

VBALL | Bulldogs face No. 6 Washburn on Friday, Southwest Baptist on Tuesday as they continue conference play

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a .520 hitting percentage, scored a loud first point of the second set, but Emporia quickly recovered. Senior right side hitter Lauren Graybeal and Sharpe were rested early in the second set and soon thereafter, ESU took the lead. Truman showed renewed life toward the end of the set, but it was not enough and ESU evened the match 1-1.

Sharpe said the team can pull some positives from the tough loss.

"We know that we can play with this team and we know we can beat this team because we've done it," Sharpe said. "We just got to get that mental part there. Physically, it's all there. Physically, we have the hitters, we have the defense, we have the setters, we have everything."

The volleyball team began to gel during the weekend, as it swept its first tournament of the year.

The No. 19 Bulldogs beat

St. Edwards University (Texas) 3-1, Southeastern Oklahoma State University 3-1, the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith 3-1 and the University of Central Oklahoma 3-0. All four opponents are in the Bulldogs' region, and the victories will help the Bulldogs in the regional rankings as they move into the difficult MIAA portion of their schedule.

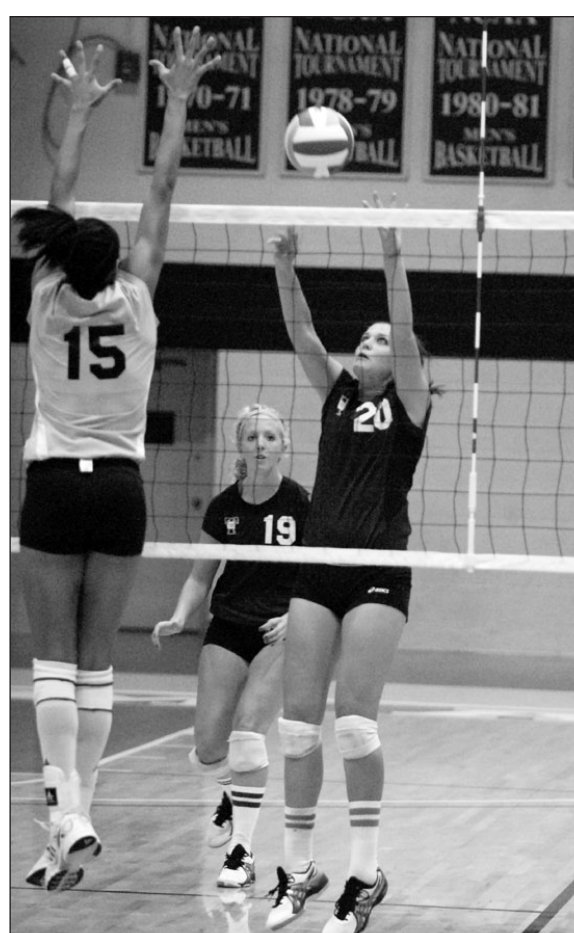
Truman had its most cohesive team play of the season during the weekend. The team had solid performances again from freshman middle blocker Megan Sharpe, who had 52 kills during the tournament, and senior right side hitter Lauren Graybeal, who had 44 kills. The team also received contributions from a variety of different players.

"I think we were a little more consistent," Graybeal said. "We definitely had all of our players for the whole weekend, which helped. We got a little more in a rhythm, which helped too. We are starting to understand how

the person next to you plays, which helps. When we were up, we killed opponents. ... We were in the game, which is something we need to take from that weekend a lot."

Junior libero Casey Bruno made a bid to become the starting libero as she racked up 77 digs. Outside hitters junior Allison Barker and sophomore Molly Sinclair added to the offense and defense. Barker put up three matches with double-digit kills, while Sinclair had two. Barker also had three matches in which she totaled double-digit digs. Senior right side hitter Erin Hattey led the Bulldog attack during their match against Fort Smith. She led the teams in kills (15) for the match.

The Bulldogs enter the heat of their conference schedule with a match at No. 6 Washburn tomorrow. Truman stays on the road to play Fort Hays State University on Saturday, and heads to Bolivar, Mo., to play Southwest Baptist University on Tuesday.



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Senior outside hitter Erin Hattey attempts a block during last night's 3-1 loss against No. 3 Emporia St.

FAMILY |

Truman is 1-5 in last six Family Day games, including 49-0 last year

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Truman, and Family Day is the biggest stage the team plays on in the regular season.

During the first half of the game last year, my dad was caught explaining to two students what a first down was. The students were from a country where futbol, not football, was the main sport. It was the first time they had ever attended a Bulldog athletic event.

If Family Day is the one game students like these attend all year, the Bulldogs must at least compete with the opposition.

Vlcko said the team takes the season one game at a time, and each game is the most important game in the season. But maybe, just for the Family Day game, the team should put in a little extra emphasis.

The 'Dogs will have an easier task than Northwest this year, but by no means is Truman a lock for a victory against Fort Hays State University.

The Bulldogs and Tigers were picked ninth and 10th in the preseason MIAA coaches poll, respectively. But Hays (2-1) is coming off a loss to Missouri Western State University in a game that was closer than the 58-31 score indicates.

Truman will have its hands full trying to stop Hays' QB Mike Garrison, who threw for 394 yards Saturday, and returner C.J. Lovett, who already has three returns for a touchdown this season.

