

# Portland Observer

## Auto Review

News and reviews on new motor vehicles



### 2006 Mercedes Benz R500

BY KATHLEEN CARR

The R-Class is an all-new Mercedes series; plugging a hole at the upper end of the 'progeny-prolific' consumer market segment. It is elegant like all Benzes, sleek like all Benzes, and has all the typical Benz styling touches you'd find on the other models—but the one-box shape is unmistakable. For all intents and purposes, this R-class is a people-hauler.

The R500 is downright fast, packed with all-wheel drive, electronic stability control and other features designed to help the driver maintain control. It transmission a seven-speed automatic also has a sport setting, offering crisper shifts at higher shift points—or you can shift yourself via buttons mounted behind the steering wheel's spokes. The seven-speed is the best automatic transmission currently on the market, smooth, quiet and extremely flexible and useable. The Airmatic suspension is adjustable; stiffer shock-absorber response is a button-touch away.

In order to pull off the "Grand Sport Tourer" idea, every one of the six bucket seats in the R-Class has its own cupholder, seat adjuster, armrest, ventilation, lighting. The first two rows can provide an independent choice of listening

and viewing entertainment. The R500 was built to hold six adults, not two adults and four children.

A new innovations in the luxury-car world today is the keyless starting system—and Mercedes' 'Keyless Go' execution of the concept is perhaps the best we've seen. The standard fob sits in your pocket or purse, giving off a signal that unlocks the car doors as you pull the handle, and allows for starting the engine with the push of a single button. This makes getting in and out, and on the road, a seamless process—and makes locking your keys in the car an impossibility. A standard metal key is provided in case of battery drain.

If you need to haul six people and their gear in Mercedes-Benz luxury and style, there is no better vehicle out there. This is a very large vehicle, but the radical design and its sloping roof and sweeping front-to-rear lines tend to minimize the size and accent its sportiness at the same time.

**Tested Vehicle Information: Price is \$60,800; Engine is a V-8 3-valve per cylinder; Transmission is a 7-speed automatic w/column shifter**

# SPORTS

## Local Youth Sets Track Record

10-year-old Cameron Retherford, a member of the Inner City Steppers Track and Field Club in north Portland, broke the Phoenix, Ariz. Invitational Track and Field long jump record, during a meet on April 1.

Retherford competed in the Bantam Division (nine to 10 years old) and jumped 4.56 meters, or 14 feet 11.75 inches, to break the long-standing mark of 4.48 meters in this event. He also participated in the 100 and 400-meter dashes, winning the 100-meter with a time of 13.54 seconds and placing second in the 400 meters with a time of 1:04.1 seconds.

This was the first meet of the season for Retherford, and he is looking forward to more exceptional performances as



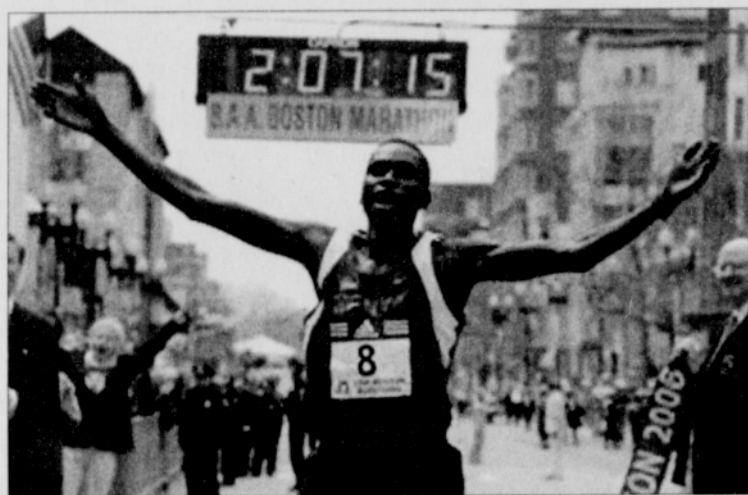
the 2006 season unfolds.

Retherford finished the 2005 season as a National medalist in the long jump at the National Junior Olympic Championships in Indianapolis, Ind. He also qualified in the 100 and 400-meter dashes.

The Inner City Steppers is a local track and field club in north Portland and practices are held at Jefferson High School. Local support is always welcome and the community is encouraged to support by.

Cameron Retherford, 10, of north Portland's Inner City Steppers Track and Field Club competes at the Phoenix, Ariz. Invitational where he broke the long jump record.

## Boston Marathon Winner



Robert Cheruiyot of Kenya crosses the finish line to win the men's 110th Boston Marathon Monday in course record time of 2 hours, 7 minutes, 14 seconds. It was an outstanding day for the Americans too as U.S. runners came in third, fourth and fifth. (AP photo)

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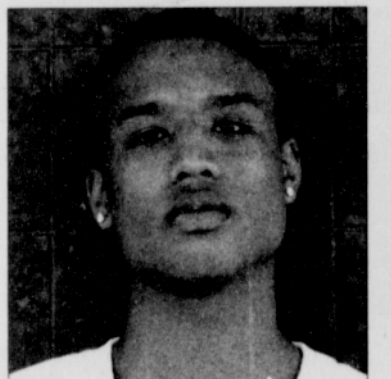
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## Hopson Signs with WSU

Former Jefferson High School standout Mac Hopson has signed a letter of intent to play basketball at Washington State University in Pullman, Wash. in the upcoming season this fall.

The 6-foot, 2-inch point guard just finished his freshman season at North Idaho College where he helped lead the Cardinals to a co-championship in the Scenic West Athletic Conference. He averaged 13.7 points per game and finished the year with a 73.7 free throw percentage and 64 steals. He maintained a 3.0 grade point average in school.

"It's been a big dream of mine to



Mac Hopson

play in the Pac 10," Hopson said. "I really like the atmosphere at WSU and I've built a good relationship with their coaching staff."

## Portland State Athlete Excels

Portland State senior Gayle Imran-Sideris was recently named Big Sky Conference Female Field Athlete of the Week for placing 10th in the triple jump at the Texas Relays in Austin, Texas March 8 with a Viking record 42-foot, 4.75-inch leap.



Gayle Imran-Sideris

The mark, which qualified Imran-Sideris for both the NCAA Western Regional and the BSC Outdoor Championships, placed fifth in Big Sky

history and is the best distance in the Big Sky this outdoor season.

The Federal Way, Wash., native, was the first Viking to ever participate in the NCAA Division I Indoor Championships.

Saturday, she won the women's triple jump at the Miami Elite Invitational and will compete this weekend at the Oregon Invitational in Eugene.

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