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# SPORTS

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## SECTION B

### PREP BASKETBALL

# He's right on target

## Time in gym gives Braves' Brunson deft shooting touch

By MATTHEW GLENESK  
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When Brett Brunson shoots the basketball, his teammates expect him to make it.

And more often than not, the Indian Creek sophomore comes through.

In his first full season as a varsity player, Brunson's deft shooting touch has helped the Braves win four of their past five games and earn a berth in tonight's Johnson County Tournament semifinals. The Braves will face Franklin at 6 p.m. at Edinburg Community High School.

"He's a very good shooter; that's been obvious for a couple of years," Indian Creek coach Rex Wilson said. "He's a gym rat. He loves to play, and it tells. He loves to be in the gym, and most gym rats are good shooters." Brunson spends at least two hours each day honing his shooting touch.

During the summer, when many of his teammates are busy with their football duties, Brunson is perfecting his craft.

Brunson's shooting stroke is so pure that missed shots come as a surprise to teammates.

"When he spots up and he's open, if he misses it, it's weird," senior Kyle Ray said. "If he gets his feet set, it's most likely going in."

Through nine games, Brunson is shooting 58 percent from the field, including 14 of 26 on 3-point attempts.

But even the best shooters have a lapse or two.

During a Dec. 5 game against Brown County, Brunson air-balled a 3-pointer. It was his first air ball of the season.

"That kind of got me a little rattled. My

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### TOURNEY TIME

Tonight's semifinals matchups in the Johnson County Boys Basketball Tournament at Edinburg:

6 p.m.

Franklin (2-6) vs. Indian Creek (5-4)

7:30 p.m.

Center Grove (7-1) vs. Whiteland (4-4)



Indian Creek sophomore Brett Brunson goes in for a shot as Edinburg junior Matt Smith tries to defend him during a first-round game in the Johnson County Boys Basketball Tournament in Edinburg on Tuesday.

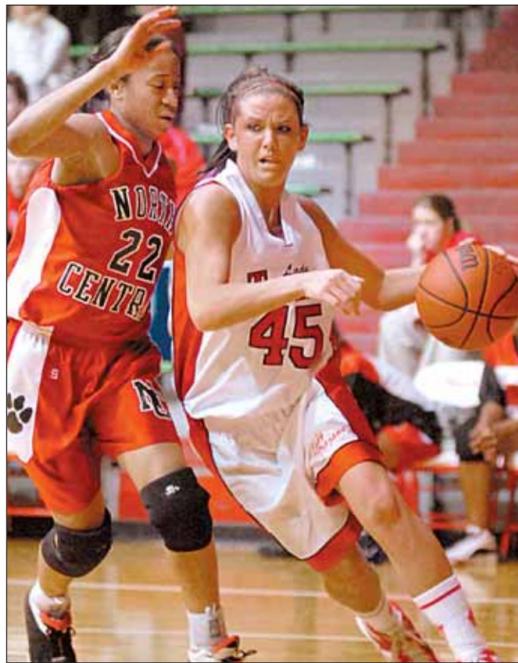
STAFF PHOTO BY SCOTT ROBERSON/sroberson@thejournalnet.com

### THE BRUNSON FILE

**Name:** Brett Brunson  
**High school:** Indian Creek  
**Family:** Mother, Susan Wilkerson; stepfather, Brian Wilkerson; sister,

Taylor Wilkerson, 13  
**Favorite team:** Indiana Pacers  
**Favorite player:** Washington Wizards guard Gilbert Arenas

**Favorite movie:** "Hoosiers"  
**Favorite TV show:** "Seinfeld"  
**Favorite restaurant:** Steak 'n Shake



Center Grove senior Hillary Bowling, right, drives to the basket as North Central senior Jackie Gill guards her during Thursday's game.

STAFF PHOTO BY JOE SABA

# Seniors step up in Trojans' MIC win

By JEFF SKIRVIN  
DAILY JOURNAL SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

Center Grove girls basketball coach Joe Lentz learned something about his Thursday night.

Lentz watched his team stave off a late surge, and the Trojans hit clutch shots during the fourth quarter of their 57-49 victory against Metropolitan Conference foe North Central (9-5).

The Trojans (11-3 overall, 2-1 in the MIC), who led by as many as 15 points, had to fend off the Panthers as junior guard Briana Bass scored 22 of her season-high 26 points in the second half.

Bass' 3-pointer with 2:33 left and Kyla Buckley's free throw pulled North Central within six points at 50-44.

But Center Grove seniors Lydia Feldman, Hillary Bowling and Heidi Reisinger combined to go 6 of 7 from the

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Indian Creek hosts Speedway, and Crothersville visits Edinburg in girls basketball games. Page B2

free-throw line in the game's final 1:30. That's the kind of senior leadership Lentz says is the mark of a veteran team.

"We made some key buckets and knocked down our free throws," he said. "We made plays when we needed to, and that's the sign of a team that can win games."

