



Howard Dardeen, right, plays defense during a pickup basketball game at Baxter YMCA on the southside. Dardeen, 70, plays three days a week and recently helped his 70-plus team earn a national championship.

# CG resp opp IU-boun shows r

By JOHN SCHWAB  
DAILY JOURNAL SPORTS  
jschwab@dailyjournal.com

Before swi  
the best ni  
some phor  
He didn't have  
Didn't have to m  
them at all, real  
But before he  
fully enjoy his d  
play football at I  
University, the C  
Grove senior-to-l  
obligation to per  
inform the suitor  
didn't make the  
Stoner called I  
recruiter at Loui  
Then Toledo. An  
Western Kentuck  
Iowa State, a pa  
tough call given  
Cyclones were ti  
school to make t  
offer. And Illinois  
Stoner didn't get  
of his contact th  
away. He vowed  
trying.  
The calls were  
yet he could not  
not making them  
"One of the we  
things I've had t  
while," Stoner sa  
it's respect. One  
of them might b  
coach or interv  
"It's not fair to  
them hear about  
or Scouts, or a n  
brance to be me  
Stoner is your  
and text-messag  
6,000 texts a mot  
He's fast on a

# Still got game

## 70-year-old never stopped hooping it up

## 70-year-old never stopped hooping it up

When **Howard Dardeen** tells people he plays basketball, the reaction often goes something like this:

Half-court, right? Three-on-three? Non-contact? Shorter quarters?

"No, no, no," the Greenwood resident tells them. He plays full-court, five-on-five, high-scoring, hard-nosed hoops in regulation-length games.

Just the way he's been playing basketball for more than six decades.

STORY BY JEFF DECKER  
PHOTO BY  
SCOTT ROBERSON

Dardeen, 70, hasn't stopped hitting the hardwood on a regular basis since he began hooping it up as a boy in Terre Haute. And he's not about to stop now.

He plays pickup games every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Baxter YMCA on the southside.

And he remains active in senior basketball competitions. Last month, he helped the Indiana Masters win the 70-plus — that's right, 70-plus — division of the Masters Basketball Association National Senior Championships in Coral Springs, Fla.

The Indiana Masters, some of whom have played together since they were mere youngsters in the 40-and-over division, won a grueling five games in five days to claim their fifth national championship.

And if you think the Indiana Masters stall-balled their way to the title, think again. Playing games with 20-minute halves, Dardeen and his teammates scored 93 points in one game, 87 in another.

"We get the ball out and go," Dardeen said.

To be able to do that at 70-plus — two 70-year-old players were on tournament rosters — and over a span of five days seems remarkable even to those doing it.

"When you're playing one game a day for five days and it's 20-minute halves ... that's un-

believable for anybody, let alone 70-year-olds," Dardeen said. "I don't know if I could have done it back when I was 16. I don't know how I did it this time."

"It wears on you. When it was over, I bet it took me close to a week to recover."

The tournament games not only were fast-paced but were physical, said Dave Ross, a Morristown resident and the team's coach.

Though players get up and down the court well, they perhaps can't move their feet on defense as well as they did in their youth, making play around the basket not for the faint of heart.

"It's brutal inside," Ross said. "You'd better be pretty strong."

And, with scores in the 90s,

(SEE GAME, PAGE B6)

"I don't know if I could have done it back when I was 16. I don't know how I did it this time."

**Howard Dardeen, Greenwood resident,** or playing five games in five days in a 70-and-over basketball tournament





SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Indiana Masters recently won the Masters Basketball Association National Senior Championships by winning five games in five days in Coral Springs, Fla. Pictured are, front row from left, player/coach Dave

Ross, Howard Wilkison, Jerry Seese and Ron Orr; and back row from left, Dave VanDerMulen, **Howard Dardeen**, John Newlin and Gordon Pope. Dardeen lives in Greenwood.

## Game

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

you'd better still be able to run the court and put the ball through the basket.

