

Gymmen hungry for NCAA title

By MEGAN CULHANE
Collegian Sports Writer

It came as no surprise Tuesday when the men's gymnastics team received a bid to the national championships at UCLA (April 23-25) — its ninth in Head Coach Karl Schier's 10 years at the helm. At this point on the national scene in gymnastics, the NCAA title is anyone's for the asking. The question is — how badly does Penn State want to walk away with the hardware?

"It's not fun anymore," senior captain Chris Laux said of his hunger for a national title. "It's a quest. After all, a trophy is not just another piece of hardware. It's a tribute to years of hard work and dedication; it's a legal pay-off for a job well done. A national championship? Well, that speaks for itself."

The quest began in April 1985 when Penn State, with one of its most potent squads, went into the NCAA Championships holding the No. 1 spot after accumulating a score of 285.32 on the season. After the first day of competition, it seemed that all the Lions had to do was show up for the meet in order to walk away with the title, but fate didn't have the same game plan. As it worked out the team settled for third place, posting a

score of 283.05 behind Ohio State (285.35) and Nebraska (284.55).

"Basically, we had the worst meet of our lives at the most inopportune time of our lives," Terry Bartlett said after the meet.

After seeing a sure thing slip through their fingers, it's a given that there will be strong feelings connected with the heartbreaking loss.

"I think Coach has a bad taste in his mouth," Spider Maxwell explained. "But as bad as it seemed, we knew we were the best in the country. Everyone knew that, but we just didn't win it. That's just bad opportunity. Instead of faking open wounds, Schier turned the unpleasant loss into a learning experience. He learned never again to count on statistics as an indicator of team performance and he learned that the meet is 'never over until it's over.'"

Schier said that his philosophies have not really changed from past to present, and that he's counting on hard work, determination and skill to pull the team through this year. The veteran squad is looking to rectify the disappointment.

"It's not a game," Schier explained. "All the preparation goes on months before. The guys are quite Please see GYMEN, Page 13.



Senior gymnasts (left to right) Spider Maxwell, Chris Laux, Ian Shelley, Tony Griffiths, and Mario Gonzalez will compete in the NCAA Championships April 23-25 at UCLA.

Lady laxers out for revenge

Will face Maryland if weather permits

By DAVE SOTTILE
Collegian Sports Writer

Look out the window. Is it raining? If the answer is yes, then one of the top sporting events of the spring semester will be scheduled for this afternoon, however with the threat of rain looming large over Happy Valley, a decision as to whether or not to play the game will be made early this morning.

If Mother Nature cooperates, the second-ranked Lady Lions will tangle with the fourth-ranked Terps in a rematch of last year's national championship game (won by Maryland, 11-10). If the weather is nasty as expected then the contest will be tentatively rescheduled for Sunday May 3, at 1 p.m.

While the game's playing date is still up in the air, one thing is certain: whenever it's played, it will mean a lot more to the players than any other regular-season game to date.

More than just a national ranking is at stake here sports fans, pride is involved, just ask Penn State attacker Anna Marie Vesco.

"I'm still holding a grudge against them," Vesco said yesterday. "I want to see us win big."

"I really want to play and I hope everybody can play with high intensity," the junior from Pine Brook, N.J. said. "It would be great to see everyone play well together."

The Lady Lions (10-2) have rolled up 61 goals in their last five games for an average of over a goal per contest, while surrendering just 29 in the same span. Penn State's margin of victory has averaged close to 10 goals, but that doesn't figure to happen against the Terps.

Maryland leads the all-time series 10-9-1, but six of those games — including last year's NCAA title game (at College Park, Md.) and the 1985 NCAA semifinal (a 12-11 Maryland win in triple overtime) — have been decided by a single goal.

"This will be a very exciting game," Penn State Head Coach Sue Scheetz said after her troops drolled Lafayette, 13-8 on Tuesday. "Both teams will put on a fine exhibition. This will be one of the finest lacrosse games played all season."

"I think we'll have to concentrate on this game," defensive wing Mary McCarthy said. "We might have a tendency to get caught up in thinking about losing to them in the finals last year. We have to focus on this year."

The Maryland/Penn State matchup is one of the top athletic rivalries on the East Coast, with football being the most obvious. McCarthy says that it's carried over to lacrosse as well.

"It has definitely been a rivalry," she explained, "because a lot of their players play both lacrosse and field hockey."

