

A JOLLY GOOD FIGHT



Andrew Dunheimer/Collegian

Dominik DeFalco (left) and Jay Mathias (right) tackle a Cambridge rugby player during Penn State's 44-15 loss to the heralded English university Wednesday.

Bass fishing

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people who don't know we're out there." "It's an honor [to compete for Penn State]," Lake said. "I hope we get Regionals for Penn State. It shows [the school] is good all around."

Baker and Lake were the only team in the qualifying final to catch four fish. Each member can catch up to three fish for the total weigh in — a possible six per team. The team reeled in three fish within the first hour and a half to all but secure its place in the Northern Regional final in November.

"We got there at 5 a.m. and they had decided we'd be limited to the bay and we didn't have anything picked out for that," Baker said. "We really didn't switch our tactics, but we wanted to fish in 25-30 foot water and the deepest we could get to was 15 feet."

Though neither of them had ever fished Lake Erie, Baker and Lake were able to adjust and take first place with 8 pounds, 12 ounces to advance. The prize for winning the Northern Regional is \$25,000 and a boat decked out in the blue and white of Penn State. The top five, out of the 20 or 25 schools competing, will earn a berth at the National Championship.

Former advisor and current head coach Juan Veruete said the boat would be a

huge help to the program because it would allow the students, who normally can't get out to practice much, more time on the water to improve. Baker added the prize money for the program could fund students' trips to tournaments so they wouldn't have to raise the money on their own.

Lake feels that getting Penn State's bass fishing program on the map is just as important because of the lack of members the club has. He said there are plenty of people who fish, but don't know about the program here.

"Some people have no idea there's such thing as college fishing," said Lake, who feels this year's success may help the program for the future. "Kids might look to Penn State for school because of bass fishing now."

In addition to competing in the three-day event in November in Raleigh, the Big Ten Championship will take place on Oct. 2 in Michigan. Penn State took home fourth place in 2009 and is looking to be at the top again.

"[College fishing] is very competitive and takes a lot of focus. It would be a major accomplishment [to advance to Nationals]," Veruete said. "A Big Ten championship would be icing on the cake."

The club will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, Sep. 29 in the Forest Resources Building near the East Parking Deck in Room 105 and is open for anyone with interest in bass fishing to attend.

Road trip

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practice Monday and Tuesday this week. Senior outfielder Drew Cost has mixed feelings about the short practice schedule.

"We'll only have one or two practices this week so hopefully we'll be fresh and ready to go," the co-captain said. "But it's definitely something we'll have to overcome."

The team was unable to schedule a flight out of State College, forcing them to take a three and a half-hour bus trip to the Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport.

Failing to book a flight to Colorado on Wednesday, the Lions stayed the night in Hanover, Md. and woke up for an early morning flight to Denver Thursday.

Upon arriving in Denver, a two and half-hour bus trip to Colorado Springs awaits to take the Lions to the Air Force Academy for their game Friday.

Just the traveling alone has Warming concerned.

But along with playing in the high altitude of Colorado, the coach is worried his

team won't have the time to recover.

"If you didn't go and play in the altitude, a mile up, how long would it take to recover from being in the altitude and just that much travel?" Warming said. "A couple days at least."

After two nights in Colorado Springs, it's back to Denver. Following a night's stay in the "Mile-High City," the Lions will take on Denver University at 3 p.m. Sunday.

And finally, after Sunday's match, the team will get a one-way flight back to Happy Valley and arrive home at about 6 a.m. Monday.

Despite the possibly exhausting plans, the team is managing to stay positive.

Goalkeeper Warren Gross feels confident that the team is prepared for the trip, and will come home from Colorado satisfied.

"We've done it before," Gross said. "We've had crazy traveling. And with how we've been treating the lead up to the season, how we've been preparing for every game, I don't think it'll be an issue for us at all."

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Warming

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High School in Omaha, Neb., knows he won't start.

But Grant's teammates have seen him making the extra efforts in order to overcome the "coach's son" label, and earn a spot on the field.

"He told us once that he thinks we see him as the coach's son," senior co-captain Drew Cost said.

"So it's really tough for him, but he's doing really well getting acclimated to Penn State."

One reason it's been so easy for the younger Warming to fit in with the rest of the team is how accepting the team is of everybody.

The team doesn't seclude anybody, Grant Warming said.

Regardless of each other's backgrounds or level of experience with the team, everyone is equal.

Though it's early in the season, the Lions have noticed something very important about Warming's playing style, something that has made accepting him that much easier.

