

Crean makes run at school record

BY JOE BARKER
Sports Editor

Kevin Crean narrowly missed out on the school record, but he still won the race.

The senior from Kirkwood, Mo., crossed the finish line two seconds ahead of his nearest competitor to claim victory in the 1,000 meters at last weekend's Northern Iowa Invitational. His time of 2:31.55 was one second off the school record set by Chad Jansen in 1992.

"It was a pretty sound race," assistant track coach Tim Schwegler said. "I thought he dropped a little too much in the middle, but Kevin has a tendency to do that. He hung in there close enough and had a good finish, and he was able to come out on top."

Crean said his race plan called for him to get the school record, but the pace of the race started off too slow, costing him valuable seconds. Still, he said he was happy to come away with the win.

"With about a lap to go, I was tired of the pace, and there was a lot of emotion built up into the race because the school record was attainable, so I took off," Crean said.

The win was Crean's first win of the indoor season and was his first win since winning the 800 meters at the Northwest Missouri Open last spring, which he also won by two seconds.

Heading into the race, Crean said he was confident he could come away with the victory. He said that before the gun sounded, he knew he could win if he did what he was supposed to do.

"I was running to get a fast time," Crean said. "In the back of my mind, I

was thinking I could win this. ... From the gun, I was shooting for it."

Despite his confidence, Crean said he didn't expect to win by two seconds.

"Normally, at this level, you don't win by two seconds," he said. "It just doesn't happen, at least in that event. ... To win by that much, I was kind of impressed by myself on that one."

It was only the second time in the senior's collegiate career that he entered a 1,000-meter run. Crean ran a 2:38.83 in the 1,000 during his sophomore year. Crean's main race is the 800.

The 1,000 is not a normal NCAA race and isn't on the schedule for any of the remaining events for the indoor season.

"I will never run 1,000 meters for the rest of my life," Crean said.

Crean has just four races left in his collegiate career. Because of an injury his freshman year, Crean redshirted his first year of cross country and indoor track but did run during the outdoor season. When the indoor season is over, his career as a runner will end, too.

"He only has the indoor season left, so we are really trying to concentrate and get him to peak and get him as fast as we can at the end of February," Schwegler said.

Crean said he wants to have no regrets for his remaining meets.

"My goal is to leave it all out there on the track," Crean said.

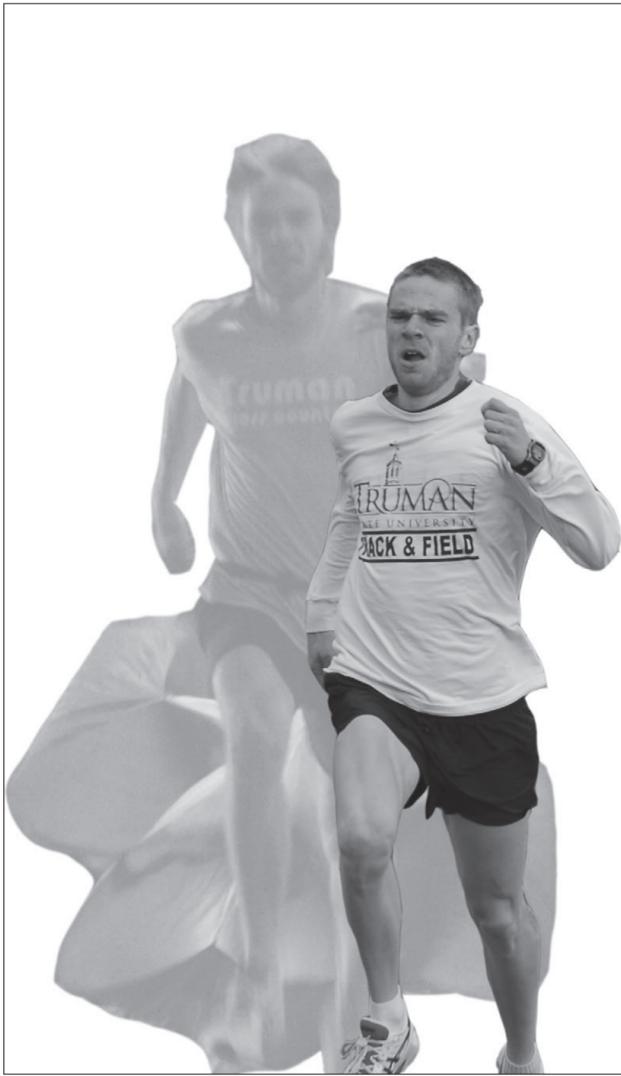
Schwegler said he hopes Crean can continue his recent run of success.

