Bulldogs continue losing streak

BY GARRETT FRITCH
Staff Reporter

The Truman State mens tennis team was unsuccessful for much of the weekend, posting a record of 0-2 during matches against the University of Missouri-St. Louis and Lewis University.

The score of the matches combined was a 3-15.

Sophomore Joe Murphy-Baum and sophomore Mike Merchant were the only singles players to win a match this weekend. The doubles team of Murphy-Baum and sophomore Adam King was the only doubles team to win its match.

Although the score of the matches does not indicate that the Bulldogs were competitive this weekend, the individuals were much closer to the desired outcome for the team.

The Bulldogs went on the road Sunday to play the University of Missouri-St. Lous.

The Bulldogs had played UMSL at the Principia tournament earlier this spring. If it had been a dual match the Bulldogs would have won, head coach Pete Kendall said.

“I think every match had at least one tiebreak set in it,” he said. “It wasn’t very many swings of the racket and that score would have been in our favor.”

Murphy-Baum’s three-set win was a source of pride for most of the Bulldogs this weekend because it was one of the few close matches the Bulldogs were able to win.

“Support from the other guys on the team helps in these matches,” King said. “Having coach come on to the court to talk to you helps as well. After Joe got killed in the first set, Coach came on to the court and Joe killed this guy in the second set.”

Freshman Griffin Smith said during close matches such as Murphy-Baum’s, the team makes sure to support him, and cheer after big points.

Against Lewis the Bulldogs did not play their best tennis of the spring, and they were still close matches, which left Kendall without much to say afterward.

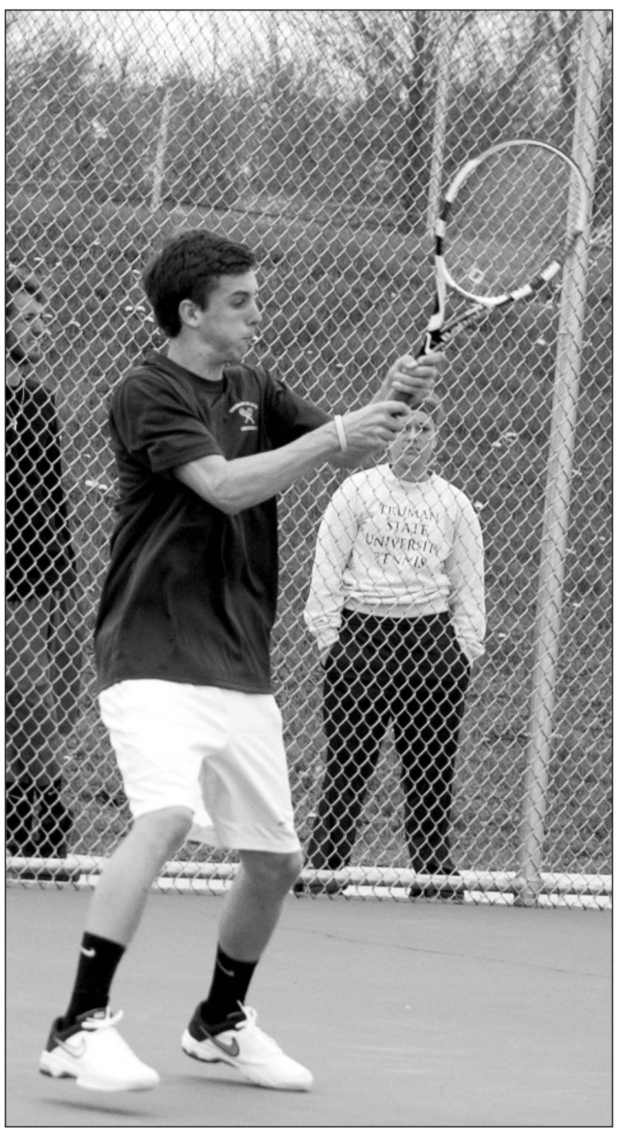
“I just tell them they played well, and if you keep playing like that you’ll end up well down the line,” Kendall said. “I think sometimes it’s harder to lose close like that than it is to get dominated by somebody. We made them earn every point out there and the guys know that.”

The men stayed in Kirksville on Wednesday when they faced the Rockhurst University Hawks.

The Bulldogs didn’t win a match all day against Rockhurst, with the final tally at 0-9.

This was the team’s third loss in a row, as they have failed to win a dual match this spring season.

Their next dual is at 4 p.m. today against the University of Nebraska-Kearney at home. On Saturday, the ’Dogs play at 1 p.m. against Emporia State University.



Andrea Hewitt/Index

Left, sophomore Joe Murphy-Baum hits a backhand Friday against Lewis at the Truman tennis courts. Right, sophomore Mike Merchant also swings through a backhand.

Womens’ tennis team struggles

BY GARRETT FRITCH
Staff Reporter

The women continued their tough schedule last weekend with a trip to St. Louis to battle the University of Missouri-St. Louis Tritons. The Bulldogs won the matches 5-4.

