

Lions see similarities from last season's Bucknell game

By Alex Angert COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

A shaky start to the season, followed by two promising games and then a midweek contest against Bucknell — sound familiar?

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Last season, the Penn State women's soccer team opened with a disappointing 2-4 record after winning its 11th straight Big Ten championship the season before.

Then came back-to-back strong performances leading up to a midweek game against a familiar foe, Bucknell.

Fast forward one year later, and the situation looks quite similar. This time, the Nittany Lions find

themselves at a crossroads, starting down a 1-5-1 record and a must-win game against Bucknell at 7 tonight at Jeffrey Field.

And just like last year's contest, the Lions have some momentum heading into yet another pivotal Bison showdown.

"They are coming off of five losses as well and they are going to be really gunning for it," Maddy Evans said. "I think we can raise it, too. We were just talking about how Portland was a really, really great team for us to play [Sunday] and we think we might be that for Bucknell. We

want to destroy them from the start."

While Penn State won both of its games before the Bucknell match last year, the players still feel the same sort of confidence this time around thanks to a hard fought game against No. 4 Portland, despite losing in the end.

Evans said the Portland game was the spark the team needed to get it out of its slump, and it now can't afford to take any steps back.

The Lions hope the similarities don't stop with the Bucknell game, as last year the team went 8-1-1 in its next 10 games before the NCAAs after playing the Bison.

Knowing their team rebounded from a slow start last year, Penn State's coaches have confidence the team can see a repeat of last



Walsh

If you go

Women's Soccer vs. Bucknell When: 7 p.m. Where: Jeffrey Field

year's strong finish — but it's not going to come on its own, head coach Erica Walsh said.

"This is a group that when we are focused and when we are playing good soccer together, there is no shortage of talent," assistant coach Ann Cook added. "So I have every bit of confidence that we will pull it back together and play well toward the end of the season here."

However, before the team wor-

ries about the rest of the season and the looming Big Ten season, the focus lies on Bucknell — who tied the Lions 0-0 last year.

Last year, Walsh thought her team should have lost that game against the Bison and were fortunate to come out with a draw.

Bucknell is a team Walsh said comes out with a fire and intensity on the field as it is well-coached with a great goalkeeper. Nevertheless, riding a current five-game losing streak, Penn State finds itself needing a win.

"It's a do or die match for us," Walsh said. "We have to go out, we have to perform and we have to get a result. We've got to walk out of here with three points."

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Execution during set pieces a new concern for men's soccer team

By Andrew Robinson COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

For the 32 years Bob Warming has been a head coach, his teams have always been strong on set pieces.

So excuse the first year Penn State men's soccer coach if he's a little upset with his team's set piece performances so far this year.

"I could talk about it for nine hours, I didn't sleep at all Friday night I was so bent out of shape about it," Warming said. "My teams have always been incredible at it and we're poor."

The Nittany Lions have not

scored a goal off a free kick or corner yet this season and have work to do defending them. The team fell to Bucknell 2-1 after the Bison scored twice on set pieces.

Warming said it's almost like his team switches off before a set piece or throw-in. He has noticed that players would walk away when the ball went out or stop to adjust their shin guards instead of paying attention.

"We showed it to them on the tape, they're getting ready to throw the ball in and we're walking away," Warming said. "To me,

it's a concentration issue."

An important part of defending set plays — especially corner kicks and free kicks near the box — is communication. The players know they haven't performed up to par yet and they've noticed their positioning could be cleaned up, senior defender Andres Casais said.

Goalkeeper Warren Gross handles most of the organization on the defensive end, moving the field players around and telling the wall where to set up. Gross said the biggest thing the team needs to focus on is having the players know their roles on a free kick and that the communication will come.

"It's coming along, I feel like the biggest thing is our positioning in

general before the play even begins," Gross said. "We've been working on that and I feel like if we continue to work on that then we won't have any issues with it."

Casais echoed Gross in saying the organization and marking before a set piece is a main focus. Casais called it "basic organization" and said set pieces are all about wanting to win the ball.

