

# B O X S C O R E

A Publication of the Indiana High School Basketball Historical Society

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

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## 2014 Summer Issue

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### ANECDOTES WANTED

Alright, IHSBHS members, tickle your memories a little bit and get down on paper (or on e-mail) one of your prized experiences related to the game of basketball. Send it in to editor/VP Cliff Johnson or President Roger Robison for possible inclusion in a future *Boxscore* issue. Our readers always enjoy these little anecdotes, no matter how mundane or inconsequential they might seem to you as the writer. Sharing experiences is the kind of thing that keeps our organization glued together while providing great reading

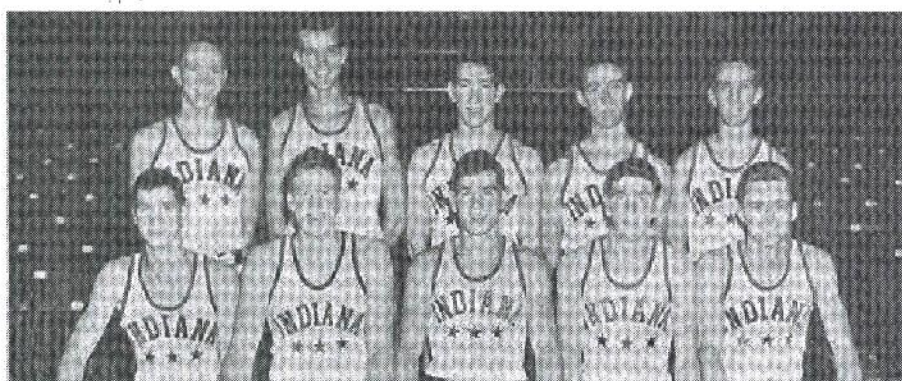
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### 1948 INDIANA ALL-STARS

Below is a photo of the 1948 squad that defeated Kentucky in the annual June interstate All-Star game. The lop-sided score was 70-47. It was the seventh win over Kentucky in the eight games that had been played since 1939. Indiana's team in 1948 was both balanced and talented.

Terre Haute Garfield's six-foot-9-inch Clyde Lovelette went on to become a consensus All-American at the University of Kansas before enjoying an illustrious career in the NBA. Later, he was voted into the Basketball HOF at Springfield, MA.

Look for more of these All-Star photos in subsequent issues of *Boxscore*. Any readers having similar All-Star photos either prior to 1947 or after 1952 are invited to lend them for publication to editor Cliff Johnson. After replication, all photos shall be promptly returned.



★ 1948 ★

FRONT ROW Left to Right: Bobby Masters, Lafayette; Clyde Lovelette, Terre Haute Garfield; Darrell Brewster, Portland; Bill Tibbetts, Lawrenceburg; Gene Southwood, Evansville Central. BACK ROW Left to Right: Dick Peck, Anderson; Marty Horn, Ravenna; Bob Newton, Muncie Central; Bill Nieman, Indpls. Washington; Roger Adkins, Martinsville.

**PREZ SEZ**

by  
**Roger Robison**

Since the invention of the game in December of 1891 it has been traditional to change the rules every spring. This year the IHSAA has increased the length of the quarter for junior varsities to seven minutes from the present six. Once upon a time, Indiana had 20-minute halves for varsity teams but changed that to four eight-minute quarters in 1931. And now, in line with the recent change made for junior varsities, would it also be appropriate to increase varsity team quarters to nine minutes from the present eight??

In addition, the girls' basketball season has now been moved forward one week so that their finals will not conflict with other events in Indy or with the boys' sectionals. Naturally, this has annoyed the volleyball people but it has allowed the boys to schedule 22 regular season games now instead of 20. Lord knows, the IHSAA could use the extra 2-game gate count to help compensate for a consistently falling total attendance figure.

The Indiana Basketball Coaches Association [IBCA] has a proposal under study between now and next October that would alter the four-class tourney format that has historically lost money ever since the present class system was initiated. It proposes six classes and 80 sectionals that would eventually conclude with three championship winners. It is a hybrid scheme to try and make both the larger and smaller schools happy, while reducing tournament travel time and costs. Instead of dividing the 400 +/- schools evenly, this scheme would divide them for the 80 sectionals as shown in the first chart at the end of this article. All the entry numbers would be fixed except for 1b, which would be adjusted to include the ever-changing number of private schools.

The first chart illustrates how the sectionals would be arranged under this proposed format, with 80 (count 'em) winners. The second chart presents my theory of how the regionals and semi-finals might be constructed. Three state champions? Wait and see.

