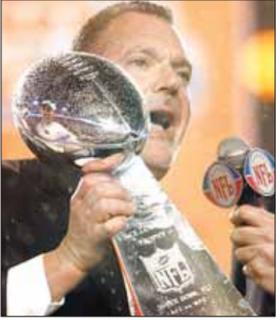


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SPORTS

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SECTION **B**



AP PHOTO
Colts owner Jim Irsay holds the Lombardi Trophy after Indianapolis won Super Bowl XLI on Feb. 4.

Trophy going on tour

Colts want fans to be part of win

By JASON MARTIN
DAILY JOURNAL SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

INDIANAPOLIS

Indianapolis Colts coach Tony Dungy thought he had a pretty good idea about the significance of winning the Lombardi Trophy when he had the symbol of victory at home for four days this month.

Dungy's youngest son, Jordan, 6, fell asleep clutching the trophy. The scene made for a priceless photo opportunity and a touching moment of satisfaction for Dungy and his wife, Lauren.

Then, when Dungy took the film to be processed, he found out just how much winning the Super Bowl meant to Colts fans.

The man who handled Dungy's order admitted he was breaking protocol but asked if he could have a personal copy of the picture of Jordan sleeping with the sterling silver trophy.

Dungy, of course, obliged. "I took it for granted and didn't realize how special the trophy is," Dungy said. "But thinking back after the game, and our guys were yelling to pass it around just so they could get a chance to touch it. ... It was a really unbelievably emotional time for us ... and we wanted to be able to share that with the fans."

In response to the demand of fans who want to feel like they were a part of the Super Bowl win, Colts owner Jim Irsay is putting the Lombardi Trophy on tour.

(SEE TROPHY, PAGE B3)

TRAVELING TROPHY

The Indianapolis Colts are taking the Lombardi Trophy on tour. Fans can receive posters, have photographs taken and even touch the top of the trophy.

Here are some of the locations in the Johnson County area where the trophy will be on display:

Today — Southport, Meijer at 5325 E. Southport Road, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Avon, HH Gregg, 10101 E. U.S. 26, 5 to 7 p.m.

March 4 — Bloomington, HH Gregg, 606 Gourley Pike, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Martinsville High School gymnasium, 5 to 7 p.m.

March 6 — Seymour, Tanger Outlet Mall, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Columbus, FairOaks Mall, 5 to 7 p.m.

March 7 — Shelbyville High School gymnasium, 5 to 7 p.m.

Complete schedule: colts.com/trophy

Tackle hoping to live up to expectations

By MICHAEL MAROT
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS

Top offensive linemen are supposed to be money in the NFL draft.

Leave it to the son of a banker, Joe Thomas, to deliver more than mere interest this year.

Projected as the No. 1 tackle in this year's draft class, Thomas wants to re-establish the old image of highly drafted linemen laying the foundation for an offense for a decade or more.

"I think over the past 10 years if you look at offensive linemen, that's pretty true," said Thomas, projected as the No. 1 tackle in this year's draft class. "A lot of guys who have been drafted high on the offensive line have started

(SEE TACKLE, PAGE B3)

PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL: TROJANS IN SEMISTATE

Saturday's game

Class 4A

IHSAA Southern Semistate championship
At Southport High School

Center Grove Trojans (19-6) vs. Columbus East Olympians (23-2)
About 3:15 p.m. Saturday



Underdogs again



Center Grove senior Hillary Bowling, left, drives past Ben Davis' Dorothy Craig during Saturday's Class 4A regional at Southport High School. STAFF PHOTO BY JOE SABA

Center Grove gets motivation from doubters

By MATTHEW GLENESK
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Two words on the tip of the tongues of every Center Grove girls basketball player this week: "underdogs" and "revenge."

And so far, the message has served them well.

The Trojans' improbable run to Saturday's Class 4A semistate final against No. 9-ranked Columbus East (23-2) has been highlighted by victories against ranked opponents and second chances to beat teams that had defeated Center Grove (19-6) earlier in the year.

Saturday's game against the Olympians will provide yet another opportunity for the Trojans to avenge an earlier loss and surprise a few people in the process.

"We're the team of revenge," senior



Center Grove girls basketball coach Joe Lentz goes over some points of emphasis with his team during practice Wednesday. STAFF PHOTO BY MATTHEW GLENESK/mglenesk@thejournalnet.com

Alex Dewitz said. "If a team beat us before, we're going to beat them the second time around. That's just how we are. We love the underdog label."

That label will once again belong to the Trojans on Saturday. Columbus East

is riding an 18-game winning streak, which includes a Dec. 28 victory against Center Grove.

The Olympians didn't just beat Center Grove. They embarrassed them, Trojans coach Joe Lentz said.

Columbus East won by 20 points to claim the Center Grove Holiday Tournament championship.

Lentz said his squad is a different team now than it was at the end of December. And the Trojans won't shoot 22 percent from the field like they did in their previous meeting, Lentz promised.

"We're going to do better than that," he said. "I can guarantee you."

Center Grove's appearance as one of just four teams remaining in Class 4A is a bit of a surprise, even to some of the Trojans players.

(SEE DOUBTERS, PAGE B4)

GAME AT A GLANCE

A look at Saturday's IHSAA girls basketball Southern Semistate:

About Center Grove

Coach: Joe Lentz, in his 13th season at Center Grove

Conference: Metropolitan Interscholastic Conference

Home record: 10-3

Road: 7-2

Neutral: 2-1

Conference: 3-4

Streak: Six wins

Sagarin rankings: Ninth overall, second in strength of schedule.

