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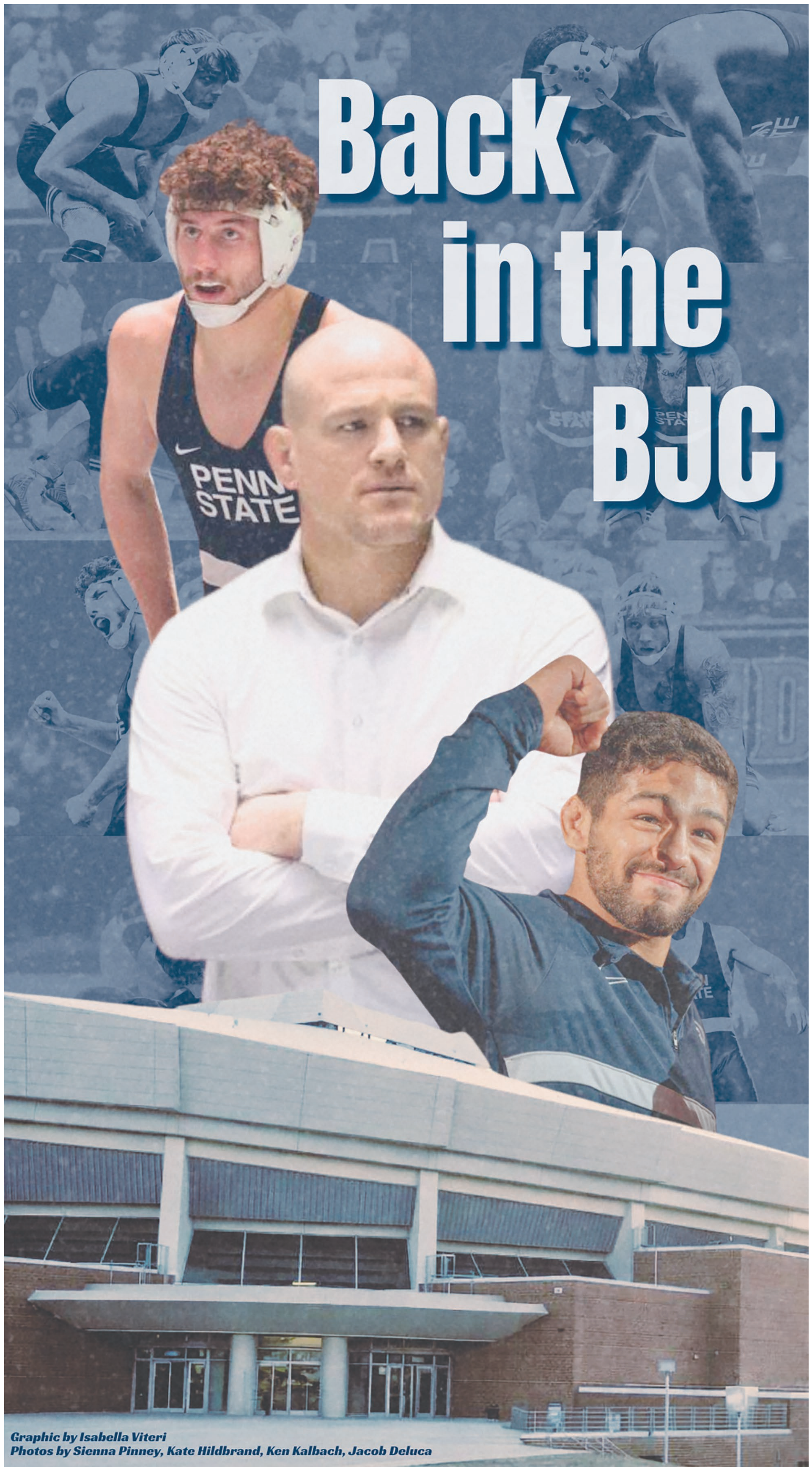
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NEBRASKA (9-5)
CORNHUSKERS

(11-0) PENN STATE
NITTANY LIONS



Back in the BJC



Graphic by Isabella Viteri
Photos by Sienna Pinney, Kate Hildbrand, Ken Kalbach, Jacob Deluca

Heavyweight mean mentality

Cole Mirasola's fresh mindset showcases growth

By Andrew Deal
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

The heavyweight position is a spot that can range from around 200 pounds, all the way to 285 pounds. When deemed a smaller heavyweight, the wrestler has to utilize additional tactics other than size to succeed at the weight class.

For Cole Mirasola, he's focused on his quickness and IQ, while incorporating a mental aspect that has led him to a win streak.

"I feel like in the past I haven't really been super mean when I wrestle, just kind of tactical and slick, but talking to coach Cael (Sanderson), you always have to be clean," Mirasola said. "You can win dirty, like not being dirty, but pulling guys down and focusing on just being mean."

Mirasola has implemented a mean aspect to his wrestling that's propelled him to the next level at the collegiate stage.

Entering this season, it was unknown how the redshirt freshman would fully perform.

Being an undersized heavyweight, Mirasola showed what could happen against the bigger heavyweight during his redshirt season.

While Greg Kerkvliet was nursing an injury in 2025, Mirasola stepped in and faced Ohio State's Nick Feldman and Illinois' Luke Luffman.

Both matches he was unable to get out from underneath the big wrestlers, proving that size does sometimes matter.

"I think he's obviously a little bit smaller than the guys he's wrestling," Josh Barr said. "But, I think he just kind of got that chip on his shoulder to go out there and fight guys."

Despite facing bigger wrestlers, Mirasola has continued to



Herley Gong/The Daily Collegian

At 285 pounds, Penn State's Cole Mirasola fights to hold down Indiana's Caleb Marzolino, winning 5-0 in Rec Hall.

"I think I'm trying to focus on being more mean, when I'm wrestling, just kind of not like letting guys get any points easily."

Cole Mirasola
Heavyweight

maintain focus, perfecting his craft, but the mentality shifted as the season has gone along.

"I think I'm trying to focus on being more mean, when I'm wrestling, just kind of not like letting guys get any points easily," Mirasola said.

Mirasola's confidence in himself has never wavered. Through a two-match losing streak, questions arose from outside the pro-

gram about the true potential of the heavyweight wrestler. Despite this, he continued to work and continued to believe in himself, becoming more bad-tempered with his approach in the process.

"It doesn't really matter where we wrestle," Mirasola said. "I'm just trying to be mean wherever we go."

This mean aspect has struck fear into his teammates, including Barr, who's attempting to "try and stay from him" because "he's a mean, tough kid."

He showcased this mentality throughout his latest matches, using that anger to overpower some bigger wrestlers, while keeping steady in his attacks during bouts with wrestlers more of his size.

His first test of 2026 came against Iowa's Ben Kueter, who's closer to his weight than that of Lehigh's Nathan Taylor — who

Mirasola lost to earlier in the season.

"Cole's continuing to obviously get better as he competes and his confidence," Sanderson said.

Mirasola maintained his focus and upset Kueter, proving his capabilities despite this being his first collegiate season as the starter and one of the smaller heavyweights in the country.

The toughness and focus showed up in his most recent matchup against Maryland. Mirasola overpowered a heavier Joey Schneck and drove him to the ground multiple times before putting him in a cradle for the fall.

"If I wrestle the whole time, I don't think anyone can really wrestle with me for that whole seven minutes," Mirasola said. "If I use my conditioning as a factor, I think that'll help for sure."

Mirasola's conditioning has pushed him to No. 12 in the InterMat rankings, winning his last

seven matches entering the illustrious Bryce Jordan Center dual on Friday against Nebraska. With his first dual season still ongoing, the Jackson, Wisconsin, native is still "kind of actively trying to get the extra calories."

The calorie growth has been a process for Mirasola who's slowly trying to add on. He's constantly putting the work in, and slowly adding weight to his already skilled body.

After succeeding in his first major test of 2026, Mirasola will face yet another highly ranked wrestler when the Cornhuskers come to town.

He'll take on a similar sized wrestler in AJ Ferrari, who's jumped weights after competing at 197 pounds last season.

Ferrari's transition to heavyweight has seemingly been much easier, as he's matched up well against the heavier wrestlers. In his most recent match, he lost in sudden victory to Feldman, giving up just one takedown.

His unique style will provide something a little different for the Nittany Lion.

"He's very tactical in the way he wrestles, so very tricky, and it'll be a fun challenge for Cole," Sanderson said. "Obviously you got to wrestle wisely and do what you do to give yourself a chance of success there."

