

Powell making impact at corner

By Audrey Snyder
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

When the Penn State wide receivers take the practice field, there's usually a group of excited cornerbacks waiting for them on the other side of the ball.

The opportunity to go against a receiving corps that returns its top-two downfield threats continues to test the Nittany Lions' secondary, cornerback D'Anton Lynn said. But among those excited cornerbacks is a guy who is used to being in the offensive huddle.

After catching 28 passes last year, Chaz Powell has found himself at cornerback since spring. But as the season nears, and still

playing behind Stephon Morris and Lynn on the first-team defense, Powell's likely going to see the field in nickel packages, where he'll sub in for a linebacker.

"I said something to the coaches like, 'Hey if you guys need me to come back over there I'll do whatever you guys want me to do,'" Powell said after wide receiver Curtis Drake broke his leg during an August practice.

The idea to allow the former four-sport high school athlete to play on both sides of the ball is something Joe Paterno and the coaching staff considered once Drake was injured, Powell said.

While he believes he could be able to play cornerback and

receiver in the same game, his current focus is on becoming a better cornerback and a more refined kick returner.

But Powell's efforts to improve at his new position have not gone unnoticed, as Paterno said it would take a "disaster" to return him to wide receiver.

"Powell is doing very well on defense and likes it over there," Paterno said. "Powell's biggest problem has been, you know, he's a kid that has not been consistent in doing some things. But all of a sudden he looks like he's having some fun out there on defense, and he's really doing well."

Though Powell's only previous experience playing in the second-

ary came from his days as a safety at Susquehannock High School, he wasn't too apprehensive.

While his safety duties in high school mainly involved playing man coverage on a tight end, adjusting to playing against a fast wide receiver is just part of the transition.

"At first, you know when he switched in spring there was definitely a learning curve," Lynn said. "It's not something easy to switch to because it's a tough position. But he picked it up quick, he worked at it all summer and he came into camp and he's had a real good camp."



Daniel Bott/Collegian

Chaz Powell talks at media day.

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Safety leads with actions

By Brendan Monahan
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Safety Drew Astorino admits he's not outspoken.

Instead, the redshirt junior is more of the leader-by-example type - a characteristic his teammates have noticed.

"He can hit," redshirt junior linebacker Nate Stupar said in the spring. "He'll come at you hard."

The hard-hitting Astorino is now healthy after a January surgery on his left shoulder to heal a torn labrum, which forced him to sit out spring practice.

Astorino yearned to play full throttle on the field, which is why he played with his injured shoulder last season, including returning punts.

While battling the injury, Astorino started 12 of the team's 13 games. On a team that has yet to decide its captains, Astorino and his 62 tackles from last season are the most by a returning player. Astorino sticks out as a possible captain, though he isn't the vocal leader the coaching staff may be looking for.

Though quiet, Astorino believes he can be the leader of the defense. The redshirt junior headlines an experienced defensive backfield with three other returning starters.

Only participating in non-contact drills, Astorino was relegated to a sideline role in the spring.

"I couldn't tell you how bad it was to sit out during spring practice and just sit there," Astorino said. "It's the worst experience ever. You want to be out there."

Astorino, who said his time out in the spring gave him a chance to help the younger defensive backs, described being back on the field as "phenomenal."

He's happy to be leading by example and working hard, though some teammates may be cringing from his hits.

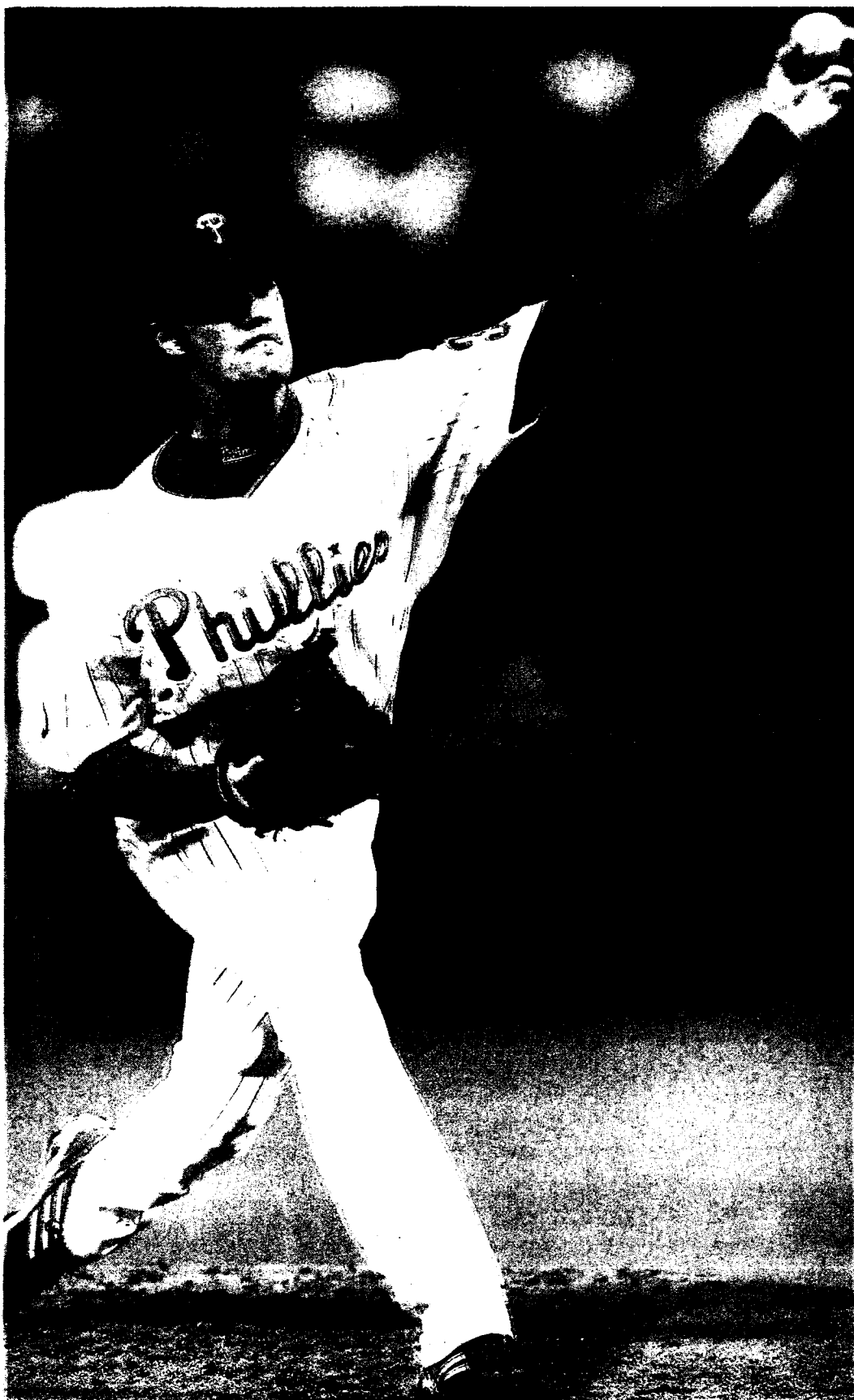
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Andrew Dunheimer/Collegian

