

# Men suffer slim loss on Senior Day

BY JACK NICHOLL  
Assistant Sports Editor

Many times this season, the men's basketball team has fallen apart after falling behind. The first time the Bulldogs played the University of Central Missouri, the 'Dogs completely deflated in the second half and were outscored by 26 points.

The second time against the Mules was a different story.

Truman (6-21, 1-19 MIAA) didn't win, but they stayed with the No. 12 Mules (23-4, 16-4 MIAA) in a 77-71 loss during Senior Day on Saturday in Pershing Arena. UCM never led by more than nine and it was a one-point game as late as the 4:49 mark in the second half.

"The whole week in practice coach [said], 'We have to be ready to fight. You have to be ready to fight,'" senior forward Patrick Fandja said.

Fandja recorded his third double-double of the season with 15 points and 10 rebounds. Freshman center Vesko Filchev, sophomore forward Ethan Freeman and sophomore guard Stefan Garrison also tallied double figures.

"We just came out motivated, and we played a little bit more solid," Filchev said.

It was the depth of the Mules that ultimately put the game away. Guard Nathan Frazier, who averages 11 minutes

a game, sunk his only two baskets in the final two minutes, each to extend the lead to seven. Eight UCM players scored at least five points.

Truman shot 45 percent as a team and 33 percent from three-point range. The Mules shot 46 percent and were led by 22 points from guard Joe Young.

"It's tough, because you don't know who's going to hurt you," Fandja said. "... Besides [Young] — that's the guy, you know he's going to shoot it. All the other guys, you don't know when they're going to step up."

UCM sank eight three-pointers, but the 'Dogs scored most of their points down low. The Bulldogs started the game with their low-post offense but also mixed in their power offense, something they usually don't do with Filchev in the game.

"It lets us control the game," head coach Jack Schrader said. "Unfortunately, we controlled it so much that they went zone, ... and we had a couple possessions that caught us off guard."

Schrader said each offense had its advantages. Filchev has a three-inch height advantage on UCM's tallest player, which contributed to the down-low scoring.

Truman took an early seven-point lead in a back-and-forth first half that ended at 33-

31 in UCM's favor. The Mules had an opportunity to increase their lead to seven with the last possession, but a steal by senior guard Banks Estridge with six seconds left set up a trey by sophomore guard Alex Henderson.

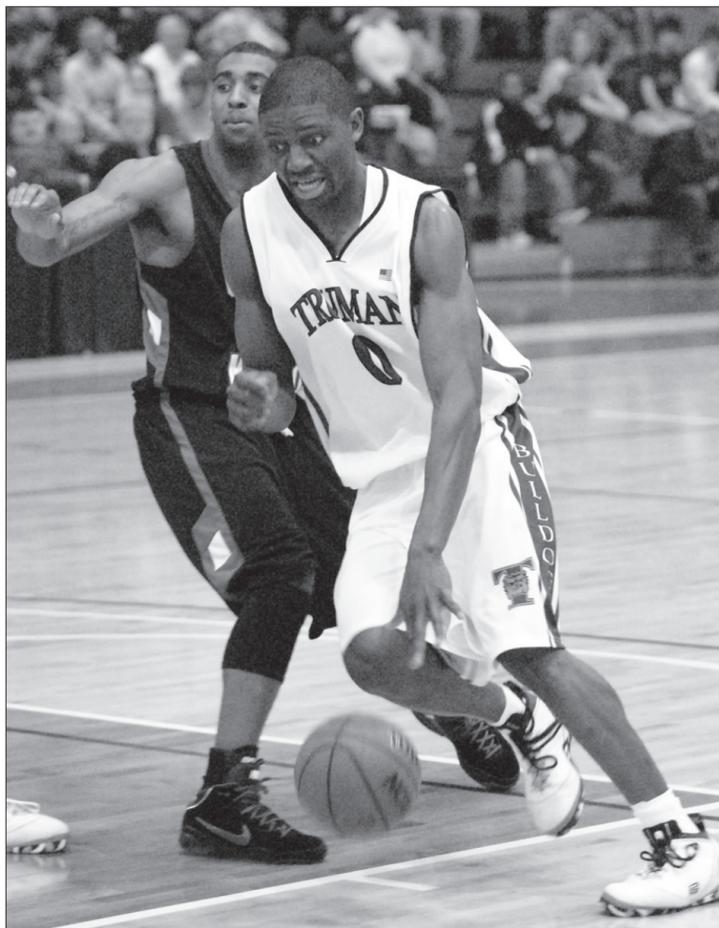
The second half became a battle of foul trouble, as both teams reached the double bonus by the 12 minute mark. The 'Dogs responded with one of their best performances of the season by sinking 78 percent of their free throws, compared to only 59 percent for the Mules.

The two teams finished the season at opposite ends of the conference. UCM is the No. 2 seed in the MIAA Tournament, which starts today, while the 'Dogs finished last in the standings by a four game margin.

