

# Lions need to develop consistent intensity

By Ryan Loy

IN Friday's win against a talented Indiana squad, the Penn State women's volleyball team looked like its typically overpowering self.

But at times in Saturday's less impressive four-set victory against Purdue, the Nittany Lions appeared to be the ones in costume on Halloween weekend.

After witnessing just how good Penn State can be when it plays

to its potential, Saturday's team looked like an imposter.

Throughout the season, it's been a tale of two teams for Penn State. There's the energetic, dominating team similar to the one fans have come to know in recent seasons, and an ordinary, underwhelming squad that can't seem to find that spark to make it go.

Luckily for the Lions, their recent spells of average play have been good enough to get by with wins.

However, it's now time for the team to find its true identity and consistently play with enthusiasm as the final stretch of conference play looms.

The inability to maintain con-

sistency may be due to the season-long search for the Lions' best possible lineup. Since my personal volleyball experience is limited to some spirited gym class tournaments in high school, I don't consider myself to be as competent as one of the winningest coaches in NCAA volleyball history when it comes to creating a lineup.

It appears, though, like the Lions may be on the verge of having their ideal lineup.

Since the insertion of freshman outside hitter Ariel Scott into the rotation, the Lions have gone 6-0 while dropping only two sets.

With that lineup, Penn State has shown signs of being one of the

best in-system teams in the Big Ten.

But once the energy level drops and coach Russ Rose is forced to shuffle the lineup, the Lions show vulnerability — especially with players still gaining experience.

"To have four freshmen on the floor at one time," Rose said following Saturday's game, "might be good in two or three years, but it's not good where I'm sitting."

In order to end the continuous search for who needs to be on the floor, the team needs to figure out what makes it tick.

There's no question the veteran core players on the team have the desire to win every time they step on the floor. It's now a mat-

ter of turning that motivation into energy for the entire team to feed off of throughout the matches.

The Lions have said several times during the season that they can only control what happens on their side of the net. It's time to take full control — physically, mentally and emotionally — and consistently bring focus and intensity to each match.

Once that happens, not many teams on the other side of the net can bring the same level of play to the court.

Ryan Loy is a junior majoring in journalism and is a Collegian women's volleyball reporter. His e-mail address is [rml5138@psu.edu](mailto:rml5138@psu.edu)



MY OPINION

## Giants win World Series behind Lincecum, Renteria

By Ben Walker  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ARLINGTON, Texas — The prize that eluded Willie and Barry at long last belongs to the San Francisco Giants, thanks to a band of self-described castoffs and misfits and their shaggy-haired ace.

Tim Lincecum, Edgar Renteria and the Giants won the World Series on Monday night, beating the Texas Rangers 3-1 in Game 5 and taking the trophy home to the city by the Bay for the first time.

It was an overdue victory — the Giants last wore the crown in 1954, four years before they moved West. So much for a franchise that never quite got it done in October despite the likes of baseball giants Willie Mays, Barry Bonds and Juan Marichal. It's November, and now new stars stand tall in San Francisco.

"This buried a lot of bones — '62, '89, 2002," Giants general manager Brian Sabean said, ticking off losing Series appearances. "This group deserved it, faithful from the beginning. We're proud and

humbled by the achievement."

Lincecum outdueled Cliff Lee in an every-pitch-matters matchup that was scoreless until Renteria earned the Series MVP award by hitting a stunning three-run homer with two outs in the seventh inning.

Nelson Cruz homered in the bottom half, but Lincecum returned to his wicked self and preserved the lead.

Lincecum won this game of Texas Hold 'em, beating Lee for the second time in a week. The two-time NL Cy Young winner

gave up three hits over eight innings and struck out 10.

Brian Wilson closed for a save, completing a surprising romp through the postseason for a pitching-rich team that waited until the final day to clinch a play-off spot.

Manager Bruce Bochy enjoys calling his Giants a ragtag bunch. Maybe Cody Ross, Aubrey Huff and Freddy Sanchez fit that description.

But the foundation of this club — for now, for the foreseeable future — is totally home grown,

built on a deep, talented and young rotation, a rookie catcher with huge star potential and their bearded closer.

