

# MIZZOU

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## Around the Columns

### Professors hit the hardwood

MU instructors are accustomed to calling the shots behind a lecture-hall podium. But when basketball Coach Mike Anderson laces up and joins the professors who regularly shoot hoops on campus, it's his class that's in session.

Since the 1960s, a group of MU academics have convened three times a week at the Student Recreation Complex. Playing styles and players have come and gone, but the effort is always earnest — especially when Anderson drops by.



Tiger basketball Coach Mike Anderson, far right, gets a run for his money in the professors' game. Also pictured, from left, are Bill Lamberson, Kevin Everett, Rick Blakemore and Danny Fuemmeler.

Photo by Shane Epping, Mizzou Wire.

“The intensity picks up a little bit when he’s here,” says John Faaborg, 60, professor of biological sciences and former guard at Iowa State University.

The games are played to 32 points with a handful of extra participants for substitution and no game clock. Players try to match up with opponents of similar size and ability, and since several professors have Division-I basketball experience, the quality of play is high.

“It’s amazing how many games come down to the last shot,” says retired educational psychology Professor Richard English, 73, who played college basketball at the University of Texas–Pan American during the 1950s. “My doctor said, ‘Keep on doing what you’re doing because it’s working for you.’ ”

The professors are selective about who they let into their game, choosing players with enough basketball savvy to minimize injuries. In November 2008, Anderson was allowed into the exclusive club.

“I’ve taught at four different schools — the universities of Florida, Missouri, Wisconsin and Oklahoma — and each one has a professors’ game similar to this,” says Rod Uphoff, 59, director of MU’s South African Education Program and former Wisconsin point guard.




All the players have an appreciation for the game, Anderson says. “That has allowed us to build some great relationships with one another and of course have some fun and stay in shape.”

The cardiovascular camaraderie runs three games and lasts about 75 minutes. When Anderson plays, it’s still The Fastest 40 Minutes in Basketball.

“One time, during a game, he yelled, ‘Dick, you need to break to the basket after you set that pick!’ ” English says. “I said to myself, ‘Coach, I’m only 73.’ ”

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