

## Simek | Simek and his brother did not get to swim against each other when teams met in a dual meet three weeks ago

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give up on the set. You've done sets harder than this."

That respect for each other was essential to their performance in the pool and relationship outside the pool, but the two held starkly different views on the nature of their motivation.

"Sometimes we'd end up in the same heat racing each other, but we weren't really going out there to beat each other," Andrew said. "We were just going out there to race."

For Jerod, the friendly competition has been vital to his success as a swimmer. In the 2005 Ozark Championship at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, the Simeks found themselves in a battle for the title of top overall swimmer. With the trophy on the line, Andrew had just one event left and needed to finish third or better to edge out his brother in total points. Jerod said he remembers the conflicting emotions as he watched his brother compete.

"There's that part of me that really wants him to win because I knew he had the chance to do it," Jerod said. "He was second, and I knew he could beat the kid that he was going against. But there was the other part of me that really wanted him to get fourth, so I got the trophy."

As it turned out, Andrew's goggles fogged up, he veered into the rope, and Jerod came home with the hardware.

Regardless of the results of individual races, the Simek twins remained close throughout high school, and as their high school days came to an end, everyone was interested in whether they would go to the same school,

but Jerod and Andrew agree parting ways was beneficial for both of them. Andrew pursued engineering at MST and Jerod is considering physical therapy at Truman.

"We drove in the same car to practice, we had the same practice times, we always saw each other in school, so we were almost never separated," Jerod said. "I still talk to my brother and it's still a good relationship, so it's nice [going to different schools]."

Judging from Jerod's improved times, he made the right decision in coming to Truman. In the mile, he has dropped his best time by 41 seconds, from 16:40 to 15:59, and an A cut is within reach as the conference meet approaches. In practice, his intensity has drawn the attention of head coach Mark Gole.

"He gets himself to do some things that I had yet to see in practice here," Gole said. "I mean, he's gone [the] fastest 400 IMs in practice from a push that I've seen at Truman. For him to be doing that his freshman year is pretty solid."

Aside from his times, Gole said Jerod was quiet to begin the year but has "come out of his shell," and his attitude has meshed perfectly with the team's.

"When we got back here [from San Diego] for a couple weeks, he was training with a lot of people who would do similar sets in practice, and they'd be racing," Gole said. "They'd be trying to beat each other on everything. Definitely [with] how competitive he is, he pushes his teammates."

Sophomore distance swimmer Brian Tillis is one teammate who has been pushed more than any other by Jerod, and one who has pushed him in return. Last year, Tillis had



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index  
Freshman Jerod Simek has B cuts in the 500-, 1,000 and 1650-yard freestyles and the 400-IM.

"It would have been cool to have everyone sitting there watching, cheering for their own Simek."

Andrew Simek  
Jerod Simek's twin

nobody to compete against in practice but this season's competition between Jerod and Tillis has driven both to time improvements.

"It's affecting Tillis on a very high, positive note," Gole said. "[Jerod's] pushing Tillis to train at a much higher level than he ever has in his life."

In the meet against MST, Jerod pleaded with Gole for the chance to race against his brother, but with only a few events in which they still both compete, the grudge match could not be arranged. Andrew said he was excited about the idea too, for the fans as well as the brothers.

"It would have been cool to have everyone sitting there watching, cheering for their own Simek," Andrew said.

Despite not having his twin brother to compete against, Jerod has B cuts in the 500-, 1,000- and 1650-yard freestyles and 400-yard individual medley. If he cuts just a few seconds off any one of these times at the conference meet next week, he will be able to race in all four at nationals.

"I'd say as a freshman, he's still on the wings on [leading the team], but he definitely leads by example with what he does in the pool on a daily basis," Gole said.

