

SPORTS

PSU Sports @ Glance

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Let me take you back to arguably the best game in this past football season, the Ohio State game. Hundreds of people camped out for days in anticipation of this game. Hundreds more waited in line for the entire day cheering at the gate. Inside it was a sea of white. The atmosphere was electric.

There were 109, 839 emotionally charged people packing the stadium. The stadium was whiter than snow. The game culminated in the fourth quarter when nobody sat down for the entire quarter. In fact, the whole stadium was bouncing to *Zombie Nation*, cheering so deafeningly loud people in Ohio could probably hear us. When Tamba Hali sacked Troy Smith forcing a fumble I think we probably registered a small earthquake in State College. I had never felt so much energy in one place. At this point there was no doubt in my mind we were some of the best fans in all of football.

Now let me take you back to another great moment in this past season, the Orange Bowl. My friends and I decided to make the drive down to Florida for the game. On the drive down you could pick out every Penn State fan. Their cars were adorned with paw prints, flags blowing in the wind, and in some extreme cases, one RV in particular, Penn State murals on the side. Every Penn State fan honked and waved and let it be known they were on their way to support their team. When we arrived in Florida and saw Penn State fans everywhere, but nothing could have prepared us for the atmosphere at the game.

When we got to the stadium it was nothing but Penn State fans. If you closed your eyes you would have thought you were in Happy Valley listening to the sweet sounds of WE ARE... PENN STATE.

It was amazing to me. We were playing Florida State, IN Florida, and we easily outnumbered their fans. When we got into the stadium it was like Ohio State all over again. The stadium was nothing but white. Every kick by Gary Cismesia seemed to be pushed wide by the thunderous cheers of the Penn State fans. The entire stadium seemed to hold their breath each time Kevin Kelly kicked and when he finally willed that one through the place erupted. Next to Ohio State, I have never felt so much energy, nor have I ever expended so much energy.

When you are a passionate Penn State fan you live and die with Penn State football. Each game you leave everything in the stadium. Your biggest goal is to assist your team. This year I felt like we honestly did that, and we had the numbers to prove it. "The Nittany Lions placed fourth in the 2005 attendance survey with an average of 104,859 spectators for seven games (gopsports.com)." That is fourth out of 615 schools with an average of 104,859. For fifteen years now we have been in the top four. There is a new season on the horizon, let's be louder, let's dress whiter, and let's let the rest of the world know who WE ARE, ... PENN STATE.

Look for more from James Grap right here in The Capital Times.

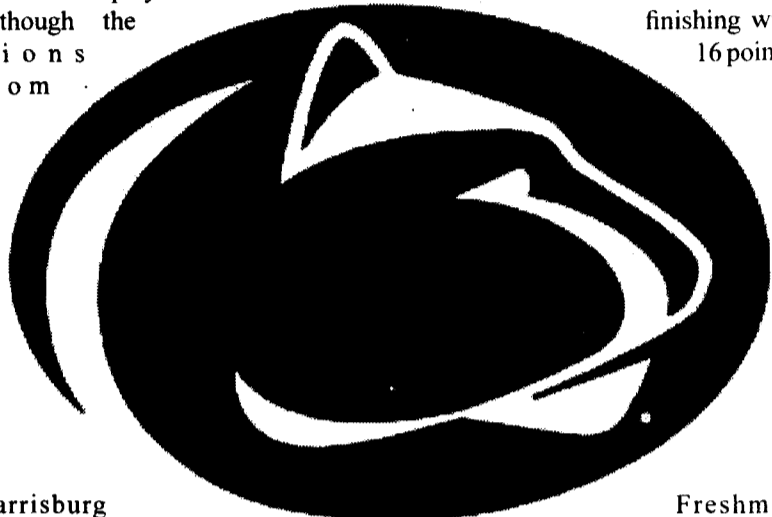
Time to recap a great PSH basketball season

Men's team ends strong Womens' team make PSUAC championship

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Considering Penn State Harrisburg hasn't had intercollegiate athletic teams for many years, the men's basketball team had a strong and competitive first season, finishing with a record of 12 wins, 11 losses and making it to the first round of the PSUAC playoffs.