"We also know a lot of their players off the field, so it's a friendly rivalry," she said. "Some of us went to high school with a few of their players, so it's the same players over and over again. They have a lot of talent and I think they know how to play us. Last year they matched up their best defensive players with our best offensive players."

While that strategy proved successful a year ago, it might not work again. One thing that can't be defended is attitude, and Vesco says the Terps should beware.

Volleyball isn't just for the West anymore

A few years back, no one from the East Coast would dare challenge the heavyweights from California in a simple game of volleyball. Not even for fun, because the knew they would get demolished.

Let's face it: volleyball is a beach sport that tall, tanned, blonde guys play 20 hours-a-day on Mission Beach in San Diego. There aren't any beaches around here, and don't say "What about New Jersey?" because those pathetic few miles of coastline don't count. A Jersey beach is so second-rate they don't even call it a beach; they call it a "shore." But that's beside the point.

These days, the Lions are gaining more attention by not being exactly modest about what they plan to do. They want the gold cup, the silver platter and the brass ring all compressed into one object with the logo, "Penn State — 1987 NCAA Men's Volleyball Champions" printed across it.

If the award were based strictly on player quality, the Lions would have no problem in staking claim to it. Head Coach Tom Tait has assembled an arsenal of talent that would make any California coach give up his condo on Catalina Island to get in on the action. Get a load of this:

- Chris Chase — This sophomore middle-hitter was pretty much first team everything last year. As a freshman no less. This year he is even better. At 6-10, 230 pounds, he is the biggest and probably most powerful hitter in collegiate volleyball. And when he goes up above the net, the opposing blockers aren't expecting dadfodds.
- Chase goes up for the kill about a week before the ball is set, arches his back, extends his right arm and clinches his fist. He's gonna rifle it. He knows it. The team knows it. The guys on the other side of the net sure know it, because they are running for cover. Chase also has a serve that I wouldn't mind having on the tennis court. The only problem he has is that sometimes he goes up a week and a day early and ends up practically swatting a whole bunch of atoms into a nuclear explosion.
- Javier Gaspar — Tait has called his 6'0 junior setter "one of the most exciting players to play NCAA volleyball" and for good reason. Gaspar revolutionized the job of the setter by



making himself a potent offensive threat as well as a premier setter. Not only can Gaspar loft up a set that I could probably spike past anybody, but he can make defenders look like real chumps by dropping a little dink past them while they get ready to have their hands ripped off by a Chris Chase kill. Gaspar is also the spiritual leader on the floor, providing enough intensity to get even the referees psyched. His minor problem, though, is that sometimes he is too intense and his comments of protest become a bit louder and a bit more personal.

Sharing the court with these guys are players who tend to get less publicity, but who, according to Tait, are the reason for the team's success. Outside hitters Robert Pierce and Dave Bittner have added a new dimension to the Penn State offense; namely the ability to go to the outside hitting. Not having to rely solely on the middle-hitting of Chase and senior Jose Rubayo (another threat when Gaspar loops a beautiful set) has really given the Lions an edge.

Tait has also stressed the leadership capabilities of co-captains Rich Cero and Mike Hogan.

There's no question that Penn State has the talent to win it all. So where do the problems lie? Namely, in its conference. The Lions play in the Eastern Intercollegiate Volleyball Association, which is a big name for a little league.

This year the schedule has seen some improvements, however. The Lions tangled with the Midwest's strongest teams, Ball State and Ohio State, a number of times and made two trips to California, coming back once ranked No. 1 by virtue of its stunning upset over Pepperdine.

Softball team faces another road trip

By STEVE SAMPSELL
Collegian Sports Writer

On the Road Again
Do you remember that song? Well, it could work as a theme song for the softball team. After a short two-game homestand on Tuesday (the only two home games the team has played all season), the Lady Lions (14-16, 0-2 in the Atlantic 10) are once again traveling, this time on an four-day, eight-game road trip to New England.

This road trip may prove to be the most important of the year as the team will play six conference games against Rhode Island, Connecticut and Massachusetts. The Lady Lions need to finish at least fourth in the Atlantic 10 regular-season standings to qualify for the conference tournament which they will host May 7-9.

Today the team is in Rhode Island for a doubleheader against the Rhode Island Wrens (4-19, 1-1), scheduled to begin at 2 p.m.

Both teams were in action Tuesday, the Lady Lions dropped a pair to Temple and Rhode Island split a doubleheader with No. 20 UConn.

Although the teams were both at the Lady Lion Invite last weekend, they did not meet, so today's games mark their first meeting of the year. Penn State leads the overall series 8-6.