It'll be a difficult task against Ferrari, who's showcased he's one of the best at heavyweight. Despite this, the weight matchup will favor Mirasola, who's thrived against wrestlers with a similar weigh-in.

"He's a tough kid," Barr said. "I'm sure coach Cael mentioned that, but he's just going to get better every single match."

To email reporter: asd5765@psu.edu.
Follow him on X @[AndrewDeal22](https://twitter.com/AndrewDeal22).

Daily grind leads to dominance



Herley Gong/The Daily Collegian

At 174 pounds, Penn State's Levi Haines lifts up Indiana's Orlando Cruz, winning 5-0 in Rec Hall.

By Lyle Alenstein
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Mitchell Messenbrink pumped his fist toward the crowd after winning via pin. After Braeden Davis' commanding 24-10 victory by major decision, he was greeted by Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics Pat Kraft, who gave him an emphatic high five with his left hand.

It was a commanding 48-0 win for Penn State over Indiana to make it 81 straight wins in dual matches, but for Cael Sanderson's squad, it was another day in the office.

"We enjoy competing, and each individual's working on what they do and getting better in each match," Cael Sanderson said. "So, every time you step out there, it's an opportunity to compete and do something you love, and then also continue to get better."

At intermission, Penn State had eight of its nine wrestlers receive championship rings from suiting up for Team USA this past summer in the U23 and U20 World Championships. Mesenbrink was the lone Nittany Lion who didn't partake in the ceremony, as his bout was up next coming out of the half.

"I think when you enjoy what you're doing, points are obviously a good thing, and it's good training and conditioning."

Cael Sanderson
Coach

Sanderson often preaches how the goal for his wrestlers is to succeed beyond the collegiate stage. The success at the international level this past summer proved just that.

But then it again, it carries over to when his wrestlers suit up in the blue and white singlets. Entering the weekend Penn State had six guys ranked No. 1 in the InterMat rankings, but those top spots don't really matter to Sanderson.

"I think we have a strong team, obviously, a lot of good kids," Sanderson said. "We don't really focus or worry or think too much about rankings, right? It's the same boring process of getting better every day and every com-

petition and remain grateful for the opportunities that we have, and all those other things will take care of themselves."

With the win over the Hoosiers, Penn State moved to 10-0 on the year and 4-0 in Big Ten play. It was a dominant showing in front of a Rec Hall crowd that had over 6,200 people show up draped head to toe in the blue and white.

Sanderson said Indiana was "scrappy." The No. 25 Hoosiers ended up recording more takedowns than what No. 4 Iowa recorded against the Nittany Lions a week ago, but Penn State still ended up with bonus points in nine of the 10 victories.

"They came out fighting, so it was good for us, and it's good that our guys were able to score a lot of points," Sanderson said. "I think when you enjoy what you're doing, points are obviously a good thing, and it's good training and conditioning."

Penn State returns to action on Saturday to face Maryland in College Park, as pending snowstorms had the dual moved from Sunday. Sanderson said wrestling in consecutive days will be great preparation for the postseason, where the wrestlers will have to do just that.

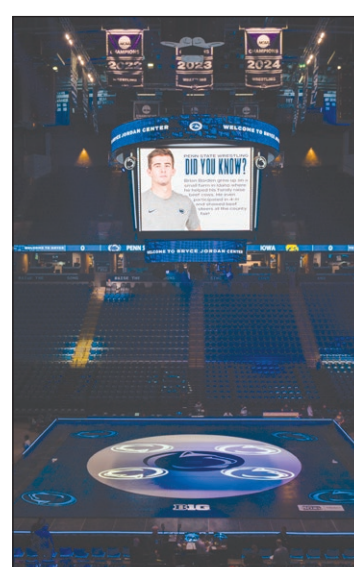
After blowing out Indiana, the Nittany Lions will face a similar caliber opponent in the Terrapins. Despite blowing out the Hoosiers, and the outcome likely to be very similar against Maryland, Sanderson is expecting his squad to fine-tune mistakes from Friday as it hits the road.

That's to be expected from a coach who has led Penn State to 12 national titles as a head coach, because finding miscues in a 48-0 victory is what it takes to create a dynasty like he has.

"We weren't at our best at every weight, but we're excited to keep pushing forward here and get right back on the mat," Sanderson said.

To email reporter: lca5223@psu.edu.
Follow him on X @[LAlenstein](https://twitter.com/LAlenstein).

Around the Big Ten



Sienna Pinney/The Daily Collegian

Lights shine on the mat before the Penn State wrestling dual against Iowa in the Bryce Jordan Center.

By Evan Smith
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Similar to Penn State, there were two dominant victories over the weekend as the rest of the Big Ten saw a series of lopsided-dual matches.

However, two duals stood above the rest in competitiveness, headlined by a clash between upcoming opponents for the Nittany Lions.

BJC Dual preview

The most noteworthy contests of the previous weekend came from Penn State's upcoming dual opponents in the Bryce Jordan Center in Nebraska and Ohio State. The two faced marquee opponents on Friday before clashing with each other in a highlight-reel matchup on Sunday afternoon.

The Buckeyes started the action on Friday with a 29-9 blow-out of Minnesota in Minneapolis. Ohio State won the first five matches en route to taking seven out of 10 matches on the card.

Noteworthy matches in the dual included No. 4 Max McEnelly beating No. 5 Dylan Fishback, 4-1, in sudden victory. McEnelly has performed under expectations up to this match after being a favorite in the weight class entering 2025-26, while Fishback has surged up rankings up until his match Friday.

Unranked

Buckeyes' 125-pounder Vincent Kilkeary upset no. 9 Jore Volk in sudden victory to set the tone. During the ensuing five-match win streak, 141-pound No. 1 Jesse Mendez delivered a 21-5 tech fall over No. 9 Vance Vombaur.

Notable news for the Buckeyes is that 157-pound No.1

Brandon Cannon is out with a knee injury, which is expected to keep him out for multiple weeks. He is uncertain to return for their dual with Penn State on Feb. 13.

Nebraska, on the other hand, spent their Friday night losing to Iowa at home. Hawkeyes' coach Tom Brands earned his 300th career win in the 22-14 victory.

The victory came behind a couple of upsets by the Hawkeyes. At 133, No. 10 Drake Ayala upset No. 8 Jacob Van Dee, 12-6, and at 184, Gabe Arnold upset No. 7 Silas Allred, 4-1.

On Sunday, Nebraska and Ohio State met in Columbus in a dual decided by a single point.

The dual started with four straight Buckeye victories, getting Ohio State out to a 14-0 lead. One of those wins saw Mendez get revenge over No. 3 Brock Hardy in a national final rematch. Mendez won 14-3 via major decision.

Once the bout reached 157 pounds, Nebraska turned the tides. No. 5 Antrell Taylor's major decision over Maddox Shaw set off a run of five straight wins to give Nebraska a 16-14 lead with one match to go. Nebraska saw upsets at 174 pounds, with No. 6 Christopher Minto defeating No. 4 Carson Kharchla. At 184-pounds Allred beat Fishback in tiebreakers during the streak.

The dual came down to a heavyweight rematch between No. 3 Nick Feldman and No. 4 AJ Ferrari. The match went into sudden victory, where Feldman took down Ferrari to secure Ohio State's 17-16 win.

Rest of conference

The rest of the Big Ten saw a smattering of blowouts around the Midwest, with the exception of another one-point swing in Champaign, Illinois. The No. 12 Fighting Illini beat No. 17 Rutgers on a criteria tiebreaker after the matches concluded tied 16-16.

The teams traded back-to-back wins for the first four weight classes, before Illinois pulled away slightly, up 13-6. At 174 pounds, Ryan Ford upset No. 25 Colin Kelly with a major decision to bring the Scarlet Knights back into it.

Rutgers trailed 16-13 entering the heavyweight bout when No. 19 Hunter Catka took a sudden-victory decision to knot the dual at 16.

Illinois was awarded the decisive point on third criteria, which is awarded to the total individual scoring across the 10 matches, where it had a 46-42 edge.

To email reporter: evanrgsmith@psu.edu.
Follow him on X @[evanrgsmith](https://twitter.com/evanrgsmith).

New InterMat rankings

By Evan Smith
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Braeden Davis fell one spot to No. 12 at 141 pounds despite winning both of his matches against Indiana and Maryland. Davis was jumped by North Carolina freshman Luke Simcox, who jumped from No. 17 to No. 10.

The other nine Nittany lions held steady in their positions, including six No. 1 wrestlers across the lineup.

