

On TV

Auto racing

NASCAR, Nextel Cup, pole qualifying for Dodge/Save Mart 350, Speed TV, 6 p.m.

NASCAR, Craftsman Truck Series Milwaukee 200, Speed TV, 9 p.m.

Boxing

Heavyweights, Oleg Maskaev (30-5-0) vs. Terrence Lewis (32-15-1) ESPN2, 9 p.m.

Golf

European PGA Tour, Open de France The Golf Channel, 9:30 a.m.

Champions Tour, The Bank of America Championship The Golf Channel, 1:30 p.m.

PGA Club Pro Championship The Golf Channel, 4 p.m.

PGA Tour, Barclays Classic, USA, 4 p.m.

U.S. Women's Open, ESPN2, 5 p.m.

MLB

Chicago Cubs at Chicago White Sox WGN, 4 p.m.

N.Y. Mets at N.Y. Yankees, ESPN, 7 p.m.

Washington at Toronto, UPN 20/MASN/ DirecTV 626, RCN 8, 7 p.m.

Baltimore at Atlanta, TBS, 7:30 p.m.

Tennis

Wimbledon, ESPN2, 8 a.m.

WNBA

Washington at Detroit, CSN, 7:30 p.m.

On the Web

Chats

www.soccertimes.com

A no frills site that can keep you up to date with football around the world.

On tap



Friday vs. Toronto
7:05 p.m.
Radio: 1050 AM and
104.1 FM



Friday
at Atlanta
7:35 p.m.



Wednesday
at Chicago
8:30 p.m.



Friday
at Detroit
7:30 p.m.



Seth Rossman/AP

Danica Patrick, left, and the Indy Racing League are making a stop in Richmond this weekend.

On media

Danicamania is on its way

Jim Williams

The Indy Racing League is in our neck of the woods this weekend, and that means Danicamania to the max. Danica Patrick, the hottest sports ticket in auto racing, leads a very talented field of drivers and race teams into Richmond for a big race Saturday night.

ESPN will have all of Saturday's action and a major part of the announcing team is Jamie Little, pit reporter for IRL broadcasts. It would be easy to dismiss her role on the telecasts as the babe of IRL. She is beautiful, has her own Web site (www.jamielittle.com) and has graced the pages of FHM. But to say she is on the air as another pretty face would be unfair — and worst of all totally wrong.

Jamie Little is a good reporter who knows auto racing as well as anyone covering the sport and her passion for racing makes her a force that commands fans' attention. She is a talented 25-year-old reporter who knows a good story and most importantly how to develop it. I had a chance to talk IRL racing with Jamie and it took about 10 minutes on the phone before she had converted me to a fan.

Jim Williams: How has Danicamania affected the IRL racing coverage?

Jamie Little: Danica has been perfect for the IRL. She has been able create a real buzz and so we not only race draw fans to our telecasts but we get a healthy number of casual sports fans who want to watch the races to see how Danica is doing. That has allowed us to showcase many of the other fine drivers that we have. So, once we get the fans it is up to us to keep them.

JW: What are some of the

drivers and the teams that a new fan to the IRL should look for?

JL: Andretti Green Racing has been awesome this season with guys like Dan Wheldon, Tony Kanaan, Dario Franchitti and Bryan Herta. The Rahal/Letterman Racing team has Danica, Buddy Rice, and Victor Meira — all have been very competitive. Then you can never count out the Penske team with Sam Hornish, Jr. and Helio Castroneves. Plus there are plenty of other talented racers, so each race is wide open.

JW: What makes Richmond such a challenge?

JL: Because you are constantly turning. There will be plenty of close quarters racing and that means about five G's, each time you take a turn and that really makes for a physically tough race. For Danica it will be interesting to see how she can handle the grind of a race track like Richmond.

After my conversation with Jamie Little it is easy to see that she is someone to watch as one of ESPN's raising stars. She is a solid, knowledgeable, creative reporter and her love of racing makes Jamie a very impressive broadcaster with an awesome future.

