

VILLENEUVE RETURNING TO INDY 500

NEW YORK: Former Formula One world champion Jacques Villeneuve is taking a crack at winning another Indianapolis 500 by joining Schmidt Peterson Motorsports to race in the famed event he won in 1995, the team announced.

Villeneuve, 42, left the circuit after winning his first Indy 500 and the CART championship that year and has

not started an IndyCar race since.

"We started talking not long ago, actually a few weeks ago," said the Canadian of the May 25 race. "It all went fast. The discussions happened at the right time because I'd been watching the IndyCars last year, and it looked extremely exciting with the new cars, to the point where I was angry and jealous that I wasn't rac-

ing. So that got me going again."

The Quebec native left for F1 after his triumphant 1995 season and competed from 1996 through 2006, winning the world championship in 1997. Villeneuve moved to stock cars in 2007 and has run in a variety of series including NASCAR's Sprint Cup, Nationwide and Le Mans as well as sports cars. Villeneuve said the new-

style IndyCars and the aggressive racing style got him itching to return.

"When I started seeing that last year, I started getting excited again, just because the racing was amazing, the cars looked fast and aggressive, it looked hard on the drivers, and the battles were fierce, which is all what I love about racing," he said. — Reuters

MASKED JAMES LEADS HEAT PAST KNICKS

MIAMI: Miami's LeBron James, clad in a face-covering black mask to protect a broken nose, scored 31 points to lead the Heat to a 108-82 blowout win over New York on Thursday.

The Heat maintained a yawning 12-1/2 game lead in the Southeast Division ahead of Washington, which had a triple-overtime road win against Atlantic Division leader Toronto.

James was clearly unencumbered by the mask, hitting 13 of 19 shots and topping 30 points for the fifth consecutive game.

Dwyane Wade added 23, shooting 10 of 13 from the field, for the Heat, which outscored New York 23-3 over the final 7:02 of the third and won its sixth straight game. Miami shot 61 percent, while the Knicks shot 37 percent.

Carmelo Anthony scored 29 points for New York, but none in the final 21:38. The Knicks won only two games in February.

Washington's Trevor Ariza scored the go-ahead basket on a fast-break layup with 1:20 left in the third overtime to secure a 134-129 win at Toronto. Marcin Gortat fouled out with 31 points and 12 rebounds for the Wizards, who have won five straight.

DeMar DeRozan scored 34 points in 58 minutes for Toronto. In the day's other games, league-leading Indiana beat Milwaukee 101-96, with Roy Hibbert scoring 24 points and adding 12 rebounds, while Brooklyn won 112-89 over Denver, to record their first win in Colorado for seven years.

Pacers 101, Bucks 96

Center Roy Hibbert scored a game-high 24 points and had 12 rebounds to power the Pacers to a hard-fought 101-96 win over the Milwaukee Bucks.

The Pacers, who lead the Central Division

by 13 games, rallied from a six-point deficit in the third quarter as forward Paul George added 18 points and a game-high six assists. Guard Brandon Knight led the Bucks with 23 points.

Wizards 134, Raptors 129 (3 OT)

Guard John Wall scored 31 points while center Marcin Gortat also scored 31 points and added 12 rebounds as the Washington Wizards defeated the Toronto Raptors 134-129 in triple overtime.

Wall, who scored eight of his points in overtime, made a driving layup in the final minute of the third extra period to give the Wizards a four-point lead.

Guard DeMar DeRozan led the Raptors with 34 points.

Nets 112, Nuggets 89

Forward Paul Pierce scored 18 points before sitting out the entire fourth quarter as the Brooklyn Nets raced out to a big lead early and never relented in a 112-89 win over the Denver Nuggets.

Guard Marcus Thornton scored 10 points in his second game since joining Brooklyn at the trade deadline last week.

The Nets are 27-29 and within reach of Toronto for first place in the Atlantic Division.

The Nets embarrassed the now-woeful Nuggets despite solid games from forward Kenneth Faried (14 points, eight rebounds) and guard Randy Foye (15 points).

Their efforts were not nearly enough to overcome Denver's worst period of the season. The Nuggets were just 3-for-18 from the field in the first quarter and had as many points as turnovers, eight. — Agencies



MIAMI: Miami Heat small forward LeBron James (6) prepares to shoot over New York Knicks point guard Pablo Prigioni (9) during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Miami, Thursday. The Heat won 108-82. — AP

NBA results/standings

Indiana 101, Milwaukee 96; Washington 134, Toronto 129 (OT); Miami 108, NY Knicks 82; Brooklyn 112, Denver 89.

Eastern Conference Atlantic Division

	W	L	PCT	GB
Toronto	32	26	.552	-
Brooklyn	27	29	.482	4
NY Knicks	21	37	.362	11
Boston	20	39	.339	12.5
Philadelphia	15	43	.259	17

Central Division

Indiana	44	13	.772	-
Chicago	31	26	.544	13
Detroit	23	35	.397	21.5
Cleveland	23	36	.390	22
Milwaukee	11	46	.193	33

Southeast Division

Miami	41	14	.745	-
Washington	30	28	.517	12.5
Charlotte	27	30	.474	15
Atlanta	26	31	.456	16
Orlando	18	42	.300	2.5

Western conference Northwest division

Oklahoma City	43	15	.741	-
Portland	40	18	.690	3
Minnesota	28	29	.491	14.5
Denver	25	32	.439	17.5
Utah	21	36	.368	21.5

Pacific Division

LA Clippers	40	20	.667	-
Golden State	35	23	.603	4
Phoenix	33	24	.579	5.5
Sacramento	20	37	.351	18.5
LA Lakers	19	39	.328	20

Southwest Division

San Antonio	41	16	.719	-
Houston	39	19	.672	2.5
Dallas	36	23	.610	6
Memphis	32	24	.571	8.5
New Orleans	23	34	.404	18