

## • Value

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Owens was suspended and eventually deactivated. He won't be returning to Philadelphia; Denver or Miami, according to reports, would appear to be his most likely destination before the 2006 season.

Owens has been, and deservedly so, the bad guy in this entire situation. That is, until McNabb, who had been relatively quiet about the whole deal, decided to open up last week.

McNabb went after T.O. on several fronts.

He ridiculed a news conference in which Owens and his agent, Drew Rosenham, offered a half-hearted apology to the Eagles and McNabb. No problem with that; the scene that day was ridiculous to the point of being surreal.

McNabb also chastised Owens for not coming to him personally with his criticisms. Keep in mind this was coming from a guy opening up to a reporter on national TV during a week in which all eyes are on the NFL. Not much personal about that.

But McNabb's most puzzling comments, and the most damaging to his own persona, compared T.O.'s criticism to "black-on-black" crime.

What apparently bothered McNabb the most was that Owens reportedly had said that the Eagles would have been better off with aging Packers quarterback Brett Favre at the helm.

McNabb didn't so much have a problem with being compared to Favre, by most accounts a more productive quarterback than McNabb, but was bothered by being compared to a white quarterback by a black teammate (thus the black-on-black "crime").

"It's different to say, 'If we had Michael Vick or Daunte Culpepper or Steve McNair or Byron Leftwich,'" McNabb, who is black, told ESPN, naming four black quarterbacks. "But to go straight to Brett Favre, that kind of just slapped me in the face like, 'Wow.'"

For one, that's not even correct.

Not that I'm comfortable defending Owens, but his original comments were a response to a statement made by ESPN analyst Michael Irvin, a former wide receiver who also is black (since we seem to be keeping score here).

Granted, T.O. did agree with Irvin, who said the Eagles would be undefeated with Favre at quarterback. But he didn't single out Favre, or any other white quarterback, in an effort to slap McNabb in the face; Irvin had done that for him.

Secondly, McNabb's objection to being compared to a white quarterback is just plain racist, which is ironic given McNabb's past.

Right-wing talk-show host Rush Limbaugh, who makes a living by saying a lot of stupid things, once complained that McNabb was overrated simply because the NFL was trying to promote black quarterbacks.

Then, after the whole Owens-McNabb mess unfolded, an official with the Philadelphia chapter of the NAACP called out McNabb for his diminishing ability to run with the football, which is apparently what is expected of black quarterbacks.

So here we have McNabb, a victim of racist comments from critics both black and white, lowering himself to their level.

Whatever McNabb hoped to accomplish with his comments, you can bet it wasn't this: He took much of the onus off Owens and putting it on himself.

That can only help T.O., who possesses immense talent but still is a selfish, attention-starved human time bomb.

But he's one that someone will take a chance on.

So long as it's not the Indianapolis Colts.

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## • Trip

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began to fade into the past, along with the perception the Steelers and their coach couldn't win the big one.

Even Terry Bradshaw, Joe Greene, Franco Harris and Lynn Swann, stars of the Steelers' four Super Bowl champions of the 1970s, never put together anything like this championship run.

The Steelers rallied from 10 points down to win at Cincinnati, helped by an early injury to Bengals quarterback Carson Palmer.

They beat Super Bowl favorite Indianapolis 21-18 in a stunning upset that will be long remembered for Jerome Bettis' late-game fumble that nearly turned a certain victory into a historic defeat, and the Roethlisberger tackle that made certain it didn't.

That victory carried them to a

## • Teams

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

**Location:** Indianapolis  
**Enrollment:** 1,748 (2004-05 figure)  
**School colors:** Navy, powder blue and silver

**Conference:** Conference Indiana  
**Coach:** Mike Armstrong  
**Record:** 8-11  
**Offensive average:** 47  
**Defensive average:** 47.4  
**Sagarin rating:** 60 of 388 teams

### Southport

**Nickname:** Cardinals  
**Location:** Indianapolis  
**Enrollment:** 1,874  
**School colors:** Cardinal and white  
**Conference:** Conference Indiana  
**Coach:** Denise McClanahan  
**Record:** 6-13  
**Offensive average:** 54.8  
**Defensive average:** 56.8  
**Sagarin rating:** 146 of 388 teams

### CLASS 3A At Beech Grove Beech Grove

**Nickname:** Hornets  
**Location:** Beech Grove  
**Enrollment:** 751  
**School colors:** Black and orange  
**Conference:** Indiana Crossroads  
**Coach:** Paula Fettig  
**Record:** 4-15  
**Offensive average:** 42.1  
**Defensive average:** 56.4  
**Sagarin rating:** 279 of 388 teams