"They did all right," Bochy said. "I couldn't be prouder of a group. They played with heart and determination. They weren't going to be denied. My staff, they accepted their roles and had only one mission."

Renteria reprised his role of postseason star.

His 11th-inning single ended Game 7 of the 1997 World Series and lifted Florida over Cleveland.

## Costa

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three times last week, then kept rolling Sunday at Purdue. In the 27th minute, Costa provided the eventual game-winning goal against the Boilermakers after putting home a deflection of her own shot.

With the offense in full stride, Costa struck again in the 50th minute off an assist by Nairn, fin-

ishing her scoring tear at five.

All season, the coaches have told the forwards to be the first line of defense, which Costa said led to her second score.

"I stuck with it and when I hear my team telling me to go and to pressure and they have my back and they're with me, I go and I go all out," Costa said.

"That's what I did and we got the ball back, I cut in and looked up then I just placed the ball and it went in the goal and won it."

With Costa's success, Toney has experienced her own resurgence, scoring a goal in each of the last three games, all Lions' wins.

Toney said Costa has a great forward's mentality and anytime the redshirt freshman gets the ball she believes she's going to score.

The senior has seen more confidence in Costa, and as an accomplished goal scorer, Toney said having that confidence helps greatly.

"She is a handful when she's playing with confidence," Walsh said about Costa. "Her fitness is better and the combination of the two between Tani and Dani is a very dangerous combination."

Nairn has seen Costa hammer home plenty of goals in training and wasn't totally surprised by her teammate's recent success.

But from her attacking midfield position, Nairn has enjoyed the view during the last few games.

"It's just the way she's been

scoring these goals, she just places it perfectly in the upper corner and stuff like that," Nairn said.

"It's really fun to watch from behind her to see the pace and the curl she puts on the ball and she's been working really hard to get that translated to the field. You can see her stats, five goals in two games, it's unbelievable and she deserves it."

To e-mail reporter: [adr5079@psu.edu](mailto:adr5079@psu.edu)

## Depth

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possible concussion, but coach Pat Fitzgerald said he passed all tests easily.

"Stephon's in our mix," Bradley said. "I think we've got to be able to mix it up now, and we can do some different things. We needed to develop another corner and that will give us a chance to maybe change up our nickel package a little bit."

Having Powell as an option provides depth at the cornerback spot for the first time since Derrick

Thomas was suspended from the team for undisclosed reasons before the Big Ten opener at Iowa.

Powell was critical of his performance after the game, saying he still feels he must hone his skills. But Powell, who has shifted to defense then offense then back to defense again this season, said he is relieved he has finally found a spot where he thinks he fits.

Powell praised Morris, saying he expects him to see more time this week against Northwestern, and possibly even earn his starting job back. Morris was beaten for two touchdowns and missed several tackles in his last start

against Minnesota, prompting Bradley to make the switch.

"Oh, trust me, Steph's gonna be playing," Powell said. "He's just gotta hang in there. A lot of people go through different things, but he'll be in the mix."

Junior safety Drew Astorino said he wasn't impressed with the performance of the secondary. Michigan quarterback Denard Robinson threw for 190 yards and a touchdown and the unit didn't record an interception, but Astorino attributed much of the struggles to the challenge of stopping Robinson.

One player Astorino was

impressed with Saturday — and all season in practice — was Willis, who finished the game with eight tackles, a week after recording nine stops.

"He's a stud," Astorino said. "He stepped up huge, he was making tackles, and he's playing absolutely great."

Astorino never doubted Willis's talent but didn't expect the redshirt freshman to perform so well after being thrust into game situations.

"I knew Mal's a great player, but it's tough when you just get out there," Astorino said.

"But really, it's like he's been

out there for four years."

Now, there's competition for starting spots, and Powell and Bradley noted how important the depth in the secondary will be going forward. It will also give the Lions increased competition in practice, which is never a bad thing, Bradley said.

As for who starts and who plays this week, Powell said to mark that question "to be determined."

"I guess we'll find out what's going to happen," Powell said. "We just got to keep competing in practice."

