

BOXSCORE

A Publication of the Indiana High School Basketball Historical Society

IHSBHS was founded in 1994 by A. J. Qulgley Jr. (1943-1997) and Harley Sheets for the purpose of documenting and preserving the history of Indiana High School Basketball

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2012 Fall Issue

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Important Notices

It has been decided that the yearly dues, which are due by Jan. 1, 2013, will be increased from \$7 to \$8 because of the increase in postage and printing costs. However, those members receiving Boxscore electronically will stay at \$7. Anyone who would like to avoid the increase and is not electronically established may contact Rocky Kenworthy, who will add you to his email list. His email and address are in the publication box on this page.

The IHSBHS roster which has always appeared in the Fall newsletter will be in the Winter Issue this year.

PREZ SEZ

The Naismith Hall of Fame initiated a new class this September. There are now 152 players, 85 coaches, 60 contributors, 14 referees, and nine teams enshrined at Springfield, Mass. People with Indiana high school connections make up 14 of these. Six of the 152 college and/or pro players were Hoosier high school grads: Larry Bird [Springs

Valley], Clyde Lovellette [Terre Haute Garfield], Branch McCracken [Monrovia], Oscar Robertson [Crispus Attucks], Robert "Fuzzy" Vandivier [Franklin], and John Wooden [Martinsville]. Five of the 85 coaches were Hoosiers: Everett Case [Anderson], Everett Dean [Salem], Piggy Lambert [Crawfordsville], Arad McCutchan [Evansville], and Wooden. Among the 60 contributors are four Hoosiers: Tony Hinkle [Calumet H.S., Chicago], Chuck Taylor [Columbus], Arthur Trestler [Plainfield Academy] and Cliff Wells [Bloomington]. Readers, have we overlooked anyone?

TIDBITS

We all remember the 1935 Jeffersonville fiasco which forced "Hunk" Francis out of town (see Fall 1998 Issue of Boxscore). It has never been substantiated that Mr. Francis was involved in any wrong doing. The assumption was that he became involved with gamblers and was possibly drugged. Recently I was told something off the record that lends credence to the mystery. Frank Barnes, who coached Shelbyville to the 1947 state championship, succeeded Francis at Jeffersonville (1936-40). Mr. Barnes was asked why he left the River City for

Shelbyville. He said it was due to a problem with gamblers.

In the Indy Star of July 26, it was nice to have Bob Kravits recognizing the outstanding Olympic achievements of Ray Ewry, a phenomenal Hoosier athlete who has never been given the accolades he most certainly deserves. See my Ray Ewry (The Human Frog) story in the 2002 Summer Issue of Boxscore.

One of the great small high school basketball stories took place in 1959. Little Odon of Daviess County was kept from the Final Four by the big, bad New Albany Bulldogs in overtime by two points. The star of that team was Larry Graham, who was recently inducted into the Hall of Fame, scored 1,300+ points and grabbed around 1,000 rebounds. Larry was also the keynote speaker at the IHSBHS's Paris, Ill., meeting in 2003. His coaching resume shows him winning two Illinois state titles at Marion, Ill. Congratulations to Larry on his well-deserved honor.

1934 FINAL SIXTEEN

The Richmond Red Devils

By Cliff Johnson

In the early 1930s, our favorite indoor sport wasn't played the way it is today. Its evolution into the present-day game

has been a slow, drawn-out, Darwin-like process, all the way back from its earliest form. The game's markings, plumage, and anatomical shape changed over the decades to suit certain notions and preferences promoted by a long line of developers and organizers. It took many decades for the game to get where it is now, but there are those (including myself) who maintain that many of the more recent rule changes seem retrograde in nature. Nevertheless, there were some necessary and logical modifications that were established by the middle of the 20th century. Most of those modifications were needed to keep the sport thriving and entertaining for everyone. Furthermore, basketball has always been expected to keep pace with the steady advancements in architecture, communication, and technology that every new generation offers to society. The following story relates to a team that made it to the final 16 while playing under one of the older versions of the game. Although our ball games were different back then, they didn't necessarily lack excitement as the game presented toward the end of this story should demonstrate.

In 1934, basketball teams like Richmond played the game under such archaic regulations as the following:

1. There was a new center jump following every score.
2. Stalling for prolonged periods was allowed.
3. Camping under a goal was permitted (no three-second calls or goaltending).
4. The basketball was laced together, made of soft leather, had deep seams, and was larger and heavier than it is today.
5. The court dimensions didn't matter.
6. The iron hoops might rattle and vibrate when the ball hit them.

