

## Pittsburgh teams plagued with injuries

by Jess Carlson  
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There is a plague in Pittsburgh: it's called the injury-amongst-athletes plague. Okay, so I made that up, but think about it: Willie Parker, Levance Fields and Sidney Crosby all have something in common (please note that I omitted any Pirates players). What they share is a curse of the injury.

Willie Parker was well on his way to being the leading rusher in the NFL for the season. His streak, however, came to an abrupt halt during game 15 when he broke his fibula and was out for the remainder of the season. With Parker out, the door was left wide open for the San Diego Chargers' Ladainian Tomlinson to steal the glory with 1,474 yards. Along with Parker's injury were a number of other banged up and bruised Steelers players, which most likely contributed heavily to their loss at home against the Jags in the first round of the playoffs.

Point guard for the Pittsburgh Panthers, Levance Fields, went down and out with a broken bone in his foot on Saturday, Dec. 29, in a game against Dayton. Along with losing Fields, they also lost the game with a score of 80-55.

Fields' injury was poorly timed to say the least. It came just a week after one of the Panther's starting forwards, Mike Cook, tore his ACL and will not be returning for the remainder of the season. The game in which Cook was injured turned out to be a victory over Duke when Fields hit the game winning three-pointer in OT. Fields was originally expected to be out 8-12 weeks, which would take him to the end of the season. However, his rehabilitation is going well and is hoping to return for the game against Marquette on Feb. 15.

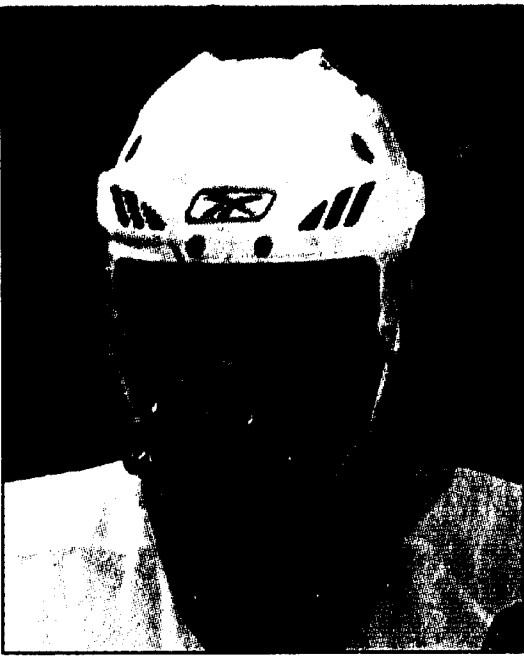
The most recent injury in Pittsburgh sports is Sidney Crosby who sprained his ankle on Friday Jan. 18 against the Tampa Bay Lightning. The effects of the

loss were felt merely minutes after he skated off the ice. The Lightning went on to be victorious over the Pens with a score of 3-0. Crosby may not be the only one hurting from this injury as the Penguins are in a three-way race with the New Jersey Devils and Philadelphia Flyers for the Atlantic Division lead. Losing their No. 1 contender may put the rest of the team under a little more pressure.

Another Penguin starter suffering a similar injury is goal tender Marc-Andre Fleury. Fleury is proof of the difficulty of estimating a return date from this type of injury. Fleury is pushing his eighth week being inactive since he was injured and is still not ready to go. He was expected to recover in 6-8 weeks. Crosby is remaining optimistic and is hoping that his youth - at age 20 - will help him get back on the ice quickly. He has not, and does not plan to, release to the press an actual date he thinks he may return; however, he says he has an idea. The Penguins are somewhat used to dealing with star players being injured. Franchise owner and retired player Mario Lemieux sat out for what would add up to 9 1/2 seasons from his constant back problems, his battle with cancer and a heart condition, as well as a few other injuries throughout his career which lasted from 1984-2006.

Just like Parker, Crosby's injury came at a bad time - of course no injury is necessarily timed well. However, prior to the day of his injury, Crosby was tied for the leagues leading scorer with 63 points and was solidifying a reputation as being a stellar shoot-out performer. Rookie Tyler Kennedy is also out and will not play in the YoungStarts Gamedue to mononucleosis.

The Penguins next game is Tuesday, Jan. 29 against the New Jersey Devils who are competing for first place in the division. Game time is 7p.m. and can be viewed on FSN-Pittsburgh.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
Sidney Crosby of the Pittsburgh Penguins

## ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



**NAME:** Krystal Kovach  
**SPORT:** Women's Swimming and Diving  
**CLASS:** Freshmen  
**DATE:** Jan. 21, 2008

Krystal Kovach (Pittsburgh/Chartiers Valley) has been named the ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR athlete of the week for the week of January 21, 2008.

On Saturday, Kovach became the first diver in Behrend history to achieve a qualifying mark for the NCAAs. She won the 1 meter dive and with a total of 421 points, now has a chance to compete at the national championships. To do so, Kovach must achieve this mark once more to be accepted to the competition. The women went on to beat Frostburg State and Penn State Altoona 56-38 and 64-43 respectively.

The Behrend swimming and diving team will travel to Washington & Jefferson Saturday, January 26 to take on the Presidents at 1 p.m. The squad returns to the Junker Center Pool on Friday, Feb. 1 where they will compete in a tri-meet with Grove City and Pitt-Bradford. Meet is set to begin at 5 p.m.

Do you have a love for sports?

Are you interested in writing?

The Behrend Beacon is looking for sports writers for the 2008 Spring Semester.

If interested, please contact Jess Carlson at [jlc5018@psu.edu](mailto:jlc5018@psu.edu) or Andy McLachlan at [asm5006@psu.edu](mailto:asm5006@psu.edu).

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