



Senior defensive back James Thabuteau snares a ball during practice last spring. The Bulldog defense was able to stop the University of Missouri-Rolla's late-game scoring drive to preserve the team's 38-31 Saturday victory.

SUSPENSION | Administration made the right call in suspending arrested athletes

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Simply putting themselves in a situation where they could face trouble was ignorant and irresponsible. I know it seems unfair to say that just because they are charged they should be punished, but that's the way it should be. All athletes have to know that their actions don't just affect them — they affect the whole University.

These three players are paid representatives of the University. The University gives them money in the form of scholarships to wear the Bulldog purple and white and represent the University in the best possible light. The three young men failed to do that.

"It's unfortunate, but it's a privilege to be a student athlete, and at this point they are suspended from their respective teams," Wollmering said.

For all athletes, their actions on the field and court as well as off will always be tied to the University. When the Kirksville Daily Express reported the incidents, it did not say "Three students arrested" — it said three athletes.

When I first heard about the arrests it was, "Hey, did you hear a football player got busted?" No one ever asked, "Hey, did you hear a freshman got busted?" The athletes are synonymous with their sports, like it or not.

Because of this, the athletic department had to do some-

thing. It could not give off the impression that it lets its athletes run wild. It had to take action.

And really, they had no choice. On Aug. 20, two University of Iowa football players were suspended following an arrest for unauthorized use of a credit card. Iowa wasted no time and suspended the players.

I know athletes might think it's a double standard — this policy of swift justice before the courts wouldn't apply to non-athletes. I think it would. If I were to get arrested tonight for starting a bar fight, I know my boss here at the Index would waste no time in suspending me — possibly even letting me go.

Just like the athletes, I am a paid employee of the Index — just like the athletes could be considered paid employees of the sports teams. I am an employee of the Index. I am a representative of the Index no matter where I am or what I am doing.

For all athletes out there, think the next time you are out. I am sure none of you want to see your mug on the front of the paper.

"The common thing basically is, poor decisions with alcohol leads to more poor decisions," Wollmering said.

The three athletes — guilty or not — made poor decisions this weekend. Fortunately, the athletic department did not.

FOOTBALL | Junior wideout Tyler Fenton collects first career catch for game-winning score

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reflected a solid performance from the offensive line, a relatively inexperienced unit entering the season.

"Our offensive line did a good job in their first game together," Carrier said. "It was definitely a concern heading into the season, but I thought they did a pretty good job."

The Bulldogs experienced most of their offensive success early. They scored points on five of six first-half possessions and held a 31-10 lead with 17 seconds remaining in the first half. But a 41-yard kickoff return by Rolla's All-American receiver Ashton Gronewald set the stage for quarterback Brad Guidry's four-yard touchdown pass to Nathan Binder, cutting the Bulldog lead to 31-17 as the half came to a close.

The Miners continued their comeback

attempt in the third quarter. Helped by a fumble by Cunningham and later a turnover on downs, Rolla tied the game at 31 with two minutes to play in the third quarter.

"That [score before half-time] ... led to some momentum [for Rolla]," Carrier said. "If we would have been able to make that play and keep them out of the end zone and go into half-time with a 21-point lead, we could have maybe broken the game wide open in the second half."

Guidry and Gronewald were a burden to the 'Dogs' defense all night. Gronewald gained more than 100 yards rushing on just five carries and also caught nine passes for 84 yards.

Guidry passed for 345 yards and completed 68 percent of his passes.

Junior defensive back Garrett Feig said Guidry utilized a short passing attack to exploit the Bulldogs' defense.

"They would throw short passes, and their receivers would make a few guys miss," Feig said. "It was the yards after the [catch] that kind of hurt us. We could have tackled a little bit better."

Feig, a transfer from Los Angeles Valley Community College, did his best out of the secondary to help stop the Miner passing attack.

He intercepted two passes and was named the MIAA Defensive Player of the Week. Feig's two interceptions marked the first time a Bulldog had more than one interception in a game since Sept. 25, 2004.

Feig's efforts, along with Fenton's catch and junior transfer Mike Phillips' 10 tackles, made it a productive night for players competing in their first game as Bulldogs.

The Bulldogs have next week off as they prepare for their 6:30 p.m., Sept. 8, home opener against Upper Iowa University.

