

Lions earn road sweep of OSU

By Emily Kaplan
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

In Wednesday night's match, sophomore Kristin Carpenter thought her team had energy. They played well together, passed efficiently and played good defense.

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

But what the setter was most happy about was that the Nittany Lions did that all on the road.

"Oh my gosh, this was the first away match that we all started clicking," Carpenter said. "And it felt good."

The No. 9 Penn State women's volleyball team (16-4, 6-3 Big Ten) swept Big Ten foe Ohio State (25-22, 25-21, 25-18) at St. John Arena in Columbus, Ohio. It was the Lions' first road win

since Sept. 26. Before Wednesday's match, Penn State had lost five of its last six contests away from Rec Hall.

"We showed earlier in the season that it's difficult to win on the road," senior co-captain Blair Brown told the Big Ten Network after the match. "With energy in the gym it's really hard."

On Wednesday night, though, the Lions made it look easy.

Penn State recorded a combined .309 hitting percentage — compared to the Buckeyes' (16-6-

4-5) .202. Meanwhile the Lions had balanced offensive production as Brown led the way with 13 kills and senior Arielle Wilson and freshman Deja McClendon each tallied nine.

That was a stark contrast to Penn State's last road trip. On Oct. 8 and Oct. 9, the Lions dropped back-to-back matches to Purdue and Indiana, both unranked at the time.

"The Big Ten is a tough place to play," senior libero Alyssa D'Errico said. "It's competitive

everywhere you go. And you know everywhere you go the other team's going to bring their 'A' game. So anytime you can snag a win in somebody else's gym, that's a good win."

Even though Wednesday night's victory was a sweep, the match was tight and even heated at times.

Toward the end of the second set, with the score knotted at 19, senior Fatima Balza jumped up to intercept an Ohio State overpass

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Sarah Finnegan/Collegian

Jason Lee (2) prepares to kick the ball during the Penn State's 2-1 overtime loss to UMBC Wednesday night at Jeffrey Field.

O-line looks to exploit Minn.

By Audrey Snyder
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Stefen Wisniewski wasn't even aware Penn State is playing against the Big Ten's worst run defense Saturday.

Despite Minnesota's defense being gashed by the opposition for an average of 201 rushing yards per game, Wisniewski said his team needs to continue working on its own improvement.

For an offensive line that has faced a lot of criticism this year, Wisniewski said the unit "deserves our fair share of the blame."

But after spending much of the bye week working on the running game and trying to figure out the offense's identity, in order to improve there are two components the line is trying to work on: better technique and a more aggressive attitude.

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Retrievers top Lions in overtime

By Andrew Robinson
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Add a 30-yard strike flavored with a bit of luck to the list of bizarre ways the Penn State men's soccer team has lost at home this season.

MEN'S SOCCER

After turning in their worst half of soccer at home all season in the first half Wednesday night, the Nittany Lions rallied

back in the second half to force overtime against University of Maryland Baltimore County. However, a long ball played to Milo Kapur turned into a bending shot that gave the Retrievers a 2-1 win at Jeffrey Field.

"It's really disappointing, there's not much

more we can say, we played terribly tonight and we lost for it," senior co-captain Drew Cost said.

The Lions started slow and looked out of sync throughout the first half and didn't register a single shot on goal until about ten minutes into the second half. While the team undoubtedly played below their standards, it did start shorthanded.

Senior midfielder Matheus Braga has been battling some minor injuries all year and did not

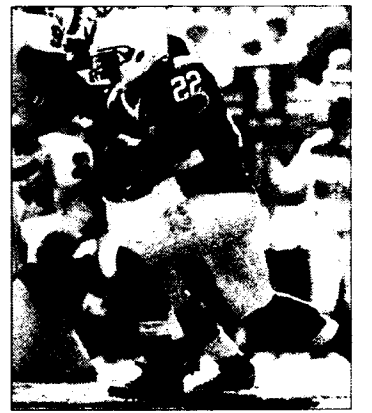
start, while junior striker Corey Hertzog sat the entire first half battling the flu. But Penn State coach Bob Warming said the junior wanted to play from the start.

In the second half, Hertzog was in the starting formation and provided energy for the team.

