

SPORTS

THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

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Lions begin home Big Ten slate

By Jake Kaplan
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Rec Hall is one of the Big Ten volleyball venues where Mark Rosen really enjoys coaching.

The Michigan women's volleyball coach appreciates the passionate and knowledgeable Nittany Lion fanbase.

He also respects the fact the Penn State faithful are not overly aggressive toward his team.

However, there is one caveat to

all of the things Rosen likes about playing in Happy Valley.

It's where the Lions thrive.

No. 4 Penn State, winners of 80 consecutive games at Rec Hall, opens its Big Ten home slate this weekend. The Lions take on Michigan State at 7 tonight before matching up



Rose

against No. 19 Michigan at 6 Saturday night.

"They play well everywhere, but we really don't want to play them where they're playing their best," Rosen said. "So that's something we're going to have to contend with."

The last time Penn State (11-2, 1-1 Big Ten) lost in the friendly confines of Rec Hall was Dec. 9, 2005, when Tennessee upset the Lions in the NCAA Regional Semifinal.

Since that time, Penn State has lost a mere six sets on its home floor.

Michigan State (9-4, 1-1) hasn't beaten Penn State at Rec Hall since November 2001, while the Wolverines (13-1, 2-0) have never had the fortune of knocking off the Lions at home in 21 chances.

The Lions are excited to play at home after a tough loss at Illinois last Friday night. For that match, 4,141 Illinois fans packed Huff Hall, which many of the Penn

State players said is already the toughest conference venue to compete.

Not surprisingly, Penn State senior defensive specialist Cathy See **WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL, Page 14.**

If you go

Women's volleyball vs. MSU

When: 7 p.m. tonight

Where: Rec Hall

Stanzi a test for Lions

By Audrey Snyder
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

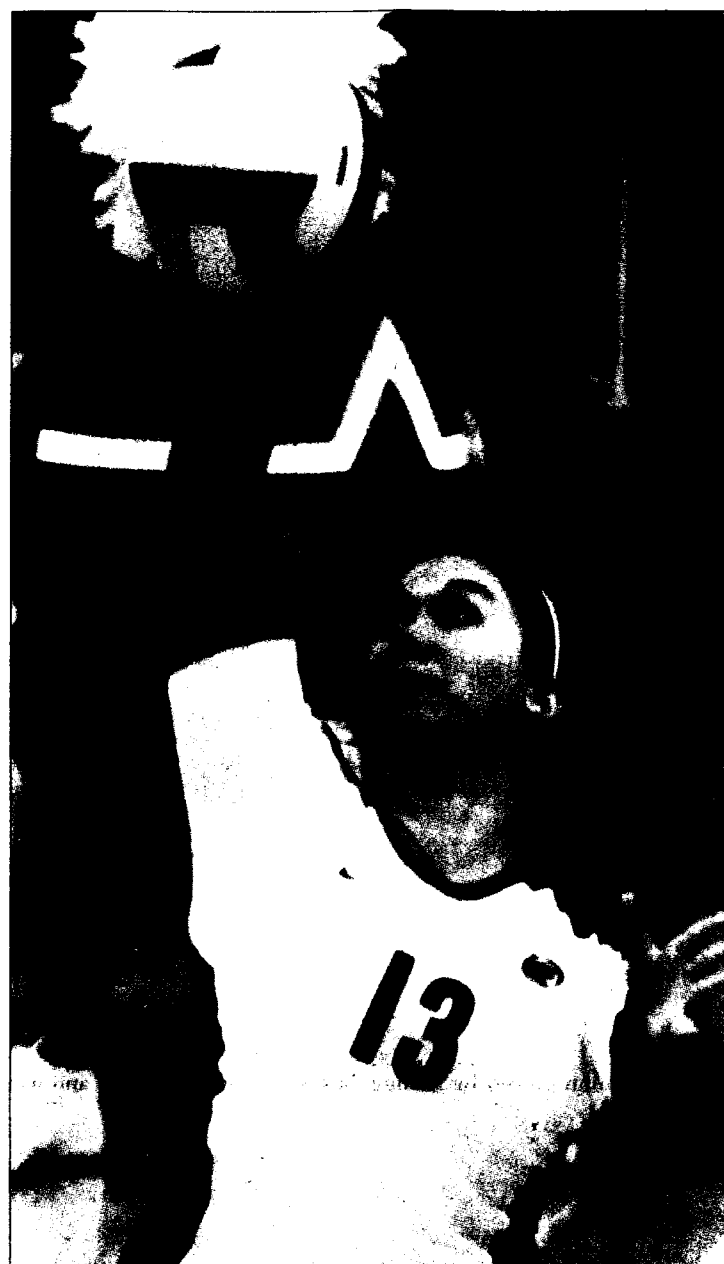
It wasn't long ago that quarterback Ricky Stanzi was under center doing just enough to help his Iowa Hawkeyes get by.

