

SPORTS

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Section B

UIF ALL-STAR CLASSIC



Lexington (Ky.) Herald-Leader/CHARLES BERTRAM

Rayshawn Askew of the Lexington Horsemen goes in for a touchdown against the Bloomington Extreme in a United Indoor Football playoff game last month. Askew, who will play for the Eastern Conference in Saturday's UIF All-Star Classic at U.S. Cellular Coliseum in Bloomington, holds the all-time record for career TDs on any professional level with 210.

Call him MR. TOUCHDOWN

Horsemen's Askew sets his sights on the end zone ... and the NFL

By Daniel Makarewicz
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BLOOMINGTON — Lexington Horsemen running back Rayshawn Askew sits almost hidden among the 50 United Indoor Football all-stars. His modest 5-foot-10 frame pales in comparison to his lanky, burly teammates that crowd inside the U.S. Cellular Coliseum concourse for lunch.

As he discusses a professional football career that spans over five years, Askew suddenly becomes a larger-than-life figure. He talks about his desire to be the best; the countless hours spent perfecting his game; and fine-

Reaching paydirt

Rayshawn Askew of the Lexington Horsemen holds the record for most career touchdowns by a professional. Here's a list of career touchdown leaders in each level of football.

Rayshawn Askew (UIF)	210
Jerry Rice (NFL)	207
T.A. McLendon (high school)	178
Ian Smart (NCAA)	95

tuning a body that takes a physical beating 16 weeks out of the year.

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► There's no letup in UIF championship Storm

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Most importantly, he talks about an opportunity to play in the National Football League.

"I want to be able to play at the highest level of football," Askew said Thursday. "That's why I continue to work so hard and try to break as many records as possible to try to get them to notice me."

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MR. TD

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His numbers will surely garner attention.

Last month in the Eastern Conference championship game against the Bloomington Extreme, Askew surpassed Jerry Rice for most touchdowns by a professional player with 208. As he represents the Eastern Conference in Saturday night's Casey's All-Star Classic, Askew still is in awe of a record few thought would ever be touched.

"I think that's a great accomplishment and that's something only I can say," said Askew, who currently has 210 career touchdowns. "To me as an individual, it shows the hard work that I've put in to play football. It makes all the sacrifices I've made even sweeter."

A native of Cincinnati, Askew originally intended to play at Purdue, but continued his career at Elizabeth City State University in Elizabeth City, N.C. With his collegiate career over, Askew began working in home health care and watched his

brother, B.J., get drafted by the New York Jets in the third round of the 2003 NFL Draft.

With his competitive fire still burning, Askew played professionally in several different leagues before playing for Lexington this past season. Despite playing in some lesser-known leagues, Askew became one of the most decorated football players in indoor football history.

Currently, he holds the indoor football record for rushing at 4,438 yards. He also holds the Great Lakes Indoor Football League records for most touchdowns in a season (41), game (6) and all-purpose yards (1,503).

"He can run, he can catch, he can block," Eastern Conference coach Ted Schmitz said. "He's the real deal. He's the whole thing."

That enables him to escape his brother's shadow.

"It definitely gives me a bragging right because I can always say, 'How many touchdowns do you have?'" said Askew, whose brother has 102 rushing and 73 receiving yards in a four-year NFL career with no touchdowns.

"It does give me some bragging power and just being able to say the No. 200 in anything, I think is just amazing. It's something that nobody can take from me."

This past season, Askew scored 38 touchdowns, tied for first in the league, and finished with 1,019 total yards. His 38 touchdowns were seven more than LaDainian Tomlinson, who broke the NFL single-season touchdown record.

"We definitely have confidence in (Rayshawn) to get in the end zone," said Lexington wide receiver Harry Lewis.

His ability to find the end zone comes from a hunger to be the best.

"I'm able to go every play if I have to — all four quarters, overtime," said Askew, who had 2,134 yards rushing in college. "I get stronger as the game goes on where most people get tired."

That enables him to be at 100 percent on every play.

"He doesn't have, as some players do, an up and down (game). He's up every game," Schmitz said. "That takes a special person."