

WHAT ABOUT US?

Men's squad features six freshmen

BY BRETT MCMILLAN
Staff Reporter

The recruiting class of 2010 is the largest that head coach Jack Schrader has brought to campus in recent years. There will be four new guards including freshmen Isaac Gardner, Pat Sodemann, Marek Bush and Justin Strickland.

Freshman Josh May will be the only new forward on this year's team. Mike Carlson is a redshirt sophomore who can play the perimeter and down low. He transferred to Truman after playing his freshman year at Hope College in Minnesota.

Sophomore Tom Norton said the new players will provide the starters with some much needed rest during the games.

"It adds a lot of depth to our team," Norton said. "Last year, we didn't have a lot of depth. We had guys who had to play 36 minutes a night. This year, we've got guys at every position who can come in off the bench and fuel the fire."

Some of that depth will come from the defensive-minded Strickland. He was a state champion at Sumner Academy in Kansas City last spring and was part of the all-time winningest class in the history of Kansas City, Mo.

"As a basketball player, I'm a winner," Strickland said. "I do whatever I got to do. I do what the coach asks me. I can pass. I can score. I love playing defense — love, love, love playing defense. Love getting steals and getting in the open floor."

New players will need to be brought in this spring when seven of Schrader's players will end their eligibility.

"Historically, we've been a team that we bring high school guys in, they take their lumps, they get better and they end up being pretty good," Schrader said. "That is the idea. So what we were able to do this year is six new guys. Different sizes and shapes, every position, but they bring energy."

In the last two seasons combined, the 'Dogs only brought in three freshmen. During practice last year the team did not have enough players to even scrimmage on a weekly basis.

"Every game last year, if you followed us closely, we

were in," Norton said. "We had a chance to win every game. We'd be in the game for about 36 minutes, and then it was just a let down for about four. My main emphasis, and the team's main emphasis, this year is just finishing the game."

Those six freshmen provide the team with the ability to do more in practice and more frequently cycle players in games.

Gardner was a three-year starter in high school but will come off the bench this year, along with most of the freshmen. Gardner said the change will force him to alter his mental approach to the game this year since he will not start this season.

"[I will] always be ready and realize that when coach puts you in, he is putting you in for a reason," Gardner said. "Since you won't be in there as long as in high school, you need to give 100 percent, 100 percent of the time. By doing that, if you are playing well, that will earn you more minutes."

Schrader said he is confident in his seniors' ability to lead the team but knows that he must begin the process of integrating his younger players this year so they are ready to take over next fall.

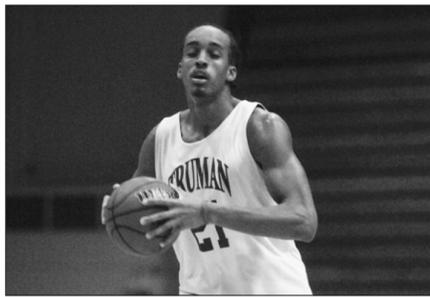
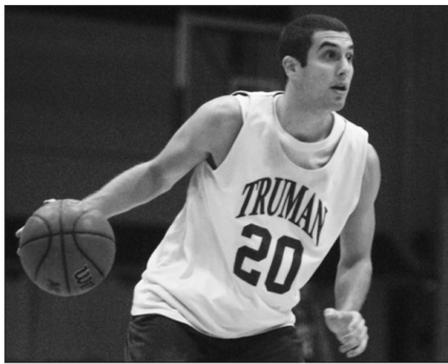
"Rotations and stuff is a thing in progress," Schrader said. "People will play when they can help the team. They'll have the opportunity. Don't give kids the opportunity, then they don't compete, so they got to have the opportunity. Our older guys need to take their opportunities too. They know that there is no guarantee that if somebody is better that they're not going to get a shot."

Truman's coaching staff decided that May and Bush would not redshirt this year.

The Bulldogs seniors are in the practice of showing up early and staying late after practice to work on their game, and they are teaching the freshmen to do the same.

Schrader found this year's recruits through a variety of different avenues — some through AAU basketball, some through high school tapes and others through mutual acquaintances. They come from different cities and will fill different roles on the floor.

"I got looked at playing AAU ball," Strickland said. "Coach Schrader contacted me, and that is how I found out about Truman. Didn't know where Kirksville was, but I know where it is now, and we are going to make it big."



From left to right:
Guards Pat Sodemann,
Marek Bush, Justin
Strickland

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Northeast Missouri Properties is now renting for the 2011-12 school year. Apartments & houses between the sizes of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 bedrooms available. Some utilities included. Very pet friendly. Locally owned & managed. Affordable quality rentals. Call today, 660-216-1794.

4-bedroom, 2-bath one block from TSU! 1003 S. Halliburton has large bedrooms, space and character. KPM at 665-6380.

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3-bedroom 100 yards from TSU! Loaded. All appliances including dishwasher and washer/dryer. New interior. Great rental. 208 E. Pierce. KPM at 665-6380.

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4-bedroom, 2-bath apartment. Available May 2011. Call 341-7529.

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2011-2012 school year. 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-bedroom apartments. Great apartments with fantastic location. Call 660-627-2060 or 660-341-6947 for more information.

Miscellaneous

Bible Study, 8 p.m. Monday, Ryle Hall Cafeteria. For more information, call or e-mail:

Colin at 573-673-3633/colins573@yahoo.com

Rebekah at 660-349-0509/rgg7546@truman.edu

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