FIVE 2001 TRUMAN ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES ANNOUNCED

On Sept. 15, five former Truman student-athletes will be inducted into the Truman State University Athletics Hall of Fame in honor of their athletic achievements.

The 2001 inductees will be recognized and introduced during halftime of the football game against Emporia State University (Kan.) that begins at 1:30 p.m. A pre-banquet reception in their honor will begin at 6 p.m. in the Student Union. Following the reception, the banquet and induction ceremony will begin at 7 p.m. in the Student Union.

For the football game, reserved seats cost $7, general admission is $5 and tickets for senior citizens and students are $3. Banquet tickets are $15 each and are available through the Athletics Office, Pershing Building 213, (660) 785-4235, by Sept. 20.

Since 1983, the year the Truman Athletics Hall of Fame began, 182 persons have been enshrined. This year, the following athletes will be inducted:

Felicia (Sutton) Baker (Holt, Mich.) turned in four outstanding seasons on the basketball court, and found time to contribute for two years on the Bulldog volleyball court.

When Baker arrived in Kirksville in 1987 from University City (Mo.) High School, the Bulldog women’s hoosters had not experienced a winning season since 1982, and had never qualified for a trip to the MIAA tournament since the league began sponsoring women’s basketball in 1982-83. This later objective would be realized by the end of her first season, as the ‘Dogs would finish 6-8 in the MIAA and 8-20 overall, good for fourth-place in the league, and make their first trip to the conference tournament. Baker began her freshman campaign as a reserve and spot starter, but by December she had found her way into the starting lineup where she would remain for the season and then for three more. Baker announced her presence early on, making the all-tournament team at the Quincy Tournament with 29 points and 41 rebounds over three games. Despite being a rookie, she paced the squad in points in 13 games and in rebounds in 18 contests and completed the season as the team’s top producer in points (13.0) and rebounds (11.2) per game. Baker was rewarded for her quality play by being named to the all-MIAA second team and the conference’s all-freshman team.

The Bulldogs hit a stumbling block in 1988-89, falling to a 2-25 record. Despite the team’s struggles, Baker averaged 14.8 points and 12.2 rebounds per contest, and snatched a career-high 27 boards in the Feb. 18 contest at Missouri-Rolla. Baker’s brilliance in the midst of the team’s struggles was not overlooked as she was again named to the all-MIAA second-team.

Baker, and the rest of the ’Dogs, returned for the 1989-90 season with a vengeance, winning the William Penn tournament with Baker being named to the all-tournament team as she led all rebounders in two contests and led all scorers with 21 points in Truman’s victory over the host. Baker led the ‘Dogs on the boards in 16 games, averaging 10.3 per game, to go along with her 14.4 points per game and 55.1% shooting from the floor. She finished the season with four consecutive double-doubles and was named honorable mention all-MIAA as the team improved to 12-13 and narrowly missed qualifying for the league tournament.

She saved the best for last, as her senior season would prove to be both Baker’s and the team’s finest. The squad racked up the first winning season since 1981-82, going 16-10 overall and 9-8 in the MIAA, good for a fourth-place regular season finish and a trip to the postseason tourney. Baker dominated the glass for the purple-and-white in 23 of the 27 games, and led Bulldog scorers in 11 contests. For the season she averaged 13.2 rebounds per game, tops in the conference and seventh in all of NCAA Division II, and had 17.9 points per game, second in the MIAA to teammate Angie Gum’s 20.2, and for the third consecutive season shot better than 50% from the floor. Baker’s career-best was 51.5% effort. She was named first-team all-MIAA to conclude her career.

Over her tenure, Baker played in 105 games, tossed in 630 field goals, had a 52% shooting percentage, scored 1,578 points, averaging 15 per game, and grabbed 1,235 rebounds to average 11.8 per game. She is still second all-time in scoring at Truman, despite playing before the initiation of the three-point shot.

A decade later, Felicia Baker’s name remains etched in both the Truman and the MIAA record ledgers. She holds the Bulldog career marks for field goal percentage (52%), rebounds (1,235) and rebounding average (11.8), and the single-season marks in rebounds and rebounding average (356 and 13.2, respectively, in 1990-91). Among Truman career leaders, she is second in points (1,578) and field goals (630) and third in field goal attempts (1,211), free throws made (318) and free throw attempts (573).

She also maintains league records in career rebounds and rebounding average, and single game marks for rebounds (27) and offensive rebounds (13).

