

B O X S C O R E

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THE BEST IN BOURBON

by

Cliff Johnson, *Boxscore* Editor

At a time in Indiana when the golden age of basketball was just beginning to glitter, a teenager in the small town of Bourbon, Indiana was gaining attention in the statewide sports news media as a top gun in the

northern sector of the state's playing courts. His name was Keith Stackhouse. I had reached only the ranks of junior high at my school when I began routinely gathering up the contents from our farm's mailbox at the edge of state road 26 in Howard County. Kokomo's daily newspaper was always among the contents, and I got to be the first in my family to grab the sports pages, my favorite section. Although Bourbon and Stackhouse were far to the north, news coverage of Stackhouse's scoring exploits on the hardwood were widespread up and down the state.

High game scores and individual scoring feats had not yet reached the levels they would in just a few more years, so any reports of unusual point production on the courts of the late 1940s were bound to find their way into print. Such was the case with Keith Stackhouse. As a youngster growing up on a small farm, his chores and schoolwork always took precedence. He also cultivated a passion for judging livestock. But he never let those activities interfere with time practicing his basketball skills in an old barn that held a hoop and backboard. By the time he was a

freshman, he had developed a deadly jump shot from mid-range. The accuracy of his shooting, along with acute court awareness, were attributes that continued to be polished as he matured into a young man. His first year in high school, he made the Bourbon High varsity under veteran coach Gene Rovenstine. This was Rovenstine's fourth year at the helm and he had experienced only one winning season to date, his initial one in 1943-44. In 1946-47, the Comets starting lineup consisted of veteran players, but Rovenstine could not piece together a consistent winning combination that season. The regular schedule ended with a record of 8 wins and 12 defeats, and after two sectional victories they were beaten by Bremen in the final, 54-42. Freshman Stackhouse got in enough playing time, however, to contribute 40 points overall.

Rovenstine was replaced in 1947-48 by Warren Seaborg, but the Comets' fortunes continued to decline, and another disappointing regular season of 5-14 ensued. They were also knocked out of the sectional in the first round by Tyner, 39-37. Stackhouse, now a

sophomore, appeared to be the one shining light in the Comets' hope for the future, as he dominated his team's scoring with 271 points. No one else on the team accounted for as many as 100 points that season.

Seaborg was able to bring the team back to an even keel in 1948-49, at 10-9. Stackhouse again led the offensive attack with 353 points, but this time the scoring was better distributed among the players. Nevertheless, Plymouth dashed the Comets' hopes in the first round of the sectional, 53-50, despite some on-court heroics by Stackhouse. By this time, Keith had gained the reputation of being a high-powered scoring machine, averaging in excess of 19 points per game his junior year.

He had striking features, stood 6-1, was an avid scholar, and was exceptionally popular among his schoolmates. But his biggest attribute seemed to be the ability to shoot cowhide balls into a 10-foot-high goal and make the underlying nets snap, so often. For the small community of Bourbon, the media attention which that yielded must have given the residents a sensation of significance. And the best was yet to come. The 1949-50 Bourbon team was returning its top three scorers, including the most prolific one in the town's history. Stackhouse was the star performer, but he would be accompanied in the new season by Dick Servis, Chan Stine, George Hahn, and Art Winkle, all seasoned veterans, along with a highly-talented sophomore, Bill Bailey. Great expectations! But the season started out slowly, with 2 wins and 2 losses in the first four games. From then on though, the Comets and their season came to life. They captured the next eight straight games, and 19 of the subsequent 22. They took the sectional crown with four victories, but just squeaking by a potent North Judson team, 62-61,

in the finale. In its first game of the regional, Bourbon brushed aside Elkhart, 56-40, thereby joining the other 31 remaining teams left in the state tournament. In the regional finale, the Comets were finally overpowered 69-38 by South Bend Central, led by All-State selectee Entee Shine. The AP had earlier ranked S.B. Central as the #1 team in the state, so the painful defeat came as no surprise.

Stackhouse had a terrific season. He scored a total of 617 points, not to mention the numerous rebounds and assists which were not officially kept in those days. His jumping and driving abilities were extraordinary, and in many games he poured in more than thirty points. His per game average was 24.4, an unheard-of statistic for that time. All those accomplishments earned him a spot on the Hoosier All-Star team of 1950, comprised of the top ten players in the state, as selected by the sports editors and writers throughout Indiana. He joined Entee Shine, South Bend's contender that year for "Mr. Basketball," who would also play against the Kentucky high school All-Stars in the annual Classic.

The June contest at Butler Fieldhouse between these two All-Star teams became the scene of one of Stackhouse's premium performances of his entire basketball career. He was not among Indiana coach Wilbur Allen's top five selections to start the game but came in as a substitute well after the game had begun. In those remaining three and a half eight-minute periods, Stackhouse put on a scoring spectacle that had rarely been witnessed by All-Star game attendees. He clicked on ten of twenty FG shots and sank six of seven free throws for 26 points to help the Hoosiers blow out the Bluegrassers, 70-57. For his effort, he was awarded the "Star of Stars" award as the best player on the Butler Fieldhouse ballcourt that night. The award helped lead to his selection by the UPI as an honorable mention All-American high school basketball player.

