

Lions dealing with injuries

Bencsko nearly healed

By Steven Petrella
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Penn State women's gymnast Whitney Bencsko's fall training workouts have been different from those she's done in the past of her gymnastics career.

WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS

The junior co-captain hyper extended her knee last season on Feb. 27 at Ohio State and is still recovering, gradually working her way back up to full strength.



Bencsko

"The doctor said I have to take my time at this point," Bencsko said.

"I've been slowly progressing and I started adding small things. If things keep going this way I should be ready [for the season opener]."

Bencsko said she is cleared to do any move as long as she feels comfortable and there is no pain in her knee. She expects to compete in Penn State's first meet of the regular season on Jan. 7 at Alabama.

"I was doing rehab with the trainers and getting small back so I could start getting back to fully training," Bencsko said. "Now I'm touching every event every day."

Last season, Bencsko suffered the knee injury after a dismount off the uneven bars during the Lions' 194.950-193.850 loss to the Buckeyes, causing her to land on the mat straight-legged.

First-year head coach Jeff Thompson said he expects the all-around gymnast to be back competing by the time the season begins.

As a freshman in 2009, Bencsko was named second-team All-Big Ten and was a NACGC/W first-team and All-American on vault and second-team All-American in the all-around.

Another injury concern for Penn State is sophomore Susan Martens, who slipped off the back of the beam last week during practice and sprained her ankle.

She is taking it day-by-day and should be ready to go against Alabama. "Typically you're in a boot for a week or two," Thompson said about the injury. See **GYMNASTICS**, Page 12.

PARK AVE. HOOLIGANS



Pete Tesonero/Collegian

"Hertzog's Hooligans" — the men's soccer team's student section — pump up the Jeffrey Field crowd during the Lions' loss to Indiana.

Fans making an impact

By Andrew Robinson
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

The discussion started at Denny's during a meal between friends.

Brian Wrodel sat with Corey Hertzog and Daniel Burnham, founders on the Penn State men's soccer team when conversation turned to the famed "Lambeau Leap," which takes place after a touchdown by the Green Bay Packers. Realizing the bleachers at Jeffrey Field aren't that high off the ground, the talk turned to goal scoring celebrations.

MEN'S SOCCER

Sunday afternoon, Hertzog celebrated the first of what Wrodel hopes is many "Jeffrey Jumps."

"We just said we should do something like that here and "Jeffrey Jump" came to mind and we had wanted to do it ever since," Wrodel said. "When it happened against Michigan State it was the most glorious thing ever so hopefully we get to see some more of those."

Wrodel (junior-business management) has been friends with Hertzog since seventh grade and after transferring to University Park from Penn State Berks, decided to start a student section for the men's soccer team. Right See **FANS**, Page 12.

Defense figuring out best lineup for Akron

By Mike Still
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Brian Fergie knows the Akron men's soccer team is the real deal.

The No. 1-ranked Zips have outscored their opponents 26-2 en route to an undefeated 9-0-2 record this season.

When the Nittany Lions host Akron at 7 tonight at Jeffrey Field, they know they'll be up against arguably the country's most talented team.

"They're obviously the No. 1 team in the country," Fergie said. "They're a great team and doing a lot of things right this year."

In preparing for such a dangerous offensive team as the Zips, Penn State is working to figure out what defensive line. See **DEFENSE**, Page 12.



Warming

Thomson remaining consistent

By Andrew Robinson
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Jackie Molinda knew last spring Emma Thomson was going to make for a great leader.

It was during routine sprints in training last year and Molinda was struggling to finish them. Molinda said Thomson, who had already finished, jumped in and encouraged her to push through.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

This fall, Thomson, a junior co-captain on the Penn State women's soccer team, has played at a consistently high level despite frequent changes along the defense.

As the only defensive player to start every game, it's helped the junior grow as a leader.

"The key has been to keep doing what I can do, communicating and organizing the back line," Thomson said. "Whoever's in there, just making sure I help them out and communicate and

keep an open mind to everything that's been changing."

Nittany Lions coach Erica Walsh tries to have at least one junior captain every year, and lets the players vote on captains every spring.

