

# An end to cheer stunts?

## National safety group wants certain moves banned

By JIM SUHR  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

### ST. LOUIS

A national cheerleading safety group is calling for the suspension of certain aerial and towering stunts during this year's college basketball tournaments in response to a cheerleader's frightening fall from a 15-foot human pyramid.

The injured cheerleader's coach on Wednesday criticized the action, which essentially bars cheerleaders from performing the high-flying tricks that many squads have been doing for years, as devastating and unnecessary.

Effective immediately, the American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Administrators recommended college conferences bar basket tosses and high pyramids without a mat. But cheerleaders would not likely have time to haul the mats around during tournament games, meaning they would have to omit those routines.

While the association has no enforcement power, the NCAA, NAIA and other basketball tournaments require cheerleading teams to conform to its guidelines. And squads are likely to comply, since conferences could kick cheerleading teams out of games for breaking the rules.

"It'd be an unwise move for a coach or others to go against the committee," Jim Lord, the cheerleading group's executive director, said Wednesday.

On Tuesday, the Missouri Valley Conference barred its cheerleaders from such stunts during its women's basketball tournament, which begins today.



Southern Illinois cheerleader Kristi Yamaoka receives a standing ovation from the crowd after falling during a time out routine in the second half of the Missouri Valley Conference tournament championship game against Bradley in St. Louis on Sunday.

The MVC includes Southern Illinois University, whose nationally televised conference title game Sunday came to a halt when cheerleader Kristi Yamaoka lost her balance, toppled the wrong way off the human pyramid and landed on her head.

The 18-year-old sophomore had a concussion and cracked vertebra in her neck but gave a thumbs-up after she was strapped to a backboard and cheered with her arms as her school's band struck up its fight song. She was released Tuesday from a hospital.

With Yamaoka escaping serious injury, "we dodged a bullet," Lord said. "We don't want to have another situation like that."

SIU's cheerleading coach, Jennifer Graeff, said that while her squad will comply with the restrictions, she questioned their necessity after what she called Yamaoka's "unfortunate accident" doing a formation she said is routinely done thousands of times a year.

Graeff said her colleagues across the country are upset and hoping the rule will not stand.

## • Player

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

scorer in county history. But beyond the individual numbers, the Warriors were consistent winners during most of Huffman's career.

Whiteland had back-to-back 17-win seasons during Huffman's junior and senior years. It also won a share of the Mid-State Conference championship in 2004-05, marking the first time the Warriors had won a league title.

During her four years, the Warriors had a combined record of 51-36.

Huffman's determination and drive to win were contagious qualities throughout her career. "Jessie brings a game you don't see very often in girls basketball," Whiteland coach Bill

Hogue said. "She's a gym rat. She loves to be in the gym and play basketball. She brings a fire within herself."

"And on the other side of that, she makes other people better."

Despite all she accomplished, Huffman wanted to do more. Topping the list was winning a sectional, which the Warriors have never done.

Whiteland lost in the 2005 sectional championship game and was defeated in this year's semifinal. Both losses were to Chatard.

"I'm happy we won 17 games, but it would've been a lot better had we won some championships," Huffman said. "I don't think I left a legacy. We just won 17 games. I think if we would've won sectionals, I would've (left a legacy)."

"I haven't done any more than some of the other players that have come through Whiteland."

A 2005 Junior All-Star, Huffman

has her sights set on making the Indiana All-Stars team this season.

She enjoyed her experience last year and would like to be a part of an All-Star team again.

"I think it'd be a great honor to be selected," Huffman said. "I'm not sure of my chances. I figured if we won sectionals, I had a good chance. I really want to make it."

"But I'm not going to dwell on it. I have other things to look forward to, like college."

Huffman will attend NCAA Division I Eastern Illinois University on a full basketball scholarship. She chose the school ahead of offers from Southern Illinois and IUPUI.

She likes Eastern Illinois' coaching staff and the fact the school is about a 2½-hour drive from Whiteland. It wasn't too close or too far away.

"I've been out with the (Eastern Illinois players) a cou-

ple of times," Huffman said. "They're my kind of girls to hang out with. We had fun."

Although Whiteland's season ended about a month ago, Huffman is still working on her game.

She's spent nearly every day in the gym taking at least 200 shots, refining her shooting technique. It's all in an effort to perform well at Sunday's Top 40 Workout at Ben Davis High School.

A good showing at the workout could improve her chances of making the Indiana All-Stars Team. If it happens, she'll become the first Whiteland girl selected for the team.

But if it doesn't, she looks forward to starting her college career.

"Hopefully, I can get better each year like I did (at Whiteland)," Huffman said.

