

# Tennis set to begin season

**Blair should to take No. 1 singles spot for women, men lose Bracha for fall**

BY KRISTA CRIDER  
Staff Reporter

The men's and women's tennis teams are gearing up to begin their 2008 season in a big way.

The women will play first at the Truman Invitational on Friday, and the men soon will follow at home in the Town & Gown scrimmage on Sunday.

The women are coming off of a historic season. The Bulldogs had a 22-6 record last year. The 22 wins were the most in Truman's history, so the 'Dogs will have their work cut out for them to match last season's success.

Without alumna Jennifer Salmon, the No. 1 player for the past three seasons, the women have had to rework their lineup during preseason.

"We're still in the middle of [deciding the lineup] by playing matches among the players," head coach Pete Kendall said. "A couple new players will be in it, and we'll have at least one new doubles team."

The Bulldogs will return two seniors to fulfill the leadership role.

"We have two seniors, Lindsay [Blair] and Courtney [Walther], who will be playing one and two [in singles]," Kendall said. "They will also be playing doubles together."

Blair played No. 2 singles last year and has an overall singles record of 74-7 during her three years at Truman.

Blair and Walther have been doubles partners for three years and are experienced at the No. 1 doubles spot.

Sophomore Amy Ochs, a hopeful for the No. 3 singles spot, had a record of 25-1 last season at the No. 5 singles spot. Ochs was doubles partners with Salmon last year, and with two freshmen, Ellen Russell and Dagmar Velez, vying for playing time, the doubles teams are still up in the air.

"Coach is going to mix and match some at practice to see how teams work together," Blair said.

The women will be playing in the Truman Invitational and the Western Illinois Invitational within the next couple of weeks. The Truman Invitational is a singles-only tournament, and the team has been practicing accordingly.

"We have been doing a lot of singles play and singles drills at practice to get ready for [the Invitational]," Blair said. "The Western Illinois [tournament] is both singles and doubles, so I am guessing in the next couple weeks we will start playing more doubles at practice."

Overall, Blair said the women are optimistic entering the season.

"I'd say right now [our attitude] is excitement," she said. "We realize we have a chance of being really good this year, and so we just want to try to do our best and match our potential."

The men's team is going to be in for a big challenge during the fall. Two returning letter winners, junior Peter Bracha, the No. 1 singles player in 2007-08, and junior Ben Rusk, are studying abroad this semester. This leaves the No. 1 singles spot up for grabs.

"A lot of people will get different responsibilities than in the spring," Kendall said.

The Bulldogs were 13-8 last year and are returning many of their players despite, graduating Cody Pusateri and losing Bracha and Rusk this fall. The Bulldogs also have freshman Eric McCollough entering the lineup and he will be seeing some playing time.

Men's and women's tennis competes during both the fall and the spring seasons, with the more challenging conference matches taking place in the spring.

"The teams in our conference are probably our hardest competition," Kendall said. "Our conference is always tough."

During the fall season, the teams mostly will be taking part in tournament play, but with rankings and records at stake, the fall is just as crucial.

