

Leimkuhler no 'chicken'

Consistency is now the name of her game

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"Louise is unreal," Portland said. "She was what we thought would be the chicken of the team. And she has really done a super job."

"Chicken" was the attitude problem Portland had labeled Leimkuhler with in the past, including this year. It started because in college, Leimkuhler's play hasn't exactly been a model of consistency.
"Last year was a lot of up-and-down," Leimkuhler said. "I'd have a good game, and then I'd do terrible."

Part of that, Portland said, was due to the changes that took place in the Lady Lion program when Portland became coach last year, taking over the job from former Penn State coach Pat Meiser, who recruited Leimkuhler and resigned after Leimkuhler's second year here. For much of last year, Portland said, Leimkuhler played as if she were part of the old program, not part of Portland's philosophy — it's not whether you win or lose, it's if you give it your best. And you don't get a night off here.

"Louise fluctuated so much," Portland said. "She didn't really have the consistency and the game that you need to be a true student-athlete. And

as a high school player, she had that, and I saw that. And the program here changed so much that she needed to change, too."

Leimkuhler also needed to mature as a player. The main reason she said her performance fluctuated so much was because she was afraid to play against black players, who she considered much better players than herself.

"I was always intimidated by them," Leimkuhler said. "And I was afraid — I shoot the ball, I eat it. I couldn't do anything, especially when we played Cheyney. I was really afraid. And I'd airball and all that."

It took confidence and verbal prodding from Portland to overcome that intimidation. And it all came to a head before this year's loss to Cheyney.
"When we played Cheyney," Leimkuhler said, "(Portland) was walking around, 'Bawwwwwwwk, baw, baw, baw' like I was gonna be chicken and stuff again. And I was like, 'Not this year. And so I loved it. I faced her. And I don't get a night off here.'"

"So against South Carolina," Leimkuhler said, "when I had to guard

Sheila Foster (who is black), (Portland) was like, 'Well, what are you gonna do, go back in your little thing again?' And it got me really mad that she was saying stuff about me. So I just had to face her and keep facing her. I hope by now she has the idea that I'm not gonna chicken out on her."

Also helping Leimkuhler is the fact that this year she's put more time into her game than any other player in trying to maintain her consistency.
"I've seen the results that happened to Cheryl (Elison) last year because she gave a lot of time last year and improved immensely," Leimkuhler said. "So I figured, 'heck, if I'll work for her, maybe I'll work for me.'"

Against Clemson, Leimkuhler scored in double figures for the 19th time in Penn State's 29 games and for the seventh time in the last 10 games. That string includes the win over Montclair, in which she scored her previous career-high 23 points, on 11 of 12 from the floor to set a school record for field goal percentage in a game — 91.7.

Louise Leimkuhler had her moments in the past, but this year she's getting them in every game.

Levine tops on balance beam

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"Considering the way I felt, I'm pleased with my performance. Especially in the floor."

Another who was pleased with her floor routine was Levine. She finished second to her Lady Lion teammate in the event with an 18.45 total. But it was the balance beam that earned the senior co-captain a visit to the top of winner's stand.

Levine had a career-high 9.50 on the beam Friday, then came back with a 9.35 Saturday to claim her third regional beam championship in four years.

"I guess knowing I had done it before got me through it," said a tired, but happy Levine. "My feeling on the beam was just feel as though I were attacking the beam."

Coch Judv Avener couldn't have been more pleased with the four-year veteran.

"Marcy is just a real trooper," Avener said. "After all the years and all the different meets you'd think that she might get tired of it and not give it her best. But she goes out there and gives it her best shot every time. She's quite a competitor."

The entire team proved to be quite competitive, coming back from a gruesome road trip to compete in a major meet all in a matter of days.
"This is why we all work so hard for so many years," Levine said. "My body's aching right now and I'm really tired of all the travel and all the different meets. But we're in good shape and we love to compete. That's what it's all about."

GYM GEMS: Karen Polak qualified in every event and finished seventh in the all-around competition with a 35.05 total Friday, but didn't compete in the individual competition Saturday because of a

badly stubbed big toe. The injury occurred while the talented sophomore was on her way to the lockerroom after the meet's rivalry.

