

'Dogs roll 54-7, move to 1-1



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Senior receiver Vanness Emokpae catches a touchdown during Saturday's 54-7 victory. The 'Dogs are now 1-1.

BY BRENT FOSTER
Assistant Sports Editor

After falling behind early in Week 1, the Bulldogs had to fight from behind and could not establish a run game. That was not the case Saturday in Week 2.

The Bulldogs ran for 183 yards on 34 carries and sprinted past Oklahoma Panhandle State University 54-7 to even their record at 1-1.

"We definitely want to run the football and we felt like we were able to run the football better Saturday, but we still have work to do there," head coach Aaron Vlcko said.

The Bulldogs distributed the ball evenly to their backs. Seven running backs had at least three carries.

Junior running back Donald Harvey led the team with 70 yards on six carries and a touchdown.

The Bulldogs ran the ball 11 straight plays in the fourth quarter because of the big lead. For the game, they averaged 5.4 yards a carry. In the Week 1 loss to Minnesota State University-Mankato, the Bulldogs fumbled five times and averaged only 2.4 yards a carry.

The Bulldogs took the opening kickoff and marched 63 yards in five plays and took a 7-0 lead when junior quarterback Phil Davis connected with senior receiver Charlie Brunette for a 40-yard touchdown pass. The Aggies responded with a seven-play, 69-yard drive to tie the score at 7-7.

Truman scored the final 47 points of the game, including a 40-point outburst during the second and third

quarters to put the game well out of reach. The 47 points included a stretch in the second and third quarter in which the defense scored 16 points in a row.

The Bulldogs led 17-7 in the second quarter when the defense took over. Redshirt freshman defensive lineman Patrick Blackwell forced an intentional grounding in the end zone for a safety, then senior defensive back Demetrius Lavant returned an interception 46 yards for a touchdown and sophomore defensive back Terrence Byrd picked up a fumble and ran it back 36 yards for a score early in the third quarter.

The Bulldogs were so efficient on offense they did not punt the ball for the first time since a Sept. 23, 2000 victory against Missouri University Science and Technology. The 'Dogs scored touchdowns on five straight possessions from late in the second quarter through the fourth quarter.

Junior quarterback Phil Davis finished 13-for-20 with 224 yards passing and two touchdowns. He completed passes to eight different receivers. With the game well in hand for Truman, redshirt freshman quarterback Taylor Breen relieved Davis in the fourth quarter.

Senior receiver Steve D'Antonio led the 'Dogs with four catches and 70 yards.

The game also marked a stark contrast to Week 1, when the Bulldogs fumbled five times. Truman did not have a fumble Saturday.

"Coach Vlcko on Sunday after the loss to Mankato



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Junior quarterback Phil Davis throws a pass during the 'Dogs' 54-7 victory against Oklahoma Panhandle State University.

made it a point to tell us that ball control and ball security is one of our goals and we really need to work on it," D'Antonio said. "I mean last year we had a really good turnover ratio, and we need to keep it up this year."

Truman's defense carried the momentum it picked up in the second half of the loss to Mankato. After giving up the touchdown on Panhandle's opening possession, the defense clamped down. The final 11 possessions for Panhandle included two punts, four turnovers and three turnovers on downs. The defense made a stand in the final minute of the game, keeping the Aggies out of the end zone after nine straight

plays inside the Bulldog 10-yard line.

Truman outgained Panhandle 407-302, averaged more than seven yards a play and converted 6-of-10 third downs. For the season the 'Dogs have converted 62 percent of their third downs.

The Bulldogs open conference play 6 p.m. Saturday at the University of Nebraska Omaha. Last season Truman upset No. 16 UNO 26-20 in double-overtime.

Vlcko said the team has to establish the run to do well against Omaha.

"That will be a big reason we will be able to win the football game this upcoming week if we can control the clock and run the football," Vlcko said.

'Dogs split at tourney

Volleyball team wins first two, loses next two

BY JOE BELL
Staff Reporter

The volleyball team continued its early season ups and downs last weekend when it competed at the North Alabama Classic.

The No. 20 Bulldogs (5-3) won their first two matches Friday when they beat Christian Brothers University (Tenn.) 3-0 and Northern Kentucky University 3-0. Truman did not fare well Saturday, when the 'Dogs lost their matches against No. 20 University of Indianapolis 3-0 and the University of North Alabama 3-2.

Although the 2-2 split was disappointing for the team, there are some areas that the 'Dogs showed the last two weekends that could indicate greater success for the team as the season progresses.