Luke Lilledahl, Shayne Van Ness, Mitchell Mesenbrink, Levi Haines, Rocco Welsh and Josh Barr are ranked No. 1 in their respective weight classes.

Elsewhere in the lineup, Marcus Blaze sits at No. 4 at 133 pounds, PJ Duke is ranked No. 3 at 157 pounds and Cole Mirasola remains No. 12 at 285 pounds.

To email reporter evanrgsmith@psu.edu.
Follow him on X @[evanrgsmith](https://twitter.com/evanrgsmith).



Herley Gong/The Daily Collegian

At 141 pounds, Penn State's Braeden Davis lifts Indiana's Henry Porter, winning 4-0 in Rec Hall.

Will the dynasty end?

How can collegiate wrestling catch up to Sanderson's run?

By Evan Smith
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Cael Sanderson's Nittany Lions have been the dominant program in the world of college wrestling for the better part of the last two decades. The program has won 12 of the last 14 national championships and are in the midst of the longest-winning streak in NCAA wrestling history.

Through changes in the landscape of college sports, no other team has been able to catch up to the dominance of the Nittany Lions. In fact, the current team may be in its best form yet, being the first team ever to have six wrestlers ranked No. 1 at the same time.

The Nittany Lions will also only lose one member of its starting lineup next year, will add top recruits and senior world champion Masanosuke Ono as well as returning past starters in Aaron Nagao and Tyler Kasak.

But dynasties can't last forever. In an upcoming era that sees the financial landscape of the entire NCAA changing and rules modernizing across the board, what will it take for another program to usurp Penn State as the top dogs in wrestling?

Big Ten Network analyst Shane Sparks watches more college wrestling than most of the country and has had a front row seat to see the Nittany Lions throughout this historic run. Despite having seen the entire national landscape of college wrestling, not even he could think of a solution for other programs.

"It's one thing to close the gap, but it's another thing to actually beat (Penn State)," Sparks told the Daily Collegian. "How does that happen? I don't have an answer for you."

Teams around the country are trying to innovate in order to reach levels near what is being accomplished inside the Lorenzo Wrestling Complex.

Oklahoma State decided to hire out of the Sanderson coaching tree, landing former Penn State wrestler and assistant coach



Jackson Ranger/The Daily Collegian

Penn State wrestling head coach Cael Sanderson holds an award for wrestling coach of the year during the Big Ten Wrestling Tournament at the Crisler Arena.

David Taylor prior to last season. To build up his program faster, Taylor utilized the transfer portal heavily, including grabbing former Nittany Lions in Alex Facundo and Zack Ryder to insert into his starting lineup. While the new roster hasn't been as successful as hoped, Taylor had another trick up his sleeve.

The Cowboys landed a commitment from in-state Bishop McCort High School senior Jax Forrest last winter. He decided to enroll early and start competing this semester.

While Forrest hasn't reached his five-dates yet, after he secured a pin in the first minute of his debut, Forrest wrestled attached at the Cyclone Open, where he won the 133-pound weight class. The attachment signals that Forrest will burn his redshirt in order to compete at the NCAA tournament this season.

Others, including his former high school teammate and top 2027 recruit Melvin Miller have teased using the same tactic during their senior year.

Miller and his brother Bo Bassett are two central Pennsylvania natives from Johnstown,

Pennsylvania. After two recruitment cycles, both prospects elected to spurn Penn State, first to commit to the Iowa Hawkeyes, then to Virginia Tech.

According to Bassett, Penn State was in the mix for both brothers throughout the recruitment process, even with Sanderson attempting to visit their home up until the day of their second commitment to the Hokies. However, Bassett had aspirations beyond joining college wrestling's most recent dynasty.

"I have nothing but respect for what (Sanderson) is doing and this wasn't a decision I took lightly," Bassett said. "If I can add some trophies for Virginia Tech, that would be an amazing opportunity."

Recruits like Bassett and Miller, who have been in the national spotlight since they were children, chose the opportunity to be the faces of a program, rather than part of the machine in Happy Valley. Bassett has been an individual star since he began in the sport, even competing for Real American Freestyle as a high schooler.

Bassett's message for what it

"If anyone is going to even match (Penn State), it's going to take a lot of hard work. I don't think they're losing anytime soon."

Shane Sparks
Broadcaster

will take to rebuild a new dynasty is to not give any other programs too much respect and to hold belief in his coaches and teammates that they can outwork anybody.

For Miller, his mentality of what it means to be at the top of the sport guided his decision to follow Bassett to Virginia Tech.

"I've always been a guy that has to beat the best, and right now, Penn State is the best," Miller said. "Our goal is to take a team to be top 10 up to the top one."

Virginia Tech has a plan to maximize the incoming talents, utilizing the redshirt on their 149

pound starter Caleb Henson after a season in which he went 30-2 en route to a national championship, to maximize their team points when Bassett arrives next year. Miller may follow in the spring similar to Forrest, but he admits the build will take time for the Hokies.

"It's going to take a couple of years of getting a full team and gaining consistency," Miller said. "We just have to believe in ourselves and put in the hard work."

What has Penn State's response to these pushes by other programs? Essentially following the "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" motto. Sanderson's focus has been on building the program the way he has, focusing on recruiting wrestlers who prioritize becoming the best they can be over cashing in for the highest bidder.

"We have a special thing going here and I think recruits see that," Sanderson said. "This era has been good to us, so we're going to follow the rules and get the kids that want to come here for the right reasons."

Programs attempting to match Penn State are focusing on areas similar to what Sanderson pushed for the Nittany Lions in 2011, including acquiring a premium supporting staff and building wrestling clubs of top talent beside the college program.

They're also attempting to utilize the NIL era and outside desires of recruits to land the level of talent Sanderson has consistently developed.

But both recruits and analysts know that the gap is wide between Penn State and the rest of the wrestling landscape. Closing that gap will take a lot, especially with the Nittany Lions at the top of their game.

"If anyone is going to even match (Penn State), it's going to take a lot of hard work," Sparks said. "I don't think they're losing anytime soon."

To email reporter: evanrgsmith@psu.edu.
Follow him on X @[evanrgsmith](https://twitter.com/evanrgsmith).

Davis finding comfort

Adjusting to new a weight class



Herley Gong/The Daily Collegian

At 141 pounds, Penn State's Braeden Davis fights to hold down Indiana's Henry Porter, winning 4-0 in Rec Hall.

By Evan Smith
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Braeden Davis is a man of few words when it comes to speaking into a microphone — Davis prefers to do his talking on the mat.

He did just that in Penn State's dual against Indiana Friday, dropping 24 points in a major-decision victory over No. 25 Henry Porter. The Hoosier scored 10 points against Davis, keeping him one point shy of a tech-fall finish, but Davis didn't let the takedown shake his focus on the mat.

"I've always been taught that if something goes bad, just go and score another takedown," Davis said. "I'm just glad I didn't get thrown on my back."

While Porter offered Davis a modicum of adversity, it was not a worry compared to the treacherous path the junior has walked this season. He's the only Nittany Lion to have taken a loss in their last six dual matches.

That loss came to Iowa's Nasir Bailey, a loss decided by one point, and in which Davis was seconds away from earning that point via riding time or stalling calls.

"There's such a fine line between winning and losing," Cael Sanderson said on Tuesday. "(Davis) will just keep getting

"It was a little bit of a challenge at first, but now that I'm down to my normal shape, it's quite comfortable."

Braeden Davis
141-pound wrestler

better as we move forward."

As Davis walked to the mat Friday, his new walkout song, "Bawitadaba" by Kid Rock, didn't become audible until the final seconds before his match began, a fitting metaphor for a late-onset season for the defending All-American.

At the start of Penn State's season, Davis was notified he'd be redshirting. Following an off-season that saw Davis mired in off-mat controversy, the additions of Marcus Blaze, Masanosuke Ono and the return of Aaron Nagao, Davis was the odd man out of the lineup.

"There was a little bit of confusion at the start of the year but it feels good," Davis said about returning to the lineup.

Davis admittedly didn't manage his weight with intention dur-

ing the month-long period where he wasn't expecting to compete. He only competed at the Kauffman Open in January to start the year. The Belleville, Michigan, native went 4-0 to win the tournament.

That week, Davis learned he would burn his expected redshirt after Nagao once again suffered a season-ending injury. Then the work started to get back into starting lineup worthy condition.

"At the time, I thought I was redshirting, so what do you expect?" Davis said. "So no, I definitely didn't (manage weight) the best."

