

## Midterm grades

### Nittany Lions playing above average at midseason point

By JOHN GIBLIN, RYAN HOCKENSMITH and WILLIAM KALEC  
Collegian Staff Writers

Nevertheless, here's an analysis of Penn State's performance after seven games.

of the first five games, helped put the running game back in action. He tallied 179 yards on 54 attempts — 3.5 yards-per-carry — prior to Iowa. He waltzed out of Iowa City, Iowa with a 130-yard performance, and a week later blew up for a career-high 211 yards at home against Ohio State.

attack is back, or so it seems.  
**OVERALL GRADE: B**

#### Quarterbacks

Two is better than one, at least according to Penn State coach Joe Paterno. The 72-year-old coach chose to go with a two-pronged attack behind center to start the season, and his scheming has helped lead the Lions to a 7-0 record.

To put things into perspective, of quarterbacks with 70 or more attempts, backup quarterback Rashard Casey would be the Big Ten's leading passer with a 168.15 passer efficiency rating. Purdue quarterback and Heisman Trophy candidate Drew Brees is more than 30 points below Casey, with a rating of 133.39.

So what does this all lead to? With starting quarterback Kevin Thompson questionable for this weekend's game against Brees and the Boilermakers, the ever-proficient tandem looks to be in jeopardy.

**OVERALL GRADE: A-**

### Cover Story



#### Tomorrow's Cover Story:

A profile of Penn State outside hitter Carrie Schonveld

#### Wide receivers

After his performance against highly-ranked but unproductive Arizona, Chafie Fields was mentioned in the same breath as the Heisman Trophy.

But with an injury to wide receiver Corey Jones, the opposing defenses were able to double-team Fields. But the Penn State receiving corps had an answer, as young receiver Eddie Drummond stepped into the starting role for Jones, taking pressure off Fields.

A now-healthy Jones returned to the field Saturday against Ohio State, and should see even more playing time this weekend at Purdue. Combined with the potent passing attack and a resurgent rushing game, defenses have more than one weapon to defend against.

**OVERALL GRADE: B**

#### Offensive Line

The Penn State offensive line had more kinks in it during the first five games than an old slinky being crushed by boxes in a closet.

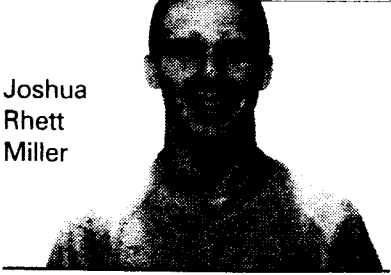
After weeks of being asked about what was wrong with the running game and what needed to be done to fix the problems, it seems the Lions' offensive line has found the answer.

Tailback Eric McCoo has been shown the way to 100-yard games the last two weeks in wins against Iowa and Ohio State. Still, the Lions second-leading rusher is quarterback Rashard Casey, who has rushed for 188 yards.

That is not good.

"I feel like things are back to normal now," McCoo said after Please see REPORT CARD, Page 22.

### My opinion



Joshua Rhett Miller

## Boston loss not due to curse, but to bad play

After watching every game of the New York Yankees-Boston Red Sox American League Championship Series, it's safe to conclude that even the best one-two punch will succumb to a slew of stiff jabs.

Boston shortstop Nomar Garciaparra and pitcher Pedro Martinez, probably the best players at their positions in the league, couldn't muster enough juice to defeat the constant onslaught of Yankees pitching and timely hitting.