After graduation, Keith decided to join a few other nearby area basketball stars who had elected to enroll at Michigan State College (later, renamed a "University" in 1955). Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher and basketball star Robin



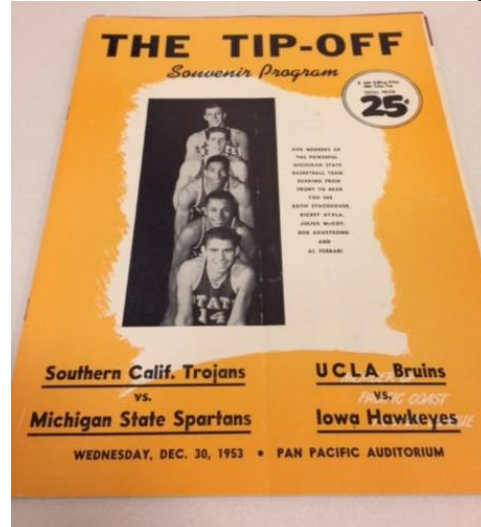
★ 1950 ★

FRONT ROW Left to Right: Ted Server, Madison; Pat Klein, Marion; Entee Shine, South Bend Central; Bob Clayton, New Albany; Spence Schnaitter, Madison. BACK ROW Left to Right: Trainer Jim Morris, Harry Hobbs, Sheridan; Gene Wilson, Anderson; Dick Farley, Winslow; Keith Stackhouse, Bourbon; Jerry Ellis, New Castle; Coach Wilbur Allen.

Roberts had graduated from there four years earlier, and it had other alumni of notable repute in the field of sports. The basketball program had already existed for five decades, but only upon Keith's freshman year debut (1950-51) had it been invited into Big Ten Conference competition. Arriving that same year as head coach of the Spartans was Pete Newell, who had just recently led the University of San Francisco to an NIT national championship. Newell brought one of his graduated stars, John Bennington, with him as an assistant and to coach the freshman team. After Bennington and Newell caught a glimpse of Keith Stackhouse in action during freshman practice, they knew he was destined for greater things with the Spartans. The coaches and their scouts were also busy on the circuit recruiting the best they could find of high school seniors across the country. After a 4-18 season in 1949-50, they were determined to build a program of respect for the institution. Success was still a year or two away, but the 50-51 season was showing improvement, at 10-11, and the team was beginning to compete effectively with other Big Ten teams. Besides, recruited prospects were looking good. Not only was Stackhouse, as a freshman, ready to play varsity the next season ('51-'52), but also maturing into fine players were Gordon Stauffer and Bill Bower from Fort Wayne South Side and the in-state Carey brothers 6-1 Bill and 6-5 Bob. In-state newcomer Bob Armstrong at 6-8 and Brooklyn, NY recruits 6-2 Al Ferrari and 5-5 playmaker Rick Ayala looked promising. A 6-2 future All-American Julius McCoy would soon join the team, as well.

Stackhouse did not disappoint in '51-'52. He led the team in scoring with 236 points and was gathering up more than his share of rebounds and

assists. The Spartans finished 13-9 for the season. The following



Keith Stackhouse at MSU (Front), 1954.

season, '52-'53, Stackhouse was again in good form, finishing with 279 tallies. Ferrari, now a sophomore and blossoming into a superb shooter and rebounder, led the Spartan team in scoring with 351 points. The team repeated its '51-'52 season of thirteen wins and nine losses, but this time they proved themselves also as a serious contender in the rough and tumble Big Ten, finishing in a tie for third place at 11-7.

Ferrari, Stackhouse, and Ayala all were returning for the '53-'54 season, and now were joined by big Bob Armstrong, and All-America candidate Julius McCoy. One would expect that all this talent should produce a formidable college team. Pete Newell was extremely optimistic at the beginning of the season. But by the end of the first semester, things were not going well. Injury and ineligibility took a toll. Four of the team's guards were sidelined with one or the other of the two problems at issue. That forced Newell to transfer Ferrari and Stackhouse into the backcourt, at guard spots that were relatively unfamiliar to them. While the frontline power duo of Armstrong and McCoy remained intact,

remaining guard Bob Devenny could not provide all the help needed to bring the ball downcourt and set up plays. Ferrari and Stackhouse, both capable ball-handlers, were nevertheless hampered by having to play out of their comfort zones. Stackhouse, especially, was affected by having his favorite shots from a forward position taken away. His point total fell to 96 and by the end of the season he had missed four games. McCoy, Ferrari, and Armstrong led the Spartan scoring, but the team finished with a dismal 8-14 record. It was a sad ending to a season with such promise. Coach Newell, eventually inducted into the Springfield BB Hall of Fame, departed for the west coast bay area again. He was hired by the University of California at Berkeley and ultimately led that school to greater hardwood success. John Bennington stayed at Michigan State as an assistant to new coach Fordy Anderson from Bradley University.

Meanwhile, after Keith Stackhouse had scored a total of 604 points for the Spartans over a three-year stretch, good for third place in Spartan basketball history at the time, he was also completing four years of academic undergrad study. He had an excellent record as a student and was thus ready for bigger and better things. He enrolled at Northwestern University as a graduate student in its medical school and earned the M.D. diploma and a license to practice cardiovascular surgery. For about thirty years he was a dedicated surgeon, and his patients were always what mattered most to him. Whether as a basketball star, scholar, or physician, Keith gave life everything he had. It ended with throat cancer on Sept. 4, 1987, at the age of 55. His name is now just a memory, but he once graced the BB courts of Indiana. *Thanks to Randy Klotz for the assist.*

COMPLETE LIST OF IN/KY BOYS ALL-STAR GAMES

Editor's Note: These game results were contributed by Pat McKee. Pat has been the Director of Special Projects for the Indiana Basketball Coaches Association since 2010 while concurrently serving as coach for the Columbus North girls' basketball team, a position held through 2021. He formerly was a sportswriter and editor for The Indianapolis Star from 1982 to 2008. He also enjoyed a 4-year stint as an assistant coach for the Butler University women's basketball team. Pat has been inducted into both the Indiana Basketball HOF (as a Silver Medal recipient in 2008) and the Indiana Sportswriters & Sportscasters Association HOF in 2009.

