



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index  
Senior Emily Greenwood is one of 14 women who will attempt to regain the national title during the Wednesday to Saturday Swimming and Diving National Championship meet in Columbia, Mo. The Bulldogs finished second to their rival Drury in 2007.

## 'Dogs send 14 to nationals

BY JACK NICHOLL

Members of the women's swim team will find themselves in an unfamiliar position next week.

It will be the first time in six years they will go into the national meet without the challenge of defending a national title. The 14 national qualifiers will travel to Columbia, Mo., next Sunday to compete in the Div. II national championships starting Wednesday. After the 'Dogs won the meet for six straight years, rival Drury University took home first place last season.

It will likely come down to Truman and Drury again this year. Only a couple of other teams have an outside chance of finishing ahead of either Drury or Truman, head coach Mark Gole said.

The Bulldogs' goal is to get back on top and put up personal best times.

"I'm willing to do whatever it takes to get first, but there comes a point where we can't control what the other teams bring in — what they have and what they don't have," senior Emily Greenwood said earlier this season. "All we can control is what we have. ... We're going to have some crazy fast times, but if that's not fast enough to beat Drury, it's not fast enough. But we can leave knowing that we did everything in our power to beat them and have our best meet."

Drury will feature 12 qualifiers, the same

number as last year. Bryan Beatty, assistant swimming and diving coach for the Panthers, said Drury had quality swimmers from every qualifier last year and that it will need to repeat that pattern.

The Bulldogs will send fewer people to nationals than in recent years. After sending the maximum of 18 for a few years in a row and 17 last year, the team is down to 14 this year. However, the number of swimmers who are capable of scoring is more important than the number qualified.

"I really don't think it's any difference at all because there are always girls who it seems like are kind of along for the ride," Greenwood said.

Last season, only 11 of the 17 competitors from Truman scored in individual events, which Gole said was a huge contributor to the second-place finish.

In individual events, 12 of the 14 Bulldogs are ranked in the top 16 in the nation, and the other two are ranked just outside the top 16, in which swimmers need to place to score at nationals. A top-eight finish is All-American and a top-16 finish is Honorable Mention All-American. Rankings are compiled from season-best times.

"We have the potential to have all 14 girls score individual points, and honestly that is what it's going to take to win," Gole said. "If we have 13 score individually, we have a chance. If we have 12, we still have a chance,

but if we are going to hands down [win], we need all 14 girls to score."

The women will have swimmers in every individual and relay event, apart from the diving events. Depth, which always has been a strength for the team, still is there — many of the swimmers are capable of swimming numerous events.

"Every single one of the people who has qualified who is going is incredibly strong and have the potential to score," senior Molly Polette said. "With 14 girls, compared to the amount of people the other teams are bringing, our depth is definitely there."

The competition also is deeper than it has been in the past. Many small school programs are bringing in one or two swimmers who are capable of scoring high, which will in turn affect the scores across the board.

Polette, the champion in the 500-yard freestyle last year, will have a hard time repeating depending on whether Div. I transfer Kristen Frost from Southern Connecticut State swims in the event. Gole said four of the five relays have a chance of winning their events and senior Whitney Wodstrichill has a chance at winning the 200-yard individual medley, which she did not swim at nationals last year.

Greenwood and sophomore Kate Aherne are ranked in the top five in the 100-yard backstroke and 50-yard freestyle, respectively.

## TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

### Wrestling: Nahlik: 'I don't think they wanted it'

The NCAA Div. II Midwest Regional tournament was rough going for a lot of the Truman wrestling team. Half of the team's 10 representatives failed to win a single match.

Senior Rob Nahlik said some team members needed to have more of a desire to win.

"I don't think they wanted it," Nahlik said. "I really think it just came down to a lot of them just wanted their season to be over, and they didn't wrestle to their potential at all. I thought we could have gotten five guys through if they would have tried. You have to step it up to another level at regionals, and they didn't do it."

### Men's basketball: Improvement needed at line

After finishing the season with a 5-22 record and ninth in the MIAA standings, the men's basketball team has some areas that need to improve for the team to finish higher in the standings next season.

Junior guard Banks Estridge said the team will work to get stronger during the offseason and that the Bulldogs also need to shoot better from the foul line next season.

Truman's 66-percent clip from the free-throw line was seventh in the MIAA, and the Bulldogs were in the cellar of the conference in free throws made.

"Obviously we need to improve our free-throw shooting," Estridge said. "Personally I know I need to do it, but as a team, too, we need to work on that."

The Bulldogs lost at least two games mainly because of their failure to make free throws.

Against Pittsburg State University on Jan. 5, the 'Dogs were 7 for 16 from the charity stripe and lost 62-59 in overtime. In the Bulldogs' other overtime loss — a one-point defeat to the University of Central Missouri on Feb. 5 — they made 14 of 29 free throws.

Truman also will need to limit its turnovers next season. The 397 turnovers the Bulldogs committed this season were the most for a Truman team since the 1998-99 season.

