

Women drop fifth in a row

Bulldogs lose 86-71 to Bearcats, Joya and Montebello miss game

BY BRENT FOSTER
Staff Reporter

Kelli Nelson continues to be a thorn in the side of the women's basketball team.

The senior guard tied an MIAA record with nine three pointers and added 25 points as the Northwest Missouri State University Bearcats defeated the Bulldogs 86-71.

Nelson's nine three pointers tied Bulldog guard Candace McGee's record set two weeks ago in a Bulldog victory of Northwest. Nelson went over the 1,000-point mark for her career early in the first half.

The Bearcats also set a school record with 36 three-point attempts, making 12 of those shots.

The Bulldogs have lost five games in a row and drop their overall record to 13-9 (5-8 in the MIAA).

Nelson, who had 14 points in the teams' first meeting, held Candace McGee to two points and no field goals.

Georgia Mueller recorded a double-double for the 'Dogs with 27 points and 12 rebounds. Freshman forward Malorie Kiecker added 9 points in 14 minutes off the bench for the Bulldogs.

Mueller and Kiecker's efforts were not enough as the Bulldogs were not able to overcome 23 turnovers and a 3-of-18 shooting effort from behind the arc.

The Bulldogs kept the game close in the first half and trailed the Bearcats by two at halftime. However, Northwest broke the game open early in the second half with a 7-0 run that Truman was never able to recover from.

Truman played the game with a depleted roster. Senior guard Carmen McGee returned after missing the last game, but three Bulldog contributors sat out the game. Sophomore guard Julie Guinn did not play and likely is out for the season. Senior guard Julia Montebello and sophomore guard Laura Joya also sat out the game for unknown reasons.

Northwest was able to wear down Truman by throwing in subs early and often. Four Bulldogs played more than 30 minutes, while only one Bearcat played 30 minutes.

On Saturday, for the third straight game, the Bulldogs jumped out to an early lead. And for the third straight game that lead quickly vanished.

Truman jumped out to an early 10-point lead but could not hang on as the Bulldogs fell to Southwest Baptist University 87-82 in Bolivar on Saturday.

The loss drops the 'Dogs to 13-8 (5-7 MIAA) and is the team's seventh consecutive loss on the road.

SBU avenged a loss earlier in the season to the Bulldogs and is in first place in the MIAA.

Head coach John Sloop said the difference in the game was that SBU was able to wear down the Bulldogs.

"It was a great game," Sloop said. "The two teams played really well. It really just came down to one team making one more play. I thought the difference between here and there was that here we were playing a rotation with eight kids. We were missing a couple of those kids. They only play about six kids double-digit minutes. ... It came down to a one-possession game in the last minute."

Truman galloped out to an early 22-12 lead, but SBU quickly got back in the game and took a one-point lead into the half.

The Bulldogs hung around for the entire second half, and eventually took a one-point lead on a senior Katie Fowler layup with just more than two minutes to go. But Truman hit only one more shot the rest of the game and Southwest Baptist made its free throws to pull out the win.

Senior guard Julia Montebello said that despite all the injuries facing the team, the players never gave up.

"I think our team worked really well against adversity because we had people that are not playing, people that are injured," Montebello said. "I just think the team struggled a little bit with their fast break. ... It was more of their being aggressive and us not being as aggressive as they were."

The Bulldogs had two players register double-doubles. Junior forward Georgia Mueller poured in a team-high 25 points and grabbed 10 rebounds. Fowler had 10 points and a game-high 11 rebounds.

Also in double figures for the 'Dogs was senior guard



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index
Senior guard Katie Fowler puts up a shot in traffic during a Feb. 6 game. Fowler scored 15 points against Northwest Missouri State University on Wednesday night.

Candace McGee, who had 16 points, including four three pointers. Joya also chipped in with 19 points on 9-for-15 shooting.

Joya said that despite playing hard, the team just couldn't close the deal in the end.

"We were more aggressive defensively as well as offensive-

ly," Joya said. "We know we had to step up. We had our back-up point guard [Guinn] hurt as well as one of our starters [McGee]. We just gave it our all and unfortunately we couldn't close it in the last few minutes."

Truman will be back at home Saturday against No. 19 Washburn at 1 p.m.

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Men's basketball: 'Dogs could miss tourney

The men's basketball team (4-18, 3-10) is in danger of missing out on the MIAA tournament for the first time since the 2004-05 season. That season marked the end of a four-year stretch in which the Bulldogs missed out on the conference tournament.

Truman is tied with Missouri Western State University for ninth place in the 10-team MIAA. The top eight teams qualify for the March 7 to 9 conference tournament in Kansas City, Mo.

Winning the conference tournament would be the only way the Bulldogs could qualify for the NCAA tournament.

Washburn University and Pittsburg State University are the teams right ahead of Truman in the conference standings. Both schools have three more wins than the Bulldogs.

Washburn comes to Truman on Saturday and the 'Dogs end the regular season March 1 at Pittsburg State. The Ichabods and Gorillas won their matchups with the 'Dogs earlier this season.

