



THE FIRST FEW WEEKS OF COLLEGE— BOB MAUS, FRESHMAN

Can you get to know anyone in just four weeks? Especially if he's an 18-year-old freshman and you've passed the magic 30 mark? Bob Maus (pronounced "moss") is a big kid, over six feet tall, athletic, with reddish-brown hair. The first time I met him, and nearly everytime since, he wore bluejeans and a tee-shirt, the Campus's semi-uniform. I had been looking for a representative freshman to photograph and write about. Not "typical," whatever that

means, but one who could, no matter how imperfectly, stand for this incoming wave of students. I hoped that by choosing a few names at random, making a few long distance phone calls — and crossing my fingers — I would end up with a freshman whose background and early college experiences would parallel those of most of his generation at Mizzou. That selection process, no matter how haphazard, did weed out such obvious exceptions as the boy who was a Merit Scholar, student council president and starting halfback on his high school football team.

No, Bob Maus was above average, but certainly most of his colleagues would find it easier to identify with his achievements. He is a good student, and most of Missouri's students have good high school academic records. Bob was a member of the National Honor Society, a varsity soccer player, a boy who worked summers to earn some extra spending money.

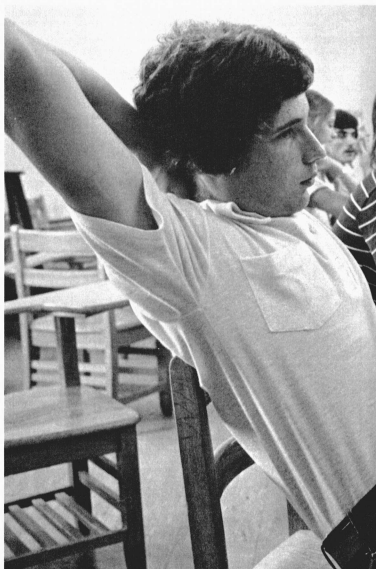
Like more than a third of all Mizzou's 3,400 incoming freshmen, Bob's home is in St. Louis, where he attended



John Scanlan

On his own and ready to start his freshman year at Mizzou, Bob Maus says a few words of farewell to his parents as they return to St. Louis.

Set theory and matrix algebra require alertness but when math classes are held at 7:40 a.m., simply staying awake is a challenge.



Photos and text by Aaron Levin

St. Mary's High School in the southern part of the city. I asked him why he chose Mizzou.

"Well, I wanted to go to a big university and I wanted to get away from home," he recalled, one afternoon in his second floor room in Hatch Hall dormitory. Dylan's voice on the stereo created a world-weary counterpoint in the background. "I'd gone to a small, private school for the past four years, and decided to come to a bigger school. There's more to do here, more activities, more choices.

"I never really knew the University that well before coming to school here. I was only here for football games when my brother was in school, but the Campus seemed attractive. I always liked that. But I never knew that much about the classes or the dorms."

Bob and his roommate, Leo Donahue, went to school together at St. Mary's, an all-boys' Catholic high school and indirectly the cause of a major adjustment Maus faced after his arrival on Campus — getting used to girls seated in the same classroom.

"After four years at an all-boys' school, it's been different. It was hard to concentrate at first, sitting in a class with women, but I'm used to it by now," he said with a smile. And having followed him around for a month, I can affirm that he was eminently successful in making this adjustment.

Not only are his classes coed, his dormitory is, too. But this shouldn't faze Maus. After all, he grew up in a house with seven brothers and sisters. In Hatch and adjacent Schurz Hall, men and women are housed on alternate floors in a special program. If this arrangement has caused any concern or even excitement, it is probably only among parents or alumni. So far the reaction of most residents to this controlled intermingling of the sexes is positive. When pressed for his opinion of the experiment, Bob Maus, with a characteristic lack of elaboration, replies: "It's O.K."

On weekends, Maus is as faithful a Tiger football fan as any Mizzou student and unhappily watched the Tigers' early season misadventures. But as a player, soccer is his



Although a faithful Tiger football fan, Bob's own sport is soccer. A fullback for the club, he works out hard in practice each afternoon.



first love, and he spends two hours each weekday afternoon working out as a fullback for Missouri's soccer club. Perhaps his interest in soccer comes from living in St. Louis, which may be the national capital of the sport. Or it could be due to Maus' own European background. His parents were born in Romania and lived in Germany and Austria before moving to the United States. His father, who works as a bricklayer foreman, was once a pretty good player himself and remains a committed soccer fan.

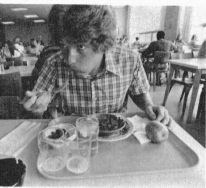
"I've been going to soccer games with my dad for at least 15 years ever since I was three years old," he remembers. "He used to go every Sunday, even if there was six inches of snow on the ground."

