

Women's rugby

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the team does to bond on these trips. Steinberg is willing to let his players have their fun on the bus, but when the team arrives at West Chester, he expects the atmosphere to be all business.

"We have been working on hitting and driving their players to the ground," Steinberg said. "We are also focusing on attacking quickly to not let their defense get set up."

This weekend's matchup means more to Penn State than a conference win — this match is a battle for supremacy in Pennsylvania.

Steinberg said Philadelphia is a huge recruiting pool for high school rugby players.

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Padres on verge of elimination after loss

Bernie Wilson
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

SAN DIEGO -- Brad Snyder hit an RBI single off Heath Bell with one out in the ninth inning to lead the Chicago Cubs to a 1-0 win over San Diego on Thursday, pushing the Padres to the cusp of elimination from the playoff race.

The loss reduced San Francisco's magic number for clinching the NL West to one and idle Atlanta's magic number for clinching the NL wild card to two.

The Padres trail San Francisco

by three games going into the final three-game series at San Francisco. It's the first time the Padres have trailed by three games since April 17. The Padres are two games behind Atlanta, which closes with a home series against the NL East champion Philadelphia Phillies.

San Diego, which started the season with the second-lowest payroll in the majors, led the division for much of the summer until staggering down the stretch. The Padres have lost 22 of 34 games since Aug. 25, when they were 76-49 and had a 6½-game lead over the Giants in the NL West.

Aramis Ramirez started the Cubs' ninth with a broken-bat single to right-center off Bell (6-1) and was replaced by pinch-runner Darwin Barney. Xavier Nady laid down a sacrifice bunt and scored on Snyder's single to left.

San Diego had only three hits. It was the second time in the four-game series that San Diego lost 1-0. The Cubs took three of four.

Sean Marshall (7-5) got two outs in the eighth for the win. Carlos Marmol pitched a perfect ninth for his 37th save in 42 chances.

San Diego's Jon Garland held San Diego to four hits in 6 1-3 scoreless innings, struck out eight and walked one. Chicago's Tom Gorzelanny allowed three hits in six scoreless innings, walked four and struck out three.

Until the ninth, Chicago's best scoring chance was in the sixth, when Blake DeWitt hit a leadoff double just inside the right-field line and took third on Marlon Byrd's fly ball to center. Garland struck out Ramirez to end the threat.

San Diego's David Eckstein

reached third with two outs in the sixth but was stranded. He and Miguel Tejada drew consecutive walks. Adrian Gonzalez grounded into a double play that moved Eckstein to third before Ryan Ludwick flied out.

Notes: The game started after a 22-minute rain delay, the second of the season at Petco Park. The first was April 21 against the Giants, lasting 18 minutes. The Padres have had one rainout in Petco Park's seven-year history, on April 4, 2006, against the Giants. There have been only 16 rainouts in San Diego history, and only two since 1990. ... The crowd of 28,576 gave the Padres a final home attendance of 2,131,774. ... The Cubs have surrendered three or fewer runs in 13 straight road games dating to Sept. 10, the longest streak by the franchise since 1920.

Shifflett

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daughter was when the current junior was about 8 years old. A high school player accidentally tossed a ball Megan's way. Instead of backing away, the elementary schooler turned what Susan describes as a "perfect pass" back over the net.

Then she proceeded to slide across the floor.

"It was kind of like a cartoon moment," Susan said. "After the

initial gasp to see if she was OK, everyone just laughed. And I think that just shows how tough she was."

"And she still is, which is good because you definitely need that if you're going to deal with Mr. Rose."

Megan said at practices, Rose compares the mother and daughter all the time. They have the same bubbly demeanor and happy-go-lucky outlook.

They also remain close. Every Friday night before a Lions' home game, Susan cuts her

high school practices early by 30 minutes so she can watch her daughter play.

She said there was nothing cooler than watching Megan play in a Lion uniform for the first time. Megan agrees.

"It was always a dream in the back of my mind to play here, but it was something that I wasn't sure was always possible for me," Megan said. "But now that I'm here, I'm just trying to make the most of it."

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Women's Volleyball

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Quilico said it's much more fun playing at Rec Hall, especially against conference foes. She hopes the atmosphere helps the team perform like it did on Sunday at Wisconsin.

