

Football adds assistant

Jed Paulsen joins staff, will likely be offensive line coach

BY BRENT FOSTER
Assistant Sports Editor

Football head coach Gregg Nesbitt has added a new member to next year's coaching staff. Jed Paulsen joined the staff Jan. 8 and immediately began his duties as an assistant coach.

Nesbitt said Paulsen probably will serve as the team's offensive line coach next season and will run the fitness portion of the strength and conditioning program.

Paulsen is the one new addition the University allowed to be brought in before July 1. Nesbitt said current offensive line coach Marty Costello could be retained next season at a different coaching position. Costello has served as offensive line coach since 2007.

"I had the opportunity to hire someone, and he was at the top of the list," Nesbitt said.

Paulsen and Nesbitt have known each other since Paulsen was in high school. Nesbitt coached Paulsen at Hickman High School from 1997 to 2001, when he was a three-time All-State center. After playing four years at North Carolina State University, Paulsen reunited with Nesbitt in 2005 at the University of Central Missouri. Nesbitt was co-defensive coordinator for the Mules, while Paulsen served as a graduate assistant and ran the strength and con-

ditioning program the last two seasons.

Nesbitt said Paulsen's effect on UCM football was felt throughout the program during his time as strength and conditioning coach.

"I think he had more positive impact on our football team than any of our coaches, including myself," Nesbitt said.

Paulsen played center at NC State from 2001 to 04, and was a three-year starter. He earned honorable mention All-ACC snapping the ball to All-American quarterback Phillip Rivers. Nesbitt said Paulsen's high level of play at NC State gives him immediate credibility with players.

If Paulsen becomes offensive line coach, he will be in charge of an offensive line that had trouble protecting the quarterback last season. The Bulldogs allowed 25 sacks, ninth in the MIAA. The Bulldogs also failed to establish a running game behind the offensive line. The 'Dogs averaged 133 yards per game, last in the MIAA.

Paulsen said "drilling the basics" is the first step to create a sound offensive line.

"From this point on, we will be a technically sound offensive line that will play hard, and that's two things I can guarantee you," Paulsen said.

Besides the addition of Paulsen, Nesbitt said he also expects his son, Kellen Nesbitt, to join the staff. Kellen Nesbitt was a safety for the Mules from 2003 to 06. He served as a graduate assistant and position

The Paulsen Connection

- Probably will serve as offensive line coach
- Played center under head coach Gregg Nesbitt at Hickman High 1997-2001
- Three-year starter at center at NC State for All-American Phillip Rivers
- Says "drilling the basics" is first step to sound offensive line

Design by Cameron Ballentine/Index

coach at UCM the last three years. Gregg said he hopes Kellen can be brought in during the spring or summer and that he could coach in the defensive secondary and could be co-defensive coordinator.

"Those were the two young people [Paulsen and Nesbitt] that, through the interview process, that I made certain everybody here knew those two guys I wanted to bring on as I went through the interview process," Gregg Nesbitt said. "We're certainly working towards that goal."

Director of Athletics Jerry Wollmering said there might be more coaches in place when spring practice starts March 27, but their contracts

would not begin until July 1. Besides Paulsen and Nesbitt, the remainder of the staff's contracts run through June 30.

"Obviously, it would make sense to whoever would be here in the fall we'd like to have here in the spring," Wollmering said.

Wollmering said "the picture is fairly clear" on which coaches will not return from interim head coach Aaron Vlcko's 2009 staff next season, but would not comment on particulars because nothing has been finalized.

"I think coach Nesbitt has met with them all and made clear his intention of the direction he's going, so I think everyone pretty much knows," Wollmering said.

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Swimming: Teams to swim same format again

The men's and women's swimming teams will have the same middle-distance meet format for the third-straight week at Drury University on Saturday.

The Bulldogs swam the format at home against Lewis University (Ill.) two weekends ago and at Missouri State University last weekend. Head coach Mark Gole said he told Jack Steck, Missouri State head coach, that he wanted to swim different events, but Steck already had an agreement with Southern Illinois University.

Missouri State and Southern Illinois are rivals, and MSU could have drop-tapered for the event. The Bulldogs were swept in all four duals during the weekend.

"SIU and Missouri State are big-time rivals, kind of like us and Drury, we really go crazy against them," junior Emily Buss said, who had Truman's only victory Saturday. "It was more than just a dual meet for them."

Buss said the same format every week can be both a good and bad thing.

"If it's all the same, you can really compare your performance and see how you change week-to-week," she said. "It gives you a chance to really focus on race strategy in those races. But at the same time, you don't get to focus on the race strategy in other races."

