

Smitley hopes to bring back intercollegiate sports

By ERIC THOMAS

Staff Reporter

It was only ten years ago.

To a true sports fan that seems like more than a decade.

Intercollegiate athletics once ran supreme across Penn State Harrisburg, but then due to a lack of commitment from student athletes, time constraints, and finances they were swept under the rug, not to be heard from again.

Until now.

Bud Smitley, coordinator of Recreation and Athletics at PSH is optimistic that within two years intercollegiate athletics will once again rule the day. But it will not happen overnight and it will not be a smooth ride.

"It really depends on a lot of things," Smitley says. "The budget is a very important topic right now. How much is this going to cost us, where is the money going to come from?"

Yet through all of the negativity Smitley began the conversation with, the mood quickly turned from dark to light.

**"The problem I see right now is where is the money going to come from."
-Bud Smitley
Coordinator of Recreation and Athletics**

"We are really hoping within the next two years...we will have at least something going at that time. It is beginning at this point so it is hard to say when exactly it will start."

What sports will be in their infancy at that point is anyone's guess. The NCAA will set early guidelines for Capital Campus and also inform them of which sports they must start out with.

The school would compete at a Division Three level, and opponents could possibly include teams such as Lebanon Valley, Messiah and Franklin and Marshall.

"If we had to pick a sport, what we would probably do is pick a very popular men's sport and a very popular women's sport, something like basketball for men and for women, volleyball or softball, something in that area," Smitley adds.

Among some of the early speculation, basketball, softball, volleyball, soccer and cross country could be the sports of choice.

Believe it or not, there was a time when intercollegiate sports were a top billing on campus. The school churned out numerous academic All-Americans in baseball, cross country and soccer. There were great games that were played on the hardwood floor in the Capital Union Building. A double overtime victory over Swarthmore sticks out in Smitley's mind.

But then they were all left for the history books.

"It was difficult to run," Smitley said of his previous experiences. "Participation wasn't great either. We sometimes had a difficult time getting people to play a sport. We're thinking now with freshman it won't be the same problem."

It has been well-documented in the last few weeks that changes being made to Capital Campus, including the upgrade to a four-year institution, will increase the amount of freshman and sophomores and, hopefully, increase participation in sports.

"We were very successful for a two-year school playing against four-year schools...as long as we had the participation," Smitley said.

The major stumbling block in getting the sports back to Capital Campus is money. Where it comes from, how it is used and when it gets here.

"The problem I see right now is where is the money going to come from. Intercollegiate sports can get very expensive," Smitley says.

Capital Campus will set their own budget and some financial help will be sought and received from University Park, but as for the daily financial matters, that will be up to the staff here.

"We need facilities in some areas and we have good facilities in other areas," Smitley said. "Money-wise, we'll need uniforms, we have to pay coaches, equipment we have, but uniforms will be a big deal, that's expensive."

"Our basketball facilities are good and our softball facilities will work for the ladies. Our volleyball facilities are good but we have no tennis courts. We had them at one time and we don't have a baseball field, we had a great field at one time," Smitley says.

"We could have women's softball; we could have basketball, volleyball and soccer. We're going to start with whatever the NCAA says we have to have. They may say we need three men's sports and three women's sports. We can do that. We can really have a tennis program if we wanted to because we can rent the local courts off campus. We can have a men's and women's cross-country team. Put them in uniforms and they go run."

As for long term goals, Smitley's eyes widened.

"Here's my idea and it has not been approved by anybody. I'd like to see when they tear down Meade Heights, Penn State doesn't sell the land, they keep the land and they put athletic facilities there. When that happens, I hope we can make a baseball field there."

There are some other key issues the school will look at such as GPA and other academic requirements, scheduling and travel plans. Those are a long way off as of right now. One staple of college athletics that will show its face is recruiting, something Smitley sounds pleased to confront.

"We'll recruit the same as say Lebanon Valley and we're hoping the biggest recruiting tool we have down here is the name Penn State."



photos from The Capitollite

PSH intercollegiate varsity basketball team in 1980



PSH varsity baseball team in 1981

Intermural Softball Report

By JOHN FLUELLEN

Staff Reporter

As the Major League season comes to an end, the Penn State Harrisburg Intramural Softball season is just getting started. The five-team league, consisting of Penn State students, compete for the coveted honor of becoming league champions.

So far this year, the defending champion Shenanigans began the season losing their first game, but have won three games since then. They look ready for a strong repeat campaign led by captain Mike Wagner.

The Fighting Amish has championship dreams of their own. They are out of the gate with a perfect record through their first five games. The other teams that make up the IM soft-

ball league are the Bad News Cubs, Left Overs, and Fast 2.

The season was put on hold last week due to inclement weather and the destruction of a light pole by hurricane Isabel. Bud Smitley confirmed that this week's games will continue as scheduled.

