

ST. JOSEPH'S Pumas (15-13 in 2003-04) at (- /21) NOTRE DAME Fighting Irish (19-13 in 2003-04)



Date: Thursday, November 4, 2004

Place: Joyce Center (11,418)

Time: 7:30 p.m. (EST)

Radio: Notre Dame Sports Properties (Jack Lorri, Jack Nolan) originates the Notre Dame Radio Network which includes: WZOW 97.7 FM and 102.3 FM (South Bend, Ind./Michiana Region); ESPN 1000 AM (Chicagoland area); ESPN 950 AM (Indianapolis, Ind.); WGL 1250 (Fort Wayne, Ind. and Northeast Indiana); WEFM 95.9 (Michigan City and Gary, Ind.), WLUV 96.7 FM and 1520 AM (Rockford and DeKalb, Ill. and Beloit and Janesville, Wis.); ESPN 1480 AM-WRSW (Warsaw, Ind.) and WAMW 107.9 FM and 1580 AM in Washington, Ind.). All radio broadcasts can also be heard through the World Wide Web at www.und.com and on Sirius Satellite Radio.

Real-Time Stats: Live in-game statistics are available for all home games, via the Notre Dame athletic website (www.und.com).

Tonight's Game:

Notre Dame plays the first of two exhibition contest contests this evening when it faces the Pumas of St. Joseph's College (Rensselaer, Ind.). The Irish are slated to play a second exhibition game against Quincy College on Wed., Nov. 10 at 7:30 p.m. Notre Dame opens up the 2004-05 regular season against Harvard on Fri., Nov. 19 at 7:00 p.m. It will mark the first of three straight home games to start the regular season.

Celebrating 100 Seasons:

The 2004-05 season marks the 100th season for the Notre Dame men's basketball program. A special logo has been designed and there will be events throughout the season commemorating the occasion. Notre Dame is one of 13 Division I schools celebrating its 100th season of basketball this year. The others include: Dayton, Delaware, Duke, Georgia, Howard, Illinois, Miami (Ohio), Northwestern, Oregon, Virginia, William and Mary and Wyoming.

Notre Dame played its first varsity game on January 29, 1898 (a 64-8 loss to First Regiment). The Irish played two others games that season and finished with a 1-2 record. The following year, they played two games in 1899 and then did not field a team again until the 1907-08 campaign.

Scouting the Irish:

Notre Dame returns four starters and nine monogram winners from last year's 19-13 team that advanced to the third round of the National Invitation Tournament. The Irish missed a fourth consecutive NCAA Tournament bid under head coach Mike Brey who has led Notre Dame to three NCAA appearances in his first three seasons and three consecutive 20-plus win campaigns. The Irish also finished 9-7 in BIG EAST play (seventh in the league standings) and advanced to the quarterfinals of the conference championship. Notre Dame has posted a winning record in BIG EAST regular-season play each of the last four years (the only other school to have a winning record in league play since the 2000-01 campaign is Syracuse).

Notre Dame will be without the services of guard Torrian Jones and center Tom Timmermans. Jones averaged 8.4 points and 5.8 rebounds, while netted 6.0 points and grabbed 4.3 boards per game.

The Irish return their top three leading scorers who averaged double figures. Senior **Chris Thomas**, who has started all 99 games of his Irish career, returns for his final season at point guard. Already Notre Dame's career assist leader (638), he is within reach of becoming the sixth 2,000-point scorer in Irish history. Thomas enters his final season with 1,783 career points for an 18.0 scoring average. A year ago, he netted a career-best 19.7 points per game and earned second-team all-BIG EAST honors for the second consecutive year, in addition to honorable mention All-America accolades for the second time in as many seasons. Thomas also led the Irish in assists for the third straight campaign.

Thomas underwent knee surgery on April 9 and was cleared to return to playing in mid-August following four-plus months of rehabilitation.

Junior **Chris Quinn**, Thomas' backcourt mate, was the second-leading scorer a year ago as he averaged 14.3 points, more than triple the point total of his his

2004-05 University of Notre Dame

Men's Basketball Schedule

(0-0, 0-0 BIG EAST)

November

4	Thur.	ST. JOSEPH'S- IN (Ex.)	7:30 p.m.
10	Wed.	QUINCY (Ex.)	7:30 p.m.
19	Fri.	HARVARD	7:00 p.m.
23	Tue.	IPFW	7:30 p.m.
26	Fri.	CHARLESTON SOUTHERN	7:00 p.m.