Series Game Scores

Year	Winner	Score	Site of Game	Series Record
1939	(The All-Stars defeated state champ Frankfort 31-21)			
1940	Indiana	31-29	Indianapolis	Indiana, 1-0
1941	Indiana	52-41	Indianapolis	Indiana, 2-0
1942	Indiana	41-40	Indianapolis	Indiana, 3-0
1943	no game – World War II			
1944	no game – World War II			
1945	Kentucky	45-40	Indianapolis	Indiana, 3-1
1946	Indiana	62-55	Indianapolis	Indiana, 4-1
1947	Indiana	86-50	Indianapolis	Indiana, 5-1
1948	Indiana	70-47	Indianapolis	Indiana, 6-1
1949	Indiana	66-61	Indianapolis	Indiana, 7-1
1950	Indiana	70-57	Indianapolis	Indiana, 8-1
1951	Indiana	68-57	Indianapolis	Indiana, 9-1
1952	Indiana	86-82 OT	Indianapolis	Indiana, 10-1
1953	Indiana	71-66	Indianapolis	Indiana, 11-1
1954	Indiana	75-74	Indianapolis	Indiana, 12-1
1955	Indiana	94-86	Indianapolis	Indiana, 13-1
	Kentucky	86-82 OT	Louisville	Indiana, 13-2
1956	Indiana	92-78	Indianapolis	Indiana, 14-2
	Indiana	102-77	Louisville	Indiana, 15-2
1957	Kentucky	91-71	Louisville	Indiana, 15-3
	Kentucky	77-76	Indianapolis	Indiana, 15-4
1958	Indiana	77-76	Indianapolis	Indiana, 16-4
	Indiana	69-58	Louisville	Indiana, 17-4
1959	Kentucky	86-81	Louisville	Indiana, 17-5
	Indiana	88-77	Indianapolis	Indiana, 18-5
1960	Kentucky	95-86	Indianapolis	Indiana, 18-6
	Indiana	101-64	Louisville	Indiana, 19-6
1961	Indiana	82-71	Louisville	Indiana, 20-6
	Kentucky	78-75	Indianapolis	Indiana, 20-7
1962	Indiana	88-82	Louisville	Indiana, 21-7
	Kentucky	70-68	Indianapolis	Indiana, 21-8
1963	Kentucky	90-86	Indianapolis	Indiana, 21-9
	Indiana	90-75	Louisville	Indiana, 22-9
1964	Kentucky	68-59	Louisville	Indiana, 22-10
	Indiana	68-54	Indianapolis	Indiana, 23-10

(Continued next page)

The Ticket Pool Is a Mirage

by

Doug Bradley

The ticket pool is a mirage, to mix a couple of metaphors, but that murky water is the key to busting a myth that Indiana media have always reported as gospel. The numbers 9325 and 8996 are more important to Indiana high school basketball than any other number except 1954. While it is true that Milan did, in 1954, cat-and-mouse it's way to the state championship, 9325 and 8996 are lies.

We know 9325 and 8996 as the respective seating capacities for New Castle and Anderson high school gyms. Those numbers were ticketing capacities. The seating capacities were actually 9249 for New Castle and 9122 for Anderson. The ticketing capacity, not the seating capacity, is the number each school used in its application to host an IHSAA tournament. The IHSAA is concerned only with how many tickets are pooled on the table before those tickets are divided among participating schools, in accord with the IHSAA's prescribed formula.

New Castle ticketed more than its 9249 fieldhouse seats. Used mostly for media, NC had 76 folding chairs (not including chairs used for team benches) set up at tables along both long sides of the basketball floor. Anderson went the other direction. More than 50 Wigwam seats were not included in the ticket pool. Those were set aside for city and school administrators.

Numbers for both schools have varied over the years. The program for NC's home games in 1960 listed the gym capacity at 9252. The promise for the ticket pool that first year was 9300. The promise was up to 9325 by 1962.

(Continued next page, column 3)