Astorino (28) playing last year.

KING COLE



Matt Rourke/AP

Cole Hamels delivers a pitch in the second inning of the Phillies' game against the Houston Astros Tuesday. Hamels pitched seven innings, giving up five hits and striking out eight hitters but failed to get a decision. The Phillies fell to the Astros 4-2 in 16 innings.

Spikes drop 2nd straight

By Jake Kaplan
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

State College Spikes manager Gary Robinson couldn't pinpoint exactly what the problem with his team's offense was following Monday night's game against the Mahoning Valley Scrappers.

Whatever it was, the Spikes were not able to figure it out in time for Tuesday night's rematch on the road.

One night removed from a 3-hit performance from the team's offense, the Spikes managed just another four hits and suffered a 1-0 defeat at the hands of the Scrappers Tuesday night at Eastwood Field in Niles, Ohio. It was the third game out of the last four the Spikes (30-32) have lost to the Scrappers (27-36), who are just a half-game out of last place in the Pinckney Division.

State College first baseman Matt Curry, who went 1-for-4, said he thinks the team is pressing at the plate.

"We haven't had a very good game in a while and everybody's trying to do too much," Curry said. "Trying to get out of the slump in one game where we need to just work back into it by just hitting the ball."

The game's lone run came in the first inning as Mahoning Valley shortstop Nicholas Bartolone led off the latter half of the frame with a double to left field. He advanced to third base on a ball that got away from State College catcher Matt Skirving and scored on a groundout by Scrappers designated hitter Richard Martinez.

Though the Spikes struggled to get hits, the team did manage to draw eight bases on balls.

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Freshman Tyler making adjustments

By Mike Still
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Even with his 6-foot-2, 200-pound frame, Jordan Tyler still finds himself intimidated by the size of players at the college level.

The freshman forward has played only one game for the Penn State men's soccer team, but he's already noticed the difference from playing in high school.

"I just felt like my skill level's there, but the speed of play is a lot faster and guys are a lot bigger and stronger, so it's a lot more physical," Tyler said.

Penn State coach Bob Warming

gave Tyler the start against Hartwick, challenging the freshman in his first collegiate contest.

Despite fighting a case of freshman jitters, he rose to the occasion.

In the 22nd minute, with the Lions down 1-0, the freshman beat Hartwick keeper Jake Wright to tie the game at 1-1.

Though he knew starting Tyler would test the freshman emotionally and physically, Warming felt

the move was necessary.

Many times he's seen young players come into games and play timid with heavy legs and nervous energy, Warming said. He wanted Tyler to get those nervous feelings out of the way during the pre-season so Tyler will be ready to go mentally for the regular season.

It's still early, but Tyler's teammates have noticed the potential the freshman has if he plays confidently.

While describing Tyler's style of play, junior forward Corey Hertzog drew a comparison to a recently departed Penn State star.

"I think he's gonna be a lot like Jason Yeisley," Hertzog said. "A big, physical forward up top, and that'll help with the physicality of our game."

With a game under his belt, and one more preseason exhibition to go until the Lions open their regular season Sept. 3, Tyler is confident he can contribute to the team's success this year.

"Just when I first got started, just like Coach said, I was just really nervous," Tyler said. "But now it's out of my system and I'm ready to play."

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THE LINE

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PENN STATE Nye receives award

Penn State men's golf head coach Greg Nye has been selected as the 2010 Division I NCAA Northeast Regional Coach of the Year for the third consecutive season. Nye has earned the prestigious honor from the Golf Coaches Association of America eight times after 59 tournament titles, four NCAA births and 17 NCAA Regional appearances.

NFL Gailey a breath of fresh air

Buffalo Bills coach Chan Gailey approached teenaged hecklers after the team's practice yesterday to defend quarterback Trent Edwards.
The 58-year-old coach told the punks that if they diss one of 'em, they diss all of 'em.
It's nice to see a coach go out of his way

to defend his players. Especially one who is expected to be one of the team leaders this season.

NEW YORK-PENN LEAGUE Q: Who were the State College Spikes affiliated with before becoming a member of the Pittsburgh Pirates farm system?

Tuesday's Answer: The last Toronto Blue Jay's player to lead the league in homeruns was Fred McGriff in 1989 with 36 homeruns.