

# Iowa's Stanzi could miss final games

By Wayne Staats  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Iowa's Rose Bowl chances have just taken another hit.

Hawkeyes head coach Kirk Ferentz said during his weekly teleconference on Tuesday that quarterback Ricky Stanzi may miss the final two regular season games.

**BIG TEN  
NOTEBOOK**

"It's very, very doubtful that he'll play in the next two weeks," Ferentz said. "But we're very, very confident that he'll return shortly thereafter and be ready to go."

Ferentz confirmed that Stanzi did have surgery on the severely sprained ankle. The quarterback had thrown for just one more touchdown than interception this season before he suffered the injury after getting sacked by Northwestern's Corey Wootton in last Saturday's 17-10 loss to the Wildcats.

James Vandenberg gets the start for the team's crucial game against Ohio State this weekend. Each team is 5-1 in the Big Ten

and the two meet in Columbus on Saturday.

Vandenberg struggled when he was brought in for the injured Stanzi against Northwestern. The redshirt freshman completed just nine-of-27 passes and tossed an interception.

Although Stanzi may miss the rest of the regular season, Ferentz said it was likely that the signal caller could be back for the bowl game.

"I think a good chance," Ferentz said. "I'm an optimist."

**Juice-less?**

If Illinois is going to take another step toward .500 this weekend, there's a chance its veteran quarterback can't help.

Head coach Ron Zook said senior quarterback Juice Williams is questionable for this weekend's game against Northwestern.

"I think if you look at Juice and you look at his history and you look at his background, he's a tough guy," Zook said.

"Obviously we're not going to do anything that would put him in any situation that would be a detriment to him."

Illinois has won two in a row to move to 3-6 overall, meaning the Fighting Illini have to sweep the final three games to become bowl eligible.

Williams was 5-for-5 passing and threw for a touchdown on Saturday's win against Minnesota, but the signal caller left with an injured left ankle. Zook said Williams' wearing of a boot was for precautionary reasons and he would wear it Tuesday but that would be it.

Redshirt freshman Jacob Charest shined replacing Williams, throwing for 185 yards and a touchdown against Minnesota.

Another quarterback, Eddie McGee, showed his versatility when he caught a 42-yard pass. Zook summed up McGee's role as saying that he has to be able to play at both quarterback and wide receiver.

Zook called Williams' injury day-to-day and said that the team is excited with how Charest played coming off the bench.

One positive is that Zook said Williams is tough and has played through things in the past that



