

Lady Hawks hand 'Dogs first defeat

BY SHAWN SHINNEMAN
Staff Reporter

The women's basketball team's season-opening winning streak came to an abrupt halt Wednesday night.

Against rival Quincy University (Ill.), Truman (5-1) failed to get much going offensively, shooting just 21.4 percent from the three-point line in an 86-69 loss in Quincy.

Entering the game, head coach John Sloop said his team would have to be on its game to beat the 5-2 Lady Hawks.

"We're going to have to play well," Sloop said. "They seem to have an energy [and] a bounce in their step at home that really makes it difficult to play at their place. So we're going to have to play well in all areas of the game to go in there and get a win."

But the 'Dogs couldn't put together a full 40 minutes. Down eight at halftime, Truman cut the deficit to five when senior forward Carmen McGee hit a three-pointer with just more than 15 minutes to play. From there, the Lady Hawks went on a 23-1 run during the next six-and-a-half minutes that effectively put the Bulldogs away for good.

Junior forward Georgia Mueller continued to light up the stat sheet with 22 points, 15 rebounds and five blocks in the losing effort. Senior guard Katie Fowler added 10 points and nine boards.

Quincy forward Lindsey Stellflue torched the Bulldogs for 29 points and helped the Lady Hawks outscore the 'Dogs 50-22 in the paint. Quincy also outrebounded Truman 51-36.

On Saturday, the Bulldogs grinded out a 61-57 victory against Lincoln University. Truman shot just 36 percent from the field but pulled out a tough win at Pershing Arena.

But it was a different win than the previous four victories had been for the 'Dogs. Truman struggled in the first half, making only 9 of 31 shots from the field for a dismal field goal percentage of 29 percent.

"We missed so many open shots, especially lay-ups, [in the first half]," Sloop said. "I thought we were really lucky to be down only five. It was a battle. We had to fight to win."

Truman did keep fighting. The Bulldogs came out of half-time on a 12-4 run behind their starting five that put them in the lead.

"What I told them was 'Guys, we've gotten all kinds of open shots. ... Just keep taking them. Our share is bound to come our way,'" Sloop said. "Things that don't go your way physically, you've just got to keep working. They weren't really mental mistakes."

Mueller's 1-for-10 shooting performance in the first half turned into seven for 11 in the second half. Mueller finished the game with 19 points and 14 rebounds, and currently is third in the MIAA in both categories.

"Whenever I'm really off like that I just try to focus on taking a little extra time when I shoot," Mueller said. "I was a little embarrassed, so I was kind of more determined to come out in the second half and make it up."

Mueller said her teammates helped her through her first half struggles when she scored just four points.

"My teammates are really encouraging, so at halftime they were just like, 'Don't worry about it, just keep shooting,'" she said. "That always helps because then you know that you have your team's support."

The 'Dogs showed maturity in staying in a game that at times looked like it could have



Jackson Groves/Index
Senior guard Katie Fowler takes a jump shot from the free throw line in the closing seconds of the first half against Lincoln on Saturday. The women lost at Quincy on Wednesday.

easily not gone their way. Senior guard and second-leading scorer Candace McGee, who came into the game shooting nearly 42 percent from three-point range, was just 2-8 from behind the arc.

"We worked hard even though the shots were not going in," senior point guard Julia Montebello said. "Sometimes teams just give up because it's not going in, and we just kept it

up and got the defense [going]."

The defense of the Bulldogs forced 21 Blue Tiger turnovers that translated into 23 points. Montebello had five of the team's 11 steals and added five points and six assists.

Truman plays its last home game of 2007 this Saturday when the 1-4 Hawks of Rockhurst University (Mo.) will come to Kirksville for an afternoon match-up.

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Wrestling: Keller builds off return from injury

Senior Dan Keller continues to work on returning to elite status after he suffered a torn ACL last season.

Keller wrestled for the first time in almost a year in the Coe College Invitational on Nov. 17. He went 2-2 in the invitational and took fifth place in the 133-pound weight class.

This past weekend Keller also went 2-2 at the Simpson Invitational but did not place. Keller was a 2005 national qualifier.

Women's Swimming: 'Dogs seeking more cuts

The women have an uphill battle to make it to their goal of 18 qualifiers for nationals. After the Miami (Ohio) taper meet, the women have 12 swimmers qualified, but only a few more are close to A cuts.

If the women finish with 15 national qualifiers, the total will be smaller than previous seasons. Last year, they qualified 18 but only sent 17 to nationals. During their championship run of six straight years, they were known for qualifying more than 18 and not being able to send everyone to nationals.

Rival Drury had success in the past sending less than 18, but the Panthers always have a few women who are capable of placing first at nationals.

