



Jackson Groves/Index

Freshman midfielder Scott Biggerstaff contends for possession during a game earlier this year. Biggerstaff assisted both goals in the Bulldogs' 2-0 victory Saturday against Kentucky Wesleyan College. The men have won six straight games.

Men extend win streak

BY SHAWN SHINNEMAN
Staff Reporter

Men's soccer head coach Duke Cochran made a crucial mid-game adjustment Sunday afternoon.

In a 0-0 tie against Kentucky Wesleyan College with his team struggling to generate offense in the early going, Cochran decided to change its formation.

"Kentucky Wesleyan played [very] defensive," Cochran said. "They tried to set in and counter, and until we moved Drew Vogt up top and played a 3-4-3, it was kind of tough to get in behind them. ... The game kind of broke open from there, and then we kind of controlled it."

The move worked perfectly. Senior midfielder Drew Vogt scored in the 24th minute to put the Bulldogs (7-2-0) on top. They never looked back, winning the game 2-0 on Sunday at Kentucky Wesleyan.

The team continues to receive help from its freshmen. Freshman midfielder Scott Biggerstaff assisted both goals Sunday, the first to Vogt and the second to sophomore forward Nick Schlichtman in the 72nd minute of play. Cochran said Bigger-

staff's play can get this team going offensively.

"When we find [Biggerstaff's] feet, we now know he has got the ability to beat a guy and get service," Cochran said. "So we are getting forward, we are getting runs in [and] we're trying to find him. That's just a nice weapon to have when your wide players are that dangerous."

Biggerstaff was one of the reasons the Bulldogs were able to outshoot Kentucky Wesleyan 18-9 on Sunday.

The story was a little different Friday evening when Truman took on the University of Southern Indiana, but the result was the same.

The Bulldogs beat USI 1-0 despite managing only nine shots all game, compared with the Screaming Eagles' 16. Cochran said that statistic is a bit misleading because only five of Southern Indiana's shots were on goal. The Bulldogs put eight of their nine shots on goal.

"They came at us, don't get me wrong," Cochran said. "They were putting balls in our box. Our guys were just defending really hard and not allowing free service or free looks at our goal. ... It made

it difficult for them to have a really good scoring opportunity."

The Bulldogs struck early Friday as they have frequently this season. Cochran said that has been key for the team all year.

Any time you can score early, it's huge," Cochran said. "Because no matter how teams play — if they're defensive or attacking — it makes them come at you. And then the transition goals and the counterattack open up."

Vogt finished an assist from junior midfielder Josh Weir in the sixth minute.

Coming into the game, Vogt had recorded four assists and was second on the team with 16 shots but had yet to find the back of the net.

"I figured it would happen," Vogt said. "I just knew it was going to take some time."

Vogt's two-goal weekend helped secure two more victories for a team that has momentum going for it. The defense is playing as well as it has all year — recording six straight shutouts — and freshman goalkeeper Kyle Talbot has been sharp. This was evident Friday when Talbot made a save to preserve the lead in the first half. "They had a header off of a

[corner] kick, and we let one of their guys get loose," Weir said. "He made a nice diving save to his left."

Cochran said players are stepping up when they need to in order to win games.

"It's good to see everyone on the team stepping up to say, 'I'll help preserve these wins,' or 'I'll help get the win,'" Cochran said.

Weir said the 'Dogs are determined to shut teams out every time they step on the field.

"It's just that mentality that nobody is going to score," Weir said.

Weir and Vogt could provide the veteran leadership this team needs down the stretch. Cochran said they complement each other well.

"[Vogt] is kind of a silent leader," Cochran said. "[Weir] is a vocal leader. ... They're good leaders together."

The Bulldogs will look to continue their winning streak when they play the University of Missouri-St. Louis Friday afternoon. It is the first home game for Truman in five games. The 'Dogs will be back on the road Sunday when they take on Gannon University in Erie, Penn.

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Football: Interceptions add up for defense

When junior linebacker Michael Phillips got his hands on a Josh Mathews pass in the first quarter of last Saturday's 53-6 loss against Northwest Missouri State University, it marked the fourth consecutive game the Bulldogs have intercepted a pass.

The purple and white have intercepted seven passes this season, already tying their mark from last season. Meanwhile, the Bulldogs have not thrown an interception since Nov. 4 of last season.

After four games, the 'Dogs rank third in the MIAA in turnover margin, at plus six on the season. The turnover reduction has been one of the few bright spots for a defense that has allowed 142 points this season, the most of any MIAA school.

Volleyball: Leshner seeing more playing time

Sophomore Susie Leshner has been coming up big recently for the volleyball team. On Friday against Southwest Baptist University, Leshner finished second in total points with 12.5. She also had 12 kills and amassed a hitting percentage of .286. The increased production by the outside hitter from Carrollton, Texas, has given her the opportunity for more playing time.

Leshner is near the top for the Bulldogs in games played and has appeared in all 18 of the team's matches. She saw playing time in only 30 games last season.

