



PURDUE FOOTBALL



Northern Illinois quarterback Jordan Lynch got the better of Darrell Hazell and Kent State in last year's MAC championship game.

ANDREW WEBER/USA TODAY SPORTS

NBA



Paul George will reportedly make at least \$90 million over five years. MATT KRYGER/INDIANAPOLIS STAR

Pacers, George announce extension

All-Star signs five-year deal to remain in Indy

By Michael Pointer
Indianapolis Star

Indiana Pacers President Larry Bird saw Lance Stephenson standing in the crowd during a news conference to announce Paul George's contract extension and decided to send a little love to the fast-improving guard.

"Don't worry, Lance," Bird said. "You're going to have this next year."

That's when Bird will concern himself more about the potential financial impact on the rest of the team caused by George's extension, which was announced Wednesday.

"I'm not going to say this team is going to be together forever, but right now we're going to enjoy it because they're good guys and they've got a lot of talent," Bird said. "I don't know if they'll get to the Finals because you've got to go through Miami, Chicago, Brooklyn and all that, but I do feel right now we have a better team than what we put out there last year (when the Pacers lost to Miami in seven games in the Eastern Conference finals)."

The Pacers did not reveal contract details. But several people with the team or involved in the negotiations referred to it as a five-year contract (the fifth year is a player option) and as a "max deal," meaning George will be paid at least \$90 million.

Bird agreed the George signing gives the Pacers less financial flexibility. They have approximately \$64 million committed to nine players for the 2014-15 season, leaving little room to re-sign Stephenson, who will be entering the final year of his NBA entry-level contract, and fill out a roster with a salary cap slightly higher than this season's \$70.3 million, according to www.hoopsworld.com.

Longtime team leader Danny Granger likely will become a free agent after this season. Bird and Pacers officials have made it clear they have no plans to pay the NBA luxury tax, so keeping a young Pacers team together for the long term could be a challenge.

For now, those concerns are secondary to putting the best possible team on the court for this season, he said.

"We're going to play this year," Bird said. "You never know about the future, but right now, we're pretty satisfied with

Purdue coaching staff has experience with star QB Lynch, Northern Illinois

By Mike Carmin
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Purdue didn't play Northern Illinois last season.

But nearly half of the coaching staff did face the Huskies.

"I don't know if it's an advantage, but it gives us some ideas," linebackers coach Marcus Freeman said.

Darrell Hazell and his Kent State staff, which included Freeman, running backs coach Jafar Williams and defensive backs coach Jon Heacock, played Northern Illinois in last year's Mid-American Conference title game.

Meanwhile, current defensive coordinator Greg Hudson was Florida State's linebackers coach when the Seminoles squared off against the Huskies in the Orange Bowl.

"I think it helps a little bit, but it's not about what we know. It's trying to get it across to the players so they know it," Heacock said. "The good news is you

have some idea of what you're doing and where the gaps, the fits, and the coverages are. The challenge is to try and get it across to your players in three days."

The one player this year's staff is worried about is the same player they worried about last year. Quarterback Jordan Lynch returns, and this year's coaching staff fully understands the challenge.

In the conference title game, Northern Illinois outlasted Hazell's team 44-37 in double overtime, keeping Kent State from advancing to the Orange Bowl. The Huskies amassed 524 total yards as Lynch rushed for 160 and three touchdowns while throwing for 212 yards and one touchdown.

In the Orange Bowl, Florida State's defense was able to limit Lynch's running during the 31-10 victory. Lynch averaged 1.9 yards per carry on 23 attempts and threw for 176 yards and one touchdown.

"The one thing they do is they will line up on the widest blade of grass there is in

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bounds and then they'll move all over the place," Hudson said. "Their line knows what to do, and they're very sound in how they do it."

Hazell said his coaching staff plans to use more of the Florida State game plan than the one he used at Kent State.

"Watching the Florida State film gives you an idea of what we've done against them, but not necessarily what we're going to do," Freeman said. "Our plan wasn't that successful at Kent."

Defensive end Greg Latta said it's helpful the coaching staff has firsthand knowledge about a nonconference opponent Purdue has faced once in program history.

"They've already scouted them before," Latta said. "They run the same of-

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HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS SOCCER

Smith still has the touch

After year off, senior leads CC in scoring

By Sam King
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The threshold Megan Smith developed for pain met its match.

Plantar fasciitis in both feet kept Smith from playing soccer her junior season at Central Catholic, and that was the real pain in the situation.

