

Top Stadium Moments: Taliaferro returns

Saturday's game with Ohio State will be the 300th played at Beaver Stadium. In anticipation of the milestone, we're counting down the top five moments in stadium history throughout the week, with one moment revealed per day through Friday.

Moment No. 5: Penn State breaks back into the national scene by beating Ohio State, 17-10, Oct. 8, 2005.

Moment No. 4: Larry Johnson becomes the first Nittany Lion to break the 2,000-yard mark in a season in Penn State's 61-7 win in 2002.

Moment No. 3: Penn State

beats No. 2 Nebraska, 27-24, in 1982 for the biggest regular-season win in its first national title season.

Moment No. 2
Date: Sept. 1, 2001

Moment: Taliaferro returns to Beaver Stadium

What Happened: The fact that the Nittany Lions were routed by No. 2 Miami (Fla.) almost didn't matter.

This was Taliaferro's moment. Back on Sept. 23, 2000, late in the game against Ohio State in Columbus, Taliaferro made a tackle with teammate Gino Capone on the Buckeyes' Jerry Westbrooks but suffered a serious spinal cord injury.

Forget about playing football. He wasn't even supposed to walk again.

But Taliaferro went through the rehabilitation process and persevered.

Almost a year later, the New Jersey native was back in his No. 43 jersey and made his way out of the Beaver Stadium tunnel and onto the field as his parents watched in the stands.

They were two of the 109,313 fans in attendance that day, which was a record crowd.

To say the crowd roared would be an understatement.

Yes, his football playing days were over. True, Penn State lost, 33-7.

But Taliaferro accomplished a personal miracle — prompting the game to effectively take a backseat in memory.



Adam Taliaferro stands on the sidelines during Penn State's game against Miami (Fla.) on Sept. 1, 2001. The former safety suffered a spinal cord injury against Ohio State the previous season and led the team on the field after being told he wouldn't walk again.

Intrasquad

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period was something both sides expected.

"We're meshing well," assistant coach Cody Sanderson said. "These guys are doing a good job. They're listening to us almost all the time. Every day we get to know them a little bit better."

Still, Cody Sanderson said it will take some time for the team and staff to get fully acquainted.

Whether redshirting the freshmen class or two All-Americans, Cael Sanderson said he is trying to look at the wrestlers' best interests. Wright said he was open to redshirting when Cael Sanderson asked about the possibility.

It's these types of accommodations that has the team and coaching staff uniting — and also the coaches knowing the wrestlers' best interests.

"As long as they know that and believe that — that we're here trying to help them reach their goals," Cael Sanderson said. "That is really the key and that is what we're doing."

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Glass

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Wilson, saying he would like to see Glass' role increased on offense.

"I like when she's a little bit more active because it makes things easier for Ari and for Fatima," Rose said.

"It puts a little more pressure on the other team."

Rose said Glass' offensive ability stemmed directly from her high school career in Leland, Mich., where she played hitter and led the nation in kills during her four years.

Glass' mindset, Rose said, was often that of a hitter, which made her different from other setters in the Big Ten.

"I think what separates her from a lot of other setters across the country is that she is so strong at the net," Rose said. "So she was a hitter turned setter."

In high school, Glass not only led the nation in kills, but also service aces.

With Glass now a setter, freshman outside hitter Darcy Dorton said her ability to understand different roles has helped Dorton develop as a hitter.

"She can help people at any position. She can help me in my position even though we don't play the same position," Dorton said.

"We do very different things, but at the same time, she understands the game from so many different aspects so well. Playing with her is really easy and really fun."

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Babb

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points per game, noted he would have to help replace more than just offense.

"Defense is going to be very important this year," Babb said. "Especially with players like Manny Harris, Evan Turner and Durrell Summers. Players like that — you have to guard them every night in the Big Ten. That's tough."

Babb said playing against Pringle and Morrissey in practice last season helped him defensively. He pointed to their differing styles of play — Pringle's quickness and Morrissey's shooting ability.

Junior forward Jeff Brooks said the Nittany Lions will rely on Babb mainly in two areas this season: shooting and defense.

"Chris is going to be very important because he brings a lot to the table in terms of shooting, and because he plays tremendous defense," Brooks said.

"He's very good at defense, and that's something this team is prided on — defensive pressure."

Babb shot .349 from behind the arc last season, and Brooks said he has looked even better from the outside in practice this season.

But DeChellis said he has seen the most improvement in the 6-foot-5 guard from a mental standpoint.

"I think he understands about how hard he has to work each day," DeChellis said.

"I think he's gotten better at knowing if you make a mistake, you can't carry it with you —



Chris Babb (10) drives to the hoop.

you've just got to let it go. That's called maturity."

Junior guard and last season's leading scorer Talor Battle agreed with DeChellis, noting the crucial role Babb will play as most likely the team's starting two guard.

But Battle said this season wouldn't be about Babb stepping into Pringle's spot.

"I expect Chris to be Chris — when he's open make shots, rebound and defend," Battle said. "He can do all the things we ask him to do. He's not Stanley, and he never will be Stanley — he's just himself. He's just got to play his game and I think everything will fall into place."

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Defense

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pressured the Lions throughout the rest of the second half and produced numerous chances that nearly tied the game.

Likewise, Wisconsin's goal allowed the Badgers back in the game, and the visitors dialed up the heat on Penn State over the final eight minutes. Even though the win gave the Nittany Lions sole possession of first place in the Big Ten, Wisconsin very nearly could have stolen that in the late goings of a match the Lions had controlled.

Gorman noted Wednesday the late goals are an issue the team would like to nail down, but it didn't sound as if it's on top of his priority list.

"It's something we've got to tighten up on," the veteran coach said. "We're more concerned with being a little slack at the start of the period rather than bucking down and making sure we keep the focus and concentration for the entire 45 minutes."

Gorman was alluding to the team's occasional habit of starting slow at the beginning of either half. Against Wisconsin, it wasn't until the game was almost 20 minutes old that his side started to get into an offensive groove.

And while the team's final regular-season opponent, Indiana, isn't having the season they're accustomed to, Penn State will need to avoid a slow start and sloppy mistakes to get the road win Friday in Bloomington, Ind.

"I think during Wisconsin, we got up two goals and then it was kind of let off a little bit," Yeisley said. "We can't do that, especially when we play against Indiana. We've got to play 90 solid minutes because they are a good team."

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