



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Sophomore centerfielder Kenny Swanson takes a level cut during Tuesday's baseball game against Lincoln. The Bulldogs won 11-10 in 15 innings. Swanson went 3-for-7 with two runs scored in the win.

Baseball tops Lincoln in 15

BY BRENT FOSTER
Staff Reporter

Wild and crazy does not begin to describe the baseball team's game against Lincoln University on Tuesday afternoon.

A game that saw 21 runs, five errors, 30 hits, 20 walks, a nine-run deficit overcome, 15 innings and was the longest in Bulldog history ended when freshman catcher Devon Meyers lined a single up the middle to give the 'Dogs an 11-10 victory, more than four hours after the first pitch.

"It was awesome, especially since I had a tough day at the plate before that," Meyers said. "It was nice to get that one that mattered."

The amazing part was how the Bulldogs (10-37, 6-26 MIAA) got in position to win the game. Fueled by a strong wind blowing toward the left-field fence, Lincoln belted three early homers to take a 10-1 lead. But unlike most of the season, Truman responded quickly. The 'Dogs picked up three runs in the fourth on just one hit. They picked up another tally in the seventh and tied the game at 10-10 with five runs in the eighth when senior left fielder Corey Eagen hit a two-out RBI double.

Of all the stats from this game, the most telling was the 11.2 consecutive scoreless innings by the Truman bullpen. After the combination of freshman Logan Frame, senior Corey Tomasek and freshman Christian Witt allowed Lincoln to score 10 runs through five innings, the trio of freshman Tyler Stefan, sophomore Michael Stairh and junior Jake Smith silenced the Blue Tiger bats for the rest of the game, allowing no runs on five hits. Stefan led the brigade by pitching the first 5.2 innings and Smith picked up the vic-

tory to improve his season record to 2-1.

"I tried to give our offense a chance to come back," Stefan said. "We were down big early, but our team just never quit."

Sophomore centerfielder Kenny Swanson was the only Bulldog to finish with more than two hits. He went 3-for-7.

Last weekend added to Truman's misery against the University of Central Missouri. UCM completed a four-game sweep of the Bulldogs in Warrensburg, extending the Mules' winning streak against Truman to 68 games.

The last Bulldog victory against the Mules was in 1989.

"When you play good teams, they do good things against you," head coach Dan Davis said. "I think that's probably what's going on."

Truman had two chances to break the streak but blew leads in the nightcap of a doubleheader Friday and Game 1 of Saturday's doubleheader.

In the first game Saturday, Truman jumped out to an early 4-0 lead, but Central rallied and scored four in the fifth and two in the seventh to win the seven-inning contest 7-5.

The Bulldogs led 5-1 heading into the bottom of the fifth when Central exploded for four runs off freshman starter Seth Huninghake. Through four innings Huninghake allowed one run on five hits, but the fifth inning got off to a bad start when a throwing error by freshman shortstop Steven Rose allowed the first batter to reach base. That was followed by three consecutive hits, including a two-run homer by Mules right fielder Jason Waegner to tie the score at five.

Despite Huninghake's struggles in the fifth, Davis said he didn't think about going

to the bullpen in that situation.

"Absolutely not," Davis said. "I think they just got to him. They hit him a little bit. That's what good teams do. I think he was the best guy on the mound for us at that time."

Central took the lead for good in the sixth inning on a two-RBI single by Waegner. Truman went down in order in the seventh to end the game.

The loss dropped Huninghake to 0-7 this season.

Sophomore second baseman Luke Crader went a team high 3-for-3 during the game and finished 4-for-7 during Saturday's doubleheader. This came after Crader went a 0-for-8 in the two games Friday.

Truman had chances to break the streak in Game 2 Friday but once again failed to hold its early lead. Truman led 1-0 on a third-inning home run by right fielder Jeff Davison. The Bulldogs extended the lead to 2-0 in the fifth before Central broke through against Bulldog sophomore starter Kyle Veazey. Veazey shut out the Mules through the first four innings, before they scored two runs in the fifth and sixth to win 4-2.

Truman's best chance to break through offensively came in the sixth when the 'Dogs put runners at second and third with two outs, but sophomore third baseman Drew Garwood flied out to right ending the threat.

The 'Dogs finished with just six hits for the game, with only one coming after fifth inning. Veazey fell to 0-5 with the loss.

The 'Dogs return to action this weekend with a four-game set against Washburn University beginning Friday in Topeka, Kan., followed by an out-of-conference doubleheader at Quincy University on Tuesday.

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Baseball: Team ties MIAA mark from 2008

The baseball team has tied its conference win total from last season with eight MIAA games remaining. The Bulldogs have picked up six conference victories this season. The Bulldogs will have plenty of chances to pick up some more MIAA wins in the final weeks of the season.

The 'Dogs play a four-game series at Washburn University this weekend and close the season with a four-game series against Missouri Western State University. Both Washburn and Missouri Western are below .500 in the MIAA. The last time the Bulldogs won more than 10 MIAA games was in 1999 when they finished 11-10 in conference play.