1965	Kentucky	90-80	Indianapolis	Indiana, 23-11
	Kentucky	74-69	Louisville	Indiana, 23-12
1966	Kentucky	104-77	Louisville	Indiana, 23-13
	Kentucky	77-67	Indianapolis	Indiana, 23-14
1967	Kentucky	79-67	Indianapolis	Indiana, 23-15
	Indiana	78-76	Louisville	Indiana, 24-15
1968	Kentucky	59-54	Louisville	Indiana, 24-16
	Kentucky	61-56	Indianapolis	Indiana, 24-17
1969	Indiana	91-83	Indianapolis	Indiana, 25-17
	Indiana	114-83	Louisville	Indiana, 26-17
1970	Indiana	80-79	Louisville	Indiana, 27-17
	Indiana	108-97	Indianapolis	Indiana, 28-17
1971	Indiana	115-99	Indianapolis	Indiana, 29-17
	Kentucky	110-91	Louisville	Indiana, 29-18
1972	Indiana	96-72	Louisville	Indiana, 30-18
	Indiana	115-86	Indianapolis	Indiana, 31-18
1973	Kentucky	103-82	Louisville	Indiana, 31-19
	Indiana	105-86	Indianapolis	Indiana, 32-19
1974	Indiana	92-81	Louisville	Indiana, 33-19
	Indiana	110-95	Indianapolis	Indiana, 34-19
1975	Indiana	95-91	Indianapolis	Indiana, 35-19
	Indiana	94-85	Indianapolis	Indiana, 36-19
1976	Indiana	96-88	Louisville	Indiana, 37-19
	Indiana	77-71	Indianapolis	Indiana, 38-19
1977	Kentucky	87-84	Indianapolis	Indiana, 38-20
	Kentucky	85-84	Louisville	Indiana, 38-21
1978	Indiana	100-90	Louisville	Indiana, 39-21
	Indiana	86-78	Indianapolis	Indiana, 40-21
1979	Kentucky	78-59	Indianapolis	Indiana, 40-22
	Kentucky	72-69	Louisville	Indiana, 40-23
1980	Indiana	82-80	Louisville	Indiana, 41-23
	Kentucky	96-93	Indianapolis	Indiana, 41-24
1981	Indiana	114-102	Indianapolis	Indiana, 42-24
	Indiana	109-96	Louisville	Indiana, 43-24
1982	Indiana	96-94 OT	Louisville	Indiana, 44-24
	Kentucky	81-80	Indianapolis	Indiana, 44-25
1983	Indiana	96-87	Indianapolis	Indiana, 45-25
	Indiana	82-72	Lexington	Indiana, 46-25
1984	Kentucky	89-83	Lexington	Indiana, 46-26
	Kentucky	84-81	Indianapolis	Indiana, 46-27
1985	Kentucky	93-85	Lexington	Indiana, 46-28
	Indiana	99-80	Indianapolis	Indiana, 47-28
1986	Kentucky	96-93	Indianapolis	Indiana, 47-29
	Kentucky	104-99	Louisville	Indiana, 47-30
1987	Indiana	104-92	Indianapolis	Indiana, 48-30
	Indiana	119-114 OT	Louisville	Indiana, 49-30
1988	Indiana	102-82	Louisville	Indiana, 50-30
	Indiana	112-100	Indianapolis	Indiana, 51-30
1989	Kentucky	102-98 OT	Indianapolis	Indiana, 51-31
	Indiana	96-88	Louisville	Indiana, 52-31

(Continued next page)

Anderson opened for the 1962 season with 8240 seats and a ticket pool of 8089. Just before the 1963 sectional, 882 telescoping bleacher seats were added to the stage and the ticket pool promise was increased to 9213 for 1964. Following the state fire marshal's tantrum of 1964 and 1965, the Wigwam's ticket pool fell to 8998 before settling at 8996 a few years later.

The seating capacities were 9249 and 9122. The ticket pools were 9325 and 8996. They're apples and oranges, to mix more metaphors, and never the twain shall mean the same.

EARLY TRIVIA

by

Bill Ervin, IHSBHS Past President

Here are a few tidbits I picked up while reviewing Brazil High School records, mostly from the Brazil Daily Times.

On 12/22/13 a resolution was presented to the IHSAA to declare that high school boys who smoke would be ineligible to play in varsity sports. Not a bad idea maybe, but apparently the resolution went nowhere.

On 2/2/15 a legislator introduced a bill in the Indiana House to move Indiana University to the Purdue campus. Was this to save taxpayers' money? Later reports indicated that the bill was not approved.

On 2/7/15 a new college football rule came into effect involving 4th down. No longer would an incomplete pass out of bounds on 4th down be used to establish the new scrimmage line for the opposing team's takeover possession which, strangely, was the existing rule. Thereafter, either a kick (punt or FG attempt) would be required, or the opposing team would take over at the unchanged line of scrimmage. A definite rule improvement at the time, wouldn't you say?

(Continued next page, column 3)

1990	Indiana	94-90 OT	Louisville	Indiana, 53-31
	Indiana	83-82	Indianapolis	Indiana, 54-31
1991	Kentucky	103-101	Indianapolis	Indiana, 54-32
	Indiana	98-86	Louisville	Indiana, 55-32
1992	Kentucky	85-84	Louisville	Indiana, 55-33
	Indiana	87-66	Indianapolis	Indiana, 56-33
1993	Kentucky	107-91	Louisville	Indiana, 56-34
	Indiana	107-89	Indianapolis	Indiana, 57-34
1994	Indiana	91-87	Louisville	Indiana, 58-34
	Kentucky	75-73	Indianapolis	Indiana, 58-35
1995	Indiana	102-95 OT	Indianapolis	Indiana, 59-35
	Kentucky	101-84	Lexington	Indiana, 59-36
1996	Indiana	98-87	Lexington	Indiana, 60-36
	Kentucky	106-99	Indianapolis	Indiana, 60-37
1997	Indiana	102-88	Indianapolis	Indiana, 61-37
	Kentucky	108-75	Frankfort	Indiana, 61-38
1998	Kentucky	80-76	Frankfort	Indiana, 61-39
	Indiana	108-70	Indianapolis	Indiana, 62-39
1999	Indiana	92-72	Indianapolis	Indiana, 63-39
	Indiana	94-91	Frankfort	Indiana, 64-39
2000	Indiana	115-83	Frankfort	Indiana, 65-39
	Indiana	116-100	Indianapolis	Indiana, 66-39
2001	Kentucky	103-90	Owensboro	Indiana, 66-40
	Indiana	107-91	Indianapolis	Indiana, 67-40
2002	Indiana	87-82	Owensboro	Indiana, 68-40
	Indiana	96-76	Indianapolis	Indiana, 69-40
2003	Indiana	73-70 OT	Owensboro	Indiana, 70-40
	Indiana	75-69	Indianapolis	Indiana, 71-40
2004	Kentucky	89-81	Owensboro	Indiana, 71-41
	Indiana	93-90	Indianapolis	Indiana, 72-41
2005	Indiana	94-72	Bowling Green	Indiana, 73-41
	Indiana	88-65	Indianapolis	Indiana, 74-41
2006	Indiana	90-74	Bowling Green	Indiana, 75-41
	Indiana	94-66	Indianapolis	Indiana, 76-41
2007	Indiana	97-79	Bowling Green	Indiana, 77-41
	Indiana	104-87	Indianapolis	Indiana, 78-41
2008	Indiana	83-82	Indianapolis	Indiana, 79-41
	Kentucky	95-78	Louisville	Indiana, 79-42
2009	Indiana	78-65	Indianapolis	Indiana, 80-42
	Indiana	64-49	Louisville	Indiana, 81-42
2010	Indiana	100-97	Louisville	Indiana, 82-42
	Indiana	81-69	Indianapolis	Indiana, 83-42
2011	Indiana	105-103	Louisville	Indiana, 84-42
	Indiana	94-82	Indianapolis	Indiana, 85-42
2012	Indiana	90-85	Louisville	Indiana, 86-42
	Indiana	83-73	Indianapolis	Indiana, 87-42
2013	Indiana	114-60	Louisville	Indiana, 88-42
	Indiana	84-77	Indianapolis	Indiana, 89-42
2014	Indiana	104-94	Lexington	Indiana, 90-42
	Indiana	111-99	Indianapolis	Indiana, 91-42

