

PSU Sports @ a Glance

By Christian Torres
Sports Editor
cgt111@psu.edu

The NCAA Women's Tournament is a familiar place for the Penn State Lady Lions. This year should be no different, with an already impressive 18-9 record and an equally impressive 12-0 record at home. But like previous years, these Lions still have a lot of work to do to get to the promised land of an NCAA title.

Year after year, the Lady Lions get close but never close the deal. This year, the Lions hope to turn that tide of disappointment. It all starts with the two players that should not need an introduction.

Tanisha Wright continues to lead the Lady Lions with her tremendous play. The 5'11" senior guard is leading the team in points and is among the team leaders in steals and assists. Not far behind Wright is Jess Strom. Strom is second on the team in scoring and leads the team in assists and steals.

The remainder of the team is a good mix of young and veteran players. There are some solid forwards and guards up and down the lineup. And Amanda Brown is filling the position of center and while she is only averaging seven points a game, Brown leads the team in rebounds and blocks.

And let us not forget the solid coaching. Rene Portland has been at the helm of the Lady Lions for 25 years. Her success is unquestioned even without an NCAA title.

But one issue for these Lady Lions to address on their way to the tournament is their record. In particular, their record on the road leaves more to be desired. The Lions may shine at home at the Bryce Jordan Center, but 6-9 on the road has got to improve. Especially with postseason play approaching, playing well in hostile territory becomes crucial.

And then there is the issue of whether this team can hang with some of the better teams in the league. Just recently, the team lost a big game against Big Ten rival Ohio State. Earlier in the season, the Lady Lions were dropped by top-ten ranked Duke. So until the Lions can start beating the better teams in the league, there will still be questions as to whether they can win.

Speaking of those other teams, here are the top five teams the Lions will have to watch for during the postseason.

1. Ohio State- This team is not only ranked sixth in the country, but is also in the Big Ten. The Lady Lions are 1-1 so far against Ohio State this season. It is expected that both teams will meet in the Big Ten Tournament.

2. Tennessee- Just for the simple fact that this team is constantly good. Once again this season, the Lady Vols are nationally ranked and poised for another title.

3. Michigan State- Another Big Ten foe. In their only meeting this season, the Lions beat the Lady Spartans fairly handily with a 73-56 score. Anything can happen in the postseason and they could square off once again in the Big Ten Tournament.

4. Duke- Not only do the Duke men know how to play, but the ladies are not that far behind. The Lady Blue Devils have an impressive 25-2 record and defeated the Lady Lions earlier this season.

5. Baylor- Not much is known about Baylor, but they are a good team. The Lady Lions found that out firsthand after a 21-point loss to Baylor in December.

Sports

Expand your 'Horizon'

By Christian Torres
Sports Editor
cgt111@psu.edu

The prospect of watching a professional basketball team play would probably mean going to Philadelphia or Washington. Yes, basketball does exist around this area, but is the professional level something this area is too small for? Not at all. In fact, professional basketball is literally just around the corner and it is actually played on this campus.

Meet the Harrisburg Horizon. They may not have the household players like Kobe Bryant or Allen Iverson, but they put on quite a show on Saturday nights inside the Capital Union Building.

They are comprised of a men's and women's team. The men have been playing now for eight years. The women this season celebrated their third anniversary.

Both teams play in the Eastern Basketball Alliance (EBA). So far this season, both teams have shown they can play. At the time this story was written, the men had a record of 6-2, while the ladies were a perfect 7-0.

But success is something this organization is used to. The men are coming off back-to-



Photo courtesy of harrisburghorizon.com

The Harrisburg Horizon, central Pennsylvania's professional basketball team, has completed its seventh season in the Eastern Basketball Alliance.

back championship seasons. The women won their first championship last season in only their second year of existence.

It is also nice to know that both teams are getting significant help

from ex-Penn State players. Jonathan Branam is helping the men get a possible third straight title. Meanwhile Marissa Hoover, former Lady Lion and current employee at Penn State

Harrisburg, is helping the women possibly get a second straight championship.

It doesn't look like anything right now is standing in both teams' ways. The women's closest team

in the standings is Delaware, which has a record of 4-3.

It gets a little tougher when talking about the men. Delaware is the only team with a better record than the guys, and they recently lost in overtime to Delaware. The guys had one more shot as they faced Delaware on March 19. That game could be critical in deciding this year's champion.

Both teams may be about what happens on the court, but there is also a lot that happens off the court. Both teams offer free basketball clinics, have outreach programs, and also lend their players for special appearances.

So in their brief existence, the Harrisburg Horizon have made a quite a name for themselves. With the exception of intramural athletics, sports are almost non-existent here at Penn State Harrisburg. The Horizon has not only provided sporting entertainment for many people, but they have been successful in doing so.

The season will be ending soon for both teams. The last home games were played on March 19. A playoff season will probably follow and home games will once again be played at the Capital Union Building here at Penn State Harrisburg.

