



Senior Erica Anderson swims in the 200-yard medley relay Nov. 8. Anderson was one of many women last year who swam an A cut at the fall taper meet. The women will have a good idea of where they stand for nationals after this weekend.

Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Bulldogs seek A cuts

Swimming teams will compete at fall taper meet this weekend

BY KRISTA CRIDER
Staff Reporter

The biggest meet of the fall semester is coming up for the men's and women's swimming teams, and they have been preparing physically and mentally for the past month.

The Hoosierland Invitational, in Bloomington, Ind., will take place Nov. 21 to 23, and the Bulldogs have been tapering on different schedules for the past few weeks to get themselves ready. Head coach Mark Gole said he thinks they are finally prepared to go for the A cuts needed for nationals.

"We are swimming very well right now, so I'm excited to see what they're going to be capable of doing," Gole said. "After the Indiana meet, we'll really be able to gauge kind of where we are at."

At last year's taper meet, the men came out with five A cuts and the women earned 11. Gole said he hopes as many swimmers as possible will get A cuts

at the taper meet, including those who have gotten them in the past and some of the promising newcomers.

Three Bulldogs, two women and one man, already have achieved A cuts this year: junior Kate Aherne, senior Jason Stokes, and sophomore Anna Grinter. On the women's side, Aherne said she is expecting quite a few more A cuts at the Invitational, especially from the relays and the breaststroke events.

"I am looking forward to watching all my teammates swim," Aherne said. "I think everyone is going to do really well. I am definitely [expecting more A cuts], definitely from our relays, and I'm hoping some of the girls will get them in the breaststroke events. We have a lot of opportunities for a lot of people to get it."

At the invitational, the Bulldogs will face Div. I teams including the University of Indiana and Cincinnati University. Stokes said these Div. I schools will push the teams to perform at a higher level than normal for a Div. II school.

"I think [the level of competition] is going to be great

for us," Stokes said. "I think it is going to enhance our level of performance because they are a bunch of fast teams, and they are not tapered at all, but their regular speeds are our taper speeds, so they are going to meet the times that we need to be going."

The taper process is something that's good for an athlete every so often, but never for consecutive meets. Gole said tapering for the Bulldogs involves a lot of resting, a decrease in yardage at practice and working with techniques such as starts and turns to perfect and decrease times at the taper meet. Stokes said the Hoosierland Invitational is important to the Bulldogs because it allows for an easier tapering process when the time comes for conference and nationals.

"[The taper meet] is the highlight of the first semester," Stokes said. "We want to get all of the A cuts out of the way right now, because we don't want to have to taper for conference. It is really tough to taper for conference because three weeks later, we'll need to taper again for nationals, and that messes up your body's flow and how

you feel in the water."

Multiple women on the team said the Bulldogs have been training harder this year than ever before. Aherne said she thinks that if the swimmers remember all of the things they've been working on, the invitational will be a success. "[We need to] remember how much training we've done, and know that we've put in the work this semester to really have some awesome swims," Aherne said. "If we keep that in mind, we have the training to back up some really good times."

Stokes said the men are hoping for A cuts in multiple individual races, the 200-yard freestyle relay and the 400-yard freestyle relay. Gole said that in addition to A cuts, he is hoping to see a Stokes break his own school record of 20:64 in the 50-yard freestyle.

"Hopefully, we will break a school record," Gole said. "I mean, ideally, [Stokes] is going 20:77 right now, and he should be able to drop it down. I am sure he is going to have aspirations of finishing hopefully in the top four or five, maybe even the top three in the nation before the end of the year."

Kelly eyes All-American status

Senior will attempt to finish in top-30 in final race of career

BY LOGAN JACKSON
Staff Reporter

Senior Danna Kelly is looking to finish her cross country career on a high note.

Kelly will be competing in the NCAA Div. II Championships on Nov. 22 in Slippery Rock, Pa. This will be the second national meet she has participated in.

Last year, she finished 80th with a time of 22:34. Although she didn't place as high as she wanted to, she said it was a great learning experience for her. She said she is excited to have another shot at the national meet.

"Obviously, these are the best women in Div. II in the country," Kelly said. "Last year, showing up on the course was pretty intimidating. This year, instead of thinking these are the best in the country, I'm thinking that I'm a part of this group. I feel like I have a lot more confidence this year."

The course also will be a

factor in deciding the outcome. Kelly said she hasn't seen the course, but it will be much different than the regional course she ran in Texas. The regional course was mainly a flat one, with a couple of small hills. The national course looks to be tougher, with a fairly large hill at the start of the race.

"From what I know of it, the beginning is going to have some hills," Kelly said. "I don't think they're going to be huge killer hills or anything. It will definitely be hillier than Texas. After the hills, it flattens out and remains pretty flat for the rest of the race."

The weather also could have an influence on the outcome of the race. According to MSN Weather, there is a slight chance of snow flurries in Slippery Rock the day of the meet. The temperature also is supposed to be low that day. Kelly could use this as an advantage, mainly because that weather is comparable to the weather she practices in, and it's tougher to prepare for colder weather. However, Kelly has run in cold weather several times before.

Kelly expects to improve

from last year's placement, and she said she wants to finish in the top 30. The top 30 runners in the meet are awarded All-American status. If she finishes in that group, she will become the first Truman runner to earn the honor since Jacquie Faust did in 2006. She also would become the fourth women's cross country runner from Truman to be an All-American. If times

are comparable to last year's national meet, Kelly would have to shave about one minute off her 2007 national time to reach the top 30.

