

Women can't defeat rival

BY DEREK FRANKLIN
Staff Reporter

Interim assistant coach and former Bulldog swimmer Danielle Odenthal easily can recall her most memorable moment of the competitive rivalry between Drury University and Truman.

During her freshman season at the 2008 NCAA Championships, the national champion was decided during the final race. Truman defeated Drury by one place to clinch the national championship with a score of 461.5 to Drury's 449.

"It was amazing, an amazing meet," Odenthal said. "It came right down to the last event and we knew we had to win that relay to win the meet. We've always had an intense rivalry since Drury, winning nationals and losing nationals against them."

The rivalry between the Bulldogs and Drury Panthers has grown since 1997, with Truman and Drury each taking home the crown seven times.

The Bulldogs could not overcome the defending national champions Saturday, losing 148-57 on Senior Day in Pershing Arena.

Truman honored seven women's team seniors: Emily Buss, Anna Grinter, Julia Jones, Claire Myers, Stephanie Myers, Carina Pautz and Tanya Sylves-

ter, all of whom have competed at the Div. II NCAA Championships for the Bulldogs.

But it was not the seniors who had the best day on the scorecard for the 'Dogs.

Junior Jessica Jenkot placed second in both the 50-yard freestyle with a time of 24.92 and the 100-yard breaststroke in 1:09.61 for the Bulldogs.

Freshman Casey Jepsen finished second in the 200-yard freestyle and freshman Beth Evanson took second in the 100-yard backstroke.

Although the team was not happy with the final score, the intensity of the meet remained high, Buss said.

"Given everything that has been going on with our team, everybody swam about where they were swimming previously, some even faster, so I think it was a pretty solid meet for us," Buss said. They're a really good team this year with a lot of talent. They went on a training trip over break and ours got taken away from us. They're just good."

In December, former head coach Mark Gole resigned, costing the team its annual training trip to California during Winter Break.

Jennifer Godlewski took over as interim head coach Jan. 6.

"Everyone has done a phenomenal job, with everything that has happened," Buss said. "I am so proud of the way that

everybody has handled the situation. Everybody still has a good attitude, working hard and ready to swim fast."

Buss said she particularly was impressed with the upperclassmen's performance Saturday. Godlewski said the team is ready to make the adjustments necessary for the conference meet, namely speed workouts.

"We're going to be working on the finer points of things, a lot of speed," Godlewski said. "They have the aerobic base set, so now it's just a matter of holding that threshold, that speed, for an extended period of time."

Odenthal said injuries have hurt the women's team, particularly the seniors. Buss, last season's 100 and 200-yard breaststroke conference champion, probably won't be back in full force.

Luck has not been on the Bulldogs side this season as far as injuries go, but Godlewski emphasized the mental aspect of swimming, especially at this point in the season, where injuries and distractions abound.

Godlewski said the team addresses ways to deal with distractions prior to races.

"We do visualizations and calming techniques so that we are mentally ready as well as physically," said Godlewski. "At this point in the season it's 90 percent mental and 10 percent physical."



Laura Tyler/Index

Senior Tanya Sylvester concentrates on her take off last weekend against Drury.

'Dogs struggle against top two teams

BY DEREK FRANKLIN
Staff Reporter

The men's swimming team's biggest rival, Missouri University of Science and Technology, came to town last Friday. The Bulldogs could not pull off the win against the No. 2 team in the nation, losing 119-81.

Sophomore Jerod Simek won the 1,000-yard freestyle in 9:48.02 with freshman Sam Collier finishing four seconds behind for his season-best time of 9:52.53.

Simek also won the 500-yard freestyle, beating out the Miners' Phillip Arve by four seconds, and sophomore Taylor Frymire placed second in the 50-yard freestyle in 22.53 seconds.