With 14:27 left in the game, Hertzog scored his NCAA-leading

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More coverage on men's soccer | SPORTS, Page 14.



Sarah Finnegan/Collegian

Evan Royster carries the ball.

Secondary seeing shake up after injury

By Andrew J. Cassavell
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

For all the struggles the Penn State defense went through during the first half of the season, the secondary managed to stay relatively effective.

Now, one of the Nittany Lions' top units during the season's first half, faces a pair of major shakeups. During the bye week, the team learned Nick Sukay, a junior safety will be out for the season with a torn pectoral muscle, and Chaz Powell, a junior cornerback, will make the switch to defense from wide receiver.

FOOTBALL



Sukay

The injury and the decision to move Drew Hador a ripple effect on the Lions, too. Powell Astorino, typically the unit's strong safety, or as Penn State calls it "hero," takes over at free safety, where he struggled against Illinois after Sukay went down in the first quarter.

"It's pretty different than the position I have been playing, but you just get used to it," Astorino said. "You got to stay slow, you got to make your reads and read the quarterback, and just trust that you know what you're doing. I know all the coverages. I know what I'm doing."

Astorino's move opens the door for red-shirt junior Andrew Dailey to take over at hero. He started there over Astorino against Temple and has 11 tackles over the season.

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Daniel Gott/Collegian

Mia Nickson (24) goes for a layup during the Lady Lions practice on Oct. 11.

Captain Nickson leads by example

By Jake Kaplan
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Mia Nickson was surprised when Penn State Lady Lions coach Coquese Washington tabbed her as one of the squad's co-captains for the upcoming season.

Not only has Nickson never been a captain on any level, but the forward hasn't played one second in an official game for the Lady Lions.

"You can count on Mia to do the right thing at the right time all the time," Washington said at the team's media day on Oct. 11. "She is a great student, she is a great role model in that sense. She has a caring spirit and she looks out for her teammates and makes sure they are doing the right things and giving them the right advice. I just think she is somebody that they look up to and follow her lead in all areas."

Nickson was forced to sit out last season after transferring from Boston College. A junior with three years

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SPORTS ON TV

MLB
Philadelphia at San Francisco
Game 5 NLCS
7:30 p.m., FOX

Q: What year did San Francisco Giants' second baseman Freddy Sanchez win a batting title?
Wednesday's Answer: Game 5 of the 1983 World Series against Baltimore.

Baseball to play in Challenge

The Penn State baseball team will once again compete in the annual Big East / Big Ten Challenge which is slated for February 18-20 at various ballparks in the Clearwater and St. Petersburg area in Florida.

Penn State will open the event on Friday, February 18 at 10 a.m. when the squad battles Seton Hall at historic Al Lang Field. The following day, the Nittany Lions will square off with West Virginia at 1 p.m. at Jack Russell Stadium before wrapping up the event on Sunday at 10 a.m. with a game against Notre Dame at the Walter Fuller Baseball Complex.

Ticket information for the 2011 Challenge will be released at a later date.

Enter Collegian Pick 'Em

Every week, the Collegian's sports editors go up against some of the biggest names on Penn State's campus in an NFL picking contest.

Included in the pool each week is a Penn State student selected by the editors. Want to be that student this week?

Then listen closely. For the chance to be included in the pick 'em, e-mail the answers to today's trivia question (to the left) to Collegian Sports Chief Paul Casella.

Paul's e-mail address is plc5032@psu.edu. Send your answers to Paul, first one to correctly answer the question gets bragging rights and the chance to make picks. And a chance to prove you're smarter than the Collegian's sports editors and some of Penn State's biggest names.

JoePa wants to see faces

Joe Paterno thinks one way to reduce the problem of helmet-to-helmet collisions in football could be going old school and taking facemasks off players' helmets.

The 83-year old coach vividly remembers his days playing football at Brown, when helmets lacked the caging on the front, and players were unable to use their helmets as weapons as they often do in today's game. We would love to see football go all "Leatherheads" and remove the facemasks. Not only could it reduce injury, but it could make all those throwbacks the NFL markets even more realistic. That, and we might get to see some bloody, Paul Posluszny-style noses, too.