Kelly has also battled Kimi Shank during the last two years. Shank has been Missouri Southern's best runner during those years. She joined Kelly at the national meet last year and finished in 22nd place.

They have run close this year, with Shank coming out on top during their three meet-

ings. They both advanced to nationals this year after Shank finished second in the regional meet and Kelly finished fourth. Kelly said Shank is someone she can follow for most of the race. She said she would like to try to stay on her heels as long as she can.

Head coach John Cochrane said he realizes how tough it is to finish with All-American

honors. He said it takes a lot of concentration and effort to do that well. He also said the competition in the meet will be tough, so Kelly has to be ready to run.

"She has to get out and place herself, and she's got to be able to hang on to it," Cochrane said.

"Last year, she paced herself for a little bit but the focus wasn't there. With the quality of everybody, if you do not get out and get yourself in that first group, you're not going to catch them."

"I'm thinking that I'm a part of this group. I feel like I have a lot more confidence this year."

Danna Kelly
Senior

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Basketball: Trio sits out with suspension

Three players served a one-game suspension from the men's basketball season-opening game against William Woods University (Mo.) on Saturday.

Freshman center Vesko Filchev, junior guard Gabe Landau and sophomore center David Scott did not dress for what head coach Jack Schrader called "minor disciplinary action."

Schrader said each of the players received a minor in possession during the offseason.

"That's just sort of what I've done in the past," Schrader said. "I don't know, it's a long time between the event and now and their behavior has been fine, so I don't know if it's the right thing or not. But that's what I usually do, so that's why."

Women's Soccer: Regional schedule moved

The South Central Region's championship originally was scheduled for Friday, with an Elite Eight game on Sunday. The games have been pushed forward a day to Thursday and Saturday, respectively.

One of the schools in the West Region, which also has its final at Truman Soccer Park, Seattle Pacific University, is a religiously-affiliated school, and therefore does not play on Sundays. An NCAA exception allows the team to play on Saturdays throughout the season instead of Sundays, including during the postseason.

Volleyball: Bulldogs sign five recruits

With six seniors graduating after this season the volleyball team has a lot of spots to replace. The 'Dogs took a step forward to accomplishing that this week by announcing the signing of five incoming freshmen for the 2009 season.

Truman announced the signing of middle blocker Emily Briesno from Lee's Summit, outside hitter Heather Hargadine from Labadie, Mo., middle blocker Cami Martin from Tujunga, Calif., middle blocker Megan Sharpe from Edwardsville, Ill., and middle blocker/right side hitter Alli Walsh from Milwaukee, Wisc.

Volleyball: Six MIAA teams qualify for region

When the Bulldogs begin play at the NCAA regional tournament Friday afternoon, they will be in familiar territory. Five MIAA teams will join the Bulldogs to make for a record six MIAA teams in the regional, which will be hosted in Emporia, Kan. The Bulldogs are the No. 2 seed and will open up against No. 7 seed University of Nebraska Omaha at 2:30 p.m. The winner of that match will face the winner of No. 3 Washburn University and No. 6 University of Central Missouri.

The top half of the bracket will get underway at 5 p.m. with No. 5 West Texas A&M University taking on No. 4 Pittsburg State University. The first round concludes at 7:30 p.m. with host No. 1 Emporia State University taking on No. 8 Texas Permian Basin University.

The tournament continues Saturday with two semifinal matches at 4:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. The championship match is set to begin at 4 p.m. Sunday. The winner of the regional tournament advances to the national quarterfinals, which will be Dec. 4 to 6 at a site yet to be determined.

Football: Two stand out for special teams

Two special teams players stood out for the Bulldogs on Saturday during the 39-38 loss to Missouri University of Science and Technology at Stokes Stadium.

Senior all-purpose returner Phil Kenney put the 'Dogs in good field position for their first three drives with kickoff returns to Truman's 50, 46 and 43 yardlines. The returns were good enough that for the next two kickoffs, S&T kicked away from Kenney.

Kenney ended up with four returns for 108 yards. His last return, with 18 seconds left in regulation, was covered up and went for no gain.

Freshman punter Max Kleckner also had a good day. He averaged 31 yards for five punts — but his biggest contribution came on a fake punt. Down 14-0 late in the first quarter with the 'Dogs facing 4th-and-4, Kleckner completed a 20-yard pass to senior tight end Ryan King, which led to a touchdown two plays later.

Kleckner ends the season 2-for-2 passing for 54 yards and a 326.8 passer efficiency rating.

Basketball: Estridge injures pinky finger

Senior guard Banks Estridge suffered a minor injury to his right pinky finger in the second half of the season-opening game against William Woods University (Mo.).

At the 14:06 mark, Estridge caught his finger on a defender's jersey while making a cut. Estridge went on to make the shot before sitting out the rest of the game. In 23 minutes played, he was second on the team with 17 points on eight-for-ten shooting.

Estridge got x-rays after the game and the injury was diagnosed as dislocated.

"They put it back in place," Estridge said. "Just playing through the pain. That's pretty much all you can do."

The injury did not deter from Estridge's performance against Quincy University (Ill.). Wearing tape around his pinky and ring fingers, he had a team-high 20 points, five rebounds and two assists.

Head coach Jack Schrader said Estridge may sit out in tonight's home game against Central Christian University (Mo.).

"I don't know if he will play Thursday," Schrader said. "It's a team we should really be superior to, although they are massively improved. So it's just something that will be sore, but will continually get better."

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