

Sidelines
A brief look at the world of sports

Scores

NBA

Orlando 122, Phoenix 106
Miami 88, Cleveland 81
Boston 110, Milwaukee 103
L.A. Clippers 104, Philadelphia 102
Utah 104, Minnesota 96
Portland 113, Indiana 108
Houston 95, Vancouver 89
Washington 99, Atlanta 91
New York 104, Chicago 79
San Antonio 106, Seattle 105
Toronto 128, Dallas 112
New Jersey 99, Denver 88
Sacramento 96, Golden State 95

NHL

Tampa Bay 1, Washington 0
San Jose 6, Buffalo 4
Boston 4, Florida 1
Detroit 5, Winnipeg 2
New Jersey 3, Philadelphia 2
Anaheim 3, Los Angeles 2

Schedules

NBA

L.A. Clippers at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Vancouver at Sacramento, 10:30 p.m.

NHL

Dallas at Montreal, 7:30 p.m.
Florida at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.

In brief

Student tickets not available for NCAAs

Due to the very limited allotment made available to Penn State, there will be no public sale of tickets to the Lions' NCAA Championship appearance against Arkansas on Thursday, March 14 in Providence, R.I.

Bud Meredith, Penn State ticket manager, said the NCAA consignment of 350 tickets will be exhausted by demand from the team and coaching staff, University and athletic administration. Seating for the Blue Band must be accommodated within mandated allotment.

Meredith said he has been informed that all seats have been sold for first-round action at the Providence Civic Center, which has a capacity of 12,931.

Game time for Thursday's Penn State-Arkansas game will be announced today.

The Lady Lion-Youngstown State game will be Friday at 8:30 p.m. with tickets at \$10 for adults, \$8 for students for game packages.

Lady Lions: Queens of the Big Ten

By **ROB AMEN**
Collegian Sports Writer

Longworth, Mack give all in tournament
— Page 15

INDIANAPOLIS — With Katina Mack out for the entire championship game after getting hit in the head and sustaining a severely bruised nose during pregame warmups, the Penn State women's basketball team's task of repeating as Big Ten tournament champions grew more difficult.

After all, Mack was making a run at tournament MVP with her inspirational play and two consecutive 20-point barrages in Penn State's 85-70 win over Northwestern in the quarterfinals and 84-70 dismantling of Ohio State in the semis.

Now consider that Lady Lion leading scorer Angie Potthoff dislocated her knee just six minutes into the title game against Purdue and that task just begs for heroics.

But injuries are nothing new to Penn State women's basketball. Then again, neither is bouncing back from them. Even Lin Dunn knows that.

"Angie Potthoff has been injured her entire career and she plays like she's been shot out of a cannon," the Purdue coach said. "Every time I see her pass out, get hit in the head or hurt her knees, she always gets up and scores 30 points."

Close. Team trainers popped Potthoff's knee back into place, and the junior forward returned less than two minutes later to ignite the Lady Lions.

The team's leading scorer burned the Boilermakers for 29 points and 11 rebounds in leading No. 2 seed Penn State to a 71-69 thriller over No. 4 seed Purdue here at Hinkle Fieldhouse last Monday night. The win ensured Penn State of the Big Ten's automatic berth into the NCAA tournament.

"It's sore but I can play through it," Potthoff said of her nagging knee, adding that she feels she has stepped up to the adversity. "My

She did, and ultimately the game was settled in the final seconds. Lady Lion point guard Tina Nicholson tossed in two free throws with 3.7 seconds left to seal the victory after Purdue cut a seven-point lead to two.

"I knew I had to make them. I've been in that situation before," Nicholson said. "I like to be in a situation like that. That's what you live for."

