

# Icers looking to bring back physical style

By Anthony Barton  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

At its peak, senior captain Marek Polidor can describe the Penn State Icers' style of play in one word — intense.

Coaches and players both said they lost that intensity in their previous series against No. 6 Ohio this past weekend. The No. 5 Icers took countless bad penalties and were outshot by 12 on their way to a split in the two-game series.

"I think we played hard, but we didn't play as intense as we would like to," Polidor said.

"Every guy played hard in the games, we just need to come mentally prepared."

The team now has a short week to prepare for two games against No. 15 Liberty on Thursday and

Friday at the Greenberg Ice Pavilion.

If history proves as an indicator, junior forward Paul Daley said the Icers will have to regain their physicality, because the Flames rely on intensity to win games.

"Liberty is always big and very physical," Daley said. "They usually have a lot of Canadians that like to play pretty chippy."

To combat that style, Daley said the Icers have been using hitting and battle drills during practice. Assistant coach Josh Hand said regaining their physical form all starts in practice. If players work harder during practice, he said it will translate to the games.

Questioned about what it will take to be successful against Liberty's physical style of play, Hand responded confidently about how his team will play.

"They just need to play with a

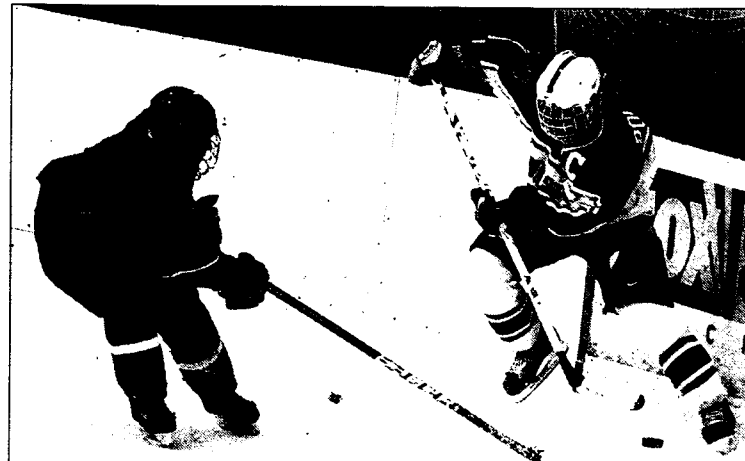
little bit more swagger like they have in the past," Hand said. "I don't want to say arrogant or cocky, but kind of with some swagger."

Senior forward Tim O'Brien said he doesn't think this Icers team is built to be as physical as years past, but it isn't necessarily a bad thing. "I think everyone has this stigma that we're some hard-nosed, grinding team that's going to go out there and be taller and faster and stronger than everyone else," O'Brien said.

"I don't think that's the case this year, and we're going to try and build our own identity."

While that identity is yet to be seen, one thing is certain. With six players taller than 6-foot-1, the Flames will put the Icers physicality to the test.

"In this game we're going to be forced to play physical. We won't



Marek Polidor (left) tries to deke an opponent this past weekend.

have a choice, that's just the way they are," Daley said. "We'll try to outmatch them, be more physical than they are and hopefully we'll

just give them a taste of their own medicine."

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# Tennessee's handling of Bruce Pearl situation laughable

By Jared Shanker

Boy, they sure do know how to pick 'em down there on Rocky Top.

First, Tennessee savior Lane Kiffin, the notorious Oakland Raiders washout with the inability to put his foot in his mouth and penchant for recruiting violations, left



MY OPINION

Tennessee at the altar for the West Coast.

It was a black eye for an athletic department that put all its eggs in one basket. The blow of Kiffin's gutless departure was softened a bit in March, though, when the men's basketball team, led by enthusiastic and often shirtless coach Bruce Pearl, made its first ever Elite Eight appearance. The Volunteers' men's program finally took a step out of Pat Summitt's shadow.

It seemed hard to fathom

Tennessee athletic director Mike Hamilton could dislike anybody more than he does Kiffin, but after the latest news regarding an NCAA investigation into Pearl surfaced, he just may have taken that honor from Kiffin as Pearl left the university in the streets beaten and bloodied.

