

Pressbox: Did Jordan get help setting record?

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blowout win over the Detroit Pistons. While the classy thing to do would have been to let the clock run out, Bowie called a time out, hoping for one last chance at that last assist, which would give him a triple-double. Pistons coach Doug Collins,

seeing this, kept his players off the court and allowed Bowie to get his 10th assist uncontested, refusing to subject his players to that humiliation.

A similar situation occurred in 2001 when San Diego Padre Rickey Henderson, who was chasing MLB's all-time career runs scored record, stole second base

late in a game that his team led, 12-5. The act infuriated Milwaukee Brewers coach Davey Lopes, and rightfully so, as his team was being blown out. However, standard courtesy was being overlooked in favor of Henderson's pursuit of a record.

There are countless more incidents similar to these. Records

have become a bigger deal in sports than the integrity of the games. With this change, however, the records themselves have become cheapened.

No longer can we say confidently that a record is legitimate. Odds are, the athlete who set it would not have set it in the normal course of a game, but rather had

a remarkable game, season, or career, and got so close that people decided to give him the record.

There should be an asterisk next to all these people's names in the record books. The real records belong to the players who achieved them without outside help.

Deacs:

Defeat the Wolfpack

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the ACC as a consolation prize after their setback against the Golden Eagles.

Against the N.C. State Wolfpack Feb. 6, the Deacons used a very similar beginning as against Marquette, but managed to write a much happier ending.

With Howard again having trouble getting started, the Deacons needed strong performances from others just to stay in the game during the first half against the Pack. Levy led the scoring for the half for the Deacs with an almost perfect period, as he converted all five of his field goal attempts, one of them a three-pointer, only faltering on his one attempt from the foul line.

Freshman Eric Williams also stepped up with 10 points in the half, though that total may have been less impressive than the 18 minutes the foul-plagued frosh logged. It was only thanks to those anomalistic scoring performances that the Deacons were able keep their deficit to 35-31 in a half where Howard managed just four points.

But, as he has shown a knack for doing this year, the Deacons' leader ratcheted his game up a few dozen notches when it mattered most.

Once again stating his case for conference player of the year honors, the senior co-captain went 6-of-8 from the floor and 7-of-7 from the free throw line on his way to 20 second-half points, giving him 24 for the game. He also grabbed eight rebounds in the final half, giving him a double double with 12 for the game.

Howard and the Deacs' knock-out punch came about halfway through the final period. Tied at 49 with about 10-and-a-half minutes remaining, the Deacons went on a 19-4 run to lead 68-53 with only 2:55 to go.

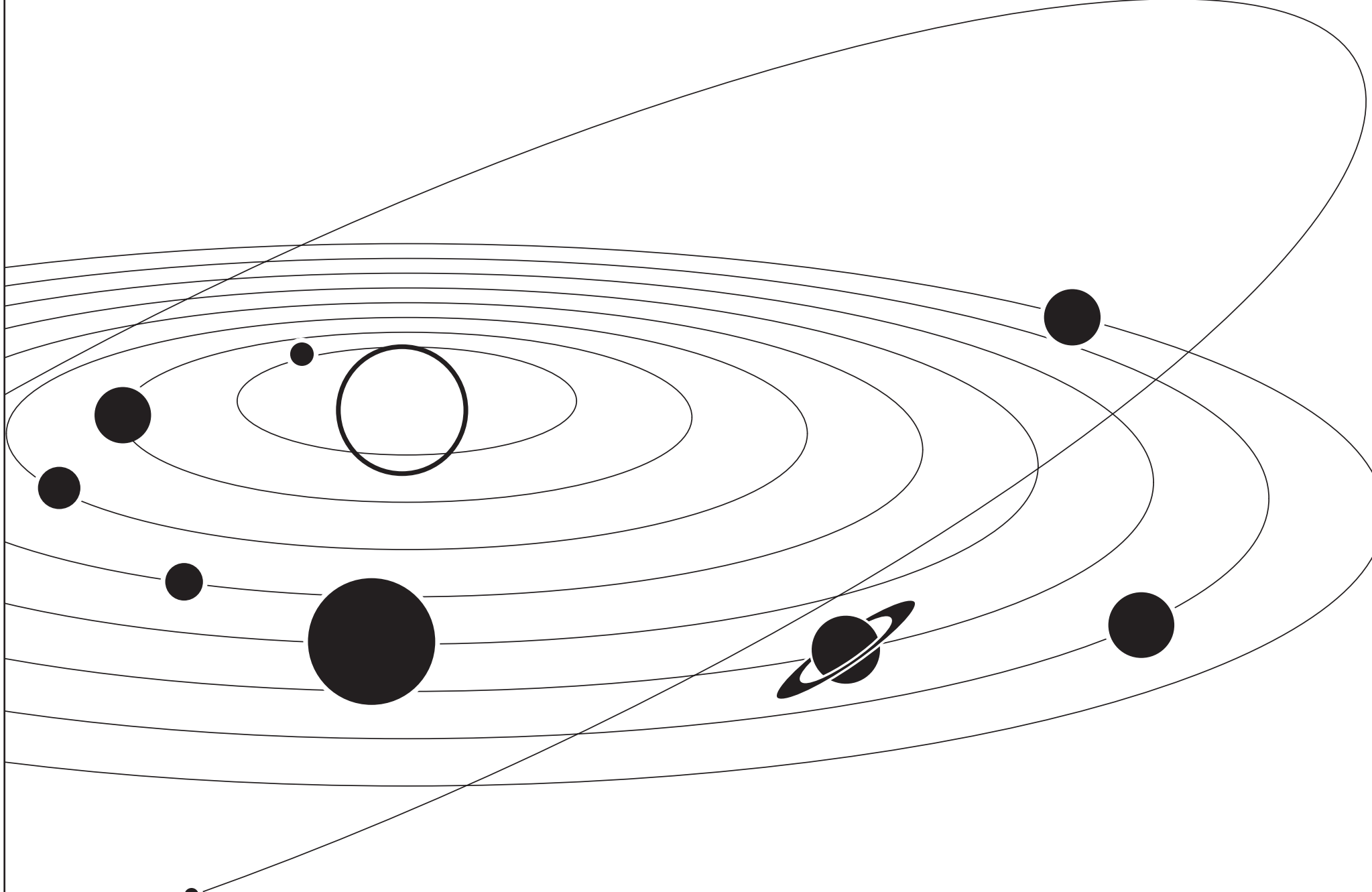
Howard had six points during the run, but the real dagger came from Downey. With the Deacs up 10 and less than five minutes remaining, Downey found himself above with the ball as the shot clock wound down. With only two seconds remaining, the sophomore point guard threw up a three from somewhere outside of High Point. When the shot went, in the Deacons were up 13 and on their way to a convincing win.

"That was a prayer," Prosser said. "Luckily he's a good church-going kid."

Downey finished with 12 points and three assists, while Williams added 16 points and five rebounds and Levy tallied six boards and five assists to go with his 11 points. With freshman Justin Gray having missed the last eight games with a broken jaw, Downey has been almost single-handedly shouldering the ball-handling load.

"I don't know if it can be appreciated how much pressure is on that kid," Prosser said of his sophomore co-captain. "He's our only guard, so he's got to play a lot of minutes, he hates to come out, he hates to come out in practice."

So, after a battle for second place in the ACC and a game against a top 15 team, the Deacons find themselves facing the toughest yet of their labors. They surely know a Herculean effort will be required if they are to keep their post of ACC supremacy. They must just as surely be planning on providing just that.



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