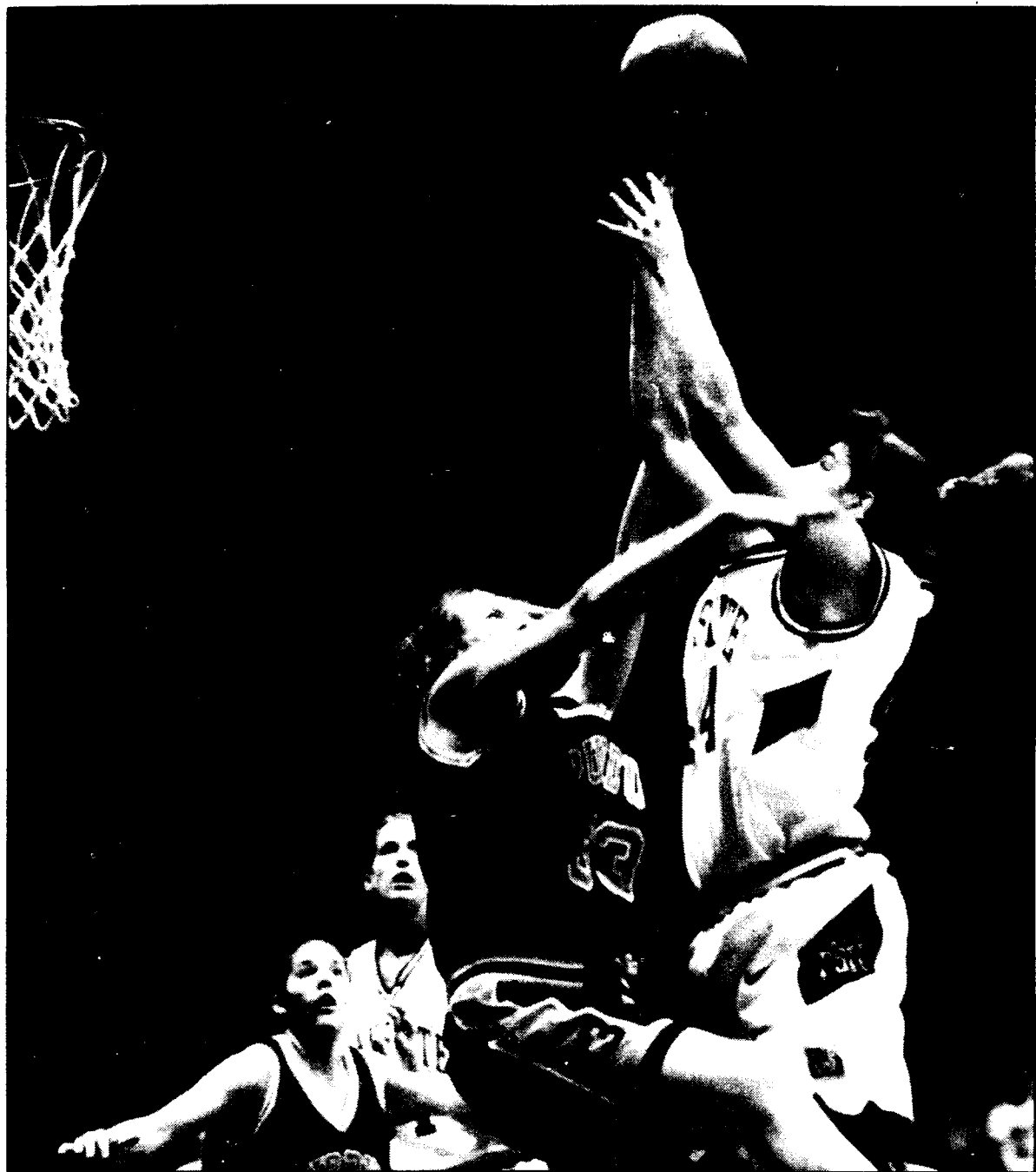
Nicholson, though, thrived all night. With Mack, the team's spiritual leader, gone, the senior from Downingtown stepped up with confidence and ignited the Lady Lions, pouring in 10 of their first 12 points in the opening four minutes and 28 seconds. Nicholson finished with 22 points, tying her career high, and seven assists in playing all 40 minutes.

While the Lady Lions primarily received scoring from Nicholson and tournament MVP Potthoff, the Boilermakers showcased a more balanced scoring attack. Junior Jannon Roland and seniors Tonya Kirk and Stacey Lovelace paced the team with 18, 17 and 16 points, respectively.

