

Support of NBA at China

By Chad Menefee

Anyone who watched the Beijing Olympics last summer could see how popular sports are becoming in China. In particular, I have been fascinated by the popularity of basketball in the country. My interest in both basketball and international marketing made me think that Chinese basketball would make a great topic for my dissertation. The only problem was that I had never been to China and I had no research connections in the country. My doctoral advisor, Dr. Jonathan Casper, came up with the idea to try one of NCSU's Chinese partner schools. We found that Zhejiang University, one of our partner universities, had a sport economics department that was similar to our own sport management program. We contacted faculty members at the university and I traveled over to Hangzhou in August 2007. We discussed research ideas and agreed to collaborate on a study during the 2007-08 Chinese basketball season. Graduate students from Zhejiang's sport economics program showed me around the local area and I had a great time exploring China.

In early 2008, we collected surveys at basketball games in China. The goal of our study was to compare Chinese fans' support of the National Basketball Association with support of their local Chinese Basketball Association. After completing analysis on this project, I finalized the ideas for my dissertation project with my doctoral committee. Once again this year, we're working with Zhejiang University faculty to study basketball fans in China. Zhejiang faculty members are collecting data on Chinese basketball fans, while we're collecting data on American fans. We're hoping to complete a full cross-cultural study for publication later this year. The collaboration has proven to be a great success, and we hope that faculty members in our department will continue to pursue research projects with our colleagues at Zhejiang University in the future. This has been an incredible experience that would have been impossible without the help of my PRT department and Hofmann Fellowship.

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