The Volunteers men's basketball program is under investigation for making excessive phone calls to recruits, allowing recruits to exceed official visit time restrictions and meeting with junior recruits at an off-campus site.

At least one of those off-campus sites is Pearl's house, where he hosted a barbecue for three recruits and their families. The barbecue was a violation of NCAA rules and Pearl knew it, and he let all the recruits and their families know it was, too. When NCAA investigators interviewed Pearl this past June, Pearl lied about the barbecue and called one of the recruit's fathers to remind him to lie if the NCAA contacted him as well.

Maybe even worse, Pearl denied knowing the location of a photograph of him, a recruit and a woman. The picture was taken in Pearl's kitchen, and the woman was Jana Shay.

It must have been the first time Pearl hosted a barbecue or any type of event for friends and staff, because Pearl said he didn't know who the woman was. Turns out, Jana is the wife of John Shay, who has been an assistant under Pearl for 10 years. How did the public learn about all of this? Well, because a Knoxville, Tenn., television station got hold of the letter of termination Hamilton and Tennessee Chancellor Jimmy Cheek sent Pearl on Sept. 9.

"... Chancellor Cheek and I have determined that you engaged in gross misconduct, including dishonesty and other acts involving intolerable behavior," read Hamilton's letter to Pearl. "As a result, the University is terminating your Employment Agreement for Adequate Cause." Twenty-four hours later,

though, Hamilton stood firmly behind his coach and defended Pearl during a press conference, failing to mention anything about the letter sent to Pearl the day before.

"People make mistakes, and we all make them," Hamilton said at a Sept. 10 press conference. "Bruce made one mistake in this incident, and he came forward to correct it. I'm glad he's our basketball coach. I hope part of what you get out of this today is this is a person that stood up and did the right thing in the end by coming back forward and saying, 'I want to correct this.'"

Where do we start with all of Mr. Hamilton's contradictions: that Pearl made just one mistake, that Hamilton is "glad" Pearl is the coach or that Pearl did the right thing?

Lying about the barbecue isn't Pearl's lone incident of knowingly violating NCAA rules. The men's basketball staff also made 96 impermissible phone calls to recruits, 34 of which came from

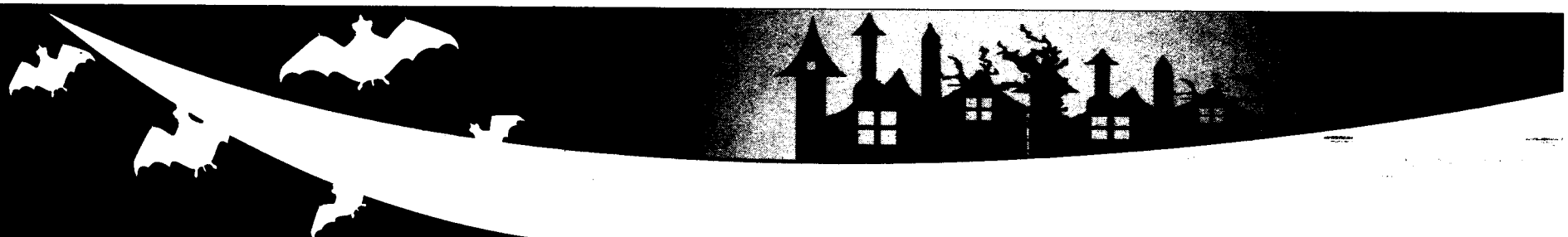
Pearl over a two-year period.

Hamilton is proud to have Pearl as coach? It sure doesn't sound like it from this statement from Hamilton's letter to Pearl: "On the Effective Date (of termination, Oct. 8, 2010), you will become an employee at-will with no definite term of employment." Pearl is currently without a contract and his new one will be at a reduced salary. Last, Hamilton said Pearl did the right thing. I won't even spend a sentence debunking that statement, as it would be an insult to my readers.

Not only is it a time to change its men's basketball coach, now it's time for Tennessee to change the words to its famous renditions of "Rocky Top" after Pearl put the Vols in hot water.

*Ain't no smoggy smoke on Rocky Top; Ain't no telephone bills.*

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