

Track qualifiers set sites on national indoor meet

By Samantha Gillis
News and opinion editor

"It's the ultimate competition a track and field athlete will face," said Jim Helmer, men's track and field head coach. The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Indoor Track and Field Meet will be March 4 to 6 in Johnson City, Tenn.

Ten of Southwestern's indoor track and field members left yesterday and drove to Tulsa, Okla. The participants flew out this morning to Johnson City. The first event will begin at 3 p.m. Individual men's qualifiers include Jimmy Bryant, business administration senior, in the 1000 meter run, Conner Drendel elementary education sophomore, in the 1000 meter run, Carrington Crum elementary education sophomore, in the mile, Andrew Topham, biology junior, in the 3000 meter and 5000 meter, and Alex Hutchins, business

administration senior, in the 35# weight throw.

In addition, Bryant, Drendel, Crum and Topham make up the 4000 meter Distance Medley Relay.

For the women's team, Jordan Unruh, nursing junior, will compete in the 600 meter run, Amy Pierson, nursing junior, will compete 800 meter, 1000 meter and mile, and Paige Carswell, journalism junior, will compete in the triple jump.

Unruh, Pierson, Anjaih Clemons, business junior and Alyssa Carter, philosophy & religious studies senior, will compete in the women's DMR. Kari Roth, psychology senior, Clemons, Unruh and Pierson will run the mile relay.

To avoid any luggage complications Unruh will be packing her uniform and spikes in her carry-on. "And my green socks. I am a little superstitious," she said.

Unruh and her teammates qualified

for the DMR and the mile relay in January. "I qualified for the 600 meter at K-State. It was my last chance and all season I had been about half a second behind the A standard. When I qualified I also broke the school record," she said. Unruh was wearing her lucky socks when she qualified.

Participants must qualify with a standard which is set by the NAIA.

"There is an A standard and a B standard," said Helmer, "We can only take three B standards for the men and three B standards for the women's team. This year we had exactly three B standards for the men, so we did not have to choose which ones to take."

The team will run preliminary races on Thursday and Friday. On Saturday, those who have advanced to the finals will compete. Currently Pierson is ranked fourth in the nation for the 1,000 meter. "She has a very good chance at becoming an All-

American, which is placing in the top six in the nation," said Helmer.

Hutchins qualified for B standard early in the season. "It was a huge relief when I finally made the A standard," said Hutchins.

Since it is Hutchins' senior year on the team, it wasn't just an honor to qualify. "I had high expectations for myself and if I didn't make it to nationals I would have been letting myself and others down," he said. Hutchins qualified in the 35 pound throw with 16.76 meters.

"The nationals trip is always fun," said Hutchins. "Everyone takes it really seriously with going to bed early and stuff, but we still have fun."

Hutchins listens to the same song before each competition. "It's kind of funny and it just kind of stuck, but I probably shouldn't say the title," he said.

Unruh also listens to music before meets. "I am really into 'Rude Boy,'

by Rihanna. It just gets me going. So that is the main song on my playlist," she said.

She also practices other routines to calm her nerves. "Me and Amy have been running together since high school, so we always do our 'Shake and Bake' thing and we always pray," said Unruh. Both routines remind her to have fun and to stay relaxed.

With 100 schools competing at the meet Unruh knows this is not the same as any other meet. "At nationals it is a whole different world," said Unruh. "The competition is intense and my nerves will be going a little bit, but I think it's more fuel to the fire than anything," she said.

Unruh's parents will be watching from the stands. "They usually don't get to come to a lot of my meets," she said.

Unruh is going into each competition with an all or nothing mental-

ity. "In the best case scenario I will break the record for the 600, we will cut down the time for the 4 by 400 and we will give our best for the DMR," she said.

Helmer said there is a good possibility a few athletes will come away with an All-American title. Helmer said, "We are not in a position to score big points, so it would be nice to score a few points and maybe have a few All-Americans. But really in years past we had really successful national meets where nobody got All-American, but everyone just ran and did really well in their competition."