(Continued next page)

On 3/5/15 Bill Zeller of the Brazil High basketball team scored 58 points against Staunton, in a game Brazil won 72-18. He scored 26 FGs and 6 free throws. Zeller went on to play for Indiana University.

On 1/8/18 Indianapolis Manual played Brazil and used a "colored boy" on the court, possibly for the first time. His last name was Bybee. By the 1921-22 season, another "colored boy" named Otis Tuggle played for Brazil. He lettered in football, track, and basketball during his tenure at Brazil and graduated in 1924. In the early days of Hoosier athletics, blacks were often not welcomed onto the athletic teams.

On 10/27/22 Brazil downed Gosport in football 158-0. According to the Daily Times, that "very nearly equaled the state record." Now we wonder what the record might possibly have been, right?

Indiana's Game: The Rise and Decline of High School Basketball in Indiana (Part 1)

by

Michael Wohlford

Editor's Note: This is the first of a three-part series sequence. It is a synopsis of Indiana basketball's great history and then its precipitous drop in popularity during the decade following the 1996 decision to adopt class basketball. It offers not one, but several reasons why many of Indiana's fans began to lose interest. The synopsis was written as an academic honors thesis by the author while a graduating student at Ball State University in 2007. His thesis was prepared under the supervision & guidance of Dr. Anthony Edmonds. Wohlford's references for his thesis will be shown at the end of the series sequence. He is currently the boys' head basketball coach and

(Continued next page, column 3)

2015	Indiana	83-80	Lexington	Indiana, 92-42
	Indiana	88-77	Indianapolis	Indiana, 93-42
2016	Indiana	106-84	Indianapolis	Indiana, 94-42
	Indiana	99-96	Louisville	Indiana, 95-42
2017	Indiana	94-89	Indianapolis	Indiana, 96-42
	Kentucky	111-110 2OT	Frankfort	Indiana, 96-43
2018	Kentucky	100-89	Louisville	Indiana, 96-44
	Indiana	109-81	Indianapolis	Indiana, 97-44
2019	Indiana	97-64	Louisville	Indiana, 98-44
	Indiana	120-74	Indianapolis	Indiana, 99-44
2020	No games – COVID-19 pandemic			---
2021	Indiana	93-70	Owensboro	Indiana, 100-44
	Indiana	86-70	Indianapolis	Indiana, 101-44

a Social Studies teacher at Goshen High School.

Abstract:

Although the game of basketball was invented in Massachusetts in 1891, many consider Indiana as its place of development. Since being introduced to the state in 1893, basketball and Indiana was a near-perfect match. For various reasons analyzed in this thesis, basketball

(Continued on this page, column 1)

became a key fixture in Hoosier society. Many towns and communities across the state began identifying themselves by their local high school basketball team, and as time went by in the middle part of the 20th century a sort of 'Hoosier Hysteria' took hold of the state. Indiana became basketball-crazed, as massive high school gymnasiums were built and hordes of fans traveled to watch their local team play. But these 'glory days' have come and passed. This paper investigates reasons why Indiana high school basketball has declined in popularity among the state's population. Not only does this thesis show how Indiana became known for its high school basketball in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, but it also begins to explain why high school basketball is becoming less important for Hoosier citizens. The last aim of this paper is to look towards the future of Indiana high school basketball. Using the story of the 2006-2007 Muncie Central Bearcats, for which I served as an assistant coach, this paper examines prospects for a return to glory for high school basketball in Indiana.

Acknowledgements:

I want to thank Dr. Anthony Edmonds for advising me through this project. His direction on writing this paper was greatly appreciated, as was his editing and suggestions. I

could not have chosen a better advisor. I also want to thank my grandfather and father for instilling in me a burning desire to be part of Hoosier Hysteria. It was through them that I too became basketball crazed.

Prologue:

As the senior captain on my high school basketball team, Columbus East, it was my main goal to win the school's first sectional title in seven seasons. But now, late in the fourth quarter of our sectional semifinal match-up against the Bloomington South Panthers, the possibilities for realizing this dream were looking bleak. To make matters worse, with just under a minute remaining, the whistle blew, the buzzer sounded, and the crowd rose to its feet to cheer as I had just committed my fifth and final foul. The cheering was muffled as I fought back tears and made my way to our team's bench on the other end of the floor. Distraught, I knew this would be my last game in an Olympian jersey; it would be my last game in front of the Columbus East fans. More importantly, this would be my last game as an Indiana high school basketball player. What I had known for the past four seasons was now coming to a close, signed, sealed, and delivered in an 88-78 loss. As I sat there watching the final seconds tick off the clock, I couldn't help but cry in dejection,

knowing that I would never put on a jersey again. I had fallen short of my dreams. And now, a little over four years removed from that scene, I still long for Indiana high school basketball. The truth is, I don't think I'll ever get over losing it.