Estridge, Fandja and senior guard Todd Kulage each had something positive to take from their last game. Kulage received his second career start, Fandja had his double-double and Estridge finished with nine points, six assists and five rebounds.

"Just going through my mind [as] I was going up and down [the court] and this is the last one, I can't believe it," Fandja said.

Estridge finished the season with a team-leading 10.1 points per game. Fandja had 9.6 points and 5.6 rebounds per game.



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Senior forward Patrick Fandja scored 15 points and grabbed 10 rebounds Saturday. The Bulldogs lost to UCM 77-71 and finished the season 6-21 overall with just one MIAA win.

The season itself started out strong for Truman with five straight non-conference wins, but the Bulldogs then faltered and won just one of their final

22 games. The only conference win came on a last-second shot against Missouri Western State University on Jan. 14.

"[UCM] kind of showed

how the season went," Fandja said. "... Every time we were close against one of the best in the country, we just need just a little bit to get over the hump."



File Photo

Sophomore catcher Bryce Bond gets into his throwing stance during a game last season. Bond was behind the plate for Truman in Game 1 of last weekend's series against Fort Hays. Truman was swept in four games.

# Baseball swept at the hands of Fort Hays State

**Bulldogs shut out in two games, outscored 29-9 in four-game series**

BY BRENT FOSTER  
Staff Reporter

Offense was hard to come by for the baseball team this past weekend.

Fort Hays State University outscored Truman 29-9, including two shutouts during a four-game sweep of the Bulldogs at Hays.

The sweep dropped the Bulldogs to 1-10 for the season and 0-4 in the MIAA. It was the opening MIAA series for both squads.

Fort Hays set the tone for the weekend with a 10-0 shutout in Game 1 on Friday. The Bulldogs managed only one extra base hit in the loss.

Fort Hays senior Eric Gilliland went the distance for the Tigers, struck out seven Bulldogs and scattered four hits in seven innings.

"[Gilliland] dominated us," head coach Dan Davis said. "Sometimes that's going to happen in baseball."

Trailing 3-0 in the fourth inning, it appeared Truman had a chance to cut into the lead. Sophomore second baseman Luke Crader walked, junior outfielder Keaton Jones singled to center and sophomore first baseman Kevin Zukaitis was hit by a pitch to load the bases. But Gilliland bore down and got freshman shortstop Steven Rose to pop out to third and sophomore first baseman Matt Herrick to fly out to center to end the threat.

FHSU added seven more runs during the next three innings to put the game out of reach. Freshman pitcher Seth Hunninghake was saddled with the loss. He went 4.1 innings and allowed eight runs, all earned, on 10 hits.

The offensive assault seemed like a carryover from last year for the Tigers. Last season, Hays finished second in the conference in batting average. They hit .324 and belted 88 home runs.

Truman's best chance at a win came Saturday in Game 2 during its best offensive showing of the weekend.

Truman pounded out 13 hits and scored six runs, but it still was not enough. Hays scored single runs in the

seventh and eighth to knock off the Bulldogs 8-6. Truman came out of the gates with three runs in the first inning. After the first two batters reached, Jones hit Truman's first home run of the season to left field to give Truman a 3-0 lead. But the lead did not last as FHSU scored two in the bottom of the first. Sophomore left-hander Kyle Veazey retired the first two batters but then allowed a double to first baseman Dusty Washburn and a home run to designated hitter Greg Bieker.

Truman led 5-2 heading into the bottom of the fifth, but the Tigers played small ball to tie the score at five with four singles and a sacrifice fly.

Truman took the lead again in the top of the sixth, but it didn't last. The Tigers scored single tallies in the sixth, seventh and eighth.

Truman had the tying-run on base in the ninth inning, but Rose grounded to short to end the game.

"We had a team talk, and we've kind of had enough of the moral victories, and we need to start actually winning games on the scoreboard," sophomore

outfielder Kenny Swanson said.

The loss spoiled Jones' big day and huge weekend at the plate. He was 8-for-14 at the plate and had five RBIs. So far this season Jones is hitting .383 with five extra-base hits and 11 RBIs.

Truman's inability to produce offensively also soured a good pitching performance Sunday. In the first game of Sunday's doubleheader, freshman right hander Ryan Trimble allowed four runs and five hits in 5.2 innings, but took the loss as Truman fell 4-0. The Bulldogs mustered a season-low three hits.

"As a pitcher, really all I can do is try to go out there and try and keep us in the game and give us a chance to win," Trimble said. "At times it can be a little frustrating, but you've got to trust in your team. I know eventually we are going to get some runs."

Truman lost the final game Sunday 7-3. Freshman right-hander Christian Witt was chased from the game after recording just one out. He allowed four runs on three hits, and threw 13 pitches.

Kenny Swanson went 1-for-4 with two runs scored in Game 4. So far this season, he has been a bright spot in the leadoff position. He has scored 10 runs while batting .295 and has drawn five walks.

Truman travels to Joplin Friday to take on Missouri Southern State University in a four-game series.

Last year Truman lost 3-of-4 to the Lions.

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