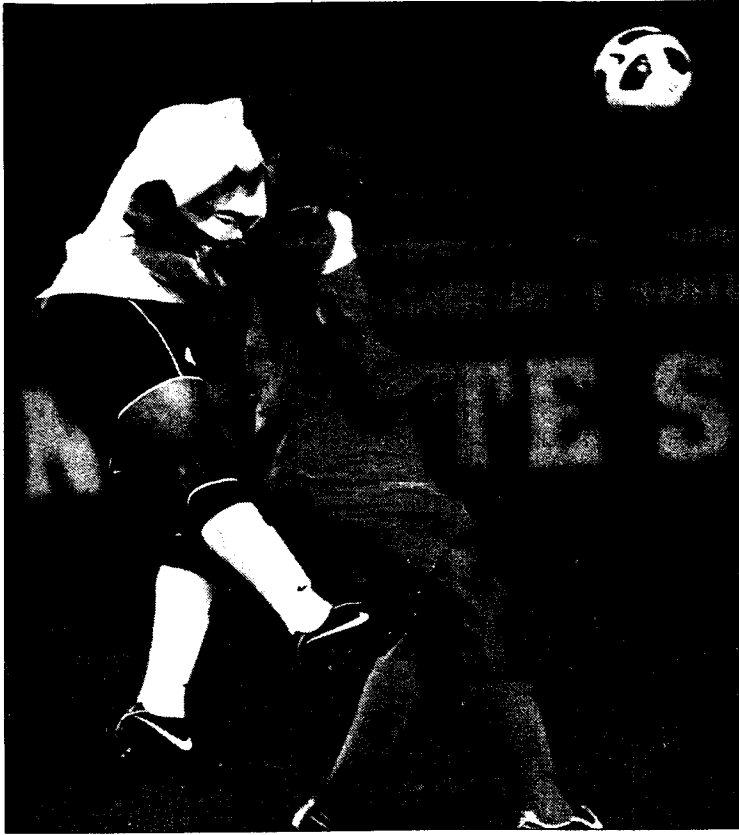


Work on set pieces shows over weekend



Mark Fetrow (left) goes for a header in a match against Bucknell earlier this season. Fetrow scored the Lions' first set piece goal this season.

By Andrew Robinson
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Fittingly, the first set piece goal of the year started at the foot of Matheus Braga and ended off the head of Mark Fetrow.

Two days later, Braga would be the one bouncing a ball off his head and into the goal off a service from a corner kick.

It may have taken two weekends, but the No. 23 Penn State men's soccer team finally found the back of the net off of set pieces on its trip through Colorado this weekend in a 2-0 win against Air Force and a 4-0 victory over Denver.

"It was really good for us, one was on a free kick and the other was off a corner kick," Braga said. "We've been working at it a lot in practice since we got here in pre-season and started practice."

Nittany Lions coach Bob Warming has stressed a positive plus-minus margin all season, where a Penn State goal on a set piece results adds a point and an opponent set piece goal subtracts one.

After a less than stellar showing last weekend where they allowed three set piece scores, the Lions began the road trip at minus three.

They returned early Monday morning minus one after scoring twice and conceding none.

"I'm really proud that they're starting to execute the plays that we've had set up," Warming said. "A lot of credit goes to great service from Drew Cost."

Cost, a senior, has taken most of the teams' corners, and Braga said Cost played the ball he turned into his goal Sunday. Braga said on his goal he was the shortest player in the box, but he just exploited Denver's zone style defense and got into space.

While he was the shortest player on Sunday, Braga's service against Air Force Friday night went to the tallest Lion, the 6-foot-5 Fetrow. Having such a big target, Braga said the set piece takers try to find Fetrow wherever he is in the box.

"Fetrow's the tallest guy on our team and he works really hard," Braga said. "We always try to put the ball on his head and see what happens."

Braga's ball found Fetrow on

Air Force's far post and the junior complimented Braga's service. As a centre back, Fetrow doesn't get many offensive looks and he was glad to help his team against Air Force.

"It was great to get a goal 20 minutes into the game and it felt good to finally get one on the year," Fetrow said.

"I feel like the team rallied behind it a little bit."

After set piece defense cost the Lions their game against Bucknell and hurt them against Binghamton, Warming made it a focus of practice when the team got to Colorado last Thursday. The work the Lions did on both sides of the ball showed in their production this weekend.

Indiana comes to Jeffrey Field on Friday night as the first Big Ten opponent and the Lions want to keep improving on their set pieces as they take on their conference foes.

"We got really tough defensively on set pieces this week and tough offensively too," Braga said. "That's why we were successful this weekend and we want to do that the whole year now."

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Lions looking to avoid early lack of urgency

By Andrew Robinson
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

It's probably the least effective way to spark a team, but for some reason the Penn State women's soccer team has latched onto an idea this season.