December

4	Sat.	at Michigan (ESPN)	12:00 p.m.
8	Wed.	at Indiana (ESPN)	7:00 p.m.
11	Sat.	DEPAUL (ESPN2)	5:00 p.m.
19	Sun.	ARMY	1:00 p.m.
22	Wed.	MARIST	7:00 p.m.
28	Tue.	WESTERN ILLINOIS	7:00 p.m.
30	Thur.	SAMFORD	7:00 p.m.

January

5	Wed.	at Seton Hall*	7:30 p.m.
8	Sat.	VILLANOVA*	12:00 p.m.
10	Mon.	SYRACUSE* (ESPN)	7:00 p.m.
15	Sat.	ST. JOHN'S*	2:00 p.m.
19	Wed.	at West Virginia*	7:00 p.m.
23	Sun.	at Georgetown*	12:00 p.m.
26	Wed.	at Villanova*	7:30 p.m.
30	Sun.	CONNECTICUT* (CBS)	3:45 p.m.

February

5	Sat.	at Syracuse* (ESPN)	9:00 p.m.
8	Tue.	BOSTON COLLEGE* (ESPN2)	7:00 p.m.
12	Sat.	at Pittsburgh* (ESPN)	12:00 p.m.
16	Wed.	GEORGETOWN*	7:30 p.m.
19	Sat.	at Providence*	12:00 p.m.
21	Mon.	at Connecticut* (ESPN)	7:00 p.m.
27	Sun.	UCLA (CBS)	2:00 p.m.

March

2	Wed.	RUTGERS*	7:30 p.m.
5	Sat.	PITTSBURGH* (CBS)	2:00 p.m.
9-	Wed.-	BIG EAST Championship	
12	Sat.	(Madison Square Garden)	
17-	Thur.-	NCAA First and Second Rounds	
20	Sun.		
24-	Thur.-	NCAA Regional	
27	Sun.		

April

2 &	Sat. &	NCAA Final Four Championship
4	Mon.	(Edward Jones Dome - St. Louis, Mo.)

* - indicates BIG EAST game

all times local site

() - indicates Associated Press and ESPN/USA Today rankings at time of game

ESPN/USA TODAY
(Preseason)

	<u>Final 2003-04 Rank</u>
1. Kansas	9
2. Wake Forest	15
3. NorthCarolina	22
4. Georgia Tech	3
5. Illinois	11
6. Syracuse	19
7. Connecticut	1
8. Oklahoma State	4
9. Kentucky	8
10. Michigan State	NR
11. Arizona	NR
12. Duke	2
13. Louisville	NR
14. Mississippi State	13
15. Texas	10
16. Maryland	24
17. Pittsburgh	7
18. Alabama	17
19. North Carolina State	20
20. Wisconsin	16
21. NOTRE DAME	NR
22. Florida	NR
23. Memphis	NR
24. Washington	NR
25. Stanford	6

bold indicates 2004-05 opponent

freshman season. He ranked second to Thomas in assists with 104. Quinn and Thomas will remain Notre Dame's top three-point shooting threats. Last season, the two combined for 168 of the team's 265 (.634) three-point field goals. The duo should be regarded as one of the nation's top backcourt tandems.

Notre Dame frontcourt is bolstered by the return of senior **Jordan Cornette**, **Torin Francis** and **Rick Cornett**, and the addition of senior **Dennis Latimore** who did not play last season after transferring from Arizona in June of 2003. The combination of these four will provide the Irish with one of the strongest frontlines in recent memory.

Francis missed the final 12 games of the 2003-04 campaign with a back injury. He underwent surgery on March 8 to repair a herniated disc and returned to playing with his teammates in mid-June. Despite the fact that he only played in 10 BIG EAST contests, Francis still earned a spot on the BIG EAST Honorable Mention Team as he averaged 14.2 points and 8.8 rebounds, leading the Irish in that category for the second consecutive year. Francis also had 35 blocked shots.

Cornette is Notre Dame's best defensive players in the post. He adds great versatility to the Irish lineup because he is able to play along the perimeter. Cornette has demonstrated the ability to hit the three-point shot. In addition, he is one of Notre Dame's top shot-blocking leaders. He led Irish in that category last season for the second straight year (75 as a sophomore and 63 in his junior season) and needs just 46 blocks this year to become the school's all-time leader in that category.

Cornett will figure prominently in the Irish plans this season. He played better than anyone during the final four games of the '03-'04 campaign, netting 11.8 points and 5.5 rebounds in those contests. Cornett played in 26 games and averaged 4.5 points and 3.4 rebounds. He had foot surgery in July for a stress fracture, but was ready for the start of practice on October 16.

