

Hope floats

Booters tourney hope alive with win over JMU

By GEOFF DODD
Collegian Staff Writer

When the Penn State men's soccer team made the trek to Eastern Lebanon County (ELCO) High School in Myerstown over the weekend to face James Madison, revenge was not the only thing on its mind.

Sure, the Nittany Lions had lost to the Dukes 5-0 at the identical point in the season last year in Harrisonburg, Va., but that was in a meaningless match at the end of an otherwise disappointing season.

This year the stakes were noticeably higher. Each team came into the game knowing it needed a victory to keep alive any hopes of a berth in the NCAA Tournament.

At 11-4-2 (4-1 Big Ten), the Lions went into Saturday's final regular-season game against an equally impressive James Madison (12-5-1, 6-1-1 Colonial Athletic Association) squad and left

with a 1-0 victory. Penn State's NCAA hopes are still alive.

Lion sophomore midfielder Ricardo Villar kept the Lions alive by scoring the game's only goal, 57:50 into the game, off a corner kick from the far side by fellow sophomore midfielder Matt Leahy.

"We knew coming down here that we had to get a result," Penn State coach Barry Gorman said. "That was the primary focus of everything we did this week."

After an evenly paced first half that saw the Lions notch three shots on goal to the Dukes' two, Penn State erupted in the second half with eight more shots.

More impressively, Lion goalkeeper Whit Gibson wasn't challenged by JMU in the second half, while the Lions saw numerous breakaway chances from senior forward Jon McClay, sophomore midfielder Parham Parsa and redshirt freshman midfielder Greg Oldfield.

"We're a different team this year," James Madison coach Tom Martin said. "We had a number of seniors from last year who really contributed, three of whom are playing professionally right now. We're not as good, and Penn State's better."

The game might have been remembered more for its physical play than lack of scoring, especially by the noticeably larger James Madison team.

With aggressive 6-foot-6, 210-pound sophomore defender Seppo Jokisalo and equally tenacious 6-foot-2, 185-pound senior midfielder Hisham Gomes patrolling the field for the Dukes, the undersized Lions knew they were going to be sore.

"It's not very often that you get somebody that's playing soccer who's (6-foot-6)," Lion forward Ken Lear said. "Usually they're playing basketball or something. On top of that, (Jokisalo) was solid too, so he just used his size to his advantage."



Collegian Photo/Andrew Roach

Icer Jason Zivkovic slams a Dusquene player into the boards during Penn State's 20-2 blasting of the Dukes Friday.

Icers dominate in weekend wins

By CARLA MOTKO
Collegian Staff Writer

If the Penn State Icers had any concerns about their offensive output coming into this weekend, they can put those fears to rest.

After a 20-2 demolishing of Duquesne (4-5) Friday and a 6-1 pounding of Buffalo (5-2) Saturday, both at the Ice Pavilion at Greenberg Sports Complex, the Icers (6-0) have found the scoring touch.

"We're better than (both teams)," forward Alon Eizenman said. "That's a nice theme for the weekend."

Saying the Icers were better than their opponents is a gross understatement, but they more than proved Eizenman's statement this weekend. Penn State knew Buffalo was a much better team than in years past, so the Icers came out with strong forechecking early in the first period to take away the Bulls' hopes.

Bulls coach Rick Brooks said he had three dependable lines for this

season, and he didn't disappoint. Buffalo's offense created several scoring opportunities as its defense subdued the Icers for much of the first period. The Icers went into the locker room with a mere 1-0 lead after a late goal by Joe Bassett.

Penalties abounded in the second period, goals did not. Buffalo's penalty killers were solid, but Penn State's dominated, creating many power-play and short-handed scoring opportunities. However, the Icers had trouble cashing in. Greg Held's early goal for the Icers capped scoring for the period, making it 2-0.

According to Eizenman, a fiery speech by Penn State coach Joe Battista lit up scoring in the third period. Eizenman, Bassett, Rich Podulka and Rob Shaner each scored in the third period to make the score 6-0. It looked as if Penn State would shut out the Bulls until Buffalo scored in the final 27 seconds of the game to make it 6-1.

"It was part of our strategy to

get out of the starting gate quickly," Battista said. "I thought it was great that we came out, banged them and made them pay for every inch of real estate."

The Icers did that and worse against Duquesne. Penn State's offense took a leather strap to the Dukes' backside, scoring seven goals in the first period, nine in the second and four in the third. Todd Dakan had four goals, Don Coyne a hat trick, and Bassett and Travis Dorsey each had two.

In the past, a destructive win like the one over Duquesne would have led to an overconfident Penn State team and an easy victory for Buffalo, but the Icers knew from experience not to let that happen.

"Every time you play a really weak game, the tendency is for you to be much more lackadaisical in the next game, and the quality of the team seems to be much more compounded," Eizenman said. "(The Bulls) seem to be much better than they really are. We were really careful not to get too overconfident and let that happen."

Fencers converge at Garrett Invitational

By DARREN STEELE
Collegian Staff Writer

The clicking and clanging of metal upon metal filled the gymnasium. Everywhere you looked fencers were preparing to battle it out, to win a spot as a finalist in the Garrett Invitational, hosted by the Penn State Fencing team.

This past weekend more than 17 college and club fencing teams from the United States and Canada converged upon the White building for a truly spectacular tournament.

Princeton garnered the most top 10 finishers with 11. Penn State placed 10 of its athletes in the top 10, eight of which represented the women's team. Lady Lions Carla Esteve and Stephanie Eim had impressive days Saturday. Esteve placed second in the women's foil competition. She lost to eventual champion Erinn Smart from Columbia.

"I love coming here," Smart said. "The competitiveness is tremendous, and I got to take home another Lion trophy. I'm really excited."

Eim finished second in the women's epee, losing a tough battle to Notre Dame's Magda Krol.

"I think the women's performance was outstanding," said coach Emmnuil Kaidanov. "We were very impressive in the women's foil, as well as epee. (The

Penn State women) were a very strong squad."

The men's team did not fare so well. It had only two top 10 finishers.

"I was a bit disappointed in the men's performance," Kaidanov said. "It is early in the season, and I don't expect them to be in the best of shape just yet."

The rest of the men's competition was fierce. Cliff Bayer from the University Of Pennsylvania was a powerhouse. He came out on top of what was one of the best duels in the tourney. Bayer defeated Jeb Dupree of Columbia to take home the men's foil title, his third such trophy in three years.

"This year was particularly strong," said an exhausted Bayer. "I can't complain, the competition it was great. All of the good talent was here. Jeb was really good, he moves so well. We always have great matches. Penn State did a really good job with this tourney."

Daran Levit of St. John's took home first place in the men's epee. Levit beat Jason Burrell of Princeton in the final and most exciting match of the tournament. It was a sweet one for Levit, his first in American competition.

"I am very happy," Levit said. "I came here to these United States wanting to fence as well as I do in Israel. The competition was very good, and I was impressed by the organization of the tournament."

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