



Adam Kabins/Index

Sophomore sweeper Ben Green prepares to fire the ball downfield during Bulldogs' Oct. 16 5-0 victory against Illinois Wesleyan. The men lost Sunday, falling to 10-6-1 on the season.

# 'Dogs shut out 3-0

**Lewis issues men's soccer its third defeat in last four contests**

BY SHAWN SHINNEMAN  
Staff Reporter

It took only 4:57 for the Bulldogs' playoff hopes to take a significant hit Sunday afternoon.

In a game the Truman men's soccer team (10-6-1) had to win to keep the chance of a playoff berth alive, the 'Dogs gave up an early goal en route to a 3-0 loss to No. 23 Lewis University (Ill.).

Lewis' Jorge DeJesus was the beneficiary of a mistake by the Bulldog defense that allowed DeJesus to have a one-on-one with freshman goalkeeper Taylor Hyndman. DeJesus netted the ball for an early 1-0 Lewis lead. Sophomore defender Ben Green said he was partially at fault for the goal.

"It was just a miscommunication between me and Taylor," Green said. "I'll take responsibility for it. I should have been able to deal with the ball he gave me a bit better. ... It's just one of those things where you look back on it, and you are kicking yourself, but there is not much you can do. ... You've just got to move on from it."

After having two solid offensive chances before the goal, the Bulldogs were only able to muster five shots the rest of the half. Head coach Duke Cochran said the team did not respond very well to the early goal.

"We played, I would say, av-

erage at best, and they played like a tournament team," Cochran said. "It's not like they were better by any means, but if we're going to play just an average game, then a better team is going to take advantage of every little weakness."

Truman outshot the Flyers 13-11 but saw few scoring opportunities. The team was only able to put two shots on goal all game. Freshman forward Bobby Larkin, who got his first start of the season Sunday, said the shots didn't mean much because they weren't able to score.

"[It] just never really seemed that we tested the keeper that much," Green said. "We had a couple high balls that he came out and caught, and the first couple minutes we had an opportunity. But it just never really seemed that we were going to go forward and put one in."

The Bulldogs were able to keep Lewis from striking again until the 63rd minute when Kipp Cartwright shook free of a Truman defender and took a shot from the left side. A diving Hyndman saved the goal, but the ball rolled in perfect position for Lewis' Cory Mastey to blast home a shot for the 2-0 lead.

"I think, overall, [Hyndman] still did OK," Cochran said. "He's still a freshman. In a year or two, does he make that save? Maybe. I think he might get better and better. ... If that rebound has to be given up, maybe he pushes it wider off his frame, instead of still in an

area where it can be finished." Just seven minutes later, Mastey struck again to give the Flyers a commanding three-goal lead.

"Coach had said that I was going to push up into the midfield with 15 or 20 minutes left," Green said. "I moved up, [and] sure enough it broke down because obviously we only had two at the back at that point."

Truman now has given up eight goals in the past six games after giving up just seven goals in the first 11 contests. Its team goals against average has risen from a once-impressive 0.64 to a more pedestrian 0.94 mark.

The Bulldogs' sixth loss likely ends their playoff hopes, but Cochran said the team still seems to be motivated to end the season strong.

"We need to continue to establish [our home field] for those younger players as a place where other teams don't want to come play," Cochran said.

Larkin added another reason for the 'Dogs to continue to play hard this year.

"We are just trying to make it best for our seniors," Larkin said. "[We want to] give them a good memory of their final year."

Truman will look to finish the season strong when it plays its two remaining games at home. The 'Dogs will face Hannibal-LaGrange College (Mo.) on Thursday afternoon and then finish their season Tuesday against regional opponent Drury University.

## Bulldogs stumble against adept competition

BY SHAWN SHINNEMAN  
Staff Reporter

To make the NCAA tournament, teams inevitably will have to beat quality opponents.

The Truman men's soccer team hasn't been able to accomplish that task this season.

Sunday's loss to Lewis University (Ill.) served as the final dagger in the heart of the Bulldogs' (10-6-1) playoff aspirations. The 3-0 defeat Truman suffered moved its record against the top 10 teams in their region to 0-6-0.

"If you're off just by an inch [against] a good team, they're really going to punish you," head coach Duke Cochran said. "If you are playing a team that's not a top team, then you don't get punished by it. When you're playing a very good team,

any little mistake is magnified."

Truman has made strides from last year's 8-7-3 record by playing well against unranked teams. But the Bulldogs have struggled against their region's top 10, being outscored 13-1 and posting a 2.17 goals against average in those six contests. They are allowing 5.3 shots on goal per game in losses.

In its 10 wins this season, Truman has beaten opponents by a combined 24-2 and only allowed 3.7 shots on goal per game, all while maintaining a miniscule goals against average of 0.2 in those games.

Going into Sunday's game at 10-5-1, Truman was in a position to run the table and have a good chance to get a bid into the tournament. But the Bulldogs were unable to get much offense going as they produced just two shots on goal all game. Sophomore defender

Ben Green said the team lost a bit of confidence after being scored on within the first five minutes of the game.

"It kind of took, I think, the wind out of our sails a bit," Green said. "We never gave up. We obviously were playing for it, but we never really seemed to recover fully from it."

Sunday wasn't the first time the offense failed to produce in a big game. Of the six key games this year against regionally ranked opponents, the Bulldogs have managed just one goal — an unassisted shot by junior midfielder Nick Cepicky in a 5-1 loss to Rockhurst University on Aug. 29.

Despite offensive deficiencies, the defense has been able to keep the 'Dogs in most games this year. Of the six losses, Truman has allowed only two goals in the first half. Eight out of

13 goals given up in losing efforts have come in the last 30 minutes of play.

Little mistakes against good teams have cost the Bulldogs a chance at a playoff run. After winning four straight road games earlier in the season, two late-season 1-0 road losses likely will prove to be the difference in keeping the 'Dogs out of the tournament.

One particularly tough loss came to Quincy University (Ill.) on Oct. 10 when Quincy broke the 0-0 tie with a goal that hit the back of the net with 1:05 remaining in the game.

Cochran said he is looking to become the team that is ready to jump on any little mistake from the opponent.

"Good teams better punish you for [mistakes]," Cochran said. "That's why they are good teams. We need to become the team that punishes other teams when

they make those little mistakes."

With two games remaining, Truman will try to finish on a positive note heading into next year.

"We are still a young team," freshman forward Bobby Larkin said. "We all have a lot of growing to do. We've just got to learn from it."

Youth is definitely something the 'Dogs have on their side. Out of 16 players that have started games this year, 12 of them are freshmen or sophomores.

Cochran said he thinks they have the pieces in place to be a very good team.

"We've got the talent here," Cochran said. "We've stumbled against good teams. We're in every game. Lessons need to be learned from this season, and we need to move forward and take care of business next time around. ... But the team is a very strong team."

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