

SPORTS

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Mills' agent optimistic about NFL prospects

Philadelphia-based Brett Senior, also representing two other former Nittany Lions, wants teams to take the time to get to know Zack Mills.

By Jenny Vrentas

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As far as the NFL draft is concerned, all it takes is one team to fall in love with a player — then he's set, and the rest is up to him.

The trick, of course, is giving the team

enough reasons for that to happen.

That's how, in any case, the draft has been presented to former Penn State quarterback Zack Mills by his Philadelphia-based agent, Brett Senior, who is also representing former Penn State football players Andrew Guman and Robbie Gould.

"There are some teams that just are going to say he doesn't fit," Senior said of Mills. "But there are some teams that are going to say, 'Hey, here's a guy that brings a lot, he's going to be an addition to a team that's positive in any manner, and he can play football.'"

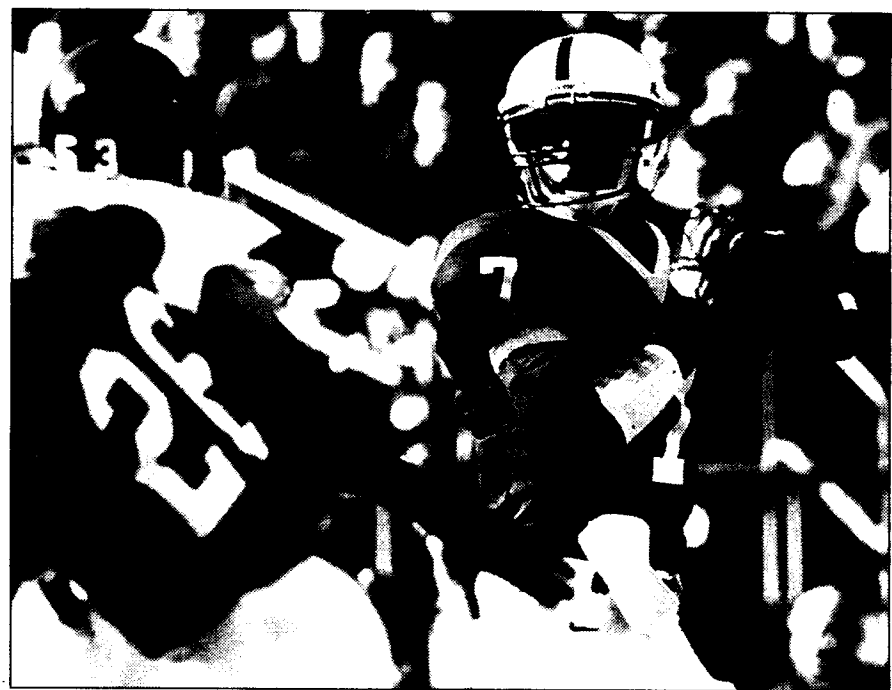
The plan, then, is to get the teams to

know the player, with reports, letters and interviews, and then to take care of the rest with a physical display at combine-like workouts such as Penn State's Pro Day, which takes place tomorrow.

Senior takes care of the first part, by contacting position coaches and player personnel directors in the NFL, sending out player and character bios and, later in the process, setting up interviews and follow-up workouts for the players.

The players themselves implement training schedules leading up to the pro day, which Mills, Guman and Gould have been able to do at Penn State with

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Kathryn MacNeil/Collegian File Photo

Zack Mills (7) has a lot to offer a potential NFL employer, his agent says.

Calvano makes return to field

By Stefen Lovelace
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

After college, most students are thrown into the "real world," grabbing interviews wherever possible in hopes of finding a job or career.

Anthony Calvano, however, is not quite ready to put away the shin guards.

Calvano, a former Penn State men's soccer player, will get to continue his soccer career with the United Soccer League's Pittsburgh Riverhounds.

When Calvano first graduated, he hoped he could extend his soccer career beyond college. His coaching staff at Penn State tried to get him a try-out with professional teams, to no avail.

When it appeared soccer might not pan out, he decided to start looking for work as a teacher. In his second interview, Calvano received a job in Fairfax, Va., teaching sixth graders.

But a call that Friday from the Riverhounds changed his career plans indefinitely.

"I got a contract offer from the Riverhounds that Friday," Calvano said. "I was already nervous about teaching, and then I got the call from them. It was kind of a shock, but it turned out to be a good shock."

Calvano signed a contract with the Riverhounds, but still had to explain to the school that he would not be taking the job. He went in the following Monday, which was supposed to be his first day as a teacher, to tell the administration.

"I told them I was going to play for the Riverhounds and they understood that I would never get a chance like this again," Calvano said. "They told me to keep in touch if the soccer thing didn't work out."

Calvano, a Penn State men's soccer team member from 2002-04, joins a Riverhounds team that was the Atlantic Division champion last year, posting a 19-3-1 record. Rich Salvini, an assistant coach for the Riverhounds, said his coaching staff has been watching Calvano for years and thought he would be a great fit for the Riverhounds style of play.