Latimore will be a catalyst in the Irish lineup this season. He and Francis will form a formidable frontline tandem. Latimore possesses natural offensive abilities, but will also need to be a threat on the boards. He averaged 3.2 points, 3.1 rebounds in 12.0 minutes before leaving the Wildcat team in February of '03.

Sophomore **Omari Isreal** and freshman **Rob Kurz** will give the Irish considerable front-line depth. Isreal missed all of last season recovering from ACL surgery he had midway through his final scholastic season. He is a true slasher who also has the ability to play along the perimeter. Not only will Brey look for Isreal to contribute offensively, but will also rely on his rebounding skills. Kurz has great court savvy and a good understanding of the game. He will look contribute on both the offensive and defensive ends of the floor.

While Notre Dame's backcourt may boast two of the nation's top players in Thomas and Quinn, it certainly is not a two-man show. Look for sophomore **Colin Falls** to pick up where he left off a year ago. He averaged 4.6 points per game and played in all 32 contests, Falls also was third on the team in three-point field goals with 36. The combination of he, Thomas and Quinn as three-point shooting options, could rank as one of the country's best this season.

Sophomore **Russell Carter** gives the Irish depth at guard. He too is an excellent outside shooter and possesses great offensive skills. Carter will look to see more playing time this season.

The Captains:

For the second time in school history and for the second consecutive year, Notre Dame will have four captains. Seniors **Chris Thomas** and **Jordan Cornette** will once again serve as captains and are joined this year by juniors **Torin Francis** and **Chris Quinn**.

History Lesson:

While this may be only an exhibition game, Notre Dame and St. Joseph's have met 12 times before on the hardwood. The Irish have been victorious in all 12 meetings between the two schools. The first game was played on December 7, 1935 and the last meeting took place on December 28, 1987.

Toughest Ticket in Town:

Notre Dame's success on the hardwood has paid dividends at the box office. For the fourth consecutive year, the number of season ticket holders increased, and already this season, six games are sold out (DePaul, Syracuse, St. John's, Connecticut, UCLA and Pittsburgh). Notre Dame students also showed their support for the Irish with as the student allotment of 3,000 was a complete sellout in less than three hours.

Irish Find Success in the Classroom:

Notre Dame had its best semester ever in the classroom during the spring of 2004, combining for a 3.115 cumulative grade point average. Seven players were named to the BIG EAST Academic All-Star Team — **Greg Bosl**, **John Carlson**, **Rick Cornett**, **Jordan Cornette**, **Torrian Jones**, **Chris Thomas** and **Tom Timmermans**. To be eligible, student-athletes must have maintained a cumulative 3.0 grade point average during the school year.

Irish Set For Five Repeat Games In BIG EAST Play:

Notre Dame will play Connecticut, Georgetown, Pittsburgh, Syracuse and Villanova twice (both home and away) as part of its BIG EAST Conference regular-season 16-game

NOTRE DAME STARTING LINEUP:

2003-04 Statistics									
No.	Player	Pos	Ht.	Wt.	Class	PPG	RPG	Other	Notes:
12	Jordan Cornette	F	6-10	236	Sr.	5.8	6.0	155 career blocks	Needs 46 to become Irish career shot block leader
34	Torin Francis	F	6-11	252	Jr.	14.2	8.8	459 career rebounds	Missed final 12 games in '03-'04 with a herniated disc
41	Dennis Latimore	F	6-9	238	Sr.	--	--	--	Sat out last season after transferring from Arizona
1	Chris Thomas	G	6-1	190	Sr.	19.7	4.2	638 career assists	Eighth all-time in career scoring (1,783 points)
2	Chris Quinn	G	6-2	185	Jr.	14.3	3.0	104 assists/37 turnovers	Had BIG EAST best 2.81 assist/turnover ratio

2003-04 Statistics									
No.	Player	Pos	Ht.	Wt.	Class	PPG	RPG	Other	Notes:
4	John Carlson	F	6-5	248	So.	0.7	0.3	Second-year walk-on	Tight end on the Irish football team
5	Omari Isreal	F	6-9	233	So.	--	--	--	Missed entire 2003-04 because of ACL surgery in Feb. '03
11	Rick Cornett	F	6-8	256	Jr.	4.5	3.4	26 games played	Averaged 11.8 points and 5.5 rebounds in final four games
15	Colin Falls	G	6-4	204	So.	4.6	1.3	37 3-Pt Field Goals	Only freshman to play in all 32 games
21	Ben Nickol	F	6-5	218	Jr.	--	--	--	First-year walk-on
24	Chris Murphy	F	6-6	210	Jr.	--	--	--	First year walk-on
31	Rob Kurz	F	6-9	219	Fr.	--	--	--	Only freshman on Irish roster
43	Russell Carter	G	6-4	223	So.	0.8	0.4	--	Played in 11 games
55	Greg Bosl	G	6-1	198	Sr.	0.5	0.0	6 games played	Second-year walk-on

