

Secondary

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rushed for 751 yards as a freshman in 2009 behind Heisman Trophy winner Mark Ingram, who is unlikely to play against Penn State because of recovery from arthroscopic surgery in his left knee, which he underwent Aug. 31.

While talk has centered around Penn State stopping Jones, the Lions secondary has the responsibility of helping on run defense and limiting the other Alabama receivers, making the Crimson Tide's offense even harder to stop.

"We're not going to put all our focus on just one guy," Lynn said. "We're just going to do and just trying to make breaks on balls."

The Lions are just as concerned with Alabama quarter-

"We're not going to put all our focus on just one guy."

D'Antony Lynn
junior cornerback

back Greg McElroy, who in addition to his passing abilities is able to make plays on his feet outside of the pocket. McElroy and the Alabama offense also like to stretch the field, a strategy Lynn expects them to use this week-end.

Talent in Alabama's second and third receivers, Maze and Hanks, allows the Crimson Tide to utilize all areas of the field.

Penn State didn't see that last week against Youngstown State, which stuck to short passes.

"I wouldn't say there's anything in particular that we're doing different from any other week," said Penn State safety Nick Sukay about Alabama's receivers. "We

just know that they're really talented."

Penn State's secondary needs to play all areas of the field, but the Crimson Tide receivers, more specifically Jones, and their explosiveness are still its primary target.

Not only can Jones block, separating him from other receivers the Penn State cornerback has played against.

"I probably can't compare him to anybody," Lynn said. "Just because I know the receivers we've faced aren't as physical as him."

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Saban

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Paterno is coming from, noting Saban's work ethic and incessant preparation.

"Coach Saban is probably one of the most focused individuals I've ever been around," McElroy said.

"He's a diligent worker. He demands a lot of his team, and the only reason he demands a lot of his team is because he demands a lot of himself."

Nothing will be different for Saban when the No. 1 Crimson Tide (1-0) take the field at 7 Saturday night to face the No. 18 Nittany Lions (1-0) on national television.

McElroy said Saban's mind is constantly on the next game to the point where anything else is just a distraction.

"That's the reason why he's won everywhere he's been," McElroy said.

"You can walk by him in the hall and you can say hello to him, and he'll mumble hello to you because his mind is on the game. He car-

"Coach Saban is probably one of the most focused individuals I've ever been around."

Greg McElroy
Alabama quarterback

ries around a notepad, and he's always taking notes and thinking, and that's why he's so successful."

Saban took over Michigan State in 1995 and last coached against Paterno in 1999, beating the Nittany Lions in his final season in East Lansing.

The Lions won three of their five matchups against Saban, but Paterno warned Saban is the same coach he was dressed in green and white, only with more talent.

"They played tough," Paterno said, recalling the intensity of those games.

Three of the five were decided by a touchdown or less, and in 1997, a one-loss Penn State team was stunned in its regular-season finale by Saban's squad in East Lansing, 49-14.

Now, Saban's Tide sit atop college football with a 15-game win

streak and a chance to win another pair of titles — both in the SEC and nationally.

Saban, as usual, refuses to look ahead.

"I'm thinking mostly about a very good team we're playing this week and trying to get our team as well prepared as they can to do a good job," Saban said.

That preparation, Saban said, is something he learned in part by watching Paterno.

"I have a tremendous amount of respect for guys like Joe Paterno and Bobby Bowden, who have done this for so long and been extremely consistent in the way they do it, and the product that they are able to produce year-after-year-after-year," Saban said.

"I always had a great admiration for Joe."

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Icers

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the skaters racing toward him at mid-ice.

Hand drew up drills on a tiny whiteboard and later had the players execute them.

When Hand wasn't pleased he had a simple solution — skate laps.

Earlier Wednesday, Balboni held a veteran skate for the older players on the current roster. Balboni said he was pleased with his team's progress over the summer and felt they had a good day's

worth of practice on the rink.

"Overall, we looked pretty good and conditioned," Balboni said. "There's still more tryouts and we did not want to tire them out on the first day."

Day one was just the beginning of a four-day long tryout.

Balboni hopes to get the number of players down before he begins more intense drills. The next tryout will combine the freshman recruits and veterans, whom will bring more competition.

Balboni also said he would bring back some players who caught his eye.

"Overall, we looked pretty good and conditioned."

Scotts Balboni
Icers coach

Walk-in is making the task, Balboni did not rule out the possibility of it.

"Right now we have one true walk-on on the team," he said. "There's definitely a chance."

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Dorton

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anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) in her left knee. Rose and the No. 1 Penn State women's volleyball team are unsure when the 2009 Big Ten Freshman of the Year will be ready to play.

The void left by Dorton's injury, as well as the two graduations, means a relatively young team — that's started 6-0 against inferior opponents — will meet its stiffest challenge at 7:30 tonight when it faces No. 4 Florida on the Gators' home court.

Though the Nittany Lions swept Florida in last season's regionals, Rose knows this is a different Penn State team.

