



Jackson Groves/Index

Sophomore wide receiver Albert Coker falls to the ground after being tripped up on a punt return. Coker returned four kick returns for 123 yards, including a long of 48 yards during the Bulldogs 40-0 loss to Pittsburg State University.

## Gorillas pound 'Dogs 40-0

BY BLAKE TOPPMEYER  
Assistant Sports Editor

The Bulldog football team continued its struggle to compete against quality competition Saturday.

Hampered throughout the game by mistakes and missed opportunities, the 'Dogs fell 40-0 to Pittsburg State University (5-2, 3-2) in front of a Family Day crowd at Stokes Stadium. The Gorillas scored in every quarter, extending their streak to 21 consecutive victories against the Bulldogs (4-3, 2-3).

"They might be a playoff team, and we're obviously not there yet," head coach Shannon Currier said. "... We didn't do anything to generate any enthusiasm or excitement today."

The loss dropped the 'Dogs' record to 0-3 against opponents with a winning record. In those games, opponents have outscored Truman by a combined score of 120-13.

The Bulldogs struggled against a Pitt. State team that entered the contest last in the MIAA in rushing defense. The Gorillas were allowing an average of 229 rushing yards per conference game prior to Saturday, but the Bulldogs posted just 76 yards on 31 carries.

Junior wide receiver Phillip Henry said the 'Dogs' minimal running game contributed to the purple and white converting just three of 14 third-down tries.

"I think third and short, you should be able to run the ball for a couple yards," Henry said. "We didn't get that done today, but that's something we'll continue to work on and hopefully get better at third downs this year." Each time the Bulldogs sustained enough offense to pose a scoring threat, a mistake negated the opportunity.

Trailing 14-0 early in the second quarter, the 'Dogs marched 56 yards to the Gorillas' 21-yard line before senior running back Jake Cunningham fumbled and Pitt. State's Jeremy Jackson recovered to bring the scoring opportunity to a halt.

The Gorillas tacked on a safety after senior center Tim Bauman's snap got past junior quarterback Matt Ticich, who was in his usual shotgun position. Ticich fell on the ball in the end zone to give Pitt. State a 16-0 lead.

After the Gorillas scored on the ensuing drive, the Bulldogs had another opportunity to put points on the board before halftime. After penetrating the red zone for the first of two times all day, Ticich fired a pass to sophomore wide receiver Charlie Brunette. But the pass — which would have resulted in a touchdown if caught — bounced off Brunette's chest and was intercepted.

"You have to make plays when they come to you," Currier said. "Until we do those things, we're not going to beat a team like Pitt. State."

Brunette's dropped pass was one of several drops by Bulldog receivers and running backs, which played a role in Ticich's completing just 13 of 32 passes for 156 yards with two interceptions. It marked only the second time this season in which Ticich has failed to complete more than half of his pass attempts.

Pitt. State played primarily a zone-pass coverage, which was effective in shutting down the Bulldogs' wide receivers and tight ends. Of the 13 pass completions, seven were caught by running backs.

"First and foremost, they have pretty fast cornerbacks that are able to cover our outside receivers pretty well," said Henry, who is second on the team in receptions but was limited to just one catch for 24 yards Saturday. "They dropped a lot of linebackers, a lot of safeties."

The Gorillas utilized their MIAA-best running game to take advantage of a weakness that has developed in the Truman defense. With Pitt. State posting 306 rushing yards, the Bulldogs now have allowed at least 195 yards rushing in five games this year.

The defense has surrendered fewer than 165 rushing yards just one time this year, in the 'Dogs' Sept. 29 victory against Fort Hays State University. In comparison, the Bulldogs have been limited to fewer than 120 yards rushing in five games this year, including three games with fewer than 80 yards on the ground. Opponents have outgained Truman on the ground in all but two games this season.

The Gorillas exploited the 'Dogs with their option running attack. Quarterback Mark Smith gained 108 yards rushing to accompany the 83 yards and three touchdowns by running back Caleb Farebi, who sat out most of the second half.

