

Two games remain for senior Mayerhofer, Penn State lacrosse team

By Steve Duncan
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Just two more games remain for the Penn State men's lacrosse team this spring. But for Don Mayerhofer, those two games are all that remain in his entire collegiate career.

When he walks off the field on May 6 against Stony Brook, four years of sacrifice on the field will be all over. No more practices. No more pre- or postgame speeches. No more competition on Jeffrey Field.

But there will be the memories. And Mayerhofer will have plenty of them to look back on.

Throughout his four years he has continually improved, going from playing little initially to becoming the team's go-to guy. Last season he scored 31 points, tops among returning players. This year he is once again near the top with 41 points.

But he hasn't just been handed the suc-

cess he has had. He has worked for it every step of the way.

"He's not the greatest athlete in the world. He's a good lacrosse player. So, he's made up for it with hard work. He works hard and he runs hard and he's lifted the weights," Penn State men's lacrosse coach Glenn Thiel said, adding that if Mayerhofer had a swagger to him, he could be that much better.

Those efforts have earned him the respect of his teammates. When the team voted for captains before the season started, Mayerhofer's name was at the top of the list, along with teammates Sean Huss and David Washo.

"It shows how you have team leadership," Mayerhofer said about the captain's role. "It shows that other people look up to you and, most importantly, other people believe in you. I think it's a testament of your hard work. Captain is not something that is given to you; you have to work hard for it.

"I was definitely happy about that."

Those qualities are something Thiel said are immeasurable.

"Without him, I really don't know where we would be," Thiel said. "He's the one experienced senior that we've been able to go to. He's been the one guy that's been through it all and knows what it takes."

Unfortunately for Mayerhofer and the rest of the team, going through it all and knowing what it takes hasn't been enough this year. The team has played solidly, but the record hasn't reflected that due to some difficult losses.

Still, Penn State has managed to fight its way back to .500 with a 6-6 record, 2-3 in the Eastern College Athletic Conference.

Rather than give up or complain, Mayerhofer has made the best of the situation. He has tried to pass on what he could to the younger players with the belief that the future is brighter.

"I think we had a very good team this year, we had a lot of good players," he said. But he had a few tough losses that held us back. But coming back next year, and the years to come, I think it will be a great team."

The one possible question mark for next year lies at a certain position — Mayerhofer's.

"Without him, we wouldn't be doing much at all. So, he's kind of been the glue, really, that has held us together offensively," Thiel said. "Somebody's going to have to step into it next year and be the ball handler. That'll be the one position we'll have to mature over the summer."

But before next year begins, this year has to end. And with two games remaining on the schedule, Mayerhofer is aware those are two more chances to do what he loves to do.

His main focus is on this week's game against No. 8 Duke. The game is the last one Mayerhofer will ever play at home, and the

last chance to pull out and win as a top team.

"I don't think you can win as much that would make you a national contender. We all know we can't really feel that nothing is going to really would make me a national Penn State complete."

After that, one last game, and it's all over.

"I try not to think about it. I'm trying to take it one day at a time, but I figure it's damn well pretty tough," he said. "I know last time I will put on a headband and compete at this level. I know I can hit me."

And then he can reflect on what that might not have meant to him, expecting it to, but certainly not a disappointment.

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