

# Team depth brings competition, chance for rest

By Jake Kaplan  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

If any year were the year to have multiple injuries, this would be it for the No. 18 Penn State women's gymnastics team.

Opposed to other years, when the team might have only eight or nine gymnasts compete in a given meet, the Nittany Lions have a deeper squad this year. During Friday's season opener in East Lansing, Mich., 11 Penn State gymnasts saw action in at least one of the four events — balance beam,

uneven bars, vault and floor exercise.

The Lions expect their depth to create competition within the team and keep the gymnasts fresh.

Six women make up the lineup in each of the events and senior Casey Rohrbaugh said she remembers times in the past when only seven gymnasts competed in a given meet. Most of the gymnasts had to compete in all four events, and the rest would compete in three.

She said not having to endure the pressure of competing in three or four events during a meet helps in terms of handling stress.

In Friday's opening quad meet, only two Lions competed in all four events and two more competed in three of the events. Because of the multitude of gymnasts capa-

ble of putting up high scores on this year's squad, the remaining seven girls competed in just one or two events. Keeping the team well-rested will help later in the season.

"It's nice to have depth because then you can rest people, and people don't get worn down," Rohrbaugh said.

"It prevents injury, and it kind of spreads out the work distribution."

Senior co-captain Rosie Smith said she prefers having many capable gymnasts on the team, even if it takes away lineup spots from gymnasts who may have been in the starting lineup in the past.

"That will make everybody better if everybody is fighting," Smith said.

"Everybody wants to be in that

top six, to be in that lineup, to compete.

"So it's kind of pushing everybody to be better this year, which is awesome."

Though it is early in the season, the depth of the roster that brought back 12 letter-winners and added three freshmen has already proved beneficial for Penn State in the early going. Senior Alexandra Brockway, a 2009 All-American, competed only on the bars after a preseason ankle injury, and freshman Sharaya Musser's foot injury limited her practice time before the meet.

A pair of juniors, Heather McElwee and Melissa Klein, are not traveling with the team this weekend for the meet against Denver.

McElwee is sidelined with an ankle injury, and Klein has not

returned to full strength after hip surgery.

"Injuries are part of the sport," coach Steve Shephard said. "It's rare that you get through a whole season that you don't have at least one injury that keeps you out, so you have to have depth."

"That's why we recruit walk-ons and we try to have people pushing for spots in the lineup. It's a good thing."

Smith gave credit to the coaches for the way they design the practices and work around injuries.

"If somebody's hurt or something, it's gonna affect our team," she said.

"But we have so much depth that we'll still be good no matter what."

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## WOMEN'S GYMNASICS



Shephard

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### By Jacqueline Bigar

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** for Thursday, Jan. 14, 2010.  
This year, you get a chance to renew, to begin again in some area of your life. You become increasingly creative and more dynamic. Do be careful about being too me-oriented. Be honest with yourself about what you would like to change. Sudden events could point to areas that don't work. If you ease up and relax more, you will let go of what isn't working. Every so often, we need to revise our goals, as they become outdated as we transform. If you are single, you'll discover the power of a strong relationship. Just remember that a relationship is a two-way street. If you are attached, give your mate power by giving more weight to his or her ideas. He or she, too, can have unusual solutions. CAPRICORN reads you cold.  
The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-Soso; 1-Difficult  
**ARIES** (March 21-April 19)  
\*\*\*\* As difficult as one day might be as good as the next can be. See the error of your ways, or see where you can change a situation as it evolves through to resolution. Be willing to give that extra push of self-discipline mixed with determination. Tonight: A must appearance.  
**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20)  
\*\*\*\* Do needed research, be willing to get past another person's anger. How you handle a matter and the decisions you make define the spade of a change. Be willing to call a potential a spade. Tonight: Meet a friend at a new restaurant.  
**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20)

\*\*\*\* An agreement or decision makes relating to a key individual easier later. In a sense, you have pushed too far and done too much. Now this person needs to demonstrate his or her true colors through actions, not words. Tonight: Chat over dinner.  
**CANCER** (June 21-July 22)  
\*\*\*\* Though you might have felt you had reason to be angry, let go and claim responsibility for your side in this difficult situation. Your vision could be informative and important. Listen to another perspective, and get past an issue. Tonight: Deter to others.  
**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22)  
\*\*\*\* You might want to understand more of what is happening behind the scenes. Be a listener, but ask questions that help you resolve a mental conflict. As a result, you can make a new resolution or change your direction. Tonight: Put your feet up.  
**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)  
\*\*\*\* Once more, your creativity means something. Resolve an issue involving a child or new friend. Someone you meet today could be very important in the long run. This person has a way of re-energizing you. Tonight: Go into weekend mode.  
**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)  
\*\*\*\* Stop and be willing to understand more of what is going on with you. Sometimes you do nothing or project on someone else when you need to resolve the issue once and for all. Tonight: Laughter helps you relax.  
**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)  
\*\*\*\* Talk is cheap and takes you in a different direction. Resolution comes through communication. You could be surprised by how someone looks at a situation. Innovate and change directions.

Tonight: Hang out. If need be, clear the air with a friend.  
**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)  
\*\*\*\* Nearly anything you do has positive results. Your ability to edge through a personal situation and come out on top could mark your finances. You have the financial wisdom and knowledge to make a situation work. Just do it! Tonight: Your treat.  
**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)  
\*\*\*\* You manage to do something very differently and come up with as-yet-unknown results. A new approach and beginning become distinct possibilities. LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)  
\*\*\*\* As you like it.  
**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)  
\*\*\*\* Your sense of self and direction take you to a new level. Realize what is happening behind the scenes with you and perhaps a close friend. If you want to change directions, please do. Tonight: Take some much-needed personal time.  
**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20)  
\*\*\*\* A friendship influences your decisions and direction. Take time to renew this bond; after all, it means a lot to you. Discussions open you up to possibilities as yet unthought-of. Think before you leap. Tonight: Think and act like it is the weekend.  
**BORN TODAY**  
Singer Jack Jones (1938), actress Faye Dunaway (1941), actor, rapper LL Cool J (1968).  
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Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at [www.jacquelinebigar.com](http://www.jacquelinebigar.com).  
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