

WOMEN | The women's basketball team made it past the first round of the conference tournament.

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Truman started postseason play Sunday against William Jewell, and Briggs again played a vital role. After Truman's sluggish start to the second half, the Cardinals closed the gap to 42-40 with 10 minutes remaining. That was when Briggs scored 17 of her team-high 22 points, including three three-pointers, and the Bulldogs never looked back. Eagan said her senior provided a much-needed offensive spark at a critical time for Truman.

"She was just a lot more willing to make things happen for us at that time, which we needed at that point," Eagan said. "We were playing very non-aggressive offensively, and she really stepped it up."

Briggs' effort was especially valuable to Truman, since two of the Bulldogs' usual starters, senior guard Nicole Gloor and junior guard Allie Norton, were limited because of injury. Szaferowicz said the team's mentality is with two key players out, everyone on the team needs to contribute, and she said she is impressed with how the Bulldogs responded during the last two games.

"Some very important people are out, but we still need to step up and make up for some of the people who aren't in," Szaferowicz said. "I think right now we're just hitting our peak, and hopefully we're going to start passing teams that have [reached a plateau]. I'm really excited and I feel like everyone's on the same page."

While it is unclear if Gloor or Norton will be able to be 100 percent effective for the remainder of the year, Eagan said, the Bulldogs' offensive system is one that depends on an overall team effort, not one or two players.

Truman now faces the GLVC East Division champion, Lewis, 6 p.m. Thursday in the quarterfinals of the GLVC tournament. When the 'Dogs last met the Flyers at Lewis Jan. 3, the Bulldogs were defeated 98-72, the most points a team scored against Truman all year.

Eagan said a lot has changed for Truman since then — among other areas, she said she thinks the team and staff are more comfortable with each other. A key to the game, Eagan said, will be Truman's defensive rebounding.

"We gave up 16 points in the first half to offensive rebounds to them [last time] ... the first thing we have to do is block out," Eagan said. "I think we're going to have to defend really well. If we do [that], I think we'll have a chance to be successful."

If Truman wishes to make the national tournament, a victory against Lewis is nearly essential. The Bulldogs must be in the top eight of the Midwest region to qualify — currently, they are outside the top 10. Quincy, however, is ranked third in the Midwest region, and Lewis is second, so beating the Flyers and the Hawks during the same week would increase the likelihood of Truman's being placed in the top eight. If



Zoe Zaiss/Index

Coach Amy Eagan watches from the bench as her team takes the court. During Eagan's first season as head coach, the Bulldogs are 19-8 for the season.

Truman wins the GLVC tournament, they will receive an automatic bid to the national tournament.

Revenge was a motivating factor for the Bulldogs against Quincy last Thursday, Szaferowicz said, and she said she thinks it will be even more of a factor today. Lewis has lost to teams that Truman has beaten, so she said the team considers the Flyers beatable. The Bulldogs' goal since the start of the season has been to win the GLVC tournament, and she said that hasn't changed.

"Our mindset is right, and we're ready to get revenge on them since they put a

beating on us at their place," Briggs said. "There's revenge, there's a win against them will help us get to the national tournament, and it'll get us one game closer to the conference championship. So our motivation and our confidence is really high right now."

If the Bulldogs win, they play the winner of Quincy/Southern Indiana in the tournament semifinals at 2:30 p.m. Saturday. If Truman wins that game, they will play in the finals Sunday. Depending on those games, the Bulldogs will know their destiny, and whether their season will continue.

MEN | The men's basketball team has been all but eliminated from the playoffs after a upset loss to the University of Illinois-Springfield



Elle Fitzgibbons/Index

Sophomore guard Andrew Vander Zwaag catches a pass from freshman guard Kyle Kanaskie. Vander Zwaag scored 17 points Sunday including five three-pointers.

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senior Marek Bush. Woodley said his newest concern is whether the team will be able to replace the leadership role vacated by Carlson's departure.

"The thing that's most concerning about this basketball team is the leadership — I don't know where it's going to come from," Woodley said. "Talent wise, no question, this will be the most talented team I've had in four years."

This question, along with others, will be answered this offseason as the team reflects and moves forward. The squad will return multiple players who had been sidelined by inju-

ries all year, specifically sharp-shooting senior guard Isaac Gardner and the other half of the Myers duo, sophomore Cory Myers.

Vander Zwaag said despite the loss, he'll look at the 2013-2014 season with nothing but positivity because of the steps forward the program took.

"It's incredible how far we came after these first couple of years," Vander Zwaag said. "Just understanding what it takes to win was huge for us. Obviously, it didn't happen [Sunday], it's still a huge progression for us."

Yet, the Bulldogs' season was cut short. The

No. 12 seed in the GLVC tournament upset the No. 5 seed, and now the squad only can watch the ensuing events transpire with nothing but a minor stake in the results. Woodley said this offseason.

"Five months of work outweighs 40 minutes of not-our-best basketball," Woodley said. "We just didn't make the plays when we needed to. Unfortunately, that's something that's going to stick with us this entire offseason. For as much good as we did, that taste will be hard to get out of your mouth for a long time."

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A limited number of general admission tickets will be available for \$7 each at Edna Campbells and the Truman State University Cashier window in McClain Hall. Tickets may also be purchased online at lyceum.truman.edu.

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