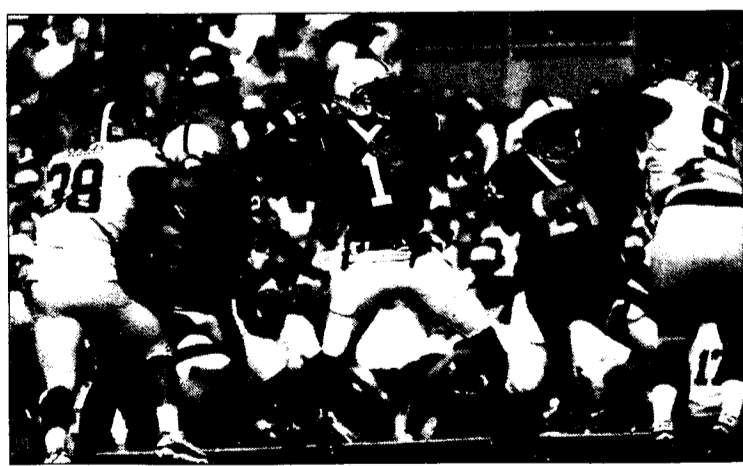
Molinda, now the starting left back on defense, said she voted for Thomson in the spring and added the junior has been the anchor of the defense this season.

Thomson started the year as the right back, but moved to See **THOMSON**, Page 12.



Sarah Finnegan/Collegian

Thomson (25) pushes the ball.



Freshman quarterback Rob Bolden (1) attempts a pass vs. Illinois.

Bolden still evolving at QB

By Andrew J. Cassavell
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

The playbook is getting thicker for Rob Bolden.

Six weeks into the season, the freshman quarterback has been given new plays on an almost daily basis, while still learning the ins and outs of being a Division I quarterback.

Bolden's progression, statistically, hasn't been much. He strug-

FOOTBALL

gled last week against Illinois, going 8-for-21 for 142 yards — most of the yardage coming on an 80-yard second quarter touchdown pass to Derek Moyer.

But senior tailback Evan Royster said Bolden has done a good job comprehending the schemes quarterbacks coach Jay Paterno has been adding, and his progression, while not apparent in the stats, has been evident in the huddle.

"He's calming down a little bit back there," Royster said.

"They've opened up the playbook a little bit more for him, and they're getting him more complicated stuff on offense. He's still learning. It's gonna take time because we keep adding to the playbook."

Bolden, who is unavailable to the media per Joe Paterno's policy, has struggled in the last three games. He has thrown one touchdown pass during that time, and the Lions have dropped to 3-3, winless (0-2) in Big Ten play.

See **BOLDEN**, Page 11.

THE LINEUP

SPORTS ON TV

NCAAF

Central Florida at Marshall
8 p.m., ESPN

TRIVIA

Q: Who is the last New York Yankees shortstop to bat below .250 in the regular season?

Monday's answer: Tom Brady has thrown for 4,000 yards in a season 3 times.

QUICK HITS

Branch practicing with Pats

(AP) — Together again, Deion Branch and Tom Brady walked side-by-side to the sunny practice field.

The Patriots new wide receiver was getting a crash course on plays installed since he left in 2006 after they were part of two NFL championships.

"I still remember some plays," Branch said Tuesday. "They didn't call those plays today."

The Patriots reacquired the player they drafted in the second round in 2002 — and the MVP of the 2005 Super Bowl — from the Seattle Seahawks on Monday for a fourth-round pick in the 2011 NFL draft.

"I'm not here to replace Randy," he said.

Lions wrap up fall season

Despite putting up a decent effort, the Penn State women's golf team finished in 10th place out of 12 squads Tuesday at the Lady Northern golf tournament in Chicago, Ill.

The Nittany Lions closed their fall season with a total score of 915 (51-over-par), a three-round total that ties with the performance at the Cincinnati Fall Classic on Sept. 22 for the team's worst finish this season.

The team fell one place after Monday's competition, where they finished with a two-round score of 603 (301-302), putting them in ninth place. The Nittany Lions struggled.

To read the rest of Katie Montgomery's story, check out psucollegian.com.

OUR THOUGHTS

Rematch a possibility

It happened in 2009 and there's a good chance it'll happen again.

The New York Yankees and Philadelphia Phillies are the most likely matchup to come out of the League Championship Series.

The Phillies boast one of the greatest 1-2-3 punches since the Braves had the Maddux, Glavine, Smoltz trifecta from the 1990s.

The Yankees are riding a hot streak including a sweep of the Minnesota Twins and are riding high on C.C. Sabathia, Andy Pettitte and Mariano Rivera performing as well as they did in the most dominant stages of their careers.