

Intramurals expand to students' advantage

BY VALERIE SPENCER
Staff Reporter

Intramural sports will never be the same, and that's a welcome change.

Starting this year, there will be three separate divisions of intramural sports that Truman students can get involved in – open, Greek and organizational. This is in contrast to previous years, in which an open league was the only option.

Scott Wagner, director of intramural recreational sports, said intramural chairmen of several different campus organizations brought up the idea to separate the league last year.

"Obviously we have a very strong Greek life here on campus, and we wanted to make something that was just unique to them," Wagner said. "We also added the organizational division so that those other organizations didn't feel like they were left out in the cold."

Although anyone can enter the open league, only fraternities and sororities can play in the Greek league, and all campus-chartered organizations are allowed in the organizational league. Wagner said he thinks this method will increase interest in intramural sports.

"It helps drive participation because where you might have just maybe two or three teams in an event, now you have 20 because certain organizations want to put their hat in

the ring so they can eventually win that title at the end," Wagner said.

Since Wagner initiated the change earlier this year, he said it has been well received across campus.

Senior Pat Miller, intramural sports chair for Pi Kappa Phi, said the change was a good idea.

"I know a lot of fraternities were complaining about certain eligibility restrictions or lack thereof, and I think the creation of a separate league helps sure that up," Miller said. "A lot of people that I've talked to have been pretty happy with it thus far."

Not just Greek organizations have been accepting of the change.

Junior Morgan Shahan, chairwoman of women's sports ministry for Campus Christian Fellowship, said last year non-Greek organizations didn't have to present a list of all their members like the Greek organizations did. Some of the Greek organizations noticed this and thought that the other clubs had an unfair advantage, causing controversy.

"They were saying we had an unlimited amount of people to select from, which we didn't do, but it was definitely part of the argument," Shahan said. "I totally understand why they redid it like this."

Wagner said he also tried to incorporate more activities that men and women can participate in together, including volleyball, which has been popular this fall.

"Our main goal was to add some

events [that would be] inter-gender because that was something that we thought was a point of emphasis, and then we also added some non-traditional things," Wagner said.

Wagner said many new activities have been added this year with the hope of attracting a wider variety of students. These include several workshop-type events that are still part of the intramural program but are not competitive.

"My main goal is to offer a little bit of something for everyone, that's why we added a lot of the non-traditional activities," Wagner said. "I realize that most people – a large amount of people – aren't always interested in sports, so there are card games and board games and sports trivia and scrapbooking and different arts and crafts and things like that."

Junior Cara Graziano, intramural sports chairwoman for Delta Zeta, said she's impressed with the variety of activities that are being offered this year.

"There are so many different sports," Graziano said. "I mean, we can play pickleball." There also is an array of locations where these activities and sports can be played. According to the Truman Recreation Web site, games can be played at the Student Recreation Center, Multipurpose Field west of Centennial Hall, the Student Union Building, Kirksville North Fields, Jaycee Park, Centennial Hall Sand Pits, Pershing Arena, Pershing Natatorium and on the Quad.

No matter which league the games are played in, Wagner said he hopes intramural sports offer an outlet for many students to relieve the stress accumulated in class.



Mark Hardy/Index
Members of the Sigma Sigma Sigma and Sigma Kappa intramural teams play an intense game of volleyball in the newly formed Greek league.

"I realize that campus, especially a campus like this where academics is a pretty high priority, takes a lot out of students and they need to get an outlet to relieve stress and get away from the books," Wagner said. "... Hopefully that's what we're striving to do, and I think we're on the right track with that."

Sophomore Lawrence On, a member of Sigma Phi Epsilon, said he, like many others, is just happy to be able to be involved in intramurals no matter what league he plays in.

"Intramurals bring us together," On said. "Even if you don't play you can watch, you can always go with your group of friends."

Two student fishermen reel in outdoor hobby

BY VALERIE SPENCER
Staff Reporter

For sophomore Mike McCarthy and freshman Spencer Clark, fishing isn't just a hobby – it's a way of life.