A few touchdown passes here and there, mixed in with more interceptions than his head coach would've liked, and Stanzi would turn the game over to his defense.

Last year defensive end Adrian Clayborn's blocked punt that he returned for a touchdown proved to be a decisive play in the game against Penn State. However, this year Stanzi won't need to rely so heavily on the rest of the team as he's finally come into his own.

Just one year after throwing 17 touchdowns and 15 interceptions, Stanzi is off to the best start of his collegiate career and is the focus of the Nittany Lions' defense.

"You're talking about a really, big-time football player," Joe Paterno said. "Big-league leader and a kid who knows how to play that position and he knows how to use his personnel." See **STANZI, Page 14.**



Amanda August/Collegian

Junior Megan Shifflett goes for a serve in a match earlier this year.

Junior key for team

By Emily Kaplan
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Susan Shifflett would often talk to the Nittany Lion coaching staff about the prospect of her daughter, Megan, pursuing collegiate volleyball — but the discussions never really touched on the possibility of playing for Penn State.

Susan, an outside hitter for the Lions in the early 1980s, was realistic.

At 5-foot-6, Megan was a good high school player — exceptional, even — but her mother thought Megan would probably find a good fit at a Division-II, D-III or small D-I program.

"Playing at a national powerhouse like Penn State wasn't really a prospect," Susan said. "So I would talk to the coaches and ask advice about what the best options for Megan would be."

But midway through Megan's junior year at Langley H.S., former assistant coach Salima Rockwell approached the Shiffletts at a tournament. Rockwell asked if Megan would be interested in playing for the Lions.

"And right at that very moment, I was ready to take out a second mortgage," Susan said. "If that's what it would take to pay for her to go to school there, we'd do it. It's just an opportunity she couldn't pass up."

Four years later, Megan is now a junior for No. 4 Penn State. She's counted on to come off the bench as a defensive specialist in key situations, and also to be a constant source of energy in the practice gym and during matches.

And the Lions couldn't be more pleased she ended up in Happy Valley.

"She's the definition of a team player," junior co-captain Katie Kabbes said. "She wants whatever's best for the team. She's hard-working, she's fun, and she always brings a smile to our faces. I can't imagine this team without her."

Kabbes, who roomed with Shifflett freshman year and now shares a house with her, said the Falls Church, Va. native gets along with literally everyone. Kabbes added she can't think of a single instance when Shifflett didn't enter the practice gym smiling.

It's that unflappable attitude that the Lions depend on during matches.

Shifflett is what head coach Russ Rose describes as a "solid bench player." She has yet to record her first career start, but will regularly substitute in during matches when the Lions need a strong serve or spark of energy.

"Coach trusts her enough that he played her in last year's national championship match," Kabbes said. "I think that says a lot."

Shifflett's best attributes are her volleyball acumen and even-tempered attitude, Rose said.

"She's not impacted by a crowd and by stressful situations," Rose said. "She's played a lot of volleyball, and her mom's a coach, so she's aware of certain things."

Mrs. Shifflett, who coached her daughter through high school and club, would bring young Megan to her team's practices.

Her fondest memory of her See **SHIFFLETT, Page 14.**

Football writer A.J. Cassavell shares his thoughts on this weekend's game at Iowa: psucollegian.com



Collegian file photo

Stanzi (12) gets taken down.

Lady Ruggers face first road test

By Brandt Gelman
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Freshman Kelsey Corbett had to make a tough decision regarding which school she would attend this fall, and where she would play rugby.

West Chester University reached out to her high school coach, offered to fly her to its campus, and give her the whole NCAA recruiting experience. She never even gave West Chester a chance.

"I knew I was coming to Penn State after I visited here first," Corbett said.

The rivalry between West Chester and Penn State has grown so much over the last decade, and Corbett's recruitment is only one example. This Saturday, the rivalry will be renewed as the Penn State Lady Ruggers travel to West Chester for their first road match of the fall season at noon.

