

Transfers threaten D-1 basketball

BY IAN PENNY
STAFF WRITER

The list of college basketball players departing their college basketball programs is extensive.

A plethora of Division I players — 420 as of April 25 — are transferring to other basketball programs, including University of Louisville guard Kevin Ware.

"You hear a lot more about basketball players transferring on ESPN than football (players)," said first-year soccer player Jake Whitsett. "I think it's much more of an option in college basketball."

Additionally, a high-caliber group of underclassmen players, led by Duke University forward Jabari Parker, University of Kansas center Joel Embiid and University of Kentucky forward Julius Randle, has declared for the 2014 NBA Draft.

By now, the number of players skipping town for other opportunities is not a surprise in the world of college basketball.

Over the past decade, men's basketball teams have had a higher percentage of transfers from four-year colleges than other major collegiate sports.

In fact, the influx of athletes from other universities is trending upward.

According to The Salt Lake Tribune, 259 players transferred between D-I schools in 2013, a number which may nearly double in 2014.

What has caused the prevalence of early departures?

When it comes to transferring schools, academics are often not the primary reason.

"A lot of times kids aren't transferring or leaving because of the environment they're in," said University of Florida coach Billy Donovan according to The Salt Lake Tribune. "It generally comes down to one thing, and a lot of times it's playing time."

For potential draftees forgoing their education, the discussion directs back to the NBA's "One-and-Done" rule.

"A lot of Division I athletes aren't looking for a degree," said first-year basketball player Miranda Martin.

Instead, many are using college programs as a stepping stone to the NBA.

According to the NBA rulebook, players must be 19 years old and one year removed from high school to be eligible for the draft.

This leaves a few options for those with professional aspirations: play a year in college, play a year overseas, play in the NBA Development League or simply take a year off and train.

"You used to be able to go straight from high school to the NBA," said Whitsett. "Each year, they're basically cutting into these guys' money."

Transfers and dropouts are causing eligibility problems for universities, which must meet certain standards under the NCAA's Academic Progress Rate.

Scholarship players earn points for their team's APR when they stay in school and keep good academic standing.

Failing to meet APR benchmarks could result in reduced practices and games or even postseason bans like the University of Connecticut encountered during the 2012-2013 season.

"Once you become a Division I player, your focus is on athletics, not academics," said junior Rod Walker. "Coaches focus on building powerhouse programs, instead of finding guys who will benefit the school and the team."

Future actions taken by the NBA and NCAA may affect the current trend.

NBA commissioner Adam Silver floated the idea of bumping the draft eligible age from 19 to 20.

The proposal would effectively create a "Two-and-Done" rule.

The NCAA Leadership Council tabled a proposal that would get rid of hardship waivers that transferring students use to play immediately after switching schools.

Current rules require transfers to sit out one full season unless they demonstrate family hardship.

These changes have the potential to restore continuity to college basketball and the student-athlete concept.

"I feel you shouldn't transfer for a sport, you should transfer for the school," said Martin.

Assistant soccer coach leaving in Fall

BY NICOLE ZELNIKER
STAFF WRITER

"I recruited Peter," said head men's soccer coach Jeff Bateson. "He played for four years."

Next semester, Guilford will say goodbye to assistant men's soccer coach Peter Truitt '13.

"I got a job in Washington, D.C. working as the director of a soccer camp," said Truitt.

Truitt came to Guilford as a student-athlete in 2008.

"I played for four years as goalkeeper," said Truitt. "I stayed on as the student-assistant coach." "He was a very good goalkeeper for us, probably one of the best that we've had," said first-year midfielder Jonny Goffredi.

As a student-athlete, Truitt was very interested in sports sciences.

"He's inquisitive, and I really saw him come alive in Research Methods," said Professor of Sports Studies Lavon Williams. "He seemed to really enjoy learning about a topic of his interest."

Even as a student-athlete, coaching was the end goal.

"Soccer has always been something

really important to him," said Chair and Associate Professor of Sport Studies Bob Malekoff. "As time went on, he became more interested in sports management."

Throughout the years, Truitt made a huge impression Guilford's soccer program.

"Peter recruited me to come here," said senior soccer captain Michael MacVane. "I played with him for three years."

As a coach, Truitt made even more of an impact than as a player.

"He's just someone I can go to and talk about anything," said first-year soccer player Robert Stallings.

