

SALARIES | Truman head coaches' salaries rank near bottom of conference

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with 26.23 percent of total expenses allocated to salaries. The high figures can be attributed to Truman's 21 varsity sports, the most in the conference.

Wollmering said the high percentage of expenses has an effect on other areas of athletics.

"Having more resources in personnel definitely affects what we can do," Wollmering said. "We're not going to be at the top of the league in scholarships and operating costs."

Even with the comparatively low statistics, the salaries of Truman coaches have increased in recent years. Wollmering said every coach that remained in the same position received a 3 percent increase during the last two years.

Also, before this season, some coaches were adjusted from 10-month salaries to 12-month salaries.

Wollmering said that at Truman salaries rarely are adjusted on a case-by-case basis. The only time he recalled salaries adjusted case-by-case was when men's basketball head coach Jack Schrader and former head football coach John Ware's salaries were market adjusted to better compare to other MIAA salaries.

"Our conference is a good measuring stick as to what we could potentially use as a yardstick for hiring a head coach," Wollmering said.

Assistant coaches

According to the same statistics for 2007-08, Truman ranked second in the MIAA at \$28,943 average salary for assistant coaches. Only two other conference schools averaged more than \$20,000.

Wollmering said the low number of graduate assistants Truman has compared to conference schools skews this data. The Bulldogs' 17 assistant coaches in 2007-08 tied for second lowest in the MIAA.

"I think the uniqueness of us not

having graduate assistants may have led to those [statistics]," Wollmering said.

Wollmering said he thinks Truman's full-time assistant coaches are more in line with other schools' full-time assistants than Truman's head coaches.

"Not doing it to make money"
Truman's athletic department is treated no differently than other departments.

According to information supplied by Budget Director Dave Rector, faculty and staff members in the university received the same 3 percent raise as coaches prior to this fiscal year. He said the source of coaches' salaries is a mix of student fees and state appropriation, which is the same as everyone else's on campus.

"If you look at it, and take a sport like soccer, it's really to provide ... an activity for the players," Rector said. "It's an activity for students to go to. We're really not doing it to make money. And, you know, we're not having a golf team to make money, and we're really not having a football or a basketball team to make money. It's more tradition and school spirit — that sort of thing."

John Cochrane, head cross country and track coach, who has been at Truman for 29 years, including a stint as interim athletic director, offers a different view.

According to the Missouri Blue Book, Cochrane was paid \$63,740 in 2007-08. Only long-tenured professor and women's golf coach Sam Lesseig (75,590) and head football coach Shannon Currier (\$70,990), whose contract will not be renewed for 2009-10, made more.

"The problem is you always have trouble determining really how much money is this person worth in this position," Cochrane said. "What is it, [head men's basketball coach] Kim Anderson at Central Missouri gets

140-150,000 thousand dollars, and it's like, 'Is he really worth that much money to them?' I don't know."

Anderson has compiled a 158-59 record in eight seasons at UCM including two final four appearances. He is part of a small percentage of coaches, like Skoch, who have had success multiple years in a row.

However, most coaches are not able to sustain success.

"Just because you have a good season, somebody doesn't necessarily have to give you \$10,000, because two years down the road you don't have a good season — are you going to give that \$10,000 back?" Cochrane said. "And in this world you kind of have to look at it that way."

"Where would that money come from?"

Wollmering said Truman does not produce extra revenue when teams are successful.

"To spend more money in salary because of success would cost us more money," Wollmering said. "Where would that money come from? Where we have success, we don't generate a lot of new income by having success at our level."

The women's soccer and volleyball teams each advanced far into the post-season last fall, but both teams made little, if any, revenue for their success.

In the case of the soccer team, which hosted three playoff games last fall, the school does not make money from admission sales. This is because the NCAA reimburses Truman for the difference between admission sales and the expenses of hosting, making hosting the event a wash with revenue, Wollmering said.

