Women split MIAA opener

Adam Kabins/Index

Sophomore forward Riley Mahn dribbles the ball down the field during the team's 2-1 win against the University of Nebraska Omaha on Sept. 8. The women are 4-2-0 on the season.

BY RYAN TURNER
Staff Writer

The women's soccer team opened conference play last weekend and wasn't disappointed with its first performance.

The Bulldogs (4-2-0) began their weekend at Missouri Southern State University. For the second consecutive game, the 'Dogs came from behind with two second-half goals to win 2-1.

The Bulldogs were not so lucky in their second contest of the weekend, losing 1-0 at Southwest Baptist University.

The 'Dogs continued their pattern of trailing 1-0 in the first half, but this time, they could not turn it around enough to pull out a victory.

"We need to stop falling behind," head coach Mike Cannon said. "We've played seven games, we've been behind at halftime in five of them, and that's not where you want to be."

In the first game, junior goalkeeper Emily Roark continued her strong play this week. She allowed only one goal in each game. In the first half against Missouri Southern, the Lions' Jentri White penetrated the defense and put it past Roark for the early 1-0 lead.

The Bulldogs kept it close until late in the second half. Junior forward Katelyn Talcott tied the game in the 83rd minute. Sophomore forward Jessica Wiegert got possession of the ball off a corner kick and crossed it to the center of the box where Talcott awaited it for a header redirection.

Less than a minute and a half later, the Bulldogs notched another tally. This time, it came from sophomore midfielder Katie Reuck on a feed from junior midfielder Katie Buning.

The Bulldogs' unbeaten start in conference play was short-lived. The 'Dogs went to Southwest Baptist on Saturday to take on the Bearcats.

The Bulldogs again gave up an early goal, just 11 minutes in. This forced them to play keep-up for the remainder of the game, but they could never break through. Despite out-shooting SBU 11-1 in the second half, the Bulldogs failed to score.

"Unfortunately in the Southwest Baptist game, we couldn't capitalize," Reuck said. "[Southwest Baptist] really packed it in the back. It was a lot harder for us to find the open space and to create the opportunities."

Bearcats senior goalkeeper Aline Lopes made nine second-half saves on the way to posting her first shutout of the season, earning her the MIAA defensive player of the week honor.

"We need to start scoring more goals," Cannon said. "One of our goals is [that] we need to score the first goal."

Cannon said it is important to get on the board early because it gives the team a driver-seat mentality.

"We just need to create more opportunities and have better first halfs," Talcott said.

The Bulldogs still are in fine position to be in the conference race. Cannon said this was the hardest conference road trip of the season, playing two tough opponents.

Even though he said he would have liked two wins, or a win and a tie, Cannon said getting through the weekend in decent shape will make this week much better.

Only the University of Central Missouri is unbeaten in conference games, and the Bulldogs have their next five games at home, where they finished 5-1-3 last season. They host defending conference champion Washburn University on Friday afternoon and will be looking for their first win at home against the Lady Blues since 2004.

Cannon is preparing the team for better offensive decision making, as well as first touches, to try to avoid another offensive debacle like last Saturday's match.

Reuck said the team needs to be more fired up when they start out Friday. She said the squads need an early goal and to avoid falling behind.

The Bulldogs will host Emporia State University on Saturday afternoon. Cannon said they're more of a defensive team that lays back and tries to play tighter. This will allow the Bulldogs to press for the early goal they need.

The Bulldogs have never lost to Emporia in 12 meetings (11 wins, one tie). Both games start at 2 p.m. at the Truman soccer park.

Talcott provides offensive boost

Junior forward scores second goal of year, sets new career high

BY RYAN TURNER
Staff Writer

The Bulldogs have been getting offense from an unexpected source this season. Junior forward Katelyn Talcott has been contributing a great deal to the offense all season.

Her coaches first started to take notice when she scored a goal in the opening tournament of the season in Austin, Texas.

"Both coaches knew that I was a hard worker," Talcott said.

She said she is just now recovering from a knee injury that forced her to take a medical redshirt her freshman season.

> "I think they finally found a spot where I fit in with the team."
>
> **Katelyn Talcott**
> Junior Forward

Talcott came to Truman as a center midfielder, which is where she played until last spring. The coaches moved her up to forward, and she has been playing well in the position ever since.

"I think they finally found a spot where I fit in with the team," Talcott said.

Talcott currently leads the team in scoring, with two goals and two assists, for a total of six points.

