

# Foul trouble downs 'Dogs vs. SBU

BY JACK NICHOLL  
Assistant Sports Editor

For almost 30 minutes last Saturday, the men's basketball team showed that it could play with one of the best teams in the nation.

The Bulldogs had minimized the damage from the MIAA's best player, held the league's best offense to well below its season average and shot 45 percent from the field.

But a series of fouls in the middle of the second half led to an 81-57 Truman defeat at the hands of No. 6 Southwest Baptist University in Pershing Arena.

Head coach Jack Schrader was called for two technicals in a span of two minutes, freshman center Vesko Filchev fouled out with nine minutes left and senior forward Patrick Fandja picked up his fourth foul at the 7:52 mark in the second half before fouling out with 2:29 to go.

"I'm going to fight for my players," Schrader said after the game. "They need to pick up on that fight. We have to fight for respect. ... They need to know this is [a] competition — it's tough. And the last thing they can do is give up."

SBU outscored Truman 34-17 in the last 13 minutes to break open what had been a 32-31 halftime score. Truman had no answer for SBU's big men after Filchev and Fandja got into foul trouble.

SBU center Matt Rogers, who is leading the MIAA in scoring and blocks, had 18 points, seven rebounds and six blocks for the game. Many of his points, including two dunks,



Mayank Dhungana/Index  
Sophomore forward Ethan Freeman attempts a drive during Saturday's 81-57 loss against Southwest Baptist on Saturday.

came in the second half.

"Without our big guys, we're not much of a team," sophomore forward Ethan Freeman said. "Our guards can do their own personal job, but they can't

do the big guys' job. That put us down, big time, and that's unfortunate for us."

The fouls became a major factor in the second half, when SBU went 15-for-22 from the

line compared to just 1-for-3 in the first half. Truman was 12-for-15 from the charity stripe for the game.

Truman fought full-court pressure throughout the game.

The 'Dogs had 19 turnovers, which led to 24 SBU points.

But before the foul trouble started, the first half was a different story.

The Bulldogs kept the game

close, shot 50 percent and won the rebound battle 21-to-16 in the first half. They also held Rogers, who is averaging 19 points a game, to 3-for-13 shooting. The downsides were that the 'Dogs committed 10 turnovers and allowed SBU, which is leading the nation in three-point attempts, to hit five threes.

"We didn't play not to lose," Freeman said. "We played to win. And that's what we did for the first half. We're not worried about too much, and we just played our own game to see what we can get done."

Freeman led the 'Dogs with 11 points. Fandja tacked on 10 in 18 minutes of play, senior guard Banks Estridge had nine and sophomore guard Brandon Griffin had eight.

"I think we just came out with the mindset of 'Be tough and bang around with them a little bit,' and I think that helped us in the first half," Estridge said.

SBU clinched a berth in the MIAA tournament with the victory. The Bulldogs' chances of making the postseason are all but mathematically impossible — they are 5.5 games back of the eight-place team with five games to go. Truman has made the MIAA tournament twice in the past seven years.

Truman's next game is at 7:30 tonight against Fort Hays St. University in Pershing Arena. Hays won the first matchup between the teams 69-47 on Jan. 3.

The Bulldogs will wrap up the three-game homestand Saturday against University of Nebraska-Omaha before traveling to Northwest Missouri University next Wednesday.



Mayank Dhungana/Index  
Freshman guard Breanna Daniels shoots over a Southwest Baptist defender during Saturday's game in Pershing Arena. Daniels scored 24 points on 9-for-14 shooting while coming off the bench.

## Daniels puts up career-high 24

BY JOE BELL  
Staff Reporter

Freshman guard Breanna Daniels re-entered the basketball game Saturday with only three and a half minutes left in the first half. Southwest Baptist University had a 34-30 lead heading into the final minute.

With 38 seconds left, Daniels received the ball from sophomore forward Ashley Ward and unleashed a jump shot, which cut the lead in half. A steal by senior forward Georgia Mueller set up Daniels for one final shot with only one second on the clock. That last shot tied the score at the half, 34-34.

"Our last couple games, it's kind of been the other way — the other team has scored right before the half," Daniels said. "It's a big momentum shift, going into the locker room having just scored. It definitely helps with your momentum in the second half. Our coach is always talking about that, never letting the other team score before the half. We finally did that this game."

Daniels capitalized on that momentum during the second half. She scored another 12 points in the last 20 minutes. She was a perfect 5-5 from the free-throw line, and she converted nine of her 14 shots. She ended up scoring a career-high 24 points for the game coming off the bench.

Daniels said it was a change in outlook that helped her in the game. She said she was better able to relax and take opportunities as they came instead of trying to force them.

Saturday was an example of a recent offensive uptrend for Daniels. She had been scoring an average of

9.5 points a game for the previous four games and shooting a combined .614 percent before her explosion Saturday. Daniels said her overall offensive increase was the result of several factors.

"Towards the beginning of the season, I felt like I was trying so hard not to miss shots," Daniels said. "It was making me think about it too much instead of just reacting. In pre-season [I] hurt my ankle pretty bad. I think I was still kind of favoring it some towards the end of pre-season and maybe the first couple of weeks of actual season."

Head coach Michael Smith said that the transition from high school basketball to college basketball causes many players problems and might have accounted for some of Daniels' slow start. The fact that she was recruited by a different coach also made her transition a little rougher. When she arrived at Truman, she not only had to adapt to the college game, but also to an unfamiliar coaching philosophy.

"We knew [Daniels] had the capabilities [to] play well for us," Smith said. "She's gotten a little better as the season goes on. There's no doubt about that. Anytime a freshman comes into a college-type atmosphere, they never really know what to expect. ... High school to college is like night and day ... but she came off the bench and did a great job for us."

Smith also said he expects Daniels to remain a double-digit scoring force for the remainder of her career. Her talent, paired with a newfound confidence on the court, could spell big things for Daniels in the future.

## Athlete of the Week

**Breanna Daniels**  
Sport: Women's Basketball  
Year: Freshman  
Position: Guard

Daniels was 9-for-14 from the field for a career-high 24 points in the 87-80 victory against Southwest Baptist last Saturday. She hit two shots in the final minute of the first half to knot the score at 34-34 and 12 of her points came in the second half. She was also a perfect 5-for-5 from the free throw line. Daniels is averaging 12 points per game in the last five games.

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