"He's on a roll," Schwegler said. "He had a good week at Iowa State. He had a good week at Northern Iowa — we just want to keep that going. He's only got four meets left, and we want to get the roll going."

Athlete of the Week

Kevin Crean
Sport: Indoor Track
Year: Senior
Position: Mid-Distance
Hometown: Kirkwood, Mo.

Crean won the 1,000-meter run at last weekend's Northern Iowa Invitational. His time of 2:31.55 was just one second off the school record. Crean was in second for most of the race but passed the leader with about 200 meters remaining. The win was Crean's first since a victory in the 800 meters last spring.



Photos by Mark Hardy and Brian O'Shaughnessy and design by Mark Hardy/Index

SIGNING DAY | Hurt, Milo headline 2008 recruiting class that includes 28 signees and four transfer players

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secondary. Carrier said certain positions — such as defensive backs, running backs and offensive line — were targeted but that the variety of recruits shows that the recruiting season was a success.

"I feel like we just covered the complete spectrum in this class," Carrier said. "That's what makes it a solid class."

Carrier said the coaching staff was able to focus on getting recruits with the 2009 season in mind, instead of expecting them to contribute immediately.

The linebacker position was one area the coaching staff approached in this manner. Seven recruits are listed as linebackers and should help fill the void that will be created when five Bulldog linebackers graduate after next season.

Jesse Swanson of Knoxville High School in Iowa is one linebacker who signed with the Bulldogs. He broke his high school's career record for tackles and has finished twice in the top three at the state wrestling meet.

Swanson, who also was recruited by the University of Central Missouri and Missouri Western State University, said he was impressed with the rebuilding efforts of Truman's program and the coaching staff, which started pursuing him in the fall.

"I talked to every single one of the coaches," Swanson said. "They started talking to me before my [senior] high school

football season started. So they started talking to me way before any other coaches did."

Although many of the recruits probably will redshirt next season, Tracy Milo is one who could contribute immediately. The running back from The Woodlands, Texas, received interest from Div.

I schools such as the Air Force Academy but signed with the Bulldogs.

"[The Woodlands] is one of the best high schools in the state of Texas," Carrier said. "He was a heavily sought-after running back going into his senior year, but he had a knee injury, which allowed us to get him."

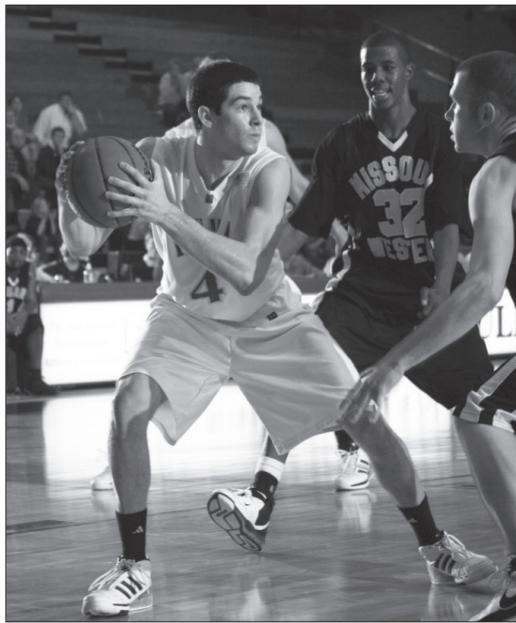
Signing Day occurred just more than three weeks after Carrier was announced as a finalist for the Minnesota State University-Mankato head coaching position. He did not receive the job.

Carrier said he is committed to the Truman program and that he doesn't think applying for the Mankato job hurt the Bulldogs' recruiting.

"People are always concerned about what's the commitment by the staff to staying," Carrier said. "It's a valid concern by incoming freshmen. ... Who knows what happens in years to come, but I see myself being here for a long time. I guess my main goal is just trying to win a national championship here. That's what we came here to do. We're trying to finish out the job that we came here to do."

