

'Dogs place sixth at conference meet

BY JACK NICHOLL
Staff Reporter

Junior Grace DelNero ran the best race of her career in her last conference meet.

DelNero finished third in the MIAA conference championship meet Saturday at the Kirksville Country Club.

"Grace probably ran the best race she's run in all the years she has been there," women's head coach John Cochrane said.

Overall, the women placed sixth out of eight teams, with Missouri Southern State University winning the meet.

Junior Danna Kelly placed sixth overall and second on the team, which marked the only time this season she hasn't been Truman's top runner.

DelNero and Kelly earned all-conference honors. Cochrane said both of them ran very well except for the end of Kelly's race when she was passed by two people.

"Both Grace and Danna did what we had talked about doing, and consequently, they ran really well," Cochrane said. "[Grace] went out much more controlled, Danna went out much more controlled, and then they moved when they were supposed to move."

Because of the tapering prior

to the meet, many of the results were different than they had been all season, Cochrane said. DelNero and Kelly switched places for the first time all season, and Missouri Southern's No. 2 runner beat Kelly for the first time this year.

Because of the importance of the race, some runners might not have been ready mentally, Cochrane said. He said the top three runners for Truman were prepared but that the other runners had some trouble.

Freshmen Kylie Raitchel, Amanda Brown and Stephanie Nichols, and sophomore Fiona Williams also placed for Truman. Morgan Cox, who usually is one of the top finishers for Truman, is no longer on the squad.

The men's team also finished tied for sixth out of eight teams, which is better than the last-place finish it was expected to get coming into the race.

The tapering and the difficulty of the course had little effect on the performance of the men's top runners. Sophomore Zach Chapman, who finished 27th, was the leading runner, followed by freshman Bob Gorman, senior Bryant England and freshman Josh Mantooth. Those four consistently have been in the top spots for the Bulldogs throughout the year.

The course had a significant effect on the bottom half of the men's squad. Freshman John Venner, who has finished seventh, sixth and seventh for Truman in three meets this season, finished fifth at conference. Sophomore Tad Dallas, who has averaged a sixth-place finish for the Bulldogs, placed seventh for them this weekend.

Men's head coach Tim Schwegler said he was happy the team finished sixth but that the team could have run a little better. Although the race wasn't perfect, he said he was happy with the results.

"I like this team a lot," he said. "I think it's got potential. It's one of those growing pains. I'm not disappointed in the team at all. If we go and race another day, the results could be something completely different."

Dallas said having the home-course advantage for the first time in four years helped the squad.

"I think having it here was just huge because we had so many fans come out, and we saw a lot of Truman pride," Dallas said. "It was awesome. It was a tough course too, and I think [having the fans there] gave us the edge."



Jackson Groves/Index

Members of the men's cross country time train earlier this fall. Both cross country teams finished sixth at the MIAA meet which Truman hosted Saturday.

The men followed the pre-race plan well, Dallas said. The team runs in two packs, and Schwegler set mile times for each of the packs to get to.

"[Schwegler] said that if we hit [our mile times], to just go with it," Dallas said. "He made sure that we tried to push the uphill because it was a really hilly course, and you

can get lost in it. The middle miles are pretty harsh."

The packs were able to run together fairly well. They both stayed together for about the first mile and then started to get split up a little, Venner said. After the first mile, Chapman went ahead a little and finished 15 seconds ahead of Gorman and England.

Venner said that after the first mile, the second pack was able to move up in the race.

"I just kind of worked my way up and brought some teammates with me and caught up to some people in front, so that was good," Venner said. "We probably could have done better, but we did all right."

Nebraska demolishes Bulls in fall season finale

BY BEN YARNELL
Staff Reporter

The end of the regular season was anything but regular for the men's rugby team.

Last Saturday, the Bulls took on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and lost 70-29. The loss dropped the Bulls to 2-5 on the season and 0-2 against league opponents.

But the Huskers were not the only obstacles the Bulls had to overcome last weekend. During the match against Benedictine University (Kan.), junior scrumhalf Dustin Ralph suffered a minor concussion. Team policy states all players must sit out a minimum of one week after experiencing such an injury.

The plan throughout the week was to start the team's backup scrumhalf, freshman Aaron Loida. However, after a bit of rough-housing, Loida suffered an injury

that resulted in seven staples in his scalp, sidelining him as well, head coach Bill Sexton said.

"It was like having both the starting quarterback and backup injured and having to go into the game with the linebacker at quarterback," Sexton said.

Both injured players traveled with the team, but Sexton said he had to make a decision that was for the betterment of the individual players rather than the team. Come game-time, Sexton decided to start junior captain Justin Lacy at scrumhalf.

The Huskers dominated the Bulls in the first half, scoring nine tries and converting four in the first half alone. The lone bright spot for Truman came at the 29th minute after a dropped lineout. Lacy scooped up the ball and handed off mid-tackle to senior Jake Uhlenhake, who drove down the field for a try.

The Bulls went into halftime trailing

53-5. Sexton said it was then that the team faced a turning point.

"I asked the guys, 'How do you want to finish the season?'" Sexton said. "'Do you want to finish out the regular season on an up note or a down note?' I told them, 'You are not going to win this game, but you can decide to play as well as you possibly can.'"

At that point, Sexton and his captain decided to replace Lacy with junior Will Holleman at scrumhalf. Holleman normally plays flyhalf, but he had some high school experience at the position.

In the second half, the Bulls were able to mount more of an offensive attack with Holleman helming, scoring four tries and two conversions to the Huskers' three tries and one conversion.

"In retrospect, maybe we should have started [with Holleman at scrumhalf], but the captain and I felt we needed to maintain the continuity of the back line more than we

needed to juggle around at scrum," Sexton said. "Had we started the game like that, I think Nebraska probably would have still beat us, but it probably would have been a closer game."

Sexton said the loss was a tough experience for the team.

"When you get beat like that, it is a humbling experience," Sexton said. "You can't help but walk off the field feeling inadequate."

Sexton said the loss puts the Bulls almost totally out of the running for a bid to the Western Collegiate Championships.

"The only way we would be in it is if we beat [the University of Oklahoma] and [Oklahoma State University] by big enough margins that we pick up bonus points, and they are going to have to start beating up on each other," Sexton said. At the start of this season, players noted that elimination caused a drop in the intensity of play last spring. Uhlen-

hake said he hopes it doesn't happen again.

"You are going to have that when the goal you are working for isn't possible any more," Uhlenhake said. "We just need to have a goal to work towards."

To help find those goals in the spring, Sexton said he plans to enter the team in more tournaments.

"I'm trying to change the mentality on the team that championships are a be-all, end-all," Sexton said. "We've got to move to a point where we understand that playing the game is the reward in itself."

The Bulls will need to improve on their team numbers to have continued success at the tournaments. In the off-season, recruiting will be a big focus for the team.

"We can always use more guys," freshman flanker Matt Englebart said. "It always helps to have a full team, so we can have full scrimmages at practices."

THE CAREER CENTER PRESENTS

HAUNTED HOGWARTS

"EXPECTO TERROR!"

**A Haunted House
In the Career Center
October 31, 2007
7 to 11 PM**

