

Tarantino runs to third consecutive win

BY RACHEL STEINHOFF
Sports Text Editor
tsusportseditor@gmail.com

Three races. Three wins. And just over three weeks until senior Laura Tarantino gets to run for redemption at the GLVC Championships.

Tarantino picked up her third straight victory this weekend at the Div. II Showcase at Trevecca Nazarene University in Nashville, Tennessee. After victories at the Lindenwood Dual and UIS Invitational to kick off the season, Tarantino led 111 competitors across the finish line in Nashville.

Fourteen schools from all over the country participated in the showcase event, with Tarantino's performance, followed by Junior Michaela Hylen's 6th place run, granting Truman State University a 2nd place team medal. The Bulldogs finished with 81 points, following the first place team, Bloomsburg University, who tallied 76. Tarantino said the meet was a great experience on a beauti-

ful course and a fun camaraderie builder for all the Div. II schools competing.

Tarantino did not have time to make friends, however, as she ran the 5K in a dominating time of 18:46.9, 11.5 seconds faster than the second place individual.

Tarantino said she expected improvement but has been happily surprised with what she has been able to do the last few weeks. Racing against the clock rather than other runners can be a challenge, Tarantino said. She also said she ran to win, but despite a big lead, she said her winning time did not match up with what she personally considers a fast time.

"I'm my greatest competitor and critic," Tarantino said. "I'm always racing myself, so even when someone is not with me I'm still thinking about my time and working to push myself. I do think that's harder, because I love the motivation of being competitive with other people. I really look forward to some of the bigger races because I really want to run faster times than I have been."

Bigger races are coming for her and the rest of the Bulldog men's and women's cross country teams. The women will run their first 6K of the season Sept. 8 at the Jackling Jocks Invite at the Missouri University of Science and Technology. The 'Dogs will get one weekend off, then it will be time for the GLVC Championships, also hosted at the Missouri S&T golf course.

Tarantino said the women's team hopes to finish top 5 in the GLVC but will have to stick together more as a team to move up in the ranks. Tarantino said the conference is tough from top to bottom, but she thinks her team can hang in the top half.

Personally, Tarantino said she has just started to think about individual goals for the conference meet. Tarantino said she is focusing on this week of training and pushing through a lot of mileage, but now she will do so with an all-conference goal in mind.

"I guess the number that has been floating through my head the last few days is top 10, top 5," Tarantino said. "Really just with

how things have gone for me the past two years, I've just felt disappointed with how I've raced under the pressure at conference. I was 16th my sophomore year, one spot from all-conference. Now I know I'm in shape to be there in that top 15, and that's the goal, just run my race and see what happens. I feel like I still have a lot left this season. I feel like I haven't let myself see my full potential yet."

Tarantino said she feels less nervous about the conference meet this year despite the persisting power of her opponents in the GLVC.

This season, the GLVC remains a power conference with two teams in the top 25 nationally. The University of Southern Indiana came in 6th this week while Lewis took 23rd. The University of Wisconsin-Parkside also received votes in the national polls. Tarantino currently has the 6th best 4K time in the conference.

Head Coach Tim Schwegler said Laura has been doing a great job of controlling the races and sticking to effective race tactics.

Schwegler said Tarantino won the last race by pulling away in the final 1200, but she will be challenged even further at upcoming meets.

Schwegler said he thinks Tarantino will reach her all-conference goal and hopes to see her land a spot on what he called one of the toughest all-region teams in the nation. Further down the road, Schwegler said he could see her having a shot at nationals with the shape she is in.

"She's really fit right now, so that's kind of exciting," Schwegler said. "Now we're waiting for her mind to catch up to her fitness, and it should really be an interesting season. She's getting there though — mentally, she's improving every race. She's starting to believe she can run with anybody right now."

Both the men's and women's teams will race back-to-back meets at the Missouri S&T golf course. The 'Dogs will get their first taste of the course Saturday, Oct. 8, and will then return for the conference meet Saturday, Oct. 22.

BUCK BROS.
SUNNY SLOPE AUTO, LLC
NAPA Service Center

660-665-8464
710 W. Potter Avenue
at the Corner of Oteophathy & Potter Ave

serving the area for over 30 years

Complete Automotive Services
oil change, tire rotations, tune ups, check engine light, jump starts, & unlock locked car

Tell us you saw our ad
in the Index and get
10% off on labor

www.buckbrothersauto.com

WWW.TRUMANRENTALS.COM

**Providing affordable
student housing
for more than 30 years**

**Boardwalk • Waterworks • Park Place
States Avenue • St. James Place • New York Avenue**

**Four Horizons Realty
703 N. Marion St.
Kirksville, MO 63501**

660-665-RENT

www.4horizonsrealty.com

Welcome Parents
Visit Kirksville's Most Exciting Store

Sieren's Palace

108 W. Harrison
Kirksville, MO, 63501
660-665-6820

Brighton.
handbags and jewelry

Vera Bradley
large collections
available

ESTÉE LAUDER
complete line of perfums and
treatment products available

UGG
australia

large selection of UGG boots

Register for a free Vera
Bradley handbag!

Sieren's Palace

108 W. Harrison
Kirksville, MO, 63501
660-665-6820