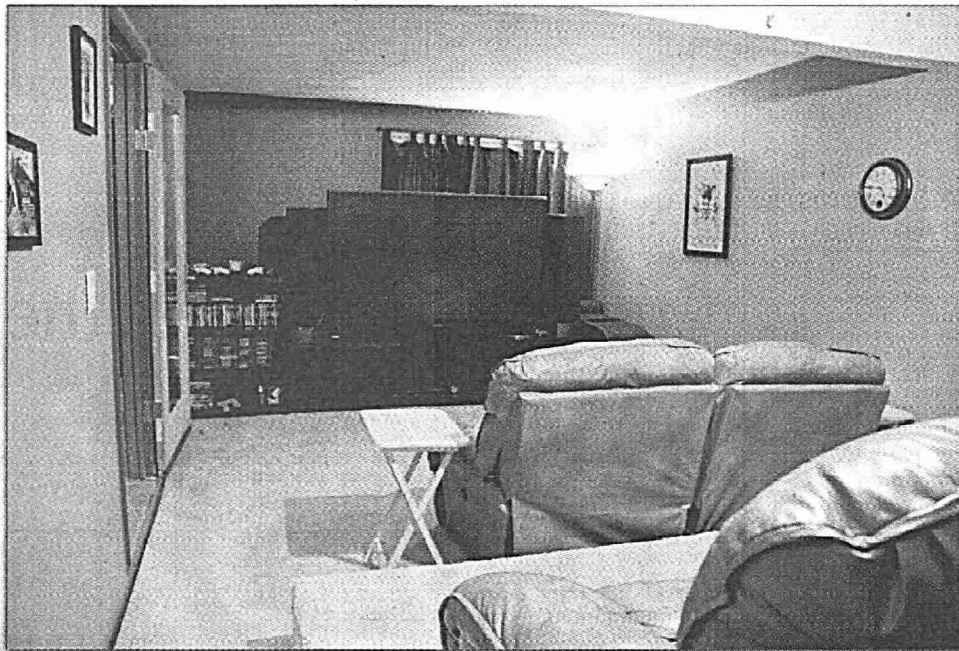
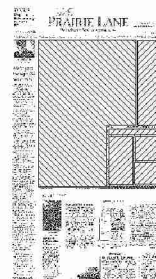
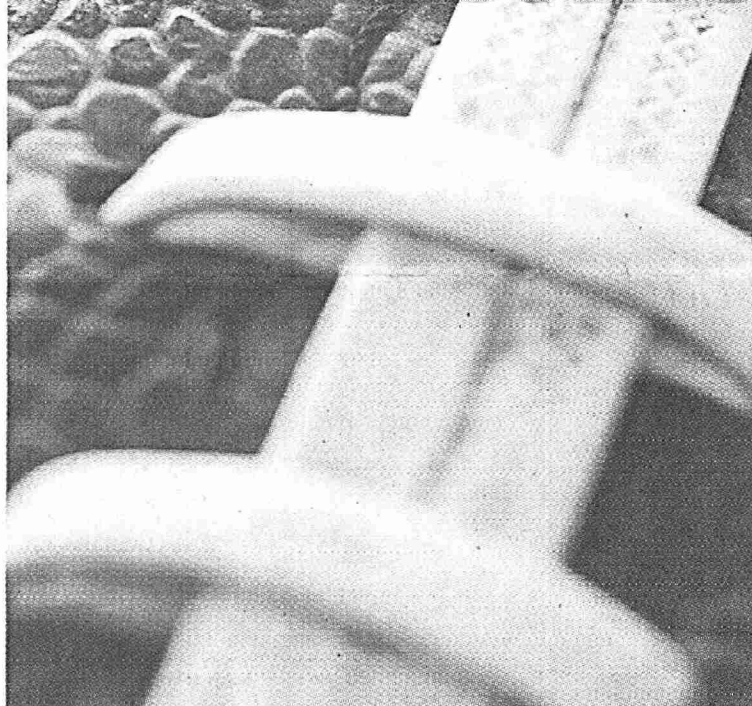


Jeff Hardy is hosting a Super Bowl party today in his home theater, equipped with reclining leather seating and a 73-inch flat-screen television.