Her second goal came this past weekend at Missouri Southern State University. Wiegert crossed it to her in the air off of a corner kick.

"She buried it," head coach Mike Cannon said. "It was a good header."

Cannon said he has been very impressed with her play this year.

"She's a strong kid, she's smart, she's been doing really well for us," he said. "She's holding the ball for us, she's been a good target."

Cannon said Talcott's game has improved all around this year since she made the transition from midfielder to forward.

"She makes good decisions like turning the ball back to the midfielders," Cannon said. "She has a knack for the goal and for being in the right place at the right time. She's involved, she works her butt off [and] plays good defense. She's talking and working for the team. She's been our most consistent forward so far this year."

Talcott said that even though she's been happy with her play this year after having been frustrated by injuries, she knows she still can do some things better.

"I need to test defenders more by taking them on," Talcott said.

Talcott also said learning from other forwards has helped her in the transition. She typically is a starter alongside sophomore forward Jessica Wiegert.

"She knows herself really well," Talcott said of her teammate. "She knows when to lay it off [pass]. I like getting open for her. I totally feel comfortable with her finishing."

Talcott said finishing has been the hardest thing for her to grasp as a forward but that it's becoming more natural for her.

"It's a more mental thing," Talcott said. "You just have to really want to score. It's all about where your head's at."

She said playing forward can be more difficult defensively because she might be all alone against an opposing defender trying to possess the ball.

Photo Submitted

Junior forward Katelyn Talcott works around a defender at the St. Edwards Tournament earlier this fall.

"It's a position that you have work really hard to get the ball back," Talcott said.

The Bulldogs need Talcott to continue her recent level of play. They were shut out off Saturday, which leaves them with just 10 goals in seven games. Cannon said he would like the average to be closer to two goals per game.

The Bulldogs are likely to have more opportunities to score Saturday against Emporia State University. They'll need their forwards and midfielders to continue to be aggressive against the defensive-minded Hornets.

"[We need to work on] taking people on once we get inside our half," sophomore midfielder Katie Reuck said. "Not turning the ball over as soon as we get the ball on offense."

TRUMAN ATHLETICS
News and Notes

Football: Hickory Stick up for grabs Saturday

The oldest trophy in Div. II football will be up for grabs next Saturday when the Bulldogs (2-1) travel to No. 11 Northwest Missouri State University (1-1).

The 'Dogs have won the Ol' Hickory Stick just once in the past 11 years, but head coach Shannon Currier said his team won't feel any extra pressure against its rival, the runner-up in last year's Div. II championship.

"They're picked to be the favorite," Currier said. "They're picked to be the top team in the conference. They are ranked in the top 10 in the country. So really, there is nothing for us to lose."

Senior running back Jake Cunningham said it's important for the Bulldogs to bring a positive mindset into the contest.

"A lot of teams that go in to play against Northwest get beat before they even show up," Cunningham said. "It's all mental, and you just have to believe you can win."

Volleyball: Tough MIAA schedule ahead

The volleyball team's schedule is only going to get tougher from here on out. The Bulldogs play three MIAA teams in the top 15 in the next three weeks. It could be this string of games that decides the conference, which includes back-to-back road games against University of Central Missouri and Pittsburgh State University before the team comes home to face Washburn University on Oct. 2.

"Washburn will probably be our toughest game," junior middle hitter Eli Medina said. "It's always a tough game. They always come out ready to play."

Men's Soccer: Defense continues solid play

The Bulldog defense has been stifling this season.

Aside from a 5-1 loss at Rockhurst, the team has a minute goals against average of 0.33, compared to a 0.85 average from last year.

On Saturday at Upper Iowa University, the Bulldogs held the Peacocks to just two shots on goal, and three shots total. They also tallied their fourth straight shutout in route to a 4-0 win.

Women's Soccer: Roark playing well in net

Junior goalkeeper Emily Roark continued her strong play in net again this week for the women's soccer team. She made eight saves this weekend to post a save percentage of 80 percent. Roark allowed two goals.

One came off of a breakaway against Missouri Southern University, and the other was on a rebound after she had made an initial save.

Athletics: Shearman nominated for award

Former volleyball standout Sarah Shearman is one of eight female finalists for the Division-II Conference Commissioners Association Scholar-Athlete of the Year Award. To be considered, Shearman had to have a minimum 3.0 career cumulative grade-point average and possess outstanding athletic credentials.

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