

The Behrend Beacon

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5 Reasons Why...

Big Ten football referees should have at least a grade school education

OK, I realize that that is a bit harsh, but we easily have the most notorious refs in the country and they have been atrocious game after game.

I also realize as the coaches and players have been quick to point out that had Penn State played better, these late game comebacks would not have been necessary. This is also true; they got themselves into jams which is what caused all of the injustices.



Scott Soltis

wonderful call again in the crucial final minutes. Either the ref couldn't see two feet in front of him, or he didn't understand that possession and two feet in bounds constitutes a catch in NCAA football.

Technically, you only need one foot in college but on this play Tony Johnson clearly had both feet in bounds. Maybe the refs just have something against Johnson. This play would have given Penn State a first down in Michigan territory with 40 seconds and two timeouts. Would it have made it a shoe in? No. Would it have given them great chance to avoid overtime? Hell, yes! This was yet another boneheaded call by the refs that potentially cost Penn State another football game.

3. Penn State vs. Ohio State - I know at this point it must sound like I'm beating a dead horse, but facts are facts. In this game Penn State and Ohio State were locked in a brutal defensive showdown. The Nittany Lions were going for first down on a fourth and three deep in their own territory. Bryant Johnson nearly had a catch but the pass fell to the ground, incomplete. However, it was not that simple. Bryant did not catch the ball because he was clearly interfered with, clear to everyone but

the refs.

The Lions would have had a fresh set of downs to march down the field. Instead there was a turnover on downs and the Buckeyes ran the clock out. Penn State lost by six points and fell to a record of 5-3. The refs didn't cost the team the game as much here, but they eliminated the chance of Penn State winning.

4. Joe Paterno - Coach Paterno is usually not critical of the refs, he takes blame himself for not preparing his team enough. He realizes that things should not come down to the calls of the refs and that his guys need to play a little better (especially in the Iowa game). However, Paterno has been very critical of the Big Ten officiating.

He went as far as to chase down a ref following the Iowa loss and grab him by the arm. "I thought they made a couple of lousy calls on the other side of the field," Paterno later explained.

Penn State Athletic Director, Tim Curley, has also chimed in, saying he sent a letter to the Big Ten following the Michigan loss. "I am of the opinion that Big Ten officiating has not met the usual high standards associated with the Big Ten in all areas." This is as strong of an official statement criticizing the refs by Penn State in a long time.

5. Florida State vs. Notre Dame - This game proved that Big Ten

officials suck whether or not they are reffing a Big Ten game. The refs blew call after call in this game. There were calls against both teams and by the second half Notre Dame started to pull away. There was no glaring example of a Big Ten blunder in this game, but there were lesser blown calls everywhere.

I understand that refs are not perfect and will not make all calls, but we have to set standards of what is unacceptable. The way that Big Ten officials called these four games and many others this season is intolerable. It is feasible to say that if none of the Penn State calls at the end of the games the team could easily be 7-1. 8-0 would be a stretch because the Lions would have had to drive a long way against Ohio State, which could have been possible, but unlikely.

I guess we'll never know how good the season could have been without those wonderful Big Ten refs.

In a totally unrelated note congratulations and much respect go out to Emmitt Smith who is the new all-time rushing leader for the NFL. Emmitt is the main reason I have been a Cowboys fan for years and I would have been remiss not to mention this feat.

Behrend to host AMCC cross country title race

by Ed Mesaros
staff writer

The Behrend cross country team has worked hard, battled injuries, and fought the elements. On Saturday, they will leave everything on the course.

The seven teams that make up the Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference will be here at Behrend to compete for the AMCC team titles and individual titles this Saturday.

Behrend has nursed back some of its previously missing runners, and all are expected to compete at the meet.

"We are ready now that we have the whole team back and are semi-healthy. We are really united and ready to win," said freshman Nina Zinger.

When asked about running the AMCC meet at Behrend this year, sophomore Matt Sprung said, "I think that it's going to be a good experience for the team." About the home course advantage for the meet he replies, "I think that it's definitely going to give the team an upper edge."

The competition at the meet is expected to be close. Many believe the top honors will be fought for by Frostburg State and Behrend. The women's team will be defending the title that it captured from Frostburg State a year ago.

Coach Dave Cooper believes that in order to win the team titles, everyone is going to have to step up this Saturday.

This year's leading runner for the men's team, Tim Schultheis, will have to keep pace with Frostburg's top runners. The rest of the men will need to finish ahead of their No. 3 and 4 runners to stay in contention.

"Nine of our men have finished in the top 5 at different times this year. We have the depth to really set Frostburg back if the guys run like they are able to," said Cooper.

When asked how the men's team has been shaping up for the conference meet, junior Dan Croft replied, "The pack has really come together over the past two weeks. I don't think Frostburg knows what to expect. I wanna bring the AMCC title back to Behrend."

The women's team faces the same type of situation. Jessica Sarver and Jessica Knapp will look to finish strong, and should provide some breathing room. The Lions will also need to push to finish in the third through seventh positions to stay in contention for the title.

"We'd like to end the season with both the men's and women's titles, but it should be close," said Cooper.

On the individual level, Andrew Musinguzi, a member of La Roche's team, is favored to defend his AMCC title.

Last year, Jessica Knapp captured the women's title, and looks to defend it this year. One of her strongest challenges should come from teammate Jessica Sarver.

When asked about the upcoming meet, Sarver replied, "I'm really excited. It's been a while since the whole team has gotten to run together because of injuries. It's going to be a great time to see how well we can do and hopefully win on our home course."

However the outcome, this Saturday should provide for some of the most exciting cross country action of the season. Racing kicks off at 11:00 a.m. with the women's race, and will be followed by the men's race at 11:45 a.m.

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