<u>SCHOOLS:</u>	<u>ENROLLMENTS:</u>	<u>SECTIONAL TROPHIES</u>
<b>3a top 32</b>	<b>5000 to 2000 +/-</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>3b next 32</b>	<b>2000 to 1500 +/-</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2a = next 64</b>	<b>1500 to 850 +/-</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2b = next 96</b>	<b>850 to 500 +/-</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>1a = next 96</b>	<b>500 to 290 +/-</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>1b = last 85 +/-</b>	<b>290 to 45 +/-</b>	<b>16</b>

After the sectionals, it is anyone's guess what would happen to get the finalists down to six teams. My guess is as follows: Any comments?

<u>Entries</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Sectional Winners</u>	<u>Regionals; Sites</u>	<u>Semi-Finals</u>
<b>64</b>	<b>3A [3a+3b]</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4x4 teams</b>	<b>2x2 teams: 1 game each</b>
<b>160</b>	<b>2A [2a+2b]</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>8x4 teams</b>	<b>2x4 teams: 2 games each</b>
<b>180 +/-</b>	<b>1A [1a+1b]</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>8x4 teams</b>	<b>2x4 teams: 2 games each</b>

**TIDBITS**  
by **Harley Sheets**

**Reelsville/Pleasant Gardens**

I told editor Johnson that I would be skipping my Tidbits column for this issue, but some last-minute circumstances prompted me to write it after all. Among those circumstances is the following one, which was absolutely unbelievable to me! At an auction, I came upon and obtained a postcard of Pleasant Gardens, Indiana. You might ask, "What's so amazing about that?" I'll explain: Back in the 3<sup>rd</sup> issue of the 2008 Boxscore, I wrote a story entitled *The Mystery of Reelsville*. In that story I mentioned the confusion of there being a highway sign on U.S. 40 that announced "Pleasant Gardens" where, by all indications, the town was really "Reelsville." After three subsequent trips there and conferring with a number of local people, I eventually solved the Reelsville/Pleasant Gardens conundrum. There never was an Indiana town/hamlet named Pleasant Gardens. Instead, it's a locally-named section of Reelsville. After my expose' was published in Boxscore and some copies found their way to my new acquaintances in the area, the word must have gotten around because the next time I traveled over that way, lo and behold and to my utter surprise the Pleasant Gardens sign had vanished and in its place stood a replacement sign that properly showed

"Reelsville." This strange account might help explain my shock of finding that postcard of Pleasant Gardens, a town that couldn't be found on any map or recognized publication. Over the last 20 years of collecting thousands of postcards, I had never gazed upon one captioned "Reelsville," but I now have one of "Pleasant Gardens," an Indiana town that never was! Evidently, the publisher of this circa 1930s postcard must have been as confused as I was.

**This and That**

In case you haven't heard, the I.H.S.A.A. has allowed schools to add two games to their basketball schedules starting in 2014-15.

In years past, IHSBHS had one or two in-person gatherings each year. That practice has pretty much faded, but be alert! There seems to be something brewing for a possible meeting in Martinsville within the near future. If it indeed gets scheduled, there will be an advance notification provided here in Boxscore.

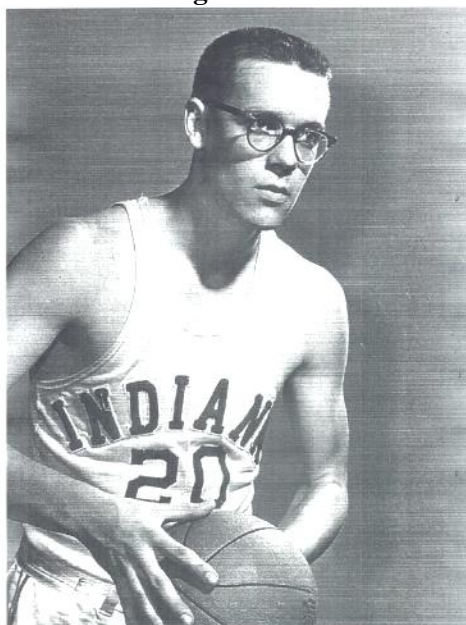
A new member, James Rich of Frankfort now living in Burlington, has published two basketball history books on the small communities of Burlington and Cutler. Others books James plans in the future are on Adams Twp. (Carroll Co.), Camden, Carrollton (a.k.a. Wheeling), Deer Creek, Ervin Twp. (Howard Co.), Flora, Michigantown, Rockfield, Scircleville, and Young America. He hopes to tackle two per year.

It was recently called to my attention that member Pat Rady who stands at #2 on the all-time win list of Indiana high school basketball coaches, completed his 50<sup>th</sup> year of head varsity coaching. Can anyone come up with validation of any other coach to have survived or endured this long in our favorite pastime?

## BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE

**Jim Barley**

**Marion High School Giants**



Jim Barley at I.U., Circa 1954

IHSBHS member Jim Barley graduated from Marion High in the spring of 1952 after playing three years of varsity basketball under coach Woody Weir. He also excelled at baseball for four years, earning a college scholarship offer (which he declined) from the University of Michigan. At the end of his senior year he had set a new North Central Conference basketball scoring record by averaging 20.1 points per game in conference competition while breaking nearly every scoring record for the Giants. He was the first ever Giants player to amass over 1000 points (1015) in varsity play.

