



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index
Several members of the Bulldog track teams go through calisthenics in Tuesday's practice. The Bulldogs competed at the Knox Invitational on Saturday. Both Truman squads won the invite and compiled numerous first-place finishes.

Track teams win Knox Invite, 16 'Dogs win events

BY BEN YARNELL
Staff Reporter

Last weekend, Truman's men's and women's track teams won the Knox Invitational at Knox College in Galesburg, Ill.

Head coach John Cochrane said the wins were important to the teams.

"[The teams] felt better about themselves," Cochrane said. "But the only team thing that I think matters to them is in two weeks when we go to the [MIAA] Conference meet."

The showing for the Bulldogs was a strong one. On the men's side, there were seven first-place winners. This is up from four first-place finishers last year, when the men took second to Western Illinois University. This year, however, the men beat out their closest competitor, St. Ambrose College, by almost 80 points and third-place Western Illinois by almost 90 points in their first scored tournament of the year.

Leading the way for the Bulldog men was senior Sean Bergstedt, who took first place in the 55-meter hurdles with the

team's only NCAA Div. II provisional time of 7.69 seconds. Bergstedt also took second in the 400-meter dash, missing out on first by only .08 seconds.

The senior men's hurdlers also had the distinction of capturing all three of the top spots in the 55 meters. This placing is an improvement for the Ackermann brothers, seniors Joe and Jake, who have averaged fifth and eighth place, respectively, this season.

Jake Ackermann said that although this dominance of the top spots is nice, it isn't what he is most focused on.

"For me, the thing I look for is my time," he said. "It's like coach has told us before. No one is going to look back at these meets and say, 'He won that race.' We just have to focus on improving our times."

Other Bulldog men who took first place include senior Charlie Brandhorst in the 55-meter dash, freshman Brandon Gutteridge in the 800-meter run, freshman Josh Mantooh in the 3,000-meter run, the 4 x 400 meter relay team and freshman Andy Cochran in the high jump.

Another senior who turned in a consistent performance for the 'Dogs was Kevin Crean, who took first in the mile run. This marks his second first-place finish of the indoor season.

For the women, it was the field side of the competition that scored most of the points for the team. Out in front was junior Ashley Bernard, who took first place in both the shot put and the weight throw, earning provisional marks in both events.

Bernard said she especially was pleased with the double marks since they are something she hasn't earned in a long time.

"It was actually the first time I have placed first in more than one event in college," she said. "I used to do it back in high school, but the competition isn't like it is in college."

Bernard was not the only Bulldog to capture multiple first-place finishes. Senior Christen Lauer also took top honors in both the long jump and the triple jump. Also setting Lauer apart was the fact that, like the men's hurdling team, both her long jump and triple jump teams took first,

second and third place.

In total, the women took nine first-place spots as opposed to the men's seven, both season highs. Cochrane said this partially was because of a lower level of competition.

"It wasn't anywhere as difficult as any of the other meets have been," he said. "This will probably turn out to be one of the easiest meets we'll have all year, indoor and outdoor."

As Cochrane works to prepare his teams for more difficult competition, however, there seems to be a road block. For the first time this season, Cochrane had to move his team inside on Monday, a day generally used for outdoor practicing regardless of weather. This was due to snow on the track. Cochrane said this is a detriment.

"In the older days ... I had a couple of favorite streets we used to use before we had an all-weather track," he said. "But Kirksville seems to have taken the attitude that it will melt someday. ... But there is no point worrying about it because you cannot change those things."

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Men's basketball: Coaching staff dons pink

The men's basketball team's coaching staff showed their support for "Think Pink" day Saturday. The event is designed for women's basketball programs, and women's assistant coach Marne Fauser organized the event.

Men's head coach Jack Schrader, assistant coach Tim Deidrick and student-assistant Bryan Austin all wore pink shirts for the game.

"I wore pink, and my wife liked it," Schrader said. "She thought it was very handsome. That's all that counts."

Junior guard Banks Estridge thought Deidrick looked the best in his pink duds.

"[Schrader] didn't look quite as good as Coach Deidrick," Estridge said.

Schrader, however, disagreed.

"They didn't look nearly as good as me, according to my wife," Schrader said.

Wrestling: Seniors nearing end of career

Saturday will mark the end of the regular season for the wrestling team.

When the team hits the road to take on Minnesota State University-Mankato, it will be the last dual in the careers of three seniors — Rob Nahlik, Dan Keller and John Horman.

After this dual, the team will move on to the Div. II Midwest Regional Tournament and then the Div. II Championships for those who qualify.

Horman said his last two wins have given him a boost going into the end of the season.

"I definitely think that the wins I've got recently, and the way I've been kind of preparing for this year, the momentum is starting to swing upwards, and I'm ready for regionals," Horman said. "It's my last time to wrestle."

Women's Basketball: Team fights injury bug

The illness and injury bug continues to plague the Bulldogs. Once again, the Bulldogs were without three of their top guards. Sophomore Laura Joya, senior Julia Montebello and sophomore Julie Guinn all missed the game because of either injuries or illnesses. The three guards are averaging a combined 16 points per game this season.

