

SID continues development of position in completion of first year at A-State

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Take a portion of every phase of journalistic work, put them into a hat, shake it up and let the pieces fall, and you will have the makings of a major college sports information director.

Jerry Schaeffer, Arkansas State University's occupant of that athletic position, feels no differently about his many tasks.

"It's a little bit of everything about journalism, from writing and editing copy for releases to developing your own pictures," he said.

Schaeffer has not yet been one full year on the job as Indian SID, having taken over the work last May 1, but he has adjusted well.

"He has definitely improved the position," Andy Morris, Jerry's predecessor, admitted. "He's done one helluva job."

Morris, who now works as ASU's athletic promotions director, had nothing but praise for Schaeffer.

"His strongest asset is that he's a good publications man," he noted, referring to the numerous brochures and recruiting pamphlets that are distributed by the Sports Information office each season.

The job of sports information director was somewhat different from his previous job. After graduating from A-State with a B.S. in journalism in 1968, he

earned positions with two magazines and two newspaper sports staffs.

Logging time with The Hallmark, a military magazine, and Probe Magazine of Memphis, Schaeffer also worked as reporter for the Alexandria, Va., Gazette, and the Arkansas Gazette, where he served for two years as sports news editor.

His first newspaper role came during his college day, when he was employed by the local Jonesboro Sun as sports writer and editor.

A graduate of North Little Rock's Ole Main High School in 1964, Jerry served as an Army intelligence officer for two years, including one 12-month span in Vietnam.

All this experience aided him in adjusting to the Tribe's program, but he didn't expect it to be quite so rough, he related.

"When I came to Jonesboro to talk about the job last spring," he said, "they (Don Floyd, then athletic director, and Morris) told me that many times during the football season, and in the transition from football to basketball, I'd have to work up to 60 hours a week.

"But, they also said that during the spring, I might have to work only 25 to 30 hours, so the job would balance itself out." Smiling, he quickly added, "I've yet to see the light at the end of that 60-hour tunnel."

For example, Jerry's wife Pat charted the Indian administrator's work schedule during the 1974 A-State gridiron season. "I averaged 84.4 hours per week," he sighed.

Regardless of the long hours and sleepless nights while traveling with the teams, Schaeffer continues to improve his office's work daily.

"It's difficult for anyone to come in from a non-publications position and make as smooth a transition as he has," Morris said. "There is no doubt that he is suited for the position."

And, indeed, Jerry Schaeffer is suited for a position he enjoys tremendously. "Always on the go" could be his motto for, if ever anyone needed to be in five places at one, Jerry needs to be.

Answering questions, checking on press box and statistical crews, catering to visiting press, and helping to coordinate pre-game and after-the-battle coaches' conferences, are just a few of his duties.

No one in Indian Field House is more readily available to talk with an inquirer about Arkansas State's athletic program, but the visitor had better don his running shoes before entering.

Just look for a tired, 5-10, 165-pound journalist trying to do four or five things at the same time, and you've come to the right place.

The sign on the door reads 'Sports Information Director,' and inside is ASU's ace, Jerry Schaeffer.