

## NBA

NEW YORK

## Pacers' O'Neal named to All-Star reserves

Carmelo Anthony, the NBA's leading scorer, was not among the seven reserves announced Thursday night for the Western Conference team that will play in the NBA All-Star game.

Denver teammate Allen Iverson was chosen, extending his streak of consecutive All-Star appearances to eight. Anthony, who missed 15 games while suspended for his role in the brawl at Madison Square Garden, was the most obvious omission.

Indiana's Jermaine O'Neal and first-timers Dwight Howard of Orlando and Caron Butler of Washington made the East reserves.

Steve Nash, Amare Stoudemire and Shawn Marion were all chosen from the Phoenix Suns, but Dirk Nowitzki was the only player picked from the Dallas Mavericks, who have the league's best record.

Chauncey Billups and Richard Hamilton, who both made their first appearances last season, are going back, and Jason Kidd and Vince Carter will represent the Nets in the game at UNLV's Thomas & Mack Center.



O'NEAL

PONTIAC, Mich.

## Accused chair-thrower in Palace brawl jailed

The only person charged with a felony in one of the worst brawls in U.S. sports history was jailed after authorities say he missed several court appearances.

Bryant Jackson, 37, turned himself in at Oakland County Circuit Court on Wednesday after a bench warrant was issued for his arrest. He has skipped court appearances for a probation violation hearing. Jackson posted bond.

Despite throwing a metal chair as Indiana Pacers players fought with Detroit Pistons fans in November 2004 at The Palace of Auburn Hills, Jackson dodged a jail sentence because he had no record of assault, and the judge cited the mob mentality of the brawl.

In March 2005, Jackson pleaded no contest to one count of felony assault and one count of misdemeanor assault and battery. He was accused of dislodging a chair and heaving it over his head, hitting several people.

Jackson was sentenced to two years of probation and was ordered to pay more than \$6,000 in restitution. He is accused of violating that probation by not paying the restitution and failing to undergo anger management counseling.

By STEVE HERMAN

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## INDIANAPOLIS

All those Horizon League coaches who dissed Butler last fall must feel awfully foolish right about now.

The Bulldogs lost three starters from last year and, despite the return of sharpshooter A.J. Graves, they were picked a lowly sixth in a preseason vote by the rest of the league's coaches.

Butler's Todd Lickliter knew better — he picked them to win the conference — but he had the advantage of seeing his players in practice.

"More than anything for me, what I know is I really enjoy being around this group of guys," the sixth-year coach said. "The winning is definitely a byproduct of this team's unselfish approach, and that's so gratifying."

No. 13-ranked Butler beat Youngstown State 71-58 Wednesday night to go 21-2, its best record after the first 23 games of a season in school history. The Bulldogs, who play Wisconsin-Milwaukee on Saturday, also share the best record in Division I with Wisconsin, thanks to the No. 2 Badgers' 71-66 loss at Indiana.

What Lickliter apparently knew



AP PHOTO

Butler's Julian Betko, right, looks to pass around Illinois-Chicago's Jovan Ignjatovic during their game Monday in Indianapolis.

at the start, and what the Horizon's eight other coaches didn't, was how much a difference guard Mike Green would make.

The transfer from Towson has started every game this season, is second to Graves in scoring at 13.7 points and leads the team in assists (4.0) and rebounds (5.5) per game. His quickness and his ability to penetrate, then shoot or pass off it, make him almost impossible to guard effectively.

And his ability to draw fouls has sent him to the line 75 times more than Graves, who leads the nation

in free-throw percentage (97.0).

"I'm just doing my job. Anytime I do my job, we have a chance to win games big," Green said.

The Bulldogs' most recent loss was in overtime at Illinois-Chicago on Jan. 10, when Green hit only one of 13 shots and scored just four points. On Monday night, in a rematch at Butler, he had 16 points, eight rebounds and six assists as the Bulldogs avenged the loss 71-45 for their 20th straight win at home.

