

Lions win close

By Jared Shanker
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

It was a game Penn State didn't deserve to be in.

A team with aspirations for its first NCAA Tournament appearance in almost a decade should not have needed a 28-second lead with 1.3 seconds left to beat a 3-5 Northeast Conference team.

Yet that's what it came down to, and if not for another clutch, game-winning shot from senior Tabor Battle to break a tie game, the Nittany Lions would have been dealt a serious blow to its NCAA Tournament résumé. The Lions (7-2) eked out the win, though, a 57-53 win over a depleted Mount St. Mary's on Tuesday at the Bryce Jordan Center.

The Mountaineers (3-6) were picked to finish fifth in the NEC this year and were playing without five of their top nine players, including starting center Raven Barber.

"No, it shouldn't have," Lions coach Ed DeChellis said when asked if it should have even come down to a final shot.

The Mountaineers trailed the entire game until a Tayvon Jackson tip-in with 10:48 left gave the Mount a 38-37 lead. The Lions and the Mountaineers would trade leads three more times before the Lions took a two-point lead with 52 seconds left on a layup by Battle.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Penn State

Mt. St. Mary's

See WIN, Page 10.



Tabor Battle (12) watches his game winning 3-point shot fall in the Lions' 57-53 victory Tuesday night.

Battle's heroics save win

By Emily Kaplan
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

He stood well beyond the arc, the ball in his hands.

There were less than two seconds left in the game. The score was tied.

"Good players make shots in those situations," Mount St. Mary's coach Robert Burke said. "They know it's desperation."

Senior captain Tabor Battle is the Penn State men's basketball team's best player — the Nittany

Lions' leading scorer in each of the last three seasons.

So Battle looked up at the clock, looked down at the ball, then did what felt natural to him.

"I just shot the basketball with some confidence," Battle said. "Thank God it fell."

Battle's heroic three pointer sealed a 57-53 win over the Mountaineers Tuesday night at the Bryce Jordan Center.

Yet the joyous moment didn't exemplify the senior guards' performance in the game — only his

performance in the last two minutes.

Battle struggled to find any offensive rhythm for most of the night. He was 1-for-12 from the field and 0-for-6 from 3-point range before scoring the Lions' last seven points over the final 1:44.

Battle finished the night with a team-high 13 points along with eight rebounds.

"Offensively, he just didn't really have it tonight," coach Ed DeChellis said.

See BATTLE, Page 10.

Mid-major schools look for respect



Collegian file photo

Former Penn State running back Charlie Pittman carries in a 45-22 win over Navy in the opening game of the Lions' undefeated 1969 season. Pittman rushed for more than 100 yards in the game.

By Brendan Monahan
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Charlie Pittman, Penn State's tailback from 1967-69, talked to Missouri's Jon Stagers years after the 1970 Orange Bowl — when the Nittany Lions beat the Tigers 10-3 — and Stagers called the win lucky.

"I played two other teams that were better than you," Pittman remembered Stagers telling him. "Who were they?"

Pittman replied, "Kansas State and Colorado," Stagers said.

"Guess what," Pittman told Stagers. "We beat them too."

Decades later amid

laughs, Pittman said the revelation stunned Stagers.

"I think people have preconceived ideas where [the] best football is played," Pittman said. "People didn't have much respect for our teams until they played us, and then we beat them. That's very similar to what Boise State is going through."

The former Penn State running back said he identifies with TCU and Boise State.

The two mid-major schools deal with the same stereotype that plagued the Penn State teams of the 1960s and 1970s, when the Lions tallied three undefeated seasons but never finished No. 1 in the Associated Press (AP) or

United Press International (UPI) polls.

Media and schools from major conferences in other ends of the country perceived eastern teams as inferior at the time. Many considered Penn State second fiddle to teams such as Texas (Big 8) and Ohio State (Big 10) because the Lions played a perceived lower quality of opponent and hailed from the East.

"Why? I don't know," said Dennis Onkotz, a Penn State All-American in 1968 and 1969 and College Football Hall of Famer, on the reason for people viewing the Lions as inferior. "It's just, the history of eastern football wasn't there. Who was a powerhouse in the east in the '50s

See RESPECT, Page 10.

Libero D'Errico focused on the road ahead

Series Note: This is the first of a three-part series highlighting the senior co-captains of the women's volleyball team.

By Jake Kaplan
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Alyssa D'Errico couldn't wrap her head around 3-for-3, let alone 4-for-4.

But with every win, D'Errico and the Penn State women's volleyball team are inching closer to

completing what might've seemed like a long shot just a couple of months ago.

D'Errico, along with her two fellow senior co-captains, is only four wins away from pulling off something no one else in Division I women's volleyball ever has — winning a perfect fourth national championship in four years.

"Oh, that would be incredible. I mean nobody has ever done it,"

D'Errico said of the possibility of her team hoisting another trophy after the championship match on Dec. 18 in Kansas City, Mo. "And especially because this year has been such a year full of obstacles and adversity that ending it off with a national championship would just be the cherry on top of everything."

D'Errico is in her second season starting at libero for the Nittany Lions after playing mostly as a defensive specialist her first two years. She played in every set

of all three title matches, tallying a combined 42 digs.

This year, in addition to being one of the team's most vocal leaders on and off the court, D'Errico's team-leading 450 digs and 45 service aces helped earn her an honorable mention on the All-Big Ten team.

Penn State coach Russ Rose said people might under-appreciate D'Errico's influence on the court because his blocking system doesn't allow liberos to have flashy

See D'ERRICO, Page 10.



Tyler Sizemore/Collegian

Alyssa D'Errico makes a play.

NEUP
ON TV
NHL
San Jose at Philadelphia, 7:30 p.m. CSN
Toronto at Pittsburgh, 7:00 p.m. FSN

QUICK HITS

Lions earn AVCA honors

Four members of the Penn State women's volleyball team took home AVCA Mid-east Region honors on Tuesday. Seniors Blair Brown and Arielle Wilson as well as freshman Deja McClendon were named to the all-region team. McClendon as also named Mid-east Region Freshman of the Year. Coach Russ Rose took home Mid-east Region Coach of the Year honors, additionally. Brown, Wilson and McClendon are now qualified for All-America honors, which will be announced during the the NCAA championship.

Haynesworth suspended

Simmering all year, the antagonism between Albert Haynesworth and Mike Shanahan finally reached the boiling point Tuesday when the two-time All-Pro defensive lineman was suspended by the Washington Redskins coach without pay for the rest of the season. Citing a litany of acts that essentially add up to season-long insubordination, the Redskins suspended Haynesworth for "conduct detrimental to the club" and told him he's not welcome for the team's final four games — and making it extremely unlikely he will play for the club again. "Despite the club's numerous attempts to persuade Albert Haynesworth to abide by the terms of his contract, he has repeatedly refused to cooperate with our coaching staff," Shanahan said in statement

THOUGHTS

Pitt's Wannstedt Out

Pitt coach Dave Wannstedt's resignation yesterday could have a ripple effect. Penn State defensive coordinator Tom Bradley could potentially be a candidate for the Panthers' job as a result of his strong recruiting ties to western Pennsylvania and solid reputation as a defensive coach. Also, recruiting website Lions247 is reporting that linebackers coach Ron Vanderlinden is interested in taking a head coaching position at Ball State. If these two coaches decide to leave, Penn State coach Joe Paterno might have to re-think his decision to return next season with two of his most valuable assistants gone.

Q: Before Monday night, when was the last time the New York Jets lost by 42 or more points?
Yesterday's answer: 13 times.