

All Eyes On: Jack Schrader

Coach used basketball as his ticket to travel the world, now inspires players

BY BETHANY COURY
Assistant Features Editor

Go back to the Soviet Union, 1982, Moscow airport. Put your bags on the security check table, but slide the last one under with your foot. Once you've made it back to Badalona, Spain, tell your wife to send your toddler out running to you in the airport. Pinch him, and when he starts crying, ask the customs guards to be able to return him to his mother, taking your bag with you. You've successfully sneaked caviar from Russia to Spain.

Or at least, that's how it was done when Truman's basketball head coach Jack Schrader led a Badalonan team that he used to coach on one of their many travels to international games. Schrader said he thought they'd get thrown in jail for sneaking caviar, something outlawed by both the Soviet Union and Spain, which had very restrictive taxing laws. However, his team members were professional adults — he wasn't their babysitter.

Schrader didn't withhold from all the mischief, however.

"Once, when we went to Israel, we had to go [back to Spain] through Switzerland," Schrader said. "And so another guy and I went back and swiped the stewardess' or hostess' clothes and stuff. We served the whole plane coffee and tea. We sort of hijacked the plane's service."

Basketball was the venue that led to these adventures, and more.

Schrader graduated from Arizona State in 1975 with a political science degree, planning either to attend law school or to teach for a couple years. However, when the Phoenix Suns recruited him, he said he saw it as his big shot at the NBA.

They cut him after one summer season — but provided a few names of European teams looking for tall, American players. Two teams had openings: Helsinki, Finland and Mataro, Spain. He chose Spain, the

country that would become his second home, he said.

"I was in Los Angeles, flew back to my home in Iowa on Thursday and then that Sunday, I flew to Spain," Schrader said. "I was 22, unemployed and [had the chance to] play basketball on the Mediterranean Sea in a foreign country, so it was pretty exciting."

Coming to Spain in 1975, Schrader became a witness to a historical turn in Spain's history, starting with his first lessons of the language.

Never having taken Spanish classes and suddenly immersed in a non-English speaking environment, he had to learn on the go with the use of a small dictionary, but mostly just picked up what he heard. He said he eventually found out the natives were speaking a regional language, Catalan, which was banished by the fascist government of dictator Francisco Franco. Franco was a contemporary of Adolf Hitler

and Mussolini, Schrader said, whose guards (the "Guardia Civil") were machine gun-toting policemen who procured respect.

"There's a lot more leniency toward a tall, blonde-haired [person] who didn't know what he was doing," Schrader said. "The repression of Catalonia was more for the people there in Catalan."

He was not blind to his surroundings, however. "A lot of the guys on my team were university students," Schrader said. "They would come to practice that night and talk about protests they had. And I witnessed the police on their horses, riding down people and beating them up."

When Franco died that November, power went to the monarch Juan Carlos, and while the repression began to subside, democracy started to take form, Schrader said. Schrader played in Spain for three years when, after what he thought would be his last season there, he met his wife, Josefina. Subsequently, he stayed three more years before he and his wife moved to Kirksville, where he attended Truman, getting his masters in sports administration in 1981. He has since returned to Spain for two

one-year periods to coach Spanish teams. Although he taught in high schools near Kirksville, he had been affiliated with Truman's basketball team since his graduation, and became the head coach in 1995.

Schrader said he loves Spain and maybe someday he and his wife will live there permanently, but for now they're content where they are and love what they do.

"I think I coach because you become a team," Schrader said. "When you become a team, you become something beyond yourself. ... I think coaching is just, sort of the way to live life. To me, any success is directly proportional to the relationships and the ability to become a team, and that involved all the things you've got to become good at: communication, trust, work ethic."

Schrader said serving that experience, as opposed to having that experience served to him, is much more fulfilling.

Assistant coach Timothy Deidrick has worked under Schrader for ten years and witnessed this coaching style firsthand.

"He's here first and foremost for the players and the school, and he does everything he can to serve both the students and the school," Deidrick said.

