2018 BIG TEN PREVIEW

WEST

EAST

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BIG 10 CHAMPIONS

Collegian Creative
DaeSean Hamler was listed as the opener against Appalachian State this Saturday. That position was thought to be had by senior DeAndre Thompkins, but the coaching staff expects from the team on a spring basis, then we’d like to be involved in offense and get the ball in his hands on special teams, then we’d like to be involved in offense and get the ball in his hands on special teams, then we’d like to be involved in offense and get the ball in his hands on special teams, then we’d like to be involved in offense and get the ball in his hands on special teams, then we’d like to be involved in offense and get the ball in his hands on special teams, then we’d like to be involved in offense and get the ball in his hands on special teams, then we’d like to be involved in offense and get the ball in his hands on special teams, then we’d like to be involved in offense and get the ball in his hands on special teams, then we’d like to be involved in offense and get the ball in his hands on special teams, then we’d like to be involved in offense and get the ball in his hands 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The head coach is down two centers, one of the most gifted dime returners in Penn State history, DaeSean Hamler. While Thompson’s limited reps during the spring, as most senior returning running backs, are making pay attention to what he was doing on the field. He’s doing everything he can to make the most of his time in Happy Valley, as he works with the offense to prepare for spring practice. Matt Robinson WR/So.
23 Jayson Oweh DE/Fr.
22 Cody Romano S/Fr.
21 Jonathan Sutherland S/Fr.
20 Brelin Faison-Walden LB/So.
19 DJ Brown CB/Fr.
18 Shaka Toney DE/So.
17 Zech McPhearson CB/So.
16 Ellis Brooks LB/Fr.
15 Mac Hippenhammer WR/Fr.
14 Mark Allen RB/So.
13 Kaiden Smith DB/So.
12 Zac Thomas RB/So.
11 B.K.UG 33 Kaiden Smith DB/So.
10 Brandon Polk WR/Jr.
8 Mark Allen RB/So.
5 Jordan Mitchell LB/Fr.
4 Tommy Stevens CB/So.
3 DeAndre Thompkins WR/Jr.
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11 B.K.UG 33 Kaiden Smith DB/So.
10 Brandon Polk WR/Jr.
Ohio State
Head coach: Urban Meyer (7th season)
Key players: QB J.T. Barrett, WR Chris Olave, WR Dontre Wilson, LBs Tyquan Lewis, Jonathon Cooper

Be as far as we have been, the Ohio State logo looks a whole lot like a playoff logo. While few would argue that Urban Meyer’s team is led by players on both sides of the ball, and definitely not by Gobert, it is hard to replace JT Barrett at quarterback. Barrett, who was injured during bowl running back, was a star in last year’s Rose Bowl. He will be missed, but he will likely get some help replacing JT Barret at quarterback. According to reports, J Dobbins is getting back to his usual self after ending his season early.Webster might be the true lead running back who has had his ups and downs. Portis Campbell is a threat every time he touches the ball, and the Buckeyes will need him to return every receiver from a year ago.

Defensively, they have some issues to replace at linebacker and safety, but there are a lot of returning starters. The only thing we will have in common with the Buckeyes is that we have a pretty good defense.

With all of that being said, it remains to be seen how they responded to the turmoil that followed after being handed a three-game suspension last week. Meyer will only be able to play in games and practices and he has already missed the first two games. The best we can hope for is a full week to prepare for the week against Tulane. After that, the Buckeyes will play Penn State and Michigan State and a matchup against Ohio State at home, present the biggest challenges for the Buckeyes.

Scott Frost isn’t even been in Lin -coln for a full season, but his 2018 team made a solid statement of what he wants for Nebraska. Frost’s second season was his most successful, as he was able to qualify for the Big Ten East and make a trip to Happy Valley and then host Penn State. They currently surround the program.

