

NWMSU crushes 'Dogs

Laura Cooper scores 24 points, but Bulldogs fall 88-60 to MIAA foe

John Scognamiglio
Staff Reporter

After garnering its first MIAA victory of the season last Wednesday, the Bulldog women's basketball team felt the sting of defeat Saturday against Emporia State University and last night versus Northwest Missouri State University.

Last night, the Bulldogs battled their in-state rival Northwest Missouri State University in Pershing Arena and lost 88-60.

Sophomore guard Laura Cooper came off the bench to hit eight-of-13 three-pointers en route to a game-high 24 points. The eight treys tied the school record for second most in a single game.

Sophomore guard Katie Fowler was the only starter to score in double figures for the 'Dogs, finishing the night with 10 points.

Overall, the purple and white only shot 34.4 percent from the field, while the Bearcats, led by forward Mandi Schumacher's 22 points, made 53.8 percent its field goal attempts.

Northwest put the game out of reach with a 14-0 run in the second half that gave it a 67-40 lead.

The loss dropped the 'Dogs back to the .500 mark at 9-9 and 1-

7 in the MIAA. They are competing for the last spot in the MIAA postseason tournament with Southwest Baptist University.

Last Saturday, the squad entered against the Hornets looking to put together consecutive wins in conference for the first time since January 2005.

Neither team shot the ball well in the first half, with Truman shooting 37 percent and Emporia shooting 38 percent.

Truman went into halftime only down by 10 points to the No. 3 team in Div. II.

As the teams entered the second half, Emporia scored first, but the 'Dogs went on a scoring frenzy, cutting the Hornet lead to four points with 14 minutes to play.

However, it was forward Michelle Stueve's day for the Hornets. The sophomore forward ended the day with 31 points and 10 rebounds as the Hornets shut down the 'Dogs offense, holding the team to two field goals in the final 14 minutes of play.

Freshman forward Georgia Mueller said the squad wasn't outplayed that much by Emporia.

"They were just hitting shots," she said. "We hustled everywhere, and I think we had them scared for a little bit."

Junior forward Natalie Schupbach said the 'Dogs were not able to hit big shots down the final stretch.

"Offensively, we weren't attack-

ing really well," she said. "They were overplaying us, so it was kind of hard to get good passes."

Head coach John Sloop said fatigue was a bit of a factor in the loss to Emporia.

"They went a little deeper on the bench, and we got a little worn down," he said. "I was really happy with the way we competed down there. I think it was our best defensive in the conference at this point. In the second half against their pressure defense, we only turned the ball over four times, compared to 15 in the first half."

Mueller paced the squad with 15 points and three blocks. Schupbach added 11 points and eight rebounds in the losing effort.

As the team enters the second half of the season, fighting for a spot in the MIAA tournament, there are several storylines for fans to watch.

As a team, the Bulldogs rank second in the MIAA behind Washburn University in three-pointers made. With 131 three-pointers made so far, the single season record of 173 could fall by season's end.

Another important storyline to follow is Mueller's campaign.

Currently, the freshman leads all freshmen in scoring with 12.2 points per game, placing her as a favorite to win MIAA Freshman of the Year.

Mueller said she plays her game to enjoy it.

"I'm out there playing and

having fun," she said. "Our team makes my playing wonderful. I'm glad to have such a great team."

Schupbach said Mueller has been amazing so far for the squad.

"I have really enjoyed playing with her, and I know everyone else on the team has, too," she said. "She has really stepped up. She is always out there doing something, either scoring or rebounding. You can count on her to get things done."

The squad will start the second half of the conference schedule Saturday as they take on Washburn, hoping to build momentum heading into the return contest with the Northwest Missouri State University on Wednesday.

Sloop said the squad will have a pretty good feel for NWMSU because the second game was scheduled a week after the first matchup.

"The coaches don't have to do a whole lot in terms of preparation the second time because there's not a whole lot of opportunity for teams to change," he said. "It's a little bit strange, but we've been doing this for a couple of years."

