

Bulldog Breakdown

ON CAMPUS

Softball
3 p.m.
vs. Central Oklahoma

Softball
5 p.m.
vs. Lindenwood

STANDINGS

W Basketball (6th)
17-9 (11-9 MIAA)
five-game win streak

M Basketball (9th)
8-20 (5-15 MIAA)

Softball
5-4 overall

Baseball
1-3 overall

TOP 'DOGS

Becka McHenry
basketball guard
19 points vs. UCM
Earned all-MIAA second team

Seth Jackson
basketball guard
Named 2011-2012
MIAA mens basketball
Freshman of the Year

Jennifer Zweifel,
track athlete
Broke own school
record in triple jump
and 29-year-old school
record in long jump
Qualified for Nationals
in both

Two 'Dogs make national meet

BY KIRK SCHLUETER

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When senior thrower Derek Atwood awoke Sunday morning for the final day of the MIAA Indoor Track and Field Championships, he already knew how the day was going to end for him.

"I could have told you I was going to win," Atwood said. "I just felt super good. I told everybody that would listen that I would win it."

Atwood was right. He took first in the shot put to help cap an uneven weekend for the Bulldogs, who saw the women place fourth and the men eighth in their conference meet. The 'Dogs won four individual event titles during the meet.

"I didn't think we'd get that many [individual titles]," head coach John Cochrane said. "We're not super teams. We hung on to get fourth with the women, which is pretty decent for us. We're a little better on the mens side than we showed. We should have crawled one more place."

In addition to Atwood, senior Jenny Zweifel took home gold for Truman State. She set an automatic qualifying mark for the national meet in the triple jump for first place, and later broke a school record in the long jump with a leap that was good enough for second place for the meet and a national provisional mark.

"I've been trying to break Lisa Moats' long jump record for 29 years," Cochrane said. "We just haven't had a good enough jumper indoors."

With her long jump finish during the weekend, Zweifel now has the Truman record in both the triple jump and the long jump, having broken her own mark in the triple jump this weekend only one week after setting it at the Missouri Collegiate Challenge. She said she was proud of her marks in both categories.



Hanna Bilinski/Index
Members of the mens and womens track team practice last week on the field at Stokes Stadium. The women took fourth in this weekend's MIAA Indoor Championships and the men placed eighth.

"I feel very blessed to be a part of a legacy," Zweifel said. "When you break a record that's almost 30 years old, it really makes you feel like you're a part of something that's bigger than just yourself. Being able to have two school records is just incredible."

In addition to Atwood and Zweifel, the final two Bulldogs to win gold last weekend were junior Rachel McCarroll in the weight throw, who also set a provisional mark with her throw of 56-10.25 and junior Ryan Peterson in the 600-yard run.

Cochrane said the team might have suffered slightly from the length of the three-day meet Sunday.

"I didn't see it as a problem with being able to perform," Cochrane said. "I think it was not being able to focus on things. I think that might have been a bigger casualty than just being tired. It's just a long, long time [to be competing]."

Cochrane also said another problem for the team was the relative inexperience of some of the younger athletes for the mens team, who struggled to execute during several weekend events.

"We're not quite ready for prime-time with those people," he said.

He said several of the women, while not winning their events, set personal bests. Junior Karen Grauel had a personal record in the 5,000-meter run, where she placed second. Junior Cindy Grauel marked her personal best in the 5,000-meter run and the 3,000-meter run. Additionally, senior Anne Ratermann set a personal best in the 800-meter run.

"You can't complain about [people running their personal bests]," Cochrane said.

Zweifel automatically qualified to the national indoor meet March 9-10 in Mankato, Minn., and she and At-

wood's respective provisional marks in the long jump and shot put were also good enough to warrant selection to the national meet.

Atwood, who qualified for the national outdoor meet his sophomore year, but then suffered setbacks and redshirted last season to prepare for this year, said he is planning to spend midterm break in Minnesota.

"I redshirted last season in order to get stronger and get some confidence back, and I did," he said. "I felt great coming into this year, and it's perfect timing ... If I throw my best, I could place All-American, and that's the goal from when I started."

Zweifel, who placed sixth at the national indoor meet to earn All-American honors last year, said that once the athletes arrive in Mankato, everything they have done previously this season is irrelevant.

Tennis faces strong weekend competition

BY ROB JONES

Staff Reporter

The mens tennis team kept its momentum from an undefeated fall season alive this weekend during the Principia Invitational.

The Bulldogs posted a flawless 10-0 record against host Principia College on the way to an overall 19-11 record against the University of Missouri-Saint Louis, Washington University (St. Louis) and Principia.

Notable singles performers included sophomore Kirk Schlueter, who went a perfect 3-0 during the weekend, including a close 0-6, 7-5, 14-12 victory against a player from UMSL. Freshmen Jake Ohlhausen and Griffin Smith, and sophomores Joe Murphy-Baum and Mike Merchant came home with 2-1 records, their only losses coming to Washington University. Ohlhausen and Smith also went 3-0 to win the No. 2 doubles flight while Murphy-Baum and sophomore Adam King went 2-1 in the three doubles flight.

After getting off to a cold start against Washington University (2-7 overall) the team quickly shrugged it off, heightened its intensity and never looked back, going 17-4 in the rest of its matches.

"We knew that guys from Washington University would be tough, and those were some close matches," head coach Pete Kendall said. "UMSL is a really good team and if you look at that as a dual match, we beat them and Principia, [which] is a much better team [than they were last year] so it was good beating them too."

King said he was proud of the team's overall performance last weekend.

"I feel like our team performed very well and many of us played some of the best tennis we've ever played for Truman," King said. "We're playing a lot better than we were at the same time last year so hopefully we can maintain that high level throughout."