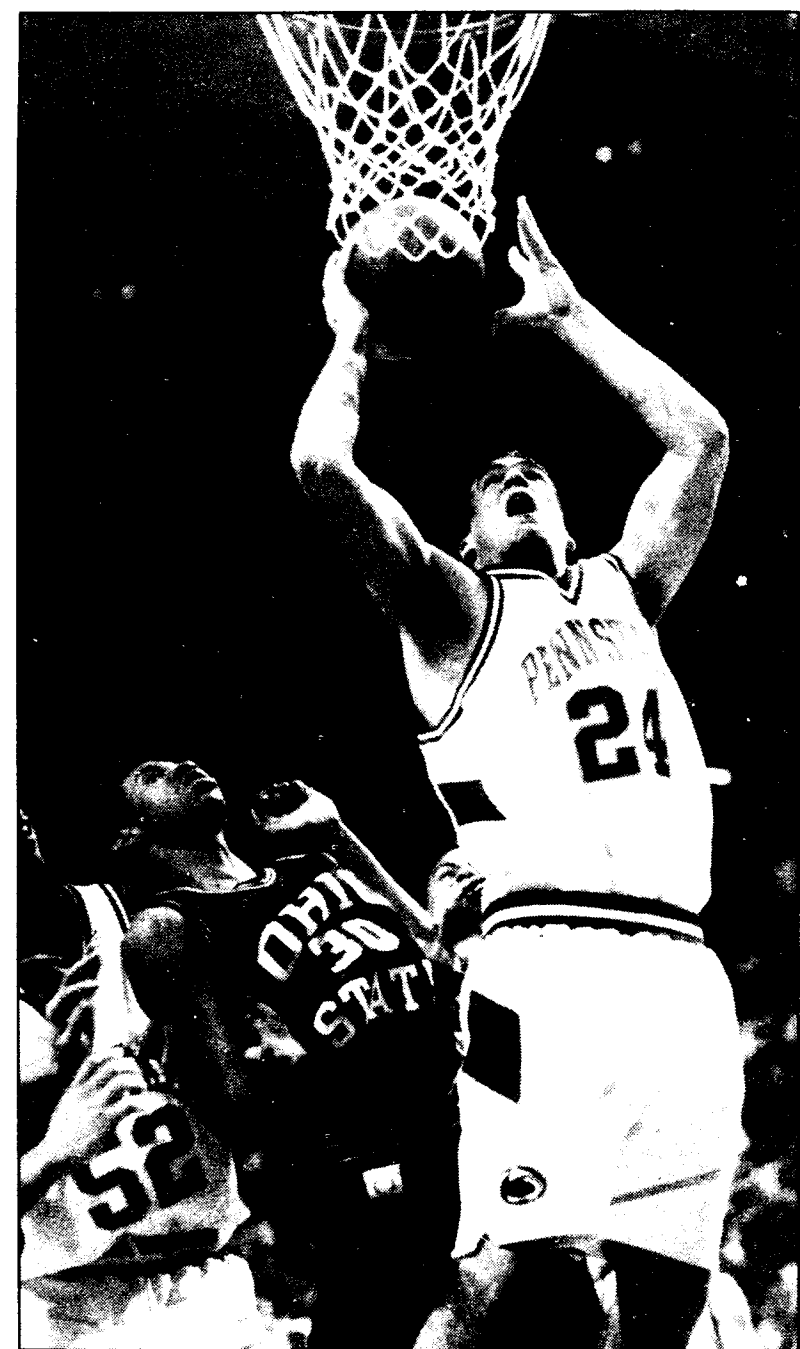
However, neither team could pull away from the other, mainly because of the shooting percentages. Outside of the five aforementioned, practically no one was hitting from the floor. The Lady Lions managed to shoot 47 percent while the Boilers hit good on just 40 percent of their shots.

But perhaps no points were bigger than the six that sophomore guard Tara Macciocco contributed. Macciocco, who had been plagued by injuries most of this season and

Please see **WHOOPS**, Page 18.



Angie Potthoff shoots over Purdue's Michelle Van Gorp in the Big Ten Championship game. Penn State defeated Purdue 71-69.



Matt Gaudio penetrates past an Ohio State defender on Saturday. The Lions will face Arkansas in the first round of the NCAA tournament.

It's Madness

Lions beat OSU, Providence next stop

By **BRAD YOUNG**
Collegian Sports Writer

Sekunda now anew, DeChellis leaving
— Page 14

The outcome of the men's basketball game Saturday was never really in question. Even at their worst — and they've been pretty darn close to that lately — the Lions could handle Randy Ayers' inexperienced and outmanned Ohio State squad.

The Bryce Jordan Center-record crowd of 15,190 — 15,191 if you include a bewildered bird that flapped around the arena — wasn't there to see if the Lions could emerge with a win. They knew that was coming.

What would be more intriguing for all to witness is whether Jerry Dunn's squad would return to early-season form or continue an ugly, month-long fall from grace that had seen them drop four of their last six games.

With an 86-70 triumph, the Lions would do the former, showing signs of breaking their decline just in

Please see **CAGERS**, Page 18.

Lions grapple with Big Ten results

Sanshiro Abe, Russ Hughes become Big Ten champions, as Lions place second at conference tournament.

By **TIM HYLAND**
Collegian Sports Writer

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Before the 1996 Big Ten wrestling championships, the members of the Penn State wrestling team had certain expectations, both as individuals and as a team. And although things didn't turn out exactly as planned, Lions coach John Fritz was awfully proud of his team.