The duo met earlier this year through mutual acquaintances and a shared love of fishing. Clark said he started looking for someone else who loved to fish as soon as he got on campus, and he said he found out about McCarthy through some members of Alpha Kappa Lambda, of which McCarthy is a member.

McCarthy and Clark said they got into fishing for fun but have grown to become accomplished, competitive bass fishermen.

"I've been fishing since I was two," McCarthy said. "My dad got me into it when I was younger, and I've just fished all my life, basically."

McCarthy and Clark said they participate in several tournaments throughout the year, and that those tournaments are not as easy as one would think.

"You're playing against an opponent you can't see, if you think about it," Clark said. "You're always putting the puzzle together of how to catch them. The fish really change with the weather, and you have to be able to change on the water in order to catch them. You can't just go out and catch them the same way every day."

However, McCarthy said the patience and problem-solving necessary for successful fishing have come with big rewards.

"The year before I was in around a 50-boat tournament, and I got \$1,000," McCarthy said. "With a 20-boat tournament you usually get between \$400 to \$500 for first place, then about \$300 and probably about \$200 for third."

That prize money doesn't always go straight into the bank account, though.



Jason Williams/Index
Mike McCarthy fishes off the bridge over the lake next to Hollister.

Equipment for competitive fishing can become rather expensive, with reels costing more than \$200 and rods anywhere between \$100 and \$350, McCarthy said. Not to mention that it's always best for an entrant to own his or her own boat to enter in competitions, Clark said.

"The main thing that's been hindering me is that I don't have a boat," Clark said. "I'm getting my boat this spring, so I'm excited for that. I've been trying to work in where I can fish tournaments in the back of others' boats."

Working around such a problem is just one example of Clark's dedication to the sport.

"I fished a tournament in December, and it was like 25 degrees out only," Clark said.

McCarthy and Clark said the lakes they utilize for their outings around Kirksville include Hazel Creek Lake, Mark Twain Lake and Forest Lake Thousand Hills State Park. Coincidentally, McCarthy and Clark both are competitive bass fishermen, although McCarthy said he sometimes fishes for trout and crappie just for fun.

"In the bass tournaments I participate in, the fish you catch have to be 15 inches or bigger," McCarthy said. "Your top six fishes after 15 inches are the ones that count, so it's really the

length that matters."

Brent Steacy, superintendent of Thousand Hills State Park, said he hasn't seen very many college students fishing in recent years.

"There are some students [who come out to fish], but not in any large numbers," Steacy said. "They're probably too busy studying."

Steacy said he recommends college students give fishing a try, though.

"It's a good way to relax and clear your mind," Steacy said. "It's good to get outdoors, even if you don't catch anything. And if you like [to eat] fish and you do catch something, then there's dinner."

McCarthy and Clark said that since meeting this year, they have begun laying out plans to form a fishing club on campus, the first of its kind at the University.

"When I first got here I looked at the list of clubs they have, and I was sort of disappointed there wasn't a fishing club here, and I thought it'd be pretty cool if we started the first fishing club here, so we're working on that," Clark said.

McCarthy said he actually began working on plans for the club his freshman year but had a few problems getting it off the ground.

"Mike actually had come up with the idea to start last year, but he didn't really have anybody to try and help him get the paperwork in, and it was kind of like he was having to do it all on his own," Clark said.

Now that McCarthy and Clark are working together, they said a fishing club could soon be on its way to Truman. McCarthy said they plan to have two groups within the club: one that fishes for fun and one that fishes competitively.

"Once you establish a club then you can go into tournament-level fishing for colleges, so I was hoping on getting a solid group of like four guys and taking that to the college level and fishing competitively for scholarship money and stuff like that," McCarthy said.

McCarthy and Clark said they encourage everyone to give fishing a try and enjoy its relaxing, laid-back character.

"It feels like when I'm out there in nature that's where I'm supposed to be," Clark said. "I just feel like one out there. I don't really think about much else that's going on. It's kind of like a place where my spirituality comes out or something when I'm fishing."

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