

Defending your 'Dogs



EMILY WICHMER
Assistant Sports Editor

Assistant sports editor encourages a sense of athletic pride

I run a 13-minute mile. I can't get a volleyball over the net. As soon as I set foot in a pool, I sink. I am not a skilled athlete — which is why supporting Truman State's sports teams is so important to me.

Since high school, I have had a strong desire to be involved in school sports. I used to tell people that my high school football team was undefeated — granted, I was homeschooled, so this boast was less than impressive. With no school mascot and no sports teams, I was envious of my friends' freshman year because they all had stories of tailgating for their high school football games.

Some of these friends compared Truman to their high school teams. Some complained Truman didn't have the same game coverage as larger universities. Others said school spirit wasn't as important to students here as it was at their high school. To me, however, Truman athletics is perfect.

Our school often is praised for being extremely academic. We're ranked in the top 10 regional universities in the United States in U.S. News & World Report's "Best Colleges." For highly ranked academic schools like Truman, many sports fall by the wayside.

Bulldog fans, however, can be found everywhere. Truman students, professors, Kirksville residents and alumni from across the country come to support games.

People get decked out in purple shirts and face paint. Even Wal-Mart has a special section for Truman spirit wear.

Truman athletics promote long-standing fans. My parents both attended Truman. My mom was in the color guard for football games. They ask me about how the teams are doing every time I go back home. And it's not just me — alumni bring their children to Truman games, traveling all the way to Kirksville for homecoming weekend to support the 'Dogs.

I get into heated arguments with my aunt about college basketball at family functions. Last season, she invited me to a game at her alma mater, Lindenwood University, against Truman. Watching the game, I complained about the referees' calls, cheered for each and every Bulldog basket earned, and threw around some smack talk with my aunt. Although Truman didn't win, even my aunt had to admit the 'Dogs showed incredible sportsmanship as Lindenwood's obvious fouls went uncalled. I especially was proud of my college team that day because of the gracious way the players handled themselves in the face of aggressive fouls and poor calls.

But the best part of being a fan is that Truman has some great athletes. The men's basketball team went to the GLVC championship tournament this year. The volleyball team became the GLVC volleyball conference champions. The softball team currently is 21-5. Truman athletes play their hearts out for their sport, and balance lives of studying and socializing at the same time.

While I probably would eat turf playing football and constantly lose my grip on a golf club, Truman athletes come together each season to perform at their highest capabilities both on and off the field. They deserve our respect and support. And with every game they play, those athletes return their support right back to the fans through their strong athletic performances.

Sitting on the bleachers at Stokes Stadium cheering on my team with a crowd of loyal fans, I have to say — I am proud to be a Bulldog.

Index announces TMN softball lineup

BY ANNA GRACE AND HENRY JANSSEN
Managing Editor and Staff Reporter

The second annual Truman Media Network Softball Tournament is speeding towards the plate April 26, and as the pressure of potential glory rises, the Index has announced its lineup for the games.

1 - Manager/1st baseman — Senior Bob Overmann

Overmann is a perennial Index hero. The self-proclaimed finest batsman in the print division of the Truman Media Network league, Overmann has achieved high praise as a manager because of his team's lack of regard for courtesy or official regulation.

2 - Pitcher — Junior Anna Grace

Grace is one of the team's many returning faces in the infield. Last season, Grace used her elegance and charm to disorient opposing batters while she threw pitches overhand, aiming for the kneecap. Grace's pitching figures look really good when you enter her numbers into sabermetric equations then extrapolate the data.

3 - Shortstop — Senior Henry Janssen

Janssen is a second-generation Index player and his knowledge of the sport shows in his play. Best known for his love of ball and his skill at it across multiple forms of media, Janssen truly is an MVP in the hearts and minds of the Index team.

4 - 2nd baseman — Senior Devin Gillespie

All-around sportsman Gillespie, breaking several NCAA rules to play in the World Series of Truman Media, is batting cleanup despite a debilitating injury which left his right hand in a cast. In spite of this, he is the Index's best bet to hit for any sort of power.

5 - 3rd base/Secondary shortstop — Junior Courtney Strait

Strait, relegated to the secondary shortstop position after a lowly sports columnist wrote her off as a starter, has refused to let that get in her way. Using her unrivaled boxing-out skills, she and Janssen continue to battle for the shortstop spot.

6 - Designated runner — Junior Grace Bueckendorf

Another athlete with experience that puts her far above the Index team's nonexistent prerequisites is runner Bueckendorf. Formerly a 5K runner, the Index can only hope that skill translates to the 60 feet between the bases and will leave her with enough in the tank to shag balls batted out of play.

7 - Full-time outfielder and avoiding peanuts — Senior Joe Wright

For the second consecutive season, Wright will be skipping the third line of "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" during the seventh inning stretch. Wright held his mortal enemy, peanuts, to a remarkable .000 last season. The Index club willingly will take the out every time Wright is due to appear at the plate so he's not forced to approach the infield where peanut-eating humans likely will lurk.

8 - Centerfield/critic — Junior Katey Stoetzel

Stoetzel is best known for her witty critiques of pop culture and luckily for the Index, this translates into a skill with pop flies. She also brings distracting laughs to the opposition with "Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt" and "Parks and Recreation" references.

9 - Catcher — Senior Bethany Boyle

Boyle is used to wild pitches as the Index News Editor, whether they're terrible story ideas about famous local dogs or Grace's sick curve ball. A strict diet of avocados keeps her in sporting shape.

10 - Switch hitter — Junior Emily Wichmer

As Assistant Sports Editor, Wichmer took liberties with the rules of baseball to extend the lineup. Having spent time as a member of the editorial staff of nearly every section, she is used to switching up what sort of headline puns she makes and somehow translated that into an ability to bat left- and right-handed.

11 - DJ/food sponsorships/left field — Sophomore Austin Hornbostel

Hornbostel is known around the office for his ability to work while bumping some sick tunes and the relative calm of left field allows him time to play around on his phone for the listening benefit of all. He also owns the field in sponsorships due to his high volume of Taco Bell consumption.

Umpire — Senior Megan Archer

Opinions Editor Archer has her fair share of opinions and, combined with an inner calm, that makes her the perfect umpire. Unfortunately, she occasionally misses a call because she's simultaneously drawing hilarious cartoons of the batters.

No. 1 fans — Copy Desk

As harsh as Copy Desk can be about AP style, cheering on this team every time, date and place it takes the field is their truest calling. They are also the most likely fan base to turn the sports experience into a well-written, directed and acted musical.

Bat boy/photographer/future MVP — Freshman Trevor Stark

The up-and-comer Stark was a solid sign by the Index back at the start of the season when he was only hauling bats. When the team realized the bags he was carrying were camera bags, they put him to work as the team photographer and haven't looked back since.

During preliminary scouting trips, we discovered KTRM struggled with not getting to narrate every play for the listening audience and had trouble releasing frustration after a strike out because of the limited cursing vocabulary they are allowed.

TMN TV never started practice, as they were taking turns faking epic plays for a highlight reel.

From the looks of the Index roster, KTRM and TMN TV better brace themselves for the power of print journalism.

Congratulations!

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