

SPORTS

Paterno says team just "beaten down"

By Ray Parrillo
Knight Ridder Newspapers
(KRT)

In full animation, Joe Paterno stalked the sideline for his 457th game as Penn State's head coach on Saturday, tying Pop Warner for second place on the all-time college football list behind Amos Alonzo Stagg, who coached 548.

After the Nittany Lions lost for the 10th time in their last 11 Big Ten Conference games, suffering a hard-fought 20-13 defeat against fifth-ranked Purdue, Paterno looked and sounded like a guy who was in no hurry to surpass Warner.

Paterno made it clear that he was fed up and frustrated with the losing, just like the 108,183 spectators who had poured into Beaver Stadium and the growing number of Penn State followers who would like to see the 77-year-old coach step aside.

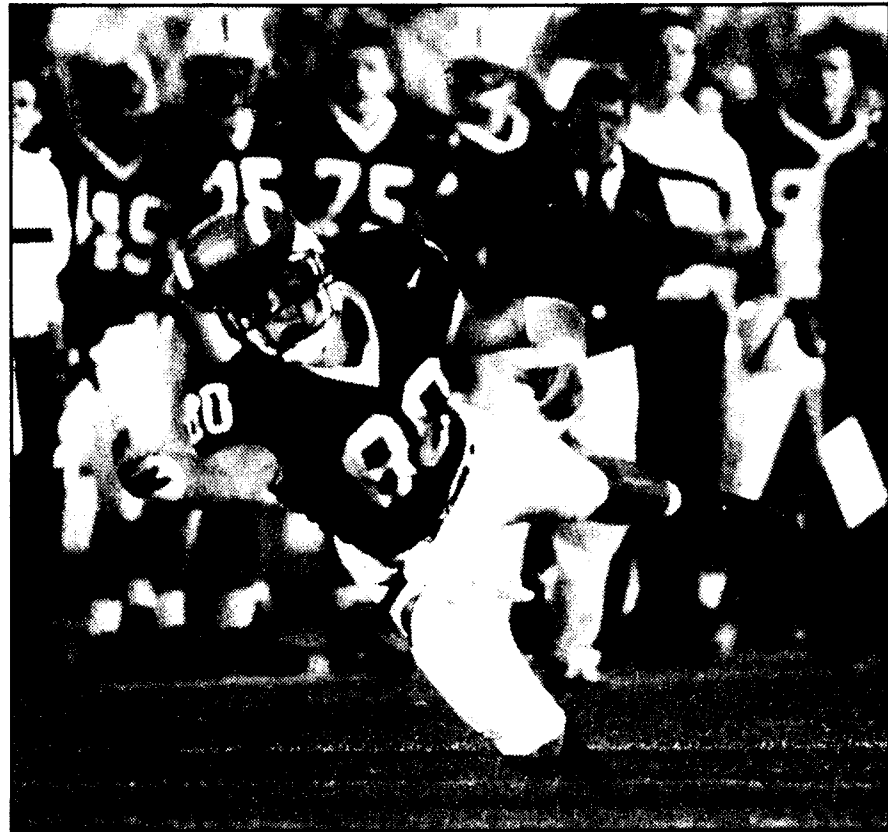
He didn't want to hear about a moral victory. He didn't want to consider the evidence that his team appeared to be making progress. Slow progress, but progress nonetheless.

Instead, Paterno said his players, whom he put off-limits to the media, were "beaten down." And that he and they were emotionally drained.

After losing three straight games to ranked opponents, Paterno and the Nittany Lions (2-4, 0-3 conference) get the break they apparently need with this week's bye before Iowa and homecoming arrive on Oct. 23.

With the season at the halfway point, here are some random thoughts about Paterno's 39th team:

Although they remain prone to mistakes at critical times (penalties wiped out gains for first downs on their first



Penn State wide receiver Mark Rubin can't quite hold onto the ball in the fourth quarter during the team's 20-13 loss to Purdue.

two possessions Saturday) the Nittany Lions are playing with pride and character, which couldn't be said of last year's 3-9 team.

At long last, they are playing defense with the nasty edge that was missing in recent years, and youth is on their side. Sophomore linebacker Paul Posluszny, who left Saturday's game early in the third quarter with a shoulder injury, and freshman linebacker Dan Connor are emerging as standouts. Connor, from Strath Haven High, started at middle linebacker for the first time Saturday, filling in for injured Tim Shaw, and looked as if he belonged, even though he had practiced at the position for just one

day. "It's pretty impressive that a young kid like Dan Connor can go in and play middle linebacker and call signals in his sixth game of (his first) season," defensive coordinator Tom Bradley said.

More often than not, the Nittany Lions play only one senior on defense. If only half the team has been effective, better that it's the defense.

"This was the best defense we've seen by far," said Purdue quarterback Kyle Orton, a leading Heisman Trophy contender who hadn't thrown an interception before he was picked off twice Saturday. "They're big and physical."

The other side of the ball doesn't look so promising, and it isn't the fault of Zack Mills.

