Swimwomen take pair; splash past Pitt, WVU

By JOSEPH HAAS
Collegian Sports Writer

Any doubts that might have prevailed about the depth of the women's swimming and diving team were answered in dramatic fashion at the University of Pittsburgh yesterday afternoon.

The Lady Lions (5-0) posted an impressive double victory over Pitt (145-123) and West Virginia (161.5-106.5). In the process, a three-year winning streak went by the boards for Pitt. Ironically, the Lady Panthers last loss was to Penn State in January of 1984.

There was some doubt as to how well Penn State would score against a very deep Pitt team, but the Lady Lions answered their critics by scoring three places in all but four of the 16 events. As an added bonus, the team avenged tight losses to Pitt from the last two seasons.

"They swam like champions today, they weren't going to be denied," Head Coach Bob Krimmel said. "The kids earned the victory and really deserve to enjoy it. We're going to enjoy the next two days, that's for sure.

"It was exciting because we didn't lose one close race. It was definitely a team effort all the way through. I don't think I've ever seen so much tension in a pool area before . . . both teams knew that."

"We went into the meet so excited," junior Kathy Zoranski said. "It's a fantastic feeling. I think the biggest quality we showed today was our depth all the way through."

With five events to go Penn State was comfortably ahead of West Virginia, but the Lady Lions led Pitt by only one point. Then the team took first, second and fourth places in the 500-yard freestyle to extend its lead to 10 points. After that, the team never looked back.

"With five events to go, we were up 93-92," Krimmel explained. "We put the pedal on the floor and won going away."

Alisa Hess won the 500 with a time of 5:01:78 just minutes after swimming the 200-yard backstroke. She was followed by freshman Erin Dittmar at 5:01:94.

The whole meet was packed with outstanding individual performances for Penn State including a rare 1-2-3 finish in the 1650-yard (1 mile) freestyle. Hess placed first at 17:07 with freshman Christy Johnson grabbing second at 17:11. Mandy Thompson, normally a breaststroker, completed the hat trick when she came in third at 18:17.

Two Lady Lions qualified for Eastern Finals with personal bests. Kristen Elias won the 200-yard butterfly in 2:01:90 to beat her best by 2.2 seconds. She added another personal best in winning the 100-yard butterfly in 56:48. Dennise Sonntag also qualified for Easterns by winning the 200-yard backstroke in 2:07:78, three seconds faster than her previous best.

Kathy Zoranski pulled out the 200-yard freestyle in dramatic fashion, winning in 1:53:52. She trailed by half of a body length going into the last lap but pushed off strong and won with a big finish. Ironically, Zoranski had been nosed out by the same opponent in last year's meet.

"I was really keyed up to beat her," she said. "I didn't feel that fast but I felt strong and pushed off on the last turn. I said, 'She's not going to get me this year.' "

Zoranski added a win in the 200-yard individual medley (2:09:03) and then teamed with Sonntag, Dittmar and Jill Fretz to win the last event, the 400-yard freestyle relay, in 3:32:18.

LADY LION NOTES: The team will swim in the Pitt Invitational the next two days. Its opponents are Miami of Ohio, St. Bonaventure and Virginia Tech, WVU and Pitt.

Ryan wants his flock in next NFL Pro Bowl

By RALPH BERNSTEIN
AP Sports Writer

PHILADELPHIA — Coach Buddy Ryan is trying to fill the NFC Pro Bowl defensive backfield with his Philadelphia Eagles.

A week ago Ryan said the post-season All-Star game played annually in Hawaii would be a farce without Eagles cornerback Roynell Young.

This week Ryan boosted safety Andre Waters for a trip to Honolulu after the back returned a fumble 81 yards to set up the winning touchdown in an upset 33-27 overtime victory over the Los Angeles Raiders on Sunday.

"If you guys have a Pro Bowl without him (Waters) in it, you ought to be ashamed," Ryan told reporters, forgetting that the players and coaches vote for the Pro-Bowl squads, not the media.

"He is playing as good or better than any safety in the NFL, and I don't think he quite gets the ink that (Dave) Dureson gets," he said, referring to the Chicago Bears back. "That's because Dureson is on a winning team. But I don't think he's playing as good as this kid."

Also during the upset, Waters made his sixth pass interception of the season, with 2:54 remaining in regulation, and led the Eagles with nine tackles.