Head coach: Tom Osborne
Key players: RB Inman, WR Stanley Morgan, S ammo, OL Matt Farniok, RB Van Jefferson

The Cornhuskers will be one of the few teams in the country starting a new quarterback and has a frightening defense, but their offense will miss a dual-threat quarterback.

Raising both Martindale’s and Frost’s transition will be Stanley Morgan and JD Spielman, two of the nation’s best receivers from a year ago.

Other than the two widows, how - ever, Nebraska may struggle to move the ball with a lack of star power at the quarterback position. Nebraska returns the majority of its starters on defense from last season, but that defense was almost as bad as last year’s offense. Frost has a great offense, but he still don’t expect much from this team.

The Cornhuskers will be better than last season, but coming off a coaching change, it looks a whole lot like a playoff team. Frost needs time to let the program get its feet on the ground. It is just the beginning.

- Thomas Schlinker

Michigan
Head coach: Jim Harbaugh (4th season)
Key players: QB Brian Cushman, RB Tarik Black, RB Kareem Higdon, RB Hassan Haskins, WR Donovan Peoples-Jones

Through three seasons under Jim Harbaugh, the Wolverines have yet to finish above third in the Big Ten East. They’ve also yet to beat Ohio State.

This year’s Michigan team may be the second-best team the Wolverines have had to work with. There’s still a real chance the Wolverines could be in a position to actually make the previous mentioned goals.

Although Harbaugh was conservative in saying what constitutes a win, the Wolverines have missed some key players from last year’s squad, especially in the defensive backfield. They will suffer significantly from the loss of the Big Ten East.

Chalk it up to one of the most difficult coaching tasks Harbaugh will face this season.

Michigan opens the season with a trip to No. 17 Notre Dame. Before hosting No. 4 Wisconsin and No. 9 Penn State, it will play a two-in-state rivals No. 11 Michigan State later in the season.

The Wolverines then finish the season with a trip to No. 10 Ohio State.

So in reality, regardless of the fact Harbaugh was very conservative, he must be number four or fifth — perhaps fourth or fifth — in the Big Ten East?

- Matt Linneman

Michigan State
Head coach: Mark Dantonio (12th season)
Key players: RB LeVeon Bell, RBs Jordan Moster, J.J. Scott, WR Rettig Davis, OL Beau Benschawel, OL Michael Deiter, LB TJ Edwards, LB Joe Bachie, S David Dowell

Michigan State is entering the 2018 season after surprising plenty of people with a 10-3 season that ended with a victory over Washington in the Rose Bowl.

The Spartans return almost all of their key players from a 10-3 season, and this year’s team will only have a few key positions to compete for in their starting line.

The Spartans also return all of their key defensive players. The Spartans’s biggest loss has to do with the offense, with Brian Hoyer leaving to become the quarterback for the Big Ten East.

After losing the last Big Ten Ti - tle game, Paul Chryst’s team is ready to make the jump to one of the nation’s top-elite teams.

Given they play in the weaker div - ision, Wisconsin should have no prob - lems running the football on route to the Big Ten East. The Wolverines lost to them by a significant margin in last year’s conference contest. But this team has the talent to attack any top 10 team and can have an offensive line that can pass block and run block in an elusive conference title.

Michigan offers potential for the Buckeyes. Michigan State can be a big hurdle for the Wolverines. Michigan State can definitely be a challenge for the Wolverines.

However, Michigan State is not as dominant a team as the Wolverines.

- Matt Linneman

Iowa
Head coach: Kirk Ferentz (23rd season)
Key players: TE Noah Fant, QB Nate Stanley, WR Stanley Morgan, S Amani Hooker, CB Matt Hankins, LBs Joe Bachie, LBs Tyler King, LBs Mike Daniels, LBs Anthony Young

There are certainly some question marks, particularly at running back and on the offensive line. But there’s a lot like about this Iowa team.

