

SPORTS

EDITORS: NICOLE KRASEAN & TAYLOR LEHMAN | SPORTS@IDSNEWS.COM



PHOTOS BY KATELYN ROWE | IDS
Offensive Coordinator Kevin Johns talks to receiver Mitchell Paige, as well as other members of the IU offense during practice Wednesday at Mellencamp Pavillion. Paige, a junior, is looking to fill the wide receiver slot left open following J-Shun Harris being unable to play this season due to injury.

NO CEILINGS

Diminutive walk-on slot receiver earns big role in Hoosier passing game after injury ends Harris' season

By Brody Miller

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Midway through a 9 a.m. summer practice, with the IU football team sweating through another of summer's hottest days, a good-natured bark echoes through Mellencamp Pavillion.

Senior quarterback Nate Sudfeld has just thrown a touchdown pass to tight end Anthony Corsaro, which brings more enthusiastic yelps.

"Can somebody cover Corsaro today?" the voice yells. "Somebody?"

It's difficult to find the source. The sideline is full of players as tall as 6-foot-7, as heavy as 300 pounds. The voice is somewhere behind them, hidden.

As excitement simmers down and players line up for the next play, he makes himself seen. Mitchell Paige hops with his helmet off and his hair soaked in sweat. As the smallest player on IU's roster, he doesn't pass the eye test for a Big Ten football player. It's hard to picture him leaping over a cornerback for a deep ball or bulldozing a linebacker on a slant route.

He didn't earn a Division I scholarship out of high school, nor did he draw a long list of suitors from smaller schools.

But this season, 5-foot-7 Mitchell Paige may be IU's starting slot receiver.

Andy Kremer laughs when

asked if Guerin Catholic High School brings in a lot of future Big Ten-sized talent.

"Definitely not," he says.

The former football coach at the Noblesville, Indiana, high school saw Paige transfer in from Carmel High School, sit out his sophomore year, then become one of the most prolific players in school history.

The program tried to put together a difficult regular season schedule each year to prepare for the Indiana 2A playoffs. Paige managed to stand out.

"I can't remember too many games where Mitchell wasn't the most electric player on the field," Kremer said.

Paige finished his career with 23 school records and led Indiana high school football in collective kick and punt return yards his senior season.

However, on-field play does not always translate to national acclaim. It's easy for coaches to ignore a 5-foot-7 receiver when wooed by physical specimens occupying some of the same territories. Paige had no offers coming his way.

He was invited to IU for what he called the "walk-on camp." An IU fan as a kid, Paige was always interested in playing in Bloomington.

He came to training camp as small as ever — about 140 pounds — competing with a Division I football program.

"The first practice was, uh, different," Paige says. "To be honest, it took a while to get comfortable."

It took time to make a name for himself with the Hoosiers,

and it became even more difficult to maintain that good name. He thought he did well in his first spring, then he struggled once fall came around. The next spring he felt confident once again, but he still had yet to catch a pass during a college football game.

He just needed an opportunity. This summer, he got one.

The news that sophomore J-Shun Harris tore his ACL and would miss the 2015 season broke just moments before IU Coach Kevin Wilson took the podium to speak to the media.

It was a blow to a receiving corps already stretched for depth. IU's leading returning receiver would now be Dominique Booth, who had only eight receptions in 2014. The injury posed the question, "Now what?"

One recurring name was Mitchell Paige.

He had one quality every receiver craves.

"Nate Sudfeld trusts him," IU Offensive Coordinator Kevin Johns said. "He is a savvy little guy who always finds a way to get open."

Sudfeld praised the former walk-on, who earned a scholarship this spring and found himself in a major position battle. Sudfeld had undergone injuries and position battles of his own and enters his final season without an established target.

But he seems to have found something in Paige.

Although Paige is not as fast as his predecessor, Shane Wynn, what sets him apart is his mind. As Johns said, "savviness" has become the word to describe Paige.

Kremer says it. Johns says it. Sudfeld says it.