Linda Tardiff put together a strong 9.10 on the beam Saturday and wound up tied for fifth in the event. She also tied for fifth place in the uneven bars. Anderson finished second on the uneven bars with a 19.05 total. She came up with a 9.30 on Saturday, but that wasn't good enough to catch Pitt's Lisa Shirk, who posted a pair of 9.70s for the uneven bars title. Lucia Cancino of New Hampshire won the vault.

The first NCAA regional meet attracted about 3,000 people combined for the two nights. Perhaps the committee would consider moving the meet to Rec Hall next year, where the crowd would likely be four times greater.

NFL players, owners reopen talks today

WASHINGTON (AP) — Contract talks between representatives of the National Football League players and owners reopened today in the nation's capital with the owners expected to formally reject the players' demands for a fixed percentage of each team's gross profits.

"We will be responding to the players' initial proposals and I don't suppose the union will be very happy," said Jim Miller, spokesman for the NFL Management Council, which represents the owners. "We will reject some outright and point to others where we will feel there is room for discussion which represents the owners."

Miller said it would be a "safe bet to say the fixed percentage of the gross would be one of the items that will be rejected."

While 25 percent of the gross profits is the figure most often cited by the National Football League Players Association, the concept and not the amount appears to be the key to the negotiations.

"I can't say it will definitely be 55 percent. It may be 10, it may be 25," said NFLPA president Gene Upshaw. "The issue of a percentage of the gross profits is what's etched in stone," the Oakland Raider lineman quickly added.

"We are not coming to any agreement unless it is tied to a percentage of the gross," Upshaw warned late last week.

Lady fencers snatch title

By MICHAEL FELICI
Collegian Sports Writer

Last week, women's fencing coach Beth Alphin said she couldn't understand how the Lady Lions could still be ranked No. 1 after two late season losses.

She was given a clue Saturday when Penn State swept through five opponents, three of which are ranked in the top five, by a combined score of 45-18 en route to the Eastern Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women championship held at the White Building.

"I didn't think in the fall when our team consisted of one fencer with varsity experience, two with very little experience and two freshmen, that we would be ranked first," Alphin said. "I wouldn't vote for that team."

"After what I saw, we are probably the best in the country, but we have to fence our best both days of the nationals to come out No. 1."

The Lady Lions were at their best gaining an automatic berth to the national championships. Led by an undefeated performance (9-0) by freshman Hope Meyer, Penn State eased past Fairleigh-Dickinson (9-1), Navy (9-0) and Temple (9-3), April Miller's 6-1 record against Pennsylvania and Rutgers helped Penn State put away the Quakers, 9-7 and the Scarlet Knights, 9-4.

But the brightest light for Penn State was Meyer. The New York City native fencer with the skill of an excellent collegiate fencer although she is only winding up her debut season.

"Hope was phenomenal all day," Alphin said. "She was aggressive and used her height (5-11) and her reach to her advantage beautifully."

"Hope fenced very well today, she was sharp all during," team captain April Miller said.

Meyer said the drills and pointers Alphin gave her during practice helped her greatly in the meet and that the home crowd was also a moral booster.

Meyer said for this meet because it is the Easterns, "I was psyched for this meet because it is the Easterns," Meyer said. "I basically was the aggressor in most of my

bouts."

The Lady Lions expected much stiffer competition from the highly-ranked Owls, Middies and Quakers, but found those schools were no match for Penn State's depth. Alphin used her team as a chessplayer would use its pieces. She substituted Meyer for freshman Alyson Frost in the Penn match when the Quakers were ahead 4-1. After Meyer won her bout, the Lady Lions won seven of the remaining ten bouts to secure the win.

Frost returned the favor when she was put in for Meyer in the Navy match and fended to a 2-1 record. Her second victory of the match clinched the win for Penn State.

"Our opponents didn't expect our strength," Alphin said. "I put Alyson in a pressure situation in the Navy match and she came through as I expected."

Another bright spot for Penn State was the return of Donna Perry, who twisted her knee in a bout three weeks ago. She disobeyed doctor's orders in order to compete.

"The doctor made me sign a paper to waive his responsibility," Perry said. "But when you're fencing you don't think about injuries. It's not 100 percent (her knee) so I'm glad the nationals are still three weeks away."

"Donna was at the best she has been since the fall," Alphin said. "Nobody expected her to be ready for this meet."

