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OUR OPINION

Give DeChellis chance to get men's basketball to next year's tourney

As the nation throws off its collective straightjacket, ready once again for another Mad March, Penn State fans may gaze eagerly and forlornly on the 65 teams that made this year's NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship Tournament.

But as 6-foot-10 forwards with silky smooth moves on the court and NBA dollar signs in their eyes throw down alley-oops, the most important things for Nittany Lions fans is passing. That is, give Penn State men's basketball coach Ed DeChellis a pass on the Nittany Lions' 7-23 season this year, which included just one win in 16 Big Ten games. Sure, the record is as dismal as were the myriad of empty seats at many games in the Bryce Jordan Center this season. But DeChellis seems to be germinating success in the Lions' program, which could spring forth as early as next season. First and foremost is the young talent, which DeChellis seems to be grabbing in bunches. Forward Geary Claxton was one of five players to make the Big Ten's all-Freshman team this year, the second straight season that the Lions have placed someone on the squad. Add to that shooting abilities of guards Mike Walker and Danny Morrissey, who each showed flashes of better things while playing in their first NCAA seasons this year.

At times this year, Penn State started four players with two or fewer years of playing experience at the Division I level. That situation was exacerbated when doctors discovered that sophomore guard Marlon Smith, arguably the team's most viable offensive threat, had a blood clot in his brain and had to miss the rest of the season. Coupled with the transfers of several other players, DeChellis' program was left with little in the way of talent and even less in bench capacity.

And at this point, it's important to remember that each coach requires several years to put his stamp on a program.

Take, for example, Vermont's Tom Brennan, who is now in his 19th, and final, year at the school. He has led the Catamounts to a 21-12 record this season and a No. 13 seed in the NCAA tournament. Things looked bleak at the beginning for Brennan, who went just 14-68 in his first three years. DeChellis is a tireless worker, and a program-builder himself. He was responsible for the growth of men's basketball at East Tennessee State, where he and guard Timmy Smith led the Buccaneers to the NCAA tournament in 2003. That was seven years after a dismal 7-20 start to DeChellis' stop in Johnson City, Tenn. And he is recruiting talent to Happy Valley as well, but it must have time to develop. Year three is a crucial time in the process, and much progress remains to be seen. For now, however, give DeChellis an assist. He can use it.

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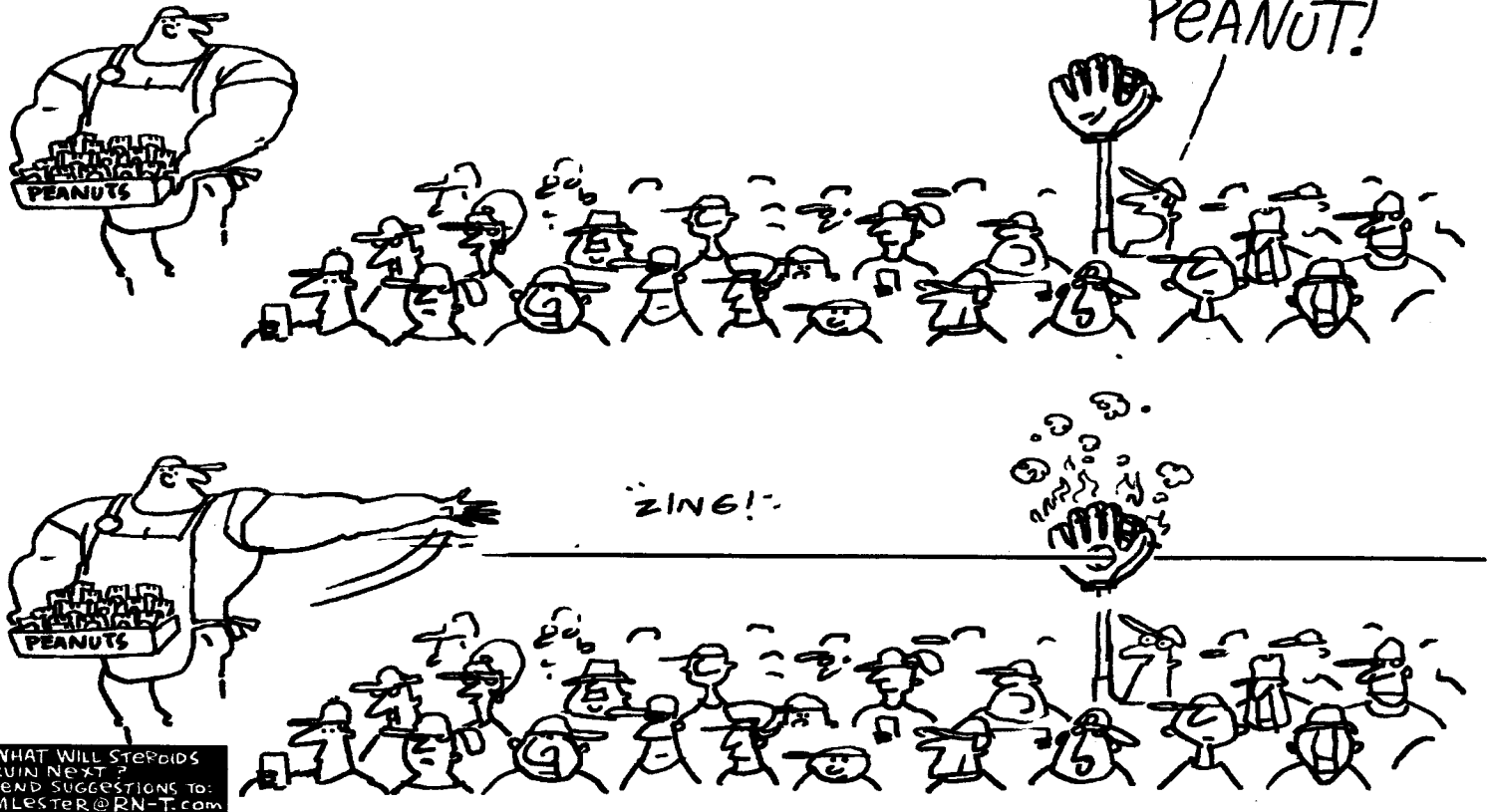
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OPINION

