

# Opponents strong in lengthy matches

By Ryan Loy  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

While most teams try to address its problems right away in practice, the Penn State women's volleyball team waits until the end of each session to work on one of its small weaknesses.

## WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

The Nittany Lions (28-5) lost all three of their five-set matches during the regular season. Should Friday's match against Oklahoma go to a fifth set, the numbers won't be on the Lions' side.

While Penn State is 0-3 in five-set matches, the other three programs set to compete in the University Park regional of the NCAA tournament are a combined 15-2 — including a 6-0 mark by Oklahoma.

Penn State sophomore Kristin Carpenter said the Lions play 15-point games, the amount of points a fifth set is played to, at the end of each practice when they're tired.

By doing this, the players can never feel content with losing a close match.

"Every day, we can't be satisfied with just losing 15-17, or even 19-17," Carpenter said. "We have to push, even at the end of practice because we know that in game-situations, we are tired."

Coach Russ Rose and some of the players said the solution to the team's few five-set losses is simple — don't let the match go to a deciding fifth game.

Senior opposite hitter Blair Brown said in those three losses, the Lions had opportunities to finish the match in the third or fourth sets and they should have closed it out then.

While the other teams in Penn State's regional were forced to play more lengthy matches than the Lions, they've thrived in the fifth sets.

Oklahoma and Duke each advanced to the University Park regional with five-set victories in their second-round matches.

Missouri, the other team

preparing to play in Rec Hall, had beaten No.5-seeded Northern Iowa in a five-set match in the tournament's opening round.

Rose said a team's momentum in the tournament carries more weight than rankings and stats.

"I don't look at it as they're 15-2, and we're 0-3," Rose said. "You can crunch numbers any way you want to crunch numbers. We play Oklahoma and Duke plays Missouri. The winner of the first match will play the winner of the second."

As simple as Rose's view is, it's true. And if the Lions are able to win the next two matches, they'll be back in the national semifinals for the fourth straight season.

To get that done, Rose said the team can't focus on what happened in the regular season.

"Past performance in five-set matches probably isn't going to have a high correlation in the outcome of those matches," Rose said.



Andrew Dunneimer/Collegian

Kristin Carpenter (5) sets the ball to a teammate earlier this season.

# Sophomore Nadolsky working for comeback year

By Matt Densted  
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Neither injury nor surgery is enough to hold back Aaron Nadolsky.

The sophomore sprinter is back and ready to once again perform at a high level. His recent recovery from a groin injury has him itching to get back to being with the team and competing against the best.

Nadolsky came to Penn State as a highly talented high school prospect. Winning Pennsylvania state titles in the 4x100 and the 4x400, Nadolsky had high hopes and high expectations for his sprinting career at Penn State.

Unfortunately in just his first big

meet of the season last year, Nadolsky had what he called a "freak accident."

Running in his first 50 meters of the 400, Nadolsky injured his groin.

Later, it was discovered that he had suffered a sports hernia in his groin area. Still, there was optimism for a comeback last season.

The Altoona Area High graduate trained lightly and expected to make a return to the team late in the spring. However, the injury ended up sidelining him for the entire season.

"It was hard because I thought I

would be able to compete but I then found in the beginning of the spring that it just wasn't going to work out," he said.

More than practicing or competing, Nadolsky truly felt the absence of being with the team as much as he had hoped.

"I missed being able to compete, but I really just missed traveling with the team," Nadolsky said.

Eventually, the injury forced Nadolsky into surgery. After the hernia operation in May, he resumed light workouts that he carried on throughout the summer as though to ease back into the serious training. It wasn't until the start of practice this year that he felt he was able to go 100 percent.

Nadolsky believes he now feels

as though he can contribute to the team. He said he feels good and hopes to benefit the team through scoring points in the Big Ten. He hopes this is the year that the team will "do something big."

Vast concern and support has Nadolsky very appreciative of his teammates.

"I always had teammates asking about my injury and if I would be coming back for the season," Nadolsky said.

His teammates were very supportive and helpful to the then-freshman. Now a sophomore, Nadolsky will get to truly experience the track season as he had previously hoped, that is, so long as there is no re-injury.

Admittedly, Nadolsky is a little scared of such possible re-injury to his groin. However, he knows he

can't allow himself to think about it while running and said he does a good job of clearing it from his mind.

Now finally able to compete, Nadolsky has set personal goals on what he hopes to achieve this season.

He sets his sights on placing in the Big Ten as well as scoring points for the team and hopefully making it to nationals — training hard at practice with the addition of high expectations leaves Nadolsky with a good attitude on the upcoming season.