Men's Soccer: Talbot, team nearing record

The Bulldogs defense is eyeing a record.

The team has now recorded six straight shutouts — two shy of the consecutive shutout record set by the 2005 Truman team. The team has continued to set the goal of a shutout each half they play, and it has helped freshman goalkeeper Kyle Talbot achieve a goals against average of 0.69 this season.

The record certainly is not the main concern of the team, but it is something that head coach Duke Cochran said is in the back of their minds.

"Records are meant to be broken," Cochran said. "I'm sure the defenders on this team know the record, and goals need to be set. They want to establish their legacy."

Women's Soccer: Newsham earns MIAA award

Another strong week from senior fullback Emily Newsham gained her recognition in more ways than one. Not only did Newsham find her way into the box score by scoring a long range goal against Washburn University on Friday afternoon, but also it helped contribute to her being named MIAA defensive player of the week. Newsham's stalwart defense helped the Bulldogs to shut out both opponents this weekend, giving the team two conference victories.

Rugby: Team begins home schedule Saturday

This Saturday is the first home match of the season for the men's rugby team, and they are planning on a crowd.

After several large turnouts by Bull fans at home matches last semester, the team expects to see the same at its match against the Kansas State University.

Sophomore P.J. Muelleman said one of the main reasons the crowds are so big is because of the other activities he and teammates are involved in.

"A lot of us are Greek, and we get a lot of our brothers to come out," Muelleman said.

The crowds will be able to catch the Bulls at the rugby pitch next Saturday at 1:30 pm.

Road trip spurs men's soccer to winning mark

BY SHAWN SHINNEMAN
Staff Reporter

Four games, four states, four wins.

After making it through a brutal four-game road stint without even allowing a goal, the men's soccer team looks to bring that success back to Kirksville where it will play seven out of its final 10 games.

"We are hoping to take that momentum that we have got on the road and bring it home," senior midfielder Drew Vogt said.

The road trip started with a Sept. 8 match against Div. III powerhouse Washington University-St. Louis. The Bulldogs won that game 2-0 in a tough, rainy environment in St. Louis. Head coach Duke Cochran said that game helped jump-start the team toward the success it enjoyed.

"They're a ranked team," Cochran said. "Yeah, in a different division, but they hadn't lost yet. ... That was that time when the switch really kind of went on because it was on the road. It was like, 'We've got to do this. We've got to beat good teams on the road.' ... So I think that might have been that turning [point]."

Strong road play has propelled the Bulldogs to a 7-2-0 start. After going 1-2 in their first three games, the Bulldogs have come back to record six straight shutout victories.

The 2007 Bulldogs already have eclipsed last year's team total of three

road wins, when they went 3-6-1 away from home for the season. Cochran said the team's hard work has been a big reason for its success on the road this year.

"It has been tough, but again, our guys have big goals, and they know they have to show up every match [and] every training session if they're going to do this," he said. "It has been hard, but it is something we have to show we can do."

Junior midfielder Josh Weir also said it was big for the team to earn the four straight wins away from home.

"It was pretty huge, especially since road games were kind of the issue of the team last year," Weir said. "Getting these results on the road is huge, especially coming back home for the next couple weeks minus a game here or there. We're pretty tough at home."

Since Cochran took over the head coaching position in 2005, the Bulldogs have gone 16-2-2 at home. This stat bodes well for a team that will play four home games against teams with winning records coming down the stretch.

But road tests still remain for the Bulldogs. Away games against the rival University of Missouri-Rolla and higher-ranked regional opponents Quincy University (Ill.) and Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville still must be dealt with before Truman can settle into its final four games — all at home.

"Those three are very big games," Cochran said. "I'm happy to be at home for the other seven because those will be big as well. I think the guys will be happy to be at home, too, and establish their home field as a place teams don't want to come."

The Bulldogs already have taken strides in establishing their home field as an intimidating place to play this season. They are 2-0 at home on the year, and Cochran said their stadium has been one of the toughest for opposing teams to play in this year.

"I would say our first game home against Northeastern [University (Okla.)] has been probably the toughest environment for a team to play in," Cochran said. "I wouldn't have wanted to go into that environment."

The four straight road wins have come against opposition with a combined record of 17-22-2.

Although the team is back home for many of its remaining games, the games are against much tougher opponents.

"These are teams that we need to beat," Cochran said. "Our tests will be coming up, ... [but] home-field advantage is definitely something that you want."

No matter how tough the remaining opponents are, Truman players are looking forward to games in front of Bulldog fans.

"It's going to be nice to come home finally," Weir said.



Jackson Groves/Index

Sophomore defender Dan Russell defends a Northeastern State player during the Bulldogs' Aug. 31 1-0 victory. The men have six straight shutouts.

MIAA Soccer Showdown Weekend!

Support the 'Dogs in these key conference/regional matchups!



Friday

Women vs. Central Missouri, 2 p.m.
Men's game to follow vs. UM-St. Louis
(approx. 4 p.m.)

Saturday

Women vs. Missouri Western, 2 p.m.

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