

# Week brings mixed results

BY TYLER POE  
Staff Reporter

Truman State had its winning streak snapped Tuesday night in a loss (26-24, 28-26, 25-18) to Emporia State in Emporia, Kan. The loss dropped the 'Dogs to 16-10 overall and 5-5 in MIAA conference play.

Despite the loss to Emporia the 'Dogs have been ranked 7th in the first NCAA South Central regional poll of the season which was released yesterday.

The Emporia match featured 52 combined errors, the Bulldogs hit .016 and were swept for the first time in five matches. The team was averaging a hitting percentage of .356 in their previous three matches, but was stifled by errors Tuesday night. The team's .016 is the lowest hitting percentage since their final game of the 2009 season when they were swept by then No. 3 West Texas A&M in the national tournament.

As a team, Truman committed 27 errors, with eight players tallying more than two errors each in the match. Paige Vanderpool led the way for the Lady Hornets, scoring 13 kills, 3 blocks and an ace while her teammate Brianna Kaiser chipped in 10 kills and an ace.

Once again, junior middle blocker Megan Sharpe led the Bulldogs with 9 kills and 3 solo blocks for the match. Senior outside hitter Molly Sinclair and freshman outside hitter Allie Brak each had 5 kills, but also 5 blocks in the contest. Defensively, freshman Abby Moser had 16 digs to lead the 'Dogs.

Earlier this week Truman returned to conference play after winning seven of its previous eight games, including wins against Southwest Baptist University, Missouri Southern and Pittsburg State University last week. The Bull-

dogs hit at an average of .356, the highest average during a three-game stretch since the 'Dogs hit at .357 back in 2008. The Bulldogs are paced by Sharpe (2.99 kills/set), Brak (2.59 kills/set) and Sinclair (2.17 kills/set).

Sinclair said the team's calm, collected attitude was a big reason for the team's success last week.

"At the beginning of the season, we would lose games and lose our composure," Sinclair said. "Now we are calmed down and in a good place. Consistency was missing, but we have it now."

Sinclair said that, as players have become more comfortable with each other, the team has been focusing less on defining its roles and more on its opponents. She said the team's difficult schedule early caused a lot of adversity it couldn't handle then.

Truman has played five top 25 teams this season, including back-to-back ranked opponents to open MIAA conference play in September. Since their 1-4 MIAA start, the team has had four straight conference wins.

Brak said the freshman nerves are gone now, and it is making a big difference on and off the court.

"As a freshman, I'm settled in and finding a groove now," Brak said. "[The team] is able to battle adversity better because our communication has improved a lot."

On the court, the team is committing far fewer errors, averaging fewer than 11 errors per game during the streak. Sharpe has committed just four errors during her last 52 attacks, while the team forced 57 errors by their opponents the last three games.

Sinclair said the team is focused on winning and playing



Jessie Poole/Index  
The volleyball team huddles before a game previously this month. The Bulldogs now are 5-5 in the MIAA after being swept by Emporia State on the road.

to their strengths.

"We are controlling out errors and forcing opponents into mistakes," Sinclair said. "The hitters and timing with setters is improving every day, and we are putting balls away to creating more opportunities for our offense."

This weekend, the Bulldogs will take on No. 5 Washburn and Fort Hays State University — two teams that contributed to the Bulldogs slow start during conference play. The Bull-

dogs were swept by Washburn and lost a five-set thriller versus the Tigers at Fort Hays State. Washburn currently is having a 15-game winning streak.

Brak said she is excited for a chance at redemption this weekend.

"I'm excited to play teams we lost to early on in the season," Brak said. "This next week is going to be challenging, but will be good tests to see where we are."

Sinclair said if everyone does their job, Truman can and will

win at home this week, despite the high level of competition.

"We are awesome right now," Sinclair said. "Especially now that we are all on the same page. Great competition is coming up, and we want to take care of our business."

The Bulldogs (4th in MIAA standings) next two game will be at home. Truman will host the Lady Blues (1st in MIAA) 7 p.m. Friday and then will host the Fort Hays State Tigers 6 p.m. Saturday.

## Varsity beats club soccer



Andrea Hewitt/Index  
Varsity freshman midfielder Nicolas Tolmais advances a ball downfield Wednesday while club player sophomore Tyler Payton defends. The varsity team won 3-0. Varsity lost last year to its club counterparts.

## PRETRE | Early in his career, coach set his eyes on a job like Truman and now seeks to restore program

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He was then hired by Rutgers for three years. After that, he spent two years at East Carolina University as an assistant coach.

In his Div. I assistant coaching and recruiting positions, Pretre worked with men and women who had coached Olympic gold medalists and many members of the U.S. national team. This gave him a lot of experience he said he uses when he sees an opportunity.

"I think recruiting is the main thing that I've learned from Princeton and Rutgers," Pretre said. "From East Carolina, one of my mentors, to this day, Coach Rick Kobe, taught me the way to manage different types of people and to manage them individually. And if you do that you're going to be successful."

During his most recent journey through the NCAA coaching world, he was offered the Truman job last year. Pretre said he didn't have much of a decision to make.

"A few years ago when I was making that transition from Princeton to Rutgers my wife asked if I would ever go Div. II or III," Pretre said. "I said, 'Yeah, there are three schools—Denison [University] [Ohio], Kenyon

[College] [Ohio] and Truman because they're great academic schools, and they win. When you have the chance to [coach there], you do it."

Pretre's swimmers said he is a coach who truly understands the importance of the title, "student-athlete." They also said he understands the stresses of being a collegiate athlete.

"He takes the time to care about us as individuals and that builds morale," senior Jessica Jenkot said.

Senior Krista Tippin said Pretre brings more than swimming knowledge to Truman.

"With his recruiting skills, I think he's really going to do fabulous things to the program and I think he'll be able to get the tradition of national excellence back to where it was," Tippin said.

It is not only the athletes who sing his praises — his former colleges sing his praises too.

"I think he'll do an absolutely great job," said Rick Kobe, Eastern Carolina University head swimming coach. "He's got the full package. My hope is that he gets that program back up onto the national level like it used to be. And I absolutely think he can do it. He was the man for the job."

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