Paige prides himself on being able to find space. He said what makes him successful is he tries to know everything. He wants to know what the tight ends are doing, what the two outside wideouts are doing and what the quarterback is reading.

At his size, he can't just blow by an Ohio State corner or jump over a Michigan State linebacker. He has to use his mind. So, if he knows that the tight end is running one route, then he also knows what space will be open.

"I'm not Shane Wynn fast," Paige said. "I'm quick; I'm smart."

Paige still talks to Wynn, the recent IU graduate who ended his career with more than 2,000 receiving yards. Both are listed at 5-foot-7. They have had similar obstacles to overcome.

The first thing Paige learned from the NFL rookie was how to get low.

"Those big guys are coming, they're hunting," Paige said. "We got to take those hits off us."

But the main lesson Wynn taught Paige was the value of watching film. Wynn may have been faster, but he also understood the cerebral aspects of playing the position.

"He's a big influence on the way that I play," Paige said.

One day in July, Paige and Sudfeld went golfing.

Before Sudfeld could enjoy his strong start, Paige eagled the hole.

"I threw my club and said 'I'm done,'" Sudfeld said.

At Guerin Catholic, Paige lettered in basketball, track and field, and golf in addition to football. Kremer said it didn't matter if it was on the field or off, Paige was competitive in just about any setting.

Sudfeld and Paige may take pride in their trust and connection on the field, but they compete in just about everything off it. Despite Paige being 10 inches shorter and 64 pounds lighter, they play a lot of one-on-one basketball.

"We play make it, take it," Paige said. "So I try not to let him get it. Once he gets it, it's hard to play defense on him."

Paige isn't afraid to compete with any opponent or attempt any task. He returns kicks for the Hoosiers. He jokingly took snaps as a place holder after practice one day.

Now, he and fellow veteran Ricky Jones have to take the challenge of being the leaders of a young receiving corps despite having hardly any game experience. IU no longer has a Cody Latimer, Kofi Hughes or Shane Wynn. There is no obvious star receiver whom everyone follows.

"It's an interesting role," Paige said. "But I think we are taking it

SEE PAIGE, PAGE 11



Left Receiver Mitchell Paige adjusts to catch a pass during practice Wednesday at Mellencamp Pavillion.



Right Paige runs upfield after the catch during a practice Wednesday at Mellencamp Pavillion.

"When he steps on the football field, he's one of those wiggle guys that can just get down the field and catches everything you throw to him."

Kevin Johns, IU Offensive Coordinator



PHOTOS BY KATELYN ROWE | IDS

Redshirt junior Mitchell Paige warms up with the IU football team by doing jumping jacks on Wednesday at Mellencamp Pavillion.

» PAIGE
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

kind of in stride. We are excited, kind of putting our own imprint on IU football."

* * *

Coach Johns likes to tell players, "Once you think you've got it, you're about to get it."

Claiming a depth chart spot isn't reason to become complacent, Johns says. So Paige doesn't accept he has the starting slot receiver position in the bag.

Experience aside, Wilson

has referred to this group as the most skilled receiving outfit he has had in his five years. It can be viewed as a blank slate, with no roles set in stone. There are skilled young freshmen fighting for time, and Jones is always an option to move inside if need be.

In the meantime, Paige is impressing those around him. He said he had multiple successful springs that failed to turn into productive falls. Now, he is trying to put it all together for the first time.

"When you look at him, he doesn't look like a Big Ten, 6-foot-4 receiver," Johns said. "But when he steps on the football field, he's one of those

wiggle guys that can just get down the field and catches everything you throw to him."

Jones said no receiver goes out there thinking they are small and have limits. It just adjusts the way they play.

Paige knows he isn't particularly big, but he has never known what it is like to be any bigger.

Kremer doesn't think the 5-foot-7 kid out of a small 2A high school focuses on how close he is to the ground, rather how much higher he can go.

"I don't think he believes he has a ceiling," Kremer said.

