



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Senior No. 2 singles player Courtney Walther practices in the fall. Walther won her singles flight, but lost 8-4 in the final of the No. 1 doubles flight. Overall, the team won nine of the 12 flights during the weekend.

## Women start off well

BY JACK NICHOLL  
Assistant Sports Editor

The women's tennis team faced little serious competition last weekend.

The Bulldogs won seven of eight singles flights and two of four doubles flights at the season-opening Principia Tournament held in Elsah, Ill. The 'Dogs dropped only four sets at the tournament.

In 37 of the 53 sets Truman won this weekend, the opposing team won one game or fewer.

The 'Dogs also were supposed to play in a dual match against Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville on Thursday, but SIUE cancelled because three of its seven players were injured. Although SIUE would have given the 'Dogs a good matchup, Principia was able to ease Truman back into competition.

"I think it's a good starting tournament because not all the teams are really competitive with us, and so it gets us kind of back into it," sophomore Amy Ochs said.

Ochs cruised through the No. 3 singles bracket, but in No. 2 doubles, her match went to a tiebreak, one of four match-deciding tiebreakers the Bulldogs faced at the tournament.

Ochs and her partner, freshman Ellen Russell, took a 4-1 lead to start the set, but the pairing from the University of Illinois-Springfield, which was one of the four teams at the tournament,

got back on serve at 4-4. The match stayed on serve until the tiebreak.

"I think the reason we started losing our lead was just that we started making a lot more mistakes and one of their girls was just hitting ridiculous shots back," Ochs said. "She was playing really well. So that made it tough."

With Ochs serving in the tiebreak, the Bulldog pairing faced match point at 5-6 but they rallied to win the final three points.

That tiebreak was indicative of the rest of the weekend for the 'Dogs, as they won four of five tiebreakers overall.

The hardest competition for the Bulldogs came from the No. 1 and No. 2 players from Illinois-Springfield. Senior Lindsay Blair defeated UIS's Kathleen Brancato (6-2, 6-3) in No. 1 singles, but that was the best Truman would do against the No. 1 and No. 2 pairing from Springfield.

Blair and senior Courtney Walther were ousted (8-4) in No. 1 doubles and Walther squeaked out a victory (6-0, 4-6, 11-9) at No. 2 singles against UIS's Thiyumi Abeyasinghe.

"I think I actually might have won the first set too easily, and then I kind of let up in the second set," Walther said. "The first set I didn't really miss, and she made a lot more errors. And then the second set it was kind of the reverse, where I missed a lot more easy shots and she was a lot more consistent."

In the tiebreak, Walther fell behind 7-2, then switched to a defensive style, which allowed her to close out the match on a 9-2 run.

Walther said she and Blair have played Brancato twice before this weekend, and she offers good competition when playing at her best.

"She serves the ball really hard, so it's hard to break her serve," Walther said.

Freshman Bulldog Sarah Schlafly needed a tiebreaker to win at No. 8 singles (6-2, 2-6, 10-1), but she was not as fortunate in No. 4 doubles in a 9-8 loss. Schlafly gets experience primarily in deep tournaments such as Principia, and head coach Pete Kendall said it's always good when everyone on the team gets to play.

"All in all, everybody played well," Kendall said. "Closed out matches when they should, not played matches close when they shouldn't, stuff like that. That's always something that you look for. I think we only had one or two sets where we maybe should have done a little better than we did."

The 'Dogs have the next three weeks off before a home dual meet against Lincoln University (Mo.) at 4 p.m. March 17. The three teams Truman played against this weekend — Missouri Baptist University, Illinois-Springfield and Principia — will not play the 'Dogs for the rest of the season.

## Bulldogs claim five event titles

Cochrane looks for 'Dogs to step up even more in upcoming MIAA meet

BY JOCELYN NEBEL  
Staff Reporter

Head coach John Cochrane wants the men's and women's track teams act more like Tom Cruise this weekend.

"[Now] we've got to get Maverick to engage," Cochrane said, referencing "Top Gun" as he talked about the MIAA Championships in Warrensburg, Mo., starting tomorrow.

The teams finished the regular indoor track season Friday at the Central Missouri Classic in Warrensburg. Five athletes ran, threw and jumped into first

place finishes, including junior jumper Katrina Biemann and senior thrower Ashley Bernard. Three conference schools were present, including the University of Central Missouri and Northwest Missouri State University, giving the Bulldogs their first taste of the competition to come.

"The competition's pretty good," sophomore distance runner John Venner said. "It's not as good as UNI or Iowa State, but it's nice because we get to see a few more conference schools, so we get an idea of what we're getting into going into the conference meet."

Senior distance runner Danna Kelly won the 3,000-meter run in 10:13.99, almost 28 seconds ahead of second place. This time was a personal record for Kelly.

Kelly said assistant coach Tim Schwegler placed her in faster races in previous weeks such as the mile and 800-meter runs to help her prepare speed work for the race.

"[Running faster events] makes the 3K seem a little more relaxed and easier paced after running quick stuff the weeks before," Kelly said.

Kelly said one of her biggest competitors for conference is Anna O'Brien from Northwest. O'Brien did not run Friday even though she was scheduled to compete in the 3,000 with Kelly.

"As soon as I got on the line and knew she wasn't there, I just knew that I had to try to hit my splits and stay on pace with what coach had planned for me to run in order for me to hit my goal time," Kelly said. "Not having her to race [against] gets me even more excited."

Other top competitors for the women this weekend included sophomore sprinter Neosha Hayes and junior hurdler Shaina Dochterman. Hayes placed second in the 200-meter run with a time of 26.62 seconds and Dochterman placed first in the 400-meter run with a time of 57.94, just short of a provisional mark. Cochrane said Dochterman also ran well in the 60-meter hurdles and beat two of the top three competitors in the conference.

Cochrane said sophomore distance runner Adam Kell and freshman distance runner Joey Walls gave good performances for the men. Walls and Kell placed first and fourth in the 3,000 meter run, respectively.

Junior middle distance runner Damon Morris also placed well at the meet. Morris placed third in the 800-meter dash with a time of 1:14.87, less than 0.05 seconds behind first and second place.

Cochrane said he only will take about 35 runners to the meet this weekend.

"It's no use to take people that on pa-

per aren't going to have a chance to score," Cochrane said. "They're just there. Every time we cut back on the number we take, we have better performances."

Cochrane said the athletes have to be mentally prepared for the meet and there is not much other conditioning they can do to improve their performances. He said the performances the Bulldogs give this weekend are his biggest concern now.

Venner and Cochrane said sophomore distance runner Josh Mantooth also should do well at the conference meet. Mantooth did not run Saturday because of a sinus infection. Venner said Mantooth and teammates Walls and sophomore Bob Gorman also should have good performances.

"If we're taking you, you should be able to do something to help us," Cochrane said. "We need to have some good efforts out of the people we're taking."

Kelly said she looks forward to the conference meet.

"It's a very competitive meet, but it's always a lot of fun," Kelly said. "In a way I'm sad realizing it'll be my last conference meet, but it's almost like it's that much more motivating and exciting to do as well as I can knowing that I won't be back here next year."

### Index Classifieds

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**For Rent:** New three-bedroom duplex apartment. Two full baths, two walk-in closets, off-street parking, refrigerator, range, dishwasher, garbage disposal, washer/dryer, central air, outside storage shed. Available June 8. 802 N. Green. \$600/month. 665-2796 M-F 8-5

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