TRUMAN VOLLEYBALL LOOKS TO BOUNCE BACK IN HOME AND CONFERENCE OPENER

The Truman State University volleyball team (4-4, 0-0 MIAA) will open Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association (MIAA) play this Friday and Saturday when it hosts Missouri Southern and Pittsburg State.

The Bulldogs will be looking to bounce back in their home openers from a disappointing weekend in Tampa. Truman played four close matches against nationally ranked teams at the University of Tampa Classic, but could not pull out a victory in any of them.

SCOUTING THE LADY LIONS: Missouri Southern brings a 4-5 record into Pershing Arena this week following a 2-2 weekend at the Harding Invitational. The Lady Lions have played three common opponents of the Bulldogs in the early going this year. Missouri Southern defeated Southern Colorado but lost to Nebraska-Omaha and Regis at the Nebraska-Omaha Tournament. Truman, at the same tournament, defeated all three of those teams.

Amy Little currently leads the team with 3.00 kills a game followed by Jessie Puszewski with 2.73 kills a game. Lindsey Mason is averaging 2.33 kills and has a team-high .315 attack percentage. Missouri Southern is allowing opponents to hit just .155 against them. Helping this is Little and Shannon Schultz who are both averaging over four digs a game and a trio of blockers (Jennifer Ford, Mason and Puszewski) who are averaging nearly one block a game.

Missouri Southern is coached by Debbie Traywick who is in her 15th season at the school. At Missouri Southern, she has a coaching mark of 242-238 and in 1+ years of coaching overall, she has a mark of 297-275.

The Bulldogs lead the all-time series with Missouri Southern by a 18-13 mark, including wins in the last eight meetings. Last year, Truman defeated Missouri Southern by 3-1 scores in both matches. The last Lady Lions win came during the 1997 season when Missouri Southern won both conference meetings by a 3-2 score.

SCOUTING THE GORILLAS: Pittsburg State has opened up the 2002 season by compiling a 6-3 record, including a 2-2 mark last weekend at the North Dakota State Tournament. The Gorillas will open their conference season at home against Southwest Baptist on Wednesday before travelling to Kirksville.

Dina Wathan leads the squad offensively with 4.73 kills a game and also has a team-high 5.18 digs a game. Gloria Hlariogun and Marianne Carrier average 3.30 and 2.91 kills a game, respectively. Megan Barth is the top setter, averaging 11.21 assists and 2.27 digs a game.

Ibraheem Suberu is the head coach for Pittsburg State. He has compiled a record of 32-76 at Pittsburg State and 62-111 overall in his coaching career.

Truman has a big advantage in the all-time series, winning 24 of the 26 meeting between the two schools. Both of Pittsburg State's wins in the series came during the 1992 season. Since that time, Truman has won 18 straight. The Bulldogs have won all 10 meetings with the Gorillas since Qi Wang and Becky Pike formed Truman's coaching staff and they have swept the Gorillas in seven of those matches.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...
BULLDOGS FALL IN AVCA POLL: Truman slipped 13 spots to number 17 in the AVCA Coaches poll released today. For the third straight week, there is a new number one in the poll. CS-San Bernardino, who barely got by the Bulldogs on Friday, is the newest number one team in the country.

UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA TOURNAMENT RECAP:
#5 CS-San Bernardino 3, Truman 2: The Bulldogs dropped a tough one to start the University of Tampa Tournament with a five-game loss to CS-San Bernardino.

The Bulldogs came out strong and won the first game 30-24. Jessica Sears led the way with 8 kills in 10 attempts as Truman hit .317 in the game. The second game was tied 25-25 but the Coyotes scored five of the next seven points for the win. Truman went up 2-1 after the third game. The Bulldogs had a comfortable lead throughout the game but a late run by the Coyotes made the final margin just 30-28.

A late run by CS-San Bernardino would end up costing the Bulldogs in the fourth game. Truman led 27-25 but CS-San Bernardino scored on a sideout and then off of three straight serves to take a 29-27 lead and go on to win 30-28. The deciding game was close all the way with neither team ever going ahead by more than two points. The Bulldogs served for match point twice but the Coyotes were able to sideout each time and won on to win 18-16.

Sears and Kelly Vogel led the Bulldogs with 18 kills apiece. Monica Marlowe had 57 assists and Shelby Orterwth led Truman with 15 digs.

