



# SPORTS

Sunday, August 17, 2008

www.trumanindex.com

15

## TITLE SEARCH

Soccer team seeks ninth MIAA title in 10 years

Page 16



## Volleyball to play three matches at KPS

Practices will be in Rec Center, new floor should be in place by October

BY BLAKE TOPPMEYER  
Sports Editor

The members of the Kirksville School Board didn't know it at the time. But in March when they approved the installation of a Kirksville High School volleyball program — set to have its first season this fall — they also created a temporary home for a college team with more than 100 wins in the past three seasons.

The floor in Pershing Arena sustained extensive flood damage July 25 (See story, page one). This left the Truman volleyball team without a floor to play on for its three September home matches.

With no other available floor options on campus to host a volleyball match, Wollmering said he decided to contact Doug Baughman, director of athletics at Kirksville High School, about the possibility of the Bulldogs playing their Sept. 19, Sept. 20 and Sept. 24 matches — all against conference opponents — at Kirksville Primary School, while the floor at Pershing gets replaced.

"It's a god-send that the high school has started volleyball this

year," Truman's Director of Athletics Jerry Wollmering said.

Baughman did not return calls from the Index requesting an interview.

Truman volleyball head coach Jason Skoch said that before this season, the Kirksville school system did not have a gym equipped for volleyball. But because KHS begins volleyball this year, he said the school has been preparing the primary school gym floor for volleyball.

"Now, all their courts are ready for volleyball," Skoch said. "We have to go tape the lines this weekend, but they already have the [volleyball] holes, they have the pole systems, they got everything."

Wollmering said he told companies bidding on the installation of the new floor that installation must be complete by the beginning of October, before the men's and women's basketball teams begin practice.

If a new floor is in place by October, it would allow the volleyball team to host its final seven regular season home games on the new floor and make Pershing Arena a possible venue for the South Central Regional in the NCAA Tournament.

Until the new floor is installed, the volleyball team is practicing at the Student Recreation Center.

Skoch said that practicing at the

Rec Center actually has its advantages for the Bulldogs.

"The only con really is we're not in our gym so we have to travel from the training room to here," he said. "The pro is, it's a great gym, and we're getting two different courts to jump off of. We only have one in Pershing. ... I can do different things in practice that I can't do over there."

The only other gym floors on campus are the small gym in Pershing Building and the gym in Kirk Building. Neither floor is an option for practices or matches.

"If our small gym was in good enough shape and had a good enough wood floor, we could potentially be practicing in there," Wollmering said. "But we have no [usable] wood gym. We have nowhere to go. Kirk gym — it's not available. They won't let anybody in there."

Wollmering said he hopes the situation proves to be "an eye-opener" that the University needs better athletic facilities.

"Again, I think it just shows the lack of adequate facilities to provide the right type of experience we need to provide for our student athletes," he said.

Although Truman might lose a bit of its home-court advantage by playing its September home games in

Please see PERSHING, Page 19



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index  
Sophomore Ashley Petek practices in the Rec Center last Wednesday. The rec will house volleyball practices until Pershing is available.



File Photo

Senior running back Phil Kenney looks for a hole during a game last fall. The squad will have their hands full this season with games against tough opponents, such as conference newcomer Nebraska-Omaha.

## Football returns 20 starters

Offense strength to team as quarterback and wide receivers all return

BY JACK NICHOLL  
Assistant Sports Editor

Coming off back-to-back 6-5 seasons, the football team will try to make the next step in becoming one of the top teams in the tough MIAA.

"I think the biggest thing to focus on is having the belief that we're going to beat the top teams," head coach Shan-

non Currier said.

The Bulldogs will have their hands full with games against Northwest Missouri State University, Div. II runner-up the last three years, and conference newcomer the University of Nebraska-Omaha, a team that was 10-1 last season. Eight teams in the conference had winning records last year, which contributed to Truman's eighth-place ranking in the preseason coaches' poll.

The 'Dogs will play a school record seven games at home, including their first four. Three games will be under the lights at Stokes Stadium. The team

will play home games on new AstroTurf Gameday Grass 3D, which potentially will be ready for the season-opener Aug. 28. The Bulldogs are 10-2 in their last 12 home games.

"The more good teams you have the more you have guys just beating at each other," Currier said. "So if we can let other teams beat each other up and if we can sneak a couple big wins, we might be sitting at the top of the race when it's all said and done."

The strength of the team will come from the passing attack led by senior

Please see FOOTBALL, Page 19

## Columnist welcomes new students

Every Truman freshman is sure to have questions about entering the college realm.

Such as: How often can I miss my 7:30 a.m. Spanish class and still earn a passing grade? (I'd try to go at least twice a week to a three-day a week class.)

Will my roommate notice that I'm wearing the same pair of jeans for the fourth day in a row? (Probably not. Even if your roommate does notice, he/she probably is wearing the same jeans as the day before, too.)

Can I wash my reds with my whites? (Yes, just toss in a few Tide color catchers.)

And maybe — hopefully — you have a few questions about Truman's athletic program. I probably can anticipate a few of the questions you have about the Bulldogs, so I'll try to answer them here.

Question: What division/conference does Truman play in?

Answer: The Bulldogs are an NCAA Div. II team and compete in the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletic Association. The MIAA has 11 teams total, but not every sport has 11 teams. Football, for

example, has 10 conference teams. Every MIAA team is from Missouri or Kansas except conference newcomer University of Nebraska-Omaha.

Truman has some sports, such as men's soccer and men's and women's

swimming, that the MIAA does not sponsor, and therefore, the Bulldogs compete independently or in a different conference for these sports.

As most Truman athletes will readily tell you, the MIAA is one of the

toughest conferences in Div. II. The conference has produced the national runner-up in football for three straight years (Northwest Missouri State University).

Five MIAA teams qualified for the 2008 NCAA volleyball tournament. The University of Central Missouri is a two-time Div. II national baseball champion.

Even against tough competition, the Bulldogs are, at the very least, competitive in almost all of their 21 varsity sports.

Question: Who is Truman's top rival?

Answer: The Northwest Please see ANSWERS, Page 19

### COMMENTARY



Blake Toppmeyer



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index  
Once finished, the synthetic surface at Stokes Stadium will be used for events other than football games, including soccer, band and football practices.

## Field might not be finished for opener

BY JACK NICHOLL  
Assistant Sports Editor

The new synthetic grass surface at Stokes Stadium might not be ready for the football team's season opener against Missouri University of Science and Technology on Aug. 28.

"It's going to be kind of day-to-day right now," Director of Athletics Jerry

Wollmering said.

Wollmering said they are looking into an alternate site if the field, which originally was scheduled to be completed by the first week of August, is not finished in time for the first game.

"Potentially neutral site, you know," he said. "At [Missouri S&T], obviously, could be an option. We don't

have a definite yet, but we are obviously exploring all of our options at this point."

Missouri S&T, a non-conference rival, is the only team on Truman's schedule that plays on a grass field, the same surface Truman has been practicing on in Kirksville.

Every MIAA team plays on a turf field, with multiple Please see FIELD, Page 19