Sanderson didn't hesitate to give his trusted lightweight the opportunity to hold his spot knowing that Nagao wasn't likely to return this season.

"We kinda just threw him right in there and that decision is made as he's a competitor," Sanderson said. "He will just keep rolling with things."

Getting in shape was easier for Davis than in past years as he moved closer to his natural weight. As a freshman, Davis wrestled down weight at 125 pounds, then bumped up to 133 pounds last season. Weight management is easier for the junior as he bumps up again into the 141-pound slot.

Davis' pace has continued to improve as he works his way deeper into the season, peaking Friday with an eight-takedown performance against Porter. Rec Hall gave Davis a resounding ovation as he left the mat for his largest win of the season. The moment represented Davis finding his place back in Penn State's starting lineup and finding his comfort in a fluctuating season.

"It was a little bit of a challenge at first, but now that I'm down to my normal shape, it's quite comfortable," Davis said. "(141-pounds) is probably the most comfortable out of all the weight classes I've wrestled so far."

To email reporter: evanrgsmith@psu.edu.
Follow him on X @[evanrgsmith](https://twitter.com/evanrgsmith).

Series history

By AJ Piazza
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Penn State will face Nebraska at the Bryce Jordan Center for its 20th matchup. Penn State has won the last nine matches against the Cornhuskers and could extend that to 10 as the favorites entering the dual.

Here's a deep dive into the history of the matchups between Penn State and Nebraska.

Overall record

Penn State has a record of 11-8 against Nebraska. The Nittany Lions have been the better team as of late, while Nebraska won a lot of the early matchups. Penn State has not lost to the Cornhuskers since Cael Sanderson has been at the helm.

Nebraska head coach Mark Manning hasn't been able to get the Cornhuskers over the edge despite bringing in a lot of talent from the transfer portal like heavyweight AJ Ferrari on this year's roster. Manning will try to lead his team to an upset and its first victory in a while.

Notable matches

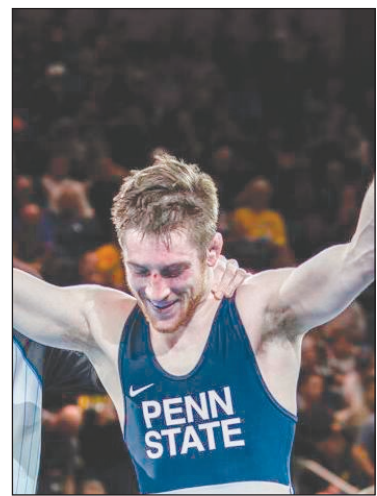
Last season Penn State dominated Nebraska 31-7. No. 3 Tyler Kasak matched up against No. 5 Antrell Taylor, a matchup we will not see this season. Kasak exploded in the first period, and then it was pretty even until Kasak took over. He secured a takedown, and continued to be in control.

The now-junior secured four-near fall points as well to garner a large lead and get the victory, 9-3. Taylor went on later in the season to become a national champion.

One of the closest matchups between the two teams was in 2021-22. Penn State got the victory by a takedown, 21-14. Former Nittany Lion and current assistant coach Nick Lee had a tight match against Chad Red Jr. Lee, who was No. 1 while Red Jr. was No. 8.

Lee got an escape and was awarded an extra point for riding time to take the victory, 4-1. This match got the Nittany Lions the Big Ten regular season title.

In 2015-16, Penn State showed its dominance with a



Chloe Trieff/The Daily Collegian

Penn State's Nick Lee is victor and champion of his weight class after matching up with North Carolina's Kizhan Clarke.

24-10 win. Former wrestler turned UFC fighter Bo Nickal was a part of that dominance. Nickal was the No. 1 wrestler at 174 and wrestled No. 14 Micah Barnes. Nickal was the better wrestler.

In the final period Barnes gave Nickal points by stalling. This allowed Nickal to extend his lead and get the decision win 10-3.

Last time Nebraska won

The last time Nebraska defeated Penn State was in 2008-09 when the Cornhuskers advanced to the NU National Duals semifinals when they defeated the Nittany Lions, 20-14.

At 157 pounds, No. 2 Jordan Burroughs got the first victory for the Cornhuskers and started the momentum for the squad. Burroughs got the 10-4 decision victory over No. 8 Dan Vallimont.

The largest victory of the match was at 197. No. 1 Craig Brester got the tech-fall win over Clay Steadman 20-5. The three-time All-American brought his team within reach to defeat Penn State and set up heavyweight Tucker Lane to put his team over the edge.

Nebraska had eight-ranked wrestlers while Penn State only had two, which allowed the squad to get back in the match and get the victory. Lane sealed the deal with a 4-2 decision victory over Cameron Wade.

To email reporter: ajp7192@psu.edu.
Follow him on X @[Aj_piazza31](https://twitter.com/Aj_piazza31).

Blazing through the competition

Marcus Blaze's competition for the postseason

By Andrew Deal
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Marcus Blaze entered Happy Valley as the No. 1 wrestler in the 2025 recruiting class. Before even wrestling in a blue and white singlet, Blaze took the international world by storm.

He's a U17 and U20 World Champion, placed third at the 2024 Olympic Trials as an 18-year old and owns four state championships in Ohio. He left Perrysburg High School with a 196-2 record.

All of those accolades made it seem like Blaze would be a contender for the national title, no matter the weight class he was in. Blaze is currently No. 4 in the national rankings, but the competition at 133 pounds continues to get deeper and deeper following the potential burning of multiple redshirts.

To begin, the national finalists last year — Lucas Byrd of Illinois and Iowa's Drake Ayala — are back for another year. To emphasize the depth of this weight class, Ayala, who's been on the verge of a national title for the past couple years, is No. 9 in the country, according to InterMat.

Ohio State redshirt freshman Ben Davino has been unleashed



Celia Lewis/The Daily Collegian

At 133 pounds, Penn State's Marcus Blaze celebrates a win against Lehigh's Mason Ziegler, winning by a 19-4 tech fall in Rec Hall on Sunday, Dec. 7, 2025 in University Park, Pa. The Nittany Lions beat the Mountain Hawks 36-6.

for the Buckeyes and is a big reason for them being No. 2 in the NWCA rankings. Davino holds a 15-0 record and could pose as the biggest threat to Blaze's undefeated dual season when Ohio State travels to the Bryce Jordan Center in February.

The other Big Ten competitor is Zan Fugitt out of Wisconsin. Fugitt ranks at No. 12 and adds to the young crop of talent. Fugitt is

a redshirt sophomore and placed fourth at the NCAA Tournament last season in his first full season of competition.

Out of the Big 12, No. 3 Evan Frost from Iowa State appears to be the favorite for the conference title with Arizona State's Tyler Larkin not far behind him at No. 6 with a 14-1 record. Frost didn't wrestle against the Sun Devils when the Cyclones defeated them

29-14 on Jan. 6.

Behind them is Dominick Sorrano, who holds a 9-0 record out of Northern Colorado.

Despite the three Big 12 wrestlers, and Big Ten wrestlers who could all earn the national title spot, there's two new freshmen that are expected to burn their redshirts and will instantly become contenders.

Oklahoma State no longer has

a problem at 133 pounds after Jax Forrest enrolled early with the Cowboys. Forrest was a 2025 U23 World Champion, as well as a 2025 US Open champion.

Forrest instantly becomes a favorite for the national title, and a Blaze-Forrest title match would likely break the internet. It'd be the first time Cael Sanderson and David Taylor sat across from each other at the biggest stage, and for it to be two of the best young stars in the sport facing off, the hype for the matchup would be palpable.

The other freshman who's expected to burn his redshirt is Virginia Tech's Aaron Seidel. In his most recent match, Seidel took down then-No. 7 Tyler Knox of Stanford, 13-0. In one of his first matches of his young career, Seidel took down Dylan Shawver, the 2024 Big Ten Champion, by tech fall, solidifying his arrival onto the scene.

With Forrest and Seidel's emergence, in addition to the other major competitors, the 133-pound weight class could cause chaos come NCAA Tournament time, making Blaze's path to the final a tough task.

To email reporter: asd5765@psu.edu
Follow him on X: [@AndrewDeal22](https://twitter.com/AndrewDeal22)

Chatting with Cael

By Lyle Alenstein
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

After consecutive weekends of going 2-0, Penn State returns to the Bryce Jordan Center for the second time this season and the first time in the new calendar year.