Four Bulldogs won matches during the day. It was a win that was helped by the two seed senior Dagmar Velez, three seed freshman Kim Birenbaum, four seed junior Maggi Schutte and five seed senior Jennifer Hawkins winning matches for Truman as well as the two seed doubles team of Schutte and Birenbaum winning their match for the Bulldogs.

Several of the winning Bulldogs fell behind early during matches only to come back to win. Kendall was especially excited about the team’s come from behind wins.

“It’s a team effort,” Kendall said. “Everybody playing their hardest, playing their best. ... We had a couple of matches where we got behind in tiebreakers, and they came back and won.”

The best example of this came late during the day when Hawkins was the only player left on the courts.

“My match decided who won,” Hawkins said. “It’s a lot of pressure. It makes you really nervous, but it’s really exciting.”

It was the first time Hawkins had ever clinched a match for the Bulldogs.

The Bulldogs played Lewis University the previous day. With a tough 2-7 loss, Kendall said the difficult schedule for the Bulldogs was going to help them improve throughout the season.

“It certainly is a thing that’ll get you ready to play tough players. As long as you understand that there are tough teams and it doesn’t hurt your confidence,” Kendall said. You don’t want to get too down when you get a loss or too high when you get a win. You just don’t want to lose a whole bunch of matches.”

Velez said playing teams like Lewis gives the Bulldogs confidence during later matches.

“The match against Lewis helps us know that if we work really hard we’re a really strong team and we can go very far,” said Velez.

The Bulldogs will continue a grueling schedule as they take on the University of Nebraska Kearney, Emporia State University, Northwest Missouri State University and South Dakota State University next week.

The Bulldogs faced Rockhurst University on Wednesday with little success, only picking up two wins in singles and none in doubles.

Midway through her match against Rockhurst’s Karsyn Betts, Velez hit a shot that would have landed three feet out of the court. It ended up out for Velez and the mistake lost her the point. The shot epitomized the day the Bulldogs were having.

Velez and Schutte were the only players to pick up individual wins for the Bulldogs in the team’s loss.

Clutch performance from Hawkins

Senior Jennifer Hawkins clinched the win for the Bulldogs last weekend against the University of Missouri-St. Louis with a 6-4, 7-5 victory in the final match

Golf places in bottom half

BY ROB JONES
Staff Reporter

The Truman State womens golf team shook off the rust last weekend and began their spring season following a winter hiatus. The Bulldogs competed at the Missouri Western Invitational at Missouri Western State University in St. Joseph, Mo.

After the first round of play, the Bulldogs found themselves sitting in eighth place out of 10 schools, posting a disappointing score of 375 in the process. Before the match, players were worried that being idle for several months, as well as playing on an unfamiliar course, might take a toll on the team.

“It was the first tournament of the season, and that’s always kind of rough ... but [the course] definitely showed us what we need to improve,” Lestmann said. “Golf is definitely a game of feel and takes a lot of practice, so when you’re out for a couple of months you lose a feel, and when you’re confined to the gym hitting against a net you don’t see the results of your shots.”

During the second day, the Bulldogs shot 13 strokes better as a squad to score a 351, finishing sixth. Five golfers improved, including freshman Riley Keltner, who shot a team best round of 85.

“We went into round two with a better knowledge of the course, which gave us more confidence in our game,” Lestmann said. “We got our first round jitters out of the way. Since we didn’t play our best in round one I think everyone went into round two wanting to improve and knowing what they could do to bring their scores down.”

Senior Jessica Schepker, who finished in the top 20 for the third time this season, said her performance is a confidence booster and a testament to her consistency.

“Coming into the first tournament of the season is always the hardest for me,” Schepker said. “It just lets me know I’m getting control of my mental game. Being able to come out and do it fairly well is kind of reassuring for me.”

Schepker said being able to perform this well this early in the season was more than a surprise, as her number one goal was simply to compete.

“It was the first tournament of the spring and I tried not to go into it with too high of expectations,” she said. “I had personal goals that I wanted to shoot pretty decently. You can practice on your own, but being able to compete was good in itself, and being able to get into the top 20 was an added bonus.”

The tournament also showed the team the main areas individuals will need to focus on in the future.

Lestmann said the cold Kirksville winters put them at a disadvantage for the beginning of the season.

“We need to make sure that we’re practicing our weaknesses,” she said. “Teams that may not have had Kirksville weather have been outside longer so we have to work double hard to make up for the shortcoming.”

The Bulldogs will travel to the Gateway National Golf Course in Madison, Ill. at the Washington University Invitational this weekend.

WWW.TRUMANRENTALS.COM
Providing affordable student housing for more than 25 years.
Boardwalk • Waterworks • Park Place • States Avenue • St. James Place • New York Avenue
Four Horizons Realty
703 N. Marion St.
Kirksville, MO 63501
660-665-**RENT**
www.4horizonsrealty.com