



Christine Nairn head the ball against Michigan State.

Offense in slump

By Andrew Robinson
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

At this point one year ago, the Penn State women's soccer team had scored 15 goals. This year, the team has scored 15 goals in the same number of games.

But that statistic doesn't represent the way the Nittany Lions offense has played over the last three games. The Lions have one goal, off a penalty kick, in the 276 minutes they've played against Dartmouth, Michigan State and Ohio State.

The players are aware of it and have been putting in the extra effort to turn their fortunes around.

"It's definitely a concern, we need to create more opportunities and we're trying to switch things up," senior striker Dani Toney said. "We're working on it in practice and we're focusing on it and hopefully this week we can turn some things around."

This season the Lions have scored more than two goals just once, a 5-1 drubbing of Bucknell on Sept. 15. Toney said the front six players in the Lions' formation haven't been creating enough chances, so they need to do a better job of keeping the ball and moving it around in the attack.

Toney work when the offense has time to work the ball, they're more dangerous but it doesn't happen enough. While the Lions are working, coach Erica Walsh wants to see her team press more to try and create a goal out of nothing.

"I actually don't think that they're doing that enough," Walsh said. "I would like to see them work harder to make something out of nothing. You see the goal Ohio State scored against us was simply a forward chasing down a loose ball putting some pressure on a goalkeeper."

Walsh said she believes a lot of goals in Big Ten play are a result of that pressure to make something happen. To get her players to be more aggressive, Walsh said it's a matter of showing them when to press and when to hold the ball and create through their offense.

Against Michigan State, the offense looked primed to break out, putting seven of their 12 shots on goal and the players felt like they should have had several scores. Instilling an aggressive mentality hasn't been the only focus of practice — the players are hoping working through scoring situations over and over will help their production.

"It's just a matter of taking advantage of our chances and putting them away," sophomore midfielder Christine Nairn said. "We've been doing a lot of repetition and we're improving. We're happy with what's coming out in practice so I think we'll be fine."

Toney agreed repetition helps and by doing something enough, it becomes second nature in a game.

The Lions opponents this weekend, Northwestern and Iowa, are ranked in the bottom half of the Big Ten, having allowed 12 and nine goals respectively.

With the offense needing goals, some of the scoring load may fall to the midfield and with Nairn and freshman Taylor Schram, it boasts some scoring prowess. But at the moment, the Lions will take the scoring from anywhere.

"There's always going to be that pressure as to who's going to take the team on their back and carry it all," Nairn said.

"But I think everybody's dealing with it well and taking it upon themselves to do what they need to get better."

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Midfield takes shape

By Andrew Robinson
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Through 11 games, Penn State's midfield has been comprised of four players, then three, as many as five and back to four.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

It's been a box, it's been a swarming mentality with a lot of movement but seems to have settled into more defined roles. It dictates the pace of the game, where the attack is coming from and connects the back line to the forwards.

The women's soccer team's midfield has undergone several changes and modifications, but over the past few games it's become a strength for the Nittany Lions.

"We're knocking on the door of putting everything together and gluing the last couple of pieces together," sophomore midfielder Christine Nairn said. "I think if the communication is a little better and we get used to playing with each other and knowing each other's tendencies, we'll be fine."

So far this season, the midfield has contributed four goals and six assists from players listed as midfielders on the roster. Senior forward Dani Toney also notched two goals against

Bucknell after starting as an outside midfielder on Sept. 15.

Consistency has been a key factor to the midfield's emergence. The same four players — Nairn, Jess Rosenbluth, Maddy Evans and Taylor Schram — have established themselves as the starters and settled into specific roles.



Walsh

"We've been trying to find a connection between the players in there," Evans said. "It's cool though because we have a lot of players who can bring a lot of different things. Depending on the game, different players can bring their certain strengths."

Evans said they've progressed with each game and the sophomore noted the communication between the midfield and defense as one area that's improved greatly. As the holding midfielder, Evans has the most contact with the defense and said she feels very connected with the centre backs.

Depth is another factor in the unit's success. In any game, the Lions can turn to their reserves to add different dimensions to the field but also retain a high level of play.

"Things are always changing

but I'd say that with every game we gain more trust within each other and recognize the strengths within one another," junior midfielder Ali Schaefer said. "It's come together really beautifully."

Schaefer is the first midfielder off the bench and has played all over the field this season, whether it be as a holding midfielder, outside or as the attacking mid. While all the midfielders have some degree of versatility, the starters have taken up specific responsibilities.

