

Lady Lions class list

Amanda Brown 6-4, F/C, Jr.

The junior co-captain isn't too flashy, averaging 7.2 points per game last year mostly off missed shots by Tanisha Wright and Jess Strom. Brown needs to be more aggressive on the offensive end and as a leader. After broadening her horizons studying basketball abroad with the Canadian Junior National team this summer, Brown needs to be more than just a role player this year.



Brianne O'Rourke 5-6, G, Fr.

The rookie has aced every test Portland has thrown at her to be "The Penn State Point Guard." She has practiced against former Lady Lion PG Jess Strom, who started as a freshman five years ago. O'Rourke's a great passer, but nobody knows how well she can shoot. To be successful, O'Rourke must limit turnovers. Better said, this freshman cannot play like a rookie if this team is to go anywhere.



Kamela Gissendanner 6-1, G/F, So.

Gissendanner saw the floor a lot last year. The problem: she was in street clothes, red-shirting the season after transferring from North Carolina State. Now as a sophomore, Gissendanner will be asked to co-captain a team she has never played with. She could be a consistent scoring threat and pose problems for opposing scorers with her size from the wing. But this is all theory because nobody knows what she can do after two years on the sidelines.



Mashea Williams 5-10, G, Fr.

She has matched up with former Lady Lion Tanisha Wright during practice, and has the potential to fill Wright's role as the primary scorer. Williams has the ball handling skills to penetrate and swears that she can be a defensive stopper, too. While starting at one wing, Williams will also back up O'Rourke at the point. A lot of Penn State's success is riding on this freshman's shoulders.



Charity Renfro 6-2, F/C, Jr.

She will be the other starting forward alongside Brown. Renfro spent the first two years of her eligibility at a Yavapai Community College where she was a Kodak/WBCA honorable mention All-American in 2005. How this will transfer to Div. I play, nobody knows, but she gets the start because nobody else has been impressive offensively. While Renfro isn't a huge offensive threat either, she gives the Lady Lions a nice defensive presence in the middle.



Adrienne Squire 6-0, G, So.

She saw limited action coming off the bench last year, averaging less than 7 minutes a game in 21 games and posting only 1.9 points per game and 3 rebounds. Squire is the team's best bet from beyond the arc but needs time to set before she shoots. Coming off the bench, she'll be the one the Lions turn to for the big jump shot.



The rest of the class: Rashida Mark, 6-2, F, Fr; Courtney Molinaro, 6-0, F, Fr; Romana Vynuchalova, 6-4, F/C, So; Brittany Remmey, 5-8, G, So.



Attention class...Penn State basketball players. Head coaches Rene Portland and Ed DeChellis will need all reference materials under your seats. Some of the class might be prepared, some might not be. The Big Ten isn't an easy test, with four ranked opponents in conference for both the guys and the gals. There are two answers for every question — Not A or B, but W or L.

Nobody can rely too heavily on one classmate. Lady Lions, you might be looking for Amanda Brown to carry you through this test, but there is no cheating on this exam. Rankings committees don't grade on a group curve. And Nittany Lions, you might be looking for Geary Claxton to help

you breeze through this season, but attendance of all members is required to pass.

All subjects will be covered. Chemistry, possibly the hardest subject to master, requires you all to work well together. In mathematics, the wins must add up quickly to pass into the postseason. In history, Portland is trying to continue the tradition while DeChellis is trying to build a new one.

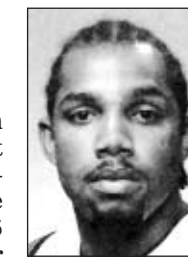
There's a chance both teams may pass through this season with flying colors, but there's also the chance that Portland and DeChellis have forgotten their trusty No. 2 pencils — this could prove to be a very forgettable year that neither team wants written in its record books.

You have 27 games to complete the exam. Time starts now.