Wednesday night, Green had a season-high 23 points.

## FOOTBALL

SOUTH BEND

## Kansas linebacker, Ohio kicker commit to Irish

A high school linebacker from Kansas and a kicker from Ohio have announced they plan to sign letters of intent with Notre Dame next week to play for the Irish in the fall.

Brian Smith, who earlier announced he would go to Iowa, said he has changed his mind. The 6-foot-3, 230-pound linebacker at Saint Thomas Aquinas High in Overland Park, Kan., is the son of Chris Smith, who was a fullback at Notre Dame from 1981-84 and now a member of the school's Monogram Club board of directors.

Placekicker Brandon Walker of Findlay, Ohio, committed to Louisville in September but began reconsidering his decision after coach Bobby Petrino took the coaching job with the Atlanta Falcons.

Walker attempted just six field goals this year, hitting three of them. As a junior, Walker connected on 10 of 14. Mark Ritzler, Walker's coach at Findlay High School, estimated that 80 percent of Walker's kickoffs resulted in touchbacks. He averaged just less than 43 yards per punt as a senior. Signing day is Wednesday.

## PREP

MILWAUKEE

## Two Milwaukee schools punished after fight

Parents or guardians of players will be the only fans allowed to watch two high school teams play after a melee led to six injuries and 10 arrests.

Bradley Tech's boys team defeated Bay View High School 82-81 in an emotionally charged overtime upset Tuesday night. Tech students rushed their court in celebration, but it soon turned rowdy, with several fights breaking out on the gym's floor and one woman jumping on the back of a police officer.

Four police officers and a 15-year-old student were injured as was an 18-year-old student who apparently suffered a seizure and could not be reached by officers trying to assist her, police spokeswoman Anne E. Schwartz said.

Officers were forced Tuesday night to send out a rare citywide call for support, drawing dozens of squads to Bradley Tech. Even after police cleared the school, fans continued to yell at each other in the street.

None of the injuries was considered life threatening, but two officers suffered broken bones.

## Texas freshman romping through Big 12

By JIM VERTUNO

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## AUSTIN, Texas

The Big 12 will have to forgive Texas' Kevin Durant for turning the league into his personal playground. The kid just wants to have some fun here while he can.



DURANT

His latest? Try 37 points and 23 rebounds in a 76-64 win at Texas Tech on Wednesday night.

It was his most dominant performance in a season full of them and one that left Tech's Bob Knight, the winningest coach in college basketball history, befuddled as to how to stop him.

"He's mobile. He's quick. He's fast," Knight said after the freshman outscored his entire team

24-22 in the second half.

"There's no secret thing that he drinks before the game or that they rub on (him) before the game that makes him that good," Knight said. "The guy is a great athlete that can really play basketball."

Durant, who likely would have gone straight to the NBA out of high school if the pro league hadn't imposed an age limit, is having the kind of season Texas basketball fans have never seen before.

Durant has torn through the Big 12 with a flurry of 3-pointers, dunks and rebounds. He leads the league in scoring (33.3 points) and rebounding (14.4) and is making 83 percent of his free throws. He's been named Big 12 player of the week four times and has topped 30 points in five of his eight league games.

He won't say if he'll leave for the NBA after this season, but it's widely assumed he will. If he

keeps playing like this, it would be hard to argue for him to stay in college.

The No. 22 Longhorns (16-5, 6-1 Big 12) will simply enjoy the ride. The rest of the Big 12 can hope he has a short stay in Austin.

"Send him to the league," Missouri coach Mike Anderson said after Durant scored 34 points against the Tigers. "He needs to go to the league, man."

Yet nothing compared to his domination of the Red Raiders.

Texas Tech beat top 10 teams Kansas and Texas A&M on its home court but had no way of slowing down the 6-foot-9, 215-pound forward.

Durant scored 18 points in the final 11 minutes. In one stretch, he hit a bank shot, a 3-pointer and finished a three-point play. He was 15 of 29 from the field and now has 13 double-doubles, tying him for the most in Big 12 history.

