

PSU FOOTBALL

History of the Linebacker U legacy

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sports editor

The Pre-Paterno Era:

A man nicknamed "Mother" was the first of many All-American linebackers of Linebacker U.

William "Mother" Dunn captained and started at center and linebacker for the then newly nicknamed Nittany Lions in 1906. He was the first non-Ivy League player and Penn State's first player to be named an All-American by coaching legend Walter Camp.

Dunn supposedly received the unique nickname "Mother" as he was followed around campus by several of his peers. A student nearby allegedly shouted, "there goes Mother Dunn and his chickens."

The nickname stuck, but it took 55 years for the All-American linebacker factory that Penn State's football program is notorious for to start churning.

The next great linebacker produced out of Penn State, Dave Robinson, played defensive end for the Nittany Lions. It was not until he was drafted by Vince Lombardi's Green Packers in 1963 that Robinson was moved to linebacker. Seven years and three NFL championships later, Robinson was named to the NFL 1960s All-Decade Team.

The First Golden Era:

From 1968 to 1973, head coach Joe Paterno coached six All-American Nittany Lions linebackers. Dennis Onkotz (1968, 1969), Jack Hamm (1970), Charlie Zapiec (1971), John Skorupan and Bruce Bannon (1972) and Ed O'Neil (1973) were the first flurry of Penn State's growing reputation for generating excellent linebackers.

Hamm would go on to win four Super Bowls with the Pitts-



Contributed photo

LaVar Arrington is the only Nittany Lion to win the Jack Lambert Trophy, the Dick Butkus Award and the Chuck Bednarik Award.

burgh Steelers. Onkitz and Hamm are the only two Penn State linebackers inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame.

In 1975, Greg Buttle and, in 1976, Kurt Allerman put forth All-American efforts. Buttle holds Penn State's single game tackle record, 24, and its single season tackle record, 165.

The Ice Age:

After having eight linebackers named All-Americans in eight years the Nittany Lions would only see two more in the next two decades.

Penn State would have to wait nine years before outside linebacker Shane Conlan broke through as the Nittany Lions' next All-American linebacker. He was named an All-American in 1985 and 1986.

Conlan secured Penn State's last National Championship in

the 1987 Fiesta Bowl against the University of Miami. He recorded eight tackles and two interceptions, the second of which he returned to Miami's five-yard line to set-up the game's winning touchdown.

Three years later, Andre Collins was named an All-American linebacker. He is now the Director of Retired Players for the NFL Players Association.

The Second Golden Era:

A decade's wait was worth it when LaVar Arrington became a two-time All-American linebacker in 1998 and 1999. Arrington was the first Nittany Lion to receive the Butkus Award, Chuck Bednarik Award and the Jack Lambert Trophy.

Fellow backer Brandon Short was also a 1999 All-American selection. It was the first time two Nittany Lion linebackers

were selected as All-Americans in the same year.

Six years later, a new bout of outstanding Penn State linebackers flooded the college football world.

It started with Paul "Poz" Posluszny. Posluszny was named a two-time All-American and two-time Chuck Bednarik Award recipient, as the nation's top defender in 2005 and 2006.

Backer Dan Connor followed Posluszny's footsteps and was named a two-time All-American in 2006 and 2007. Connor won the Chuck Bednarik Award in 2007, giving Penn State linebackers the award for three consecutive years.

The Current Crop:

Sean Lee leads the present Penn State backers in upholding the Linebacker U tradition.

Lee was named an All-American in 2007. He was arguably the nation's top collegiate defender heading into the 2008 heads up the line backing core with junior Navorro "LaVarro" Bowman and senior Josh Hull.

Bowman's nickname "LaVarro" stems from the all-out playing style he unleashes on opponents similar to ex-Lion, LaVar Arrington. He leads the team with eight tackles for losses.

Hull is the one of three Nittany Lions to have played in every game this season. He has the most tackles, with 69 on the team. The second highest tackle recorder is Sean Lee with 34.

The trio's recent shutout effort against Minnesota was the defense's first shutout since Nov. 11, 2007.

Lee is arguably the top collegiate linebacker in the country, but he may not even be the best one on the team. It is part of the Linebacker U tradition.

And to think it all began with a man dubbed "Mother."

MEN'S WATER POLO



Jon Klein / The Behrend Beacon

Captain Robert Westhille is seventh on Behrend's all-time saves list.

Water polo heads to Division III ECAC tournament

ALEC ITALIANO
staff writer

ond place trophy."

The men's water polo team is traveling to Washington and Jefferson College on Oct. 24 to compete in the Division III Eastern Championships.

It has been a rocky season this year for the water polo team.

With a lack of veteran players and an extremely challenging schedule, the Blue and White were only able to scratch out three wins towards the end of the season. The team hopes that momentum could help them this weekend.

The competing field includes three other teams from John Hopkins University, Washington and Jefferson University and Connecticut College. John Hopkins has won the championship the last three years.

"I think the tournament will be very tough," team captain Jacob Bernstein said. "If we bring our 'A' game, we should come back with at least a sec-

On Oct. 2, Bernstein secured the men's first win after making a save on a five-meter penalty shot against Cal Tech.

Bernstein was an Academic All-American and received the program's leadership and scholarship award as a junior. He earned the CWPA Excellent Academic All-American honor as a sophomore.

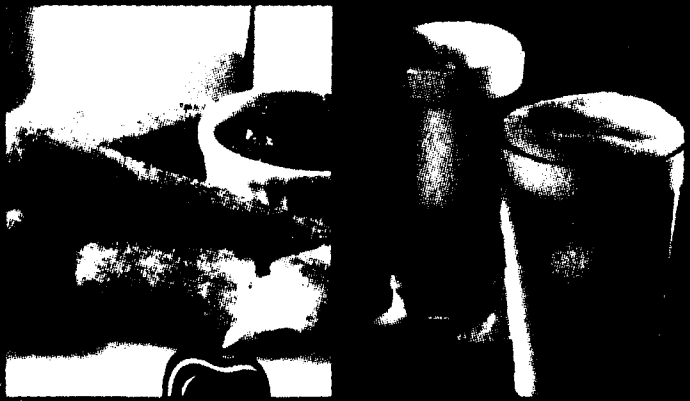
Bernstein and fellow senior captain Robert Westhille will hope to prove the team's formidability during the championships.

Westhille has been racking up saves this season and ranks seventh on Behrend's all-time list for career saves. He has an impressive 46 percent career save percentage.

Behrend's other two wins this season came against Salem International College.

If the Nittany Lions are going to win the championship the team has to at least match its season win total, three, this weekend.

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in your neighborhood



Applebee's

*4 APPETIZERS

MON-THUR 4-6PM

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Crunchy Onion Rings | Quesadilla Grande |
| Boneless Wings | Cheese Quesadilla |
| Classic Wings | Spinach Artichoke Dip |
| Mozzarella Sticks | Veggie Patch Pizza |

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\$3 BUD LIGHT POUNDERS
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