

# Laxers to kick it with 'Heels; Lady sluggers trek to Florida

On March 6th the only thing that will separate the Penn State and North Carolina lacrosse teams will be the fabric of their uniforms and a few insignificant white lines.

But in terms of NCAA tournament experience and lacrosse history the two teams are light years apart.

The Tar Heels have appeared in the tournament 18 times and have won four NCAA titles, most recently in 1991. Although the Lions have no such statistics a win over the Tar Heels next Wednesday in Chapel Hill, N.C., would go along way in helping propel them into their first national tournament.

"A win would be a big plus for our program," Lion coach Glenn Thiel said. "It would open up a lot of eyes in the lacrosse world because those kinds of things don't happen too often."

And don't think the players don't realize it either.

"If we beat UNC we would be a lock for the tournament," said attackman Chris Killoren. "But that would mean we couldn't take all of our other opponents for granted and lose a game we were supposed to win."

For the Lions, Thiel said the key will be keeping control of the pace of the game. With a team like North Carolina Thiel said Penn State can ill afford to run up and down the length of the field.

This means the Lions will need to control the ball and keep it in their sticks as much as possible he said.

The Tar Heels are led by tri-captain Brendan Carey who was second on the team last year in scoring with 26 goals, attackman Merrill Turnbull who led the team in scoring with 34 goals and currently leads the team after one game with three goals and three assists.

Rounding out the Tar Heel scoring attack is attackman Spencer Deering who leads the team in goals this season with four which puts him in second, right behind Turnbull, on the scoring list.

As for Villanova the one thing that worries Thiel is that his team does not experience a letdown after their big game against the Tar Heels.

"I hope our kids don't think they absolutely must beat UNC," he said. "I don't want them to think they're stepping off the end of the world if they lose, if we lose it isn't the end of the world."

— by Don Wagner



Courtesy of Penn State

**Karolyn Peterson**  
Lady Lion outfielder

## Lady sluggers hope to expand on solid start

The Penn State softball team travels to Florida looking to capitalize on last weekend's 4-1 record.

The Lady Lions lead off the week with the Florida Atlantic Tournament at Boca Raton, Fla., followed by individual games against South Florida, Central Michigan, Oklahoma State and Indiana State. They will close out the week by competing in the South Florida Classic in Tampa, Fla.

In looking at the week's hefty schedule, Fillipp is concerned with Central Michigan and Oklahoma, but South Florida is no stranger to the Lady Lions. Last year, the Lady Lions came back from a 5-0 deficit to win the game 8-7.

"We really want to beat those two teams," sophomore outfielder Karolyn Peterson said. "They were in the finals in last year's tournament, so we really want to make a good showing against them."

The Lady Lions did not make a good showing against Indiana last year and in this year's South Florida Classic they will meet them before their Big Ten schedule.

Last year the Lady Lions went 1-4 against Indiana and Fillipp said that playing them this early in the season is somewhat unusual.

"It's kind of unusual because in the past one Big Ten team wasn't in the same tournament with the other."

Fillipp questioned whether or not the Lady Hoosiers' pitching staff will be successful this year. Their senior pitcher Gina Ugo pitched about 75-80 percent of their games last year according to Fillipp.

"They only have two pitchers," Fillipp said. "I'm thankful that I have four pitchers that I can go to anytime I want to. I also question whether or not the other Big Ten teams have four pitchers. And if they do, can they count on them? I don't think so."

— by Matt DiFebo

## Spikers to face top foes at Hall of Fame

The Penn State men's volleyball team wants to start its climb back into the Top 10 with a big showing this weekend, but it will have to face a tough task on Saturday.

The No. 13 Lions want to get a big boost by taking a first place finish as they travel to Springfield, Mass., to battle in the annual Hall of Fame Classic tournament. The only problem is that the Lions must face either their long-time nemesis No. 9 Ball State, or the No. 2 team in the nation, Long Beach State.

But first, Springfield College, the second ranked team in Division III, will await the No. 13 Lions at 8 p.m. tonight. They have faced Penn State before, and have fared well in past tournaments.

"Our team usually plays well in the Hall of Fame tournament," Springfield coach Joel Dearing said. "We're capable of competing with them, it's just the matter of being able to handle their size."

On Saturday, win or lose, the situation gets tougher.

Last weekend, Penn State went through the Garden State like a Weedwacker after defeating two New Jersey teams with out losing a single set. "I feel we played very consistent volleyball this weekend," Lion coach Mark Pavlik said. "It was the first week we put all of the phases of the game together, offensively and defensively."

Penn State knows Ball State (10-4), and Ball State knows Penn State very well. They have already met twice this season, with the Cardinals winning each match in straight sets. In the Outrigger Hotels Invitational in January, junior Phil Eatherton hammered home 14 kills to led the team. "Phil is a guy who works hard and so long on little things, he would stay all night to prac-

tice," Cardinal coach Don Shondell said.

The 49ers (9-2) boast a talented group of veteran players. Opposite hitter Tom Hoff will be a tough person to stop, averaging 7.22 kills per game last year. The transfer from Ohio State is part of a formula that, according to Long Beach State coach Ray Ratelle, will turn into one result. "National championship," Ratelle said.

