

Volleyball hoping to bounce back

By Jenny Vrentas

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Red-faced and drenched with sweat, Penn State women's volleyball assistant coach Mike Schall stood atop a large blue box Monday afternoon, spiking balls at the Penn State players poised to receive his hits on the opposite side of the net.

After consecutive balls boomed against the floor, untouched by the women, Schall stopped.

"I'm not doing this for my health," he yelled. "When you don't give effort, I get the impression that you don't care, and when that happens, Saturday night happens. And when Saturday night happens, Wednesday night can happen as well."

Women's Volleyball
Penn State vs. Ohio State, tonight at 7, Rec Hall

For the women of the Penn State volleyball team, they would rather that Saturday night's ugly 3-0 loss to defending Big Ten champions Minnesota did not happen. But with Ohio State (8-8, 2-6) coming to Rec Hall tonight at 7, the focus has not been dwelling on the loss, but rather getting fired up and preparing for the Buckeyes.

"We have to get ready to play," Penn State women's volleyball coach Russ Rose said. "We can't sulk about [the loss], and we can't change it, and the fact that we can't change it means it's time to move on."

Part of moving on is having the hitters practice taking big swing after big swing, because hitting a .106, as the women did on Saturday, is not the way to win. Middle hitter Cara Smith and opposite Erin Iceman will look return to form after being contained by the Minnesota block this weekend.

"[Junior outside hitter] Ashley [Pederson] was the only one taking big swings for us [on Saturday], so if the slump that those other individuals found themselves in continues, then we're in a lot of trouble," Rose said.

Moving on also involves solidifying the block that the Golden Gophers managed to hit past. This is especially important because Ohio State will bring to the court one of the most powerful swings in the conference in last year's Big Ten Player of the Year, outside hitter Stacey Gordon.

Gordon not only leads her team with 6.35 kills per game, but she is a multi-faceted threat as she also ranks first for the Buckeyes in service aces, with 0.4 per game, and in digs, with 3.38 per game.

"One player can't win a match, but if the match is close, Stacey Gordon can win the match," Rose said.

While the Buckeyes have had a rough start in the Big Ten, winning just two matches out of eight thus far, they field a talented rotation, beyond just Gordon.

"We have to try and recognize that there are a lot of people that are playing well on that team," Rose said. "The fact that [Ohio State] went five [last Friday] with Minnesota, and Minnesota the next night beat us 3-0 is certainly all the reason one would need to recognize that we better be ready to play because Ohio State is playing [well] right now."

But as the women discovered this past weekend, claiming victory in a match goes well beyond simply recognizing the threat the opposition poses. Victory requires a fight. And before Schall resumed spiking on Monday, he drove home that point.

"If you aren't going to go after every ball, then that door says 'out' on it," he said, pointing at the exit in the South Gym of Rec Hall.

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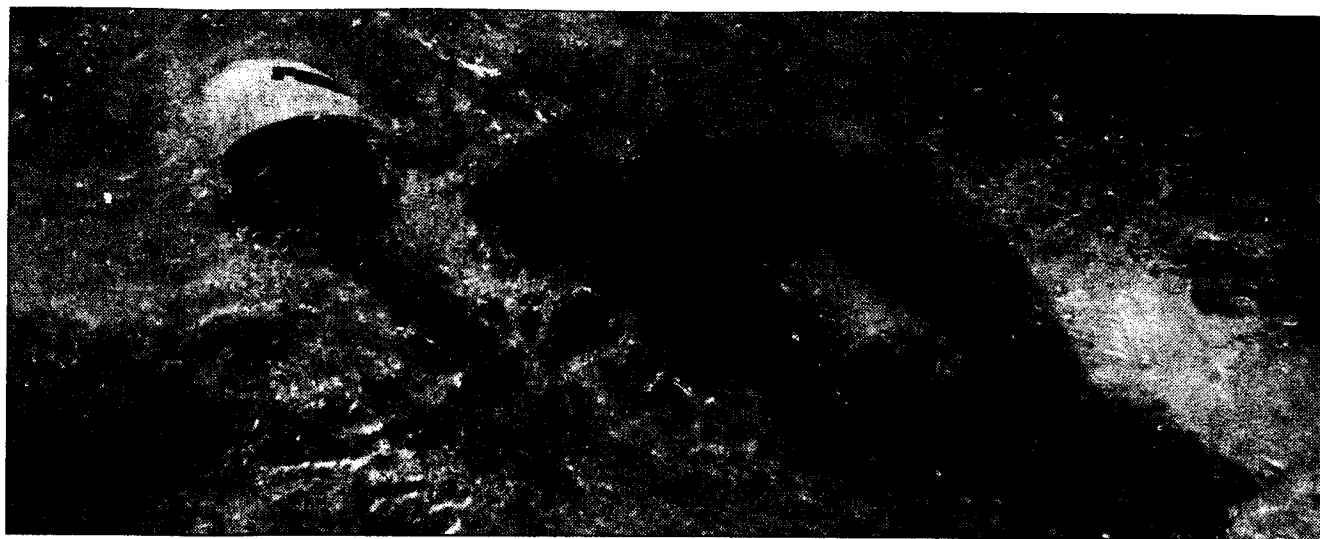
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Collegian File Photo

Eugene Botes swims in an event. Botes graduated last season and is currently training for the South African Olympic team.