The Hawkeyes’ game changing players are largely the same as last season, with Nate Stanley, two of the team’s top two receivers, all four starting offensive linemen, and two of the team’s top three running backs and tight ends. This team could be one of the nation’s best teams.

Noah Fant, despite probably is the best offensive talent at tight end and is a matchup nightmare for even the best defensive linemen.

On the defensive side of the ball, the Iowa defense is as good as any in the Big Ten East.

The defense has a few key injuries, but they still have a good shot at finishing near the top of the Big Ten East.

- Matt Linneman

Wisconsin
Head coach: Paul Chryst (5th season)
Key players: QB Jonathan Taylor, OL David Edwards, OL Michael Deiter, QB Alex Hornibrook

After losing the last Big Ten Ti - tle game, Paul Chryst’s team is ready to make the jump to one of the nation’s top-elite teams.

This year’s Michigan team may be the second-best team the Wolverines have had to work with. There’s still a real chance the Wolverines could be in a position to actually make the previous mentioned goals.

Although Harbaugh was conservative in saying what constitutes a win, the Wolverines have missed some key players from last year’s squad, especially in the defensive backfield. They will suffer significantly from the loss of the big three.

Chalk it up to one of the most difficult coaching tasks Harbaugh will face this season.

Michigan opens the season with a trip to No. 17 Notre Dame. Before hosting No. 4 Wisconsin and No. 9 Penn State, it will play a two-in-state rivals No. 11 Michigan State later in the season.

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So in reality, regardless of the fact Harbaugh was very conservative, he must number fourth or fifth — perhaps fourth or fifth — in the Big Ten East?

- Matt Linneman

Iowa has one of the best offenses in the Big Ten West, and perhaps the one in senior guard: Mark Dantonio. He and linebacking pair should never break on Big Ten West offenses, even though the Buckeyes will be replacing two important contributors, they will never be the same as they were last season.

As Michigan State Coach Dantonio, this team has a chance to be one of the nation’s top teams.

Although Alex Hornibrook has been very inconsistent through his first two years, the Iowa offense should be efficient enough game manager to lead a terrific Wisconsin team.

His 21 passing touchdowns were good for fourth among Big Ten qua - terbacks last season and he owned a rating of 148.4. The kyle has plenty of arm and was statistically one of the few deep threats in the nation last year, but this team has the offensively line to help him if he needs to find a receiver downfield.

Defensively, Wisconsin has one of the best defensive lines in the Big Ten West and perhaps the best defensive line in the Big Ten West this season. With Nate Stanley, two of the team’s top two receivers, all four starting offensive linemen, and two of the team’s top three running backs and tight ends. This team could be one of the nation’s best teams.

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- Matt Linneman
By Matthew Lingerman

For the last decade and the foreseeable future, a matchup involving Appalachian State and Penn State is one of the most anticipated in college football. For the Mountaineers, this visit is the first of two seasons.

The Mountaineers are the only team this season that has a chance to beat the Nittany Lions.

By Thomas Schlarp

Penn State vs. Appalachian State

As a result of its transition to FBS, Appalachian State is 36-9 over its last 45 games and 27-3 against Power Five teams.


What to watch

Penn State: Miles Sanders

The Miles Sanders era officially begins on Saturday. He might have the toughest job of any running back in the nation.

Penn State -24

Mountaineers… They’re better

Penn State fans should use the precedent of the 2007 Appalachian State that beat Michigan — the 2018 Appalachian State Mountaineers can hang around and give the Nittany Lions a chance to play a true top-10 game.

Lineman group ready to move forward without Manny Bowen

Bowman’s departure undoubtedly removes only the best talent at the Mike position, but his leadership will also be absent from the defense.

Mountaineers one of the best line groups in college football.

The defensive line will have to step up and be more active this week.

Through the Numbers

1,088

Tracy McLellpy needs a little more

2018 App. State Mountaineers...

Penn State

See how many turns they get this week.

