

# Women make defense focus

BY KIRK SCHLUETER  
Staff Reporter

More than halfway through its season, one word has emerged as the cornerstone of the Truman State women's basketball team — defense.

Another pair of solid defensive efforts propelled the Bulldogs to another winning week, as the 'Dogs downed the University of Missouri-St. Louis at home and Maryville University on the road last week. The two victories increased Truman's current winning streak to five games and their overall record to 11-4. The team has not lost for more than two weeks. The home win was Truman's 22nd straight home victory. The Bulldogs have not lost at Pershing Arena since Feb. 1, 2012.

"I thought our defense was really good this past week," head coach Amy Eagan said. "I think we've made some good strides in the last two weeks, and what won us those two games was how well we defended, and defended personnel."

Against UMSL, one key statistic the Bulldogs knew they needed to control was offensive rebounds, senior guard Amy Briggs said. UMSL entered the game averaging about 15 offensive rebounds per game to Truman's nine or 10, Eagan said, and the Tritons are athletic enough that they make most of their second attempts. The key to containing the Tritons was being physical while rebounding, Eagan said. Truman succeeded at keeping UMSL off the boards. While the Tritons had 11 rebounds to Truman's seven, the Bulldogs had three more rebounds and kept UMSL below their season average.

The entire team had a solid defensive effort, Briggs said. They made sure they adhered to the principles of Truman's defense by blocking UMSL's passing lines and not letting their opponents get easy shots.

The defense paid off, as the Bulldogs emerged victorious 70-55 led by junior guard

Allie Norton's 16 points. Norton was four for five from three-point range on the night. Three other Bulldogs scored in double digits, led by senior forward Nicole Gloor with 15. As a team, the 'Dogs shot 43 percent from the field while limiting the Tritons to 33 percent shooting.

Truman's contest against Maryville featured more offensive firepower as the Bulldogs defeated the Saints 87-73. Eagan said she thought the Bulldogs played excellent defense, and attributed the higher score to the style of Maryville's offense. This features moving the ball quickly up and down the floor to test defenses and score points. It's a style the Bulldogs know well because they use it themselves.

Maryville	73
Truman State University	87

"After evaluating the kids after I got here and seeing what our skills were, we have some very offensive skilled kids who can shoot the ball, who can get to the rim and do good things around the rim," Eagan said. "We play up and down as much as we can, get to the rim, put pressure on the defense as much as possible, and if we don't get that we do have some set plays to get the ball into some specific people's hands. But if you watch us it's probably pretty up and down."

Truman's offensive skills were evident Saturday. Norton led the team and scored 17 points. Gloor and Briggs tied for the next highest total with 16 each. Sophomore guard Courtney Strait scored 15 points and senior forward Bianca Szafarowicz scored 11 points.

The game against Maryville was the 10th time at least four Bulldogs scored double digits this year. Having multiple offensive threats provides Truman with an offensive versatility and makes the Bulldogs a nightmare for teams to match up against, Briggs said.

"It's just great because the other team can't focus on one player on our team," Briggs said. "They have to watch us all. So if they do focus



Adam Antor/Index  
Sophomore guard Courtney Strait shoots a three-pointer against Missouri-St. Louis. The women beat the Tritons 70-55 Thursday, Jan. 16.

on one person, that gives other players an opportunity to hit shots we know that they can hit. It's harder for other teams to match up with us when we have five people on the floor who can score."

Truman's next test will come on the road. The Bulldogs face at 5:15 p.m. tonight at Rockhurst University to take on the Lady Hawks, and square off against William Jewell College at 1 p.m. Saturday. Both GLVC foes are below

Truman in the West Division rankings, where the Bulldogs currently are third behind nationally ranked Drury University and Quincy University. Even so, Truman will have to be prepared mentally for two tough road games, Eagan said. Rockhurst has momentum coming into tonight's contest after their first win of the season. Eagan said the Bulldogs will have to step off the bus ready to execute their game plan and take care of business.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Thursday, Jan. 23

**Women's Basketball** 5:15 p.m.  
at Rockhurst  
Kansas City, Mo.

**Wrestling:** 7 p.m.  
at Central Baptist  
Conway, Ark.

**Men's Basketball:** 7:30 p.m.

at Rockhurst  
Kansas City, Mo.

Friday, Jan. 24

**Wrestling:** 7 p.m.  
at Central Oklahoma  
Edmond, Okla.

Saturday, Jan. 25

**Women's Basketball:** 1 p.m.  
at William Jewell  
Liberty, Mo.

**Men's Basketball:** 3 p.m.  
at William Jewell  
Liberty, Mo.

Friday & Saturday

**Track and Field:** All day  
Dutch Athletic Classic-Central  
College  
Pella, Iowa.

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

## Swimming toward the finish line

BY ANGIE DANIELSON  
Staff Reporter

As their competitive season draws to an end, the Truman State swim team buckles down to finish their last events with a bang. After the recent meet against Missouri State, the team said they began understanding the final technique issues they soon would be focusing on.

Assistant coach Jessica Hessel said the team's season is winding down, leaving their hard practices and training during last semester. She said the main goal for this semester will be focusing on the final techniques — starts, finishes and turns, and from there the team will regain their speed.

Hessel said she thinks the team is ready for conference compared to their chances during previous years. Hessel said Truman State's swim teams will give other GLVC schools a run for the title.

Hessel said the biggest improvement she has seen by the team since the season's beginning is their effort. She said the team's aerobic ability has increased because of their day and night training, leaving them in a better position heading into the conference meet only a couple of weeks away.

Freshman Grant Gilchrist said the team has come a long way from the beginning of the season. Gilchrist said he is new to the team and did not know what to expect, but thinks he has come out a better swimmer.

"Our team is full of great swimmers," Gilchrist said. "There is always room for improvement, but as a team, I know that we have gone out and given it our all."

The main differences for the team from last semester are the different approaches the team will make for their practices. The team said they will begin a strong focus on their final fixes to gain speed, with the hopes they can go through the conference successfully.

Redshirt freshman Eryn Spencer said conference is the next step on their journey. Spencer said at this point during their season, the team is ready and determined to face what's next.

"I know we will have a chance. We're going to walk into conference knowing that we are going to make a statement," Spencer said.

Spencer said she thinks the mental aspect of the sport has grown within her teammates.

"Everyone puts in every ounce possible. We all got better and better. There isn't anything more we could have asked for," Spencer said.

During the team's final steps to finishing strong, they said it is important to remember that they each have their own goals as well. Gilchrist said this last meet against Missouri State was about proving they can beat their personal bests.

Hessel said she thinks Nationals are a solid goal again this year for some of the swimmers, both on the men's and women's teams.

"We've got good swimmers who have come a long way, and we're definitely better than last year," Hessel said.

The team is pushing to finish the season strongly as their conference date soon arrives. With their hard work and determination, Spencer said the team can amount to anything — all they have to do is get there and give it their all.

With the NCAA goal in mind, the swim teams dive into the end of their season. The team said their ultimate goal being able to send some of their top swimmers to nationals.



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