MEN'S SOCCER

Maurey pushes IU, offense to 2-0 win

By Lionel Lim
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The Hoosiers put their previous loss behind them to beat Western Michigan in an exhibition game, 2-0, Thursday night.

Goals from sophomore Grant Lillard and senior Femi Hollinger-Janzen ensured the Hoosiers would quickly rebound from the 2-1 loss they suffered against Valparaiso in their Monday exhibition game.

While senior Ben Maurey did not get onto the score sheet in this game, his performance throughout the game was more than enough to satisfy IU Coach Todd Yeagley.

"Overall I thought Ben had a nice performance," Yeagley said. "I think in the first half he was one of our most consistent attackers. I thought Ben gave us what he needed to give us, and I was pleased with that."

Maurey, a senior transfer from Brown University, proved to be a handful for

the Western Michigan defense. Playing as a lone center forward, the former Bear showed a willingness to use his large frame to link the play with the three attacking midfielders playing behind him.

Maurey, who stands at 6-foot-5 and weighs 200 pounds, is more than just a traditional target man. A play in the first half showed Maurey has loads of speed and is more than willing to take on his marker.

Receiving the ball wide out on the left flank, Maurey was willing to engage in a foot race with the defenders and powered down the left flank, beating two defenders before sending a cross in.

Unlike a traditional target man who constantly dwells close to or in the penalty box, Maurey showed a willingness to go out wide to drag markers with him and make space for other rushing attackers.

His intelligent movement and willingness to

work will be key, as it will create options for the three attacking midfielders playing behind him.

"He makes really good late runs, and he brings the physical ability to hold the ball up," Yeagley said. "When you have a mobile attack, which we have, it brings players in late in our system, so I love that component."

Yeagley said he hopes his new center forward can chip in with some goals, and he said he is hoping for him to get near the 10-goal mark.

"We like to see our strikers near the 10-goal mark, and we haven't had that, but that's something that I think Ben's capable of," Yeagley said.

Maurey's aggressiveness will be helpful for an offense that scored just one goal against Valparaiso Monday.

The Hoosiers travel to Fort Wayne, Ind. Saturday to play Marquette in the Shindigz National Festival.

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Horoscope

To get the advantage, check the day's rating:
10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22) — Today is a 5 — Spend time in contemplation. Consider from a spiritual view. Friends feel like partying. Avoid stepping on toes. Find a peaceful haven to escape the chaos. Keep it practical or risk trouble. Charm a rebel.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — Today is a 6 — Work interferes with pleasure. Add some zing to your project, but don't share it yet. Frugality remains practical. Avoid risk and expectation. Dress conservatively for an appointment. Travel near water could be involved. Rest when you can.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) — Today is a 6 — Sort out practical issues from irrational worries. New evidence threatens complacency. Hold off on an assignment. Avoid reckless driving, accidents and arguments. Share comfort and support. Don't get hung up on the details. Let somebody love you.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) — Today is an 8 — Family obligations take priority over a romantic tryst. Defer gratification for now. Postpone travel and expense. Wait for a better time. Assume responsibility, and take care of home matters first. After that,

enjoy yourselves.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) — Today is a 5 — Your curiosity makes you attractive. Mix socializing with studies. Listen and learn, purposefully. Don't compromise your values or gamble. Guard against overindulging. A friend provides inspiration, although budgetary concerns could limit things. Wait for developments.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — Today is a 6 — Plans change under scrutiny. More promises than money flow in. Heed your mate's concerns. You can get what you'll work for.

A confrontation between friends distracts. Be a calming influence, especially around an authority figure.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) — Today is a 6 — Someone's talking nice about you. A temporary clash between love and money could spark. Something that works theoretically doesn't in reality. Find out what you're doing the hard way. If irritated, take a walk and breathe deeply.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20) — Today is a 7 — Don't count your chickens until they're hatched. Attend to household issues and repairs before buying frilly extras. Work interferes with travel and romance. Impulsive spending leads to buyer's remorse. Read the fine print. Every little bit

counts.

