

# Women wrap up winning season

BY RYAN TURNER  
Staff Reporter

The women's soccer team's season came to an anticlimactic end.

The Bulldogs (15-7-1) were bumped from the NCAA tournament in a somewhat-routine fashion. Regional rival University of Nebraska-Omaha eliminated the Bulldogs for the fourth time in as many NCAA tourney meetings.

The season's end came early for everyone on the Bulldogs roster, but particularly for this year's graduating class, including senior fullback Emily Newsham.

"I didn't really feel like it was my last one until it was over, but it [went] by really quickly," Newsham said. "It was too soon."

Newsham had a solid year for the Bulldogs but not one easily found in a box score. As a defender, her most telling statistic would be goals scored by an opposing team.

The Bulldogs only allowed 0.82 goals per game this season. Junior goalkeeper Emily Roark's largely contributed to the statistic, but Newsham was a key part as well.

A lot of the low goal-scoring can be attributed to a lack of shots, which Newsham helped control by being aggressive and taking on opposing forwards.

In the MIAA conference tournament, the Bulldogs permitted two shots on goal

during the entire tournament for an average of one per game. This helped the 'Dogs post shutouts in both matches.

Newsham was not always a defender. She has played as a forward and midfielder. Her time as an offensive player helped her learn how to be a better defender.

"I just know what I hated that [opposing] defenders did, so I just tried to do that," Newsham said.

Newsham's game was not one-sided this season, though. She said that because of her experience playing forward, she loved to get involved in the attack.

"[Newsham's] such a skillful player," head coach Mike Cannon said. "She's probably one of the best attacking backs we've ever had as far as being able to be offensive. She scored a couple of goals this year, got into the attack a lot while still being very good at shutting down the other team. She's a good player — we could've play her up top, in the middle of the field, out wide. She's a pretty versatile player. I think we found a really good spot for her this year."

Newsham's achievements were not ignored by all-conference voters, as she was recognized as first-team All-MIAA this season after earning honorable mention last year.

"I just wanted to finish the year playing the best soccer that I ever had played," Newsham said.

Although the Bulldogs will lose both Newsham and Roark, they have plenty of



Jackson Groves/Index

Sophomore forward Lisa Nadeau works around a defender in a late-season game. The women's soccer team concluded its season with a loss in the opening round of the NCAA Tournament.

talent returning next season. The team's top five returning scorers all will be back next fall. Sophomore forward Jessica Wiegert, who led the team in scoring as a freshman last year, reclaimed this distinction again by registering 19 points. Senior forward Katie Ruefer is the only loss up front for the Bulldogs.

The Bulldogs' goal-scoring average is up from 1.58 to 1.68 goals per game from last season. With the top scorers gaining experience, especially tournament experience, that average should rise again next year.

Cannon said earlier this season that he would like to average two goals per game, which was the average in 2004 — the last time Truman made the tournament.

Returning to the postseason was a big accomplishment for the team.

"You can look at it any different way

you want to spin it, obviously — being tied for the conference championship, winning the conference tournament, making the [NCAA] tournament — those are important steps," Cannon said.

Junior forward Katelyn Talcott said she thinks many of the holes being created by graduating players will be filled by younger players.

"I feel like people that didn't really have a chance to play this year, maybe like freshmen that are coming up, are going to be really good," Talcott said. "I don't see a drop in our level next year. I think we have another good chance to make the playoffs next year."

Cannon said he would have liked the team to have played better in the NCAA tournament but that he is optimistic about the future of the program.

"I expect we'll be right in the thick of things again for a conference champion-

ship [and] hopefully get a spot in the playoffs," Cannon said. "It might be a little bit tougher with UNO joining the conference. That's two more tough conference games for everybody. It's not going to be easy for UNO with how deep our conference is as far as no team's going to win every game in the conference."

UNO's addition is not the only change in store for the MIAA. Because of the additional two games per team being added to the schedule, the conference tournament, new this year, will be dropped. The regular season champion will get the conference's automatic bid next season.

"Disappointing end, but overall, we're real happy with the season," Cannon said. "We accomplished a lot of our goals, and ... we're looking forward to spring, getting back at it and getting ready for '08."

# Season ends with 3-0 loss to UNO in first round

BY RYAN TURNER  
Staff Reporter

Having seen the University of Nebraska-Omaha earlier this season, the Bulldogs thought they knew what to expect from the Mavericks. But when the first round of the NCAA tournament got underway, they didn't know what hit them.

The women's soccer team's (15-7-1) season came to a swift end early Friday afternoon with a 3-0 loss to UNO. The Mavs avenged a 2-1 defeat in mid-September at Truman, eliminating the 'Dogs from the Div. II NCAA tournament in the first round. The Bulldogs' futility against UNO in the tournament continued. The team now is 0-4 in the tournament against the Mavs all-time.

The Bulldogs were frustrated by UNO's strong attack all day.

"They pressured us pretty well, and we didn't deal with it that well," head coach Mike Cannon said. "We didn't really keep possession of the ball to relieve the pressure."

The Bulldogs first succumbed to the Mavericks' pressure at the 19-minute mark, giving up a goal off a corner kick. Cannon said the team hasn't been great in the air this season, and it came back to bite the women early in the match.

"It just seems like a lot of times we had a hard time winning the ball out of the air and keeping possession," junior forward Katelyn Talcott said.

The biggest blow of the game was yet to come. Senior

UNO forward Brandie Beale beat several defenders and finally junior goalkeeper Emily Roark to give the Mavs a 2-0 lead in the match.

The goal created a steep difference for the Bulldogs only 30 minutes into the contest.

Although the Bulldogs continued to struggle during the first half, they didn't allow another goal during the first 45 minutes.

The team stepped up its play in the second half, but it wasn't enough.

"Our second half was better, but we were already down by two goals, so it's tough to come back from that," Cannon said. "We actually kept the ball a bit more and dealt with their pressure a lot better, created a couple of chances,

which we should have had at least one goal."

But the Bulldogs never managed to break up the shutout. Their deficit grew once more when the team allowed a third goal in the 72nd minute.

Three goals is the most the team has allowed in a single game since before conference play began, when the 'Dogs suffered a 3-1 loss to the University of Central Oklahoma.

The Bulldogs were frustrated because they beat UNO 2-1 at home earlier in the year.

"I know that our skill level matches up with their skill level, and a 3-0 loss doesn't represent that," Talcott said.

Because the Bulldogs dug themselves a first half hole, the team could not mount a comeback.

"I guess now we kind of learned that you have to play the whole game and not just 45 minutes of it," senior fullback Emily Newsham said.

A positive that Cannon said he took from the match is that the team followed a weak first half with a much-improved second half, which has been consistent for the Bulldogs this season.

The Mavericks came out stronger from the start, and Newsham said she thinks their efforts were rewarded.

"I think the big main part is that they definitely wanted it more than us, and it showed," Newsham said.

Another reason the slow start hurt the Bulldogs was that the game was played on an artificial surface, unlike

their usual grass field.

"They were very aggressive," Cannon said. "Some of it was their pressure, some of it was, I just don't think we, for whatever reason, were ready for it, because we should've been. And being on the turf a little bit made [the ball] harder to control."

Cannon said that being on turf wasn't an excuse because the team has to play wherever it's told to play and should overcome obstacles like different surfaces.

"[Great] teams find ways to win on any surface," Cannon said.

The Bulldogs will get at least two shots at revenge against UNO next season, when the Mavs join the MIAA.

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