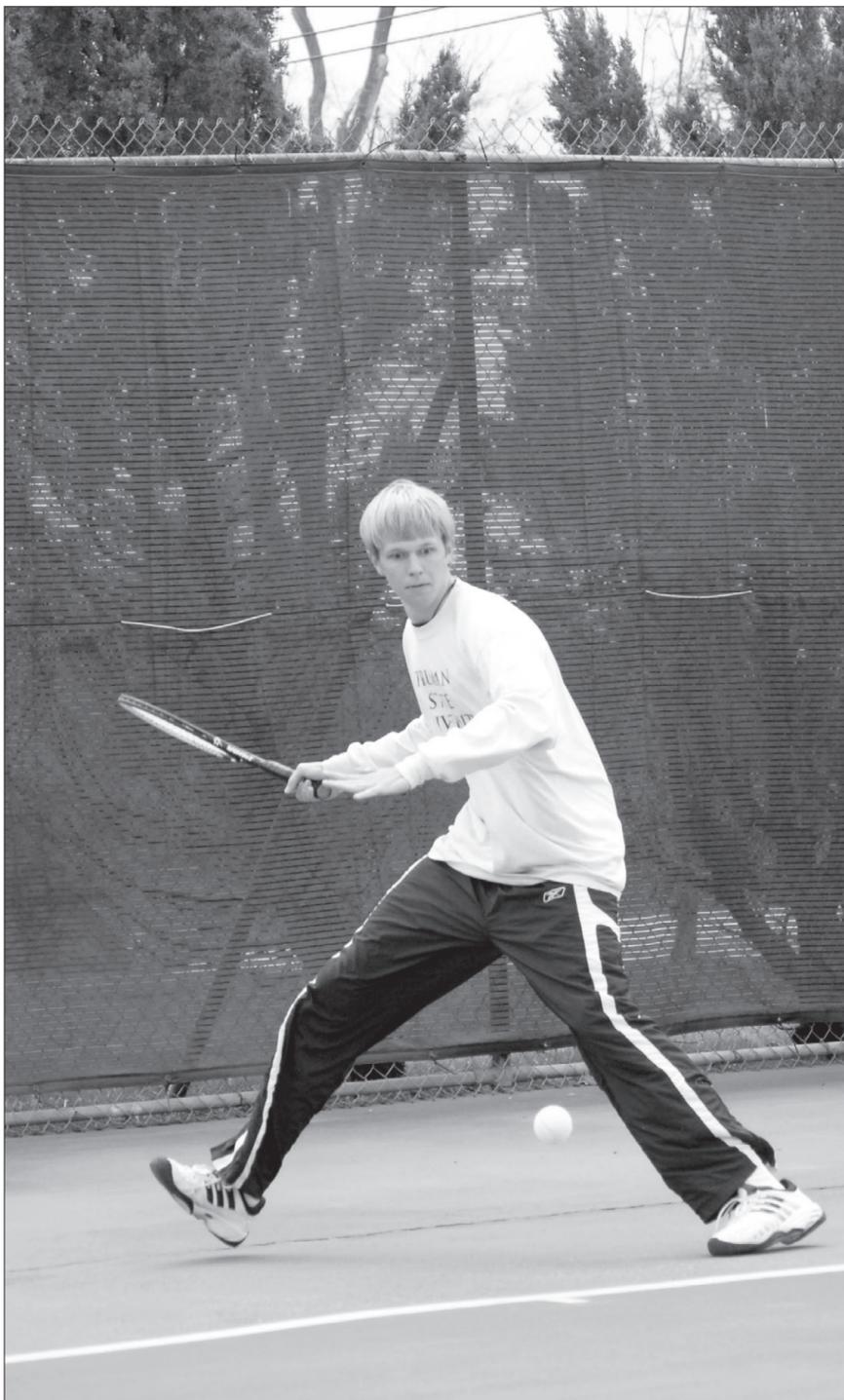
"It's not a 'so called' official season and an unofficial season," Kendall said. "Everything counts in tennis."

The tournaments played this fall will be anything but easy.

"ITA is the national tournament we're playing in, so it should be pretty tough," junior Steve Hipkiss said. "If we can come together with our doubles, we should be able to do pretty well."

The men and women are both ready to get the season started.

"They're obviously looking forward to playing," Kendall said.



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index  
Junior Kyle Schlotz sets himself for a forehand during play last season. Schlotz was 14-7 in singles play in 2007-08, playing out of the No. 4 and No. 5 singles position. Schlotz could move up the depth chart this season.

# New rules will make football games shorter

**NCAA implements changes in timing and penalties**

BY JACK NICHOLL  
Assistant Sports Editor

The NCAA is implementing multiple rule changes for the 2008 football season.

The most prominent difference will be changing the play clock from 25 seconds to 40 seconds, similar to how it is in the NFL.

Last year referees had to spot the ball and declare the ball in play before a 25-second play clock started. This season a 40-second play clock will start at the end of the previous play.

"I think the rule changes will also help us, the fact that there are going to be less plays at the end of the game, and with our high-tempo offense, that works to our favor," head coach Shannon Currier said earlier this year. "As well as, if you are the

underdog, which it appears we are, if the best teams have problems scoring early, they aren't going to have as many opportunities to score in games."

