

CONFERENCE LOSS

Men lose by 10 to Emporia on Wednesday night

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SPORTS



Swimming: 4 p.m. Friday Jan. 18 vs. Missouri State
Swimming: 1 p.m. Saturday Jan. 19 vs. Lewis (Ill.)



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Hornets sting 'Dogs

Emporia State wins 98-61 on home floor to hand Truman its third loss

BY SHAWN SHINNEMAN
Staff Reporter

The first 4:25 of the game told the story Wednesday night.

Before Truman (11-3, 3-2) could even get a basket to fall, Emporia State University had poured in four threes and a pair of lay-ups for a 16-0 lead. From there, the Lady Hornets cruised to a 98-61 victory in front of their home crowd.

Before the game, head coach John Sloop said he was excited for the challenge that No. 19 Emporia State would bring.

"That's a real difficult place to play, but I always like those games in terms of it's a fun environment," Sloop said. "It's a great opportunity for us. It's the next challenge in front of us. Let's go measure ourselves once again."

But nothing seemed to go right for Truman. The Lady Hornets played smothering defense all game as they came up with 13 steals. In addition, they held the Bulldogs to just 36 percent shooting from the field and forced 22 turnovers.

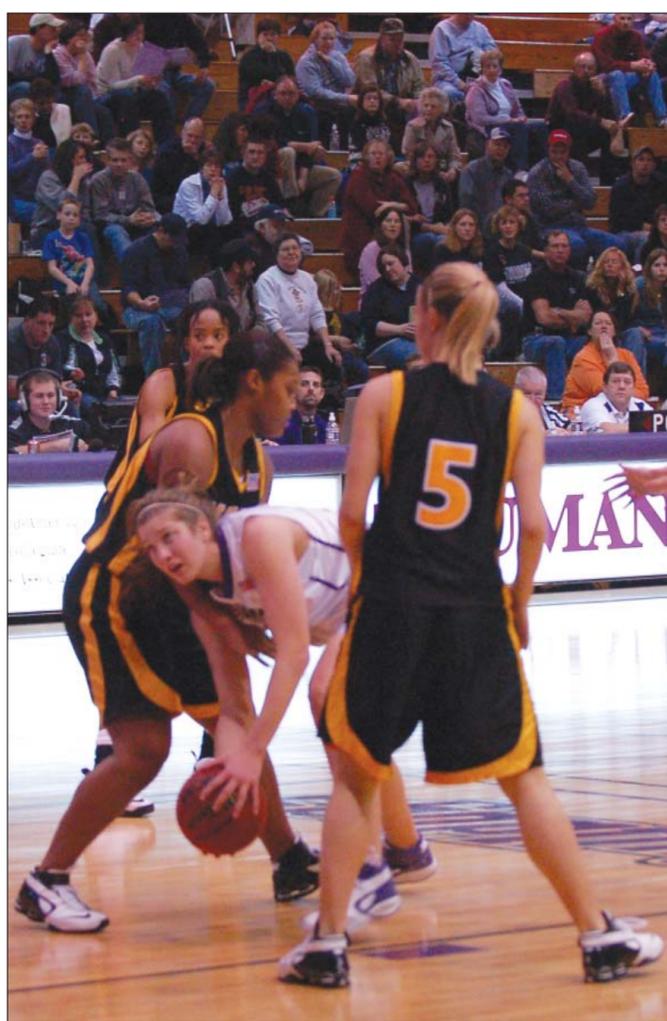
"They're as big, fast and strong as anybody in the league," Sloop said. "And beyond that, they're really talented in terms of basketball players. ... Not only do they have all that ability, but they're able to score, they're able to do stuff. And they do a real good job at the defensive end."

Emporia State's size and athleticism was too much for the Bulldogs, who never were able to cut the lead to less than 15 after the Lady Hornets' initial run. Before the game, junior forward Georgia Mueller said the height disadvantage would not be an intimidation factor.

"I'm used to it because [the opponent has] a height advantage every game," Mueller said. "If they come and trap, we have good enough shooters to kick it out. Especially this year, our perimeter offense has been really good. I'm not worried about the tall girls."

Sloop said Mueller plays bigger than her 5-foot-11-inch frame.

Despite the confidence, Truman's leading scorer never really got on. **Please see HORNETS, Page 21**



Mark Hardy/Index
Junior forward Georgia Mueller cuts through the Missouri Western defense during Saturday's game. Mueller is averaging 21.7 points per game this year.

