

# DT Still embraces next year's chance

By Audrey Snyder  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

He was only 12 years old, but opposing coaches told their players two things about Devon Still.

No. 1, get to the edge. At 6-feet tall and with a chunky build, it was nearly impossible to go through the young defensive tackle. Watch for whatever way Still goes, and run in the opposite direction.

No. 2, just fall down. If Still's moving in to make the tackle, fall down before the kid has a chance to deliver a big hit.

And that's when Still's little league football coach, Kerry Galloway, said he knew the Penn State defensive tackle was destined to be a great football player.

This season, the Nittany Lions are hoping for similar results.

With the redshirt junior finally healthy after suffering a torn anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) and a broken ankle during his first two seasons, Still is ready to become Jared Odrick's successor.

"He is going to be phenomenal," Odrick said. "He can become one of the best defensive tackles that

Penn State has ever seen. And if he keeps working hard in season, out of season, on the field and off the field, he already has the natural skills to go with it, he'll be great."

While Still has just one start under his belt, which came in the Capital One Bowl because Ollie Ogbu wasn't allowed to start because of disciplinary reasons, he is no stranger to waiting for opportunities to come his way.

Growing up, Still didn't play any sports until Galloway convinced Still's father, Antonio, to let the 12-year-old join the J-Street Raiders football team.

With a build made for a lineman and raw athletic abilities, Still first caught Galloway's eye because the two were neighbors. The player-coach relationship quickly grew as Still caught on to the sport.

"After his third game Devon was just slashing people," Galloway said. "He was one of the hardest hitters on the team, and the kids would just run the other way."

At 12 years old, Still quickly learned he was too big to play the skill positions and landed himself a spot on both the offensive and defensive lines.

And as he entered Howard High School of Technology in



Andrew Dunheimer/Collegian file photo

Devon Still (71) tackles Ohio State's Dan Herron in last year's game at Beaver Stadium. The Lions look to Still to replace Jared Odrick on the defensive line this season.

**"He can become one of the best defensive tackles that Penn State has ever seen."**

Jared Odrick  
former PSU defensive tackle

Wilmington, Del., that's where he stayed.

As a 6-foot-4, 230-pound high school sophomore, Still's defensive line coach, Matt Rice, said Still became one of the team's most dominant players.

"He really came on as somebody to be reckoned with," Rice said of Still's play as a junior. "Then his senior year, the opening game, the quarterback rolled away from him."

"He ran him down all the way from the backside for a sack, and that was a pretty big play."

With the ability to play on either side of the ball, Still entered Penn State in 2007, where he worked with the defensive line.

But Still's freshman campaign came to an abrupt end.

"It was Aug. 10 of his freshman year," Antonio Still said. "I still remember the date."

"He told me what happened was he was going after the quarterback and a teammate pulled down on his shirt."

"As he was continuing to run, his foot got like stuck in the turf and twisted. It was really like a freak thing that happened."

The result: a torn ACL in Still's left knee. With months of rehabilitation ahead of him, Still said he set out determined to be back on the field the following summer.

The defensive tackle succeeded and put the surgery and therapy behind him, but before the Lions

even opened the 2008 season, Still found himself on the sidelines. This time a broken left ankle forced him to once again wait for his opportunity.

"My first year I wasn't that distraught," Still said.

"Injuries come with football so I just had to work my way back to where I was before."

"But then when I came out the second time and I broke my ankle.

That's when I really started feeling like, 'Why me? Am I ever gonna be able to get healthy?'" Sensing his spirits were

down, Galloway, also a deacon, said he called his former player and told him to trust in God's plan and to know that through prayer God would allow him to work things out.

With the help of the training staff and encouragement from Galloway and his own family, Still finally found his way to the field last year.

After serving as a backup defensive tackle, Still enters this season completely healthy and ready to build off last year's experience.

With Odrick's shoes left to fill, Still took it upon himself to slim his physique from 310 to 298 pounds.

While he had to give up Chinese food and McDonald's, both things he said were part of his college life, the diet is aimed at allowing him to play those 60 plays a game Odrick used to take.

After Still made it through spring workouts healthy, his teammates and coaches said they are excited to see him become an impact player.

"Everybody's gonna be shocked at how good he is," Ogbu said.

"I don't think we're gonna miss a beat with him out there."

"I think of, with all we've lost with Jared, we still have a guy who can come in and do the same exact things."

The task ahead for Still is something he said he always wanted.

Although the chance to finally show his skills and to fill in for Odrick comes with a lot of pressure, Still said he has big enough shoulders to embrace the challenge.

The mental toughness of having to withstand the grind of the season is something Still said his rehabilitation has given him plenty of time to prepare for.

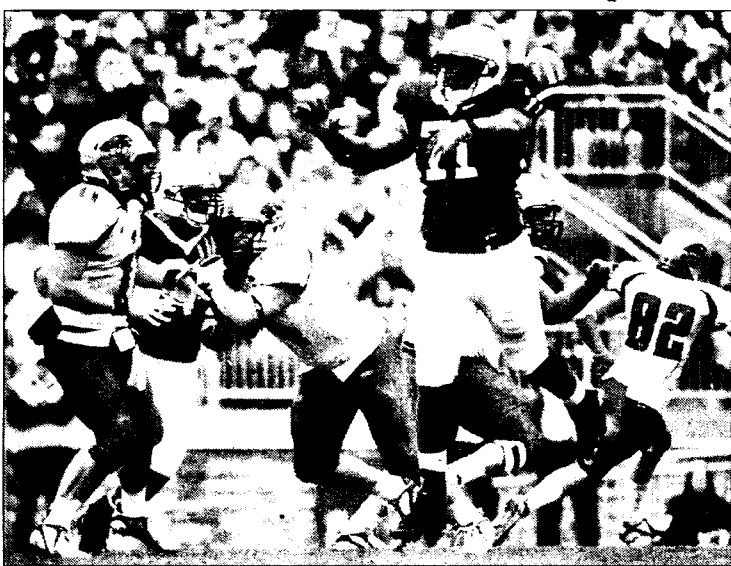
As for worrying about whether or not the season will go as he wants, Still's high school defensive line coach said the player's huge 6-foot-5, 298-pound frame that strikes fear into his opponents couldn't be more opposite than his laid-back personality.