When any sport, including volleyball, sends athletes to nationals the NCAA reimburses Truman for bus or plane expenses and \$75 per person

A Glance at Coaching Salaries

Truman Data	MIAA rank	MIAA average
Head coach average salary: \$37,056	9	\$44,534
Total Expenses on coaches: \$1,121,980	3	\$909,923
Percentage of salary expenses to total athletic expenses: 26.23	1	\$18.72



Information is from 2007-08, source: US Department of Education Web site
*Truman salaries were increased by 3 percent prior to this year, and some coaches were adjusted from a 10-month to a 12-month contract.

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per day. However, Wollmering said Truman sometimes has to cover the cost of sending extra people and high hotel costs.

Rector said Truman is lucky to break even on these trips after miscellaneous travel expenses are added in, even with the postseason travel reimbursement given by the NCAA.

"You have to decide why you are somewhere"

For Skoch, the increase in salary was just a part of his decision to resign.

For Cochrane, who made \$8,000 in his first year at Truman and whose salary is a product of 29-years of coaching, he said he would stay at Truman at this point in his career even if he was offered more money elsewhere.

"You have to decide why you are somewhere and if you have goals," Cochrane said. "... My rewards come from working with kids."

For Michael Smith, first year head women's basketball coach, who signed a \$52,200 contract before last season,

the decision to come to Truman wasn't all about money. Like Skoch, Smith transferred to be closer to his family.

"Really, money wasn't even a factor," Smith said. "And don't get me wrong — money is nice. But what I've learned being in my fourth or fifth different university working now that money is not everything. You have to get along with the people that you work with."

The non-salary factors Truman offers are why the school can retain coaches like Cochrane or 16-year women's soccer head coach Mike Cannon, whose salary was \$34,350 in 2007-08, according to the Missouri Blue Book. Cannon has won seven MIAA Coach of the Year awards and has led his team to a 217-76-27 record in his tenure.

"You make it what it is, whether it be your program, how you raise your family, the house you live in, the job you take as far as the money," Smith said. "You make it what it is and do the best with what you can."



DUO | Seniors have compiled two of the best singles records in Truman history, near end of four years playing together as doubles duo, including three years as No. 1 pairing

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"I think we are both pretty mentally stable on the court," Blair said. "We don't get too up or too down, so if we have a bad match we don't let it affect us too much for the next one."

All their success happened after the two were paired together at the beginning of their freshman year. They never have played a Truman doubles match without each other, even when former two-year No. 1 singles player Jennifer Salmon constantly switched doubles partners.

"If you can put freshmen

together, and it works out, and they can stay together, then it really helps you all over the years," Kendall said.

Walther was a state doubles champion in high school and Blair was state champion in singles. But all that is insignificant now, because it all happened before — before the Blair and Walther doubles team enter postseason play in two days, and before their Bulldog careers come to a close in the near future.

But when it ends, they'll find something — just like they have for the last four years — to laugh about.



Above: Senior No. 1 singles player Lindsay Blair focuses while she prepares to return a serve earlier this season. Below: Senior Courtney Walther, shown earlier this season, has partnered with Blair for four years at No. 1 doubles.

HARRIS | Harris nears graduation, will soon embark on two-year stint in Teach for America program

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On the rugby field the next fall, Sexton said Josh started playing the best rugby of his college career — so good that Sexton was pushing for Josh to play on the regional all-star team before Josh suffered an ankle injury.

But midway through the fall semester, Josh hit a wall. After surging forward strongly after his brother's death, Josh said the emotional toll eventually caught up with him. With about six weeks left in the semester, Josh pulled out of classes and went home to be with his family.

"Everything started weighing down on me," Josh said. "I had to take a break. I was going like Superman for as long as I could. So I had to take a break, step back and refocus. I just wanted to be with my family for a little while and decide whether or not I was going to come back and finish."

Needing just one more semester to graduate, Josh returned to Truman this spring. He is set to graduate this May with a degree in justice systems and a minor in political science. After graduation, Josh will do a two-year stint in the Teach for

America program, teaching secondary math to students in New Orleans. After he completes the program, Josh said he would like to return to school and earn his Ph.D. in criminology so he can teach the subject the college level.

"[Returning to school] was just the drive to not let this define me, don't let this be the thing that derailed me from all my goals."

