

Women's soccer wins GLVC

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The Truman State women's soccer team is the 2015 GLVC tournament champion. The women, who defeated Quincy University in penalty kicks and the University of Missouri-St. Louis 2-0, earned an automatic bid into the NCAA regional tournament in Louisville, Kentucky. The conference championship was the 10th for the Truman women's soccer program and brings the 'Dogs their second NCAA tournament berth during the past three seasons.

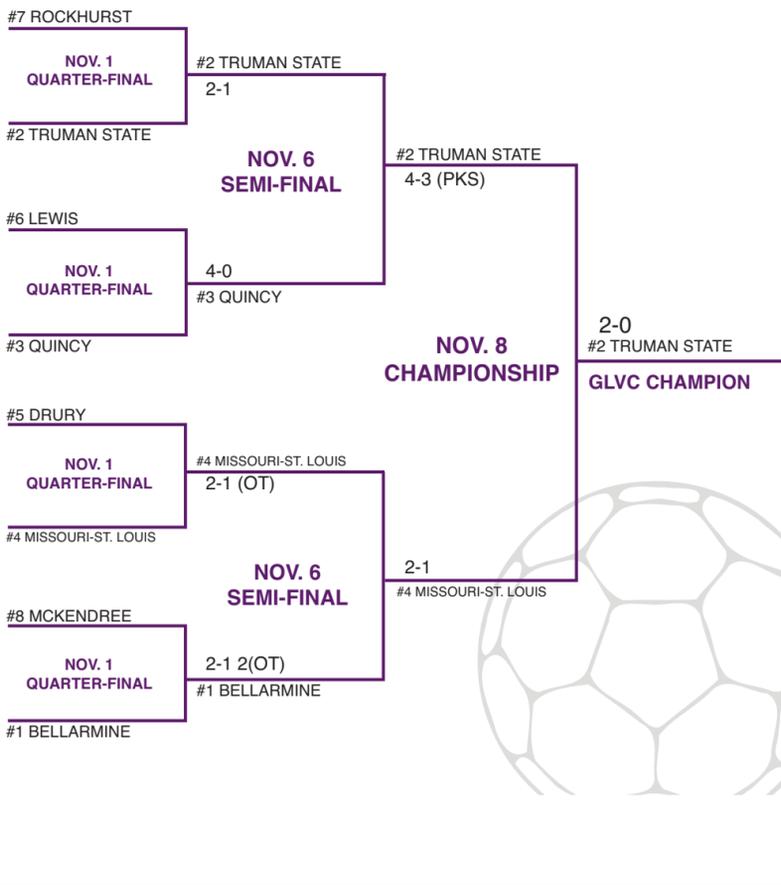
Head Coach Mike Cannon said he did not have to do much to mentally prepare his players for postseason play. Cannon said because the team had faced Quincy and UMSL before the tournament began, it was easier to prepare for the games and emphasize the opponents' strengths and weaknesses. Cannon said his players played well going into the end of the regular season, so he kept practices light and fun before the GLVC tournament.

"Our starters are playing lots of minutes," Cannon said. "We are trying to stay healthy and fresh. Most of what we have been doing in practice has been playing and trying to have more fun. Winning is great, but that doesn't mean you're having fun. I want to make sure the kids are enjoying it."

The Bulldogs, sporting a third place regional ranking entering postseason play, would have received a bid into the NCAA regional tournament regardless of the outcome during the conference tournament. Cannon said this also helped keep the team from becoming stressed during games. He said during the penalty kicks against Quincy, he reminded the players a loss would not hurt them in regard to the NCAA tournament.

Tournament hosts Bellarmine University were the top seed going into play last Thursday. Cannon said the Bulldogs played at Bellarmine a few

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"[It was difficult] stringing passes together because the ball bounces everywhere," Cannon said. "And the ball runs, too — it doesn't slow down a whole lot. Compared to when we played Bellarmine a few weeks ago, Friday we played better, and Sunday we played a little better [than Friday]."

Junior midfielder Megan Whitehead said the team carried the same mindset it had during the regular season into the GLVC tournament. Whitehead said during the regular season her teammates kept their focus on being positive, building each other up and pushing each other to improve. She said whether that is through extra sprints during practice or taking time to make sure each team member was on the same page, this mindset helped the 'Dogs stay focused going into Louisville.

Whitehead said the Bulldogs' victories did not come easy. She said the penalty-kick victory against Quincy was not only physically taxing, but mentally taxing as well. She said the team's multiple overtime games early during the season benefitted it against the Quincy Hawks.

After the 'Dogs took down Quincy, Whitehead said the team used its confidence and positivity to claim the momentum early against UMSL. She said everyone played with intensity during the championship game.

"I knew we were going to win," Whitehead said. "Everyone was giving it everything they had, and we can't lose when we play like that."