"We all know our roles and our ultimate goal is to win the game in front of us," Nairn said. "So if we all play our individual roles, we'll be fine."

Penn State coach Erica Walsh said she likes the way the midfield has been able to keep the ball, but she would like to see the unit be more dangerous on attack. While the overall play has been good, Walsh thinks if the midfielders put more emphasis on shooting from deep or making an extra pass it could open up the offense.

"Every player has their own strengths so it's just recognizing that in each other," Schaefer said. "There's a lot of things to work out but as far as I see it, we're still 100 percent in this to win it."

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Junior walks on to golf team

By Matt Clancy
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Anthony DeGol is a rarity at Penn State — he walked onto the men's golf team.

MEN'S GOLF

DeGol, a junior, said he has been working to make the team since his freshman year. His hard work allowed him to become the first walk-on to the Nittany Lions have had, in what DeGol said was the past 15 years.

"It's really cool," DeGol said. "It's a special achievement to make it onto the team and be a Division I, Big Ten golfer."

Out of high school DeGol said he shot good scores, but was not ready for collegiate golf because he had mechanical issues to work out.

DeGol, who is from Hollidaysburg, Pa., spent eight weeks in Georgia this summer taking daily lessons.

The result was that he qualified for the Pennsylvania state open and was in a playoff to qualify for the U.S. Amateur tournament.

"I knew after this past sum-

"[Anthony DeGol] had some success in the summer and has worked on some things. We felt it would be an appropriate move for us to take him on the squad."

Greg Nye
Penn State golf coach

mer I had the skills to compete," DeGol said. "It was [a question of] whether I would get the chance. I finally got the chance and I'm glad to help the team out."

Coach Greg Nye said this season was the right time for DeGol to join the Penn State team.

"We had an available slot," Nye said. "We've known Anthony for a couple of years and have been watching him. He had some success in the summer and has worked on some things. We felt it would be an appropriate move for us to take him on the squad."

DeGol started his collegiate career on fire. He finished tied for fifth at the Maryland Intercollegiate, his first ever tournament at the major college level.

Despite struggling a week later and finishing 66th at the

Windon Memorial, DeGol is pleased with his start this fall.

"I couldn't really ask for more," DeGol said after Windon. "I'm still trying to get used to everything."

DeGol said that he did not have any offers out of high school to play golf because he did not play in the big name tournaments that coaches look for prospective players in, but that was not a big deal for DeGol.

"I only applied to Penn State," DeGol said. "That was pretty much the only school I wanted to go to."

Now DeGol is finally on the golf team at the school of his choice, playing the sport that he loves.

"This was definitely my dream to play golf in college," DeGol said.

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Icers' defensemen hoping to lock down on opponents

By Anthony Barton
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

The Penn State Icers are without arguably their two best defensemen from last year, losing John Conte and Steve Thurston to graduation.

ICERS

Usually when a team loses players of that caliber, who were also the team's captains, there is a significant drop-off in that area.

Head coach Scott Balboni doesn't see it that way. In fact, he said his team's defense is the strength of this year's team.

Assistant coach Josh Hand sees similarities between Conte and Thurston and the current crop of Icers' defensemen.

"I think not only were [Conte and Thurston] good defensemen, they were also good leaders," Hand said.

"I said they've rubbed off on some of our guys. Do we have

some of those guys back this year? We don't know yet, but they certainly have a decent base."

To fill the leadership void, Balboni said he will look to senior defensemen Carey Bell and sophomore defenseman Rich O'Brien.

As a freshman, O'Brien played every game, adding two goals and 19 assists. Balboni said most of his time was spent against the opposing team's top line, making his plus-33 for the season that much more impressive.

"I think they expect a lot more out of me," O'Brien said. "Last year I was lucky and I got to play

with Thurston, he made me look good out there. I'm just hoping to be a bigger part in our offense and more physical on the back end."

Balboni said Bell has been a steady contributor during his first three years on the Icers, but injuries have always held him back.

This season, he said Bell has already stepped up and been one of the players he believes he can count on.

Bell said being the most tenured defenseman makes this season different than past ones.

"There's definitely a little bit of a leadership element," Bell said. "We got a couple of new guys this year so just getting them integrated into the system and getting everyone on the same page is something I have more of a role in this year."

Both players contributed offensively in the team's two-game sweep of the Pittsburgh Panthers last weekend, with O'Brien scor-

ing twice and Bell adding a goal of his own.

O'Brien attributed the success to making quick decisions when they had the puck.