Courtesy photo

Super duper Super Bowl setup



These viewers will be partying in style today with enormous screens and comfy seats.

BY KATHRYN GATES MOORE
Lincoln Journal Star

Jeff Hardy really knows how to watch a football game.

Cushy leather seats — ones that recline, no less. Table for refreshments close at hand.

And a GIANT television screen.

Having a home theater room was a natural for Hardy, who loves to watch movies and football.

Hardy transformed a space in his 1970s ranch to accommodate two sets of leather theater chairs — one of them on a raised platform — and his latest purchase, a 73-inch Mitsubishi flat-screen with a rear projector.

He watches movies several times a week in this room, he said.

College football is the main attraction in the fall, but today, as in years past, he will host a Super Bowl party for friends.

And, because he has had the big-screen television only a few weeks, this Super Bowl will be

better — at least on the screen — than the last one.

Hardy won't be alone. Across the country, 79 percent of Americans plan to watch the Super Bowl from home, according to a survey done by La-Z-Boy.

It's third down and long. But it's hard to concentrate on the game — even the Super Bowl — when the grass on the giant

See SUPER BOWL, Page 3E

screen television is so close up you can practically watch it grow.

And how about the colors in those uniforms?

Jed Brunken of Columbus had a media room in mind when he built his home in 1999.

The floor of his lower-level media room actually slopes, so the ceiling is 9 feet from the floor at one end and 12 feet at the other. It works perfectly for four rows (five seats in each row) of theater seats.

Seating in a room like this, is crucial, he said.

And the 22-inch-wide seats, which recline slightly, have cup holders. Perfect for a cold beverage during the game.

The 100-inch screen with a rear

projector has been used for all kinds of family gatherings, most recently a Big 12 Championship game party (he had to work during the Gator Bowl) and many Super Bowl parties.

And if the game becomes boring, the room next to this has a pool table, backgammon table and wet bar.

Brunken even took the home theater theme a step further, creating a "ticket window booth" with a nearby commercial popcorn popper.

Hearing Bruce Springsteen belt out "Born in the U.S.A." will be awesome in surround sound.

And you can really watch the finger work in that guitar solo.

Big-time football games make people want to buy new televisions, said Scott Barr, sales manager at Schaeffer's.

Business has been good the past two weeks, he said.

And the fact that the newest flat-panel television screens take up less room and can be mounted on the wall has helped, too.

Barr says the 52-inch flat-panel screens are the most popular of the big screens. He suggests sitting at least 10 feet away for optimum viewing. A screen that large works well in a room that is about 15 by 20 feet, Barr said.

Usually the size and quality of the television purchase is a family decision, Barr said.

"They come in to look, discuss and sometimes come back a second time before deciding," he said.

More often than not, they decide to "buy up" in size, he said.

It's not just about football, he said. There are also video games and movie rentals.

And if you need a real theater-style seat, those are available.

This game is really all about the commercials.

The Budweiser Clydesdales are practically high-stepping their way into the room on this screen.

Check out the 3-D movie trailer for "Monsters vs. Aliens." Awesome.

When the game is over, media rooms such as Hardy's and Brunk-

en's can be used for lots of other things.

During the holidays, Brunken said, his nieces and nephews did their own version of "The Wizard of Oz," making him think a miniature stage would have been a nice addition.

And sometime he would like to do an Academy Awards night party for his friends.

"I've certainly gotten my money's worth out of this room," Brunken said.

Reach Kathryn Gates Moore at 473-7214 or kmoore@journalstar.com.

Home theater installation tips

Setting up a new home theater system is exciting, but, with equipment and components and wiring galore, it has its share of pitfalls — many of which are avoidable.

