

Penn State tops No. 17 William & Mary



Christine Reckner/Collegian

Jen Steadman steals the ball from a William & Mary player during Penn State's first outdoor home game of the season at Jeffrey Field on Sunday.

By Kurt Bopp
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Early in Sunday's game against William & Mary, Penn State struggled to capitalize on opportunities.

But after a few missed passes and shots off the post, freshman attacker Molly Fernandez found junior attacker Jen Steadman for the game's first goal.

No. 14 Penn State snapped out of its early struggles and rode a consistent attack and stifling goalkeeping to an 11-8 victory over the No. 17 Tribe (5-4) at Jeffrey Field.

"We didn't play perfect lacrosse," coach Suzanne Isidor said, "but everyone stepped up their game and kept going hard the whole 60 minutes."

WOMEN'S LACROSSE

Penn State

William & Mary

Seven Nittany Lions scored Sunday, led by Laura Lesnick's hat trick and assist. Lesnick said having so many threats makes it tougher for opponents to scout the offense. Penn State (6-3, 0-1) out-shot the Tribe 17-10 in the first half but was limited to six goals by goalie Emily Geary and three posts, which stopped four Penn State shots.

Lions goalkeeper Stephanie Ellis was equally as dominant, as she recorded eight saves and neutralized the Tribe attackers. Most notably was late in the second half when William & Mary showed a revival and rushed the net. An attacker passed to her teammate next to the goal but was intercepted by an aggressive Ellis.

"She played awesome," senior defender Ashley Boccio said. "She

is always positive back there. She's always pumping us up and congratulating us. I'd be lost back there without her."

Equally critical to the Lions' victory were draw controls.

Penn State won draw controls 13-8, including eight out of 11 in the second half alone. Isidor was proud of her team's production in draw controls, particularly in Maggie Dunbar, who won four.

"They were huge," Isidor said. "That has been our focus all week. It was huge for momentum to get us going."

Dunbar wanted to win every draw control, and she and her teammates wanted it more.

"Typically when you win the draw controls you win the game," Lesnick said.

The Lions built on their 6-3 half-time lead with three goals within the first 11 minutes of the second half. William & Mary answered with two quick goals, when a Penn



ONLINE

The Nittany Lions' consistency allowed them to jump out to a quick start: psucollegian.com

State timeout led to Lesnick's third — and most bizarre — goal of the game.

Lesnick attempted a shot but lost control of the ball as her stick moved forward. The ball rolled out of the junior midfielder's stick and flew just over Geary, rolling slowly into the back of the net to give Penn State a commanding 10-5 lead.

Boccio said the win could be a jumping off point for the Lions, who are looking to break a recent trend of playing only one half and following each wins with a loss.

"We definitely had something to prove to ourselves today," Isidor said, "that we could go out there and do it."

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Lions down Red Storm

Penn State won its first game of the season after losing six in a row.

By Tom Copain
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Late in the fourth quarter, Byron Collins looked toward his bench and cracked a smile.

The Penn State men's lacrosse assistant coach was almost as jubilant as the players, holding his hands in the air as the players jumped in celebration on Jeffrey Field's sideline.

His reaction was in response to Chris Hogan's late goal Saturday that sealed the

MEN'S LACROSSE

Penn State

St. John's

Nittany Lions' 13-11 win over St. John's, giving Penn State (1-6) its first win of the season.

"I'm glad that we're not hearing the 0-6 anymore, or the winless Lions," Dave Baker said.

It was a long time — 331 calendar days — since Penn State's last win, May 2, 2009 at Georgetown. Saturday's game didn't look promising for most of the afternoon as Penn State trailed the Red Storm (3-5) midway through the third quarter. After a floating Dillon Ayers shot beat Baker, St. John's led 9-6, and the Lions looked to be done in by another scoring run. But a six-goal fourth quarter that ultimately saved Penn State. Penn State coach Glenn Thiel said he moved freshman Nick Dolik to midfield and placed Anthony Basciano on attack with Billy Gribbin and Matt Mackrides.

Basciano started up front, and he and Dolik responded by each scoring twice in the fourth quarter

to put Penn State ahead. Basciano's two goals came 74 seconds apart, turning a one-goal deficit into a late lead that Penn State wouldn't relinquish.

"The first two quarters or so, maybe even three, I didn't play my best," Basciano said. "I just got my confidence back."

Dolik and Gribbin each had a hat trick, including Dolik's acrobatic goal, firing a shot as a defender knocked him down.

