

Portland Observer Auto Review

News and reviews on new motor vehicles

2007 BMW 650i Convertible

BY KATHLEEN CARR

There's a new class of car out there that's quietly making an impression at the top end of the market - it's the big, nasty convertible. Jaguar and Cadillac are the natural heirs to this kind of road monster; something with a big motor, a long hood and as comfortable as a sultan's palace.

BMW is not to be denied, and they offer the 650i Convertible as their player in the game. Merging the refined style and fiery spirit of the legendary 6 Coupe with the open-air freedom of a convertible, the stunning 6 Series Convertible seizes the imagination as boldly as it captures the eye.

A muscular 4.8-liter V-8 power plant delivers 360-hp at 6300 rpm, 360-lb torque at 3400 rpm; produc-

ing a riveting 5.6-second launch to 60 mph. The 650i Convertible has the ambience of a true high-performance sports car. Both the Coupe and the Convertible inspire a feeling of control and success, before they even leave the driveway. These cars encourage the driver to take driving seriously. Unlike most other luxury coupes, the 6 Series offers more than just your average automatic transmission. For those who truly enjoy maximum involvement, a 6-speed manual and Sequential Manual Gearbox (SMG) are also offered.

More than just raw power, the BMW 6 Series Rietta Payton and Nathaniel Davis incorporates numerous high-tech materials to keep its weight down. A composite trunk, aluminum suspension components, aluminum doors and thermoplastic front fenders all contribute to the effort, while the remaining bulk is perfectly balanced 50/50

Experience the Ultimate Freedom



Specifications: 4.8-Liter, 32-Valve (4-cam) 360-hp at 6300 rpm, V-8 Engine; 6-Speed StepTronic automatic transmission; MPG: 17-City 25-Highway; \$91,720 MSRP

front to rear. In addition, the 650i offers BMW's revolutionary Active Steering system that can adjust the steering ratio to the maximum maneuverability, whether you're granny cruising in the park-

ing lot or tearing up the open road. To provide car enthusiasts with the smoothest ultimate driving experience, the 6 Series incorporates the Active Steering system along with Active Roll Stabilization, which

helps to suppress body roll during aggressive cornering. The BMW 650i is a luxury vehicle. After all, it is a BMW. Standard features include 18-inch wheels with run-flat tires, premium leather uphol-

stery, wood trim, dual-zone automatic climate control, an MP3-compatible CD player, Bluetooth wireless capability, a full set of one-touch power windows, heated power mirrors and a power top for the convertible, front seats feature driver memory and electric heaters. The I-Drive vehicle management system is integrated into the console, while a DVD-based navigation system with voice command and park distance control also come standard. Standard safety features include front side-impact, full-length side curtain airbags and the rollover protection system, which is only available in the Convertible.

The bottom line on the BMW 650i Convertible is that folks who are looking into the "big nasty roadster" class are going to love it. It's got all the bells and whistles, it rides smooth even with the top down at 70 mph., it's showy and it handles with the confident speed and agility of a cheetah.

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Florida Repeat in NCAA Tourney

With same starting five

(AP)--The Florida Gators took a chomp out of NCAA history with the repeat they simply had to have.

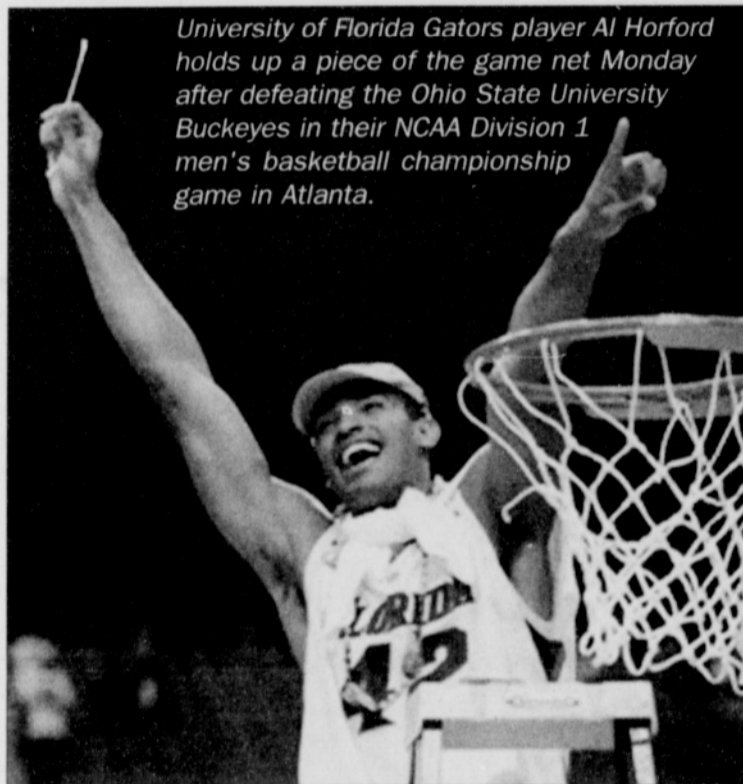
Now they want more. They want to be called one of the best teams of all time.

