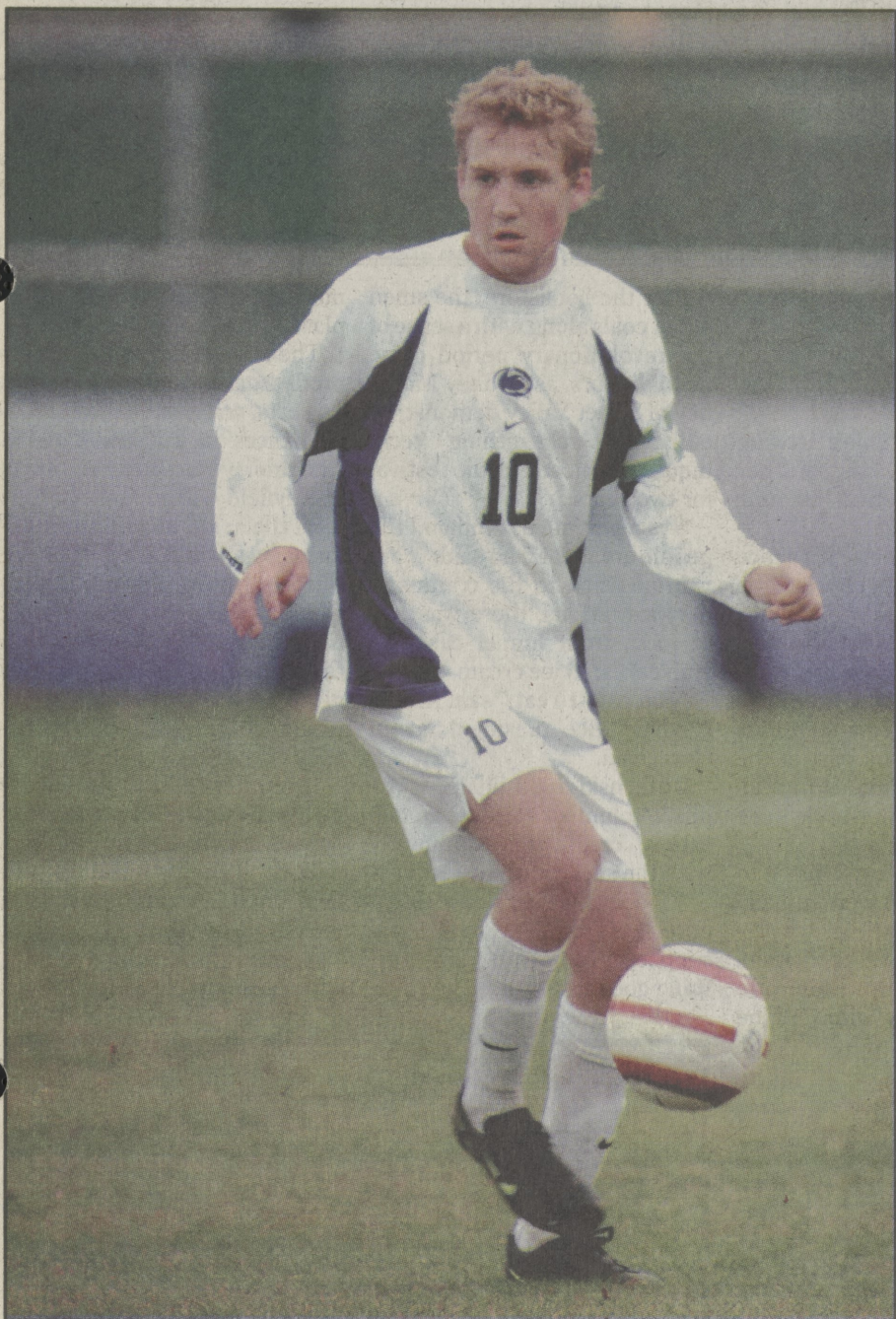


Sports Week

Former Lake-Lehman standout optimistic about senior year switch to defensive midfield



David Walters, son of Hank and Linda Walters of Hunlock Creek, will wear the captain's armband for the third consecutive season at Penn State.