Although the Lions from



Harrisburg knocked off McKeesport by one point in their last match-up, they were unable to beat Penn State McKeesport for a second time when they faced off on Tuesday, February 28th, losing by a tough 86-47 score.

Before losing in this playoff game, the men's team came up with a commanding win over Penn State York at home on Wednesday, February 22nd. It was a close game, with the score Penn State Harrisburg 36, Penn State York 34, at halftime. The game remained close until midway through the second half,

when the Harrisburg Lions took a commanding lead and never looked back. Sophomore standout Abe Hitz had a superb 25-point offensive performance. However, this win was surely a team effort. Consistent senior Nealy Rawlings played fantastic defense, blocking several York shots and scoring 18 total points. Freshman Hasahn Wright came off of the bench and played a great game offensively and defensively, finishing with 16 points.

Freshman Padraic Wood chipped in 9 points and other scorers included senior Tim Hurtack, senior Corey Daniel, sophomore Steve Molek, and freshman Keith Wiggins. The final score ended up being Harrisburg 82, York 68.

Congratulations Lions on a great first season!!

The Penn State Harrisburg women's basketball team finished their first season with about as strong a showing as anyone could have asked for when they made it to the PSUAC Final Four and then the championship game at the Bryce Jordan Center at University Park on March 3rd and 4th.

The Harrisburg Lady Lions beat Penn State Delaware County in the Final Four on Friday, March 3 by a score of 70-63. This pitted them against Penn College for the championship game on Saturday, March 4.

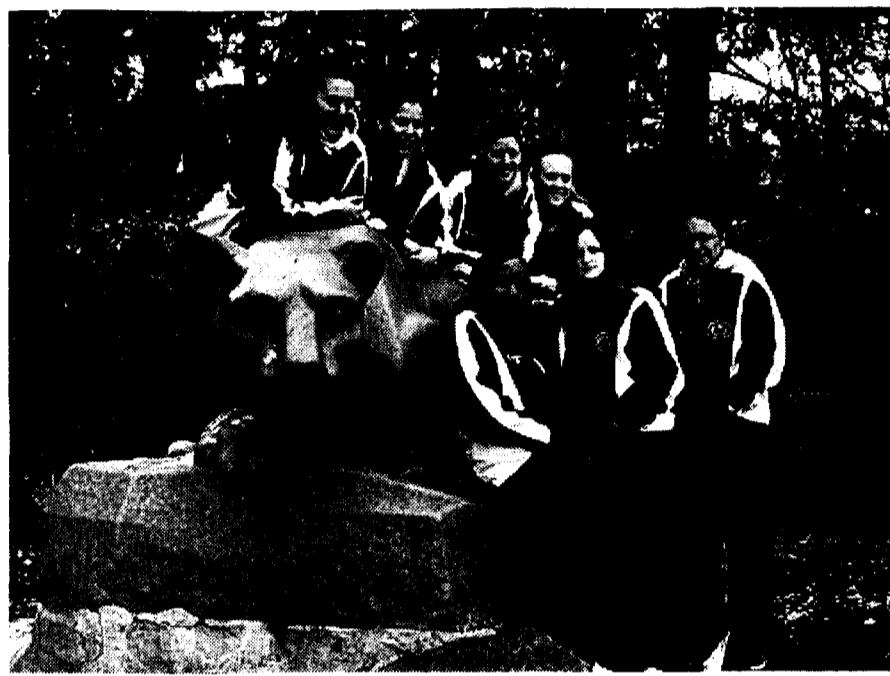
Although I was not at this game, the reported score indicates that it was a nail biter, as Penn College narrowly escaped with a 69-67 win. Nonetheless, the Penn State Harrisburg Lady Lions had an amazing first season, finishing with a record of 10 wins, 6 losses. Their success this season is even more remarkable considering the fact that they had six players on their roster for the first half of the season and seven players on their roster

for the second half of the season. Most of their opponents had rosters twice as full.

The Harrisburg Lady Lions were able to make it to the Final Four by beating Penn State Hazleton for the third time this season in the Regional Playoffs at home on Tuesday,

offensive threat, scoring 10 of her 20 total points in the first half. By halftime, Harrisburg had commanded a 14-point lead, making the score Harrisburg 38, Hazleton 24.

