

SPORTS



Long Flies

Josh Rubin hits three homers, team goes 3-1 during weekend action

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Dollars, grades affect athletics

John Weeks
Staff Reporter

Athletes come to Truman in hopes of playing their favorite sport and dream of being awarded a scholarship for academic or athletic accomplishments.

With the statewide budget taking its toll on school tuition and scholarship money, Bulldog athletics still find a way to shell out more money to its players every year, reaching nearly \$1.1 million in the 2004-05 academic year.

Athletic Director Jerry Wollmering said the NCAA sets a cutoff scholarship amount for every sport, but Truman does not fund every sport to its potential.

"Obviously how teams do can vary from year to year," Wollmering said. "I think we base it more on who we're competing against, the level of funding

needed to be as competitive as we can. The thing that we struggle with is when you have a finite set of dollars. We'd like to fully fund every program if we could."

In 2004-05, certain athletic programs received more money for their scholarship budgets. The football team led the way with more than \$370,000 available for athletes.

"We're a very unique institution in that we have more men's sports than women's sports," Wollmering said. "... Even though we have more women sports than every school in our conference, those schools still have less men's sports than women's sports. Can we adequately fund all of those at our current funding levels? No."

Wollmering, who is in his seventh year at Truman, applied the scholarship formula to two fictional basketball players coming to Truman.

"If we give an out-of-state kid a scholarship, the cost is \$15,000," he said. "If we give an in-state kid a scholarship, the cost is \$10,000. But they still count as one point toward our 10 equivalences."

Truman has 11 men's athletic teams and 10 women's athletic teams.

No school in the conference has more than eight sports on men's and women's sides.

The top five allowance for scholarships set by the NCAA are football, both cross country and indoor track teams and men's and women's basketball.

The football team has the NCAA potential to receive 36 scholarships every year, but Truman does not open up its wallet that wide. Football was awarded 27.71 scholarships last school year.

The bottom five allowance for scholarships set by Truman were wrestling, baseball, men's golf, the men's

swim team and women's golf.

As for the baseball team, which recently picked up its 10th win on the year this past weekend, the lack of scholarship funding is reflected in the team's record: It has not had a winning season since 1982. The program received 1.54 scholarships on a 9.0 maximum NCAA scale in 2004-05.

Assistant Athletic Director BJ Pumroy used to coach the baseball team up until the late '90s.

"I kind of knew the numbers and the process [of scholarships], even as a coach," Pumroy said. "I felt like it was kind of my duty, and as part of my annual meetings, I'd ask the question, 'Why is baseball funded this way compared to some of our other sports?,' and the answer at the time seemed to generally be, 'Well, that's the way we've always done it."

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Sophomore Lesley Lovesee snatches 47 kilos, landing her the third place medal at the Roadhouse Open at Truman's Pershing Arena. Lovesee and senior Elizabeth Swartz are two of the top lifters for the Iron Dogs Weightlifting Club.

Iron Dogs break records, stereotypes

John Priest
Staff Reporter

Don't be fooled by their perfect smiles or petite frames – senior Elizabeth Swartz and sophomore Lesley Lovesee could kick your butt.

Two of the leading Olympic weightlifters for the Iron Dogs, Truman's weightlifting team, Swartz and Lovesee are part of a growing trend. As women in a man's sport, they're breaking as many stereotypes as they are records.

Alex Koch, associate professor of exercise science and faculty mentor for Iron Dogs, said his lifters don't fit any stereotypes.

"People expect to see bulging muscles, a mustache and back hair," he said. "The truth is women don't look like men, and lifting weights won't change that."

In fact, Swartz and Lovesee said they fit most people's ideas of average college students.

"If you saw me walking down the streets, you wouldn't think, 'Oh, she's strong. She's a weightlifter,'" Swartz said. "But I am."

And Lovesee said she's still a woman. "I dress up like other girls," she said. "I wear high heels, tank tops and short skirts. I put on makeup and do my hair. My toenails are even painted pink and shimmery right now."

But she said she's different where it counts.

"Thanks to weightlifting, I have a better butt than they do," Lovesee said.

Olympic weightlifting has changed her body subtly but she said she's not worried about turning into a man.

"Girls don't have testosterone," she said.

"That's why we don't get all big and gross."

Lovesee started powerlifting in high school. She switched to Olympic lifting at Truman, and she said she gained the "freshman 15" in muscle and moved up three pant sizes.

That's because getting stronger means gaining muscle, and gaining muscle means gaining weight.

"I'm a girl who actually wants to gain weight," Lovesee said. "People get mad when they see what I eat, but I'm hungry again in 30 minutes."

Swartz said she lifts to help her deal with her hectic major.

"Nursing is really stressful, so lifting is my outlet," Swartz said. "When it comes to relieving stress, lifting is much better for your body than eating McDonald's."

Rising to the Occasion

Although only five years old, the Iron Dogs have become one of the fastest-growing and most successful teams. A great deal of that success belongs to the Iron Dogs' women.