"They had a big offensive zone and we had a lot of space up top and we just got shots off as quick as we could," O'Brien said.

"They weren't always a big slapshot, but we just tried to get it on net."

Balboni doesn't ask anything of his defensemen offensively, but said when they do score, it's an added bonus.

"Our goal right now from the defensive end is for those guys to just get shots on net and let our forwards do the work offensively," Balboni said.

Two newcomers will also be counted on to play significant roles on the Icers' blueline. Junior transfer Kevin Miller and freshman Ryan Seibolt are both expected to contribute throughout the season.

As Hand's first impressions of Miller and Seibolt, he said they played OK, but also made some mistakes. He said as they become more acclimated to the Icers' system, Hand expects their level of play to raise.

"We were really lucky to get both those guys here," Bell said. "They're both really talented defensemen that can contribute a lot."

The consensus between the coaches and their defensemen is clear.

The defensive potential of the Icers is not only the capability to completely shut down the opposing team, but also to lead the Icers to an ACHA title.

"I think we can be really good. We got a lot of size, we got a lot of talent, and we have speed too for our size," O'Brien said. "Everyone likes to hit, so I think it'll be a fun 'D' to watch."

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Phils' Halladay throws second postseason no-hitter ever

By Rob Maaddi
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

PHILADELPHIA— Roy Halladay spent his whole career waiting for this start, wondering what it would be like to pitch in the playoffs.

MLB

It was better than he — or anyone else — could have predicted.

Halladay threw the second no-hitter in postseason history, leading the Philadelphia Phillies over the Cincinnati Reds 4-0 in Game 1 of the NL division series on Wednesday.

"It's surreal, it really is," Halladay said. "I just wanted to pitch here, to pitch in the postseason. To go out and have a game like that, it's a dream come true."

Don Larsen is the only other pitcher to throw a postseason no-hitter. He tossed a perfect game for the New York Yankees in the 1956 World Series against Brooklyn. The 54th anniversary of Larsen's gem is this Friday.

Halladay took the Year of the Pitcher into October. The excitement spread beyond Citizens Bank Park — the last two outs were shown on the video board at Target Field, where the Twins were preparing to play the Yankees, and Minnesota fans cheered.

The All-Star right-hander, who threw a perfect game at Florida on May 29, dominated the Reds with a sharp fastball and a devastating slow curve in his first playoff start.

The overmatched Reds never came close to a hit. Halladay

allowed only one runner, walking Jay Bruce on a full count with two outs in the fifth, and struck out eight.

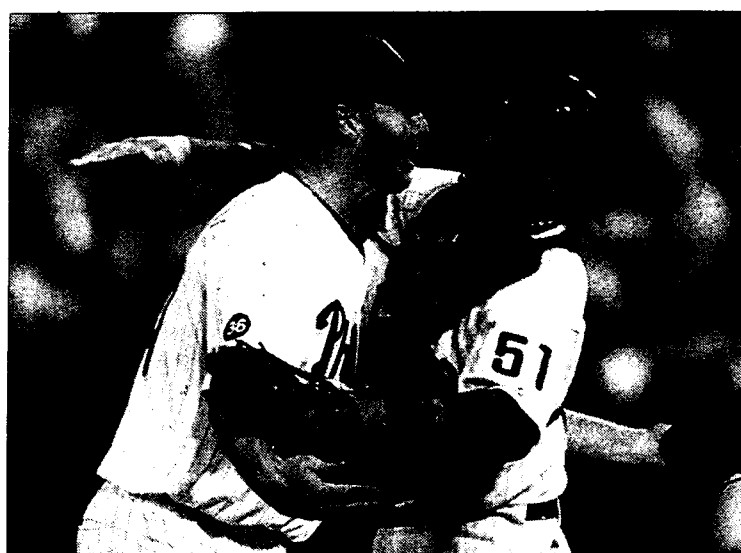
"To get a no-hitter in this fashion, in your first postseason game, you've got to put it right up there," Phillies first baseman Ryan Howard said.

Halladay threw 104 pitches, 79 for strikes.

"It's no fun out there," Reds slugger Joey Votto said. "It's like trying to hit nothing. He's an ace among aces."

Halladay spent 12 seasons with Toronto, far from the postseason. A trade last December brought him to the defending two-time NL champions, and gave him this chance.

"This is what you come here for," Halladay said.



Carlos Ruiz (51) congratulates Roy Halladay on his no-hitter.

Rob Carr/Associated Press