

Four stickwomen shine at U.S. Olympic Festival

By CAMERON MCGAUGHY
Collegian Staff Writer

Kirt Benedict put some fear into her field hockey competitors this summer.

The senior forward and three of her Penn State teammates participated this past July in the U.S. Olympic Festival in San Antonio.

"It was serious competition, but it was a lot of fun," Benedict said. "The other teams know we're going to be good. I think we scared them."

Benedict and senior defender Becca Main were on the East team which won the bronze medal with a 2-0 victory over the South. Junior defender Jill Pearsall and senior forward Sharon Kuntz were part of the gold medal-winning West team.

The four were selected to play in the Festival by trying out during a camp at Rutgers University last December.

"It was incredible — the whole experience was fun," Kuntz said. "Everyone was there to play, and the coaches were great. I don't even know if I can compare it to anything."

Kuntz said most of the drills they did were less strenuous and more fun as well, and that the Festival provided a great chance for the

Lady Lions to size up their competition.

"Anytime you get a chance to play against your competition and see what they're like is a good opportunity," she said. "Even though we were competing against each other, we were still there as Penn State."

More importantly, the Festival was a vehicle for the Lady Lions to show the rest of the nation how strong they will be this season.

"The four of us played at a very high level," Main said. "I know we left a lot of people nervous about the season — knowing how well we played."

Although the four had to play against each other, Main said they didn't give away any Penn State secrets to their inquiring Festival teammates from other schools.

All of the players said the Festival was a fun experience. Benedict said they were able to meet and watch many athletes from different sports — including those they usually don't get to see, like men's field hockey.

For Pearsall, the Festival was much more than fun — she provided the gold medal-winning goal for the West team.

"It was an intense time," she said. "It was a great way to prepare



Collegian Photo/Judy Fedor

Jill Pearsall (right) fights for control against Temple last year. She and three teammates played in the 1993 U.S. Olympic Festival.

myself and my teammates for our season. We're really looking forward to playing now."

Pearsall's goal was off a penalty stroke in the last two minutes of the game, and was the only score of the 1-0 win over the North team.

"It was a good opportunity for when I take penalty strokes for Penn State," she said. "It was good for me to take it with the pressure so I could get used to it."

The Lady Lions open their season at home against Syracuse Sept. 10.

UNC, USC primed for Pigskin Classic

By DAVID DROSHAK
AP Sports Writer

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — The teams appear to be mirror images of each other, but North Carolina and Southern Cal just aren't sure what reflection they'll get when they open the season Sunday in the Pigskin Classic.

The Trojans are ranked 18th in the preseason poll, while the Tar Heels are 20th.

The two programs also have a great tradition of running the football, producing the most 1,000-yard rushers in NCAA history, however both come into this weekend's game in Anaheim Stadium with question marks at a key position — tailback.

"It's a miserable time for coaches because you are sitting there with all those unanswered questions even if everybody is back," North Carolina coach Mack Brown said Tuesday. "... What you are trying to do is get everything answered and worked on and as you get closer to gametime and you are running out of time it seems like there is more you need to do."

John Robinson, returning to USC after a 10-year absence, agreed with Brown.

"The funny thing about two-a-day practices is you work against yourselves and one day you think your offense is good and your defense is lousy and the next day you think vice versa. That process leaves you confused sometimes," Robinson said during a teleconference.

Robinson, who won 82 percent of his games at Southern Cal from 1976-82 and won a national title before leaving to coach the Los Angeles Rams, is hoping to return the Trojans to past glory.

"I like them (early games), for us particularly with a new program that is trying to do some things differently," Robinson said. "I would have liked to play 13 games and had a couple of scrimmages."

"It doesn't help either one of our schools now facing each other, but it will certainly help for the next couple of games," he said. "I think we will get an advantage in those games because we would have had more time together."

The Tar Heels are trying to build on a 9-3 campaign that ended with a Peach Bowl win over Mississippi State but also with the early defection of 1,200-yard rusher Natrone Means to the NFL.

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