#20 Northern Kentucky 3, Truman 1: Following a tough loss in the first game, Truman started out slow against Northern Kentucky, falling 30-15 in the first game. Truman had as many errors as kills (9) in the game while the Norse had a .520 attack percentage. The Bulldogs bounced back quickly, taking early control of the second game and winning 30-23.

Truman had an early 7-4 advantage in game three but the Norse scored 14 of the next 19 points to take the lead. The Bulldogs eventually got within two to 27-25 but it was too little, too late as Northern Kentucky won 30-26. The Norse went up 9-3 early in the second game as they scored five straight points with Marcela Cunha serving. Truman was down by as much as nine points before eventually falling 30-24.

Jessica Sears again led Truman with 19 kills and also had a team-high 13 digs. Micaela Walter had 12 kills and Megan Remley added 10 for the Bulldogs. Monica Marlow led the team with 30 assists while Rachael Shedd added 15. Rebecca Knefelkamp had 12 digs in the loss.

#15 North Florida 3, Truman 1: The third match for Truman at the Tampa Tournament started out promising as the Bulldogs won the first game 30-26 and appeared to be in control of game two with a 27-23 lead. However, a late run again by the opposing team hurt Truman as five straight points off of Kim Payne’s serving gave the Lady Ospreys the lead and eventual 31-29 win.

Game three was all North Florida as the Bulldogs scored just six points off their serving on the way to a 30-20 loss. The Lady Ospreys took an early lead in the fourth game as well. Truman fought back and got within two but still dropped the game 30-27.

Shelby Orterwth was the top offensive threat for the Bulldogs with 18 kills followed by Annie Nickolai with 15. Rachael Shedd was the setter for most of the match and ended with 32 assists. Rebecca Knefelkamp had a huge game defensively for Truman with 26 digs.

#10 Tampa 3, Truman 1: The Bulldogs ended the tournament with a 30-28,30-27,30-25, 30-32 loss to the University of Tampa. Again, Truman struggled at the end of games. In game one, the Bulldogs led 23-22 before Tampa scored five straight to take control of the game. In the second game, Truman was tied at 24-24 before Tampa went on a 3-0 run to jump ahead.

The Bulldogs played their best game in the third one of the match. Truman hit .341 in that game and won 30-25. The Bulldogs also jumped out early in the fourth game, leading 22-16 at one point. The Spartans slowly chipped away at the lead before tying the match at 26. Both teams traded sideouts for the next six serves. Truman was serving for game point at 29-28, but couldn’t convert as Tampa scored four of the final five points for the victory.

Shelby Orterwth had team-highs with 19 kills and 12 digs. Kelly Vogel also had a double-double with 16 kills and 12 digs.

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AVCA DIVISION II TOP 25 POLL (SEPT. 10)

1. CS-Bernardino (13) 839 8-0 5
2. South Dakota State (12) 822 9-0 2
3. BYU-Hawaii (8) 778 8-0 7
4. Grand Valley State 651 6-1 8
5. UC-San Diego 638 6-1 9
6. Northern Colorado 604 9-0 22
7. West Texas A&M (1) 601 6-2 1
8. North Alabama (1) 568 7-2 3
9. Nebraska-Kearney 548 8-0 13
10. Western Washington 511 5-2 11
11. Minnesota-Duluth 489 6-1 NR
12. North Dakota State 475 7-2 14
13. University of Tampa 470 4-3 10
14. Central Missouri State 454 6-3 12
15. North Florida 408 5-1 15
16. CS-Los Angeles 323 4-2 17
17. TRUMAN 295 4-4 4
18. Barry 282 2-4 6
19. Metro State 275 5-3 16
20. Augustana 226 3-5 19
21. Regis 207 5-3 24
22. Northwood 182 10-1 25
23. Northern Kentucky 162 2-2 20
24. Hawaii Pacific 142 5-3 18
25. Findlay 129 5-3 NR

Receiving Votes (Truman’s 2002 Opponents): Nebraska-Omaha (19), SIU-Edwardsville (7), Rockhurst (6)

Truman’s 2002 Opponents in italics.

STREAKS: The Truman Bulldogs will be looking to extend three streaks this weekend against Missouri Southern and Pittsburg State while ending one.