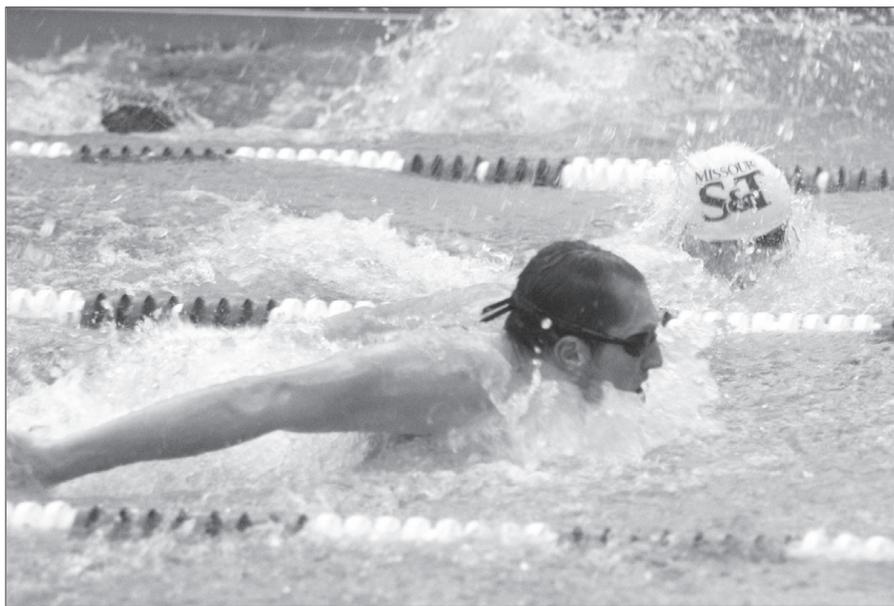
Senior James Barber said that every year the team has this tough weekend, but the meet with S&T gets the team energized.

"We always get up and go for Rolla," Barber said. "That's our big rivalry in state. It's always good competition."

Each team sees a lot of familiar faces when they meet, as Barber said there are a lot of former teammates from the swimmers' high schools on both sides of the pool. Simek's brother, sophomore Andrew Simek swims for the Miners and took third place in the 200-yard butterfly.

Barber said the meet against S&T was more demanding than usual on the swimmers because it was only the men's teams, whereas normally the women's race would offer breaks.

Less than 24 hours after racing against the No. 2 team in the nation, the Bulldogs were back in the pool against



Amy Vicars/Index

Junior Zac Litzau closes in on a Missouri S&T swimmer in the butterfly. The men lost 81-119 to the Miners.

No. 1 Drury University, against whom the men fell by a score of 140-65.

The lone senior honored for the men's team last weekend was Barber.

Sophomore Tony Hernandez was the only event winner that day for the Bulldogs, taking first in the 100-yard fly, and second in the 100-yard backstroke.

Simek finished second in the 200-yard freestyle and junior

Brian Tillis was second in the 1,000-yard freestyle.

Going up against the No. 1 and 2 teams in the nation during the same weekend is a daunting task, but Barber said many of the team's best times were recorded this weekend.

"Most of the guys have gone through this before," Barber said. "We do it every year this week. It's a fast meet. Every year

it's always high energy.

"We've always done really well against them compared to some of the other meets in the year. Usually our best times are at this meet almost guaranteed, and this year was no different."

Interim head coach Jennifer Godlewski said the fatigue was a factor on multiple levels for the Bulldogs. They not only swam demanding races on back-to-back

days, but also did not taper their normal training routine.

Godlewski said the team's main focus is achieving its best times at conference, and it would not be beneficial to its training schedule to ease up training for dual meets like these, as the team makes up for its missed training trip during Winter Break.

Many of the Bulldogs' best races of the year have come from freshman and sophomores, and interim assistant coach Danielle Odenthal said the team is "up and coming."

"We definitely have a lot of young talent," Odenthal said. "Our sophomore class is our strongest class I would say. Brian Tillis has gone to nationals, and the junior class will be a good leading class next year."

Odenthal also emphasized that the main relays at the conference meet will be composed of sophomores for the Bulldogs because they are some of the team's strongest swimmers. The relay events are worth more points than the individual races in determining a meet's winning team.

Truman has its work cut out for it, as all of the chips are on conference meet in the effort to move on to nationals.

Odenthal and Godlewski said the teams will be working on the finer points of speed — starts, turns and finishes — these last few weeks as the teams move closer to the conference meet.

"That is the nature of the beast," Godlewski said. "The nature of the sport is to put all of the emphasis of a season to peak for a short period of time at the end of the season."



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