

Women sweep Lewis

Aherne, Brunkow, Odenthal earn victory in final home meet

BY JACK NICHOLL
Sports Editor

The women's swimming team sent its three senior swimmers off with a dominant performance against Lewis University (Ill.) last weekend on Senior Day.

The 'Dogs defeated Lewis 139.5-61.5 Friday and 110-79 Saturday in a two-day dual that saw Truman win nearly every event, even with many 'Dogs swimming in different events than normal.

The Lewis meet followed up the annual winter training trip and a 184.5-77.5 dual meet loss at the University of California-San Diego on Jan. 2.

"Friday was still working out the cobwebs from the training trip," head coach Mark Gole said. "I was hoping the UC-SD meet would

do that, but it was right in the middle of training, and it didn't really do the job."

Truman came right out of the gates against Lewis with a 1-2-4 finish in the 400-yard medley relay. Senior Kendra Brunkow, swimming in her last home meet, anchored Truman's A team. Brunkow finished with three firsts and two seconds, while fellow seniors Kate Aherne and Danielle Odenthal combined for seven top-three finishes. The three seniors were recognized before the meet.

Aherne recorded the only A cut on the meet with a 4:32.87 in the 400-yard individual medley, an event she does not normally swim. Aherne and Brunkow also went first and second, respectively, in the 50-yard freestyle Saturday. Aherne's performance during the weekend earned her Div. II National Collegiate Swimmer of the Week, her second such award this season.

Gole said he mixed up the

lineup against Lewis to prepare the team for more difficult duals coming up. The 'Dogs swim against Missouri State University and Southern Illinois University this weekend before competing against Drury University on Jan. 23.

"It's a nice break because if you can do multiple events, it's nice to do the ones that you're not as good at because you can get tired of doing the same thing over and over," Brunkow said.

Gole said many of the swimmers who swam different events will not swim those same events later in the season.

"I wanted a lot of people to swim at least one or two of their main events," he said. Five different Bulldogs picked up individual victories during the weekend, and Truman swept the relay events.

After Truman cruised to victory Friday, Gole exhibited the last three events Saturday to make the score closer. If not for the exhibi-

tions, Gole said the score would have been closer to 150-40.

The meet against San Diego was a different story with Truman coming off its training trip and the Toreros well-rested entering the meet.

"It was ugly, I'm not going to lie," Gole said.

Junior Anna Grinter claimed Truman's only victory, with a 2:09.14 in the 200-yard butterfly, and the 'Dogs also went 2,3,4 in the 1000-yard freestyle. Gole said he was impressed with the distance swim but the sprinters looked rusty in their first meet since the fall taper meet Nov. 22.

San Diego placed third at nationals last season, one spot ahead of the Bulldogs. The Toreros currently have 13 national qualifiers to the 'Dogs' 10.

"In my opinion, and I'm not alone in having this opinion, that UC-SD might be the actual favorite right now with



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

The women's swim team defeated Lewis University in Pershing Natatorium last weekend in two duals. Next up for the 'Dogs is a meet this weekend against Missouri State and Southern Illinois University.

how many national qualifiers they have at this point in the season," Gole said.

As the 'Dogs shift to the second half of the season, so does their focus during practice. Aherne said the team

worked more on endurance earlier in the season, but they are now focusing more on technique.

"We're still trying to really perfect our starts and turns," Aherne said.

Men's swimming earns split on Senior Day

Men win final dual of season after return from California training trip

BY BRENDAN O'BRIEN
Staff Reporter

While most students relaxed with family and friends during their last week of Winter Break, the men's swim team was in the midst of its annual training trip during which the team underwent its most rigorous practices of the season.

"There are guys that can't handle the training very well — they get broken down really fast — and there's guys that really kind of feed off of it," head coach Mark Gole said. "Collectively, I felt like every swimmer from one to 14 on the men's side walked away from that trip better than they were going into it."

As is required by the NCAA, the team also competed in a meet while at its training trip. The Bulldogs took on the University of California-San Diego on Jan. 2, and although the end result was 228-30, senior Andrew McCall said it

must be taken in context.

"In terms of how the scoring went, they are one of the best teams in Div. II," McCall said. "There were some mistakes we made, but I think those can basically all be attributed to how broken down we were."

When pushed to the brink in practice, interteam competition can play an even larger role. Freshman Jerod Simek said before the training trip that, at times, it can be a source of both reassurance and motivation.

"You both have the same goals," Simek said. "You both have the same training times that you want to hit for the most part, so it's always nice that someone's there training with you."

One positive for Truman was sophomore Brian Tillis, who swam his season-best time in the 500-yard freestyle despite the team's eight hours in the pool during the two days before the UC-SD meet.

Upon their return from California, the 'Dogs wasted no time with practices Wednesday and Thursday before a Friday morning swim circuit that Gole said was meant to

"fine-tune the little things."

Later Friday, the 'Dogs went toe-to-toe with Lewis University. Gole said he knew how closely matched the teams were before the meet and

despite their fatigue, the Bulldogs made the meet a battle with major victories. Freshmen Jerod Simek, Matt Fletcher, and Greg Taplin went 1-2-3 in the 400-yard individual medley, and Taplin, Simek and freshman Tony Hernandez went 1-2-3 in the 100-yard breaststroke.

Despite its effort, the team fell short on Friday, 104.5-100.5. Just a little more than 12 hours later, it was a different story. The second day began with a decisive win for Truman in the 200-yard medley relay, led by Fletcher. He later shocked Gole when he broke 2:00 in the 200-yard IM and swam a 2:01 in the 200-yard backstroke.

"Matt Fletcher right now is on fire," Gole said. "We've just got to keep the momentum going with him. I have no idea what he's going to swim at the conference meet

"It's really easy to ... coast in the last four or five weeks, but it's really important to hammer it home right until the end."

Andrew McCall
Senior

right now, just the way he's been training, he's been solid all-around." McCall's biggest swim might have been in the 50-yard free in which he broke 22 seconds for the first time this season en route to a first-place finish. The senior said he soaked in the atmosphere in his last meet at Pershing Natatorium.

"I was enjoying it," McCall said. "I'm going to miss it definitely."

The team received a boost from almost every swimmer, but Gole said one race in particular was make-or-break for the 'Dogs.

"I'll tell you right now that the biggest swim on Saturday — obviously there were a lot of big ones

— was [freshman] Taylor Frymire winning the 100 free," Gole said. "When that happened, I knew in the back of my mind that we had won the meet."

Gole was right, and the Bulldogs finished with a 115-89 win.

The 'Dogs attempt to carry that momentum into this weekend, when they return to action Jan. 16 at Missouri State University. Gole said Missouri State and Southern Illinois University-Carbondale will provide some of their toughest competition so far this season, and their primary focus of that meet, coaching-wise, is to have people race their top events or events in which they show potential.

McCall said the hardest thing to maintain at this point in the season is focus, but he also stressed its importance.

"It's a race to the finish," McCall said. "It's really easy to come off of our training trip and just think, 'Oh, you know, the hard part's behind me,' and coast in the last four or five weeks, but it's really important to hammer it home right until the end."

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