



'Bayou' Bill Scifres
OUTDOORS

Fur prices expected to remain steady

The proof still will be in performance, but prices of raw furs for most species appear to be about the same as last year, says Bruce Plowman, fur-bearer biologist for the Division of Fish and Wildlife.

Mink and muskrat prices are expected to be slightly higher this year, Plowman says, adding that beaver could be up some, too. But generally, Plowman notes that prices for the other species will be about the same. Those other species include red and gray fox, coyote and raccoon.

However, prices on raccoons could be a bit lower, Plowman says.

Plowman says higher prices of ranch mink seems to be somewhat escalating prices of wild mink and muskrat, but he says warehouses are loaded with the other long-hair furs, and this could tend to keep prices for these species about the same as last year.

Plowman says North American Fur Auction activities in Canada toward the middle of the month could bring changes in fur prices. Trapping seasons on the foxes, raccoons, opossum, weasel, mink and muskrat will end Jan. 31. The trapping season on coyote and beaver continues through March 15.

Plowman's 2004-05 survey of the Indiana fur harvest and value of pelts sold is, by species, as follows:

- Muskrat, 48,986 pelts, \$2.50 average price
- Raccoon: 129,630, \$7.77
- Red fox: 1,923, \$12.46
- Gray fox: 530, \$13.85
- Mink: 2,751, \$11.10
- Opossum: 6,214, \$1.29
- Skunk: 328, \$2.82
- Beaver: 3,095, \$11.21
- Coyote: 4,470, \$10.57
- Long-tailed weasel: 13, 94 cents

The survey indicated 197,940 pelts sold by Hoosiers brought \$1,282,820.35, for an average price per pelt of \$6.48.

Plowman maintains a list of fur-buyers in the state. He can be contacted by telephone at (812) 849-4586, by e-mail at bplowman@dnr.IN.gov, or by mail 526 DNR Road, Mitchell, IN 47446.

Legislative watch

If you think you have heard the last of the morbid deer-pen hunting in the Indiana, just twirl your skullcap and House Bill 1152 will pop up.

The brainchild of Rep. Eric Gutwein, R-Rensselaer, is not a noxious bill in the eyes of conservationists. In simplest terms, it would prohibit the hunting of exotic animals (presumably including deer) in high-fence situations.

But conservationists and others opposed to deer-pen hunting are keeping jaundiced eyes on the measure because Gutwein is a known advocate of deer-pen hunting. He also is chairman of the House Agriculture Committee.

Opponents of deer-pen hunting believe Gutwein may have changes planned for HB 1152, if it should gain some measure of acceptance in the legislature.

Still another bill, Senate Bill 157, backed by the Department of Natural Resources, seeks to replace a pair of advisory groups to the resources agency with a single panel. This is the baby of Department of Natural Resources director Kyle Hupfer, who has said publicly that he would prefer the simple demise of both panels.

Fishin' facts

The word's out: Bass are being taken on a variety of artificial lures from smaller bodies of standing water that are free of ice.

Slow-running lures of drab colors have always served me best at this time of year, but every time I write this bit of "expertise" some angler scores big with a brightly colored spinner bait.

The choice of lures is yours.

"Bayou" Bill Scifres' outdoors column appears Saturdays in the Daily Journal. Comments can be sent to P.O. Box 699, Franklin, IN 46131.

Aging star to be part of U.S. team

Chelios to play in fourth Olympics at age 44

By LARRY LAGE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DETROIT

When Chris Chelios suits up for Team USA at the Turin Olympics, he will be 44. And by the time most of his teammates arrive at the dressing room each day, Chelios likely already will have finished his coffee and sat in the sauna.

"Some guys show up when you tell them to, like two hours before a game or a practice, but Chelios will be there three or four hours earlier than that," Team USA general manager Don Waddell said Thursday. "I wish all players in the NHL had the passion and drive that Chris Chelios has for the game."

Chelios, a Detroit Red Wings defenseman, made his Olympic debut as an amateur in 1984 and returned in 1998 and 2002 as a captain when NHL players were allowed to participate.

Keith Tkachuk and Chelios will be the first four-time Olympians in U.S. hockey history as they shoot for the team's first Olympic gold medal since 1980. Chelios, who was born Jan. 25, 1962, will become the third-oldest player in Olympic hockey history.

"If we have success, maybe they'll ask me back a fifth time," Chelios joked. "If not, maybe I'll give the Senior Olympics a shot."

"I never thought I'd be playing at this age, but now I can't imagine being done."

Forward Doug Weight is glad he doesn't have to envision going for gold without Chelios.

