



Jeff Decker
FULL THROTTLE

Here's what you won't see during Cup season

The NASCAR Nextel Cup season is just three days away, which leaves just enough time for some know-it-all motorsports writer to take a stab at what's going to happen in 2006. But anyone can pretend to know what is going to happen. Here's a changeup: a list of things you almost certainly won't see this season.

Clip this out and save it. That way, if any of these do come true, you can send me angry e-mails.

- Dale Earnhardt Jr. will win a race, his car will fail a post-race inspection, and NASCAR officials will strip him of the win.
- Jeff Gordon will drive to victory in the Brickyard 400 and will do so while talking on his cell phone (which all good drivers do), balancing his checkbook while it's propped on top of his steering wheel (which I saw someone doing the other day while driving through Wanamaker) and cooking a three-course meal (which is bound to be the next big trend in driver multi-tasking).
- With Toyota on board, NASCAR announces that Honda, Volkswagen, Hyundai, Volvo and Geely (it's that cheap Chinese car) soon will follow.
- Kyle Busch will be honored as the most popular driver among his peers. His brother, Kurt Busch, will finish second in the voting. Robby Gordon will get a lifetime achievement award for being a gentleman on the track.
- In an effort to discourage bump drafting, NASCAR will pay more money to safe drivers than it does winning drivers.
- Rusty Wallace and Ryan Newman will announce that they have put their differences behind them, that they are the best of friends and that they will have their own reality TV show.
- NASCAR will announce a new slogan for its diversity program: "At least we're no less diverse than hockey."
- Newman will be far better at racing than he will be qualifying.
- NASCAR will continue to punish drivers for unsafe driving and post-race confrontations, but it also will promise not to use footage of such antics in commercials promoting the sport.
- The stands at Indianapolis

(SEE CUP, PAGE B4)

IU downed again on road

Reports: Davis has resigned, will stick out season

By GENARO C. ARMAS
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

STATE COLLEGE, Pa.

Penn State's Geary Claxton gave embattled Indiana coach Mike Davis a rude welcome back to the sidelines.

Claxton had 20 points, including a decisive 3-pointer late in the game to lead the Nittany Lions against the struggling Hoosiers 71-68 on Wednesday night.

CBS, SI.com and The Sporting News reported late Wednesday that Davis had resigned but would remain with the Hoosiers the rest of the season.

An official announcement from the school could come as early as today, reports said.

Lewis Monroe hit a late free throw, then Penn State's Ben Luber missed two free throws with 2 seconds left.

But Marshall Strickland's desperation 3 hit was too late and hit off the rim, and the fans from Penn State (12-11, 4-8 Big Ten) stormed the court as Indiana lost for the sixth time in seven games.

The attention was squarely on Davis in his first game back on the bench after missing one game due to flu-like symptoms amid rampant speculation about

his job security. Indiana (13-9, 5-6) fell out of the top 25 this week for the first time this season.

The slide has caused unrest among a vocal contingent of Hoosier fans calling for Davis' ouster.

Before the game, Davis sat in a chair in a hallway leading to the court and in front of the media room for at least 20 minutes. In a low, soft voice, he declined to answer questions about the recent drama about his coaching status.

When asked Monday by

(SEE ROAD, PAGE B3)

WHERE THEY STAND

The Big Ten men's basketball standings:

	Conf. W-L	All W-L
Iowa	9-3	20-6
Wisconsin	8-4	18-7
Illinois	7-4	21-4
Ohio State	7-4	18-4
Michigan	7-5	17-6
Michigan State	6-5	18-7
Indiana	5-6	13-9
Northwestern	4-7	12-11
Penn State	4-8	12-11
Minnesota	3-8	12-10
Purdue	3-9	9-14



Indiana's Roderick Wilmont, left, and Penn State's David Jackson go after a loose ball in the first half of their Big Ten game in State College, Pa., on Wednesday.

Pacers look good going into break

Johnson, Stojakovic lead way as Indiana stops Milwaukee

By CLIFF BRUNT
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS

The Indiana Pacers were happy to enter the All-Star break with a victory.

The Pacers shot 41 percent and committed 20 turnovers but earned an 88-77 victory on Wednesday night.

Anthony Johnson scored 24 points, and Peja Stojakovic had 16 of his 20 in the second half for Indiana.

"It seemed like we were playing in quicksand, turning the ball over," Johnson said. "They really didn't have much energy, either. It was just two teams playing with no energy, but we found a way in the second half to get a big lead and create some distance and get a much needed win."

The Pacers led 41-40 at the end of a sloppy first half. The teams combined for 22 turnovers, and both shot 40 percent in the first two quarters.

David Harrison had 16 points and six rebounds, and Jeff Foster grabbed 18 boards for the Pacers. Indiana has won five of its past six games heading into the break.

Michael Redd led Milwaukee with 24 points, but he shot 10-for-26 from the field. Bobby Simmons scored 19 points, and Jamaal Magloire added 11 points and 15 rebounds for the Bucks.

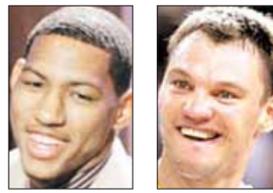
The Pacers led 76-70 in the fourth quarter before a 6-0 run, highlighted by a 3-pointer and a dunk by Stojakovic, put the game out of reach.

It was a disappointing loss for the Bucks, which had played four games in five days. Milwaukee



The Pacers' Peja Stojakovic, left, puts up a shot against the Bucks' Andrew Bogut during the second quarter of Wednesday's game in Indianapolis. Stojakovic finished with 20 points as Indiana defeated Milwaukee 88-77.