Smith said he thinks a good option attack can cause some problems for defenses and that he thinks the Gorillas were effective in attacking Truman's 3-4 defensive front.

"It's hard when teams go against [opponents] who pass a lot and then come against [an] option team," Smith said. "You don't get to practice against it that much, and I think that's why we have the advantage."

Junior defensive end Les Hammers said the team prepared for the option in practice but still struggled to contain the athleticism of Smith and Farebi.

"We couldn't simulate their speed in practice, and we couldn't simulate their cuts in practice," Hammers said. "I was working off blocks. Other guys were working off blocks, but then when it came to the cuts, they did a real good job of cutting and keeping us out of the play."

Smith also compiled 208 passing yards, many of which came on a 98-yard third-quarter touchdown pass to Harrison Kush.

The Bulldogs will be on the road Saturday against Washburn University (5-2). The 'Dogs will need to improve their performance against teams with winning records if they hope to post their second winning season since 2002. Of the Bulldogs' four remaining opponents, three currently have 5-2 records.

## TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

### Football: Third-down woes plague offense

In addition to its three turnovers, the football team's poor third-down conversion rate probably had the biggest impact in the Bulldogs getting shut out 40-0 against Pittsburg State University on Saturday.

The Bulldogs converted just three of 14 third-down attempts, but the Gorillas were successful on 10 of 18 third-down tries.

"Every down is important, though third down is the one that's going to make you punt," head coach Shannon Currier said. "We have to make sure we're not in third and 10. If we're in third and four or third and five, that's much more manageable. That's really our goal, is to get four yards on first down."

First downs weren't the biggest problem for the 'Dogs on Saturday. Truman averaged nearly four yards a play on first downs, helped by junior quarterback Matt Ticich's seven completions in 11 attempts on first downs. On first downs, the Bulldogs ran 15 times and passed 11 times.

Third-down performance was the major problem. On third-down plays, the team carried the ball three times for four yards, and Ticich completed just four of 11 pass attempts. On five occasions, the Bulldogs were presented with either a third down and three yards or third down and four yards. The 'Dogs passed the ball in all five instances, with Ticich completing just one pass.

### Volleyball: Washburn leads team in rankings

The first regional rankings of the volleyball season came out Oct. 10 with the Bulldogs second behind MIAA rival Washburn University. The rankings determine what teams from the South Central Region will play in the NCAA tournament in November.

In Div. II, the top eight teams from each region make up the 64-team field. The Bulldogs must finish in the top eight to make the tournament. Three other MIAA teams are in the top eight: No. 4 Central Missouri, No. 5 Emporia State and No. 6 Pittsburg State.

### Women's soccer: Sixth in regional rankings

The women's soccer team is in line for a postseason berth. In the latest regional rankings released Wednesday, the NCAA Div. II Women's Soccer Committee has the Bulldog women clinging to the last playoff spot in the Central Region.

The top six teams in each of the eight regions will compete for the women's soccer championship. If the season were to end today, the women would take on conference rival Missouri Southern State University in the first round of the tournament.

### Women's soccer: Ties UCM for first in MIAA

The Bulldogs gained ground on the University of Central Missouri this weekend by earning a road split in Kansas against Emporia State University and Washburn University.

Central Missouri was swept by a combination of Missouri Southern and Southwest Baptist at home, which allowed the Bulldogs to move into a tie for first in points with the Jennies. The Bulldogs currently lead by four goals in the goal differential tiebreaker.

### Men's soccer: Questionable goal costs team

In Friday's game against Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, the lone goal occurred on a controversial play.

SIUE's Dustin Attarian took a ball to the end line before cutting it back towards the field of play. Attarian was not whistled for being out of bounds, but it was a close call. Attarian proceeded to kick the ball toward the middle of the field, where it bounced off a Truman defender and into the goal.

"On video it looks like it's on the line and just over," Duke Cochran said. "So I don't know if it was."

The goal counted, and SIUE went on to win the contest 1-0.

## Feig dismissed from football team

BY BLAKE TOPPMEYER  
Assistant Sports Editor

After just six games, Garrett Feig's career as a Bulldog is over.

