

## DUAL MEET

The swim teams took on Indy in home opener

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# SPORTS

MEN'S ON CAMPUS

Wrestling: 7:30 p.m. Friday Nov. 9 vs. Central College at Kirksville High School

Football: 2 p.m. Saturday Nov. 10 vs. Missouri Western

WOMEN'S ON CAMPUS

Volleyball: 7:30 p.m. Friday Nov. 9 vs. Emporia State  
Volleyball: 7:00 Saturday Nov. 10, MIAA championship, teams TBD

Thursday, November 8, 2007

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Sophomore fullback Kelsey Richters sends a ball downfield during the women's soccer team's 1-0 victory against Southwest Baptist University in the championship game of the conference tournament.

## MIAA CHAMPS

Women's soccer defeats SBU 1-0 with a goal in the 87th minute to clinch tourney title

BY RYAN TURNER  
Staff Reporter

What a way to end a losing streak. The women's soccer team (15-6-1) concluded its two-game skid by winning the inaugural MIAA tournament with back-to-back 1-0 wins against Washburn University and Southwest Baptist University. The tournament win earned Truman an automatic bid into the NCAA Div. II tournament. The Bulldogs will play the University of Nebraska-Omaha on Friday.

Winning the tournament was a big accomplishment for the team. When the pre-season polls came out, the Bulldogs weren't even slated to make the tournament.

"[The team] seemed to really want it this year, and everyone worked hard," senior fullback Emily Newsham said. "Also, we were rated as underdogs, and

we learned to prove everyone wrong."

The Bulldogs, as a program, are used to success. They have been a top team in the MIAA every year since it came into existence in 1999. Only last season did the 'Dogs fail to capture the conference title.

Head coach Mike Cannon said the main reason for the team's accomplishments is that they had a head start on some of the other teams in the conference. The University of Missouri-Rolla left the conference in 2005, which left Truman as the league's oldest program. This establishment in the program has made it the team to beat every year.

"It's a tribute to the program and the kind of kids that we get," Cannon said. "I think this year shows that if you stick to your principles and your principles are correct, that you're going to have some bumps in the road, but you're also going to have a lot of high points."

The Bulldogs did not win the regular-season conference title outright this season, but they still earned a share with the

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## Playoff time is best part of year

As a sports fan, I have two favorite times of the season: opening day and the playoffs.

Opening day is such an amazing experience. Everyone is in first place. Everyone has a chance. Optimism is at its highest. Fans of long-suffering teams like the Cubs think they have a shot to win it all.

Once the regular season starts, reality sets in. Either your team is good or it's not. The optimism is either replaced with a feeling of "Hey, we're really good," or "When does next year start?"

There really isn't another time to get excited — that is, until playoff time.

I love the playoffs. I don't care the sport or the level of competition. I don't care if I

have a rooting interest in the team or not. I will watch the NBA playoffs and Div. III lacrosse if it is on television.

No matter the sport, playoffs are amazing.

The intensity level is off the charts. There is so much pressure to play the perfect game — to not cost your team a chance at a championship. It's more entertaining than any television program or movie.

Because of this, I can't wait for the MIAA volleyball

tournament to come to Pershing Arena on Friday and Saturday. Four teams giving their all on every play to win. The players' excitement when things go well and the expressions of agony when things go poorly are things I don't want to miss.

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### COMMENTARY



Joe Barker



Senior forward Katie Ruefer charges ahead in the MIAA title game. The 'Dogs play UNO Friday in the NCAA tournament.

## 'Dogs face UNO in first round

BY RYAN TURNER  
Staff Reporter

The Bulldogs are returning to the promised land of college soccer. They will begin their first NCAA tournament since 2004 on Friday.

The Bulldogs (15-6-1) will play the University of Nebraska-Omaha Friday in the opening round, with the winner playing site host Winona State University (Minn.) on Sunday.

The Bulldogs clinched their tournament berth by winning the MIAA conference tournament in the first year of the tournament's existence. The UNO Mavericks struggled a bit early in the season but went on a tear near the end, winning their last eight. This helped to vault the Mavs into the top six in the region, which are the teams that make the tournament.

Even though the two schools reside in different conferences

this season, they've built up quite a rivalry throughout their history. UNO leads the series dating back to 1999. The Mavs are 8-3 overall, including a 3-0 mark in NCAA tournament games.

The Bulldogs hosted the Mavericks this season and defeated them 2-1 in a thrilling comeback victory to open their home schedule. It was the first time in University history the team had managed to defeat UNO in front of its home fans.

"I've never liked playing Truman twice, believe me, especially after they beat us," Omaha head coach Don Klosterman said. "We enjoy playing Truman. We always have. It's a very good kind of a rivalry thing for when we were in two different conferences. So it'll be interesting next year when we're in the same conference."

With the Bulldogs' imperfect tournament record against

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## Volleyball advances to semifinals

BY BRENT FOSTER  
Staff Reporter

Sometimes teams will take wins however they can get them.