Walters captain of Penn State ship

By DAVE KONOPKI
Post Editor

The numbers might not be eye-grabbing. Four goals, 12 assists and 20 points over a three-year period.

But if you think those statistics are indicative of David Walters' talent or his value to the Penn State men's soccer program, think again.

The former Lake-Lehman standout was recently named as the first three-year captain in the long history of the Nittany Lion program. Walters has also been named as a third team preseason All-America selection by College Soccer News.

"When a coach puts you in the position of being a captain, you have to think of it as a very big honor and responsibility," said Walters, who has started in 65 of 66 games during the last three seasons. "I think it also shows I have the respect of my teammates. And that's the most important thing."

The son of Hank and Linda Walters of Hunlock Creek is hoping to lead the Lions to a Big Ten championship this season. Ranked No. 23 in the nation, Penn State was picked to finish second in the Big Ten in a preseason poll of Big Ten coaches. The Nittany Lions — who play their home games at the 5,500-seat Jeffrey Field — return 13 lettermen, including seven starters.

Two-time defending national champion Indiana is the preseason choice to win the conference title.

"We look really good," said the 21-year-old Walters, who will play defensive center midfield. "I think we're going to be a very strong team. Indiana is the two-time national champion. That's who we're going after."

The 5-foot-9, 165 pound senior was moved to his new position by 18-year head coach Barry Gorman, after playing for three years at center midfield. Walters' new role has him focused more on stopping opposing teams from scoring rather than scoring goals himself.

"I think (Gorman) realized that, for some reason, I was never able to score a lot of goals," said Walters, who was a first-team all-Big Ten midfielder last season. "As long as we win, individual numbers really don't matter."

"Before I played in college, I thought I knew had to play defense. The truth is I was just standing there. My ability to play defense has been my biggest improvement since I came here."

Though he hasn't put up gaudy offensive numbers, Walters' strong play hasn't gone unnoticed. In addition to being a Big Ten all-star, he was an NSCAA/adidas all-Mid Atlantic Region first team selection and was also the Most Valuable Player of the Penn State Nike Classic and Tulsa Golden Hurricane Classic tournaments last year.

"Individual honors are great, but I'm more concerned with our team winning," Walters said. "Whenever I step on the field, I'm just trying to play soccer to the best of my ability."

Walters has also been a standout in the classroom, as well. The Environmental Interpretation major has a 3.54 grade-point average and was an NSCAA Scholar All-America a year ago. After graduating in May, Walters hopes to work with children in park management or as the director of an adven-



Former Lake-Lehman standout David Walters begins his senior year on the Penn State men's soccer team.

ture program.

Or he might play professional soccer.

"That's the question everyone asks me, 'are you going to play professional soccer,'" he said. "If an opportunity comes along that would make a better life for me, I'd take it. But I'm not going to keep playing just for the glory of playing professional soccer. If that's the case, I'll just call it quits. But right now, I don't want to rule anything out."

Walters arrived in University Park with impressive credentials. He was the national Player of the Year runner-up in 2001 while playing for head coach Mark Stroney at Lake-Lehman. He was also a two-time high school All-American, a three-time all-state selection, and the state Player of the Year in 2001.

"I'm looking forward to my senior year," he said. "Beating Indiana and winning a Big Ten championship would be a great way to end my college career."

Wanek, Michno lead teams as Dallas sweeps Forty Fort

Three Dallas Junior Mounts youth football teams posted victories against Forty Fort in Wyoming Valley West Youth Football League action. The B team defeated the Flyers 32-0, the C team won by a score of 18-0 and the D team posted a 14-6 win.

B DIVISION

Brett Wanek rushed for four touchdowns as Dallas played its second outstanding game of the season, posting a 32-0 win against Forty Fort.