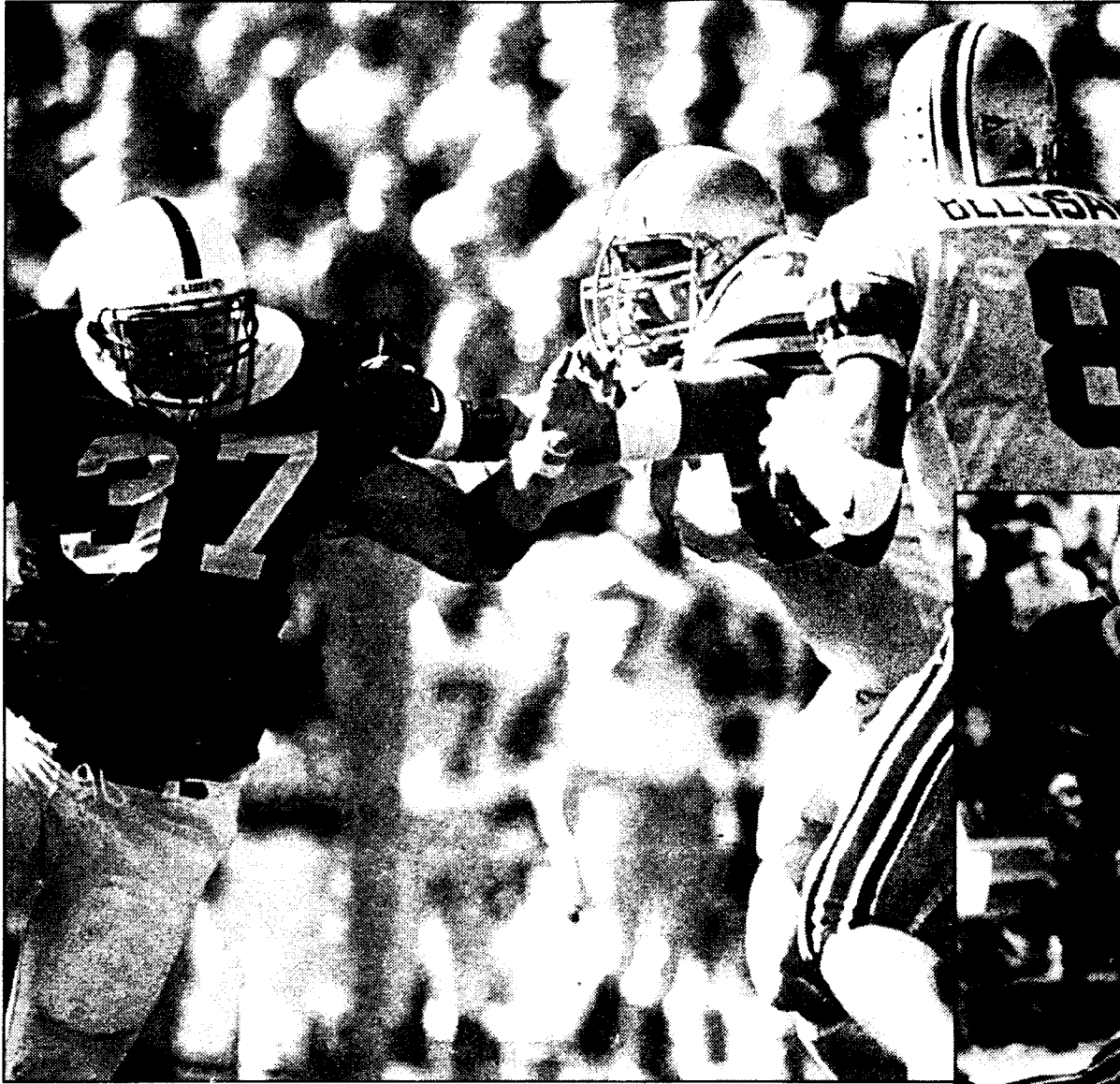
And even though I picked Boston before the series to win in seven games, I shouldn't have expected basically two guys to carry a club into the World Series.

I looked past the supreme depth of the Yankees and their uncanny ability to knock in the key run in the late innings no matter who's on the mound or in the batter's box. Ricky Ledee's grand slam in Game Four not only spoiled the Sox's chances of winning that game, but it ultimately added another year onto "The Curse" legacy.

Now baseball is a superstitious game, but the whole idea that the Red Sox are somehow cursed because they sold Babe Ruth to the Yankees is ridiculous. Most of the hype is just that — simply hype by the media to boost the drama — but Boston's loss to New York had nothing to do with the buying of the Bambino's big behind.

The loss had everything to do with the lack of Boston's pitching and their inept fielding. In dubious fashion, the Sox committed 10

Please See BOSTON, Page 22.



Collegian Photo J. M. Boyer

Defensive end Justin Kurpeikis charges toward Ohio State quarterback Steve Bellisari during Saturday's game at Beaver Stadium. Quarterback Rashard Casey evades a tackle and runs downfield. Both the defensive line and quarterbacks have been crucial to the Lions' 7-0 record so far this season.



Collegian Photo Megan Morr

## Paterno still refusing to interact with media members

By RYAN HOCKENSMITH  
Collegian Staff Writer

When it comes to the media, they're on two different planets in two separate solar systems.

