

Bulldogs drop two to Lions

BY SAM SHERMAN

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The men's and women's tennis teams finally got to play at home Tuesday as the snow cleared and the weather warmed up, both taking losses to the Lindenwood University Lions.

The men dropped two of three during doubles to give the Lions the advantage heading into singles play. The No. 1 pairing of sophomores Jake Ohlhausen and Griffin Smith dropped their match 8-2, before the doubles team of juniors Joe Murphy-Baum and Adam King won their match 9-7. The pairing of juniors Mike Merchant and Kirk Schlueter dropped the final doubles match of the day to the Lions 8-4.

The Lions continued their winning ways during singles play, winning four of the six matches against the 'Dogs. Smith and Murphy-Baum picked up the only victories. Smith won 7-6 (7-5), 2-6, 11-9, winning two tie-breaking sets en route to the victory, while Murphy-Baum dropped his first set 6-4 before winning the next 6-4 and then the tie breaker 12-10.

Head coach Dan Blodgett said because the Bulldogs haven't had much experience on tennis courts this spring season due to weather, this match was meant to gauge progress for the team, and he said one positive effect the poor weather had on the men's team was the extra emphasis on conditioning.

"I was looking forward to this match today to see where we're at," he said. "I'm very pleased with the way we're playing. ... All of our guys are stronger at the end of the match than they were at first. They're really doing well."

The main problem the Bull-



Junior Mike Merchant returns a ball Tuesday at the Truman tennis courts against the Lindenwood Lions. The men lost 6-3 to the Lions during their first home match of the season.

Amanda Atwell/Index

dogs faced, Blodgett said, was the slowing down of the play surface. Because of the frigid weather and floor conditions in Pershing Arena — the team's practice setting this season — the men and women had to adjust quickly.

"With these courts, with the sand in the surface, it slows the ball up so much," Blodgett said. "So when we get out here, we're waiting on the ball."

The women's team faced the same problems as the men, yet didn't fare as well against the

Lions. The Bulldogs won just one match for the day, with the win coming from the No. 1 doubles pairing of senior Maggi Schutte and sophomore Kim Birenbaum, who won 8-6.

Junior Jessica Gennuso said to prepare for the expected weather and slowing down of play surface, the team visited the court the day before the match to try to see what kind of conditions they'd be playing in. She said it was difficult to prepare for Lindenwood, as the team had never matched up

against the Lions in a conference competition.

"We've never played Lindenwood before, we've only played them in [Intercollegiate Tennis Association tournaments]," Gennuso said. "We didn't really know what to expect, but yesterday we came out and we were just trying to get the feel for the wind and the outdoor elements since we hadn't really been practicing much outside."

The theme of the day for the women was extra sets, as three of the six singles matches went

into tie-breaking sets. Birenbaum dropped her first set 6-3 and won the second 6-2 before falling 6-1 in the tie-breaker. Freshman Holly Cantalupo also fell on the wrong end of her tie-breaking set, with the final score of her match at the No. 6 spot 4-6, 6-4, 1-6, and freshman Savannah Everett finished her singles match losing at the No. 3 spot 2-6, 6-4, 3-10.

During doubles play, the team of senior Lauren Higgins and sophomore Kelsey Porter dropped their match 8-6. The doubles pairing of Gennuso and freshman Savannah Everett lost their match 8-3, but Gennuso said the pairing poses well for the future.

"This is the first time Savannah and I were playing together," Gennuso said. "I think we did really well at communicating and just keeping each other loose, and anytime we'd tense up, we would just try to calm each other down."

The women will return to their home court at 2:30 p.m. Friday as they face off against the Fort Hays State University Tigers before rejoining the men at 11 a.m. Saturday at the Truman tennis courts when both teams play against the University of Nebraska-Kearney Lopers.

While both losses were decisive in the Bulldogs first matchup against conference foe Lindenwood, Blodgett said the future looks bright for the teams, pointing to the recent matches positives as an example of what's to come for the 'Dogs.

"We've got a strong team," Blodgett said. "The guys team is very strong, the girls team is really getting stronger. ... We've got some other girls coming up that are really doing well. We've got some strong freshman — [former head coach] Pete [Kendall] left me a pretty good hand to play with."

Top Bulldogs



Andrea Klipsch

softball, sophomore second baseman

Klipsch hit back-to-back homeruns during the Bulldogs' 8-7 victory against the Upper Iowa University Peacocks, with her second homerun proving to be the game winner.



Tim Lee

Baseball, junior pitcher

Lee was on the mound for eight of nine innings during the Bulldogs' second game against the Lincoln University Blue Tigers and allowed just one run and six hits with six strikeouts during the 8-1 victory.

Mark your calendar

Baseball

1 and 3 p.m., Thursday, Mar. 21
Bulldog Baseball Park

Coming off a 3-3 road trip, the Bulldogs face Lindenwood University for the first home games of the year.

Softball

1 and 3 p.m., Friday, Mar. 22
Kirksville, Mo.

The women have won five out of their last six games and take on Missouri Southern State University.

Women's Tennis

2:30 p.m., Friday, Mar. 22
Kirksville, Mo.

After a tough loss to Southwest Baptist University, the women look to rebound against Fort Hays State

Men's and Women's Tennis

11 a.m., Saturday, Mar. 23
Kirksville, Mo.

The men and women compete in a home meet against Nebraska-Kearney University.

Baseball

2 and 4 p.m., Saturday, Mar. 23
Bulldog Baseball Park

The men play a doubleheader against Northwest Missouri State University at home.

Softball

1 and 3 p.m., Saturday, Mar. 23
Kirksville, Mo.

The softball team plays a doubleheader against MIAA foe Pittsburg State University.

Women's Golf

Sunday, Mar. 24
St. Joseph, Mo.

The women's golf team opens their spring season at the Missouri Western Spring Invite.

Baseball

12 p.m. Sunday, Mar. 24
Bulldog Baseball Park

The men finish up a three game home series against the Northwest Missouri Bearcats.

Women's Golf

Monday, Mar. 25
St. Joseph, Mo.

The women continue their second day of competition at the Missouri Western Spring Invite.

Men's and Women's Tennis

Tuesday, Mar. 26
Kirksville, Mo.

The men and women host the final of four straight home meets against Northwest Missouri State.

Baseball

1 and 3 p.m., Wednesday, Mar. 26
Bulldog Baseball Park

The men finish up a seven game homestand against Missouri Western State University.

See all the results of last week's games online at <http://tmn.truman.edu/theindex>

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