

MSSU Athletics Report

1. Sport Program Reports

- a. **Men's Basketball** – The Men's Basketball team is off to a 10-5 start and is 4-2 in the MIAA. Junior Austin Wright recently set a new MSSU single-game three-point record with nine three's against Northeastern State on Jan. 10. The team will play at Lincoln on Saturday.
- b. **Women's Basketball** – The Women's Basketball team is 9-4 on the season and just recently held Northeastern State to its lowest point total in school history after moving to the Division II ranks when the Lions won 50-34 this past Saturday. Southern held the RiverHawks to just nine points in the first half in the win. The Lions play at Lincoln on Saturday.
- c. **Men's and Women's Track and Field** – The track and field teams will play host to the MSSU open this Friday and Saturday at the Leggett & Platt Athletic Center. Events begin at 2:30 pm on Friday and 10:30 am on Saturday. The MSSU Men are ranked 6th nationally, while the women are ranked 20th nationally. Jeff Fraley ranks second nationally in both the 60m and the 400m. He has automatically qualified in the 60m. Morgan Hold ranks 5th nationally in the men's pole vault, while Darion Boure ranks sixth in the triple jump. On the women's side, Melanie Bower ranks 11th nationally in the pole vault and Kaylee Morgan is 11th in the long jump.
- d. **Spring Sports** – Baseball and Softball have begun practice and will have their first games next month. Golf gets back into the swing of things in March.
- e. **State Farm Trophy Series:** We are up 3-1 in the State Farm Trophy Series Standings. Wins from Volleyball and both cross country programs.

2. MIAA News:

- a. The 2nd meeting for the Strategic Planning Committee in October. Rachel Burleson is representing MSSU. The MIAA Strategic Plan Outline and the current existing Strategic Plan has been reviewed on each campus. The Strategic Plan Outline is now being voted on by the Presidents today at 3PM in Washington, DC.

3. NCAA News:

- a. Current proposed legislation is under review and will be voted on tomorrow at the NCAA Convention in Washington, D.C.; nothing too controversial to be discussed at this time.

4. Athletic Department Information:

- a. **Record High GPA:** Our overall GPA for Fall 2014 was **3.06!** Men's Teams were 2.75 and Women were 3.36. The highest GPA for the men was Men's Cross Country/Track with a 3.06 and women was Women's Basketball with a 3.53; this is third time in the last six years the athletic department has accomplished that feat. It is quite an achievement to have over **320 students** in a variety of majors to average above the 3.0 mark! Congratulations to all the student-athletes, the fine instructors at MSSU, our dedicated athletic department tutors and academic coordinators and Rachel Burleson, our SWA and Assistant Athletic Director.
- b. **Graduation** - The Athletic Department had 23 current or former student-athletes participate in the Winter Commencement ceremonies this past December. Among the graduates were two graduating Summa Cum Laude, as well as one graduating Magna Cum Laude. Jake Benton finished with a perfect

4.00 GPA and is currently in Kenya interning at a hospital, while training for the 2016 Olympic Trials. Also notable was the graduation of former player Johnny Berry, who passed away in a car accident in August.

- c. **Season Ticket Offer-** Athletic Marketing and Athletic Game Management had set aside some time throughout the weeks since Thanksgiving to call former season ticket holders who have not renewed about doing so this year. Some of the objections we have encountered regarding not renewing is not being able to make it to all the games. In response, we have created a weekend conference game package. It is for the 5 conference games that fall on Saturday's. The price would be \$60. We advertised this officially after Thanksgiving as a "stocking stuffer" gift. This generated 5 more season ticket holders for this basketball season.
- d. **Ticket Office-** We are considering looking at other ticketing software before the 2015 fall sports season. ExtremeTix, our current system, lacks on customer service and has caused us some formatting errors this basketball season that has upset some Lionbackers. The review process will begin by early February 2015.
- e. **Web Streaming Away Basketball Games-** Residents life is streaming away men's and women's basketball games in bottom floor of Mayes student center in the theatre. Everyone is invited to attend if you would like to see the game.
- f. **Our Make-A-Wish campaign-** is well underway and we have raised over \$1500 as of now which is almost triple what we accomplished last year. This has been driven by our SAAC and their collective sport teams. They have done such things as trivia contests, 50-50, Bingo and other great activities.
- g. **Athletic Marketing-** It is time for the Joplin Business Expo, where over 1,000 business owners and area residents will be at the convention center in Joplin. Each year we ask each head coach and or assistant coach to take a two hour time slot. This is a great opportunity for them to be out in the public eye and talk to people about our programs. We will provide lion decals that are handed out by the coaches.
- h. **Midyear Transfers-** In combination during the early signing date in November for the sports of Football, Basketball, Baseball, and Track and Cross Country we have 19 new midyear student-athletes for the Spring Semester.

5. Lionbacker Annual Campaign:

- a. We currently have 274 Lionbackers Memberships paid for representing around 730 people. We have 53 new memberships this year and the rest are renewals. We are currently renewed at 78% of our total memberships from last year. We have our highest total of both Lionbacker donation dollars & Season Ticket dollars we have ever had.