### Chatard

**Nickname:** Trojans  
**Location:** Indianapolis  
**Enrollment:** 789  
**School colors:** Blue and white  
**Conference:** Independent  
**Coach:** Kevin Sweeney  
**Record:** 17-3  
**Offensive average:** 68.4  
**Defensive average:** 43.7  
**Sagarin rating:** 26 of 388 teams

### Howe

**Nickname:** Hornets  
**Location:** Indianapolis  
**Enrollment:** 777  
**School colors:** Brown and gold  
**Conference:** Indianapolis Public Schools Athletic  
**Coach:** Lori Hardister  
**Record:** 0-19  
**Offensive average:** 31.4  
**Defensive average:** 64.7  
**Sagarin rating:** 387 of 388 teams

### Roncalli

**Nickname:** Rebels  
**Location:** Indianapolis  
**Enrollment:** 1,064  
**School colors:** Red, white and blue  
**Conference:** Independent  
**Coach:** Linda Niewiedde  
**Record:** 9-11  
**Offensive average:** 51.0  
**Defensive average:** 45.0  
**Sagarin rating:** 95 of 388 teams

### Washington

**Nickname:** Continentals  
**Location:** Indianapolis  
**Enrollment:** 605  
**School colors:** Purple and white  
**Conference:** Indianapolis Public Schools Athletic  
**Coach:** Kelin Mark  
**Record:** 2-17  
**Offensive average:** 30.5

**Defensive average:** 73.2  
**Sagarin rating:** 377 of 388 teams

### Whiteland

**Nickname:** Warriors  
**Location:** Whiteland  
**Enrollment:** 1,246  
**School colors:** Royal blue and white  
**Conference:** Mid-State  
**Coach:** Bill Hogue  
**Record:** 17-3  
**Offensive average:** 63.2  
**Defensive average:** 43.9  
**Sagarin rating:** 17 of 388 teams

**Notes:** Eighth-ranked Warriors concluded best regular season in team history and are ranked in the top 10 for the first time in team history. They also are looking for their first sectional title.  
**Quotes:** "It's an exciting time," coach Bill Hogue said. "The kids are a little more mature this year. Hopefully, we can get something done this year."

### CLASS 2A At Triton Central Indian Creek

**Nickname:** Braves  
**Location:** Trafalgar

## HOW THEY'VE FARED

A look at game-by-game results this season for Johnson County's high school girls basketball teams:

Center Grove		
Date	Opponent	Score
Nov. 18	at Franklin	W 47-33
Nov. 19	Whiteland (neutral)	W 51-45
Nov. 22	at Hamilton SE	L 54-40
Nov. 26	at Martinsville	L 60-48
Nov. 29	Franklin	W 62-33
Dec. 2	Terre Haute North	W 84-59
Dec. 6	Brownsburg	W 87-44
Dec. 13	at Bloomington South	W 61-45
Dec. 17	Terre Haute South	W 81-59
Dec. 27	Madison	W 63-34
Dec. 27	Columbus East	W 58-57
Jan. 4	at Whiteland	W 52-43
Jan. 7	Rushville	W 57-35
Jan. 12	at North Central	W 52-46
Jan. 18	at Perry Meridian	W 52-38
Jan. 21	at Ben Davis	W 70-55
Jan. 24	Greenwood	W 79-48
Jan. 27	Lawrence North	L 62-52
Jan. 31	at Carmel	W 56-54
Thurs.	Warren Central	W 48-45

Edinburg		
Date	Opponent	Score
Nov. 11	at Southwestern	L 51-33
Nov. 16	Indian Creek (neutral)	L 47-46
Nov. 19	Greenwood (neutral)	L 77-30
Nov. 23	Indian Creek	L 68-53
Nov. 29	at Eminence	L 69-54
Dec. 2	Oldenburg Academy	L 48-39
Dec. 6	at Triton Central	L 73-33
Dec. 10	Milan	L 55-27
Dec. 15	Medora (neutral)	W 62-48
Dec. 17	at Crothersville	W 56-31
Jan. 6	Hauser	L 53-37
Jan. 10	Indiana Deaf	L 50-48
Jan. 12	at Crothersville	W 58-46
Jan. 14	at Morristown	W 49-33
Jan. 17	at South Decatur	L 66-32
Jan. 19	North Decatur	L 69-35
Jan. 23	Waldron	L 65-32
Jan. 26	Trinity Lutheran	L 46-31
Jan. 31	Medora	L 46-42
Friday	at Lutheran	L 60-29