As if this matchup needed any more fuel to the fire, Penn State will make its inaugural debut in the East Penn Rugby Union this season, where West Chester has been a dominant force for years. Although Penn State plays West

Chester almost every year, this year the match will count against each team's conference standings for the first time.

"We are going into this game confident in ourselves," captain Sadie Anderson said. "If we play at our pace, we should have no problem getting a win."

Head coach Pete Steinberg said he will start the best lineup the Lady Ruggers have used all season. Senior Deven Owsiany and junior Kelly Sager will return from injury to give the team a welcomed boost. Owsiany said Wednesday night's practice was

the barometer of whether she could play this weekend after sitting out last weekend's match against Indiana.

"The medics told me that if I could get through Wednesday's practice without feeling any tingling sensation in my neck then I could play this weekend," Owsiany said.

While Owsiany is excited just to get back out on the field, the rest of the team is looking forward to its first road trip of the year. Corbett said she is excited to experience all of the weird things

See **WOMEN'S RUGBY, Page 14.**

Men's soccer preps for UM

By Andrew Robinson
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

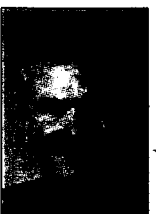
When the nation's leader in total points meets the reigning national high school player of the year two games removed from a hat trick, there's only one possible outcome.

A good, old-fashioned striker battle.

When the Penn State men's soccer team takes on Michigan in Ann Arbor Sunday at 1 p.m., two of the Big Ten's best forwards, Penn State junior Corey Hertzog and

Wolverines freshman Soony Saad will take the field, each hoping to lead his team to its first conference win.

"[Saad] had, I think, nine or ten shots against Kentucky the other night and he's one of the best strikers I've ever seen," Nittany Lions coach Bob Warming said. "It's going to be a great battle



Warming

between him and Corey as to who's going to get the goals for his team."

The Lions have already dealt with one star Big Ten striker in Indiana's Will Bruin, who scored the game winning goal with 11 seconds left last Friday. However, unlike the 6-foot-2, 194 pound Bruin, Saad is a 5-foot-10, 165 pound player more in the mold of the lightning-quick, crafty Hertzog, who stands 6-foot, 172 pounds.

See **MEN'S SOCCER, Page 14.**



Andrew Dunheimer/Collegian

Corey Hertzog (right) attempts a shot vs. St. Francis Wednesday night.

THE LINEUP

SPORTS ON TV

MLB

Pittsburgh at Florida
7:10 p.m., FSN

TRIVIA

Q: Who did the New York Jets select in this year's draft with the pick they recieved from the Seattle Seahawks in the Leon Washington trade?

Thursday's Answer: The Boston Americans won the first World Series.

QUICK HITS

Collegian Pick 'Em Update

As the Collegian enters week four of its Penn State NFL Pick 'Em contest, it's the athletes leading the way, having correctly predicted 30 of the first 48 games.

Wrestler Brad Pataky, and basketball players Talor Battle and D.J. Jackson have each gone 10-6 in their individual weeks to turn in the contest's best record through three weeks.

Penn State Icers forward Paul Daley will look to keep the athletes in the lead with his picks this week.

Jim Regan, the Nittany Lion Fund president, and Paul Casella, Collegian assistant sports editor, each sit just one game back in a tie for second.

More coverage online

Check out psucollegian.com for more articles on Penn State's athletic teams.

Read a story by James Nicol on two Nittany Lion tennis players traveling to participate in All-American competitions this weekend.

For a story on how senior men's rugby player Chris Saint is handling a different role from the sideline this season after tearing his anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) in the offseason, check out Greg Fernandez's article.

The women's cross country team dropped from the top-30 of the national rankings on Tuesday and are using it as motivation for the Notre Dame Invitational in South Bend, Ind. that begins this afternoon with the men's team also competing, writes Zack Feldman.

OUR THOUGHTS

Furyk getting a raw deal

At a time when Jim Furyk is playing the best golf of his season during one of the best years in his 17-year PGA career, the Lancaster native is being asked to watch from the side during the U.S.'s Friday morning session vs. the Europeans in the first day of the 2010 Ryder Cup.

The No. 5-ranked player in the world has a career-high three victories this year — including a thrilling victory in the Tour Championship last week that won him the FedEx Cup — and is a strong candidate for PGA Tour Player of the Year.

Yet U.S. team captain Corey Pavin chooses not to put Furyk in the morning lineup? Doesn't make sense to us.