

Construction continues

Tennis courts expected to be completed at the beginning of September



Tyler Killen/Index

Construction on the six main tennis courts began July 27. Renovations include resurfacing, a new fence surrounding the complex, new privacy slats for blocking the wind and concrete under the bleachers.

Student Athletic Fee pays for the renovations

BY LOGAN JACKSON
Sports Editor

While construction at Truman seems constant, the athletic department is closing in on one completion.

Director of Athletics Jerry Wollmering said construction on the Truman tennis courts began in late July. A new surface, new concrete and a new fence are among a few of the renovations for the courts. Wollmering said the courts will be completed around the beginning of September if the weather cooperates.

There are eight total courts, but only six are being repaired.

"We took those six main courts and basically demolished them," Wollmering said. "We took off the top layer of asphalt and chewed it all the way down to the concrete."

Wollmering said a new fence with a gate on the south side will be put up. The gate will allow easy access to the south in case a ball is hit out of play in that direction. With the old fence, a person would have to walk out and around the courts to reach the south side.

The fence will include privacy slats instead of the giant windscreen that was used before. Wollmering said the slats are similar to what the baseball team uses on its field.

Concrete also will be added around the courts. There was a four-foot gap between the fence and the sidewalk on the old courts. The new facilities will have concrete up to the fence and a pad to put the bleachers on.

"You get weeds that grow up through [the bleach-



Logan Jackson/Index

The new courts will be used by both Truman varsity teams, Truman intramurals, Kirksville High School teams and the public. The estimated cost of the project is \$300,000.

ers]," Wollmering said. "It just looks better. It's going to save the grounds guys a lot of time so they don't have to move them and trim around them."

Wollmering said the project cost around \$300,000 and was paid for by the Student Athletic Fee. Each student pays \$50 per semester that goes toward the maintaining or renovating of athletic facilities. The fee will be up for review during this school year.

"The original intent was to improve athletic facilities," Wollmering said. "Many of the facilities are shared facilities. The turf and lights in our football stadium are used by several groups. We want to benefit athletics, but if there is a by-product out of it, it makes it better."

The Truman tennis courts are not only used by the varsity teams, but Kirksville High School uses them for

matches as well. The courts are also free to the public as long as the varsity team does not already have them reserved. Intramurals and several classes also take advantage of them.

"It's really a project that's a win-win for so many people," Wollmering said. "Obviously, it will benefit our tennis teams. The community uses our courts, we've had high school tournaments and classes use them too. We felt it was a high priority."

Head coach Pete Kendall said the courts had not been renovated in 14 years. There were raised places in the asphalt and some other imperfections with the courts.

"The answer is they were almost unplayable," Kendall said. "The last three or four years they were getting worse and worse. For varsity playing conditions, they

were pretty bad."

Because tennis does not have its championships in the fall, Kendall said the team is not allowed to practice until school starts. He said the team will use the Kirksville High School facilities if the courts are not ready by the start of the fall semester.

"It's not much of a deal," Kendall said. "[The high school's] not very far. We're hoping that doesn't happen, but a few days won't bother us. The only way it will slow us down is playing challenge matches against team members. That's really nothing though."

Kendall said he had the high school cancel one of its matches just as a precautionary measure. The first varsity home match is Sept. 14, when the men's team plays Missouri Baptist University.

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Football: Vlcko hired at Div. III school

Former football coach Aaron Vlcko has accepted the offensive coordinator position at Div. III University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

Vlcko led the Bulldogs to a 2-9 record in 2009 as interim head coach after he replaced four-year head coach Shannon Currier. Vlcko had served as the offensive coordinator for four seasons prior.

New football head coach Gregg Nesbitt did not retain Vlcko for the 2010 season.

Stevens Point is coming off a 7-3 campaign in 2009 and is ranked No. 11 in the USA Today Div. III poll for June 22.

"It's exciting for me and my family to have the opportunity to come to the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and become active members of the University and Stevens Point communities," Vlcko said in a Stevens Point press release.

The Truman offense averaged 346 yards per game from 2005 to 2008 under Vlcko. He was responsible for recruiting junior transfer quarterback Matt Ticich, who finished his career second in total offensive yards in Truman history.

Last season, with Vlcko still running the offense, Truman fell to last in the conference in total offense by more than 75 yards per game. The team had a myriad of injuries at quarterback, and junior Vanness Emokpae led the team in rushing and receiving.

Truman's defense ranked seventh in the MIAA and last against the run with Vlcko as head coach.

Though Truman did have numerous blowout losses in 2009, including 70-0 against Northwest Missouri State University, the team ended the season with its first win against Pittsburg State University since 1989.

Prior to working at Truman, Vlcko coached at Coe College (Iowa) in 2003 and was an assistant coach at Bemidji State (Minn.) University from 1996 to 2003.

"Coach Vlcko brings a great deal of experience in both coaching and play-calling to our program," said John Miech, Stevens Point football head coach, in a press release. "Having coached at Coe and Bemidji, Coach Vlcko is aware of the Wisconsin High School recruiting landscape."

Women's Basketball: Team hires assistant

Michael Smith, women's basketball head coach, announced the hiring of assistant coach Lora Westling near the end of June.

Westling spent the last three seasons as an assistant coach for Div. II University of Missouri-St. Louis, a member of the Great Lakes Valley Conference. Missouri-St. Louis was 26-58 in Westling's tenure.

Westling replaces Taira Roth, who left the team in early June "to pursue other interests," according to a press release.

Prior to coaching, Westling played for Washburn University, including the 2005 national championship season. Westling was a two-time All-MIAA selection in basketball and recorded 299 career assists.

Westling also was an all-region soccer player for the Lady Blues. She served as a graduate assistant for both the basketball and soccer teams at Washburn.

Football: Emokpae not selected in NFL draft

Former wide receiver/running back Vanness Emokpae was not selected in the NFL supplemental draft after foregoing his senior season. Emokpae is now an NFL free agent.

As a junior in 2009, Emokpae entered as the Bulldog's No. 1 wide receiver but saw time at every offensive position except offensive line. He led the team in rushing (524 yards, 5.4 per carry) and receiving (365, 14.0 per reception). Emokpae also scored nine touchdowns and was 2-for-2 passing out of the wildcat.

Emokpae led the Bulldogs in receiving yards in two of his three seasons. After 35 catches for 462 yards in 2007, Emokpae suffered a season-ending ACL and MCL tear in the first game of 2008 and took a medical redshirt. He earned honorable-mention All-MIAA honors in 2009.

Emokpae decided not to return for his senior season prior to the last game in the fall, as he was honored as part of Senior Day against Pittsburg State University.

Women's Soccer: Reuck becomes assistant

Former Bulldog soccer great Katie Reuck will join the team as an assistant coach this season. She played for Truman from 2007-2009.

Reuck transferred from Rockhurst University (Mo.) before her sophomore season. She finished 10th in Bulldog history with 20 goals. She added 10 assists and was named to the NSCAA All-Region team twice. The midfielder was also an All-American during her senior season.

She replaces former men's soccer player Martin Claves on the bench. Claves was a Bulldog from 2002-2005 and was an All-American in 2005. He had been an assistant at Truman for two years.

Claves became the 11th head coach at Westminster College (Mo.).

Welcome Freshmen & Upperclassmen



- Open 6 am-10 pm Monday & 6am Tuesday through 9 pm Sunday
- College tradition since 1983
- Sign up for our frequent diner program & earn free food!
- We now have a new webpage with our link to facebook
www.pancakecitykirksville.com