



50 YEARS AGO... 1958-59 By Gus Stevens



Front Row L-R. Norman Wheeler, Charles Sims, Paul Brunson.
Back Row: L.-R. Dale Gray (Mgr.), Roger Benson, Charles Courtney, John Frye, Burl Martin, Glenn Stackhouse, Larry Meyers, Paul Anderson, Allen Bradfield (Coach).

Coach Allen Bradfield was in the second season of a building program following the outstanding success of the Trailblazers in the fabled 1955-56 & 1956-57 seasons that combined for a 52-6 won/lost record and national prominence. The 1957-58 team had earned a respectable 14-11 record with ten freshmen. Five of those freshmen: Larry Meyer, Glenn Stackhouse, Charles Sims, and Paul Anderson would be the nucleus of the new team. As the season approached Bradfield began to smile just a little. From the Vincennes Alices he would have one of the top players in Southern Indiana, Roger Benson. From across the Wabash River the St. Francisville Saints' great forward Paul Brunson signed on. Two added bonuses were Charles Courtney of the Odon Bulldogs and Burl Martin of the Oblong Panthers. These four freshmen, along with returning team captain Larry Meyer, would become the top five scorers of the new team.

The schedule was competitive. Ten of the 23 teams were four year institutions, plus such JUCO powers of the era as Moberly (Mo), N.E.

Mississippi, and Joliet, (Ill.).

The Trailblazers finished the first half of the season with a 9-3 record against stiff competition and went on to a final 18-7 record. In tournament play they won the annual Olney Invitational Jaycee's tournament with strong wins against Chanute AF Base, 91-62 and old rival Centralia JC 91-74. The Centralia game was of historical significance. The rivalry had always been fierce between Coach Bradfield and the Red Devil's fine coach Chuck Mundell. It would be 30 years before the Blazers would play Centralia again. By this time the Illinois JUCO had changed its name to Kaskaskia College and the games have continued to the present day. The second tourney was the NJCAA Region 12 held in Flint, Michigan The Blazers defeated a strong Jackson (Mich.) team 86-66, but lost in the quarter finals 61-57 to Spring Harbor College of Michigan..

Roger Benson was the team's top scorer with 482 points and a 19.3 points per game average. Other scorers were Paul Brunson (350), Larry Meyer (329), Burl Martin (220), Charles Sims (167) and Glenn Stackhouse (132). Benson was the team's top free throw shooter with an 80.5 percentage, and his 42 points against Northeast Mississippi ranked him the number two single game scorer for the Blazers up to that time.

At the post season team banquet sponsored by the Vincennes Civitan Club, Paul Brunson received the coveted sportsmanship award and team Captain Larry Meyer the McQuaid MVP Award.

Paul Brunson's real "claim to fame" would come two decades later when his daughter, Paula, would be a member of the VU Lady Blazer basketball team's of 1980-81 and 1981-82. They are the only father/daughter combination to attain this distinct honor.

The 1958-59 Trailblazers was an excellent team and became part of the series of great VU basketball powers that would eventually win an NJCAA National Championship in 1965.

Deceased members of the team are Paul Anderson, John Frye and Larry Meyer.

MEN'S BASKETBALL ROSTER 1958-59

Name	Position	Height	Year	Hometown
Paul Anderson	Forward	6-0	Sophomore	Vincennes, Indiana
Roger Benson	Guard	5-11	Freshman	Vincennes, Indiana
Paul Brunson	Forward	6-0	Freshman	St. Francisville, Illinois
Charles Courtney	Guard	5-11	Freshman	Odon, Indiana
John Frye	Forward	6-0	Freshman	Monroe City, Indiana
Burl Martin	Center	6-4	Freshman	Oblong, Illinois
Larry Meyer (Capt.)	Forward	6-4	Sophomore	Winslow, Indiana
Charles Sims	Guard	5-11	Sophomore	Winslow, Indiana
Glenn Stackhouse	Center	6-4	Sophomore	Palmyra, Indiana
Norman Wheeler	Guard	5-10	Freshman	Oaktown, Indiana

Head Coach: Allen Bradfield

Student manager: Dale Gray, Lawrenceville, Ill.

RESULTS - 1958-59 SEASON *Won 18 Lost 7*

Vincennes 94 Lincoln Bible 64	Vincennes 90 Rio Grande 66
Vincennes 83 Rose Poly 65	Vincennes 68 Rose Poly 61
Indiana Tech. 88 Vincennes 72	Campbellsville 84 Vincennes 80
Alpena 71 Vincennes 58	Vincennes 75 Moberly 73
Vincennes 66 NW Michigan 61	Vincennes 70 Lincoln Bible 64
Vincennes 94 NE Mississippi 85	Lincoln JC 89 Vincennes 79
Campbellsville 97 Vincennes 80	Vincennes 79 Oakland City 65
Vincennes 67 Moberly 62	Oakland City 74 Vincennes 64
Vincennes 118 Joliet 78	Vincennes 66 Marian 63
Vincennes 73 Lindsey Wilson 68	NJCAA Region 12 Tournament-Flint, Michigan
Vincennes 59 Marian 56 o.t.	Vincennes 86 Jackson 66
Vincennes 82 Alpena 54	Spring Harbor 61 Vincennes 57
Olney Jaycees' Tournament	
Vincennes 91 Chanute AF Base 62	
Vincennes 81 Centralia 74	

Home games in bold