



Sophomore Anna Grinter swims the 200-yard butterfly during Saturday's meet against Drury University. Grinter won the event with an A-cut time of 2:05.73. Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

## Drury edges past women's swimming

**Aherne, Grinter pick up individual victories in loss to visiting Panthers**

BY KRISTA CRIDER  
Staff Reporter

The women's swimming team held its own at Pershing Natatorium against Drury University on Saturday, coming out with a close loss.

The Bulldogs went neck and neck with Drury for most of the meet. They entered the last relay with a 13-point deficit and came out of the meet with a close final score of 110.5 to 92.5 against a team that traditionally turns out to be their toughest competition of the year.

The two teams have been the top two finishers at Div. II nationals for the last nine years, and this meet was only a glimpse of the level of competition they will bring to the national cham-

pionships March 11 to 14. Head coach Mark Gole said Drury probably has a better lineup than when it won nationals in 2006-2007, and junior Kate Aherne said the Bulldogs exceeded expectations on Saturday.

"Drury has a ton of talent on their team that they can just lay it into us," assistant coach Greg Naumann said. "To have it only be an 18-point loss was actually pretty surprising. I think [the Bulldogs] did step up when needed."

The rivalry between Truman and Drury has been going on for more than a decade, and the swimmers knew each rival team's strengths and weaknesses going into the meet.

"We knew going into [the meet] that Drury had the big first place people that finished in nationals, and we have always had the depth," junior Kendra Brunkow said. "Going into it knowing we were going to have some tough competition, it was nice to see we could still compete with them."

The Truman women didn't taper going into the meet, so even though the team didn't expect much in regard to times, some of the women stepped up and hit personal and untapered bests. Sophomore Stephanie Myers, for example, took third in the 1650-yard freestyle with a time of 17:54.87, and sophomore Anna Grinter hit a time of 2:05.73 in the 200-yard butterfly, taking first place.

"I was actually really surprised to see some of the girls swim the times that they did, considering the amount of work that we've been putting in [at] the pool," Gole said.

Aherne said the fact that both teams were untapered and still competed at this level provided a glimpse into their potential for conference and nationals.

"I think [Drury] just showed us that they're in the same spot as we are right now, just training as hard as we can," Aherne said. "Everyone is pretty

broken down, but that just means that conference and nationals are going to be two completely different meets from what we saw this last Saturday, and we just have to be prepared for that both mentally and physically."

The Bulldogs aim for a few more A cuts at the conference meet coming up Feb. 11 to 14 in Cleveland, Miss., including the 200-yard medley relay that made the cut at the Indiana Invitational but got disqualified because one of the swimmers jumped early. Brunkow said even the swimmers who don't taper for conference should do well.

"Last year at conference, people pulled out some swims that were incredible, especially because of the atmosphere," Brunkow said. "I think that has a lot to do with it, like when we are having fun and cheering for each other, the atmosphere can just make us go faster because of that."

Aherne said the electric atmosphere comes mainly from the fan

following Truman tends to get at the conference meet, and nationals is one step up even from that.

"I think that our team brings a lot of the energy at conference," Aherne said. "Our parents are huge at that meet, almost all of them come down, and it makes a huge difference to have that big support base, and then at nationals the level of competition is much higher. The best of the best are there, and it's just a completely different level."

Aherne said teamwork is a huge part of swimming, especially in the later, more important meets.

"It makes a huge difference when your team is doing really well and you have a positive attitude," Aherne said. "It is so much easier to swim faster for them and for yourself. As long as you stay positive and just know that everyone's going out there as fast as they can, doing their best and keeping the energy up, it carries us through."

## Men fall in pair of home duals

BY LOGAN JACKSON  
Staff Reporter

Last weekend was a difficult one for the men's swimming team, as the Bulldogs hosted two of the top Div. II swimming teams.

Friday, the Bulldogs swam against the Missouri University of Science and Technology, and Saturday they competed against four-time defending national champion Drury University. Truman lost both meets by large margins.

Missouri S&T defeated the Bulldogs 150-55 in a men's only meet. Truman never got on track, winning only one of 11 events. Sophomore Corey Moon said that although Truman didn't win, the team had a great meet overall.

"It was definitely the best meet of the year," Moon said. "A bunch of guys stepped up and gave their best. We had a lot of guys go best-in-season times."

Freshman Eric Kaestner picked up the lone win for the Bulldogs with his first-place finish in the 50-yard freestyle. It was the second time that Kaestner won the event this season. The other time came on day two of the Lewis University (Ill.) meet earlier this month. Kaestner said his swimming has improved since the Florida training trip during Winter Break.

"I've been swimming better ever since I went," Kaestner said. "It was

the most work I've done in my entire life. It was huge. You do nothing but swim, eat and sleep."

Kaestner swam the 50-yard freestyle in place of senior Jason Stokes, who missed his second meet in a row because of a violation of team rules, head coach Mark Gole said.

Sophomore Krish Singhal and freshman Brian Tillis also had solid meets for the Bulldogs. Singhal improved his 1,000-yard freestyle time to 10:05.39, a 12-second improvement from his previous best time. Tillis also improved his 1,000-yard freestyle time by more than a second to 9:45.71.

The meet against Drury was Senior Day, but it didn't go any better against the defending national champions. The Bulldogs lost 137-67 and again only won one event. Moon said the meet was difficult to get prepared for.

"The Drury meet is always tough because we like to put our focus on [Missouri S & T], which takes a lot out of us," Moon said. "It's a little bit tougher to get going that next day. However, we still had a pretty solid meet."

Kaestner again was the only swimmer to pick up a win for Truman, in the 100-yard butterfly.

With that win, Kaestner has won at least one event in the last five meets. Gole said Kaestner's work ethic helped him improve throughout the year.

"[Kaestner] is extremely talented,"



Sophomore Corey Moon comes up for air during the breast stroke leg of the 400-yard individual medley during Saturday's meet against Drury. The Bulldogs lost to Drury 137-67. Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Gole said. "The breakthrough that he had in Florida has kind of carried with him since we've gotten back to Kirksville. He's really elevated his game on a regular basis. He's starting to have a little bit more fun challenging himself in practice. When the talented ones do that, great things start to happen."

Stokes was back for the Bulldogs on Saturday, taking second place in the 50-yard freestyle. He finished third in the 100-yard freestyle and

was a part of the second-place 200-yard freestyle relay, which was also a bright spot for the Bulldogs. They finished with a time of 1:25.83, less than three-tenths of a second behind Drury. The relay is one of Truman's strongest, as it qualified for nationals during the Indiana Hoosierland Open Invitational.

Truman will have next week off in preparation for the Feb. 11 to 14 NSISC Championships in Cleveland,

Miss. The NSISC is a very competitive six-team conference. Five of those six teams are also in the top 15 of Div. II teams. Gole said Truman will be working on several things before that meet.

"[We will be] fine-tuning everything," Gole said. "The national group will keep pounding it out for the next two weeks. Everybody else will just see a gradual reduction of intensity and work load."

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