Their success doesn't come without hard work and dedication. Swartz and Lovesee train together multiple times a week.

"No one can tell me they don't have time to work out because I'm a nursing major, and I get in there four times a week," Swartz said.

Lovesee juggles class and her athletic trainer responsibilities, but she still finds the time to lift.

"You can't just stop and pick it up," she said. "It's a year-long thing because once you stop, your technique gets bad, and you're back where you started."

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Columnist enjoys best day as fan

Double dip.

From now until the day I die, whenever I hear that phrase, it will take me back to probably the greatest day in my life as a sports fan.

Three of my friends and I managed to spend eight hours in downtown St. Louis, spend a ridiculous amount of money on food and take in two professional sporting events.

The great day – Saturday, April 15 – started off bright and early at 11 a.m. My

buddy Nate pulled into my driveway to pick me up. I ran outside and got in the car.

We were headed to our friend Chris' house to make our virginial trip to Busch Stadium III.

The three of us, along with Chris' older brother Mike, all were walking billboards for the Cards.

I was in my now-vintage No. 41 Yadier Molina jersey, Nate was in his road jersey he bought at Marshall's, which now had only two buttons – the first one and the last one – Chris was in a Scott Rolan jersey, and Mike was supporting the great Albert Pujols.

We got to the park an hour before game time and were blown away. Pictures simply cannot do the new park justice.

Like tourists, we walked around and snapped pictures, trying to soak everything in.

We eventually found our seats high along the third baseline and stared at the Gateway Arch looming in dead center. For someone who has only experienced baseball in the bowl of old Busch, having something besides the game to look at was exciting.

After half an hour of just sitting and staring, the game finally started. And what a game it was.

The Cards used their pitching, hitting and defense to pound the Cincinnati Reds 9-3. The Birds hit three home runs, including one by the great Pujols that caused the

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Joseph Barker

Sophomores help lead golf team

Conor Nicholl
Sports Editor

Marta Samojluk and Laura Westensee each started playing golf at age five.

These days, the sophomores help form the backbone of the Bulldog women's golf team that enjoyed a trip to regionals this last spring and narrowly missed out on a return trip in the 2006 campaign.

In between, though, the two golfers developed two completely different games and two storylines.

When Marta Samojluk was very young, she would head to the course with her dad, George, and ride in the cart while he and her older brother played.

Sometimes George Samojluk, a Polish native, would let his daughter hit a shot from the men's tees. If she hit the ball to the women's tees – usually 20 or 30 yards away – she would win a prize.

"I would get a Beanie Babie or some Bath and Body Works shampoo," Marta Samojluk said.

During her childhood, she often played a round on the weekend with her father and his friends. Marta Samojluk didn't need many lessons or technique work.

"She had some kind of natural golf talent and ability," George Samojluk said.

Once, when she was 10 or 11, Marta

Samojluk had a 180-190 yard shot to a green fronted by water. Instead of laying up in front of the hazard, she pulled out a 5-wood and decided to go for the green. It seemed like a very risky and very unlikely shot – especially for someone so young.

"I asked her what she was doing," George Samojluk said. "She said she was going for the green. I said she was out of her mind. ... I told her she could get an ice cream if she hit the shot."

Marta Samojluk nailed the ball right in the center of the green.

"My friends and I were all really surprised and impressed," George Samojluk said.

The length and fiery demeanor, however, always has been part of Marta Samojluk's game.

She's not very tall, but she generates tremendous power and torque from her lower half body, allowing her to hit drives nearly 240 yards.

"It's all about physics and clubhead speed," George Samojluk said. "She has worked on her speed over time and in the evenings when she was younger."

Her driving always has been one of the strong points of her game, a strength that helped her at Naperville (Ill.) High School.

After looking at several schools, she settled on the Bulldogs, bringing her driv-

ing ability and determination on the golf course.

She averaged an 85.6 in her first fall season and 87.4 in her inaugural spring campaign but wasn't pleased with the results.

But her family had moved to O'Fallon, Mo., and Marta Samojluk focused on two things.

"I didn't know anyone, so it was my job and golf," she said.

She played nearly every day at Wing Haven Country Club.

And the practice paid off in the 2005 fall season, as she finished in the top 10 of four of the seven tournaments she played. This included shooting a 77, good for a second-place finish at the Fighting Scots Invite.

She cooled off in her first spring tournament, firing a 54 for the front nine in wet and windy conditions at the Bulldog Invitational. Her determination laid the groundwork for a turnaround.

"I looked at my scorecard and just started laughing," she said. "I was so embarrassed. I felt like I should have got up and walked right in."

She birdied her first hole after the turn and shot a 41 – one of the best nine-hole scores on the day.

Marta Samojluk also impressed a parent walking the course at the Bulldog Invite.

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Sophomore Marta Samojluk sizes up a putt during her second at the Bulldog Invite. She has been one of the top golfers for the team the last two years.

Chris Tharp/Index