Manny Bowen had a "reputation" to live up to and he needed to accomplish this summer to earn his way back on the field in Beaver Stadium.

Hollahan or Danny Dahl, who have a combined 16 career rushing yards.

Penn State’s defense will have to step up to the task -- it’s going to be a difficult game for Appalachian State.

Young guys and the starters will have to gear up for 10 interceptions last year.

Penn State's defense will have to step up to the task -- it’s going to be a difficult game for Appalachian State.

Bowman has been impressed with not only the team’s performance on the field, but their continued drive to improve on and off the field.

Bowman’s leadership will also be absent from the defense.

The Mountaineers will utilize a run-heavy pistol spread scheme.

Bowman’s absence undoubtedly removes only the best talent at the Mike position.

Penn State should still be expected to win this game.

Bowman's leadership will also be absent from the defense.

Parsons and Luketa, in particular, should still be expected to win this game.

The Mountaineers are one of the best line groups in college football.

Penn State will have to dominate in the trenches in both halves of the ball.

Penn State may have the toughest job of any running back in the nation.

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They can move at the levels of special interest for Saturday.

You're going to see a lot of younger players in the lineup. Those guys can move. They've worked hard and they're ready for some extended playing time.

They're mature guys," Brown said last week. "I'll talk about all of us, all of our starters, but we will talk about it with Manny Bowen in mind, but we will talk about it with him off the field." 1.5 - 2.0

They are twitchy, they are explosive.

Before the Big Ten kickoff, we discuss a few同年 questions.

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Record Prediction: 11-1

All summer long, I was down on Penn State's chances to repeat its success from the previous two seasons. I was especially concerned about the Nittany Lions' lack of experience everywhere, wasn't sold on the optics of Jan Johnson starting at MIKE linebacker and the barrage of medical retirements didn't exactly make things any better. There was even a point where I was firmly settled on an 8-4 prediction.

I still have the same concerns I once had and I don't even think the Nittany Lions are the best team in the Big Ten East, yet here I am. Ultimately, I love the way that the schedule lines up and I'd be a fool to bet against Trace McSorley. The blue and white extend their unbeaten streak at home another year and ride the arm of McSorley all the way back to Indianapolis.

-Patrick Burns

Impact Freshman: LB Micah Parsons

We've been hearing since his commitment just how scary Micah Parsons can be in the eyes of opposing offenses, but I wasn't sure he'd have an immediate impact given his change from end to linebacker. But with the front seven seemingly in flux, most evidently with the apparently final end of the Manny Bowen saga, it sounds like Penn State is going to need Parsons. By all accounts, Parsons is ready for the call. His body is way ahead of schedule compared to most freshmen and although he may struggle in coverage as a linebacker, his versatility on the edge might prove vital to Penn State's defense — especially in third down situations.

-Matt Lingerman

Offensive MVP: QB Trace McSorley

McSorley might also have to make a pit-stop in New York in December before he gets to Indianapolis. This offense is just as much his as it is Ricky Rahne's and he has as many tools to work with. But with longtime Barkley now in the NFL, McSorley will have to prove to critics that he has what it takes to repeat. It's absolutely ridiculous that he still has to prove his talents to people, but that's the nature of football and if anybody who thrives with a chip on his shoulder, it's McSorley.

In other words, Magic Sanders and Trace McSorley would each take different approaches to No. 9. It is the obvious pick here. Expect home to receive the ball with much of the program's passing records in his possession.

-Patrick Burns

Defensive MVP: LB Cam Brown

Just as many people focus on his new football skills, Parsons should be an even smarter defender and will be playing his best football as the season progresses.

-Thomas Schlerp

Emerging Star: Yetur Gross-Matos

Thrust into the starting defensive end position with the medical retirements of Ryan Buchholz and Torrence Brown, Gross-Matos will have to progress a little quicker than ideal, but something he's fully capable of. As a freshman in 2017, Gross-Matos was already an athletic freak, but needed some time to refine his raw football skills.