The Giants became a state finalist in 1950 while Jim was a sophomore, and his team lost in the afternoon to state champion Madison by the narrowest of margins, 50-49. Jim scored five points in that game, but it might well have been seven—including a game-winning field goal. He remembers the event very distinctly because of a controversial goal

interference call at the end of the contest against Madison. Behind 49-50 with only a few seconds remaining on the clock, Jim himself took a clean shot at the basket that missed, but Madison's 6-4 center Spence Schnaitter reached up and touched the nets while, as the story goes, the ball was still deciding whether to drop through the goal or not. Initially, the ruling gave Marion a 51-50 victory, but after the game had officially ended the referees conferred further among themselves and the call was reversed with the ruling that Schnaitter's contact with the net was inadvertent and Barley's FG attempt had essentially no chance of dropping anyway (it didn't). That night, Madison walloped Lafayette in the final, 67-44, and was awarded the state crown. After his sophomore year, Jim and teammate Fran Fisher led the Giants to two more very successful seasons as the team made it to the Sweet 16 both years.

After receiving many awards in his senior year, including membership in the National Honor Society, Jim was selected to the Indiana All-Star basketball team. Unfortunately for him, he had to undergo an appendectomy prior to the annual All-Star game with Kentucky that summer and was still in weakened condition by game time. In limited action, he still managed to score four points in Indiana's squeaker over Kentucky in an exciting overtime game 86-82.

Immediately after high school graduation, the 6-2, 180-pound Barley was recruited by coach Branch McCracken to play ball for the Hurryin' Hoosiers at Indiana University. IU was at the top of its game the next two seasons, winning the national championship in 1953 along with conference crowns in both '53 and '54. By the 1954-55 season, IU began to slip somewhat in its W-L record, but Jim was hitting full stride with the Hoosiers by scoring 149 points in 18 games. 109 of those points were made during Big Ten Conference play. Unfortunately, Jim's senior year on the team was marred by an off-court fighting incident that he did not instigate but which resulted in his being penalized by McCracken. He was demoted from a starter to a rarely used substitute. Even

so, the Hoosiers concluded the 1955-56 season on a positive note with a 13-9 record.

Once Jim had received his bachelor's degree at IU, he joined the U.S. Army for six months and then signed up for eight years of on-call duty with the Army Reserve Corps. Concurrently, a career in high school basketball coaching began for him in 1957. He returned to Grant County to coach two years as assistant at Van Buren High before moving on to Urbana (Ind.) as head coach for the next three years. From there, he was hired as varsity coach for Montpelier for three years, 1963-65. His 1963 Pilots went 21-3 for the season, the best in school history, and won a sectional championship. While at Montpelier, Jim completed his master's degree in phys ed at Ball State. Scottsburg, in the southern half of the state, then hired him as coach beginning in 1966 and he spent the next 12 years there before departing the head coaching ranks in 1978. His 1969 Scottsburg team was one of the best in the state, finishing undefeated during regular season play and averaging 90.0 points per game (still second highest in IHSAA history). The team also advanced to the semi-finals of the state tournament before dropping its final game to another undefeated team, the Vincennes Alices, 75-71.

After a 13-year break from coaching to focus on teaching (accounting, business, and phys ed) at Scottsburg while directing a summer conditioning program, Jim returned to the courts as assistant coach from 1991 to 1995, prior to retiring. His W-L record as a varsity coach (not yet confirmed by IHSBHS) is reported as 275-141, a win percentage of .662. In retirement, Jim has indulged himself in hunting & fishing, two of his lifelong favorite activities. Scottsburg, where Jim still resides, recently named a new city street after him (Jim Barley Way) in honor of his 45 years of service to the community. He was inducted into the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame in 2005.



## CLAUDE AKINS, THE HOLLYWOOD STONECUTTER

by

**Cliff Johnson**

*(with a big assist from IHSBHS member  
Larry Flinn, of Lawrence Co.)*



Actor Claude Akins, Circa 1955

I had occasion several months ago to look at the 1944 basketball roster for the Bedford Stonecutters. That roster contained the name of Claude Akins. Immediately, I wondered if that World War II era ballplayer could possibly be the same ruggedly handsome guy whose name appeared later on theater marquees and in major TV productions for the next several decades. Turns out that, yes, they were one and the same. Akins, an all-around athlete but never a shining court star at Bedford, migrated to the world of theater and celluloid several years later to acquire star quality in an entirely different realm of spectator entertainment.

