

Track looks to improve

Indoor track teams to open season Dec. 10 at Cyclone Holiday Preview in Ames, Iowa

BY SAM SHERMAN
Staff Reporter

Head track coach John Cochrane said his biggest worry this season for both track teams is the growth of the MIAA.

"Last year, our conference had the most national qualifiers of any conference, so that tells you that it's pretty scary," Cochrane said. "Lincoln [University] has joined our conference and they have won four out of the last five national indoor championships, so that will raise the bar a little bit."

The Bulldogs start their indoor season Dec. 10 in Ames, Iowa. Senior Shania Dochterman, who finished fourth in the 400-yard dash at the national meet two years ago, said the women's team should be able to do well.

"We're small, but the people that we have will be able to compete," Dochterman said. "We have four freshmen, but they're all really good."

The women's team is starting the season with three runners who have placed nationally. Besides Dochterman, junior Jennifer Zweifel finished ninth in the national outdoor triple jump, and junior Dani Dell'Orco finished 10th in the 5,000-meter run and fifth in the 10,000-meter run.

A key loss is Katrina Biermann, who won nationals in the indoor pole vault last spring.

Not losing many seniors, Cochrane said he thinks the team will improve on last years' finish.

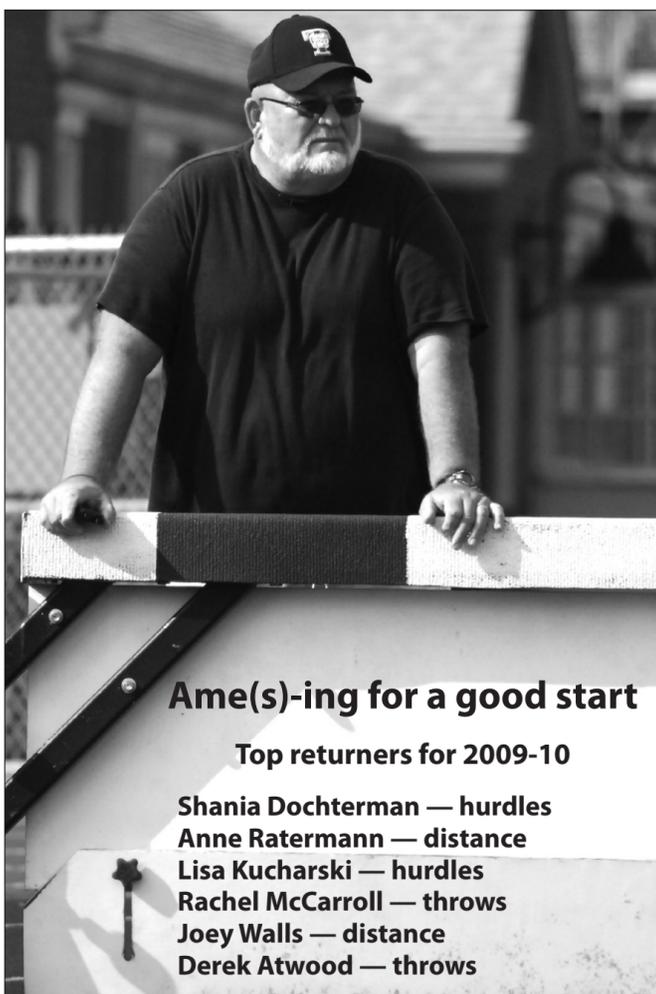
"The women's team is better than last year," Cochrane said. "We have some people coming back, so that should make us stronger. We have some strength in the distance side, but besides that our strength is scattered among all of the events."

The Bulldogs finished seventh in the outdoor meet last year with the help of Zweifel and Dell'Orco.

"We are very strong, and we have a lot of potential," Zweifel said. "We've been working really hard all fall, and I'm so excited to see what we can do. We have so much talent and have worked so hard that I think we can do great things this season."

With the addition of Lincoln to the MIAA, Dochterman said training has intensified.

