A new coaching staff that didn’t have the benefit of a spring practice. A squad that lost four all-conference players, including one first-team all-American. Another brutal schedule that started with four teams ranked in the top-11 in the country.

Those were the obstacles that the Truman volleyball team faced when it opened up the 2005 season. None of them fazed the team, however, as the Bulldogs put together another memorable year.

The biggest highlight was once again winning the South Central Regional Championship, the team’s fourth title over the last five years.

This year’s victory was arguably the most impressive, as the region included four of the top eleven ranked teams in the country.

Truman breezed through the tournament, though, dropping just one game and sweeping nationally-ranked foes in Washburn and Central Missouri.

The regional title sent Truman to the Elite Eight once again, where it unfortunately had a bad draw. The Bulldogs had to face the host school and number one team in the country, Nebraska-Kearney, in the NCAA Quarterfinals. In front of a then NCAA record crowd, Truman fell by a 3-1 score to the Lopers.

The regular season opened up with a perfect 4-0 record against a tough field at the Minnesota-Duluth Tournament. Truman would go on to win its first ten matches of the season, pushing its regular season winning streak to 49 contests.

That streak was halted by North Alabama, a team that the Bulldogs couldn’t solve twice in the regular season.

Another streak that kept going for a bit longer was the team’s conference winning streak. Truman opened the MIAA season with eight straight wins, breaking a school record with 32 consecutive victories in league play.

The Bulldogs opened up the second-half of MIAA play with a 20-1 overall record, and the squad had been ranked first in the country for much of the season.

Things started falling apart, though, for the team. In a four-day span, Truman lost three MIAA matches.

The team quickly regrouped, winning seven of its final eight regular season matches.

Truman regained its dominance in the MIAA by winning the conference postseason tournament. The Bulldogs swept Central Missouri and then went on the road for a 3-1 victory in the final over MIAA regular season champion Washburn.

Those victories helped spark the team’s run to the NCAA Quarterfinals.

Truman’s season concluded with a 32-6 overall record. It marked the third straight season and sixth time in school history that the Bulldogs hit the 30-win plateau. It was also the 16th straight year that the Bulldogs finished the year with a winning record.

Truman did all that despite having a schedule that included 16 matches against nationally-ranked team. The team won 11 of those matches, including eight against teams ranked 11th or better in the final national poll.

**2005 Truman Awards**

**AVCA All-Americans**
- Sarah Shearman (first-team)
- Kelsey Wackerman (first-team)
- Micaela Walter (honorable mention)

**AVCA All-Region**
- Sarah Shearman
- Kelsey Wackerman
- Micaela Walter

**All-MIAA**
- Kelsey Wackerman (first-team/MVP)
- Sarah Shearman (first-team)
- Micaela Walter (second-team)
- Megan Remley (honorable mention)

**Elite Eight All-Tournament Team**
- Sarah Shearman

**South Central Regional All-Tournament Team**
- Tiffany Graham
- Eli Medina
- Sarah Shearman
- Kelsey Wackerman
- Micaela Walter

**Minnesota-Duluth All-Tournament Team**
- Sarah Shearman (MVP)
- Micaela Walter

**MIAA Players of the Week**
- Whitney Boehner
- Sarah Shearman (twice)
- Kelsey Wackerman (twice)
- Christine Wagener
- Micaela Walter

**2005 Season Review**


The Bulldogs went 13-3 in conference play and finished second in the MIAA standings. Only the three-match skid midway through the conference schedule kept the team from winning another regular season crown.

Truman’s status among the nation’s elite was shown throughout the year in the AVCA national poll.

The Bulldogs were ranked in the top-10 in every poll in 2005. Truman has now been ranked in the top-10 for 44 straight polls, the longest active streak in the nation.

Truman ended the year with a No. 4 ranking, marking the fifth straight year it was in the top-10 in the final poll of the year.

The Bulldogs also accomplished a school-first when they were ranked first in the nation. The program held the top spot in the rankings for six polls during the season.

Another school-first in 2005 was that two Bulldogs were named first-team all-Americans. Kelsey Wackerman earned all-American honors for the first time in her career after playing the dual role of hitter and setter.

Her all-around play numbers included her averaging 3.19 kills, 2.90 digs and 0.63 blocks a game. She recorded 15 triple-doubles on the season, by far the most in NCAA Division II.

Besides earning all-American honors, Wackerman also became the fifth Bulldog in school history to earn MIAA MVP honors. Sarah Shearman was named an all-American for the second time after also receiving second-team accolades in 2004.

Shearman led the Bulldogs with 3.84 kills and 4.00 digs a game. She hit .278 for the year and had a 0.55 block average. Shearman regularly recorded double-doubles in kills and digs, and led the team in kills in 23 matches.

Shearman was a repeat selection on the all-MIAA first-team. Both Wackerman and Shearman, along with Micaela Walter, earned all-region accolades.

Walter was a second-team all-MIAA and honorable mention all-American choice after being Truman’s leading middle blocker.

She led the squad with a .334 hitting percentage and averaged 2.68 kills and 1.01 blocks for the year.

Walter was one of three senior middle blockers who put the finishing touches on their careers.

Megan Remley, a 2005 honorable mention all-MIAA pick, averaged 2.34 kills and 0.92 blocks a game in 2005.
Micaela Walter

Tiffany Graham averaged 2.43 kills and 1.13 blocks and hit .329 for the season.

Walter finished fifth in school history in career blocks, Graham was sixth and Remley was eighth.

The other senior in 2005 was outside hitter Melanie Jones. In 35 games, Jones had a 2.11 kill average and a 1.83 dig average.

Christine Wagener split time with Wackerman at the setter position and finished the year averaging a team-high 7.50 assists a game. She also averaged 2.47 digs a game.

Other key specialists were Marti Joyer and Amanda Holliday. The two defensive specialist averaged 3.14 and 3.85 digs a game, respectively.

The other returner last season was right-side hitter Alex Baker, who averaged 1.85 kills a game.

A big key to the success of 2005 though was due to the play of the newcomers. By the time of the team's postseason run, three freshmen were regular contributors.

Eli Medina was a regular starter as an outside hitter and averaged 1.76 kills and 3.85 digs a game.

Melissa Keck and Whitney Boehler both stepped up big late in the season for Truman.

Keck, a right-side hitter, averaged 2.12 kills and hit .266 for the season. She led the team in kills during the NCAA quarterfinal match.

Boehler took over libero duties late in the season and finished the year with a 3.08 dig average, including a 5.62 mark in postseason play.

Other newcomers were Dana Hanselmann, Erin Leavitt and Megan Hornof.

Hanselmann hit .303 and averaged 1.83 kills and 0.70 blocks from her middle blocker position.

Leavitt averaged 5.50 assists a game as a backup setter, while Hornof averaged 0.46 kills and 0.62 digs in 13 games.

Truman was guided during the year by head coach Jason Skoch. The first-year skipper did not look like a rookie as he kept the Bulldog volleyball tradition going through the coaching transition year.