7. Coaches were prohibited from communicating with their teams during quarter breaks or time-outs.
8. All held balls were tossed up for possession at the spot where they were called, and between the players contesting possession of the ball, regardless of their height differential.
9. Both hands were often needed to loft the larger, heavier ball.
10. The score was usually displayed on mechanical scoreboards that used preprinted numbers.
11. Substituting had strictly controlled limitations.
12. Players at the guard positions rarely shot the ball.

Of course, we don't even bother to list other major changes now in effect, like the three-point goal, the foul limit for free throws, the one-and-one free throws, or the shot clock. Since the game was so different, we'll avoid describing the detailed game played in this article, for the most part.

Richmond High's official school name in 1934 was Morton. Sports writers routinely referred to that name in their basketball columns, along with the originally bestowed, but religiously heretical nickname of "Red Devils." Oliver P. Morton, a 19th-century Indiana governor who, ironically, had never completed his high school education, was nevertheless the inspiration for the renaming of the school to "Morton High" in 1922. Furthermore, Morton himself had studied at a Presbyterian seminary as a youth, and had thus been imbued with a religious educational background. Although the original concept behind "Red Devils" is murky, it makes a person wonder if perhaps the student body which originally conjured that nickname had played a subtle prank on the school's religious educators. I guess we'll never know for sure. Anyway, by 1939, the name Morton had been removed from the school's official

name, so that today the whole matter is moot. Morton's name, though, lives on at two other Indiana high schools, Hammond Morton and Morton Memorial (recently closed).

The Red Devils' coach for 1933-34 was Elder Eberhart, beginning his second season with the team. In his first year at Richmond, he had wound up with a 14-14 record, and lost four of his five starters to graduation. Despite that, entering the fall of 1933, Eberhart was anticipating a stellar basketball season. A height advantage over opponents was one of his compelling reasons. If he wished, he could start two 6-foot-2 forwards, a center at 6-4, and two guards at 6-3. A lineup that tall in the early '30s could monopolize the tipoff requirement necessary after each counted field goal or free throw, and also capture a lion's share of the rebounds from missed shots. The lone returning starter, Tom Lamar, operating at the center post, could provide the needed experience, ability, and guidance to make the team jell.

The season began at 8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 24, against the Bulldogs of neighboring Lynn. Lynn had played four games in November, winning two of the four. A record paid attendance came to the Richmond Coliseum to see if the Devils were really as good as the preseason hype had indicated. The outcome of this initial game was never in doubt after the first-quarter jitters had ended, and the Red Devils eventually won going away, 37-18. It looked indeed like a good season was under way for the locals. Their second scheduled game, against yet another set of Bulldogs, this one from Centerville High, confirmed the majority perception, as the Red Devils used a smothering defense to stymie this county school by a score of 29-13. Bulldogs, as a breed, seemed to be a favorite prey for the Devils, at least early on.

The next test in store was a nearby North Central Conference member, New Castle. The Trojans, as usual, were

touted as one of the powers of the conference and a valid contender for the state championship. By this time, Eberhart had pretty well determined what combination of his players worked best against the competition. It was not at all the tallest combination that he could field, since some degree of ballhandling skill seemed imperative. This was especially true for advancing the ball down to the offensive end of the court. Eberhart settled for 5-8 Paul Vance at one guard and 5-9 Vernon Bell at the other. Glen Bull, at 6-3, usually alternated with those two, since size remained important. Besides that, Bull was a scorer. The 6-4 LaMar, of course, remained at center, but 5-10 James Lyboul was injected at one forward, while 6-2 John Eggemeyer remained at the other corner spot. Carl Henderson, at 6-feet, was an ample alternate at forward. This particular Lyboul, James, was an older brother of Sammy Lyboul, who starred at Purdue later on. He was proving to be an effective scorer and a team sparkplug, his style similar to that of Johnny Wooden at Martinsville six years earlier. Wooden, as we all know, thrice was voted a Purdue All-American. James proved a provident selection by Eberhart, since he quickly developed into the best all-around player on this Richmond team. Several of the taller players were relegated to reserve status, but remained effective in their relief roles throughout the season.

The Red Devils did not disappoint against New Castle, winning their third game in a row while keeping the score down with smothering defense. The final score was 29-23. This victory vaulted Eberhart's team into a momentary tie for first place in arguably the toughest high school league in Indiana, the NCC.

