

NBA PLAYOFFS

Back in effect



Roy Hibbert dominated the paint Wednesday, scoring a season-high 28 points to help the Pacers even their second-round series with Washington. MATT KRYG/INDIANAPOLIS STAR

Hibbert comes up big as Pacers even series

By Michael Marot
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Roy Hibbert broke out of his playoff funk with a season-best 28 points and nine rebounds, leading the Indiana Pacers to an 86-82 victory over the Washington Wizards on Wednesday night that tied the Eastern Conference semifinals at 1-1.

It was a stark contrast to Hibbert's abysmal, scoreless showing in Monday

night's loss — and most of this year's playoffs.

But after hearing 48 hours of constant criticism and questions, Hibbert responded with the kind of game Indiana desperately needed. He made his first four shots, dominated the middle and produced big basket after big basket.

Game 3 is Friday in Washington. Marcin Gortat had 21 points and

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HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL

Bates out after 29 seasons

Longtime McCutcheon coach will not have his contract renewed in '15

By Sam King
sking@jconline.com

When Jim Bates arrived at McCutcheon in 1981, there was no softball program.

In 1986, he started one and built it into a state power, winning the 2008 Class 4A state championship with a team led by Miss Softball Tori Collins.

For the first time in the program's history, McCutcheon will seek a new softball coach.

Bates chose not to adhere to the administration's wishes to resign prior to Wednesday's deadline and his contract for the 2014-15 softball season will not be renewed, McCutcheon athletic director Ryan Walden confirmed.

A statement released by the McCutcheon athletic department lays out a goal of hiring a new coach by June 30.



Jim Bates

In 29 seasons, Bates is 574-242, winning 11 sectional and seven regional titles and making three final four appearances, including the one state championship, and a runner-up finish in 2005 after a nine-inning loss to Martinsville. Bates will coach the Mavericks through the end of the season.

"We are grateful for the efforts that coach Bates has made placing McCutcheon softball on the map as one of the best softball programs in the state," Walden said in a statement.

In 2008, Bates was inducted into the Indiana Softball Hall of Fame.

In addition to Collins' 2008 Miss Softball recognition, the Mavericks have produced two IHSAA state mental attitude award winners in Heather Han (2005) and Elizabeth Scanlon (2007). 14 academic all-state selections and 26 Indiana All-Stars. Thirty-seven former players continued their careers in college.

"It's been very rewarding. It's all been worth it," Bates said. "I am the kind of person who takes ownership in stuff. It's been real satisfying to build it up and to get to that point. It's a shame it couldn't have a better ending. Maybe that is my fault. Maybe I should've got out after (2008)."

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GAME 3

Indiana at Washington
When: Friday, 8 p.m.
TV: ESPN

HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL

For second straight day, CC nips Delphi in seventh

By Sam King
sking@jconline.com

DELPHI — Coy Cronk grew up in Delphi, befriending members of the current Oracles baseball team who he once called teammates.

On Wednesday night, he broke their hearts.

Cronk's two-run single gave Central Catholic the lead in the top of the seventh and was part of a six-run inning that deflated Delphi 7-4 in a battle

between two teams ranked second in Class 2A.

"A lot of them are my good friends and I still hang out with them and talk to them and text them," said Cronk, who also had an RBI double off the wall in the first. "This game meant a lot to me. I felt pretty confident at bat in the seventh inning and sat on a good breaking pitch. That's the moment I've been dreaming about since I transferred in

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Delphi's Brent Hawn slides in for a steal of second base, beating the tag from Central Catholic's Anthony Berumen. JERRY SCHULTHEISS/FOR THE JOURNAL & COURIER

PURDUE FOOTBALL

Can Purdue keep its streak going?

Allen is Boilers' best hope in NFL draft

By Mike Carmin
mcarmin@jonline.com

Since 1998, at least one Purdue player has been selected in the NFL draft.

The streak is on the line as the annual event begins tonight in New York City. The first three rounds will take place tonight and Friday, with the seventh-round draft concluding Saturday.

Which former Boilermaker will keep the streak alive?

Ricardo Allen

The undersized cornerback probably has the best chance,

based on the numerous mock drafts. But the NFL is a copycat league and coaches are looking for big cornerbacks to battle the tall wide receivers. Think the Seattle Seahawks, who won the Super Bowl.

Allen, though, brings the right attitude and usually plays bigger than his 5-foot-9 frame. He had a knack for big plays during his four-year career, an area that can't be overlooked. He was the only Boilermaker to participate in the NFL scouting combine.

What they're saying: "Short, lean-framed, battle-tested corner who lacks exceptional athletic traits and will always have physical limitations but has enough competitiveness and ball skills to compete for a spot as a

reserve." — Nolan Nawrocki, NFL.com.

