

# Pitching powers Lions to shutout victory

By Tom Kinslow  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

With an ailing Jackie Hill leaving the game after three innings, the pressure was on pitcher Lisa Akamine.

## SOFTBALL

The sophomore responded, throwing four shutout innings en route to a 3-0 Penn State win and weekend sweep of Wisconsin Sunday.

Akamine took over for Hill, who left with an undisclosed injury. Coach Robin Petrini would only say the senior was sore after the game.

The pitcher inherited a 1-0 lead and kept the Badgers at bay, allowing three

hits and striking out four in her second appearance of the weekend.

Saturday, the sophomore tossed six innings, giving up three hits and walking five while surrendering one run as the Nittany Lions (25-11, 4-2 Big Ten) topped Wisconsin (9-22, 0-6 Big Ten), 3-1.

Since Akamine filled in for the senior at the start of the series, the pitcher said she tried to approach the start as if she were pitching in her normal slot behind Hill.

The aforementioned Hill came in to

close out Saturday's game, registering her fourth save of the year.

Akamine and Hill allowed a combined one run over 14 innings of work, an effort that was not lost on their teammates.

"They were great this weekend," outfielder Ashley Griffith said.

"They held them to little hits and little runs, so we were able to win both games because they had strong pitching out there."

Sunday, the Lions leaned on the duo until the fifth inning, when Penn State broke out offensively, scoring two runs on three hits and extending the lead to three.

Prior to that inning, the Lions only man-

aged three hits in four innings, two of which belonged to Griffith.

Following that outburst, Penn State notched three more hits, and the Lions believe that fifth inning was crucial in waking up the offense.

It was Penn State's first sweep in the Big Ten this season, something the Lions believe is huge for their confidence.

"Sweeping is a big thing, it's not easy to do in the Big Ten," Griffith said. "Any time you can sweep a Big Ten team it's a very good thing. It'll definitely give us some momentum going into Michigan State this week."

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## BATTED AWAY



Kelly Rootes-Murdy/Collegian

Penn State rising senior midfielder Matheus Braga (7) heads the ball away from a Villanova defender in Saturday's exhibition at the practice fields near Jeffrey Field. Penn State won, 3-0, largely because of the play of Braga and his fellow midfielders. For full coverage of the soccer team's exhibition: [psucollegian.com](http://psucollegian.com).

# Matadors sweep PSU

By Eddie Gentile  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Penn State coach Mark Pavlik wanted to see where his team was at heading into this weekend's West Coast trip.

Two losses later, the veteran coach has a better idea.

## MEN'S VOLLEYBALL

The No. 9 Nittany Lions fell to the No. 4 Cal State-Northridge Matadors in straight sets Saturday night in Northridge, Calif., 3-0 (30-27, 30-24, 30-25) to complete a weekend sweep.

Including Friday's 3-0 loss to No. 11 UC Santa Barbara, the Lions failed to grab a single set during the weekend.

But what Pavlik learned during the losses was, while his team is exhausted physically and mentally, it can "probably beat an EIVA team" with the way it played.



Pavlik

"I like what we did. This was definitely worth the trip out here," Pavlik said.

Physically, the Lions were able to hang with the No. 4 team in the country throughout the first 40 combined points of each set.

But when the time came to grab the essential points they needed to close out sets, the Lions couldn't jump quite as high or swing quite as hard as their opponent.

"We're on a tank that's less than half empty," Pavlik said.

The Lions led only twice during Saturday night's match. At one point in the first set, Penn State held a 22-19 lead.

After a Matador timeout, Cal State-Northridge went on a 7-1 run and ultimately took the set, 30-27.

Penn State did not lead the rest of the night.

Mentally, playing from behind took its

"You can't let Northridge get easy leads on you. They can compete without being given any easy points."

Mark Pavlik

Penn State men's volleyball coach

toll on the Penn State players as well. The Lions had trouble controlling the amount of errors they registered as a result.

As a team, the Lions gave the Matadors 41 points in errors.

Cal State-Northridge was able to better control the ball, as it limited its errors to 28.

The Matadors' management and defense proved enough to seal the Lions' fate.

"You can't let Northridge get easy leads on you," Pavlik said. "They can compete without being given any easy points."

Penn State (20-7) entered the match with the third-highest hitting percentage in the nation (.336).

But during Saturday's match, that offense was limited to .193 hitting against the Matadors.

Senior co-captain Will Price registered a match-high 19 kills but was held to an attack percentage of .268. The opposite hitter also tallied eight attack errors and three service errors on the match.

Joe Sunder was next in kills for the Lions with 11.

But the sophomore outside hitter also had trouble finding consistency throughout the match and was limited to just .115 hitting, tallying eight attack errors.

Pavlik said Sunder and his teammates now are in a rest and recuperation period with one match in the next 17 days.

"I'm ready to see the team well rested heading down the stretch," Pavlik said.

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