The Red Devils were to win four straight games at the beginning of the season before yielding 22-17 to Indianapolis Arsenal Tech, a team with 6-4 star and future All-American center

John Townsend. For the remainder of the regular schedule, results were slightly disappointing, and the team went into the sectional tournament with a marginal 12-10 record. It had registered a 4-5 tally against the always-rugged NCC competition. Logansport's Berries overpowered nearly every team in the conference that season with a 10-1 record. Tech came in second.

Nevertheless, the sectional games were a relative breeze for the Red Devils, and four straight wins landed them the Wayne County sectional crown. The two regional games were also won handily, the Devils prevailing once again over New Castle 18-12 in the final. Coach Eberhart used no substitutions whatever during the game. It was the third straight win against the Trojans for the season, but the one that mattered the most, because now Richmond was entering the final 16 for the first time in 10 years. Its W-L record had by now improved to 18-10.

The afternoon game of the Sweet 16 for the Red Devils found them matched against one of the state's premier small-school powerhouses from the previous two seasons, little Beaver Dam from Kosciusko County (a separate Boxscore article is planned about that team). The Beavers went into the Richmond game with plenty of confidence, but watched in anguish as their touted zone defense fell apart from a barrage of close-in goals and tap-ins by the much-taller Red Devils. The Devils emerged victorious without raising much of a sweat, 40-12. Even Richmond's second five looked good while widening the margin during the fourth quarter. By now, Lyboul, Eggemeyer, and Lamar were playing their best ball of the season. Vance and Bull were lending able playmaking and scoring support from their guard posts, while the reserves had proved that the team had ample bench depth. Things had finally jelled for this team. Expectations became high for a state championship. Only one more game to

go before breaking into the Final Four! The next opponent, however, was to be Tom Rea's scrappy and talented Jasper Wildcats, sporting a 28-1 record coming into the game. Jasper's only blemish had been a two-point upset at home by Evansville Reitz during a New Year's holiday tournament.

Richmond and Jasper were probably at peak performance coming into this contest. It would be no surprise whichever team won, and it might even determine the 1934 state championship. Richmond came out fast against the Wildcats, scoring three consecutive goals from Lamar, and also controlled the subsequent tipoffs before Jasper took a time-out to reconfigure its defense and scoring strategy. Coach Rea substituted Bill Carnes, a tall and husky six-footer, to try and intercept some of Lamar's center taps. It seemed to work, and Richmond just maintained a nominal lead throughout the first half as Jasper matched the Red Devils goal-for-goal. The half ended 16-12, Richmond. Cyril Birge, center for Jasper and later a highly regarded IHSAA referee, was keeping Jasper in the game with some accurate shooting and slick passing from the pivot. The second half began much the same way the first half had gone, and Richmond maintained its lead by four points. The third period ended 19-15. As the fourth quarter began, John Steffin and Eddie Rottet got the Wildcats off and running to put their team in the lead for the first time, 21-20. Birge, Steffin, and small but speedy Arthur (Marty) Gosman were then able to widen that margin to 26-21 with three-and-a-half minutes to play. The Red Devils refused to fold, however, and scratched their way back to 26-24 when 6-3 substitute Byrl Logan sank a goal and Eggemeyer managed one of two free tosses on a foul against Rottet. Richmond's hopes were diminished, though, when Steffin scored a goal and Birge dropped a free throw. That made it 29-24 with about a minute remaining.

But Logan quickly scored again for the Red Devils to bring them within three points, 29-26. The final few seconds of the game suddenly became a wild ride when Jasper's Rottet was whistled out of the game for a technical foul while vigorously protesting a charging call against him. Consequently, Eggemeyer received two free throws from the personal foul and the technical. But he made just one of them. After the free-throw attempts, Jasper quickly gained control of the ball while the clock ran out. It ended at 29-27, with Jasper hanging onto the ball for dear life. This was arguably the most exciting game of the tournament. Two outstanding, closely matched teams had been pitted against one another in a run for the state championship.

As it worked out, Jasper in turn was edged out by favored Logansport in the first afternoon game of the finals, 31-28. The two previously mentioned NCC powerhouses and the ones that had given Richmond so much trouble during the season, Logansport and Indianapolis Arsenal Tech, then played for the state title. Cliff Wells' Logan Berries prevailed 26-19 and were awarded the championship trophy. It was unarguably a banner year for the NCC.

