

PSH flag football tackles competition

By: WILLS KING
STAFF WRITER
WPK5004@PSU.EDU

From the heated competition of playing a rival, to the heart pounding moments spent as a fan in the stands, sports have always provided a means to bring peers together and create bonds of friendship. But as we move to college, sports can become just a memory, as the level of commitment is heightened and the field of competition is even greater.

Fortunately, Penn State Harrisburg provides an opportunity for all students to continue enjoying the experience through a variety of intramural sports.

Of all of the intramurals offered at PSH, the most popular is certainly flag football. With over 200 students forming over a dozen teams, the flag football program incorporates all types of students to enjoy what is advertised as a recreational game with a hint of competition. With a seven on seven format, teams compete under the lights at the educational activities field, with game times starting at 9 p.m. and 10 p.m.

Adam Michalski, a sophomore and second year veteran of PSH flag football says that the atmosphere of the games provide the thrill of competition with the friendliness of a pickup game.

"When you're out there with the lights and the crowds, it can get pretty intense," said Michalski, "but when you look over and see the opposing quarterback is a kid from your calculus class, it's easy to just have fun with it."

In addition to the thrill of competition and the fun of a recreational sport, flag football also provides a means to create strong friendships.

"I was captain of my team last year, Tamzid and the Chipmunks, and by the end of the season we all got to know each other really well," added Michalski.

Julie Stoehr, the coordinator of intramural sports at Penn State Harrisburg also praised the program for the positive social environment it creates.

"It's a wonderful way to get to know people on campus and make new friends," said Stoehr.

While keeping the registrations and rules updated and organized, Stoehr has also been making efforts to provide an ultimate goal for all teams to strive for. The National Intramural Recreational

Sports Association hosts an annual flag football championship game that Stoehr has hopes of sending a team from Penn State Harrisburg to compete in.

"I'd like to be able to send either our champion team or our good sportsmanship team," said Stoehr, "whether or not we will be able to do that this year I do not know."

Because the national championship game will be held in South Florida this year, funding becomes the main issue in making this hope become a reality.

"There would have to be fundraising, or student activity fee money perhaps, but it's a great way to get out there and compete against another school,"

said Stoehr. "If we can't do that, then what we will probably try to do is get together with another school from around the area and have our champions play."

Regardless of whether or not such a game becomes scheduled, Stoehr is making sure that the registration process and regular season is as convenient as

possible for students. Registration for team rosters will be available online, and Penn State Harrisburg Intramural Sports has a Facebook page featuring all important dates, times and meetings.

Students can register teams from Sept. 12 to 17, and anyone who needs a team can sign up for a free agent list in the CUB building.

Tom Brady out for season

By JIMMY GOLEN
AP SPORTS WRITER

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP) — The New England Patriots have come back from injuries before, winning three Super Bowls and reaching a fourth despite losing Rodney Harrison, Richard Seymour, Junior Seau and Drew Bledsoe.

Now they will try to do it without Tom Brady.

The 2007 NFL Most Valuable Player will miss the entire '08 season with a left knee injury that needs surgery, the team said Monday. That leaves the Patriots without one of the game's great quarterbacks and severely damages their hopes of a return trip to the Super Bowl.

Coach Bill Belichick would not say what the injury is, but the play, Brady's reaction and the prognosis all point toward a torn anterior cruciate ligament.

"As a team we all just have to do our jobs. That really doesn't change," Belichick said Monday, a day after Brady's knee collapsed under him when he was hit by Chiefs safety Bernard Pollard in a 17-10 victory over Kansas City. "He played one position, he played it very well. We have somebody else playing that position now."

The Patriots issued a one-paragraph statement that the two-time Super Bowl MVP will have surgery and be placed on injured reserve. That leaves them in the hands of a backup who's barely been tested — in part because of Brady's 128-game starting streak that was the third-longest for a quarterback in NFL history.

Matt Cassel, who guided New

England to its 20th consecutive regular-season victory after Brady was hurt, will start Sunday at the New York Jets. It will be the first meaningful start since high school for Cassel, who backed up Heisman Trophy winners Carson Palmer and Matt Leinart at Southern Cal and spent the last three years holding a clipboard for Brady.

"I'm not trying to be Tom Brady. I'm just trying to be Matt Cassel," he said when subbing for Brady on his regular weekly radio show. "I don't know where that's going to take us."

Brady took the Patriots to three

where Brady's locker remained stocked with equipment and personal items. "There's always a way to win. We're not going to have a lot of excuses about it."

Even without Brady, the Patriots remain a team stocked with veterans in a mediocre division, and with one of the most successful coaches in NFL history.

"The leadership on this team will take care of itself," offensive lineman Matt Light said. "I expect (Cassel) to do his job, and that's the same thing he expects from each one of us. There's nobody on this team that we don't have confidence in. You can't have a better mentor than Tom Brady."

The Patriots have just two quarterbacks on the roster: Cassel and rookie Kevin O'Connell. Matt Gutierrez, who signed as an undrafted free agent before the 2007 season and has thrown one career pass, was released in the final cutdowns before the season.

But Belichick denied media reports that out-of-work quarterbacks Chris Simms and Tim Rattay were headed to Foxborough to take physicals or to audition.

"In spite of what some people are putting out there, we haven't worked out anybody," he said. "We had a lot of people call us, I can tell you that."

For now, Cassel is his starter. "I'm happy for his opportunity to have a chance to play," said Leinart, who, ironically, is now a backup with the Arizona Cardinals. "I'm bummed for Tom. You just hope he can heal as well as he can and get back out there as soon as he can. But Matt will step up. I think he'll be all right."

Pollard, who apologized to Brady immediately after the play, said Monday that it was a normal play and prayed for Brady's speedy recovery.

"I can't change what happened," he said. "As soon as the play happened, I said, 'Oh, man.' When I heard him scream, I knew it was serious."

While not calling Pollard's play dirty, Belichick said his players are taught to hit quarterbacks between the knees and shoulders. Patriots defensive lineman Vince Wilfork complained that he was penalized and fined for a hit similar to Pollard's, but league spokesman Greg Aiello said supervisor of officials Mike Pereira determined it was legal.

"It is not a foul because the defensive player was coming off and affected by a block by the offense," Aiello said.

A former fourth-stringer who was the 199th overall selection in the 2000 draft, Brady himself took over at quarterback when Bledsoe sustained a life-threatening chest injury in a 2001 game against the New York Jets. Brady led the Patriots to their first NFL title that year, another in 2003 and another in 2004.

Belichick said comparing this season to 2001 was like comparing "apples to grapefruit."

But Patriots players cited that experience as proof they could do it again.

"Everybody here understands that things like this happen; they've happened before," Light said. "I feel good about this football team."

Brady missed the entire preseason with an unspecified foot injury, then left the season opener 7:33 into the first quarter. After being tended to on the field, Brady walked off, limping, between two trainers. He went to the locker room and wasn't seen on the sideline again.

"We feel badly for Tom about the injury," Belichick said Monday. "You hate to see anyone go down. No one has worked harder or done more for this team than Tom has."



Photo courtesy of media.theadvocate.com
New England Patriot star Tom Brady will be out for the rest of the season due to injury.

NFL titles since 2001 and led them to a perfect record in the regular season last year before a loss in the Super Bowl to the New York Giants deprived them of a fourth championship and an unprecedented 19-0 season. They had been favored to return — before Brady's injury.

"We're not going to tank it the rest of the season. That's not going to happen," defensive lineman Richard Seymour said in a somber and nearly empty Patriots locker room. Seymour was across from