



Photo by Greg Bultus

Despite the Lions' 71-42 loss to West Virginia in their season opener yesterday at the McCoy Natatorium, breaststroker Dave Mastrantuono (above) and the men's swim team found much promise for the season ahead.

Mountaineers sink Lions in opener

By GREG LODER
Daily Collegian Sports Writer

Although the men's swimming team was overwhelmed by a superior West Virginia team 71-42 last night at the McCoy Natatorium, a few good things did come out of its season opener.

First of all, in the second event of the evening sophomore Rick Kennedy broke his own Penn State record set last year in the 1000-yard freestyle. Kennedy cut the record down almost a second from 9:51.3 to 9:50.71.

Although Kennedy did break the record, he finished third in the event to two strong West Virginia swimmers.

"He is really fantastic," said coach Lou MacNeill in praising the sophomore. "To break a record in his first meet of the season is super. He is really a gutsy kid."

Kennedy said he was expected to do better.

"I wanted to do a 9:48, but I was pretty happy with the swim," Kennedy said. "I like the 1000-yard freestyle more, but it is usually only swam in championship meets."

As for the team this season, Kennedy did express some regrets about the seven record holders who are ineligible due to academic restrictions.

"It's a little depressing because we could be so much better than we were tonight," Kennedy said. "It's OK to get beat in the pool if you swim well, but we have been beaten out of the pool."

Another bright spot in the Nittany Lions' performance last night was the diving of sophomores Dale Dmitrzak and Mike Cecatiello. Dmitrzak won the one-meter competition and Cecatiello captured the three-meter dive, where Dmitrzak finished second.

Both Dmitrzak and Cecatiello, who happen to be roommates, said they were pleased with their performances.

"I think we did pretty well for our first meet," Dmitrzak said. "West Virginia is an Eastern power and they have had some meets already, which put some pressure on us."

The success of the two divers, according to Dmitrzak, has come through working with each other.

"We couldn't dive if we didn't work together," Dmitrzak said. "We help and motivate each other."

The final bright spot in the meet for

Houston nips Cleveland

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston quarterback Gifford Nielsen, thwarted all season by injuries and the aging shadow of Ken Stabler, came off the bench with a 30-yard touchdown pass to ignite the Oilers to a 17-13 National Football League victory over the slumping Cleveland Browns last night.

Nielsen, slated to become the Oilers' starting quarterback this season before Stabler ended a brief retirement, replaced Stabler in the third quarter with Houston behind 6-3 and hit tight end Dave Casper for the touchdown to put the Oilers ahead for the first time.

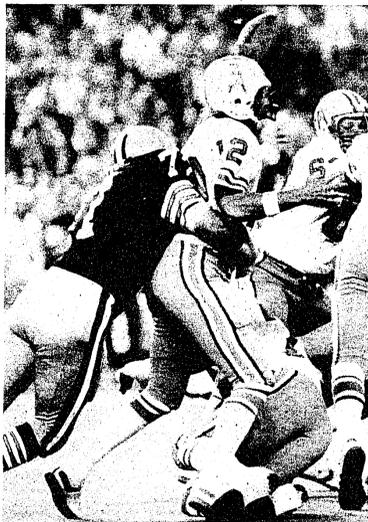
Moments later, when the Browns were forced to punt for the first time in the game, rookie Avon Riley dashed in and blocked Steve Cox's punt, and Adger Armstrong scooped it up and ran 8 yards to the Browns' 3. Earl Campbell drove into the end zone from a yard out.

The Browns, who lost for the fifth time in six games and fell to 5-9, had taken a 6-3 halftime lead on field goals of 18 and 19 yards by Matt Bahr after Cleveland drives had fizzled at the Houston 1-and-2-yard lines.

The Oilers drove to Tom Fritsch's 32-yard field goal on their first series of the game, but could not penetrate the Browns' goal line until Nielsen entered the game to start the second half.

After Houston, 6-8, went ahead 17-6, the Browns struck back with 6:54 left in the game on Cleo Miller's 1-yard run, capping a 77-yard drive that included 34 yards in penalties against the Oilers.

The Browns forced the issue down to the final 20 seconds when Miller was tackled on a fourth-and-goal drive from the Houston 4 following a last-ditch drive that started on the Cleveland 37.



Houston's Ken Stabler (12) is hit by Cleveland's Doug Dieken (73) in last night's NFL game. Gifford Nielsen later replaced Stabler at quarterback to lead the Oilers to a 17-13 win.

The big push: Nittany Lion cagers begin difficult road stretch

By SHARON PINK
Daily Collegian Sports Writer

It's not exactly Murders' Row, but for the men's basketball team, the next seven games on its schedule resemble it closely enough.

The names of the teams look rather harmless in black and white print. But starting at 7:35 tomorrow night against North Carolina-Charlotte (1-0) at the Charlotte Coliseum, the Lions (3-0) will be on the road for six of those games, three of them against possibly the toughest teams they'll face all year.

After Penn State returns from Charlotte, it goes to Hersheypark Arena on Tuesday to play Lafayette. Then next Friday and Saturday the Lions will be in Bloomington, Ind., for their first quality test of the year, the Indiana Classic.

At the Indiana Classic, they'll meet Southern Methodist in the first round and, if they get by the Mustangs, face a possible championship game matchup with the defending national champion and Top 20-ranked Hoosiers.

A week later, Penn State is in Birmingham, Ala., to go against Alabama, ranked 20th in The Associated Press preseason poll. Then it's back to Rec Hall against Nebraska, out to the Cable Car Classic in San Francisco after Christmas for a first-round game with No. 1 North Carolina and to Chicago for a Jan. 2 meeting with DePaul.

The key to performing well in this stretch could be tomorrow night.

"This game is especially important," guard Craig Buffie said, "because if we win this one, we'll be 4-0. And we've got a good shot at winning at Hershey, so that

different things to do and see what happens."

The 6'ers aren't a tricky team. Their defense is man-to-man, and they play pretty much a straight textbook offense. But coach Dick Harter acknowledged the potential Charlotte has.

"They have a very explosive-type team," he said. "They have great rebounding potential."

They also have great rebounding that is more than potential. The 6'ers outrebounded Asheville 40-22, while the Lions and Indiana State were even at 36-36 Wednesday night. But Wednesday was the Lions' best rebounding performance so far, even though their big man, Mike Lang, was only credited with four, a figure Harter said could have been low.

The rebounding effort was consistent throughout the lineup, too, but that's not necessarily good, Buffie said.

"Lango has to get more than the other people," Buffie said. "David Griffin, Dick Mumma, they all have to get a greater share than the guards or small forwards for when we go against team giants."

Harter said he doesn't care if one guy gets 50 as long as the others get four or five each. That's become more important with the loss of 6'7 Rich Fetter. The Lions aren't making any special plans to compensate for Fetter's temporary absence, but it is being felt.

"Rich had a great preseason," Buffie said. "He was playing the best ball he's ever played. We want him back as soon as humanly possible. We'll have him back for the last two-thirds of the season."

"It's a good time for (the injury) to happen — earlier in the season. Because starting Dec. 11 and 12 (the dates of the Indiana Classic), it gets hard."



Photo by Robert Hamner

Freshman Craig Collins (center) gets an early taste of college basketball's life on the road beginning tomorrow night when the Lions travel to North Carolina-Charlotte. Penn State's next seven games are away from Rec Hall.

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