

Paterno announces return for next year

By Mike Hricik
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Penn State students praised last week's announcement of Joe Paterno's return as head football coach for the 2011-2012 football season.

A senior next year, Paternoville Vice President John Tecce said he is thrilled to have Paterno coach during his entire stay at Penn State — and maybe even a little "selfish."

"I think Coach Paterno has earned the right to leave the program when he wants to. While there are many, myself included, who sometimes get frustrated with the uncertainty surrounding the program's future at head coach each year, I think that Coach Paterno can still lead and is still a major part of the program," Tecce (junior-marketing) said.

Tecce isn't the only one to want a legend to stay at Penn State. Aaron Black said he wants Paterno to stick around as long as possible.

"I'm happy to see him come

"I think that Coach Paterno can still lead and is still a major part of the program."

John Tecce
Paternoville vice president

back because of the things that he's done on and off the field. The guy's a legend," Black (freshman-civil engineering) said.

Fans pointed to weaknesses and strengths in next year's young team for Paterno to focus on, marked by the losses of seniors like center Stefen Wisniewski and all-time leading rusher Evan Royster.

Jihye Park said Paterno can rest easy when it comes to quarterbacks.

"Our quarterbacks will shine. I hope to see our offensive line get a little stronger to support our quarterback, whoever that might be," Park (graduate-bioinformatics and genomics) said.

She said she remains confident in the abilities of defensive coordinator Tom Bradley despite 19 touchdown passes

given up this season.

Black said next year's team received valuable lessons on the road against teams like University of Alabama and Ohio State this season.

"It all comes down to experience and I think we'll have that," Black said.

Tecce said the team's defense, plagued by injuries during the 2010-2011 season, needs to maintain its health next year.

"Next year's team should be heavy with experience on defense, with a good amount of returning starters being upperclassmen," Tecce said.

He said he looks forward to a full season of tailback Silas Redd and the return of receiver Curtis Drake.

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Joe Paterno talks in a press conference after the Michigan State game. Paterno announced last week that he will return as head coach next year.

Kelley King/Collegian

Saturday's game sees low turnout

By Micah Wintner
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Most students were home Saturday for Thanksgiving break, but some students journeyed back to Beaver Stadium to attend Penn State's football game against Michigan State.

But with 21,000 seats available to students and the Blue Band, only half were filled up for Saturday's game. Associate Athletic Director for Marketing Greg Myford wrote in an e-mail, "It's been several years since Penn State hosted a football game following Thanksgiving, but we see some trends with other sports that take place over other holidays during the year, especially when students are not on campus, and overall attendance does usually get impacted," Myford wrote.

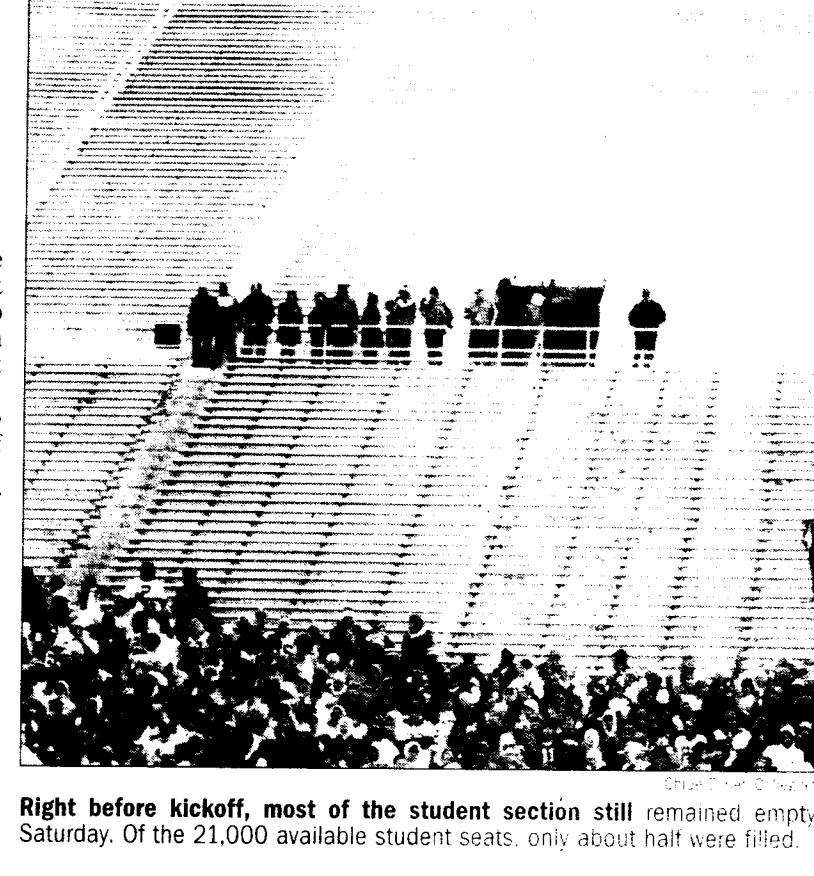
Ticket sales totaled 102,000, but only 85,000 people showed up to the game. Myford wrote.

