

MIZZOU

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Around the Columns

Tiger athletes go global

Basketball players usually don't want to be known for traveling. On the other hand, they might not mind the moniker "globetrotter." Junior Steve Moore, aka "Big Steve" to teammates and coaches, or "Steeeeeve!" to fans at Mizzou Arena, can add "Euro-Steve" to his mounting list of nicknames.

This offseason, the center from Kansas City, Mo., traveled abroad with the Global Sports Academy to Germany, Belgium and England. He and his five touring teammates — players from mostly Western schools such as Arizona State and Santa Clara — went 4-1 against professional competition. With such a limited roster, Moore had plenty of court time to hone his post-play. "They don't have goaltending over there so that was different," says Moore, who paid attention to the rule nuances should he find himself across the pond someday as a pro. "And it's a lot more physical. I feel like they really let you bang in the paint." The 6-foot-9, 270-pound Moore also sampled the unfamiliar cuisine. The verdict? Belgian waffles: thumbs up. European hamburgers: not so much. "They taste like meatloaf," Moore says. "But I ate a lot of waffles because they were cheap."

International travel during the offseason has become fairly commonplace for NCAA athletes. It's an opportunity to develop as players, establish friendships and see the sights. This summer, senior volleyball captain Julianna Klein from Keota, Iowa, visited Brazil, where the women's circuit is popular. Traveling with Bring It Promotions and players from Virginia, Illinois, New Mexico and elsewhere, Klein and her collegiate companions tasted exhibition



Mizzou volleyball team captain Julianna Klein, fifth from left, was one of several Tiger athletes to travel internationally in 2010. She and her Bring It Promotions teammates visited Sao Paulo. Photo courtesy of Julianna Klein

competition against professionals. “I didn’t know anyone until I arrived at the airport in Newark [N.J.],” Klein says. “A girl came up to me and asked, ‘Are you going to Brazil to play volleyball, too?’ We pretty much stuck together from there.” The team played eight-straight days in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and other Brazilian cities. Off the court, the squad saw Christ the Redeemer — the iconic, 130-foot tall statue in Rio — and visited Ipanema Beach to shop.

Other traveling Tigers in 2010 are senior soccer forward Alysha Bonnick from North Gower, Ontario, who toured Denmark and China with the Canadian national team, and red shirt freshman forward Edith Lopez of Columbia who traveled to Mexico. Freshman volleyball setter Molly Kreklow also played in Mexico, and softball shortstop Jenna Marston took the bronze medal with Team USA at the IBAF Women’s Baseball World Cup in Maracay, Venezuela.

“Athletic competition is a unique ‘lab’ experience that allows our men and women to mature in a variety of ways,” says Mike Alden, director of athletics.

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