

Athlete of the Week

Katrina Biermann

Sport: Track and Field

Year: Junior

Events: Triple jump, pole vault

Hometown: Liberty, Mo.

Biermann improved her NCAA provisional mark in the triple jump with a season-best mark of 38 feet at Saturday's Jack Jennett Invitational. Biermann's jump earned her first place. She also placed third in the pole vault. Biermann qualified for the indoor track nationals in 2008 and finished 11th in the triple jump. Her 38-foot jump Saturday was farther than her 2008 national jump.

Biermann takes first place in triple jump

BY KRISTA CRIDER
Staff Reporter

Junior Katrina Biermann stepped up and achieved her season best last Saturday at the Jack Jennett Invitational, hosted by the University of Northern Iowa. Biermann earned an NCAA Provisional Mark for her showing in the triple jump and also snatched first place with a jump of 11.58 meters.

Biermann, who went to nationals last year, took third in her other event Saturday, the pole-vault, with a vault of 3.35 meters.

She improved her triple jump at the Iowa Open Jan. 23 by 0.10 meters and currently has the seventh longest distance of those who have qualified for nationals in the triple jump. Biermann said that even with her solid performance this past weekend, she wants to keep progressing for the rest of the year.

"Last week was a meet where I definitely had a lot of improvement," Biermann said. "I am happy with last weekend, but I am looking forward to competing in the rest of the season [and improving]."

Before Winter Break, Biermann only had competed in one of the two meets, jumping 11.31 meters in the triple jump and no-heighting in the pole-vault. She said she is encouraged by her performance this year and is hoping to get even better.

"I got off to a slow start before Christmas break," Biermann said. "I didn't really get to do a whole lot, but I think I am way ahead of where I was last year. I think it's going pretty well so far, and we

still have more of the season left."

Head coach John Cochrane said Biermann has the potential to improve throughout the rest of the season.

"[Biermann] is a decent athlete, she works pretty hard and she's pretty competitive," Cochrane said. "There are some technical things she has got to work out, but she is getting better."

Biermann said she has a specific way of focusing and preparing for every meet. She also said that since she has two events she has to prepare for, she tries to center her attention on one at a time.

"Going into warm-ups, I visualize my performance and look at who I am going to be competing against, and I talk to Coach about what I am going to have to do to compete well," Biermann said. "It is a lot of mental focus, and I try to keep the two events separate in my head."

Biermann said she wants to build on her last performance to bring her marks up to national standards.

"I definitely want to improve on my marks," Biermann said. "I feel I should get to the national meet at the end of the season, but I definitely think I have to jump a lot farther and a lot higher. I know I am going to have to jump farther to get to Houston."

Cochrane said Biermann still isn't one of the main vocal leaders of the team. He said athletes usually don't get to the point where they know a lot until senior year, but Biermann still manages to lead by example.

"[Biermann] is one of the [athletes on the team] that is a leader, but she leads pretty much by what she does with work ethic," Cochrane said.



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index
Junior Katrina Biermann practices for the triple jump during Tuesday's practice. Biermann won the triple jump and placed third in the pole vault at Saturday's Jack Jennett Invitational.



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Junior guard Laura Joya had nine points last night against Washburn. Truman was able to keep the score close against the Lady Blues until the last four minutes.

'Dogs let close game slip away against WU

BY BRENT FOSTER
Staff Reporter

The women's basketball team continued its trend of keeping games close, but just like most games this season, the Bulldogs were unable to put together a late run.

The Bulldogs (4-17, 1-13 MIAA) trailed by just six points with 3:42 left, but never got any closer as they fell to No. 10 Washburn University 61-46 in Topeka last night. The loss dropped the 'Dogs to 0-4 against ranked teams this season.

Head coach Michael Smith said losing so many close games, as opposed to getting blown out every night, tells him his team is still fighting.

"I think their spirits are pretty high," Smith said. "But don't get me wrong, we're all dying to have a win."

Truman's only lead of the game was 2-0, but the Lady Blues weren't able to completely put the Bulldogs away until the final minutes of the game.

After senior forward Georgia Mueller made a pair of free throws to cut the lead to 52-46, Lady Blues head coach Ron McHenry shook up the lineup with three substitutions. The Bulldogs did not score again, and Washburn finished the game on a 9-0 run.

Truman has had chances to win late in the second half in seven of its last eight games. But just like last night, late-game scoring droughts have ended any hope of Bulldog victories. Against the University of Central Missouri on Jan. 21, the 'Dogs suffered a seven-minute second-half scoring drought. Against Missouri Southern

State University on Jan. 24, Truman went more than six minutes in the second half without scoring.

The Bulldogs kept the score close for most of the game despite being beaten soundly on the glass. The Lady Blues out-rebounded Truman 14-4 on the offensive glass, and 40-29 overall.

Mueller led the 'Dogs with 15 points, and was 5-for-6 from the foul line. Junior guard Laura Joya finished with nine points.

Truman turned the ball over 15 times, five below its season average. The Lady Blues finished with 11 turnovers.

The 46 points scored by the Bulldogs tied their second-lowest point total of the season. Truman scored 39 points in a Dec. 13 loss to Washburn. The 'Dogs also scored 46 points in a loss to Fort Hays State University on Jan. 3, but Truman played that game without Mueller.

Truman is last in the MIAA in scoring, averaging just more than 60 points per game. The next closest team is Missouri Western State University. The Griffons average 64 points per game.

The Bulldogs traded blows with the No. 4 team in the country for 34 minutes Sunday, but it wasn't enough.

ESU guard Andrea Leiker, scored 10 straight points for the Hornets, including back-to-back three pointers late in the game, to push the Hornet lead to double digits late in the second half, as the Hornets beat the Bulldogs 67-59 at Emporia.

"[Leiker's three pointers] were kind of detrimental, but I mean, that's just the way our season's gone," senior guard

Eli Medina said. "Playing so well, so well in the first half, and a couple slip-ups late in the game kind of cost us."

Truman trailed the entire first half but made a run early in the second half to make a game of it. After trailing 40-29 at the half, the Bulldogs chipped away at the lead and cut it to 55-52 with six minutes left. But that was when Leiker took over the game. She buried a three from the corner to push the lead to six, and after a turnover by junior guard Julie Guinn, Leiker buried another three pointer, pushing the lead to nine and ending any hopes of a Bulldog comeback. Lieker finished with 14 points.

"It was a heartbreaker," Mueller said. "We just kept fighting and tried to compensate for those two threes."

The Bulldogs made strides on the defensive end in the game. Truman tied a season-high in steals with 15, and forced 24 Emporia State turnovers.

"We did nothing special," Smith said. "We just played our half-court defense like we always do. A lot of those turnovers were forced as far as on Emporia's part. But at the same time it was nice to see a change as far as the other team turning the ball over more than we did."

Mueller led the Bulldogs with 16 points in 38 minutes. Joya continued her strong play, finishing with 12 points, five steals and nine rebounds.

"The last 34 minutes of the game we really just played all out and left it out on the table," Smith said.

The Bulldogs return home Saturday to take on Southwest Baptist University. Tip-off is set for 1:30 p.m.

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