

Henneghan leads with tenacity, funny personality

By Mike Still
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Growing up, Charley and Danny Henneghan rarely got into any trouble with their parents.

Any time their mother tried to scold or punish the two brothers, Charley changed her mind.

**MEN'S
LACROSSE**

"Over the years, it's gotten to the point where we never really get into that much trouble because he just always makes my mom laugh at the end of it all," Danny said of his older brother. "She always forgets she's mad."

His whole life, Charley has had a certain quality about him. He has the rare ability to make any situation, no matter the circumstances, a funny one for everyone involved.

"He doesn't take himself too seriously, and he makes people feel comfortable and has fun with whatever he's doing," Molly Henneghan said of her oldest son.

"He just makes people feel good."

He has brought his antics and easy-going attitude to Penn State and for four years has kept the spirits of the men's lacrosse squad high through hard times.

But there are two very different sides of Charley Henneghan.

And as beneficial as it's been having Henneghan's light-hearted personality on the team, his abilities on the field might be just as vital to the Lions' success.

The entertainer

Despite being an athlete his whole life, Henneghan's heart may belong to somewhere else other than the playing field — the dance floor.

When he was 13, Henneghan tirelessly memorized the dance moves of "NSYNC and Michael Jackson." "Beat It," "Thriller," "Bye Bye Bye." Charley had the moves

down to the slightest of details.

"I'm the best dancer on the team, far and away," Henneghan joked.

"I've been known to take over a few dance floors in my day. The dance floor is my stomping ground."

Though he refrains from breaking out his dance moves everyday in practice, Henneghan finds other ways to keep his teammates entertained.

The senior possesses an arsenal of different jokes, impressions and movie quotes that's guaranteed to keep the Lions in stitches.

"If you think of a funny movie you saw seven or eight years ago, he can just recite a quote word for word from it," senior co-captain Joe Britt said. "It's one of those quotes that you hear, and now you have to figure out where it's from, but you know you recognize it."

But the guy his family and friends call "Good Time Charley" really doesn't have to do much of anything to get a laugh.

His presence keeps the Lions uplifted.

"You just look at him and laugh," said freshman Nick Dolik who attended Brother Rice High School with Henneghan in Bloomfield Hills, Mich.

"He can make you smile easily doing nothing. He always has a really good attitude with everything and makes everybody happy and smile."

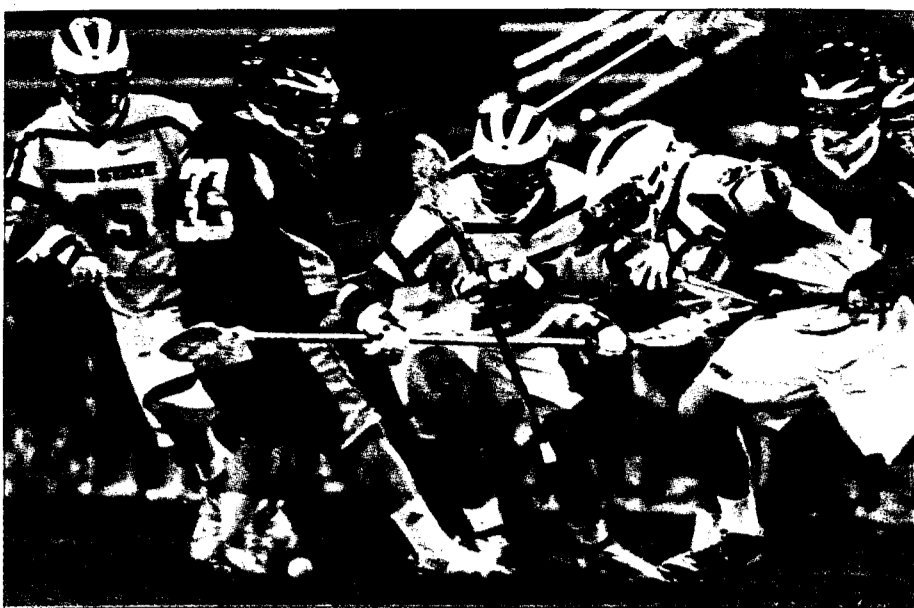
Henneghan's ability to keep the team happy and positive is something his teammates have found invaluable this season.

With just one win all season, the 19 Lions are not having the year they hoped for before the season began.

Many times, "win" haven't been high and frustration has taken control, but Henneghan has always been there to keep his team motivated and positive.

"He keeps in mind what we play for," Britt said.

"It's supposed to be a game, and it's supposed to be fun, and he definitely kept



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Charley Henneghan (right) fights for a ground ball in a game against Bucknell this season.

a lot of people from getting down this year."

As fun-loving and relaxed as Henneghan is off of the field, it may be difficult to grasp the idea that he's also the Lions' top faceoff man.

One of the most brutal aspects of the game, winning faceoffs, takes a side of Henneghan that those who don't share the field with him don't often see.

