

# Gifts courtesy of TSU sports



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Sports Editor

Normally during this time of year we look forward to a break from school for a month, seeing family and friends and opening presents under the Christmas tree, Hanukkah Bush and Kwanzaa . . . OK so I just did an in-depth Google search, and Kwanzaa gifts are called Kuumba — they are educational, so yeah.

Kwanzaa aside, we at Truman are fortunate in the way we don't have to wait to open presents, because being in the wonderful slice of paradise called Kirksville, Missouri, is a present enough!

Just kidding, don't worry, I haven't lost my mind. We have been getting presents all year and most of us haven't even noticed. Truman State athletics have been giving us gifts that

rival those brought by Santa, Hanukkah Harry, and Kwanzaa . . . OK, so another Google search and you guys, Kwanzaa is bananas. Kwanzaa gifts are just given — there is no secret person that gives you gifts in the dark of the night.

Our first stocking stuffer happened like clockwork. Every Saturday this fall, head football coach Gregg Nesbitt and his team took the field and put together a second winning season in the GLVC. The 'Dogs finished the season with a record of 6-4 and 5-3 in the GLVC.

Senior running back Garrett White led the offense and, at times, carried the team on his back. White rushed for 1,166 yards this season, which led the GLVC, and ended his Truman career ranked fifth all-time with 2,829 rushing yards, one of only a handful of Bulldogs to ever eclipse 2,000 yards during their college career.

Football was not the only sport that gave us a feeling of holiday joy this year. The women's soccer team gave us yet another winning season and a run into the postseason. The women went 13-5-2 overall, 10-3-2 in the GLVC and were a perfect 9-0-0 at home. In addition to their team performance, senior defender Lauren Seawright and junior midfielder Alexis Heffernan were named to the Nation-

al Soccer Coaches Association of America All-Midwest team. Heffernan was named to the first team and Seawright was named to the third team. Luckily, we will get to watch Heffernan play again this year, and the team should be equally successful — if not more so — next fall.

The final gift from the fall, arguably the angel on top of the tree, the last candle on the Menorah, the last . . . Google comes through again! Kwanzaa lasts seven days and on the sixth day there is a Karuma, or feast — there is tons of food and everyone drinks out of a communal cup called the Kikombe cha Umoja.

So the Karuma of Kirksville is without a doubt the volleyball team. What one sports editor deemed possibly the greatest volleyball team Truman State has ever seen truly decked the halls with blocks and volleys.

The women finished with an amazing 29-4 record overall, a 17-1 conference record and a record breaking 21-game winning streak. It seemed every week there was a player who was the GLVC player of the week, and at the end of the season seniors Allie Brak, Abby Moser and Meghan Zimmerman made the American Volleyball Coaches Association All-Midwest Regional Team. Head

coach Ben Briney was named the GLVC Coach of the Year, Brak was named GLVC Player of the Year and Moser was named GLVC Libero of the Year.

Even though the Bulldogs were dealt a loss during the 32nd round in the NCAA Postseason Tournament, the season was a complete success. The team of the fall represented Truman excellently and made University President Troy Paino smile, and as we know, the best kind of T-Pain is a smiling T-Pain. Well, I suppose a snow-day-giving T-Pain is the best T-Pain, but we all know that sometimes only happens once a year, no matter the weather.

So just like winter break will seem to be finished before it even started, the fall sports season flew by like Rudolph on that foggy Christmas Eve. Luckily for us, however, there are more sports to follow and more wins to be had as basketball, swimming, wrestling, track and field, baseball, softball, tennis and golf play until the school year ends.

But for now, let's cozy up to the fireplace with a nice warm cup of hot chocolate, and remember the good times, because as the great poet-philosopher Ferris Bueller once said, "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."

## VOLLEYBALL | Volleyball exits the NCAA tournament in the second round after a loss to Rockhurst

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"The tournament was tough," Brak said. "We knew we could win that match against Rockhurst but it just didn't work out. They are a great team, hats off to them."

After the tournament, the American Volleyball Coaches Association announced the All-Midwest region team, with four Truman State players on the squad. Having four players selected was the highest for the team during a single season since 2008 and is the most from any Midwest school. Patterson received all-region honors along with all three of her senior teammates — Meghan Zimmerman, Moser and Brak.

This is the second season in a row Patterson and Brak earned all-region recognition. Last year, both also received All-American honors from the American Volleyball Coaches Association. The majority of the all-region team are members of the GLVC, with 10 of the 14 spots on the region's primary team. The GLVC was represented in the region by earning awards such as Freshman of the Year from McKendree and Coach of the Year from Rockhurst.

"This season was such a ride — I couldn't have asked for anything more for a senior season," Brak said. "There's nothing like winning a [conference] championship with your teammates."


The Bulldogs finish the 2014 season with an overall record of 29-4 and a GLVC conference title. They received top seeds in the conference and national tournament, along with a number of individual and team awards that deserved attention from across the country. Truman's three graduating seniors — Moser, Brak and Zimmerman — will leave their names behind in nearly 10 program records collectively.

Bastian said much of this year's success is because of the seniors, but everyone held up their end of the bargain.

"Every person on the team has worked extremely hard since the first day of spring season last year, throughout the summer and every day of practice in season," Bastian said. "Our seniors led the way and a huge reason we were successful this season."

Four starters and nine lettermen will return next August for the 2015 season. Next year's team has a lot to look forward to because of the success of this year's group, Walters said.

"One of the things we said in the locker room was 'tomorrow starts day one,'" Walters said. "The returning players are going to use the success of this past season to motivate them to put in work during offseason in preparation of next fall."



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