The No. 1 Nittany Lions will face No. 6 Nebraska at 8 p.m. on Friday in a matchup between two of the premier teams in the country. Ahead of the dual, Cael Sanderson met with the media.

Here's what he had to say.

Nebraska

Despite the Cornhuskers being one of the better opponents that Penn State has seen this year, the mentality as always remains the same, as Sanderson said the mindset is "the same as every week."

"I think it's pretty similar," Sanderson said of the mentality. "For me, the guys are trying to be the best they can be. So, I think it's exciting. I mean, it's a BJC dual, obviously, a very strong opponent. One where there's 10 good guys makes it fun."

Sanderson had praise for Nebraska head coach Mark Manning, who has been with the Cornhuskers for the last 26 seasons, clashing with Sanderson for the last 17 years.

Sanderson complimented Manning's passion, calling him a "great competitor." He also highlighted his ability to churn out a consistently dominant program year in and year out.

"Every year they're really good, and they always have a really good dual-meet team," Sanderson said.

Aaron Nagao

Last week, Sanderson confirmed that 141-pounder Aaron Nagao was out for the season following his injury at the Black Knight Invitational in November. He returned to the mat at the Southern Scuffle, winning his first match, but then medically forfeiting the next one.

His future is currently uncertain. Sanderson was unsure about the possibility of Nagao being able to obtain a medical redshirt, in which Sanderson replied with "maybe."

"He would have one already, based on previous years, so I think that would be an option for him, if that's something we wanted to take," Sanderson said.

Sanderson said it'll be a "long road to recovery" for Nagao, who already had to make a similar form of a comeback, returning to the mat this season after having not wrestled for close to two years prior due to another injury.

"He'll have to figure that out. Obviously, we would love to have him continue to wrestle," Sanderson said. "He's also a guy who has exciting plans and he got married this past summer, and has a lot going on. So, a lot of good, positive things."

PJ Duke vs. Antrell Taylor

Up to this point of the year, Friday will bring the toughest matchup for No. 3 PJ Duke, as the freshman will face No. 5 Antrell Taylor, who won the NCAA Championship a season ago.

The top-five matchup will have lots of national attention toward it when the pair square off in the Bryce Jordan Center. It'll be the first time the tandem clashes on

the collegiate stage, but not the first time ever.

Last May, when Duke was still a senior at Minisink Valley High School, he wrestled Taylor at the World Team Trials, beating him by a score of 8-6.

"PJ is an incredible competitor, has an opportunity to wrestle a defending national champion in his weight," Sanderson said. "I think it's a great opportunity for PJ to really kind of see where he is. Obviously, he's wrestled some great wrestlers this year, but now he gets a chance to wrestle a defending national champion."

Shayne Van Ness

On Saturday against Maryland, Shayne Van Ness got off to a start that not many anticipated, as he fell behind 7-1 to then-No. 7 Carter Young.

Then, the 149-pounder exploded, as the No. 1 wrestler in his class recorded nine takedowns en route to a 31-15 win.

"For Shayne himself, if we give up a takedown or give up a few points, it's not a big deal," Sanderson said. "It's part of competing and with a three-point takedown, you can get back in there really fast."

Sanderson said it's a great lesson for Van Ness and the team, saying the match is an example of proving you can never truly be out of the contest.

"Especially with scoring the way it is now, you can make mistakes and you can come back, so it's not really that big of a deal," Sanderson said.

To email reporter: lca5223@psu.edu
Follow him on X: [@alenstein](https://twitter.com/alenstein)

Nits around the nation

By AJ Piazza
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

2-0 in collegiate matches and 1-2 in non-collegiate matches. The redshirt freshman also had a tech-fall victory and placed fourth.

Transfers

Oklahoma State was supposed to have two matches last weekend, but the match against Utah Valley got postponed. That match could've contained three former Nittany Lions, with 149-pounder David Evans being on Utah Valley, but the Cowboys only had their match against Missouri. Oklahoma State defeated Missouri 33-3.

Of the Oklahoma State contingent who were in action, No. 7 Alex Facundo at 174 pounds wrestled a former All-American in No. 10 Cam Steed. The match was tight, but Facundo got the better of Steed, defeating him 2-1. Facundo now has four-ranked wins with his last two being Steed and No. 8 Carter Schubert of Oklahoma.

At 184 Pounds, No. 8 Zack Ryder continues to struggle against wrestlers ranked higher than him. The Cowboy dropped his match, 4-1, after No. 3 Aeoden Sinclair got a takedown in the later parts of the third period. That is Ryder's fifth loss of the season.

Jack Kelly got some action for George Mason against Edinboro. Kelly bumped up from 184 to 197 in this one, and it didn't go in his favor. Kelly lost by decision, 8-4, to Brody Evans which led to Edinboro getting the victory over the Patriots.

Rounding it out at 285 pounds, Dawson Bundy wrestled the most out of any of the other Penn State competitors. Bundy went

To email reporter: ajp7192@psu.edu
Follow him on X: [@aj_piazza31](https://twitter.com/aj_piazza31)

PROJECTED LINEUP

No. 1
No. 6

<p style="font-size: 36px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">125</p> <p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">No. 1 Luke Lilledahl vs. Alan Koehler</p>	<p style="font-size: 36px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">165</p> <p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">No. 1 Mitchell Mesenbrink vs. No. 7 LJ Araujo</p>
<p style="font-size: 36px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">133</p> <p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">No. 4 Marcus Blaze vs. No. 10 Jacob Van Dee</p>	<p style="font-size: 36px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">174</p> <p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">No. 1 Levi Haines vs. No. 4 Christopher Minto</p>
<p style="font-size: 36px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">141</p> <p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">No. 12 Braeden Davis vs. No. 4 Brock Hardy</p>	<p style="font-size: 36px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">184</p> <p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">No. 1 Rocco Welsh vs. No. 6 Silas Allred</p>
<p style="font-size: 36px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">149</p> <p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">No. 1 Shayne Van Ness vs. No. 18 Chance Lamer</p>	<p style="font-size: 36px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">197</p> <p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">No. 1 Josh Barr vs. No. 9 Camden McDaniel</p>
<p style="font-size: 36px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">157</p> <p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">No. 3 PJ Duke vs. No. 5 Antrell Taylor</p>	<p style="font-size: 36px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">HWT</p> <p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">No. 12 Cole Mirasola vs. No. 4 AJ Ferrari</p>

The Daily Collegian

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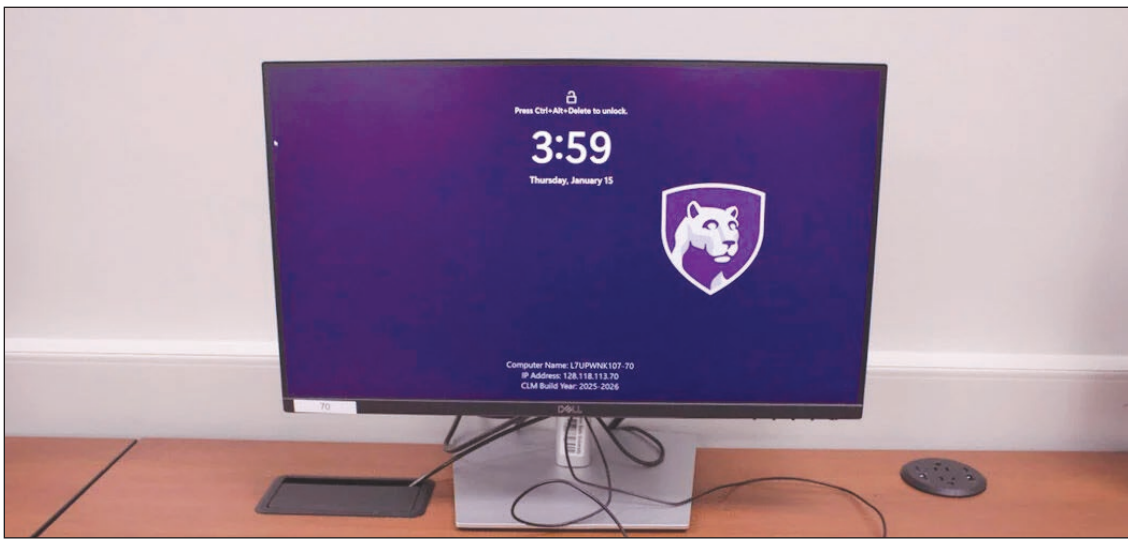
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Friday, Jan. 30, 2026

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'We need to wrestle with it' Professors discuss AI usage at Penn State

By Jonathon Chiu
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN



Celia Lewis/Collegian

A computer monitor sits on a table in the computer lab at Warnock Commons on Thursday, Jan. 15, 2026 in University Park, Pa.

about how AI can be used in their course, Osunbunmi said it was important for students to first learn lesson materials without AI before they are given access to it, as a way to assist in solving complex problems.

