

HOW SWEET IT IS

The Illini top Nevada, 71-59, and advance to the Sweet 16.
SPORTS, D1



SATURDAY'S UPSETS

- ▶ (6) TEXAS TECH 71, (3) GONZAGA 69
- ▶ (6) UTAH 67, (3) OKLAHOMA 58
- ▶ (12) WIS.-MIL. 41, (4) BOSTON COLL. 37
- ▶ (7) W. VA. 111, (2) WAKE FOREST 105

ICC SECOND

Illinois Central College women fall short for a national title, falling 64-46

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OUTLOOK
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Complete forecast Page B8

Glenbrook rolls

A week after mother dies, coach celebrates state victory

STATE!

Take home our Class AA SPECIAL PULLOUT SECTION with pictures, memories and the scoop on high school hoops.

BY JEFF LAMPE
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — Standing in a concourse below Carver Arena Saturday afternoon, emotions began to well up in Dave Weber.

The state basketball championship game was hours away, but Weber was already finding a catch in his voice as he contemplated the possibilities.

"It's kind of an emotional day now. I didn't know it was going to be this way. But to think of all we've been through to get to this game," said Weber, head coach at Northbrook Glenbrook North. "For us to win, it would be really special ... for my mother. She would have really enjoyed this." No question there. Dawn Weber

Please see GLEN, Page A11



A group of Glenbrook North fans cheer for their team at the start of the Class AA title game Saturday night at Carver Arena.

MATT DAYHOFF
JOURNAL STAR

INSIDE TODAY

NEWSMAKERS



FEARS COME TRUE

Police find body of 9-year-old Florida girl more than three weeks after she was snatched from her bedroom.

NATION, PAGE A2

SCHIAVO DEAL

House agrees to meet to vote on legislation as mother pleads to save daughter's life.

NATION, PAGE A2

SPOTLIGHT



WHO'S GOT SPIRIT?

Fans show their colors and their support at the Class A IHSA state basketball tourney.

PAGE E1

DATELINES

PEORIA: LaSalle

County eighth-grader wins Grand Final Spelling Bee to advance to national contest. PAGE B1

STREATOR: Two years

after the death of 7-year-old Dalton Mesarchik, police still seek killer.

PAGE B1

PEORIA: The Eureka

High School scholastic team takes second at the state tournament.

PAGE B1

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Back home at last

Galva Guard unit returns to heroes' welcome after a year in Iraq



CHRIS CURRY/JOURNAL STAR

Joe Graham, left, and fiancée Kelly Blundell, both of Streator, share a kiss Saturday in front of a barrage of "welcome home" signs after Graham returned with his unit, the Galva-based Battery F, 202nd Air Defense Artillery of the Illinois National Guard.

BY BRANDON COUTRE
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

A long, violent year of fighting in Iraq ended amid tears and cheers from a welcoming crowd Saturday for 120 soldiers of the Galva-based Battery F, 202nd Air Defense Artillery of the Illinois National Guard.

"Being back is great," said Spc. Ryan Carlson, 24, of Annawan. "Not going back is even better."

The soldiers arrived in Galva around 9:15 a.m. with a police escort after traveling from the Quad City International Airport in Moline. Supporters decked Galva and other communities along the soldiers' route with patriotic signs and welcoming messages.

A Galva woman who stapled a hand-drawn welcome home sign to her fence along

U.S. Route 34 an hour before the troops returned said she didn't know anyone coming home, but that didn't matter. "They're family even if I don't know them personally," Susan Weimer said.

Efforts like Weimer's did not go unnoticed.

"There were people everywhere," Carlson said. "Signs, flags ... everyone was showing their support. It was more than I expected."

The unit left Galva in November 2003 and trained at Fort Hood, Texas, before being sent to Iraq in March 2004. At their homecoming Saturday, many soldiers used the same word to describe their feelings: surreal.

"All the sudden we are back in the United States," said Spc. Bill McDaniels, 26, of West Peoria. "It's been a long road. This is where we

Please see GALVA, Page A20



CHRIS CURRY/JOURNAL STAR

Kirsten Musil of DePue holds her niece, Corrinton Musil, 5, so she can see the bus her father, Ryan Musil, is returning home in Saturday in Galva.

Violence slows Iraq economy

Two years after war, insurgent battles taking toll

BY JIM KRANE
OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iraq has become one of the world's poorest countries, ranking at the level of Haiti and Senegal as insurgents work to wreck the economy as fast as the U.S. and Iraqi governments can restore it.

Economists see little hope for big improvements in 2005: Overall, the tattered and dangerous country has less electricity each day than a year ago. Oil production so far this year has slipped even below

Please see IRAQ, Page A8

INSIDE STORIES

▶ About 20 protesters turn out in Downtown Peoria to speak out against President Bush and the war in Iraq. PAGE A21

▶ Two years after the start of the war, many are asking if U.S. opened doors to democracy in Iraq. PAGE A21