



Baseball

■ For now, the Yankees have pulled out of the chase for Diamondbacks lefty Randy Johnson.
— **Sportfolio, C-9**

SPORTS

Thursday, December 2, 2004

The News-Gazette **C**

I **NO. 5 ILLINOIS 91, NO. 1 WAKE FOREST 73** 

One-derful!

What happened

■ The fifth-ranked Illini outplayed, outhustled and outclassed the nation's top-ranked team, dominating Wake Forest and winning a fifth straight blowout.

What it means

■ At this early stage of the season, at least, Illinois is as good as anybody, and maybe better than everybody. The Illini looked like the nation's best team in thumping the Deacons.

What the Illini said

■ "I'll go home tonight and watch 'SportsCenter' and enjoy it. Maybe have a cold one. But after that, we've got to get ready for Arkansas." — UI coach **Bruce Weber**

What the Deacons said

■ "They played infinitely better than we did. I don't know how much more clearly I can put it. Their offense was exponentially better than our defense, hence the score of the game." — Wake Forest coach **Skip Prosser**

What's next

■ Illinois visits Little Rock, Ark., to take on Arkansas (1 p.m. Saturday, ESPN). Riding an emotional high, the Illini will try to avoid hitting a speed bump against the Hogs.

What's inside

■ **Rossow column:** Illini need to watch their step, **C-7**.
■ Weber puts on a fresh coat, **C-6**.
■ Wakeup call for sleepless Brown, **C-7**.
■ Game 5 report card, **C-6**.
■ Game 5 box score, **C-6**.



John Dixon/The News-Gazette

Dee Brown celebrates Illinois' big lead near the end of the first half. Brown had 16 points on 7-of-12 shooting as the Illini beat

top-ranked Wake Forest 91-73 on Wednesday night at the Assembly Hall. It was the UI's first win against a No. 1 team since 1979.

Illinois rout shakes up hoops scene

By **BRETT DAWSON**
News-Gazette Staff Writer

CHAMPAIGN — For one night, this town was the center of the basketball universe.

And Illinois' 91-73 rout of Wake Forest on Wednesday provided one heck of a college hoops big bang.

The fans cheered — and "booed" and "Luuuued" and "Bruuuued" — the band played, and when the orange dust settled, Illinois had utterly dominated the nation's top-ranked team.

The obvious question in the Wake (er, wake) of Illinois' destruction of the Demon Deacons: Is anybody better than the Illini?

"I don't know what to say," Illinois guard Dee Brown said. "After that performance, you tell me."

Ask the 16,618 hoarse fans who packed the Assembly Hall and chanted "We're No. 1" as the final seconds ticked.

Please see **ILLINI, C-6**

Tough going

The ACC/Big Ten Challenge went the ACC's way for the sixth year in a row. A look at the year-by-year results:

- **2004:** ACC won 7-2
- **2003:** ACC won 7-2
- **2002:** ACC won 5-4
- **2001:** ACC won 5-3
- **2000:** ACC won 5-4
- **1999:** ACC won 5-4

UI's openings closing door on opponents

CHAMPAIGN

It's not a fluke if you keep repeating it. Fresh from another offensive explosion — new President Joseph White said he hasn't seen anything like this at Michigan — Bruce Weber's whirlwind Illini compiled another set of incredible numbers.

Wake Forest might have been the toughest opponent so far, but the Demon Deacons were just as outclassed defensively, unable to prevent Illini breakouts, a step slow covering the arc, incapable of matching UI cleverness.

An Illini club that built a 38-point lead on Gonzaga returned home to put the Deacons on the ropes by 32 in a 91-73 result.

In 100 years of UI basketball, no team ever has put forth such remarkable first-half numbers through the first five games. Illinois is averaging more than 53 points in five opening halves while shooting 59 percent from the field and draining 41 of 79 three-pointers.

The most difficult aspect of Weber's job is



TATELINES

LOREN TATE

Please see **TATELINES, C-6**

How could I overlook Ron Zook?

Sometime early Monday afternoon, Ron Guenther will stride to the podium at the Bielfeldt building. Looking a whole lot happier than he did two weeks before.

Eight years and four days after naming Ron Turner as Illinois football coach, Guenther will call out No. 2. And don't be a bit surprised if it's another Ron (They like to stick together, you know).
Not McDonald. Not Artest. Not Howard. The name is Zook. Ron Zook.

Learn it. Memorize it. Write it down. In ink.

Please see **ASMUSSEN, C-8**

2004 NEWS-GAZETTE

All-Area

FOOTBALL TEAM

Discipline goes a long way



Vanda Bidwell/The News-Gazette

Urbana's Preston Williams III is the News-Gazette's All-Area Football Player of the Year. *All-Area team coverage, C-2-4.*

You could learn a lot from Preston Williams III

By **JEFF MEZYDLO**
News-Gazette Staff Writer

URBANA
Sometimes lessons learned when you're young can last a lifetime. When Preston Williams III was an eighth-grader, he learned a valuable one he hasn't forgotten.

Like any boy, Williams liked to goof around. One day during his eighth-grade year, he had a substitute teacher in one of his classes — and he acted up. His parents, both educational administrators in the Twin Cities, laid down the law.

Williams, or "Trey" as he's known around the house, was punished and couldn't play in his upcoming Urbana

youth league football championship game against Danville.

"He stayed at home," said Williams' mom, Ivy. "They lost the game, and he wrote an apology letter to his coaches and team that he was sorry for letting them down."

Williams, the Urbana senior quarterback who became the Twin City's career yardage leader this season, never got himself in trouble like that again. And he never let his teammates down in any sport, at any level, again.

"He's a good boy," said Ivy Williams, who ran track in high school and was a cheerleader at Illinois State and is now the student services coordinator at Robeson Elementary School

Please see **WILLIAMS, C-2**