For some reason, the Nittany Lions can't seem to play inspired soccer until they go down a goal. While the sense of urgency that results from trailing prompts the Lions to play their best soccer, the team knows it shouldn't take a deficit to make them play hard.

"I have to tell them if we go down a goal in the first half, I'd rather have a 90 minute performance of us down a goal early than to wait the whole game until the opposing team scores to see our team play," coach Erica Walsh said.

Sunday against Dartmouth, the team looked uninspired until Dartmouth scored in the 60th minute. The next half-hour saw the Lions play with passion as they unleashed a hail of shots on Dartmouth's goal.

Walsh said after the game that frantic push was the best it played all game. But it wasn't enough to get that goal and senior co-captain Megan Monroig said the team

seemed defeated on the field in the first ten minutes. It was the continuation of a season-long trend for the team.

"We made a good push now and again but we didn't start playing that game until there were 20 minutes left," Monroig said.

"That 'Oh, crap' factor hit us that we're going to lose cause we're down one nothing and that's when we started to play. We're not going to win a 90-minute game playing for 20 minutes, bottom line."

Earlier this season, the Lions came out slow against William & Mary and continued to play slow until they went down 2-1 and went on to lose by that score despite pushing hard to tie the game.

Against Washington on Sept. 10, the team conceded two first half goals and had to play frantically the entire second half, finally getting a goal with seven minutes left but falling 2-1. Walsh said after that game the Lions played with their backs against the wall in the second half, but they needed to be starting games that way.

Sophomore midfielder Christine Nairn said the Lions need to find some consistency and stop playing as a collection of 11 individual players.

"It's not individually, it's the team as a whole," Nairn said. "Be consistent and play as a team instead of individuals. I know it's the same thing over and over again but we go out every day in practice and try to change it and hope for the best."

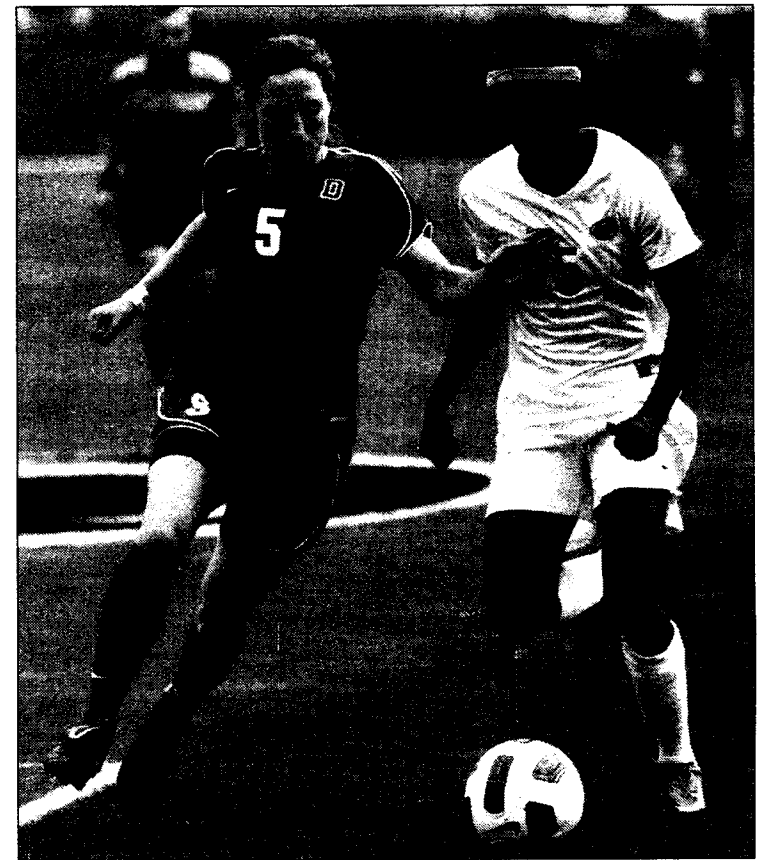
Part of the problem is a lack of hustle-based players in the starting lineup. The Lions have plenty of talent on the roster, but so far the mentality of the less heralded, grind-it-out players hasn't spread through the lineup.

Monroig said the team is trying to figure out how to instill that hustle and the players know that's what the problem is.

The nonconference schedule is over and starting Sunday, every game is against a Big Ten team, meaning the margin for error is gone.

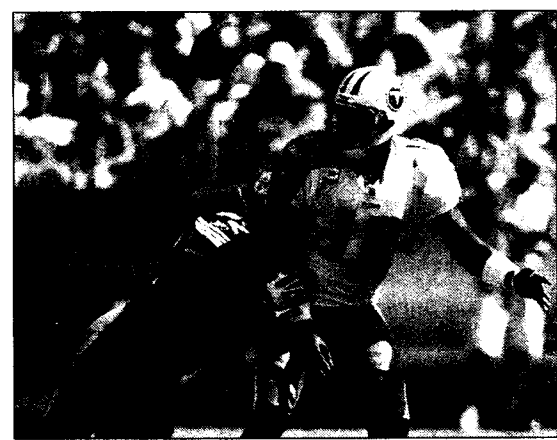
"We're one of those teams that has big names on our team and that's great because we have soccer players but we don't have the when our backs are up against the wall, we're going to go win this game mentality," Monroig said. "We're trying to find that right now. That's where we're at and we have a week to find it."