"He's a guy everybody looks up to because of his personality and the way he loves the game," Weight said. "He has earned so much respect because he's won Stanley Cups, and he's played



AP PHOTO

Detroit Red Wings defenseman Chris Chelios skates up the ice against the Philadelphia Flyers in Detroit on Thursday. Chelios will become the third-oldest hockey player in Olympic history in Turin.

at such a high level forever because of the way he takes care of himself."

Chelios' physique is chiseled, even as gray hairs surface on his head and face. The NHL's oldest player deflects credit for his longevity to those who help him train near his offseason home in Los Angeles, and to luck.

"When my trainer started training younger guys like Rob Blake, I found new things to do and new guys to work out with in addition to working out with him," Chelios said. "I don't tell anybody some of the things I do; that's my ace in the hole."

"I do some really different

stuff with Laird Hamilton, a big-time surfer, and Don Wildman, a 73-year-old guy who started Bally's."

Chelios has such a passion for hockey, and an aversion to sitting still, he played 23 games for the Motor City Mechanics of the United Hockey League last season during the NHL lockout.

The three-time Norris Trophy winner, given to the NHL's top defenseman, and 11-time All-Star signed a one-year contract last summer, returning to Detroit for a seventh season and his 22nd in the league, hoping to win his third Stanley Cup.

Kwan still talk of championships

Injured skater seeking to compete in Olympics

By NANCY ARMOUR
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ST. LOUIS

Even from half a country away, Michelle Kwan is dominating the national championships.

The nine-time champion is missing the U.S. Figure Skating Championships for the first time since 1991, at home nursing a groin injury.

But she's petitioned for a spot on the Olympic team, and the "Should she or shouldn't she?" debate has sparked far more interest than anything happening on the ice.

Fans are wearing buttons and T-shirts supporting Kwan. Each of the top women has been asked repeatedly what she thinks, and coaches and choreographers have weighed in, too. Even men's contender Evan Lysacek had his pre-event news conference hijacked by Kwan questions.

"No, I'm not surprised that it's a huge deal," Ron Hersherberger, president of U.S. Figure Skating, said Friday. "Michelle has been a marvelous champion. She's a terrific athlete. It's clear that skating fans everywhere adore her, and they should. She's been a terrific image for the sport of figure skating, so I'm not surprised that there's all this attention."

Only the winner of the women's event is guaranteed a spot on the Olympic team, with the federation's International Committee selecting the other two athletes after the free skate tonight.

There are 35 people on the committee, but at least nine will have to recuse themselves because of personal or professional conflicts; a simple majority is needed.



AP PHOTO

Michelle Kwan performs in the Marshalls U.S. Figure Skating Challenge in Boston on Dec. 11.

The committee will base its selection on how athletes fared at six competitions. They are, in order of importance: nationals; the 2005 Grand Prix final; the 2005 world championships; the 2005 Four Continents championships; the 2005 Junior Grand Prix final; and the 2005 world junior championships.

Kwan also had to be examined by a doctor selected by U.S. Figure Skating to prove she was physically ready to compete in Turin.

"She was seen by a doctor at his office (Thursday) and had a complete examination of the groin injury," said Kwan's agent, Shep Goldberg.

Neither Kwan nor U.S. Figure Skating had seen the report as of Friday afternoon. Goldberg also said Kwan resumed jumping again Friday for the first time since Dec. 17.

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Embattled skier suffers another difficult day

By ERICA BULMAN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WENGEN, Switzerland

Bode Miller hit the trifecta: an apology, a disqualification, an absence.

One day after he was humbled for comments about drinking and racing, Miller was disqualified near the end of a World Cup race Friday. The champion skier failed to get the result reversed and later skipped a ceremony in town for the downhill draw for Saturday's race.

"It just never stops with him," World Cup race director Guenther Hujara said.

Miller, the defending overall champion, was disqualified just yards from the finish of a slalom, allowing Austria's Benjamin Raich to win a super-combi and pad his lead in the overall standings.

The super-combi, a new version of the traditional combined, adds the times from a shortened downhill in the morning to a slalom leg a few hours later.

Norway's Kjetil Andre Aamodt was second and Italy's Peter Fill was third for his first top-three finish. The top American was Steven Nyman in 19th.

Miller was second fastest in the



AP PHOTO

Bode Miller reacts after straddling a gate during an Alpine Ski World Cup Men's super-combi race in Wengen, Switzerland, on Friday.

morning's downhill and appeared to have won after the slalom, leading Raich by 1.11 seconds. But the New Hampshire skier was disqualified for straddling a gate near the end.

Miller was unable to get his disqualification changed after speaking with Hujara, and his problems didn't stop there.

He skipped the mandatory downhill bib draw ceremony in the town square, letting down thousands of fans hoping to catch a glimpse of him. It was unclear why he was absent; no other skier missed the draw.

And the Winners are . . .



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Sally Wells, Tad Thompson, and Adam Treibic

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