

Hockey earns second spot in region

BY JOE BARKER
Sports Editor

Last year's second-place trophy now has a companion.

For the second year in a row, the Truman roller hockey club came away with a second-place finish in the Great Plains Region tournament. The Bulldogs fell to Missouri State University 2-1 in an overtime contest.

"Frankly, I was pretty disappointed," senior forward Dane Moody said. "We played a fantastic weekend as far as defensive hockey goes, which has never been our forte, but we just couldn't put the puck in the net. ... To get that close to beating Missouri State and to not do it was pretty disappointing."

The championship game was the third meeting between the Bears and Bulldogs with neither team claiming a victory in the first

two contests. Instead, the teams settled for ties of 5-5 and 2-2.

The squads looked evenly matched after the game started. Neither team scored a goal in the first two periods.

Eight minutes into the third period, Truman's freshman forward Zach Rohne broke the tie with a power play goal on a feed from senior defenseman Jim Dougherty. Rohne's goal came on a rebound chance around the net.

"Very rarely do we get garbage goals, but that's what we got," head coach Joe Nedelec said.

Late in the game, the Bears pulled their goalie for an extra man and attacked junior goalie John Pecher. The puck found the back of the net with 28 seconds remaining in the contest when the Bears' Zach Dangos pounded home a rebound to tie the score.

"Mo. State did it perfectly," Nedelec said. "They pulled their

goalie and had the two extra guys low and popped in a rebound to put into overtime."

In the sudden-death overtime period, Missouri State's Zach Jacobs scored 3:35 seconds in to give the Bears the first-place trophy.

"As a fan of hockey, that was a great game to watch," Nedelec said. "As a coach it was painful because we were so evenly matched. ... Any time a game goes into the third period 0-0, it's either the goalies are standing on their heads or the teams are crap. But that wasn't the case. Both goalies were playing really well, and both teams were playing really well."

The game almost didn't make it to overtime on two occasions. The first was on a shot by Moody in the third period when the puck hit the inside crossbar and bounced out back onto the surface.

"It came out just as hard as it

went in," Moody said. "The referee standing on the goal line waved it off and said 'no goal.' Then apparently he came over to the bench two or three minutes later, and he told coach the he completely had completely blown that call."

Missouri State almost ended the game in regulation as well. Pecher made a save on a rebound that Nedelec said was the best he's ever seen a goalie make. Pecher was caught down on the floor with a Bears player bearing down on an empty goal. Pecher dove to his right to make the save without knowing where the puck actually was.

"As the puck was coming toward the net, I hit it horizontally toward the corner — I just knocked it out of the air basically without really looking at it," Pecher said. "I knocked it in the corner and got back up, and I saw the whole bench and the stands just explode."

Before the playoffs were underway, the Bulldogs had to finish up the regular season Saturday against Washington University-St. Louis. Dougherty started the scoring off for the Bulldogs 1:33 into the first period. Wash U answered back five minutes later to tie the score.

In the second period, junior forward Drew Vandas netted a short-handed goal at the 8:10 mark. Vandas' goal would be it for the scoring, and the Bulldogs ended the regular season with a win.

"We had a strong game against Wash U," Nedelec said. "We could have been better, but we did what we had to do."

The playoffs started at 8 a.m. Sunday. The 'Dogs drew Southeast Missouri State University in the first round. In the teams' two prior matchups, the Bulldogs had little trouble knocking off

the Redhawks, winning twice by a combined score of 21-1.

The Redhawks forfeited the game giving the 'Dogs a 1-0 win, a pass to round two and a date with new rival St. Louis University.

SLU had beaten the Bulldogs in the teams' last two contests.

After allowing the first goal of the game, the Bulldogs settled down and lit the lamp five unanswered times and secured a 5-3 victory and a return trip to the championship game.

"I felt so relieved to beat that team because they had our number," Nedelec said. "The guys came out really flying, and we put our chances away."

Despite falling in the title game, the Bulldogs' season lives on. The team earned an at-large bid to the Div. II national championship. The games will be played April 9-14 in Colorado Springs, Colo.



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Sophomore Katrina Biermann practices Tuesday. She recorded a triple jump of 11.7 meters at last weekend's MIAA indoor track meet. The jump qualified her for a spot in the national meet.

Biermann jumps into national meet

BY NATHAN BECKER
Editor in Chief

Katrina Biermann has to change her spring break plans.

The sophomore jumper won the triple jump with a distance of 11.7 meters and took second place in the pole vault with a height of 3.5 meters last weekend at the MIAA indoor conference meet in Joplin, Mo.

The winning triple jump qualifies her for the NCAA Div. II championship meet March 14 to 15 in Mankato, Minn.

"I was planning on going home for spring break and kind of relaxing, and I got an e-mail yesterday saying that [senior Christen Lauer] and I are going, and I was just completely shocked," Biermann said. "Now I'm starting to get a lot more excited as it gets closer."

Because of time conflicts between the pole vault and the triple jump, Biermann only was able to take her preliminary triple jumps and hope they were good enough not only to get her to finals, but to place.

"We told them, 'You only get your preliminary jumps. Whatever you do with that, you're just going to have to live with those marks,'" head coach John Cochrane said.

Biermann said she knew she had only a few jumps to make a lasting impression.

"I had to really psych myself up because I knew that was going to be my only shot," she said. "I knew I was

going to have to jump pretty far."

Cochrane said Biermann has shown steady improvement since she came to Truman, tacking on about three feet in both her vault height and her triple-jump distance.

"She's done well, and we hope she continues to put in the time and effort to do well in the future," Cochrane said.

Cochrane said that during the season, Biermann was about 60 percent pole vaulter and 40 percent triple jumper. The conference-winning jump has Biermann thinking about her status.

"Before last weekend, I kind of considered myself more of a pole vaulter, but after jumping that far and getting to go to nationals, I don't know," she said.

Biermann said she hopes she can triple jump well enough at the national meet to break into the top eight of 15 jumpers, which is All-American territory.

Cochrane said there usually aren't many centimeters of difference between 15th place and eighth place, so Biermann might have a chance to realize her goal.

"Usually if you can do in [the national meet] what it took you to get there, you can get pretty close to scoring," Cochrane said.

Cochrane said that no matter how Lauer and Biermann fare at nationals, they still should be proud of what they accomplished.

"When you get to the national meet, there's no such thing as a failure because you got there," he said.

Athlete of the Week

Katrina Biermann

Sport: Track and Field

Year: Sophomore

Position: Triple Jumper, Pole Vaulter

Hometown: Liberty, Mo.

Biermann qualified for the March 14 to 15 NCAA Championship meet with her triple jump of 11.7 meters at last weekend's MIAA conference meet. She finished first in the event and placed second in the pole vault.

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