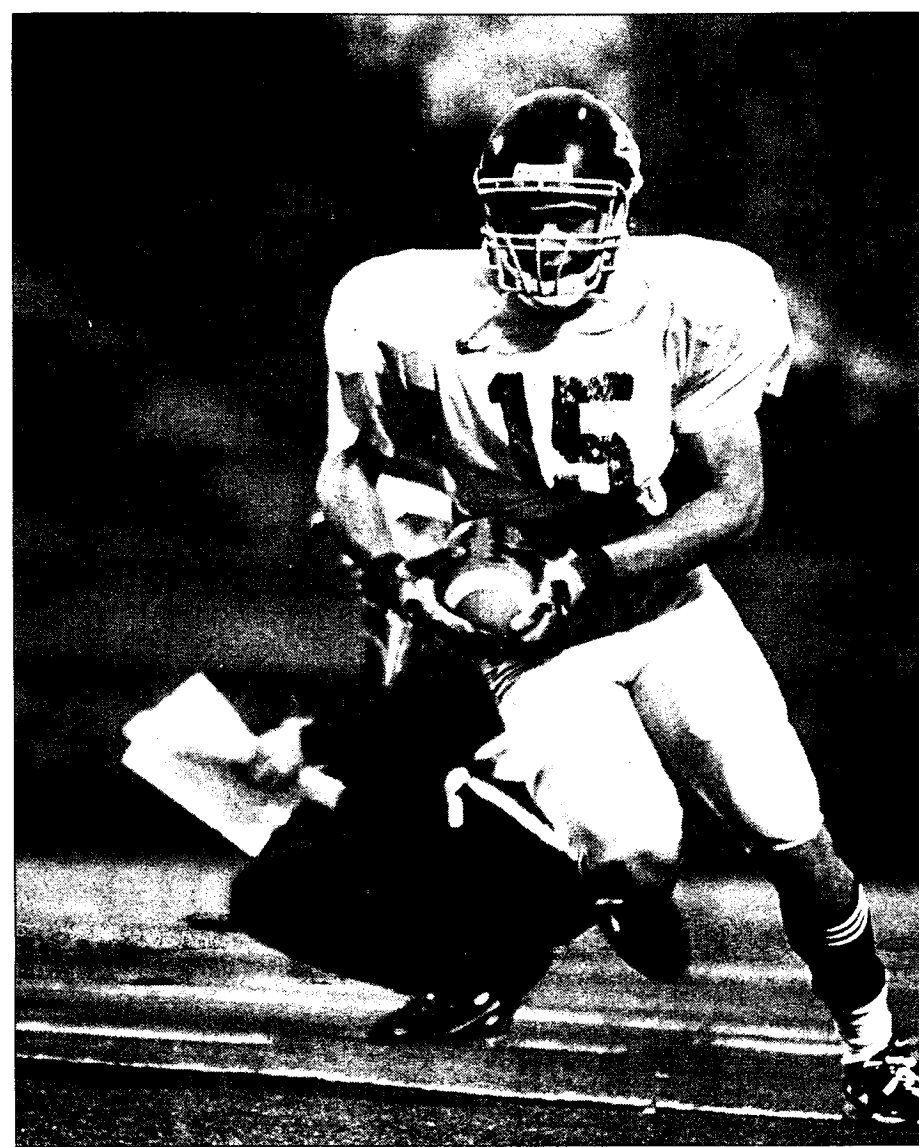
Michael Felletter/Collegian

Iowa's Ricky Stanzi (12) is sacked by Penn State's Josh Hull (43).

other players may not have. "I'm not saying he's going to play, but I'm just cautiously optimistic as to where we are right

now," Zook said. "I'd say that you'll probably see him in uniform."

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Ryan Ullsh/Collegian

State College Area High School wideout Alex Kenney runs the ball during practice Tuesday at Memorial Field. Kenney is one local standout who chose to play for Penn State.

## Local

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pass-happy Pac-10 and dominant SEC for a chance to play in Beaver Stadium — just two miles north of his high school football field.

To his peers at State College High, Kenney is living the dream. Growing up in the backyard of one America's most storied athletic programs, many students of State College have been bleeding blue and white since infancy. If given a choice to play for the Nittany Lions, well, it's not even a choice.

"I didn't really have a chance to get many scholarship offers because early on I was just telling everyone I wanted to play for PSU," said Mike Pierce, a State College graduate.

Now one of the Penn State baseball team's top lefty relievers, Pierce remembers going to Nittany Lions games since age 6.

"Growing up I always followed Penn State," Pierce said.

"Forever, it's been my dream to play for them."

For some athletes, a local connection is a foot in the door. Jesse Wagner, a 2007 grad of State College High, was fielding volleyball scholarship offers from Juniata, NYU and Princeton. But he wanted to go to Penn State.

"I already knew [coach Mark Pavlik] just because I was from the area, doing some camps here, things like that," Wagner said. "I told him I was going to come here, and he offered me a chance to walk on."

Wagner was confident in his decision to play for the Nittany Lions and has never looked back.

Kenney, however, wasn't always that sure. Widely regarded as one of the fastest prep athletes in Pennsylvania — he has clocked 10.6 seconds in the 100m — Kenney was lured by some of the country's top programs. The idea of being "just another State College kid at Penn State" almost seemed like a stale afterthought.

Yet it was the advice he received from the face of Penn State football that helped put things in perspective.

His father, Larry Kenney, remembers sitting down with coach Joe Paterno early in the recruitment process.

"He looked at Alex and said, 'I don't know you well enough to tell you with certainty that Penn State is the perfect school for you, but I will tell you that you shouldn't go somewhere else simply because Penn State is close to home and you've been

around it all your life,'" the elder Kenney said.

When Alex Kenney finally committed in July, it was because Penn State had the total package.

"In the end, I just fell in love with the school," he said. "The coaching staff, the program. Just everything."

When Kenney officially enrolls at Penn State next fall, he'll be one of four former Little Lions on the Nittany Lions' roster: Starting kicker Collin Wagner and stand-out linebacker Nate Stupar are both State College alumni.

Little Lions coach Al Wolski doesn't think it's a coincidence that so many of his athletes are excelling at the next level, especially at Penn State.

"We're in the backdrop of one of the best football programs in the country," said Wolski, who has been coaching the local high school for six years. "It sets the tone for our team."

