

**SWEPT** | Simek earns one first-place finish to go along with three seconds during two dual meets

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200-yard butterfly. Gole also said times in both the 200-yard IM and 400-yard IM improved compared to Lewis. All this came at the tail-end of a fortnight during which the Bulldogs faced off on five different days.

"It was pretty exhausting by the end of the meet of Drury, but it went very well overall, because Drury's No. 1," Simek said. "It's just a very, very hard weekend to do. But overall I think I swam very well, and from what I saw, most of the other kids on the team did very, very well too."

Simek was a key performer for the Bulldogs, with a first-place finish to complement three second-places and one third-place during the weekend. Simek came in two seconds behind MST's Andrew Trowbridge, who Gole described as "one of the best distance swimmers in the nation," in the 1,000-yard freestyle, and finished just 1.42 seconds off first in his third-place 500-free at MST. But Simek said he sees room for

improvement.

"Throughout the whole race, until probably 400, we were neck-and-neck and 450 we were even," Simek said. "The last 50 the kid in lane two just took off, and I tried to stay with him as best as I could, but I didn't have it in the drive, which has happened a few times this year, so I've got to work on finishing and closing speed."

Simek and the rest of the Bulldogs will have the next two weeks to fine-tune strategies and techniques in preparation for the conference meet Feb. 10. From this point forward, swimmers will be on different training regimens, with sprinters like senior Andrew McCall and freshman Taylor Frymire easing up workouts to be fully rested, and distance swimmers like Simek and sophomore Brian Tillis continuing their work.

"That's probably the biggest challenge, is keeping everybody focused on what they need to do," Gole said. "Sometimes the distance swimmers get a little frustrated



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

The men's swimming team lost in two duals against Drury University and Missouri University of Science and Technology last weekend. The team ends the dual season with one win, against Lewis University.

because they're in the water for two hours when the sprinters are getting out after an hour twenty minutes. ... It can be a little trying mentally."

Interteam competition has a major impact on how hard swimmers push themselves. Simek and Tillis feed off their rivalry, but Gole also mentioned Taplin and Fletch-

er, among others.

"On the sprint side, I'd say Andrew [McCall's] really pushing the younger sprinters because he's really showing them this is the last go that he has and he is the senior captain," Gole said. "I'm glad I have him because he's an extremely intelligent swimmer and he's able to kind of really talk the guys through

stuff and push them as well. It's almost like having a coach in the pool in a way."

Many Bulldogs are hunting for A cuts at conference to qualify for nationals.

"We know we're right there, and it's just a matter of time before it happens," Frymire said before the week began.



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Freshman forward Megan Sharpe is averaging 15 minutes, 2.5 points and 2.9 rebounds this season.

**SHARPE** | Forward averaged 15 points and five rebounds in high school

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volleyball player in the last two seasons to make the transition to basketball. Eli Medina completed her four-year volleyball career last year and decided to play one season of basketball. The similarities between the two's journey seem to end there. The most notable difference is the fact that Medina played only one season of volleyball workouts like Sharpe does.

"I worry about it wearing on her body," Smith said. "She went from one to the other. ... I hope she can stick with it."

Sharpe said she wants to play basketball for four years, and indicated the same sentiment in a meeting with Smith.

Smith said he will sit

down with Sharpe after the season and evaluate how her body handled playing volleyball and basketball.

"Being a freshman right now it's hitting her in the face," Smith said. "She'll have a better understanding after the basketball season. She's gone through her first year of college and athletics. She had a great year in volleyball and now she's helping us in basketball. It'll be interesting to see what the next two months bring with her."

When Sharpe joined the team in late November she was more than a month behind her

teammates. Sharpe said not being with the team prior to the start of the season caused her to be behind because she was not familiar with the motion style offense and defensive scheme Truman used. She quickly picked up Truman's defense and since the team switched offenses from motion to spread two weeks ago, Sharpe said she is learning the new offense along with her teammates.

"Everyone is learning the new offense, so everyone is on the same page," Smith said. "If I would say, 'Hey, we need two big offensive rebounds right here in the next two

minutes,' I think she's the one that could do that because she has the capabilities of jumping over the top of people."

Sharpe had success in high school. She averaged 15 points and five rebounds per game during her senior season at Edwardsville (Ill.) High School. She was named to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch All-metro first team and was an All-state second team selection.

Sharpe has played in 11 games this season and is averaging 2.5 points and 2.9 rebounds per game. But at least one teammate says she brings more to the team than just natural basketball abilities.

"Anyone that comes to a game can tell that she is the most athletic kid on our team," junior guard Amy Galey said. "She definitely gives us a spark."

"It'll be interesting to see what the next two months bring with her."

**Michael Smith**  
Women's basketball  
head coach

**DRURY** | Junior Anna Grinter earns Truman's only individual win in 200-yard butterfly

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There was the 1,650-yard freestyle, in which junior Julia Jones was third — although Drury drop-tapered Erin Dolan, who was first by about 45 seconds. There was the 200-yard backstroke, in which freshman Stacy Wymer had the best unshaved time of her life and finished second by one second. Truman also earned second-place finishes in the 500-yard freestyle and the 200-yard breaststroke.

"I thought we should have put up a lot bigger fight than we did," Gole said. "I can't explain what was going on. It was a really weird atmosphere on Saturday."

Perhaps the most telling comparison of Truman and Drury is that senior Kate Aherne was edged in the 100- and 200-yard freestyle, both by Drury's Tiffany Van Dongen. The two are currently tied for the best time in the 200-free in Div. II, and they are in the top five in the 100-free.

In both races Aherne fell behind in the beginning and could not make up enough ground. However, she did have a negative split time in the 200-yard freestyle. Aherne said she did not quite race her best in either event.

"I was really trying to edge that girl out, but sometimes it's just not there that day," Aherne said. "And I'd much rather take the loss now than in a bigger meet."

Reynolds said he thought going into the meet that Truman would win more than one individual event.

"I knew Anna would be almost impossible to beat in the 200 fly," he said. "I thought Kate would be

almost impossible to beat in her events. ... I have a lot of respect for those girls up there and what they can do."

As for the 400-yard medley and freestyle relays, Truman never had a chance as Drury had a faster time in each by at least three seconds. Drury was faster in every leg of every relay, including another victory by Van Dongen against Aherne in the freestyle.

Gole said Truman had a difficult time because Drury has faster sprinters in every event except for possibly freestyle.

"They have way too much firepower," Gole said. "There isn't a relay I think we can touch them in as of right now."

However, the meet was not all lost for Truman. Junior Emily Buss defeated Abbey Musch, who has Div. II's fastest time, in the 200-yard breaststroke. Buss finished second in the event because Drury drop-tapered Deanna Sorenson.

Gole gave freshman Taylor Birsa accolades for a team-best fifth-place in the 400-yard individual medley. Her time of 4:42.94 was an in-season best.

"She's one of those swimmers that we're still looking at for qualifying for nationals, so I was really pleased have a 400 IM as strong as she did on Saturday," Gole said.

The Bulldogs have two weeks off before heading to Cleveland, Miss., for the NSISC Championships starting Feb. 10. Truman has won its conference meet the last nine years. Drury is also in the conference, but the Panthers do not taper for the meet.



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

The women have next week off, their first in three weeks, before heading to Cleveland, Miss., for conference Feb. 10.

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