

Softball splits with Drury University

BY BRENT FOSTER
Assistant Sports Editor

The Bulldogs couldn't cash in on key opportunities and split a doubleheader with Drury University on Wednesday at the Truman Softball Park.

After the Bulldogs won Game 1 5-2, Drury (17-25) returned the favor with a wild 10-8 victory that featured 18 runs and 27 hits during the two-hour-10 minute-game.

The Bulldogs (16-20, 6-6 MIAA) left 11 runners on base, including two in the bottom of the seventh inning.

"We just didn't get the hits when we needed them," head coach Erin Brown said. "That happens. Sometimes we get tons of hits at a time."

The 'Dogs fell behind 7-2 but battled back. Truman got as close as 9-8 after a grand slam by senior pitcher Richelle van Gennip in the bottom of the sixth, but couldn't complete the comeback in the seventh.

Truman left at least two on base in four of the seven innings. The inability to drive in runs wasted three-hit games from senior centerfielder Erica LaCombe and freshman right fielder Laura Miller.

Freshman pitcher Kirsten

Krause was saddled with the loss in her first collegiate start. She allowed five runs on four hits in 1.1 innings.

Junior pitcher Beth Schnurbusch picked up the victory in the first with a complete game, allowing two runs on five hits.

For much of Tuesday's doubleheader against the University of Illinois-Springfield, the Bulldog offense struggled to produce runs. But in the fifth inning of the second game, the offense got a lift. Freshman third baseman Christine Ulses blasted a three-run homer to left to break open a 1-0 game and lifted Truman to a 9-0 win and a split with the Prairie Stars at the Truman Softball Park.

Following Ulses' team-leading fourth home run, the Bulldogs scored five runs in the bottom of the sixth for a six-inning victory.

"I don't know if I really sparked the team as much as everybody else getting on," Ulses said. "I just hit the ball. They did their job getting on. I think just the rally in general got the thing going, not just me."

The Bulldogs had chances to score runs in the first four innings but couldn't cash in.

Truman had six hits through the first three innings but scored just one run and left four on base.

The late offensive outburst capped a complete-game shutout by Schnurbusch. She allowed four hits and struck out two while walking two.

Brown said the key to Schnurbusch's success was keeping the ball down, while van Gennip kept the ball high in the zone during the first game. She said the difference in van Gennip and Schnurbusch was too much for the Prairie Dogs to overcome.

"She did a good job keeping them off balance," Brown said. "We really worked the ball low with her drop ball and her change up, which is sort of opposite of Richelle [van Gennip]. I think it's a difficult adjustment for batters to make."

Schnurbusch said she wanted to get groundballs by moving the ball around the plate.

"I just tried to get my pitches to move and get them to hit ground balls and get my defense to work," Schnurbusch said.

Truman's nine runs in Game 2 tied a season high achieved during two previous

games this season.

Truman struggled offensively in Game 1, collecting just six hits and drawing one walk but still led 2-1 in the top of the seventh before things unraveled. Van Gennip, who struck out eight of the first nine batters she faced, was two outs from a complete game when she allowed a double, walk and a single before being pulled in favor of freshman pitcher Kristen Krause. Krause's first batter doubled to left center, giving UIS a 3-2 lead.

Brown said it was tough for van Gennip in the last inning because of what Brown thought was an inconsistent strike zone. She said that in the last inning van Gennip had to throw the ball down the middle of the plate to get called strikes.

The 'Dogs threatened in the bottom of the seventh but to no avail. After the first two batters reached on a hit by pitch and a fielder's choice, the Prairie Dogs shut down the Bulldogs to end the game.

The Bulldogs return to action this weekend at the MIAA Crossover Tournament in Maryville, where the 'Dogs will take on five MIAA teams.



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index
Junior pitcher Beth Schnurbusch winds up during Wednesday's win against Drury University.

Bulldogs pick up doubleheader sweep

'Dogs drop road games at Northwest, Missouri Western

BY LOGAN JACKSON
Staff Reporter

Solid pitching and timely hitting gave the Bulldogs two wins against Maryville University (Mo.) on Wednesday at the Truman baseball park.

