

# Young grapplers face killer slate

By RICK WEBER  
Daily Collegian Sports Writer

Penn State wrestling coach Bill Koll has been around long enough to know that he can't accurately assess his 1977 squad this early in the season.

"I don't want to put a burden on them and say they're great," said Koll, who's in his 14th season as head mentor of the Lion grapplers. "Yet, I don't want to say the potential isn't there."

"I'm a very hard person to satisfy, especially early in the year. I've gotta see them go a couple of tough matches to see if they have the fire."

Koll said this year's squad is typical of the teams he's had in the past — well-conditioned, aggressive and tough. If that's the case, then good things are in store for Koll and assistant coach Andy Matler.

But the Lion wrestlers will still be hard-pressed to match the accomplishments of last year's team — a young, inexperienced team which Koll molded into a big winner.

The Lions rolled up an 11-1 regular-season record, won the Eastern Wrestling League title and placed 18th in the NCAA Championships in March. Penn State lost to Michigan, 32-16, in the third match of the season, then racked up nine straight wins, including a big victory over Lehigh for bragging rights in the East.

Penn State loses just one starter from last year's team, but it's a very, very big loss. His name is Jerry White and he's already a legend at Penn State. Last year, White went 15-0-1 during the regular season (including a team-leading four falls) and placed third in the NCAA Championships.

"You can never replace a kid like Jerry White," Koll said. "He is one of the really outstanding wrestlers in Penn State history. In my 30 years of coaching, he was one of the top wrestlers I've coached."

White will be sorely missed, but the Lions do return a solid nucleus including Mike DeAugustino at 118, Geoff Brodhead at 142, Bill Vollrath at 150, Dave Becker at 158, Bill Bertrand at 190 and Sam Sallitt at heavyweight.

118 — DeAugustino has this one all to himself. The sophomore from North Allegheny High School, where he was a three-time champ, recorded a 15-3 slate last season and advanced to the national quarter-finals before he was defeated. "Unquestionably, he is a talented young man," Koll said. "He's a good, tough wrestler."

126 — Freshman Scott DeAugustino, Mike's younger brother, went out over senior Ray Frantz in eliminations this week. Scott, a two-time PIAA state champ, has been bothered by a back injury but has almost recovered. Frantz, also a two-time state champ, was 1-5-3 last season.

134 — Sophomore Bernie Fritz will start the season here. Jimmy Earl, who started at this weight last season and notched a 13-5-2 record, broke a finger and will be out of action until January. Fritz, brother of John, an NCAA champ in 1975, hails from Bethlehem Liberty High School. "He's young, but he's come along very well," Koll said.

142 — Brodhead has the advantage over Dan Crawley here. Brodhead, a sophomore, beat Crawley once in eliminations and needs to beat him again to nail down the spot. Brodhead, a Missouri state champ, went 3-5-1 last season.

150 — Vollrath returns here after posting a 14-3 record last year. The senior co-captain from Hattboro qualified for the NCAA's but lost his opening round bout. Koll calls Vollrath "a good, steady wrestler."

158 — Becker, also a senior co-captain, is being counted on by Koll for much of the team's leader-

ship in the absence of White. Becker went 15-2 last year and lost his opening round match in the national tournament. "He's one of the premier takedown artists in the country," Koll said. "He's superb on his feet."

167 — Rick Snyder, a sophomore transfer from Williamsport Community College, has edged out senior Ashley Swift (7-8 last year) for this spot. Snyder is a former state champ from Montoursville High School. "He's a different type of wrestler," Koll said, "but he's effective and very dangerous. He lacks experience at this level. He'll have to make the adjustment."

177 — Sophomore Dan Pfautz, a transfer from Keystone Junior College, beat out Sallitt in eliminations for this spot.

190 — Bertrand, a junior from Burgettstown, returns here after posting a 13-3-1 record last year. Bertrand qualified for the NCAA's last season, but was eliminated in the opening round.

Hwt. — Sallitt, who was eliminated at 177 earlier this week, beat out senior Larry Fath for this spot. Irv Pankey could help the Lions out after he completes his obligations with the football team.

"We have fairly good balance and good individual talent, but we're a very young team," Koll said.

Koll said the schedule, which includes Florida, Cal Poly, Oklahoma and traditional rivals Clarion, Navy and Lehigh, "is the toughest Penn State has ever had in its wrestling history. The nice thing is that most of the tough ones are at home."

According to Koll, one of the biggest problems the Lions face each year comes from the "David-Goliath Complex."

"Every match is THE match for our opponents in the East," Koll said. "We're the Goliath and they're gonna try to knock us off. But it's good for us. Our wrestlers seem to do well."

# Lady spikers' poor finish doesn't blur their progress

By RICH TABIN  
Daily Collegian Sports Writer

The performance in the Eastern regionals at Oswego State University of New York wasn't the best way for Penn State's women volleyball team to end its season.

But just getting to the playoff tournament, which was almost beyond Coach Tom Tait's expectations at the beginning of the year, and the Lady Lions' final regular season 24-15 record in total matches, was enough to make Tait "very pleased" with his team's season performance in only its second year as a varsity sport.