He did all of it after a bad

"It's hard to play against them because you have to choose your poison," Youngstown's Quin Humphrey said. "You cut out the 3-point line and you've got Mike Green that's going to penetrate. We tried to stop him, and then there are shooters that are going to knock it down."

On Monday, UIC tried to use a zone defense "but they just riddled it," said assistant coach Mark Coomes, who was one of the early doubters who never saw the Bulldogs' success coming.

"I don't think anybody did," he said. "Nobody knew how good Green was going to be. Everybody knew how good Graves was going to be, but Green has been a phenomenal addition to their basketball team."

"When you look at their program, they have freshmen and sophomores a lot of times you don't know who they are until they're juniors and seniors. That's the mark of a good mid-major program."

Butler started the season with a 40-point rout at Tulane, then started to be noticed when it won the NIT Season Tip-Off with victories against Notre Dame, Indiana, Tennessee and Gonzaga. Besides the upset by UIC, the only other loss was at Indiana State in December.

## GOLF

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates

## In Dubai desert, Woods has frustrating day

The clicking cameras didn't help, nor did the poor putting. All of which left Tiger Woods as frustrated as any weekend hacker.

For someone who has been playing nothing but sterling golf of late, Woods tossed his club after a botched putt Thursday during the opening round of the Dubai Desert Classic.

"Last week I putted great, and today I didn't putt so good," Woods, the defending champion, said after his 4-under-par 68.

He was three strokes behind leaders Ross Fisher and Graeme McDowell. Ernie Els was another stroke back at 66 in a tie for third with Jose Manuel Lara and Jyoti Randhawa.

Woods' problems started on the second hole, where he drove into a row of trees before settling for a bogey. He reclaimed the lost stroke on the par-5 third hole, but he soon encountered another problem on the eighth.

While he was swinging, a group of photographers were snapping pictures, causing Woods to send the ball into the long grass on the edge of the fairway.

SYDNEY, Australia

## Webb tied for second in Australian Open

Sarah Kemp shot a 6-under 66 Thursday to take a one-stroke lead over fellow Australians Karrie Webb and Nikki Campbell at the Women's Australian Open.

Coming off a resurgent 2006 in which won five tournaments on the LPGA Tour, including her second Kraft Nabisco Championship, Webb eagled the par-5 16th, her second eagle of the day, to pull within a stroke of Kemp.

But Webb missed an 11-foot birdie putt on 18 that would have put her into a tie for the lead. She is attempting to win her third Australian Open title.

Making her first start of the year, Webb said she was nervous. "I just all of a sudden realized that it was the first tournament round of the year," she said, "and I was thinking, 'I don't know if I'm ready for this.'"

But she curled in an improbable 70-foot eagle putt at the second.

Before the putt, Webb said she turned to her caddie Mike Paterson and said, "You have to give me 50 bucks if I get this within 5 feet."

## McRoberts' emergence propels Duke

By GREG WALLACE

SCRIPPS HOWARD NEWS SERVICE

Last year, Josh McRoberts blended in.

Duke's freshman forward didn't need to do much more, not with All-Americans and NBA lottery picks Shelden Williams and J.J. Redick around.

Now, Redick and Williams are gone. And McRoberts, who attended high school in Carmel, is showing what he can do.

He has emerged as the No. 8 Blue Devils' best player, a 6-foot-10 forward who can score, rebound and pass with the best in college basketball.

Heading into Thursday night's game at Virginia, McRoberts was averaging 13 points, eight rebounds and nearly four assists per game, well up from last season's numbers of 8.7 points and 5.3 rebounds per game.

This week, he was named a midseason Wooden Award All-American and one of 30 finalists for the Wooden Award, given to the best player in college basketball.

Count Boston College coach Al Skinner, who watched McRoberts power Duke past his Eagles 75-61 Sunday, among those who isn't surprised.

"If you saw him in high school, you knew what kind of player he was," Skinner said.

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