

Seniors say goodbye

Tim Cook

by Keith E. McFall
Sports Editor

Their relationship started out a little shaky, but eventually blossomed into a beautiful friendship. Who am I talking about? None other than Stephen Respress and Tim Cook, the only two seniors on the men's basketball team, who played their last game for the Lions last month.

"I came up here on a visit in the spring of 1991, and I met Tim. I didn't like him at first because he was a little cocky guy. But, over a period of time we got to know each other a lot better, and started

to hang out more and more," said Respress.

In fact, Cook was deciding at the time if he wanted to play basketball his last two years. "I think I had a lot to do with Tim playing. I came to the team, we became friends, and he decided to play," said Respress.

"Yeah, Steph plays the type of game I like, and that helped in my decision to play. I said, 'I'd like to play with him' because he plays the same style of game, and I knew we could play well together," said Cook.

In their first season together the then juniors knew that they had a good shot at going to the ECAC tournament.

"We most definitely knew that we had a chance. We had that spark and we believed in each other, so that carried over into a productive year," said Respress.

Eventually the team did get a bid to the tournament and they had a good chance to win it, but failed. "When we did get there, I believe we could have won it all, but Steph's ankle injury halted a lot of things and we lost the championship game," said Cook.

"It blew my mind to lose that game...It was so hard on all of us. I wanted to play so bad, but I was on the bench with my injury. I wanted to go back in but Coach (Paulsen) wouldn't let me," added Respress.

When asked what their expectations were for the 92-93 season after the success of the 91-92 campaign, the two players said they had even more expectations than for the previous year. "Since we were returning eight players I thought we would have a real productive season again and go far," said Cook.

Commenting on the season, Respress said, "At the early part of the season we lost a lot of close games by one or two points and that hurt. That dropped our confidence level. I think if we had won a few of those games, the season would have been totally different. With me, Tim, Byron (Thorne), and Rob (Hunt) all stepping up we shouldn't have had any problems, but we did."

Many of the best times Cook and Respress had together were during road trips and overnight stays. "We used to take my Sega

on the trips to play in the hotel rooms to relax our nerves. It brought all of the team together. Everyone would be in one room and we would hold tournaments and just enjoy the evening," said Respress.

Cook added, "I remember one time five of us, who refer to each other as the 'dinner thieves', wanted to induct a new member one night on the road.

I'd like to leave him anonymous, and I don't want to get into what happened, but it was something to remember, I'll tell you that."

Both seniors have a different view of what effects the home crowd has on their play. "There is a big difference between the road and home. At home you have the fans and they support you and that pumps you up," said Respress.

Cook said, "I'm different than Steph in that regard. He feeds off the home crowd, but I'd rather play on the road because then you don't have any pressure to perform."

Throughout the season the two players had a rivalry going in certain categories. "We competed

Stephen Respress



in categories like steals and free throw percentage. It gave us something other than the game to talk about and enjoy," said Respress.

We really started competing the last eight or nine games. I would say 'I'm going to catch you in this category by a certain time,' and then we would both step it up," said Cook.

"We always hung out together in practice and on the bench during games and goofed off. It got us in trouble a lot, because Steph's a funny guy and he always made me laugh at the wrong time," laughed Cook.

Photos by Arnel Balcita

Bradley Excels

from BRADLEY on page 20

Bradley hopes to be able to "contribute more in the field." She credits her incredible output in Florida to the players batting ahead of her, "with teammates like those who bat in front of me, it's not hard to get a lot of RBIs."

Athletics aside, Bradley still shines, as is evident by her ambition to go to a graduate school of dentistry after she graduates this spring. Eventually she wants to be an orthodontist and is looking at Pitt, Connecticut, and other universities as graduate school options.

One of the few gripes Bradley has about student athlete rights is that of housing. Although student athletes get discounts at the Wintergarden Pizza Shop and scheduling priorities, next

year's sophomores will no longer be able to get into the Behrend apartments. Bradley states, "Dobbins does not provide those of us who need to maintain a certain diet for training in our sport, so we need to be able to cook our own food." Even though it doesn't affect her, Bradley believes that the new NCA regulation will hurt more than help. She believes that since honors students get a housing privilege so should student athletes.

When May rolls around and Darcie Bradley's collegiate athlete career ends, she will have every right to look back and say that she made a substantial contribution to Behrend. Hopefully, future female student athletes will follow Bradley's exemplary example.

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