And Penn State has long set the tone for the entire community. For as long as most residents can remember, State College, population 39,893 — whose economy and demographics are largely influenced by Penn State — has evolved to fit the needs for the university. And now it even helps produce some of its athletes.

Matt Groves, a middle-distance runner for Penn State's track team, is also a home-grown talent. When it came time to make the college decision, he had little hesitation.

"Going to Penn State just felt right," Groves said.

For Ben Ryan, a senior on the swim team, the path to Penn State wasn't as clear.

Though he lived just miles away from McCoy Natatorium, he didn't see a Penn State swim meet until his senior year in the heat of the recruitment process. Given offers by several schools, Ryan eventually chose Penn State for the overall fit of the program, not from pressures to stay close to home.

"But I do have some family members at almost all of my home meets," Ryan said. "And that's nice."

Groves agrees, saying the biggest perk of attending college close to home is having his family nearby to support him.

When Kenney takes the field for Penn State next fall, he too will be sure to have a sizable State College contingent there to cheer him on.

"Penn State has a great tradition," he said. "I've seen it from the outside growing up in State College, and now I'm just lucky to be a part of it."

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third quarter before not returning. Matt Stankiewitch played the rest of the game at left guard.

"In all fairness, Troutman was not playing that well," Paterno said. "We'll probably have to sit around and figure out what we want to do with the left guard spot."

Troutman was listed as "possible" on Penn State's weekly depth chart released Monday night.

The redshirt sophomore had started in eight straight games since replacing Stankiewitch, Penn State's original starter, in the Lions' second game.

### Changes may come

It's no secret that Penn State has struggled with special teams play in its two losses this season.

The Lions had a punt blocked and returned for a touchdown in a 21-10 loss to Iowa on Sept. 26 and allowed two punt returns of more than 40 yards Saturday in a 24-7 loss to Ohio State.

Paterno said different players may be used on special teams against Indiana this Saturday.

"Well we're gonna spend a little more time with them maybe," Paterno said. "I don't know whether that's part of the problem or not. We did, we took a good look at them Sunday and [Monday] and I think we're going to make a couple personnel changes. We went out [Monday] without pads, so on Mondays it's tough to evaluate people. But today we'll go out there and challenge a couple guys a little bit."

Paterno stressed that coaching was not the problem with the special teams units, reiterating that he may be using the wrong players and not emphasizing special teams enough.

He defended his philosophy of not having a special teams coach on his staff and

said it was the same way when he played in college and when he first came to Penn State as an assistant.

"We haven't been bad on special teams through the years. Just don't get carried away, guys," Paterno said. "I'm not about to change. I think we're doing fine. And I think the coaches are doing fine."

### 8-2 "not a disaster"

Penn State has been favored to win in all 10 of its games this season but has dropped two at home. Still, Paterno stressed that an 8-2 record is not the end of the world for his team.

"You know, 8-2 isn't a disaster. That's where we are, all right?" Paterno said. "Now, obviously when you lose to a couple good football teams at home and you don't score a point in the second half against either one of them, you've got some concerns. I've got some concerns about that."

"But, I still think that we have a bunch of kids that want to go out there and do well, and for me to go out there and do anything but encourage them, that's just not my style. I think we'll go out there, we'll practice hard this week, and we'll see how good we are."

Asked if he would have been satisfied to hear at the beginning of the season that his question-filled squad would finish 10-2 and play in a New Year's Day bowl, Paterno cautioned against overlooking the last two games.

"Right now we're only 8-2," Paterno said. "We've got a tough game this week. I'll think about it at the end if that happens. I think maybe we've got to be a little bit more realistic each year. When you look at a lot of things that go into it — our graduation rate, the type of kids we're recruiting and the kind of effort that we've gotten out of kids and the great job that the staff does. I think maybe if we end up 10-2, that's a pretty darn good year... If we end up 10-2."

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## V. Ball

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D'Errico said. "We don't feel pressure, it's just one match at a time for us."

With the team looking ahead to the next matches, D'Errico said she would like to see Penn State finish off the last three weeks of the season playing as a team. She said the Lions have been successful in learning what each player has to do on the court, and that will be beneficial to the team from here on out.

If there is a time when the players are getting distracted or focusing on the wrong things, Dorton said the Lions are quick to help out their teammates and get them back on track.

"When things aren't going well in practice, one of the captains will bring us in and get us back going toward our goal," Dorton said.

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