With another summer under his belt, Gross-Matos should be an even smarter defender and will be playing his best football as the season progresses.

-Thomas Schlerp

Impressively, Brown is once again not a part of the Penn State program. Cam Brown is arguably the team's most experienced linebacker. Brown saw significant playing time during his true freshman season in 2016 when the Nittany Lions dealt with a number of injuries. Now, Brown is in his junior season and is going to be the veteran presence for a new crop of young linebackers. The linebacker core is always the backbone of the Penn State defense and Brown will be the reason there's not much of a drop off from last season.

-Tyler King
Laundry? Solved.

From Tide to Febreze, save and shop close to campus.

Penn State Campus Target
Beaver Ave & Fraser St
By Bailey Jensen

The Daily Collegian

Campus doesn’t have Native American students, and the thought of paying for college makes her feel like she doesn’t belong. “I don’t think that the idea of Penn State is to be very inclusive,” Clever said, who is a freshman hospitality management major from Brazil.

Clever had moved to Pennsylvania to study at Penn State, but the thought of paying for college makes her feel like she doesn’t belong. “I don’t think that the idea of Penn State is to be very inclusive,” Clever said, who is a freshman hospitality management major from Brazil.

For Clever, there is only one way to get to native american college students: to be more inclusive. “I don’t think that the idea of Penn State is to be very inclusive,” Clever said, who is a freshman hospitality management major from Brazil.

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Nearly one-third of all students in the study report negative impact on their academic performance. Roeser said students can cope with these higher stress levels by learning mindfulness. This is a skill that can be cultivated through training the mind, he said.

Mindfulness allows individuals to deal with stress by breaking aware of their minds and bodies, Roeser said.

"It takes practice to just be aware," Roeser said. "You have to overcome the fixity of the mind to bring them to this clear, open place. Practicing mindfulness has benefits, however.

"It's a three-fold skill that consists of concentration, clarity, and acceptance." Roeser believed that individuals need to be present to the here and now, right as our thoughts are occurring.

Learning to be present can help students in obvious ways, like paying attention and being aware of surroundings, but also with issues of stress, suffering, and increasing happiness.

"It's very hard to want to help people flourish, we want to help alleviate the unique sources of suffering they're dealing with," Roeser said.

While some may deride the idea of such a program will inadvertently benefit a Robin Hood tax on Wall Street." As for the idea of free college, McCarthy wasn't surprised by the idea's popularity among Americans, saying more independent voters are "identifying with the left, a progressive wing of the Democratic Party.

She expressed certainty, however, that the policy as being funded by higher taxes — raising the military budget by another $61 billion — is commonly cited by the majority of Americans think upper-income households should pay for such programs.

According to a Gallup poll, the majority of Americans think upper-income individuals and corporations pay too little in taxes; most prominent among advertising the policy as being bad for the economy by higher taxes on such groups. Still, the exact cost of a tuition-free college program is malleable. The World Bank has roughly estimated that eliminating student debt in the US would cost $700 billion— commonly cited by Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos as being funded by higher taxes.

"There's no reason the federal government would be opposed to making something free dimin -

"You can practice mindfulness by experiencing the world through your five senses.

Roeser said practicing mindfulness — through meditation or focusing on details to ground oneself — can help alleviate stress by allowing people to be present as fully as possible in whatever is occurring at the moment.

"We're really trying to get young people to think about what they're passionate about, what's important to them. The courses meet for 25-30 minutes every week, using a 'flipped' class format by having students listen to readings that are reviewed outside of class. Scheduled class meeting times are used as workshops for experiential exercises and discussions.

Students then attend a contemplative lab once a week to discuss course material and on-demand coursework.

Roeser taught the class at the University of Wisconsin—Madison to help college students succeed — and stress less.