"I told him one of my mantras that 'If you cannot do it without AI, there's no (way) you can verify AI output,'" Osunbunmi, an assessment and instructional support specialist within the Leonard Center for Enhancement of Engineering Education, said. "I said 'Now that your students have mastered the fundamentals, now they know that AI can go wrong. They'll be careful not to use it or, even if they use it, they will check it and they have done it in a safe space where they are being guided.'"

Osunbunmi said he's currently working on a website resource for Penn State faculty to learn about how AI can be used in their courses. He said there needs to

be more accessible resources and frequent discussion on how to effectively use AI in higher education.

"Why there's some pushback to AI integration is because it's disrupting how we teach, it's disrupting how we learn," Osunbunmi said. "Ultimately, it has a lot of potentials for use but the outcome will be based on deliberate, inflectional design and I perceive it's going to be a collection of people sitting together in a room and having these hardcore conversations."

Mark Morrisson said he and several of his colleagues are currently investigating how to broaden the ways students can leverage AI through a Bachelor of Arts to complement existing Bachelor of Science degrees already being taught in the Colleges of Engineering and Information Science and Technology (IST).

"The engineering one is about how to make AI, how to

understand AI, and the IST one is more use apps, things like that, but what we wanted to achieve with a BA was thinking more about ethical, social, cultural implications of emerging technologies," Morrisson, a professor of English, said. "Liberal art students fit this kind of thinking very, very well and so we wanted something that would draw students ... to be thinking more capaciously about how to understand impacts and dynamics of emerging technologies."

He said Penn State stands to benefit from providing ways to increase AI literacy among students.

"There is a lot of disruption going on right now over AI and there's the kind of Luddite perspective of 'Let's just rewind and not use this,'" Morrisson said. "Well, it's not possible to do that anymore so instead, whether just uncritically consuming it or hoping it'll just go away, there's

a middle ground which is understanding it and really thinking it through like we do with all education at Penn State."

David Fusco said he instructs his students to use AI as a tool to help them rather than a crutch to rely on.

"In the world of technology that most of my students end up going into, people are using AI in their technology-based jobs," Fusco, an associate teaching professor in the College of Information Science and Technology, said. "From my own personal experience and the courses I teach, I think it's a disservice to students to not understand how to use AI properly."

He said he thinks it important that students learn how to effectively use AI due to it becoming an increasingly necessary skill in several industries.

Gregg Rogers, an associate teaching professor of English and PWR's associate director, said Penn State has a "responsibility" to teach students about AI so they are both provided with a useful skill and inspired to pursue new ways in which the technology can be applied.

He said changes in Penn State's stances toward AI in recent years is the result of beginning to consider how to overcome its drawbacks — such as hallucinations, where LLMs generate faulty outputs — as well as its potential for misuse.

"None of these problems are going to be solved by not looking at it," Rogers said. "We are all still learning about this thing which is what we're supposed to be doing — we're a university."

To email reporter: jwc6496@psu.edu
Follow him on X [@JonChiu38880](https://twitter.com/JonChiu38880)

Vigil, protest held to honor Alex Pretti

By Jonathon Chiu
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

well-informed about his death.

The vigil began at 7 p.m. and saw hundreds of protestors lead through chants of "Say his name: Alex Pretti," "Say her name: Renee Good" and "Fuera La Migra (ICE out)."

During the protest, a red car attempted to drive through the crowd at the Allen Street light with a protester jumping onto the vehicle and punching the windshield before the car drove away.

Carter Davis said he was appalled by attempts from the federal government to cover up the details surrounding Pretti's death.

State College police said no reports have been made about any incidents from the protest.

"I feel like everyone here saw what happened in Minneapolis, which is kind of pretty clear," Davis, a second-year studying secondary education, said. "It's just not right."

Davis said he believes change must happen soon in order to prevent further bloodshed.

"I'd like to hope that someone's listening but if they're not listening, we can at least try to be heard by being loud and outspoken," Davis said. "I hope we should start to get people's attention so that they start thinking critically about what's going on and just stir up some sort of action. Maybe you can get more people to just come to the protests and just

speak out against what's going on, just cause it's terrible."

Protestors were guided to march from Old Main and into downtown State College, holding signs that said "Drive out ICE," "I prefer my ICE crushed" and "Make racists afraid again."

The march ended at Old Main at 8:15 p.m. with organizers from the SCDS and People's Defense Front urging those in attendance to sign up for neighborhood patrols and continue coming together to hold future events.

An SCDS spokesperson, who requested anonymity for fear of their personal safety, said they hoped the protest's message would reverberate across multiple channels and ways.

"I'm hoping that people in Minneapolis see that people in a relatively small rural part of Pennsylvania stand with them," the spokesperson said. "I'm hoping that Penn State sees what students want, what the community wants, and doesn't allow ICE to come on campus, doesn't revoke student visas, and I'm hoping that ICE sees this and knows that people are gonna take action if they plan to come here and we're prepared."

To email reporter: jwc6496@psu.edu
Follow him on X [@JonChiu38880](https://twitter.com/JonChiu38880)



Kelly Miller/Collegian

The cold and flu aisle sits in the CVS pharmacy inside Target on Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023 in State College, Pa.

Healthcare companies sued

By Taylor McGillvray
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

unjust enrichment.

Insulin prices have been quickly increasing over the last twenty years, however, the process of manufacturing the drug has decreased, according to court documents. In 1990, a vial cost as little as \$2 to produce, and was priced at \$20. Now, the same vials range anywhere from \$300 to over \$700. The relevant period for the alleged claims is 2008 through the present.

The defendants' continuous contacts and conduct within the Commonwealth established a strong nexus among defendants, this forum and the claims at issue, making the exercise of jurisdiction proper and fair.

The defendants' listed above were active in Pennsylvania, and their actions directly impacted residents, so the case is to be handled by a court and a requested jury.

The defendants' listed above were actively selling insulin in Pennsylvania, and their actions directly impacted residents, including those at the Pennsylvania State University. Penn State demands trial by jury on all issues that are triable.

Penn State is seeking restitution and damages, among other legal and equitable monetary remedies available under the state laws.

The university declined to comment on the ongoing litigation.

To email reporter: tmm7195@psu.edu
Follow her on X [@taylormcg726475](https://twitter.com/taylormcg726475)



Zach Gleiter/Collegian

Demonstrators march on College Ave to honor Alex Pretti and Renee Good while protesting ICE at Penn State on Monday, Jan. 26, 2026 in State College, Pa.

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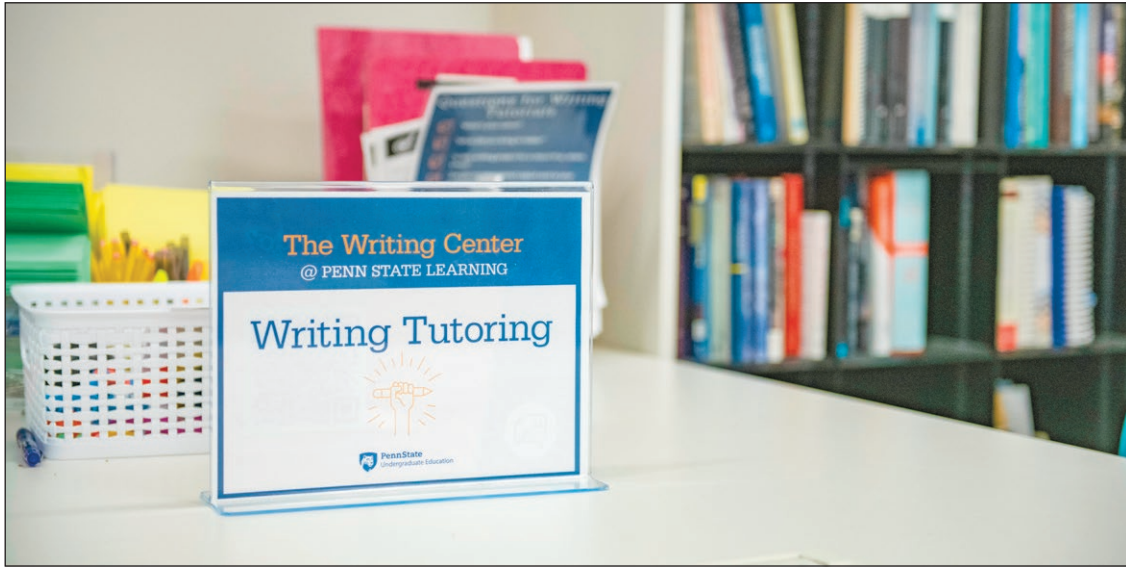
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Writing Center points students in the ‘write’ direction

By Ava Krysko
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN



Sawyer Hadlum/Collegian

A sign for “Writing Tutoring” sits in the Penn State Writing Center in the Boucke Building on Friday, Nov. 21, 2025 in University Park, Pa.

how their day is going or topics they’re interested in.