Tennis: Blair four singles wins from 100

Senior Lindsay Blair's quest for 100 career singles wins for the women's tennis team suffered a setback last weekend.

Blair currently has a 96-15 career singles record heading into the MIAA Tournament. She had a chance last weekend to inch closer to the century mark, but the Bulldogs had three matches cancelled.

Blair has been extremely consistent throughout her career. In her four seasons, she has compiled singles records of 19-2, 28-4, 27-1 and 22-8.

For Blair to reach 100 wins, the 'Dogs will have to advance past the MIAA Tournament, where they will play three matches at the most.

The 96 career singles wins are believed to be the most in Truman history.

Volleyball: 'Dogs add four to signing class

The volleyball team announced the signing of four more players for the 2009 season. The four players who signed are outside hitter Lauren Radix from Black Earth, Wis., outside hitter Deanna Schaefer from O'Fallon, Mo., right-side hitter Allyson Stellmach from Huntley, Ill., and outside hitter Julie Varriano from Kansas City, Mo.

These four are in addition to five players signed in November. The nine new freshmen will be expected to contribute heavily in 2009 after six seniors, including three All-Americans, graduated from last season's squad.

"These recruits are big keys to their respective teams' successes," Ben Briney, who is handling the head coaching duties, said on the athletics department Web site. "Therefore, they are used to producing in critical situations. This mental toughness is what makes Truman volleyball successful, and I am very excited to be bringing in players that are used to handling these types of situations."

Last season the Bulldogs made their ninth consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance, losing in the Final Four.

Basketball: Women expand signing class

The women's basketball roster is shaping up for next season. Head coach Michael Smith announced the signing of the team's sixth player for the 2009-2010 season. Cassie Hunt, a transfer from North Central Missouri College, will join five other players who signed in the fall.

Hunt, a 6-foot-0 post player from Richmond Mo., averaged 18 points per game during her career at NCMC and was a two-time All-American.

"With Georgia [Mueller]'s graduation, we needed to find someone with experience in the low post, and Cassie brings that having been a two-time all-American," Smith said. "She has great hands and does a great job finishing around the basket. She is one we needed in many ways, is a great vocal leader, and will be a big contributor to our program."

Hunt was a two-time all-conference performer in high school and she was twice selected to the KMZU Dream Team.

The Bulldogs finished 8-19 last season and have not made the NCAA Tournament since the 1998-99 season.

Players continue to drop off baseball roster

BY BRENT FOSTER
Staff Reporter

A trend has developed during the first three seasons of Dan Davis' reign as head baseball coach.

At least 16 players have quit the team, been dismissed from the team or transferred during Davis' tenure as head coach.

"College baseball isn't for everybody," Davis said. "Even when they are gung-ho and go into college baseball and they think it's going to be, 'Oh we're just going to play games and that's it' — it's a little bit different. It's not what everyone thinks coming out of high school."

A few weeks ago, sophomore first baseman Matt Herrick was dismissed from the team. Earlier this season senior pitcher A.J. Barton also was dismissed. Davis declined comment on the two dismissals this season. Herrick also

declined to comment on the matter.

Two of the team's top offensive threats from last season left the team before the start of this season. Then-junior Neil Bleish led the team in home runs and slugging percentage in 2008. Then-sophomore Josh Dilday added five home runs.

The Bulldogs have 23 freshmen and sophomores on the roster and only three seniors. Davis said all the change in personnel will not affect the team's development.

"What it does is open up opportunities for other guys who are playing behind them," Davis said. "More importantly, younger guys who are in the developmental stage and are hungry to play."

Davis said the players who have quit the team under his watch have not quit because of conflicts with him or other members of the coaching staff. Director of Athletics Jerry

Wollmering said he has met with a couple of baseball players during the last three years, but would not go into detail about the meetings.

Wollmering said that because the baseball team at Truman is not funded with scholarships as highly as the other baseball programs in the MIAA and other Truman sports, the players' incentive to continue competing is not as great as it might be in other sports. He said most sports have players who are unhappy, but the difference in scholarship money can make or break a student's decision to continue playing sports at Truman.

"It's easier to walk away because there's no financial investment lost," Wollmering said. "... In other sports a player may be disgruntled, but when a \$17,000 scholarship is on the line, it's harder to walk away."

The Bulldogs' 10-37 record

Early Exits

16 players who have left the team and not finished their careers during head coach Dan Davis' tenure:

Matt Herrick	Joshua Dilday
A.J. Barton	Wataru Oe
Jordan Nietzel	Kevin Sweeney
Neil Bleish	Andy Schulte
Brandon Pearl	Matt Macke
Justin Robbins	Dan Brannen
Andrew Austin	Jason Thomas
Matt July	Quinten Fisher



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only makes matters worse. Wollmering said problems with players are often magnified during hard times. He said when teams are successful on

the field, many problems go unnoticed. "Every kid has their own reason [for leaving the team]," Davis said. "There have been

some guys who just want to focus on academics. That's the majority of our guys. And the majority of those guys are still at Truman."

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WITH THE INDEX EVERY THURSDAY MORNING

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