THIS WEEK'S INSTALLMENT OF:
STERIODS HAVE RUINED BASEBALL
WHAT'S NEXT?



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Opposing gay people is not act of hatred

To suggest that one can be a "homosexual Christian" is oxymoronic. It is an irrational and blasphemous assault on both reason (violating the fundamental principle of non-contradiction) and faith (counter to the teaching of the Second Person of the One Triune God who existed eternally as God).

Would so-called "Christian" apologists for the homosexual lifestyle have us believe that Matthew 5:21-31 excuses any responsibility for living it because homosexuality is not explicitly referred to? It most certainly is. In particular, see Genesis 18:20-21, Romans 1:24-28 and the Epistle of Jude. Are we to believe as Christians that somehow homosexuality fell through the cracks in sacred Scripture?

Thus, from the Christian standpoint, to imply that Jesus, Second Person of the One Triune God, never said anything about being inclined to unnatural acts, as God, is Bible eisegesis with the consequences of Matthew 18:6. To give a message to those inclined to homosexual acts that "they are OK as they are" is un-Christian in the extreme given the above observations. It makes no more sense than to tell an alcoholic that you may continue drinking to get over alcoholism. The Magdalenes of the Gospel were most certainly forgiven, but the words of Jesus following His forgiveness are conveniently forgotten. "Go and sin no more." That is what it means to be Christian. To imply that the homosexual lifestyle somehow has a Christian blessing is tragic. It is tragic because souls are at stake — those living the lie and, especially, those

telling it. For Christians, that's not love but hate for their fellow man.

Gary Morella
graduate assistant

Sports is key part of our American society

I was somewhat appalled after reading Lane Weaver's article in the March 15 opinion section. He noted that sports seem to be doing more harm than good to our society. He went on to refer to sports as a waste of knowledge and time by calling it useless trivia.

I highly doubt Mr. Weaver would broaden his intelligence by erasing the "useless sports trivia" in his head and replacing it with "Macbeth, Gray's Anatomy and a few chapters of the phonebook." You see intelligence has to be applicable to the people around you.

The truth is that sports (not Macbeth or chapters in a phonebook) are followed by a vast majority of people in America and around the world. Sports can be used as an ice-breaker in corporate America or a punch line in a political speech. After the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, it was Major League Baseball's playoffs and the NFL's Super Bowl XXXVI (coincidentally won by the Patriots) that rallied America together in a time when we needed it the most. Professional sports played an integral role in the mending of our wounded nation back in 2001.

Rarely do I ever see any forms of patriotism outside of a sporting event, and I have yet to hear a better rendition of the Star Spangled Banner that was sung by Whitney Houston during Super Bowl XXV. Sports are not harming our society, Mr. Weaver. They are here to entertain and bring a sense of

pride to our great nation and her citizens.

Garrett Aptacy
junior-political science

Fla. woman will die very horrible death

It is easy for facts to become distorted in order to promote a certain point of view, and many times people believe what they are told without taking the effort to examine the facts.

In the Terri Schiavo case, her estranged husband and guardian Michael Schiavo would have people believe death by removing her feeding tube will be a painless and peaceful process. However, deprivation of food and water leads to seizures, cracked skin, nosebleeds, vomiting, and extreme hunger and dehydration. Think about how you would feel if you did not eat or drink anything for just one day.

Terri will suffer much more than that. After winning a malpractice lawsuit and stating his intent to use the money to care for her, Michael has not provided Terri with physical therapy, medical care or dental care for years. He did not even allow a priest to visit her. Terri is not in a vegetative state because she is able to respond to her environment by smiling, following with her eyes and showing emotion.

She is not dependent on machines, is able to breathe on her own and does not drool, leading doctors to believe that with therapy, she could learn to swallow. Instead of denying Terri therapy and concentrating on trying to let her die, her husband should provide her with proper care. It is not right to jump to conclusions and say that care has not helped, when

in reality, basic medical care seemingly has not even been provided.