Looking at records only, it would seem a certainty that the Lady Lions will get their first 10 victories of the year. Records, however, do not tell the whole story with this team. On paper the Lions look strong, it's on the field that they've been having their problems.

Aside from Nan Sichter who leads the team at the plate with a .451 average and sophomores Tammy Irvin and freshman Dona Tauriello, the hitting seems to disappear when it's most needed.

A prime example would be the Lady Lions' second game with Temple on Tuesday. They loaded the bases in both the first and seventh innings, but didn't capitalize on these opportunities and eventually lost the game, 2-1.

"We've really been hitting the ball well, it just seems that we're hitting it right at people and especially when we really need it," Head Coach Sue Rankin said.

The pitching too has been strong featuring freshman Cathy Kaminski (7-6, 2.86 ERA) and senior Aileen Polanis (6-8, 3.21).

On Tuesday Polanis lost her game on an error in the seventh and Kaminski gave up only one earned run in her 6-4 loss to Temple Tuesday. Assistant Coach Beth Perine has been pleased with the staff though.

Phils lose; Brewers get no-hitter

Carter, Strawberry lead Mets to win

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Gary Carter and Darryl Strawberry hit consecutive home runs in the seventh inning as the New York Mets beat the Philadelphia Phillies 4-1 last night.

Left-hander Sid Fernandez, 2-0, worked six innings, giving up two hits, walking five and striking out five. Rookie reliever Dave Cone came on in the seventh and protected the New York lead for his first save. He retired Mike Schmidt and Lance Parrish on fly balls to right with two on and one out in the seventh.

Doug Sisk earned his second save by getting two outs in the ninth.

Right-hander Kevin Gross, 0-2, pitched two hit, one-run, one-inning ball through six innings before leaving for a pinch hitter.

The Carter and Strawberry homers leading off the seventh came off reliever Kent Tekulic. Strawberry has hit in all seven Mets games, including four home runs and 11 RBI. He's scored six runs in the last seven games.

The Mets took a 1-0 lead in the third when Rafael Santana singled to center, reached second on Fernandez' sacrifice bunt and scored on Wally Backman's single to right.

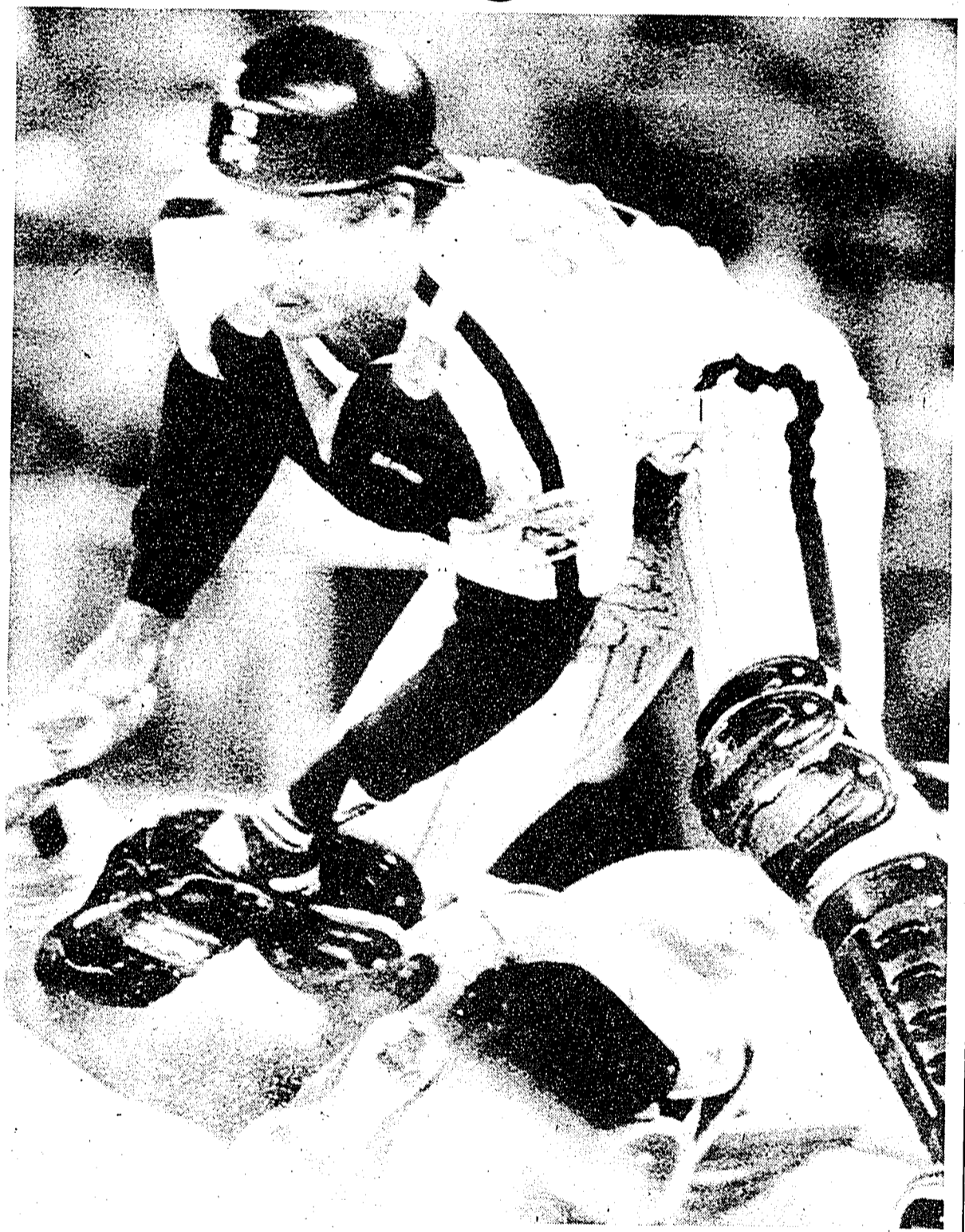
New York's other run came in the ninth when Strawberry doubled and scored a Von Hayes' fielding error at first base.

