

Rugby shut out thrice at Ruggedfest

BY KRISTA CRIDER
Staff Reporter

The men's rugby team had a humbling showing at the Ruggedfest Tournament in St. Louis last Saturday thanks to poor teamwork, a lack of intensity and minimal warm-up time.

The Bulls were completely shut out with a 0-3 record and zero tries. They lost to the Ohio Northern club team 28-0, the Indianapolis Impalas club team 27-0 and Principia College 10-0. Head coach Bill Sexton said the players were embarrassed by their poor performance.

"We did play three games, though I will tell you, with the exception of one game, we played very miserable games," Sexton said. "Shall we say, some of the worst rugby we've played all season?"

The tournament was structured with a winners' bracket, a losers' bracket for the losers of the first game and a "pride bracket" for the teams that lost both

their first and second games. Both men's collegiate and club teams were lumped into the same bracket, and Sexton said organization was a big problem when it came to the tournament in general. The Bulls began on a sour note Saturday when they showed up late for their first game against Ohio Northern because it was rescheduled from 9 a.m. to 8 a.m. without their knowledge.

"[Ohio] had guys that were big and very physically aggressive, and we basically had guys that were walking onto the field from their cars because of the change in schedule, so we came out flat and stayed flat," Sexton said. "We had moments where we looked like we knew what we were doing, but largely we just were flat, not responsive, and they beat us."

Sexton said there were few positives about the tournament with the exceptions of the weather and the team's performance during the second game of the day against its hardest competition, the Indianapolis Impalas.

"Even though we got beat, it was actually quite a good display," Sexton said. "We worked very hard and did some good stuff in that game."

The third game of the day was later in the afternoon. Sexton said the team was flat yet again, the opposing team was disruptive and physical, and the referee was "bizarre." He said the team never got into a rhythm.

"A good team figures out the referee, reacts and plays above themselves," Sexton said. "We never reacted. We actually played down to the disruptive level of the game and consequently got burned by a couple of athletic moves and finished the day at 0-3."

Junior Jordan Buchheit said that despite the team's less-than-exceptional performance, the players still got some experience under their belts.

"We came up against some good, more experienced teams," Buchheit said. "I mean, they were a lot better than us, but I think we got a lot of good experience by playing them, and you only

get better by playing better teams."

The team had to move positions and add a few players in the matches because only 16 players went to the tournament. A few key players were missing, including four starting forwards, so some visiting alumni were added to the roster for support. Sexton said the movement should not have affected the team's performance so substantially, but it did.

"It's always hard when you're missing some key players, but we didn't do a very good job of plugging in new guys or putting people in slightly different positions and still maintaining a quality game," Sexton said.

He attributed the team's poor performance to an inability or unwillingness to follow through offensively off of tackles and go through more than one or two cycles in the offense.

Junior Paul Edgerley said that the team appeared to have lost all fundamentals.

"I think that we didn't play to our

full potential," Edgerley said. "We didn't get the continuity we played with against K-State, which was a big factor when it came to ball movement, so we didn't keep the ball moving, and we kind of just played greedy. Overall we didn't play with the same intensity and just kind of threw away the fundamentals."

Sexton agreed that the team's performance looked nothing like it did in a 36-0 win against Kansas State University on March 21. He said the mistakes Truman made last semester and early this semester reappeared, giving the team areas to work on at practice before its next game against the University of Missouri-Columbia this weekend at home.

"As good as we played against Kansas State two weeks ago, to play as bad as we did this past weekend, we looked like two completely different teams," Sexton said. "I don't know what it was, ... but it was clearly one of our worst performances of the season. We were just not clicking at all."

Athlete of the Week

Danna Kelly

Sport: Track and Field

Year: Senior

Event: Distance runner

Hometown: Boone, Iowa

Kelly ran a 10:58.78 in the 3,000-meter steeplechase last Saturday at the Northwest Missouri Invitational. Her time broke her own school record in the event for the second-straight week, despite windy conditions. The NCAA automatic mark in the event in 10:55.00. Kelly was named MIAA Athlete of the Week for her efforts.

Kelly nears automatic mark in steeplechase

BY BRENT FOSTER
Staff Reporter

If senior distance runner Danna Kelly continues to break records at this pace, she might run out of records to break.

Kelly broke her own school and a seven-year meet record in the 3,000-meter steeplechase, helping lead Truman to a second-place team finish at the Northwest Missouri Invitational on Saturday.

