

SPORTS

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Glance

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If you are anything like me, by the time spring rolls around, all you want is some Penn State football. I've got just what you need to satisfy your football craving, some lacrosse.

Lacrosse has been popular in the south and northeast for years but recently has had a surge in popularity all over the nation. It touts itself as "the fastest game on two feet" and rightfully so.

Without getting into too many rules, it is comprised of four basic positions. There is the defense that does just that, protecting the goal and never leaving their goalie's side. There is the attack that plays the opposite side of the field with one job, score goals. Third, there is the midfield that plays the whole field playing defense and offense. Finally, there is the goalie protecting a 6'x6' goal.

There are three attack, three defense, and three midfielders. Each player has a stick or "crosse" with which they throw the ball. The object is to score the most goals, but in-between it's packed with bone-jarring hits, tantalizing moves, and spectacular goals. If you haven't actually seen a game, stop reading and find the nearest game.

Conveniently for everyone, one of the best games you can watch is going to be right up at University Park. Yes, we have a team, and yes, it is very, very good.

In the most recent USILA coaches poll Penn State was ranked 18th. Penn State is coming off two very impressive victories over ranked teams. Penn State won 11-6 at 20th ranked Fairfield and then followed up with a very impressive win over 7th ranked Massachusetts.

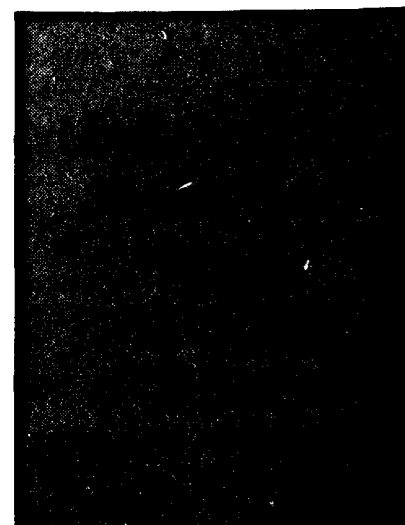
Senior captain Nate Whitaker, who stole the show in the Massachusetts game scoring four of Penn State's seven goals, leads the team. With those four he set his place in Penn State history moving into tenth place on the all-time scoring list.

Mark your calendars for May 6. Besides school being out, Penn State will play host to 5th ranked Georgetown. It may be the biggest lacrosse game ever played at Penn State and could have huge NCAA tournament implications.

I realize it's not Penn State football, but check it out, I'm very confident it will fill your football void and then some.



Senior Captain Nate Whitaker



Rare open practice offers inside peek The new possible Nittany lion football lineup takes the field

By GENARO C. AFIMAS
Associated Press

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. - A black brace fitted on his injured right knee, Paul Posluszny darted alone across the Beaver Stadium end zone as a couple of coaches watched his every step.

The All-America linebacker didn't do much else on a cold spring afternoon, but at least he was on his feet on a field. The last time most football fans saw Posluszny, he was being carted off the field during the Orange Bowl in January.

Most of the rest of his teammates did don pads and jerseys on Saturday during a Penn State spring practice open only to reporters and high school football coaches in town for a camp.

No player interviews, though. Not even a sound bite from coach Joe Paterno. Just a glimpse at the 2006 version of the Nittany Lions running through what was essentially a physical game of two-hand touch.

Posluszny is recovering from partial tears of two ligaments in right knee, and Paterno has said that his star linebacker would be used sparingly. At the start of spring drills several weeks ago, Posluszny said that he felt he could play in a game if needed.

