



The BULLDOG of Wall Street *Covers Sochi*

Former Index Editor-in-Chief discusses his work at the Wall Street Journal as a copy and sports editor during the Olympics

By Kasie Garcia, Staff Reporter

Getting his start working for The Index, one Truman State alumnus has found himself at The Wall Street Journal doing what he enjoys — helping report the news. Meet Nate Becker, former Editor-in-Chief of The Index and current copy and sports editor of the Wall Street Journal. With the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, in full swing, I got a chance to talk with Nate about the Olympics and life after Truman.

Kasie Garcia: Walk me through a day in the newsroom during the Olympics.

Nate Becker: I'm usually in the office to work on business desk stuff around 7 a.m. and I might work for an hour. At 9 a.m. [The Wall Street Journal Sports staff] get on a global phone call with reporters who are in New York, London and Russia. We will recap on what has happened as well as discuss work that is ahead of us that day. Then it is a waiting game. We will watch the Olympic Games for planning purposes, and when stories come in, an editor will edit [them] as they see fit for the platform that will display it.

K.G.: What news tasks are you responsible for during the Olympics?

N.B.: My day-to-day job is on the business desk, but they have given me lean to work on sports because they know I like sports. I'm working on the sports desk as an editor full-time right now, so I work with reporters who are in Sochi and write headlines, pull photos and do editing to make the story ready for print.

K.G.: What is one of the biggest challenges for you as a journalist during the Olympics?

N.B.: I've been learning new stuff, but I wouldn't say there is something specific that is a big challenge. There is always that couple of moments of craziness where we are like, "Shaun White didn't medal, get it out quick." Getting things out quick and getting it right is always important.

K.G.: What has been one of the most rewarding aspects of working on coverage for the Olympics?

N.B.: It's just really cool to get to say you were the person who put up the Shaun White story or getting to pick up the paper and seeing pages of beautifully displayed coverage and getting to say, "I was a part of that."

K.G.: How does a newspaper prepare for the amount of work that goes into covering such a large-scale event?

N.B.: Meetings on meetings on meetings. This is a global event, so not only are we

sending reporters to Russia, we are also ramping up our coverage. It's about getting the right people in the right places to cover the right things.

K.G.: How does working in media change your perspective of big events such as the Olympics?

N.B.: As crazy as it sounds, you view it more as work rather than a majestic event. I think people around the world tend to view the Olympics as this magnificent thing, and they go home and watch the coverage. I tend to view it as work, which isn't a bad thing — I'm still a fan, but it definitely is a little more work.

K.G.: Why did you want to be a journalist?

N.B.: I was good at writing and I enjoy getting a good story. I also have an interest in the truth. That, and a natural knack for writing led me to journalism.

K.G.: Has there been a story you have worked on that has been especially rewarding?

N.B.: I've had some pretty high-profile stuff. Twitter went public, and I was the person that was charged with manning that story all day. I was taking in as much news as I could and editing the story that was the face of the biggest news event all day.

K.G.: How do you think Truman prepared you for working as a professional journalist?

N.B.: I think working for The Index was incredibly important in preparing me for the professional world. When you're working on the student paper, the standards are really high, and you have your class work load as well. I would have to go talk to the Police Chief for a story and then immediately go to Biology 100. I always told myself it would get better when I was just a journalist, and it is.

K.G.: What kind of life-after-college advice can you give to future students?

N.B.: My best advice is go somewhere and do something. When I graduated, I interned in San Francisco and moved back to St. Louis. I interned in Chicago and then moved back and now I work in New York. If you would have told me my senior year that my first job out of college would be The Wall Street Journal, I would have told you that you're nuts. Work hard, people won't hold you back.

You can follow The Wall Street Journal's coverage of the Olympics at olympics.wsj.com



Nate Becker graduated from Truman during 2008 with a degree in Communication-Journalism. During his senior year, he was the Editor-In-Chief at The Index. After graduation, Becker worked as a business reporting intern with MarketWatch and Bloomberg News. He also did freelance work for the Kansas City Star, St. Louis Business Journal and MarketWatch before getting a job during October 2009 as a reporter for The Wall Street Journal and Dow Jones. During 2010, Nate became a part-time Sports Editor for The Wall Street Journal before eventually becoming a Copy Editor for the Real-Time News Desk during 2011. Nate has been published on WSJ.com and on the front page of The Wall Street Journal Asia and Europe. Adding to his accomplishments, Nate was named a trainer for his desk during January 2013 despite being the youngest person on it.

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-Nate Becker