

Stickwomen to entertain Ursinus

By BOB LIPSKY
Collegian Sports Writer

The 11th-ranked field hockey team (9-3-1) will host Ursinus at 3 this afternoon in a key Mideast Regional matchup at Lady Lion Field.

The squad, 4-1 in the region, will try to bounce back from last Friday's 1-0 overtime loss at Penn. And a win would greatly boost the Lady Lions' chances to win the region and earn an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

Connecticut, a team that beat Penn State 4-0 earlier in the year, is on top of the region, while the Lady Lions are a close second.

Senior forward Tami Worley realizes the importance of today's contest.

"We need a win going into this weekend because we have a big weekend coming up," she said. "We have to get our confidence back before we play New Hampshire and UMass."

Coach Charlene Morett also hopes a win today will carry over to the weekend.

"Against Ursinus we're looking to dominate the entire 70 minutes," she said. "We want to play well (today) to get us on a roll for the weekend."

The team will travel north for a pair of games this weekend. New Hampshire has a 2-7-1 mark, but several of its losses have come to nationally-ranked teams. Massachusetts will be the big test for the squad. UMass starts the week with an impressive 12-1-1 slate and is ranked No. 4 in the nation.

On Sunday, the Lady Lions will have to contain Tania Kennedy, who leads UMass in scoring with 11 goals and one assist. Goalkeeper Cindy Cox leads a stingy defense with a 0.28 goals-against average and 58 saves.

Morett knows the squad still has several strong teams remaining on its schedule.

"UMass will be very tough," she said. "They lost, in overtime, to Old



Penn State defender Kathy Klein (in white) passes the ball to a teammate during a recent Lady Lion game with Bucknell. The 11th-ranked Lady Lions play host to Ursinus today at 3 at Lady Lion Field.

Dominion (the top team in the nation), but they are a very strong team this year.

"(New Hampshire) is always a tough game and West Chester is going to be a tough game," Morett added.

Against Ursinus last season, the squad found itself behind 2-0 at halftime and needed a miracle to avoid an upset. That miracle came in the form of three second half goals from Worley to give the Lady Lions a 3-2 come-from-behind victory.

The hat trick was the first of Worley's career.

In the recent history of the series, Penn State holds an overwhelming advantage over Ursinus. The Lady Lions haven't lost since 1977 and are 11-0-1 over the span.

Morett has the team working on ball-handling drills to tune up for the contest.

"We need to play a possession (game) aggressively," she said. "We've been playing possession tentatively, and we want to play

more aggressively where we're eliminating defenders with possession.

"We've been passing the ball off for the sake of passing it off, not to pass it off to beat somebody."

The Lady Lions enter today's contest unbeaten on their home turf this season. The squad has compiled an impressive 5-0-1 record at Lady Lion Field.

"We have a very good crowd and that makes a big difference," midfielder Lynette Kidder said.

Gretzky makes his return to Edmonton

By The Associated Press

EDMONTON, Alberta (AP) — In an atmosphere similar to that which surrounded the announcement of his trade to the Los Angeles Kings two months ago, Wayne Gretzky returned yesterday to Edmonton's Northlands Coliseum.

"I haven't really been looking forward to this," Gretzky said during a news conference in the building where he helped build a hockey powerhouse for 10 years.

His every word was recorded by television cameras and by about 200 media representatives. It was reminiscent of a playoff final, not an early-season NHL game.

"It's another situation where all eyes will be on me. It's only game seven of the season and it's on national television," Gretzky said. "Everybody will be watching me."

Gretzky, generally regarded as the greatest player in NHL history, was traded to the Kings on Aug. 9 in one of the biggest transactions in sports history. Through six games, the Kings of Gretzky and former Oilers Marty McSorley and Mike Krushelnyski lead the Smythe Division with a 4-2 record. The Oilers, winners of four Stanley Cups in the Gretzky years, are third with a 2-2-2 mark.

"I think when the game comes, I'll be more nervous. There are too many things going on that I have to deal with before the game," Gretzky said during the one-hour news conference.

Gretzky noted that tonight's game will actually be the second time he's played at Edmonton for an opposing team. The first was in 1978, as a 17-year-old rookie with the Indianapolis Racers of the World Hockey Association.

"I remember it well. I scored my first two professional goals that night."

Gretzky played only eight games for Indianapolis before being traded to Edmonton.

Gretzky said he knew the celebrated trade was coming, even as he

helped the Oilers win their second straight championship last spring.

The trade actually was set in motion, he said, when he signed a five-year contract in September 1987. That deal would make him a free agent at age 31 and "in a position that everyone wants to be in, to be paid full market value."

Gretzky said having that power didn't mean he would choose to leave Edmonton, but that the Oilers interpreted it that way.

"When I signed the contract, I knew the Oilers wouldn't like that and I knew something was going to happen in the course of those five years. When I agreed in September, I figured that would be my last year. I knew I was gone."

Gretzky remains visibly upset over post-trade comments by Oilers owner Peter Pocklington, who accused Gretzky of staging his tearful exit from the city and of having "an ego the size of Manhattan."

"In 10 years here, the organization was good to me and I think I did a few things for them," Gretzky said. "They taught me a lot, helped me through my life. But I don't have anything to say to that man after the comments he made. Some of the things he said left a sour taste. But I don't get mad. I get even."

Because the opponent is Edmonton, Gretzky said he'll have to approach the game differently.

"Because every other game I've ever gone into ... I've disliked who I'm playing against because I want to win," he said. "It's tough in this situation because I know the players and like a lot of them."

Oilers coach Glen Sather, who opposed the trade that cost him the eight-time league most valuable player, now finds himself in a position he had enjoyed forcing upon other teams — finding a way to stop the Great One.

"I'm not playing against him so it'll have nothing to do with coaching," Sather said. "It's what the players do against him. I'll do the same everyone else does: hope and pray."

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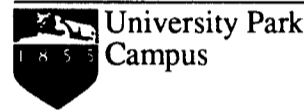


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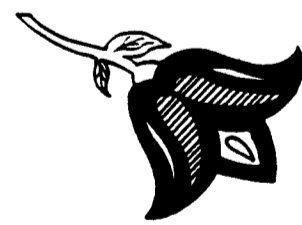
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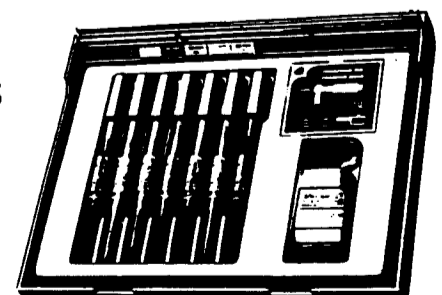
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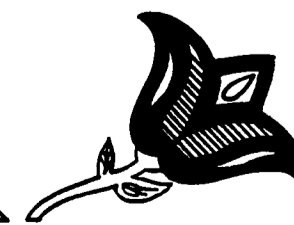
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