



Jess Rosenbluth (16) dribbles in a game against Virginia.

Junior rebounds

By Andrew Robinson
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Going into last Sunday's match, Jess Rosenbluth wanted to make sure her inclusion in the starting 11 was justified.

A week after seeing only 22 total minutes of play against Minnesota and Wisconsin, the junior midfielder turned in a strong showing in Champaign, Ill. against then No. 13 Illinois. After an initial assault by the Fighting Illini, Rosenbluth set the tempo for Penn State's offense, putting all three of her shots on net and getting assists on both of the Nittany Lions' goals.

"Last week we had a kind of tryout and our teammates voted on the starting lineup," Rosenbluth said. "I just wanted to prove to them that I deserved to be there and make sure that they didn't make a mistake by putting me in there."

The junior didn't play at all last Friday when the Lions rallied to defeat Minnesota, but Rosenbluth said it was more a matter of matching up against the Golden Gophers' size. Two days later she came off the bench against Wisconsin, her only non-start in 15 appearances this year.

Last year, Rosenbluth played as an outside midfielder but has transitioned to more of a central mid, her natural position, this season. Being in the middle of the field has different responsibilities than the flanks, and one thing Rosenbluth has focused on is her final pass forward.

"That work paid off Sunday, especially on the game-winning goal scored by senior Dani Toney."

"It was actually a really cool set up," Rosenbluth said. "Carly [Niness] kicked it to Tani [Costa] and Tani did this amazing shoulder pass to me and I just saw Dani running so I just volleyed it over the back line to her."

"She's been excellent in training and really trying to impose herself"

Erica Walsh
women's soccer coach

Toney said she was happy to see Rosenbluth play well Sunday, but the senior also expected it. Leading up to Sunday's game, Toney said nothing changed about Rosenbluth's preparation and, "you don't see a different J-Ro' from day to day."

Though the midfielder is in a different position, her teammates are still confident in what Rosenbluth can do. And it's not like the junior has struggled, thanks to her technical ability with the ball.

"She can dance around the ball all day long," Toney said. "She's got a great touch and it's her home in the midfield. She's great in there, she loves it and she can get herself out of tight spots and just looks good in there."

Last year, Rosenbluth got on a hot streak to close the year, recording a point in the final four games of the year, and five of the last six. That run is still in the junior's mind and she is hoping to replicate that late-season success again this year.

Rosenbluth's work this year has earned the junior the support of coach Erica Walsh. Walsh noted the junior's work on her final pass and said it gives her confidence knowing that key pass can come from anywhere on the field.

"She's been excellent in training and really trying to impose herself," Walsh said.

"She's a central player at heart and that's where she's at her best. She's really been trying to prove that she should be a consistent starter and she's got my vote."

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Lions' Costa contributing

By Alex Angert
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Coach Erica Walsh makes it no secret she isn't pleased with Tani Costa's fitness.

But that's not stopping the forward from helping contribute to the team.

With the Lions in a can't-lose game last weekend against No. 13 Illinois, Costa earned a start and assisted the team's first goal.

And just like she did against the Fighting Illini, Costa has been contributing in big moments all throughout conference play, helping her team go 5-2 against the Big Ten so far.

"I'm definitely making a lot of strides forward," Costa said. "I can always get into better shape with my fitness but definitely with my game I feel a lot more confident. I'm just really excited that I get to get some playing time with my teammates."

After scoring an overtime goal in the team's season opener against West Virginia, Costa's playing time has fluctuated all season long.

Sometimes she barely plays. For instance, against Minnesota two weekends ago she was on the field for only three minutes.

But sometimes she plays significant minutes, like her 54 against Wisconsin — two days after the game against the Golden Gophers.

And sometimes she doesn't even play at all — zero minutes against Ohio State and Portland.

But since she doesn't have the ideal fitness, Costa has never come close to playing a full game, averaging 34 minutes in her 14 games played.

Yet despite her limited playing time, the forward is tied for fourth on the team in points with three goals and three assists.

"Coming off the bench I always just try to keep the play high and not allow the play to drop," she said.

"I just work to my strengths."

