

Brandywine Sports

PSU Brandywine Baseball in Pursuit of World Series Title



Penn State Brandywine's Baseball field
(Photo courtesy see of Kieran Mason. Lion's Eye Sports Co-Editor)

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As the winter weather starts to slowly fade away, baseball season will soon be upon us. With just a few weeks until the start of Spring Training in Cocoa Beach, Fla., the Penn State Brandywine baseball team is focused on the 2012 season.

After a fantastic 2011 campaign, finishing with a 14-4 record overall and the runner-up in the Penn State Athletic Conference (PSAC) the Brandywine club, along with third-year head coach, Tom Calvecchio, have their eyes on a trip to Springfield, Ill. and a National Championship. "In prior seasons, we looked strictly to just walk up to the plate and try and hit the ball around, but this year will be different," Calvecchio said. "This season we need to be more productive and play good defense."

Alongside Calvecchio, is returning assistant coach, Brian Neitz and first year assistant coach, Ian Whinnery. All three coaches were teammates on the baseball team at Lock Haven University and they hope to continue the success of the program, according to Whinnery.

Last year's one-run loss in the championship game to rival Penn State Greater Allegheny still leaves a bitter taste in the mouths of the coaches and returning players. "It's kind of like an East versus West thing, on who can top each other each year," Calvecchio said.

The two schools have been rivals for the for the past few seasons due to the fact that Greater Valley has ended Brandywine's season the past few years. According to Calvecchio, the thing that sets the two programs above the rest is their recruiting tactics. Both programs scout both inside, as well as outside of

Feb. 24 at Southern Virginia University 1:30 PM
at Southern Virginia University 3:30 PM

Mar. 3 vs. Miami Hamilton @ Vero Beach Sports Village - Field 1 7:00 PM

Mar. 4 vs. Susquehanna University @ Lakewood Park, Fort Pierce 1:30 PM
vs. Lebanon Valley College @ Lakewood Park, Fort Pierce 4:30 PM

Mar. 5 vs. Miami Hamilton @ University Stadium 7:00 PM

Mar. 6 vs. Rochester College @ Vero Beach Sports Village - Field 5 3:00 PM

Mar. 7 vs. Bridgewater State @ Vero Beach Sports Village - Field 1 9:00 AM

Mar. 8 vs. Patriotes Academy, Quebec @ Vero Beach Sports Villiage - Field 1 12:00 PM

Pennsylvania which sets them apart in hope to pull in some talent outside of the Delaware County region.

Returning second basemen, Travis Crammer, who hails from Cerritos, Ca. is the player to watch this upcoming season. The All- Conference player provided a much needed spark last season batting a staggering .420 while also stealing 40 bases on the season. Also returning is Downingtown native, Charles "Tre" Herman who was the most consistent pitcher on the team in 2011 and is going to be a key player for Penn State Brandywine this season.

Coaches will be looking for shortstop, Anthony Kyne to play a key role in the lineup, who is put in a big spot with shoes to fill after the graduation of former shortstop, Tom White. "I think that there's a great group of guys on the team who are capable of doing big things and hopefully that is going all the way this year," White said.

Penn State Brandywine opens up their 16-game season March 11 at home against Swarthmore College at 3:00 p.m. The game that everyone has circled on their calendars is on March 24, when they travel to face their nemesis, Penn State Allegheny, who has had the upper hand on them the past few years. "This year we want to make the trip to Springfield and play for that World Series, that's our ultimate goal," said Brian Nietz.

Penn State Brandywine's Women's Basketball

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It was a rough start for the Penn State Brandywine women's basketball team this year. The season started off with a victory on November 16th 2011 however the next three consecutive games ended in defeat by significant points. The girls saw another victory on December 2nd 2011 against Penn State Greater Allegheny. After this game the season went downhill for the Brandywine team as they lost one game after the other.

When asked about the consistent defeats Amanda Congialdi said, "The season had its ups and downs. We got off to a slower start than I thought we would, but we worked hard every day at practice because we knew we had the talent to turn the season around"

Like Amanda said the team knew that they had to work hard and turn the season around that is exactly what they did and accomplished a nine game winning streak.

"Winning nine straight games was a huge for us. It was a confidence booster for the team and it gave us a great momentum going in to the play offs," said Bobbi Caprice.

The team won fourteen out of the twenty four games they played in the season so far.

Another big highlight for the team was on January 12, 2012 as the teams coach Larry Johnson celebrated his one hundred wins of his career. When the second

half of the game started it seemed like the game was not going in favor of the Brandywine team but Shari Harper made it happen by scoring eighteen points in the second half.

"We played pretty bad for 30 minutes," Johnson said. "I don't know how we pulled it out. We started a run and came back from 16 down. A 17-2 run got us back into it and we pulled it out."

"It's a great achievement," he said. "I have to thank all the girls who played for me this year and in the past. Without them, this wouldn't have been possible... These are girls who are just playing for the love of the game. That's why I love this level of basketball. It's not about the money; it's the love of the game."

The Brandywine teams also celebrated their only senior player Shari Harper as she played her last home game. Shari has been playing for coach Johnson for the past four years. Shari has had many achievements to her name one of them being a thousand point scorer this year.

"I was excited not only to be known as a Penn State Brandywine basketball player but also to know that I became of the few female players to reach their thousand points," said Shari Harper.

The last home game was played against Penn State York on February 14, 2012 defeating the guest team by forty points making their way into the play offs.