The freshman midfielder has shown the determination and effort the team wants to see from its young players.

"He does great out there," junior midfielder Mackenzie Arment said of his freshman teammate. "You can just tell he's got a tenacity and a drive in him that helps everyone out. He's always playing with a fire."

Playing with a fire is what Grant will have to do throughout the season to contribute to the Lions' success.

Because in order to see the field, substitutes for coach Warming have to do two things — pass well and play hard.

"You can do those two things, you'll play," Bob Warming said. "I'm not asking them to be the most creative guy, but you've got to do those two things if you want to play as a sub."

In the Lions' four games this season, Grant Warming has yet to make a start, but

he has seen considerable time as a substitute in the midfield.

Not the biggest or fastest reserve on the squad at 5-foot-11 and 155 pounds, the freshman knows what he can do to contribute when he's called on to relieve a starter — make solid passes and possess the ball.

"It's everything to my game right now," the freshman said of passing. "I'm just trying to complete passes when I come out, and have a high completion rate, but at the same time not let my team down with my passing choices."

Penn State doesn't officially keep a passing percentage statistic for each player, but the younger Warming would be right up there with the team leaders in the category if the Lions did, coach Warming said.

Starting with passing, Grant Warming is making the transition to the college game one step at a time. Though he's looked the part of a freshman, possessive midfielder so far this season, the idea of playing with some of the country's best young talent still has the freshman nervous.

"I might appear confident when I'm out there, but this first time playing D-I soccer, it's a little intimidating," the freshman said with a laugh. "I try to at least have the facade of being confident but I'm nervous out there."

Throughout his entire soccer career, Grant Warming has never played for his father, which makes it interesting that the first time happens to be at such a high level, the freshman said. But having his father there to keep him motivated to improve has been a blessing.

The combination of playing for his father, being with his family and having the opportunity to join a welcoming and competitive team like Penn State has made the freshman's transition as smooth as it could be for a player with so much on his plate.

"It's great to keep the family together and it's a great school to come to as well," Grant Warming said. "I mean, Penn State, it's a dream to come here. So it's awesome."

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Pirates fall to Mets, Pelfrey earns 15th win

Mike Fitzpatrick  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

NEW YORK — Mike Pelfrey earned his 15th win, pitching seven strong innings and hitting a tiebreaking single to help the New York Mets finish a four-game sweep with a 6-2 victory over the Pittsburgh Pirates on a rainy Thursday night at nearly empty Citi Field.

Slumping rookie Lucas Duda had a two-run double and the Mets rallied for their first four-game sweep since June 2006 at Arizona. New York (74-73) has won seven of nine — likely too late to get back in the playoff race — to move over .500 for the first time since Aug. 24.

Angel Pagan added three hits, two RBIs and an outstanding catch in center field. Pelfrey (15-9) extended his career high for wins by following up a victory over Philadelphia with a solid effort against the puntsburg Pirates.

Pittsburgh, with the worst record in baseball at 48-98, fell to 15-59 away from home.

The Pirates must win three of their last seven road games (three in St. Louis, four at Florida) during the final week of the season to avoid matching the 1963 Mets for the worst road record (17-64) in a 162-game season.

Pelfrey allowed two runs and six hits. He also put New York up 3-2 with a two-out single off Sean Gallagher through the left side in the sixth. That scored Duda, who doubled with one out off Wilfredo Ledezma (0-3).

Ike Davis added a sacrifice fly in the seventh after a balk by Chris Resop, and Pagan hit a two-run double in the eighth to make it 6-2.

Pedro Feliciano struck out two in a perfect inning and Bobby Parnell finished with a 1-2-3 ninth. The four-game winning streak is New York's longest since an eight-game run June 10-18.

The Pirates dropped to 0-7 at Citi Field. With a "crowd" that numbered in the hundreds at the start, cavernous Citi Field was eerily quiet at times — except for the vendors hawking Crackerjack and a cheering section in left field for Pirates third baseman Pedro Alvarez, who went to high school in New York.

Some of those who did want to come out might not have been able to. A powerful storm tore through the city less than two hours before game time, knocking down trees and power lines. Service was shut down on the elevated No. 7 subway train and the Long Island Rail Road, both of which carry passengers to the Mets' second-year ballpark.

Fans were warned before the game to take cover on the concourses, but play began only 12 minutes late.

Those in attendance were soon invited down to fill expensive seats in the lower level — many moved back up the aisles later to get under the overhangs during a steady drizzle.

