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Rush scores passing grade

New machine likes KU player's shooting stroke during camp workout

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The eyes of 700 basketball campers were fixed on Brandon Rush as he flipped in shot after shot from the free-throw line Monday afternoon at Horejsi Center.

"I think so. I hope so," Rush, Kansas University's sophomore guard/forward from Kansas City Mo., said when asked if KU coach Bill Self's campers could learn anything from the demonstration.

"Maybe it helps them by mimicking my shot," added Rush, who hit 47.4 percent of his floor shots — including 47.2 percent of his threes — as well as 76.1 percent of his free throws his freshman season.

Rush's shooting form was rated as "expert" Monday by a computer program in the new $5,000 "Noah Select" machine recently purchased by the basketball program. A small camera on the front of the machine took pictures of a series of Rush shots, assessing a score to each shot based on the arc he put on the basketball.

The 6-foot-6 guard had scores of 46, 49, 48, 45, 47, 47, 47, 47 and 46 on a series of free throws.

"Brandon hit 47 (average). That's good. It means he has a consistent arc," said camp director Brett Ballard, indicating scores over 50 indicate too high (of arc); scores under 43, too flat.

Photo by Richard Gwin

Kansas University's Brandon Rush demos a new machine Monday at the Bill Self Basketball Camp at Horejsi Center. The machine photographs shots and measures their arc, then creates a score based on that information. Rush's average score of 47 is evidence of a shooter with a consistent stroke.

"Great shooters have consistent arc. Brandon's is almost always the same," Ballard added.

Rush tried to shoot without noticing the camera's eye.

"I didn't pay much attention to it," Rush said. "I'm still going to shoot the same. All it's going to tell you is the score. It isn't going to change it."

Some Jayhawks who don't shoot with the touch of Rush might benefit from the machine in an attempt to develop a consistent stroke.

"I haven't really studied it yet, but everybody tells me it's pretty cool," Self said. "I do think it'll help our players. We have too many guys inconsistent in shooting the ball, especially free throws.

"At camp we can educate them on how to use it. That'll be one (machine) I bet Sasha (Kaun) spends quite a bit of time on."

Rush has been spending time this offseason on more than his shooting form.

"I've been working on my left hand," said Rush, who had trouble heading left a year ago.

“I am more comfortable with my left hand now. I’m also getting bigger, stronger. I’ve gained eight, nine pounds since the end of the season,” he added, noting he weighed 212 pounds.

The Jayhawks, who assembled for the start of summer school June 6, will remain in town the rest of the month then head to their hometowns until the start of fall semester (Aug. 17). While here this summer, they not only attend class on campus, but play pick-up games up to five times a week and lift weights as well.