As an epilogue, better things were yet to come for the Red Devils in the next season, 1934-35, when coach Eberhart once again overcame the loss of all his starters except one (Lybault) to advance to the Final Four of the state tournament for that season. Many Hoosier basketball historians are probably aware of Richmond's 1934-35 run to the finals, but, analogous to recalling the 1953 Milan finalists, they might be oblivious to this "companion" run for the championship the preceding season. You now know that story.

CLASS BASKETBALL IN INDIANA: STILL CONTROVERSIAL

By Cliff Johnson

This is strictly an opinion piece, and it's a given that some (perhaps many) will disagree with my assessment of the multi-class/single-class issue that has bugged so many souls on both sides of the controversy for the past 15 years. Also, by the time this article finds its way into print, the matter of class sports in Indiana, including basketball, might once again be "officially settled." But I'm a trifle skeptical. It's been such a raging issue over the past 15 years that it's uncertain whether a repeat trip down the same old pathway to resolution will end it. The thoughts I'd like to express here are ones I've embraced privately for some time now.

The continuing policy of the IHSAA to call upon our chief administrators of the high schools, i.e., the principals, to help bring closure to this matter by casting their votes didn't work in 1996 to the majority acceptance of Indiana's general public, so why should it suddenly become acceptable in 2012?

While it's easy to understand why the folks at the IHSAA feel duty-bound to rely on the collective judgment of school principals to resolve the issue, the question of "appropriateness" can readily be raised. It's been raised repeatedly over the many decades in Indiana whenever the phenomenon of Hoosier Hysteria was the topic. As one of many examples that could be cited, in 1943, the Honorable William Kinder of Tipton, taking the floor of the Indiana Senate to speak on allegations of the IHSAA abusing its authority by establishing policies not in the best interests of high-school athletics, stated in part:

"...the people who build gymnasiums and support athletics must have (their) way and they must be shown the proper respect. It seems to me that the IHSAA

is too much of a principals' organization..."

Kinder went on to further rebuke the IHSAA, hinting at future events that would ultimately lead to multi-class basketball and eventually to the widely perceived "death of Hoosier Hysteria" 54 years later. Wow--quite a prognostication!

I have an admiration for school principals. Having spent nearly half a century in university administration and classroom matters, I can relate to the often difficult, yet unquestionably honorable, profession they have chosen. Some of my best friends in Indiana are retired principals or vice-principals. Another admirable attribute of many educators, including principals, is a tendency to be benevolent. They desire to do things they believe are in the best interests of their students or to do things that tend to please them. I suspect that had a lot to do with the 1996 vote that resulted in implanting the idea of "fairness" into high-school sports. It also provided for four times the number of championship trophies than were available before.

But the phenomenon of Hoosier Hysteria has been the end product of the past enthusiasm of Indiana's residents for high school basketball—and not the result of any objectives or aspirations initiated or fostered by our educational administrators, neither the present ones nor the past ones. Therefore, some believe that the choice of a single-class vs. a multi-class system should reside directly with the general public, and not with school officials, whose primary responsibilities are (1) education, (2) administration, and (3) discipline.

That's not the only argument that proponents of the single-class system have routinely embraced. There is also the "David vs. Goliath" notion. In former years, it was not unusual when smaller schools or underdogs often became the sentimental favorites of many fans up and down the state as a

season progressed. Significantly, whether a small school actually WON the state championship, as Milan did in 1954, was hardly paramount. What really mattered was how far a small school or underdog could go in the tournament and what big schools they could manage to bump off in the process. Those teams were routinely given plenty of space in the newspaper sports pages, helping to spur tournament excitement to new heights. Now, with the multi-class system, the Davids can generally meet only other Davids, and Goliaths other Goliaths. The spectator interest and the revenues have plunged to new depths year after year, and it's a stretch to assert that it can all be attributed to (1) a multitude of alternative contemporary interests, (2) gender-specific expansion, or (3) lack of available time.

An additional argument employed by many single-class basketball proponents is the idea that success in our society is based upon competitive capability, not "fairness." Meeting and sometimes succeeding at big challenges, especially at a young age, and especially in athletic events, can be thought of as indispensable for developing self-confidence. Yet, most student athletes in classes 1A, 2A, and 3A are not fully challenged today. They can't become "all that they can be." Instead, they are implicitly admonished that they are neither good enough nor big enough to compete with their counterparts in the top class (4A). Is this how high-school kids should be prepared for the competitive and sometimes harsh realities that accompany real life situations? Single-class proponents don't think so.