A variation of this scene is played out for thousands of Indiana high school basketball players every year. Since its inception in 1911, the Indiana high school basketball state tournament has claimed the tears of many seniors playing their last game. From its beginnings until now, players and their fans have lived and died by the bounce of the ball and the sound of the net. Indiana is a basketball-crazed state. The popular saying goes, "In 49 states it's just basketball. But this is Indiana," and throughout the history of the game this quotation rings true to the core. From the creation of the largest high school gymnasiums in the United States and their subsequent capacity crowds to the development of Hoosier basketball legends, Indiana has been described by many as the Mecca for basketball in this country. Basketball has always just seemed *different* in Indiana. It has always been more important, more valued. I mean, what else is there to do in the middle of a cornfield but pick up a ball and shoot some hoops? Though the perception by outsiders may still be that Indiana is a hotbed for hoops

junkies, the reality within the state is that high school basketball is dying.

For whatever the reason, Indiana's passion for the game is on the decline. Many blame high school basketball's decline in popularity on class basketball, saying that the game was given its death sentence in 1996 when the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA) voted to trade the state's fabled single-class tournament in for a devalued four-class version that crowns four champions in one day. Others argue that the events of 1996 were not the sole reason for the decline in game attendance and overall enthusiasm, but that high school basketball has been on the decline since its heyday in the '50s, '60s, and '70s. Statistics back this second assertion, as an estimated 1.55 million fans attended the state tournament in 1962, far more than the 786,024 fans who attended the tournament in 1997, the last year of the single-class tournament.! These numbers, along with the fact that the state's population actually grew during those 35 years, are evidence that Indiana high school basketball was on the decline well before class basketball took hold.

My argument falls somewhere in-between these two camps. Class basketball was the figurative straw that broke the camel's back. It was not the sole reason for high school basketball's loss in popularity, but it surely expedited the process. The fact is high school basketball has been rapidly falling on the list of priorities for Hoosiers since the glory days of the mid-20th century. There are simply too many other things to do. I would argue these things are less meaningful than what many call "Hoosier Hysteria," but the collective attention of Indiana's citizens has been pulled in many directions away from basketball. What was once the thing to do on

Friday and Saturday nights for students, parents, and community members alike, has now become the fourth or fifth option on the list.

This thesis is multi-faceted. Not only do I wish to outline the reasons for high school basketball's decline since its glory days, but I hope to show why and how Indiana basketball was once the most important activity this state had to offer its citizens. I want to show why high school gymnasiums with capacities topping out at the absurdly high 9,314 (New Castle Chrysler Fieldhouse) were routinely filled to the brim. Finally, I want to use my experience coaching the Muncie Central basketball team this year to show that high school basketball is still held dear by the players who play the game and the coaches who coach it. To these players and coaches the game still matters most. This is an aspect of high school basketball that I do not believe has fallen on hard times. My passion for Indiana high school basketball goes so far that I have often been caught saying, "I wish I lived in the '50s." The painful truth of the demise of high school basketball in Indiana has hit me as hard as anyone. Growing up in a family of basketball maniacs, I come by this trait honestly. The only thing most of us die-hards around the state have is history. And it is with this history that I begin.

Indiana High School Basketball: The Beginnings

When looking at a list of famous Hoosiers, one can't help but remark about its inordinate number of basketball stars. Featuring the likes of John Wooden, Oscar Robertson, and Larry Bird, a list of Indiana basketball legends is a veritable who's who among the game's greats. From the start of high school basketball in the early 20th century, Indiana has been a hotbed for basketball stars. But the reasoning

behind Indiana's moniker of basketball-crazy doesn't stop there. For decades in the 20th century, communities poured into gymnasiums around the state. From the small towns that mark rural Indiana to the high population areas of Gary, Fort Wayne, Evansville, and Indianapolis, fans fought over seats for ballgames. For the players, making one's high school team was a badge of honor. Playing year round, through rain, snow, or sleet, almost every young Hoosier worked towards a dream of making the high school team. For the fans, basketball was a religion of sorts. No one questioned the weekend's activity during the winter, taking it for granted that the ballgame would take center stage. Towns and communities gathered around their "heroes," cheering them on in victory and defeat. A sense of pride could be gained by a single win, and towns would collectively cry out in mourning after a loss in the state tournament.

Though basketball began in Massachusetts, the game's inventor, James Naismith, summed Hoosier Hysteria up best in 1939 when he said, "Basketball really had its origin in Indiana, which remains today the center of the sport. First introduced to the state in 1893 when "Nicholas C. McKay, a protege of Naismith, brought the game to Indiana, basketball has developed over time. From decade to decade since the late 19th century the game has evolved, starting with peach baskets and ending with three-pointers. But why did basketball put such a stranglehold on Indiana? Why not Ohio, Michigan, or Illinois? What makes Indiana the hotbed for hoops? The IHSAA gives one such answer to these questions. In a book celebrating its 100-year anniversary, *Play On*, it suggests that "Basketball and Indiana were made for each

other. "With a native Protestant population greater than that of other states in the Midwest, Indiana was amply populated with YMCAs, which disseminated the new sport (basketball) to the general population." Whether this is the impetus or not, basketball struck a chord with the population of Indiana. With 34 percent of the Hoosier population as citing membership to a church in 1906, these Christians saw basketball as a way to socialize their youngsters by instilling strong moral values through the game.