Bruce Gaston

The defensive tackle is mentioned in the mock drafts as a possible late-round selection. He was a four-year starter and adjusted to a new position, playing outside in the 3-4 scheme implemented midway through last season.

Gaston had a career-high 48 tackles last year and posted team highs in tackles for loss and sacks.

What they're saying: "He is more of a plunger than a consistent pass rusher and won't consistently play on the other side of the line of scrimmage, but brings high character and high

effort and should provide quality depth at the next level." — cbssports.com

Kevin Pamphile

Pamphile performed well enough at Purdue's pro day that the 6-foot-5, 310-pound offensive tackle visited several teams, according to published reports. A couple of mock drafts have Pamphile as a sixth- or seventh-round selection.

He's still relatively new at playing offense after starting his college career on the defensive line. Pamphile concentrated on basketball during high school, but he did play one year of football in Florida.

What they're saying: "College left tackle with intriguing

foot quickness and length to be groomed in a zone-blocking scheme. Developmental project." — Nawrocki, NFL.com

Cody Webster

It's not uncommon for punters to be selected in the draft — Minnesota picked UCLA's Jeff Locke in the fifth round last year — but the left-footed Webster is likely looking at a free-agent signing.

That wouldn't be all bad, since the Big Ten's Punter of the Year could select his destination. He's ranked No. 3 at the position by walterfootball.com and No. 8 by cbssports.com. Webster proved he was durable, punting 70 times and averaging 43.5 yards last season.

PURDUE SOFTBALL

Game no longer a chore for battle-tested Monchek

By Sam King
sking@jonline.com

Softball seemed to become almost a chore for Maia Monchek.

The cuts in the batting cage, the outfield drills, the pre-practice stretching, whatever it is, Monchek is making sure to fully bask in it these days.

That happens when you have something you love taken away — twice.

A collision with Wisconsin's first baseman during a 2010 Big Ten game caused a torn ACL and meniscus. She missed the remainder of her freshman season after starting 40 games in left field for Purdue's softball team. Complications with built-up scar tissue caused her to miss the 2011 season.

She stayed behind on road trips. She watched from the dugout while teammates enjoyed the game she for so long had taken for granted.

"It definitely helped me appreciate the game a whole lot more," Monchek said. "It turned something that seemed like a job into something I realized how much I love it once I couldn't do it for such a long time."

When the 2013 season closed, so too did the belief that Monchek had laced up her cleats for her last game.

The San Mateo, Calif., native had accepted that as fact, but this story had a silver lining.

The Boilermakers hired a new coach and the head of the program had a need for a leader who bought into every word the new staff said and made sure the rest of the team understood. Kim Schuette had heard of a three-year starter who still had a year of eligibility



Maia Monchek provides Purdue with some needed veteran leadership. PURDUE UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS

BIG TEN TOURNAMENT

At Northwestern

Purdue (26-27-1)
vs. Indiana (17-38-1)

Time: Noon

What's next: The winner plays Minnesota (38-9) at noon Friday in the quarterfinals.

but was not offered the opportunity to return.

"She said, 'I will be that, coach, you can trust me,'" Schuette recalls. "She has definitely not let me down."

So Monchek came back, much to the delight of her teammates — but, as the eldest Boilermaker, also as the brunt of their jokes.

They called her the water girl. The offered her a cane to assist with walking at her advanced age.

"When she dives, 'Are you

OK, Maia? Do you need us to get your wheelchair?' It's funny," senior Tori Chindo said, giggling at the thought.

It is lighthearted and certainly is funny, because Monchek would rather be the butt of the joke than the alternative.

She sometimes wonders what could have been. But she's never hung her head and she's kept her promise to Schuette. No longer possessing the power to rip the ball over the fence or having the speed to slap the ball and beat out an infield single, Monchek has found new ways to help Purdue beat opponents.

"I lost a lot of my speed and a lot of my power (after the injury)," Monchek said. "I had to adjust as a player. My goal now when I am up to bat is how I can move base runners or how I can do little things to help my team win rather than hit a deep ball."

Schuette puts a more positive spin on Monchek's talents.

"She makes every throw right on target. Maybe it's not the strongest arm or the fastest, but she gets it there as fast as anyone else and it is right on target," Schuette said. "She might not have the speed the other outfielders do, but she knows how to jump on the ball and that makes up for it."

Purdue begins the Big Ten tournament today in Evanston, Ill.

This time, Monchek knows for certain she'll be done when Purdue's season ends. First, she has some priorities that would fulfill Schuette's request of her during the initial discussion of a comeback.

"What I want most is for us to win the Big Ten tournament, battle as hard as we can and play as hard as we can. That's all we can do," Monchek said.



