



Jackson Groves/Index
Sophomore defender Drew Pauk makes a slide tackle in an attempt to gain possession during a game earlier this fall. Pauk has been a contributor in the Bulldogs' eight shutouts.

DEFENSE | Young defenders lead Bulldogs to a 9-4-1 start to year

Continued from Page 19
a left-footed shot into the right side of the net.
Green's goal served as an example of a time when the defense gave offensive help. But Randazzo said the whole team has been helping out the defense all year.
"The whole team works together, not just us defensively," Randazzo said. "The whole team gets back [on defense] for us."
The team's defensive efforts have combined to smother opponents this year, but Cochran said there is always room to improve.
"We need to be stronger in the tackle and keeping the guy in front of us," Cochran said. "So as a team, it's, 'Can we stay focused for 90 minutes?' ... At any time in the game, you can get scored on — even when you're dominating."
Even with improvements still to be made, this defense already has taken its place among the best ever at Truman. The scary thing for opposing teams is that the Bulldogs still are very young. With all four starters in just their second year of eligibility, the Bulldogs have the potential to become even better the next couple of years.
Because they will not be losing any defenders in coming years, they will be able to improve as a whole and not just as individuals. Russell said the team is a very tight-knit group.
"Our relationship on the field is as strong as it is off the field," he said. "We're all best friends, and we all hang out, and it shows. We play for each other on the field, and we're there for each other."
As good as this defense is, players have things to be concerned about. The Bulldogs are entering the stretch run in which every game can make or break the season.
"I would like to be remembered by getting into the tournament and doing well there," Russell said. "The shutouts are great, but wins are better. And that's what it comes down to."

MEN | Soccer loses to Quincy for first time since 1987

Continued from Page 15
last eight games. It's soccer, and things happen."
The teams were deadlocked in a 0-0 tie until the 74th minute when Gannon's Chad Wynter took a breakaway past two Truman defenders before putting it into the right side of the net for the 1-0 lead. The goal was the first given up by the Bulldogs since Aug. 29 — their third game of the season.
"That ball seemed to always end up back on [Wynter's] foot, and it found its way into the back of the net," Cochran said. "It was a real kick to the gut, really, because we hadn't been scored on in a long time."
Gannon struck again just seven minutes later to effectively seal the victory. Although the team recognized the consecutive shutout record as a significant accomplishment, players agreed the biggest disappointment about Friday's game was not getting the win.
"It was a letdown to see our shutout

streak go down like that," Russell said. "But the records [aren't] a big deal. The games hurt more."
The feel of the game changed in the second-half when Gannon became more physical. Gannon recorded 11 second half fouls, compared with just six in the first half.
"If a team is basically dictating play, there are ways to change that," Cochran said. "They're smart. ... They're going to start hitting us [and] try to take us out of our game. And they found a way to get it done."
Whatever the outcome, Truman continues to show that it is never going to be overmatched.
"We can play with anybody if we are playing well and playing together," Randazzo said.
The Bulldogs will continue their push for a postseason berth when they travel to take on Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville (8-2-1) on Friday. They then will play Iowa Wesleyan College at home Tuesday.

STREAK | Women's soccer has not lost in last six contests, is 9-3-1 on season

Continued from Page 19
18-yard box, which allowed Gaeta to just chip it over her. The shot found the back of the net, even though it appeared to go over the goal.
"I was the only one celebrating because no one else thought it was in," Gaeta said. "Everyone else thought it was over."
Cannon said he was pleased with Gaeta's performance and that it really helped the team surge.
"Isabel Gaeta provided a spark off of the bench," Cannon said. "It was a pretty nice goal. You don't see that too often."
The Bulldogs established a comfortable 3-0 lead going into the second half. They also had the wind, which was important since Northwest failed to hold serve in the first half.
"They weren't dangerous in the second half because it was harder

to play just-kick-it-and-chase," Cannon said.
Although the Bulldogs didn't attempt to sit on their 3-0 lead, they couldn't add to it after halftime.
"We were pushing forward just as much, we weren't trying to play more defensively," Haluszczak said. "... The opportunities just presented themselves more in the first half, I guess."
Cannon said that, as a whole, his team played better offensively against Northwest the second time around. Not only did the team score one more goal in this meeting, but it also maneuvered around the Bearcats' offside trap more easily.
"We were only offsides like two or three times on Sunday as opposed to like seven or eight on Wednesday," Cannon said.
The overall passing and decision-making seemed to improve as

well, which was vital in the aforementioned difficult conditions.
"Our team was able to connect better, and by connecting better we were able to create more goal-scoring opportunities," Gaeta said.
The Bulldogs held onto their lead for the remainder of the second half. They pulled starting junior keeper Emily Roark at the 65-minute mark to give her a rest. Sophomore backup Denise Childress came in but went untested while she was on the field.
One of Truman's biggest staples this season has been the defense, which in addition to the wind in the 'Dogs' favor, could explain the lack of shots against Childress.
"Our defense is really solid, too," Gaeta said. "They've been ... consistently solid, and a lot of the games that we've been winning are because of them," Gaeta said. "They keep the shutouts."

WOMEN | 'Dogs prepare for 2nd half of conference schedule, trail just UCM in MIAA

Continued from Page 19
in order to make the inaugural conference tournament, which consists of the MIAA's top four teams.
"Every game we win gets us closer to where we want to be," Cannon said. "We need to get off to a good start against Emporia."
The Bulldogs currently are in second place in the MIAA, trailing the University of Central Missouri by three points.
"We don't follow it that much," sophomore midfielder Kristin Haluszczak said about the standings. "We don't really worry about that right now. We just take each game and not worry about what other teams are doing because we can't really control that."

Another factor Cannon is trying not to worry about at this stage of the season is the main tiebreaker in the conference standings, which is goal differential.
Currently, the Bulldogs have a better goal differential than any other team in the MIAA except Central Missouri. The 'Dogs trail the Jennies by one goal in this category.
"You know you can't focus on that too much," Cannon said. "Otherwise you start to think that we have to win this game by this many goals, and that puts a lot of pressure on the kids."
Truman scored seven against Emporia State in the teams' first meeting, including four in the first half.
Cannon said he won't tell the

team to quit trying to score if it gets out to a sizeable lead, but he doesn't want to wear his team out before they take on Washburn the following day.
"We don't need to score 14 on Friday and score zero on Saturday," Cannon said. "We need to score both days."
This message has been relayed down to the rest of the team. Players seem to realize how vital each game is at this point in the season.
"Any one we have right now's a big one," sophomore midfielder Isabel Gaeta said. "We have to win every game. We're just taking it one game at a time, and we're not going to be happy with anything but a win."



Jackson Groves/Index
Senior midfielder Rachael Schmidt jockeys for possession during a game earlier this fall. The women not lost in six straight games.

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