

Wrestling goes 0-4 at Central

BY CORY WEEKES
Staff Reporter

With problems mounting for Truman's wrestling team, the 'Dogs looked to rebound last weekend as they traveled to Warrensburg for the University of Central Missouri duals.

The team, however, could not find its stride. The 'Dogs were forced to forfeit the 185-pound weight class in every dual, surrendering six points per forfeit. The injury-plagued Truman squad finished the weekend 0-4, losing to No. 9 ranked University of Nebraska Kearney, No. 15 University of Findlay (Ohio), Chadron State College (Neb.) and Northern

State University. (S.D.)

The team's below-average performance can be attributed to injuries and a lack of depth that head coach Dave Schutter said makes it impossible to be a good dual team.

Throughout the season, the team's inability to wrestle in duals has come as no surprise to Schutter, who said, "It was a rough day, we just aren't a very strong dual team with less than one scholarship."

With the injuries sustained by the team this year, including the one to former-wins leader freshman Colton Schmitz, the team has lost some depth in dual meets.

With the team in a state of flux, the Bulldogs again were led by senior Loyde Braidlow. He went 3-1 on the day, defeating Ben Hohensee of UN-Kearney in a 6-3 decision, Northern State's Jared Little in a 3-1 decision and Chadron State's BJ Boylan by pin in 43 seconds. Braidlow's only loss came when, because of slight adjustments to the tournament, the 'Dogs spent the first round resting.

"Loyde wrestled really well, probably the best I've ever seen him in his career," Schutter said. "The first round of the tournament we just sat around, and Loyde had to wrestle a tough opponent cold. Had he been warmed up and ready, that

match could have easily gone the other way."

With his performance, Braidlow proved his recent success is a product of improvement in his three phases of wrestling. In his third match against Northern State, Braidlow defeated a former Div. II national qualifier — a feat that can't be ignored, Schutter said.

"Loyde has really come on strong," Schutter said. "It's good to have his leadership when the team is down. He gives us a strong foundation, and we've started to get few different guys now who are starting to get back on the map."

Truman enters this week with something they haven't

had in a while: a full roster, which means Truman will not forfeit any matches.

Sophomore Alex Maus, one of two wrestlers on the team to surpass the 20-win mark, will take the place of injured freshman Colton Schmitz in the 141 weight class.

"Maus is really good," Schutter said. "It's really a toss up between him and Schmitz in the 141 weight class. He will do good there and give us some good leverage in the lower weights."

Maus said success starts with the basics.

"I just go out there and compete," Maus said. "We just keep working our fundamentals, and it's starting to come together for us as a team."

Schutter said with February's regional closing in, it is crucial that the team picks up some momentum in the next few weeks.

This weekend, the team travels to Wheaton, Ill., to compete in the Wheaton Open. Schutter said the competition will be about as hard as the team will see at any other tournament from here on out.

"It's kind of like the Div. II national championships," Schutter said. "So if you get guys who can place at Wheaton, they will usually be a national contender. Having a full roster will be nice, and this should be a good indication as to where we are at as a team."

Athlete of the Week

Kristina Biermann

Sport: Track
Year: Senior
Hometown: Liberty

Senior Kristina Biermann set the Truman pole vault and triple jump records at Iowa State Open on Friday and Saturday. Biermann also was named the MIAA Athlete of the Week for the second consecutive week.

Biermann sets two records at Iowa State

BY BLAKE TOPPMEYER
Editor in Chief

Every time senior Kristina Biermann competes in an indoor track meet this year, there is a good chance a school record will fall. But the name on the all-time leader board won't change.

Biermann is making a habit of breaking her own school records.

She broke her school pole vault record for the second time this season with a vault of 13 feet, 1/4 inches Friday at the Iowa State Open. The vault bested her mark of 12-7 1/2 that she recorded in December. Biermann's vault Friday also broke the MIAA record of 12-10.

Biermann was back on her record-breaking pace as she broke the school triple jump record with a jump of 38-11 1/2 on Saturday. She previously had been tied with Truman alumna Christen Lauer for the school record in the triple jump at 38-4 3/4.

"It's something I look to do — not so much breaking school records, but just improving on my performances every week because

if you get complacent, if you think, 'I broke the school record so there's nothing else I can do,' then you're not going to get any better," Biermann said.

With Friday's vault, Biermann ranks second in Div. II behind Abilene Christian's Jessica Blair, who is No. 1 at 13-1 1/2. Biermann has automatically qualified for nationals in the pole vault, while her triple jump mark was good for a provisional mark.

Clearing 13 feet in the pole vault had been a career goal for Biermann.

"As soon as I landed, I kind of freaked out a little bit and kind of ran off the mat," Biermann said. "I was pretty surprised it happened, but I was really excited. It's a goal I've had for a long time, so it was nice."

Biermann said she benefited from using a heavier pole during Friday's vault. Normally, Biermann uses a 13 1/2-foot, 155-pound pole. But Biermann said she was feeling good prior to Friday's performance, so she decided to use a 13 1/2-foot, 160-pound pole.

Using a heavier pole can help a vaulter generate more

lift. However, a heavier pole is more difficult to handle.

"It [a heavier pole] is a little bit different and harder to use, but it gives you a lot more push up in the air, so that helps," Biermann said.

Head coach John Cochrane said Biermann's background in gymnastics has helped her become a successful vaulter. Growing up, Biermann participated in competitive gymnastics, and she coached gymnastics in high school while also competing in track.

"Gymnastics definitely carries over to pole vaulting," Biermann said. "You need to be pretty flexible, you need to have good body awareness when you're in the air, going upside down. Pole vaulting is a very technical sport like gymnastics is, so definitely elements of that carry over. You have to be quick, and it takes a lot of power."

With Biermann posting new school records virtually every weekend, Cochrane still thinks Biermann's best performances are yet to come.

"Is she peaked out? No," Cochrane said.



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index
Senior Kristina Biermann broke the Truman triple jump and pole vault records at the Iowa State Open last weekend.

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