

Bulldogs finish 2-0 during week, now 12-2 overall

Women's volleyball team wins fifth straight conference game

BY TYLER KILLEN
Assistant Sports Editor

The No. 12 Bulldog volleyball team went 2-0 in conference matches last weekend. Truman beat Pittsburg State University 3-2 and Missouri Southern University 3-1 and extended their record to 12-2 overall and 5-1 in the MIAA. The Bulldogs dug themselves into an early hole in the match at Pittsburg State on Saturday. After having a 12-8 lead in the first set, Truman gave up 17 of the next 21 points. Truman scored the first point in the second set but never led after that, losing 25-23.

"I think a little fatigue caught us," Briney said. "[The Bulldogs'] legs were a little like Jell-o, and they took advantage of it and really took it to us, especially in the second set."

Truman hit -.038 in the first set, and .140 in the second set. Sophomore outside hitter Heather Hargadine said the team faced a deficit for the first time in quite a while.

"It was definitely stressful," Hargadine said. "Being down two games, we weren't really used to that. Other than the two games we lost, we've been on this big winning streak where we hadn't needed to come back. But we knew what we had to do, and we just did it."

The Bulldogs came out fast in the third set, rallying to a 20-7 lead. The Gorillas reeled off seven straight points after that, but Truman held on to win the set 25-17.

The fourth set was a tight battle throughout. Neither team had more than a five-point lead until Truman scored to make it 24-19. After a kill from Gorillas' sophomore outside hitter Leah Flynn, sophomore middle blocker Megan Sharpe blocked a shot to win the set 25-20.

"I was proud of the girls because we refocused," Briney said. "And this team has that 'we're not going to die' attitude. And we really kind of put it on them in the third set. ... And going into the fifth set, I knew we had it."

Ben Briney
Head coach

The fifth set also was tight. Truman led 7-5, but a service error and back-to-back attack errors by the Bulldogs allowed Pittsburg State to take the lead 8-7.

Senior outside hitter Allison Barker then had a pair of kills to give Truman the 9-8 lead. She went on to record five kills in the final nine Truman points to give the Bulldogs the 15-11 win.

Senior libero Casey Bruno said it took a little while for Truman to adjust to the conditions at Pittsburg State, but she never had any doubt about the win.

"There has always been an aura in Pitt. State's arena," Bruno said. "It's a big gym where the noise travels up. And we feed off of energy. So, when we're in there and it's just dead, we're forcing ourselves, and I think it took us a while to get used

to the atmosphere in there."

Barker led Truman with 17 kills and added 11 digs. Hargadine had 13 kills and a team-leading 25 digs. She is playing more while junior outside hitter Molly Sinclair deals with contact lens issues. Although Sinclair should return soon, Hargadine is not worried about her playing time.

"[Playing time] is not really up to me," Hargadine said. "But if they do decide to put me in there, then I'll be ready and willing to go in there and do what's best for my team."

Friday night's match at Missouri Southern was delayed one hour because Truman had to take a detour before arriving. Once the Bulldogs made it, they went straight into their pregame routine.

Truman led the Lions 15-13 in the first, but then ran off a seven-point rally to open up a 22-13 lead and went on to win 25-15.

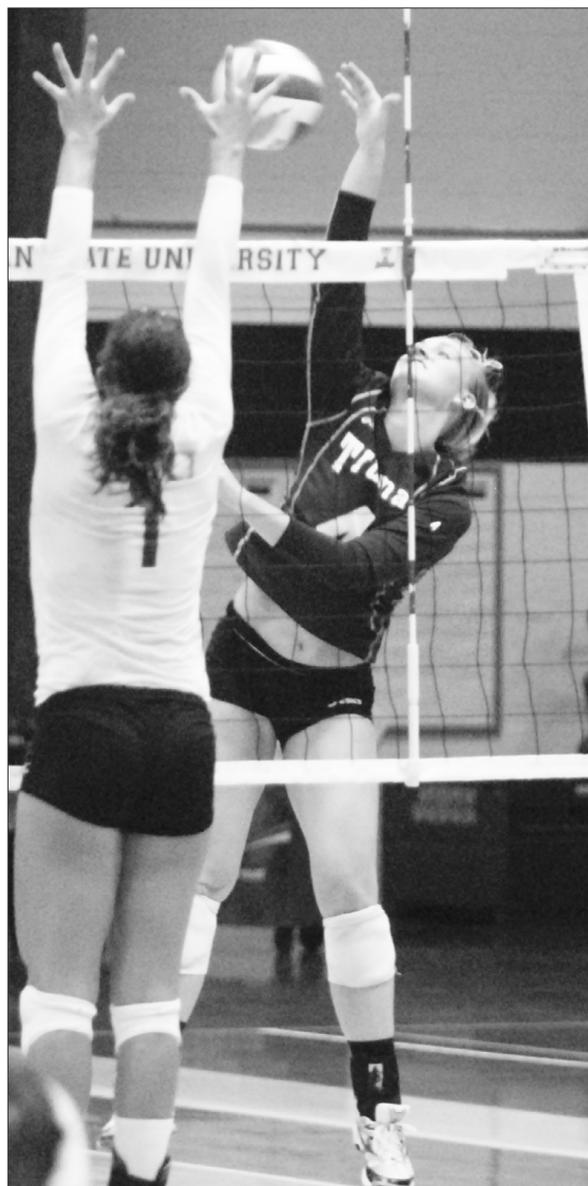
The second set was much closer. The Bulldogs had a 12-11 lead, but gave up five straight points and fell behind 16-12. Truman cut the gap to 22-20 following a block from sophomore middle blocker Megan Sharpe, but lost the set 25-21.