In 13 games, Waters leads the 4-9 Eagles in interceptions (six), fumble recoveries (three) and forced fumbles (three). He is second in tackles with 97.

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Gymmen look to make progress

By MEGAN CULHANE
Collegian Sports Writer

Last season the men's gymnastics team was just looking to make a decent showing. Riddled with injuries, the squad ended the 1986 campaign with a disheartening 10th-place finish at the NCAA championships. This season, however, the theme is progress.

"Right now I'm more concerned about the team's progress and remaining injury-free," Head Coach Karl Schier said. "In this sport it seems that there is never a complete healing."

With a strong showing at the Metro Invitational Tournament behind it, the team will travel this weekend to the Farmingdale Open at SUNY-Farmingdale.

Two of Penn State's top all-arounders are recovering from injuries sustained last year. Seniors Chris Laux (broken hand) and Spider Maxwell (who missed five meets with a pinched nerve in his neck) are on the comeback trail. But so far the majority of the Lions are healthy. Schier said the injuries that plagued the team last year are now "just nagging things here and there."

The Lion's regular season is set to begin in the middle of January with a trip to Syracuse. Schier said the reason for the two exhibition meets now is to help pull the team together and prepare them for competition.

"These two meets are mainly experimental so we can adjust to being in front of an audience again," Schier said. "I'd like to walk away from every meet healthy or healthier than we were before."

All-arounder Mario Gonzalez, who is currently suffering from slight shoulder and ankle injuries, said the difficulty level for routines has been raised, making competition that much more strenuous.

"Performance-wise we have a lot of new tricks," Gonzalez said. "They've raised the difficulty requirements, so the object will be to hit the new routines well."

Because time is the universal healer, Gonzalez said he will see limited action at this weekend's meet in order to speed recovery. He said team health is improving, however, and sometimes it's necessary to compete in pain.

"Most of the guys are coming along well," Gonzalez said. "You can put up with pain from nagging injuries for a short while, but over long periods it takes its toll."

Gonzalez added that since this year's team consists mainly of all-arounders, a kind of cohesion between the gymnasts is formed, pushing them to higher levels of achievement. He said the number of all-arounders will be an added bonus because it will allow the team to qualify more team members for the NCAA tournament.

Icers begin busy weekend tonight

By DAVE SOTTILE
Collegian Sports Writer

After a two-week layoff, the ice hockey team swings back into action in a big way this weekend as the 8-3 Lions host Maryland today at 9 p.m. and tomorrow at 3:30 p.m. at the Ice Pavillion. The team then hits the road Sunday to play Buffalo State at 2:30 p.m.

The Lions are riding a three-game winning streak, thanks mostly to the emergence of a stingy defense which complements a high-scoring offense. During the stretch, Penn State has surrendered a mere eight goals while scoring 24.

Goaltender Tim Leon Guerrero has played well — allowing just four goals in his last two appearances and lowering his goals against average to 4.49 for the season (10 games played).

According to co-captain Jeff Speece, the Lions recent defensive surge can be traced to adjustments among the defensive corps.

"I think we're starting to get used to our defensive pairings now," the 5-10, 185-pound defenseman said before yesterday's practice. "We're getting used to one another.

"We've been coming around and we're starting to get to know our partners' styles a little better now," he said.

While the adjustment period may be over for the backliners, assistant captain John D'Aloisio says that the rest of the team should be credited for the defensive turnaround.

"Our forwards have really been helping out a lot more," D'Aloisio said. "The more they concentrate on getting back to help out, the easier it is for us."

D'Aloisio said that the defensemen may be thinking a little more about the defensive aspect of the game while leaving the goal-scoring to the forwards.

"We've been making an effort to get the puck out of our end, concentrating more on the defensive side of things rather than goals or assists," he said.

While the Lions have bolstered the defensive side of their ledger, the offensive side remains in the black as well.

Although it may seem like a broken record, co-captain Lynn Sipe still leads the scoring race with nine goals and 16 assists for 25 points. Teammates Jim Yablecki (10-11-21), Rob Smith (10-9-19), and Mike Cardonick (9-10-19) are right on his heels.

Somewhat lost in the limelight of the Sipe-Smith-Cardonick (SSC) line has been the play of wingers Rick Tullio (3-14-17) and Brian Stevenson (7-9-16).

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