

'Dogs set for spring scrimmage

BY ASHLEY MURPHY
Staff Writer

The Truman State University women's soccer team is back in action this spring after a strong fall season. The team finished the fall season with a trip to the GLVC postseason tournament and a record of 6-6-5.

Although primarily a fall sport, the team has a full spring schedule this year. The Bulldogs' spring outdoor season is six weeks long and started with games against Missouri Western State University and Missouri Valley College. Head coach Mike Cannon said the players will finish with scrimmages against the University of Central Missouri on April 15, Quincy University on April 22, and an alumni game on April 28, which will be a good test to prepare the team for the fall.

"UCM will be the toughest opponents as reigning national champs, and Quincy also made the national tournament in the fall along with Missouri Western," Cannon said.

Cannon said the spring games played against them are usually a good test to help the team prepare for the following fall. He said the spring season is essential in preparation for the fall season because preseason only lasts three weeks long when the team returns to campus in the fall. The team will integrate 13 new players into the team during this time.



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Freshman midfielder Paige Peterson prepares for a kick in a game last season. With eight seniors not returning, the Bulldogs' returning players have worked out together during the week and played games during the weekend.

with a hard-working and focused group. The players are excited for the upcoming games and scrimmages to assess where they are making progress and which areas of their game they need to improve.

grow as a team and build our relationships together to develop new leadership and new roles," Cross said. "We definitely bond over early morning running and hard lifting sessions."

Junior midfielder Kacie Trueman said the spring season is essentially split into two parts. Before spring break, the team can only touch the ball for two hours each week because of NCAA regulations. After spring break, the practices increase in intensity, taking place for two hours, four days a week. In a typical week, Trueman said the team has Mondays off, lifts on Tuesdays and Thursdays, has agility, yoga and team bonding on Wednesdays, and runs on Fridays. Games are played on weekends.

Trueman said she enjoys the camaraderie that's exhibited during lifting sessions. She said this season is even more special because one of her teammates, redshirt sophomore midfielder Isabel Kurzban, created a new lifting program for the entire team.

"Lifting with the team is probably the best time in the world," Trueman said. "You are all there together, listening to the same music, hyping each other up, dancing, getting stronger. It's a wonderful time."

Being a fall sport means the graduating seniors finish their soccer careers at the end of the fall season, leaving the underclassmen to step into leadership roles in the spring.

"It is always hard losing the seniors in the spring," Trueman said. "Spring for the soccer team is a time to strengthen the bonds between the retiring players before the incoming freshmen come."

Trueman said the team is focusing on the basics this spring which is helping. While the Bulldogs have only played one game, she said she thinks the team has been playing the best soccer she has ever seen them play.

Trueman said the most difficult part about seeing the seniors go is having to fill the void of both of the team's graduating goalies. Senior Katie Mattingly is one of these losses along with her distinction as a former GLVC Defensive Player of the Year.

"That has changed the dynamic of practice as well as games," Trueman said. "When we do drills in practice, our coach or one of our injured players is our goalie. For the game we played already, we had a retired field player be our goalie."

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—Junior midfielder Kacie Trueman

He said the team can focus more on individual needs, like getting healthy, because games don't count like they do in the regular season.

"It helps tremendously if we have a positive, healthy and productive spring season, where the older players are on the same page and we can have a good base before adding new players to the mix," Cannon said.

Cannon said the team is required to take two days off each week because of NCAA rules, but other than that, the team's practice schedule is very similar to the fall season.

Cannon said this spring has been good,

Redshirt freshman midfielder Allie Cross said spring workouts are the time when everyone on the team trains their bodies for the fall to continue into the summer. Cross said this involves a lot of lifting and conditioning, which is necessary for the team to be in proper condition for the start of the season.

Cross said the team is looking to build mental and physical fitness as a cohesive unit. She said one important part of spring workouts is to build chemistry within the team so the spring routine is more team-oriented.

"This year we had a lot of seniors who are graduating, so we really have had to

Bastian finding success overseas after Truman

BY BROOKE BAILEY
Staff Writer

Truman State University volleyball alumna Kayla Bastian has had a successful first season in England at Northumbria University. Bastian has already won two trophies and advanced to the National Cup Finals.

Bastian is no stranger to success, as she was part of two conference-title teams at Truman and her name can frequently be found in the Bulldog record books.

Bastian said the team's goal for the season is to end with five trophies, and the team has had its sights set on that since the beginning of the season. The goal is to



Alumna Kayla Bastian has been playing volleyball in England for a year. She has added more accomplishments with her team winning two trophies.

keep the indoor season going until May at the National Volleyball League Finals. Once the indoor season ends, beach volleyball season begins.

Bastian said it has been an adjustment playing volleyball in another country after she spent years learning the game in America.

"The international game is a lot different than playing at Truman," Bastian said. "The type of competition is a lot less conventional than in the U.S. The program is run much more like a business, which Truman helped prepare me for. [Head coach] Ben [Briney] always talked about treating your role on the team as a job, and that is very true here."

Bastian said the team still participates in drills and scrimmages. She said she has not perfected her volleyball game, but that is what she loves about the sport. Bastian said she is thankful for her experience so far.

Along with exploring a different way of living, Bastian said she has met great people she has grown close to.

"Between this and Truman, I have zero regrets about making the decision to go forward with them," Bastian said. "I feel like, as athletes, we always talk about the friendships we walk away with, but it is the honest truth."

Briney had nothing but positive things to say about Bastian's time at Truman. Briney said one of her best qualities is that she constantly wants to get better and asks what she needs to do to improve.

Bastian was a part of the 2016 GLVC champion team, where the Bulldogs started their season 3-11 and persevered to win the conference. She led the team then in kills and service aces on her way to a Second-Team All-GLVC selection.

Besides the aforementioned categories, Bastian also led the 2016 championship team in games and sets played. She was one of two Bulldogs to play all of the team's 35 games and one of three to play all 128 sets.

Briney said Bastian was also valuable because he knew she was going to work hard in practice everyday.

"From the day she walked on campus to the day she graduated, you got [that motivation] every day in practice, and that's why she ended up where she ended up, and that was a huge part of our leadership her senior year," Briney said.

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