Purdue football coach Joe Tiller has taken part in interviews during games. His players are also easily accessible to reporters.

Counterpart Joe Paterno, whose No. 2 Penn State squad travels to West Lafayette, Ind., Saturday for a date with the Boilermakers, isn't so media-friendly. Last week, the Nittany Lions coach made his players off-limits to the media.

What are the chances of Paterno allowing reporters to speak with him during games?

"None," the 34th-year Penn State coach said yesterday during his weekly teleconference.

"I've been asked," he elaborated. "I think it's foolish. I really do."

"If Joe (Tiller) wants to do it and some other people want to do it, that's fine."

#### Injury report

After Saturday's brawl with Ohio

State, a pack of Lions have limped into practice this week.

The most noteworthy, starting quarterback Kevin Thompson, got drilled by Buckeyes linebacker Na'il Diggs and left the game with a shoulder injury.

"They're (trainers) fairly optimistic that he'll be able to go," Paterno said of the senior's chances of playing Saturday. "We may know this afternoon when he goes out there and tries to throw."

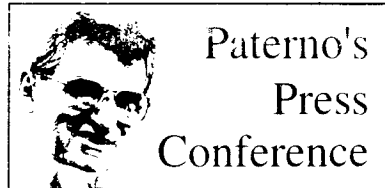
"If he can throw, he will be OK."

Paterno wasn't so optimistic about tackle John Blick, who hobbled off the field last weekend with an ankle injury.

"That's a long shot," Paterno said of Blick's chances of playing. "That has me concerned."

The coaching staff is considering moving senior short tackle Kareem McKenzie to Blick's spot. Red-shirt freshman Matt Schmitt might be inserted at long tackle and leave McKenzie on the short side.

Center Joe Iorio's ankle injury isn't severe, and the true freshman should start Saturday. Defensive



Paterno's Press Conference

tackle David Fleischhauer, out for the past two games, is slowly recovering and could play this weekend. Linebacker Mac Morrison, who suffered a mild concussion from Buckeyes tailback Michael Wiley, also should start.

#### 'Choo Choo' never derailed

Some said the 211-yard showing by Lions tailback Eric McCoo in the Ohio State game a breakout performance for the sophomore.

Paterno, on the other hand, doesn't think McCoo ever fell in a rut.

"I have never felt he was out of form," Paterno said. "We have obviously been going piece by piece trying to get this thing together the way we wanted to get it together."

"He played very well. He's a

good back. There's no question about that."

#### Bow for Bowden

Thirteen months ago, Paterno walked out of Beaver Stadium with his 300th career victory. After a postgame presentation, the veteran coach broke down when addressing the packed house of fans that stuck around for the end of the 48-3 slaughter of Bowling Green.

Little more than a year later, coaching peer Bobby Bowden of Florida State is about to topple the 300-win barrier, too.

That has flashed Paterno back to the environment following his victory.

"When all the fans stood around in the ballpark (Beaver Stadium), I was just overwhelmed with how much everyone wanted us to win 300 games," Paterno recalled. "I am sure Bobby will go through the same kinds of emotion."

"You don't think about it until it happens. When everybody else gets in it and you realize people appreciate what you have done and then, I think, it gets to you a little bit."



Collegian Photo/Megan Morr

Quarterback Kevin Thompson hands off to tailback Eric McCoo Saturday. McCoo broke out of a mini-slump with a 211-yard game against Ohio State.

## Rams QB inspired by blind son

By JIM SALTER  
Associated Press Writer

ST. LOUIS — St. Louis Rams quarterback Kurt Warner spent a big part of his day off yesterday playing with visually impaired children, posing for pictures and signing toy footballs and tiny jerseys.

It's a cause very familiar to Warner, whose adopted 10-year-old son, Zachary, is blind.

NFL players from all 31 teams spent the day doing community service for the "NFL and United Way Hometown Huddle." In Baltimore, members of the Ravens served meals to the homeless. Jacksonville Jaguars helped students at a Boys & Girls club with their homework. Members of the Cleveland Browns helped build a playground for underprivileged kids.

Warner, the NFL's surprise star of 1999, and several teammates spent hours at Delta Gamma Center for visually impaired children. Warner brought along his wife, Brenda, and Zachary, who seemed to relish taking on a sort of big brother role with the children — mostly 1- to 3-year-olds — who attend the center.