“It gives me more time to know them on a personal level before we start reading,” Jones, a third-year studying journalism said.

According to Jones, she assists students with various essays from English 15: Rhetoric and Composition to projects in higher-level classes with the goal of guiding them to better, more structured pieces.

Jones said she learned about the program from her own English 15 professor, gave it a shot and ended up loving it.

“It makes me happy to know that I can help students become more confident in their own writing and their own voice,” Jones said.

To become a tutor, students have to enroll in a class — English 250: Peer Tutoring in Writing — where they learn how to become a tutor and revise writ-

ing effectively. The class also consists of a writing practicum with an experienced peer tutor mentor.

The process to join the class begins when students fill out an application to take the course, which is posted on the Penn State Learning website. After passing the class, students can be hired by the center.

Tabitha Fisher, the writing center coordinator, oversees the program and is the direct supervisor for all of the undergraduate peer writing tutors. She said the process is rigorous so the student tutors are equipped to help for many different academic writing needs.

“We’re here to facilitate conversations about writing and with writers to help them make independent decisions about the direction they want their writing to go,” Fisher said. “We work with writing in and outside of the

classroom, so we work with a lot of upper-level writing courses as well, and things like resumés, grad school applications, cover letters and personal writing.”

Fisher said the center also hopes to serve the peer tutors themselves by providing an ethical employment model and prioritizing their professional development.

She also said the tutoring sessions work outside of the traditional model, with instead of having the tutor sit and read the work the writer brings in, the process is much more collaborative, centering the writer as the agent.

Usually, the process starts with the writer asking the tutor questions or looking at the assignment sheet together. Next, the tutor has the writer read their paper out loud, as a technique to help the writer catch things they may have missed in their first read through.

From there, the rest of the time focuses on the writer’s objectives and what they specifically want to get done or are struggling with during the session, encouraging writers to understand that what they think is important to the tutors too.

Fisher said coming in for a tutoring session doesn’t mean you struggle with writing — strong writers seek out assistance too.

“This is a thing you do when you care a lot about your writing,” Fisher said. “Don’t feel like you’re stupid or a bad writer because you’re thinking about seeking help.”

Fisher is especially proud of the tutors in the program and said they are “just so lovely.”

“I love getting the opportunity to work closely with them one-on-one and provide a good model for what a positive, constructive working environment looks like,” Fisher said. “I think that’s my favorite part.”

Julie Evanchak, a peer writing tutor, said one commonality she noticed among the students she tutors is a lack of confidence in their writing. Because of this, she said a lot of the time she focuses on instilling confidence in her writers, so they can be proud of their work.

“I feel like there’s this stigma behind tutoring, especially for students who don’t know what it’s like to be tutored,” Evanchak, a second-year studying advertising/public relations, said. “I like to make it personable and really collaborate together to make the writing better.”

To email reporter: apk6215@psu.edu
Follow her on X @[avakrysko](https://twitter.com/avakrysko)

‘Connecting people through art’ Sarasota sings for State College

By Ashlyn Kafer
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

and make this about myself.”

After playing with the band to test her skills, the members fell in love with her vocals and she was soon welcomed into Sarasota with open arms to begin the spring semester as a lead vocalist.

The band takes huge pride in audience enjoyment, tailoring its setlist to tracks that people might be listening to on their walks to class or can sing along to with ease.

Tom Petty, Oasis and Bruno Mars are only some of the artists Sarasota pulls from, hoping to ensure its sound can reach diverse audiences and keep listeners engaged throughout the entire performance.

“Everytime we play a show and play a song that everybody in the crowd is singing and having a great time to, it hits me in my soul,” Swihart, a third-year studying advertising/public relations, said. “I could cry seeing that — giving the people the opportunity to have fun and just let loose.”

With Robertson, Mopsick and Cho graduating this spring, the band also tries to ensure that its setlist reflects music the members enjoy producing, translating how they interact with each other during practice onto their audiences when performing live.

“Playing live is such a rush,” Cho, a fourth-year studying materials science and engineering, said. “We can practice playing the song, or practice twice a week, but when you play it on stage, it’s a completely different feeling. In addition to making a fun atmosphere for everyone, it’s really rewarding. All of us enjoying the songs is a super important aspect of it.”

Sarasota values a lively audience, hoping its energy on stage can power the energy in the

crowd. Many of its audience members include close personal friends, roommates and family members, who are appreciated greatly for supporting each show despite constantly hearing a similar setlist.

These supporters can be found at the front row of each venue the band plays at, such as Doggie’s Pub, Cafe 210 West, university club formals or off-campus fraternity houses.

As the future of Sarasota remains uncertain, the band members want to spend this semester playing as much as they can. They hope to continue reviving the live music scene around State College.

“When I was a freshman, I didn’t really hear about a lot of live music happening, and I feel like there’s been a big boom of it in the last two years,” Swihart said. “I think if we had any part in that, then that’s really cool just to help that community.”

Each member of the band brings different experiences, from formal lessons to teaching themselves their favorite songs for enjoyment.

Compiling their individual expertise, passion and drive together, the members have strengthened their ability to learn new music and connect to a wide array of tastes or interests present at each gig.

“There’s something about live music that forces a community in the room,” Von Weigand said. “Everyone knows the same song and is singing along with the singer, and it really just brings people together in a different way.”

To email reporter: ank5761@psu.edu
Follow her on X @[ashkafer13](https://twitter.com/ashkafer13)

THIS WEEK IN HAPPY VALLEY

MONDAY, FEB. 2

- Yoga & Meditation - 12:30 p.m. at 232 HUB-Robeson Center
- Chess Night - 5:30 p.m. at Holt Memorial Library in Philipsburg
- Needlework Club - 5:30 p.m. at Schlow Centre Region Library
- Painting and Drawing Session - 6:30 p.m. at The Makery of Central Pennsylvania

TUESDAY, FEB. 3

- Spine Smart Strength Training - 9:30 a.m. at Wellness in Motion Studio
- State College National Day of Racial Healing 2026 - 11 a.m. at the Borough of State College Municipal Building
- Jeremy Engels Book Signing - 6:30 p.m. at 3 Dots Downtown

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 4

- Learn to Skate - 11:30 a.m. at Pegula Ice Arena
- Yoga and Mindfulness at the Palmer - 12 p.m. at Palmer Museum of Art
- Well-Being Wednesday - 3 p.m. at IM Building
- Axemann Trivia Night - 7 p.m. at Axemann Brewery
- Dancing with the Stars - 7 p.m. at Bryce Jordan Center

THURSDAY, FEB. 5

- Penn State Women in Business - 12 p.m. at 3 Dots Downtown
- Spring 2026 Housing Fair - 1 p.m. at Alumni Hall, HUB-Robeson Center
- Open Mic at the Print Factory - 7 p.m. at Print Factory Bellefonte
- The Twilight Saga: New Moon - 7:30 p.m. at The State Theatre

FRIDAY, FEB. 6

- Souper Bowl Challenge - 11 a.m. at YMCA of Centre County
- Storytelling Game Night - 5 p.m. at Print Factory Bellefonte
- Family Trivia Night - 6 p.m. at YMCA of Centre County
- Improv Comedy Show - 7 p.m. at Blue Brick Theatre
- Men’s Volleyball vs. Saint Francis - 7 p.m. at Rec Hall
- Wide Eyes Shut - 8 p.m. at The State Theatre

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Courtesy of Alex Osman

Sarasota plays at Chi Phi fraternity on Nov. 15, 2025

2016 playlist | So back



Collegian file photo

Students dance as the Chainsmokers perform a free show at the Nittany Block Party in front of the HUB-Robeson Center on Friday, Aug. 28, 2015.

By Ashlyn Kafer
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

The year is finally 2026 ... or is it?

