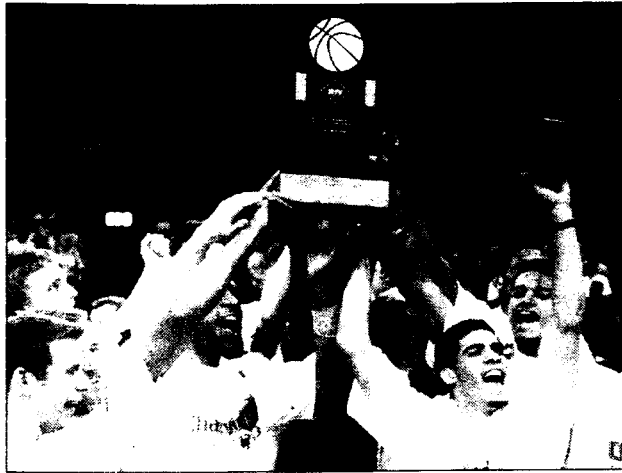
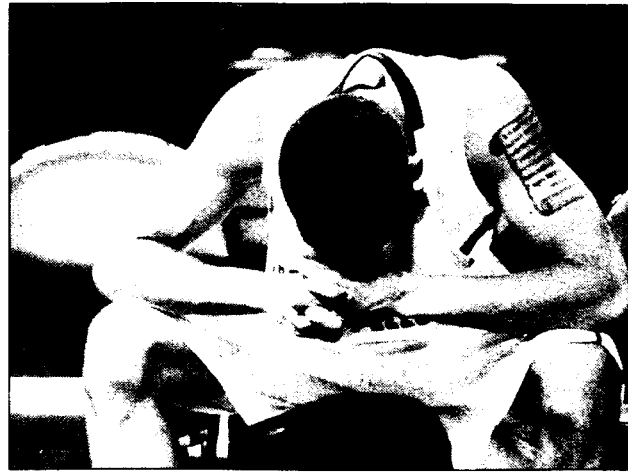


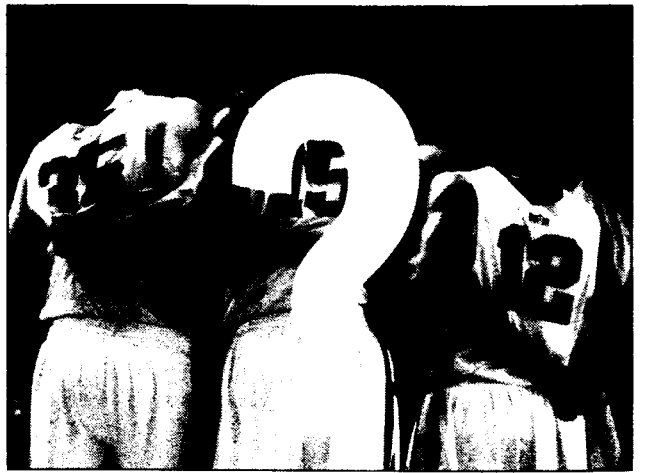
# LAST SHOT



Collegian file photo



Chloe Elmer/Collegian



Kelsey Morris/Collegian

The Nittany Lions celebrate in 2009 after winning the NIT.

A frustrated Talar Battle after a loss last season.

Players huddle before a preseason scrimmage last weekend.

## Lions putting last season in rearview mirror

By Alex Angert and Emily Kaplan  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITERS

What a difference a year can make. Last season, the Penn State men's basketball team was fresh off a National Invitational Tournament Championship with an uncharacteristic buzz surrounding the team.

By the end of the season, things had changed dramatically to the point where Talar Battle can remember guys not wanting to be here. The team was struggling, players weren't having fun and the excitement surrounding the team from the previous season was suddenly gone.

Simply put, the Nittany Lions lost the roar they had found the season before.

But now another year has passed and with the 2010-11 season opening at 7:30 p.m. tonight against Lehigh at the Bryce Jordan Center, that's all in the past. And instead of just adding a new chapter to the Penn State basketball story, this year's team is writing their own book from scratch and starting fresh.

"We're looking straight forward," Battle said. "Everything is ahead of us and all of that stuff is irrelevant at this point. We just want to have a good year."

