

Swim teams increase national roster

BY KRISTA CRIDER
Staff Reporter

The women's and men's swimming teams came out of the Hoosierland Invitational hosted by Indiana University with more A cuts than they took into it, but not as many as head coach Mark Gole wanted.

Truman faced Div. I teams such as Indiana University and Louisville University (Ky.) at its taper meet Nov. 21 to 23. Gole said he was hoping the women would get 12 A cuts and thought 10 was an attainable goal, but they only achieved nine. They would have reached their goal of 10 if not for a false-start in the 200-yard medley relay. The men earned four, which was right on track for Gole's goal for the meet.

"All in all, it went well," Gole said. "We had many swimmers swim lifetime bests, but we didn't get as many qualified as I was hoping. Overall I was pleased with how we did considering it was a week earlier than we had ever tried to get up and swim that fast."

Junior Kate Aherne gave an impressive performance, getting three individual A cuts in the 50-, 100- and 200-yard freestyle races and achieving A cuts in both the 800-yard freestyle relay and the 400-yard medley relay. Gole said the team needs women who have never qualified for nationals to hit A cuts for the team to have a chance at reaching its goals for nationals.

Gole said the team needs sophomore Jessie Lemaster and sophomore Claire Myers to get

A cuts in their events by the end of the season. He said he was hoping for A cuts from them at the taper meet, but a few small mishaps kept them from it.

Aherne said the reason the women might not have done as well as they had hoped was because of a few problems throughout the meet.

"As always, there were a couple swims where maybe we could have done better or maybe we weren't quite happy with our times, but overall both teams did really well," Aherne said.

Aherne also said she still thinks there are more A cuts on the way for the women's team.

"There are definitely still a couple girls who could pull through and get [A cuts]," Aherne said. "A lot of people are just a couple seconds off, so

with the little bit more training we will have in the winter could really be the little bit more that lets them get it."

The men got their A cut via the 200-yard freestyle relay, consisting of senior Jason Stokes, juniors Andrew and Peter McCall and freshman Eric Kaestner.

Gole said the men's team is hoping for freshman Brian Tillis to step up and hit the A cut in the 1650-yard freestyle. Tillis dropped 26 seconds off his fastest time at the taper meet, was two seconds off the school record and was a little more than six seconds from getting the A cut.

"To get that drop I have to have faster flip-turns and have a more evenly paced race than I had in Indiana," Tillis said. "I

think with some pace work and training I can probably get that time down to the A cut."

For the Truman swimming team, winter is a time for training and preparing for the spring season. The team goes on a Florida training trip every year during Winter Break, and this year Gole said the team definitely will not only be having fun in the sun.

"[The team's training in Florida] is by far the most intense training of the year," Gole said. "... Once [the team] leaves Florida, they are going to be in by far the best shape they have been in this season and ready to do any additional training that we are going to do when we get back. [The winter training trip] kind of lays the foundation for the remainder of the season."

Gole said the next dual

meet for the men, at Lewis University (Ill.) next weekend, is possibly going to be the closest matchup of the year. To finish off the regular season the Bulldogs swim against the two top Div. II schools from last year, Missouri University of Science and Technology and Drury University.

He said the women's meets against Div. I Missouri State and Drury University both will be challenging — the first because MSU will be out for revenge from the loss earlier in the season and the latter because of Truman and Drury's long time rivalry and Drury's formidable lineup.

"Drury is the fastest I have seen them in probably the last eight years this year, so they are going to be tough," Gole said.

200 freestyle relay grabs national cut

Jenkot's split time in final 50 yards gives quartet national-qualifying cut

BY JOE BARKER
Managing Editor

After a morning of preliminary events, the first final event at the Hoosierland Open Invite was an important one for the women's swim team.

The 200-yard freestyle relay needed a national A cut. In their quest for an eighth national title in nine years, the women needed to get every relay qualified. Head coach Mark Gole tabbed junior Kendra Brunkow, sophomore Tanya Sylvester and freshmen Kelli Horner and Jessica Jenkot to qualify the relay.

"We were thinking that [they would qualify] just where their best 50s were," Gole said.

Getting the foursome qualified would be huge. One, it would allow the quartet to go to nationals and swim in the races in which they had national B cuts. Two, it would prove that the Bulldogs don't need last year's national champion junior Kate Aherne on every race.

Brunkow led off followed by Sylvester and Horner. Gole said Brunkow got off to a good start and Sylvester followed with a solid second leg.

Horner, in her first collegiate taper meet, clocked in at a season-best 24.96. Still, when she touched the wall it didn't look like the relay team would get the A cut.

"We saw that Jessica had to go 23.25, and I was like, 'Her best time is 24.3, that's probably not happening,'" Gole said.

Jenkot had one thing going for



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

The 200-yard freestyle relay team consisting of junior Kendra Brunkow, sophomore Tanya Sylvester, freshman Jessica Jenkot and freshman Kelli Horner.

her: adrenaline. Gole said Jenkot is a swimmer who excels at relays. Jenkot said she was fired up to be on the anchor leg with a chance to send her and her teammates to nationals.

The freshman dove into the water and sprinted the first 25 yards in 10.75, the best on the team.

"When she touched I was just like 'Holy cow' — those weren't the exact words I said — but I was like, 'They got a shot,'" Gole said.

Jenkot kept swimming and touched the wall for a split of 23.18, the fifth-best 50-yard freestyle time in Truman history. Her split put the relay at a combined time of 1:36.62, beating the

A cut time of 1:36.69.

"It was a narrow margin," Gole said. "It's nothing. You can't even start and stop a stopwatch in 0.07 of a second."

When Jenkot finished she was unaware that she had just shattered her personal best time.

"I was so surprised," Jenkot said. "I was completely shocked. When I finished and they told me I went 23.1, I was really happy with it, obviously, but it surprised me."

Jenkot's split left Gole impressed.

"It was a superhuman swim by Jessica Jenkot," he said.

Along with the A cut came a fifth-

place finish out of 13 Div. I teams.

With the qualifying time the quartet now has time to focus on the national meet instead of spending more time worrying about making the A cut.

Gole said he is unsure if Brunkow, Sylvester, Horner and Jenkot will be used together on the relay at nationals, but he said it's a good chance.

"It's huge, in my opinion, just because, like I said, we can't use Kate on every relay," Gole said. "If we have a relay that already made the cut without her, then that might be a relay we don't use her on."

Athlete of the Week

200 Free Relay

Sport: Women's swimming
Swimmers: Junior Kendra Brunkow, sophomore Tanya Sylvester, freshman Kelli Horner and freshman Jessica Jenkot

The 200-yard freestyle relay team swam an A cut time in 1:36.62 at the Hoosierland Invitational last weekend, just .07 ahead of the qualifying time. Jessica Jenkot swam a 23.25 in the final leg, a lifetime best by more than a second. It is the first A cut for Jenkot and Horner.

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