## BASKETBALL | Three score in double digits as early run by Emporia dooms Bulldogs during Saturday's home loss

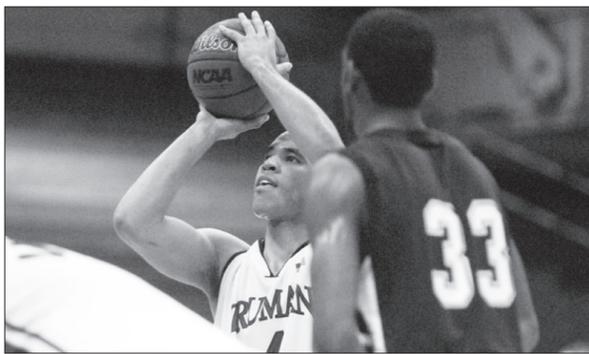
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Schrader said. "I think we did, but that emotion got in the way sometimes. Still, I'll take playing with emotion. This time of the year, you have to have that emotion."

Neither team could get things going in the first half. Both teams shot under 33 percent from the field and Truman held a slim two point lead. The first half was fast-paced, however turnovers were not a problem for either team. Washburn had just three turnovers in the half and Truman had five.

Before the game, Schrader said he wanted to focus on defending Washburn's DeAndre Washington and William McNeill. Those two players combined for 42 points in the first match-up between the two teams. Last night, the Bulldogs nearly cut that number in half and the two combined for just 24 points.

"I think we did pretty good on [Washington] and McNeill," Schrader said. "Those are their two key guys. They shot a really low percentage. They got to the free throw line, unfor-



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index  
The Bulldogs could not hold on in Pershing Arena last night after leading at the half by two against Washburn University.

tunately, I still thought they were very well defended, though."

The Bulldogs once again had a balanced attack. Truman had six players score five or more points. Henderson, junior forward Ethan Freeman and freshman guard Tom Norton each scored 11 points. Sophomore center

Vesko Filchev ended the game with nine points and nine rebounds. He scored eight points and had eight rebounds in the first half.

Poor shooting and turnovers forced the Bulldogs into a double-digit first half deficit Saturday at home against Emporia State Uni-

versity. Truman couldn't dig out of the early hole and lost 72-59.

The 'Dogs shot just 6-for-23 from the field in the first half and committed eight turnovers. They also were cold from beyond the arc, missing all six of their 3-point attempts. Schrader said the team was still thinking about its last game against Pittsburg State University.

"Our offense relies on movement and rhythm to create shots," Schrader said. "I think, as a consequence of winning [last] Wednesday, we were in a hurry to win. We got rushed and hunted plays, hunted shots. We were a little flat and a little overanxious."

The second half was completely different from the first. The Bulldogs shot 50 percent from the field and committed just two turnovers. However, Emporia kept Truman at bay by getting to the free throw line 23 times. Garrison said the Bulldogs couldn't put a dent in Emporia's lead.

"We put ourselves in such a hole in the first half that we just traded baskets in the second half,"

Garrison said. "We'd get a few, but they would go on a run to spread the margin back out again."

The Hornets outscored the Bulldog bench by 26 points. However, two Emporia bench players, senior guard Tim Niles and junior center Adam Holthaus, led Emporia in scoring this season. Schrader said the Hornet coaching staff likes to have the extra spark off the bench.

"Niles is a guy who is [Emporia's] leading scorer, and he came off the bench," Schrader said. "Holthaus is their leading post scorer. The post that they start is just a screener. They do that to create more scoring later on in the game."

Filchev led the way for the Bulldogs with 16 points and eight rebounds. Henderson and Garrison had 12 and 10 points, respectively. Freeman had six points and a team-high 11 rebounds. Freeman is now second in the MIAA in rebounding.

The Bulldogs' next game is at 3:30 p.m. Saturday at Southwest Baptist University.

## RECRUITS | Class includes six on offense, six on defense and two on special teams

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defensive end Nic Abbate of Carol Stream, Ill. Abbate had 75 tackles, nine sacks and six forced fumbles for Glenbard North High School. He was also a member of the Chicago Sun-Times all-state team his senior season.

"He has that edge of a defender that we want to create," Nesbitt said. "Here's a Bulldog defender. That's already there. I can see it on video. He has a fabulous knack for rushing the quarterback."