Judging by her minutes and nine points, she has done just that. Compared to the three other primarily used forwards on the team — Hayley Brock, Dani Toney and Maya Hayes — Costa has statistically been the most efficient.

The Hawaiian native has averaged a point for every 53 minutes on the field while Brock averages one every 90, Toney every 92 and Hayes every 118.

While the other three are in better shape and can rely on their speed, Costa has molded her game by playing stronger and more physically.

"She's one of those players who needs to get fit," Walsh said after the Wisconsin game when Costa scored.

"She has to be strategic because she can't run well."

Walsh added Costa is a good piece against certain teams who drop back because she can move the ball well.

Although she can't run up and down the sidelines like the other three forwards, Costa has been able to fire off shots from inside and around the box when crowded by defenders.

Over the last four games, she has tallied four shots on goal, two goals and two assists despite only playing three minutes in one of those matches.

Nevertheless, Costa has the potential to contribute even more if it wasn't for the shape she is currently in.

"The fitness is the key to her and she doesn't have it," the coach said.

"It won't change in the next four weeks. Hopefully it will change in her lifetime."

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Swimmers look to stay perfect

By Dan DiBacco
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

With a perfect record through two meets, the Penn State women's swimming team is looking to continue its early season success throughout the rest of the season.

With a good mix of talented freshmen and seasoned upperclassmen, convincing wins over West Virginia and Virginia Tech has generated confidence for coach John Hargis' squad.

Despite the early success, the schedule this year is not an easy one for the women, but Hargis hopes it will prepare the team for his high expectations.

"I want to swim a tough schedule," Hargis said.

"They need to get used to being put in pressure situations, so when we get to the Big Ten meet and onto NCAA's, they've been in that environment, and it's not going to scare them."

Hargis can rely on at least one of his swimmers not getting scared, and that's Amy Modglin.

Modglin has continued her success so far this season after a phenomenal freshman season that was topped off with honorable mention All-American honors in the 200-backstroke. Modglin earned Big Ten Women's Swimmer of the Week for the second time in her Penn State career Tuesday, after dominating the 200-yard distance in Saturday's meet against Virginia Tech.

"They need to get used to being put in pressure situations, so when we get to the Big Ten meet and onto NCAA's they've been in that environment and it's not going to scare them."

John Hargis
women's swimming coach

"I was really happy with how I swam [Saturday]," Modglin said. "Overall I think it went very well."

The sophomore swam to three first-place finishes Saturday, clocking a 1:49.71 in the 200-freestyle, a 1:58.82 in the 200-backstroke and a 2:03.60 in the 200-IM. Modglin also finished second in the 500-free, with a time of 4:54.80.

While all her backtimes were impressive, her backstroke time in particular impressed Hargis.

"It's fun to see," Hargis said. "She loafed a 1:58 backstroke, and that's a heck of a swim, to go as easy as what she had to go, to do it."

While Hargis is impressed by Modglin's times, his expectations for everyone on his team are very high, including the freshmen, who are a big part of the team this season. With 14 freshmen, Hargis knows his team is very young, but is already pleased with how well they are swimming.

"It's good to see the young people getting involved now, and swimming faster than I ever thought they could," Hargis said.

And it doesn't hurt that the freshmen have someone like Modglin to look at, who just a year ago was in their shoes as a freshman.

"[The upperclassmen] are all so great," freshman Chelsea Weedman said.

"But one of them, we were circuit partners at the beginning of the year, was Amy Modglin...she's kind of helped me with everything."

The next meet for Hargis' group is a dual meet in Charlottesville, Va. against Virginia and Big Ten foe Indiana on Nov. 19-20.

Already this season, the Lions have six swimmers who have grabbed multiple first-place finishes — freshmen Rachel Butler and Hailey Campbell, sophomores Merrit Krawczyk and Paige Whitmire, junior Erin Thomas and senior Alexandra Young. Campbell and Whitmire have both grabbed five first-place finishes, while Young has four already this season.

Despite some of the impressive individual stats, Hargis is confident with everyone on his team.

"I could go on and on about the group of women we got that are going to be doing some pretty special things all year," Hargis said.

"We've got a group of women that are very determined and it's showing. Each week we're getting better. It should be a good year, a fun year, and so far so good."

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