Ryan Hanson scored on a pair of 2-point conversions, while Eric Anderson and Garrett Artsma each scored a 2-point conversion. The offensive line led by Jeremy Geisinger, Logan Bullock and Brian McDonnell opened some huge holes for the running backs.

The Mount defense shut down Forty Fort, led by defensive line play of Nate Vario, Mike Mullea and Brian Stepniak. Patrick Condo and J.J. McGovern led the outside pursuit.

C DIVISION

Mark Michno rushed for two touchdowns and Ryan Zapoticky added another

as Dallas posted an 18-0 win against Forty Fort. Michno scored on runs of 8 and 60 yards, while Zapoticky scored the game's first touchdown on an 80-yard run. Will Akins set up Michno's first score, intercepting a Forty Fort pass on the 38-yard line and returning it 20 yards to the 8-yard line.

The Dallas defense was led by Logan Brace and Mitchell Benson, who recorded multiple sacks. Cody Long and Josh Probst also played well defensively, while Michno recorded an interception to preserve the shutout late in the game.

D DIVISION

The Dallas Junior Mounts got their first win of the year with a 14-6 win against Forty Fort. Matt Harrison hauled in a 7-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Cole Dixon to put the Mounts on the board, and Dixon added a two-point conversion. Dixon later scored on a 2-yard run following a 56-yard run by Chad Phillips. A solid Dallas defense was led by Jackson Shaver, Chad Phillips, Justin Hutchins, Justin Sweeny and Cameron Brennan.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Kris Roccograndi carries the ball for Kingston Township during last weekend's B division game at Plymouth.

Shaver, Shaffer, Gattuso, defenses shine as Raiders overpower Plymouth

The Kingston Township Raiders youth football program posted three easy victories against Plymouth last weekend in Wyoming Valley West Youth Football League action. The B team won by a score of 30-0, the C team won its game 38-0, while the D team posted a 32-0 win against the host Shawnee Indians.

B DIVISION

Neil Shaver rushed for one touchdown and caught another as the Raiders posted a 30-0 win against the Shawnee Indians. David Gawlas and Quincy Patrick also scored a touchdown apiece for Kingston Township.

Shaver scored the first two touchdowns of the game, the second one coming off a pass by Gawlas. Chris Ostrum and Robbie Boedecker added two-point conversions to make the score 16-0. Later in the game, Gawlas scored on a long-run and Patrick found the endzone on a 45-yard run. Jim Roccograndi pulled in a two-point conversion pass to make it 30-0.

The offensive line of Justin Hromek, Michael Sebastian, Ostrum, Justin Rivero, Luke Edwards, Nick Ondish and T.J. Weeks opened large holes for the Raiders, who finished with more than 280 rushing yards. The Raider defense — led by Jake Piskorick, Brandon Rome, Chris Hood, Bobby Baker, Augustus Diana, Kris Roccograndi, Aaron

Lisses and Nate Miller — forced several turnovers and did not allow a first down.

C DIVISION

Jesse Shaffer scored two touchdowns while Jake Rome, Robert Wargo, Corey Patrick and Matt Doggett each added long touchdown runs as the Raiders improved to 2-0 win a 38-0 win against the Indians. Kyle Kotulski added the lone two-point conversion.

Defensively, Ed Meszczynski, Domenic Oliveri and Jason Morgan each had two sacks while J.T. Carey, Kevin Lazarowicz and Matt Miller added one each. Oliveri was named the offensive Player of the Game for his standout play at center, while Kotulski was named the defensive Player of the Game for his tough run defense at nose tackle.

D DIVISION

Tanner Gattuso scored three touchdowns and Bret Storrs added another as Kingston Township defeated Plymouth, 32-0. David Edwards, Peter Capitano, Kyle Piskorick and Storrs each scored on a two-point conversion.

The blocking of Jason Anderson, Mason Dumond, Mitch Kelly, Ray Anthony Ostroski, Ryan Martin and Ricky Morgan opened the holes for the running game. The entire team played well defensively to record the shutout.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Kingston Township's Matt Doggett runs through an opening during a C team game against Plymouth.