Women defy predictions

One of the things I hate about sports is how everyone has a prediction for everything.

Seriously — coaches, players and even fans want to throw in their two cents about what they think will happen. It could be a game, a player or how the season finishes, but everyone thinks they can predict the future.

I'll admit that I am guilty of pretending to be the wise Joe-stradamus who knows the future, but the truth is I'm not good at prognosticating. For every hit, I have just as

many misses, and it's the misses that I never hear the end of.

To protect myself from this embarrassment, I usually don't write my predictions down. That way I can deny making them when I miss the mark completely.

Unfortunately, the basketball coaches of the MIAA didn't abide by my rule of not writing anything down. I say unfortunately, because back in October, the coaches released their preseason predictions for where the teams in the conference would place.

The coaches tabbed the Bulldogs women's squad to finish 10th. In case

you aren't up to date on your MIAA schools, there are only 10 teams in the conference.

Granted, the coaches had reason to think the women would be pulling up the rear this season. They had pretty much the same roster from last season's 8-19 squad that went just 3-15 in conference play.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the cellar. The women are pretty good this year. In fact, a quick glance at the MIAA standings shows that only one team in the conference has more league wins than the Bulldogs.

I know the conference season isn't even half over yet, but in just **Please see PREDICTION, Page 21**

COMMENTARY



Joe Barker



Mark Hardy/Index
Senior guard Carmen McGee sets a screen for senior guard Candace McGee to get an open shot during Saturday's contest against Missouri Western.

Team earns MIAA wins

BY SHAWN SHINNEMAN
Staff Reporter

The women's basketball team has gone from laughingstock to legitimate contender in the always-competitive MIAA conference.

The Bulldogs are off to a blazing 11-3 start and find themselves sitting in an early tie for fourth in the MIAA standings. At 3-2 in the conference, Truman already has equaled or surpassed its conference win total from each of the previous four years.

And they've done it with an inside-outside attack.

"Last year, we were consistent [in] being able to score the ball in the post at the basket, but from the perimeter not as much," head coach John Sloop said. "[This year] we've had different kids step up and hit big shots for us. We've been a better perimeter-shooting team overall, and that makes teams decide what they're going to do."

The Bulldogs have shot 45 percent from the field and 34 percent from behind the arc this season after the team shot just 39 percent from the field and made 30 percent of its three-point shots a year ago. Couple that with junior forward Georgia Mueller's record pace of 21.8 points per game, and Truman's offensive attack has become a force to be reckoned with.

And it's starting to show. With high-quality wins against previously ranked Shaw University (N.C.) and No. 23 Missouri Southern State University, the Bulldogs are building an impressive season résumé.

Missouri Southern came into Kirksville ranked No. 16 and undefeated, and left with a 68-55 defeat.

"That was a big win for us, but I

also think it put a big target on our back," Sloop said. "I think at that point people recognized that, 'OK, I think the conference is wide open.'"

Truman also won a key game against defending MIAA champions Missouri Western State University when it squeaked out an 84-80 victory Saturday in the closing minutes.

"I really thought the whole time we were going to win that game," senior guard Candace McGee said. "It was definitely a big win for us, [and] I felt confident the entire game."

The confidence could be the result of a starting lineup that includes four seniors and a junior. This experience might be the difference between the team's disappointing 8-19 finish last year and its current success.

"If the game gets close, we don't seem to waver like we did last year," said Mueller, who has eight double-doubles this year. "I do think that has a lot to do with the experience that we have. We know that just because they make a couple baskets it's not over."

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"If the game gets close, we don't seem to waver like we did last year."

Georgia Mueller
Junior Forward

Wrestling returns from break

BY BRENT FOSTER
Staff Reporter

While most Truman students enjoyed the last few weeks of Winter Break relaxing at home and sleeping until noon every day, the wrestling team was out on the road continuing its season and continuing to improve.

The Bulldogs returned to the mats 10 days before students returned to campus when they traveled to Mount Vernon, Iowa, for the Cornell Matmen Invitational. The team finished eighth out of 13 teams. Coe College (Iowa) won the event with four individual championships.

Junior Blake Peterson (165) paved the way for the Bulldogs, making it all the way to the championship match before losing to Tyler Burkle of Coe (6-4) for the second time this season.