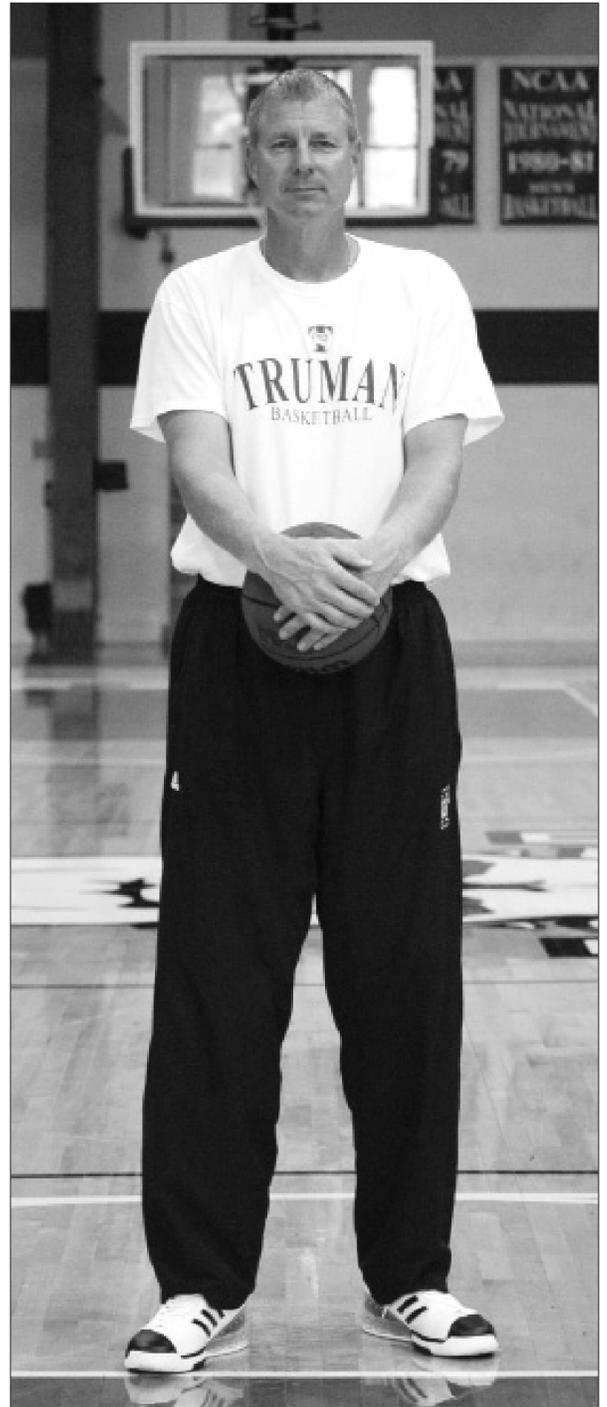
Senior guard Alex Henderson, who was recruited by Schrader, can attest to this, having played all four years under Schrader's coaching. He said many high school athletes come in without an understanding of what it takes to succeed in college, and so they have to grow up a lot.

"That's something I feel like I've done, and he's been one of the main reasons," Henderson said.

Henderson said Schrader adjusts his coaching style for each team, realizing its dynamics change each year when it gains and loses team members.

Schrader said this diligence results from his passion for basketball, both because of the time he's dedicated to it and the opportunities it has presented to him.

"[Basketball] has been great to me," Schrader said. "I mean, I was pretty much a nobody from nowhere, and it allowed me to travel first from the United States ... and then it just opened up so many doors to the world — to Spain, and from there we traveled to Moscow, Israel, Morocco, England, all that stuff. So I think it's been a pretty significant part of my life, and a pretty rewarding one, definitely."



Krista Goodman/Index
Coach Jack Schrader, 6'9", moved to Spain in 1975 to play for the Mataro basketball team and traveled across the world to play.

Intramurals program undergoes changes

Students take on intramural director position

BY KELLY KIESEL
Staff Reporter

The intramurals program is now, temporarily, student-run.

After two years, former Intramurals Director Rhonda Hampton has transferred to Northern Illinois University. With this change, which began Sept. 7, seven students have taken on the director's role while the process of hiring a new director is underway.

Senior Ryan Everding has worked as an intramurals supervisor for two

years and is one of the students taking on this additional role. Everding said the director's job has been split into three positions — staffing, scheduling team sports and scheduling single participation sports — with two to three students responsible for each position. Everding said staffing has been added to his job as a supervisor. A supervisor works jobs on the field, such as watching referees, signing players in and keeping score. The staffing position requires Everding to make schedules and train staff on upcoming sports. Everding said students may need to be a little more patient, but not much should change in the program.

Intramurals supervisor senior John Doyle said their predecessor did a terrific job of

outlining all of her duties and dividing them into groups.

Doyle said the split in jobs occurred "so that no single person is overwhelmed with running the entire thing and we can efficiently run the program as a cohesive unit."

Doyle said there has been some success already with the change. He said their first

student-run presentation of rules and the hands-on clinic for softball went well.

"We are confident that, between the seven of us, we will be able to accommodate anything that comes our way," Doyle said. "We have a great

deal of experience in the intramurals department and

will be able to seamlessly transition into the administrative positions."

Students involved with intramurals are still planning their schedules as usual. Junior Jessi Hill, intramural chair for Alpha Sigma Gamma, said she thinks intramurals have had a little trouble getting started this year. Hill said she is a little confused with the whole process so far but thinks the program will be good.

With all the changes to the program, Sue Limestall, director of campus recreation, is working closely with the Human Resources Office to hire a new director. She said the school has received applications, and outside interviews and

screenings are being conducted. Limestall said the amount of time to find a new director depends on the number of applications and how long outside and official reviews take. She said there will be an opportunity for students to meet with the candidates at an open forum.

Limestall said she thinks the change has added a lot of hours to the student workers' plates, but that she thinks they are doing a great job.

"The student employees really stepped up and are doing great in less than ideal circumstances," Limestall said. "They should be applauded for their efforts."

"We have a great deal of experience in the Intramurals department and will be able to seamlessly transition into the administrative position."

John Doyle
intramurals supervisor, senior

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