Back in early April, after Sen. Mike Delph (author of a potential bill that would have returned Indiana to single-class basketball) and IHSAA Commissioner Bobby Cox had agreed to conduct a series of 11 hearings on the multiclass issue, a well-known newspaper sports writer wrote an article

that reflected some observations he had made at one of the early hearings. Some of his observations seemed rational, but others less so. He asserted that the sparsely attended hearing he watched consisted mostly of "older people" (like me) caught up in nostalgic emotion and longing for a return to high-school basketball as we once knew it. His column header also asserted that "Multi-class Basketball Meeting Misses Point," his idea apparently being that few high-school kids were at the meeting, so obviously they weren't interested in a return to single-class basketball. The "older people" present at the hearing site I attended, however, seemed more focused on the rationale and logic repeated on their behalf in this article. I detected no displays of nostalgic emotion. There were admittedly few youths present, but what could be expected from a generation that has no recollection of what Hoosier Hysteria was all about? I think it's probably a matter of personal experience.

My opinion on single-class basketball is obviously biased, and I was admittedly upset about the IHSAA and principals' decision 15 years ago to make the transition to multi-class ball. I sent in a terse objection that appeared in the HOF's history magazine at the time, even though the news came to me while living in California. But since retiring from higher education in 2003, I've been returning each summer to conduct research and publish articles on the history of Indiana's once-favorite sport. This subject matter, while seemingly innocuous when compared with climate change, terrorism, natural catastrophes, or today's price of gasoline, is nevertheless a field of study that's significant to Indiana. It won't be fully comprehended by anyone who grew up outside the state's borders prior to 1997.

If basketball in Indiana were ever to return to a single-class (which is less than likely right now), I believe there are other states that would follow suit, using

our transition as a desirable model. By now, the wholesale consolidation of prep schools across the nation essentially obviates any need to retain multi-class systems for sports. The playing field for most high-school athletic competition has been leveled to such a degree these days that the use of enrollment numbers for deciding where class division lines should be drawn seems preposterous. A high school with 500 enrolled might easily have as much basketball talent within its ranks as one with 4,000, especially if the program is strong and the scheduled competition is on a near equal footing. After all, no big school in Indianapolis ever won a state championship for half a century. In retrospect, that fact seems to have escaped the IHSAA board of directors 15 years ago, when consolidated schools had already become nearly as common and large as they are today.

On a broader basis, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) would remain opposed to any state's move away from multi-class sports, so the same battle Indiana fans have undergone would be repeated over a wider geographical framework. Multi-class sports will probably remain with us for a time, but rational sports fans should stay tuned in to the subject and keep right on discussing it privately and publicly.

OLD BASKETBALL PUBLICATIONS TO READ

IHSBHS donated a large collection of (mostly) Indiana high school basketball publications to the Indiana Historical Society (IHS) last year. They have been fully catalogued by IHS and are available for anyone's use at its library, located at 450 W. Ohio St. in Indianapolis, across the street from the State Library. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. Parking accommodations are available daily in the back lot just off New York

Street for a nominal fee. City metered parking is also nearby and can be used.

Using your own home computer or laptop, you can view these publication titles, along with a short description of each one. There are 212 of them listed in total. Here's how to view the list:

1. First, key in www.indianahistory.org.
2. Next, place your mouse pointer on "our collections." Scroll down to "search the library catalog" and click there.
3. Then place the pointer on "search" and click again.
4. Using the space marked "Find This," key in "basketball." Click on "search" and page one of the list will appear. The first 212 entries relate mostly to Indiana basketball.

Be sure to write down the "call number(s)" of any materials you wish to view when you come to the library. Bring those with you. That should speed things up once you arrive. The library attendant can have the materials immediately brought out of the archives. These materials are restricted to in-house use. There are computers also available at the facility, free of charge.

THE FLORA BADGERS OF 1946

By Harley Sheets

The word "flora" describes either the plants of a specific region or the Roman goddess of flowers. There are nine small communities in the U.S. known by this name, one being in Carroll County, Ind. When pondering the name, one should have visions of colorful beauty abounding here and there. But when thinking of an Indiana basketball power area, one would not give much thought to Carroll County. Delphi, the county seat, had won four regionals ('28, '30, '32 and '38), but no county school had gone farther until the Flora Badgers shocked the state in 1946.

