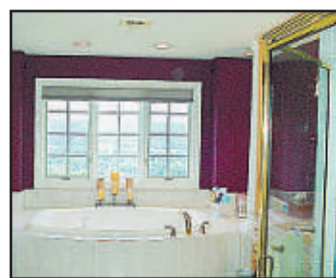




IN LIFE
Taking great photos of kids



IN HOME STYLE
Big show starts today



THE CINCINNATI ENQUIRER

CINCINNATI.COM SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 2007 FN 50 CENTS

IN SPORTS

High school scoreboard

Boys Div. I Sectional finals	
Moeller	73
Anderson	40
La Salle	57
Sycamore	34
Boys Div. IV Sectional final	
Lockland	65
Fayetteville	46
Girls Div. II District final	
Alter	70
Tippecanoe	60

For more coverage, see Pages C1, 8-9

UC'S HOPE TURNED TO DESPAIR

Bearcats won 9 of 13 games early. Then team couldn't buy a win, it seemed.

By Bill Koch
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MORGANTOWN, W.Va. — Reality struck the University of Cincinnati basketball team on a Thursday night in early January.

For 13 games, the Bearcats had more than held their own. Yes, they had been blown out by then-No. 3 Ohio State, but they had beaten crosstown rival Xavier. They had knocked off North Carolina State and Temple.

They were 9-4 as they headed south, and UC fans were allowing themselves to believe that

what had looked to be a trying season might not be such a disaster after all.

Then came the game Jan. 4 at No. 22 Memphis, a longtime UC nemesis from Conference USA. The Tigers scored the game's first 11 points. They led by 20 midway through the first half and by 31 at halftime before settling for an 88-55 victory.

Cronin stood helpless in front of the UC bench as Memphis fans ridiculed his team. The players on the floor looked shellshocked.

See UC, Page A8

Last game today

- **When:** 4 p.m. at W. Virginia.
- **TV/Radio:** WXIX-TV, WCKY-AM (1530).
- **In Sports, C6:** Conference standings, notebook and more.

UC head coach Mick Cronin came into a tough situation and sees leadership, experience and talent improving next year.



Enquirer/Ernest Coleman

Up Front

Must reads inside today's Enquirer

Teen confesses to Sharonville rape

During an interview with police, a teenager confessed to raping a woman at a Sharonville park. LOCAL B1

Foreclosed homes on auction block

Unoccupied and ready for new owners, 11 homes will be auctioned off to the public Monday. BUSINESS D1

Paul Wilson rejoins Reds, rejoicing

After two years of healing an injured shoulder, Paul Wilson is back — and he's loving it. SPORTS C7

Also...

Army Secretary Francis Harvey abruptly resigned amid troubles at Walter Reed hospital. NATION & WORLD A2

XU's Musketeers will take on La Salle today, and the men's basketball team is starting to feel the heat. SPORTS C1

Bluffton bus crash scares local families



The Enquirer/Gary Landers

Brennan Bauman, a freshman on the Bluffton University baseball team, watches TV news reports about the crash of a bus carrying the team. Bauman didn't make the trip; his brother, Chris, was injured in the crash. At right are his father, Keith, and sister Morgan, 16, in the family's Miami Township home.

Milford grads survive wreck that killed 6; 2 others on baseball team didn't make trip



The Associated Press/Gene Blythe

A charter bus carrying the Bluffton University baseball team lies on Interstate 75 in Atlanta after it plunged off a highway ramp early Friday. "It looked to me like a big slab of concrete falling down," truck driver Danny Lloyd, 57, of Frostburg, Md., said.

By Kimball Perry
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and Jennifer Baker
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Jolted awake, Milford's James "Jamie" Hausman on Friday found the bus in which he and other members of the Bluffton University baseball team were riding a buckled heap and everyone confused.

Hausman, a 2005 graduate of Milford High, felt no broken bones but heard other players moan and groan around him.

Then, he smelled the fuel.

"He told me there was diesel fuel coming in the bus so he climbed out on his own very shortly after the bus wrecked," his mother, Lynn Mesley, said Friday.

Mesley and her husband, Barry, are firefighters and paramedics in Clermont County's Miami Township.

Their son and Chris Bauman — both Milford High graduates on the Bluffton baseball team — were on the bus. Two other Milford High graduates also on the Bluffton baseball team didn't make the trip.

