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Jetting to the top

SKY-HIGH SKATER: Joey "Jett" Hornish, 9, of Towson, enjoys his time on the vert ramp during the AST Dew Tour at Camden Yards. » Page 41 - Chris Ammann/Examiner

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TIGER TO SIT OUT BUICK OPEN

» **Tiger Woods** has informed the Buick Open that he will not be playing in the tournament this year, organizers announced Friday. On Monday, Woods' wife gave birth to the couple's first child. Woods has played at the tournament about 60 miles north of Detroit the past five years — winning it in 2006 and 2002 — and eight times in his career. He is scheduled to host a tournament in Washington, D.C., from July 5-8. —AP



BASEBALL

Streak buster?

Miguel Tejada's consecutive games-played streak appears over as it turns out he has a fractured left wrist. Check out Matt Palmer's blog at examiner.com for more.

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Getty Images

ACTION SPORTS » AST DEW TOUR



Joey 'Jett' Hornish, 9, of Towson, idolizes Shaun White and Bucky Lasek, and Friday got to meet both at the AST Dew Tour in Baltimore. — Chris Ammann/Examiner

'Jett' takes off at Dew Tour

Towson native gets his chance to perform with idols

By **Kiel McLaughlin**
Special to The Examiner

He may sign his name Joey Hornish at the top of his spelling tests, but everybody knows him as Joey "Jett."

Joey earned the last name from his father, Steve Hornish, because the younger Hornish was always "jetting around the house."

The nickname stuck, just like the third-grader sticks 540s and rodeos on the professional skateboarding circuit.

The Towson-native celebrated his ninth birthday Tuesday on the 98 Rock morning show Mickey and

Amelia with one of his biggest heroes, Dundalk's Bucky Lasek. Lasek sat beside Joey and gave him tips, stressing to always wear a helmet and pads. Wearing enough padding, though, is one worry that doesn't apply for Joey.

"One time at a competition with 1,000 people last year, the crowd was cheering for Joey to do a 540," Joey's mother, Isabel Cumming, said. "He put his finger in the air to tell the crowd to wait, and yelled to me 'Mom, I need my pads.'"

Safety comes first for Joey and his team of pint-sized skaters that demonstrated their skills on the vert ramp Friday at the AST Dew Tour following the skateboard vert preliminaries.

"I'm more worried about Joey when he's running around the neighborhood playing with his friends than when he is dropping in on one of these ramps," Cumming said.

"These kids here aren't daredevils. They are trying to have fun, but they are very careful."

Joey, along with Mitchie Brusco, Greg "The Bull" DeHart, Zach Krouth, Chris Powell and Joey Hamlich strapped on enough pads to play football before dropping in, like the pros had just moments earlier.

Someday, Joey hopes to reach the same level as his favorite pro, Shaun White. This past school year, Joey and his classmates at Cromwell Valley Elementary were asked to come to class dressed as who they wanted to be when they get older.

Fully equipped with a skateboard and a bright red, curly wig, Joey walked to the front of the room as White — the Flying Tomato himself.

Friday, Joey had the opportunity to meet White.

"It was pretty cool," a noticeably shy Joey said.

While meeting the likes of White and Lasek this week, Joey skates with some of the best every week with the State of Confusion skate team. Other members of that team include Rodney Jones, who placed in the top 10 on the 2006 Dew Cup standings.

To think, it all started with a SpongeBob SquarePants skateboard when Joey was 3 years-old. When he wasn't on his board, Cumming said that they would watch tapes of professional skaters, trying to learn moves.

These days, Joey has the opportunity to see the best perform in person as he is traveling with the Dew Tour on all five stops. The next city on the circuit is Cleveland for the Right Guard Open July 19-22.

At each city, Joey and his friends will have the opportunity to show those in attendance what the next generation of skating looks like.

BASEBALL HALL OF FAME

Ripken digs in for Fame speech

By **Sean Welsh**
Examiner Staff Writer

Roughly one month away from being immortalized in the hallowed halls of the National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cal Ripken has yet to write his speech. But don't call him a procrastinator.

"I feel the sense of urgency setting in," Ripken said in an interview with *The Examiner*. "I've got a lot of things in my head, and probably next week I'll start to write things down and to try to put into words my feelings."

Ripken will be inducted into the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., on July 29. He will be joined by career-San Diego Padres outfielder Tony Gwynn, St. Louis Cardinals writer Rick Hummel (J.G. Taylor Spink Award winner), and Kansas City Royals broadcaster Denny Matthews (Ford C. Frick Award winner). Each of the honorees will give an acceptance speech before what is likely to be a record crowd on the lawn at the Clark Sports Center.

Ripken, who has created a successful business enterprise with Ripken Baseball since his retirement, will rely upon his findings in the business field.

"I've done enough projects to know that by putting it into words you start to refine your message," Ripken said. "My whole goal is that you can be meaningful and concise all at the same time."

Ripken is adept at giving speeches. He spoke before soldout crowds at Oriole Park at Camden Yards on two occasions — in 1995 after he surpassed Lou Gehrig for the consecutive-games record, and in 2001 after the final game of his major-league career.

No doubt, Ripken's speech will be emotional and to the point. In 2003, he was on-hand to hear the Hall of Fame speeches of former teammate Eddie Murray, Gary Carter and legendary broadcaster Bob Uecker.

"Bob Uecker is a standup comedian," Ripken said with a smile. "Even in the disguise of all the laughter, you really could tell he has a love for the game of baseball. I think being himself was appropriate. I'm not a comedian by any means, and I'll try to stay within myself."



Ripken