

Women win fourth straight NSISC title

BY JACK NICHOLL
Staff Reporter

The women's swim team continues to build strength going into next month's national championship meet.

The team finished first at the New South Intercollegiate Swim Conference last Wednesday through Saturday. Truman finished with 978.5 points, well ahead of Delta State University (Miss.) with 832. Ouachita Baptist University (Ark.) finished third with 585.5. At nationals last year, Ouachita finished seventh and Delta State finished 18th.

The victory meant that the conference title has gone to Truman 14 of the last 15 years. However, the most important meet is nationals, and mission No. 1 was qualifying more swimmers for the national meet next month.

Freshman Claire Myers did her part by qualifying for nationals with an A cut in the 400-yard individual medley, which brought the total number of team qualifiers to 14. Her time of 4:32.77 was 0.22 seconds faster than the time needed. Head coach Mark Gole said the recent training really took effect and that Myers had good split times on her race.

"She swam phenomenal," Gole said. "It was probably the best meet I've ever seen her have."

New B cuts included freshman Emily Buss' 1,000-yard freestyle and Myers' 200-yard individual medley and 200-yard backstroke. Sophomore Danielle Odenthal added B cuts in the 100- and 200-yard breaststroke, and freshman Alayna Colley made her first B cut in the 100-yard backstroke. Odenthal and Colley do not have A cuts, and Gole said he is debating on whether to have Buss and Myers swim their new B cuts at nationals.

Junior Jessie Lemaster once again was slightly behind the pace for her A cut in the 1,650-yard freestyle, finishing less than two seconds behind the time needed. Gole said Lemaster was on pace for the first two-thirds of the race until she slowly started giving it back.

It was Lemaster's third time tapering for the event this season and the second time she finished within



Senior Whitney Wodstrchill practices her stroke during practice Monday afternoon. Wodstrchill took home a second-place finish in the 200-yard backstroke with a time of 2:03.08.

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seconds of the A cut. Gole said drop-tapering her for the Drury University dual meet Jan. 26 was a mistake because it slowed down her training for the conference meet.

"That's something that I take 100-percent responsibility in," Gole said. "I think I made a big error by drop-tapering her for Drury. I think that might

have affected the outcome of [the conference] race."

Lemaster will join freshman Julia Jones and sophomore Danielle Odenthal at the last-chance meet next weekend. Lemaster and Jones will be swimming the 1,650-yard freestyle, and Odenthal will swim the 200-yard breaststroke. Jones and Odenthal were

surprised at the conference meet because Gole said he thought they were outside shots at getting A cuts going into the conference meet. Jones swam lifetime bests in the 500-, 1,000- and 1,650-yard freestyle events, including taking 21 seconds off her 1,000-yard time. Odenthal had her best meet since freshman year, Gole said.

Men finish fifth, earn no new A cuts

National roster remains at five after team fails to add new members at NSISC

BY COREY JAROS
Staff Reporter

The Truman men's swimming team traveled to Cleveland, Miss., for the 2008 New South Intercollegiate Swim Conference championships with one goal in mind: qualifying more men for the national competitions next month.

The Bulldogs took finished fifth at the New South Intercollegiate Swim Conference championships last week, trailing Missouri S&T, Ouachita Baptist, Delta State and Henderson. They claimed third place in the conference last year.

More importantly, the national roster remains at five. Still, head coach Mark Gole said he was happy with the overall performance.

"I was pleased with the majority of the group, but we had a few swimmers that were a little bit off," Gole said after Monday's practice. "The swimmers that were on the A relays were already qualified for nationals, so we didn't rest them. For us to swim as well as we did, I was actually really impressed."

The 200-yard medley relay team of

seniors Alex Totura and Adam Pruess, sophomore Peter McCall and junior Jason Stokes had the best finish of the meet, taking second place and coming within one second of Truman's school record for the event with a mark of 1:33.62.

The Bulldogs also excelled in the 800-yard freestyle relay. Totura, Stokes, junior Darren McDivitt and freshman John Gloss earned a fifth-place finish in the relay with a time of 7:02.39.

Totura, Pruess and Stokes will form the core of all of the relay teams at the national competition, with the final slot being filled by either of the sophomore brothers, Andrew or Peter McCall.

Stokes continued his string of impressive performances in the 50-yard freestyle, stopping the clock at 20.89, just .02 seconds off of his personal best of the year. Peter McCall came in fifth place in the same event, earning a B-cut qualification with a time of 21.41.

Senior Kyle Ruiz helped out his team with a sixth-place finish in the 200-yard breaststroke with a time of 2:08.50. He also contributed a strong performance in the 400-yard individual medley, earning a seventh-place finish with a time of 4:07.74.

"The conference meet went really well for everyone on the team," Ruiz said. "I



Senior Alex Totura works with a kick board during Monday's practice. Totura swam on five relays at the New South Intercollegiate Swimming Conference championships last week.

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think everybody had at least one best time of the season. It has always been our goal to swim the fastest at the end of the year, and we had a lot of people move up places from where they were seeded, so it was really a successful meet."

Senior Jon Strom capped off his season, earning seventh-place finishes in both the 500- and 1,000-yard freestyle races. Junior Andrew Berdine took a fourth-place finish in the 200-yard backstroke with a time of 1:54.49, missing the qualifying time for the national

competition by three seconds.

Ruiz is the lone Bulldog who will compete at a Last Chance Meet scheduled for Saturday, when he will get his final chance to swim an event with a fast enough time to earn a spot on the team going to the NCAA Div. II championships. The Last Chance Meet is taking place in Cleveland, Miss., the same location as the conference championships.

"I ended up cutting some more time than expected in the 400 individual medley," Ruiz said. "So now the goal is

just give it one more try to see if there's any way I can go faster and get the national qualifying time. It's basically a win-win situation either way."

The Bulldogs now begin preparation for the NCAA Div. II championships set to take place March 12 to 15 at the Miz-zou Aquatic Center in Columbia, Mo. The five men qualified to compete at the national event will taper their workout regimen during the next month as they get into ideal condition to try to improve upon last year's 15th-place finish.

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