The Lions bounced back from their loss with a lopsided sweep of the Badgers.

"The home crowd is always easy, more relaxed," Quilico said. "Also, it gives you more confidence being at home. I think that will be something that will show and we can have a match like Wisconsin if not better."

Michigan State coach Cathy George said there is always a lot of energy inside Rec Hall.

"They've carried a big home court advantage over the last three years," the Spartans' coach said.

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Men's soccer

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In nine games this season, Saad has seven goals, and tallied all three of Michigan's goals in the team's 3-2 overtime win over Kentucky Sept. 22.

Hertzog leads Penn State with nine goals and four assists and leads the country with 22 total points.

Senior defender Andres Casais said practicing against Hertzog has helped the team prepare for

Saad, but Casais is impressed by what he's seen of the freshman on film.

"He's a very mobile and dynamic player, he likes to get into space and he works well the other forward," Casais said. "He's a good kid, he's having a good season but we're going to come up there, hope for the best and always have him on lockdown, not letting him get space and know where he is."

Containing Saad isn't the only challenge the Lions will face in Ann Arbor. Penn State enters the game at

6-2, but has yet to lose a game or allow a goal away from Jeffrey Field.

The Lions have developed a quick-strike mentality and Warming said this team is one of the fastest at creating chances he's ever coached.

"We've had an unbelievable number of chances and I'm not sure we're going to be able to do that exactly on the road at Michigan," Warming said. "But we'll give it a shot and see if we can press them a little bit early, too."

Michigan athletic teams use Adidas equipment, meaning Sunday's game will feature the infamous Jabulani soccer ball. During this summer's World Cup, the Jabulani drew plenty of criticism for the way it curved and bent in odd directions while in flight.

Prior to last week's game, the Lions acquired some Jabulani balls from Indiana, also an Adidas school, in exchange for some Nike balls and used them in practice this week.

"That ball flies, it really does,"

Casais said. "For us in the back, we have to be careful of those long balls we think are going to come up short and just take a couple steps back further."

While the defenders have to adjust to the ball, Casais said it gives the dangerous Hertzog one more tool to use.

"Corey, he's told me he likes that ball," Casais said. "He can hit it and that ball sometimes moves, it really does."

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Stanzi

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and they know how to coach him. That's a tough combination."

The most glaring turnaround in Stanzi's play this year has come from his ability to read defenses better, which has resulted in the senior throwing just one interception. Entering Saturday's game, Stanzi has just one interception to go with his nine touchdowns and 999 passing yards.

For a quarterback who's thrown

the ball 99 times through four games, he's completed 66 percent of his passes and is becoming a focal point for opposing defenses.

"When you see him start to take command of his offense and get things going, as a defense you've got to realize that he's not out there for fun and games," defensive tackle Ollie Ogbu said. "He's out there to prove a point."

Ogbu noted Stanzi's poise as an attribute that stood out when he watched the 6-foot-4-inch field general on film. Ogbu said the confidence Stanzi has in his play this

year probably came from simply having more game experience.

With Stanzi now in his third year as the starter, Ogbu and the rest of the Penn State defense know what the quarterback is capable of doing when he's outside the pocket.

Getting a consistent pass rush and not over pursuing Stanzi is something defensive end Pete Massaro said has been stressed to the defensive line. The defense lanes to ensure Stanzi won't be able to showcase his mobility and

to help improve the chances that he makes a bad throw, Massaro said.

If the Lions' front can't get after Stanzi, the secondary is well aware of the quarterback's improved play.

"He makes good throws especially when he has a lot of time," safety Drew Astorino said. "And his offensive line gives him a lot of time. One thing you can't do is give him a lot of time because then he can pick apart a secondary."

And that's where Paterno's hoping the player who's carrying the

Hawkeyes will return to his previous form.

Paterno looked down through his thick glasses and let out a laugh when asked to talk about Stanzi's transformation at quarterback.

"He's turned out to be one of the better quarterbacks in the country," Paterno said.

"He's a good leader and he's got guts and he takes a lot of chances. I like the kid, I think he's a heck of a player."

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