Aside from the moral values the sport offered, youngsters were also able to learn about hard work, dedication, and passion. These traits translated over into a year-long obsession with the sport. Basketball's importance in Indiana can only be understood by driving through the state and seeing that almost every young boy has some type of basketball goal on or in his barn, garage, driveway, etc. These boys play basketball *every day* of the year. They seem to thrive on playing basketball. It seems to be a natural instinct for them. Whether it was in the rain, snow, or sleet, young Indiana boys developed their skills through hours and hours of hard work and dedication.

Basketball quickly caught on in all parts of Indiana. Starting in a YMCA in Crawfordsville, it soon found its way into high schools around the state. For multiple reasons, schools found basketball to be a benefit to their students. Not only did the sport encourage fitness and teamwork, but it also only required five players, which made it the ideal sport for smaller schools. Much more accommodating than football (which required eleven participants per team) to Hoosiers living in predominately rural areas, basketball also only required an enclosed barn with a wooden floor

and peach baskets at both ends. In Indiana, barns were not hard to come by. And then there was the agricultural component. Indiana was geared around the fall harvest time and the springtime planting season. Many high school boys were expected to work on the family farm after school. Basketball fit in well with this tradition, as practice started in the late fall, soon after the harvest was completed and ended in late March, just before spring planting began. Basketball fit the schedule of Indiana to perfection. The winter had always been a down time on the farm, which allowed basketball to garner all of the attention. Basketball and Indiana was truly a match made in heaven.

Famed Indiana high school basketball historian Herbert Schwomeyer defines Hoosier Hysteria by saying, "There just isn't anything quite like it. 'Word descriptions have been attempted by some of the best in the business, but until you have been personally involved as a participant, you wouldn't believe it anyway.'" Schwomeyer qualifies participation in Indiana basketball as not only playing or coaching, but also includes the "spectators and team supporters as well." From the very beginnings of the sport in Indiana, basketball attracted quite a high level of participation, according to Schwomeyer's definition. Communities from around the state flocked to their local gymnasium (or barn) to cheer on their team. A sense of community pride swelled throughout the winter, culminating with the state finals, first played in Bloomington in 1911. At the first high school basketball state finals, 1,200 fans packed into Indiana University's Assembly Hall (the original, built in 1896 with a listed capacity of 600) paying 25 cents to see Crawfordsville beat Lebanon 27-

18. Hoosier Hysteria had begun.

Advancements in technology allowing for better transportation and communication spurred "Indiana's game" in the next 25 years. Paved highway mileage in Indiana increased dramatically during the 1920s and 1930s, culminating in "more than half of its 10,100 miles of roads being paved with concrete or asphalt by 1940. This allowed an impressive increase to occur in the attendance at high school basketball games. For fans who could not attend the game, whether it was because they lacked the transportation or because tickets were sold out, the next best thing was to listen to the game on the radio at home or at the local gathering place. The *Franklin Evening Star* reported in December 1920 one such account. "Almost as thrilling as watching the real game at Martinsville was the watching of the electric basketball court installed at the Opera House. 'From the time that the first purple light flashed at five minutes after 8:00 p.m. until the close of the game, the crowd was wild.'"

Basketball continued to grow in popularity around the state, as more fans were able to travel to the game or listen on the radio. During this time, many individuals and teams caught the attention of the basketball-crazed state, adding to the lore that was becoming Indiana high school basketball. The "Franklin Wonder Five" was one such team, winning three straight state championships from 1920 to 1922. No team would complete such a feat until the Marion Giants in the mid-to-late 1980s. A mere decade after that first state championship in 1911, "The Wonder Five were the New York Yankees of Indiana high school basketball, and their appearance in the state finals three years running caused such a demand for tickets that

the IHSAA was forced to move the site of the championship to the Indianapolis Coliseum. An astonishing 12,500 fans, more than 10 times the number of spectators who attended the first state finals just 11 years before, attended Franklin's third straight championship. The Wonder Five were such a spectacle in 1920 and 1921 that they often played their games in the Franklin College gymnasium, which seated 1,000 fans, double their high school's 500. As a result, the local school board decided to build a new gymnasium, one that would seat some 3,000 spectators. This development was the first of many building projects that would mark Indiana with huge gymnasiums in the decades to come, making Indiana the finest place in the world to watch a high school basketball contest. This statement was validated in 1925 when the game's creator, James Naismith attended the states finals in front of 15,000 screaming fans and said, "The possibilities of basketball as seen there were a revelation to me." What Naismith wasn't aware of was that Indiana basketball had just begun growing in popularity.

Along with the Wonder Five, Indiana's first dynasty, the early days featured many individuals whose names would shine brightly throughout history. One such luminary is John Wooden. Born in 1910, Wooden grew up under modest conditions on a farm outside of Martinsville in rural Morgan County. Taught the basics of the game early on, Wooden quickly became one of the state's stars. While playing for the Martinsville Artesians from 1926 to 1928, Wooden and his fellow 'Arties' won the state championship once and made the championship game three times in all. Going on from Martinsville, Wooden led Purdue University to the National

Championship during his senior season in 1932 and was a three-time All-American. Wooden is best known for his coaching days. After graduating from Purdue, Wooden taught English and coached basketball in South Bend. Soon thereafter, he received the head coaching position at Indiana State, and in 1948 made the move to California and the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). Though he experienced modest success early on, Wooden would go on to win 10 national championships in the span of 12 years (7 in a row at one point) and retire in 1975. His coaching record of 10 NCAA basketball championships far outnumbers that of any other coach in the history of college basketball.