Delphi's Jason Sterrett pitched six strong innings, but Central Catholic got the better of him in the seventh. JERRY SCHULTHEISS FOR THE J&C

KNIGHTS

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eighth grade."

The CC victory, coupled with the 3-2 win against the Oracles on Tuesday, puts CC in the driver's seat for the Hoosier Conference championship. The Knights (15-5) have two games each against Tipton and Benton Central and are now 8-0 in league play.

For the Oracles (13-4, 4-2), who now are in the same sectional as CC, the two matchups this week showed they can play with the Knights, who have won five consecutive Class A state championships. Now it's a matter of executing for a full seven innings.

"We played solid baseball for six innings and that is something we can take away, but we didn't get it done," Delphi coach Kerry Yoder said.

Hayes Cronk, who started on the mound for CC but exited after walking the leadoff batter in the fifth, doubled between strikeouts from Jason Sterrett in the seventh. Sterrett thought he'd recorded his third strikeout on a pitch on the outside that

Jackson Anthrop took for a ball. Anthrop then singled in Jake Page, making the score 4-2 and starting the rally.

"We never give up. We fight until the last out," said Anthrop, who was 2-for-4 and scored twice.

Adam Lovell doubled in Cronk, Evan Kennedy was plunked in the back and two-run singles from Coy Cronk and Nigel Hensley followed.

It was another game where CC seemed to thrive with the pressure cranked up.

"It's CC and they win state championships. They know how to win," Delphi shortstop Brent Hawn said.

Sterrett, who was 3-for-4 at the plate, pitched six solid innings before getting tagged in the seventh. CC reliever Nate Wiercioch retired six straight in the fifth and sixth innings to earn the win and Jarrod Patzschke pitched a perfect seventh for the save.

"Our pitchers aren't going to outthrow anyone," said Lovell, who was 2-for-4. "We don't have a 90-mile-an-hour arm out there, but we know they can all throw strikes and we try to rely on our defense to make the plays behind them."

BATES

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McCutcheon is 5-13 this season following a 14-10 victory at Westfield Tuesday night. McCutcheon started three freshmen and four sophomores in what has been a rebuilding season.

"What they told me is that my kids are not playing with passion and we're not developing leaders and the kids are not inspired," Bates said.

Bates informed the team Tuesday that this will be his last season.

"I still enjoy what I am doing and that's why I stuck at it. I am old enough to draw social security, but I love what I am

doing," Bates said.

Bates' current plans are to continue to teach in the math department. He will not seek another coaching opportunity. Bates had hoped to coach at least one more season before pondering retirement.

Bates, who said he was taken aback by the administration's decision, has coached three games since knowing he would not return.

"I have kind of approached it a little different. I've really tried to enjoy the time with the kids and enjoy being with them," Bates said. "Wins and losses don't matter at this point. If I can help the kids, to me, they are like family, and if I can help them out so they can be better, then it will be worth it for me."

PACERS

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Bradley Beal added 17 for the Wizards.

Washington took a 77-74 lead with 5:01 left in the game. Indiana scored six straight and never trailed again.

Washington had won all four of its previous road playoff games — three at Chicago and Monday night in Indy.

But Hibbert refused to let it happen again Wednesday.

He scored the first five points, blocked two shots and altered a handful of others on a night Indiana needed every contribution he could give.

Hibbert's one-handed dunk

cut the deficit to one with 7:57 left, and it was a nifty stop-and-go layup that got the Pacers within 77-76 three minutes later. That basket ignited the decisive spurt.

Paul George's steal on the ensuing possession led to a George Hill layup that gave Indiana a 78-77 lead, and Hibbert's inside presence opened the lane for George to drive for a two-handed dunk to make it 80-77.

All the Wizards could muster after that was an alley-oop layup by Gortat and a long 3-pointer from Beal that got the Wizards within 84-82 with 11 seconds to play.

But David West made two free throws and Hibbert, fittingly, grabbed the final rebound of the game to seal it.

Washington survived Indiana's opening flurry, tying the score at 23 after one quarter, then taking the lead and holding it for most of the second.

The Wizards pulled out to a six-point lead early in the third, but Indiana used a 15-3 spurt to turn a 33-48 deficit into a 63-56 lead with 3:55 to go.

Washington steadily closed the gap, getting within 68-64 at the end of three, tying the score at 69 when Drew Gooden made 1 of 2 free throws with 9:56 to go and retaking a 71-69 lead on Nene's 20-foot jumper with 9:10 left. The Wizards went up 77-74 on Beal's 15-foot pullup jumper with 5:01 to play, but Hibbert and George answered with the six straight points and the Pacers held on.