"Hopefully, I can make Eastern Illinois a championship team."

## • Team

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

one of the team leaders in steals (1.8) and was one of its top defenders.

"(Lippold's) the first player to dive on the floor for a loose ball," Trojans coach Joe Lentz said.

"She's a strong outside shooter. She gives all-out effort and always goes to the right place and does what we ask."

• **Jenny Gray, senior, Center Grove:** The 6-foot forward averaged 10.7 points a game and shot 50 percent from the field.

An Indiana All-Stars candidate, she was also the Trojans' leading rebounder at 6.6 per game and averaged 1.1 blocks per game.

Gray was also among the Trojans' assists leaders at 2.3 per game.

"(Gray) brings athleticism and consistency and a great work ethic," Lentz said.

"She's an exceptionally talented athlete and a force in the middle that everybody else on other teams knows (they have) to contend with."

• **Molly Lauck, senior, Center Grove:** A 6-foot center, she was the Trojans' leading scorer (10.9 ppg) and second-leading rebounder (6.3 rpg).

Lauck led the county in field-goal percentage (54.1) and was fourth in rebounds.

"She easily had the best year of her career," Lentz said. "She's a tenacious rebounder and defended the post area very well."

"I've pointed out several games where, if we don't have her, we don't win."

• **Abby Collier, senior, Greenwood:** A 5-9 forward, she was the Woodmen's leading scorer (9.5 ppg) and rebounder (6.1 rpg).

She finished fifth in the county in rebounding and also shot 69 percent from the foul line.

But Woodmen coach Debbie Guckenberger said Collier's biggest asset was her leadership.

"She was a very good influence to our younger kids," Guckenberger said.

"We had a lot of freshman playing this year. She did a nice job mentoring them and making them feel comfortable."

"I can't say enough about the character of her as an individual."

## 2006 ALL-COUNTY GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

Here's a look at the athletes selected for the Daily Journal's 2006 All-County Girls basketball team:

FIRST TEAM		
Player	School	Year
Jessica Huffman	Whiteland	Senior
Amy Orender	Whiteland	Junior
Jenny Gray	Center Grove	Senior
Molly Lauck	Center Grove	Senior
Traci Lippold	Center Grove	Senior
Abby Collier	Greenwood	Senior

SECOND TEAM		
Player	School	Year
Lydia Feldman	Center Grove	Junior
Lindsay Vandivier	Franklin	Freshman
Nancy Miller	Franklin	Junior
Brittney Wilson	Whiteland	Junior
Sarah Condra	Whiteland	Sophomore

### HONORABLE MENTION

Center Grove: Heidi Reisinger, Jordan Price and Hillary Bowling  
Edinburgh: Heather Dowell and Hannah Basey  
Franklin: Erin Bullington and Kristin Chaney  
Greenwood: Jessica Unversaw, Casey Dollens and Tessa Ratliff  
Whiteland: Jennifer Harriman

# FC runner earns spot in championship meet

Special to the Daily Journal

Franklin College senior Robyn Burns is returning to the NCAA Division III indoor track and field national championship meet, this time in the 5-kilometer run Saturday at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn.

"I am shooting for All-America right now," said Burns, a Roncalli High School graduate from Greenwood. "I have a good shot at finishing in the top eight."

"My main goal is to stay with the leaders for as long as possible since I'm more of a kicker. Then with four or five laps to go, I will try to make it through the pack."

Burns earned her spot in the nationals while competing in the Fred Wilt Memorial Invitational meet Feb. 25 at Anderson University. She posted a fieldhouse record time of 17:16.66, beating the old time of 17:21.24.

"It helps a lot having previous experience in the nationals," Burns said. "I was really nervous my freshman and sophomore years. Now I can be prepared and try to treat it like a normal race."

This is the third time Burns has qualified for the indoor national championship meet. If she completes her goal of All-American status, it will be the third time she has done so in her career.

"Robyn has persevered through some hard times with her anemia, especially during her junior year," said Franklin track and field coach Paul Sargent.



PHOTO COURTESY FRANKLIN COLLEGE  
Franklin College senior runner Robyn Burns will head to St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., for the NCAA Division III indoor track and field national championship Saturday.

"We have been concentrating on the mile the most this season, and when she ran the 5-kilometer race at Anderson, I was surprised to see that her leg speed and stamina were there."

"Robyn beat some good competition and went out and did her job," Sargent said.

Burns will compete against 14 other runners in the race, which is scheduled to start at 6:25 p.m. Saturday.

She finished second in the 1,500-meter run in the 2003 NCAA indoor nationals and sixth in the 2003 NCAA outdoor nationals her freshman year, earning All-American honors in each competition.

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