Nittany Lions class list

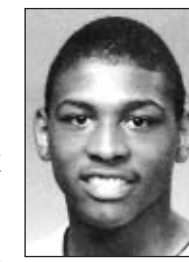
David Jackson 6-2, G, Jr.

In his first year as a Nittany Lion after transferring from Gulf Coast Community College in Florida, Jackson adds size and toughness to the Penn State backcourt — at 195 pounds, he's larger than either Luber or Walker. With sophomore Danny Morrissey out, he also gives the Lions depth they might not have imagined they'd need. Jackson's played with a considerable amount of grit in the preseason and was also the team's second-leading scorer in those games. He's practiced at the point in case one of the other guards goes down, but figures to be a shooting guard most of the season.



Geary Claxton 6-5, F, So.

Without Claxton the Lions are like a clown with no jokes. The second year wing provides so much energy and talent to this young squad that should get into foul trouble — or gasp, injured — Penn State would have difficulty keeping games close. An athletic player that led all Big Ten freshmen with 6.3 rebounds per game last year, Claxton must also lead an offense with no established presence in the paint. Opponents will likely gameplan to stop him, and it will be interesting to see how Claxton fares with the added pressure and attention in his sophomore campaign.



Brandon Hassell 6-9, F, So.

Coach Ed DeChellis said he's probably on Hassell more than any other member of the team, trying to tap his potential and push him to "get into third gear." After a freshman season spent for development, Hassell provides the most experience at the post for the Lions — which is not saying much — and the team hopes he can be a leader underneath the basket. DeChellis said he's looking for a certain amount of production from the post position, whether it's one person or by committee (along with freshmen Milos Bogetic and Joonas Suotamo). Hassell's going to have to overcome some preseason inconsistency to step up and claim it.



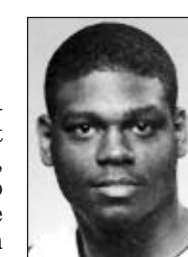
Ben Luber 6-0, G, Jr.

The Lions have two junior guards on their roster, but Luber — arguably the most experienced player on the team — is the one who is likely to have the ball in his hands to start the offense. Luber is probably the most polished passer on the team but has a tendency to turn the ball over more than one would like. He's no scoring machine, but he's almost a lock to lead Penn State in assists — he's a good team player who's in a great position to lead the Lions.



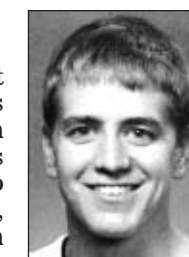
Travis Parker 6-5, F, Sr.

Parker lost weight over the offseason and is down to 231 pounds. That might work well with the aggressive, running style that DeChellis wants to use this year. Parker, the team's lone senior and captain, led the Lions with a .365 three-point percentage and a .453 field goal percentage last season. A rebound or two more per game over his 5.4 last year would be a giant help for an undersized Penn State squad.



Mike Walker 6-2, G, So.

Walker isn't listed as a starter, but he'll still get plenty of playing time as the Lions' spark plug — and may even replace Jackson if he struggles. He's a key reserve who should continue to be a solid contributor off the bench, allowing his teammates to remain fresh on the court. Last season he played in all but one game while averaging 6.3 points and hitting 41-of-123 from beyond the arc. Walker is a shooting specialist who will be called upon to help fill the shoes of the injured Morrissey, Penn State's top 3-point threat.



Entrance Exams

Predictions

Andrew Staub's prediction

Record: 13-14, 6-10 Big Ten
Rene Portland hasn't had a losing season in 25 years, but this year will prove that an old dog can learn new tricks. With four freshmen, a walk-on and no seniors, Penn State does not have the veteran presence to compete in the tough Big Ten conference. A non-conference schedule that includes No. 1 Duke and No. 13 Texas Tech doesn't help either. The losses of Tanisha Wright, Jess Strom and Jen Harris will be felt early. The Lady Lions will have to rely on their freshmen to contribute from the start. Freshman point guard Brianne O'Rourke will be a bright spot for the team in a drab season. Despite the grim outlook, Portland is one of the game's best coaches and will have her team playing Lady Lions basketball near the end of the season, but when the NCAA Tournament comes to the Bryce Jordan Center, the Lady Lions will have to watch another team protect their house.