See CRASH, Page A8

Local players



Jamie Hausman climbed out of wreckage when he smelled fuel.



Chris Bauman was trapped under the bus and later underwent knee surgery. Brennan Bauman and David Riddle are on the team but were not on the trip.

Six dead

■ Bus driver Jerome Niemeyer, of Columbus Grove, Ohio.

■ Niemeyer's wife, Jean.

■ Soph. David Betts, of Bryan, Ohio.

■ Soph. Tyler Williams, of Lima, Ohio.

■ Fresh. Scott Harmon, of Lima, Ohio.

■ Fresh. Cody Holp, of Arcanum, Ohio.

THE DELTA BANKRUPTCY

Comair to keep jets as pilots agree to pay cuts

By Alexander Coolidge
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After more than a year of tense negotiations and court challenges, Comair has won labor peace and is poised to exit bankruptcy this spring.

With almost 69 percent of pilots voting in favor of cutting a deal, the Erlanger-based regional airline won labor concessions worth \$40 million for the next four years, union and company officials said Friday. The pact is still subject to court approval.

Comair also said Friday that parent Delta Air Lines, which had threatened to take Comair planes away after it collected flying bids last fall, decided that it would not shrink Comair's fleet any further. That means Comair will emerge from bankruptcy with 130 jets, down from 174 at the start of bankruptcy.

The contract vote, in which 84 percent of the 1,600 union members participated, ends a standoff where pilots threatened a potential strike until a bankruptcy judge forbade it.

J.C. Lawson, chairman of the union, said Comair still needs to mend fences. "Threats were made, and trust has to be rebuilt," he said.

Pilots' base pay will be cut by 7.75 percent to 12.5 percent. Pay will range from about \$21,120 to \$95,021. The contract is to expire March 1, 2011.

Comair president Don Bornhorst told employees in a phone message that he knew the cuts were painful but necessary to get the airline out of bankruptcy, which he hoped would happen in late April or May. "I will be glad to have these times behind us, and I am sure all of you will as well," he said.

Stan Lampe, vice president of the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, welcomed the prospect of less turbulence at Comair.

"We've got to have efficient air travel in order to compete in the global marketplace," he said. "It's distinctly encouraging — Comair is our local airline, and their 6,500 employees are our neighbors."

Toll rises to 8 at high school

Tornadoes kill at least 20

The death toll from a violent Midwest-to-Southeast storm system rose to at least 20 Friday, a day after tornadoes ripped apart an Alabama high school and tore through Georgia.

Eight students died when a twister blew out the walls and roof of a wing at Enterprise High School, Mayor Kenneth Boswell said. NATION & WORLD A2



Lawson



What's your view?

Speak up in our online edition about Enquirer stories, reviews, columns, editorials and letters to the editor. Click on "Comments" to post your thoughts and to read those of others. Go online to Cincinnati.com and join the conversation.

WEATHER

High 40°
Low 22°
A shower

COMPLETE FORECAST: B8

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Lakota schools | Plenty of friends have been made in these first 50 years

Lakota school system has gone from a single building in 1957 that graduated just 34 seniors to Ohio's seventh-largest, with 17,900 students.

Today, the Butler County district — whose enrollment is larger than every other Greater Cincinnati district except Cincinnati Public Schools — begins celebrating its anniversary with an all-day festival at Lakota East High School.

The once sparsely populated farm communities of

Local, B1: Find out more about the transformation of Lakota from a small district among rural cow pastures to the second-largest in the Cincinnati area.

West Chester and Liberty townships have rocketed into some of the region's fastest-growing suburbs, with more than 85,000 residents. Their children go to 19 Lakota schools.

Despite its size, Lakota — an Indian term meaning "friends" — has earned the state's top academic rating of "Excellent" for five straight years. Lakota is the largest district among Ohio's 614 school systems to achieve that distinction.

— Michael D. Clark

"Lakota Turns 50": Readers in the Lakota district can find 50 years of memories in today's Your Hometown Enquirer insert, Pages 1-27.



High school sweethearts Ernest and Ester DeBord show their 1960 Lakota Junior Senior prom photo. The '61 grads still live in West Chester.

The Enquirer/Craig Ruttle

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