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Maya Hayes (right) dribbles in the Lions' 1-0 loss to Dartmouth Sunday. The Lions fell victim to a slow start in the match against the Big Green.

Lexi Simchak/Collegian



Vince Young (10) fumbles during a loss Sunday.

Young still starter

By Teresa M. Walker
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

NASHVILLE, Tenn. -- Jeff Fisher keeps repeating it: There's no quarterback controversy in Tennessee, and Vince Young will start Sunday against the New York Giants and for the rest of the season.

Quarterback continued to be the hot topic after Fisher benched Young for the final quarter of their 19-11 loss to the Pittsburgh Steelers. While there's plenty of blame to go around on offense — the Titans (1-1) committed seven turnovers — Young had two interceptions and a fumble and was the center of attention.

Fisher didn't say if he's talked with Young about his decision to yank him and play backup Kerry Collins.

But Fisher made it clear what he expects. "He shouldn't like it," Fisher said of the move. "No one you take out of the game should. Do you expect them to like it? No, they shouldn't like it."

"I would expect any player who was replaced for any reason not to be happy with it, but what you do is you come back to work, you work harder and you improve. That's the game. This is not an easy position to play. You saw what happened around the league Sunday."

Young wasn't the only quarterback benched Sunday after struggles on the field. But he is the quarterback who lost his job to Kerry Collins two seasons ago in the opener and didn't get it back until the Titans started 0-6 last year.

Tennessee had been 9-2 with Young back at quarterback until seemingly no one could hold onto the ball.

Fisher said the entire team — except the defense — had a bad day against Pittsburgh. The coaches probably had too much in the game plan, asking too much of the offense against the Steelers' defense. Fisher defended even that, saying the extensive game plan reflected how far Young's come in his fifth NFL season.

Shot selection a focal point after loss

By Alex Angert
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Having only two shots on goal is never a good sign.

It's even worse when one of those two shots came from the other team.

In Penn State's loss against Dartmouth Sunday, shots flew from every direction off the feet of the Nittany Lions' players. And every direction is exactly where the shots landed — except on target.

"It's just poor shot selection," coach Erica Walsh said. "It's selfishness and taking shots from spaces that we've got no chance to score. Some of them were good chances but too many of them were just wasted attacks."

By the time the final buzzer sounded and Dartmouth's players rushed the field in shock, Penn State had outshot its opponent 28-9, including 21 shots in the second half. Barely any of those shots came close to turning into a goal as the final percentage of shots on goal for Penn State was a staggering .071, and without the one shot courtesy of Dartmouth, it would stand at .037.

And what makes Sunday's statistics

even harder to look at is comparing them to Wednesday's victory, when the Lions had the same amount of shots on goal. However, in that game, Penn State shot 57 percent of its attempts on goal and put five into the back of the net.

But against Dartmouth this weekend, it was a different story as shot after shot for Penn State sailed over the net, wide to the right or left, off of defenders and virtually nowhere near the goal.

In fact, the Lions' first and maybe best opportunity didn't even come off the foot of one of its own players but rather the head of one of Dartmouth's.

In the 56th minute of the game, one of Dartmouth's defenders headed the ball to the goalkeeper, who was forced to dive and knock away the ball that was misplayed back to her.

Other than that, the only other shot on goal from Penn State came minutes later when Tani Costa got past her defender and fired a shot right into the hands of Dartmouth's keeper. The rest of the Lions' shots were ill advised and not high percentage attempts at all.

"That's extremely hard to swallow, just because it's things like, if you are 40-yards out, 'Why take the shot?'" defender Megan Monroig asked. "I'm sure there's somebody close enough to

you. Pass the ball, keep it, find a better way to get it into the box."

Monroig said the players need to find better opportunities and focus on getting their shots on goal, instead of firing them from every angle without clean looks. As for Walsh, she admits some of the shot selection fault falls on her, as the players need to think and make better mental choices.

"It's just using your mind," she said. "I take blame in that we've got to teach them and we've got to tell them when it's not good enough. We need to do more of that as a coaching staff."

A large reason behind the discrepancy between shots and shots on goal could be attributed to Dartmouth's use of defenders and strategy of stacking the box. However, the players were still upset with the lack of on target shots.

Nevertheless, some of the Lions are optimistic Penn State can turn things around and produce more high percentage shots behind the talent the team has.

"We have the ability to still get them on frame," forward Hayley Brock said. "We should be able to put more in. We can do it. We know we can."

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