This year's experienced Penn State squad has survived both the ups and downs of college basketball over the past two years.

For the seniors on this year's team, they have both an NIT championship and a pitiful 3-16 Big Ten record on their resume.

After doing a lot of evaluating of what they did right and wrong last year during the offseason, the team has since put last season — as well as the year before — in the very back of their minds.

"We really try not to think too, too much about last year,"

senior D.J. Jackson said. "We just know we have to do better because there's nothing we can do about it. What's done is done."

Jackson, along with the rest of the Lions, is entering this season with tunnel vision as the team tries to move forward and focus solely on the future.

It's no secret the coaches weren't pleased with how last season went either. Returning 75 percent of its scoring from last year, the Lions are hoping another magical run is in store like there was two years ago.

Practices have been much more spirited with a positive energy this season and coach Ed DeChellis has noticed a desire in this year's team to want to do better.

But when it comes to looking back on last year, the 2008-09 Big Ten Coach of the Year is done worrying about the successes and failures his team has experienced. Unable to build off the potential shown two years ago, it's a new season starting tonight.

"I'm done talking about last year to the guys," DeChellis said. "They know we didn't do what we needed to do and so it's time to move on."

### Leadership time

Danny Morrissey wasn't in the locker room last season. He doesn't know what was said — or what was left unsaid.

But what Morrissey does know is that the 2009-10 squad performed well below their preseason expectations. And he thinks he has a hunch on why.

"Last year's team didn't have senior leadership necessarily, that you typically have," Morrissey said in a telephone interview Wednesday. "There was a certain factor they just didn't have. That 'X' factor. It goes beyond talent."

Morrissey graduated in 2009, along with the tandem of scoring threats Janelle Cornley and Stanley Pringle. The

trio led Penn State to the 2009 NIT Championship, the program's first-ever postseason tournament win.

Last year's roster featured just two seniors: former walk-on Adam Highbarger and the serviceable reserve Andrew Ott. Neither were main contributors on the court.

"Everybody thought after the NIT they could've continued the success and kind of carried what we had done the year before and use the momentum to keep going," Morrissey said. "I added a little bit here and there, but when you lose three senior leaders, it's going to be difficult to repeat what you did the year before."

Now, coming off an 11-20 season that included only one home Big Ten win and a 12-game losing streak, the Lions are looking for redemption. And they have a group of five seniors — including starters Talar Battle, Jeff Brooks, D.J. Jackson and Andrew Jones — who have experienced both the highs of hoisting a championship trophy and the lows of finishing the season last in the Big Ten standings.

"We've got seniors and I think they want to do something special so they are committed to that," coach Ed DeChellis said at media day last month. "I don't think they're going to let anything stand in their way."

This is their last shot to make a statement, and they want to make sure everyone is on board for the ultimate goal — making the NCAA tournament for the first time since 2001.

"The seniors have definitely played a huge role on my behalf here," said sophomore guard Tim Frazier, the only underclassman in the Lions' opening day starting lineup. "You got them in all positions."

With that, Morrissey believes Penn State will be better than last season. The Lions always had potential, he said. The ball just didn't bounce their way.

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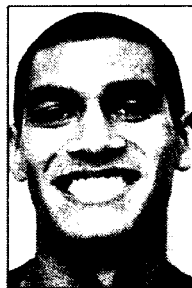
### DAILY COLLEGIAN PREDICTIONS



**Alex Angert**  
Regular season: 15-14 (7-11)  
Postseason: None  
Must-see game: Jan. 5 vs. Purdue  
What to look for: Experience helping team improve on last season, but hard to envision Lions consistently competing with elite Big Ten teams.



**Emily Kaplan**  
Regular season: 14-15 (7-11)  
Postseason: None  
Must-see game: Jan. 8 vs. Michigan State  
What to look for: Chemistry on and off the court between brothers Talar Battle and Taran Buie — key for a team struggling for an identity.



**Jared Shanker**  
Regular season: 13-16 (6-12)  
Postseason: None  
Must-see game: Dec. 1 vs. Maryland  
What to look for: Non-conference tests helping to gauge where team stands before a crucial stretch in mid-January.

