

TENNIS | The men and women win the opening home tennis match against Westminster

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doubles flight, losing to the freshmen team of Michael Baiocchi and Michael Savaglio from Valparaiso University. Schluter and junior Mike Merchant placed third in the number three doubles flight.

Blodgett said what stood out to him most was the teams' drive and the way it constantly played with all they had.

"They don't give up for a second," Blodgett said. You can really beat yourself up out there. Tennis is a mental game but those guys did not blink. They went out there, and they went out there to win. It's not the final result. It's the process."

Blodgett said part of that process is putting players in positions early during the season where they will feel uncomfortable. It will allow them to learn from their coaches and teammates who have been

there and done it before.

After the tournament, Blodgett said he was excited to watch his team play for the first time and liked how they matched up against some of the Division I talent.

The womens team competes next at the Truman Invitational Sept. 14 and 15 at home. The men will not compete again until both teams play at the Intercollegiate Tennis Association tournament Sept. 21 in Springfield, Mo. Blodgett said he tries not to have expectations for his players during tournaments so they can relax and just play.

"I'm very encouraged," Blodgett said. "We're going to get banged up in some of these [tournaments] but [the players] know that. They also know they can play with these guys. Win or lose, if they give 100 percent, I'll be happy with it."

Mens Tennis Results

Singles:

No. 5 Flight
Kirk Schlueter
3rd Place

No. 8 Flight
Joseph Stuhlmann
3rd Place

Doubles:

No. 2 Flight
Adam King &
Patrick Spain
2nd Place

No. 3 Flight
Mike Merchant &
Kirk Schlueter
3rd Place

from Art Peterson Invitational

COACH | Two former Bulldog tennis players, senior John Gooch and Ellen Russell, work to transition from playing on the court to working as assistant tennis coaches

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Russell made her return to Truman tennis as a student assistant this season.

Russell said her four years of collegiate tennis will allow her to impact freshmen the most and she thinks she can help the freshmen transition into the college arena. Russell also said her time spent as a teammate last year will help her assist the veterans on the team.

"The girls I got to play with last year ... I know them very well," she said. "So I know their game style. I know what they freak out about. I know how they like to be talked to out on the court."

Although Russell said it feels weird no longer being a player, the

transition to assisting head coach Dan Blodgett was smooth. He said he saw Russell play a few games last year and was impressed by her skills and by the way she helped her teammates. He said her drive and personality as a player led him to think she would be a good assistant.

"Ellen understands the pressure kids are under when they play in matches and that's something you can only experience by going through it," Blodgett said. "Her experience has shown her what she needs to do to talk to these kids. After being a player for four years on a team at the college level, you have been through the fire."

Freshman Hannah Runez came to Truman never having played

doubles during high school. Russell, whose specialty was doubles, worked with Runez recently on her game. Russell said she played with Runez on the same team to help her learn strategy — something Blodgett said was the most important aspect of playing doubles. Russell also said she had fun helping because Runez was eager to learn.

Runez said she likes Russell's coaching style because it is encouraging and motivating, she said. Runez also said she thinks Russell's previous experience with the team is beneficial.

"Having a relationship with the Truman tennis team has been really helpful," Runez said. "She can connect with us on more of a personal level than just as a coach."

COMMISSIONER | Assistant editor addresses NFL's Bountygate scandal

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on the CBA infractions, he is fully within his authority to take action if he felt the players' conduct was detrimental to the game.

The League gave the players until Tuesday of this week to decide if they would like to meet with Goodell to discuss their involvement in any pay-for-injury program. Linebacker Jonathan Vilma, whose original 16-game suspension was the longest suspension for on-field conduct throughout NFL history, has asked for one thing throughout the entirety of the scandal — transparency. He and his lawyers have asked simply for the evidence Goodell used to issue the original penalties. The commissioner's office has produced less than 1 percent of the evidence gathered during the Bountygate investigation, disallowing players to even make a case for themselves because they were never presented with much more than hearsay and the charges themselves.

There is nothing that could possibly hurt the League by showing some transparency and sharing the facts from the investigation with the players as well as the public. Fans want to know what really happened so they can make their own informed opinions and players want to be able to defend themselves against the allegations. Instead, the NFL has allowed a cloud of skepticism to hover above the scandal.

In the long run, will this hurt the NFL? Most likely not. But that's because in America, we love the game of football much more than we care about the individual players. Is it aggravating to fans and players that the League refuses to release their findings? Absolutely. Don't suspend a player from his job for a year without at least letting him know what evidence you have against him, and don't dangle a headline in front of fans and reporters and expect us not to ask questions.

However, if I had to guess, I would say we will get those answers shortly after the meetings between the players and the commissioner, and those answers will tell us Goodell did not have sufficient evidence to suspend the players without finding the CBA loophole and overstepping his authority.

VOLLEYBALL | Bulldogs win this season's first conference game against Lindenwood University Sept. 11. The team was led by sophomore Allie Brak

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new 5-1 offensive system, meaning the team has one setter and more opportunities to kill the ball. During previous years, the 'Dogs 6-2 alignment helped balance the court and give multiple individuals looks at the ball, but Briney said the new formation gives the Bulldogs more offensive options and grants the middle blockers more consistency when hitting behind the front row. Briney said the

team's consistency is all that is separating them from its first win against a ranked opponent this season.

Senior Emily Briseno said the team is expecting a good defensive performance from both clubs Friday night. Briseno said the team who plays cleanest and has the best discipline will win the MIAA showdown.

The Bulldogs are 0-2 this season against nationally ranked opponents, but this is the first confer-

ence home game of the season for the Bulldogs. The opposing Lady Blues are undefeated this season at 8-0, having lost only a single set all season long. However, the Bulldogs lead the head-to-head series at 36 wins to just 13 losses to the Lady Blues. Following their match against Washburn, Truman will compete against Southwest Baptist University Saturday in the Plaster Athletic Center in Bolivar, MO.



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