

Young players gaining experience for next season

By Brendan Monahan
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

The biggest stumbling block for Penn State was youth going into the season.

Growing pains are still a topic of conversation for Joe Paterno with two regular-season games left.

FOOTBALL

"You are bound to have those days where things, you know, you can't make something happen for yourself," Paterno said. "And anything adverse that happens is probably a little bit more dramatic than it would be when you get older kids."

Youth may be a cause for the four losses this season, but it could be beneficial beyond this year.

There are 82 players on Penn State's 117-man roster who have freshman or sophomore eligibility, but Paterno said youth won't change whom he plays in the final games. He believes the upperclassmen deserve to finish off the year and said he won't start doing anything new simply for the betterment of the 2011 Nittany Lions.

With only two games left in the season, plus a bowl game, young players have increased expecta-

tions. Senior wide receiver Brett Brackett said Paterno has been harping on younger players in practice and letting them know youth is no longer an excuse.

"A lot of these young guys technically aren't young guys anymore," Brackett said. "They're getting experience ... They're making plays."

All three Penn State road losses came against considerably more-experienced teams — Alabama, Iowa and Ohio State.

The Lions will lose 10 seniors, and center and right guard are the only positions where backups have no experience.

Injuries have caused younger players to step up this season. Safety redshirt freshman Malcolm Willis replaced an injured Nick Sukay. Willis said he continues becoming more comfortable with each snap he plays and attributes Sukay and safety Drew Astorino for helping him establish a comfort zone with reads and checks.

Tight end Kevin Haplea, who started the season as the third tight end, is starting after injuries to Andrew Szczerba and Garry Gilliam, and right tackle Chima Okoli replaced senior Lou Eliades after he tore his ACL.

"Injuries are a part of the game," Willis said. "At any given time, anybody can get hurt, so being one of the young guys, you just have to be ready to step up and fulfill their role on the team."

The injuries may help the Lions in the long run after 2010, as the setbacks force younger players to step into greater roles. Paterno thinks injuries and youth are reasons why teams beat the Lions by at least 20 points on four occasions, the first time that has happened under Paterno.

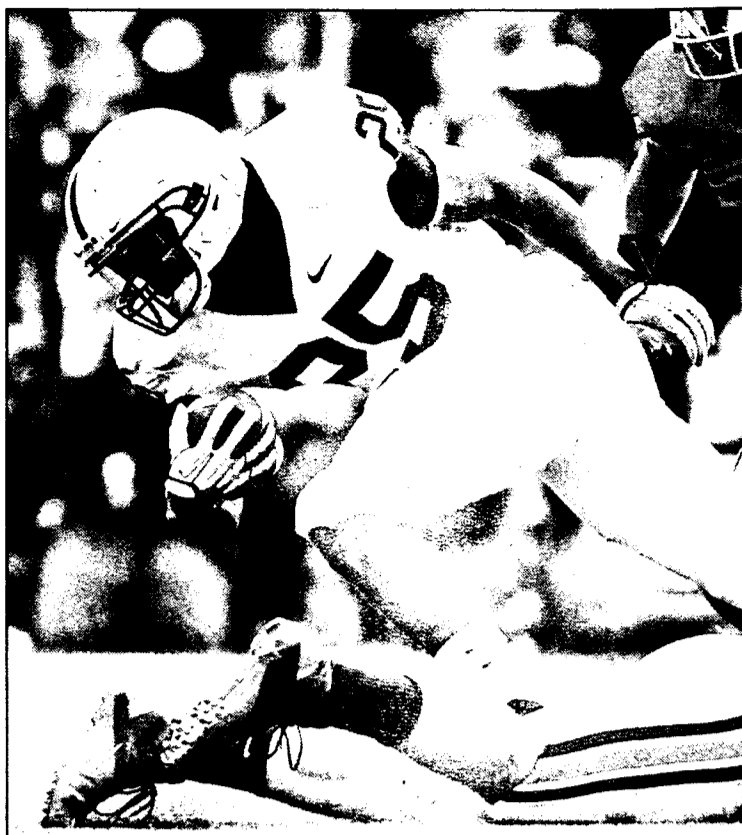
Brackett said his goal is to win the next two games, but the team also has other objectives, like youth getting more experience and players learning to compete in difficult scenarios.