Guinn likely is out for the season because of a knee injury. Head coach John Sloop said Joya and Montebello are day-to-day. Joya sat on the bench during Saturday's loss to Washburn, but Montebello was not in attendance.

Women's swimming: Preliminary times differ

A couple of the teams at the conference championship meet took advantage of the meet structure by using a unique approach in their preliminary races.

In the 400-yard freestyle relay, the University of the Incarnate Word (Texas) and Ouachita Baptist University (Ark.) both had significant drops between their preliminary and final swims. Ouachita dropped from 4:03.14 to 3:30.28, and Incarnate Word dropped from 4:24.68 to 3:44.21. In contrast, the Truman A relay dropped 8.20 seconds and the B relay dropped 11.65 seconds.

Because some swimmers are tapered and some aren't, preliminary races don't have to be swum as fast as usual to make it to the finals.

"With some people, it might [help out] if you kind of save yourself," senior Molly Polette said. "There are some people who are good enough to do that ... but for the most part, I think it's too risky."

The Bulldogs finished first in the final of the relay, 1.26 seconds ahead of Ouachita. The Incarnate Word A relay had the seventh-fastest time of 13 teams, finishing 10.90 behind Truman's B team.

Men's swimming: Ruiz has last chance

Senior Kyle Ruiz has more chance to make the national squad.

The senior distance swimmer missed on earning a national A cut in the 400-yard individual medley at the conference meet. He had a time of 4:06.20, just off the 4:04.39 A-cut standard.

Ruiz will have a chance to earn the time at the Last-Chance Meet on Feb. 23 in Cleveland, Miss.

Men's tennis begins spring season at Principia

BY JOE BELL
Staff Reporter

After a long winter, the men's tennis team hit the court once again.

The men opened the spring season Thursday, Feb. 14 at Principia College (Ill.). They had a dual meet against Missouri Baptist University and participated in the Principia Tournament the following two days. The team won the dual meet 6-3 and claimed first- and second-place finishes during the tournament.

The Bulldogs claimed four of the six singles matches and two of the three doubles matches against Missouri Baptist. Sophomore Kyle Schlotz took first place in the B flight of the singles tournament and second place in the first doubles flight with sophomore partner John Rothfusz. Sophomore Steven Hip-

kiss and senior Cody Pusateri tied for third place in singles first flight. In the third singles flight, freshman Colin Boswell tied for third and sophomore David Sherwood claimed fifth.

"Overall, we all did pretty well," head coach Pete Kendall said. "And, not as an excuse, our No. 1 player, [sophomore] Peter Bracha, was not with us. It certainly affects everybody else, who they play, but we still did pretty well."

All the men were forced to play up a slot due to Bracha's absence. He missed this meet because of a wrist injury but Kendall said he hopefully will rejoin the team in a few weeks in the meet against Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville.

Injuries also were a factor for Rothfusz, who said this was his first tournament back after having been down for a semester with a shoulder injury. Us-

ing primarily weight training to get his shoulder back into shape, he was able to come out and win his singles match (6-2, 6-2) and doubles match with partner Schlotz (8-5) in the dual meet versus Missouri Baptist as well as a second-place finish in the doubles flight number one in the Principia tournament.

For Pusateri, settling in was a big factor during the first match.

"For me, it was mostly nerves, coming out and playing the first match against Missouri Baptist," he said. "You can tell that you're nervous when you're sweating pretty heavily during the warm-ups. Not having your No. 1 there and having to play up a spot, it's very nerve-racking coming out for your first match of the year. ... Sometimes yourself can be the worst enemy when it comes to playing and being out there on the court all by yourself."

Pusateri lost the first set of his match against David Conley of Missouri Baptist but came back to win the next set 6-2. He lost the match in a tight tiebreaker, 10-7.

The team adjusted its practice routine to prepare for Principia's indoor courts, which were used for both the dual meet and the tournament.

"We do practice inside at Pershing, but the surface is completely different, more of a hard rubbery surface, than what we were playing on at Principia," Pusateri said. "It was a real indoor hard court. It's surfaced smoother than the outdoor courts and allows for faster play. But really, as far as affecting play, we got acclimated to [the indoor courts] pretty fast."

Rothfusz said he is a fan of indoor courts but not the ones at Truman.

"I like playing indoors, as long as

it's not at Pershing," he said. "Outdoors is a lot of fun, too, just because you're out in the sun."

Kendall said practicing indoors requires the team to make adjustments.

"We try and do a lot in our practices, especially indoors, drills that are point-like, drills that simulate playing because we don't have as much time as we would outdoors," Kendall said.

Additionally, Rothfusz said many of the players lift weights and condition on their own time in preparation for the spring season and their first meet.

"A lot of us lift weights outside of practice," he said. "It's not mandatory for the team, but a lot of us do it."

Next up for the men's tennis team is a dual match at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville on March 1. The home opener for the team is March 18 against Newman College (Kan.).



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