Baker was a member of the Bulldog volleyball squad as a junior and senior, and despite not having played the sport competitively since high school, she quickly became a valuable asset. The team turned in its finest record in history, 34-10, and tied for third at the MIAA championships during her initial campaign in 1990. Baker totaled 95 kills and 67 digs as a role player on that squad, then as a senior in 1991 she exploded into one of the most lethal attackers in the league. She established new Bulldog records for kills (478, also sixth in the MIAA), attempts (1201) and block solos (138, third in MIAA). She recorded double figure kills in 26 matches. Baker was named first-team all-MIAA as the team turned in a stellar 28-16 mark, including a 12-8 conference CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...
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record and a tournament appearance in which the ‘Dogs’ season ended with a loss to perennial power CMSU in the second round.

To go along with her numerous records on the basketball court, Baker also enjoys several Bulldog volleyball marks. She is first in career hitting percentage at .274 and tied for first in matches played in a season with 44. She is also seventh in career kills per game (2.92) and ninth in matches with double figure kills (26).

She is married to Greg Baker and they have three children, two boys named Akili, who is 7-years-old, and Maalik, who is 3-years-old, and a daughter, Khadeja, who is five. They are also expecting an addition to the family in January.

Baker is an administrative assistant at Dart Container, and recently began attending Ross Medical School where she is studying to become a medical assistant.

Stan Dippel (Mason Mich.) arrived at the University in 1982 and joined a men’s soccer team that was in its relative infancy. The program had been created in 1979. A field player until his junior year of high school, the switch to goalkeeper would prove to be a fortuitous one, as Dippel would earn all-city honors as a senior at Southwest High School in St. Louis and prepare to embark on a fine collegiate career.

With the graduation of incumbent goalkeeper Tom Brown following the 1981 Truman season, the position was up for grabs at the opening of the ‘82 campaign. Early in the year Dippel split time with sophomore Mike Taylor. However, as the season rolled along, Dippel asserted himself as the team’s top netminder, notching his first victory as a Bulldog in shutout fashion against Benedictine (Kan.) College, 2-0. Dippel went on to record four more shutouts in his first collegiate campaign, including back-to-back whitewashes of Washington University and Memphis State, after which he became the first Bulldog soccer player ever to be named MIAA player of the week. He would earn the honor twice in his first season and was named honorable mention all-MIAA at the season’s end, thanks to his 161 saves, five shutouts and only 16 goals allowed. Dippel was selected co-MVP and rookie of the year for a squad that recorded a 5-8-3 mark, including the program’s first ever MIAA victory.

Dippel’s sophomore campaign would prove to be his finest, as well as the best season in the brief history of Truman soccer. The team improved its mark to 10-6-2, and a season-ending 3-0 victory over the University of Missouri-Rolla gave the squad a share of the MIAA championship with a 2-1 conference record. Dippel saw action in all 18 games, making 113 saves, recording six shutouts and allowing a stingy 1.0 goals per game average. Dippel was voted player of the year and defensive MVP by his teammates, as well as named first-team all-MIAA. The National Soccer Coaches Association of America took note as well, selecting Dippel to its Division II all-Midwest and all-America teams, making him the administrative assistant at Lutheran South High School.

In Dippel’s junior campaign of 1984, the team posted a 9-6-1 record and captured the school’s first outright MIAA soccer championship. Dippel again performed solidly in the net, making 118 saves and allowing 22 goals over 15 games, including four shutouts.

In 1985, the team enjoyed a No. 19 preseason ranking, but stumbled under the weight of those expectations, and turned in a 4-10-4 mark. Despite the team’s struggles, Dippel made 68 saves, allowing just 15 goals over 15 games. He was named honorable mention all-MIAA to conclude his career.

At the close of his Bulldog playing days, Stan Dippel owned 15 school records, and still maintains his grip on several individual marks. He is first by more than 100 in career saves with 453, as well as first in single-season saves with 154 as a freshman. Dippel is also second on the career list of shutouts with 19.

Following his career, Dippel served as an assistant coach for the Bulldogs for a season, helping with the goal tenders.

He graduated from Truman in 1986 with a bachelor’s degree in business. Dippel is married to the former Lisa Nolte, who is a 1989 graduate of Truman. They have three children, Brooke who is 8-years-old, Sydney who is 6, and Holden who is 3-years-old.

Dippel has stayed active in soccer, coaching his daughter’s teams and playing in a 35-and-older league. He has worked for Edward Jones & Co., Inc., since 1989.

Andre Gillespie (Florissant, Mo.) was another in a line of fine Bulldog running backs. The 5-9, 185-pound Pagedale native was a second-team all-state selection as a senior for Normandy High School, racking up 1,188 yards and seven touchdowns in the Suburban North Conference.

