

WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS

## Penn State preps for national title run

By Dan Graybill

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This is it.

Today begins the Penn State women's gymnastics team's attempt to capture the national championship.

It all begins at 2 p.m. at Auburn University, when the Nittany Lions will start on the beam. The top three teams from the afternoon session and top three from the evening session will combine to form the Super Six tomorrow, to determine the national champion.

Penn State's competition in the afternoon session will include Nebraska, Michigan, LSU, Oklahoma and Utah. All five teams were ranked in the top 10 of the last GymInfo poll, released Mar. 28. Penn State is ranked just below them at 11.

The Lions are coming off of two consecutive second-place finishes. They finished behind Michigan at the Big Ten Championships and finished behind UCLA in the West Regional, which guaranteed Penn State the spot, it holds currently.

### NCAA Championships

Today through Saturday  
Auburn, Ala.

"Practice went well [yesterday], everyone is ready," Penn State coach Steve Shephard said.

The Lions will continue with the lineup they used during the Big Ten championship and the West Regional meets.

So far the trip has been pleasant for Penn State and they have adjusted to everything just fine.

### Michigan

Michigan once again finished first in the Big Ten, for the seventh consecutive time. The Wolverines defeated the Lions

by the smallest margin in Big Ten championship history, .125 points. They also defeated the Lions back in a late January dual meet by more than a point. The Wolverines took first place in the South Central Regional with a 196.600. They scored a season high on floor exercise and uneven bars during the meet.

### Nebraska

Nebraska finished .300 points behind Michigan while hosting the South Central Regional. See GYMNASTICS, Page 18.

BASEBALL

## PSU capitalizes on sloppy defense

By Josh Moyer

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Forget that Aaron Markowitz retired 15 straight batters and allowed only two hits. Forget that Norfolk State lost 30 games this season and hasn't beaten Penn State in nine years. The Nittany Lions were hanging by the skin of their teeth yesterday at Beaver Field.

Penn State came out on top in the doubleheader by scores of 5-1 and 3-0, but a sputtering offense greatly limited the Lions' opportunities. Norfolk State coach Claudell Clark believed the game was a lot closer than the scoreboard indicated.

"In my opinion, it should've been a 1-

1 ballgame — not 3-0," he said of the second seven-inning stretch.

It may have been closer, but the Lions (21-12) turned in a solid pitching performance.

Gary Amato earned the win in the first game, and Markowitz set the tone early in the second by striking out seven of the first eight batters en route to a complete game shutout of the Spartans (10-32). All in all, the nine-K, no-walk performance was pretty surprising, considering the sophomore entered

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**3**  
Penn State  
**0**  
Norfolk State