Linebacker Connor Nagel from Lemont, Ill. also will try to help shore up the defense. Nagel had 125 tackles, seven sacks and three fumble recoveries as a senior at Lemont High School. He led the South Suburban Conference in tackles and received honorable mention all-state the last two years. Nagel said Nesbitt and the academic rigor attracted him to Truman.

"I'm just going to push myself hard and do the best for the team,"

Nagel said.

The class includes one quarterback, Brady Nowak from Belleville, Ill. Nowak threw for 1,500 yards and 19 touchdowns last season at Althoff Catholic High School. He also ran for 600 yards and had six rushing touchdowns.

Other notable recruits include kicker Brian Rosser from Kirkwood High School. Rosser was first team all-Suburban West Conference last season. He made all 28 extra point attempts and 5-of-6 field goals. Rosser could get the opportunity to play right away because of the departure of Mickey Masucci, who handled the kicking duties the last four seasons.

Rosser, who also played soccer at Kirkwood, said one adjustment he will have to make when transition-

ing to college is learning to kick off the ground. High school kickers are allowed to use a tee when kicking field goals.

"I've already practiced, and it's a little bit hard to get used to," Rosser said.

Nesbitt said the new recruits will compete for spots like every player, but many new recruits end up redshirting.

"Most of the time in this conference kids are going to redshirt," Nesbitt said. "Certainly they are going to be more productive players their third, fourth or fifth years than their rookie season. But if you're a competitor, that redshirt year can probably be one of the longest years of their athletic career. We'll let them come in and compete and see where it goes."

"He has a fabulous knack for rushing the quarterback."

Gregg Nesbitt  
Head Coach, on recruit  
Nic Abbate

## INK | 13-person football recruiting class cannot be fully evaluated for a few more years

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"You can glean a lot of information in an hour and a half sitting in someone's home about whether you feel like they're a fit for this university," Nesbitt said.

Although the overall recruiting class is less than previous years (at least 28 in 2008 and 2009), Kearney isn't dismayed. Both he and head coach Gregg Nesbitt agreed that Truman focused on quality more than quantity this year. Nesbitt said nine to 11 could easily start in a few years and four to five possibly will have an immediate impact.

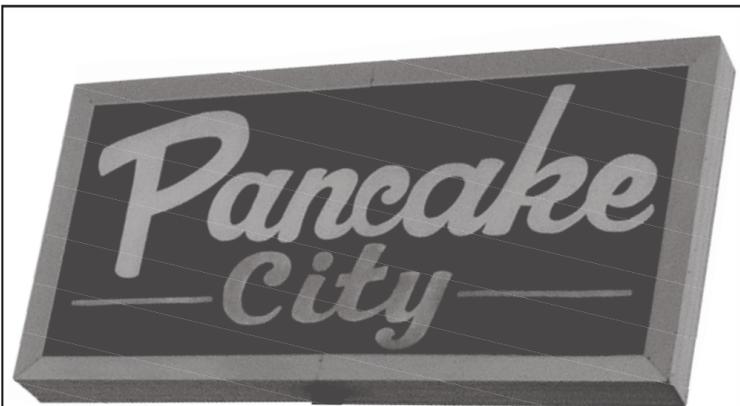
But let's not get carried away. The last comparable class was in 2006 when the Bulldogs signed 15. I have never heard of 11 of those players, and only three became impact players, including quarterback Matt Ticich and

wide receiver Vanness Emokpae.

Four years from now, the 2010 class won't be judged on the No. 13. It will be judged on how many players stay with the team and make an impact. Just like the class of 2006, no 13 players can be judged fairly before they have ever played a down in college.

"You're going to pick up the newspapers tomorrow and all the sports fans are going to be reading about the great recruiting classes that every coach says he has signed," Nesbitt said. "This will be my 31st year next year — I've never read about a coach saying he's got a poor recruiting class."

The process never stops. Kearney will come to work tomorrow and start over, sifting through thousands of names for 2011.



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