Mills outplayed Orton, throwing for 293 yards and a career-high 29 completions without an interception. But quarterbacks generally don't succeed without the help of a running game, and the Nittany Lions haven't had much of one in their losses. Against Purdue, they gained 18 yards on 17 carries the third-lowest yardage total of the Paterno era. In their four losses, they have totaled only 182 yards on 86 tries, an average of 2.1 yards a carry.

The mystery of Penn State's inability to turn out efficient an offensive line continues, and the inability of its receivers to stretch the field compounds the problem. The result is that the defense rarely gets a breather.

Paterno's stubbornness, which often served him well during better times, can be self-defeating.

Case in point: On a 37-yard TD pass from Mills in the second quarter, Terrell Golden, a redshirt freshman, made the kind of tough catch that is so infrequently made by Penn State receivers. He didn't return to the game until the final play. Paterno explained that he was upset with Golden because of the unsportsmanlike-conduct penalty the receiver was hit with for excessive celebration after the touchdown. He also said Golden hadn't figured in the game plan anyway. Huh?

The most difficult part of their schedule behind them, the Nittany Lions will have a good chance to win each of their five remaining games if they continue to play with resolve. A feel-good finish for such a young team would be reason for optimism next season.



Big Ten Standings

Teams	Big10	All
Wisconsin	3-0	6-0
Michigan	3-0	5-1
Purdue	2-0	5-0
Minnesota	2-1	5-1
Michigan State	2-1	3-3
Northwestern	2-1	3-3
Iowa	1-1	3-2
Ohio State	0-2	3-2
Illinois	0-3	2-4
Indiana	0-3	2-4
Penn State	0-3	2-4

BIG TEN T.V. GAMES

Minnesota at Michigan State Oct. 16, 12:00 p.m. ESPN
Michigan at Illinois Oct. 16, 11:00 a.m. ABC
Ohio State at Iowa Oct. 16, 2:30 p.m. ABC
Wisconsin at Purdue Oct. 16, 4:30 p.m. ESPN2



SPOTLIGHT ON



Carrie Smock Senior, Women's Soccer

BB: What is your favorite memory from your sport?

CS: My favorite memory is our trip to Ireland that we took at the end of the summer this year. We didn't eat for ten days, I was so hungry! Haha...

BB: What are your plans for after graduation?

CS: I don't have any definite plans for after graduation. I'm thinking of moving out of Erie for a while. Nothing else is set in stone though, I'm pretty much up for anything.

BB: What will you miss most about Behrend?

CS: Definitely going to miss the people and participating in my sports.

BB: What is your most embarrassing moment?

CS: There are too many of those to write down! Anyone who knows me knows there is never a dull moment in my life.

America's favorite pastime... and I don't mean baseball

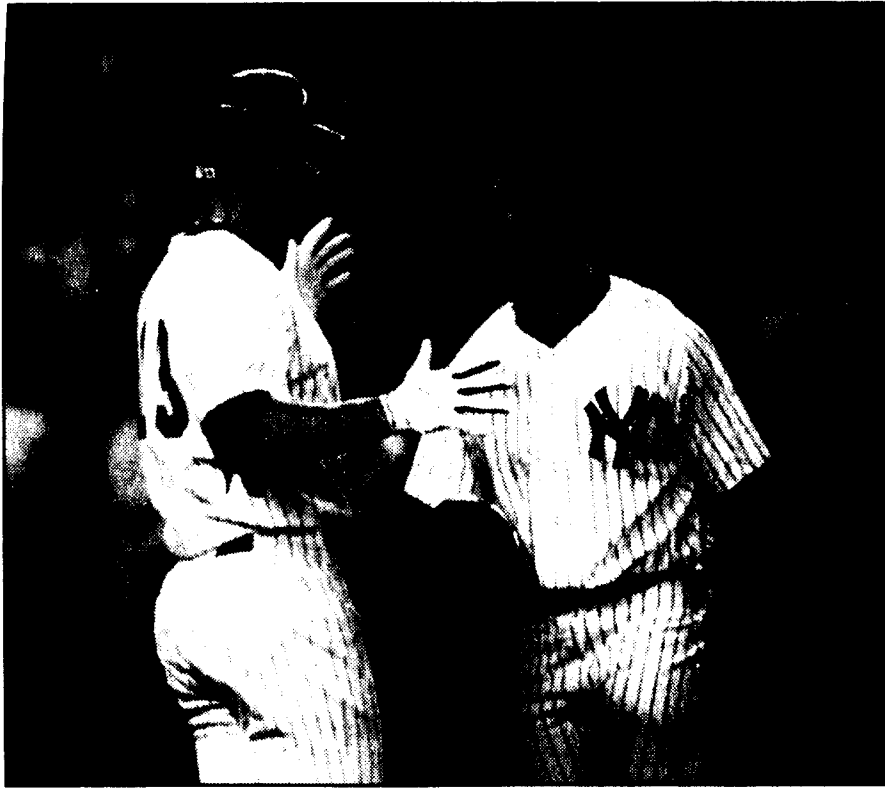
Commentary by Chris La Furia
staff writer

Since 1903, the year which gave birth to the World Series, the New York Yankees have won the Fall Classic 26 times. That is three times more than the team who has the second highest amount of wins. From the beginning with players such as Babe Ruth, Mickey Mantle and Derek Jeter, the Bronx Bombers have fought their way to achieve a dynasty of greatness, overcoming the opposition to be considered the greatest sports teams in history.