"I feel like we just covered the complete spectrum in this class. That's what makes it a solid class."

Shannon Carrier
Head Coach



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Junior Banks Estridge works out of a double team earlier this season. Estridge scored 21 points Wednesday night.

FRESHMAN | Young roster provides opportunities for first-year players

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a game or anything. I'm just trying to play good defense and chip in a couple points here and there when I can."

Garrison and Henderson have been Schrader's top two options off the bench. Freshmen Mark Misiewicz and David Scott also have been called upon at various points in the season. The two combined for 14 points Saturday. The remaining freshman, Vesko Filchev, has been hampered by a foot injury and limited to just five games.

"I think all of us bring a lot of energy," Henderson said. "In the games, that's what we're asked to do, I guess. We're not asked to go out there and score 20 points. We're asked to go

in there and be solid and bring some energy."

Schrader said the inexperience of his team stretches beyond the number of freshmen on the roster. In addition to the six freshmen, four Bulldogs joined the program just prior to last season.

Schrader said he hopes the freshmen will develop their strength and shooting in the off-season, similar to how sophomore Gabe Landau, who has started 15 games this season, improved following his freshman campaign.

"I think you see in Landau someone who has gotten stronger and has improved as a shooter so I think that's the step that you'll see these [freshmen] make," Schrader said.

BASKETBALL | Poor free-throw shooting allows Mules to claim 65-64 victory

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Truman shot less than 50 percent from the free-throw line the entire game and could not put the game away. The Bulldogs made two of their last nine free throws in the final two minutes of regulation. The Mules had a chance to win the game at the end of regulation, but only made one of two free throws to send the game to overtime.

Truman outshot and out-rebounded the Mules. However, Truman committed 20 turnovers to Central Missouri's 12 and had two top players in foul trouble. Freeman, who recorded a double-double with 13 points and 14 rebounds, and Patrick Fandja both had four fouls midway through the second half. Fandja fouled out near the end of regulation.

"Our leading rebounder fouled out, and that puts pressure on everybody else to get boards," senior Josias Flynn said. "I feel as though everybody else stepped up and did their part."

In overtime, the Mules started out fast and it was Truman who had to make a comeback. De'Andre Byrd scored eight straight points to get Central Missouri out to a quick six-point lead in the extra period. Truman came back from a seven-point deficit and they took the lead by one on a jumper by Estridge with 38 seconds left. After the Mules responded with a basket, Truman was unable to come up with any points in the final possession.

Estridge led the Bulldogs with 21 points, followed by 16 from senior Nick Certa.

The Bulldogs fell to Missouri Southern 77-61 on Saturday night in Joplin, Mo. Truman was stayed with the Lions throughout the first half, leaving the score tied at 32 at halftime. But the Lions went on runs of 10 and eight points in the second half to finish off the 'Dogs.

Truman was 20 for 40 from the field, but its good shooting was offset by Missouri Southern's 19 offensive rebounds and the Bulldogs' season-high 24 turnovers. Missouri Southern had 29 points off turnovers to Truman's nine, and it shot the ball 30 more times than Truman.

"We fought hard in the first half, and then [it] just got out of hand in the second half," freshman guard Alex Henderson said. "We felt like we were kind of helpless. We just turned it over so much."

Schrader said it was amazing that Truman was able to keep the score close as long as it did given the number of turnovers and offensive rebounds.

"I think 24 turnovers and 19 offensive rebounds really speak for themselves," Schrader said. "... Nineteen offensive rebounds is just too much to overcome."

The turning point came at the beginning of the second half. After Certa sank a three to bring Truman within two, Missouri Southern went on a 10-0 run that was fueled by three straight Truman turnovers. Truman again had a run of three straight turnovers in the middle of the second half, allowing the Lions to pad their lead.

Henderson led the 'Dogs in scoring with 13 points coming off the bench. He made just one field goal but was eight for nine from the free throw line. He said he was able to get to the line a lot because of Missouri Southern's aggressive defense.

"They were a really physical team, and they were causing some turnovers, so they were really flying around," Henderson said.

Certa was second on the team in scoring with 11 points. Three other players had seven points. The Bulldogs had 35 of their 61 points coming off the bench, and they were 15 for 22 from the free throw line overall.

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