Kelly's time of 10:58.78 was nearly two minutes faster than the second-place finisher, and she broke her previous school record of 10:59.27, which she set the previous weekend at the Washington University Mini-Meet in St. Louis.

"I don't think [breaking records every week] is going to continue to happen all the way through," head coach John Cochrane said. "I think the next time when she runs faster, it will be quite a bit faster."

Kelly needs to trim her time down about three more seconds to 10:55:00 to become an automatic national qualifier. She already has a provisional mark.

"[To qualify for nationals] is definitely my primary goal,"

Kelly said. "Overall, I just kind of want to see how low I can actually get it. But yeah, that first stepping stone goal is 10:55:00."

Cochrane said that in the last two meets, combinations of things worked against Kelly, causing her times to be higher than they would have been in normal conditions. He said very windy conditions probably affected her time Saturday. Cochrane also said winning by such a wide margin could affect Kelly's time because she hasn't had anyone to run against in the second half of races.

"You'd like to try and run an even pace, and when you have wind in one side and then the other, it kind of breaks your rhythm," Cochrane said. "When you're talking 20 to 25 mile per hour winds, it's a little bit different than five mile an hour winds that don't have that much effect."

Kelly could challenge the record for a third straight week when the Bulldogs travel to the Jim Duncan Invitational at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa on Friday and Saturday.

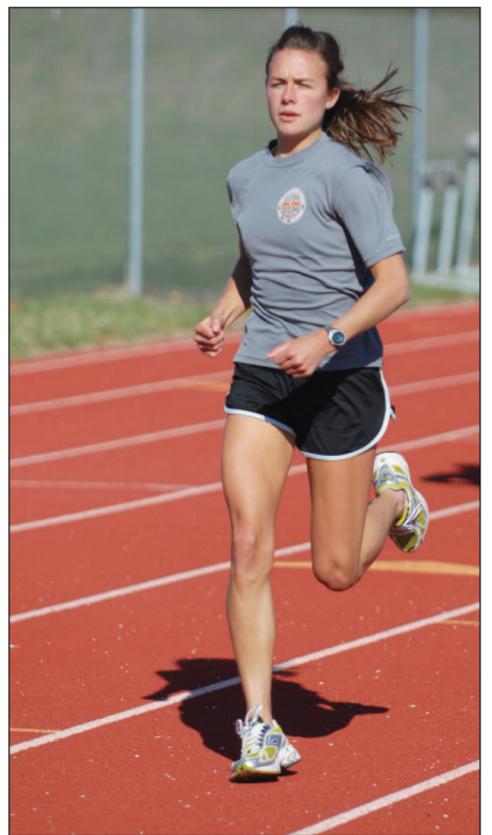
Cochrane said the com-

ination of being able to run in a more enclosed stadium at Drake and better competition from the several Div. I schools that will participate in the invitational will give Kelly a chance to improve her time even more.

"I think that if I can get in a race with some competition, as well as maybe a little bit more decent weather conditions, I really think that it's definitely attainable," Kelly said.

Kelly won the 3,000-meter steeplechase at MIAA Championships in 2006 and 2007, but took sixth place last season, losing by 36 seconds. Kelly has improved on her time in the steeplechase this year immensely. Last season the best she ran in a meet was 11:25:35, nearly 30 seconds more than her best time this season.

"I think she's been much more focused," Cochrane said. "I know she has some goals that she'd like to take care of. Just things have finally clicked. ... She's accomplished a lot since she's been here. One of the neat things is how much she's grown and how much she's matured. That's what this is all about."



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index
Senior Danna Kelly improved off her school-record time in the 3,000-meter steeplechase last Friday.

Pickler Memorial Library

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Contact: mrichter@truman.edu

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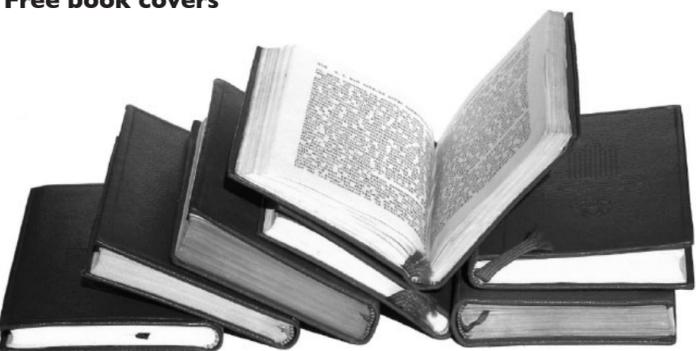
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