"People get busy, make other family plans, travel, etc. Games that are successful over break tend to get scheduled far in advance and become traditions that fit into our holiday plans," Myford wrote.

Revenue took a hit from the low turnout. Since tickets are already paid for, any loss of money would result from fewer people going to the game, he wrote.

"When you look at fewer cars to park and fewer people buying hot dogs and sweatshirts, yes, there's an impact [on revenue]," Myford wrote.

Paterno also saw a drop in attendance, Paternoville President Alex Cohen said.



Right before kickoff, most of the student section still remained empty Saturday. Of the 21,000 available student seats, only about half were filled.

Paterno turnout is usually anywhere between 300 to 1,000 people, Cohen (senior-marketing) said — but about 100 people were there for the game.

Cohen said he was still surprised by how many students were in the student section despite the holiday weekend.

"It's just a testament to the fan loyalty, even though the team hasn't done as well as we hoped," Cohen said.

"The biggest parts of the student section were juniors and seniors, so it just shows that juniors and seniors have demonstrated loyalty over the years."

Cohen said freshmen and sophomores need to "step it up."

John Tecce, vice president of Paternoville, said he came back to State College on Friday specifically for the game.

"It would take a lot of bad things to happen to me for me to miss a home football game," Tecce (junior-marketing) said.

Paterno ended up being shut down because of sub-freezing temperatures, but that didn't stop the fans from watching the game, Cohen said.

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Female student hit by vehicle

By Casey McDermott
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

A female Penn State student was hit by a pick-up truck driven by a university employee while walking across Bigler Road last week, Penn State Police said.

The student was crossing the street near Findlay Commons at about 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 23 when she was struck by an oncoming vehicle that was driven by a Penn State staff member. She appeared to have been walking within a crosswalk at the time of the collision, police said.

The staff member driving the vehicle reported the incident to police at 7:06 p.m., police said.

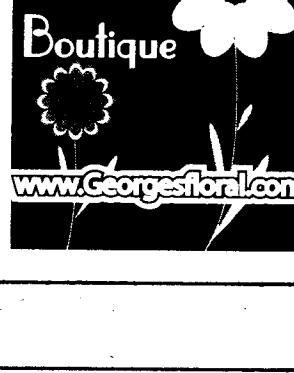
The student was first taken to Mount Nittany Medical Center for treatment of undisclosed injuries before being transported via Life Flight to Geisinger Medical Center, police said.

Police said they could not release any additional details regarding the student's specific injuries, medical condition or any other identifying information.

Charges have not been filed in connection with the crash, police said, but the incident is still under investigation.

Because the investigation is still active, police said they could not release the names of the student or the staff member involved in the incident. Police also said they could not confirm whether there were any witnesses to the accident.

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