"I was in a boot for seven months, which was hard," Smith said. "I eventually started to get used to the pain, but I never got used to not playing." It drove the Knights for-

ward to come back even stronger. She had surgery in April, recovered over the summer and returned for the start of the season ready to take the CC program to new heights.

Through Wednesday's match at Rossville, Smith leads a CC team ranked 12th in Class A with 14 goals despite missing two matches with an injury.

"She is so smart and always finds the back of the net," senior back Alaina Milazzo said. "Her sitting out was kind of a silver lining, because she could sit and watch what this team needs to improve and what our strengths and weaknesses are." Smith didn't score in a sea-

son-opening loss to Harrison, but it didn't take long for her to look like the player her teammates had become accustomed to.

She scored a pair of goals against Faith Christian in the second match, and the third she beat Delphi's keeper an impressive six times. She also had a hat trick against Crawfordsville on Sept. 16.

Smith may have lost a season of soccer, but she did not lose her knack for scoring goals, something she's gained a reputation for in her soccer career.

"I've been playing with

See SMITH, Page B5



Megan Smith leads Central Catholic in scoring this season. BRENT DRINKUT/JOURNAL & COURIER

See GEORGE, Page B5

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Here comes a regular ...

Wayne a model of consistency for Colts

By Mike Chappell
Indianapolis Star

Perspective on the iron-man streak Reggie Wayne is in the midst of resided a few cubicles to his left in the Indianapolis Colts' locker room.

Andrew Luck was informed Wayne has appeared in 185 consecutive regular-season games, the second-longest streak among active players behind Washington Redskins linebacker London Fletcher (243). Wayne's streak began in Baltimore on Dec. 2, 2001.

"It's remarkable, it really is," said Luck, who wouldn't appear in his 185th game until the ninth game of ... the 2023 season. "Definitely a high level of appreciation, me only being in the teens (19) in games. Then he plays at an incredibly high level.

"I was living in Austin, Texas, probably in the fifth grade (when Wayne's streak began)."

It continues Sunday when the Colts visit Jacksonville.

As an NFL receiver, Wayne's career is measured by numbers.

He needs 14 receptions to become the ninth player in NFL history with at least 1,000. He ranks No. 12 all-time with 13,268 yards and is tied for No. 22 with 79 touchdowns.

If Wayne maintains his current pace through the end of his contract, which expires after the 2014 season, his Pro Football Hall of Fame candidacy would include ranking No. 3 in NFL history with 1,151 receptions and 15,510 yards.

"I want to answer the bell," Wayne said. "I feel like if I'm there, the numbers are going to happen. You can't get 'em in the (cold) tub, you know what I mean? Can't get 'em at home watching TV."

"That's what this game is about, being accountable for your actions. I want my teammates to look at me and think, 'We don't have to worry about Reggie. He's gonna take care of his.'"

Coach Chuck Pagano first saw Wayne's durability while both were at the University of Miami.

"It was kind of mandated that the only way you came out of the game was if you got bone showing (through skin)," he said. "Otherwise, you stay in and play."

Wayne agreed with Pagano that his gotta-play mentality is rooted at The U.



Reggie Wayne has been a model of consistency for the Colts, playing in 185 straight games. MATT KRYGER/INDIANAPOLIS STAR

"If you got injured or didn't practice, the guy behind you probably was better than you anyway," Wayne said.

Miami funneled 27 draft picks into the NFL during Pagano's six years as an assistant. At one point, Wayne's backup was Andre Johnson, now a six-time Pro Bowl receiver with the Houston Texans. Wayne recalled a conversation with a Miami assistant coach.

"He said, 'Reggie, you need some time off?' I told him, 'No, I'm good,'" he said. "You think I'm going to let a young Andre Johnson touch the field? No, I'm gonna limp it out."

"No way was I going to let him in there. Not a chance. I know how it works."

Wayne plays, and practices. But he's not invulnerable.

The only time he missed a game with an injury was in 2001, when he suffered a high ankle sprain in his rookie minicamp. He suffered a shoulder injury in the first quarter two weeks ago against Miami, but kept playing. In 2010, he strained a hamstring at Washington, but the schedule saved him.

"We had a bye the next week," Wayne said. "If we played that next week, I probably wouldn't have made it."

Wayne's most serious brush with injury was prior to the Colts' Super Bowl XLIV loss to New Orleans af-

ter the 2009 season. He dealt with an injury to his right knee during the season, then tweaked it during the week of practice leading up to the game.

