



Collegian Photo/Wendy Zeller

Penn State forward Joe Bassett shoots and scores against Buffalo Saturday. The Icercs beat Buffalo, 6-1.

Four lines keep Icer foes in check

By KEVIN BRICKER
Collegian Staff Writer

Buffalo coach Rick Brooks surveyed his bench. It was late in the third period of the Bulls' contest with the Penn State Icercs Saturday. With one glance, he knew his team was spent.

Maybe it was the weekend road trip which went from Buffalo to Delaware and then a took U-turn back to Happy Valley. Maybe a last-minute loss in Delaware last Friday night deflated the Bulls. Or maybe Brooks' team knew the game's outcome already was determined, trailing 6-0.

But what was so apparent throughout Penn State's pair of home victories this past weekend — 20-2 over Duquesne and 6-1 over Buffalo — and what Brooks realized his team lacked, was depth.

"Our biggest problem was our team speed and we don't have the depth that (Penn State does)," Brooks said. "When I'm looking up and down the bench for somebody to go out there and contribute who hasn't had a lot of ice time, (we're missing the) skill factor."

Trailing 2-0 heading into the

third period Saturday, the Bulls were prepared for a third-period comeback. What the Bulls got instead was an uppercut to the chin. Penn State used the first two periods to wear down Buffalo, and the final period to put them away.

"Penn State came out with a great effort in the third period," Brooks said. "I think fatigue was a factor for us very much in the third period."

The Icercs won the scrums in the corners. They seemed to be a half stride ahead of the Bulls when chasing the puck. Penn State won the small battles that ultimately won the war.

Credit that to the Icercs' four solid lines. With undersized, but speedy forwards in freshmen Travis Dorsey and Kyle Jordan and bruising forwards sophomore C.J. Patrick and senior Alon Eizenman, the Icercs exhausted Buffalo.

As a former Icer, Penn State coach Joe Battista knows the bumps a team must endure along the American Collegiate Hockey Association schedule. By using four lines, the Icercs stayed fresh and had an extra hop in their strides.

"It gives us that difference in depth that's important at this level," Battista said. "Especially over a 36-game schedule, it adds up. It's too long of a season to play three lines. It's a wear-and-tear thing."

Indicative of Penn State's depth, its checking line leads the team in scoring.

"Our checking line scored three more goals," he said. "They're leading the team in scoring. It's amazing."

By mixing different units of defensemen with forwards, the Icercs kept Duquesne (Friday's opponent) and Buffalo guessing. Every line scored this weekend, and every Icer saw time on the ice, including all four goaltenders.

But after just six games, Eizenman believes the Icercs won't discover how deep their team is until later in the season.

"I think our depth hasn't been tested yet," he said. "With all due respect to Buffalo, they don't have the horses to test our horses. It's not really a race."

But if it were, Penn State would've lapped Duquesne and Buffalo several times.

Lady Icercs knock off Orangewomen

By CHRISTIAN TAYLOR
Collegian Staff Writer

Defense is exciting, but offense wins games.

The Lady Icercs' defense combined a solid forechecking game with intense penalty killing to shut down the Syracuse Orangewomen's offense with a 12-2 win on Friday night at the Ice Pavilion at Greenberg Sports Center.

Penn State (2-0) contained Syracuse to eight shots on goal from the beginning of the game. It was evident Syracuse had many defensive shortcomings, but it wasn't until Penn State put a few shots on net that it discovered the Orangewomen's real weakness — goaltending.

"I noticed that right away, we should," said Icer forward Anne Farmer. "Syracuse's goaltender had a lot of visible weaknesses, so we took advantage."

Farmer especially took advantage as she led the offense with a eight-point game, scoring four goals and notching four assists.

Syracuse scored its only two goals in the first period, when

the Orangewomen looked their best.

"We played inconsistently well," said Syracuse coach Brad Beran. "In the first period, Penn State controlled the first half and we controlled the second half. Then we just played bad hockey and that was about it."

The game stayed physical throughout with a lot of bumping and poke checking. Toward the end of the second period, the Icercs found themselves two players down with Courtney Nugent and Nicole Agostino both in the box for tripping.

But the Icercs' penalty killing unit looked strong and cleared the zone every time, not allowing a shot on goal throughout the two-player advantage.

"We worked on (penalty killing) a lot in practice, we were prepared for it," said Icer forward Jaime Thorne, who had a hat trick in the game.

The Icercs even managed to get a good scoring opportunity during the penalty kill. Icer defenseman Talia Smith played an impressive two-way game with two goals and two assists. She

often was sliding out of position to join the offensive rush and still got back in time to cover the point.

"I've never really played offensively until I played on this team," Smith said. "Sometimes I think I almost play too offensively."

The Icercs skated better than the Orangewomen and beat them to almost every loose puck. They also dominated the face-offs, winning 23 of 35.

"Our main goals was not to skate down to their level, we wanted to keep up our skating and to put a lot of shots on net," said Icer center Ellen Zajko, who notched six points in the game including a natural hat trick.

The Icercs converted on their only power play of the night when Thorne set up in front of the net and deflected Smith's shot in from the blue line.

Overall, Penn State controlled the flow of the game.

"We wanted to win," said Thorne. "We pushed hard, and we gave it our all. We were more powerful and we just wanted to bust through people tonight."

Lady booters enjoying season of firsts

By JOHN GIBLIN
Collegian Staff Writer

Records are made to be broken.

Among a whirlwind of emotion, the Penn State women's soccer team claimed its first Big Ten Tournament title in school history Sunday. In addition to running the gamut of postseason play, the Lady Lions shattered numerous individual and team records during the weekend.

"This feels great," said goalkeeper Emily Oleksiuk. "We've been talking about this since August. We've done so many things, been through so much — our team is just great."

No. 11 Penn State (19-3-1, 10-1-1 Big Ten) is the first team in Big Ten history to claim both the regular-season and tournament titles in the same year. Penn State is only the second team to host the Big Ten Tournament and win the final game in the same season. In 1994, Wisconsin claimed the first Big Ten Tournament title with a 3-0 victory against Minnesota in Madison, Wis.

"At the beginning of the year, we didn't know how good we were going to be," said senior forward Carole Dutchka. "For us to end this way — it's just incredible."

"We've done so many things, been through so much — our team is just great."

— Emily Oleksiuk
Penn State goalkeeper

"This game was just so much fun," said forward Courtney Lawson. "I can't imagine anyone not having an incredible time. It's the final, championship round, at home in front of all your fans — this is just such a great class that is going to be graduating, I can't imagine anyone not running and having a great time."

This year's squad constantly has been referred to as overachievers. The Lions don't look at themselves as having played above their heads, but rather as a team that has been overlooked since day one.

"I think they've exceeded what I thought they might do at the beginning of the year, but I've always hated that overachiever word," Farmer said. "I think that's for people who don't correctly assess the talent level."

Penn State has brushed aside criticism all year. With yet another goal and numerous other records under its belt, the Lions look forward to yet another appearance in the NCAA Tournament, where as the No. 7 seed they earn a first-round bye and will play the Indiana-Wright State winner Sunday at Jeffrey Field.

"They've done better than we've planned," Farmer said, "but not better than we hoped."

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