Whitehead, who talked the assists during the championship match, said she was proud to contribute to her team. She said during every game, her main objective is to make a difference. She said goal-scorers sophomore midfielder Allison Lockett and junior midfielder Megan Casserly were in the right place at the right time, and made her crosses look better than they actually were.

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weeks before, and this helped the players adapt to the field's playing surface quicker than their opponents. He said though the bumpy turf was not easy for any team to play on, the

Bulldogs were smart when they attacked, and they defended well. He said his team clicked going into the tournament and focused on playing its own style.

How to be a bandwagoner



By Rachel Steinhoff
TMN Reporter

It's that magical time of year again. The World Series champions have been crowned and, as with every professional championship, the sports world's most loathed phenomenon is back in full force.

That's right, the annual emergence of bandwagon fans.

It's like clockwork. Playoffs come and go for various sports — the NBA finals, the Super Bowl, the Stanley Cup and, of course, the World Series. This October was no exception, as it once again shed light on baseball's biggest bandwagoners.

Fair-weather fans of the New York Mets crawled out from a nine-year hibernation to cheer on "their team." The challengers, the Kansas City Royals, had an advantage. With the Royals making a Cinderella run to the

World Series last year, their bandwagoners were a little more prepared. Last year's newborn generation of Royals fans were equipped with one season of loyalty under their belt and a few new players that would lead their team to a title.

There's plenty of statistics to prove the existence of bandwagon fans. Peaks and declines in television views, gear sales and ticket sales are more than enough indication of this sports trend. More than any other signal, however, the come-and-go fans easily can be discovered through conversation and observation on social media. They stand out from the rest of the crowd, and usually not in a good way. Any true die-hard fan can tell the signs of a bandwagon fan, and it's typically not something that sports fans are happy about. For example, buying apparel for a specific team — but only after they win a championship. Please, don't do that.

Bandwagon fans have a bad reputation, and rightfully so. It's not fair to have more than one favorite team or to love a team when they succeed and desert them when they're down. It's not fair to latch onto a team that is a shoo-in for a championship while the die-hards might wait years to even see their team make the playoffs.

Coming from a girl who will live and die with the St. Louis Cardinals, Blues and Rams, it's hard not to find

bandwagoning irritating. At the same time, I've accepted it as a part of sports. It raises the stakes and creates a nationwide interest.

So I won't say don't be a bandwagoner. But please, be a better one. Here are some steps to beating the ugly stereotype and being a bearable fair-weather fan.

Step 1 — Admit you are a bandwagoner

The first step to solving a problem is admitting you have a problem, right? Just be upfront about it. If the team wins a lot and is fun to watch, you don't need another reason to be a fan. Just don't pretend you've always been there for the team. That's a great way to drive a die-hard fan crazy.

Step 2 — Study up

If you're going to start referring to this year's team as "we" rather than "they," please know what you are talking about. If you can't name more than two or three players from your favorite team, you are the stereotypical bandwagoner. Don't be that person. Learn something about "your team." Follow them on Twitter. Read an article each week. Know the coach, the starting line-up and be relatively informed about how the team has been performing. Not only will you blend in more, but you might find yourself becoming an actual fan.

Step 3 — Don't be obnoxious

You're a drifting fan, so of course there are many reasons why your team will be good. You and many others latched on to that team for those reasons. But if you weren't with them when they struggled, do not get involved in sports-related arguments on their behalf. Arguments in sports are never-ending because of stubborn loyalties, and we definitely don't need

disloyal fans to add to the pile of biased opinions.

Step 4 — Embrace your new fandom and forget the haters

Just because you haven't always followed a team or weren't born with a predetermined sports fandom doesn't mean you shouldn't be allowed to cheer during a sport's championship season. People will give you trouble for being the fair-weather fan, but if you can admit you are and laugh along, cheer on all you want.

When it comes down to it, bandwagoning will always be a despised facet of the sporting world. These fans take a lot of heat, and though I think some of it might be deserved, little is ever mentioned about the not-so-terrible aspects of a bandwagon fan base.

Sports are a business, and sports create business. From the box office to the bar down the street, the bus boys, taxi drivers and bellhops in hotels — a good sports team is a building block for a good economy in a city. I can guarantee they don't mind taking your money regardless of your sports loyalties.

Putting economics aside, whether you are a lifelong fan or a newcomer, your morale has the same impact on the team and the city. Sports are a positive power in our lives because they can truly unite even the most diverse group of people. When you stand by a team, you also stand by thousands of strangers. Showing support for a team should never be discouraged, even if it is short-lived.

So bandwagon fans, we don't always love you, but we need you. I recommend you change some of your ways, but never change your spirit. We can all use something to get excited about.



Kayla Bastian

Junior outside hitter Kayla Bastian finished with 14 kills and a career-high 33 digs during the Bulldogs' upset against Lewis University Saturday in Pershing Arena. Bastian's 33 digs is the 7th most all-time for any Bulldog in a single match.

PLAYER of the WEEK