

Women's soccer earns No. 4 seed



Mayank Dhungana/Index

The women's soccer team will play University of-Nebraska Omaha on Friday in the first round of the NCAA Regional Tournament. The two teams split during the regular season.

Team to face UNO tomorrow in first-round NCAA Tourney match

BY LOGAN JACKSON
Staff Reporter

Another postseason berth and another battle against its biggest rival.

The women's soccer team secured its ninth MIAA conference title in 11 years last week. The only two years the Bulldogs didn't win the title came in 2008 and 2006.

Even with a 2-0 win against Emporia State University on Saturday, the Bulldogs (14-3-3) weren't a lock for a conference title. The University of Nebraska-Omaha only needed to win one match out of two to capture the crown.

"We're coming back from Emporia, and we were aware that we played earlier than UNO," head coach Mike Cannon said. "All they needed was one win in two games. We get home and hear they tie and think we still have a shot. Then UNO loses to [the University of Central Missouri] on Saturday. It was cool to know that we definitely had a spot no matter what."

With the conference win, Truman received an automatic bid into postseason play. During a live selection show Monday night, the NCAA tournament bracket was released, and Truman saw a familiar foe next to its name — the University of Nebraska-Omaha.

The teams will play at noon at Canyon, Texas, Friday for their third match this season.

"It's another good team that we have to play," Cannon said. "We have to play good teams in the tournament. The bonus is that we know this team. It would be nice to play a different team in some respects, but we're already prepared for UNO."

If the Bulldogs win against UNO, their next match will be at 1 p.m. Sunday against No. 13 West Texas A&M University (14-2-3), the top seed in the region and host of the first two rounds.

Truman and UNO battled the entire year for the conference title with the Bulldogs winning only by two points. The teams split their regular season matches, each team winning on its home field. Both teams also struggled to close out their seasons, going 1-1-1 during their last three matches, with each team losing to UCM in that span.

Since 2002, Truman has been knocked out of the playoffs by Nebraska-Omaha four times, its closest contest coming in 2004 when Truman lost by one goal in overtime. The Bulldogs have yet to win a playoff game against the Mavericks.

Style of play will be a big factor throughout the match. In both matches, the home team controlled the style of play. Cannon said the neutral field wouldn't be a benefit to either team.

"Their style of play is different than ours," Cannon said. "We're more possession, keep the ball, short passing. They're a little bit more direct, more pressure. If we can limit our mistakes, dictate the style of the game, I like our chances. It's going to be a battle no matter what."

The Bulldogs will also have a full roster for the first time since their season opening-match. Senior forward Jessica Wiegert returned from a torn ACL and played in the team's final regular season match. She played 12 minutes in her first match since Aug. 28.

Senior midfielder Katie Reuck said it was great to see Wiegert get back onto the field.

"Everybody was real excited when she got to go in," Reuck said. "We were happy for her. You could tell she was thrilled to play. She was happy just to warm up before the game."

Cannon said the Bulldogs have to take this match just like any other. He said the team will sometimes focus too much on the 5-12 overall record against UNO. During the last three years, including this season, the two teams have each won three matches against each other.

"We have to treat it like another game," Cannon said. "Sometimes our kids put a little too much on, 'Wow, it's UNO,' instead of, 'Hey, it's the next game.' When we played them at home [this season] we didn't get too worked up over it."

To prepare for the Mavericks, the Bulldogs will be working on the same things that they've worked on all year. Wiegert said the team wants to possess the ball and get into a good rhythm early.

"I don't think we're doing anything different," Wiegert said. "We're just trying to play our game. We want to focus on what we can do. We don't want to play a different game based on how they're playing."

Bitter Rivals:

Bulldogs vs UNO

Fast Facts

- UNO defeated Truman 4-1 Sept. 12
- Truman defeated UNO 1-0 Sept. 26
- Both teams won at home
- Teams are one-two in the MIAA in most offensive categories
- UNO is 4-0 all-time against Truman in playoff games

Design by Cameron Ballentine/Index

Women finish season third at regional meet

Dell'Orco, Ratermann qualify for nationals

BY JACK NICHOLL
Sports Editor

Each member of the women's cross country team wrote down two goals before the season began: finish in the top two in the conference and top three in the region.

Mission accomplished. The Bulldogs wrapped up a successful season with a third-place finish at regionals Saturday in Abilene, Texas. Sophomores Dani Dell'Orco and Anne Ratermann qualified for nationals individually with sixth and eighth-place finishes, respectively.

"At that time, that was a far stretch, but we knew it was going to be a possibility," Ratermann said of the team. "We're just really proud that we were able to accomplish those goals."

However, the third place finish at regionals also means the team missed a national berth by one spot. The 'Dogs had 97 points, behind Dallas Baptist University's 84 and Missouri Southern State University's 18. Pittsburg State University finished fourth. The top two teams from the region advance.