Head coach Shannon Currier dismissed the sophomore safety for conduct detrimental to the team prior to Saturday's game against Pittsburg State University. Feig joined the Bulldogs this season after transferring from Los Angeles Valley Community College (Calif.).

Currier said he dismissed Feig on the Tuesday following the Bulldogs' Oct. 5 game at Southwest Baptist University because of off-the-field issues.

"What he was looking for and what we were looking for as a coaching staff just wasn't working out," Currier said. "That's it. We have to make sure that we're doing things that benefit the team and do what's best for the team."

Currier declined to comment on what specifically caused him to dismiss Feig from the team.

"It's not one specific thing, just a variety of things that occurred that just weren't conducive to us being a first-class program," Currier said. "And we just want to make sure that we're always focused on preparing for games and doing the best we can and not on other issues that might develop."

Feig, who led the team with three interceptions, played in all six games prior to his dismissal, starting five. His two-interception game against the University of Missouri-Rolla in Week 1 earned him MIAA Defensive Player of the Week.

With Feig no longer on the team, junior team captain Matt Burel will handle the bulk of the free safety duties.

Feig said the off-field problems were the bigger issue but that he thinks he still would be on the team if not for a personal foul near the end of the game against Southwest Baptist.

Feig said he committed two personal fouls in the game and that the

second upset some Bulldog coaches.

"Their receiver, No. 7 [Dion Whiteside], is on top of our DB [James] Eric Blake," Feig said. "And he has his face mask, and he's hitting him in the face, hitting him in the face. And the referee is [behind] me yelling, 'Seven, get off of him, stop, stop.' And he's not stopping, so I went over there, and I shoved him. I didn't knock him down, run over there and start a fight or anything. [I was] just protecting my DB guy."

Feig said that after the penalty he and another coach, not Currier, spoke about the incident.

"Coach kind of came to me at the end of the game and said some things that I didn't really appreciate," Feig said. "... I always bit my tongue. I never went out and backlashed, talked back to any of the coaches. We had some guys that flipped on the coaches and exchanged tons of curse words right to their face in front of the whole team. I never did that. I kind of just held back, just out of respect for the coaches."

Feig declined to comment on which coaches he spoke with about the penalty but said that he did not have any problems with Currier.

"Coach Currier is always respectful to players," Feig said. "[He] always treats them the way he'd want to be treated. I have the utmost respect for coach Currier. But people have definitely been getting into it with a lot of other coaches."

After the Southwest Baptist game, Feig said he skipped a team meeting the next day.

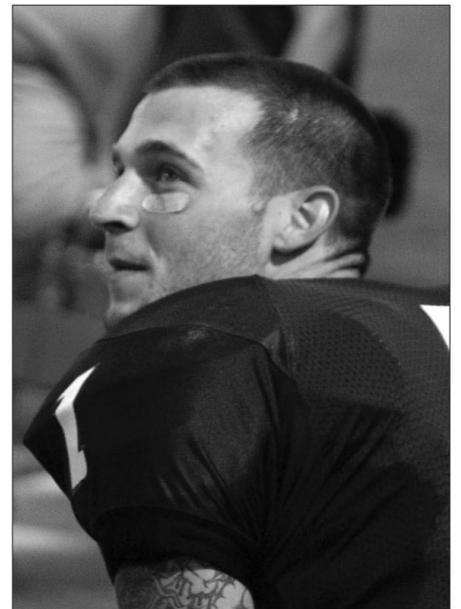
"I didn't go just because I didn't want to be around one or two of the coaches," Feig said. "It wasn't coach [Currier]."

Feig said he decided he wanted to remain on the team but that the coaching staff decided otherwise.

"If it was up to me, I wanted to come back and play," he said.

Defensive coordinator Wallie Kuchinski declined to comment for this story.

Feig said he will be transferring after the end of the semester.



Jackson Groves/Index

Sophomore safety Garrett Feig was recently dismissed for conduct detrimental to the team.

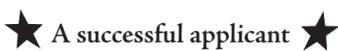
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