The Badger overall ledger wasn't outstanding by any means, having won but four sectionals ('26, '37, '42 and '45). When you look at the county's



sectional competition (Adams Township, Burlington, Camden, Carrollton, Cutler, Deer Creek, and Rockfield), the ledger is a little more diminished. However, as the saying goes, every dog has its day, and Flora's day had arrived.

The Badgers were coached by Leonard "Sweet" Reid. This probably isn't so, but the "Sweet" could apply to the fact that he inherited a coaching position that was indeed sweet by being in the right place at the right time. Ralph Kifer had taken Lynnville High School to the "Sweet 16" in 1940 prior to taking the Flora job, but just before the 1942-43 season, after winning the 1942 sectional (Flora's third), he went into the military service. Coach Reid had done stints at Camden, Royal Center, Walton, and Windfall. Now, at Flora, he coached the Badgers to their fourth sectional (his first) in 1945. So things seemed on the upswing in this small community but no one was prepared for what was to transpire in 1946.

The regular season was quite successful as the Badgers posted a 17-4 record. A definite highlight was a five-point win over Cliff Wells' Logansport Berries, the only big-time school on the pretty average schedule. However, at times, the Badgers didn't seem to be a team that would go a long way down the tournament trail. There were three losses to Larry Hobbs' Rossville Hornets in his last year there before going to Sheridan, where he haunted Lebanon in the two years I started for the Tigers. Also, in the Carroll County tourney, two wins were squeezed out by one point each over Burlington and Carrollton. But, in the sectional, the Badgers morphed into a team to be reckoned with. They took out three opponents by an average of 27 points per game. One of the vanquished was Carrollton by 31 points after Carrollton had taken them to the wire in

the county tourney. Then in the regional, the Badgers gave notice that they were legit and not just a small school with a fairly weak schedule that had advanced due to participating in a weak sectional. In the afternoon, they eliminated Clare Holley's Peru Tigers 32-27. Remember Holley's 1939 Ossian Bears? Then, in the championship, they pulverized the Logan Berries, 56-31 on their home court -- a team they had beaten by only five points in the regular season. In winning the Lafayette regional, the Jefferson Bronchos had to contend with the 26-0 Rossville Hornets, who had been Flora's nemesis, led by future Indiana All-Star and Hall of Fame inductee, junior Phil Buck. The Hornets fell short against the Bronchos, who were United Press's selection to win the state. Thus the town of 1,460 residents would be clamoring for tickets to the Lafayette semistate at Purdue to face these Bronchos.

ROSTER

Player	Height	Class
Bob Cripe	6-1 ½	Senior
Dick Oyler	5-8	Senior
Bob Spittler	5-11	Senior
Bill McPherson	6-2	Senior
Dick Hanaway	6-½	Junior
Fred Oyler	5-6	Junior
Dave Mills	6-0	Junior
Bob Allbaugh	5-11	Junior
Dick Nevin	6-1 ½	Sophomore
Bert Berkshire	5-8	Sophomore
Joie Eikenberry	6-0	Sophomore
Ken McGill	5-10 ½	Sophomore

The semistate looked to be the East Chicago Senators versus the Jeff Bronchos for the title, but Flora and Culver both pulled off miracles against the big boys. Thus, two very tired former underdogs squared off for all the marbles. Culver was ironically coached by Flora alum Harold "Red" Scering. The game was close at all times. Flora had a 28-24 lead, but saw Culver battle back to lead 33-31 with four minutes remaining. Hanaway and McPherson scored to regain the lead for Flora, but Milner of Culver tied it at 35. Milner then missed a free throw and both teams missed field-goal attempts. With 10 seconds remaining, Milner, while leading a three-on-one rush, lost the ball out of bounds. Five seconds remained. Culver called time out, but Flora would

have the ball. Dick Oyler passed to Mills, who immediately whipped it to McPherson. His shot sailed through as the gun sounded. The Badgers had survived two heart-stopping encounters and were headed to Butler Fieldhouse. As is the case with many tournament games, it's a shame that either team had to lose. If McPherson's shot had missed, this story could easily have been about the Culver Indians, possibly the best team in that school's history.