"He stayed an even keeled throughout it all," Rice said.

"I think that's what's going to help him out at Penn State and help him replace a quality guy like Odrick."

"There's some big shoes to fill, but I think he'll be able to step in and he'll take it on his shoulders and he'll do his part."

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Collegian file photo

Defensive tackle Devon Still (71) bats down a pass in Penn State's game against Eastern Illinois last season. Still was finally healthy last year after an ACL injury and broken ankle limited his play his first two seasons. Now he is set to take over as the defensive line's anchor.

# Bevy of nicknames illustrate Lady Rugger's chemistry

By Katie Montgomery  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Junior Angela Smarto has been playing for the Penn State Lady Rugger's for six months when she was given her nickname, "Barb."

On a cold night in January 2008, Smarto stood with her teammates at practice on the West Campus Pitch. She listened as then-coach Joe Pullara split the players into teams. He then pointed right at Smarto and said, "Barb, you're on this team."

"No one knew what to do because there's no one on the team named Barb," Smarto said. "And my name doesn't even start with a 'B.' I didn't get it, we had been practicing together as a team for months by then."

Each year, the players spend weekends competing in tournaments and hours training together. The friendly atmosphere of the group is born from the inside jokes and nicknames that only the players themselves know the meanings of.

"We get really close to each other," junior Meg "Pamlet" White said. "There are a lot of tight-knit groups, so giving each other nicknames kind of shows belonging."

The Lady Rugger's roster is peppered with nicknames but it doesn't reveal the stories behind them.

White said her nickname was born from a former player named Pamela, who thought White's looks and mannerisms reminded her of her own.

"We keep in touch with our alumni a lot," White said. "It's just like, keeping team unity."

To demonstrate that team unity, the rugby season begins by giving the players a chance to catch up with old friends at the annual Alumni Home Game — a game which brings back All-Americans and Olympians from previous Penn State teams.

"It's just funny when you hear alumni calling each other by their nicknames," Smarto said. "These are things that stick with you for the rest of your life. [Coach Pete Steinberg] always jokes that by the time you're a senior, your parents should be

calling you by your rugby nickname."

The team's nickname for Steinberg: "Smeter Smeinberg."

"On spring break last year a bunch of players were recording stats while they were sitting on the sidelines [of a game]," Smarto said. "One of the players doodled this little caricature of Pete with a speech bubble that said, 'I'm Smeter Smeinberg.' We like to make fun of him because he's British."

A nickname can serve as a reminder to the circumstance in which it was created — as in Smarto's case — or it can just be a way of distinguishing between teammates.

A lot of the nicknames were given out to differentiate people with the same names, White said.

This season, the roster lists four "Katies" and two "Caitlins," as well as two "Saras" and two "Laurens."

In other cases, a nickname can be a funny way of describing characteristics or body parts.

"We call Annie [Zeigler] 'Meatsticks' because she has really short and powerful legs," sophomore Amber "Bam Bam"



The Lady Rugger's are preparing for their NCAA semifinal game against No. 4 Army:  
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Curtis said. "My nickname came from one of the seniors last year. I told her that I'd never had a nickname and she just threw 'Bam Bam' out there, she's probably the only one that called me that."

In any case, the Lady Rugger's nicknames are a memento of the friends they've made while on the team and the season they've shared together.

They're a way of showing that the Lady Rugger's are more than just the four national championships they've won in the past 10 years. And they're more than the No. 1 seed in this year's national championship tournament.

The Lady Rugger's are a tight-knit group of 56 players and more than 1,600 dedicated alumni, who all have the same goal: to have fun and win.

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## THE GRID

		TIME	PLACE	TV	WHAT TO LOOK FOR
Men's Volleyball	EIVA championship vs. Princeton	7 p.m. Saturday	Rec Hall		Penn State seeks its 12th-straight EIVA crown and automatic berth in NCAA tournament.
Baseball	vs. Michigan State	Today through Sunday	Medlar Field at Lubrano Park		Ben Heath has the opportunity to break the school record for home runs in a season this weekend.
Softball	at Northwestern	2 p.m. Sat., Noon Sun.	Evanston, Ill.		The Nittany Lions look to extend their two-game winning streak in the Big Ten.
Men's Lacrosse	vs. Delaware	7:30 p.m. Friday	Jeffrey Field		Expect a playoff atmosphere as both teams will be battling for the remaining spot in the CAA postseason tournament.
Women's Lacrosse	vs. Temple	3 p.m. Saturday	Jeffrey Field		The No. 18 Nittany Lions look to avenge last week's upset to Johns Hopkins in their regular-season finale.
Men's Track and Field	Jesse Owens Classic	Saturday	Columbus, Ohio		The 800-meter quarter looks for improvement in NCAA standings.
Women's Track and Field	Jesse Owens Classic	Saturday	Columbus, Ohio		Several runners look to qualify for NCAAs in primary events.
Men's Golf	Big Ten championships	Today through Sunday	Minneapolis		The Penn State men's golf team is coming off a win in its only home event of the year.