The Gators made their case Monday night with an 84-75 victory over Ohio State to capture the second straight national championship that was their only reasonable goal this season.

They became the first team to go back-to-back since Duke in 1992 and the first ever to repeat with the same starting five.

"I think this team should go down as one of the best teams in college basketball history," coach Billy Donovan said. "Not as the most talented, and not on style points — but because they encompassed what the word 'team' means."

Al Horford had 18 points and 12 rebounds, Taurean Green had 16



University of Florida Gators player Al Horford holds up a piece of the game net Monday after defeating the Ohio State University Buckeyes in their NCAA Division 1 men's basketball championship game in Atlanta.

points and Greg Oden's 25 points and 12 rebounds weren't enough for Ohio State (35-4) to stop the Gators (35-5) from completing the quest they set upon when all the

starters delayed their NBA plans for a try at another title.

While the debate about the best teams of all time can truly begin, there is no denying that Florida's

overall athletic program is the best in the nation.

This win completes a 2007 championship-game sweep of the Buckeyes in the two biggest college sports — men's hoops and football. Florida, a 41-14 winner in the football title game in January, remains the only program in history to hold both championships at the same time.

The celebration looked much the same as last year. Lots of jersey tugging, jumping onto press row and Joakim Noah running into the stands to hug it out with loved ones.

Donovan added another gold star to his resume, which figures to command more than his current \$1.7 million salary next season, whether he returns to Florida or bolts for a possible job offer at Kentucky.

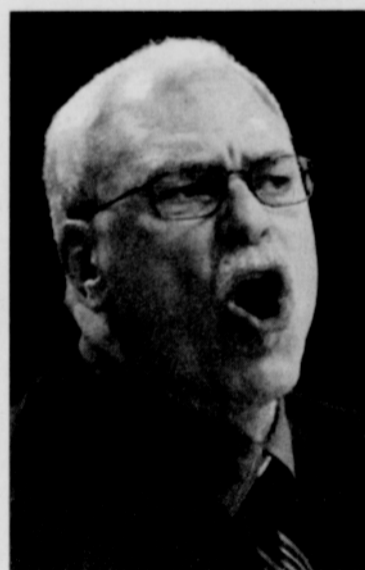
Meanwhile, one thing Florida has always been able to do is shoot the ball — a nation-leading 53 percent this year — and Monday night was no exception. The Gators went 10-for-18 from 3-point range.

And Florida also had quicker hands.

Jackson Named to Hall of Fame

(AP) Phil Jackson rode his string of three separate NBA championship three-peats straight to the Basketball Hall of Fame in his first

year of consideration. Jackson has won nine NBA titles as a coach with Chicago and the Los Angeles Lakers. Another



Phil Jackson

coach who has achieved success with two teams. Roy Williams, joined Jackson in heading a class of seven named Monday to enter the

Hall of Fame in September.

Williams is the third coach in history to lead two schools to the NCAA championship game. He won the championship with North Carolina in 2005 and also reached the final with Kansas.

Also selected to the Basketball Hall were the 1966 NCAA champion Texas Western team, four-time WNBA championship coach Van Chancellor, former NBA referee Mendy Rudolph and international coaches Pedro Ferrandiz of Spain and Mirko Novosel of Yugoslavia.

Texas Western was the first team in NCAA history to win a title with five black players, beating an all-white Kentucky team in the 1966 final. The achievement, regarded as a turning point in the integration of college athletics, was the subject of the movie "Glory Road."

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