

SPORTS

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Rising to the challenge

Senior Breanna Daniels has had a long journey to her 1,000-point Bulldog basketball career

BY SAM SHERMAN
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As Michael Smith, the recently hired Bulldog womens basketball coach, walked into the first workout with his new team in the fall of 2008, there was one unfamiliar face.

Smith had been the head coach since April and he had come in contact with most of the other fresh recruits, who were recruited by former coach John Sloop. However, this was the first time he had met Breanna Daniels, a two-time all-State player from Hollister High School in Hollister, Mo.

He said what he saw during the first few days of workouts from Daniels did not impress him, as she was having trou-

ble adapting to the rigors of college basketball. So he did what any good coach would do with a struggling freshman: challenge her to shape up.

Smith didn't know how Daniels would respond to that fateful test of perseverance. But he would've had a good idea had he talked to Daniels' high school basketball and softball coach, Mark Vert, who said that, no matter if it was a practice, game or scrimmage, Daniels never took a play off in high school.

"She was the only kid that I've ever coached in our zone offense that could play all five positions if we needed her to," Vert said. "Nobody worked harder than her and she was just a great kid to have around."

Vert said Daniels flourished at Hollister High, averaging 20 points a game and 11 rebounds in basketball and earn-

ing all-conference honors in softball, cross-country and track. By the time she graduated, she had the school record in points scored with 1,501. Following her record-breaking high school career, Daniels was recruited to play elsewhere, including College of the Ozarks and Truman State.

"There were a couple schools close to home, like College of the Ozarks," Daniels said. "Truman just made me the best offer and my mom was like, 'You should go there because you won't stop talking about it.'"

Fast forward to the fall of 2008. Smith reached out to this freshman from the Ozarks who was recruited to play post for the Bulldogs but instead was being forced to play guard in Smith's fast-paced offense.

He had second thoughts as to wheth-

er this 5-foot-9-inch player fit the vision of Bulldog basketball he had.

And that is when the challenge from Smith came back into play.

"It was one of those things as a coach that you love to see from a player," Smith said. "Basically, she took the challenge and ran with it."

During her freshman season for the Bulldogs, Daniels started 15 games and played in all 27, averaging 8.6 points and 3.6 rebounds a game. In her sophomore season, Daniels began to develop a leadership role on the floor.

"I've never been a huge vocal leader," Daniels said. "I was one of the few coming back that had quite a bit of experience. ... I feel like even then I was looked [at] to be one of our main scoring threats."

That season, Daniels started 26 of
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Volleyball signs six for 2012 season

BY TYLER POE
Staff Reporter

A strong 2011 campaign from freshmen Abby Moser, Allie Brak and Meghan Zimmerman has left many fans eager for Truman volleyball's 2012 season. Last week, head coach Ben Briney welcomed six new members to the Bulldog program.

Briney said the new players will fit in nicely with the established ones. He said he is excited about the opportunity they will have to make an immediate impact upon their arrival next fall, though he said it is hard to predict success. "You just never know how they will fit in, how they will play or how they are going to adjust to college and to a new level of competition," Briney said. "It's really difficult for new players to come in and adjust from a mental standpoint when they are used to being the best of the best from their high school or club team."

Abby Heise

Heise was named second-team all-state and led her team to its second straight IHSA Class 1A third-place finish her senior season. Heise will join current juniors Lauren Radix and Al-

lyson Stellmach as the squad's third right-side hitter. Heise totaled nearly 1,300 kills, 1,300 assists, 550 digs, 300 blocks and 150 aces and was named all-conference four times for her career at Lutheran High in Springfield, Ill.

Jessye Maurer

Maurer led Kickapoo High School in Springfield, Mo. to a 27-3 finish her senior season, winning back-to-back conference championships. Her club team, the Springfield Juniors, finished fifth at the 2009 USA Volleyball Junior National Championships in the National Division before earning a third-place finish in the American Division in 2010. She was named to the all-tournament team in 2010 and was a member of the 2009 USA Girls Select Continental team that participated in the USA High Performance Championships. Maurer will fill the team's need for an outside hitter with the departure of seniors Molly Sinclair.

Ali Patterson

Patterson will back up junior middle-blocker Emily Briseno and fill the void left by the departure of senior Erin Burmester. Patterson set records at Lee's Summit High School in Lee's Summit, Mo. in total blocks (222), kills
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Sports Editor says goodbye

There are a lot of reasons I will miss the Truman State Index, and if you're reading this, you are one of them.

To be fair, I should mention

I'm writing my farewell column a couple of years ahead of schedule. Indeed, I have a few more years of education before me. Truman is a great school and the fact that I'll be finishing my education elsewhere is not because I haven't enjoyed my time here in Kirksville.

I started writing sports for the Index the second week of my freshman year. I still remember my first story. It was an athlete of the week feature about now senior football running back

Harnish Ayora. I remember sitting down across from Harnish in the Student Union Building, clicking on my recorder and asking him about his career high rushing day against St. Joseph College

[Ind.]. That same week is the first time I met head football coach Gregg Nesbitt. I spent this fall covering his team every week and had an absolute blast doing so. It's funny how things come full circle.

Between the first week of my freshman year and now, I've had the pleasure of interacting with many of the

Truman sports community, from
What I'm about to say probably is one of the most frequented senti-
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Commentary



BRETT MCMILLAN