

'Dogs can't hold on at Mo. West

Men fall 71-68 after building early 12-point advantage

BY LOGAN JACKSON
Staff Reporter

The men's basketball team faltered down the stretch and lost its ninth straight game last night at Missouri Western State University, 71-68.

The Bulldogs (3-13, 1-8 MIAA) used an impressive first half to take an early 12-point lead. However, the Griffins used a huge second half to get the win. Truman shot nearly 67 percent from the field in the first half, including a 7-for-11 mark from the three-point line. The 'Dogs couldn't find the mark in the second half and connected on just nine field goals.

Before the game, head coach Jack Schrader said the team might not be winning, but they are starting to come together as a team.

"I sense the guys thinking that they're getting better," Schrader said. "We had no sensation of that at all last year. That is an important element because if they feel they're getting better, they keep working. I think they're getting tougher, and as they get tougher, they'll become more of a team."

Once again, offensive rebounds hurt the Bulldogs. The Griffins scored seven more second-chance points than Truman and had eight offensive rebounds. However, poor free throw shooting from Missouri Western kept the score close. The Griffins missed 12 free throw attempts, with 10 of those

misses coming in the second half.

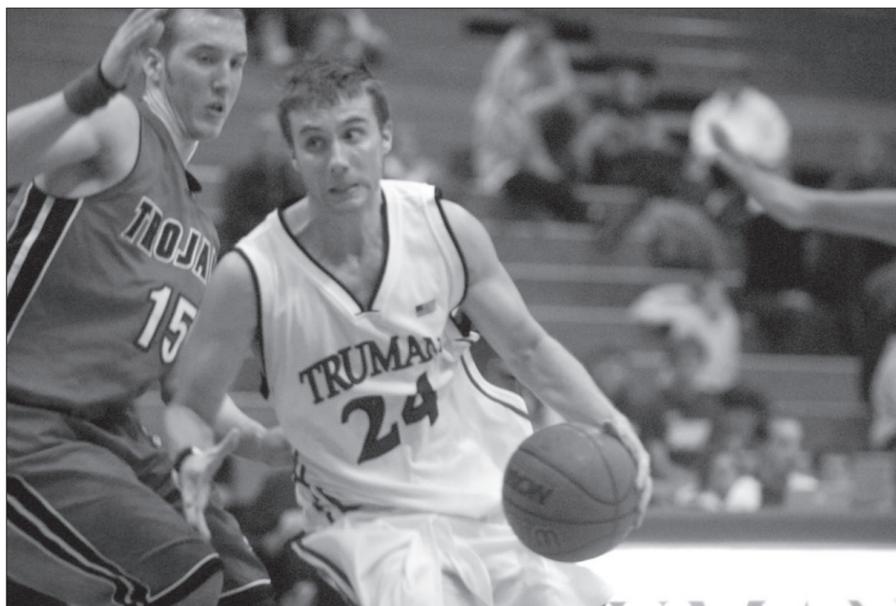
The Bulldogs led for more than 30 minutes, but Missouri Western tied the score with 8:25 left in the game and didn't look back. Schrader said the Bulldogs needed a win to get the pressure of their record off their backs.

"We've got to keep giving ourselves chances," Schrader said. "When you're behind the eight ball, it takes an extra effort to get out from behind the eight ball because your record starts weighing on you. Once you get out from behind it, who knows."

Truman once again had four players into double figures. Junior guard Stefan Garrison led the way with 18 points. Junior guard Alex Henderson added 15 points and hit three three-pointers, while freshman guard Tom Norton had four threes on his way to 14 points. Junior forward Ethan Freeman had a solid game across the board, with 12 points, 11 rebounds and five assists.

On Saturday, the Bulldogs started their two-game road trip against Northwest Missouri State University Bearcats. Both teams looked to get out of early season slumps, and the Bearcats prevailed, 73-70. The loss marked Truman's eighth straight while the win gave Northwest their fourth in 10 games.

The 'Dogs had a well-balanced attack, with four players hitting double figures. They were led by Norton's 19 points on six three-pointers. Sophomore center Vesko Filchev recorded his fourth double-



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index
Junior guard Stefan Garrison, shown here in a game earlier this season, led the Bulldogs with 18 points on 8-for-13 shooting last night against Missouri Western. The 'Dogs fell to 3-13 overall with the loss.

double of the season with 14 points and 11 rebounds. Garrison and Freeman added 13 and 10 points, respectively. Freeman said the team played well despite the results.

"We just went out and played basketball," Freeman said. "It really helped us to not have our minds everywhere and thinking about what other people are doing. We were working off each other, and we came together better. A lot of people contributed."

Truman was behind from the opening tip and found themselves down eight early. However, the Bulldogs didn't quit and faced a two-point half-

time deficit. The improved play continued into the second half, and the Bulldogs took a one-point lead with less than 15 minutes left in the game.

"The reason we got into those holes was because of turnovers," Henderson said. "We had a few bad possessions in a row. We straightened that up a little bit and got a couple jumpers on the break. Tom hit a couple threes and we were right back in the game."

The lead wouldn't last for long, as the Bearcats turned up the intensity and went on a momentum-changing 13-3 run. The Bulldogs once again caught up, cutting the Bearcat lead

to three with little more than a minute left after a Norton four-point play. Truman forced Northwest into a miss, but the Bearcats secured an offensive rebound and hit two free throws to ice the game.

"Coach has been saying that it's not the first shot that beats you — it's the second shot," Henderson said. "That was very true in that game. If we get that rebound, we're only down three, so who knows what could happen."

The Bulldogs' next game will be 7:30 p.m. Wednesday against University of Central Missouri at Pershing Arena.