Franklin		
Date	Opponent	Score
Nov. 12	at Richmond	W 43-26
Nov. 16	Greenwood	W 30-26
Nov. 18	Center Grove	L 47-33
Nov. 19	Indian Creek	W 44-21
Nov. 22	Decatur Central	W 42-32
Nov. 25	at Whiteland	L 55-42
Nov. 29	at Center Grove	L 62-33
Dec. 1	Heritage Christian	L 55-32
Dec. 3	at Beech Grove	W 59-31
Dec. 7	Greenwood	W 52-46
Dec. 9	at Plainfield	L 52-30
Dec. 17	at East Central	W 44-21
Dec. 30	Clinton Prairie	W 45-34
Dec. 30	Seymour	L 48-33
Jan. 4	Chatard	L 50-39
Jan. 7	at Jennings County	W 42-17
Jan. 11	Perry Meridian	L 41-27
Jan. 17	at Columbus North	L 63-35
Jan. 21	at Mooresville	L 63-56
Jan. 27	at Roncalli	L 44-42
Jan. 31	Shelbyville	L 33-19

Greenwood		
Date	Opponent	Score
Nov. 12	at Beech Grove	W 47-36
Nov. 16	at Franklin	L 30-26
Nov. 19	Edinburg (neutral)	W 77-30
Nov. 22	Hauser	W 57-43
Nov. 30	Perry Meridian	W 50-48
Dec. 3	at Edgewood	W 51-40
Dec. 7	at Franklin	L 52-46
Dec. 10	Columbus North	L 69-64
Dec. 13	at Rushville	L 59-31
Dec. 16	Indian Creek	W 57-33
Dec. 17	Whiteland	L 70-42
Dec. 21	at Floyd Central	L 43-27
Jan. 3	at Lutheran	W 48-46
Jan. 6	at Northwest	W 66-43
Jan. 10	New Palestine	W 63-56
Jan. 17	Southport	W 62-50
Jan. 18	Manual	W 61-39
Jan. 24	at Center Grove	L 79-48
Jan. 27	at Plainfield	L 72-42
Thurs.	Mooresville	L 52-37

**Enrollment:** 560  
**School colors:** Red, white and blue  
**Conference:** Mid-Hoosier  
**Coach:** Andi Ferris  
**Record:** 8-13  
**Offensive average:** 46.9  
**Defensive average:** 56.2  
**Sagarin rating:** 252 of 388 teams

**Notes:** The Braves enter the postseason on a four-game losing streak.

**Quotes:** "We didn't want to end the season with four straight losses, but I've told the girls that now's the time for a new record," coach Andi Ferris said. "We're 0-0 now, and I like our draw. We're going to have to play hard, play well and play smart."

### Heritage Christian

**Nickname:** Eagles  
**Location:** Indianapolis  
**Enrollment:** 488  
**School colors:** Royal blue and white  
**Conference:** Independent  
**Coach:** Mark Richards  
**Record:** 18-3  
**Offensive average:** 56.0  
**Defensive average:** 39.6  
**Sagarin rating:** 31 of 388 teams

Indian Creek		
Date	Opponent	Score
Nov. 11	Monrovia	L 75-58
Nov. 16	Edinburgh (neutral)	W 47-46
Nov. 18	Whiteland (neutral)	L 61-30
Nov. 19	at Franklin	L 44-21
Nov. 23	at Edinburgh	W 68-53
Nov. 26	at Eastern Hancock	W 60-30
Nov. 29	Morristown	W 58-43
Dec. 3	Hauser	L 64-51
Dec. 16	at Greenwood	L 57-33
Dec. 30	Jennings County	W 50-42
Dec. 30	Corydon Central	L 79-33
Jan. 5	Martinsville	L 77-31
Jan. 7	North Decatur	W 54-51
Jan. 12	at Speedway	L 57-44
Jan. 14	at Waldron	W 52-49
Jan. 17	at Triton Central	L 43-33
Jan. 21	Southwestern	W 42-37
Jan. 24	Beech Grove	L 60-44
Jan. 26	at South Decatur	L 58-54
Jan. 28	Whiteland	L 82-60
Thurs.	at Brown County	L 73-62

Whiteland		
Date	Opponent	Score
Nov. 11	Seymour	W 66-56
Nov. 12	New Palestine	W 54-43
Nov. 18	Indian Creek (neutral)	W 61-30
Nov. 19	Center Grove (neutral)	L 51-45
Nov. 23	at Plainfield	W 59-56
Nov. 25	Franklin	W 55-42
Nov. 30	Beech Grove	W 57-36
Dec. 3	at Southwestern	W 81-40
Dec. 10	Edgewood	W 71-32
Dec. 17	at Greenwood	W 70-42
Dec. 21	at Connersville	W 80-40
Jan. 4	Center Grove	L 52-43
Jan. 7	at Shelbyville	W 70-65
Jan. 11	Mooresville	L 50-45
Jan. 14	Howe	W 71-21
Jan. 17	Washington	W 71-18
Jan. 21	at Roncalli	W 54-41
Jan. 28	at Indian Creek	W 82-60
Jan. 31	Columbus North	W 64-45
Thurs.	at Triton Central	W 58-65

