

Penn State Sports

PSU Welcomes New Coaches

By: Kieran Mason - *Lion's Eye Sports Editor* - kdm5066@psu.edu



Newly appointed head football coach, Bill O'Brien and family get a warm welcome from the fans at the Bryce Jordan Center on Jan. 8
(Photo Courtesy of Pennlive.com)

When the Board of Trustees announced the firing of Joe Paterno on November 9th, the reaction was eminent within the Penn State community on how they felt about the immediate change at the head coach position. With three games to go in the regular season and the chance to play in a bowl game, the Board of Trustees at Penn State made their decision to fire Paterno after the sexual abuse scandals involving former defensive coordinator Jerry Sandusky became public.

As the search for a new head coach was in place, many fans thought that the board may hand the head coaching job over to the interim coach Tom Bradley. This was not the case. Shortly after the Nittany Lion's 30-14 loss to Houston in the Ticket City Bowl, speculation

started. At first, Tennessee Titans head coach, and former Penn State offensive lineman (1978-81), Mike Munchak was their target. While the rumor was never officially verified, it was apparent that Munchak did not want to return to his alma mater.

Next, New England Patriots offensive coordinator Bill O'Brien became the top candidate. On January 7th, it became official when Bill O'Brien was introduced to the media as Penn State's fifteenth head coach in the school's history.

The hiring raised many eyebrows, being that O'Brien does not have any affiliation with Penn State and that his Patriots were still in the midst of making a run at the Super Bowl. Many previous players called for a "Penn Stater" to fill the vacancy. Arguing that only Penn Stater's know the direction the team, and Joe Paterno's legacy, should follow. Even though the Patriots were in the playoffs, O'Brien took the time to make the trip to State College during the Patriots first round bye to address the media.

During the press conference O'Brien said all the right things; including his appreciation for all that Joe Paterno had done, devoting his life to the football program and the university. Like Paterno, O'Brien also a Brown University Alum. Being on the east coast, O'Brien always had a liking of Penn State.

As the press conference went on, O'Brien informed the media that he was in the process of putting together his own staff, being that the university wanted to "clean house" as far as the coaches were concerned. He made it clear that he would be keeping coaches Larry Johnson and Ron Vanderlinden, stating the admiration he had towards the two, and what they have brought to the program over the years.

Vanderlinden is known for shaping Penn State's linebackers into the best in the country year in and year out. His position coaching led to Penn State's infamous name "Linebacker U." Larry Johnson, father of former Penn State greats Larry and Tony Johnson, will also remain defensive line coach.

Since that press conference, O'Brien has named the rest of his staff. These gentlemen include Ted Roof (Defensive Coordinator), John Butler (Secondary), Mac McWhorter (Offensive Line), Charles London (Running Backs), Stan Hixon (Wide Receivers/Assistant Head Coach), and John Strollo (Tight Ends). All these men have had tremendous success at programs like Auburn, Alabama, South Carolina, and NFL coaches.

O'Brien, along with the rest of his newly appointed staff, can first be seen on the sideline at Beaver Stadium during the Blue-White game on April 21st. The Lions will be put to the test on September 21st, when the Ohio Bobcats head east to play Penn State in the 2012 season opener.

Brandywine Women's Basketball

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The Penn State Brandywine Women's basketball team will host Penn State Fayette on Saturday, Feb. 11 at 1 p.m. in a game benefiting the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) Pink Zone.

The WBCA Pink Zone is a global network of women's basketball coaches dedicated to raising breast cancer awareness on the court, across campuses and in their communities.

Admission to the game is free, and it will be played in the Penn State Brandywine Commons

Building/Athletic Center Gymnasium. The Campus Bookstore, located on the first floor of the Main Building, is currently selling official Pink Zone t-shirts and will sell them at the game as well. Five dollars from every \$15 adult shirt purchase and \$2 from every \$10 youth shirt purchase will be donated to the WBCA Pink Zone organization.

Besides all of the festivities going on during the day, this game is significant for both teams. The girls are currently 8-2 in the league and are battling for the top seed in the Pennsylvania State University

Athletic Conference. After their big win against league rival, Penn State Beaver, the next big opponent for girls is Penn State Fayette! A victory on February 11th will ensure the girls a top seed and a home playoff game! The Brandywine women's team is working hard to become the first team in school history to win back to back championships!

Come out and support a good cause and cheer the girls on in another big victory!



(Photo Courtesy of chronicle.northcoastnow.com)

as the Penn State football team is going through changes with a new head coach, the Penn State Men's Basketball team did the same just a few months ago. At the helm this season is Patrick Chambers, who last year took Boston University to the NCAA tournament, where they would lose in the first round to the number one seed Kansas Jayhawks.

Chambers, who hails from Radnor, Pa, has a great knowledge of the game, and his resume proves it. His

Penn State Hoops sit at bottom of Big 10

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coaching stints include being assistant coaches at Delaware Valley College, his alma mater Philadelphia University, and at Villanova University under Jay Wright. All before being named the head Coach at Boston University in 2009. During his time in Boston he had a record of 42-28 and an astounding conference record of 23-9. The Penn State community hopes that he can continue that success in Happy Valley.

Last year's coach, Ed DeChellis, surprised many that he decided to leave Penn State for Navy after the best season the school has had since 2001. Last season the team was led by senior guard Talor Battle, and eventually lost to Temple on a last second shot in the first round of the NCAA Tournament. Since that time Talor Battle, as well as Andrew Jackson, Jeff Brooks and Andrew Jones, have all graduated. This left Tim Frazier to carry the weight this season.

This season has been anything but spectacular thus far, but that is to be expected with a new coach and the young talent that Penn State has. Since starting off the season 6-1, it seemed as though Penn State had not lost a step despite all

the changes this off season, but that would soon change. As the rest of the Big Ten continues to find a way to win, Penn State does not. They now find themselves in last place of the Big Ten and the only team with a losing record.

On the brightside, Tim Frazier has many people turning their heads by his impressive play in the backcourt for the Nittany Lions. He is averaging 18 points, 4.9 rebounds, and 6.3 assists per game. Other key contributors include Cameron Woodyard, Jermaine Marshall, and Billy Oliver. All have been working well together in the absence of last season's graduating seniors. Although they are not having the season they could have wished for, the season is showing promise as the schedule winds down. Their true test lies in the remaining games against teams like Nebraska, Iowa, Wisconsin, Northwestern, Purdue and then Michigan to end the season. These games will not be easy, but if they can finish the season strong by winning at least four games, they may get a bid to play in a tournament such as the NIT.