Most of the indoor track and field competitors will go straight into the outdoor season which will have its first invitational March 11 at Cowley County.

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Basketball senior finishes out final season with Builder athletics

By Paige Carswell
Sports editor

For 20 years, Jason McCormack was in the business of playing basketball.

In the last minute of the game on Feb. 27, he realized it was over. McCormack, senior guard, and the rest of the Builders men fell 92-87 to Friends University to end their season with an 8-10 record and to put a cap on a career that started when McCormack was just 10 years old.

"It was decided in the last minute and a half or so. Somebody's gotta win and somebody's gotta lose," said McCormack. "This morning, waking up, it was like, 'Alright, I gotta grow up now.' I got pretty emotional."

As a boy, he scooped snow out of the driveway to practice his shot. He pursued the sport with a passion in high school. After missing a free throw to tie up a playoff game his senior year at Derby High School, he went to college with even more fire.

That fire was doused a few times in the next 10 years. He dropped out of college when he was a sophomore, then worked while playing in basketball leagues. However, he always kept his goals of finishing college and his basketball career in the back of his mind. At 28 years old, he came to Southwestern College to complete both.

McCormack, who turns 30 today, has been playing basketball for longer than some of his opponents have been alive.

"Oh, I feel it, too," he said. "I feel like I'm in great shape, but this sport really pounds on your body. I hit the floor pretty hard last night, and I'm feelin' it today."

The last two seasons had their ups and downs. McCormack had a career-high 25 points against Sterling College and led his team with 35 percent three-point shooting.

"I didn't expect to have what little success I did have. My role was to show some leadership to the other

guys. If I take a shot, it had better go in," he said, laughing.

Matt O'Brien, head men's basketball coach, saw it a little bit differently. "He had a few different roles along the way this season. He started out coming off the bench as another scoring option. By the second semester of conference play we counted on him a lot for scoring. The last week of the season we asked him to rebound, and he did that very well. He's the kind of player who would just do whatever it takes to help the team win. He just had the attitude to do whatever it takes to help the team."

McCormack, a sports management major, played at Cloud County Community College and Pratt Community College before transferring to Southwestern to play for Doug Hall, previous men's head basketball coach. Hall left after the 2009 season and O'Brien took his place, making him the fourth coach McCormack had in college.

"I do want to be a coach later in life, so I've learned four or five different philosophies, from conditioning to doing drills to how to operate practices," McCormack said.

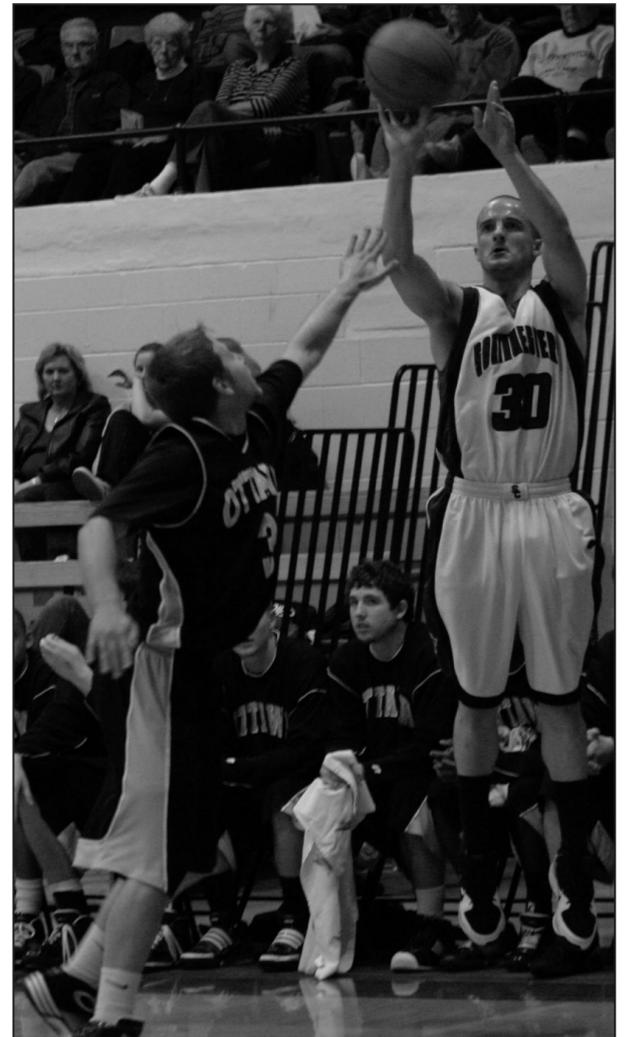
Now that it's over, he'll have to find other things to occupy the hours in his day, but McCormack said he plans to stay physically active.