Because practice runs through the dinner hour each afternoon, Maus misses supper four or five nights a week,

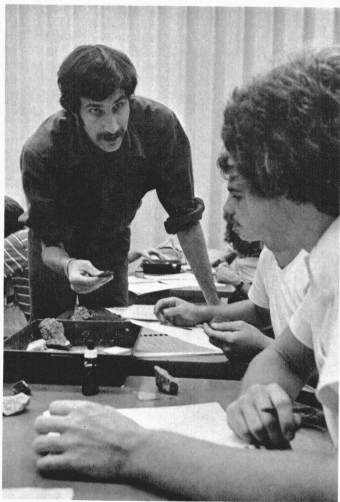
an omission he makes up for by really filling his cafeteria tray at lunchtime. In the evenings, after soccer, he manages to put in three or four hours studying in his room. He moves to the library if the noise level rises too high in the dorm. Often he is able to squeeze in an extra hour with the books during the day between classes. He did well on his first math test but not so well on a geology exam.

"It was just a matter of studying the wrong thing," he says, trying to analyze the results of the geology test. "I'm sure I'll do better at it the next time, but I was unprepared for this kind of exam. I studied for it but sometimes there were multiple answers for one question, which threw me off. I'll probably concentrate more on geology, maybe spending a little more time on it each day so it's constantly in my head instead of trying to cram it all in the last few days before a test."

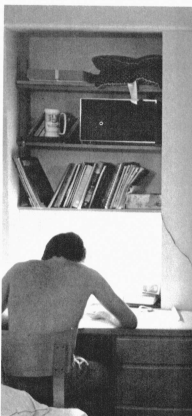
Despite this initial setback, Maus enjoys his geology lab sessions. His instructor, grad student Mark Dando, thinks Bob is a good student who clearly likes the class and follows the material better than most students. Of Dando, Maus says, "He's really good, really helpful. If you have any questions at all he explains them thoroughly. If he thinks the professor didn't cover something fully, he'll go over it with you in detail."



It's not Mom's home cooking, but at least food in the cafeteria is there three times a day.



In geology lab session, grad instructor Mark Dando goes over the fine points of identifying minerals. Says Maus: "He's really good, really helpful." (Right) Half-empty shelves and mostly uncluttered desks testify to the newness of the school year as Bob and roommate Leo Donahue study together in their dorm room one warm evening.



But in sociology, Maus enjoys the lectures and finds the discussion section less valuable. There the teaching assistant seems less in control of both the material and the class, so Maus thinks the students don't have the chance to learn what they should.

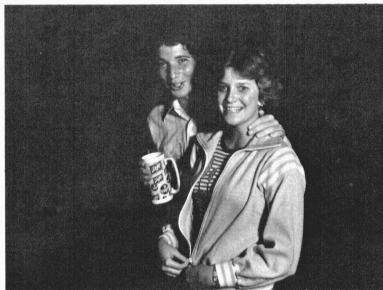
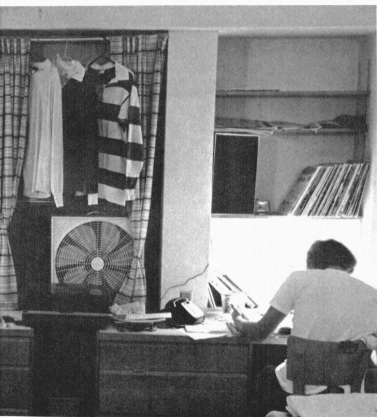
Maus, who wants to major in accounting, recognizes that at a big university students must learn to work more on their own to achieve academic success.

"But that's not bad," he points out. "You're going to be on your own after a while anyway so you might as well learn to depend on yourself. It's better than always having to depend on someone else."

Roommate Donahue agrees. Nodding his head in the direction of the kids who at that moment are yelling or playing frisbee in the hall outside his room, he says, "A lot of students around here are not thinking of the future. They've just been letting their work slide since the beginning of the school year. If you're going to make something of your time in college, you have to discipline yourself. Nothing's given to you for free."

Perhaps not, but if Robert Maus or Leo Donahue are in any way representative of freshmen today, life certainly can be comfortable.

A month is too short a time to truly get to know another person, especially someone like Bob Maus, whose basic friendliness, likability and intelligence often mask a hesitancy to reveal much about himself. Still, I think I've begun to learn something about Bob and, through him, something of this newest generation of Mizzou students. Instead of four weeks, we'll have to wait four years to find out for sure, but right now the Class of 1981 seems "O.K." □



And what's student life at Mizzou without a party on the weekend? Even newcomers learn that quickly. At one off-Campus bash, Bob gets acquainted with another freshman, Bonnie Boniface of St. Louis.