Stemming from Roeser's research, the course brings together philosophy and ratified any tuition-free program as lacking in "intellectual rigor" and was "motivated by self-interest." He said he believes in tough love.

"If people are asking, 'Why is college so expensive?' it's because the system is rapacious.

"People are asking, why college is so expensive?' and it's because you made the wrong choice of major,' " Sanders' College for All Act, the most comprehensive tuition-free college legislation ever proposed, will come with a "trillion-dollar price tag."

Aidan Mattis, co-founder of Penn State's Turning Point branch, offered a view in Mattis' ideal world, education reform will be driven by the young, progressive wing of the Democratic Party. It's a three-fold skill that consists of concentration, clarity, and acceptance. Human beings are malleable. This part of the brain can

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Be vigilant, but don’t be afraid

As college students, we need to be aware of the possibility of violence without letting it affect how we live our lives.

The possibility of an active shooter or any kind of terror attack happening on a college campus again has become an everyday worry for us.

It’s something always in the back of our minds at college and often more relevant. For Penn State’s students, it’s especially relevant and anxiety-inducing to think about.

Penn State’s student government has set up a hotline for students to reach out to and ask questions. It’s an important tool for students to feel less alone in this difficult time.

Penn State’s motto is “To embrace our motto,” which means to embrace commonalities and be inclusive. It’s something that’s been at the forefront of our minds recently.

Penn State is a community that — although we may have our differences — we are all Penn Staters. We need to embrace our motto and work towards a more inclusive Penn State.

Our View

Madeline Messa

Opinion-Editor-in-Chief

We cannot live our lives in constant fear of something out of our immediate control.

We need to embrace our motto and work towards a more inclusive Penn State.
Williamsport is remote and you make it to eventually. While on your bucket list and a place just baseball fans.”

Penn State's forward Andrew Sturtz (16) shoots the puck during the game vs. No. 18 Penn State defeated Minnesota 5-2.

The talented forward's style is one that you either have or you don't and certainly I speak for Keith Fisher and Matt Lindbohm when you go out recruiting and you see something like that, you be like ‘oh my god, incredible potential, it jumps out of you and it's something that we would love to have.’

You don’t always get it at the right time, in the right situation, but it's something that Folkes has the potential to be a catalyst of this talented squad.

Penn State Back Coni Creeley (15) goes to pass the ball during the game vs. No. 18 Penn State defeated Minnesota 5-2.

You don’t always get it at the right time, in the right situation, but it's something that Folkes has the potential to be a catalyst of this talented squad.

PSU not afraid of tough schedule

By Ben Ferrer

Penn State has grown rapidly since its move to Division I, now fielding a club sport just six years old. However, the Lions are a team with a long history of success.

Since 1970, the program has won six Little League World Series titles, and 20 individual national championships. The Lions also have won a total of 10 national championships, including six Little League World Series titles, and three Little League National Championships.

Penn State's move to Division I in 1981 was a significant milestone for the program, as it was the first time the Lions had played against teams at the highest level of competition.

The Lions have been successful at the highest level of competition since joining Division I. They have won six Little League World Series titles, including the 2009 title.

The Lions have also been successful in the Little League National Championships, winning four titles since 1981. They have also won three Little League National Championships, including the 2009 title.

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**FOR RENT 2 BEDRM**

2 in 1, 2 Bedroom Townhouse. Professional landlords with borders welcome. Utilize public transportation. Lively neighborhood. Located at 210 S. Allen St. Contact Mike or Dina at 814-235-0639, or stop by 101 N. Allen St.

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TOWNHOUSE ON SOUTHSIDE! Aida Smith has a 3 BEDRM, 1-1/2 bath townhouse available in the S. Allen St. area. Contact info: 814-235-5500 or 814-231-5600.

**FOR RENT**

4 BEDROOM, 1-1/2 bath country cottage. Very close to State College. Contact Dave at 814-360-8387 to take over lease, reserved parking, convenient location. Best price! Contact Property Mgmt. 814-231-3100.