6. Recent Events:

- a. Friday Dec 12th – 3rd Annual MOSO Trivia Night in the BSC Ballroom – We held our 3rd Annual MOSO Trivia Night in December this year. We had 24 teams compete this year and approximately 150 people attend. This is our highest attendance for this event. It continues to be one of our best received events with extremely positive feedback and it is a lot of fun for us to put on. It raised around \$7,500 this year. Dr. Mike LaFerla's team "The Average Joe's" took home the crown this year.
- b. Sat Jan 10th – Lionbacker Appreciation Day Chili Feed in Young Gym– We had our Annual Lionbacker Appreciation Day Chili Feed on Jan 10th. We held it prior to the Women's Basketball game starting at Noon. It was our highest attendance yet for this event with around 140 people there. It is a great opportunity for us to thank our Lionbackers for their support as well as a great chance for interaction between the Booster Club Members. We also take the time to honor those Lionbackers we have passed away. It is a very popular event that keeps growing each year.

7. Upcoming Events:

- a. Friday Jan 30th, Friday Feb 13th - Upcoming Lion Pride Luncheons. SMB Community Room. Lunch served at 11:30am – program starts at Noon.
- b. MIAA Basketball Tournament
 - i. Play-in Games at Campus Sites
 - 1. Monday March 2nd for the Men
 - 2. Tuesday March 3rd for the Women
 - ii. Kansas City Tournament
 - 1. Men's Basketball – March 5th, 7-8th
 - 2. Women's Basketball – March 6-8, 2015
 - 3. Kansas City Social: TBD
- c. Lionbacker Annual Campaign – April and May
- d. Spring Football Game – Saturday April 11 (subject to change)
- e. 110% Club Event – Saturday April 11th prior to the Spring Football game (subject to change if game day does)
- f. SouthernFest 2015
 - i. Dinner/Auction at Downstream Casino – Thursday July 30th
 - ii. Rod Smith Green & Gold Golf Classic – Friday July 31st
- g. See Upcoming Event Schedule for complete monthly activities:

8. Athletic Facility Updates:

- a. **North End Zone Facility Project:** See Rob Yust, Vice President of Business for updated and detailed report.
- b. **Baseball Stadium Project:** Please see Advancement report for more details.
- c. **Leggett & Platt:** The lobby between Young and L&P has been completed included the addition of some green lighting for effect. The Senior Wall has been completed including the television display system of the seniors. In addition, we have updated our baseball and women's XC and track & field banners to properly reflect the seasons with conference championships. We are currently continuing work on Door 11 Entrance updating.
- d. **Soccer Field:** The coverings for the benches were destroyed in the high winds a few weeks ago. We are investigating more permanent structures.
- e. **Softball Fields:**
 - i. We are also working with UPD and the physical plant about installing cameras and security measures over at the softball field, after another break-in (second in 3 months). This is on-going.
 - ii. We are in the process of receiving and installing a new scoreboard at a cost of \$13,000. This will be a great addition as the current scoreboard is outdated and out of the line of sight of the stat crew and operator so they can't tell what values are on the board.

Upcoming event Schedule

01/16/15	Friday		MSSU Open	all-day				
01/17/15	Saturday		MSSU Open	all-day				
01/17/15	Saturday	Basketball	At Lincoln University					
01/21/15	Wednesday	Basketball	vs Northwest Missouri University	5:30PM/7:30 PM	BOG recognition	Student Senate Recognition	MOSO Maniacs	
01/24/15	Saturday	Basketball	at Missouri Western State University					
01/29/15	Thursday	Basketball	at Southwest Baptist University					
01/30/15	Friday	Track	Central Missouri Invite	All day				
01/30/15	Friday		Lion Pride Luncheon					
01/31/15	Saturday	Basketball	University Of Central Missouri	1PM/3PM	Endowment day	Donor Awareness Game	85 team game-Robert	
02/06/15	Friday	Track	Indoor Track-Lion Invite	all-day	spaghetti feed			
02/07/15	Saturday	Softball	Ouachita Baptist	12PM				
02/07/15	Saturday	Softball	Ark.- Monticello@Arkadelphia	2PM				
02/07/15	Saturday	Track	Indoor Track-Lion Invite	all-day				
02/07/15	Saturday	Basketball	At University Of Central Missouri					
02/08/15	Sunday	Softball	Mississippi College@Arkadelphia	11AM				
02/09/15	Sunday	Softball	Henderson State@Arkadelphia	3PM				
02/11/15	Wednesday	Basketball	At Northwest State University					
02/13/15	Friday	Softball	Ill.-Springfield@Bentonville	9AM				
02/13/15	Friday	Softball	Henderson State@Bentonville	1PM				
02/13/15	Friday		Lion Pride Luncheon					
02/14/15	Saturday	Softball	Quincy@Bentonville	9AM				
02/14/15	Saturday	Track	Oklahoma Baptist Invite	All day				
02/14/15	Saturday	Softball	Rockhurst@Bentonville	11am				
02/14/15	Saturday	Baseball	Upper Iowa	12PM/2PM				
02/14/15	Saturday	Basketball	Missouri Western State University	1PM/3PM	PINK night	City Council Recognition	Roary-cupid-kiss-cam	SAAC fl
02/15/15	Sunday	Softball	Upper Iowa@Bentonville	9AM				
02/15/15	Sunday	Softball	Minn. Duluth@Bentonville	11am				
02/15/15	Sunday	Baseball	Upper Iowa	12PM/2PM				
02/18/15	Wednesday	Basketball	Southwest Baptist Univesity	5:30PM/7:30 PM	XC Jamie recognition	SA Academic Awards Night	Faculty/Staff Appreciation Night	All-Athl Night