That was the case Tuesday as the volleyball team had a tough time putting away Missouri Southern State University 3-0 (30-23, 30-27, 30-26) in the quarterfinals of the MIAA tournament at Pershing.

The victory moves the Bulldogs into Friday's semifinals of the tournament against Emporia State University. The No. 15 Hornets defeated Northwest Missouri State 3-0 to advance.

Despite the sweep, head coach Jason Skoch said he was not happy with the way his team played.

"We haven't grown up as much as I thought," Skoch said. "We have players that sit there and come in to play. They

don't come in to win. That's our big difference. They came just to play a game and not to win. The [Missouri] Southern coach agreed that both teams were playing sloppy."

Skoch, who picked up career win No. 100, also said the Bulldogs will have to improve in several facets of the game to win Friday night.

"We better play some better defense and have some more intensity, or it is going to be a short evening," Skoch said. "We didn't come to win tonight. We came to play."

Junior outside hitter Melissa Keck led the Bulldogs with 12 kills and a .500 hitting percentage. Junior middle hitter Allie Cherven had 10 kills in just two games for the Bulldogs.

The play of redshirt freshman outside hitter Allison Barker was a bright

spot for the 'Dogs. Barker, who has played in just 17 games this season, had four kills for the Bulldogs.

"I think as a team we could have done a little bit better," Barker said. "As a team I thought we had a lot of good hustle plays, and our good serve receive was pretty good."

Truman outit Missouri Southern .221 to .162 for the match.

Washburn University will play Pittsburg State University in the first semifinal match Friday. The winner will take on Truman or Emporia State in the MIAA finals Saturday.

If the volleyball team finishes the postseason the way it finished the regular season, then the Bulldogs could be celebrating a national championship.

The Bulldogs ended a successful

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## Clutch in the Conference

The volleyball team is a perfect four for four in claiming MIAA tournament titles since the conference tournament began in 2003. The Bulldogs have won 10 tournament matches during that time span, including a 3-0 victory Tuesday against Missouri Southern State University. The 'Dogs have won 30 of the 35 games within those 10 MIAA tournament matches. Here's a look at the past:

2003  
vs. Emporia State, 3-0 ✓  
vs. Pittsburgh State, 3-1 ✓

2004  
vs. Pittsburgh State, 3-2 ✓  
vs. Central Missouri, 3-0 ✓

2005  
vs. Central Missouri, 3-0 ✓  
vs. Washburn, 3-1 ✓

2006  
vs. Emporia State, 3-0 ✓  
vs. Pittsburgh State, 3-1 ✓  
vs. Washburn, 3-0

2007  
vs. Missouri Southern, 3-0  
vs. Emporia State, ???



Design by Dylan Herz/Index



Junior libero Whitney Boehler digs a ball in the volleyball team's 3-0 sweep of Missouri Southern in the first round of the MIAA tournament.

Brian O'Shaughnessey/Index

## Bulldogs aim for fifth straight title

BY SHAWN SHINNEMAN  
Staff Reporter

In its four-year history, the MIAA conference volleyball tournament only has been won by one team: the Truman Bulldogs.

Since the tournament's first year in 2003, Truman has dominated — losing only a total of five games out of a possible 32 in MIAA tournament matches. Head coach Jason Skoch said he thinks his players have been trained in a way that helps them play well when tournament time approaches.

"The biggest thing is at practice we just put pressure on the kids," Skoch said. "Some days it's tough, but they've got to learn how to respond under pressure."

The strategy has worked in the past. The Bulldogs have made every NCAA tournament since 1999, when they did not earn a bid after a 23-9 season.

Skoch compared the volleyball team's dominance to the Truman women's soccer team, who now have been MIAA

champions eight of the past nine years.

"Sort of like women's soccer, there is an understanding belief that [the] title is ours," Skoch said.

Junior outside hitter Eli Medina acknowledged that there is added pressure for the team to perform at the conference tournament because of its past success.

"Each year we come in ranked high — high in the nation, high in the conference — and we kind of have a reputation to live up to," Medina said. "And you know that as a freshman coming into this program."

Even after graduating two All-Americans, Truman has placed itself in position to achieve a fifth-straight MIAA tournament title.

"It's pretty neat that each year [we] graduate people, get new people and still have the same kind of success," Medina said. "We're really hoping to repeat that this year."

It will be no small task for the Bulldogs to win it this year. With five teams ranked in the top 20 nationally, the

MIAA is one of the deepest and most competitive conferences in the country. Coming in as the No. 1 seed in the East Region is no guarantee that they will take home the tournament trophy.

But if there is one key to the success of the team throughout the postseason, it most likely will be teamwork.

"Coach has been mentioning how we just graduated two All-Americans, back-to-back conference MVPs, and now I think you look at the team, and it's like a new person is leading the offense each game," Medina said. "That's really good because it's never good when a team has to depend solely on one person to win it."

Skoch said that because the team has had to rely on so many different players to step up this year, the season would not be considered a failure if the Bulldogs were to lose the conference tournament. Junior right side hitter Melissa Keck said the team would learn from a conference tournament loss and improve.

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