



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index
Freshman Lexi Hauser (top) and senior Kate Aherne are two of the 12 women's swimmers who will compete at the NCAA Championships.

Women aim for fourth at national meet

Team sends 12 to Canton, Ohio, where Drury and UC-SD are favorites

BY JACK NICHOLL
Sports Editor

With four fewer national competitors than 2009, the women's swimming team is looking to repeat its fourth-place finish the NCAA Championships next week in Canton, Ohio.

Head coach Mark Gole said Truman is aiming for a fourth-place finish, but third is attainable if every swimmer has a good meet. Gole said defending national champion Drury University and the University of California-San Diego are favored to finished first and second, respectively. Both teams defeated Truman in duals earlier this season.

The Bulldogs qualified 14 for the national meet but are only taking 12 because of late-season times. Sophomore Carina Pautz was unable to record a B cut at the conference meet and sophomore Krista Tippin has not fully recovered from torn intercostals. Tippin swam at the Last Chance meet last weekend at Drury University but did not swim fast enough for head coach Mark Gole to send her to nationals.

The team has not sent fewer than 14 swimmers in the last three years. Despite the difference, senior captain Kate Aherne said the team's depth is similar to past years.

"It's definitely different this year," Aherne said. "The breadth of the team is obviously a lot smaller. We don't have as many girls in as many events just because we have

six less girls than we have in past years. But the depth of the team is still there — you can see that in a couple different events. ... We may not have as much depth in as many events, but the events we do have depth in we know we are very strong."

The women have qualified as many as 18 in the past, and qualified 14 when they last won in 2008. That year, every swimmer scored individually. Ten of 16 qualifiers scored individually in 2009.

Gole said it will be difficult for everyone to score individually this year. Eight swimmers have a top-16 ranking in an individual event, which would earn All-American status. However, three others — senior Kendra Brunkow, sophomore Jessica Jenkot and freshman Allison Harding — have rankings in the top 18. Freshman Lexi Hauser, who qualified through sprint relays, is not ranked in the top 50 in any event.

Aherne and junior Julia Jones have the most top-16 rankings for the Bulldogs. Both swimmers earned the maximum of four individual All-Americans at nationals last season.

Aherne said she will swim in the same events as 2009: the 50-, 100- and 200-yard freestyles and 200-yard individual medley. She is the two-time defending champion in the 200-yard IM but enters the national meet with the third-best time by almost 2.5 seconds. No. 1

ranked Alexandra Henley of UC-San Diego defeated Aherne in a dual meet Jan. 2.

"What I need to do is go in there knowing the competition and what it's going to be like," Aherne said.

Kendra Brunkow, the only other senior on the team, will be more focused on relays than individual events. Brunkow will compete in all five relays, which she said she loves doing. She said she usually swims faster in relays and will help the team more by swimming in them.

Truman is ranked in the top 16 in every relay and the top 8 in the 400- and 800-yard freestyle and 400-yard medley relays. The 200-yard medley relay could be the most difficult, as freshman Stacey Wymer and Brunkow will replace Tippin and Aherne.

One plus for the Bulldogs is that 10 of the competitors qualified at the fall taper meet, which means they trained up until nationals. The team had nine at the fall taper meet last season.

"I think it helps a lot just because when you get qualified in the fall you kind of have that goal working towards nationals the entire rest of the year," Aherne said. "You can kind of take the pressure off at conference. But at the same time, the girls who are going to be swimming who just qualified from conference are also just that much more excited to be able to make it to nationals."

"We may not have as much depth in as many events, but the events we do have depth in we know we are strong."

Kate Aherne
Senior captain

Trimble allows one earned vs. ESU

BY BRENT FOSTER
Assistant Sports Editor

Sophomore pitcher Ryan Trimble tossed the best game of his Truman career against one of the best teams in the country.

Trimble threw eight innings of one-run ball during Sunday's 2-1, 12-inning loss to No. 10 Emporia State University.

Trimble has been nearly unhittable in his first two starts. He is 1-0 with a 0.69 ERA in 13 innings.

"He throws strikes, and he gets ahead and forces contact," head coach Dan Davis said. "If you watch him he's not afraid of contact. He's aggressive and gets after hitters. He says, 'Here it is. Hit it if you can.'"

Trimble allowed four hits and walked two while striking out six. He retired 14 straight batters after allowing his lone run in the second inning. He allowed the leadoff hitter to reach base just twice and had an 11-to-6 groundout-to-fly-out ratio.

Emporia nearly won the game in the eighth, but Trimble pitched into and out of trouble. After retiring the first batter, Trimble allowed a walk and a single, but got the next two batters to ground out to get out of the jam.



Photo submitted by Jarrett Eiskina
Sophomore pitcher Ryan Trimble fanned six in eight innings against No. 10 ESU last weekend.

Trimble left the game after throwing 98 pitches. He said Davis decided to lift him after the eighth inning. Davis said every pitcher is on a pitch count this early in the season because he does not want them over-throwing at the beginning of the season.

Despite Trimble's efforts, Emporia scored a run with two outs in the 12th inning to win 2-1. The Bulldogs had chances in the fifth and sixth innings to break through but left five men on base in the two innings and came away with just one run. Trimble said he was disappointed

that the team could not come up with the win, but he said sometimes not scoring runs is part of the game.

"It was rough," Trimble said. "My main goal is to make sure we have a chance to win every single game I pitch. That's my goal. ... While it would have been

nice to get the win, I felt like I did my job. We just couldn't get some runs, but that's baseball."

Trimble's performance came against a Hornet team that scored 26 runs in its three other victories against Truman and was ranked No. 1 before a loss to the University of Central Oklahoma two weeks ago. Through eight games the Hornets are hitting .310.

"They are definitely going to be one of the best," Davis said. "They're physical with the bat. They have great arms. They surprised me with the kind of arms that they had. They are a really good ball club."

Trimble has shown marked improvement with his first two starts compared to last season. Last year Trimble started 12 games and had an ERA of 8.57 and a 1-6 record. He said that early this season, he has hit his spots better, especially on the inside half of the plate.

Davis said one of the reasons for Trimble's early season success is that he is throwing with more velocity and is utilizing the speed difference between his fastball and changeup while attacking the inside.

"That's our pitching plan — to own the inside half of the plate," Davis said.

Athlete of the Week

Ryan Trimble
Sport: Baseball
Year: Sophomore
Hometown: O'Fallon, Mo.

Sophomore pitcher Ryan Trimble allowed one earned run and struck out six at No. 10 Emporia State University last weekend. He earned a no-decision. Trimble has a 1-0 record and 0.69 ERA through two starts this season.



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