The competitor

When Henneghan began playing lacrosse his freshman year at Brother Rice, his team didn't have a faceoff guy.

Hoping to help his team out, Henneghan gave it a shot.

"I basically taught myself throughout high school and just got better and better and by the end of high school we had a percentage of like 90," he said. "I mean, I am from Michigan, and there's not a whole lot of competition up there, but I just had a knack for it, and my hands were just quicker than most others."

Henneghan taught himself well, developing into an All-America faceoff man his senior year in 2005.

Also a standout running back on the gridiron, he used the aggressiveness and agility he gained from football in the faceoff circle.

"Football's all about quickness and getting out of the faceoff circle quickly is my biggest attribute," he said. "When the whistle blows, I'm already out."

This season, Henneghan's quickness has been working wonders for the Lions.

His .615 faceoff percentage stands as the best in the Colonial Athletic Association.

For some, it's difficult to believe "Good Time Charley" is capable of such success in such a serious aspect. But Henneghan's teammates aren't surprised in the least.

"He's just a competitor," Dolik said. "He can be all jokes and smiles off the field, but

when we got on the field, he's usually business and he can just flip a switch really quick."

"You'll think he's joking around, but he'll blow by you on the faceoff."

The one-on-one style of faceoffs provides Henneghan with added motivation.

He knows that it's him against his opponent, and whoever wins the brutal battle is going to help his team win.

"It's a game within a game and what it comes down to is focus, focus, focus," Henneghan said. "It's all about shutting everyone out and just focusing on the whistle and beating the guy up. It's basically a wrestling match out there."

Finishing strong

Looking back to Henneghan's first season with the Lions, coach Glenn Thiel can't do much else but chuckle to himself.

"When he came in here he was 'Good Time Charley,'" Thiel said. "It was just a big old freshman do nothing and just hang around and do a couple things here and there."

But having spent four years with Henneghan and getting to know him as both a player and a person, Thiel has learned to take him for what he is and is impressed with how much he's developed.

"He's comical, and he's funny, and he's relaxed, but he plays very hard," the coach said. "He's come a long ways."

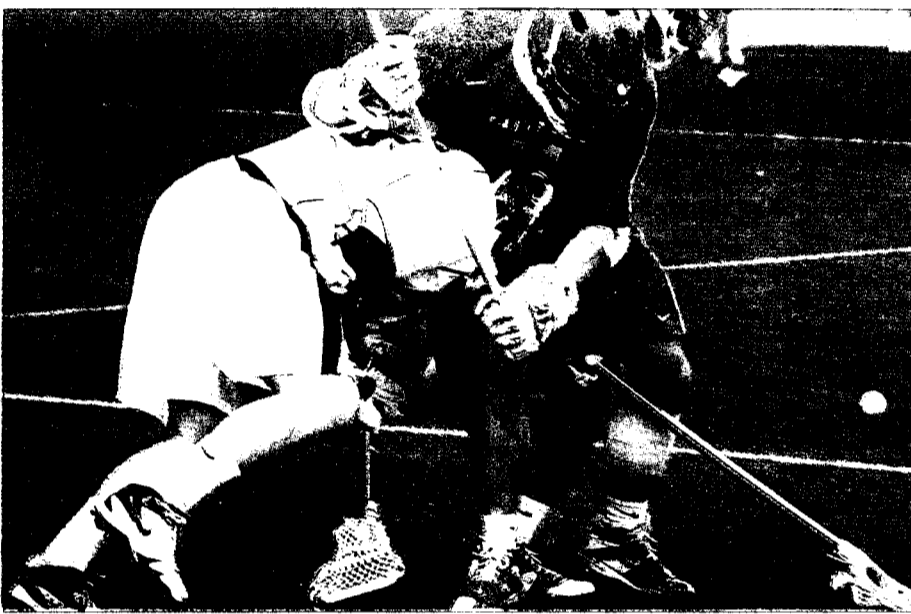
Henneghan has found the perfect balance between work and play.

He picks up the ball for his team and he picks them up when they're down.

And in his eyes, he's found his place.

"That's my way of being a leader on the team," Henneghan said. "I feel like I can have people cracking up, but when the time comes to be serious, people have enough respect to listen to me and to take in the advice I have to give."

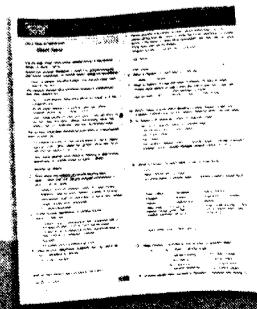
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Henneghan (right), or "Good Time Charley," has gained the respect as a leader for the Lions.

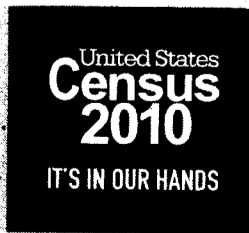
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