Freshman Karen Grauel ran with Ratermann for nearly the entire race and finished ninth. Freshman

Cindy Grauel (37th) and sophomore Michelle Gronemeyer (39th) rounded out the scoring for the 'Dogs.

Head coach John Cochrane said Gronemeyer was sick for nearly 10 days leading up to the meet, and Cindy Grauel got caught in the pack near the beginning of the race and could not make up enough ground because of the tight pack and flat course.

"It was pretty much a glorified track race," Dell'Orco said. "I think it kind of favored the weaker runners — it kept everyone packed more tightly. You didn't have the hills, or anything, to gain momentum and catch people."

Cochrane said he was not surprised Ratermann earned a national berth because she has been running well all season. Ratermann's strategy was to run with Southern's Marlee Tegenkamp, who finished seventh.

"She got herself in position, she stayed there, she cut down really well at the end and pretty much did what she was supposed to do," Cochrane said.

Like Gronemeyer, Dell'Orco also felt sick in the days leading up to meet. She said she started feeling sick Friday night in the hotel and her condition caused her to fall back a couple spots near the end of the race.

It is the first trip to nationals for the roommates, and it is now four years in a row that Truman has had at least one individual qualify.

"I'm really glad that we both get to share in the experience together," Dell'Orco said. "It makes for a very interesting two more weeks."

On the men's side, the Bulldogs did not reach their goals. The 'Dogs finished 16 out of 18 teams at the regional meet to end the season.

Head coach Tim Schwegler said before the race the goal of the team was to finish in the top 10.

"With the group we had, if everyone was on track, we still could have been top 12, top 10," Schwegler said. "We just didn't get in the race at all. We went to the back and we stayed in the back."

The team was without sophomore Joey Walls for the second straight meet because of the flu, and junior Adam Kell, who was not fully

recovered from an illness, finished fifth for the team. Juniors Bob Gorman and John Venner led the way, followed by freshman Chad Petrofsky and junior Alex Phillips.

Schwegler said that other than Petrofsky, the team "folded up like a lawn chair" at the meet and he compared the result to the 70-0 loss by the football team earlier this season. It was Petrofsky's second straight third-place finish for the 'Dogs and his first time running in a 10K race.

"He just didn't have a fear," Schwegler said. "A lot of freshmen will have fears, like they're kind of worried that it's an extra mile. He just jumped in there and did the best he could."

The team ends the season with two straight finishes that were under Schwegler's expectations. Except for redshirt senior Zach Chapman, the team is comprised entirely of underclassmen. Chapman and redshirt junior Josh Mantooth each are scheduled to return for indoor track season.

"When you look back on review, we had a good year," Schwegler said. "It just ended really bad. I guess it's like football — you have a good year, and you go to bowl game and you get blown out."

Except for the two national qualifiers, runners on both teams have a week off before starting indoor track practice next week. Track opens its season Dec. 11 at the Cyclone Holiday Classic in Ames, Iowa.

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Men's Basketball: Griffin, Landau off team

The men's basketball team will be working with a slimmer roster this season because of the departures of a couple veteran players.

Head coach Jack Schrader said junior guard Brandon Griffin "is indefinitely suspended due to off-court circumstances." Griffin is not listed on the Bulldogs' roster, and Schrader said he does not know if or when Griffin will be eligible to return to the team.

Schrader said guard Gabe Landau, who would have been a senior this season, left the team last spring "to pursue other endeavors in the college life other than athletics."

Landau averaged 14 minutes and 2.19 points per game in 62 games played during his Bulldog career. Griffin started 10 games and appeared in all 27 games last season. He averaged 18 minutes and 5.4 points per game.

Schrader said he also suspended junior forward Brian Nwelu for the Bulldogs' two exhibition games for an off-court incident. Nwelu will be fully reinstated to play in the Bulldogs' regular-season opener 7:30 p.m. Monday against Culver-Stockton College.

"I don't want this stuff happening," Schrader said. "People need to know there are consequences and they're held to a higher standard than your normal student because they're out there representing the University, and they need to know that it could hurt the team."

Truman has 12 active players on its roster after having 14 active players and one redshirt last season.

Women's soccer: 'Dogs defeat Emporia 2-0

The women's soccer team knocked off Emporia State University 2-0 last week. Senior forward Riley Mahn scored on a header in the first half, assisted by freshman Kelsey Twelman. The Bulldogs outshot Emporia by five shots in the first half and continued to dominate the ball in the second half.

Senior Isabel Gaeta put in an insurance goal early in the second half to put the game away for the Bulldogs. Sophomore midfielder Megan Buri added an assist on the play.

The Bulldogs finished the regular season with a 14-3-3 record. They had 13 shutouts, the most that a Bulldog team has had since 2004. They also won their ninth conference title in 11 years with a 13-2-1 conference record. Their next match is at noon Friday at Canyon, Texas, against the University of Nebraska-Omaha in the first round of the playoffs.

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