"It's always in the back of our minds with every workout that we need to be working harder because we're going to have a tougher conference this year," Dochterman said.



Ame(s)-ing for a good start

Top returners for 2009-10

Shania Dochterman — hurdles
Anne Ratermann — distance
Lisa Kucharski — hurdles
Rachel McCarroll — throws
Joey Walls — distance
Derek Atwood — throws

File Photo

Track coach John Cochrane is in his 31st season as a head coach at Truman.

In throwing events, the team is led by sophomore Rachel McCarroll, who finished second in discus at the MIAA championships, and sophomore Dimonique McGruder, who finished eighth in the conference in shot put.

The men's team finished eighth in the MIAA conference last year, and Cochrane said he thinks they will finish at about the same place this year.

"We'll have to see how some people develop," Cochrane said. "We have a few people who are fairly decent — not a tremendous number of them, though. A lot of it depends on how much better these people get from last year."

The team is led by senior Derek At-

wood, who finished eighth in the conference in shot put last year, junior Ryan Peterson, who finished ninth in the 600-yard run, and senior Demetrius Lavant, who came in 12th in the long jump.

"We really don't have a lot of depth, so it's hard for us to compete as a team," Lavant said. "With the people that we have we should do well, though."

The men's team also is feeling the pressure from the addition of Lincoln, and Lavant said it has affected their workouts.

"I'm sure it's affected some of the guys and given them some motivation," Lavant said. "We know that we've got better competition coming in."

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Men's Cross Country: 'Dogs finish fourth

The men's cross country team finished fourth of 15 teams in the South Central Regional Meet on Nov. 20. The Bulldogs were only eight points behind the third-place finisher, East Central University. The top three teams in the region advance to the national tournament.

Senior Adam Kell and junior Joey Walls finished in the top 20. Seniors John Venner and Zach Chapman and sophomore Chad Petrofsky rounded out the top five.

Last season, Truman finished in 16th place out of 19 teams in the regional tournament. Truman's top runner was then-junior Bob Gorman, who finished in 56th place.

The Bulldogs finished in the top five in each meet this season. It's the best finish the men's program has had in the MIAA tournament and the regional tournament since 2005, when the Bulldogs finished fourth at both meets.

Nesbitt: Coach to join MFBCA Hall of Fame

Football head coach Gregg Nesbitt will join the Missouri High School Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame this week. Nesbitt coached high school football for 19 seasons at Columbia-Hickman and Hannibal High Schools.

Nesbitt coached at Hannibal for six years beginning in 1984, and the team advanced to the playoffs in his final three years as coach. In his 13 seasons with Columbia-Hickman, Nesbitt led the team to six playoff appearances and a state title in 2004. He took home the Missouri Coach of the Year award that season. He also was nominated for National Coach of the Year.

Nesbitt was the linebackers' coach and defensive coordinator for Truman from 1990 to 1992. He returned to Truman this season and led the Bulldogs to a 4-7 record, doubling their win total from last season.

Volleyball: Barker, Sharpe earn awards

The first round of volleyball postseason awards was announced last week, and senior outside hitter Allison Barker and sophomore middle blocker Megan Sharpe were recognized for their 2010 performance.

Sharpe was named a third team All-American. She is only the sixth Truman volleyball player ever to be given All-American honors in multiple years. Sharpe is the first Bulldog sophomore ever to be picked as an All-American during the first two years of her collegiate career. The American Volleyball Coaches Association also placed Sharpe on the South Central All-Region team.

Sharpe led the 'Dogs in several statistical categories. She had a .321 hitting percentage, averaged 2.53 kills per set and ended the campaign with 115 blocks. Barker was named to the second team All-District team and also received second team All-Regional honors. She averaged 2.75 kills and 3.52 digs per set.

The Bulldogs finished the season ranked 12th in the nation after a first round loss in the NCAA tournament to Abilene Christian University (Texas).

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