Nadolsky will get his first taste of competition this season with the upcoming Blue-White Intrasquad meet at 2 p.m. this Saturday at the Ashenfelter Track. It will be a fresh start and a welcomed change for Nadolsky.



Nadolsky

## MEN'S TRACK AND FIELD

## MY OPINION

# Stop the debate: Tom Brady bests Peyton Manning

By Jared Shanker

It ranks up there with the questions that have left mankind puzzled for centuries. Why were we put here on Earth? Who built the pyramids? And if a tree falls in the woods and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?

We're still trying to figure out the answer to those, but on Monday, we were able to at least cross one off the list. The debate as to who is the best quarterback in the NFL between Tom Brady and Peyton Manning is officially over.

Brady closed — no, slammed the door shut on that discussion emphatically with the dismantling of the media heartthrob Jets on Monday Night Football.

The game, which was on a national stage, was billed as the Game of the Year. By night's end, Brady and the Patriots made it the Laugh of the Year, more suitable for a stage at the New York Comedy Club. Brady emasculated the Jets, in front of the entire country. The 42-point win is the second-most lopsided score of the season.

While the Jets talked the talk all week, Brady kept quiet, using

the 10 days leading up to the game to scheme and dissect every nook and cranny of the Jets' defense, leaving no stone unturned. The end result: 21-of-29 passing, four touchdowns and a 148.9 passer rating.

Now, Manning has had many of nights like Brady's. Actually, they've often been better.

Mechanically and statistically, Manning is superior to Brady in just about every category. If building a quarterback from scratch, physically Manning is the prototype. Pinpoint accuracy, pocket awareness, laser rocket arm. Speaking of a laser rocket arm, if great commercials were a requirement (Cut that meat! Cut that meat!), it's Manning by a landslide.

Where it matters most — upstairs — though, Manning doesn't match Brady. And it's not even close.

There's not a player mentally tougher or stronger than Brady. He's the ultimate competitor. On the game's biggest stage, Brady is at his best. When his team needs him the most, Brady delivers. With the game on the line, Brady rises to the occasion. Did you see Brady's emotion Monday after each touchdown, pumping his fist, banging helmets with his line, refusing to lift his foot off the gas?

Do you see that same killer instinct in Manning?

On Sunday, for the second straight week, Manning threw four interceptions.

Manning and the young receivers clearly aren't on the same page, but eventually Manning has to look in the mirror. You can't blame all of his AFC-leading 15 interceptions on someone else.

Those young receivers have been the argument advocating Manning this season. Supporters are quick to point out that he doesn't have enough players around him, which is the reason for the Colts' 6-6 record. Well, he has Reggie Wayne, and are you telling me Wayne isn't a better receiver than Wes Welker?

Manning hasn't been this bad since 2001, when he threw 23 interceptions and the Colts lost 10 games. Manning was without star running back Edgerrin James, who tore his anterior cruciate ligament six games into the season.

So, on second thought, maybe it is true. The supporting cast just isn't what Manning needs to be great.

As for Brady, he would have loved to have a Wayne or Edge for most of his career. He had Randy Moss for two seasons, and in their first season together they rewrote the record book.

After dealing Moss just four weeks into the 2010 season, though, Brady once again was surrounded with a bunch of no-

name players aside from Welker, who never had more than 67 catches in a season before coming to New England. He's had three straight seasons with 100+ receptions since.

A poor supporting cast is nothing new for Brady. His Super Bowl running backs: Antowain Smith, Kevin Faulk, Corey Dillon and Laurence Maroney. His top wide receivers: Troy Brown, David Patten, Deion Branch and Moss.

Regardless, Brady has been near unstoppable in the postseason, and his success has been well documented: so have Manning's failures. Brady is 14-4 in the playoffs and started his career 10-0 with three Super Bowls — and two game-winning Super Bowl drives. In four Super Bowl appearances, Brady has thrown seven touchdowns to just one interception.

As for Manning, he's 9-9 in the playoffs, which is not a bad record by any means. His passer rating is a respectable 87.6. And he does have one Super Bowl ring.

After closer examination, that ring loses some luster. During the Colts' 2006 Super Bowl run, Manning had a touchdown to interception ratio of 3 to 7. As for Super Bowl XLIV, I'll just say two words: Tracy Porter.

Rest assured, next season Manning will once again make defenses look stupid, audibling to

the perfect play. All the attention will once again be on the Colts, which is fine with Brady. He doesn't mind lurking in the shadows. As January rolls around, though, the Patriots will once again be at the top of the NFL summit.

And by that time, Brady might be going for "One for the Thumb."

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Winslow Townsend/Associated Press

Tom Brady throws a pass Monday.

*A Christmas Carol*  
by Charles Dickens

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