

Alumnus now a General

Former Bulldog faces Globetrotters on a nightly basis

BY NATHAN BECKER
Editor in Chief

Chip Sodemann — an alumnus who started 110 straight games for the Bulldogs from 2002 to 2005 and sits among Truman's career leaders in points, assists, steals and three-pointers — has been playing professionally since October.

He hasn't won a single game. In fact, the team he plays for hasn't won a game in more than 35 years — because it plays against the Harlem Globetrotters every game.

Sodemann began his professional basketball career in October with the Washington Generals, a basketball team that travels with the Globetrotters and has lost every game against them since 1971.

"Basically I kept wanting to play after college," Sodemann said, which is why he attended a basketball exposure camp in Florida with the intent to open some eyes to his skill level.

"I was fortunate enough to be seen by the general manager of the Washington Generals, and he got in contact with me," Sodemann said. "I thought it sounded pretty neat, so I went ahead and took it."

Although the Generals have lost every game and are booed heavily by Globetrotter fans, he said he enjoys his job.

"You go to other countries, and they might not know an NBA team, but they'll definitely know who the Globetrotters are," he said. "To be able to say that I traveled with them ... is not only something I'll be able to put on my resume, but I'll be able to tell my grandkids someday down the line."

He said the Generals players are skilled former college basketball players, and they don't dog it during the games. The Globetrotters exhibit antics with the crowd, the referees and coaches.

"We play as hard as we can," Sodemann said. "We're going out there to compete, and I think the harder we compete and the better off we do. It ... makes the



Nathan Becker/Index
Former Bulldog guard Chip Sodemann drives around a member of the Harlem Globetrotters during a game in Moberly, Mo., on March 24.

show look better. We never try to miss, never try to turn it over. We're always trying to go at them 100 percent of the time."

He said scores aren't decided before the game, either.

"The more we score, I think the more it elevates [the Globetrotters'] game, and they have to be on top of their game to keep up with us sometimes," Sodemann said.

Sodemann played with the Globetrotters in Moberly, Mo., on March 24 and got a warm reception, playing in his home state and close to Truman. But the Generals still were booed at the outset of the game — something Sodemann said he doesn't mind.

"Oh no, it's all good," he said. "I kind of enjoy it — it puts a little chip on your shoulder, ... you kind of play the role of the villain, of the bad guys, and so we get booed during introductions, we get booed during timeouts. ...

We have a good time with it, we enjoy it, we kind of feed off it a little bit, and it makes the show go by."

In front of the home crowd and his former head coach Jack Schrader, Sodemann took the ball from an out-of-bounds play and threw down an uncontested dunk. He said he had never dunked during a game at Truman.

"I always used to tease coach Schrader and tell him that I was the best after-practice dunker, and I could never get it, and he'd always laugh at me," he said. "It was funny enough that he was there at the game. Honestly, I don't know where it came from. I've been trying all year."

Schrader, who called Sodemann a leader and spoke highly about his improved athleticism, said he got a good look at the dunk.

"We got the picture of it," Schrader said. "That was a highlight. We'll hear about

that for years to come."

Sodemann said he would make sure to remind Schrader about the dunk at every opportunity.

"He definitely will [hear about it]," Sodemann said. "When I see him this summer at the golf tournament, I'll definitely let him know about it, and I might be up to Kirksville before the school year's out, so I'll definitely stop by his office and let him know about it, too."

Sodemann said he's not sure what he'll do after the Globetrotters' season ends this weekend. Another one begins soon, and he said that although he enjoys traveling the country, it also gets tiring.

"The last day we had off-off was New Year's Day, no traveling, no playing," he said. "Other than that, eating fast food on the road all the time gets old. I'm kind of ready for a home-cooked meal from Mom."



Joe Barker/Index
Freshman Kelsey Kuykendall squares for a backhand during yesterday's dual against Rockhurst University.

Rockhurst downs tennis teams

BY JOE BELL
Staff Reporter

The Bulldog tennis teams dropped their home matches against the Rockhurst University Hawks amid cool temperatures last night.

The women lost a close match, 5-4. They dropped two of three doubles matches, but came back to win three singles matches.

The match came down to the No. 3 singles match played by junior Courtney Walther. She split sets with her opponent (2-6, 7-6) and lost a tiebreaker (6-3), giving Rockhurst the match victory.

The men lost to Rockhurst 6-3. Sophomores John Rothfusz and Kyle Schlotz won the only doubles match the men played, but the team won only two singles matches. Senior Cody Pusateri and freshman Colin Boswell both split sets with their opponents and pushed their matches to tiebreakers, but neither emerged victorious.

"The doubles match was good," Rothfusz said. "They're a good team. We went down a couple breaks in the beginning, but then ended up coming back."

The losses dropped the women's season record to 14-2, and the men's team dropped to 10-4.

Wednesday was the women's second loss in its last three duals. Their perfect season ended Saturday in a 7-2 defeat against the Northwest Missouri State University Bearcats, who are ranked No. 31 in Div. II.

"It's hard to have perfect seasons, especially

in our conference," head coach Pete Kendall said. "Obviously, both teams were disappointed about losing, but we'll hopefully get another chance to play those teams ... at the conference tournament. That'd be good. We'd like to have another shot at them."

Junior Lindsay Blair and freshman Amy Ochs were the only Truman women to win a match. They both gained victories in singles play.