"He's got great physical toughness, he's very aggressive and he's got lots of talent and skills," Salvini said. "When he gets the ball he makes the simple play,



Patrick Sopko/Collegian File Photo

Former Penn State soccer player Anthony Calvano (22) has signed a contract with the USL's Pittsburgh Riverhounds.

which is the kind of players we look for." It's Calvano's toughness that has gotten him this far. A standout in high school, Calvano turned down scholarship offers from small schools to come to Penn State.

After being cut in varsity tryouts his freshman year, Calvano joined Penn

State's club team, where he helped elevate the team to a national championship and undefeated season.

In his sophomore year, Calvano tried out for the varsity squad but was cut — again.

That still didn't deter Calvano, who played club soccer for another year and

helped take the team to another undefeated season.

After two years playing with the club team, Calvano finally made the men's team and helped the Lions win the Big Ten title in his first year with the team. He earned Big Ten All-Tournament

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Parity shows up in tourney

Penn State is not a lock to beat Liberty on Sunday, despite holding a No. 4 seed to Liberty's No. 13.

By Justin Kunkel

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For years, filling out a bracket for the first round of the women's NCAA tournament was not challenging.

But with parity suddenly becoming the norm in the women's game, that's no longer the case.

Though fourth-seeded Penn State has to be considered a heavy favorite entering its first-round NCAA tournament game against 13th-seeded Liberty University of Lynchburg, Va., Sunday in College Park, Md., the Lady Lions would be making a big mistake if they looked past the Lady Flames.

"They come to the table with a complete game, and they are going to do some really good things," Penn State coach Rene Portland said.

Liberty has dominated the Big South Conference for the last decade and has won the league title for the last nine years, yet has no wins to show for nine straight NCAA appearances. The Lady Flames feature one of the tallest players in the history of the women's game in 6-foot-8 center Katie Feenstra. Feenstra has imposed her will on the Big South throughout her career, winning conference player of the year honors the last three seasons. She ended her career by leading the Big South in scoring, rebounding, field-goal percentage and blocked shots this year.

Feenstra's presence is also felt at the defensive end, where she and her teammates held opponents to an 82-74 upset against No. 2 seed North Carolina. Feenstra's size, she will not approach the assignment differently than any other post player she has guarded.

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Coaches outline the keys to tournament success | SPORTS, Page 12.



Prince Frederick Spels/Collegian File Photo

Jamaal Tate (1) has gone through some trying times at Penn State.

Tate looks back on tough 4-year journey

By Tricia Lafferty

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Sitting at the end of the bench dressed in a butterscotch-colored suit, he was often tortured by the desire to run onto the court and launch a 3-pointer — just like the good old days.

But minutes later, reality would set in, as it did during every home game, and Penn State senior Jamaal Tate remained in his chair. He realized his playing days were done. They've been done for some time now, but he wasn't ready to separate himself from the Penn State men's basketball team.

"Basketball has always been a part of me," Tate said. "It's kind of hard to stop something that has had such an influence on your life and got me where I am."

That's why Tate hung around and finished the year as an inactive member of the coaching staff. He was the assistant coach with whom the play-

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Jamaal Tate
Penn State senior

ers could connect, and perhaps his most endearing role — team grandpa.

"He's like that guy sitting in the old rocking chair giving you some advice. He's been very helpful and encouraging," freshman guard Danny Morrissey said.

"Uncle Tate" has been through more than most 22-year-old students. Basketball has taken him down many roads; some he'll always remember, some he'd like to forget, and some that are a complete blur.

Tate is a recovering alcoholic. He hasn't touched a drink in almost two years and he doesn't intend to anytime soon.

All he has to do is think back to the morning of June 10, 2003, when he woke up hung over at 9 a.m. with the desire to have a drink before even brushing his teeth. That same day, the Linden, N.J., native checked into a rehab clinic in western Pennsylvania. He stayed there for two weeks, just long enough to realize he had to turn around his life. He missed other warning signs that indicated he was beginning to develop a problem with alcohol. Drinking alone during the day and after practice became a daily activity for Tate. He withdrew from classes in the spring of his junior year because he was failing every class.

He found himself in this mess and had no idea how or why he got into it.

"I had such trouble realizing I was an alcoholic because my vision of an alcoholic was an old guy that slept on the bench in the park who had lost everything," Tate said. "When I got in rehab, I was in there with doctors, lawyers and regular businessmen."

Tate was a Division I athlete who played in the NCAA tournament just two years before his downfall. A true freshman at the time of Penn State's Sweet 16 run in 2001, Tate showcased a critical four-point effort in an 82-74 upset against No. 2 seed North Carolina.

And what a magical run it was. "It's something I can't describe," he said, with a boyish grin on his face. "It was definitely something special."

After losing to Temple in the Sweet 16, Tate returned for his sophomore season in which he averaged 6.5 points per game and ranked second on the team.

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