As usual, Hanne Skattebol fenced brilliantly using her experience wisely. Down 4-1 against Temple's India Hayes, Skattebol took control and swept the next four touches to give Penn State its seventh victory, putting the match out of reach.

"I got mad and decided to do the job," Skattebol said. "I stayed back and found the openings instead of charging."

Temple took an early 2-1 lead in the championship match, but excitement and impatience got the best of it and caused the Lady Lions to lose eight of the last nine bouts.

"We were a sound team today," Alphin said. "When one girl slipped, another came on strong. If we fence like this in nationals we'll win."

NOTES: In the individual competition held Sunday, Temple's Mary Bliddeaux took first with Lady Lion April Miller finishing second. Skattebol placed fifth and Perry tenth.

Redus' 'grand slam' downs Phillies

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Everybody knew it was a home run except Gary Redus, and it cost the Cincinnati Reds' young outfielder a grand slam.

The score was tied 2-2 with the bases loaded and one out in the bottom of the ninth inning when Redus drilled the ball over the Philadelphia Phillies pitcher Mike Proly over the left-center field wall.

Ordinarily, it would have been a grand slam for a 6-2 victory. But Redus climbed one of the biggest homers of his career into a one-run single when he stepped on first base and then headed for the dugout.

He hadn't seen the ball clear the wall.

"It's just that I wasn't watching the ball," said the 25-year-old Redus, who played on the Reds' Class AA Waterbury team last year.

"The outfielders were playing in pretty close. I knew it was over (the left fielder's) head. I thought it was a single and I started to run to first base," he said.

Reds Manager John McNamara overlooked Redus' baserunning blunder.

"I don't want to talk about it," McNamara said. "He did a good job. He was aggressive at the plate. He just didn't know that the ball went out of the park."

Ron Little, who was perched on third base, scored on Redus' hit for the 3-2 victory. But the other two baserunners, German Barranca and Larry Bittner, stopped when they saw Redus wasn't going around the bases. The Reds loaded the bases in the ninth when Little

ally walked Barranca and Bittner to bring up Redus with the Phillies' fielders drawn in close.

Pirates 9, Expos 1

BRADENTON, Fla. (AP) — Jason Thompson, Johnny Ray, Tony Pena and Eddie Solomon had bases loaded, Sunday as the Pittsburgh Pirates defeated the Montreal Expos 9-1 in exhibition baseball.

The defeat dropped the Expos to 4-5 in exhibition, while the Pirates climbed to 6-1 with their fifth consecutive victory.

Starter Rick Rhoden, the winning pitcher, threw three perfect innings before he was relieved in the fourth by Solomon, who gave up four hits and the Expos' only run.

Pena belted his second home run this year in the second inning off losing pitcher Charlie Lea to score Thompson and Ray. Infielder Dale Berra then rapped a solo homer, his first of the year, to make it 3-0.

The Pirates scored another three runs in the fourth. With the bases loaded, Solomon singled off an umpire's miss, scoring Thompson. Lee Lacy then singled to drive in Ray and Jimmy Smith.

The Pirates got their final three runs in the fifth inning. A base hit by Ray drove in Thompson, who had doubled. Ray moved to second on a pitch and scored on a single by Pena, who was driven home when Smith rapped a base hit.

No practice for Rose, again

CLEARWATER, Fla. (AP) — Veteran Philadelphia Phillies first baseman Pete Rose missed another day of practice yesterday, two days after he stepped to the plate for his first spring training workout.

Rose said he felt better yesterday than he did Saturday, but the team said he would not work out yet.

Manager Pat Corrales ordered Rose to forgo practice after the 40-year-old complained of stiffness and soreness as a result of Friday's training.

Rose missed the first 11 days of training because of a muscle pull in his lower

back suffered Feb. 20 while playing tennis near his home in Cincinnati.

Rose took treatments Saturday morning to relax the spasms that have been causing his discomfort.

Dr. Philip Marone, the Phillies' team physician, said Saturday that Rose could have taken batting practice but should not field grounders in order to avoid unnecessary heading.

Marone said he was pleased with Rose's progress but added, "I expected him to feel this way (Saturday)."

Meanwhile, rookie Len Matuszek has replaced Rose at first base.

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