

HOUSING AND FOOD SERVICES ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



NAME: Derek Sieber
SPORT: Men's Water Polo
CLASS: Freshman
DATE: September 25, 2006

Derek Sieber (Warren/Warren) has been named the Housing and Food Service Athlete of the Week. Sieber led the men's water polo team in a 4-0 weekend at the Wildcat Invitational hosted by Villanova. He scored eight goals, had one assist, earned 10 steals, a pair of drawn kickouts, and made three field saves. Behrend defeated University of Pennsylvania, Army, Kingfish, and Villanova.

Water Polo looking forward to postseason

By Matthew Wronker
staff writer

The Penn State Behrend men's water polo team had high expectations as they entered the 2006 season. With the largest, and quite possibly, most heralded incoming class in school history, the Behrend Lions prepared for a solid run at the Eastern Championships.

"That's our main focus," said head coach Joe Tristan. "We need to continue preparing for that tournament."

Although the Division III Eastern Championships will not be held until the weekend of October 21 and 22, the tournament will mark a milestone in school history. For the first time in program history, Behrend will host the five team tournament that ranks each varsity team on the east coast.

The road to this point, however, has been considerably bumpy. The Lions began their season with a six game road trip through California that resulted in six consecutive losses. These matches were all part of the Redlands Tournament which was hosted by the University of Redlands. Over the course of the road trip, Behrend faced difficult match-ups in the tournament, all of which were against California based opponents.

"These matches were not so much a matter of wins and losses," noted coach Tristan. "They were more a matter of how we compared to these teams. Overall, I feel we competed well against them."

In their first two matches the blue and white fell to Cal Lutheran University 16-10, and then to Chapman University 18-14. The Lions were then defeated by the University of Redlands 21-9 and later suffered their fourth straight loss to Claremont College by a score of 15-9.

In their last two matches of the tournament the Lions were

handed another pair of losses, this time from Occidental and the University of La Verne. Occidental defeated Behrend 16-4, while La Verne handled the Lions 19-6.

Throughout the tournament the Lions were led by captains Leandro Azevedo, Andre Pranckevicius and Anthony Spoto. Azevedo tallied 70 saves, while Pranckevicius and Spoto each scored 12 goals a piece. Junior Vince Brewer recorded 32 steals.

"The whole tournament was a great experience," said Tristan. "It really showed where our weaknesses are, and will give us the opportunity to address them and turn them into strengths."

Following the Redlands Tournament the Lions dropped their seventh consecutive match to rival Mercyhurst College. Despite a valiant effort, the blue and white were outlasted 9-7. Pranckevicius, junior Rodolphe Acelor and freshman Chris Munton all contributed two goals in the losing effort. Goalies Azevedo and senior Jake Hayden combined for eight saves. Acelor and Pranckevicius led the Lions with seven shots each.

After going 0-7 to start the season, Behrend began to rebuild its record with four wins at the annual Wildcat Invitational held at Villanova University. The Lions defeated Army 12-8 in their first match, and Kingfish Veterans 10-8 in their second match. To close out the tournament, Behrend outlasted tournament host Villanova 12-11 and then defeated the University of Pennsylvania 15-13.

The Lions look to add to their winning streak this weekend with matches against Gannon and Washington & Jefferson.

"We need to come together as a team for these matches," commented Tristan. "We have to focus on the little things since they're both very strong teams."

Penn State picks up second straight loss

By Tommy Phillips
staff writer

Despite a good defensive effort, the Penn State Nittany Lions lost 28-6 to the #1-ranked Ohio State Buckeyes in their Big Ten opener on Saturday at Columbus. Penn State shutout Ohio State at the half, holding a 3-0 halftime lead. However, in the second half, the Nittany Lions' defense had trouble stopping Ohio State running back Antonio Pittman, who scored a touchdown to give the Buckeyes a lead they never relinquished.

Penn State's biggest problem in this game was on offense, as quarterback Anthony Morelli threw three interceptions. Trailing 14-6 late in the fourth quarter, he threw a pass that was intercepted and returned for a touchdown, putting the game out of reach for the Nittany Lions. Morelli threw another interception that was returned for a touchdown, putting Ohio State up 28-6.

The first half was dominated by both defenses, with neither team scoring until Penn State's field goal right before the half. Both teams' quarterbacks threw an interception each, and neither offense was able to establish much of a rhythm. The teams punted back and forth until Penn State's final drive of the half, when they drove down inside the 10-yard line. Kicker Kevin Kelly missed a field goal as time expired in the first half, but a roughing the kicker penalty gave him another try, which he converted to give the Nittany Lions a 3-0 lead.

One of the game's highlights was not even a play on the field. Halfway through the second quarter and right before Penn State was about to punt, Joe Paterno went running through the end zone and to the stadium tunnel. It turned out that Paterno was feeling ill from flu-like symptoms, and he was heading to the restroom. Paterno returned in the fourth quarter.

Ohio State quarterback Troy Smith made an excellent play early in the fourth quarter, helping the Buckeyes win the game. Being chased by Penn State defensive linemen, he rolled out of the pocket, escaping the pass rush. He then threw a 37-yard touchdown pass to Brian Robiskie, which put Ohio State up 14-3.

Led by running back Tony Hunt, Penn State subsequently had a great drive that gave them an opportunity to get back in the game. Hunt picked up many of his 135 rushing yards on a 74-yard drive which went all the way inside the Ohio State one-yard line. However, after a false start penalty on fourth down, Penn State was forced to kick a field goal, making the score 14-6. This would be their last scoring opportunity, as their next two possessions ended in interceptions returned for Ohio State touchdowns. This loss to Ohio State dropped the Nittany Lions to 2-2 overall and 0-1 in the Big Ten. Penn State dropped out of the top 25 in both polls after being ranked #24 last week. The Nittany Lions take on Big Ten opponent Northwestern at home at 3:30 pm on Saturday as they attempt to get back a overall winning record.

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