

# Juniors looking to fill leadership void

By Anthony Barton  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

When coach Scott Balboni looks at the 2010 Penn State Icers, he sees no clear-cut leaders.

With only two returning seniors from last season's top 10 goal scorers, younger players will be counted on to not only replace the point production, but also fill the leadership void.

## ICERS

"It's a unique situation," Balboni said. "We're just starting with the team this year, and I'm waiting to see which of these younger guys steps up into that role."

A few potential candidates to step up include juniors Nick Seravalli, Paul Daley and Chris Cerutti. All three are among the top-six returning scorers from last year.

"All three of those guys will have leadership roles in the team," Balboni said. "Cerutti had a breakout year from a point standpoint and I expect him to be an offensive leader this year. Daley works

tremendously hard and plays physical and I expect him to have a tremendous year from a point perspective."

Daley said he expects more of himself after two full seasons playing for the Icers.

"I'm a junior now and one of the older guys on the team so I expect myself to do even better than last year," Daley said. "That's definitely what I'm aiming for and I plan on working even harder to get to that spot."

Daley said replacing graduated players such as Ryan Parfitt would be easier said than done. He said Parfitt brought an all-around game, combining a defensive presence with offensive play-making ability as he led the team in assists.

"To replace his production, I have to focus on working even harder on defense and penalty killing," Daley said.

"He was also a good center guy that has great ice vision, so I just want to play a good all-around game."

While Daley is working to gain a leadership role on the team,

Seravalli is just worried first about getting back on the ice.

After having a breakout season last year jumping from four to 20 goals, he still has reconstructive groin surgery in the off-ice. He played through the injury most of the season after getting hurt in November.

"Did I probably just myself worse by playing last season?" Seravalli said.

"At this point when I'm feeling I can finally do it, I'm working hard and try not to overdo it, but to help the team as much as I can."

He predicts his return by the end of October by practicing at November, and then he will play in practice.

"I work every day and every practice and I'm going to be out as soon as I can. I can jump from being a 20-goal scorer to being a 25-goal scorer," Seravalli said.

As for who will fill the leadership role, he echoed his coach's sentiment.

"It's a little hard to say because right now we're so young that I



Andrew Dunheimer/Collegian

Paul Daley (27) lines up a check in a game against Towson last season. The junior will be counted on to provide leadership to this year's team.

think you could see a lot of different guys step up and lead the team this year," Seravalli said. "We don't really have that at this point, so

I'm interested to see what happens."

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# Depth at goalie providing confidence for Lions

By Mike Sain  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

When starting goalkeeper Warren Gross suffered an injury just days before the Penn State men's soccer team's final pre-season game against Louisville on Aug. 28, defender Justin Lee barely broke a sweat.

## MEN'S SOCCER

Lee wasn't worried because he knows the amount of talent the Lions have up and down the roster at the keeper position.

"I'd say any one of them can just

jump in and play just as well as the best," Lee said. "That's obviously nice to have on the team, knowing that if one keeper goes down, we have another keeper that can jump in and replace him."

Against the Cardinals, redshirt freshman Brendan Birmingham was called upon to replace Gross.

Though no statistics were provided from the Lions' game against Louisville, Birmingham held the Cardinals to just one goal and bounced back after allowing the one goal early in the second half.

The redshirt freshman was confident heading into his first

appearance of the 2010 season and was excited for the chance to contribute.

"I've just been working hard in practice and trying to help the team the best I can," Birmingham said. "Warren got down with a little knock and I just tried to step up and help out."

Through working together in practice, Birmingham and Gross have learned to work off of each other, pushing one another to keep improving.

When coaches are doing drills with the rest of the team, the two will work on their own techniques and skills aside, Gross said.

"He's a great goalkeeper, obviously how he's been playing through the spring and in the game this past weekend," Gross said of Birmingham. "We've been training together for all of last year now and we've gotten to know each other pretty well."

Lee has seen the benefits of the two working together in training. Friendly competition has helped both of them greatly, he said.

"If there's competition, naturally you're gonna push yourself cause you wanna play," Lee said. "They feed off of each other just because of the competitive standpoint."

Gross only suffered a minor groin injury last week, and will be back in action on Sep. 3 when the Lions open their regular season schedule against Buffalo.

But the team knows that if Birmingham is needed, he will be ready to step up and perform.

"I would say the best teams always have the best keepers," Lee said. "When you can have a keeper who can step in and play just as well as the first-string keeper, that says a lot about his character. It just really helps the team out."

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