"Aggression is a part of it, aggression and courage," Casais said. "You have to win the ball and if you don't win it, you've got to get your man and you've got to get the ball out."

Offensively, Penn State doesn't have many tall targets on the field at a given time, but senior midfielder Drew Cost said the team

has options on any set piece.

Centre back Mark Fetrow is the biggest player on the roster at 6-foot-5, but Cost also said defenders Matt Smallwood, Brian Fergie are good at playing a ball off their head in the box. Cost takes many of the Lions free kicks and corners and along with midfielder Matheus Braga and forward Corey Hertzog, it gives the Lions players who can put a ball where they want off a set piece.

"When we get balls on the ball that can put it where they want to put it, it adds to it," Cost said. "It helps having a guy on the ball that can put it off someone's head and see if they can put it in the net."

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By Jacqueline Bigar HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Wednesday, Sept. 15, 2010. This year, you often find yourself challenged both personally and in dealings with others. Though you might want to throw your hands in the air, resolution comes from focusing on what works for both your professional image and your community status. Put that extra effort into your work, and you will see rewards. If you are single, you might meet a lot of people, though it might be difficult to develop a relationship that goes past the dating phase. If you are attached, you might not be very happy with some of the choices of your significant other. Know that this is a phase, not grounds for separation. CAPRICORN provides ideas. The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult. ARIES (March 21-April 19) You keep coming up with questions that you pose in order to find solutions. If you are not comfortable with various elements, you year in a new direction. Too many potential fields of quicksand might point to a new direction, and with good reason. Tonight: Discuss and take the lead in a key issue. TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Just when you thought you were in the winner's circle, you discover there might be reason to back off. Though disappointed, you can opt to move forward in a new direction or explore your options. Tonight: Let your imagination choose a favorite pastime. GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Keep pushing for answers. Others seem to balk at the present leadership and issues. You cannot make someone listen. Let this play out, and remain an observer. You will be happier. Tonight: Say "yes" to an offer. It is nearly too good to be true. CANCER (June 21-July 22) Stay focused, even if you see many reasons a current project simply cannot draw the support of others. Take cues with a grain of salt. You might find that letting others figure this issue out is the best way. Stay clear. Tonight: Why, where and when? You have many options. LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) You want to allow greater creativity and understanding. Listen to forthcoming information. It is interesting to see the conflict in details and information from various sources. Your imagination could kick in. Tonight: Follow the trail with the least conflict. VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) The instinct to withdraw is not all that abnormal. The real issue is determining the most effective way to stay out of an impending conflict between key elements in your life. Understanding will evolve given time. Tonight: Let your imagination rock and roll. LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Keep communication active. Take news that comes forward with a grain of salt. Focus on accomplishing as much as you can. Be aware that an expenditure might be necessary. A family member proves to be supportive. Tonight: Head home early. SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Watch a tendency to go to extremes. Hold off on making any financial commitments. You are coming to a point of view that isn't necessarily grounded to others. Be careful with making any agreements today. Tonight: Meet friends. SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Forging ahead on a set path could be a problem, as there is an enormous amount of flak coming from someone close. You care about peace on the home front. Hold off, if possible, to see a situation open up. Give yourself time. Tonight: Your treat. CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You might want to pull back and listen more. Questions and conversations point to a snafu. Give yourself time to figure out which is the best path. You know where you want to go. Tonight: Feeling re-energized. AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) You focus on the basics. Listen to friends, but realize you might have to say no to the expenses. At times you might want to say yes, but you simply can't afford to do so. Tonight: Take some much-needed personal time. PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) You take a stand that is long overdue. Investigate an opportunity a boss presents. Understanding evolves to a new level between you and those in charge. You could be in a no-win situation. A late meeting sees resolutions. Tonight: Where the gang is. BORN TODAY Mystery writer Agatha Christie (1890), actor Jackie Cooper (1922), director Oliver Stone (1946)

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