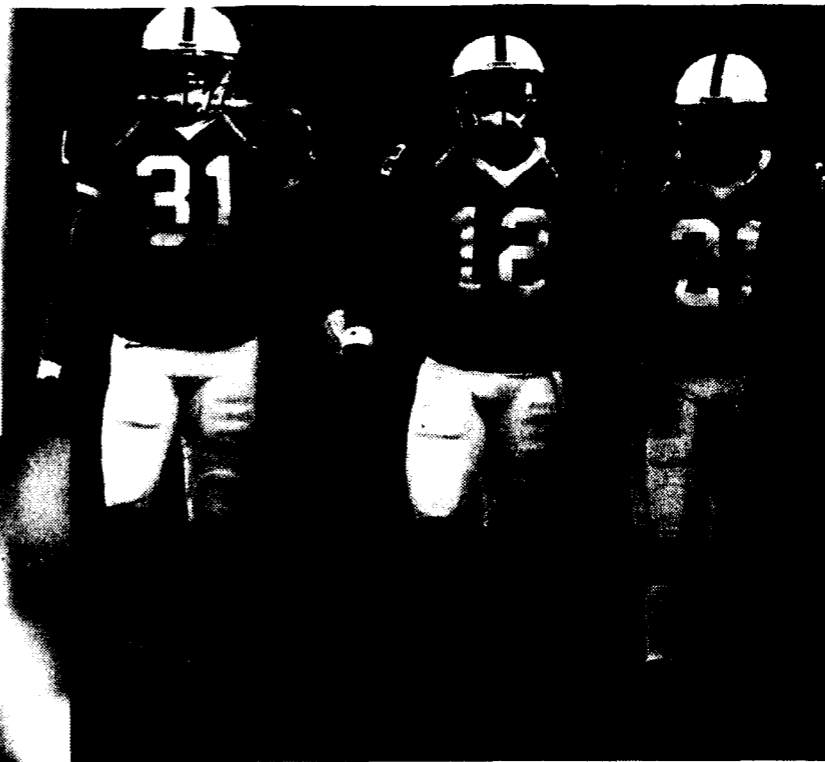
The first game is five months away, September 2 against Akron. Several other key players, including left

tackle Levi Brown, running back Tony Hunt and defensive tackle Jay Alford, also didn't take part in Saturday's practice.

So the peek into practice was more an avenue to gather clues as to where players might stand on the depth chart. Penn State lost 13 starters from last year's 11-1 squad, including the entire starting secondary, three of four starting defensive linemen and four of five starting offensive linemen.



Joe Paterno keeps a watchful eye on his Nittany Lions as they practice for the upcoming 2006 Penn State season. Not a word was uttered by either Paterno or team members at the exclusive sneak peek practice.



2005 Penn State captains Paul Posluszny (#31), Michael Robinson (#12), and Alan Zemaitis (#21) emerge from the tunnel ready to play a game. Robinson and Zemaitis leave holes in the roster for Paterno to fill, while Posluszny took the field for a light warmup during the sneak peek spring practice.

Paterno must also replace departed quarterback Michael Robinson. As expected, the strong-armed Anthony Morelli took snaps with the first team.

Morelli, who will be a junior this fall, mainly watched from the sidelines during the last two seasons.

Another star injured last season, wideout

Derrick Williams, looked good in practice and showed glimpses of the talent that sparked Penn State's offense in 2005. Williams didn't play after breaking his left arm in the Nittany Lions' last-second loss to Michigan last year.

Wideout Jordan Norwood made some nice catches. Another member of last season's famed freshmen class, Justin King, played cornerback with the first-team defense on Saturday. The speedy King played on both sides of the ball last year.

They were cheered on by a couple of last season's defensive stars who watched from the sidelines, defensive end Tamba Hali, who ran out on the field to pat ex-teammates on the back after good plays, and cornerback Anwar Phillips. Both players are expected to be taken in the NFL draft on April 29.

Other notes from Saturday's practice:

Sophomore Tony Davis played with the first-team defense opposite King. They were joined at the safety positions at times by seniors Nolan McCreedy, Donnie Johnson and sophomore Spencer Ridenour, who is listed as a linebacker.

