

# Wrestling welcomed to GLVC

BY JEREMEY JACOBS  
Staff Writer

The Truman State University wrestling team now has a place to call home.

Truman, along with six other schools, will enter the GLVC after three years of planning. The change is especially big for Truman because it's the first time in three years it'll compete in a conference and the first time in school history the Bulldogs have all 20 sports affiliated with the same conference.

Truman Athletic Director Jerry Wollmering said a six-team quota had to be met before all 16 teams in the conference agreed on its formation.

Wollmering said the GLVC policy kept wrestling out of the conference despite the efforts of Truman and four other schools — University of Wisconsin-Parkside, McKendree University, University of Indianapolis and Maryville University — to form a conference three years ago. In November 2015, Drury University decided to start its own wrestling program, and wrestling gained momentum in the conference.

With six schools interested in participating, all 16 schools of the GLVC voted to add wrestling to the conference. This June, Bellarmine University started its own program to become the seventh member.

While Wollmering said he couldn't speak on behalf of Drury and Bellarmine, he said the usual benefit of adding a sport to a school is to give potential recruits another option. He compared it to the benefit of a school adding to its academic curriculum.

"If you would've looked at Truman and said, 'Hey, they don't have the major I want,' would you have still considered Truman?" Wollmering said.

Wollmering said opening up opportunities for student athletes is beneficial for the athlete and the University because that leads to more students enrolling.

For the time being, there will be no conference tournament. Wollmering said conference members will meet again after the season and listen to coaches to determine if there's a conference tournament on the horizon. The coaches would have to agree on a setup, and the participating schools would need the funds to either host or send their athletes to the match.

While costs for wrestling will most likely increase because of changes in scheduling and travel, Wollmering said GLVC wrestling has a chance to grow if the nine other GLVC schools create wrestling programs of their own. He said similar growth has occurred in GLVC swimming over the years.

Wrestling Head Coach David Schutter has been at Truman for 25 years now. Schutter said he thinks the GLVC is a perfect fit for his wrestlers given how they seem to value academics along with athletics. He has guided Truman to six Academic National Championships.

Schutter has accomplished this even though wrestling is one of the four sports at Truman that doesn't grant University-funded scholarships. He said these student athletes have had to receive athletic aid from alumni donations after Truman underwent budget cuts in recent years.

Truman wrestling hasn't sent a Bulldog to nationals since Ryan Maus and Colton Schmitz in 2013 — the longest drought in program history since going eight seasons without a nationals qualifier from 1983-1990. To rise back into prominence in a tough field of schools, Schutter has added morning and weekend practices to his wrestlers' workload, a change he hasn't made since 2003-2005.

Under normal conditions, the intensity and difficulty of Schutter's workouts annually cause two or three freshmen to drop before the first meet. Despite the high-intensity workouts, all eight freshmen are still representing Truman wrestling, which has impressed Schutter.

Schutter said Truman hopes to use that toughness to overcome a sixth-place projection in the GLVC Preseason Coaches' poll released Nov. 1. Ahead of them in the polls are nationals top-20 finishers Maryville, McKendree, Wisconsin-Parkside and Indianapolis. Newcomer Drury University also topped the 'Dogs in pre-season polling.

Redshirt senior captain J.J. Dorrell said he thinks the team can overcome the latest challenge offered by the GLVC competition by eliminating the big mistakes from matches.

Dorrell said the opportunity to win a conference championship will provide this team with the extra motivation it needs to succeed.

"If no one's breaking, that means they're only getting stronger day by day," Dorrell said.

Dorrell said he is optimistic despite the fact the Bulldogs lost their first meet of the year Nov. 3 at Upper Iowa University. He said he doesn't want the team to peak too early so they can finish strong.

Dorrell said he doesn't mind experts picking Truman to finish near the bottom of the conference standings because it means they are under less pressure.

"Truman can be a sleeper this year in the conference," Dorrell said.

# Basketball opens with two regional wins

BY CURT WICHMER  
Staff Writer

After an offseason full of preparation, Truman State University's men's basketball jump-started its season with back-to-back wins against Trevecca-Nazarene University and Cedarville University at the GLVC/GLI-AC Challenge in Cedarville, Ohio.

The Bulldogs opened the weekend with an 82-70 victory over the Cedarville Yellow Jackets, with an 18-point showing by sophomore guard Nathan Messer. Redshirt senior Cory Myers finished the game with 16 points and sophomore Jake Velky scored 15 points on 50 percent shooting.

In the team's second game of the weekend, the Purple and White beat Trevecca Nazarene by a score of 92-55. For the second straight game, Messer led the Bulldogs with 19 points, a performance followed closely by redshirt sophomore guard Jack Green, who poured in 18 points, and Velky with 16.

Head Coach Chris Foster said the winning weekend is a testament to the cooperation and unselfishness of the entire team. Foster said by spreading the ball evenly, it gave "a bunch of

great shooters an opening to shoot at a really high percentage."

Foster said the team hit a couple rough spots against Cedarville and will need to work on defense, but he said it also saw a lot of positive angles to look at the games from. He said getting wins from these early games is important in the long run for a good season.

"These games are important, and they've hurt us in the past when trying to get into tournament rankings," Foster said. "Even when it comes down to comparing teams regionally, when it comes down to it, these games matter. Winning a road game against Cedarville is a good sign — I think they're going to be a really good team this year, so it could be pretty important to have these wins later on."

Myers said both wins were the result of complete team efforts. He said sharing the ball a lot on offense gave the team more opportunities for open shots. He also said solid defensive play contributed to the large point differential in each game.

"I'm pretty excited about what I saw this weekend," Myers said. "We played well as a team and played within our role. If we can play hard



Photo by Hudson Taylor/TMN

The men's basketball team practice in Pershing Arena. The Bulldogs won both games during a weekend series to start their season.

every game ... it should be a really fun and successful year."

Moving forward, senior guard Kyle Kanaskie said the key to keeping the team's winning streak is building upon the successes and failures of each week and continuing to improve. Kanaskie said the Bulldogs are an experienced team,

and even though they enjoy the wins, he and his teammates are determined to put the weekend behind them and dedicate all focus to the next few games.

Following a Wednesday game at Lindenwood University, Truman hosts Upper Iowa University 3:00 p.m. Saturday in Pershing Arena.

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