ANDERSON | New assistant AD brings 26 years of experience to Bulldog athletic department

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also serve as the Bulldogs' women's sports coordinator. This position was essentially vacant last year.

The Bulldogs athletic department is largely dominated by males. Of the 21 varsity head coaches, softball head coach Erin Brown is the only female. Although Wollmering said he always keeps this issue in the back of his mind, Anderson's gender was not the main factor in her hiring.

"Diversity is important for the University as a whole," Wollmering said. "... Just like in our student body, we strive for diversity in our staff. President Dixon wants to strive for diversity in the faculty as well. But the bottom line is, any job that we have open, we're always going to look

for the best candidate."

When Pumroy announced his resignation this summer, it did not come as a major surprise to the athletic department. Last spring, he was one of two finalists for the athletics director position at Southwest Minnesota State University but did not receive the job. Pumroy said professional elevation was the main purpose of his departure and said it was not easy leaving his post in the Bulldog athletic department.

"I had so many friends and contemporaries," Pumroy said. "Basically it was like leaving high school and going away to college again. It was pretty hard. ... Personally, it probably would have been a great place to stay. But professionally I knew I needed to grow."

MIAA | University of Nebraska-Omaha becomes second team to join conference in last three years after Fort Hays in 2006

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Div. I conferences like the Big 10, which has 11 teams, for ideas.

"There are different models of scheduling being tossed around," Wollmering said. "We may have conference games as early as December because we're going to have 20 conference basketball games instead of 18."

Miller said that although the 11 teams will be an inconvenience at first, the conference should be able to withstand it.

"There are some logistical issues, but every conference has different and unique logistical challenges," Miller said. "... There's nothing that concerns me at all."

Football is one sport that will not have to deal with scheduling issues. Southwest Baptist University will play an independent football schedule beginning next year, leaving the MIAA with 10 teams in football.

"Our scholarships were just not equaling the rest of the conference even though we were fully funded, and we have not had enough success here, so that was part of the decision," said Brent Good, director of

athletics for Southwest Baptist.

Previously, the MIAA balked at letting schools be in the conference without having football.

That changed this summer when Southwest Baptist was granted permission to remain in the conference despite not having a football team play in the conference.

"We didn't want to leave the conference," Good said.

With the conference football schedule already made up for the next few seasons, UNO literally will take SBU's spot on the schedule. This means the Bulldogs' Homecoming opponent for 2008 no longer will be the Bearcats. Instead, they will take on the Mavericks.

"We have the schedule for the next four years, and wherever you had SBU, you just take them out, and that's where Omaha plugs into the

football schedule," Wollmering said.

Southwest Baptist will remain in the MIAA for all other sports.

Before being accepted into the MIAA, UNO had to add another men's program. Wollmering said it will add men's tennis, making MIAA tennis an NCAA championship sport.

"That gives us six men's tennis teams in the conference," Wollmering said. "We had a men's champion, but the NCAA never recognized it because we only had five teams."

Many of the Bulldog teams are already familiar with the Mavericks. The women's soccer program has a long-standing rivalry with the team. UNO ended the women's season in 2002, 2003 and 2004 in the NCAA tournament.

"At one time we were a member of a conference that had a number of MIAA programs," Miller said. "We are in a number of ways rekindling a number of old rivalries and intensifying other rivalries now that we are conference members."

Already the easternmost team in the MIAA, the Bulldogs now will have to make a nearly 300-mile one-way trip when visiting the Mavericks.

Wollmering said this won't be much of an issue.

"We can't really do anything about our geography situation," Wollmering said. "It's just what we have to deal with. It's probably a better trip than some of the trips we currently have."

The UNO Mavericks will be the 11th team in the MIAA and will be the first school not located in either Missouri or Kansas.

UNO will be the second team to join the conference in the last three years.

Prior to the start of the 2006-07 academic year, Fort Hays State University became a full member of the MIAA.

"Our offensive line did a good job in their first game together. It was definitely a concern heading into the season, but I thought they did a pretty good job."

Shannon Carrier
Head Coach

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David Miller
UNO Director of Athletics

Changes for 2008

• University of Nebraska-Omaha will be the 11th team in the MIAA

• Southwest Baptist University is allowed to play independent football schedule while remaining in the MIAA for all other sports

• UNO will take SBU's spot on all previously made football schedules

• MIAA men's tennis achieves NCAA championship status with the addition of a sixth team

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