At regionals, where Penn State was seeded eighth, the tournament began on a promising note with the Lady Lions defeating their opening opponent, 16th-seeded Syracuse, 15-11, 14-16, 15-13, in the best-of-three match.

But it was all downhill after that as Penn State dropped the next two contests in its bracket, to fourth-seeded Edinboro and Cortland, seeded 12th. The losses ruined any chance of the Lady Lions getting into the championship bracket.

"We didn't play consistently," Tait said. "We got away from our gameplan and didn't play the brand of ball we are capable of."

Against Brockport (in the consolation round), the girls didn't give up, but the match was naturally very anticlimactic to what we had been hoping for," he added.

The loss to Brockport in the con-

solation bracket ended both the tournament and the season for Penn State's lady spikers, but the significance of this year was not lost by either Tait or his players.

"I was relatively pleased with the progress we made," Tait said. "We had a tough schedule and it gave us the confidence that we needed."

"Remember, we beat both Maryland and East Stroudsburg (this year's large and small college Eastern champions, respectively), during the season and from that standpoint I'm pleased," he added.

Cindy Brennan, one of the top setters and a mainstay of the club, also looked at the season positively.

"We are basically a good team," she said. "We have the ability to do well, we're just inconsistent for some reason."

"We could be a very good team next year," Brennan added. "Our bench should be a lot stronger too, because the girls that were freshmen this year will have some experience." For next season the Lady Lions only lose Cindy Prunget through graduation, and maybe captain Jeanne Prusak, who is still an uncertainty. Although Terry Wilson, a senior, she has a year of eligibility left.

Tait summarized his optimism for 1978 and the results of the just-passed season.

"Next year we'll have a great nucleus back and a lot more experience, and I hope more consistency," he said. "We made an enormous amount of progress this year and I think we ended up one of the better teams in the East."

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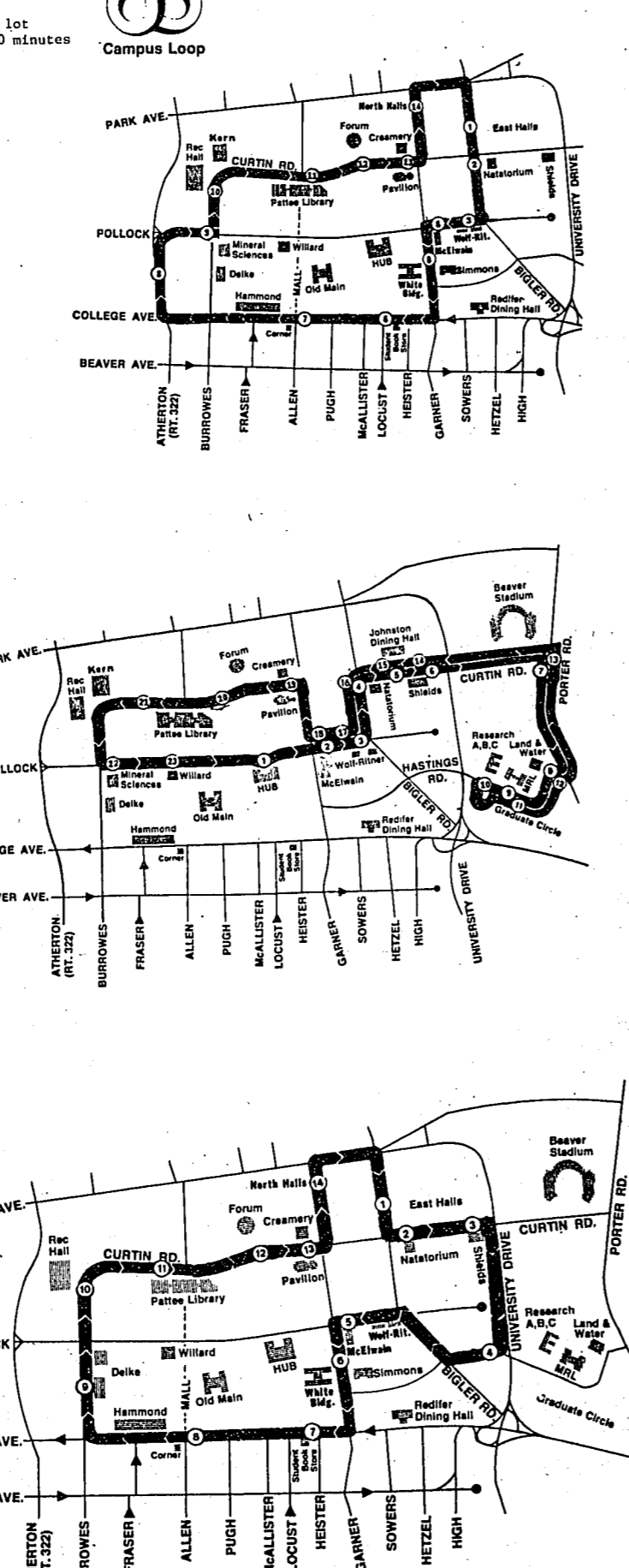
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