Wrestling: Coach says team needs more funds

Truman wrestling had a tough go of it this weekend against the University of Central Oklahoma and Oklahoma City University, but head coach Dave Schutter said it wasn't as bad as the scores made it look.

"You've got to keep everything in perspective," he said. "[Central Oklahoma]'s a fully funded program. We're not a fully funded program. Everything's relative to the competition level you're competing against."

Schutter said the team does well with what it has. "In the big picture, we're maximizing the one scholarship we have," he said. "If you look over the last five years, we've had an All-American every year. So if we had nine scholarships, we'd have nine All-Americans. We have one scholarship, we have one All-American. We've had at least two national qualifiers along with that one All-American each of the last five years."

Schutter said the team is a work in progress and slowly is making improvements.

"Our program is steadily just building," he said. "It takes money to make wholesale challenges. Truman does what they can, but with only one scholarship we're not going to take a spike up. We're not going to be competing for a national championship without more scholarship money."

Women's Basketball: Team drops in conference

The Bulldogs continue to fall in the MIAA standings. Currently Truman sits in seventh in the MIAA with a 5-8 record. The Bulldogs have lost five straight after starting out the conference season 5-3.

Just a few weeks ago, the team had NCAA tournament hopes, but now the Bulldogs must finish the season well to qualify for the MIAA tournament. The top eight teams from the MIAA qualify for the tournament in Kansas City, Mo., March 6 to 9.

Men's swimming: A cuts hard to come by

The men's swimming team is going to find A cuts tough to come by at the conference meet in Cleveland, Miss., which started Wednesday.

Apart from people who already have A cuts, no one on the squad has ever gotten an A cut. Head coach Mark Gole said that, realistically, he doesn't think the men will be able to get any individual cuts at the meet.

"A handful of people have chances, but it's going to take them having the swims of their lives," Gole said.

Gole said there is a possibility of getting a qualifier through the 400-yard freestyle relay. However, at the Miami taper meet in December when the team was less than a second off of the A cut in the event, everybody was tapered. Three of the four who swam in the event in the December meet have their A cuts, meaning they will only be on a drop taper for the conference meet.

Bulldogs' depth affected by pair of injuries

With limited players available, team relies on eight women Saturday

BY BRENT FOSTER
Staff Reporter

Just like the flu hit campus two weeks ago, the injury bug has hit the women's basketball team.

The last two games saw two key members of the squad's eight-player rotation felled by injuries. This could present a problem for the team down the stretch because of depth issues.

Sophomore guard Julie Guinn suffered what appeared to be a knee injury in the first half of the Feb. 6 game against the University of Central Missouri and most likely will miss the remainder of the season. Guinn is averaging almost 16 minutes per game off the bench and just more than four points per game.

Senior guard Carmen McGee said

she suffered a back injury last week. She missed Saturday's game at Southwest Baptist University.

McGee is third on the team in scoring, averaging nearly eight points per game. She also is second on the team in three pointers made.

McGee returned to the lineup Wednesday night, but the Bulldogs were still short-handed. Sophomore guard Laura Joya and senior guard Julia Montebello both missed the game against the Northwest University Bearcats for undisclosed reasons.

"I can't talk about the injuries other than to say that Carmen is day-to-day and that Julie is probably done for the year," head coach John Sloop said.

With Guinn out and McGee poten-

tially not at 100 percent, depth becomes an issue. In Saturday's loss at Southwest Baptist, only eight Bulldog players saw the floor, and six players played at least 23 minutes.

"I think our bench has been stepping up really well whenever they have their chance, and they are doing a good job for us."

Julia Montebello
Senior

to give shots. I think our depth this year has been a big key for us. More so than

in the past. But that's going to get tested here with what we've been battling."

This might explain what has happened in the Bulldogs last three losses. In all three games the 'Dogs have been able to jump out to big early leads, but they have been unable to close out games in the end.

Even with the injuries, playing most of the game is not new to several Bulldogs.

During the conference season, four Bulldogs are averaging more than 30 minutes a game.

Compare that to Wednesday's opponent Northwest Missouri State University, which has zero players averaging more than 30 minutes per game.

In an overtime loss earlier this season to Missouri Southern State University, two Bulldogs played more than 40 minutes.

Joya said that because of the injuries, a lack of experience adds to the depth problem.

"I feel like we have a lot of freshmen, which would definitely help us in

the future," Joya said. "But as far as injuries go, it's a problem right now, and experience is what's lacking."

With Guinn likely gone for the season and McGee still day-to-day, the only non-starters who have had significant playing time during conference season are freshmen Malorie Kiecker and Joya.

Both are averaging about 17 minutes per game off the bench in conference play.

After that, no Bulldog bench player is averaging more than five minutes per game in conference play.

Montebello said the bench is stepping up and filling the gap created by the injuries.

"Like I said before, our team is not complete now so we are still missing players that are really important for the team," Montebello said. "But I think our bench has been stepping up really well whenever they have their chance, and they are doing a good job for us."

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