

# Baseball struggles during homestand

BY DAVID LEMON  
Assistant Sports Editor

The last two home series of baseball for the Truman State Bulldogs ended with a lack of offensive production and a 1-4 record with the only win coming against Lindenwood University.

During the last game against Northwest Missouri State University, junior third baseman Chris Zrostlik stepped up to the plate for the first time and singled through the left infield. His next at bat was similar, hitting a single up the middle and adding an RBI to the mix. He continued to pelt the ball and hit his first homerun of the year with two men on base during the sixth inning, and reproduced the same homerun with two runners aboard during the next inning as well. He smacked another single, completing a perfect game at the plate with seven total RBI's and tying a Truman record of most hits during a game.

Zrostlik has not played many games for the Bulldogs this season, as senior third baseman Blake Marino has started most games at that position. Zrostlik has struggled at the plate so far this season, going into Saturday's last game with a .189 batting average, but after his five hit performance against the Bearcats his average rose to .241. After the game, he said he never expected to have a game like Saturday's this season, let alone hit two homeruns during one game.

"I hit that first homerun and I felt relieved," Zrostlik said. "Then when I came up the next time, it was just an absolute blur. I don't even know how that happened. The second one was off the first pitch and [the pitcher] put the ball right where I wanted it."

Zrostlik plated seven of the eight Bulldog runs of Saturday's finale against Northwest as Truman got swept by the Bearcats at home.

Now, with a record of 6-18 for the season, the Bulldogs have a long way to crawl back into contention as they are second to last in the MIAA conference, but it is possible.

For instance, during Saturday's first game against Northwest, the Bulldogs were only down 2-0 until a six-run sixth inning from the Bearcats put the game out of reach. Truman had the leadoff



Senior starting pitcher Jarrett Eiskina throws some warm-up pitches in between innings during Saturday's game against the Northwest Missouri State University Bearcats. Eiskina only gave up two earned runs, but the Bearcats won 8-0.

batter reach first base often during the game, but good pitching from Northwest shut them down.

Head coach Dan Davis said there still are plenty of good things to build off and the hitting just needs to come through.

"We had opportunities in the first three innings and we had our leadoff guy on, we bunted him over or we stole a base," Davis said. "At that point it comes down to clutch hitting and you have to find a way to get the guy in. We had second and third with nobody out at one point and we didn't score a run. I felt like we put pressure on ourselves as an

offense rather than just doing our job." Even though the home stand wasn't great, Davis said he still has a ton of confidence in his players and thinks they should be able to turn things around shortly.

Batting does have its place with the Bulldogs though as many players continue to produce at the plate, including Marino who has a season average of .390. During the five games of the past weekend, Marino recorded a hit in every game against the Lions and Bearcats, giving him only two out of the 23 games he has played without a hit. As for what he thinks about the way the rest of the

team is hitting, he thinks if everyone adopts the hitting approach assistant coach Weston Lewis is showing the team, the Bulldogs will have more success offensively.

"We saw it in spurts this weekend, but we all just need to focus on the approach," Marino said. "[The approach] is essentially what to look for in the count and in the early count. It's basically just your mindset and how you should be executing [at bats]."

The Bulldogs continue play tomorrow, traveling to Pittsburg, Kan. for a three-game series against the Pittsburg State University Gorillas.

## Top Bulldogs



**Cate Simon**

Softball, sophomore third baseman

Simon recently scored 2 RBI's against Missouri Southern State University. In the first inning of a game against the Pittsburg State University Gorillas, she smacked a grand slam, which was the first of her career.



**Chris Zrostlik**

Baseball, junior third baseman

Before Zrostlik's last game against Northwest Missouri State University, he was batting .182. After Saturday's game, he is now batting .241 on the season going 5-5, smashing two three-run homeruns and scoring 7 RBI's for the Bulldogs.

# Mark your calendar

## Softball

1 and 3 p.m., Friday, March 29  
Kirksville, Mo.

Starting the season 16-6, the women look to extend their winning ways against Fort Hays State University.

## Tennis

4 p.m., Friday, March 29  
Marshall, Mo.

The men and women both look to rebound against Missouri Valley College dropping two meets in a row.

## Baseball

5 p.m., Friday, March 29  
Pittsburg, Kan.

After going 1-4 in the last 5 home games, the Bulldogs travel to take on Pittsburg State University.

## Track & Field

March 29 and 30  
St. Louis, Mo.

Both the men and women start the outdoor season at the Washington University Invitational.

## Softball

1 and 3 p.m. Saturday, March 30  
Kirksville, Mo.

Softball continues their weekend homestand against the University of Nebraska-Kearney.

## Baseball

1 and 3 p.m. Saturday, March 30  
Pittsburg, Kan.

Continuing a weekend road trip, the men face the Pittsburg State University Gorillas.

## Tennis

4 p.m. Saturday, March 30  
Emporia, Kan.

The men and women's teams dual against the Emporia State University Hornets.

## Women's Golf

March 31 - April 1  
St. Joseph, Mo.

The women's golf team gets their spring season underway at the Missouri Western Invite.

## Baseball

12 and 2 p.m., Wednesday, April 3  
Bolivar, Mo.

After a stop in Kansas, the men return to Missouri to play Southwest Baptist University.

## Women's Tennis

3 p.m. Wednesday, April 3  
Kirksville, Mo.

In a home meet, the women take on the Missouri Western Griffons from St. Joseph, Mo.

## Softball

4 and 6 p.m. Wednesday, April 3  
Jefferson City, Mo.

The softball team continues their hiatus from home against Lincoln University.

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



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