The Final Four

The Badgers' next foe was the Fort Wayne Central Tigers, 1943 state champs, with big-time scorer Bobby Milton. Central led 15-13 at the end of one, but the Badgers came battling back to lead 30-27 at the half. In the third quarter, Milton netted six buckets and Central's depth was telling, and though the Badgers seemed to be tiring, they only trailed 37-41 at the end of three. The Badgers fought pretty much on even terms for the first four minutes of the fourth, but Milton's 28 points were too much to overcome and the Tigers prevailed 61-50. Flora's Badgers gained many admirers, along with praise and honors. Bob Cripe, Badger center, received the coveted Trester Award. Dick Oyler was named to the all-tourney team and later was an Indiana All-Star. Cripe and Bob Spittler also were named in other selections.

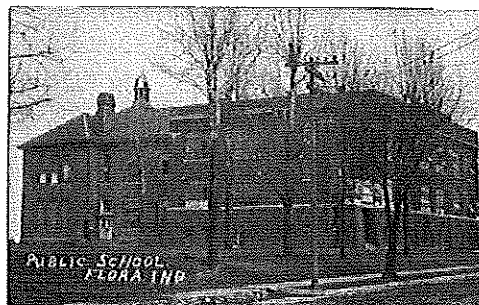


Bob Cripe, Flora
Trester Award Winner 1946

Ironically, in the championship game, Anderson defeated Fort Wayne Central 67-53, a team that had destroyed the Indians during the regular season by 27, a 41 point turn-around.

1946 Flora Badgers (24-5)

47	Burlington	26
36	Carrollton	21
36	Logansport	31
62	Camden	36
29	Rossville	41
50	Royal Center	21
57	Cutler	35
42	Delphi	32
50	Brookston	36
39	Royal Center	34
34	Williamsport	23
37	Rossville	45
57	Sharpsville	36
29	Delphi	32
56	Sheridan	25
60	Monon	44
Delphi 4-way Tourney		
47	Monticello	36
27	Rossville	35
Carroll County Tourney		
31	Carrollton	30
39	Burlington	38
38	Camden	21
Delphi Sectional		
57	Deer Creek	15
53	Carrollton	22
36	Camden	29
Logansport Regional		
32	Peru	27
56	Logansport	31
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50	Fort Wayne Central	61



THE LEGENDS WHO NEVER WERE

By Rocky Kenworthy

Everyone at some time or another has been urged by a teacher, parent, colleague, or spouse to "use your imagination." As a kid (for that matter, as an adult) there's nothing like the fear of retribution for classic cause to kick your thoughts into overdrive. In other words, when the pressure's on--make it up as you go, and see where it takes you. Growing up in our household in the '60s, our misdeeds put us kids in a bit of

trouble, but lying about them was about as bad as you could get. So, in a straw-grasping attempt to save our hides, the imaginary Bill Priff was born.

"Who left the top off the peanut butter jar?"

"Bill Priff done it, Dad."

"Who left the lawnmower out in the rain?"

"Bill Priff, Pop."

This met with varying degrees of success, depending on the mood, until the fateful day that Mom asked, "Who keeps leaving the toilet seat up?", and Dad replied, "Bill Priff."

Paydirt. Bill Priff was our version of Harvey the rabbit and Kilroy, and he was now saving our posteriors from Joe Hayes.

Bill's basketball history was brief, but functional as well. After years of craftily "entering" (use your imagination now) the old Stilesville High School gym in the late, late evening, and sometimes early morning, hours to play pickup games, our first-time capture by Chandler the janitor resulted in a quizzing of everyone's name to report to the authorities. It had been several years since I'd pulled him off the shelf, but for a moment, Bill Priff lived again, and amazingly, Bill had left his ID at home that night. Chandler let Bill go on his own recognizance.

A couple of weeks later, a second and final brush with Stilesville gym near-detainment involved two state police cars, 10 basketball guys in the bed of a '78 GMC pickup truck, and an indelibly reinforced belief there is a God. That, and the description of the guy driving the getaway vehicle sounded a hell of a lot like Bill Priff. But since I'm not certain of the statute of limitations with regard to break-ins and trespass in Stilesville, I'm not yet willing to elaborate any further.

Many much more notable hoaxes, ruses, and charlatans have dotted the Hoosier basketball landscape over the

years. The following comprise the all-time starting five.

Forward, Ivan Renko, 6-foot-8, 230 pounds, from Yugoslavia.

Renko, the most widely known legend who never existed, was a 1992-93 creation of Indiana University coach Bob Knight. Weary of recruiting "experts" profiteering from their "wisdom" about college recruits and their talents, Knight sought to discredit these scouting services by announcing on his Sunday TV show the commitment of Ivan Renko to the IU basketball program. Coach Knight said he had been made aware of Renko while speaking at a clinic in Europe the previous summer, and had just received word that he was planning to attend IU in the fall.