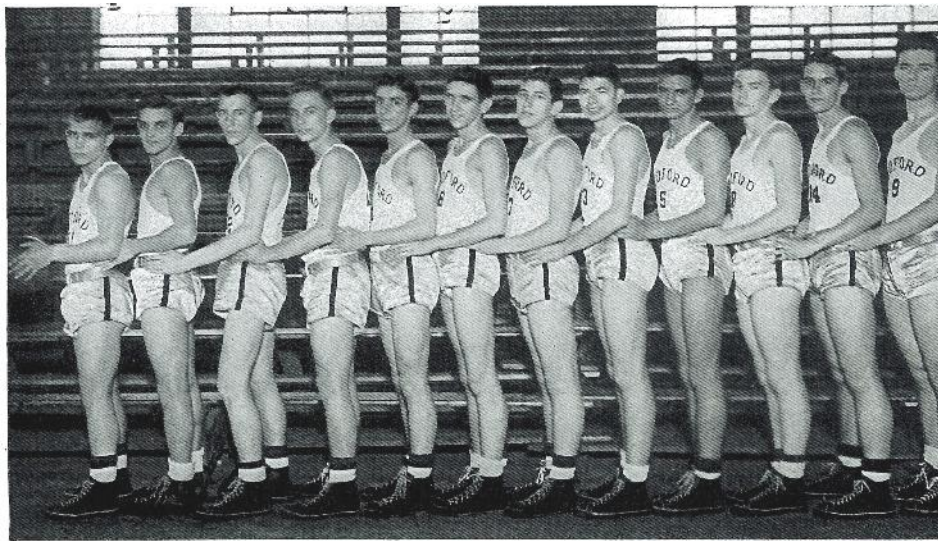
Claude Aubrey Akins was born on May 25, 1926 in the tiny community of Nelson, Georgia, located in the northwest quadrant of the state and approximately 40 miles due north of Atlanta. The family was reputedly of part Cherokee Indian ancestry. His parents, Maude and Ernest, were hard-working but financially challenged residents during the early depression years. By the mid-1930s, low wages and limited working opportunities had become severe. His father and many of his close relatives and friends were stonecutters by trade in that part of Georgia, so Claude was quite familiar with that term long before playing basketball at Bedford. The stonecutters were able to eke out a meager living by cutting, fashioning, and engraving tombstones for cemeteries, cutting

marble blocks for cornerstones, monuments, and statues, and forming structural supports for engineers and architects in Atlanta and other nearby cities. In those days, stone quarries were the basic source of much of the business conducted within a 50-mile radius of Nelson and North Holly Springs--another nearby village where yet more residents were connected with the stonecutting trade. To escape the travails of their Georgia homestead, many of them began seeking other opportunities out of state.

By the mid-1930s several of the Akins' relatives and neighbors had decided to move north to Bedford, Indiana, where the quarries were larger and the stone of better quality and in greater abundance. The Akins were persuaded to follow suit and moved up there too. Before Claude turned ten, they had taken up residence in Bedford, and Ernest was hired by the city as a police patrolman. He was able to augment that income by moonlighting at his former trade as a stonecutter. Two jobs kept him extremely busy and he

abundant stone from those colossal quarries of Lawrence County.

Once Claude entered high school, he became active in a number of school activities, notwithstanding an above-average academic development. One classmate seems to recall Claude receiving "straight A's" throughout high school. It is definitely on record that Claude was a member of the National Honor Society for two straight years. One of his favorite teachers was Helen Chandler, who taught Speech and English. She early on recognized the quality of his deep, vibrant speaking voice and oratorical abilities. He later contended that Mrs. Chandler had a pronounced effect on his career, once arranging a scholarship for him and at other times providing special training in drama programs at other institutions. Even at this young age Claude was viewing a good education as the necessary element toward pursuing a career of his own choosing. He was not enamored with becoming a career stonecutter, as his father and former neighbors had been. The record is not



Joe Hunter, Kenneth Padgett, Charles Beretta, Robert Williams, Tom Bellush, William Mellinger, William Drehoble, Claude Akins, John Wade, Kay Montgomery, Jerry Quackenbush, George Johnson.

### UNDEFEATED! (19-0) Bedford 1942 Jr. Varsity

was usually fatigued by the end of every day, but it was a much better life financially than the family had experienced in Georgia. Their close friends and relatives who had also emigrated from northwest Georgia were able to continue their work full time by cutting and shaping the beautiful and

clear, but Claude probably admired his father for his 21 years of service (1935-56) on Bedford's police force, for he was known in later years to insist on using Ernest's service revolver in many of his western and other gun-toting film scenes.



