

Football in Happy Valley is an awesome event

Continued from page 1

time to sit and relax for a few minutes to listen to the Blue Band who performs during the Tailgreat pre-game rally in the Bryce Jordan Center.

While all this takes place, several hundred students have already assembled at the gate waiting to rush up the ramps to get those coveted front seats in the student section.

Most fans who get the chance to be a part of these events

will tell you that nothing else compares to the thrill of one of those Saturdays.

However, the 96,000+ fans that attend any one game each year never have experienced the total Penn State football experience.

On October 31, and November 14, two *CapTimes* staff members, and Penn State football freaks, got the experience of a lifetime. In part because of All U Day, Brad Moist and I were issued field passes for

the games, to walk the sidelines, and be on the field with the Penn State players.

Let me just tell you, there is nothing else quite like entering Beaver Stadium with the players. As you

one takes the field as the Blue Band blasts the fight song from either side. For a moment, nothing else in the world matters, except being a part of the event.

So much is missed when you see a game on television and even when you are in the crowd. For example, the student section in Happy Valley is absolutely crazy. For over three hours, any and every word out of the dictionary was hurled at the opposing players

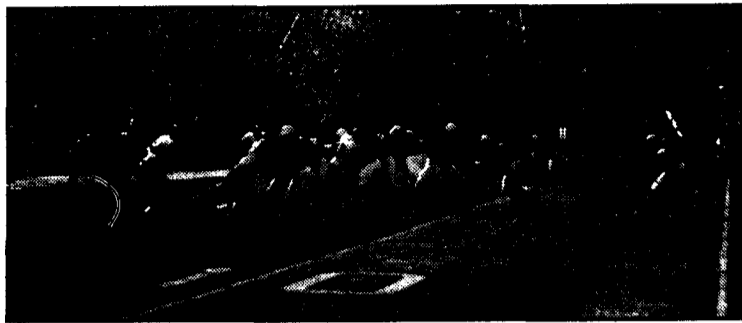


photo by Brad Moist

Tailback Cordell Mitchell charges forward to receive a hand-off from Kevin Thompson.

walk up the tunnel, you can hear the fans being directed by the Lion as the students scream, "We are..." and everyone responds, "...Penn State" in perfect unison. The steel beams around you begin to shake as a faint rumble can be heard. It gets louder and louder until the wave passes over head. At times it sent chills down my spine.

You look to the front of the players and watch for the signal. Coach Paterno raises a hand and counts one, two, three with outstretched fingers. Behind their legendary leader and a flying Penn State flag, every-

as if a game of one-sided bombardment was taking place. It got to be downright belittling.

Just seeing the size of these athletes is enough to leave you in awe. As I stood next to Brad Scioli, defensive tackle, I felt like a child. Here was a guy the same age as me, and each of his arms was the size of my neck; not to mention the amount of force these guys can produce on every hit. I can still hear the sound of the pads smashing together as the players collide. On the gridiron, survival of the fittest reigns supreme.

Even more special was being right there with Coach Paterno. PSH's Senior Senator Bob Woehr even got closer to JoePa than Brad or I did. As part of the festivities for All U Day, two representatives from each of the Commonwealth Campuses carried a banner representative of their school. While participating in the events, Woehr somehow crossed paths with the University's icon and shook his hand. The thought of "Joe Paterno shook my hand" kept running through his mind for the rest of the day.

When the game ended, the fans all filed out and went on their way,



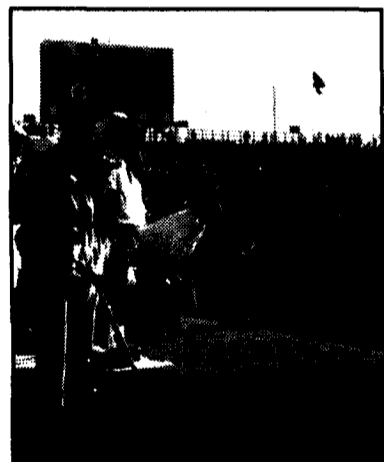
photo by Brad Moist

PSH student Bob Woehr and PSSS student Jose Pineda represent the Capital College during the Illinois game at All U Day on October 31. Each commonwealth campus had a banner that was displayed and paraded on the field during the Blue Band's halftime performance.

enough satisfaction for another week. Yet our experience was only half over. After exiting the field we were ushered into a little room underneath the stadium. While we were surrounded by other members of the press, Coach Paterno entered the room and took his seat behind the microphone. The questions began. After 10 or 15 minutes he left, and we thought that was it. But then the players all came out for personal

interviews. It was strange to see the transformation of these young men. Just 20 minutes earlier, they were the focus hundreds of thousands of people, animals out looking to cause some pain. Now, they sat there like average people with nothing more than a little more athletic ability than you or I possess.

After this experience, it is easy to understand why there is so much hype involved in college football.



photos by Brad Moist

Chafie Fields greets Kevin Thompson after a successful touchdown attempt (left), while Coach Paterno walks the sideline.



photo by Brad Moist

Penn State's cheerleading squad helps count as the Lion successfully does 27 one-arm pushups during the Illinois victory in Happy Valley.

Lawn tractor polo mows boredom

From The Associated Press

GREENVILLE, S.C. — Just say it. Lawn tractor polo. Now visualize it. There is no way to keep a straight face.

Picture grown men with a healthy dose of kid remaining in their adult bodies zipping around a patch of grass smaller than a baseball infield.

There are two or three riders to a team playing two, five-minute halves with a five-minute halftime for repairs and fluid replacement.

Bobby Jones, a contract design engineer and commissioner of this fledgling sport, said it started with a bar bet. The other person never did show up, but that

didn't stop the beginning of lawn tractor polo.

"Basically, it was a lawn tractor drag race," Jones said. "It was over in nothing flat and we were sitting around trying to figure out what to do next. Somebody said 'Why not polo?' We had a croquet set so we had mallets and a ball."

"It's a combination of man and machine working with teammates," Dickson said. "Being familiar with your tractor is also important."

There is even a trophy that goes with the championship. It is a standard trophy with a replica of a lawn tractor on top. Jones made it himself.

"It's been won nine times," he said. "I can't get anyone to take it home."

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Answers to crossword puzzle from page 9