The change will allow for a more consistent time for the ball to be snapped. Last year referees had a variation in the amount of time it took for them to signal the play clock to start.

Situations in which the 25-second play clock will still be used include after out-of-bounds plays and official timeouts.

Another rule has been put in place that will keep the game clock moving more often than in past years. When a play ends up out of bounds, the game clock will start when the referee gives a signal, as opposed to when the ball is snapped on the next play. This rule will not be in effect inside of two minutes of both halves.

The game and play clock changes have been put in

place to shorten the overall time of games. Currier said the new rules will favor Truman in more ways than favoring the underdog.

"The second benefit is we're a no-huddle offense," Currier said. "And now we're able to take advantage of it really. We're not really going to lose much time because when the ball goes out of bounds there's still going to be a little bit of time there when the game clock is stopped. The 40-second clock I don't think really affects us very much because we're getting our plays off quick anyway."

The changes also could help out the Truman defense which is used to practicing against the high-tempo Bulldog offense. The new rules will increase the pace of the game, but Truman's defense already is used to playing at a fast pace because the players practice against the offense, senior linebacker Jason Thier said.

Other minor changes will

affect penalties and should not have a big influence on the games.

The removal of the incidental five-yard facemask penalty will have no effect on the 15-yard facemask penalty. Whereas last year there was a five-yard penalty if a player grabbed a facemask but let go immediately without it having an effect on the opposing player, there will be no penalty this year.

"It could actually be better for the defense because there would be a lot of times where we would be looking at the five-yard facemask where it was completely incidental," Thier said.

"So now with the new rules that the helmet actually has to move, it can limit a

lot of five-yard penalties that weren't necessary."

The facemask penalty will be up to an official's discretion, as will be the new "horse collar" tackle rule, which will penalize a team 15 yards. The penalty will not be enforced when a running back is in the tackle box or when the quarterback is in the pocket. Also, the rule only will be enforced if a player is pulled straight down, not when a player is pulled back.

Thier said the rule only will have a minor effect because horse collar tackles do not happen as often as most people think they do.

Teams will also be flagged for five yards without warning if standing too close to

the playing field while on the sidelines. Under previous rules, a silent warning would be given before a penalty.

Every division in college football will enforce the new rules.

Truman will play its first game with the new rules noon Saturday, when the Bulldogs play against Southern Arkansas University.

Because of the inclement weather Kirksville has received the last couple of days, workers have been unable to install the rubber insulation on the turf field at Stokes Stadium, which Director of Athletics Jerry Wollmering said is expected to be finished by the Sept. 13 game against Central Missouri University.

The game has been moved to the campus of William Jewell University in Liberty, Mo., three hours from Kirksville.

Tickets are \$2 for Truman students with ID and \$5 for non-students.

**Rider Drug**  
Your Rxperts

**top 10 reasons to come to RIDER DRUG**

- 1 We're the pharmacy closest to campus
- 2 We have a drive-up window
- 3 Save time and gas with FREE Kirksville delivery, free mailing everywhere!
- 4 Order refills online at [www.riderdrug.com](http://www.riderdrug.com)
- 5 We're the pharmacy closest to campus
- 6 FREE consultation about your prescription
- 7 Most insurance and Medicaid programs honored
- 8 We're the pharmacy closest to campus
- 9 We "keep the assist in pharmacist"
- 10 We're the pharmacy closest to campus

Keeping the "Assist" in Pharmacist • 1207 S. Baltimore • (660) 665-4666

## Crazy 'Bout Patsy

A tribute to Patsy Cline starring Sherrill Douglas  
[www.sherrilldouglas.com](http://www.sherrilldouglas.com)

**Come celebrate Patsy's 76<sup>th</sup> birthday!**  
Sept. 6, 2008 at 7 p.m.  
Doors open at 5:30 p.m.  
Opening act: Danielle Steele, Unionville, Mo.  
Enjoy cake at intermission.

Silver Rails Event Center  
Downtown LaPlata, Mo.  
Tickets: \$15 in advance, \$18 at the door

**\$1 off admission**

- with current student ID
- "Crazy 'Bout Patsy"
- Sept. 6, 2008 7 p.m.
- Silver Rails Event Center, La Plata, Mo.