For his age, Claude was fairly tall, stout, and sturdy (6-1, 200), so an inclination toward sports seemed pretty natural. At Bedford High, he participated competitively in basketball and football and became a "Stonecutter" (the athletic program's chosen nickname) whether he liked that name or not. He also excelled at golf, and later during his acting career was known to have played in several pro-am tournaments. A handsome and broad-shouldered teenager, he was also voted "most likely to succeed" by his graduating classmates. We know now

In the fall of 1944, Claude enrolled at nearby Indiana University, undertaking a curriculum that emphasized speech and drama, the activities in which he had taken an especial interest throughout his school years. However, campus life did not seem compatible with his urge to move ahead with an acting career. Besides that, he knew that he still had a military obligation. He left I.U. after just one semester. At about that same time, U.S. invasions in both theaters of war were in full swing and Claude was still of prime draft age, so he volunteered for duty with the U.S.

Claude's capabilities as an actor, speaker, and singer. Being a theater buff himself, he decided to arrange a sponsored tour for Claude and members of the Bedford American Legion Chorus to put on shows in several cities. The programs included theater performances, short comedy skits, singing engagements, and other kinds of entertainment shows. The tour was a financial and popular success. Several of the Chorus' performers, including Claude, were noticed by theater agents. One engagement found the group in the state of Virginia. It was there that Claude received his first contractual theater offer. In an ironic yet positive twist, Mr. Riley and the limestone industry had closed the door to Claude while literally "setting the stage" for his real ambition to materialize.

Not much has been written or is known about Claude's personal life between 1949 and 1952. It is known, however, that after several stints on Broadway including "The Rose Tattoo," he moved to the Los Angeles area seeking to advance his acting aspirations with film roles. His first role in 1951 was on TV in *Dragnet*, which starred Jack Webb as Detective Joe Friday of the L.A. police. In 1952, Akins married pretty Therese (Pie) Fairfield, a student nurse he had previously dated at Northwestern. They eventually had one son, Claude Marion, and two daughters, Michele and Wendy. It can also be assumed that, like many aspiring young actors, Akins worked at various jobs to make ends meet while trying to gain status in the movie industry. There is one indication that he was paid for doing some commercial advertisements on early TV. Although his name did not appear in any known film credits during that time, it may be safe to say that he routinely considered bit parts or helped as an extra from time to time.

In 1953, his first official role came in the film "From Here To Eternity," starring Burt Lancaster, Deborah Kerr, Montgomery Clift, and Frank Sinatra. Akins played the minor part of a rough-edged sergeant named "Baldy" Dhomm (get the nickname pun?--a screenplay joke attuned to his ultra-short G.I. haircut in the film. He had to lose all his black wavy hair to play that role). After



**Bedford 1943 Jr. Varsity (14-3)**  
**Claude Akins front row, 3rd from the right**

that the vote was extraordinarily prescient.

In basketball, the Bedford junior varsity team excelled. Claude was a mainstay on that team for two seasons, 1941-42 and 42-43, before he was moved up to the varsity his senior year. The JV team of 41-42 came away without a loss in nineteen games, the first and only undefeated squad in BHS history, and the 42-43 squad went 14-3—another fine season. Claude's time with the varsity, however, became abbreviated. With his military obligation in mind, he signed up for a part time pre-service training course at the University of Kentucky midway through his senior year. He was not able to find enough time to play much more ball.

Signal Corps. He was shipped off to Burma (now Myanmar) and the Philippine Islands until after the Japanese empire had surrendered. Upon his military release in 1946, he opted, under the G.I. Bill, to enroll at Northwestern University, again in a drama curriculum. There, according to sources from Northwestern and Columbia Film Studios, he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1949 while being bestowed with a number of honors.

After matriculation, and with no concrete acting offers yet received, Claude returned temporarily to Bedford where his father had lined him up with a sales job selling limestone products. The president of the limestone company, William G. Riley, had learned about

this rather inconspicuous beginning, fortunately in an Oscar-winning production, studio casting directors began to consider the possibility of similar tough guy roles for this "newly discovered" actor. The casting opportunities quickly became plentiful and Akins, from that time forward, never experienced a lull in acting assignments until he retired in 1992 at age 65. His forced retirement was brought about by a recurring battle with stomach cancer. During most of his film years, audiences never saw a shirtless Akins on camera, because of a highly visible scar across his torso from surgery intended to halt the advance of that same cancer diagnosed in his earlier years. It caught up with him again in 1992 and eventually, owing partially to latent surgery complications, it led to his death two years later at age 66.

Akins' acting career spanned nearly 40 years. During that time, his fame and recognition as a great character actor grew with nearly every film in which he appeared. Possibly his best roles were as two-fisted tough guys or nefarious villains, but he never experienced being typecast as such because he could also very effectively play a highly masculine yet kind-hearted hero, a bumbling ne'er-do-well, or perhaps just an everyday down-to-earth, blue collar Joe. This diversity of character became evident in films such as *Rio Bravo*, *Battle Stations*, *Onionhead*, *Inherit the Wind*, *Merrill's Marauders*, and *The Defiant Ones*. Altogether, Akins was cast in nearly 100 feature films. His face is familiar to anyone who watches movie re-runs on TV.