"Right now, we're a little inconsistent," head coach Ben Briney said. "Friday we played great matches, beat both teams

in three [sets]. Saturday, we were up 2-0 on UNA, and we didn't close the deal. Mentally, I think, we said, 'Oh, well, hey, we're up 2-0,' and [UNA was] looking back on us, they got the momentum, and they beat us."

"Right now, it's just part of being a young team. It's one of those 'You've gotta grow up soon' [things] because it only gets tougher from here."

In their first match Friday against Christian Brothers the 'Dogs overcame deficits in two sets. Once the Bulldogs had the lead they lost it only once in the second set.

In its second match against NKU, the team won the first two sets easily.

There were also some patterns that came out of the losses as well. Truman dominated the first set against UNA and won the second set 27-25. The 'Dogs also kept the sets tight against Indianapolis when they lost by narrow scores of 25-22, 25-20, and 25-21.

The strong contributions from the freshmen continued. Freshman middle blocker Megan Sharpe built off of her strong showing

last weekend, adding 61 points to the offense during the weekend.

Freshman outside hitter Heather Hargadine sparked the defense with 50 digs.

The competition at the libero spot continued. Junior Casey Bruno had 52 digs, and freshman Natassia Heygl added 14 digs.

"We fight for [the libero spot] every practice," Bruno said. "It's not a set Casey's going in the first game to Tassia is playing in the first game. We fight for it every practice. It's competitive every drill."

There were also some worrisome trends for the Bulldogs last weekend. Although the Bulldogs stayed close, Truman still gave up several points in a row in crucial positions that cost them sets and ultimately, the match.

Senior right side hitter Lauren Graybeal said there was a much different feel to last weekend's tournament than the Bulldogs' first tournament.

"The first weekend of the season, it seemed more calm, actually, which is kind of funny, be-

cause I thought it would be the reverse," Graybeal said. "It was kind of hectic this weekend, like everybody kind of freaked out a little bit. I think we need to play more calm, more as a team, more smooth almost."

We're trying to get rid of our ups and downs and stay consistent. I think that was a little more apparent this week than last."

Graybeal said there are areas in which the team could improve itself to be better prepared for the road ahead.

"We definitely need some people to step up," Graybeal said. "We need more depth on our bench than we do. We have 22 girls on our bench and I'd like to use them ... I think we can get a lot more depth from our players, we can be more versatile. I just think there is a lot of room for improvement that we need to work on."

The Bulldogs will have the opportunity to see how much they have improved when they head to the Broncho/Fairfield Inn & Suites Invitational Friday and Saturday in Edmond, Okla.

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Women's soccer: Reuck breaks wrist, won't miss time

Senior midfielder Katie Reuck broke her wrist Friday during Truman's double-overtime 0-0 tie against No. 23 St. Edward's University (Texas).

Reuck suffered the injury toward the end of the first overtime period and didn't re-enter the game. She didn't start Sunday against the University of Central Oklahoma, but entered the game later and played several minutes.

Head coach Mike Cannon said Reuck shouldn't miss any time with the injury but that she will have to wear a protective cast for four to six weeks.

Football: Masucci breaks Truman field goal record

Senior kicker Mickey Masucci kicked his way into the Bulldog record book in Saturday's 54-7 win against Oklahoma Panhandle State University. Masucci made his 32nd career field goal in the second quarter, now the most in school history. He had previously been tied with Jeff Kleee and Scott Bresaw.

This season Masucci is 3-for-5 this season on field goals and has made all eight extra points. He also passed the century mark in extra points made for his career.

"A lot of it goes toward my holders I've got and the guys blocking for me because they do as much work out there as I do," Masucci said.

Tennis: Former No. 1 Blair to coach as grad assistant

Tennis head coach Pete Kendall will be getting a helping hand this season from one of the most successful players in Bulldog history.

Lindsay Blair, who played for Truman from 2005-09, will be a graduate assistant for the Bulldogs.

Blair compiled nearly 100 singles victories in her career, which included a stint as Truman's No. 1 singles player last year.

Sophomore No. 3 singles player Ellen Russell said Blair will be an asset to the tennis squads.

"Last year when we'd be playing in a match, she would win or get done early and then come and sit at one of our courts and coach us," Russell said. "So that really helped, and now she'll do that all the time."

Volleyball: Sharpe continues early success

Freshman Middle Blocker Megan Sharpe continued on her tear last weekend at the North Alabama Classic. Sharpe leads the team in kills (84), kills per set average (3.11), and has a team high 103.0 total points for the season, which is over 20 points higher than the next person on the list (Senior right side hitter Lauren Graybeal- 80pts.)

"She's done a great job," head coach Ben Briney said. "There's no other way to put it. She's done a really good job in practice focusing on what she needs to get better at, and she's a competitor. She wants to win, wants to beat other people."

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