Josh Harris
Senior

spring halves of the season, Josh — a three-year cog of the Bulls' backline — realized the team needed another experienced player on the field.

"We had a very young team, and we were real thin in the back," Sexton said. "And I think that some of the experienced players, his teammates, went to him and said, 'How's that ankle? We really need you out here. We do need you back on the field.' To his credit, he came out, and we established a Saturday morning routine, which was for me to tape up his ankle, and he wore a lace-up brace. ... I think he was glad to be back."

Josh finished his rugby career on a high note. On April 11, just more than a year after the tragic loss of his brother and with his family on the sidelines watching the game, Josh and the Bulls trounced the University of Missouri 37-10 at home in the final game of the season.

For Josh, the win marked the first time in his career that he was on the victorious side of a match against Mizzou — and it marked just one more challenge that Josh has overcome in his Truman career.

"I really think the world of him," Sexton said. "He's faced down this family adversity and this tragedy, and he's basically asked himself who he is and what he's going to be and how he's going to handle these things. He's handled himself well. I'm proud that he was affiliated with the club."

COLUMN | Columnist applauds Wollmering, calls out fans, thanks players and coaches

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1. Director of Athletics Jerry Wollmering is a true asset to the University. I don't always agree with Jerry, but I've always respected him.

It amazes me how many fans and readers dislike Jerry. Maybe it comes down to the simple fact that no one likes to support "The Man," but I've never found any logical reason as to why Jerry comes under so much heat. Does he make mistakes? Sure he does, but find me an athletics director who doesn't. And although people find it easy to criticize Jerry when things go awry in the world of Truman athletics (see turf project, Pershing flooding, Shannon Currier firing), many forget to praise Jerry when something goes right in Bulldog sports. And a lot does go right.

Since Wollmering has been athletics director, the Bulldogs have amassed one of the most well-rounded Div. II women's athletics programs in the country. I'll put Truman's women's soccer, volleyball and swim teams up against any Div. II school. Furthermore, Jerry does a fine job of assembling good coaches on a tight budget (see story Page 17) to lead Truman's programs. Swapping former women's basketball coach John Sloop for current coach Michael Smith last spring was an ingenious move. In his first year on the job, Smith inked six recruits — including two junior college All-Americans — to come to Truman next fall, already proving he's a far better recruiter than Sloop was.

Although the timing of Wollmering's firing of Currier seemed odd, after researching the situation further, it became clear that Currier simply proved to be an untrustworthy individual who wasn't worthy of leading the Bulldogs. Showing Currier the door was the right move. I'll trust the judgment of Jerry — who always has been up-front and honest with me — over Currier any day.

2. Although the administrators, coaches and players at Truman are fantastic, the fans stink. The low level of support Truman teams get on this campus is absolutely embarrassing. It seems like the only students who go to games are fellow athletes.

Countless times I've heard from fellow students that the reason they don't go to games is because "Truman sucks at sports." I have no idea where this notion comes from.

Sure, the football team and men's and women's basketball teams had down seasons this year, but the volleyball and women's soccer teams had very fine seasons, reaching the Final Four and Elite Eight, respectively. Yet I'd be willing to bet that fewer than 25 students traveled to Minnesota to watch the volleyball team compete in the national semifinals. Most students didn't even travel the few minutes to watch the volleyball team compete at home. Women's soccer experienced a similar lack of support.

It's almost like there's an imaginary wall built between the average student and athletes at this school, and I just can't understand that. At some schools, athletes with poor academic performance probably get some leniency. Not here. Truman athletes are good students too, just like the rest of us here. Show them support. They've earned it.

3. I know I've already mentioned this, but this job has been a lot of fun.

To the Truman athletes, I've enjoyed the privilege of covering your games and performances for three years. To the coaches, thanks for spending the 20 minutes each week to do an interview with me and talk about your team's performance the night before. This was my favorite part of the job. I loved talking with coaches and simply discussing and critiquing their teams for a few minutes, and I'm thankful that the coaches here give me the time to do that.

I hope you've enjoyed reading my columns and stories. I know I've enjoyed writing them.