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SPORTS

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SECTION B



Jeff Decker
FULL THROTTLE

Ready or not, racing season is just ahead

Calling all racers. The NHRA season kicks off in a couple of weeks. The NASCAR Nextel Cup season is less than a month away. And the racing season closer to home gets under way at most area tracks in a little more than two months.

Those of you who race, and even those of you who just watch, are no doubt preparing for the 2006 season.

So, too, is your Full Throttle columnist. And the best way to prepare is to find out what our local racers have planned for the new season.

It's time for a roll call of Johnson County racers. If you live in the county or in the Daily Journal's circulation area just outside the county, I want to hear from you.

I'm asking all racers to contact me either by e-mail (jdecke@thejournalnet.com) or by mail (The Daily Journal, 2575 N. Morton St., Franklin, IN 46131, attn: Jeff Decker) in the next few weeks.

Here's what I'd like to know:

- Your name
- Your age
- Your hometown
- What you do for a living
- What kind of racing you do, where you race and in which series you compete

- Information about your race vehicle (year, make, model, engine, how long you've had your vehicle)
- Contact information, including phone number (cell phone numbers come in handy) and/or e-mail address. This information will not be published in the Daily Journal.
- A high-quality head-and-shoulders photo of yourself.

Even if you've been featured prominently in this space before, drop me a line to tell me what's new with your racing efforts this season.

Also, if you're a reader and know of someone local who is involved in any aspect of racing, feel free to get in touch with me. I'd be interested in passing on their story to our readers.

The Full Throttle column will begin its regular rotation in the Daily Journal in late March.

Until then, let's get ready to go racing.

Pit stops

Anderson University freshman **Jake Scott**, an Indian Creek High School graduate, will be joined by **Nick Adams**, of Greencastle, as drivers of Taterhead Motorsports sprint-car entries in the 2006 Winternationals, a series of races at East Bay Raceway Park in Tampa, Fla.

Adams, who drove last season in the CRA Super Series in a stock car owned by his father, **Roger Adams** of Franklin, and Scott will compete in the non-winged sprint-car races Jan. 30 and 31 and Feb. 1. The Feb. 1 race pays \$10,000 to the winner. Scott also will compete in races for winged sprint cars Feb. 3 through 5.

The Winternationals features sprint-car, late-model and modifieds racing each night through Feb. 18. Both Scott and Adams are making their first appearance in the Winternationals.

Indianapolis Raceway Park recently released its 2006 schedule for racing on its drag strip, oval track and road course.

(SEE READY, PAGE B4)

Pacers rid themselves of Artest

By MICHAEL MAROT
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS

Ron Artest needed a place to play. The Indiana Pacers needed to unload their biggest problem.

And the rebuilding Sacramento Kings were willing to gamble on the league's most unpredictable All-Star.

The elements came together Wednesday, and this time they stuck: The Kings sent sharpshooter Peja Stojakovic to the Pacers for Artest in an on-again, off-again deal that's been talked about for months.

"We're glad this is over with," Pacers president Larry Bird said. "We wanted to be patient with



ARTEST



STOJAKOVIC

this one because Ronnie is a heck of a player, and someone's always going to take a chance on someone like that."

The deal ends a turmoil-filled career in Indiana for Artest, best known as the man who set off one of the nastiest brawls in U.S. sports history in November 2004. The fight with Detroit Pistons fans

earned Artest a 73-game suspension, the longest in NBA history.

The latest mess with Artest began with a trade rumor in December that wound up coming true: Artest for Stojakovic.

Upset at the perceived slight, Artest demanded a trade. The Pacers responded to the tantrum by deactivating the former NBA defensive player of the year.

Trouble follows Artest. He had kicked a ball into the stands, broke a television camera when he threw it down and verbally sparred with Miami Heat coach Pat Riley during games.

On Tuesday, it appeared Artest would no longer be Indiana's

(SEE PACERS, PAGE B3)

What were Kings officials thinking?

So this is how the nightmare ends. Not on the dawn of a promise-filled season, but in the midst of another one going down the tubes.

OK, so that's the bad news. The good news is, there really was a patsy out there who wanted Ron Artest.

So to the Sacramento Kings, he says, "Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you."

"Caveat emptor" is probably more appropriate. "Sucker" is probably more accurate.

But in light of circumstances, "thank you" just feels right.

It was to the point where you



Rick Morwick
PACERS BEAT

had to wonder if it was even possible to get rid of this bad-luck charm.

Especially after Tuesday's comedy of done and undone deals.

(SEE KINGS, PAGE B3)

PREP BASKETBALL



Whiteland Community High School junior Amy Orender throws a pass to a teammate during basketball practice at the school Tuesday. The Warriors are 14-3 and ranked No. 7 in Class 3A.

Winning as a team

Spreading wealth helpful as Warriors gain acclaim

By JOHN GROTH
DAILY JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER
jgroth@thejournalnet.com

Whiteland Community High School girls basketball coach Bill Hogue has a luxury most coaches don't have: a wealth of scoring options.

The Warriors have four starters who average at or near double figures. And they're giving opposing teams headaches because they can't figure out which player to guard.

"We've had three games this year where we've had four kids score 10 or more points. That's good distribution," Hogue said. "That's what we want to get from our team, and what we want to get every night."

Whiteland (14-3, 3-1 Mid-State Conference) is off to its best start in school history. The Warriors are ranked No. 7 in the Class 3A poll, the first time they've been in the top 10 in school history.