The Bulldogs (10-29, 5-23 MIAA) played eight games during the week and had lost nine straight games before the two-game sweep against Maryville. Head coach Dan Davis said the team really needed to pick up some wins.

"It's awesome," Davis said. "It's fun watching them when they pitch well and scratch home a couple of runs. Any time you win, you feel good about it."

The Bulldogs started off the day with a solid performance from sophomore Tyler Stefan. He pitched a complete game to earn his first win of the season. Six Bulldog batters had a hit as Truman came away with a 4-1 win.

In the second game, Truman was down early but scored three runs in the fifth and added three more in the sixth to pick up a 6-1 win. Sophomore shortstop Steven Rose was 3-for-3 with three RBIs, and senior outfielder Keaton Jones was 2-for-3 with two runs scored.

Another strong pitching performance, this time from freshman Matthew Grosch, kept Maryville off-balance at the plate. He pitched six innings to earn his first win of the season. In the fourth inning, the Bulldogs committed two errors, and Davis said Grosch did a good job keeping his composure.



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index
Sophomore shortstop Steven Rose takes a swing during Wednesday's sweep of Maryville. Rose finished game two 3-for-3 with three RBIs.

"Any time you get a strikeout with a man on third, it's a huge strikeout," Davis said. "He got two in a row. Lately, if we make an error, the floodgates open,

and we give up five runs. He did a good job of covering those errors up and settling down."

On Tuesday, Truman lost two conference games against North-

west Missouri State University.

Junior Michael Stairh gave up four runs in five innings and was tagged with the loss. The Bulldogs trailed throughout the game, as Rose had two of the five 'Dog hits and had the only RBI. Both teams had five hits and Northwest won 4-2.

Truman didn't take advantage of the solid performance on the mound by junior Jordan McLaughlin in the second game. He threw seven innings and gave up one run on five hits. Junior Drew Garwood walked home the winning run in the bottom of the ninth as the Bulldogs lost 3-2.

Truman had a 2-1 lead going into the bottom of the ninth, but two hits, two HBPs and a walk forced home two runs.

The 'Dogs outhit Northwest 9-to-8 and left nine players on base. Freshman Brett Budd was 3-for-4 and Jones was 2-for-3 and scored both Bulldog runs.

The Bulldogs struggled to close out games during the weekend and were swept by Missouri Western State University in four games.

Truman was outscored by seven runs during the series. Two of the games went into extra innings, and the Bulldogs were either tied or leading late in all four games. Jones said the team has some small things to work out.

"A lot of it was just some little things," Jones said. "We weren't scoring a guy from third with less than two outs. We weren't hitting a cut man, just little things like that. Those things can come back to bite you in the end."

Junior Kyle Veazey started Game 1 of the series and pitched a strong seven innings. He gave up two runs and scattered eight hits. Stefan took the loss, his sixth of the year.

Missouri Western scored the go-ahead run in the bottom of the 10th on a wild pitch to give them a 4-3 win. Rose and junior outfielder Kenny Swanson each had two hits. Swanson added two RBIs.

The Bulldogs took an early 1-0 lead in the second game but couldn't hold on and lost 5-2. Freshman Jarrett Eiskina got the start and gave up five runs in 5.1 innings. Sophomore catcher Pete Jurich had two hits for Truman and had the only two RBIs.

In Game 3 of the series, the bullpen once again couldn't hold as Missouri Western picked up a 6-5 extra-inning win. Grosch started his second game of the year and gave up three earned runs in four innings. Sophomore Christian Witt threw three hitless innings of relief. But Missouri Western got to Garwood. He gave up two hits in the eighth and took the loss.

Junior second baseman Luke Crader and sophomore catcher Devon Myers each had two hits. Rose added two RBIs.

Sophomore Ryan Trimble got the start in the finale and kept Missouri Western at one run through seven innings. Two costly errors in the bottom of the eighth inning by the Bulldogs forced home four unearned runs, and the Bulldogs lost 4-6. Trimble said Missouri Western performed when the game was on the line.

"They came up with some clutch hits," Trimble said. "They hit a couple homers in tight situations to give them leads. They pitched well and hit well and played solid defensively."

Swanson and Jones each had two hits. Myers hit his third home run of the year and had three RBIs.



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