File Photo

Sophomore Kate Aherne and the rest of the women's swimming team will compete against Missouri State University on Friday. The Bears defeated Truman in a dual meet earlier this season. Aherne won the 50-yard freestyle in a triangular meet against South Dakota and the University of Nebraska-Omaha on Saturday. The Bulldogs defeated both schools.

Women defeat No. 1-ranked Coyotes

BY JACK NICHOLL
Staff Reporter

The women's swim team thought nothing of South Dakota University's No. 1 spot in the Div. II dual meet power point rankings.

The rankings, which include the 32 points for diving, had Truman ranked ninth entering last Saturday's meet at South Dakota. Truman's main rival and defending national champion Drury University was ranked fourth in the point standings.

Truman beat South Dakota 132-105, even though the Coyotes had a 32-point handicap going in because Truman does not have a diving team. Take away the diving advantage, and the Bulldogs nearly doubled South Dakota's score.

"We basically beat the No. 1 power point team by a reasonable 27 points, which means the meet wasn't even close," head coach Mark Gole said.

The women also beat the University of Nebraska-Omaha, which hosted the three-school meet, 149.5-55.5.

Truman won seven events, including both relays. The 'Dogs had either a first or second place finish in every event.

The 200-yard freestyle relay, consisting of sophomores Kate Aherne and Kendra Brunkow, senior Emily Pufall and freshman Carina Pautz, bettered themselves once again, nearly setting another pool record. They were two tenths of a second off the pool record in South Dakota, beating their Pershing Natatorium record by more than a second. This all came unshaved and without tapering.

Many swimmers broke their personal untapered records. Sophomore Kendra Brunkow swam the 50-yard freestyle under 25 seconds for the first time unshaved in front of a hometown crowd, and sophomore Kate Aherne beat her personal best unshaven time in the 100-yard backstroke. Freshman Amanda Carnes was within two seconds of her lifetime best in the 400-yard individual medley.

Senior Molly Polette had a come-from-behind win in the 200-yard freestyle against South Dakota's best swimmer, Leita Rolfe, who then won the 400-yard individual medley two events later.

Gole said other top performances included senior Whitney Wodstrchill's second place finish in the 1000-yard freestyle, Aherne's 50-yard freestyle, senior Katie Welsh's 200-yard individual medley and senior Laura Harp's 100-yard butterfly.

Gole said it took the first half of the meet for the women to get rid of many flaws in technique caused by not having a meet for over a month.

"The front half of the meet I saw so many technical errors," Gole said. "Their turnover rates were very low. It was like they were stuck in training gear. We did a few things in practice the couple days leading up to try to get it up, but it's something that you need to get out, kind of work the kinks out in your races. And I felt like the beginning of the meet we were doing that."

The meet came on the heels of the Florida training program, which consists of two two-hour practices a day. Harp said it was good to see the training pay off with a dual meet victory.

"It was nice, since we had been practicing, to get back in and actually race, since that is really what training is for," Harp said. "I think everybody swam as well as they could have now, just getting back into more lifting and dryland."

The Florida training lasted for 12 days and then three more days after the team arrived back in Kirksville. The training is aerobic and consists of constant swimming instead of swimming mixed with weightlifting and dryland. Senior Emily Pufall said the training in the Florida pool is more beneficial to aerobic training.

"When we're in Florida, we get to practice long course, and we don't get to do that here," Pufall said. "That helps with the aerobic yards because we get to swim longer distances in a 50-meter pool rather than a 25-yard one."

The women also finished first out of four teams at the Tampa Relays on Jan. 5, although only four of the relays' 10 events will be swum at nationals. Truman finished first in every event at the relays.

Next weekend, the women travel to Missouri State University for a rematch of their first dual meet this season. Missouri State has won the last two contests after Truman beat the Bears in the 2005-06 season. Gole said he is glad the swimmers fixed technical errors last Saturday before next weekend's meet.

Men's swimming tops South Dakota in dual

BY JACK NICHOLL
Staff Reporter

The men's swim team jumped to an early lead and never looked back in the dual meet Saturday against the University of South Dakota.

The 200-yard medley relay team, led by senior backstroker Alex Totura, beat South Dakota's relay squad by more than six seconds in the first event of the meet. The men's B relay squad finished second by 19 one-hundredths of a second.

"When that happens, you're jumping out to a 15-2 lead right on the first event, and 13 points is tough to make up," head coach Mark Gole said.

The men won the meet 132-68, even with exhibitioning two events. They finished first in every event and claimed the first three spots in three events.

"On the men's side, the meet couldn't have gone any better," Gole said. "... I had no idea it was going to be that big of a drastic point spread."

The South Dakota meet came right after the team's 12-day Florida training trip, which makes for the hardest practices of the season.

After training, the men finished second in the Tampa Relays on Jan. 5. The team competed in the relays because it is mandatory under Div. II rules for a team to have a meet while on a training trip.

The Tampa Relays consist of 10 events, only four of which are contested at nationals. However, it still gives the team a chance to race against competition.

"There are a bunch of relays that aren't actual events, and it gives us a chance to have a little bit of fun," freshman Paul Wanamaker said. "But on the relays that they swim at nationals, that's also a good chance to see how we compare to everyone else that was there."

Senior Adam Pruess said the training in Florida plays a big part in improving times for the rest of the season.

"Florida training is make-or-break for a lot of people," Pruess said. "It's the week where we get to focus specifically on training outside of school, no outside influences from Kirksville or anything like that. It's a really important part of the season."

Gole said that although many of the big names on the swim team have shown improvement coming out of the Florida training, he is really pleased with the progress made by junior Andrew Berdine and senior Kyle Ruiz.

Gole also said freshman freestyler John Gloss especially has improved. Gloss finished second in the 200-yard freestyle against South Dakota and helped the 200-yard freestyle relay to a first place finish.

"[I'm] really excited about how John Gloss is doing," Gole said. "He came out of the Florida training trip, and he's got a whole lot of momentum on his side, so we're really excited to see that freshman stepping up."

Gole said the men performed well in all of the freestyle events, including the 50-yard freestyle, in which senior Jason Stokes recovered to a third place finish after losing his goggles. Truman claimed the top three places in the event.

Gole said Berdine had a phenomenal 400-yard individual medley, and that the two 100-yard backstroke swims were solid.

Last Saturday's meet marked the first time the men have won a dual meet this season, even though they consistently have performed well. Pruess said the victory isn't important at this point in the season.

"It's not important at all [to get the first victory]," Pruess said. "The only important thing at this point in the season is coming back from the Florida training trip and having a good mindset going into conference so you can swim your best times."

The men, who only have five qualifiers for nationals at this point, will start transitioning into tapering this week for the conference meet Feb. 13. Gole said the sprinters will start to transition this week, and the rest of the team will start to taper next week.

The men did not swim any new A or B cut times during break, although the training should help the team lower its times at the Feb. 13 conference taper meet.

Truman will have one of its toughest challenges of the year next week when the Bulldogs visit Lewis University (Ill.). Gole said Truman will have the upper hand in the short distance swims, but Lewis' strength comes in the longer events. He said Truman will have to have some guys step up and place in events like the 500-yard and 1000-yard freestyle events for Truman to win.

"[Lewis was] top 10 last year — we were just outside of top 10 last year," Gole said. "If we're going to prove that we are a top-10 team we're going to have to take them down, be able to step up."

File Photo

Freshman Corey Moon swims the freestyle at practice earlier this season. The men's swimming team beat South Dakota 132-68 Saturday for the Bulldogs first dual win of the season.

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WITH THE INDEX

EVERY THURSDAY MORNING

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