

Women's Field Hockey

Stickwomen return home with two more tallies in their losses column

By STEVE FEITL
Collegian Sports Writer

The field hockey team had victory in its grasp not once, but twice this weekend. Both times it battled back from early deficits. Both times it had opportunities to put the game away.

Unfortunately for the Lady Lions, both times they came up empty-handed.

No. 4 Penn State (10-8, 4-4 Big Ten) dropped a 3-2 decision to second-ranked Iowa (14-2) Friday and then lost 4-3 in overtime yesterday at Northwestern (11-4).

The Lady Hawkeyes clinched the conference title with their win. The Lady Lions had hoped their season-long ascent through the rankings would result in the Big Ten title, but Iowa stood in the way.

Iowa started off strong and took a two-goal lead in the first half on scores by Ann Paré and Diane

DiMiro. But the second half was a different story.

The Lady Lions came out rejuvenated and knotted the game at two goals a side. First sophomore Meghann Spratt scored with 27:48 remaining to pull the team within one goal.

Then senior Jen Coletta converted a penalty corner into the game-tying goal with 22:46 left in the contest.

"We were playing really good hockey," Lady Lion Coach Char Morett said. "We put the pressure on them and had them on the ropes."

The Lady Lions continued their attempt at avenging their prior loss to Iowa as they continued shooting well on the Lady Hawkeyes.

They had nine second-half shots compared to just one in the first period.

But with 9:20 remaining, Iowa put the game away. Quan Nim put a rebound past Lion goaltender

Shelly Meister and crushed the Lady Lions' comeback with one swing of her stick.

"We fought our way back," Morett said.

"For them to come out of nowhere and get the win is the tough part to take."

It was No. 8 Northwestern with a vengeance on its mind yesterday. Penn State had roughed up the Lady Wildcats for six goals in a Sept. 22 meeting.

The Lady Wildcats broke out to a two-goal lead, but the Lady Lions battled back to take a 3-2 lead on two goals by Coletta and one by senior Jenni Bisignaro.

"After last time we wanted to come out strong and take control," Northwestern Coach Deb Brickey said.

"But Penn State is so strong, of course they came back. I told the team we had to beat them to the ball. I think we did that."

The Lady Wildcats dominated

Penn State in the second half. They drilled Meister with 17 shot attempts while holding the Lady Lions to just three.

Betsy Vance scored her second goal with 15:25 remaining and then completed the hat trick with the game-winner at the 10:19 mark of overtime.

The pair of losses not only ended the Lady Lions' quest for the Big Ten regular season crown but also changes the face of the Big Ten Championships held at Penn State on Nov. 3-5.

The Lady Lions' ranking in the tournament is now an issue, and contests against Michigan and Michigan State next weekend have an added importance.

The team will look to build on what kept the games this weekend close, Morett said.

"We played aggressively," she said. "We made a lot of things happen. It was nice to see because we hadn't done that in a while."



Collegian Photo/Hector Caro

So what does it do?

7-year-old Steven Sarver of Milesburg examines the puck he caught at the Icers game Friday night. The Icers won 17-0.

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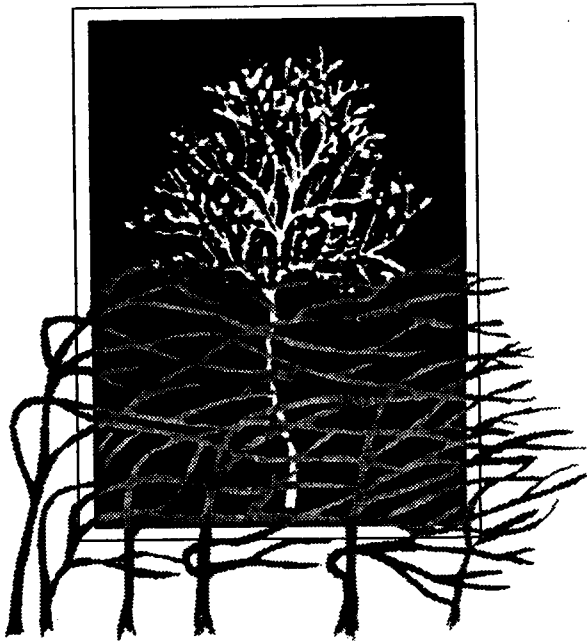
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