To e-mail reporter: [ajc5238@psu.edu](mailto:ajc5238@psu.edu)

## Wrestling

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beaten the Hawkeyes since the 2006-07 season.

Although the Hawkeyes have graduated 11 players from the 2009-10 season, Iowa returns defending NCAA champion in the 125-pound weight class, Matt McDonogh.

Wisconsin returns three All-Americans to a team that finished fourth overall at the 2010 NCAA championships, featuring 165-

pound national champion Andrew Howe, and first-time All-Americans Tyler Graff at 133 pounds, and Trevor Branvold at 197 pounds.

Sanderson also praised Ohio State coach Tom Ryan saying he really has his program going the right way after an eighth place finish at Big Ten Championships last year.

"Teams like Ohio State and Michigan will be tough tests for us," Sanderson said. "And then there's Minnesota who is ranked higher than any of us."

Penn State will face a lot of tough tests as they battle through the Big Ten this year, but Sanderson believes the team has the players to compete with the best.

Redshirt junior, and two-time All-American, Frank Molinaro is ranked No. 3 in the country at the 149-pound weight class. Redshirt sophomore Quentin Wright is ranked No. 5 in the 184-pound weight class, which will be a new weight for Wright who placed sixth at NAAs as a freshman at the 174-pound weight class.

Sanderson said the onus will be

on the upperclassmen to provide the leadership the team needs this year.

"Guys like Cameron Wade will be important for our team this year," Sanderson said. "He has shown that he is right there, he just needs a little more confidence. He had a really productive off-season and hopefully his confidence is sky-high right now."

Wade, who was a national qualifier, will wrestle this season at 285 pounds.

While Penn State certainly has the leadership to finish strong in

the Big Ten this year, it will also be looking toward the younger members of the team for support. The Nittany Lions bring in the No. 2 recruiting class in the country, and with multiple weight class positions up for grabs, the intra-squad match on Nov. 4 should be interesting to watch.

"Our young guys are going to come in and do well," Sanderson said. "It will take a team effort though for us to get to our goal of the championships."

To e-mail reporter: [bmg5094@psu.edu](mailto:bmg5094@psu.edu)

## Offense

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game to set up the passing game against Michigan. The Lions ran the ball 42 times as opposed to 25 pass plays.

Redshirt sophomore quarterback Matt McGloin took advantage of the opportunities given to him.

He was sacked only once and found a knack for throwing the ball away under pressure when wide receivers failed to get free downfield.

"We just did everything right

and executed," Klopacz said.

The Lions may look to change up the dimension of their offense and emphasize more of a passing attack against Northwestern, which gives up an average of 245 passing yards per game.

Attacking the Wildcats' secondary appears logical but so does riding a running attack that just posted 185 yards, and a tailback coming off a 29-carry, 150-yard performance.

Team co-captain Brett Brackets said confidence and a feel for the game helped open things up for the offensive line and he said the line could build

off of its solid performance against Michigan's defense.

The building process for the Lions started in the bye week after Wisniewski said the Iowa loss carried over into Illinois when the team allowed the first loss to linger.

"I think we looked at our season to that point, and we were like, 'We're a lot better than we're playing right now' and changed the attitude, changed the work ethic and started really working, started having fun," Wisniewski said.

To e-mail reporter: [bjm5146@psu.edu](mailto:bjm5146@psu.edu)

## Men's basketball

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Borovnjak, the Lions might not have a choice but to run more often with senior Drew Jones the lone remaining true center.

The Lions focused on getting the ball up the court faster during Monday's practice, where DeChellis made it clear during the first five-on-five drill he wanted his wings to be down the court as soon as the offense gained possession.

"We're definitely good at pushing the ball," sophomore guard Tim Frazier said, "and we definitely want to push the ball more."

However, what happened on Sunday, both positively and negatively, is out of the players' heads now.

There's no need for the Lions to put too much stock in the scrimmage. Battle said, because at the end of the day, it has no bearing on Penn State's season.

"And that's what's good about a scrimmage: It doesn't count," he said.

To e-mail reporter: [jps5226@psu.edu](mailto:jps5226@psu.edu)

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