

List of Early Entries in the 2008 NFL Draft

Branden Albert OG Virginia JR
 Adrian Arrington WR Michigan JR
 James Banks WR Carson-Newman JR
 Earl Bennett WR Vanderbilt JR
 Martellus Bennett TE Texas A&M JR
 Davone Bess WR Hawaii JR
 Calais Campbell DE Miami (FL) JR
 Jamaal Charles RB Texas JR
 Patrick Chung S Oregon JR
Ryan Clady OT Boise St. JR*
 Anthony Collins OT Kansas JR
 James Davis RB Clemson JR
 Johnny Dingle DE West Virginia JR
 Franklin Dunbar OT Middle Tenn. St. JR
 Jermichael Finley TE Texas SO
 Brandon Flowers CB Virginia Tech JR
Vernon Gholston DE Ohio St. JR*
 Ryan Grice-Mullen WR Hawaii JR
 Letroy Guion DT Florida St. JR
 James Hardy WR Indiana JR
 Derrick Harvey DE Florida JR
 Geno Hayes OLB Florida St. JR
 Erin Henderson OLB Maryland JR
 Jack Ikegwonu CB Wisconsin JR
 DeSean Jackson WR California JR
 Felix Jones RB Arkansas JR
 Malcolm Kelly WR Oklahoma JR
 Justin King CB Penn St. JR
 Xavier Lee QB Florida St. JR
 Curtis Lofton ILB Oklahoma JR
 Mario Manningham WR Michigan JR
 Jerod Mayo ILB Tennessee JR
Darren McFadden RB Arkansas JR*
 Rashard Mendenhall RB Illinois JR
 Phillip Merling DE Clemson JR
 Alphonso Moran DT Kansas St. JR
 DaJuan Morgan S North Carolina St. JR
 Lamar Myles OLB Louisville JR
 Brandon Ore RB Virginia Tech JR
 Kenny Phillips S Miami (FL) JR
 Chilo Rachal OG USC JR
 Bobby Reid QB Oklahoma St. JR
 Ray Rice RB Rutgers JR
 Orlando Scandrick CB Boise St. JR
 Pat Sims DT Auburn JR
Steve Slaton RB West Virginia JR*
 Kevin Smith RB Central Florida JR
 Reggie Smith S Oklahoma JR
 Jonathan Stewart RB Oregon JR
 Aqib Talib CB Kansas JR
 Devin Thomas WR Michigan St. JR
 Mario Urrutia WR Louisville JR



Steelers look to improve on 2007 season

by Jess Carlson
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It was not one of the Pittsburgh Steelers best seasons; however, it is safe to say that it was quite an improvement from their 2006 season. Under the direction of new head coach, Mike Tomlin, the Steelers finished their season with a record of 10-7 and on top of the AFC North Division for the first time in three years.

Prior to the start of the 2007 season, there was a buzz of hostility amongst the fans, the players and the franchise. For starters, many felt either Ken Whisenhunt or Russ Grimm were perfectly adequate candidates for the open head coach position. I can only imagine the utter annoyance when the Steelers received their first loss of the season to the sub-par Arizona Cardinals, who are now coached by Whisenhunt. Fans and players were also upset over the decision to release loud mouth Joey Porter, as well as not renew Alan Faneca's contract.

To top it all off, there was still clamor over whether or not quarterback Ben Roethlisberger was a reliable quarterback, or just a young guy who got lucky in 2005, followed by a league leading 23 interceptions in 2006.

If there were still a lot of skeptics prior to their first game in 2007, there most likely is not anymore. Although they went one and out in the playoffs, in retrospect the Steelers had somewhat of a solid season. Roethlisberger, with a 104.1 passer rating and 32 touchdown passes, finished second in the league behind the flawless and undefeated Tom Brady.

"Fast" Willie Parker had run for more than 1,200 yards for the third consecutive season, and had he not broken his leg in game 15, he would have led the NFL in rushing yards. The Steeler defense was ranked No. 1, and new head coach Mike Tomlin led

his time to a regular season record of 10-6; an improvement from their 8-8 2006 season to say the least. But along with the good numbers, there were also some bad. In the past two seasons Big Ben has been sacked 93 times, 47 times in 2007. Needless to say, the Steelers biggest improvement for next season is the offensive line. The majority of the line is old and no longer able to give Roethlisberger the protection he needs and Parker the big blocks for an open running lane. One of their biggest losses will



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
 Rookie LaMarr Woodley tackles QB David Garrard

be All-Pro Guard Alan Faneca when he becomes a free agent on Feb. 29. It has been known since the beginning of the season that it would be highly unlikely Faneca would return.