Here are some simple installation tips from the experts at CableOrganizer.com:

■ **Account for power requirements** — Make sure that your home's circuits can handle the power load placed on them by home theater devices. Before you plug in and run all of those audio/video components, find out how much power you have running to your home theater room, as well as the total amount of power that will be drawn by the electronics. If the load is too heavy, reconfigure your equipment so that you don't blow the circuit.

■ **Go easy on your cables** — It's only natural that you're going to care for expensive, top-of-the-line home theater components such as screens, DVD players and audio equipment, but you need to make it a point to treat your cables gently, too. These cables are responsible for transferring all the necessary signals between home theater devices. It doesn't matter how great the equipment is, if your cabling is bent or crushed, signal will be impeded and the audio/video quality won't live up to its full potential. Try observing these two key rules:

1. **No sharp angles.** If you need to work cable into or around a corner, don't force it to form a sharp 90-degree angle — that sort of "kinking" interrupts audio/video signals during their journey from Point A to Point B and will leave you with garbled pictures and sound.

2. **Don't squish your cables.**

Stapling to the wall or floor is a pretty common method for keeping coaxial cable secure and out of the way, but you need to be sure it's done right. The wrong types of staples can dig into cabling, damaging its insulation and impeding signal flow. To avoid cutting off circulation, either use staples that are specifically designed for use with coaxial cable or go with an even better option: surface raceway. Raceway covers gently route cables without squeezing or harshly bending them, keeps them neat and organized, and won't even leave holes in your wallboard.

■ Don't forget the surge protectors — One good power surge can be all it takes to fry audio/video components beyond use. By plugging everything from the high-

def screen to the sound system into surge-protected power distribution units (PDUs), you help to ensure that all of those valuable home entertainment components aren't wiped out in one fell swoop.

■ Give your equipment some room to breathe — Just like people, electronics tend not to function well when they're overheated and kept in close quarters. Remember that correct spacing and thermal management are two key elements for a smooth-running viewing room. Be sure to consult the manufacturers' specifications to see how much clearance is recommended for each piece of equipment.

■ Keep the dust in check — Dust interferes with the functions of home theater components and, left to build up, it can drastically shorten the life span of your audio/video equipment. If your home theater components are housed in an open entertainment console, be sure to dust them thoroughly and often.

■ Hang on to warranty documents — Be sure to find and hold on to the paperwork for manufacturers' warranties. Register your equipment with the manufacturers as soon as possible, then store all the documents together in a safe place for quick and easy reference.

Avoid those 'Super' plumbing problems

Super Bowl parties can be a super problem for plumbing systems.

Bowl parties often mean more pizza and chicken wings than usual. That turns into overtime for garbage disposals and toilets.

"People's attention will be on the big game and not how much food is going down the garbage disposal," said Michael Watson of the Mr. Rooter of Lincoln franchise.

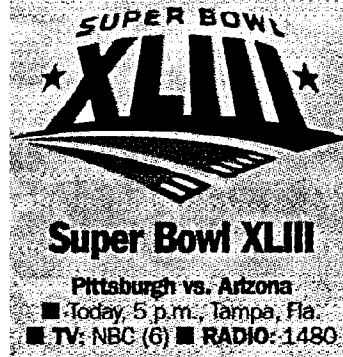
Here are some tips on avoiding problems during the big game:

For starters, don't overload the garbage disposal with leftovers, which could lead to a clogged kitchen sink. Instead, throw scraps in the trash or compost pile. Avoid pouring grease down the drain, and wipe off greasy plates and pans with a paper towel before washing them.

Be sure to tackle some precautions in the bathroom as well. Remove small objects from the top of the toilet tank that could fall in, causing it to clog. Keep a trash bin in the bathroom, so guests won't flush paper towels, napkins or facial tissue.

Timing is everything. Everybody knows that the toilet-flushing quota skyrockets during commercials.

Whether you're throwing a party or just having a few friends over, it's always important to know how to use the water shut-off valve under the tank. Toilet overflows are messy to clean up and can damage floors and drywall.



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