Of note: Center Grove fell to visiting Columbus East 59-39 in the Trojans' holiday tournament Dec. 28. Center Grove and Columbus East have faced three common opponents (Bloomington

South, Madison and Rushville), with each beating all three teams. The Trojans are averaging 53.5 points a game and surrendering 45.1. Center Grove is making its second semistate appearance. In 1996, the Trojans won the semistate on the way to the single-class state championship. Center Grove is 3-5 against teams in the top 25 of the Sagarin ratings this season. Sagarin's game predictor index gives Center Grove a slight edge in Saturday's game.

About Columbus East

Coach: Danny Brown, in his fourth season at Columbus East

Conference: Hoosier Hills

Home record: 9-0

Road: 9-2

Neutral: 5-0

Conference: 5-1

Season takes a turn

Grizzlies used loss to regroup, win HCAC title

By RICK MORWICK
DAILY JOURNAL SPORTS EDITOR
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Luke Tudor remembers the low feeling after a particularly bitter loss early in the conference season.

In the waning seconds of a Jan. 17 setback at Defiance, Franklin College men's basketball coach Kerry Prather turned to Tudor, the Grizzlies' lone senior, and voiced his disappointment in a team effort he described as perhaps the worst he'd seen in two-plus decades at the school.

The words stung. They also stuck.

Franklin hasn't been the same team since.

Tudor and his teammates made sure of it.

"That really stuck with me over the (next) couple of days," Tudor recalled of that crestfallen moment on the Grizzlies' bench. "I shared that with some of the guys. That had a pretty big impact on me. We were bound and determined to change things."

They did. Since that fateful night at Defiance, where they lost 66-49, the Grizzlies have won eight of their past nine games and are the No. 1 seed heading into tonight's first round of the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference Tournament.

Franklin (16-9, 11-5 HCAC) earned the top seed and home-court advantage by winning the regular-season conference championship Saturday in the closest race in league history.

(SEE TURN, PAGE B4)

IF YOU GO

What: Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference men's basketball tournament

When: Today and Saturday

Where: Franklin College's Spurlock Center

Pairings

Semifinals

Today

6 p.m. — No. 2 seed Transylvania vs. No. 3 Bluffton

8 p.m. — No. 1 Franklin vs. No. 4 Defiance

Final

Saturday

7:30 p.m. — Semifinal winners

At stake: A berth in the NCAA Division III Tournament

Admission: Per session, \$5 for adults; \$3 for senior citizens and middle school and high school students; free for students from participating schools with college identification

PREP WRESTLING: IHSAA TEAM STATE FINALS

HAPPY TO BE HOSTS

Center Grove enjoys putting on team finals; IHSAA saves money by using school's gym

By MATTHEW GLENESK
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For the 11th straight year, Center Grove High School will be the site of the IHSAA team wrestling state championship meet Saturday.

Center Grove has been the host for all but one of the team state finals since the team and individual finals were separated in 1996.

Because the draw for the team finals is significantly less than that for the individual meet, renting out larger venues such as Conesco Fieldhouse or Hinkle Fieldhouse wouldn't be financially prudent for the IHSAA.

The IHSAA was looking for a high school, preferably close to Indianapolis, that could fit four wrestling mats on its gym floor and was willing to host the event.

In the first year of the team finals,

Southport High School served as the site but preferred to not keep hosting the event.

With the completion of its new gym, Center Grove stepped up and assumed the host responsibilities for a year on a trial period.

It ran so smoothly that Center Grove officials were asked to continue as host.

Center Grove athletic director Jon Zwitt said he's happy to do his part and noted that, for the IHSAA to continue to function, it needs schools like Center Grove to step up and host tournaments.

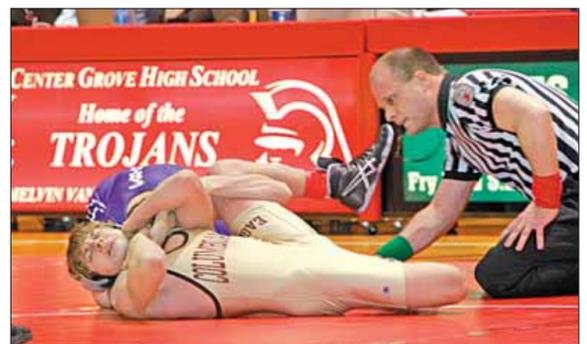
Running state tournaments for non-revenue sports like golf, track and tennis cut into the IHSAA's annual budget, and any chance for the state's governing body to save money is appreciated, IHSAA commissioner Blake Ress said.

(SEE HOSTS, PAGE B4)

What: IHSAA team wrestling state finals **Where:** Center Grove High School, 2717 S. Morgantown Road in Greenwood

When: Quarterfinals begin at 10 a.m. Saturday, with semifinals and finals to follow **Admission:** \$8

Who: Avon, Bellmont, Cathedral, Elkhart Memorial, Evansville Mater Dei, Merrillville, Mishawaka and Perry Meridian are the participating schools



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL MCADOW

An official keeps an eye on a match during last year's IHSAA team wrestling state finals at Center Grove High School. This year's event will mark the 11th straight year Center Grove has hosted the tournament.