"Two of our players that are gone are playing on the national team," Rose said, referring to Glass and Hodge. "The graduation and injury to Darcy makes us a significantly different team than last year when we played them."

Dorton was unavailable for comment. She is expected to travel with the team to Florida, but will not play.

Senior libero Alyssa D'Errico said Dorton is finding ways to help the team while she's not playing. D'Errico said the sophomore is helping freshman Deja McClendon — who has stepped into an important role during her rookie season, much like the situation Dorton faced a year ago.

D'Errico said Dorton's vision and knowl-

edge from the sideline helps inform McClendon and the other players what she's seeing during play. She believes Dorton still has the ability to perform one of her strengths by communicating with teammates.

"I don't think that her position has changed at all," D'Errico said. "She's still just as vocal as she was on the court, just from a different perspective."

While Dorton may be helping from the sidelines, the Lions are without her contributions on the court. In last season's match against Florida, Dorton tallied nine kills while hitting .643 — the highest percentage among the Lions' middle and outside hitters.

Dorton is working with trainers and doing some drills at practice, but she won't be able to fully participate until the doctors clear her, Rose said. Once the doctors release her, Rose said he expects Dorton to play at some point this season, but he's unsure when that will be.

Rose said Dorton was a key contributor as a freshman with not only her play, but with her energy and attitude. Despite her absence, the coach knows the Lions need to face the task of playing the Gators.

"It's a huge void that I didn't anticipate," Rose said of Dorton's injury. "But, that's part of life. That's part of the game."

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Men's Soccer

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second round of the NCAA tournament.

That heartbreaking loss is something goalkeeper Warren Gross still thinks about, and hopes to put behind him on Friday.

"We're gonna have to get back out there and have a clean start on Jeffrey Field," Gross said.

"Winning every game is important when you have the goals we have this season and where we want to be, winning the Big Ten championship and moving on to the College Cup."

First, the Lions are focusing on the Bison, who they defeated 2-1 last year in Lewisburg, Pa. and again this spring, 6-0, in an exhibition.

Though Penn State handled Bucknell easily in the spring, the team knows its game Friday will have a different atmosphere at

Jeffrey Field, Gross said.

He also remembers the Bison playing very hard and determined soccer in last season's contest.

"I expect the same thing this weekend, a team that will work hard and put pressure on the ball," Gross said.

"So we have to prepare for that and do what we know and do what we do best, and that's keeping the ball. And I think if we do that, we'll get the results."

The Lions are grateful for having the Bison at home, and to play every home game on a quality field such as Jeffrey, senior midfielder Matheus Braga said.

But they also know they'll have to win every game on their schedule to get to where they want to be.

"It's one of the best fields in the country and we love to play there," Braga said.

"But our mentality is just to get a win everywhere. It doesn't matter if it's at Jeffrey or away. We just want to win."

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Phillies in familiar spot

By Rob Maaddi
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

PHILADELPHIA -- Charlie Manuel scoffed every time someone mentioned the Philadelphia Phillies and wild card in the same breath.

When others thought the Phillies may have to settle for a wild-card spot this season, their skipper never wavered. He insisted his team would never concede the division until it ran out of games.

Here they are now sitting atop the NL East standings with 21 games left.

The Phillies have erased a seven-game deficit and have a one-game lead over the Atlanta Braves, who lost 11-4 to St. Louis on Thursday night.

Just as he cautioned that the race wasn't over when the Phillies were trailing Atlanta by a big margin on July 22, Manuel isn't ready to start setting up his formidable postseason rotation until they've clinched.

"We haven't made the playoffs yet," Manuel said.

"We definitely want to win our division and we'd like to have home-field advantage. Our ultimate goal is to get to the World Series, but first we've got to get in."

The Phillies' pursuit of a fourth straight division title and third consecutive NL championship has been a struggle mainly because they've had to overcome numerous injuries. They've also had major problems on offense

with several players producing below their usual standards. Part of that inconsistency can be blamed on so many guys being out of the lineup.

Six of Philadelphia's eight regulars have spent time on the disabled list, including former MVPs Ryan Howard and Jimmy Rollins. Five-time All-Star Chase Utley was sidelined for a significant stretch, and Shane Victorino, Placido Polanco and Carlos Ruiz also missed time.

Polanco said Thursday he is playing with a thumb break in his left elbow, but is postponing surgery until after the season because of the pennant race.

Rollins, a three-time All-Star shortstop, had two stints on the DL because of a calf injury and left Wednesday night's game with tightness in his right hamstring.

He's played in just 82 games, and is day to day heading into a weekend series at the New York Mets.

Utley missed 43 games because of a thumb injury. Howard missed 16 with an ankle sprain, and closer Brad Lidge was on the DL twice and currently has a sore elbow.

The Phillies have missed a total of 511 man games to injury, according to STATS LLC. Overall, they've had 17 players out.

During a nearly two-week stretch in August, Howard, Utley and Victorino were absent.

Still, the Phillies found ways to win. They're 33-14 since opening the second half with six losses in seven games.

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