Schupbach said the team is looking forward to starting the final stretch of the year.

"We are pretty excited," she said. "We are going to come out strong because we all feel a sense of urgency. We just want to improve, and we feel like we have improved so far."



Adam Kabins/Index
Freshman forward Jennifer Franklin takes a shot Wednesday night against Northwest Mo. State. The 'Dogs lost the game 88-60.

Hockey notches 25 goals en route to three straight wins

Squad improves to 10-1 with seven games left to play after last weekend

John Weeks
Staff Reporter

The roller hockey team rolled up wins in dominating fashion, outscoring its opponents 25-2 in three games during the weekend.

The scoring burst put the Bulldogs back in the driver's seat and improved its record to 10-1 with seven games left to play.

Sophomore forward Dane Moody, who had 8 points in the three-game set, said the team's success has a lot to do with its effort and desire to get better every day.

"We've all committed ourselves to having a good team, and

we have a lot of individual talent," Moody said. "I think one-on-one, individually, we're better than any team in the country."

For the 'Dogs it's a season of numbers, shooting the puck on net about 32 times during a game, while senior goalie Chris LePage faces an average of 21 shots per contest.

The top three scorers for the 'Dogs are underclassmen, and the defense keeps the puck out of its own end so often that other teams struggle to score more than two goals per game.

As a result, LePage is tied with 10 wins in the National Collegiate Roller Hockey Association Div. II, second in goals against averages with a 2.12 and second in save percentage with a .895.

Freshman forward Jon Watson,

who had two goals and an assist in the 9-1 win versus Southeast Missouri State University, said the team was disappointed in its play at the Winter Cup and wanted to turn things around.

"We really came out and had a lot of intensity these three games," Watson said. "We wanted to win again. It felt like the tournament that we played, we were just kind of playing hockey."

Watson said he expects the rest of the season to be a challenge, but he's confident the team will be ready to perform at the highest level.

"We should be prepared for the rest of the year," Watson said. "The next half of the season could make or break the season."

Freshman forward Ronnie Gentile made a name for himself in

two of the games. Twice he had a hat trick - one in the 9-1 romping against Missouri State University and the other in the 7-0 shutout win versus Kansas State University.

Now Gentile is tied with freshman defenseman Truman Patterson for second on the team with 19 points.

Gentile and Moody said staying out of the penalty box also factored into the three wins.

"Two of our biggest penalty takers didn't take one, and we did really well on our power play," Gentile said.

Patterson and sophomore defenseman Neil Bales are the top two players in penalty minutes in the region, with 25 and 30 minutes, respectively. Neither one of them sat in the box during all three games.

"I think we've solidified our-

selves as one of the teams to beat in the country," Moody said. "We just have to be disciplined enough to play our system and disciplined enough to stay out of the box."

Moody said the team's conditioning could improve to prepare for the University of Missouri-St. Louis and Washington University in St. Louis.

The 'Dogs play both teams twice before the end of the season. "Conditioning is a big thing," Moody said. "We have this tendency to play 30 minutes of a 36 minute game. ... Half of it is conditioning, but then half of it is just the mental intensity to play the entire game."

The 'Dogs have until Feb. 4 and 5 to fine-tune several parts of their game before avenging a 5-3 loss Nov. 20 to undefeated UMSL. Forward Jacob Shepard leads the Riv-

ermen with 23 goals on the year, and goalie Thomas Ames is a brick wall between the pipes with a 1.50 goals against average and a 0.923 save percentage.

"We practiced with [UMSL] over break, and a lot of guys know guys on the other team," Moody said. "It's one of those friendly rivalries that could end up not being so friendly in the end because we're both after the same thing, and we both have a legitimate shot at it."

Gentile said it's important that everyone on the team makes a valiant effort to come to practice and grind it out so the team stays focused and hungry.

"We need to have everybody here playing on the same page," Gentile said. "We just need to play as best of a team game as we can."

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