"I don't care if you're not playing very much defense, you've got to get up and down the court several times to score that many points," Ross said. "If you score 93 points, you're not standing around."

To be able to get on the court on a regular basis is half the battle at age 70 and beyond.

The Indiana Masters' Howard Wilkison, a Greensburg resident who played for Ball State back in the day, earned tournament MVP honors even though he has had a stint put in his heart. Teammate Gordon Pope wears a pacemaker. Ross has had both hips replaced and missed playing in the tournament because a cyst, soon to be removed, was causing pain in one of his hips.

Dardeen has been more fortunate. He hopes to be able to play until at least age 75, and so far, so good.

"The Lord's been good to me," he said. "I've never had any problems, no health problems of any kind."

"I need to knock on wood." Still, the way he plays basketball has changed over 60 years, just as the game itself has evolved.

Before going on to play for Indiana State, Dardeen led Terre Haute Gerstmeyer to back-to-back state finals appearances in the late 1950s. During his junior season, the Black Cats were defeated by eventual champion Crispus Attucks — a team led by a pretty good player, Oscar Robertson.

## THE DARDEEN FILE

**Name:** Howard Dardeen

**Age:** 70

**Resides:** Greenwood

**Occupation:** Retired from full-time work for GuideOne Insurance in 2000; now works part-time for the State Farm Insurance office of longtime friend Chuck Schoolcraft in Indianapolis. Was a teacher at Manual High School in Indianapolis before getting into the insurance business.

**Recent accomplishment:** Helped the Indiana Masters win the 70-and-over division of the Masters Basketball Association National Senior Championships in Coral Springs, Fla., on May 10-15. The Indiana Masters won five games in five days, beating teams from Arizona, Chicago and Rhode Island. It was the fifth championship for the Indiana Masters in national senior basketball tournaments.

**High school:** 1957 graduate of Terre Haute Gerstmeyer

Back then, the foul lane was more narrow. There was no 3-point line. And the clock continued to run during dead-ball situations.

And Dardeen, at 6-foot-4, literally stood out on the court.

"I was a big guy back then," he said. "I'd hardly ever play against anybody my size."

"Now you've got to be about 6-8 to play point guard. It's just so different."

So is the way the game is played.

"I think they're much better defensively today," Dardeen said. "I think they might be a little better-coached, especially defensively."

Dardeen concedes he was a better player in his youth than he is at age 70. But the object of the

**College:** 1962 graduate of Indiana State University, earning a bachelor's degree in education and eventually a master's degree; later earned a master's plus 30 degree in guidance and counseling from Butler University

**Favorite basketball player:** Michael Jordan. "I just think he's one of the better all-around players I've seen play." Larry Bird and Oscar Robertson also are among his favorites.

**Favorite basketball team:** Boston Celtics

**Favorite basketball team:** Boston Celtics

**Favorite place to play basketball:** Baxter YMCA on the southside. He plays there three days a week. He likes the camaraderie among players from all walks of life and a wide range of ages. "I've just grown to know these guys ... they're just fun to be around."

**Family:** Wife of 45 years, Carol; two grown sons, Sean, of Tampa, Fla., and Dax, of Greenwood; two grandsons and one granddaughter

game — putting the ball through the hoop — is the same as it was in the 1950s. And that's still a part of basketball at which he excels.

A couple of years ago, Dardeen was practicing his free-throw shooting at the Baxter YMCA. He enlisted the help of two younger players to rebound.

Dardeen stepped to the line and sank 20 in a row. Then stretched it to 50. And then 75, 100 and 125 before missing after making 127 straight.

The eyes of his young rebounders were as wide as saucers, Dardeen said. But the shooter wasn't as impressed.

"I said, 'I should be able to do that. Nobody was guarding me. And I have 60 years experience shooting them.'"

(C  
th  
th  
a  
hi  
b:  
ri  
of  
C  
pl  
ce  
re  
T

a  
St  
fu

di

oi  
ty  
lo

w  
fi  
N

in  
of  
m  
bi  
li