"It'll be different just having time on my hands. I've got to get a job. Basketball's been my job," he said. "Now it's time to get a job and provide for my daughter and my mother."

And, although he'll be leaving college, he says there are a few things he won't forget.

"The best thing I can take from here is the people that I've met--the people who help you on a daily basis, from coaches to student life people to definitely your teammates, your classmates."

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Paige Carswell/Collegian photographer
Jason McCormack, senior guard, pulls up for a three in a game earlier this year against the Ottawa Braves. The thirty-year-old has been playing basketball for two thirds of his life. This was his last season playing college ball.

running around grabbing rebounds," said O'Brien.

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Semifinal loss ends men's basketball season

By Clinton Dick
Staff reporter

It was a tough way to end the season. The men's basketball team fell to the Friends University Falcons 92-87 Saturday evening in Wichita, during the semifinal round of the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference tournament.

Friends dominated the first half, outscoring the Builders 39-27. The men didn't quit. They fought back in the second half. Despite a late surge by Southwestern, the men couldn't quite finish, losing their third game to Friends this season.

Diggles had a career game, scoring 40 points. He finished the night going 15-20 from the field, 5-7 from three-point land, and 5-7 from the free throw line. Miser followed with

14 points and Travis Thurau, junior forward, led the Builders with nine rebounds.

The Falcons finished with a 54.4 field goal percentage, compared to Southwestern's 47.6. Friends had the advantage on the boards as they out-rebounded 35-20.

The men's basketball team had previously avenged its recent 67-60 loss at Kansas Wesleyan by knocking the Coyotes off 72-62 in the opening round of the KCAC Tournament Feb 25. The men never trailed during the game at Maybee Arena.

The Builders exploded out of the gate, scoring the game's first 12 points. Kansas Wesleyan narrowed the lead down to as little as five points, but Southwestern stayed on top, going into the locker rooms at halftime up 33-23.

The men hit 50 percent of their shots in the first half while the Coyotes made just 7-29 from the field. They also out-rebounded Kansas Wesleyan 24-16 in the first half. Diggles led the Builders in scoring with 15 points.

The rout continued in the second half as Southwestern continued to extend their lead. With eight minutes remaining, the men had their biggest lead of the night at 57-42. The Coyotes made it a game late when Mekan Moss, senior forward, hit a three-point basket with 2:35 remaining in regulation to narrow the lead to 66-60. However, the Builders' free throw shooting ended any chance of a Coyote comeback. The final score read 72-62 Builders.

"You could tell from our performance that we don't want our sea-

son to end," said Matt O'Brien, head men's basketball coach. "We came out and played with tremendous energy and effort."

Diggles ended the game with 25 points. "Once the game got started, we were ready to go," said Diggles. "Everybody stuck together and was on the same page."

Miser followed with 14 points. He hit seven of his eight free throw attempts, including two with less than a minute remaining in the game. "They wanted the ball in my hands at the end of the game," said Miser. "Everyone says I'm a great free throw shooter and I just wanted to prove them right."