Before the Principia Invitational, the team had not had a match in nearly five months, and King said the idle time started to take a toll on the team.

"It was definitely killing us," King said. "We were incredibly anxious to get back out there especially because the first match we had was cancelled. So we were defi-



Grace Stojeba/Index
Freshman Griffin Smith hits a backhand during practice last week. Smith finished the weekend with a 5-1 record.

nately excited to get back into the swing of things."

Ohlhausen said the team was nervous coming out of the gate because its winter practices had been confined to Pershing Arena and its synthetic surface, which is unlike the hard court the Bulldogs played on this weekend.

"I was kind of nervous because we hadn't done a whole lot [during the winter]," Ohlhausen said. "Coach is really good about designing our practices, but there is not a lot you can do to compare it to a match, so I was worried about the competitive aspect."

After this weekend, Ohlhausen said the team is excited about the rest of the season, with fewer tweaks than they first thought necessary.

"Going forward I'd like to play

sort of the same," Ohlhausen said. "I know I can always get better and get faster ... but as a team I think we just need to do the same things."

King said the invigorated Bulldogs are excited to play the schools they fell to a year ago.

"With the current lineup we have and the way guys are playing we can do a lot better than last year," King said. "Last year we lost to Emporia and Washington and we're looking forward to getting to play them again."

The team's next match is March 19 at home against the University of Nebraska-Kearney.

"I think we will definitely have a winning season," King said. "We lost in the first round of the conference tournament last season, and this year I'd definitely say we're not going to lose in the first round."

Baseball drops three during trip

BY TYLER SIGRIST

Staff Reporter

Truman State baseball began its 2012 season Feb. 25 with a four-game series at Missouri S&T.

The Miners got the best of the Bulldogs, winning three of the four games that were played this weekend. During their 6-0 loss in game one, the 'Dogs ran up against one of the best GLVC pitchers from 2011, S&T senior Zack Gronek. Gronek gave up only three hits, struck out eight and walked none during his seven-inning performance.

"He's a pretty good left-hander," head coach Dan Davis said. "He throws strikes, has a good change up and he kept us off balance all day. He just wore us out, really, at the plate."

Senior Tyler Stefan found himself on the mound for the 'Dogs during the season opener. Stefan went three and a third, giving up five hits, six runs, five earned, recording only one strikeout and issuing a single walk.

Freshman Bret Gerstner pitched the remaining two and two-thirds of the game in relief, giving up two hits, walking one, striking out one, but without giving up another run. The teams had one error apiece yet it still was defensive woes that Davis cited as the reason for the early difficulties.

"I thought we pitched okay," Davis said. "We didn't play a lot of defense behind our guys and, unfortunately, that cost us a few runs here and there."

Game two went on to further prove Davis' point. Junior Jerrett Eiskina took to the mound for five innings, struck out five and allowed five hits. Eiskina allowed no walks and gave up three runs, two of which were earned. Three Bulldog relievers combined for the remainder of the game, during which S&T put up eight more runs. Truman's five errors and six unearned runs allowed in game two proved to be insurmountable for the 'Dogs as the Miners ran away with the second game of the day one double header, winning 11-4.

"We need to start to take care of the baseball," Davis said. "If we do that — and I think we will — we're going to allow our starters to go deeper into ball games. Whenever you have a lot of errors, it costs your pitcher extra pitches and they have to leave the game quicker, which then puts more pressure on your bullpen."

Even after a questionable first day of defense, there was only optimism from the Bulldog dugout about how the team would respond as the season continues.

"I have no worries about our defense," Eiskina said. "I feel like we'll be able to do our job. It's just a little slow start to the season. But I feel like the team did well."

The positive attitudes paid off during the first game Sunday morning. The Bulldog offense finally got rolling, putting up five runs on nine hits in the first five innings on their way to a 5-3 victory.

"We didn't have a good first day," Eiskina said. "But we bounced back really well. I felt like our pitching did fairly well. The freshman hitters came through in the clutch and so did the transfers."

Senior Devon Myers and juniors Jordan Howe and Blake Marino each had two hits as junior Logan Siegler picked up the first win of the season for the 'Dogs. Siegler threw four innings for Truman, giving up three runs on three hits, before handing the ball to sophomore Chris Allard. Allard tossed three innings of one-walk, two-hit baseball to get his first save of the year.

"I thought we started having a little bit better approach at the plate after we got settled in," Davis said. "It took us a little bit to get going but I was impressed with the way we hit after that. I think our strength is going to be defense, but I also think we are going to be a lot better offensively than what we have been in the past."

Game four looked like it was going to be another blowout favoring the Miners as they got up to a 5-0 lead by the end of the fifth. The 'Dogs made a late surge during the last three innings as the bullpen all but shut down S&T's offense, while a couple of clutch hits brought them within a run of the Miners. The early five run lead was too much for the 'Dogs to come back from as they ended up dropping the weekend's final game by a score of 5-4.

"The bullpen, I thought, did tremendous," Davis said. "Chris Allard threw three scoreless innings in the game that we won and got the save for that. [Sophomore] Tim Lee threw the eighth inning on Sunday and he was lights out. We just have to get to those last couple of innings. We have two big arms that can come in and finish games for us."

The Bulldogs' next game will be against the University of Southern Missouri on March 2-4 in Joplin, Mo.

"[Southern miss] off to a 7-0 start," Davis said. "They're hitting the crud out of the ball, and they're pitching even better than they're pitching. They're really going to be pretty good. We're going to have to go in there and scratch and claw and fight like crazy to get a win or two. It's going to be a good test."