"I thought they did an outstanding job," Fritz said. "The guys had a lot of fight, intensity, and pride."

En route to their second-place finish, Penn State had two individual champions in Sanshiro Abe (126) and Russ Hughes (150), both No. 1 seeds coming in to the tournament.

The Lions also picked up two third-place finishes in Biff Walizer (134) and Rob Neidlinger (190), a fifth place in John Hughes (142), a sixth place in Jason Betz (118) and two seventh places in John Lange (158) and Matt Hardy (167).

Except for Hardy, all of those wrestlers earned births for the NCAA tournament, which will be held in Minneapolis in two weeks.

One of the expectations that Penn State failed to realize occurred at 142 pounds, where the Lions No. 1 John Hughes lost to Jason Davids of Minnesota in the 142-pound quarterfinals. Hughes, weakened by dropping weight, would go on to lose once again to unranked Jon Vaughn of Minnesota before beating Michigan State's Phil Judge 6-5 for fifth place.

"I was fatigued and tired," Hughes said. "Hopefully I can get my confidence back and start kicking some ass."

Meanwhile, 150-pounder Russ Hughes was doing just that. Dominating the field in his conservative style while battling a cold, Hughes took his first

ever Big Ten title with a 2-1 double overtime victory over Charlie Becks of Ohio State.

"I was really pleased with that match," Fritz said. "He's on a mission."

Abe was very impressive, picking up two pins on his way to a much anticipated 126-pound final against rival Jeff McGinness of Iowa. But Abe took the title uncontested when McGinness could not wrestle due to an ankle sprain.

Neidlinger and Betz provided surprising performances for the Lions, as neither entered the tournament ranked.

Betz, who started the year as a backup 126-pounder, secured a sixth place finish and a national tournament bid at 118 with impressive wins over Purdue's Tim Derneln, Northwestern's Dominic Caruso, and a pin against Minnesota's Kipp Williamson.

"This is a dream come true," Betz said of his national tournament birth. "Considering the weight drop, I thought I wrestled about as good as I could have."

Neidlinger scored a huge win in his second match of the tournament when he knocked off Wisconsin's Aaron Stark 5-4 with a takedown with 25 seconds left. Although he would lose to Iowa's Lee Fulhart in the next round, Fritz thought that Neidlinger wrestled with more confidence than he had all year long.

Walizer, usually a very offensive-minded wrestler, was rather conservative on his way to his third-place finish. Walizer, although almost always in control, won all of his matches by close margins, and lost only to Iowa's No. 1 Mark Ironside. Ironside would go on to win the 134-pound title.

"If you make any mistakes here, it's a lot harder to come back," Walizer said. "There aren't any slouches here."

Lange and Hardy each had good and bad moments, but only Lange earned a wildcard spot to nationals.

"Two of the matches I thought I wrestled real well," Lange said. "In the two losses I just didn't get my stuff going."

Iowa flies past rest of Big Ten...again

By **STEVE FEILT**
Collegian Sports Writer

EAST LANSING, Mich. — There are times when a second-place finish is not a bad thing.

Such was the case for the Penn State wrestling team this weekend at the Big Ten Championships. Despite a 92 point performance, the Lions could not top perennial power Iowa.

But considering no team has been able to complete that task in 23 years, Lion coach John Fritz could not be disappointed.

"We're not happy with second place because we came here to win it," Fritz said. "Yet we know in a year like this, that's going to be real tough. (Second place) is ideal and I'm definitely pleased with the effort."

The Lions had three top-ranked wrestlers coming into the tournament and two of them -- Sanshi-

"Any time you can keep the kind of string we've put together going, it's crucial to the program. To do so with the domination of the scoring makes it all the more worthwhile."

— Dan Gable
coach of Iowa's perennial powerhouse

ro Abe (126) and Russ Hughes (150) — came away with Big Ten titles.

However, John Hughes, the No. 1 ranked wrestler at 142 pounds, was upset in the semifinals by No. 4 Jason Davids of Minnesota and had to settle for fifth place.

With 154.5 team points, the Hawkeyes cruised to another Big Ten title. Four Iowa wrestlers finished at the top of their weight class including Mark Ironside (134), who was named Big Ten wrestler of the year.

Please see **WRESTLE**, Page 18.

Quote of the day

"We knew that we would have to play somebody good. I've seen Penn State play on TV, and they are awfully good."

Nolan Richardson
Arkansas men's basketball coach on his team's upcoming first-round NCAA match against the Lions.

Compiled from Collegian staff and wire reports.