The men demolished Kansas Wesleyan on the boards, out-rebounding them 43-29. "It is exciting when you have a bunch of 5'10" or 5'8" guys



Samantha Gillis/Collegian photographer
Andrea Smith, sophomore forward, pushes past a Tabor defender during the opening round of the KCAC tournament Feb. 24 in Stewart Field House. The women won 67-40 to advance to the semifinals. They proceeded to beat Kansas Wesleyan 58-51, but fell to the Sterling Warriors March 1 in the Championship game 89-85 in overtime. The Lady Builders finished the season 22-9, 13-5 in the conference.

Women lose heartbreaker in conference championship

By Clinton Dick
Staff reporter

Despite one of the best efforts the Lady Builders had all year, they could not pull out the victory in the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference Championship game. It was a heartbreaking 89-85 overtime loss in Sterling on March 1.

The game opened with a 14-6 Sterling run. The women came right back though, taking a 23-22 lead midway through the first half. A three-point shot by Andrea Smith, sophomore forward, knotted up the game at 36.

As time expired in the first half, Annelina Robinson, freshman guard, hit a shot to keep Southwestern within two at the half. "It was a great lift at the end of the first half," said Dave Denly, head women's basketball coach. "She had a tremendous game."

The Builders came out strong in the second half as they grabbed a 53-45 lead with 15:55 remaining. That would be the biggest lead they would get as the Warriors fought back and neither team got up by more than four for the rest of the half.

With 15 seconds remaining in the game, the women found themselves down by two and the ball in their possession. Smith went up for a shot and was fouled with less than a second left on the clock. With the crowd making creating as much havoc as possible, Smith sunk both free throws to send the game into overtime knotted up at 77.

After a back-and-forth battle in overtime, the Builders found themselves in a similar situation, down 88-85 with 28.1 seconds left. Southwestern could not get a decent shot. In the end, time ran out on Southwestern as they fell 89-85.

"I was disappointed," said Denly. "We just stood there on defense and we didn't attack. It was a heck of a game though."

Robinson led her team in scoring finishing with 24 points. Jasmine Manuel, junior forward, followed with 22 points and went nine of 16 from the field. Manuel received all-conference first team honors during the KCAC awards release Feb. 26.

The key stat was the free throws. Sterling attempted 52 shots from the line, hitting 40. The Builders, on the other hand, made just 14-22 free

throw shots.

For seniors Jordan Jarnagin, guard, Amy Liable, forward, and Melissa Borthwick, forward, this was the last game of their careers. "It is sad," said Jarnagin. "It was our last chance to play basketball and our last chance to represent Southwestern women's basketball." Jarnagin received the Champion of Character award for Southwestern College by meeting certain criteria set by the KCAC.

"We had a great season," said Denly. "It was an awesome year. We had the third highest number of wins in school history and we tied for second in conference wins in a year. I am proud to be a part of this team."

It was a different team that stepped out on the court Saturday afternoon in Salina. One week after being downed by the Kansas Wesleyan Coyotes, the Builders came right back for the semifinal round of the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference.

The women played with fire in the game's opening half, grabbing an early lead and never looking back. A 16-0 run put them up 25-6 midway

through the first half. They continued to build on their lead over the Coyotes, going into the locker rooms up 37-15 at the half.

A 10-0 Kansas Wesleyan run early in the second half renewed the Coyotes' hopes of staying in the game. The Coyotes slowly climbed back into the game throughout the second half, but it was too little, too late. The Builders won 58-51.

"I was extremely pleased with our team's performance," said Denly. "The first half we played tremendous and they just got a little bit of a run on us in the second half."

Liable led Southwestern in scoring with 12 points. "Amy had one of the best games of her career," said Denly. "We want to carry that momentum." Liable went 5-6 from the field and 2-3 from the free throw line.

The women hit 24 of their 61 shots for the game, but shot just 17.6 percent from beyond the arch. They also struggled from the free throw line, going 7-20.

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