Junior guard Colella fulfilling dream at University Park

COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

When Linda Colella and her husband. Dave, made the threeplus hour drive to visit their son in State College last weekend, they

weren't expecting to be greeted by presents.

MEN'S Nick Colella, BASKETBALL

however, had a surprise. He handed them each a custom-made T-shirt — which he had designed himself — with his name and basketball number on the back.

Right then, Linda teared up. She knew her son had finally accomplished his goal.

Colella transferred to Penn State's main campus this semester after spending two years at Penn State-Behrend. The 6-foot-3 New Castle native played two seasons for the Division III Lions, but the plans official last spring. had bigger dreams: D-I ball.

So when he finally got an opportunity, Colella worked hard -"harder than anybody else," Linda insisted — and made it happen. After open-tryouts last month, Colella was invited as a walk-on for the Nittany Lions this season. He is now on their 15-man roster.

Colella's parents attended the team's home exhibition against East Stroudsburg on Sunday. And though Nick didn't get to play he sat at the end of the bench dressed in a shirt and tie — Linda didn't care.

"We were just proud to see him on the bench, on the floor, part of the team," she said. "I got teary-eyed again just seeing him there."

Colella said it was always his

Behrend coach Dave Niland said he preferred not to talk about Colella's departure. The coach hasn't spoken with his former player since he made the team at Penn State, and said simply: "This is a four-year program. If someone leaves, it's like it's a transfer. If this was one of Nick's goals then I'm happy for him."

It was Colella's goal — in fact, it was his No. 1 priority. So this summer, he went through an extensive training program to prepare himself for the Nittany Lions' tryout.

Colella had a summer job with the New Castle Housing Authority. Right when he got off work, he would go straight to the gym, then to summer league games.

"I got involved with every sumgoal to transfer to University Park mer league that I could," Colella after two years, as long as he kept said. "Played with a lot of guys, in his grades up. He did, and made a lot of games. Then basically

became a gym rat. It was basketball 24/7."

That work ethic extended to the fall, when he enrolled in classes at Penn State

campus a couple times to visit friends. Randomly, he met some of the Penn State women's basketball players and became friends.

"Then when I got here they told me they have some guys who play against them in practice," Colella said. "And right away, I was like, 'Sign me up. I'm there.'

So Colella became a women's practice player. And when he wasn't with the Lady Lions, he was doing one thing.

"Every time I called him this fall, he was working out, working out, working out," his mother said. "All the time."

It paid off. Colella said he felt

He said he thought he did what he needed to do, playing "good, fun-

damental basketball.' A couple days later, his phone His freshman year, Colella rang. Not surprisingly, Colella was came up to the University Park in the weight room when the coaches called. They asked him to

come up for a meeting. "I was at work that morning when Nick texted me and said the coaches wanted a meeting with him," Lir da recalled. "And I was like, 'Oh my god, this has to be a good thing. It's happening. All of his hard work has finally paid off.'

To e-mail reporter: exk5049@psu.edu



For more coverage on the men's basketball team, check out:

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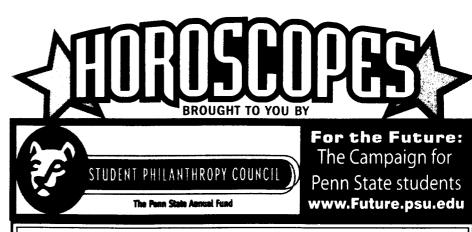
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By Jacqueline Bigar

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Wednesday. This year, you build better relationship-

because of your willingness to listen and work with others. Often, you can become exasperated by the many demands and requests. You also can become quite depressed if you are left alone. In a sense, it might feel better to be overwhelmed. If you are single, you could meet someone quite exotic and different. Be open to a different style and MO. If you are attached, the two of you become much closer because of planning a trip or pursuing a mutual interest. CAPRICORN asks the right questions.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll 5-Dynamic. 3-Average, 2-So-so, 1-Difficult

**** You are in command of your own ship. Take news that is forthcoming with a grain of salt, Honor your commitments, but don't allow someone to hang on you. Understanding evolves within partnership. Tonight: Dinner for two. TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

problem could be a lot different from another person's. Be willing to incorpo-rate other ideas with a little more ease. Tought: Fasy does it. GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

**** Discussions evolve. The only way to solve a tension-laden issue is through a talk. Your way of handling a

**** A close relationship becomes more of a possibility than you first thought. However, you might not be in

the mood for the type of discussions that are likely to occur. A steady, even pace.

ers receive your ideas. Tompht. Be with a ANCER (June 21-July 22)

*** You could be out of sorts; deter

to someone else. How you see a situation and the choices you make could be very different from this person. If the end results are the same or better, why would cou mind" Tonight: Go with another's LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

*** Emphasize the possibilities Someone close could be a bit sour or negative. Use this trait as an asset, let him or her play devii's advocate. Your strength on a personal, emotional level pays off in a big way. Jonight: Squeeze in some exercise
VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
**** Being aware of the cons

quences of certain decisions could be critical. Although you are brainstorming and allowing creativity to flourish, you still need grounded thinking. Communication flourishes in an inprecedented manner Toriight Take a midweek break LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

*** You could be fighting yourself more than anything else. You need to deal with a situation differently, but will you? A family member has similar prior ities when it comes to security. Tonight Your home is your castle. SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

***** Put your best foot forward. By giving 100 percent, you will never have a reason to feel bad or do the "what it?" should a situation not tumble in your favor. You often are very hard on your-self. Tonight: Meet a friend, and catch up

SAGITEARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

** You don't need a majority consen sus, but it is nice to have some agreement and support before taking action or making a decision. Your instincts serve you well financially. Honor who you are in a discussion. Tonight: Pay bills first.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

*** Though you radiate and seem self-assured, someone is coming down on you very hard. You wonder what you need to do to change this person's atti-tude. Instead of wondering, why not start up a conversation and ask? Tonight. The

world is your oyster. AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
*** Your instincts serve you well. If you feel that an idea or a meeting is off, you might want to cancel it. Give yourself some space, as it appears unantici-pated demands could come in from out

of left field. Tonight: Get some extra R PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

BORN TODAY

**** Don't hesitate to zero in on what you want Enlist others' support, and you will come to a conclusion much more quickly than you thought possible. You see the beauty of teamwork, Follow your knee-jerk reaction. Whatever makes you smile.

Lyricist Tim Rice (1944), singer Donna Fargo (1945), actor Roy Schneider

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at 2010 by King Features Syndicate In-

