

# SPORTS



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## Zweifel and Walls set records

**Multiple track athletes break personal and school records at Missouri-Columbia**

BY ROB JONES  
Staff Reporter

Two Bulldog track athletes broke school records during the Missouri Collegiate Challenge meet Friday at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Seniors Jennifer Zweifel and Joseph Walls saw the fruits of their labor manifest them-

selves in the Triple Jump and 1,000-meter race, respectively. Walls, who finished with a time of 2:30.01, narrowly topped the previous Bulldog best of 20 years by two-tenths of a second. Zweifel, who previously had the record, set a new record with a jump of 40-09.75.

Zweifel said breaking the record was a true confidence booster for her after struggling for a large portion of the season.

"I feel very excited," Zweifel said. "I hadn't had any personal bests at all this season [even though] coming into senior year I had a lot of expectations. I was really disappointed and had

lost confidence in myself so this meet helped me really get a lot of that back and let me know I'm not completely out of the game yet."

For her performance during the weekend, Zweifel earned her third MIAA Athlete of the Week Award of her Bulldog career.

Walls said he was surprised by the results of his performance during the meet, considering the race conditions.

"I'm happy to have finally broken the record," Walls said. "I'm a little surprised even from the circumstances. I wasn't feeling too great before the race. I was kind of tired and my mouth felt like I had been chewing on cot-

ton. Plus the track is the worse track I've raced on. It has some pretty tight turns which are harder on me because I'm taller."

Walls, who beat the next closest runner by more than six seconds, also explained that without his teammates he might not have been able to break the record.

"Team chemistry definitely played a role," Walls said. "I remember several points in the race when I heard my teammates cheering me on. There were times when I started relaxing and I remember them yelling and telling me that I was going to get the record and that

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## Men lead nation in team GPA

**Mens cross-country team finishes with one All-Academic athlete, women finish with four**

BY KIRK SCHLUETER  
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The Truman State mens cross-country team had the highest GPA of all Div. II mens cross country teams during 2011.

The team posted a cumulative GPA of 3.71 and was named a United States Track and Field and Cross-Country Coaches Association All-Academic Team for 2011. Additionally, senior Joey Walls achieved individual All-Academic status for the second consecutive year.

The womens cross-country team also saw success in GPA rankings, tied for second with a cumulative GPA of 3.73. Four women runners, senior Anne Ratermann, juniors Karen and Cindy Grauel and junior Michelle Gronemeyer earned All-Academic honors as well. It was Gronemeyer's second straight All-Academic award, and the third consecutive year for the Grauel twins and Ratermann.

To be named All-Academic individually, athletes must have a GPA of 3.25 or higher, and must finish within the top 30 percent in the regional competition.

Head coach John Cochrane said he is proud that since cross-country teams began being ranked by GPA, the Truman teams have often finished near the top of the listings. He said he sees the teams' high GPA fitting with the University's mission.

"I know all of our people are students first, and athletics is something else they do that they like," Cochrane said. "We always tell them that you're really here to go to school."

Ratermann said the Truman cross country program always has stressed academic success.

"It's not a threatening emphasis, but we definitely encourage a supportive learning environment," Ratermann said. "I know my sophomore year we were first in the nation, so it's something that we take with high regard, not just to be able to compete in our sport, but to be able to be competitive in the classroom as well."

Walls said the team does not have study halls or design

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Freshman third baseman Cate Simon throws a ball during practice Tuesday. The Bulldogs just returned from the Alabama-Huntsville Charger Chillout tournament, where they finished 2-2 for the weekend.

## 'Dogs go 2-2 in Huntsville

BY TYLER SIGRIST  
Staff Reporter

Bulldog softball began its season last weekend, at the University of Alabama-Huntsville Charger Chillout tournament. The 'Dogs went 2-2 in the tournament, losing to Quincy University 1-2 and to Maryville University 6-8. The Bulldogs beat the University of Missouri-St. Louis 10-5 and the University of Southern 2-0.

