



Kate Linman/Index

Freshman Allie Patterson goes up for a spike against Emporia State University on Tuesday. The fifth-seeded Hornets upset the fourth-seeded Bulldogs in the first round of the MIAA tournament.

VOLLEYBALL | The Bulldogs' four-set loss to Emporia State University during the quarterfinals of the MIAA tournament puts their playoff hopes in jeopardy

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-dogs, paced by Sharpe and Brak, bounced back during the third set but the Hornets and their home crowd rallied back in the fourth to force the fifth set.

In the fifth set, the two teams traded points until the Bulldogs broke through for three straight points to decide the match at 15-12. Offensively, the Bulldogs hit .259 and recorded five service aces. Defensively, Moser, who led all Bulldogs with 19 digs during the match, said the team was active at the net all night long, which might

have led to all of the [Hornets] mistakes. The Hornets committed 26 errors on the evening, with several coming during the fifth set. Moser, who admitted the Bulldogs weren't playing at their best, said the team wanted to close the season out on a high note heading into the MIAA Tournament. Moser also said that if the team would make the national tournament the team just needs to correct the little things.

"If we bring our intensity up and play how I know we are capable of playing, we can beat

anyone in the country," Moser said.

The Bulldogs could wind up the eighth seed in the NCAA Division II Tournament where they would play the No. 1 overall seed, Concordia-St. Paul, who is 25-3 on the year and winner of five straight national championships.

Should rankings stay the same as they are now, the Bulldogs could enter the tournament as a seventh seed, which would pit them against No. 2 Southwest Minnesota State University in the first round.

SCHLUETER | Truman women's basketball hasn't received the respect they deserve from the MIAA

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not happy when they don't.

The only thing they're missing is a real breakout season. As good as last year was in announcing the Bulldogs' presence as someone to be taken seriously in the MIAA, it wasn't quite the resounding establishment of Truman as a force to be reckoned with that this team knows it's capable of. But I think this year will be different.

The senior class this year is the first class Smith personally recruited at Truman. They've made the progression these last three years from 8-19 to 17-10, and they want to cap their collegiate careers in the most dramatic way possible. This is the whole team's last year as a part of the MIAA, and don't think they aren't aware of that. The emphasis for the Bulldogs this year is going out with a bang, and I don't see why they can't.

It doesn't surprise me that the MIAA coaches ranked Truman ahead of the media poll. The coaches are the ones who have to face the Bulldogs on the court, have to get their players ready to play Truman. They know this team and the type of philosophy Smith espouses. They've seen the improvements the Bulldogs have made during the past few years. They see that the next place for Truman to go is to keep climbing the MIAA ladder.

Make no mistake, the MIAA is a great basketball conference. Truman will have their work cut out trying to move up in this league. But anyone who doesn't think this team is capable of doing so hasn't been paying attention to the last few years of Truman basketball.

The Bulldogs already have gotten started this season. They hung tough in a loss against Div. I Missouri State, who won the Missouri Valley Conference last season, and torched the University of Illinois-Chicago Flames 64-51 last Friday. They play McKendree University Saturday in Pershing Arena at 2 p.m.

Sometimes I think the remarkable thing about athletic teams at Truman is how they don't buy into the ideological cycle that seems to permeate campus: the teams are no good, everyone knows this, so no one goes to the games and everyone talks about how the bad the teams are until the teams start to believe it themselves. This Truman woman's basketball team is a team that has grown out of this cycle, that in the span of four years has gone from a team less than .500 to a team that expects to be more than .500 and expects to win games. They're a team that has grown out of adversity, that has met every challenge thrown at them and thrived.

Maybe it's time the MIAA paid attention. Maybe it's time we paid attention too.

FOOTBALL | The team's 13-38 loss to Lindenwood University marks the end of Truman State football in the MIAA conference, finishing with a conference-high 26 MIAA championships

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the Grand Lakes Valley Conference for next season.

"I'm really just focusing on the good we've gotten out of the season and trying to build on it for next season," Grier said. "The league won't be as difficult next year as the league we're playing in this year. Hopefully, we can take what we learned from the MIAA conference and transfer it over to the GLVC."

Schottel started for the Bulldogs and ended his day 16-31 for 131 yards and an interception. He split time with senior quarterback Taylor Breen, who ended his Bulldog career with a 8-15 performance for 123 yards and a touchdown.

Sophomore running back Garrett White rushed 10 times for 36 yards and caught three passes for 72 yards and a touchdown.

Defensively, the Bulldogs couldn't contain the Lions' senior running back Denodus O'Bryant and senior wide receiver Andrew Helmick. O'Bryant finished the

day with 24 carries for 173 yards and two touchdowns while Helmick had 10 catches for 213 yards and two touchdowns. Senior cornerback Robert Gayden rounded off his Bulldog career with a bang, picking off two passes from the Lions' freshman quarterback Dillon Miller.

Schumacher said the combination of O'Bryant and Helmick made it tough to stop the Lions' offense and execute the defensive game plan.

"They had some good players," Schumacher said. "They just had good dudes who made some plays and unfortunately we didn't make as many plays as we wish we would've."

The MIAA announced the all-conference lineup Tuesday, with 10 Bulldogs being mentioned — the most since the 2006 season.

Senior safety Richie Schumacher picked up the Bulldogs' only first-team nod, while Grier, seniors defensive end Pat Blackwell and punter Eric Phillips all were named second-team all-conference. Bull-

dogs receiving honorable mentions include senior center Blake Holland, senior defensive backs Tremaine Millender and Michael Elliot and juniors defensive end Jeramey Dockery and kicker Derek Koon.

Thus was the finale to the Bulldogs' 100-year stint as a charter member of the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association (formerly known as the Missouri Intercollegiate Athletics Association). Truman was the first MIAA football champion ever, winning it during 1924 with a record of 2-0-2. Since then, Truman has amassed the most MIAA championships in the conference with 26, with the last championship coming during 1988.

The Bulldogs leave behind a historic football legacy as they move to the GLVC. Despite the fifth conference loss in a row during their final game Saturday, the Bulldogs didn't leave the conference hanging their heads in disappointment, but instead in prayer for one of their own — an MIAA football player.

GRADES | Bulldog sports teams lead the nation in academic success

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starting running back, senior Will Mosquera, has been injured for much of this season, allowing White to step up as a younger player and fill the position. White said he has a busy schedule, with football taking up 20 to 30 hours a week, but consistently accomplishes his schoolwork as well.

"[Head football coach Gregg] Nesbitt definitely makes sure we put our studies first, but to be honest I don't think he has to worry about it much," White said. "The team as a whole is pretty good about getting schoolwork done and I think that really sets us apart from other schools."

Women's basketball coach, Michael Smith, pushes his girls and brings out the best in them on the court, but understands and urges the girls to focus on their schoolwork as well.

"For the most part, a lot of the student athletes recruit us because of our academic reputation," said Smith. "Since I've been here ... this is my fifth year here now ... not one player has missed class because of practice. The players understand that what they do outside of basketball is going to take them through the rest of their lives."

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