The Drury meet is the last dual of the season for Truman. Conference starts Feb. 10.

Women's track: Biermann earns award

Senior pole vaulter Katrina Biermann was named MIAA Field Athlete of the Week for her performance at the Iowa Hawkeye Open on Saturday. Biermann set a Truman indoor record and is tied for the top pole vault mark in Div. II at 12-07.05. Biermann also won the pole vault and triple jump events for the second consecutive weekend.

She set a provisional mark in the triple jump at the Dec. 11 Iowa State Cyclone Holiday Classic.

Men's basketball: 4 averaging more than 10 pts

Last year the men's basketball team had one player that averaged more than 10 points per game. This season that number has risen to four, with junior forward Ethan Freeman close behind with an average of 9.4 points per game. Junior guard Alex Henderson and sophomore center Vesko Filchev lead the Bulldogs with 11.1 points per game. Junior guard Stefan Garrison and freshman guard Tom Norton also average double-digits.

As a team, the Bulldogs are averaging nearly seven points per game more than they did last year. They are also averaging two more assists than last year.

UCM blows out Truman 60-33

Women shoot season-low 25 percent in 27-point home loss

BY BRENT FOSTER
Assistant Sports Editor

The women's basketball team dug a hole too large to climb out of last night. Truman scored a season-low 17 first-half points on its way to a 60-33 home loss to the University of Central Missouri.

The loss runs Truman's (6-11, 1-9 MIAA) losing streak to seven. It was the largest margin of defeat for Truman this season and the largest margin since a 73-46 loss to the University of Nebraska-Omaha last February.

"As a coach there's nothing else I can show or do or whatever," head coach Michael Smith said. "I don't know if Gino Auriemma could come in here right now and get this thing turned around with the mindset that these kids have, and that's the honest truth. The best coach in the country can't come in here right now and turn it around."

This game was unlike the previous two games for Truman. In the last two losses to Missouri Western State University on Jan. 13 and Northwest Missouri State University on Jan. 9, Truman built double-digit second-half leads, before enduring long scoreless stretches late in the game. The Bulldogs never had the chance to build a lead against the Jennies.

Truman fell behind 27-9 15 minutes into the game.

Visibly frustrated most of the night, Smith watched the team's offense continue its season-long struggle. Truman shot a season-low 25 percent for the game. For most of the first half, the 'Dogs were on pace for the fewest points in school history: 29. Truman had 10 points with two minutes remaining in the first half but scored seven in the final two minutes of the half. It was the fewest points Truman has scored in a game in 18 years.

The 'Dogs cut Central's lead to 39-28 on a three-pointer by senior guard Julie Guinn with just more than 11 minutes left, but Central scored the next 17 points, fueled by three triples to open up a 56-28 lead. The Bulldogs went more than six minutes without a basket during the stretch.

Truman's season leading scorer, senior guard Laura Joya, finished the game scoreless for the first time this season. Joya started the first 13 games but has come off the bench in the last four. Prior to Wednesday's game, Joya averaged 13.1 points per game.

Central had a decisive shooting and rebounding advantage throughout the game. The Jennies shot 48.9 percent and made 5-of-10 three pointers. They out-rebounded the 'Dogs 38-26.

The Bulldogs had trouble moving the ball to get open looks. Truman was whistled for three shot clock violations in the first half.

"I don't know if we were being

too patient with the ball or if we were just waiting," sophomore forward Bri Daniels said. "We were taking too long to start looking to score until we were down to 10 seconds left."

UCM used a balanced attack that kept Truman's defense guessing who was going to get the ball. Meghan Waggoner led four Jennies in double figures with 14 points off the bench. Rebecca Roberts and Danielle Shows chipped in with 13 points apiece.

The 'Dogs settled for jump shots most of the game instead of attacking the basket. Smith said he wanted Truman to get to the line 25 times. Truman went 5-for-8 from the line.

Daniels led Truman with 10 points. She was the only Bulldog to score more than four points. Besides Daniels, the rest of the team combined to shoot 20 percent.

"We were just off pace from the beginning," Guinn said. "We didn't get in step, and you could really tell the entire game that we never got back in the sync of things. It just happened throughout."

Central's win avenged a 25-point loss suffered at the hands of Truman in last year's season finale.

The seven-game losing streak is Truman's longest since a seven-game skid midway through the 2007-08 season.

Truman returns to the court Saturday against Missouri Southern State University at 1 p.m. at Pershing Arena. Southern defeated Truman 79-65 Dec. 2 in Joplin, Mo.



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Sophomore forward Bri Daniels fights for a loose ball during last night's 60-33 loss to the University of Central Missouri. Daniels led Truman with 10 points and five rebounds.

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