"It was fat, swollen," Wayne said. "I was probably 70 percent."

There never was a chance of him not playing.

"My head would have had to be detached from my body," he said.

But it isn't getting any easier. Wayne turns 35 in November.

He's generally the first at the team's Northwestside complex every day, arriving at 6:15 or 6:30 a.m., often ahead of the trainers.

"I do it all: steam room; contrast, hot and cold; or just hot or just cold. If I've got a little something that's bothering me, I get treatment for that," Wayne said. "Young Reggie would be like 'Ah, I'll get to it later.' When you get older, you take care of it now."

And then there's family life. Wayne's 2- and 4-year-old children are like puppies at the door when he returns home.

"They're asleep in the morning when I leave, so they can't wait for me to get home," he said. "When they see me around 5:30, 6 o'clock, they're all over me."

"It's two-a-days all over for me. I'm surprised you haven't seen me on the injury report for thigh contusions, hip pointers. They're coming at me full speed."

SMITH

Continued from Page B1

Megan since we were 10," senior Kelsey Harding said. "That's how it was when we played rec together."

It's been an impressive season to date, no doubt, but it hasn't surprised Knights coach Bill Kerr.

Like Harding, Kerr remembers

Smith's younger years and seeing the cerebral player weave her way into holes left by the defense, then sneaking by and letting teammates find her in open space.

"Megan is not the fastest, she definitely is not the biggest, but she plays extremely smart," Kerr said. "She puts herself in the right position on the field. She sits back and watches a play develop and moves herself into that open space where

she feels the ball is going to be."

When Smith returned for pre-season training this year, she admittedly had a little rust. Once she got back in the flow, everything came back to her.

"I was able to get back into it pretty quickly once I was fully recovered," she said. "I did not expect this at all, though."

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS SOCCER

Mann, WL out to continue reign

Red Devils again go into league tourney as favorite

By Sam King
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As long as Shelby Mann had played soccer, she was her team's right outside midfielder and she was initially hesitant to play anywhere else when she had a pre-season meeting with West Lafayette coach Aaron Blessing.

With dynamic goal scorer Katie Bittner now playing for Purdue, the Red Devils needed another athletic forward who could put the ball in the back of the net and Mann fit the bill.

"We had this big talk about accepting our roles. In order to have

our team do its best, I had to play forward," Mann said.

The result was Mann becoming the most lethal scorer in the area. Through 11 matches, Mann has scored 21 goals. She hopes to add to that total in this weekend's Hoosier Conference tournament, when the Class A No. 9 West Lafayette tries to continue its dominance of the Hoosier Conference tournament, now in its third year.

On the opposite side of the bracket is Class A's 12th-ranked team, Central Catholic, a program knowing in order to show it has taken the next step, it has to beat the team that has dominated the league and the sectional.

"That is the game of the season," said CC junior Lauren Pannell, who leads the team with nine assists.

"We go into the season thinking about it. It kind of culminates our season. We go in and put our all into that one."

The Knights and Red Devils met in the sectional semifinal a year ago, with WL coming away with a 2-0 victory. Maya Alexander broke a scoreless battle with a goal early in the second half and Erin Brophy put the match out of reach with a score in the final three minutes.

If there is a rematch, both teams anticipate an equally compelling match.

"We've been working really hard throughout the season, approaching each game as though we want to finish this one before the next," Brophy said. "If we do happen to meet them, it will be a good matchup."

GEORGE

Continued from Page B1

where we're at."

George's signing has been expected. The Pacers could have matched any offer he received if he decided to go the free-agency route next summer. George himself said several times he wanted to remain with the team.

"I was supposed to have a poker face throughout this whole thing, but I didn't do a very good job," George said.

George upped his value tremendously with a breakout season last year, being named the NBA's Most Improved Player in addition to be-

ing a third-team all-league selection after averaging 17.4 points, 7.6 rebounds and 4.1 assists. Bird, who doesn't throw around superlatives often, called him the face of the franchise.

"My expectations are he's going to be one of the top players in the league," Bird said. "He's already shown he is one of the top 15-20 players in the league. Do we expect him to be a first-teamer? Yeah, we do."

George agreed with a suggestion the new contract brings additional pressure, but he said he welcomes it.

"Pressure is what builds guys' character," he said. "I'm open to the pressure. I want the pressure."

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