

# Three-point shooting expected to improve

By Alex Angert  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Thirty seconds into the game, Tyra Grant lined up with her feet behind the 3-point line, fired a shot and watched the ball bounce off the rim and into the hands of a defender.

Although she was the first Lady Lion to miss a 3-point shot, she wasn't the last.

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

By the end of the game the Lady Lions missed 13 more times from 3-point range against Indiana University (Pa.) in last Sunday's exhibition contest.

"I didn't think we shot the ball very well inside or outside," coach Coquese Washington said. "I'm not really happy with our shooting percentage. We shot 41 percent and I think we should shoot better."

Though 3-point shooting was a difficulty for the team the last few seasons and in the team's exhibition game, the Lady Lions expect improvement heading into this season.

While shooting 41 percent overall against IUP may not have pleased Washington, it looked good in comparison to the team's 13 percent 3-point average.

With the team's season opener against Drexel University on Friday, Grant said the

Lady Lions aren't worried about shooting only 1-for-15 from behind the arc against IUP.

"You need to pick your poison," said IUP coach Jeff Dow after playing Penn State. "I would just assume to give them some long jump shots as opposed to letting them pound it inside or take us off the dribble. Our feeling was that, 'Hey, if they beat us with threes all night long, tip your hat.'"

The 3-point shooting struggles the team experienced in the exhibition were nothing new for the Lady Lions as that area of the team's game has been a weakness in recent history.

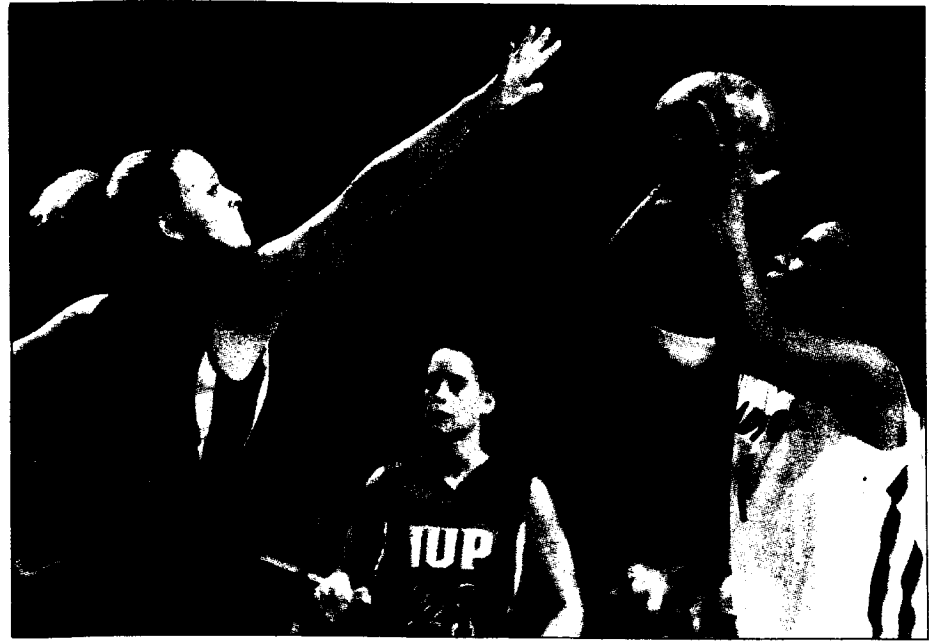
For instance, the team shot 124-for-403 from long distance last year, and 125-for-412 the year before.

However, Washington believes this season can be different for Penn State.

"I think we've got some good shooters," she said. "Zhaque [Gray] has come back, and she's shooting the ball very well for us. Ty is a very good 3-point shooter as well, and Gizelle [Studevent] is shooting the ball. She is a good outside shooter, and I think she'll be able to shoot the 3-ball for us."

Grant agreed with her coach and added that she is not concerned about the shooting performance displayed during the exhibition.

"We have a lot of good shooters on our



Guard Tyra Grant (right) lines up a shot in Penn State's exhibition against Indiana (Pa.)

Benedict A. Samuel/Collegian

team," Grant said. "That's not going to happen very often."

However, last season's statistics are not very promising for the Lady Lions.

As a junior, Grant was the only player to make more than 50 shots from long range. After her, Gray is the only player returning who made more than 10 threes last year.

The rest of the returning players who will see time on the court combined for a grand total of five 3-pointers last season.

Washington is still excited about the other possibilities the team has this year.

She said that Julia Trogele, Marisa Wolfe and Renee Womack have all improved their outside shots during the offseason and should all play a role this year.

Washington also added that the addition of freshman Nikki Greene in the post will help draw defenders and open up some shots from downtown.

"I think we've got some options," Washington said. "And if we have it, we'll take it."

To e-mail reporter: [ada147@psu.edu](mailto:ada147@psu.edu)

# Lions preparing for penalty kicks in tournament



Jimmy Dever/Collegian

Freshman Christine Nairn takes a shot at practice Tuesday. The Lions are working on penalty kicks for the NCAA tournament.

By Andrew Robinson  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Tuesday night, with the field swamped in light, the Penn State women's soccer team chided and joked about each player as they lined up for a penalty kick.

## WOMEN'S SOCCER

While the practice atmosphere wasn't serious, this weekend, the penalty kicks will count for more than bragging rights.

They may decide an NCAA tournament game.

"It's huge, especially because it's something you can practice," senior forward Katie Schoepfer said. "It's something that a team can be really good at and it can win you championships, but it can also lose you championships. I've lost before on PKs and it's terrible, so I think it's important to practice them and take them and get as

good as you can with them."

During the regular season, tie games will have two 10-minute overtime periods, and if neither team scores in the extra sessions, the game is declared a tie. However, in the tournament, each game needs a winner so a penalty kick shootout is used after 110 minutes have passed.

So far this season, the Nittany Lions have been involved with four penalty kicks, taking two and defending the others. Schoepfer scored on both her attempts, while opponents only converted one of their two shots on Alyssa Naehner.

Senior midfielder Melissa Hayes said Schoepfer is the biggest threat to put a penalty kick in the net. Hayes said the forward's ability to strike the ball and put it anywhere in the net makes her dangerous, but all the players have taken a PK at some point in their career.

"We just started taking penalty



Collegian reporters field PKs. Column online, video on the MAKE PLAYS blog: [psucollegian.com](http://psucollegian.com)

kicks last week, so its pretty fresh at this point," senior midfielder Alli Rago said. "We've all taken penalty kicks in our careers, and we're all very confident. We've been shooting goal after goal in practice for about three or four weeks during first half of practice, so all of us are very confident to take one and make sure it goes in the back of the net."

Each player has her own pre-kick routine and superstition. Freshman midfielder Christine Nairn said she knows exactly where she wants to put the ball before she kicks it and refuses to look at anything else except the ball before she fires.

The common factor for any shooter, Schoepfer said, is confi-

dence. Admittedly a free-shooter, Schoepfer said having confidence in her ability to put the ball away is what has allowed the senior to convert her attempts this season.

When the Lions open the Tournament against Colgate at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, they will need confident shooters if the game comes down to a shootout. Schoepfer said any doubt in a shooter's mind increases the chances that they will miss, and because she doesn't aim too much on penalty kicks, the forward only thinks about the positive.

"That's everything about a penalty kick," Hayes said. "You have to want to take it, and you have to want to win the game for your team and be in that pressure situation. I think that the people who thrive on that are the ones who step up and put it away."

To e-mail reporter: [adr5079@psu.edu](mailto:adr5079@psu.edu)

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