With each achievement, the Warriors gain confidence and

(SEE TEAM, PAGE B3)

BALANCING ACT

A look at the top five scorers on Whiteland's girls basketball team:

Jessica Huffman
Senior forward
18.9 points per game
4.8 assists per game
3.0 steals per game



Sarah Condra
Sophomore guard/forward
10.1 points per game
3.7 rebounds per game



Amy Orender
Junior forward
9.2 points per game
5.6 rebounds per game



Brittney Wilson
Junior center
8.7 points per game
5.5 rebounds per game
3.1 assists per game



Rusti White
Junior guard
4.4 points per game
1.7 steals per game



CG boys just miss century mark

By GREG DODDRIDGE
DAILY JOURNAL SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

INDIANAPOLIS

When Todd Price gets going inside the paint, the Center Grove High School boys basketball team can spread its offense and score in a variety of ways.

That's what happened Wednesday at Decatur Central, where the Trojans breezed to a 99-77 win.

The Trojans sealed the outcome in the second half, when they shot a blistering 77 percent from the field. They made 21 of 27 field-goal attempts in the half in their most impressive offensive display of the season.

The 99 points is a team high under

THE ROAD AHEAD

A look at remaining regular-season games for the Center Grove boys basketball team:

| Date | Opponent | Time |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------|
| Saturday | at Lawrence North* | 7:30 p.m. |
| Feb. 3 | Warren Central* | 7:30 p.m. |
| Feb. 4 | at Greenwood | 7:30 p.m. |
| Feb. 9 | Whiteland | 7:30 p.m. |
| Feb. 11 | at Terre Haute North* | 1:30 p.m. |
| Feb. 17 | North Central* | 7:30 p.m. |
| Feb. 24 | Lawrence Central | 7:30 p.m. |

*MIC game

the direction of second-year coach Cliff Hawkins.

For the game, Center Grove (9-4) shot 64 percent from the field. The

Trojans made 36 of 56 shots, including 8 of 15 3-point attempts.

"We're real happy tonight," Hawkins said. "We have kids who can shoot, and we work at it."

Despite the Trojans shooting more than 50 percent from the field in the first half, the game still was close at halftime, when the Trojans led 37-34.

But Center Grove broke things open in the second half, when the Trojans focused on feeding the ball inside to Price, a 6-foot-5 senior center.

He made 10 of 13 shots for 25 points. "Coach wanted to get the ball inside to me," Price said. "My teammates made plays to get me to the hoop. Once that happened, our offense opened up for the guards to hit 3-pointers."

(SEE MARK, PAGE B3)

Purdue's problems continue with home loss

By CLIFF BRUNT
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WEST LAFAYETTE

The last thing the depleted Purdue men's basketball team needed was overtime.

The Boilermakers have lost five of their top players for the season to injuries and suspensions, killing their depth.

Still, Purdue thought it had Wednesday's game with Northwestern wrapped up on Bryant Dillon's 3-pointer with 11.8 seconds remaining.

INSIDE

Franklin College men, women face Transylvania in Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference games. Also, a roundup of other collegiate contests.

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Northwestern's Craig Moore answered by hitting a contested 3-pointer with 0.9 seconds left to force overtime, then Vedran Vukusic scored eight of his season-high 29 points in overtime to lead Northwestern to a 78-76 win.

Vukusic shot 12 of 19, including 4 of 10 on 3-pointers. Mohamed Hachad added 20 points on 4-of-5 3-point shooting for the Wildcats (10-8, 3-4 Big Ten).

The Wildcats swept this season's two games against the Boilermakers, and Vukusic averaged 28.5 points in those games.

Vukusic was glad to have extra scoring help on Wednesday. Hachad entered the game averaging 10 points and had only made six 3-pointers all season.

"He carried the load in the first half, then it kind of evened

out," Vukusic said. "It's the first time this year we've had a balanced offense."

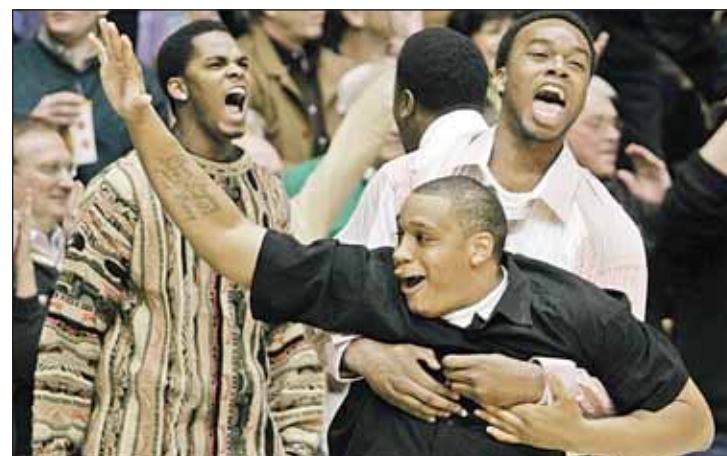
Northwestern hit 12 of 29 3-pointers overall.

Dillon, Marcus White and Matt Kiefer each scored 18 points for the Boilermakers (7-11, 1-6).

Purdue coach Matt Painter said it was his team's toughest defeat of the season, even more difficult to absorb than Saturday's loss at Indiana.

"I would say so, with Bryant

(SEE PROBLEMS, PAGE B2)



Injured Purdue players Nate Minnow, foreground, and Carl Landry, holding Minnow, celebrate after the Boilermakers tied Wednesday's game against Northwestern in West Lafayette. Purdue lost 78-76 in overtime.