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FALL HAYRIDES, BARN dances, and family fun only 5 miles east of campus. Call 234-1812.

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**PROCTOR**

Tastenu! Nutrition and technology is the only place that occasionally sells authentic Caribbean food.

Because Angela was a small island, she did not expect to find some of her favorite Anthony s firms in State College. However, she added that she loves to try new things and make her own food. In addition, she said that her Student Association offers Caribbean food during their Lunar New Year banquet.

As a student from the Caribbean, Angel Proctor said she has been unsatisfied with the food available on and off campus. She serves Anguillian or Caribbean food in State College.

**HELP WANTED**

HELP WANTED FOR PER 30 hours/week, 3:00-7:00pm. Must be able to work evenings. Duties include, but are not limited to: Twitter/Instagram/Email/Website. 

**SERVICES**

**EVERYDAY SERVICES**

- Housecleaning
- Laundry
- Shopping
- Pet Care
- House Sitting
- Babysitting
-errand running
- Swimming pool cleaning
to mention a few!

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Garrett Taylor is ready to make some noise

By Patrick Burns

Penn State defensive coordinator Brent Pry describes Garrett Taylor as a “field general.”

It seems like an odd title on the surface given Taylor’s lack of experience, both in general and at the safety position. But John Reid, a noted film-junkie and one of the more cerebral players on the team, feels the same way.

“[Taylor]’s a really smart guy,” Reid said. “He’s able to get into good positions and read the quarterback well. I think that comes from the work he puts in watching film. He seems like he always knows what the offense is trying to do. He jumps passes really well. Having that presence over the top is really helpful.”

Taylor’s ascent to starting safety has been both quiet and difficult.

After tearing his ACL his senior year of high school, Taylor redshirted his first season in Happy Valley and switched from cornerback to safety in hopes of earning some more playing time. The boost in playing time never came, as the Richmond, Virginia, native spent another two years buried on the depth chart, and ranked 24th on the team in tackles last season with just 12.

On Tuesday, Taylor was officially rewarded with a starting spot at strong safety when the Nittany Lions released their Week 1 depth chart.

“It’s just somebody who always kept working hard,” Reid said. “He never doubted himself. He never dropped his head. He just kept looking for ways to improve. Whether that’s in film, speed, technique, he always kept going for ways to get better. He was never a guy that gave up at all because he got redshirted his freshman year. He looked it as a part of growth and ran with it.”

In a safeties room that certainly doesn’t lack depth, Taylor separated himself from the rest of the pack early in the spring, according to coach James Franklin. He’s set to start next to Nick Scott, who like Taylor, has been one of the team’s top players on special teams after switching positions early in his collegiate career.

“I think I just did a really good job of knowing all my assignments, which in turn allowed me to play confident and fast,” Taylor said. “I was where I needed to be when I was supposed to be there. I made the plays I needed to make and [safeties] coach [Tim] Banks is really big on playing guys that he can trust, so I think I did a really good job of building coach Banks’ trust throughout the entire preseason,“ he added.

Taylor, a four-star recruit in high school, gained some of that trust in the weight room, where he says that his testing numbers have improved across the board.

“My bench went up to 350, my squat is at like 500, my vertical leap went up to 36.5 from like 34 and my shuttle times stayed pretty consistent,” Taylor said.

With Marcus Allen, Jason Cabinda, Grant Haley, Christian Campbell, Brandon Smith, Parker Cothren, Curtis Cothran all gone, critics have talked at length about the Nittany Lions’ lack of experience on defense.

Taylor and his teammates are sick of hearing about it and they’re ready to let their play do the talking.

“We’ve been hearing a lot of that this whole offseason,” Taylor said. “I think we’ll surprise people but we won’t surprise ourselves. We know the talent and the depth we have at defense and how explosive we are. Now it’s just a matter of getting out and showing the country what we have.”

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