During the opening game of the 2012 season, the 'Dogs fell to Quincy University by a score of 1-2. Senior Ashley Rotkovich went five and two-thirds innings, giving up two earned runs on eight hits and three walks during the first game of her last season pitching for Truman.

"In the last month we've been working with a pitching coach and we've adjusted some things," head coach Erin Brown said. "We didn't have a full fall semester to work on some of these things so our pitching staff is trying to work through that a little bit."

With a tight strike-zone that wasn't giving many outside pitches, Rotkovich said she was forced to turn away from her go-to curveball and try to spot her screwball on the inner half.

"Ashley has made some adjustments and I think she really stepped up and owned that pitch and did a good job throwing it," Brown said. "For her to face that adversity and know that she's going to have to throw it, I think she did a good job

of doing that."

Truman struggled offensively and scored only one run on four hits and three walks during game one last Friday. But the offensive woes soon went away, when in game two against the University of Missouri-St. Louis, the Bulldogs were up 6-2 after a second inning two-RBI double from senior Bridget Schade, who hit .500 during the weekend.

"We did a lot of really good things offensively in [the UMSL] game," Brown said. "I felt like we looked more comfortable up at the plate, and I knew we had the potential to put a lot of runs up on the board so it was nice to see them come out and perform like they can."

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## Pros & cons of saying 'So long' to the MIAA and 'Hello' to the GLVC

### Move offers opportunity

If you've been reading the sports section these past few weeks, you know Truman State could be moving to the Great Lakes Valley Conference for athletic competition as early as the 2013-2014 school year. That leaves us just enough time for us to sing the MIAA a chorus of "Nah, nah, nah, nah, hey, hey, hey, goodbye," grab the Hickory Stick on the way out the door and hope Northwest Missouri State doesn't notice as we ride off into the sunset, right?

Maybe we don't need to celebrate leaving the MIAA quite that much, but I do think we should run to the GLVC with open arms, should they extend us an offer to join.

The fact is, the MIAA is one of the premier athletic conferences in Div. II, and Truman is not primarily an athletic school. It is, at the risk of sounding pre-

tentious, an academic institution, and if you look at the MIAA landscape, it's not hard to see who stands out. Nearly every other school in the MIAA has better facilities than Truman, and let's face it — we don't exactly have the money right now to compete with them.

Truman stands out in another way from the rest of the MIAA. Remember that metaphor about riding off into the sunset? Turns out Truman actually would be riding into the sunrise. We're currently one of the most eastern schools in the MIAA, and the conference's geographic footprint has done nothing but move west and south in previous years. Where we used to be relatively in the heart

of the MIAA, we're now an outlier. The GLVC, with the majority of its membership in Missouri and Illinois, puts

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Commentary

KIRK SCHLUETER

### Move kills tradition, history

After hearing the announcement Truman State was going to cut 12.5 percent from its budget, I knew I wasn't going to like the athletic cuts. As I thought about what could be done to offset the lack of funding, I must have brainstormed at least 10 ways the athletic budget could be reduced, but I never thought one of the possibilities would be a move to the Great Lakes Valley Conference.

For those of you who say this has absolutely nothing to do with the budget, it certainly isn't a coincidence Athletic Director Jerry Wollmering's tweet confirming the possibility of a conference change occurred 20 days after Jay Nixon's speech suggesting the budget cut.

From a budget standpoint, who wouldn't make the change? The GLVC schools are closer than our beloved MIAA opponents, meaning travel costs are going to be re-

duced by a fairly significant amount. That's an easy fix to the budget crisis that is currently befuddling every University department, right?

Wrong, and here's why. Despite what a majority of campus might think as they walk mindlessly by the various trophies, our athletics program actually has a very rich and proud tradition. Truman is a charter member of the MIAA conference, widely considered to be the best Div. II conference in the nation.

That means the Bulldogs started competing in MIAA athletics during 1912. In those 100 years, our football program has the most MIAA championships, is second in the MIAA in wins (eighth in the nation), has one Harlon Hill Trophy winner (Div. II equivalent of the Heisman) and 13 first-team All Americans. Our basketball program has fielded an NBA Hall-of-Famer,

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Commentary

SAM SHERMAN