

Zweifel earns All-American

Junior places sixth at nationals in triple jump despite injury

BY KIRK SCHLUETER
Staff Reporter

Most Truman State students saw Midterm Break as a welcome opportunity to flee the Kirksville cold to warmer climates and banish all thoughts remotely related to strenuous activity.

Junior Jennifer Zweifel had other plans.

During the break, Zweifel traveled to Albuquerque, N.M., to compete in the triple jump at the Div. II Indoor Track and Field National Championships. Despite straining her hamstring, Zweifel placed sixth, good enough to earn her All-American honors.

"Ever since outdoor season last spring where I got ninth at nationals and missed being an All-American by two centimeters, being an All-American has been my goal," Zweifel said. "It's been a driving force, so I'm very, very happy to have gotten that honor."

Early last week, Zweifel flew to Albuquerque to begin her preparations.

"We were able to visit the track there and work on it from Wednesday through Saturday morning, which was nice because the runway was a raised runway, which isn't something you normally see. So it was very springy and had a lot of bounce to it, and we had a couple of days to get used to the feel of it."

Zweifel opened the meet with a jump of 39-02.50 in the preliminaries, which was good enough to advance her to the finals.

"My first jump ended up being my best jump of the day, so it was really good to have a good jump to start with," Zweifel said. "It's always very nerve-wracking, because you only get three jumps to start with, so you want to go out and hit that first one."

Head coach John Cochrane said Zweifel had a good showing at the meet.

"Her first jump was very

good," Cochrane said. "Very good. And then her third jump was like one of those things in basketball where someone calls traveling, and you don't necessarily agree with it. They called a foul on her third jump, and I could see maybe an inch [of the board runners use to take off from] and they called it a foul. And [that jump] was as good a jump as she'd had all season."

"There's no instant replay, nothing like that. So you go on. And we got to the finals and some people had jumped out of their minds, better than they had all season, and she was in sixth place."

In the finals, Zweifel's day took a harsh detour when she strained her hamstring on her first jump, forcing her to pass on her other two jumps.

"The injury wasn't bad," Cochrane said. "But it was one of those things where I didn't really want her jumping again. I would

have liked to have the other jumps in the finals because she was jumping really well, but you have to take those things."

Zweifel said she was disappointed at the timing of the injury.

"Obviously when you go to a national meet, you do not want to sit out," Zweifel said. "So that was kind of heart-breaking, but I'm very fortunate and glad that I did get a good jump in at the beginning."

Despite finishing fourth at the MIAA conference meet, Zweifel placed second out of the five MIAA triple jumpers who qualified for the national championships. Four MIAA triple jumpers made the top nine to reach the finals.

"I think that going to the national meet, some of the other women in the conference didn't perform as well at nationals just because of the fact that it was the national meet," Zweifel said. "I think the national meet brings a little more stress for everybody."

Cochrane said he thought the other MIAA triple jumpers suffered mentally.

"[Zweifel] did well," Cochrane



Joyce Wong/Index

Junior Jennifer Zweifel jumps during practice earlier this season. Zweifel finished second out of the five MIAA triple jumpers at the national meet.

said. "She handled the situation well. She did not fall apart. Some of the girls behind her — the second and third place finishers at conference — just fell apart."

Zweifel said that while she enjoyed competing at nationals, her focus now is on the upcoming outdoor season.

"I'm ready to start competing again," Zweifel said. "My only goal is to keep improving. I'd really like to keep improving in long jump as well as triple jump. I broke the 40-foot barrier, which is really exciting because that's been a goal for me. So 41 feet is the next mark."

TRUMAN ATHLETICS News and Notes

Men's basketball: Team reacts to coaching changes

Former men's basketball head coach Jack Schrader, who has always stressed player development, brought in five freshmen at the beginning of last season to make up for the soon-to-be loss of seven seniors.

However, Schrader made the decision two weeks ago to retire from Truman. Less than a week later he accepted the head-coaching job at NAIA Culver-Stockton University.

Schrader told the team he was retiring after the season ended.

"Everybody kind of reacted on their own in different way," junior center Vesko Filchev said. "We were all kind of surprised to hear because at the beginning of the year coach talked to us and we didn't feel any threat for him at all."

Filchev did not go into detail about what Schrader told the team, but Filchev did say the decision was based on Schrader considering it for the last couple of years — not just this season when the senior-laden squad did not make the MIAA tournament.

Former assistant coach Tim Deidrick addressed the team at the same time as Schrader, saying he was also resigning. Deidrick did not apply for Schrader's open head coaching position.

"He kind of agreed — he kind of followed with what coach Schrader said with the situation with basketball in the last couple years, and their relationship with the athletic director and all that stuff, and community as a whole," Filchev said.

Without a coach for two weeks, the team had workouts three days per week as well as individual workouts. The University hired Matt Woodley as head coach Tuesday.

"It was a shock to us, but we're excited to move forward and get in with coach Woodley," sophomore guard Tom Norton said of the resignation.

Schrader will be remembered at Truman for many things, one being that he recruited players that possibly would not have been given a chance elsewhere, such as international players Filchev and 2009-graduate Patrick Fandja.

"I think everybody is thankful — especially me from bringing me from overseas over here to get free education," Filchev. "And I think he will be missed, both to the team and to the community because he gave chance to all of us."

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Miscellaneous

The Shocking Truth, that you won't hear in most churches. Find it on YouTube. "Shocking Youth Message" by Paul Washer. rgg7546@truman.edu

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