His reputation as an actor in television was even more profound. In the series "*Movin' On*," produced in 1974-76, he probably hit the apex of his viewer popularity. As Sonny Pruitt, a self-employed long-distance truck driver, he was able to bring together nearly all the components of a personality having strong individuality, honesty, toughness (yet modified by a kind and gentle disposition), and above all a selfless empathy for those he would routinely encounter who were experiencing unfortunate situations. That role came naturally for a man who actually possessed all those traits in real

life. Other TV series that helped maintain his popularity were the comedic "*Misadventures of Sheriff Lobo*," "*B.J. and the Bear*," and "*Nashville 99*," along with "*Gunsmoke*" and "*Bonanza*," weekly television productions in which he frequently appeared as guest star. His overall guest appearances on television shows numbered well into the hundreds.

Today, if you were to drive north on State Highway 53 to the outskirts of Nelson, Georgia, you would see a signpost at the edge of town which reads "Home of Claude Akins." The old wood frame house where Claude was born in 1926 is still standing and, at the time of this writing, is occupied. In Bedford, Indiana, an annual golf tournament held at Otis Park in the late summer commemorates Akins' early life there as a high school student. The entry fees, gate receipts, and donations are deposited to a scholarship fund in his name. Most of the proceeds are awarded for financial assistance to a specified graduating senior at Bedford North Lawrence High School who intends to enroll in college. Other portions of the fund are allotted for repairs and improvements to Otis Park and its facilities. The memory of Claude Akins has apparently not faded away in either of the two widely separated communities, nor has it departed the minds of those of us who continue to appreciate the fine art of acting, while recognizing all the down-to-earth qualities of this kind and gentle man who provided it for us. FINIS

### **UNIONVILLE ARROWS, 1966 SECTIONAL CHAMPIONS** by

**Andy Graham, Columnist,  
Bloomington Herald-Times**

Angelo Pizzo obviously drew from the 1954 Milan Miracle story for his "Hoosiers" screenplay. But primary inspiration came to the former Bloomington University High School student via a very vivid personal experience. Pizzo watched Unionville, enrollment 105, knock off host Bloomington High School, in classic David-Goliath fashion, for the 1966 basketball sectional title.

"The biggest factor differentiating Milan with the Unionville story for me was that Bobby Kent, (a prominent Unionville player in the late 1960s) was a friend," Pizzo said via a recent e-mail. "We played basketball together at Binford (a Bloomington elementary school). Plus being a Univee (Bloomington University H.S.), I was on the side of any team that played against the BHS Panthers in the sectionals. Past that, I would root for the Panthers."

Bloomington High School South retained the Panthers nickname and purple color when the 1972 school reorganization transpired, with University and Unionville among the closed schools whose IHSA membership passed into the auspices of Bloomington High School North. So North, which wished to salute teams and athletes from those schools, recently honored the 1966 Unionville Arrows. Several of those 1966 Arrows, who finished 26-2 before falling in the regional to a Cloverdale team that reached the Final Four, were around to attend the festivities—including Lynn Stevens, who hit the game-winner that night 38 years ago against the Panthers.

"It's nice for North to do that, and for us to have a reunion," Stevens, who operates Stevens Barber Shop in Unionville, said about the event. "That's great." And so was Unionville's 1966 offense. According to Stevens, Dan Chitwood (recall the name Jimmy Chitwood in Hoosiers?) led the way with a 21-point average, followed by Bobby Kent (19 ppg), Stevens and Bob Skirvin (15 ppg apiece) and then Don Wood and Larry West (around 10 ppg apiece). "If we all made our averages, we scored 90," Stevens said. "We averaged 87.5 and held our opponents to 63."

Unionville's lone regular-season loss came against a terrific Needmore team, featuring Mike Holmes, brother of current BHS South coach J.R. Holmes (who graduated from Needmore a year earlier). But nobody else before the regional got the better of Unionville, including any of the 64 teams in the annual Wabash Valley tourney, a prestigious event centered in Terre Haute that also included entrants from Illinois. "That was kind of like winning



a small-school state tournament,” Stevens said. “In the prelims at Clay City that year, we averaged over 100 points.”

The Arrows were flying when sectional time rolled around and they handled Morgantown 80-67 and Eminence 94-69

three seconds left when the ball hit the floor after dropping through the hoop, but the Panthers were so stunned that nobody thought to stop the clock. Former Unionville student manager Gerald Boshears recalls that “Lynn Stevens shot it from the left wing,

played were all neighbors, and people wanted to come out and see how they did. That’s something that is missing now. Those smaller schools were so close-knit.”