The Tigers also are looking for their first conference road win ever.

"I think they are going to be a confident football team," Vlcko said. "I'm sure this is one that they feel like they should win, and for us, we need to match that confidence level."

The Bulldogs need to compete with Hays for the good of their program. They need to compete for the general image of Truman athletics.

Because even if students don't know what a first down is, they still know how to read the scoreboard.

CLASSIC | Bentzinger, Limsaico lead Bulldogs at tournaments earlier this week

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shots from the first day of the tournament. There were 17 teams participating in the tournament. Lesseig said the improvement from the first day to the second day was good, as the team came back from ninth place after Day 1.

"In some respects, some of them improved and others stayed about the same," Lesseig said. "Others were open about saying they had a bad shot at a certain hole."

The Bulldogs were one shot away from fifth place. They shot 332 on Day 1 and 323 on Day 2.

Senior Krystal Limsaico improved her Day 1 score by five strokes and finished tied for 10th, with a total of 155 strokes. Limsaico said she was satisfied with her 10th-place finish.

"I feel like my teammates weren't as happy though," Limsaico said. "That course can be easy, but you can also make it hard depending on how you're playing."

Junior Jen Lawson finished 33rd out of 97 golfers with a 165. Freshman Jessica Tomash finished 48th

with a total of 171 strokes. Sophomore Liz Lestmann and senior Erin Semple tied for 51st and freshman Kathryn Hogan placed 46th at her first meet of the season.

"We need to be in the 320s or lower," Lesseig said. "I think we can be in the 320s both days. I hope we will."

The women's next tournament will be the Nebraska Wesleyan Invite in Lincoln, Neb. on Sunday and Monday for the women. Limsaico said that her plans for the next meet are to continue to build upon what she has learned from her first three years on the team.

"We are trying to work everybody in and see how they do," Lesseig said.

Also on Sunday and Monday, the men travel to Broken Arrow, Okla., for the Northeastern Oklahoma State Invite.

"It feels like we have something to prove," Bentzinger said. "We were really disappointed with our finish because this a great opportunity to get some conference points and show our conference what we are really made of."

"That course can be easy, but you can make it hard depending on how you are playing."

Krystal Limsaico
Senior



Sondra Langley/Index

Junior Chris Kovach hits an approach shot during the Bulldog Open on Monday. Kovach finished 16th overall and tied for second on the team at 5 over par.

TENNIS | Men dominate against Missouri Baptist in first dual of season, women win two flights at Truman Open last weekend

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behind Truman with a combined record of 31-21.

Sophomore Dagmar Velez won the 5/6 flight with a 5-0 record, and sophomore Jennifer Hawkins won the 7/8 flight with a 6-0 mark. Every other Bulldog finished with at least a tie for third in their respective flight, except for freshman No. 1 Maggi Schutte, who went 1-5 in her Truman debut.

"From what I saw, everyone was playing really well," said junior No. 2 Amy Ochs, who finished 3-3 and placed third in the 1/2 flight. "There was definitely some good matches."

Hawkins is a transfer from

Lee's McRae College (N.C.), and she was competing in her first competition for the Bulldogs.

"She's another backboard who makes you play," head coach Pete Kendall said. "With Jennifer, she'll want you to make a mistake."

Schutte picked up an 8-3 win against Johnson County Community College's Kasey Spencer in her college debut, but she lost her next five matches.

The freshman was slowed throughout the weekend by a sprained ankle, which she suffered in practice last Wednesday.

Kendall said he wasn't concerned about Schutte's 1-5 mark.

"Obviously Maggi's injury slowed her down so I kind of discount most of that play," Kendall said. "I've seen her play a thousand times. She could play with all those girls."

Schutte made several unforced errors in her Saturday matches, many of which might have been caused by the injured ankle. Schutte also is continuing her recovery from a knee injury that slowed her down during her senior year of high school.

"She has a lot of injuries right now so that was kind of hard for her," Ochs said. "But she played well and pushed through it."

The men also began their 2009-10 campaign during the weekend with a tournament at Western Illinois University. Despite facing two Div. I schools at the tournament, four of the Bulldogs' top five singles

players won two of their three matches. Each Bulldog won at least one singles and doubles match.

For the tournament, the men had a combined 11-10 record at singles and finished 4-6 in doubles.

"I thought we did really well as a team," said Schlotz, who teamed with senior John Rothfusz to go 1-1 in doubles. "It was a pretty tough tournament with two Div. I teams in it. ... For the competition there, I'd say we did fairly well."

Rothfusz had arguably the best chance to finish undefeated in singles. After winning his first match 6-4, 6-2, Rothfusz won the first set

of his second match against Western Illinois' Patrick Hammers. But Rothfusz started suffering from cramps in the second set, and he ultimately lost in a tiebreaker.

Rothfusz did recover, however, to sweep Quincy's Rodrigo Azevedo to finish 2-1 in singles.

"My first serve was doing really well [against Azevedo]," Rothfusz said. "I had probably a good handful of aces."

The men will return to the courts Friday and Saturday when they host the Truman Invitational. The men and women will play their next dual match 4 p.m. Tuesday at home against Quincy.

"I've seen her play a thousand times. She could play with all those girls."

Pete Kendall
Head coach, on No. 1 Maggi Schutte

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