Men's skid reaches 8 during break

Turnovers, defense key aspects to slide, Schrader says

BY LOGAN JACKSON
Staff Reporter

The men's basketball team is glad the holidays are finished.

The Bulldogs went into break with a 3-4 record but ended the break on an eight-game losing streak. With the exception of the Washburn University and Quincy University (Ill.) games, Truman faced single-digit deficits in the second half of every game. The Bulldogs completed in those games, but did not put together a good enough run to win.

Truman can't specifically blame their recent struggles on one aspect of the game. Head coach Jack Schrader said turnovers and defense seem to be the 'Dogs biggest weaknesses, but the team is steadily improving in both of those areas.

"We have been turning the ball over between 20-25 percent of possessions," Schrader said. "We have got to reduce that to 10-15 percent. The mindset is there to be strong with the ball. We also have to improve our defense, however, we are getting better defensively."

Turnovers continued to haunt Truman, especially

during the losing streak. The Bulldogs averaged almost eight more turnovers than their opponents during the slump. Opponents are also scoring more than 17 points per game off Bulldog turnovers. Truman is last in the MIAA in turnovers and has an assist/turnover ratio of 0.91, which also ranks last in the conference.

Junior guard Alex Henderson leads the team in turnovers with 45, however, he has nearly twice as many assists as freshman guard Tom Norton, who is second on the team in assists. Henderson also leads the MIAA in minutes played and has an assist/turnover ratio of 1.5, the highest on the team.

Truman averaged 17 turnovers during the first six games of the losing streak but only gave up the ball a total of 23 times in the last two entering last night's game. Junior forward Ethan Freeman said the team is starting to protect the ball with greater efficiency.

"Each possession that we have is important, and we are really starting to realize that," Freeman said. "Right now, as long as we stop turning the ball over, we'll be better in the long run."

Rebounding the ball has also been a slight problem for the Bulldogs. Although the team has just two fewer rebounds than their oppo-

nents this season, it has allowed opponents to collect costly offensive rebounds. During the losing streak, opponents have scored 17 more second-chance points than the Bulldogs. Schrader said second shot opportunities could really hurt a team in the long run.

"I know the guys get tired of me telling them this, but it's not the first shot that beats you," Schrader said. "I don't know how many times the second shot, late in a game, makes the difference. You get a little overanxious that they miss, that you forget to do your job."

Schrader said the 'Dogs are still working on their defensive intensity as well. Although Truman did have three games in which they surrendered more than 87 points, they had six games during the losing streak that they gave up fewer than 73 points.

The Bulldog offense has really taken a hit during the losing streak. Before the break, Truman averaged just fewer than 74 points per game. During the recent skid, Truman has averaged about 64 points per game.

There are a few factors that could explain the recent offensive struggles. The Bulldogs played four straight road games and six total, during their losing streak. That road trip will be the longest of the

season for the Bulldogs, who had only played three road games before the break.

The Bulldogs also played top-notch competition during the break. Quincy University (Ill.), Fort Hays State University and Southwest Baptist University are all ranked in the top 16 in Div. II. The University of Nebraska-Omaha also received votes for the top-25. Norton said the Bulldogs usually dig a hole early and have to climb their way back into the game.

"It seems like every game there's a three to four minute stretch where we turn the ball over, and we don't get good shots, and we give up easy baskets," Norton said. "The other team goes on a big run, and we aren't able to get into the game."

Even with the eight-game losing streak, the Bulldogs feel good about the way they are playing. Freeman said the team is playing worry-free and "just playing basketball." He said the team is focused on getting back to the MIAA Tournament for the first time in three years.

"As long as people are hungry for a win and keep fighting back, we should be OK," Freeman said. "If we keep people's heads up and keep people fighting for the one goal that everyone has, which is making the conference tournament, I think we will be OK."

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Women's basketball: Foul shooting is stellar

Despite its recent five-game losing streak, the women's basketball team continues to shoot the ball well from the foul line. Truman leads the MIAA and ranks 19th in the NCAA in free-throw shooting at 76.2 percent. During conference play the Bulldogs have shot 78.6 percent from the line.

Senior guard Laura Joya leads Truman at 89 percent from the line. Freshman guard Amy Galey leads the team with 44 attempts and is shooting 70.5 percent.

Men's swimming: Transfer added to squad

With just 14 members compared to the women's team's 20, the men's swimming team has struggled with depth all year. A new transfer looks to bolster the men's lineup as they head into the final stretch.

Freshman Alex Felton attended Eastern Illinois University during the fall. Although he did not swim for the Panthers, he swam throughout high school and decided to pick up where he left off. He will add a much-needed dimension to the Truman team as a sprinter, with his specialties in the butterfly and freestyle strokes.

Head coach Mark Gole said he is excited about the newcomer. Felton has been cleared to compete by the NCAA and will be added to the roster, pending the results of a physical.

Women's swimming: Aherne earns recognition

Senior women's swimmer Kate Aherne earned Div. II National Swimmer of the Week for her performance in last weekend's dual meets against Lewis University (Ill.). It is Aherne's second such award this season.

Aherne earned an A-cut time of 4:32.87 in the 400-yard individual medley, an event she does not normally swim. Aherne also claimed individual victories in the 100-yard butterfly and 50-yard freestyle. She would have won the 500-yard freestyle as well if she was not exhibitioned.

Aherne was also honored during the weekend for Truman's Senior Day. Aherne, along with seniors Kendra Brunkow and Danielle Odenthal, were recognized on the public address, and they received flowers from underclassmen. Brunkow also has an A-cut time needed for nationals.

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