While a few of the more reputable recruiting gurus recognized it for what it was, others took the bait - hook, line, sinker. A "white Larry Johnson" was one pundit's description, a couple claimed to have film of or to have seen Renko play in person, describing his skills in detail, while another confirmed Renko's visit to IU's campus. Mission Impossible, meet Mission Accomplished.

Forward, Jason Paul Smith, 6-6, 215, from Yorktown

HoosierGazette.com in the early 2000's specialized in spoofs and satirical works. One such mildly funny article chronicled Purdue coach Gene Keady's desire for a letter of intent from Jason Paul Smith, a 6-6 fictitious forward from Yorktown, and through clerical mixup, instead accepting one from Yorktown's 5-6, 128-pound band geek Jason Parker Smith. Innocuous, maybe a bit inventive, certainly forgettable, but unmistakably untrue, except when national shock jock Jim Rome picked up the story as being a fact, and went on a rant on his radio show berating the ineptitude of the Purdue University basketball program.

Nice take, Jim!

Guard, Jody Wibbeler, 5-10, 160, from Holland.

Mr. Wibbeler is a bit of a different case, as he actually existed. Kind of. The long-extinct Agoga Tabernacle Gymnasium in Evansville used to be the home court for Evansville Memorial, and actually held the 1937 Evansville regional. It was also the site of the incredibly loaded Tri-State basketball independent tournament and hosted beaucoup independent leagues that used to get press in the Evansville papers. It was early in the 1958-59 basketball season that an obscure little fellow no one seemed to know started tearing up Agoga League boxscores. The whirling dervish signed himself in as Jody Wibbeler and did so for a few weeks. Without the counterfeit ID and Groucho Marx fake nose/glasses, Mr. Wibbeler was in reality former Holland High School star Joe D. Todrank, who was also lighting it up concurrently at a 28-point-per-game clip for Oakland City College. The humor was there, particularly that he got away with it for a few weeks, but no one was laughing when the NAIA declared Todrank ineligible for the balance of the season for competing in an independent league. The next year, however, was Jody's, or Joe D's, revenge, as Todrank would lead the Mighty Oaks to their only NAIA district championship in history.

Guard, Elmer Shotwell, 6-foot, 170, from Gladden's Corner

The year was 1975 and Phil Miller, long-time Indiana high school basketball coach was out of a gig. His Wainwright Mustangs were history, having finished their final basketball season before merging with Southwestern to form McCutcheon High School the following year. A basketball coach suddenly without basketball becomes maybe a bit more carefree, devious, and/or bold than he normally would. When the "High School All-Americans" publication out of Massachusetts came a-calling, Phil was ready. This publication sent requests to high-school basketball coaches around the country, suggesting they nominate

players to be considered for "All-American" status. And, in turn, their player could be listed and have the privilege of purchasing an \$18.95 book they published. Kind of a Screw You Who's Who, if you will. The legend of Elmer Shotwell was born, and Miller laid it on thick in the nomination letter.

"Elmer had a terrific season averaging 27 points and 12.8 rebounds for Gladden's Corner High School, in gaining All-Wea Creek Conference and Class C All-State honors. Among various school and civic achievements, Elmer was also president of the Gladden's Corner Letterman's Club."

A quick perfunctory check of the records would have concluded that coach Miller salted them pretty good. The Wea Creek Conference didn't exist, Gladden's Corner (actually near Stockwell, in Tippecanoe County) hadn't had a high school since 1929, Indiana didn't have basketball classifications in 1975, and obviously, Phil Miller didn't have Elmer Shotwell.

Nonetheless, after a "committee carefully screened his background," Elmer Shotwell of Gladden's Corner joined a select group of "less than one percent of all the nation's athletes to be selected in 1975" in becoming a "High School All-American." A letter followed implying that the book would be sent to college recruiters everywhere, and Elmer should pony up the \$18.95 and get a prestigious copy of his own. The "Elmer dollars" somehow never materialized, but, sadly, Miller's deliciously proposed following nomination of Charley Fastbreak never came to fruition, either.

Lastly, through the vagaries of my mind, I was unable to come up with anyone for the center slot for the all-time legend team.

But did I fail to mention Bill Priff was 6-11 and taught Kareem Abdul-Jabbar the skyhook?