The Phillies got their run in the ninth on a groundout by Schmidt which scored Greg Gross.

Brewers 7, Orioles 0
BALTIMORE (AP) Juan Nieves had a "medicine football" and awful slider but they were good enough for the first no-hitter in Milwaukee Brewers history.

The 7-0 victory over the Baltimore Orioles was capped by a diving catch by Robin Yount of a line drive to right-center field by Eddie Murray.

"I didn't really think about the no-hitter until the last out, when all Please see BASEBALL, Page 13.



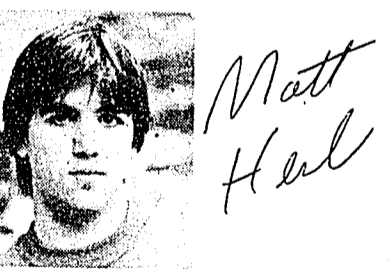
Lance Parrish tags out New York's Len Dykstra at the plate in the Mets' 4-1 win over the Phillies last night.

Are the Phils as good as we thought?

It wasn't long after the Phillies lost their home opener to the Chicago Cubs — after allegedly having lost their first two games of the season to Atlanta — that Mike Schmidt announced the team's problem was that it needed time to get. That was excuse No. 1.

Here it is less than two weeks into the season, and already the Phillies with their 1-6 record are being talked about as if they were a slimy Jello-like substance. The comparison wasn't really fair.

At least Jello tastes good.



The Phils leave a terrible taste in your mouth. They lose games they should win and lose games they should lose, only worse. It's tempting to push the panic button now that they're already 3 1/2 games behind St. Louis in the National League East (prior to last night) except that they've been playing the game like it was a Chinese fire drill since the Atlanta series. Par-tic! The Phillies are the Jell-O All-Stars: twice the errors and all the excuses.

Excuse No. 2: They are traditionally a slow-starting team, even in the most stable of circumstances, and these are not the most stable of circumstances.

Okay, fair enough. This is, after all, a team with a new catcher, a new pitcher in the starting rotation, and an American League DH in the outfield. They certainly know how to weather a rough start. The Phils began last year 3-6; in 1985, 3-8, and those teams possessed just a fraction of the talent on this year's club, so we're told. Why the concern this time around?

Well... Because a 1-6 start is not just circumstances. "We also know a lot of their players off the field, so it's a friendly rivalry," she said. "Some of us went to high school with a few of their players, so it's the same players over and over again. They have a lot of talent and I think they know how to play us. Last year they matched up their best defensive players with our best offensive players."

While that strategy proved successful a year ago, it might not work again. One thing that can't be defended is attitude, and Vesco says the Terps should beware.