### Women's basketball: Schedule set for tourney

The women's MIAA tournament gets underway today at Municipal Auditorium in Kansas City, Mo.

The afternoon session will begin at noon with No. 1 seed Washburn University taking on No. 8 Missouri Western State University. The next game will begin at 2:15 p.m. and will feature No. 4 Missouri Southern State University against No. 5 Northwest Missouri State University.

The night session will kick off with No. 7 Truman taking on No. 2 Emporia State University at 6 p.m. The nightcap will finish up with No. 3 Southwest Baptist University taking on the No. 6 University of Central Missouri at 8:15 p.m.

The winners will advance to the semifinal games Saturday afternoon. The championship game is set for Sunday at 1 p.m.

All-session tickets are on sale now at the Truman athletic office for \$30.

Single-session tickets will be on sale for \$15 throughout the tournament at the Municipal Auditorium box office.



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index  
Junior Jason Stokes is one of five men's swimmers who will compete at the national meet in Columbia, Mo., this Wednesday to Saturday. The men finished 15th at nationals in 2007.

## Men's swimming looks for top-10 finish at nationals

### Five swimmers will travel to meet, which begins Wednesday

BY JACK NICHOLL  
Staff Reporter

The time has come for the men's swim team to try to improve upon its 15th-place finish at last year's national meet.

The Bulldogs will feature five swimmers in the NCAA Div. II national championships in Columbia, Mo., next Wednesday through Saturday. Seniors Alex Totura and Adam Pruess and junior Jason Stokes are returning to the meet, and sophomore brothers Andrew and Peter McCall are first-time qualifiers. Pruess did not have an A cut last season after going to nationals his first two years.

At the beginning of the season, the men made it a goal to finish in the top 10 at the championship.

"We're really hoping for top 10, somewhere in there because we haven't been there for a number of years," Peter McCall said. "But I think we're more focused on individual relays. It's kind of a step pro-

cess — if we place in the top eight in each relay there is no way you're not going to get top eight in the meet."

The Bulldogs will compete in all five relay events and will swim in the maximum number of individual events that they can.

Unlike last year, Truman has swimmers who are competent in each of the four strokes, which makes a difference in the medley relay events. Pruess will provide the team with the breastroker it did not have last year, and the McCall brothers will split time swimming the butterfly in relays. All five of the qualifiers swim freestyle regularly.

Head coach Mark Gole said he will mix up the McCall brothers in the freestyle relays as well. Peter will swim the 200-yard freestyle relay, and Andrew will swim the 400- and 800-yard freestyle relays. Stokes, Totura and Pruess will be members in all five relays.

Relays count for double points compared to individual events, which is why it is imperative for the men to do well. Gole said the men need to finish in the top eight in the 200- and 400-yard freestyle relays and the 200-yard med-

ley relay to have a chance of scoring in the top 10 overall.

The men also are stronger in the individual events this year, and they have combined for numerous national cuts. None of the five qualifiers ever have scored in an individual event at nationals.

"Last year we really only had opportunities to score individual points out of probably two of those four, where this year we have three solid candidates for individual points and then another outside shot out of the other two," Gole said.

Having five qualifiers instead of four should not make a big difference, Totura said. But five swimmers does give Truman more chances for individual scores and allows some swimmers extra time between events.

"There isn't that much of a difference [between five and four]," Totura said. "It gives some guys more of a rest. We're obviously a sprint-oriented group so during a four-day meet you get tired because you're going all out effort."

The men also have an advantage because the five qualifiers qualified at the Miami ta-

per meet in December, which resulted in them not having to taper for the conference meet. Tapering for both conference and nationals can be difficult because the meets are only a month away from each other.

"It's very difficult to taper yourself to get ready to swim at conference because you're so mentally focused on conference, then having nationals three weeks later — that's physically and mentally draining on you having to prepare yourself for another competition like that," Totura said.

The last two years the men had to taper for conference and then hold the taper for the national meet, which caused the men to swim better at conference, Gole said. This year, the men were able to train all the way to the conference meet, which they drop-tapered for. They started tapering for nationals the day after conference.

Gole said every qualifier can build off a good conference meet.

"I'm really excited to see what these guys are going to do because we just drop-rested them all for conference, and they all swam well," Gole said.

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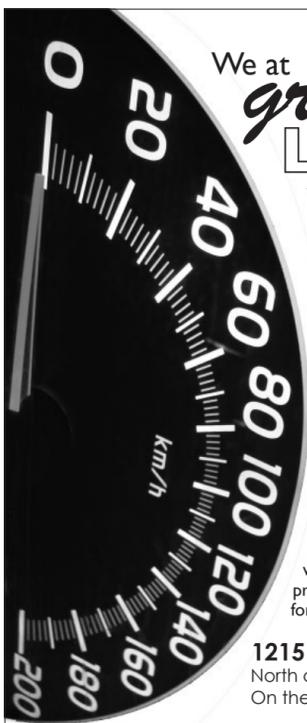
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