“We had a really good group of guys. Lynn Stevens, Larry West, Bobby Skirvin, Danny Chitwood, etc.” All those guys had known each other since the first grade and played on teams together from about the fifth grade on up. ‘Bobby Kent moved in also as a freshman that year and fit right in. He already knew all the guys since he was Gary Kent’s cousin.” (Gary Kent co-captained Unionville’s 1963 team alongside school career scoring leader Lonnie Terrell.) Bobby Kent, essentially, became the final Arrow in a well-stocked quiver. And the next time you (locals) watch “Hoosiers”, don’t just think Bobby Plump. You could also think Bobby Kent.



#### **Unionville Arrows, 1966 Sectional Champions**

**Front, left to right are Coach Ed Ellett, Larry West (50), Lynn Stevens (24), Bob Skirvin (32), Dan Chitwood (30), Don Woods (42), Bob Kent (22). Back Row, left to right are Bob Chafin, Steve Fleener, Norman Richardson, Gary Richardson, Assistant Coach Bill Asdell.**

before matching up against mighty BHS for the title. The Panthers had Unionville down by 18 before the Arrows rallied behind a press. “Bloomington beat a lot of teams by pressing,” Stevens recalled, “but we kind of turned the tables on them that night.” Down 68-67 with the ball, Unionville set up a final play for Kent, but he drew Bloomington’s defensive attention, so instead West sent a pass to Stevens. A good foul shooter, Stevens looked to drive and perhaps draw a foul, but his defender backed off to take that away.

“He backed off,” Stevens said. “There were seven seconds left when I got the ball (roughly 25 feet out). I thought, ‘I’ve got to shoot the darned thing since time is running out.’ ‘So I let it fly and the ball went up and straight through the net.” There were

between the ten-second line and the top of the key, while the Bloomington cheering section had already begun its chant of a victory, going ‘Hey Unionville, say Unionville!’ ‘They were just about to say ‘Good game!’ when Steven’s shot fell through the net. The chant abruptly stopped.” Then time expired.

Boshears continues, “The Unionville crowd went wild. It was dead quiet in the Bloomington section, but the Unionville people were so happy, just running, jumping, and yelling. Unionville had never won a sectional.” Boshears also recalls the post-game rally back at the Unionville gym, where a good time was had by all and coach Ed Ellett’s hat ended up getting burned in the bonfire. “Everybody from Unionville and the whole neighborhood was there,” he said. “The boys who

#### **THE REAL PICK AND ROLL**

**by  
Cliff Johnson**

This article addresses the lost art of the REAL pick and roll maneuver. Most of today’s coaches and players seem oblivious to the significant offensive advantages created by this move when it is executed properly. Many of you readers out there, however, are retired coaches or players who really do know the fundamentals involved with this basic play, so my apologies are extended if I seem overly preachy or pretentious about it. Moreover, my personal career was not in coaching, so I fully recognize the possibility that some might take exception to my point of view.

But a lifetime of association with the sport of basketball, including having Hall of Fame coach Ward “Piggy” Lambert as a college freshman mentor and serving as scorekeeper and radio/tv statistician in the NBA, I can say with confidence that something is basically and definitively wrong with the offenses of most teams below the professional level these days. The pick and roll is a lethal offensive weapon, and when conducted properly on-court can destroy even the best of defenses. A good offense can always prevail against a good defense. It’s one reason why NBA

game scores are usually so high. Most players at that level have learned a little about the pick and roll by that time.

The term "pick and roll" is misunderstood and loosely applied these days. One can be watching a televised college game, for example, and hear the commentator use those words for a basic pick or simple cross-over. Many fans don't have a clue either. To them, a pick and roll could be a pre-meal place setting at a formal dinner. The really sad thing is, though, that possibly because of the fast-paced action and increased individualism of today's game, many high school and college coaches have either lost sight of the pick and roll's effectiveness or never really learned about its operative details.

Piggy Lambert was one of the nation's smartest college court mentors, ever. His winning percentage of .709 is one of the highest marks ever attained in the college ranks. He spent nearly three decades at Purdue, resigned in 1945 to become the National Basketball League commissioner, then returned to Purdue to assume the role of freshman coach, in his golden years. He was at that post when I enrolled at Purdue in the fall of 1954. Although I had learned the basic pick and roll maneuver in junior high and high school, I was never aware of its intricacies until coach Lambert illustrated them to us and insisted on their use. The move was certainly not the easiest thing for a young player to perfect, but it was worth learning if one wished to be a part of a winning team.

Here's the way Lambert taught the pick and roll: After an opponent's goal, missed goal, or turnover, and if there is no opportunity for a fast break (always the first option), a player may pass to a teammate and follow that pass afoot right up to his teammate's guard to set a block. There, he spreads his legs while bending at the waist, making his body as wide as possible, while bending the knees slightly and bracing the arms downward against the knees. I've actually seen an old photo of All-American Johnny Wooden as a Purdue player assuming that very posture. Anyway, at that juncture, the blocker has become an immovable object and the pick has been set. The blocker must not move with the motion of the

opposing guard or an illegal "moving pick" can be called. However, he will not remain motionless. Instead, he will pivot inwardly with the foot closest to the court boundary while his teammate with the ball breaks around the pick and in tandem with the blocker's pivot to the inside (aka the "roll"). It will not matter if the defense makes a switch at that point, because BOTH defensive men have been put behind the play. The offense briefly has the advantage of five players to three, and the opportunity for a close-in shot usually materializes. Albeit to a slightly lesser degree, this move works against a tight zone defense as well since two opponents are still basically being left out of the closer-in action, no matter what else transpires.