Alex Rodriguez, the shortstop for the Yankees, makes \$22 million dollars in one season as one of the highest paid players in sports history. Rodriguez has helped his teams win many games with his talent and will to perform on the diamond. Because of his consistency on the diamond, he is worth a higher salary than most players. But, when dealing with superstar athletes, how high is to high for one player's salary?

This season, the Milwaukee Brewers have a team salary of \$27 million dollars. This means that every player's salary adds up to \$27 million dollars. The Brewers have also managed to accumulate a mere 67 wins, which resulted in a last place finish. Due to the fact that the Brewers have suffered such a dismal year, they have a team salary that is only \$5 million dollars more than one of the leading superstars.

Many fans and baseball experts have realized such a staggering trend forming in major league baseball. Kasey Corbin, a junior CMPS major and avid Yankees fan, said, "I think baseball players are ridiculously overpaid."



Alex Rodriguez congratulating teammate Gary Sheffield as he slid into home plate during Tuesday's 10-7 win over the Boston Red Sox at Yankee Stadium.

This past winter, the New England Patriots won their second Super Bowl in three years. They have also managed to amass 19 straight wins, the most in NFL history. Even though their two championships fail to resemble the Yankees' 26, the Patriots have been branded a "dynasty in the making." Many factors tie into the colossal difference in Major League Baseball sovereignty and that of the NFL.

In 1993, the NFL created the salary cap to place boundaries on the amount of money teams can spend on certain players each season. The salary cap for the 2004 NFL season was set at roughly

\$80 million dollars. Penalties for violating the cap include hefty fines and rejection of draft picks.

The reason that the New England Patriots have gained such status after winning only two championships is because the salary cap adds to the competitiveness of teams, since no team can spend \$22 million dollars on a single player without reaching a penalty.

"If I had the chance to make that sort of money, I would take it, but adding a salary cap wouldn't be a bad idea," Corbin adds.

Money has done everything to sports but take over. Presidents and general

managers of teams have become businessmen instead of coaches. Players sign multi-million dollar endorsing contracts because teams cannot afford to pay them what is desired. Players who cannot comply with the salary cap jeopardize the whole system of sports.

Recently, the NHL decided to lock of their players in order to settle the labor struggles that have transpired. In the 2003-2004 NHL season, the players' salaries controlled almost 75 percent of the revenues that were received by the teams. Two-thirds of the teams in the league lost money due to the players' pay. When the league decided to lower the salaries of players and deliberated instituting a salary cap, the athletes walked out.

Currently, the league has locked its players out in an attempt to settle the labor disputes.

Baseball, "America's Pastime", formerly involved players who gathered for the love of throwing a ball around and hitting it with a stick. Kids and adults both enjoyed sporting their favorite players' jersey, grabbing a foam "#1" finger and some peanuts, and spending hours at a ball park enjoying a game of America's top athletes.

Presently, we have athletes who sign \$250 million contracts and high school players who dream, not of winning a world series by hitting a home run, but of penning their name on million dollar shoe contracts and being featured on MTV's Cribs. Can a salary cap make the income of a sports star more reasonable? That we may never know. A better question to ask would be, "Can sports stars return to playing the game for love and not money?"

INTRAMURAL FLAG FOOTBALL SCORES

Mon, Oct 11

COED

Project Mayhem 40 - Niagara 6
AntiWitt 1 - Meals on Wheels 0 (forfeit)

MEN'S

KDR 14 - Sig Tau 1, 7
TKE 1 28 - Sofa King Good 0
Flying Sumo Freaks 7 - Project Mayhem 6
Prime Time 30 - TKE 2, 12
Juice 31 - Naked Mole Rats 14
BAMF 20 - Sig Tau 2, 6

Tues, Oct 12

MEN'S

Niagara 13 - LAX Legacy 0
TOE 2, 40 - TA's 8
TOE 24 - Da Truth 8
Other Team 1 - TKE 3, 0 (forfeit)
Sweet Fitchy 40 - LAX Legends 0
Banana Peals 28 - NO Clue 0
Crimson Tide 1 - Skins 0 (forfeit)
Lawrence Slayers 20 - Angus 6

Wed, Oct 13

COED

AntiWitt 24 - Niagara 6
Bare End 1 - Meals on Wheels 0 (forfeit)
MEN'S
TKE 1, 38 - Sig Tau 1, 0
BAMF 32 - Naked Mole Rats 0
KDR 23 - Project Mayhem 14
Juice 50 - TKE 2, 12
Flying Sumo Freaks 33 - Sofa King Good 6
Prime Time 30 - Sig Tau 2, 7