Aries (March 21-April 19) — Today is a 6 — Harmony requires effort. Don't take major actions or show a loved one unfinished work yet. Consult an expert first. Group efforts bear fruit now. There's no time for romance now. Finish an old job. Strengthen your structure.

Taurus (April 20-May 20) — Today is a 7 — Accept a challenging assignment. Caution is advised ... tempers are short. The instructions don't seem to work. You're gaining authority. Look for what's missing. A female brings harmony to a confrontation. Don't rely on textbooks. Keep it simple.

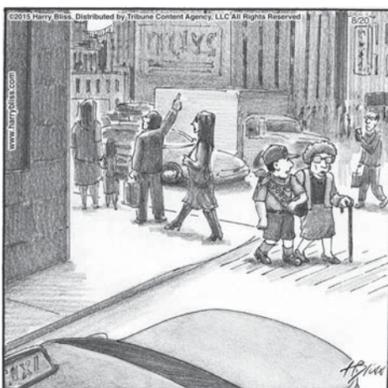
Gemini (May 21-June 20) — Today

is an 8 — Your spiritual values are strong. Refuse to be suppressed. Consider an option that seems beyond your reach. If you don't know how, ask. Don't break anything or spend excessively. Get a physical workout. Magnetic attraction prevails.

Cancer (June 21-July 22) — Today is a 7 — Work to make things happen. Review financial arrangements, avoiding risks. Find ways to increase your treasure. Meet with friends later. Don't stir up jealousies. Costs could be higher than imagined. Heed recommendations and warnings. Get outside.

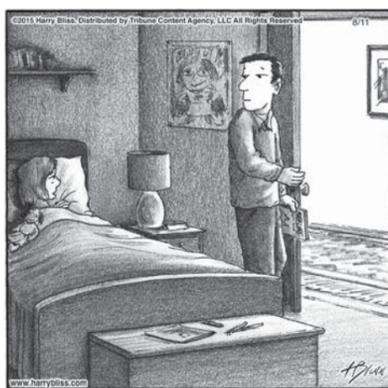
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BLISS



"I love your handbag."

HARRY BLISS



"Daddy, would you leave my door open halfway, keep the hall light on and lose the pushy girlfriend?"

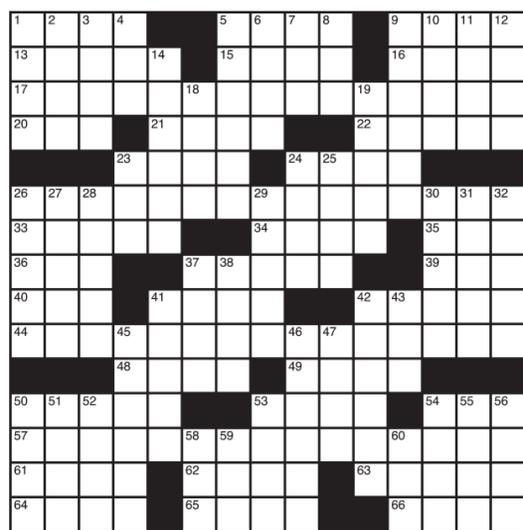


Publish your comic in this space.

The IDS is accepting applications for student comic strips. Email five samples and a brief description of your idea to adviser@indiana.edu by Sept. 7. Submissions will be reviewed and selections will be made by the editor-in-chief.

Crossword

L.A. Times Daily Crossword



Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Lewis

- 18 "Me neither"
- 19 Canceled a reservation, maybe
- 23 Ore. setting
- 24 Speaker of words like alpha and bravo
- 25 It's frequently in Italian
- 26 Aerial view provider
- 27 Saint __: Caribbean island nation
- 28 Via
- 29 Like alpha, but not bravo
- 30 Split
- 31 Sidestep
- 32 Where to get down
- 37 Ocean predator
- 38 Two of Rory McIlroy's major wins, familiarly
- 41 Put away, as groceries
- 42 Beat address
- 43 "___ a trick!"
- 45 Unscrupulous
- 46 Sousaphone, for one
- 47 Loud noise
- 50 Food thickener
- 51 Son of Jacob
- 52 Stamp purchase
- 53 Icy coating
- 54 Lush
- 55 "The Sea of Faith / Was __, too, at the full ...": "Dover Beach"
- 56 Laudatory verses
- 58 Berlin pronoun
- 59 In the fashion of
- 60 Actor's exaggeration