Jon Blau's prediction

Record: 12-15, 5-11 Big Ten
It isn't a good thing that Rene Portland's most memorable recollection from a scrimmage versus Bucknell isn't her team's play but a visit to the Lewisburg Sheetz and its awestruck manager's greeting. Scoring will be hard to come by with only 9.3 points per game returning between junior Amanda Brown and sophomores Adrienne Squire and Romana Vynuchalova. Portland is asking freshman Mashea Williams to be the Lady Lions' go-to-scorer, and she only averaged 15 points per game in high school last year. This team's only hope is to play unrelenting defense, limit second chance opportunities by rebounding defensively, and hope for easy fast break points the other way. Any opponent that can slow the game down and produce in the half-court will give the Lady Lions trouble this year. Unfortunately for Penn State, most of the Big Ten can do that this year.



Chris Weeden's prediction

Record: 12-15, 6-10 Big Ten
The Lady Lions normally play well at home, but none of the guards have any game experience for Penn State. Kamela Gissendanner redshirted last year after seeing limited action for N.C. State as a true freshman. Mashea Williams and Brianne O'Rourke will be the cornerstones of the future, but will struggle at times as freshmen. Turnovers will be a problem, especially against Duke, Texas Tech and the first part of the Big Ten schedule. Penn State only has a 10-player roster and no real depth anywhere on the court, so conditioning will be a factor. It's usually not a strength of a young team, but Portland said for the first time in years all the freshmen met the required times. They don't have the fouls to give to win in close contests, either Portland has never had a sub-500 season in her first 25 seasons with the team. The 26th won't be as successful, but the youngsters will prove that the Lady Lions have



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Predictions

Mike Garvey

Prediction: 11-16 (4-12 Big Ten)
The 2005-6 outlook of this team mirrors the way coach Ed DeChellis wants them to play — in transition. Just where they'll be after the season depends on if they can keep up the energy without swerving off the road, as they did down the stretch last year. With a year of experience for Geary Claxton and Brandon Hassell, as well as some new talents in David Jackson and Jamelle Cornley hanging around, it would be a disappointment for the Lions not to improve on their 1-15 Big Ten record from last year. But there are too many questions for a staggering improvement — will anyone regularly play the post, or need to? How quickly can the young guys catch on to the system? How will Joonas Suotamo and Hassell stack up against the Big Ten's big men? Even if these guys are the right pieces, DeChellis will need to figure out awfully quick how they fit together so they don't fall behind the eight ball.



Scott Cooper

Prediction: 9-18 (2-14 Big Ten)
These Lions have more question marks than the Ridder and may prove just as baffling. Who will rebound? Will anyone develop into a viable second option on offense, or will Geary Claxton have to carry this team on his back? Will yet another great misfortune befall this program? Will any fans come to watch? Given Penn State's recent history, there is little reason to believe that the Lions will be tremendously improved over last year, but there are still glimmers of hope. Claxton is talented and more experienced. Travis Parker is reliable. The backcourt looks stable. These are positives, but the Lions need more. Coach DeChellis and Co. should drop a non-conference game that most would not expect, but they might also win a Big Ten game that would surprise the conference.



