

Eye on Sports

Cashing in on a Great Year

PSU Gear Flying off Shelves as Lions Look Bowl-Bound

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The Nittany Lions are making a roar both on the field and in stores. The Lions have a winning record of 8-1, losing only to the Michigan Wolverines.

Anyone who has visited State College during game time knows that the streets and Beaver Stadium are filled with blue and white. The sight of people wearing Penn State clothing is enough to make a non-wearer feel left out and without team spirit.

The seven stores purely dedicated to Penn State merchandise in downtown State College see surges of sales during winning seasons, although sales do continue in down-times.

Renee Lutz, store manager of the on-campus bookstore, has a six-year history selling Penn State merchandise at Delco.

"Penn Staters start the season off believing that this is the season that we will be undefeated every single season. And as the team picked up, we really noticed a surge after the Minnesota game," she said.

The winning season brings more off-campus locales to the bookstore looking for ways to get ready for a game.

"People call and ask for random things," Lutz said. "They want Penn State cups, napkins, plates and blue band music for parties. One woman called looking for tickets and one guy came and bought \$30 worth of magnets to cover his car."

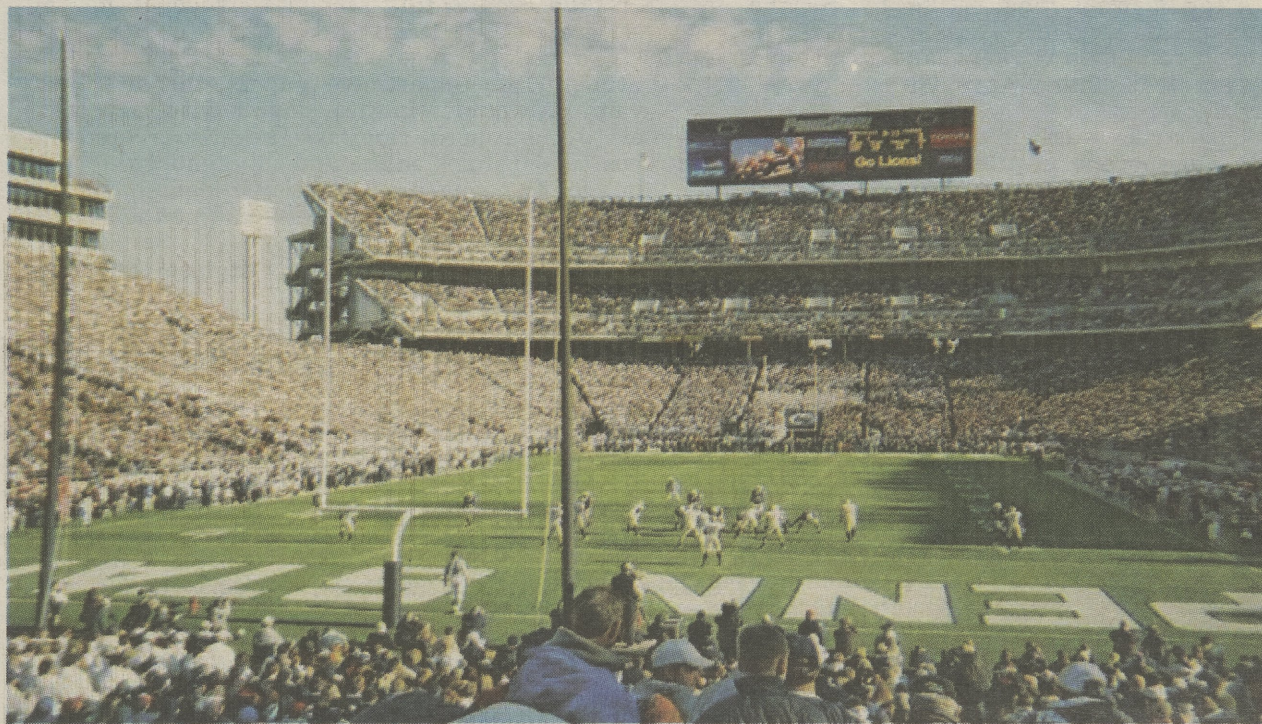
A winning season also brings a different business strategy. Inventory needs to be checked more often, and the shelves need to be restocked.

Lutz starts planning for the fall season in March. This past March, Nike turned down an offer to produce Penn State jerseys but Lutz is sure that Nike will make a commitment next season.

The hottest items selling on campus are \$1.25 buttons, while statewide[they have] been T-shirts which shout the words "We're Back!"

The bookstore does not use the winning season as an excuse to mark up prices. Penn State merchandise ranges from the \$1.25 buttons to \$50 sweatshirts here on campus.

"Penn Staters are off on their own when it comes to school spirit. When we're winning, we need to make sure we have inventory flowing in to keep people happy. They always want stickers, Penn State license plates and magnets," said Lutz.



Penn State football team's winning record has meant a windfall for merchandisers. Photo by: Frank Friday

Baseball Team Set to Spring into New Season

By KATIE NEWS
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The men's baseball team, defending east champions, finished up their fall season in first place with a 10-3 record and a two game lead in the PSUAC-East division.

This season, for the first time, their record will be carried over into the spring season and combined with that record.

The fall season was led by returning players; Chris Napoli, Devin Zuczek, Jim Watkinson, Jon Brady, Karl Jastrzebski, and Frank Flaim. Two key players who helped the team immensely this season were transfers from Widener; Chris Mecariello and Jim Porecca.

Along with those returning players came new freshman players; Rosario Messina, Matt Smith, Vinny Evangelista, Carmen DelMastro, Steve Burday, Joe DeSalis, Rhett Whitton, Mike Thornton, and Mike Zachorchemney.

The freshman were able to realize after only a few games that Delco's team was quite a few steps above what they were used to playing in high school, and they soon learned their roles in the team.

Jon Brady and Karl Jastrzebski again led as the top two pitchers in the Eastern division while Jim Watkinson and Vinny Evangelista were able to prove as strong relief pitchers.

The baseball team's combined record over the past two seasons is 28-8, an excellent record to hold.

Freak Play Ends Soccer Squad's Playoff Dreams

By KATIE NEWS
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The Penn State Delco soccer team, with a final win over PSU York, finished the season with an 8-5 record in the league and 8-6 overall.

Their season started off slow with several starters injured. Injuries included freshman standouts Denny Nicholson, Dave Hartman, and All CCAC defenseman and Tri-Captain Critter Wrigley.

The low point of the season came when the team's record dropped to 2-4 with an 8-1 ham-

mering by Penn College. After that game, it was realized that the team had to clear a 7-0 run to make it to the playoffs, and this became the team's goal. And with four of the seven games being played against teams who had much better records, the possibility of this occurring seemed almost impossible.

But, with the return of some key players, things seemed to be looking up for the team. The game that would decide whether the Lion's made it to the playoffs was played against Penn State Hazleton (12-1) on a cold rainy day. The Lion's took

their places on the field with determination set in their minds that they were going to win.

"A freak play in the mud in front of the Delco goal ended the Lions playoff dreams," said coach Jim Gastner.

"The Penn State Delco soccer team showed that they truly had the hearts of Lions as they turned a potentially dismal season into a heroic quest for athletic greatness. This team has represented the campus well and will continue to be a force in the CCAC for years to come."