# YOUTH MOVEMENT

## Sophomores and freshmen at core of young team

By Jake Kaplan and Ryan Loy  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITERS

In March, teams from anywhere in the country will be competing at the Bryce Jordan Center in the first and second rounds of the NCAA Tournament.

The Penn State Lady Lions hope to be one of those teams.

However, the goal would be the same, regardless of whether the tournament was held in their own gym.

"We just want to take advantage of it and that is the way we look at it, that we have a serious advantage having the NCAA Tournament here at home," said fourth-year Penn State coach Coquese Washington at the team's media day on Oct. 11.

Her basketball team opens its season at 7 tonight at Dayton. "Our goal is to get there and let's take advantage of the opportunity we have to get a couple games at home."

Last season, the Lions looked to seemingly be on their way to a tournament berth when they started 15-4. However, Penn State dropped nine of its last 11 regular season games and had to settle for an invitation to the WNIT, in which it lost in the first round to Hofstra.

Much of the Lions' late struggles coincided with the inability to succeed on the road. With a young squad set to take the floor for a second straight season, Washington said the team is focusing on maintaining a high level of play.

From the time the referee throws the ball up for the opening tip-off of each game, Washington wants her team to be thinking about one thing — consistency.

"We want to be consistent on the road, we want to be consistent at home, and we want to play our style of basketball every night," Washington said. "If we do that we are going to win some on the road, we are going to win some at home. We are going to be a tough team if we can play consistent basketball."

In 2009, Tyra Grant accounted for almost 30 percent of Penn State's scoring. This year, the Lions hope to be successful with a more balanced scoring attack. They showed their potential to do that in last

Sunday's scrimmage against Gannon (Pa.), when eight different players scored and five of them finished in double digits.

Senior Julia Trogele will provide a veteran presence for the generally young Lions. Trogele, who said she's sometimes called "Sergeant" by teammates, provides leadership by example for the team.

Trogele said she is looking to do what she can to help the team. That doesn't necessarily mean scoring, but she said that would be welcomed.

"[I want] to continue to lead the team in rebounding, play hard defense, possibly add to the scoring aspect because we lost Tyra," Trogele said. "I'm not really that concerned about the scoring though because, as I've seen in practice, we don't have an issue with that. It will be more so filling in areas that we may need work in."

The Lions will rely on more than just their starting five. Freshman Maggie Lucas and junior Renee Womack are expected to be key off the bench. Womack is a strong defender off the bench, while Lucas could be one of the conference's top outside shooters.

The first step toward earning that spot in the tournament begins tonight at Dayton, and Washington knows it will be a tough opening task.

The Flyers are an experienced team who made it to the second round of the NCAA tournament last season before falling to

top-seeded Tennessee.

Washington hopes a win at Dayton could be a springboard for more success in its new campaign.

"I am hoping to build off last year in the step that we made forward in terms of a winning season and getting into postseason play," Washington said at media day. "We want to build on that and just continue to move forward in that direction."

"We want to make more noise in conference play and compete for a conference championship this year."

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### 2010 STARTING LINEUP

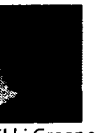
These players make up the starting five going into the season.



Alex Bentley (So.)



Zhaque Gray (Jr.)



Nikki Greene (So.)



Julia Trogele (Sr.)

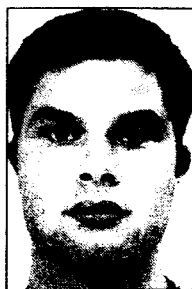


Marisa Wolfe (So.)

### DAILY COLLEGIAN PREDICTIONS



**Jake Kaplan**  
Regular season: 18-12 (9-7)  
Postseason: NCAA tournament  
Player to watch: Sophomore guard Alex Bentley  
What to look for: A dangerous balanced scoring attack and time spent on the bubble late in the season before a final surge.



**Ryan Loy**  
Regular season: 19-11 (10-6)  
Postseason: NCAA tournament  
Player to watch: Freshman guard Maggie Lucas  
What to look for: Rough times early, but improvement as the young players develop some chemistry with the rest of the team.



**Andrew Robinson**  
Regular season: 18-12 (11-5)  
Postseason: NCAA tournament  
Player to watch: Sophomore center Nikki Greene  
What to look for: Alex Bentley turns in a first team All-Big Ten season-long performance that leads the team into March.