

Netters put win streak on line against Princeton

By JON SARACENO
Daily Collegian Sports Writer

For the men's tennis team, Saturday's match with the East's top tennis team can be summed up in a single word.

Important.
The Lions, 15-1, will put their 14-game winning streak on the line at Princeton. They are one win shy of setting the school record for victories in a season. A win over the Tigers would give them a better chance at being selected to the NCAA Championships held in Georgia in May.

Princeton, 10-5 overall and 5-0 in the Eastern League, is ranked 20th nationally. A victory over the Lions would virtually assure Princeton a trip to Atlanta next month. Princeton has only been beaten by schools ranked in the top 20 this year — UCLA, North Carolina, Cal at Berkeley, Trinity and Utah.

Although they are playing the role of the underdog, the Lions are confident going into Saturday's match.

"We are loose and ready to play," said

Mark Darby, State's No. 1 ranked player. "If we win this match we ought to go to the NCAA's," Darby said.

Undefeated sophomore sensation Tim McAvoy is a bit more cautious about receiving a bid to the NCAA's. "Everyone is getting psyched in practice to play Princeton. It would certainly improve our chances if we beat them, but as a team it's unlikely we'll go," McAvoy said.

Lion coach Holmes Cathrall said his team has nothing to lose against Princeton.

"We have everything to gain and nothing to lose. They are ranked, we're not," Cathrall said. "My problem is to keep our players from getting too psyched up. That's when they might make some mistakes," he said.

Princeton coach Dave Benjamin said a loss to Penn State could possibly leave the door to the NCAA's wide open for either the Lions or Princeton to represent the East.

"If Penn State beats us, the NCAA's could be up in the air. It would be an

interesting question to see who would go in that case," Benjamin said.

But Benjamin isn't concerned with the chances of that happening.

"Since they (Penn State) haven't played any ranked teams, and with our record, we should win," he said.

Darby, 15-1 in singles play, has the matches' toughest assignment in facing freshman standout Jay Lapidus, a left-hander who has already captured the E.C.A.C. singles title.

"Playing a lefty is tougher because of the direction they spin the ball," the senior captain said. "We don't have any lefties on our team to practice with, so I hope I'm ready for him," Darby said.

Darby has two things in his advantage. First, he has defeated all three left-handers he has faced this season. Secondly, he defeated South Carolina's top singles player, Chris Mayotte, this spring, while Lapidus lost to Mayotte two weeks ago.

After their match with Princeton, the Lions will travel to Philadelphia to play Temple on Sunday afternoon.



Alex Davidson and the rest of the netmen hope to keep Princeton this afternoon to battle the Tigers. their winning streak (14 games) alive when they travel to

Lion nine: Have bat will travel

By JIM LOOSE
Daily Collegian Sports Writer

The Penn State baseball team does not need to worry too much about seeing a reflection of itself in the Pitt team that it plays on Saturday.

The Lions, 14-4-1, travel to Pittsburgh for a doubleheader with the Panthers, who were 12-9 prior to Thursday's doubleheader with Clarion State.

The big difference in the teams is not the records, but rather the hitting attacks. While the Lions have been hitting a .356 clip as a team, the Panthers have batted only .245.

Coach Chuck Medlar does not expect Pitt to be a pushover, but knows his ballclub will battle the Panthers.

"We expect two pretty good ball games," Medlar said. "It's always tougher to win away from home. But we're a scrappy ball club. We continue to come from behind and we continue to hit the ball well."

Indeed the Lions have hit the ball well. Dave Simononis leads the club in hitting with a .485 average. Simononis also leads the club with 16 home runs and 42 r.u.s. batted in.

George Weigel is the Lions' second leading hitter at .433 followed by Terry Brown (.406) and Keith Muth (.405).

Pitt, on the other hand, has only two batters with averages over .300. Outfielder Tony Roperti is hitting .370 and second baseman Dan Smodic is hitting .323.

Three players are tied with most home runs (three) for the Panthers. They are shortstop Kurt Leithols, catcher Jim Fastin and first baseman Art Bortwick. Bortwick is also a tackle on the Pitt football team.

Jim Farr (4-0, 2.83 ERA) will pitch one of the games for the Lions while Medlar is planning on giving Scott Prohaska (0-0, 1.23 ERA) his first start of the season in the other game.

"Prohaska has finally put things together," Medlar said. "He has straightened out his delivery. He has pitched pretty well in relief and deserves a shot at starting."

Farr has had some control problems recently, as witnessed by the six walks he issued at Buffalo on Wednesday.

"Farr just needs some warm weather," Medlar said. "We had some long innings at bat at Buffalo which gave him a lot of time in the dugout. It was cool and his arm started to tighten up."

"He has had excellent stuff. He's had a good fast ball and a good curve ball. All he has to do is start getting some more strikes over. If we ever get some warm weather, I think he'll do that."

Pitt plans to send righthander Marc Bianco (2-0, 1.7 ERA) and lefthander Don Koller (2-3, 2.50 ERA) against the Lions.

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