Along with coaching at Guilford, Truitt coaches for Piedmont Triad soccer club, the Greensboro United Soccer Association.

"Peter started as a goalkeeping trainer in January 2013 (and) demonstrated a great work ethic," said Director of Coaching and Tournament Director at Greensboro United Soccer Association Gary Gartner.

For Greensboro United, Truitt's hard work makes him difficult to replace.

"We're trying to see if we can move things around and bring more people on," said Assistant Girls Director at Greensboro United Guy Garguilo. "It's difficult to replace him with just one person."

As a former player, Truitt's connections

with this year's team remain strong.

"He understands our lives as students because he went through four years at Guilford," said first-year midfielder Kyle Bias.

For Truitt, being there for his players is fulfilling.

"I met with some of the kids and let them know that if they get in trouble, they can talk to me first," said Truitt.

Many players said that they love having someone around who understands what it's like to be a student-athlete.

"He understands the problems that we face concerning time management, going to class, going to practice and all that," said sophomore defense Jake Elsey.

Truitt will be missed by Guilford.

"Peter was more than a coach," said first-year forward and former student at Greensboro United Christian Torres. "He was a friend."

Students and professors alike will feel the impact.

"I enjoy him as a student, and I was disappointed to hear he was leaving," said Williams.

At the same time, teammates are excited for what lies ahead for Truitt.

"He'll be missed, that's for sure, but I'm glad for him," said Bateson.

The life of a lacrosse player: for the love of the game



KIOKA KENNEDY/GUILFORDIAN

BY CHASE CLAUSEN
STAFF WRITER

A normal day for lacrosse starts at 4 p.m. Players flood the locker room before four. The early birds usually get treatment from trainers Jared and Danielle.

There is nothing soft about lacrosse.

I have seen players injure their knees, dislocate shoulders, break hands and suffer concussions. You cannot escape playing lacrosse without a nagging injury.

The game is physical, and you expect some sort of injury during your career.

Practices start with offensive and defensive drills taking place on opposite sides of the field. The offense works on fine-tuning their sticks by shooting at the goal. Sometimes, we work on formations to practice on the defense later on in practice.

The defense works on clearing the ball to the offensive side of the field, slide packages, defensive positioning and new strategies to combat a potent offense in the next game.

After stretches, Coach Tom Carmean reads the practice plan followed by any last remarks players want to say.

The heart of the practice begins with a full-field situational drill called "Syracuse." This drill implements foot movement but also helps players focus on fundamental passing.

A majority of practices consist of man-up versus man-down. This drill matches six offensive players against five defensive players. This situation can occur in a game when a player receives a penalty or an offside call.

The last 30 minutes of practice focuses on six-player offense versus six-player defense.

Friday the 25th was the last of these practices I would have with my Guilford lacrosse team.

During stretching, thunder and rain hovered over the field, drenching us in cold water that was swept in by humid wind.

Soon, there was not a cloud in the sky. I felt an ease of

contentment hover over me as I stared at my team doing their drills.

The woods behind me boasted many shades of green, while shades of purple dangled high up in the trees. It was a tapestry of nature.

I kept telling myself that I would not cry on Senior Day.

I was lying to myself because I knew I would shed some tears. I knew that lacrosse has always had a sacred place in my heart.

I will no longer have a locker room to share with 41 other family members.

I know that I will no longer have to wash the pungent odor off of my body six days a week. I know I will no longer have to heal my bruised and beaten body in the ice bath and never again do so with other individuals who are suffering the same as me.

I know I will no longer have the opportunity to travel on long bus rides eating Rice Krispy Treats and Nature Valley Granola Bars.

No longer will my teammates witness my odd dancing while I shout, "It's your boy! DJ Chucky Clausen!"

No more surreal moments admiring the Appalachian Mountains while listening to Pandora on bus rides. I'll miss these moments most of all.

These were moments filled with happiness that comes from the natural energy shared with teammates. They were the moments where I was most content.

I know that I will be happy during the next chapter of my life. I just find it hard to give up this sport and this team.

I shared this college with many individuals; it is my sacred space.

Thank you Coach Carmean and Coach Bates for everything you have done for me. Thanks for believing in me as a student and as a player.

And to my teammates, thank you for a great four years. I have cherished many moments spent with you and will always remember my time as a lacrosse player at Guilford College.