Two other Bulldogs placed at the invite. Sophomore Dean Schultz finished fourth at 175 and finished the weekend 3-2, losing in the wrestleback finals. Senior Dan Keller took home fifth place honors at 133, also finishing with a 3-2 record.

Senior Rob Nahlik said the team

performed well over the break.

"I thought we looked pretty good," Nahlik said. "We are getting in better shape, and we started doing some different types of lifting, which is getting us in better shape for wrestling."

The Bulldogs took a week off from competition before hitting the gym again at the Central College Open in Pella, Iowa, last weekend. Several Bulldog wrestlers placed, with Peterson and Nahlik both earning individual championships. No team scores were kept for the meet.

Peterson took home the title at 165 by defeating Trevor Gehring in the championship and capping off a 4-0 weekend. The victories improved Peterson's record to 12-4 on the year.

Nahlik took home the title at 125 by defeating fellow Bulldog freshman Jeremy Minter 20-2, and finished the day with a 4-0 record.

Also placing for the Bulldogs was sophomore Andrew Bader who took fifth at 157. Bader bounced back after losing in the first round to finish 4-2. Sophomore Dean Schultz finished third at 174, winning wrestlebacks after losing in the second round. Senior Dan

Keller finished second at 133, falling in the championship match.

Bader, Peterson and Schultz all are tied for the team lead in wins with 12.

Peterson said he sees improvement in the team each week.

"We are starting to really peak," Peterson said. "I think we were really able to turn the corner, and that was evident by the results we posted last weekend."

Head coach Dave Schutter said he thought his team wrestled well and that he is seeing good things from many different wrestlers.

"We looked pretty decent at the Central College Open," Schutter said. "The level of competition wasn't as tough as some of the tournaments we've been in. But you can't have a deciding factor in who shows up in the open."

Schutter also said Nahlik and Keller wrestled well this weekend.

"Rob Nahlik at 125 looked pretty good for his first tournament back since Winter Break," Schutter said. "He basically hadn't wrestled in a month. Dan Keller is starting to figure some things out and is getting a little better."

Schutter said he also wants to see contributions from the whole team down the stretch.

"I really think everyone on the team is consistent because everyone on the team is important," Schutter said. "... They are all capable of having a good season. There is not **Please see WRESTLING, Page 21**

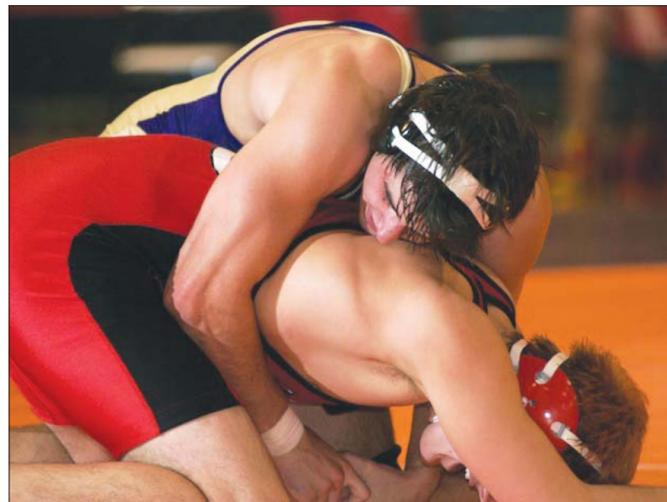


Photo Submitted
Sophomore Bryan Isbell takes his opponent to the mat during a match last fall. The wrestling team begins a rough stretch of dual meets next week.

Men seek dual wins

BY BRENT FOSTER
Staff Reporter

Even though a long break can leave a team a little rusty, the wrestling team returned to action Jan. 5 and tried to pick up where it left off in December.

A couple of weeks off can be tough on a team, but head coach Dave Schutter said he doesn't think the break affects the team in a good way or a bad way.

"I don't think it really has much effect one way or the other," Schutter said. "Guys

need to learn to keep training on their own. Some of our guys got the semester over and got their grades and their classes done, and it was a lot of weight off their shoulders. I think some of them will be a little more focused now down the end of the stretch here in wrestling."

Despite Schutter's optimism, things did not go well for the Bulldogs last season after returning from winter break. The team's season took a nose dive, with the team losing its next eight consecutive dual

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