"He means the world to me," Warner said of Zachary. "He's just a true blessing in every sense of the word."

Warner met Brenda seven years ago, when a teammate at the University of Northern Iowa persuaded him to go to a country-music club in Cedar Falls, Iowa. The two had an instant connection. But Brenda, divorced with a baby girl and Zachary, then 3, didn't know if it would last.

"I dated men before that I never heard from again" after learning of the kids, Brenda said. "Kurt showed up the next morning and wanted to meet them. He fell in love with them before he fell in love with me."

The couple wed in 1997 and added a third child, Cade, in 1998. They've had plenty of trials — Brenda's parents were killed in an Arkansas tornado; Kurt bounced from the Arena Football League to NFL Europe before finally landing with the Rams.

They've weathered it all with a strong belief in God; Warner spoke Friday at Billy Graham's crusade at the Trans World Dome. And Zachary, Warner said, has been a constant source of strength.

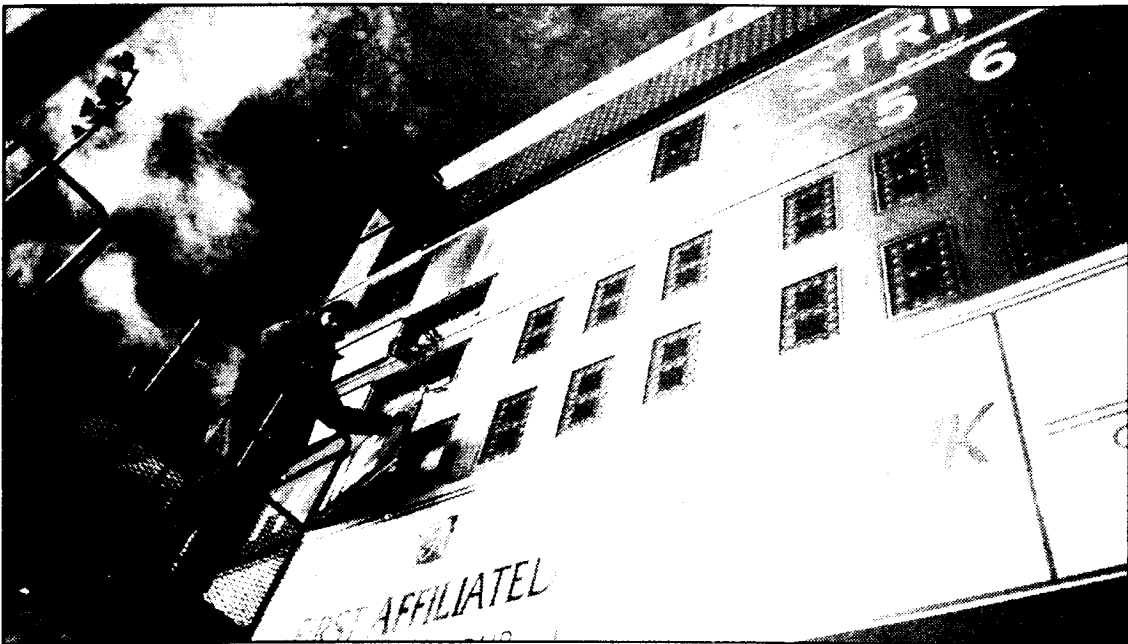
Zachary became blind as an infant, when his biological father lost his grip while carrying him from a bath. Zachary suffered severe brain damage — doctors feared he would never walk or talk.

He beat the odds. Today, Zachary can see some items up close. Though he falls often, Zachary speaks, walks and talks. He loves to wrestle with his dad, even wears his dark hair in a Kurt Warner-like crew cut.

The Warners clearly felt at home at the center. "Seven years ago, I was a single mom in this type of environment," Brenda said. "We were on food stamps and needing help. Now, we want to give back."

Warner brought along a Rams helmet and shoulder pads, walked around a circle and gently placed each on the oversized youngsters. When Zachary took a turn, Brenda said, "How do you like that? Just like Daddy wears."

"I'm ready to play," Zachary said.



Collegian Photo J. M. Boyer

### Going up

Mark Brown from Huntingdon works on the scoreboard for the new Shanner's Sport Complex that is being constructed along Route 22, just outside of State College. Once completed, the complex will be the playgrounds for local American Legion baseball.