slate during the 2004-05 campaign. Playing under a straight divisional format with 12 teams this year, each school will play each other at least once. In addition to its home-and-home series with the Huskies, Hoyas, Panthers, Orange and Wildcats, Notre Dame will face Boston College, Rutgers and St. John's at home. The Irish are scheduled for road games at Providence, Seton Hall and West Virginia. Dates and times of all conference games will be released at a later date.

BIG EAST Distinction:

Although Notre Dame fell one game short of recording its fourth straight 10-win season in league, the Irish own the distinction, along with Syracuse, as being the only two schools to post winning conference records each of the last four seasons. Notre Dame has gone 11-5 (2000-01), 10-6 (2001-02), 10-6 (2002-03) and 9-7 (2003-04), while Syracuse has posted marks of 10-6 (2001-01), 9-7(2001-02), 13-3 (2002-03) and 11-5 (2003-04).

BIG EAST Honor Roll:

At BIG EAST Media Day on October 27 at Madison Square Garden in New York City, Notre Dame was tabbed to finish fourth behind Syracuse, Connecticut and Pittsburgh in the regular-season race on a vote by the league's head coaches. **Chris Thomas** was a preseason first-team all-BIG EAST selection, the only Irish players named to one of the preseason teams.

Irish Medical Update:

Since March, five Irish players have underwent some type of surgical procedure. Forward **Torin Francis** had back surgery on March 8 to repair a herniated disc. He returned to the basketball court in June and has been able to play with the team during its summer off-season conditioning program. Point guard **Chris Thomas** underwent arthroscopic surgery on his left knee on April 9 for a tear on his left kneecap. He will be cleared to return to the court sometime in August. **Rick Cornett** was the most recent player to undergo a surgical procedure. He had surgery for a stress fracture (broken left foot) on July 23. **Rob Kurz** had surgery on September 14 for a fractured jaw and walk-on **Greg Bosl** had surgery in August after breaking his foot when he was home on summer break in August.

Ironman:

Chris Thomas has started all 99 games of his Irish career and is second all-time in consecutive games started. He should eclipse Pat Garrity's (1994-98) career mark of 111 consecutive starts. John Paxson (1979-83) stands third all-time with 85 consecutive starts (86 total during his career) and stands third on that list. Paxson started every game in his final three seasons.

The Irish All-Time:

In 99 seasons, Irish teams have posted a 1548-851 mark (.645). Notre Dame will open the 2004-05 campaign by playing the school's 2,400th game when it faces Harvard in the season opener.

Home Sweet Home:

Since the inaugural season (1968-69) at the Joyce Center, Notre Dame owns a 431-131 record all-time for a .767 winning percentage. The Irish are 46-16 (.742) at the Joyce Center during Mike Brey's four seasons, and since the 1996-97 campaign, they own an 95-33 mark for a .742 winning percentage. Notre Dame was 14-2 at home in 2002-03, winning 10-plus games for the sixth time in seven years.

2004-05 BIG EAST COACHES' PRESEASON POLL

	Pts.
1. Syracuse (9)	119
2. Connecticut(2)	106
3. Pittsburgh (10)	100
4. NOTRE DAME	88
5. Boston College	78
6. Providence	69
7. Villanova	59
8. Seton Hall	56
9. West Virginia	43
10. Rutgers	42
11. Georgetown	21
12. St. John's	11

BIG EAST Preseason Player of the Year:

Ryan Gomes — Providence

BIG EAST Preseason Rookie of the Year:

Rudy Gay — Connecticut

Preseason All-BIG EAST First Team:

Craig Smith — Boston College
Chris Thomas — Notre Dame
Carl Krauser — Pittsburgh
Chris Taft — Pittsburgh
Ryan Gomes* — Providence
Gerry McNamara — Syracuse
Hakim Warrick* — Syracuse

Preseason All-BIG EAST Second Team:

Rashod Anderson — Connecticut
Josh Boone — Connecticut
Ricky Shields — Rutgers
Kelly Whitney — Seton Hall
Allan Ray — Villanova

*denotes unanimous selection

Irish in the Preseason Polls

Lindy's — 13th
Blue Ribbon — 13th
Dick Vitale — 14th
The Sporting News — 19th
ESPN.com — 19th
Street and Smith's — 21st