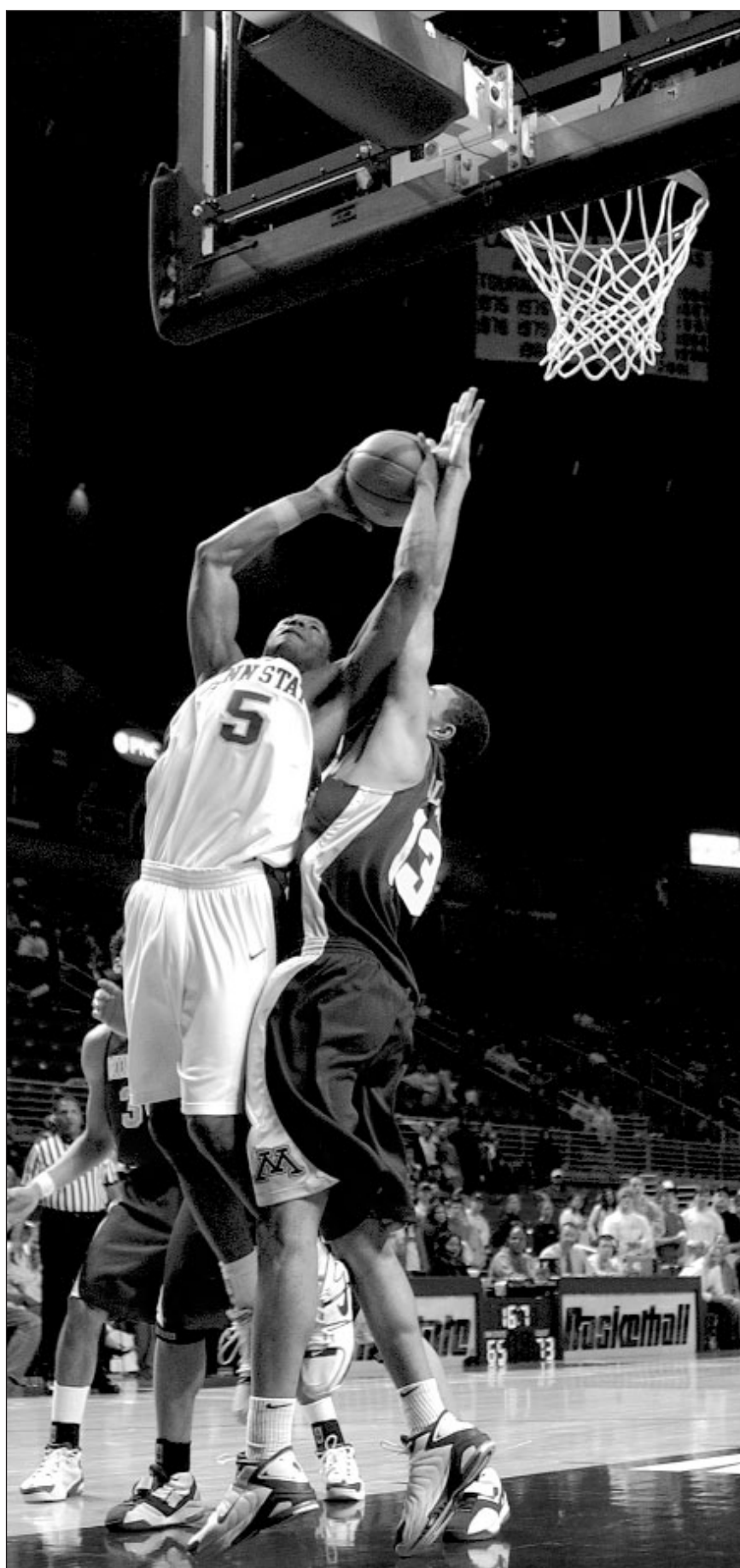


Kevin Clancey/Collegian

Catcher James Spinelli (right) brings down a throw from outfielder Travis Laird. Laird gunned down Norfolk State's Whitney Moore (24) at the plate in the sixth inning of the second game of a doubleheader, preserving a Penn State shutout.

"If I was a betting man, I'd bet everything on him."

— Bruce Parkhill, on Ed DeChellis



Keri Cubbin/Collegian

Geary Claxton (5) will be a vital component to the Penn State rebuilding project.

## Lions look to retool attitude

By Tricia Lafferty

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ED DeChellis vividly remembers the line of students extending from Rec Hall, all the way down Burrowes Street to the Beta Theta Pi fraternity house. Fans waited for hours and some even camped out overnight in Rec Hall — for basketball tickets.

Back then, from 1986 to 1996, DeChellis served as a Penn State men's basketball assistant coach, first a nine-year stint under Bruce Parkhill and then a year under Jerry Dunn.

In that 10-year span, Penn State had seven winning seasons, an Atlantic 10 tournament title, and four NIT and two NCAA tournament appearances.

Back then, students supported a winning basketball program.

But since DeChellis left Penn State nine years ago to accept a job as head coach at East Tennessee State University, something changed. In fact, a lot changed, and when DeChellis returned to his alma mater to accept a head coaching job in April 2003, after seven years at East Tennessee State, Penn State basketball wasn't what he remembered.

"When I left here in 1996, there was a real positive spin on things," DeChellis said. "We had good leaders and we had good guys in terms that they wouldn't let anybody stray. Whatever it was, that kind of faded a bit."

Since Penn State made a run to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA tournament in 2001, the Lions have compiled a 30-84 overall record, including a 9-55 mark in the Big Ten. Penn State has occupied last place in the conference for four straight years.

After losing to Temple in the 2001 tournament game that would have put the Lions in the Elite Eight, Penn State finished 7-21 the following two seasons. Dunn, who was Penn State's head

See BASKETBALL, Page 12.

## Scatliffe responds to tension, pressure

By Dan Winklebleck

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Some people just thrive under pressure.

Junior Malcolm Scatliffe, the No. 2 singles player for the Penn State men's tennis team, has certainly shown himself to be one of those individuals.

In Sunday's match against Minnesota, Scatliffe had to show up more than ever this season. Everyone knew it, too. Not being one to disappoint when it comes to a dramatic finish, Scatliffe provided those in attendance at the Sarni Tennis Center with a thrilling 6-3, 7-6 (7-4) victory against D.J. Geatz. With it, he clinched the overall victory for the Nittany Lions, but just like any Big Ten match or any of Scatliffe's masterpieces, it was not an easy one.

After getting up a set on Geatz, Penn State's Malcolm Scatliffe has been thriving on pressure all season. His second-set tiebreak win vs. Minnesota's D.J. Geatz was a highlight for the Lions.



Jim Creighton/Collegian

## Defining weekend for lacrosse team

By Chris Weeden

CAN A TEAM with a .666 winning percentage be categorized by inconsistency and poor execution at times? Bluntly put, yes.

Can it keep itself from looking ahead on the conference schedule? We will see this weekend.

With an 8-4 overall record and a 2-1 mark in the American Lacrosse Conference, the No. 8-ranked Penn State women's lacrosse team has used those words to describe its play since spring break.

The Nittany Lions began play with four straight wins, but they've split their last eight games, going 4-4.

A team that can look so great one day can look stagnant the next, regardless of the caliber of team it's facing.

Luckily for the Lions, their great

start masks their .500 play over the last month.

They've beaten some of the nation's elite during the more recent stretch, like then-No. 1 Princeton and then-No. 15 Penn. The Lions have also shown their ability to play less-than-spectacular lacrosse, as evident in losses to unranked William & Mary on the road and, more embarrassingly, Temple at home.

The Lions fell to No. 1 Northwestern in Evanston, Ill., last Friday, 14-6, failing to capitalize on any momentum gathered by the come-from-behind 16-9 win over Penn 10 days earlier.

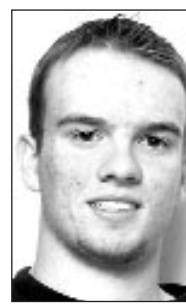
And again, Penn State coach Suzanne Isidor attributed the loss to poor execution.

"We never stopped hustling or stopped working hard. We just didn't execute well," Isidor said.

That's the tendency. With the exception of the Temple game, Isidor has never used lack of effort as an excuse for poor Penn State play.

"We got a lot of opportunities to score and didn't take advantage of them, and Northwestern did," Isidor said.

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MY OPINION