"[The singles match against Northwest] was a pretty good match," Blair said. "[My opponent] is a good player. I kind of got her frustrated in the beginning of the match, and I think that helped me build momentum through it."

Walther split sets with her opponent (6-7, 6-1) and lost the tiebreaker (10-4). The women were unable to claim any victories in doubles against Northwest.

The women came back strong to sweep their match against Missouri Valley College on Sunday. The No. 1 doubles match played by Blair and Walther was the only close doubles match (8-6).

In the other two doubles matches, Missouri Valley won only two games. In the No. 1 singles match, senior Jennifer Salmon won the tiebreaker (10-5) after splitting sets with her opponent (7-6, 4-6). Missouri Valley didn't win any more than two games in a set in any of the other matches.

The Bulldog men were also defeated by No. 26-ranked Northwest Missouri State University on Saturday, 6-3 overall. The No. 1 doubles team of Schlotz and Rothfusz won their tight match (9-8). In singles, No. 2 sophomore Steve

Hipkiss (6-3, 7-6) and No. 4 Schlotz (6-4, 6-1) won their matches.

On Sunday the men took on Missouri Valley and looked strong, winning 8-1. The only match the Bulldogs dropped to Missouri Valley was the No. 5 singles match played by Boswell. The No. 1 and No. 2 singles matches, played by Hipkiss and Pusateri respectively, split sets, and the Truman men won their tiebreakers.

The No. 1 doubles duo, Schlotz and Rothfusz, won 8-6, and the No. 3 doubles pairing, Hipkiss and sophomore Ben Rusk, won 9-8.

On April 3, the women played a dual match against Missouri Western State University. The Bulldog women beat the Griffons 8-1 on their home courts.

The only match dropped by Truman was the No. 1 doubles match (8-5) played by Blair and Walther. No. 1 singles player Salmon split sets with her opponent (5-7, 6-4) and won a close tiebreaker (10-8). Other than that, none of the matches were close.

As of April 1, the women's tennis team is ranked No. 3 in the Div. II North Central region. Salmon ranks No. 8 in singles and Blair No. 10 in the region. The doubles teams of Blair and Walther are ranked No. 5, and the doubles team of Salmon and Ochs is ranked at No. 10 in the region.

Next up for the Bulldogs is a trip to Winona, Minn., where the teams take on Winona State University on Saturday. The women also will play against the University of Minnesota Duluth. Both teams play against Minnesota State University-Mankato on Sunday.

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Baseball: Barton to return in 2009, Witt out

Injuries have taken a toll on the baseball team's pitching staff this season. Senior starting pitcher A.J. Barton, the team's No. 1 pitcher in 2007, has been out the entire season as he continues to recover from an offseason shoulder surgery to repair a torn labrum.

Barton said he is taking a medical redshirt this season and plans to return for his final year next season.

"If it's up to me, I'll [be back]," Barton said. "I've already set up my schedule and picked up another major to make it a full fifth year. I'm looking forward to next year."

Barton is not throwing off the mound yet but is continuing to build up arm strength.

Freshman starting pitcher Christian Witt went down with a torn ulnar collateral ligament March 21 in a start against Pittsburg State University. Witt said he will miss the rest of the season and is trying to be ready to pitch again in the fall. Witt had a 7.31 earned run average and pitched in five games this season.

"We kind of knew that we were going to be going in without [Barton] so it didn't affect us, I think, as much as losing Christian as suddenly as we did," freshman starting pitcher Logan Frame said. "... It just means that you have to fight that much harder and guys are going to have to come through in situations that maybe they wouldn't have been asked to come through in before."

Junior Corey Tomasek made his first start of the season in a 6-3 win Saturday against Southwest Baptist University. Tomasek had been working out of the bullpen prior to last weekend.

Softball: Two-out hits play factor in series

It was the two-out hits that made the difference in the two one-run losses to Fort Hays this past week.

In game one, Truman had the bases loaded with one out in the fourth and was able to push across a run with a single, but that was it. A lineout and a strikeout ended the inning.

In the first inning of game two, Truman again loaded the bases, this time with two outs, but was unable to plate a run. The 'Dogs did score with two outs in the second, but the run came by way of a wild pitch.

Although Fort Hays missed opportunities in game one, it ended game two with a walk-off two-out single in the bottom of the seventh.

Men's golf: 77 magic number for duo

A streak came to an end for junior golfer Scott Danielsen on Friday. Danielsen's consecutive streak of 77s ended when he shot a 75 in the first round of the Beau/Mussato Invitational at Western Illinois State University.

Before his 75 Friday, Danielsen had shot four consecutive tournament rounds of 77. He also followed up his 75 on Friday with a second-round 77. Danielsen and freshman Chris Kovach have combined for eight rounds of 77 during the span of eight tournaments dating back to the fall.

Track: Lauer, Biermann alter approach

For the women's triple jumpers, a little change made a big difference. Junior Christen Lauer said that leading up to this week, she and sophomore teammate Katrina Biermann worked with head coach John Cochrane to alter their triple jump form.

"Basically, we just lengthened our approach," Lauer said. "We moved it back a bit to add some distance to our approach."

She said that although it was a little difficult for the first few jumps in competition, it eventually became easier to work with, helping her to take first this weekend.

Both Lauer and Biermann will get a chance to test out their new approaches this Saturday when they compete in the Div. II Challenge in Emporia, Kan.

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