Baker said he didn't have his best game but still made nine saves for his first career win. Matt Bernier also picked up his play from last week. The junior defender, who said he beat himself up for a ground ball he didn't get against Duke, had five ground balls Saturday and a green grass stain on the back of his white jersey for his efforts. Earlier in the week, Bernier said the team just needed something positive. The Lions got that Saturday, and the team piled



Andrew Beam/Collegian

Players fight for a groundball during Penn State's win against St. John's.

around Baker at game's end. And captain Brian Shea echoed the sentiments of the entire team Saturday after the game.

"Love it," he said. "Finally got one."

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Explosive fourth quarter propels PSU to victory

By Bill Landis
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Glenn Thiel had seen it before. His Penn State men's lacrosse team was neck-and-neck with St. John's halfway through the third quarter — and then it happened. The Red Storm struck for two goals in a span of 13 seconds and opened up a three-goal lead over the Nittany Lions.

But unlike past games this season in which the Lions allowed

opponents to go on runs and failed to mount comebacks, Thiel said they finally "roped" their opponent back in. They outscored the Red Storm 6-2 in the fourth quarter to earn their first win.

After Penn State took an early 2-1 lead, St. John's grabbed control. And it seemed every time the Lions got within striking distance, the Red Storm had an answer. But rather than let the back-and-forth nature of the game get it down, the team regrouped before the fourth

The re-established mental focus brought a more sound attack.

"The guys in the crease and off ball moved much more than they had in the previous three quarters," sophomore attack Matt Mackrides said.

Mackrides finished the game with a goal and three assists and set up teammate Anthony Basciano for the game-tying goal with just less than eight minutes left in the game. But it wasn't just the offense that found its stride in

the fourth quarter. The Lions' defense buckled down and sealed the door after they took the lead.

After going up by two, the Lions were on their heels as St. John's sought for an answering goal. But rather than getting to the net with ease, which had been the case in the first three quarters, the Red Storm had to settle for longer shots. Those shots were either blocked by the Lions' defense or stopped by Dave Baker, who made three stops in the fourth quarter.

The defense in the fourth was a far cry from the beginning of the game St. John's scored almost immediately after Penn State goals. But Baker praised the perseverance of the Lions' attack.

"Watching [the attack] work so hard down there and then let in a weak one or kinda break down was a little disheartening," Baker said. "Luckily, our offense didn't let it affect them."

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Seniors shine at Calif.

By Zack Feldman
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Though Saturday's home-opening meet at Penn State was canceled early last week, two Nittany Lion seniors went to Stanford instead and made a dent in the record books.

Cheryl Spring and Tyler McCandless both placed career-best and top-10 school times in their 10,000-meter races at Saturday's Stanford Invitational meet to open up the outdoor track season.

The only runners who made the trip along with coach Beth Alford-Sullivan, Spring and McCandless planned to run at Stanford regardless of where the rest of the team ran. During the Saturday races, the pair experienced great racing conditions at the California track.

Despite pre-race nerves, Spring, who finished with a time of 34 minutes, 31.75 seconds, said she got the results she wanted thanks to specific training for the event.

"It was my first 10k, and I was pretty nervous about it, so I'm happy with how I did," Spring said. "I actually had to really focus on going slower during my workouts because it's important during the race not to go out too hard."

McCandless, who has run the 10,000 several times in his career, placed fifth in his heat with a time of 29:22.35, a personal-best by more than 26 seconds.

TRACK AND FIELD

Though McCandless successfully ran in the slower of the two men's heats, Spring ran in the faster women's heat.

Spring said competing in the faster heat helped her adjust to the new race and made sure she didn't go too fast out of the gate.

"I think it helped because I was able to let the other girls take the lead and run my race," Spring said. "If I had gone in the second heat, I probably would have tried to take it out, maybe gone out too fast, and I think it was probably good for what I was doing."

Spring's time puts her seventh all-time for Penn State's women in the 10,000, while McCandless is now sixth all-time on the men's list.

The Stanford Invitational was the first time a Penn State runner cracked the men's top-10 list in the 10,000 since Steve Brown in 1990 and the first time a woman has posted a top-10 time in the event since 2003.

Spring said the success shows how well both teams can cover their events, especially the 10,000-meter race, which has not seen much success in recent years.

"I think a lot of the girls are capable of running great 10ks. I'm glad we're focusing on it again," Spring said. "I think it could be a great point scorer at Big Tens. Not a lot of people think about doing that event, so I'm glad people are going to be trying it more."

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Collegian file photo

Cheryl Spring, Claire Berryman and Kara Millhouse run before a practice last fall.

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