Roethlisberger is pushing and hoping for the Steelers to reconsider and keep Faneca. Along with his hopes of keeping Faneca, Big Ben is also hoping for tall receiver. Their tallest receiver, who saw playing time was Nate Washington at 6'1". The Steelers have signed a number of players to future contracts, which includes WR

Dallas Baker who is 6'3".

Another improvement would be to find a power runner. Parker is quick, but is not a power runner. The Steelers need to find someone more like a Jerome Bettis who can power run up the middle for short yardage when it is needed; Najeh Davenport is not the man for that job.

Maybe if the Steelers had not lost five starters to injuries late in the season, they may have had a better chance of at least making it past the first round of the playoffs.

In the meantime, while most players are enjoying their off season vacation somewhere in the tropics, WR Hines Ward is undergoing knee surgery and will be expected to be able to begin training in about six weeks. As for Big Ben, he is spending his off-season time working out at the UPMC facility in the South Side...oh, yeah, and taping commercials for American Idol.

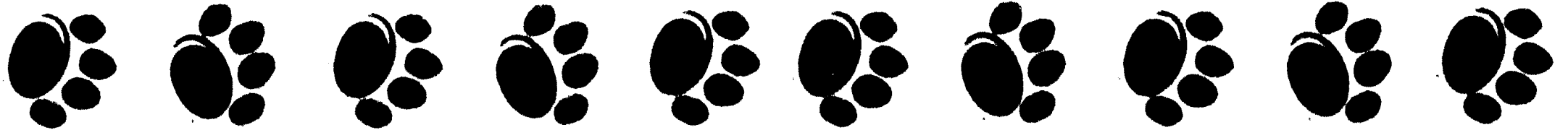
Intramural Update

Coed Swimming: Deadline is Jan. 25 at 3 p.m.

Ping Pong: Deadline is Feb. 8 at 3 p.m.

Arena Football: Deadline is Feb. 8 at 3 p.m.

For more information contact Rob Wittman at rww3@psu.edu



Behrend Hockey looks to bounce back in '08

by Jess Carlson
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In the first half of their season, The Penn State Behrend hockey team proved that they have national title potential, going 13-4-1 overall and 6-1 in the challenging College Hockey East (CHE). With the second half of the schedule containing some of the top teams in the nation, Behrend will have their hands full to keep their national hopes alive.

Behrend ended 2007 on a disappointing note, going 1-2 in the Jackson Community College Hockey Tournament in Jackson, MI. Losing to Lawrence Tech 5-4 and Oakland University 5-3 might have put a dent on their record, but Behrend contained their fifth ranking in the North Division of the American Collegiate Hockey Association (ACHA). Senior Brysten Jones, who had a goal and two assists in the JCC Tournament, said that the team has moved on since the poor performance at Michigan. "It was not how we wanted to finish the season, but we have had about a month to think about it and we are ready to get back on track this weekend."

Senior standout DJ Craven has had a heck of a season so far, scoring 27 goals and 37 assists in 18 games. Sophomore Chris Simanic and Senior Dan

Thiessen, who are on a line with Craven, are also leading the way for Behrend in scoring. Simanic has been avoiding a sophomore slump, with 24 goals and 33 assists in 18 games. Thiessen missed five games earlier in the season due to a shoulder injury, but has come on since the injury, with 16 goals and 21 assists in 13 games.

Sophomore goaltender Eric Thiessen has been stellar, showing that there is a bright future between the pipes for Behrend.

E. Thiessen has gone 6-3 with a 3.22 goals against average and a save percentage of .893.

Recently, the CHE held their annual all-star game at the RMU Island Sport Center in Pittsburgh, PA. Behrend sent five players to compete in the skills competition and the all-star game. Joining Craven, Simanic, and E. Thiessen was sophomores Aaron Marks and Matt Laskey. Marks, who participated in his first all-star game, enjoy playing in the event and is looking forward to the next half of the season. "I participated in a few events and had a great time throughout the weekend."

This weekend, Behrend will host the Akron Zips on Friday Jan. 18, 9:20 p.m. at the Igloo Ice Arena. This is the first ever meeting between Akron and Behrend. On Saturday Jan. 19, Behrend travels in Morgantown to take on West Virginia University at 9:30 p.m.



Do You Like Writing?

Do You Love Sports?

Then Join the Beacon!

The Behrend Beacon is looking for sports writers. If you are interested in writing for the Beacon, you can contact Jess Carlson at jlc5018@psu.edu or Andrew McLachlan at asm5006@psu.edu