**Nickname:** Panthers  
**Location:** Indianapolis  
**Enrollment:** 415  
**School colors:** Red and white  
**Conference:** Indiana Crossroads  
**Coach:** Marc Likliter  
**Record:** 6-14  
**Offensive average:** 35.7  
**Defensive average:** 55.4  
**Sagarin rating:** 338 of 388 teams

### Speedway

**Nickname:** Sparkplugs  
**Location:** Indianapolis  
**Enrollment:** 483  
**School colors:** Brown and gold  
**Conference:** West Central  
**Coach:** John Fair  
**Record:** 15-4  
**Offensive average:** 61.5  
**Defensive average:** 42.2  
**Sagarin rating:** 128 of 388 teams

### Secena

**Nickname:** Crusaders  
**Location:** Indianapolis  
**Enrollment:** 371  
**School colors:** Cardinal red and gold  
**Conference:** Independent  
**Coach:** Steve Burke

long way since then. And they've done it by committee.

Seniors Jenny Gray, Molly Lauck and Traci Lippold each average about 11 points per game. Junior Lydia Feldman is among the county leaders in assists and steals, and no fewer than a half-dozen other players are capable of contributing big plays.

"We're as balanced as any team we've ever coached," Lentz said. "We have been pretty focused. They're hungry for (the postseason)."

"There's been a one-step-at-a-time mind-set, and there's a never-say-die, we're-going-to-play-hard-all-the-time mind-set."

### Cubs ready for opener

Scoring points has not been a strength for Franklin heading into tonight's 4A opener against Southport.

But if the Grizzly Cubs can find the basket, coach Walt Raines likes their chances of finding their way to the final.

"This is a good group of kids," said Raines, whose team looks to break a five-game losing streak.

## • Lose

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

Who's to say things will be different this year? Knaus, for one.

Knaus is widely considered the best crew chief in the garage right now, a title that can be both satisfying and stigmatizing.

He's driven and demanding. He's confident in a way that rivals consider cocky. And he's so creative that NASCAR has had to close loopholes in the rule book that Knaus has exploited.

A protégé of Ray Evernham's, Knaus learned much of what he knows today from working under Evernham as an original member of the "Rainbow Warriors," the crew that pushed Jeff Gordon to three of his Cup championships.

To this day, Evernham's imprint can be found in the way Knaus does things, to the point where he's often chided and referred to as "Little Ray" around the garage.

There are worse things to be called. Evernham molded Gordon into a champion, won three titles, then parlayed that success into his own three-car empire.

## • Sectional

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

team. We're a good team. There's a lot of good teams."

The same is somewhat true in the six-team field at Beech Grove, where Whiteland plays No. 5 Chatard (17-3) Friday in a 7:30 p.m. semifinal. The winner plays for the championship Saturday night.

Whiteland coach Bill Hogue is confident the Warriors will make the date. Their only losses have come against Center Grove (twice) and Mid-State Conference champion 4A Mooresville (18-3).

"Anytime a team goes 17-3, you've done some nice things," Hogue said. "The three losses came against two very good teams. We're playing pretty well right now."

And the Warriors are doing so with contributions from a variety of players.

Huffman is an Indiana All-Stars candidate and the county's leading scorer at 19.8 points per



STAFF PHOTO BY SCOTT ROBERSON/roberson@thejournalnet.com

Center Grove senior Jenny Gray goes up for a shot during a Jan. 27 game against visiting Lawrence North.

game. But she is not a one-player show. She's one of four Whiteland players who average at or near double figures who can stand out on a given night.

Sophomore Sarah Condra (10.8 ppg), junior Amy Orender (9.4 ppg) and junior Brittany Wilson (8.7 ppg) lend flexibility and versatility to an offense that hurts opponents inside and out. And junior Rusti White leads a de-

fense that allows only 43 points per game. Equally important, senior Stacey Scheidler and junior Jennifer Harriman provide a punch off the bench that was sorely missing last season, especially in the sectional final. Whiteland squandered all of a double-digit lead against Chatard and lost 72-64.

"We had them by 15 or 16 points, and we let things get away from us," Hogue said. "Hopefully, we've learned since then a little more about what it takes to finish it."

"I feel like the kids have really grown up."

Huffman insists they have. And she looks forward to the postseason rematch against Chatard.

"We really want to play them," Huffman said. "We're all pretty confident. We didn't like the way we felt after last year."

Center Grove didn't like the way its season ended last year; either. It was blown out by Franklin Central 55-35 in the sectional opener.

But the Trojans have come a

## • Lose

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

"We had a chance to make history,