Last season's end not in books for swimmers

By Josh Kowalkowski

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Penn State men's swimming and diving coach Bill Dorenkott does not like to describe the summer as the off-season, and for good reason.

"We are competing at the highest level and between the men's and women's teams we have nine nationally ranked players," Dorenkott said. "There is no such thing as the in-season and off-season."

After a disappointing sixth place finish during the Big Ten championships last season, the Nittany Lions realized they needed to do something to improve.

Enter Olympian John Hargis.

John Hargis, before being hired in July, had been the assistant swimming coach at UNLV for a year.

"I've known him [Hargis] since he was 14," Dorenkott said. "He's a small town and loyal guy who brings a lot of enthusiasm to the team."

Hargis, who won the gold medal during the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta as part of the 400 medley relay team, is a 1999 graduate of Auburn, the reigning NCAA men's swimming and diving champion.

Coincidentally, the Lions face off against the Tigers this Saturday after a meet with Virginia on Friday.

Virginia, no pushovers either, won

the ACC championship last season.

The biggest loss for the Lions this year is Eugene Botes who is still on campus as a post-graduate training for the South African Olympic team.

Botes, who has dual citizenship in the United States and South Africa, became Penn State's first national champion after he won the 100-meter butterfly at the U.S. Swimming and Senior Nationals in August.

Dorenkott said that the team needs to move on after the loss of several key seniors.

"The bottom line is that we're not going to replace them," Dorenkott said. "They were a special gang who were extremely committed."

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ball player, but he didn't do anything to anybody."

And that's where I say to Paterno, don't use the last part. Because until the last part, it's believable.

Just so everything is clear, the charge against Tony Johnson is driving while intoxicated. His blood alcohol level was allegedly 0.136 percent, exceeding both the current .08 legal limit and the old standard of 0.1.

That was the crime. Whether anyone was injured or not is irrelevant. The reason why our society has deemed drunk driving such a serious offense is the potential to do harm — and destroy human life — that it presents.

That's why organizations like MADD have developed such political clout in the last two decades. That's why the legal limit for declaring a person intoxicated has fallen while penalties for drunk driving have risen.

Paterno said there were some legal

issues to be looked at, and for all we know Johnson didn't commit the other traffic violations he's been charged with. He even hinted that police in this town might be targeting football players.

Regardless of whether any of these conspiracies exist, that doesn't change the fact that Tony is accused of being drunk behind the wheel. That's what the blood test performed after his arrest said.

Tell us all you want about how good of a kid he is and how good his family is, but let's not make this out to be a guy caught in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Paterno argued that the media unfairly went after E.Z. Smith and Jeremy Kapinos following their legal troubles. This week, Smith made a plea agreement to join the Youthful Offenders Program, a sensible move for anyone caught drinking underage.

Kapinos previously made a similar deal. So yes, Paterno can dismiss cases like that as youthful indiscretions because, well, who hasn't had a drink underage? Just don't try to write

off Johnson's trouble as part of the same batch.

Frankly, Paterno sounded more perturbed that Johnson was out drinking because of the way Johnson's actions would affect his ability to perform on the field than Johnson's alleged endangering of lives.

I'm not saying I know about running a football team or developing young men better than Joe Paterno. I'm not saying Joe Paterno can no longer properly discipline his players (although I would sit Johnson down for the season, if only for the stupidity of his actions and the embarrassment it caused his father).

"They are kids and I am trying to handle them in a way I think is appropriate," Paterno said yesterday. "I am going to do what I think is appropriate and not what anybody else thinks is appropriate."

Fine. But don't use that line. Not about drunk driving.

Jeff Frantz is a senior majoring in journalism and a Collegian assistant sports editor. His e-mail address is jbf142@psu.edu.



Adam Levin/Collegian

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Paterno said there were some legal issues to be looked at, and for all we know Johnson didn't commit the other traffic violations he's been charged with. He even hinted that police in this town might be targeting football players. Regardless of whether any of these conspiracies exist, that doesn't change the fact that Tony is accused of being drunk behind the wheel. That's what the blood test performed after his arrest said. Tell us all you want about how good of a kid he is and how good his family is, but let's not make this out to be a guy caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. Paterno argued that the media unfairly went after E.Z. Smith and Jeremy Kapinos following their legal troubles. This week, Smith made a plea agreement to join the Youthful Offenders Program, a sensible move for anyone caught drinking underage. Kapinos previously made a similar deal. So yes, Paterno can dismiss cases like that as youthful indiscretions because, well, who hasn't had a drink underage? Just don't try to write off Johnson's trouble as part of the same batch. Frankly, Paterno sounded more perturbed that Johnson was out drinking because of the way Johnson's actions would affect his ability to perform on the field than Johnson's alleged endangering of lives. I'm not saying I know about running a football team or developing young men better than Joe Paterno. I'm not saying Joe Paterno can no longer properly discipline his players (although I would sit Johnson down for the season, if only for the stupidity of his actions and the embarrassment it caused his father). "They are kids and I am trying to handle them in a way I think is appropriate," Paterno said yesterday. "I am going to do what I think is appropriate and not what anybody else thinks is appropriate." Fine. But don't use that line. Not about drunk driving. Jeff Frantz is a senior majoring in journalism and a Collegian assistant sports editor. His e-mail address is jbf142@psu.edu.

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