

## Bender's new career taking off

Sales are brisk for former Pacer's knee-saving device

**Zak Keefer**

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He was the teenage millionaire who spent NBA road trips devouring books on Andrew Carnegie and J.P. Morgan. Enchanted by their wealth, their success, most of all their impact, Jonathan Bender, from the moment he stepped foot on



Jonathan Bender

a professional court at the precocious age of 18, was always different.

Now, after a crumbled career on the court, Bender has found his calling off it, turning his nagging knee pain into a million-dollar idea.

Bender's improbable story, originally published in The Star in June, continues to

» See BENDER, Page C7 amaze.

*Slumped on a park bench in Houston one afternoon shortly after leaving Indiana, Bender watched runners and walkers stroll by, and a light bulb went off in his head.*

*He raced to Walgreens, then to Home Depot, then to Sports Authority. ("Picture a 6-11 guy walking up and down every aisle for like an hour," he said.) He bought electrical tape, rubber bands, zip ties, ankle braces, metal rods and wire cutters. He went home, slapped together what he'd sketched out in his head, and asked his girlfriend, Bernice, to come into the room.*

*"Try this on," he told her.*

*She looked at it and laughed.*

*"It looked like garbage," Bender admits.*

*But it worked. The initial prototype of what would become the JBIT MedPro — picture a weight belt attached to ankle braces with elastic bands — accomplished exactly what Bender wanted: It relieved stress off the lower joints by making the quadriceps, hamstrings and calf muscles labor more intensely than usual. Simply put: It took the stress off his knees.*

When interviewed for that story, Bender was reticent to divulge just how many of his signature products — the JBIT MedPro — he had sold. But it was clear the device was catching on. His company, JB3 Innovations, had seen revenue growth of 40 percent month-over-month since December.

Turns out, they were just

getting started.

Bender's company said Wednesday it has seen exponential 5,000 percent growth over the past 18 months. Not bad for an NBA washout.

What's more, the device is winning over those in the medical field whose opinions carry significant weight in this field. Bender's company recently finalized a partnership with University General Hospital Systems in Houston and Dallas, and netted a spokesman (in addition to Bender himself) in the company's CEO, Dr. Hassan Chahadeh.

In addition, JB3 Innovations launched nationwide Pain Free Clinics, offering those who suffer from knee, hip, back/sciatica or shoulder pain a no-cost opportunity at experiencing Bender's product. The company also now offers a home therapy program to, it says, "provide even more pain-relieving services for consumers."

How much success lies ahead for Bender?

He was reluctant to discuss the future. He recently married, and the bulk of his time has been spent developing his product and identifying a market for it.

"It took a lot of faith, faith in God," Bender said of his dreams of building a million-dollar company. "But once I figured it out, all I had to do was work for it."

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**Jonathan Bender**, on the rapid growth of his company



PHOTO PROVIDED BY JONATHAN BENDER

**In the past 18 months, sales of the  
JBIT MedPro Trainer are up 5,000  
percent.**