Here is the other essential part of the offensive pattern, according to Lambert's philosophy: The other three offensive teammates must also be simultaneously executing the inside pick and roll against the defenders, even without possession of the ball. This is often referred to today as a "motion offense." But let's face it, folks, if an offense has no motion away from the ball, it is virtually no offense at all, and low-percentage periphery shot attempts shall define its doom. If the pick and roll is executed continuously amongst all five players, the odds are that sooner or later one player will be open for a chest pass, bounce pass, handoff, or lob, and acquire an inside, high-percentage, goal attempt. The alternative, a long-range, low-percentage shot, in Lambert's mind, should be attempted only by a VERY ACCURATE shooter--and then only if he is left wide open (or today, if the shot clock is expiring). That was the Lambert way, and his philosophy won a lot of ball games.

One might argue that today, with the additional point for long range goal shooting, and a short shot clock in the college and pro ranks, conditions for well-executed pattern plays have diminished. There is some truth to that, but nevertheless set plays and close-in shooting will always prevail over the low-yield launches from the outside, especially at the high school level--where the shot clock has not yet been implemented, at least in most states. Once the shot clock gets initiated in

Indiana (it eventually shall), my hopes are that it will extend to a full one-minute limit to permit set plays and good coaching techniques, the things that have always constituted the beauty of our game, to predominate. Undoubtedly, something is needed these days to re-invigorate dwindling spectator interest at the high school level. Perhaps more well-executed plays can help.

Most teams today have players who know of, and use, the "pick," although it is usually executed half-heartedly, allowing the defenders to easily slip through--or possibly use a switch. You almost never see a properly-executed pick and roll cooperative motion. Many of the ball carriers will dribble in the wrong direction after the pick is set, and sometimes the player setting the pick doesn't roll at all, or if he does roll he'll roll in the wrong direction. Almost invariably, even if the pick and roll is done properly (exceedingly rare) the player with the ball does not look to see if his teammate has managed to elude the defense once the roll is completed. He is more likely examining the location of his feet to be sure they are behind the three-point arc before firing off a volley. More times than not, the player making the pass will just stand there awaiting an eventual return pass. But occasionally, he will head into a different direction to set a pick for another teammate--which can work, but only when it's done in conjunction with other components of a set play. The offensive strategy that seems the least effective of all, however, is one that relies upon quick passes around the three-point arc, with the passers hoping to outrace a zone (or a man-to-man defense) so that someone eventually gets an open long-range shot. Not much percentage there!

The "old" game may still be the "best" game, when it comes to playing offense. One-on-one moves and long range shots must be used sparingly. The REAL pick and roll, even though it seems to have been lost to the modern age, can still win many games. Patterned offenses are pretty to watch and usually effective. That's my opinion anyway, for whatever it's worth. FINIS



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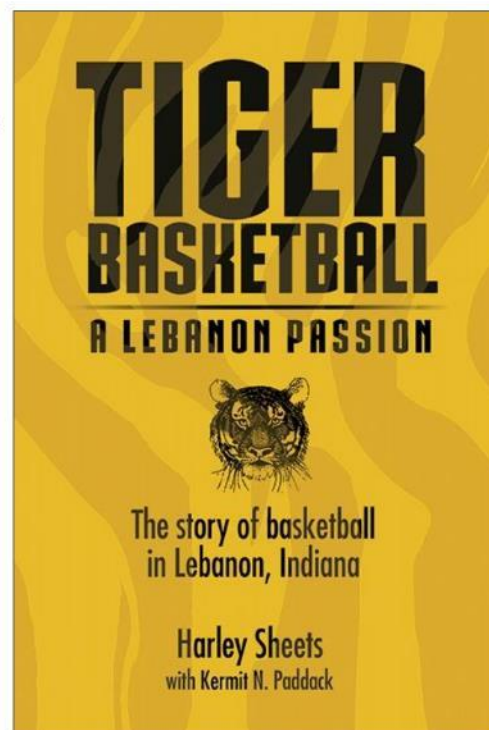
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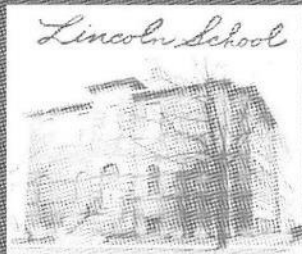




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