

# Field hockey looks back following Michigan State win



Goaltender Ayla Halus shouts directions to her teammates during a game.

By Joe McIntyre  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

After a tumultuous, disappointing and upsetting year in 2009, the Penn State field hockey team is back.

Back with a vengeance. Coming off a 4-1 victory over Michigan State last Friday, the Nittany Lions field hockey program has returned to where players and coaches say it always should be.

The Lions (9-3, 3-1 Big Ten) have gone from a 1-2 start with losses to then-No. 3 Virginia and No. 5 Connecticut, to winning eight of nine and oozing with confidence.

"For a grade, I'd give us an 'A' right now," assistant coach Lisa Bervinchak-Love said. "Sunday against Michigan State we had a great effort and our competitiveness was awesome, it was probably one of the best games with the competitive edge I would say. We just have to be careful that we still stay focused and just take it one game at a time and we continue to practice hard and don't get complacent."

## FIELD HOCKEY

And complacency was something senior captain Lauren Alloway said she saw in last year's team. There was a lack of personal accountability last season she said, and that was a major factor in the disappointing year.

"I think another big aspect of it is the overall atmosphere," Alloway said. "Last year a lot of people weren't taking responsibility of their own actions and blaming other people. And if you're blaming others, you're not going to get better."

But a year later, things are much different.

After a Michigan State goal tied the game at one Friday, the Lions took a timeout and came together as a team. They gave each other confidence with positive comments and encouraging words. It was something the Lions didn't do last year and weren't as successful, as a result.

And along with team success, confidence is breeding individual success as well.

The Lions have won four Big Ten Player of the Week awards already this season with Kelsey Amy winning Offensive Player of the Week once and goalkeeper Ayla Halus winning Defensive

Player of the Week three times, including this past week for her nine-save effort against the Spartans.

Halus is only the third Nittany Lion to win the award three times in a season. Assistant coach Annie Zinkavich most recently accomplished the feat in 2001.

And even though the award is an individual accomplishment, head coach Char Morett said for Halus to win the award three times speaks of how well the defense has played in front of her. Defense and goaltending are one unit, she said, and when the goalkeeper is awarded, the entire backfield is recognized.

With an away contest against No. 6 Ohio State coming up on Sunday, Bervinchak-Love said Halus and the Lions have a great chance to make the NCAA tournament for the first time since 2008, they just can't afford any setbacks.

"We're in a great position right now, our destiny is in our own hands," Bervinchak-Love said. "It's still up to how we play. We don't have to rely on anyone, we have it in our hands to control our postseason play."

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# Bourchier leads young tennis team through fall schedule

By James Nicol  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Youth isn't an obstacle for the men's tennis team, it's an opportunity for young players to gain valuable experience.

## MEN'S TENNIS

The team consists of only one senior, and is comprised primarily of underclassmen.

The lone senior on the team, Eddie Bourchier, is the captain and leader of the team. A native of Australia, Bourchier earned All-Big Ten honors last season and has gone 5-1 in singles so far this

fall, and 4-0 in doubles with junior teammate Jason Lee.

"We expect him to have an outstanding senior year," coach Todd Doebler said.

"More importantly really mentor and teach these guys how to become leaders and how to work hard and what it takes to compete at this level."

Bourchier has embraced his role on the team and shown many of the younger players where a high level of dedication can take them.



Bourchier

"Having a younger team with a lot of guys that are older, I think for me I really have to make sure I'm doing everything right, even the little things like showing a good example, because they look up to you a lot," Bourchier said. "I remember when I was a freshman and sophomore I looked up to the seniors and I think you influence them a lot in how they do things and go about their ways."

Bryan Welnetz, a sophomore, said he hopes to take advantage of the opportunity to learn from Bourchier in his last season.

"We've got to take into account what he's done and try to adapt, Welnetz said. "Knowing what he's

done and just working hard this fall and as a younger group try to come in and play well this year and hopefully take that into next season and step up and do some damage."

Welnetz lost to Bourchier (3-6, 6-3, 6-2) in the semifinals of the Princeton Invitational.

At Princeton, several young players showed off their talents. Freshman Russell Bader made it to the finals of his Flight B singles bracket, before falling to teammate Taylor Cohen (7-6(7-2), 6-1).

The tournament was highlighted by Bourchier's performance. The set he dropped to Welnetz would be the only one of the tour-

namment, in which he won the Flight A singles and doubles titles.

The tournament showed that gaining experience is still very important for the younger players. Upperclassmen players won all three titles, but had to pass through young Penn State players on the way to the singles titles.

"Us young guys and especially the older guys performed well at Princeton and were looking forward to our next few tournaments in the fall season," Welnetz said. "I think that was a good start to the season and I hope it carries over to the spring."

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