"We made some mistakes in the second set that gave them a couple runs," Briney said. "And that was how they got the second set. But our girls really refocused and took care of business in the third and fourth sets."

The Bulldogs won the third set 25-17 and took the fourth set 25-19 to win the match.

Truman will play in the Washburn Lady Blues Fall Classic this weekend, where they will compete in four matches.

"There is no excuse why we shouldn't [win all four matches]," Bruno said. "These are regional games where we have to come out on top."



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index
Sophomore outside hitter Heather Hargadine goes up for a kill last week against SBU. She had 25 digs and 13 kills at Pittsburg State last Saturday.

Bulldogs stay undefeated at home

BY JOHN MOENSTER
Staff Reporter

The men's soccer team has not lost at home this season. The Bulldogs, now 3-2, shut out Missouri University of Science and Technology last Friday with a final score of 2-0.

"They beat Drury on Sunday, who beat us, so we knew it was going to be a tough game," junior midfielder Johnny Brown said. "But we're good enough to beat anyone on our day, so we just kept playing away."

Seniors delivered both goals for the 'Dogs. Forward Matt Kimball scored his third goal of the season early in the match, deflecting the ball off a defender to put Truman on the board. Senior forward Robbie Narrow came off the bench in the second half and put away a rebound to provide the Bulldogs with a little insurance late in the match.

Brown said there is currently a lot of talent available off the 'Dogs bench.

"Everyone's pushing each other and when you sit back and watch our practice, it's pretty good to see," Brown said. "If we only had 14 guys we wouldn't be as strong as a team, and that's what keeps us going."

Brown said having such depth makes losing players to injuries or suspensions less of an issue for the 'Dogs. Senior midfielder Scott Biggerstaff said it creates a good environment for the team. It makes everyone on the team better when players are fighting for the ball in practice, he said. Biggerstaff said



Jack Nicholl/Index
Sophomore goalie Tyler Knierim makes a save last week against Missouri S&T. Knierim has 19 saves in five matches this season. He has played every minute in the goal for Truman and has two shutouts.

that while last Friday's win may not have been the prettiest, it was still a good win for the 'Dogs. Truman outshot Missouri S&T 22-20 with 14 shots on goal. Sophomore keeper Tyler Knierim posted his second shutout of the season, with

four saves. In the Bulldogs' next match, they will host Maryville (Mo.) University at 3 p.m. Friday. Biggerstaff said the 'Dogs will need to come out hard to remain undefeated at home. "They took Drury into overtime

recently, so it's definitely not going to be an easy game," Biggerstaff said. "We just need to take care of business early and keep our home field established." Head coach Duke Cochran said he thinks Maryville could be

a dangerous opponent. Cochran said Maryville has had some close matches where they've fallen just short of winning. Maryville has lost to Drury University and Rockhurst University and in both games the final score was 3-2.

"I think they're a team with nothing to lose, which means they're going to go for broke, which means you have to put your chances away against them, and you have to outplay them in order to win," Cochran said.

Cochran said some of his players might need to adapt to a new role on the team. He said the team has really learned a lot about itself during the past two weeks. Those players who have had the opportunity to come off the bench have proven they can perform well, Cochran said.

"I still think we're trying to find the exact mix that puts it together from start to finish," Cochran said. "For our guys, it's about believing in the team right now."

Cochran said he has a very attack-minded midfield with players like senior Dan Meagher, junior Johnny Brown and junior Charlie Backus. Cochran said he thinks putting in someone who stays back more and maintains the midfield might complement their style of play. This week in practice will be an interesting one, seeing who really competes for the starting spot.

"When you have great players fighting to get on the field, your team must be very good," Cochran said.

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