Led by the Wonder Five and Wooden, paved roads and radio transmissions, Indiana basketball was here to stay by the 1930s. In the '30s and '40s, larger and larger high school gymnasiums began to spring up all around the state and attendance numbers leaped to historical highs. To accommodate such a boost in attendance, the state finals moved to the Butler Fieldhouse in 1928. Each March, 15,000 fans attended the state finals, held in a venue that was the largest basketball arena in the world until the late 1950s. Started by teams and individuals that have stood the test of time, Indiana high school basketball became the state's passion from the very beginning of the sport. What would occur in the coming decades would make Hoosier Hysteria into something truly special that had the whole nation talking. **Next Issue: Part 2 "The Glory Days."**

WHO KILLED HOOSIER HYSTERIA?

Wendell Trogdon, now deceased, was a prolific writer of Indiana basketball stories, newspaper

columns, and books. Besides being a dedicated member of IHSBHS and major contributor to the pages of Boxscore, Trogdon was thought to be an outspoken critic of Indiana's 1997 decision to initiate class basketball into its high schools' athletic programs. He died in 2014, after which his obit/bio appeared on page 2 of Boxscore's Fall 2014 issue. Interested readers can key in the IHSBHS website at indianabasketballhistory.com where all the past issues of Boxscore are available for consumption.

One of Trogdon's final works before his death was reflective of his attitude toward class basketball. Its title posed the rhetorical question: "Who Killed Hoosier Hysteria?" The book was published by Backroads Press of Mooresville, Indiana and contains interesting commentaries by both the author and publisher regarding that transition from single-class to multi-class basketball. Among them appear the comments that "Basketball once was the unchallenged king of Indiana sports, the nearest gymnasium an escape from life's routine. 'So, who killed Hoosier Hysteria? 'Assuming it is dead, not just ailing as we (might) suspect, the answer is "We all did." 'We agree the change to team classifications is partly at fault for the lack of (current) attendance at games. 'But so are other factors, among them school consolidation, sectional realignments, mid-week games, societal and cultural changes, demographics, proliferation of other sports, and competition for time." Trogdon's book examines all these in detail. Check out on-line book dealers, Amazon, Ebay, your local or school library, The Indiana BB HOF, or other seller sources, to read this enlightening book, published in 2004.

Boone County Basketball Hall of Fame
Boone County, Indiana

MISSION STATEMENT

To recognize, honor, promote and preserve the history of basketball via the establishment of a Boone County High School Basketball Hall of Fame. This county-wide Hall of Fame will be a depository of history and of accomplished Boone County basketball athletes, coaches and supportive enthusiasts / visionaries as Inductees. This history will include both active and now those closed - a total of twelve schools. Additionally, it will also be a means to provide annual scholarships to Boone County graduating senior basketball athletes (both male and female) from currently active high schools. Scholarship recipients need to attend a college, university or other secondary educational facility.

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Boone County Basketball Hall of Fame membership is open to everyone. All members are required to pay an annual membership of \$20.00 (per each calendar year) which will be used mainly to provide annual scholarships with a very small percentage of the dollars being used for administrative costs such as postage, photocopies and website cost.

Please complete the information below and return it to Boone County Basketball Hall of Fame Treasurer c/o Dick Threlkeld, 9050 West 550 North, Thorntown, IN 46071 with your \$20 annual membership check made payable to Boone County Basketball Hall of Fame. Additional donations are accepted which will be used for scholarships. *(Mail checks only. May pay cash to treasurer if in person.)*

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Name _____ Date _____

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All sports in which I competed/lettered were *(list all-use extra sheet of paper if necessary:)*

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Other pertinent information you would like to share: _____

www.BooneCountyBasketballHallOfFame.com

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(Indiana High School Basketball Historical Society)

Join a statewide group of sports-minded individuals who have a common interest in the history of high school basketball, Indiana's favorite sport. Membership dues are currently just \$10 per year. Established in 1994, and loosely associated with the Hall of Fame in New Castle, IHSBHS (pronounced "ish-bish") publishes four seasonal newsletters for its members, each issue usually 12 to 16 pages in content, known as Boxscore. This newsletter contains diverse items, including short stories that recount tales of former Hoosier ballplayers and their schools' teams. Members are invited, but not required, to submit their own personal stories for inclusion in Boxscore.

Membership Application

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

E-Mail (optional for receiving Boxscore) _____

Telephone No. (optional) _____

High School and graduation year _____

Check or money order to IHSBHS for \$10 enclosed? _____

Mail to: IHSBHS Treasurer Rocky Kenworthy, 710 E. 800 S., Clayton, IN 46118

Board of Directors: Roger Robison (Frankfort '54), Harley Sheets (Lebanon '54), Cliff Johnson (Western '54), Rocky Kenworthy (Cascade '74), Tim Puet (Valley, PA '69), Leigh Evans (Castle '86), John Ockomon (Pendleton '60), Jeff Luzadder (Dunkirk '74), Curtis Tomak (Linton '59), Kermit Paddack (Sheridan '02), Hugh Schaefer (Freelandville '61), Bill Boone (Ladoga '56).



Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame Annual Membership Program

The Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame is committed to recognizing Indiana's Basketball Legends and inspiring Indiana's basketball future.

The Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. The operation of the Hall of Fame is dependent upon attendance, gift shop sales, funds generated through activities and events, gifts and donations. The Annual Membership Program was established to allow all basketball enthusiasts to participate in the support of preserving and sharing Indiana's basketball history.

As an Annual Member of the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame you will receive the following recognition and benefits during the next year.

- name recognition on the Annual Membership display in the lobby of the museum
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- free museum admission for the member and 3 guests, 20% discount in the gift shop
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<input type="checkbox"/> Active H.S. Coach	\$25
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Please make check payable to Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame, One Hall of Fame Court, New Castle, IN 47362. The Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. Your contribution is tax deductible.

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