Lentz said the composure the Trojans displayed means they are ready to hit the stretch run of their schedule. Four of Center Grove's six remaining games are against conference opponents, including three of Class 4A's top 15 teams.

The Trojans host No. 7 Ben Davis

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### NFL: DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS

**SATURDAY'S GAME**  
Indianapolis Colts (13-4)  
at Baltimore Ravens (13-3)

Time: 4:30 p.m. TV: WISH-Channel 8 Radio: WFBQ-94.7 FM

# Pressure always on Peyton

## Colts' QB wants team to share credit, blame

By RICK MORWICK  
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### INDIANAPOLIS

Peyton Manning expects the inevitable scrutiny at the end of each game and the conclusion of every season. But he disputes the logic that fuels it.

When the Indianapolis Colts win, Manning gets the lion's share of credit. When they meltdown in the playoffs, he gets the bulk of the blame.

Manning doesn't understand what drives the peculiar dynamic. But he's come to grips with it as an unwelcome, and often unfair, byproduct of superstardom.

"I've never really tried to understand it or justify it by any means," said Manning, who leads the Colts into Saturday's AFC divisional playoff game at Baltimore. "I've always looked at it like, when we've won a game ... the Colts won. When we lose, the Colts lose."

"Usually, the times we've lost in the past in the playoffs, the cut and dry of it is, I don't think our team was good enough."

Perhaps. But the postseason fallout always blows Manning's direction.

Right or wrong, it's easy to understand why. An eight-time Pro Bowler, a two-time MVP and



Colts quarterback Peyton Manning throws a pass during Saturday's AFC wild-card game against the Kansas City Chiefs.

AP PHOTO

(SEE PEYTON, PAGE B3)

# Clark plays important role in Indy's offense

By CLIFF BRUNT  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**INDIANAPOLIS**  
Dallas Clark describes himself as just another cog in the Indianapolis Colts' offense, no more important than anyone else.

Statistics say otherwise. With the versatile tight end in the lineup, the Colts are 12-1 and average 28 points per game.

Without him, they are 1-3 and score 23 points a contest.

Clark bounced back from a knee injury to lead the Colts with nine catches for 103 yards in last week's playoff win against Kansas City. He says he's ready for the Colts' next test Saturday at Baltimore.

"I feel great," he said. "I feel even better this week. It's the playoffs. You just naturally get that feeling that you can do this for as many weeks as you want."

Clark sprained the anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee on Nov. 26 against Philadelphia and missed four games. He returned against Miami in the regular-season finale to make four catches for 56 yards before his breakout performance in the playoff opener.

(SEE CLARK, PAGE B3)

# Bonds denies report of blaming teammate

By JANIE MCCAULEY  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

### SAN FRANCISCO

Barry Bonds said he did not get amphetamines from San Francisco teammate Mark Sweeney. But the Giants slugger did not deny a report Thursday saying he tested positive for the drugs last season.

According to a story in the New York Daily News, the San Francisco slugger failed an amphetamines test in 2006.

The newspaper reported that when first informed of the positive result, Bonds attributed it to a substance he had taken from Sweeney's locker.

"He is both my teammate and my friend," Bonds said in a statement. "He did not give me anything whatsoever and has nothing to do with this matter, contrary to recent reports."

"I want to express my deepest apologies especially

(SEE BONDS, PAGE B2)



BONDS



Franklin College women's basketball coach Kim Eiler encourages her team during the Grizzlies' practice Tuesday. Franklin is 9-5 this season.

STAFF PHOTO BY SCOTT ROBERSON/sroberson@thejournalnet.com

# Grizzlies building on success

## Coach helps make transition easy for players

By MATTHEW GLENESK  
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When Kim Eiler took the Franklin College women's basketball head coaching job, her first order of business wasn't to find out which player could shoot or which player could defend.

For her, it was important to learn their names, where they were from and what they were about before the first basketball was dribbled.

"It was really important to me to build that relationship," she said. "I wanted to learn about them and just let them know that I cared about them whether they scored 20 points or not."

"I think that's why you coach,

the relationship you have with the players."

After finding out who was majoring in what, basketball became the new focus, and Eiler inherited a winner.

Outgoing coach Mike Jewett won 62 games in his three seasons with the Grizzlies and led the team to the 2004 Division III tournament in his final season.

It was Eiler's job to maintain the program's success, something she's done in her first two seasons.

But she also had to quell any concerns remaining players might have had about playing for a new coach.

Senior Brittany Beehler remembers meeting her new coach for the first time.

(SEE GRIZZLIES, PAGE B3)

### THE EILER FILE

**Name:** Kim Eiler  
**Age:** 38  
**Birthplace:** South Bend  
**Family:** Husband, Jack  
**Hobby:** Running  
**Education:** Undergraduate degree from Biola University in Los Angeles; master's degree from Manchester College; and doctorate in health and human performance from Auburn University  
**Coaching career:** Served as head coach at Goshen College for six seasons and was an assistant coach at the University of Indianapolis and Manchester College for three years at each school