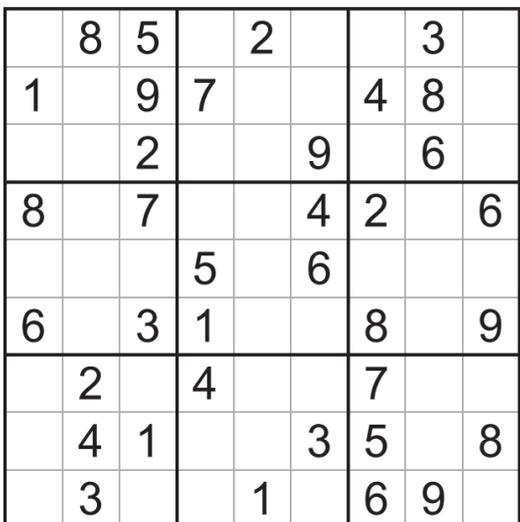
Look for the crossword daily in the comics section of the Indiana Daily Student. Find the solution for the daily crossword here.

Answer to previous puzzle

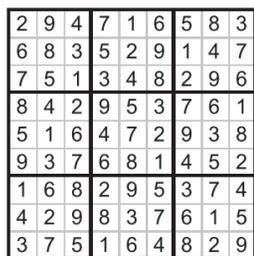


su do ku

Difficulty Rating: ■ □ □ □



How to play: Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 grid contains the digits 1 through 9, without repeating a number in any one row, column or 3x3 grid.



© Puzzles by Pappocom

ACROSS

- 1 Goof
- 5 Barnyard cries
- 9 Cook, in a way
- 13 Scheduled 2022 FIFA World Cup host
- 15 "As Time Goes By" requester
- 16 Procter & Gamble cosmetics brand
- 17 Missed the bird's nest under the eaves?
- 20 Toon cat
- 21 Farm shelter
- 22 Records, nowadays
- 23 Study intently, with "over"
- 24 City SW of Le Havre
- 26 Red army unit?
- 33 Thirsts
- 34 Bit attachment
- 35 Luau dish
- 36 Here, in 24-
- Across
- 37 Barber's "Vanessa," for one
- 39 Throw in
- 40 Time meas.
- 41 Drive
- 42 Musical lament
- 44 Druid baker's recipe?
- 48 Future execs, perhaps

- 49 They're full of beans
- 50 It was removed from the Dow
- 30 the same year Nike was added
- 53 Protective cover
- 54 Court
- 57 Carmichael/Gorrell classic, and a hint to this puzzle's theme
- 61 Nike competitor
- 62 Art medium
- 63 Shred
- 64 Tiny stream
- 65 Damage
- 66 Hits the road

DOWN

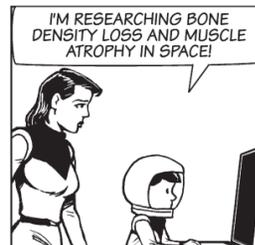
- 1 Real estate ad no.
- 2 City SW of Le Havre
- 24 City SW of Le Havre
- 26 Red army unit?
- 33 Thirsts
- 34 Bit attachment
- 35 Luau dish
- 36 Here, in 24-
- Across
- 37 Barber's "Vanessa," for one
- 39 Throw in
- 40 Time meas.
- 41 Drive
- 42 Musical lament
- 44 Druid baker's recipe?
- 48 Future execs, perhaps

NON SEQUITUR



WILEY

BREWSTER ROCKIT: SPACE GUY!



TIM RICKARD