Off-Mikes

Have you seen the cartoon Off-Mikes? Well you can see it at ESPNRadio.com and on most of the ESPN Web sites. It features Mike Greenberg and Mike Golic, the stars of Mike and Mike in the morning, heard on SportsTalk 980 (WTEM-AM).

I spoke to Mike Golic about the cartoon that is fast becoming a national hit.

JW: Mike, how cool is it to be in a cartoon?

Mike Golic: Very cool. I grew

up watching the Road Runner cartoons and the fact that both Greenie and I are part of this new cartoon is great. We both also get to see our families in the show, and since they simply take clips from the show and then build the cartoon around that, it makes for a lot of fun.

JW: Could this cartoon be coming to TV soon?

MG: I think it is possible. Right now we just got the OK for 10 new shows for the Web site so that is great news. I am hopeful that we can someday see the show on TV. It is a great deal of fun and the creative team that does all the behind the scene stuff is very talented. But Greenie and I are just happy to part of the fun process.

Things you should know

And the winner is: Comcast SportsNet Mid-Atlantic, captured four Capital Region Emmy Awards, including Michael Jenkins for Best Sports Anchor, as announced Saturday at a ceremony hosted by The National Capital/Chesapeake Bay Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS).

Comcast SportsNet captured three more Emmy Awards, including Live Play-By-Play Coverage for Washington Capitals Hockey (Bill Bell, Producer); Sports Programming, Rob Ramsay Battles Cancer (Tim Delaney, Producer); and News Segments: Sports/Same Day, Cal's Lil' Buddy (Brett Hyman, Reporter/Producer).

NBC 4's George Michael won the Emmy for the Best Sports-cast. Kudos to all!

Jim Williams is a seven-time Emmy award winning TV producer, director and writer.

Timeout

Each week *The Examiner* sits down with a sports personality to draw out their views on today's hot topics from the sports world and beyond. This week:

Matt Bowen



The Redskins safety missed the final 11 games of 2004 with a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his knee. He's healthy and ready to go — and newly married. He's also an opinionated fan.

Examiner: How is your knee?

Matt Bowen: I feel good. I got a lot of work in, a lot of change of direction. ... These next six weeks are important for me. I have my own training regimen that I follow. I'll only take four or five days off before training camp. You've got to keep working. Got to.

EX: How much can continuity compensate for a team's weaknesses?

MB: That's a big deal in any sport. When guys play together a lot, they hang together a lot. When you're done with meetings, you're going golfing. Good teams have good chemistry. That word is thrown around too much, but if you really have good chemistry and continuity — with the same guys coming back, working together out in the heat — it makes you better.

EX: What sport do you like to watch the most, besides football?

MB: Baseball. I can't stand the NBA Finals, to be honest. Ever since Michael Jordan left, my days as a Bulls fan went down the tube. I'm a baseball guy. With the NBA, all you have to do is watch SportsCenter to see highlights. In baseball, if you're really into the game you see how managers use the pen, how they use pinch-hitters. I like National League baseball. I'm not a big American League guy where they're trying to score 10 runs an inning. I'm loyal to the Cubs. I love the Nats, too. I like the way they play. They hit and run and bunt. We call it old St. Louis Cardinal baseball.

EX: Is it weird for you to see Sammy Sosa in an Orioles uniform?

MB: Yeah, because I'm a Sammy fan. Now the Cubs have Jeremy Burnitz who strikes out even more than Sammy. I was all for keeping Sosa and Moises Alou. If the Cubs had those two, they would have a great lineup, with the way Derek Lee has been playing. They'd have a lineup that could contend with the Cardinals. But they don't have one now.

EX: What did you think of Phil Jackson going back to the Lakers?

MB: It's Hollywood, man. Just like a movie. Everything is so fake out there. He was my guy [in Chicago], but I think No. 23 had a lot to do with it.

As told to Examiner correspondent John Keim.