

Sports

Bright outlook for 1981 season

Rebuilding the defense will be a major priority for Penn State's 1981 spring football practice, which began April 7, as the Nittany Lions prepared for their 95th season of intercollegiate football.

Head coach Joe Paterno welcomes back 39 lettermen from last year's 10-2 team, which capped an outstanding season with a 31-19 victory over Ohio State in the Fiesta Bowl and an eighth-place ranking in both final wire service polls. However, only six defensive starters and five offensive starters are back from that win over the Buckeyes.

"Our first concern will be to rebuild the defense," says Paterno, who is beginning his 16th Penn State season with a 141-31-1 record. "We have lost a lot of fine players on defense and we've lost our defensive leaders. We have to replace our down people and defensive end Gene Gladys, who was playing extremely well at the end of the year."

Heading the list of returning players on defense are defensive end Rich D'Amico, linebackers Chet Parlavacchio and Ed Pryts, Hero (outside linebacker — strong safety) Matt Bradley and defensive halfback Paul Lankford, all of whom started in the Fiesta Bowl win. Defensive halfback Giuseppe Harris, who alternated with senior Grover Edwards, also could be counted as a returning starter.

In addition to Edwards and Gladys, the Lions must replace safety Pete Harris, and down linemen Frank Case, Greg Jones and Pete Kugler.

"We have as strong a secondary as we've ever had," Paterno notes. "Paul Lankford, Giuseppe Harris and Matt Bradley return as starters with some outstanding young players contending for playing time. We have two

returning starters at linebacker and with a good spring, that position could be a strong suit for us."

Even though Penn State must replace more players on offense, Paterno is optimistic about that phase of the game, because his returnees are at the key positions.

"We have some outstanding skill position people," Paterno explains. "Our wideouts and running backs should be strong. Our offensive line has a lot of potential."

"Sean Farrell is as good an offensive guard as there is in the country, bar none; and he was last year. Mike Munchak is a candidate for All-American honors at guard if he returns to his past form; if Mike is healthy, then we will have the best set of offensive guards in the country."

"And certainly Curt Warner is one of the top tailbacks in the country."

Farrell and Warner lead the returning offensive starters, which also include tackle Dave Laube, quarterback Todd Blackledge and flanker Kenny Jackson.

Warner rushed for 922 yards and returned two kickoffs for touchdowns last year as a sophomore. Blackledge completed 47.8 per cent of his passes for 1,037 yards as a freshman and his favorite target was fellow freshman Jackson, the Lions' leading receiver with 21 catches for 386 yards and five touchdowns.

Penn State loses tight end Brad Scovill, tackle Bill Dugan, guard John Wojtowicz, center Bob Jagers, split end Tom Wise and fullback Booker Moore to graduation.

"On offense, we just replace three key players on the line," Paterno says. "A lot depends on how well Mike Munchak recovers from his knee injury. And Todd

Blackledge must become a lot better at doing the little things that will make us a consistent offensive football team."

Paterno also is optimistic about the kicking game, annually one of Penn State's strong suits.

"I think our kicking game can be good again," he notes. "Whether it can be as good as last year, I don't know. Ralph Giacomarro is back for his third season as the punter (43.3 average last year) and Brian Franco has a chance to be a fine placekicker."

Herb Menhardt, who kicked 15 of 21 field goals and was 26-for-26 in extra points, was the Lions' other key loss.

Paterno had his rebuilding accomplished by May 2, when the Nittany Lions played their annual Blue-White game in Beaver Stadium.

He and his staff will spend the summer preparing for a schedule which includes four top 10 teams — Alabama, Nebraska, Notre Dame and Pittsburgh — from the final polls last year. The Lions open against Cincinnati Sept. 12 in Beaver Stadium.

Spring intramurals bloom

By Donna Roberts

The Spring term intramural program is underway! This year there are approximately 300 students participating in the softball and bowling programs. Many of the students participate in both sports.

Towards the end of the winter term posters were hung announcing the program. A limit was set as to the number of persons per team and seventy five cents per person fee was requested.

"Generating interest is not really a problem for intramurals at this campus," said Bruce Young, director of the program.

For example, 19 teams signed up to play softball. The scheduling of the games was done by random selection and divisions were

set up to allow for the most possible playing time.

Mr. Young added, "Sustaining interest in the program is somewhat of a problem. There are teams that, after losing a couple of games, realize that they do not have a chance to win the championship and then do not show up for the rest of their games. This attitude is really going against the total philosophy of intramurals. Intramurals are designed to provide all students with a chance to enjoy their leisure time in friendly competition. Leagues are organized to provide some structure to the games. Competition is emphasized, but winning the championship is not the only goal. Participation, competition, and fun are the main goals of intramurals."

Tennis season draws to a close

— mens tennis —

This year's women's tennis team, coached by Deidre Jago, compiled an impressive winning record despite the lack of inexperience of several team members.

The girls finished the season at the C.C.A.C. Championships at U-Park on May 8 and 9.

The squad consists of Bill Skortin, Bob Stein, Jon Liming, Pat Pryzbyski, Jim Bagley, and Pat McKinley at singles, with singles alternate and doubles standout Matt Brady filling out the starting team.

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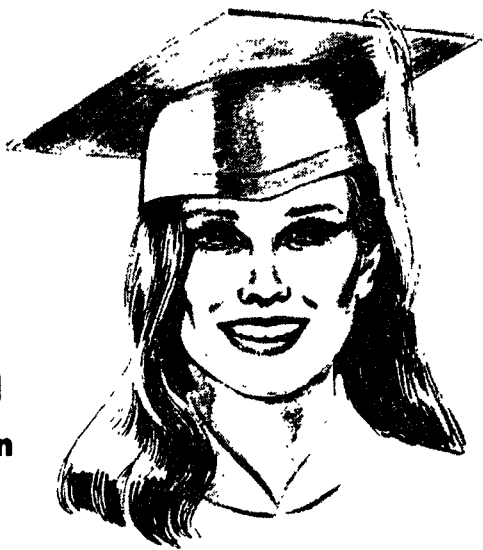
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