

Bob Fisher

This is Kansas Profile. I'm Ron Wilson, director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University.

Not one, not two, but fourteen world records. That is an amazing accomplishment by one man. All of these records have to do with basketball free throws, and they were all set by a man from rural Kansas. It's today's Kansas Profile.

Bob Fisher is the man who set these world records. He grew up at Vermillion in northeast Kansas and moved to Centralia. After living in Dallas for six years, he moved back to Centralia where he and his wife Connie live today. Bob is a technician for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. He also serves as a shooting coach for basketball players.

"Twenty-seven years ago I got the advice to become a true expert in something," Bob said. He decided to become an expert in shooting a basketball.

Bob had been a basketball player in high school. "I loved the game but I wasn't athletic enough to go higher with it," he said. "In track, I was always just ahead of the guy who finished dead last."

Years later while looking for a hobby, he thought about basketball – specifically, shooting. He read all he could from all kinds of sources and studied from the gurus of basketball. Then in 2007, he read a book which totally changed his approach to the game.

"Dr. John Fontanella's book *The Physics of Basketball* had a profound influence on my thinking," Bob said. This book dealt with the science of the basketball moving through the air. It applied the theories of physics to the challenge of directing a sphere to a specific spot.

"Professor Fontanella applied physics to the flight of the ball and calculated the exact launch angle of the free throw for players of different height," Bob said. Bob studied the science of shooting, including the biomechanics of the hand and arm. "What's really important is where the force is being applied to the ball at the moment of release," he said.

His scientific study resulted in changing his release method for shooting. "After two months, I made 246 free throws in a row, missed one, and made 200 more," Bob said. He now coaches others. As a shooting coach, he's served customers from California to Detroit.

Since Bob had accomplished great accuracy in his shooting, his next challenge was speed.

"The Guinness Book of World Records said that some guy in Sweden had made 48 free throws in one minute, so I set out to beat it," Bob said. In January 2010, he made 50 in one minute. He continued to set all different kinds of free throw records.

Today, Bob Fisher holds the following world records for free throws made: 33 in 30 seconds, 50 in one minute, 92 in two minutes, 448 in ten minutes, and 2,371 in one hour. Furthermore, he holds the world records for most free throws in one minute and in two minutes while alternating shooting hands, in one minute underhanded, and in one minute and two minutes while shooting blindfolded, plus in one minute while standing on one leg. On top of that, he holds several records with partners: Most free throws made in

one minute by a pair of people, most made in one minute by a pair using two balls, and most made in one minute by a coed pair.

One of his records was set in Los Angeles at the NBA All-Star Jam Session. He's appeared on the Tonight show and is writing a chapter about shooting for a book to be published by an international shooting coach.

All this is amazing for a man born in the rural community of Vermillion, population 104 people. Now, that's rural. It's also worth noting that he was age 52 when he set his first world record.

"Connie has been a huge part of my success," Bob said. She documents his records and works with Guinness to get them approved.

For more information, go to www.secretsofshooting.com.

Not one, not two, but fourteen world records. That's the accomplishment of Bob Fisher, who is making a difference by understanding and teaching the science of free throw shooting. Like a well shot free throw, this project is good!

For the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development, this is Ron Wilson with Kansas Profile.