Junior Brooke Conjar and Senior Kayma Sonii-Ricks both had fabulous second halves. Conjar scored 13 of



The Lady Lions of Harrisburg take a moment to pose with the Nittany Lion shrine at University Park. For their first season, the women made it to the playoffs and won their first game for an impressive showing.

her 21 total points and Sonii-Ricks scored 12 of her 17 total points. Other scorers were graduate student Amanda Mentzer and freshman Krystal Miranda. By responding to any Hazleton baskets with baskets of their own, the Harrisburg team was able to keep a nice cushion on their lead. Penn State Hazleton did put forth

one last surge of effort with about 2 minutes left, coming within 7 points of Harrisburg. It was not nearly enough, however, as Penn State Harrisburg maintained their composure, and their lead, to win the game 85-74.

Narrigan previews the 2006 MLB season

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Spring is finally here and to baseball fans, that signals the start of a great time in sports: baseball season. Drag bunts, hit-and-runs, pickoff moves, double switches, pine tar, and lefty specialists are all things incorporated into the game that we call America's pastime. Several key story lines highlight this year's season:

The Barry Bonds Saga. Fans either love him or hate him and I'm somewhere in the middle. On the field he's a joy to watch, but off the field he's an embarrassment to the game and more importantly, all high profile athletes. His name is always associated with steroids and I personally believe he blatantly took steroids during the so-called "steroid era" of baseball. However, his talent is undeniable and the unfortunate thing is that he would have been a Hall of Famer even if he never took steroids. This year should have been one of the most exciting years ever with Bonds chasing Babe Ruth and Hank Aaron's home run marks, but sadly, it will end up being one of the most controversial seasons ever.

Two new books, *Love Me, Hate Me: Barry Bonds and the Making of an Antihero* and *Game of Shadows* have unveiled revealing and detailed information of how and when Bonds took steroids. These books might force the hand of Commissioner Bud Selig to investigate Bonds and reveal the truth about his steroid use. Although an investigation would solve the Bonds mystery, it could unlock many more tribulations from the "steroid era" that would stain the game forever.

Fallout of the World Baseball Classic. This season will answer many questions to how the WBC will affect the regular season. One huge concern with the tournament was the injury threat it posed to players. But the WBC passed this test with only one major leaguer suffering a serious injury. For now, the one player was Washington Nationals relief pitcher

Luis Ayala who played for team Mexico and suffered a season ending elbow injury. However, only time will tell how pitchers will perform later in the year after pitching at a high level so early in the year. Many

After the intensity of an international tournament, how will the players react to the start of a long and grueling season? This also can only be answered in time, but some worry that the start of the season could have

the year. The effects of this year's inaugural World Baseball Classic will set the standard and expectation level for future WBCs.

I personally love watching rookies play and seeing the impact they can have on their team. Here are my top five rookies for the 2006 season:

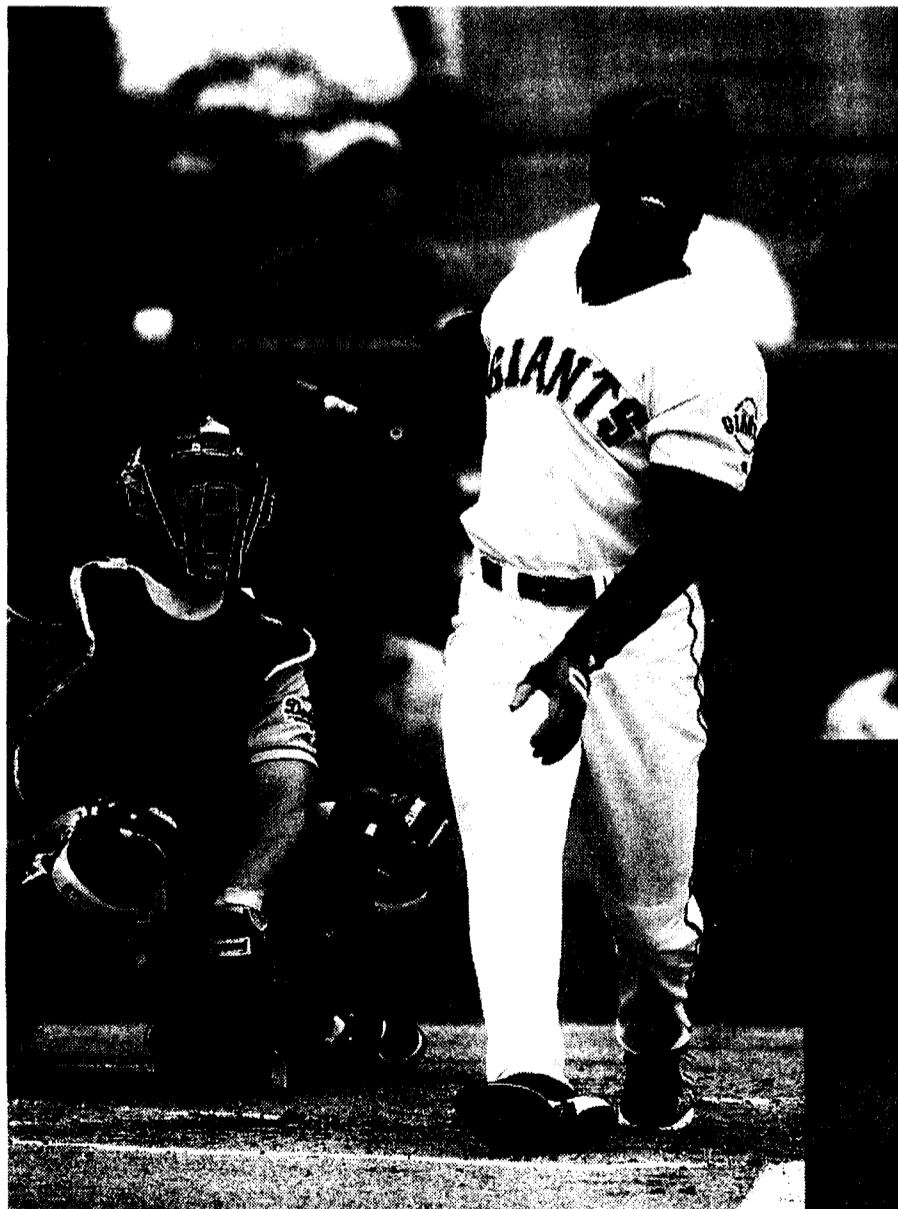
1. Jeremy Hermida (RF Marlins) - An all around talent that will hit for power, average, and steal bases. Hermida will have an immediate impact this year on the rebuilding Marlins, but will be a star for many years to come.
2. Francisco Liriano (SP Twins) - Lefthander that is compared to a young Johan Santana because of his mid-90's fastball, slider, and devastating change-up.
3. Matt Cain (SP Giants) - 21-year old that has a mid-90's sinker and sharp curveball. Cain has a good chance to make the rotation

right out of spring training and will be the future ace for the Giants.

4. Prince Fielder (1B Brewers) - Fielder is the son of former major leaguer Cecil Fielder. Like his dad, Fielder has huge power potential that will land him in the middle of the Brewer's lineup.

5. Ryan Zimmerman (3B Nationals) - Zimmerman's Scott Rolan comparisons are well deserving. He has been labeled as potentially the greatest fielding third baseman since Brooks Robinson and after batting almost .400 last year in his brief stint in the majors as a 21-year old, his bat has serious potential as well.

Statistical Notes: Phillies SS Jimmy Rollins enters the season on a 36 game hit streak, 20 shy of Joe DiMaggio's 56 game hitting streak. Ichiro will attempt to have a 200 hit season for his sixth consecutive year; Pete Rose holds the record of 200 hit seasons with 10. Barry Bonds is 6 home runs shy of Babe Ruth and 47 shy of Hank Aaron on the all-time home run list.



Barry Bonds hits another home run. Bonds' chase for Babe Ruth's and Hank Aaron's home run records should have been exciting this season, but his alleged attachment to steroids taints his image and his chase.

predict that several WBC players, especially pitchers, will wear down at the end of the year because of the physical stress they had to endure for about a month longer than they normally would have had to.

negative effects on players' mental approach. On the other hand, WBC participants might also perform very well at the start of the season because of all of that experience in meaningful games so early in



Jeremy Hermida will be trading his minor league jersey for a major league one this season. Expect to see overall talent with specialties in power, average, and base stealing as he helps the Florida Marlins rebuild their team.