Linemen Jim Shaw, Steve Roach, Josh Gaines and Ed Johnson saw first-team defense action. Ed Johnson is back after having been expelled by the university for the fall semester following allegations that he violated a school regulation concerning sexual conduct. Alford is expected to be a starter when the regular season begins.

At one point, Brown, with uniform on, ran in the end zone with Posluszny but wasn't close to keeping up with the linebacker. Brown didn't participate in a scrimmage. A.Q. Shipley, who played on both sides of the line last season, practiced at center with the first team along with guard Robert Price, who started a game at right guard last year.

Narrigan's inside look on this spring's most controversial issues in sports

By TIM NARRIGAN
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Will we see Roger Clemens on the mound again?

The Houston Astros, Boston Red Sox, New York Yankees and Texas Rangers all hope the answer to this question is yes, because all four teams believe they have a good chance in persuading "The Rocket" to pitch for them.

But at this point, it's not a matter of Clemens deciding which team to play for, but deciding if he'll play at all.

Many believe he is waiting until the All-Star break to see which teams have the best chance to make a World Series run and then sign with them for a huge one-year deal. This has led to criticism and pressure, especially from fans, for him to make a decision about his future and end all of the speculation about if or when he'll come back.

Personally, I believe Roger Clemens has the right to wait and see if he wants to play again instead of making a forced decision on the media's behalf. I'm definitely tired of hearing all the rumors of his possible return or retirement, but this is not a reason to blame Clemens. If anyone is to blame, it is the media. In three months, the rumors should be swirling, but until then lets all focus on the players on the field.

Is Brett Favre being selfish in taking so long to decide whether to retire or not?

This should not even be a question and the only reason I'm even discussing it is that way too many people seem to think Favre actually is being selfish.



The Green Bay Packers' Brett Favre has kept his NFL plans under wraps, much to the irritation of his fans, who have called Favre selfish. These people tend to not realize how much Favre has going on when they make these claims.

These misguided people seem to think he is hurting the team by not announcing his decision one way or another. His decision definitely affects the Packers' free agent and draft plans, but with last year's first-round pick Aaron Rodgers ready and waiting to replace Favre, the team is fully prepared for any decision Favre makes.

If you have 3 MVPs, 14 consecutive 3,000 yard passing seasons, eight seasons with 30 or more touchdown passes and 50,000 passing yards, not to mention have been affected by hurricane Katrina, have your father pass away and

your brother-in-law kills himself crashing an ATV in your front lawn, all while your wife suffers with breast cancer, then you can call Favre selfish for just trying to make the best decision for his family.

The Barry Bonds Saga.

I briefly discussed this issue in my last article, but since then there have been new developments that make this story even

more interesting. On April 3, a fan attending the Giants-Padres game at Petco Park in San Diego threw a syringe on the field in the direction of Bonds. Bonds actually picked it up on his way to the dugout between innings but showed no emotion doing so. One has to wonder what Bonds is up against when the Giants play teams in bigger cities such as Los Angeles, Chicago, and Philadelphia where the fans are more malicious.

What really bothers me in the whole Bonds situation is the

new show on ESPN called "Bonds on Bonds." I watched bits and pieces of the first episode and was appalled to see him cry, trying to make people feel sorry for him.

To me, ESPN is just trying to cash in on all of the Bonds' controversy publicity and give Bonds a chance to show a side of him that people don't see in the interviews. Maybe ESPN even feels sorry for Bonds. Let's hope not, because he brought on himself all of the hardships he's going through right now. Whether he took steroids or not, he has done enough to lose the respect of many baseball fans.

As a huge baseball fan, I really hate to see fans throw stuff on the field and completely disrespect the game. But if I was Barry Bonds, I'd keep my head down, because more syringes are on the way.



Roger Clemens' baseball career is as up in the air as his famous fast ball. Much speculation has surrounded his indecision about his pitching future, with the majority coming from his beloved fans and prospective teams that want to have "The Rocket" on their pitching rosters.