Men's Swimming: Stokes praises freshmen

The men's swim team is getting contributions from all levels this year. The freshmen are the only class not to have a swimmer qualified for nationals so far this season, but junior Jason Stokes said they are improving as well.

"A couple of the freshmen guys had a really good swim," Stokes said. "They surprised me a lot in the 500 [-yard freestyle and the mile]."

Men's Basketball: Charity game approaches

The men's basketball team will play a role in the Shoes for Soul game against Central Christian College in Pershing Arena on Saturday.

The game serves as an event to help collect shoes for orphans. The 'Dogs are partnering with Kirksville Rotarians, Buckner Orphan care International and alumnus Larry Lunsford to put on the event.

Last year, 750 fans attended the Shoes for Souls game in which Truman beat Vennard College 60-28. Saturday's game begins at 3 p.m.

Athletics: 49 Bulldogs named to Honor Roll

The MIAA Commissioner's Academic Honor Roll was released this week and 49 Bulldogs found themselves on the list.

The football team led the way with 18 players on the honor roll.

Sixteen players were selected from the women's soccer team, eight from the volleyball team, three from the men's cross country team and three from the women's cross country team.

For an athlete to be selected to the list, he or she must have compiled a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher and have been enrolled for a minimum of two semesters. Athletes also need to hold a sophomore, junior or senior athletic eligibility standing.

Volleyball: Team adds three for '08 season

A middle block, a setter and a defensive specialist have been added to the volleyball team's lineup for next season. Head coach Jason Kocho added Erin Burmester, Kylie Easlon, and Tassia Hegeny to the squad for the upcoming season.

Women find early-season wins

Women jump to 5-1 start in non-conference play, MIAA games to begin in January

BY SHAWN SHINNEMAN
Staff Reporter

Head coach John Sloop knows all too well that his team's 5-1 start doesn't guarantee anything for the rest of the season.

Coming off a year during which the Bulldogs started 5-1 and ended up 8-19, Sloop said it is too early to tell exactly where his team stands.

"We'll never really know about our team until we go around the league one time," Sloop said. "You can't put a non-conference schedule together that's going to match the schedule that you have in the league."

But the Bulldogs have reason to be confident coming out of an undefeated five-game run to start the year. This non-conference stretch has produced noticeable improvement in nearly every statistical category in comparison to the 5-1 non-conference start from a year ago.

The purple and white have knocked down more outside shots than last year's early stretch of games, making more than 33 percent of their attempts

from behind the arc. Truman also is scoring nearly eight more points per game. In addition, the team has limited its turnovers and produced an impressive 12 steals per contest.

The ball movement of the offense has been one of the most important aspects of the success this season. The Bulldogs are averaging nearly four more assists per game as a team than they did during the first six games of last season.

"I think that we've really been moving the ball well," junior forward Georgia Mueller said. "I think that if we continue to move the ball as well as we have been, and having so many people getting assists and really sharing the ball, then we'll be better suited for conference [play]."

The depth the Bulldogs have shown has been another key to the team's early success. A minimum of nine players played in all six games this year and 13 players are averaging at least eight minutes a game.

"We can count [on] a lot of people on the bench to sub and just keep up with the level [of play]," senior point guard Julia Montebello said. "So we can push the ball harder and do more fast breaks."

A young supporting cast has helped keep the experienced starting five rest-

ed. Five freshmen and three sophomores have seen playing time this season.

"If you look at this year opposed to last year, I think we're a little deeper," Sloop said. "Some of that depth is younger, so it's going to be a learning experience. ... It's something they've got to go through to get better."

But this certainly is not a team that lacks experience. The starting lineup includes four seniors and a junior.

Saturday, after facing a five-point halftime deficit against Lincoln University (Mo.), the Bulldogs went on a 12-4 run behind the starters to regain the lead early in the second half. The 'Dogs never looked back, grinding out a 61-57 victory in front of the home crowd.

With the tough MIAA games looming around the corner, it still is too early to call this team a playoff contender. Truman has not done better than 3-13 in conference games during the past four years, and Sloop's Bulldogs have never boasted a conference record of better than 7-11.

"I'm not one to ever look at, 'We're going to win this game, we're going to lose this game,' because you limit yourself," Sloop said. "We're preparing for the next game and preparing to win it, and then move on from there."



Jackson Groves/Index
Lincoln University's Sasha Evans blocks a shot by sophomore guard Laura Joya. The 'Dogs notched their fifth non-conference win against Lincoln.

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- to students who donated their meal blocks, raising more than \$3,500!
- to the student organizations who donated money, raising almost \$2,000!

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The  would like to thank everyone who contributed to making our community a better place!