In the fall of 1982, Gillespie arrived at Truman and overcame nagging early season injuries to become a key reserve on the 1982 team that successfully repeated as conference champions. The team went undefeated in the league and 9-2 overall, becoming only the fourth team in school history to notch a nine-win season, and rising as high as fourth in the national Division II poll. Gillespie carried the ball 27 times as a rookie for 126 yards and three TDs, contributing to a stacked offense that racked up 454.6 yards (fourth in NCAA) and 40 points (best in the nation) per contest. He was the team’s top rusher, with 41 yards on 10 carries, in the team’s NCAA postseason playoff loss to Jacksonville State (Ala.), Truman’s first NCAA postseason appearance.

Gillespie was felled by a knee injury in the seventh game of his sophomore season. However, in the first six-plus games, Gillespie carried the pigskin 87 times for 355 yards and three touchdowns, as well as snagged five passes for 81 yards and one score. He was unable to return for the rest the campaign and the team stumbled to a 4-7 finish.

Gillespie bounced back in his junior campaign, assuming the starting tailback role for the season’s entirety. He pounded out 795 yards on 175 carries, reaching paydirt three times. Gillespie notched four 100-yard games, the biggest being a 126-yard effort in a win over Lincoln. He also hauled in 20 passes covering 158 yards. For his efforts, Gillespie was named the team’s MVP by his teammates, as well as second-team all-MIAA. The squad, however, struggled to another 4-7 mark and third-place in the MIAA finish.

The year 1985 would prove to be a banner one for both Gillespie and the ‘Dogs. The team captain blazed the way for an offense that finished the season leading Division II in total offense (471.4 ypg) and finish fourth in the nation in scoring (32.5 ppg) on the way to an 8-3 record, an MIAA championship, and a No. 11 ranking in the final Division II poll. Gillespie amassed 1,201 yards on 215 rushes and scored eight touchdowns. His 109.2 yards per game was good for sixth in the nation, and he reached 100 yards in nine of the team’s 11 games, including a career-best 158-yard day against Missouri Western. He also caught 56 passes for 468 yards and five TDs. Gillespie’s 78 points scored was the 13th-most in the nation that year.

Gillespie was voted offensive back of the year by his teammates and first-team all-MIAA. He was also named to the Football News’ first all-America team and was an honorable mention pick on the Associated Press Little All-America team.

Gillespie finished his career as the fifth-most productive rusher in Bulldog history. The four-time letterwinner amassed 2,477 yards on 504 carries and scored 17 ground TDs, which still rank seventh all-time at Truman. He also totaled 718 yards on 82 catches and had nine receiving touchdowns.

Gillespie was chosen as one of 14 running backs chosen to the 1990-1999 Truman All-Century football team last year.

He has worked for the University City Public School system in St. Louis for the past five years, and has been the Physical Plant Supervisor for four years. The last two years, Gillespie also...
served as an assistant coach for the University City varsity football team, and was the freshman team’s head coach as well. He has also coached little league baseball and football.

Gillespie and his wife, Jeanette, have a son, Andre, Jr., who is 8-years-old, and are expecting an addition to the family this month.

Michael Harris (Apple Valley, Minn.) transferred to Truman from Porterville (Calif.) Junior College prior to the 1977 season. The Lebanon, Pa., native joined a team that was coming off an MIAA co-championship season in ’76.

In his first year in the purple and white, Harris split time with senior tailback Steve Powell, who would be drafted by the Buffalo Bills following the 1977 campaign.

Despite his part-time status, Harris rushed for 751 yards on 134 carries and six touchdowns, a solid 5.6 yards per carry average. When Powell was sidelined with an injury, Harris stepped up his production, having his finest game of the season against Northwest Missouri, gaining 176 yards and scoring a pair of TDs in helping the Bulldogs retain the cherished Old Hickory Stick. The team turned in a solid season at 8-3 and finished third in the league at 4-2. For his junior season efforts, Harris was named second team all-MIAA.

His junior season was just a tune-up for his breakout senior year. With the departure of Powell to the NFL, the 5-10, 185 pound senior became the full-time ball carrier for the ‘Dogs, and indeed he took the job and ran with it.

In the 1978 season, Harris rushed for 100 or more yards in eight of the Bulldogs’ 11 contests, highlighted by a 256-yard spectacular against Central Missouri State University and a 232-yard performance at the expense of Lincoln University. Those performances still rank sixth and 11th, respectively, on the Bulldog list of single game rushing leaders.

He also enjoyed his longest run against Lincoln, a 78-yard scamper. By season’s end, Harris re-wrote Truman and MIAA records with his 1,598 yards and 329 carries. He also scored eight touchdowns and caught five passes for 56 yards. His 145.3 rushing yards per game led all of NCAA Division II, his 44 carries against Southwest Missouri State established a school record, and his 329 carries remains a Truman single season record.

Harris led the Bulldogs to a 6-4-1 mark during his record-setting campaign, including a second place finish in the MIAA. His efforts did not go unnoticed, as the conference coaches selected him the MIAA Most Valuable Player and the Associated Press named him to its Little All-America second team.