"Just because the senior season hasn't gone the way I wanted it to go or anything like that doesn't mean we're not doing good things, we're not accomplishing things," Brackett said.

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Indiana QB Ben Chappell will likely be starting for the Hoosiers on Saturday; psucollegian.com



Chris Elmer, Collegian

Freshman running back Silas Redd (25) carries the ball for Penn State during the Lions' 38-14 loss to Ohio State on Saturday afternoon.

Icers finding themselves in midst of season identity crisis

By Anthony Barton
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Following a two-game sweep at the hands of Rhode Island this weekend, the Penn State Icers are searching for answers.

ICERS

Removing a two-game sweep of West Chester, which the Icers historically dominate, the team has now lost four of its last five games against more-

competitive teams. Their problem, senior forward Tim O'Brien said, is their inability to discover their identity.

"I think we're struggling but I think this would be the perfect time to figure out what kind of identity we're trying to build," O'Brien said. "We're kind of in a situation that I've never been in here at Penn State this early on in the year, and I think, you know, if we're going to come together as a team this is the perfect time to do so."

Junior forward Nick Seravalli said he's been on teams such as this before, and is confident the Icers will be all right. Sometimes, he said, players don't get together right away. In his opinion, the Icers have been trying to force an identity on themselves instead of letting it come naturally.

"We're on the cusp of being there," Seravalli said. "Right now we're not playing well as a team together, and some of the older guys are trying to take too much responsibility when we should be playing as a team. We can't have that. We have to want to play for each other."

Junior forward Paul Daley said taking too much responsibility isn't just a problem with the veteran players, but the whole team.

"There's a good amount of guys who haven't been held responsible for plays they have made on the ice," Daley said. "People need to be more accountable for the plays they make. Hopefully if someone makes a

mistake they see some punishment for it and they won't make it again."

Assistant coach Josh Hand said he thinks everyone on the team needs to put weight on their shoulders in order for the Icers to have success.

While he hasn't seen players not taking responsibility for their struggles, he said if it is happening, it's definitely a problem.

"If we've got one or two guys trying to succeed then we're not a team," Hand said. "I think that's the case, that's why we're struggling."

The Icers scored only one goal in two games against the Rams over the weekend, but Seravalli said it wasn't from a lack of effort. He said he thought the team played with heart and if the play continues, they'll find success.

Daley said the Icers know what they want their identity to be, they just need to work on the intricacies of the game to find a solid base to start from.

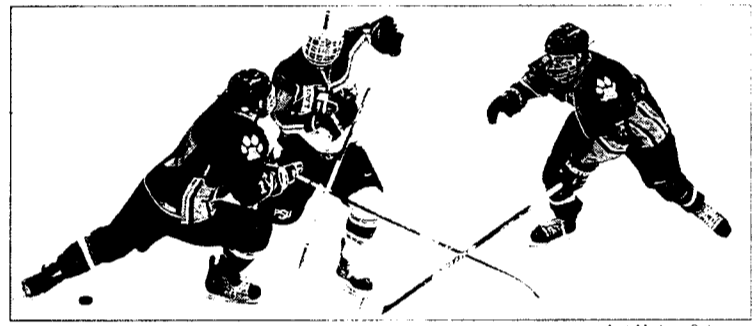
"I think we all realize we have to be a team, but we don't have the mentality to rely on someone else to score every game or in the end of the scoring in the country," Daley said. "We need to come together and play as a team every game, and we know that going in, it's just the matter of executing it."

Hand thinks it comes back to a cliché: Play as a team or don't win. "They need to be a team in every sense of the word," Hand said. "They need to be friends on and off the ice. They need to be hardworking and that supports each other. I think we're there yet."

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For Ten Question Tuesday with freshman Mathew Madrazo, check out the Between the Pipes blog; psucollegian.com



Asit Mishra, Collegian

Senior Tim O'Brien (middle) fights off Ohio defenders this season.

at Hofstra, I get things started

Richard Hayes
Management, Entrepreneurship & General Business

As director of the Capital One Entrepreneurship Challenge, Dr. Richard Hayes inspires future entrepreneurs to become their own boss and build their businesses. He is a member of several honor societies and has presented research for sociological and entrepreneurship associations. Since 2006 he has taught organizational management courses in Ghana, building connections across cultures and countries.

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