Josh Moyer

Prediction: 11-16 (3-13 Big Ten)
A weak non-conference schedule should help the Lions get off on the right foot — problem is, their conference slate will likely trip them up later in the season. Penn State simply does not have the height or skill to hang in with the likes of Illinois, or even Wisconsin for that matter. On the positive side, the defense should be markedly improved from last year, as DeChellis now has the speed to play aggressively. The Lions' gambling defensive philosophy may surprise a few teams but not nearly enough to break .500. The Lions are convinced their future is bright, pegging the season's mantra as "Up. Rising." especially with recruits like David Jackson, Joonas Suotamo and Jamelle Cornley leading the way. Make no mistake about it, though, this may be the beginning of something special — but not the start of a winning year. Get ready for another



Womens Basketball Schedule

Date	Opponent	H/A	Time
11/18/05	No. 1 Duke	H	8 p.m.
11/20/05	Villanova	H	2 p.m.
11/22/05	Duquesne	A	5 p.m.
11/25/05	Old Dominion	A	7 p.m.
12/02/05	Pittsburgh	H	7 p.m.
12/04/05	No. 13 Texas Tech	H	3 p.m.
12/06/05	George Mason	A	7 p.m.
12/09/05	Marquette	H	7 p.m.
12/18/05	Middle Tennessee State	A	6 p.m.
12/19/05	UAB/Alabama A&M	A	4 p.m.
12/22/05	St. Francis	H	7 p.m.
12/29/05	No. 4 Ohio State	A	7 p.m.
1/01/06	Indiana	A	2 p.m.
1/05/06	No. 10 Michigan State	A	8 p.m.
1/08/06	Wisconsin	H	2 p.m.
1/12/06	Illinois	A	7 p.m.
1/19/06	No. 19 Purdue	A	7 p.m.
1/22/06	Northwestern	A	2 p.m.
1/26/06	Iowa	H	7 p.m.
1/29/06	No. 16 Minnesota	A	5 p.m.
2/02/06	Michigan	H	7 p.m.
2/05/06	No. 19 Purdue	H	2 p.m.
2/09/06	Indiana	A	7 p.m.
2/12/06	Illinois	A	1 p.m.
2/16/06	Wisconsin	A	7 p.m.
2/23/06	Northwestern	H	7 p.m.
2/26/06	No. 4 Ohio State	H	2 p.m.
3/02/06	Big Ten Tournament	N	TBA
3/03/06	Big Ten Tournament	N	TBA
3/05/06	Big Ten Tournament	N	TBA
3/06/06	Big Ten Tournament	N	TBA

Men's Basketball Schedule

Date	Opponent	H/A	Time
11/19/05	Cornell	H	12:30 p.m.
11/23/05	Nicholls State	H	7:30 p.m.
11/26/05	Long Island	H	3:30 p.m.
11/29/05	Clemson	H	8 p.m.
12/03/05	Texas A&M	A	TBA
12/07/05	Missouri-Kansas City	H	7:30 p.m.
12/10/05	Pittsburgh	A	TBA
12/18/05	St. Francis	H	2 p.m.
12/20/05	New Hampshire	H	7:30 p.m.
12/23/05	IPFW	H	7:30 p.m.
12/31/05	Mount St. Mary's	H	1 p.m.
01/05/06	Ohio State	A	8 p.m.
01/11/06	Northwestern	A	8 p.m.
01/14/06	No. 20 Iowa	A	noon
01/18/06	Purdue	H	6 p.m.
01/21/06	Ohio State	H	noon
01/25/06	Wisconsin	A	8 p.m.
01/28/06	No. 4 Michigan State	A	noon
02/01/06	Michigan	H	8 p.m.
02/04/06	No. 17 Illinois	A	9 p.m.
02/08/06	Minnesota	H	8 p.m.
02/11/06	Wisconsin	H	4 p.m.
02/15/06	No. 23 Indiana	H	8 p.m.
02/18/06	Purdue	A	noon
02/22/06	No. 23 Indiana	A	7 p.m.
02/25/06	Northwestern	H	3:30 p.m.
03/01/06	No. 20 Iowa	A	8 p.m.
03/09/06	Big Ten Tournament	A	TBA
03/10/06	Big Ten Tournament	A	TBA
03/11/06	Big Ten Tournament	A	TBA
03/12/06	Big Ten Tournament	A	TBA