Following his college career, Harris signed as a free agent with the Kansas City Chiefs, but was placed on waivers during the preseason. He later played briefly in the Pennsylvania Semi Pro League and the USFL.

Harris is currently the director of security for Powers investigations, a worldwide private investigation firm located in the Minneapolis area that handles executive protection, undercover and private investigations, surveillance and legal process services. He is a certified executive protection specialist and has been with the company for over four years.

Harris has a nine-year-old daughter, Ashley, and is a member of Omega Psi Phi fraternity.

Kerry Knepper (Martelle, Iowa) was a three time 2A cross country champion, as well as a double champion as a track senior, at Cascade (Iowa) High School. Knepper’s middle-distance prowess became evident in her first semester as a Bulldog harrier. In 1986, her freshman campaign on the cross country course, she finished first in two meets and was in the top 10 five times. Her first win came on the home course in a quadrangular, and the second led to her first MIAA runner of the week accolades, as she led the team to overall victory in the Missouri-Rolla Miner Invitational. At the Great Lakes Regional Race that season, Knepper claimed second-place and earned her first trip to the NCAA Division II championships where she finished 45th.

As a sophomore in 1987, she was the top Bulldog finisher in all six regular season cross-country races, was named MIAA runner of the week again following the UMR invitational, finished second overall at the conference meet and was first at the Great Lakes regional race to again qualify for nationals. Knepper improved to a 19th-place finish at the 1987 NCAA Division II Cross Country Championships, good enough to earn her first all-America honors.

Knepper suffered a setback when she was forced to sit out the 1989 cross country campaign while battling severe anemia. However, she bounced back and completed her career in style in 1990, finishing second at the Miner Invitational (17:45.47), and then finishing third at the Great Lakes Regional Race to qualify for the national championship for a fourth time. Knepper wrapped up her cross country career with a 28th-place finish in the Division II championship race in Arcata, Calif., with a time of 17:56.1 over 5,000 meters, despite sustaining a torn hamstring.

Knepper’s also enjoyed four successful seasons of indoor and outdoor track. She began her indoor career in 1987 and was part of a school record-setting two mile relay team. At the MIAA meet that year, she placed third in the 880-yard run and earned her first MIAA track championship by winning the mile run in 5:06.8, setting a new Bulldog record. Knepper qualified for her first NCAA indoor track championship during her sophomore campaign, going on to finish seventh in the 3,000-meter race. She again qualified for the 3,000-meters in the NCAA championships as a junior, improving her finish to fourth and earning all-America accolades. That same season she shattered school records in the 1,000-yard, 3,000-meter and mile races, as well as helped lead the Bulldogs to an MIAA championship. The team repeated as champions in 1990, as Knepper won the conference races in the mile and the 3,000-meters, setting a new MIAA record with a time of 9:52.84.

Indoors, she is still the Truman standard-bearer in the 3,000-meters (9:52.84), mile (4:58.07) and two mile (11:05.98), as well as part of the record-holding relay teams in the 4x800 (9:21.89) and the two-mile (9:24.09). Knepper’s highest national finish was third in the 3,000-meters at the NCAA championships, which also garnered Knepper all-America status again as a senior.

Outdoors, as a sophomore in 1988 she won the 10,000-meters and finished second in the 5,000-meters at the conference meet. Those two races would also prove to be her claim to fame on the outdoor track during her junior season. Knepper set a new school mark in the 5,000 and qualified for the NCAA championship in the 10,000 that year, finishing second with a time of 36:06.06 and earning her third all-America honors of the school year.

Knepper concluded her outdoor track career with an outstanding senior season, establishing new Bulldog records in the 1,500-, 3,000-, 5,000- and 10,000-meters, and claiming the MIAA championship in the 3,000-, 5,000- and 10,000-meters. She finished second in the 10K at the Division II outdoor track championships that year, and then advanced to the NCAA I championships where she set a school record with a time of 34:28.6 in the 10,000 meters and charted a 10th-place finish at the meet. That was the last year that Division II athletes could qualify to compete at the NCAA Division I championships.

Knepper still sets the outdoor standard for Bulldog runners in the 1,500- (4:36.54), 3,000-meters (9:49.21), 5,000-meters (16:49.44) and 10,000-meters (34:28.6), as well as being a member of record-holding relay teams in the 1,600-meter sprint medley (4:06.44), the distance medley (12:22.03) and the 4x800-meters (9:16.66).

She graduated from Truman in December of 1991. Knepper has continued to run since leaving Truman, and has participated in the Annual Alumni Run at Truman. She is married to Paul Knepper and they have a son, Paulie, who is 5-years-old.