

## 'THE HORSE'

Former Bulldog great Harry Gallatin was inducted into NBA Hall of Fame in 1991 after 10-year playing career

STORY BY SPORTS EDITOR LOGAN JACKSON

In the hallway outside Pershing Arena there is a display case holding a single retired basketball jersey. The name Gallatin and the number 44 appear in purple on the white jersey. Under closer inspection, the name Harry Gallatin appears underneath the jersey and on the black and white pictures that string across the display case. Gallatin is wearing the Bulldog jersey in almost all of the pictures.

However, one picture in the case stands out from the rest. Gallatin is dribbling a basketball and wearing his New York Knicks warm-ups. In front of that picture is the official NBA basketball from Gallatin's 500th straight NBA game. His biography shows that he played in the NBA in the 1940s and 50s and was inducted into the NBA Hall of Fame in 1991.

There are three Bulldog team photos in the case picturing Gallatin and his teammates, including Ralph Pink. Pink knew Boyd King, the coach of the Bulldogs at that time. Pink's friendship with King proved to be vital for Truman.

"The reason that I came to Truman was because of one of my good friends, Ralph Pink," Gallatin said. "A number of people from Metro East (Ill.) decided to go to, at that time, Northeast Missouri [State Teachers College], and play basketball. We were all coming out of the service and I knew Ralph — we used to play a little basketball together. Ralph got us together and wanted us to go to college together."

Gallatin's name isn't written all across the men's basketball record book. He scored 816 points in 63 games in his two-year Bulldog career. However, Gallatin was a two-time first team All-MIAA selection and led Truman in two of its most successful seasons in the program's history. In 1946-47, the Bulldogs finished 30-2, the only Truman team to win 30 games. The next year the team finished 29-2 and was a perfect 10-0 in MIAA play.

The Bulldogs didn't only win 59 of the 63 games they played — they destroyed opponents. Of the 59 wins, 47 of them were by more than 10 points, including 20 by at least 30 points.

"We played in old Kirk," Gallatin said. "It was a great experience for all of us. Knowing each other and having some idea how each one of us played was very important in our success. Of course, I have to give credit to coach King. He molded us into a good team. We actually outsized most of the teams we played against. I think the smallest guy that played for us was about 6-foot-5. You're talking about a team that had a decided height advantage. We rebounded well and had some great shooters as well."

While there were several professional basketball teams in the early 1900s, one of the first leagues was the National Basketball League. Please see GALLATIN, Page 19

Photo courtesy of New York Knicks