Alvarez doubled in the second to the delight of his rooters and scored on John Bowker's single. Ronny Cedeno hit an RBI triple in the fourth, but the Pirates could have had a big inning if not for a spectacular play by Pagan on Bowker's drive to deep right-center with two on.

After a long dash, Pagan made a sliding catch on the warning track in front of the 415-foot sign. Then he started an 8-4-3 relay that doubled off Alvarez at first base, with Pagan pumping his fist from the seat of his pants as the Mets completed the play.

Davis and Josh Thole singled in the bottom half off starter Charlie Morton, who entered with a 9.05 ERA in 13 major league starts this season.

Duda hit a grounder past diving first baseman Garrett Jones and into the right-field corner for his second hit in 35 big league at-bats.

Struggling pitcher Zach Duke (7-14, 5.78 ERA) will make his next scheduled start for Pittsburgh on Sunday against Arizona. The Pirates considered pulling Duke out of the rotation.

Women's Soccer

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It had in fact been 25 days since the Lions' last win came in the team's season opener against West Virginia. Following a draw versus Virginia in the next game, the losses began to mount for Penn State.

And with each of those ensuing losses came a worse and worse feeling of defeat as the players began to doubt their abilities.

"What I said to them before the game was, 'It's not who we are that's causing us to struggle. It's the absence of who we are,'" coach Erica Walsh said. "If we do what we are capable of doing we'll be fine, but there's been too much of an absence of those pieces."

Now, thanks to Wednesday's victory, the team is hoping to put all the second-guessing behind them and move on to Dartmouth and the rest of the season.

"It builds our confidence a lot and it just makes us realize what our game is capable of," freshman Maya Hayes said.

"It lets us realize we can play together and as long as we keep it simple it works for us."

Hayes, who has now scored in three straight games, was all smiles after the

Bucknell win. She wasn't alone.

The entire team, from the players to the coaching staff, was laughing and basking in the victory together, as everyone was able to let out a collective sigh of relief with the losing skid over.

It's now just a matter of taking this momentum and optimism and running with it into the next part of the season.

"Just making sure [the players] are taking care of their bodies and are making good decisions," Walsh said about the next step the team must take. "Obviously we don't want to take a step forward like [Wednesday] and then take a step back on Sunday with Big Ten play looming."

Following the Dartmouth game on Sunday, the Lions head straight into conference play with a home date against Michigan State next weekend.

Hoping to win yet another Big Ten Championship this season, snapping its losing streak and boosting the team's morale and confidence was pivotal for Penn State.

"I think it's really great that we have this momentum going into Sunday's game because we want to come out strong," Toney said. "Now, we know exactly what it takes."

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Women's Volleyball

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back in its first match since snapping its 109-match winning streak, the longest string of consecutive victories in the history of Division I women's athletics.

Just six days removed from their first loss since Sept. 15, 2007, the Nittany Lions host George Washington (8-3) at 7 tonight in Rec Hall. Penn State, which dropped to No. 2 this week for the first time since 2007, then welcomes Princeton (4-3) and St. John's (11-3) on Saturday to close out its non-conference regular season slate.

Though the overall winning streak ended, Penn State still owns an 80-match winning streak at Rec Hall, dating back to December 2005. Penn State senior co-captain Blair Brown said last Saturday night's 3-0 loss to Stanford should serve as a good wake-up call for the team.

"I think the pressure's off now, and we can really focus on this year's team instead of having the pressure of having to deal with the streak every time we play and all that stuff," Brown said.

Brown and her teammates look at the

109-straight wins in a different light than most fans and media, who have put a lot of attention on the streak ending.

"Our streak was seven," Brown said, referring to the Lions' 2010 record of 7-0 prior to the loss. "It wasn't one-hundred and whatever it was. We were seven. And then we lost, and now we're going to start again. It's not like we're going to start losing a lot because we lost one game."

Setter Kristin Carpenter said the loss is merely a minor speed bump in the 2010 campaign, and defensive specialist Cathy Quilico said the Lions will learn from the loss.

"This is a lesson," Quilico said. "We have the ability to be really great and we showed that versus Florida [last Friday]."

"We have the ability to overcome a lot and we've got to hold ourselves to that level and improve upon that level every day in practice."

Ultimately, the Lions, like the other teams who didn't miss a beat in their first action after their respective streaks ended, hope to come back strong this weekend.

"This weekend is a weekend for us to be better, and be a better team and show that we can be great," Quilico said.

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