— by Chad Washington

## After big wins, netmen look to avoid letdown

Often times in sports, the lull after a storm of good play leads to a team letdown before the thunder and lightning can kick in again.

But after upsetting Penn and Northwestern last weekend, the 5-2 (2-1 Big Ten) Penn State men's tennis team will hope to avoid that letdown when they travel to Ohio State, Harvard, and George Washington over spring break.

The Ohio State Buckeyes (4-5, 0-1 Big Ten) play host to the Lions in Columbus at 7 p.m. tomorrow. Coach John Daly's squad is headlined by sophomore California native Vo Chu, and 1995 All Big Ten team member Jason Homorody.

Lion coach Jan Bortner said his team uses a modest approach to stay within themselves after impressive wins like the ones last weekend.

"We try to take each match one at a time. If we have a good win, we don't celebrate too much," Bortner said. "We gotta be ready to go after that next one."

The Lions next trek to Cambridge, Mass., March 5th to do battle with the Harvard Crimson. Harvard coach David Fish has his team off to a 5-1 start and ranked No. 1 atop the Northeast Region.

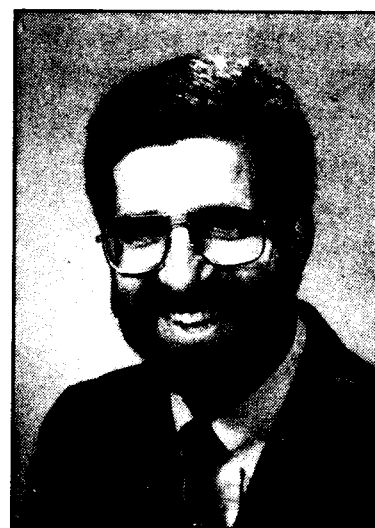
The Lions wrap up their competition over the break with a showdown in the nation's capital on Saturday, March 9th against the undefeated (6-0) George Washington Colonials.

Coach Joe Mesmer's squad, led by No. 16 Rolex Region I player Yuval Karutz, is out for revenge after last year's 5-2 loss to Penn State.

Senior captain Chris Cahill said the Lions can't afford a let down if they want to earn the respect of their upcoming opponents.

"I think it is important that we keep it up," Cahill said. "We don't want people to think that it was a one weekend thing."

— by Jordan Hyman



Courtesy of Penn State

**Jan Bortner**  
men's tennis coach

## Duo eyes revitalization during netwomen's trip

After winning the tennis doubles' tournament championship last year, Tricia Lehman and Olga Novikova had high hopes for this year's Princeton's Invitational. But a pair of Pirates and a couple of Crimson put an end to any dreams the duo from Happy Valley possessed, as Lehman and Novikova lost to Kristin Downing and Kaire Poldman of Seton Hall, 7-5, 6-7, 7-5, then to Ivy Wang and Julie Kim of Harvard, 7-6, 7-6.

The two will try to change their luck next week, when the women's tennis team travels to Orlando, Fla. during spring break for matches against Boston University (March 4), Temple (March 5), James Madison (March 7) and West Virginia (March 8).

"To be honest Trish played well and is playing well," coach Sue Whiteside said. "Other coaches were saying to me how much she improved. She was like the talk of the tournament ... She's got a great attitude. It's really nice to see her shine."

But the Lady Lions are counting on something else other than Lehman to shine next week. For the first time since the fall, the team will compete outside — something that might not seem like a major adjustment but actually is.

While at Princeton, Whiteside said that tiredness and exhaustion played a factor with her two players. She said playing inside, especially at Princeton's facility, can cause a player to become dehy-

drated easier than playing outside.

"They're a good doubles team," Whiteside said of Lehman and Novikova. "It was probably more of a fatigue thing."

As a result, Whiteside said her team needs to have some solid days of practice to condition and focus themselves on playing four matches in five days. But the Lady Lions are not going into the week blindfolded. Doubles player Shannon Etzweiler said Penn State has seen and played those teams before and knows what to expect. "It's not going to be any surprise," Etzweiler said of the other teams' strategies.

Nonetheless, the Lady Lions have had time to rest since its last match against Georgetown on Feb. 20, something that might help prevent any kind of fatigue problem next week.

"I think it's playing to our advantage," Etzweiler said. "Everyone's had a chance to rest ... I think everyone is playing well right now."

— by Rob Amen

## Lady laxers set for Virginia scrimmage

The women's lacrosse team will test its strengths and weaknesses against other Div. I and Div. III schools at the William & Mary Invitational this weekend in Williamsburg, Va.

The Lady Lions and the rest of the teams involved will each play at least 10 games this weekend, each lasting about 30 minutes, according to coach Julie Williams. There are no winners or losers at the games, rather the coaches just get to take a look at their teams in game situations.

"(The players) will use this tournament to see where they need to improve before the start of the season," Williams said.

A lot of the younger players on the roster will be getting some much-needed game experience during the invitational to help themselves get ready for the season. The invite will also let Williams play out different scenarios and see what strategies will work when the team opens its season at home against Loyola on March 13.

"You try to look at different combinations and see what works," Williams said. "We'll see what the kids who are vying for the last couple spots do under pressure."

— by Jim Iovino

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