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Flyers trying finesse to beat Rangers

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The Philadelphia Flyers have suddenly discovered they can win hockey games by doing what comes naturally — speed and defense — instead of fighting.

Even Rick Tocchet, who has led the Flyers in penalty minutes the last three years, discarded the "goat tactics" in the Flyers' 2-1 victory over the New York Rangers Tuesday night.

The win gave the Flyers a 3-2 edge in their first-round, best-of-seven Stanley Cup playoff series. Another performance like that tonight in Madison Square Garden, where the Flyers have won 10 of their last 12 times, and the series will be history.

Tocchet, who had two goals in the fifth game and is the series' leading scorer with

five, goes a game without a penalty about as often as Flyers Coach Mike Keenan and Rangers Coach Phil Esposito say something nice about each other. He almost reached that milestone, incurring an elbowing infraction as the game ended.

Tocchet's behavior wasn't by accident. It was part of a plan.

"We had already played them four times, so there is no point in trying to establish anything by fighting," the winger said.

"I mean we have to stay aggressive, but there is no point in dropping the gloves now. We want to line up, play hockey and intimidate them with our speed and toughness."

"We didn't want a lot of stoppages in play, because that's what they want so they can

rest. This way we can wear them down."

Tocchet wasn't the only Flyer to turn the other cheek.

"We want to play as good as we can, stay away from stupid penalties," said defenseman Mark Howe. "We didn't want to get behind the eight ball."

Defenseman Brad Marsh said the Flyers "wanted to play good, disciplined hockey. We played a smart hockey game tonight."

Even the Rangers' Dan Maloney realized the Flyers became aware they were a division champion struggling against a team that finished fourth, 24 points behind.

"The Flyers played a smart game," said Maloney. "They took it to us good in the third period (17-5 shot edge)."

time out

local schedule

Women's lacrosse vs. Maryland, 3 p.m. at Lady Lion Field
Men's tennis vs. Millersville, 2:30 p.m. at Penn State Indoor Tennis Club
Softball at Rhode Island, 2, 4 p.m.

pro schedule

Pirates (Kipper 0-1) at Chicago (Lynch 1-0)
New York (Aguilera 0-0) at Phillies (Cowley 0-1)
Flyers at N.Y. Rangers, 8:35 p.m.

We the People
Krick 1

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General Motors is presenting this series of programs to broaden an appreciation of our Constitution in the belief that the strength of America lies in understanding our freedoms and responsibilities as citizens.

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Sunday, April 26 Spring good times get serious. And there should be enough sun so that you won't have to wait for summer.

Under the sun at nearby Bald Eagle State Park, the annual Beta Sigma Beta/Sy Barash Regatta brings you live music from 10 to 5. And there is six-player volleyball, two-man canoe races and Tug-of-War, if your team doesn't weigh more than 1000 pounds.

And \$2.00 gets you in. The Regatta tradition as the best concert of the spring means this year it's John Cafferty & The Beaver Brown Band, famous from the movie, "Eddie & The Cruisers." CBS recording artists, Synch, Sammy Atlantic & The Jersey All-Stars all-Springsteen show. And Stolyn Hours, State College's top band.

The Regatta, Sunday, April 26. Only \$2.00. Transportation from East Halls for a buck. Buy tickets and register for events at the HUB. For the Cancer Society. Co-Sponsored by Mid-State Bank, Uni-Mart and Alpha Phi Sorority.

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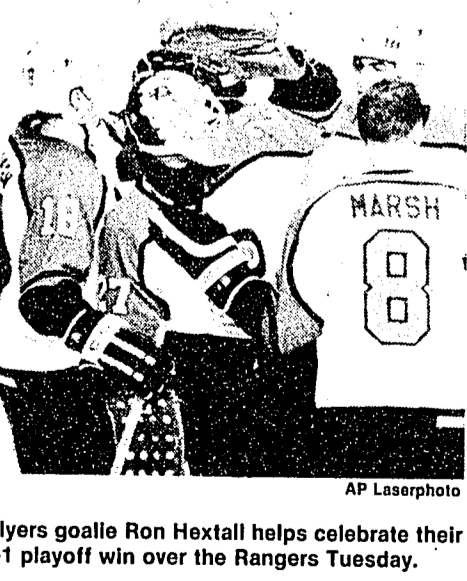
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We're Taking Reservations For Lunch May 16th, After Commencement! Open From 12:00 Noon.



Flyers goalie Ron Hextall helps celebrate their 5-1 playoff win over the Rangers Tuesday.