

# sports

## Tryouts and new cheers for another year in PSH sports

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Their voices echoed through the empty Penn State Harrisburg's basketball court.

"C'mon, C'mon! Lets go! , Lets Go Harrisburg!" they shouted.

On Monday, Sept. 8 and 9 PSH cheerleading practice was a little different from any other practice this year. Both girls and guys lined up at the Capitol Union building printing their name on the sign in sheet for this year's 2008-2009 cheerleading tryouts.

About 15 students tried out Monday evening, demonstrating their cheer, stunting, dance and jump abilities. Thick tumble mats were standard equipment on Monday's tryouts, allowing the girls and guys who were able to demonstrate those skills to do so.

"Tumbling is a definite asset, although not required," said Head coach Tammy James.

Nerves were on the edge as each and every person demonstrated their hardest presenting what

skills they had to land a spot on the squad.

The final squad members were chosen based on their personalities, cheer, dance and tumbling abilities. Rookies were notified at the beginning of Tuesday night's second round of tryouts, that they had made the team. Out of the 15 who tried out, 13 made the team.

"This year's team is a great mix of talent, enthusiasm and desire. I am looking forward to a great season," said James.

Now that a team has been chosen for this year, practices begin. Girls and guys will be taught new cheers, chants, dances, and new stunt groups will be formed.

"It is essential to practice everything because come game day, if someone is missing then we have to re-arrange everything. That is why commitment is a big deal to be on this team," said Elyse Muro



Photo courtesy of **JULIE STOEHR**

Each cheerleading practice consists of five minutes of stretching, practicing jumps, routines and daring acrobatic stunts.

"Coach Tammy is very big on our jumps ... She wants everyone to be uniformed ... Technique is big formality. For warm ups, we get divided into partners and

numbers, going back and fourth doing jumps one through five and once we get to five, we go back down, basically doing 10 jumps in a row. There are definitely sore bodies the next day!" said Elyse Muro.

Practices are held two or more times a week, lasting one to two hours. They are held sometimes

both during the day and evening, usually determined on the class schedules of squad members. The team also tries to take classes at the Hershey Gymnastics Center at their own leisure.

"Going on our spare time to the Gymnastics Center helps us build our Tumbling strengths ... There is everything from spring floors to trampolines. It's a great place for us cheerleaders to go because it's cheap, and fun!" said Tiffany Marrow.

PSH cheerleaders help cheer the Lions to victory and entertain fans at every home game. Cheerleaders at PSH represent both Women's and Men's basketball in conjunction with school spirit events and fundraisers held around campus.

Apart from typical fundraising events like car washes and bake sales, there are some very unique events and fundraising that PSH cheerleaders are involved in.

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## Student athlete of the week: Katie Lynn Kessler

By **MORGAN DYSINGER**  
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Katie Lynn Kessler, a member of Penn State Harrisburg's Varsity Women's soccer team, is a native of southern California. Kessler grew up in the Malibu region of the Golden State and attended Palisades Charter High School - lovingly known as "Pali" by its students and faculty.

When she was initially exploring her options for college, she knew she definitely wanted a change of scenery and chose to narrow her search to schools on the East Coast.

"I wanted to broaden my experience and learn not to just have a 'West Coast' attitude and mind set," she stated.

In the academic realm, Kessler found a place within the majors of criminal justice and psychology. Her ideal career would be "a criminal profiler in a large

police precinct Northeast of here, like in Massachusetts or in Connecticut."

Her majors are what first attracted her to PSH.

"Originally I applied to PSU main campus, but after a lot of changes to my major it actually turned out that PSH's Criminal Justice program is very prestigious," she said.

She realized the campus's atmosphere was a much better fit for her, "especially after meeting a lot of good friends I don't want to lose."

During her first

year at PSH, Kessler roomed with a future captain of the Women's soccer team, Amanda Basile, and it was the encouragement from

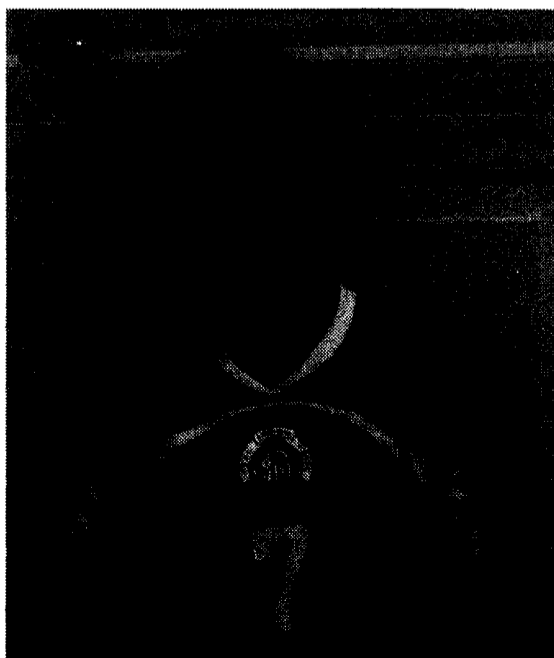


Photo by **MORGAN DYSINGER/ The Capital Times**  
Student athlete, Katie Lynn Kessler plays varsity soccer for PSH.

Basile and good friend Katie Hollinger (the other women's team captain) that gave her the confidence to try out for the team in August 2007. Although she had no prior experience in the sport, she quickly adapted to the rules and expectations of the game and returned this year with a season under her belt, ready for the fall of 2008.

"I love the fact that I am able to say I'm part of the team established here. Everybody on the team has such a great personality and something unique to offer ... There's never a dull day," she said. "It really feels like a second family because you know that 10 players have your back when something goes wrong."

Her favorite position to play on the field is right defense. She claimed it will most likely remain her favorite forever, primarily because she likes "being able to win the ball from the opponent and drive it up to the top for an

opportunity to score."

Outside of her studies and commitment to soccer, she enjoys spending her time with friends, reading good books, listening to music, going to the gym and when possible, working with horses - particularly her beloved equine pal, Reggie. She rides horses competitively back home in show jumping and English equestrian.

The next home soccer game, which is against the Gallaudet Bisons, will be on Thursday, Sept. 25 at 4 p.m. Following the Women's game is Men's soccer at 6 p.m.

"Games are always interesting and fans are always encouraged to watch," said Kessler. "Make it out to a game and cheer your lions to a W in the win column!"

Suggest a student athlete at [captimes@psu.edu](mailto:captimes@psu.edu).