

Softball splits with Washburn

Win against Ihabods snaps Truman's six-game MIAA losing streak

BY JOE BELL
Staff Reporter

The Bulldogs finally cracked the conference-win column.

Yesterday, the softball team completed the last leg of a busy travel schedule in Topeka, Kan. There the Bulldogs claimed their first conference win, 7-4, against Washburn University in the first game of their doubleheader. The Bulldogs lost their second game of the double-header, 6-1. On Tuesday, the Bulldogs lost two close games of a double-header against Emporia State University, 9-3 and 12-2. Last Friday, the Bulldogs lost two games to Fort Hays State University, 6-5 and 1-0. The Bulldogs are now 1-7 in the MIAA and 9-22 overall.

The first game the Bulldogs played against the Lady Blues was a close one, which is an outcome the Bulldogs have seen often lately. Both pitching and hitting kept Truman in the game until the very end. The 'Dogs took the lead in the eighth inning, but the Blues tied the game and the extra innings continued. The Bulldogs won the game in the 10th inning when the offense scored four runs off of two hits.

"It's kind of like the monkey's off our back," head coach Erin Brown said. "It's just great to get that win."

The Bulldogs were unable to bring the success they had in the first game into the second, however. Freshman pitcher Ashley Rotkovich gave up five runs and seven hits in her 2.1 innings of work. The Bulldogs were forced to bring in

both senior Stephanie Johnson and junior Richelle van Gennip to finish the game. Van Gennip pitched six innings in Game 1 and Johnson pitched four.

Although the relief pitching limited the Lady Blues to only one more run, the Bulldog offense was unable to make up the ground. Truman only manufactured one run from six hits.

Getting the pitching and the offense to perform well during the same game has been something that has been a problem for the Bulldogs. Against Washburn yesterday, however, the Bulldogs seemed to be able to get both to click simultaneously.

"Today and yesterday I saw a definite improvement in our hitting. I think everyone was just going to the plate with a more aggressive attitude."

Rebekah Shea
Senior
third baseman

"Today and yesterday I saw a definite improvement in our hitting," senior third basemen Rebekah Shea said. "I think everyone was just going up to the plate with a more aggressive attitude. They were really looking for a pitch to drive and it definitely showed. I think, overall, we were a little more aggressive at the plate. It seems like we've been a little lax there lately."

The pitchers also have made steady improvements. Between van Gennip and Johnson, they gave up only five runs and struck out 10 in the 13.2 innings they pitched in the doubleheader against Washburn. The only sour note was Rotkovich's five-run third inning. Without that inning, the game would have been tied.

"I think [the pitchers] were focusing more on trying to keep the ball on the corners of the plate rather than down the middle so that we could cut down the number of home runs that have been hit," freshman right fielder Katie Pitts said. "That caused a few more walks than normal. I think that kept the hitters more off-balance."



Senior shortstop Kali Holleran zips the ball across the diamond during a game earlier this season. Holleran had two RBI in Truman's Game 1 win yesterday against Washburn. Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Pitts led the Bulldog offense against Washburn. She picked up five hits in seven at-bats in the two games. She also drove in a run and scored twice.

Sophomore catcher Erica La-

Combe also had a productive showing yesterday at the plate. She garnered three hits in seven at-bats and drove in three runs total.

The Bulldogs come back home to play two doubleheaders at home this

week. Tomorrow, the Bulldogs will play a doubleheader against University of Central Missouri at 2 p.m. On Saturday, Truman will host Southwest Baptist University in a doubleheader that will begin at 1 p.m.

Women, men place second at Invitational

Kelly, Dochterman, Biermann break meet records

BY JOCELYN NEBEL
Staff Reporter

Rain and wind were no match for the men's and women's track and field teams this weekend.

The Bulldogs competed Saturday at the Northwest Missouri Invitational in Maryville against a small number of conference teams.

The men and women both finished in a comfortable second place out of six teams competing. Conference foe NWMSU finished first on both sides.

"Meeting conference schools is always exciting," junior distance runner Jacob Schrum said. "You want to try to size [them] up in preparation for the meet that really matters — the conference outdoor meet."

Senior distance runner Danna Kelly broke her own record in the 3,000-meter steeplechase with a time of 10:58.78, and junior pole vaulter Ka-

trina Biermann broke her record in the pole vault with a jump of 3.67 meters. These two marks were also meet records. Junior hurdler Shaina Dochterman also had a new meet record in the 400-meter hurdles with a time of 1:01.07. All three of these marks were NCAA Div. II provisional marks.

Freshman hurdler Stephanie Grauel said the rain and the wind were not a big factor for her during the meet.

"I tried to block out [the rain] and just tried not to think about it because ... my dad always told me everyone's dealing with the same conditions, so it's not like you're running into the wind, and the person next to you isn't," Grauel said.

Grauel placed third in the 100-meter hurdles with a time of 15.55 and fourth in the 400-meter hurdles with a time of 1:08.60. Grauel said she mentally prepared herself and adjusted her steps in the 400-meter hurdles to cope with the wind. She said counting her steps also helped her keep her mind off the weather conditions and the other competitors. Grauel said she worked on counting her steps during Midterm

Break to improve her technique.

Other top competitors for the women included junior distance runner Fiona Williams and senior thrower Kortney Holeman. Williams placed first in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:25.88. Although there was a strong wind on the home stretch of the track, Williams had negative splits and took about six seconds off of her first lap time. Holeman placed first in the discus with a throw of 40.92 meters.

There were also some great performances from the throwers and distance runners on the men's side. Sophomore thrower Alex Van Delft placed second in the hammer throw and shot put with throws of 40.75 meters and 15.58 meters, respectively.

"[Van Delft] did a good job in the meet, and he competed well," head coach John Cochrane said. "We're hoping he can continue on. Hopefully this

next weekend we can get a better discus wind for all our discus throwers."

The men's distance team also persevered through the wind and occasional rain to achieve top performances. Senior distance runner Tad Dallas won the 10,000-meter run with a time of 35:15.00. Junior middle distance runner Jason Schrum said Dallas drafted off runners ahead of him to block the wind and ran a very smart race.

Sophomores Bob Gorman and John Venner also competed well despite adverse conditions. Gorman and Venner placed second in the 3,000-meter steeplechase and 5,000-meter run, respectively.

"My heart really went out to them because the conditions weren't great for those races," Schrum said.

Schrum placed first in the 800-meter run with a time of 1:58.35. He said he did not use the drafting technique for his race and felt tired when he ran into

the wind the last portion of the race.

"The race was kind of slow, so I actually led the entire race, and I definitely noticed that coming into the last 100 [meters] I was pretty tired coming in," Schrum said. "The way my race was set out, I had to go out faster to run the time I wanted to, so I did not draft off of the other runners."

Schrum said he plans to work on saving some energy for the last 200 meters of his race, so that he has a better finish. He said assistant coach Tim Schwegler advised him to shorten his stride and increase his arm tempo to finish the last portion strong.

The Bulldogs continue their outdoor season this weekend at the Jim Duncan Invitational in Des Moines, Iowa. Cochrane said the meet will have a lot of Div. I teams, so the Bulldogs must be mentally prepared to compete.

"We're going to have to ratchet it up and compete hard," Cochrane said. "If you get your mind in gear, you should be able to perform well. And that's the thing that has to happen with us as we come to the end of the season to the 'conference war.'"

"We're going to have to ratchet it up and compete hard."

John Cochrane
On the meets leading up to the conference championship

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