

Rugby shutout by Kansas State

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The rugby team opened its league play last semester with a 20-8 loss to Kansas State. In the second matchup last weekend, it was clear the two teams were headed in different directions.

Kansas State won 61-0 after scoring five tries in the first half. Kansas State had a 35-0 lead at halftime.

"The first half we played really poorly and they scored a lot of points," head coach Bill Sexton said. "In the second half, we played hard but poorly and they scored a lot of points. It was a difficult game. They were a good team anyway, and they picked up a couple Australian foreign exchange students that gave them a significant punch. They just played very well, and we played flat."

Another four tries in the second half by Kansas State put the game out of reach. With the win, Kansas State improves to 5-0 in league play and clinches a spot in the Div. I playoffs. The playoffs include only 16 teams.

Kansas State had four players with at least two scores.

"[The first] game was close until the end of the game," Sexton said. "Last fall's game was early on in the season. Both teams were trying out different combinations. We played pretty well that day too. This weekend, [Kansas] State knows that they've won the league. I think you're seeing a club in Truman that is trying to



Sophomore forward Alex Ferguson (stripes) is lifted for a throw in by junior forward Dan Bellavia (front) and sophomore Dave Stevens earlier this season against the University of Missouri.

Courtesy of Truman Bulls Rugby

train kids, and we've got a bunch of young guys that are on the field. [Kansas] State is in a different mode. They are maximizing

their effort, and their training is really focused. They're playing like a team that is going through to the first round of nationals."

Kansas State was coming off a 116-0 win against Pittsburg State University.

Sexton said freshman forward

Nick Budd and sophomore back Landon Anderson are young but played well against Kansas State. He said sophomore forward Nick Koenen has shown improvement.

"Nick is someone we've asked to move in from the backline because he's a really good tackler," Sexton said. "He's at strong side flanker right now. He's a bit undersized but he's a fearless tackler. There were several times where he would make a tackle, get up, scramble back on sides and get another tackle right away against Kansas State."

Budd, along with senior forward Jason Ralph and sophomores forward Dave Stevens and back Dave McDonough, were named to the Heart of America Collegiate All Star team last semester.

"Everyone's learning and everyone is picking it up pretty quick," Budd said. "It's still kind of tough to start [with so little experience]. We'll get better though. We're bringing back a lot of guys for next year, and that's a good thing."

The Bulls' next game is Saturday in Lawrence, Kan., against Oklahoma State University. Oklahoma State won the first matchup against Truman 37-21.

"We definitely want to win out," graduate student forward Luke Wenger said. "We also want to play to get better. We just want to finish strong and develop some of the new players. We want to build up our experience and build up our morale a little bit. We want these guys to get used to winning a little bit."

Eiskina's arsenal leads to improvement

BY JACK NICHOLL
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Sophomore baseball pitcher Jarrett Eiskina's favorite professional pitchers to watch are Roy Oswalt and Roy Halladay.

Both aces from the Philadelphia Phillies feature an array of movement on their pitches — Oswalt with a rising fastball and a 12-to-6 curveball, and Halladay with fastballs that can move in every direction.

Eiskina, who has been Truman's No. 2 pitcher for the last two seasons, has his own style of striking batters out with movement. Eiskina generally will get ahead in the count with offspeed pitches, then put batters away with more offspeed pitches.

"Every pitch he throws looks like a whiffle ball," head coach Dan Davis said. "He just doesn't give anybody anything really good to hit."

Eiskina used his four-pitch arsenal last Saturday to allow just two hits in seven innings in a 12-0 win at Southwest Baptist University. He struck out 10 and walked two to improve to 3-1 on the season.

The win helped move Truman (10-16, 9-13 MIAA) into a temporary tie for sixth in the conference standings. If the standings hold, the Bulldogs will make the conference tournament for the first time since 1999.

Like Oswalt and Halladay, Eiskina consistently has had success. He is fifth in the MIAA in ERA and second in strikeouts. He has a 1.17 ERA with 28 K's and four walks in his last three starts.

"Big key has been getting ahead in the count," Eiskina said, who had a 5.65 ERA and led the team with 49 strikeouts in 2010.

Although he features two fastballs — both which have movement — and a changeup he developed last year, Eiskina's bread and butter is his slider. It's a pitch that has led him to a 44 to 6 strike-out-to-walk ratio this season, the best in the MIAA, and he said it was more effective last weekend due to a crosswind.

"It makes it harder for them to sit on his fastball," Davis said. "His fastball right now is anywhere from 80 to 85, which isn't tremendously hard for the college level, but when you throw

slider, slider, slider, slider and then all of sudden you see a fastball at 84-85 mph, it looks really hard."

Similar to the Phillies' staff, Eiskina has been just one of Truman's ace pitchers this season. If Eiskina is the Bulldogs' Roy Oswalt, then junior Ryan Trimble is their Roy Halladay.

Trimble leads the MIAA in ERA, and he and Eiskina have combined for 30 straight scoreless innings. The duo has thrown three complete-game shutouts in their last four outings — before this season no Truman pitcher had thrown one for nearly a decade.

"Since last year, he and I always play catch together," Eiskina said. "And kind of joking around, he's my mentor and I'm his mentee. And in the fall and stuff like that he's really worked with me on locating, and basically teaching me how to be successful here, and it's really paid off."

"It makes it harder for them to sit on his fastball. His fastball right now is anywhere from 80 to 85, which isn't tremendously hard for the college level, but when you throw slider, slider, slider and then all of the sudden you see a fastball at 84-85 mph, it looks really hard."

Dan Davis
head coach

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Jarrett Eiskina

Sport	Position	Year	Hometown
Baseball	Pitcher	Sophomore	Lee's Summit, Mo.



Courtesy of Truman Sports Information Department

Sophomore Jarrett Eiskina comes to the plate against Missouri Southern earlier this season. Eiskina is tied for the team-lead in wins and has a 2.37 ERA.



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