Kristen Brown
junior-human development and family studies

Bono deserves Nobel more than most do

In response to Rich Doyle's letter ("Bono not the leader King, Wolfensohn are," March 16), I understand his point of view on why Bono shouldn't be considered for the Nobel Peace Prize, but isn't nominating Bono actually a step in the right direction? Bono, who is a stand-up act, changed the lives of many for the better.

When you look at some of the previous winners of this "esteemed" award, you have to wonder why Fidel Castro and Joseph Stalin never received it. Jimmy Carter, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002, tried to sabotage the U.S. plans of liberating Kuwait, asking members of the U.N. Security Council to vote against the resolution to free Kuwait, while also supporting Castro's communist regime. Then we have Yasser Arafat, who won the prize in 1994, who was considered by many to be a terrorist. Kofi Annan was also awarded the prize in 2001, and now he's caught in the middle of the largest scam in the history of the U.N. — the Oil for Food Scandal.

As far as I know, Bono isn't supporting any dictatorships, nor is he funding money to terrorist groups or claiming that the West is guilty of committing genocide. Let's hope that Bono does win the Nobel Peace Prize, because it will actually go to someone who earned it.

Nick Klein
sophomore-finance

COLUMNIST

Students' opinions valid despite what old folks say

By Jessica Dellen

AS STUDENTS in a university setting, the majority of us speak to people who are older than we are on a fairly regular basis — professors, advisors, our family, even strangers we make conversation with while waiting for a bus or standing in line at the bank.



MY OPINION

Most of the time, our experiences with whom I will playfully refer to as our elders are positive, but every once in a while, we run into Captain Wisdom.

You all know this person — you've met him or her many times in your lives. Captain Wisdom can be your professor, your counselor or even your relative. The Captain seems nice at first; the two of you are having a pleasant conversation about the election and you find yourself saying something to the effect of, "Ralph Nader doesn't get enough credit for his efforts. I think he's a stand-up candidate." BAM! POW! KAZAAM!

Captain Wisdom appears from a cloud of smoke and exclaims, "Ha

ha! What do you know about politics? You're just a kid! You'll know better when you're older!"

So, you stand there like a puppy that just got its nose rubbed in piddle while Captain Wisdom proceeds to tell you why your opinion is completely wrong — how you will have the right opinion once you've lived long enough to know what you're talking about.

The Captain will then prattle off an extensive list of all the other horrible things he or she thinks about people your age.

Generally it will be something about how kids today are lazy, uninformed, arrogant and disrespectful — not at all like kids "in the good old days."

Perhaps the scariest thing about Captain Wisdom is the fact that you never know who he or she is until you express an opinion that doesn't coincide with his or hers. Politics, religion, the death penalty, foreign trade, the war in Iraq, etc., are all topics that people our age couldn't possibly understand because we're all still children in the eyes of Captain Wisdom.

I don't know about anyone else, but I'm pretty tired of people telling me that my life experiences don't amount to jack squat simply because I'm "only 21." I have done and seen a lot in my lifetime, and I refuse to believe that on some arbitrarily assigned birthday — maybe my 30th birthday — God

Himself will hand me a big 'ole box of wisdom that suddenly makes my ideas valid.

Isn't that what Captain Wisdom tries to tell us young 'uns? That we are simply too young and too naive to have any idea what we think? I don't buy it, but then again, maybe my youthful arrogance is shielding me from the "fact" that I am a clueless youth.

I think that as an up-and-coming generation, we need to nip this problem in the bud. We can't let people stifle our thoughts and ideas simply because they think we're too young to have them. We are a generation of bright, talented people, and we deserve to be listened to, not laughed at or brushed aside.

People tell me, "You'll understand when you're older," in order to belittle me and make me think that someday, I'll get my box 'o wisdom and finally understand the ways of the world. Most young people do understand, we're just demoralized into thinking otherwise because the Captain doesn't agree with our views.

I've also been told, "You think you know everything, but you'll realize as you get older that you don't." I have yet to meet a single person — young or old — who has made the statement, "I know everything." This makes me believe that whenever the Captain makes this accusation, he or she is

merely speculating about what young people think they know. Having an opinion or an idea and standing behind it is not a proclamation of knowing everything.

These types of demoralization are the most powerful weapons in the Captain's arsenal. It's so much easier to tell young people that their views are wrong and invalid than to actually listen to them and have intellectual discussions with them. If you can convince someone to accept his or her inferiority and stop talking, why wouldn't you? It's much less challenging than intelligent discourse and requires less thought.

I don't speak on behalf of all young adults. Maybe some people my age sit in silent agreement that they won't know what they're talking about until they reach middle age.

I think everyone's ideas and opinions are valid — no matter what their age. So, how do we youngsters defeat Captain Wisdom's plot to quash our ideas? Don't back down. Calmly continue to state your thoughts and stand behind them. Everyone was young once, and most people remember that, so don't be afraid to ask your friendly neighborhood "elders" for a little help, too.

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