Truman has won 16 consecutive MIAA contests after running the table last year in conference play. The Bulldogs have not lost a conference match since the final game of the 2000 regular season when they fell to Central Missouri. The school record for longest MIAA winning streak is at 26 matches.

Another streak on the line this weekend is the Bulldogs’ home winning streak. Truman has won a school record 22 matches at Pershing Arena since suffering a setback to North Alabama during the 2000 season. The Bulldogs have a record of 28-1 at home in the last two years.

The final winning streak is Truman’s home conference winning streak. The Bulldogs have won the previous 21 MIAA battles played at Pershing Arena with the last loss coming to Northwest Missouri during the 1999 season. Truman is 34-6 (.850) in home conference matches since coaches Qi Wang and Becky Pike came to Truman in 1997.

Unfortunately, Truman will also be looking to end its current four-match losing streak. This is the longest losing streak for the Bulldogs since they dropped five straight matches towards the end of the 1995 season.

TOURNAMENT COMPARISONS: As you would expect, the Bulldogs’ statistics were much different from the Nebraska-Omaha Tournament and the Tampa Tournament.

At Nebraska-Omaha, where Truman went 4-0, the Bulldogs averaged over 18 kills a game, had an attack percentage of .301 and allowed opponents to hit just .169. At Tampa, where Truman went 0-4, the Bulldogs averaged 14.76 kills a game, had an attack percentage of .178 and allowed opponents to hit .258.

Truman also saw lower averages in assists, aces and digs at the Tampa Tournament. The one category the Bulldogs improved in was blocking where they averaged 1.65 blocks a game at the Tampa Tournament compared to just 1.38 blocks a game at the Nebraska-Omaha Tournament.

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LEARNING THEIR ROLES: With a very young roster, including eight new-comers, spots for many positions are still being battled out. Offensively, four different Bulldogs have led the team in kills in just eight matches and five Bulldogs have between 2.33 and 3.00 kills per game. Jessica Sears leads the team with 3.00 kills per game followed closely behind by Kelly Vogel with 2.96 kills a game. Annie Nickolai has the best attack percentage on the team with a .353 mark.

Monica Marlowe, an all-region selection the last two years, has been the number one setter and is averaging 11.73 assists a game. However, Rachel Shedd has started three contests and has 92 assists already on the year.

Defensively, Rebecca Knefelkamp has been the libero in the majority of games and has a team-high 3.96 digs a game average. Shelby Ortwerth and Monica Marlowe both average over three digs a game as well. Megan Remley and Micaela Walter have been the top blockers so far for Truman.

HEAD COACH QI WANG: Qi Wang is in his second season as head coach of the Bulldogs. Wang had an impressive coaching debut, leading Truman to a 37-2 overall record in 2001 and was named MIAA and South Central Region Coach of the Year.

Wang is in his sixth season at Truman after also being assistant coach for four years. Since Wang has been at the school, the Bulldogs have gone 137-49, won their first outright MIAA title, shared another MIAA championship and advanced to two NCAA tournaments.

Assistant coach Becky Pike has also played a huge role in the Bulldogs’ success the last six years. Pike was the head coach from 1997-2000 before accepting the assistant’s role before the 2001 season. Pike was named the MIAA Coach of the Year in 2000 after Truman earned a share of the MIAA championship for the first time.

SEASON HIGHLIGHT REEL:
* The Bulldogs were the preseason MIAA favorites according to the coaches’ poll and were ranked fifth in the nation in the AVCA preseason poll, Truman’s highest-ever preseason ranking.

* Truman tied a school record with a .333 attack percentage in a four-game match against Regis. Jennifer Hunter had an .846 attack percentage in that match, the second-best for a single match in school history.

UP NEXT: Truman will host regional rival Quincy in a non-conference battle on Sept. 17 at Pershing Arena. That weekend, the Bulldogs will travel to Washburn and Emporia State for a pair of MIAA matches.

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For more information on the Truman volleyball team, check out the Bulldogs official website at: gobulldogs.truman.edu

2002 TRUMAN STATE UNIVERSITY ROSTER

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<th>No.</th>
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<th>Pos.</th>
<th>Ht.</th>
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Head Coach: Qi Wang
Assistant Coach: Becky Pike

# Redshirting 2002 season