Herb counts down baseball's greatest pitchers

By Herb Smith
Staff Reporter
hjs135@psu.edu

- 5) Greg Maddux
- 4) Steve Carlton
- 3) Nolan Ryan
- 2) Sandy Koufax
- 1) Roger Clemens

This countdown was probably the hardest to name a number one. I thought I'd make it easy on myself by limiting it to pitchers just from the last 50 years. I had every intention of naming Sandy Koufax number one, except that in doing research, I discovered something. While Koufax was at his best in the early 1960s, he was really only a great pitcher for about a six-year span. Even though during those years he was close to un-hittable, when doing a countdown of the greatest of all-time, longevity has to be a factor. So Roger Clemens, about to start

his 21st season, jumped ahead of Koufax.

"The Rocket" entered the league in 1984 with the Boston Red Sox. Though it seems like it had been forever that he played for Beantown; those five seasons in pinstripes certainly did help us all forget. Clemens' first few seasons were impressive for a young pitcher, but were only a sign of things to come. In his first two seasons, Clemens started a total of 35 games; it wasn't until his third season that he would spend the whole year in the starting rotation.

Starting 33 games in 1986, Clemens went 24-4 with a 2.48 ERA. Those outstanding numbers earned the "Rocket" his first Cy Young award. Clemens would win the award again the following season, winning 20 games with an ERA under 3.00.

After winning one more Cy Young with the Red Sox, Clemens



Photo by Matt York/AP

Roger Clemens, "The Rocket," has won a total of seven Cy Young awards, and can still throw 94-96 mph with ease.

moved onto the Toronto Blue Jays. He stayed in Toronto only two seasons, but in those two years, he put together two 20-win seasons and earned two more Cy Youngs for his trophy case.

Winning Cy Youngs would become a recurring theme throughout Clemens' career. The "Rocket" has won a total of seven over his Hall of Fame career. His success has continued throughout his career, as he won those Cy Youngs in three different decades, including last season as a 42-year-old with the Houston Astros.

Clemens' longevity can be attributed to his work ethic. His training regimen is very intense. There is a story that while with the Yankees, Clemens was out in the field with his trainer about

to go through his daily workout. A young rookie came out and said if a 40-year-old man can do this workout, it can't be that hard. So Clemens invited his teammate to join in his workout. By the end, the rookie had lost his lunch on the field and Clemens had the last laugh.

Moving on from Toronto, Clemens joined the New York Yankees. Five successful seasons in the Big Apple, yet another Cy Young in 2001, and finally the elusive World Series championships in 1999 and 2000, seemed to bring closure to his career. After all but actually saying he was headed for retirement in 2003, Clemens changed his mind and joined his hometown Houston Astros. Last season, Clemens was as dominant as ever, winning 18

games, an ERA under 3.00 and earning that seventh Cy Young, his first in the National League.

Of course, a few dark clouds have hung around Clemens from time to time. There was the saga with Mike Piazza in which on separate occasions, Clemens hit Piazza in the head with a fastball and threw a broken bat at the Mets catcher as he ran up the first base line. Those incidents dampened the aura around Clemens for only a moment however, as the numbers and awards continue to speak for themselves.

His seven Cy Young awards are the most in baseball history. The "Rocket" has dominated baseball for over three different decades and has proven that he is the greatest pitcher in the last 50 years.

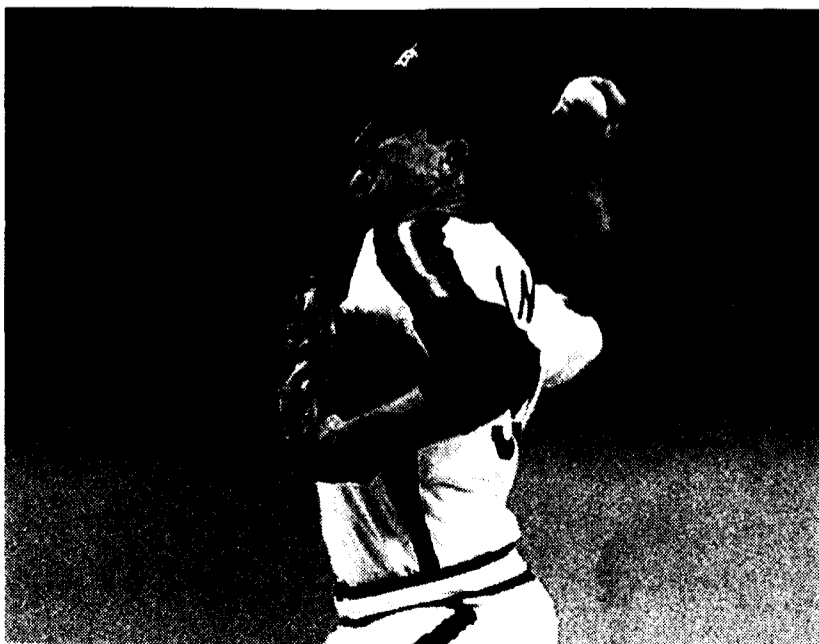


Photo courtesy of www.e-cool.com

With a blazing fastball that approached 100 mph and a work ethic like no other, Nolan Ryan holds a record 5,714 strikeouts.