COMING SATURDAY



GRANGER JASIKEVICIUS

Impressive rookies

Daily Journal correspondent Jason Martin takes a look at how rookies Danny Granger and Sarunas Jasikevicius have contributed to the Pacers this season. Both players are participating in Friday's Rookie Challenge, a part of the NBA All-Star weekend in Houston.



NEXT UP

New Orleans/Oklahoma City (29-23)

at Indiana Pacers (26-23)

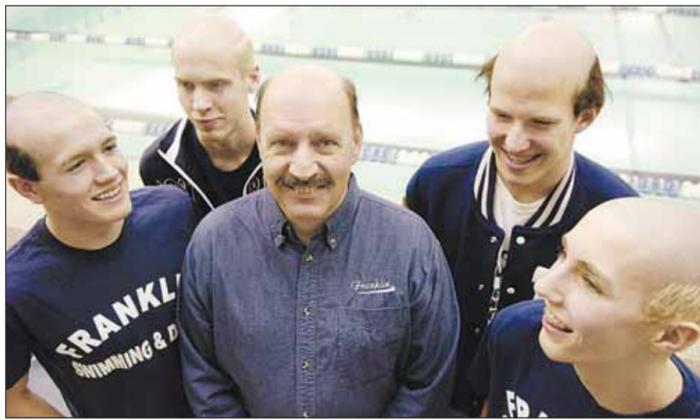
Time: 7 p.m. Tuesday
TV: Fox Sports Midwest
Radio: WIBC-1070 AM

played the night before, beating Seattle 106-91. The rested Pacers hadn't played since Sunday's 92-88 loss to San Antonio.

"I really don't think we gave our best effort tonight, being the second of a back-to-back," said

(SEE PACERS, PAGE B2)

From left, Franklin Community High School swimmers Brian Schaefer, Jason Cheek, Paul Goad and David Wanicki surround their coach, Kurt Hass, center, after the swimmers cut their hair to look like Hass, who is retiring at the end of the season. Not shown is teammate Michael McElyea, who also cut his hair in a similar style.



STAFF PHOTO BY SCOTT ROBERSON/roberson@thejournalnet.com

HAIR-BRAINED IDEA

Franklin swimmers pay tribute to retiring coach

By JOHN GROTH
DAILY JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER
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When he arrived at school Monday morning, Franklin Community High School swimming coach Kurt Hass' jaw dropped.

So did the mouths of most students and teachers who walked past some of the school's swimmers: senior Michael McElyea; juniors Jason Cheek, Paul Goad and Brian Schaefer; and freshman David Wanicki.

In fact, some even stopped to

take another look at the five.

It's not every day you see five high school boys sporting the balding "hairstyle" of their coach. But that was their way of honoring the retiring Hass before his final IHSAA sectional meet, starting today at Indian Creek High School.

"My first reaction was comical," said Hass, who's coaching in his final season after 33 years. "Then, I was pretty flattered. It was pretty obvious they were copying somebody."

(SEE SWIMMERS, PAGE B2)

IF YOU GO

What: 2006 IHSAA boys swimming and diving sectional championships
Where: Indian Creek High School
When: Swimming preliminaries, 5:30 p.m. today; diving trials, 9 a.m. Saturday; consolations and finals in all events, 1 p.m. Saturday
Admission: \$4 for single-session ticket; \$7 for season ticket (all three sessions)

Participating schools: Center Grove, Franklin, Greenwood, Indian Creek, Perry Meridian, Shelbyville, Southport and Whiteland

Hockey team opens with tie

By IRA PODELL
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TURIN, Italy

John Grahame watched the movie "Miracle" almost 100 times during the NHL lockout.

The way the U.S. hockey team played against Latvia in the Olympic opener, Grahame and his teammates might need another miracle for history to repeat itself.

Jordan Leopold scored early in the third period, and the American team with a roster full of NHL players only managed a 3-3 tie against the underdog Latvia.

When the final horn sounded, the Latvian players raised their arms in triumph while the Americans slowly gathered around goalie Grahame.



AP PHOTO

The United States' Jordan Leopold, center, celebrates after scoring against Latvia with teammates Jason Blake, left, and Bret Hedican in a men's hockey game in the Turin Winter Olympics on Wednesday.

"We were not expected to win or even get the tie," said former NHL goalie Arturs Irbe, who made 39 saves (18 in the third period) for Latvia. "We were big-time underdogs in this game

MORE INSIDE

Chad Hedrick's dream of winning five gold medals ends when the American team pursuit skating team is eliminated.

Page B5

AP's Jim Litke writes about a brave American skier who performed well after suffering an injury, while AP's Tim Dahlberg writes about the Canadian women's hockey team.

Page B8

in everybody's eyes except our own people.

"You can say that this probably means more to us than to the American team."

(SEE HOCKEY, PAGE B5)

Giants anxiously await Bonds' arrival

The Associated Press

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz.

Barry Bonds was the big topic of conversation Wednesday when pitchers and catchers reported to the San Francisco Giants' camp for the start of spring training, even though he was nowhere to be found.

It's unknown when Bonds will report to spring training as he tries to bounce back from his injury-shortened 2005 when he

played just 14 games after undergoing three operations on his knee.

The Giants' position players report Monday, but Bonds could choose to come earlier because of the injury.

Wednesday was the first day for pitchers and catchers to report to most major-league teams' spring-training camps.

Giants manager Felipe Alou said he was anxious to have Bonds in camp and immediately was asked if he still is entertain-

ing thoughts of having the seven-time MVP bat second in spite of the superstar's preference to remain in the heart of the order.

"I said I was going to talk with Barry, and we're going to talk," was all Alou said on the subject, emphasizing that he's more concerned about Bonds' physical condition than where he bats in the order.

"As a manager, I'd like to see how he is. One time last spring,

(SEE GIANTS, PAGE B5)