It's been 10 years since 2016, yet the masses are still engulfed with nostalgia for the last days of Vine, the peak "King Kylie" era and posing in front of Los Angeles' "pink wall."

Celebrities and social media users alike have flooded their feeds with throwback pictures from 2016, only perpetuating the mutual longing to go back to Gen Z's "good ol' days."

The music of 2016 holds many memories from the era of Pokémon Go and riding for your Snapchat streaks, so hop in your time machine and immerse yourself back into the days before TikTok dances and ChatGPT.

"Panda" by Designer

Designer said it best: "panda, panda, panda, grrrah."

With six-second Vine videos featuring this song as the back-track and the music video garnering 20 million views in the first two weeks of its release, "Panda" by Designer became one of the most notable pieces of 2016.

Characterized by its signature trap beats and the full-toned nature of Designer's vocals, "Panda" rose to the No. 1 spot on the Billboard charts shortly after its release, furthering the expansive pop culture surrounding the summer months of 2016.

"Closer" by The Chainsmokers ft. Halsey

Even if you've never looked at the lyrics, there's a good chance you're able to sing this song word-for-word after its near-constant radio time and internet exposure.

"Closer" made waves throughout 2016, its catchy and memorable chorus born in the

back of the Chainsmokers' tour bus taking the song to the top of the Billboard Hot 100 for a record-breaking 26 weeks.

"Black Beatles" by Rae

Sremmurd ft. Gucci Mane

Known for freezing people in place after hearing the first few notes, "Black Beatles" took 2016 by storm after sparking the "Mannequin Challenge," one of the most widespread internet challenges to date.

This song remains to be a "real crowd-pleaser" with its distinctive beat that courses beneath each verse and the reverberating vocals of Rae Sremmurd, making it nearly impossible to sit still through the entire four minutes and 51 seconds of the track.

"Somebody Else" by The 1975

Veiling impenetrable sadness and heartbreak with synthesizers and sonnet-like rhythms, "Somebody Else" has become a timeless relic of 2016, relevant even 10 years after its release.

If your memory of 2016 is a bit more scathing than the general perception allows, sing along with Matty Healy as he curses love and embraces getting his money up.

"This Is What You Came For" by Calvin Harris ft. Rihanna

Baby, songs like this are what you came for.

"This Is What You Came For" features Rihanna's sultry vocals and the signature 2016 "pop-drop," including synth plucks in an upbeat breakdown between verses.

While everybody else is looking at 2026, plug in your wired headphones and look back at 2016.

"Formation" by Beyonce

2016 was the year of Beyonce. "Lemonade" dropped in April, featuring songs like "Formation," reigniting the importance of telling album storytelling and highlighting music's role in healing.

"Formation" is a standout track, illuminating the Black female experience and including a novel, bouncing sound to captivate listeners from the beginning of the song until the number concludes.

"Never Be Like You" by Flume ft. Kai

Twinkling in your ears like the remembrance of the sparkle in a past lover's eyes, "Never Be Like You" emulates the pop-inspired EDM sound of 2016 with its trap-centric beats in juxtaposition with Kai's breathy vocals.

Making a resurgence after an edit of Jacob Elordi featuring the track went viral in 2023, "Never Be Like You" has been bringing back those 2016 vibes for several years and counting.

"Lean On" by Major Lazer ft. DJ Snake and MØ

This song is the "Rio de Janeiro" Instagram filter personified.

"Lean On" incorporates bright pluck synths and the raspy vocals of vocalist MØ, perpetuating the trend of opening the door for dance music to enter the mainstream field of view.

Lean on memories of endless 2016 summer nights and "boho" inspired crocheted Coachella outfits with Major Lazer and DJ Snake's steady beats to get you through these dark winter nights.

To email reporter: ank5761@psu.edu
Follow her on X @ashkafer13

7 Brew Coffee Review

By Lily Dorf
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

State College received a caffeine boost with Arkansas-based coffee and energy drink bar 7 Brew Coffee opening up at 1923 S Atherton St, this winter. The store is open from 5:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day, and offers coffee, energy drinks, teas and non-caffeinated options with customizations allowed for all.

This week, I ventured over to try out some of the new and exciting flavors of the various drink options.

Pixie Stick 7 Energy

I chose to order three drinks with the Pixie Stick 7 Energy being the first. The flavors within the drink help bring out the classic Pixie Stick flavor, combining orange, pomegranate and almond. I would say this drink has hints of a Pixie Stick flavor, with the orange coming out more than the other two.

My first sip tasted more like a cherry slushie, however after a few sips I started to taste the hints of orange and some slight pomegranate. The flavors within the drink are not incredibly overpowering, giving the drink a nice, balanced flavor.

Unfortunately, the Pixie Stick 7 Energy was a bit too sweet for me. If you are a fan of sweeter energy drinks, this is definitely the one for you. This drink can be customized with the original energy base or with their sugar-free option.

Rating: 7/10

Peaches N' Cream 7 Fizz

This was the second drink I tried, opting for a non-caffeinated option to see how they compared to the caffeinated drinks offered.

The fizz drinks are made with a base of unflavored sparkling water, with syrups being added to give each drink its signature flavor.

Peaches N' Cream is made with



Sawyer Hadlum/Collegian

The 7 Brew Coffee staff poses at 7 Brew Coffee on Tuesday, Jan. 20.

peach and vanilla syrups, which can be substituted for sugar-free versions as well.

The sweetness level went down with this drink compared to the first, giving it a nice and refreshing flavor palette. It had the same essence as a peach ring candy, with the vanilla syrup being hard to pinpoint within the drink.

Because of this, the flavor and overall taste of the soda were not over the top, but still present, having more flavor than other sparkling water drinks. I could see this being a very refreshing drink to grab in the heat of the summer, or something to sip on while relaxing in the sun.

Rating: 8/10

Snickerdoodle Mocha

This was the last and final drink I tried during my review, with it being the heaviest. The Snickerdoodle Mocha is a part of the store's 7 Classics, along with six other coffee-based drinks.

The drink contains a brown sugar cinnamon syrup mixed with vanilla mocha, and of course espresso. The Snickerdoodle Mocha also comes in a decaf option and has many customizations like milk type, sweetness level, toppings and sugar-free brown sugar cinnamon syrup.

The cinnamon within the drink

was strong but not over the top, letting the mocha and coffee shine through.

It was not extremely sweet like I had expected, which was a nice surprise. However, if you are not a big fan of mocha, I would opt for a different drink or customize the syrup.

The coffee also did not have a strong or bitter taste to it, helping to balance the drink out well. If strong coffee is what you usually go for, I would suggest asking for a lower sweetness level to your liking.

Overall, the flavors did not clash and made for a smooth and sweet drink.

Rating: 8/10

Final Thoughts

As someone who tries to steer clear of drinking too much caffeine throughout the day — whether that's energy drinks or coffee altogether — it was amazing to see so many options offered for those who are also looking to lower their caffeine intake.

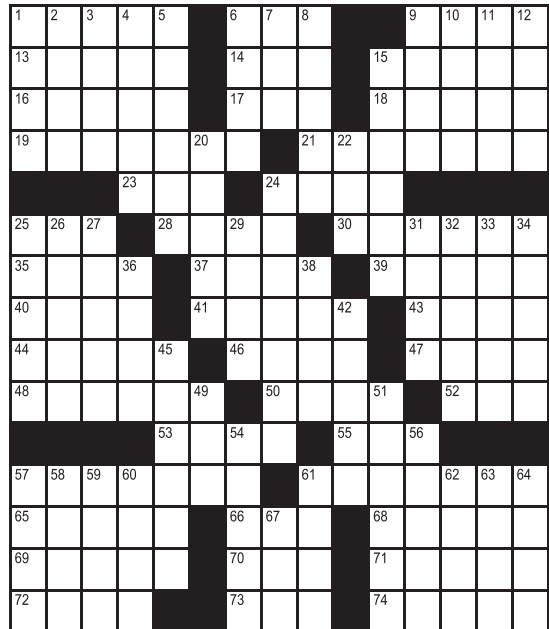
With such a variety of drinks on the menu, this is an amazing spot to check out before class, on your way to a long study session or just to grab a few tasty drinks with friends.

To email reporter: lbd5368@psu.edu

Crossword

Across

- 1 Clutch
- 6 Raises
- 9 French Sudan, today
- 13 Side dish in India
- 14 Ely of Tarzan fame
- 15 Gulf ship
- 16 Packing heat
- 17 Actress Peeples or Long
- 18 Christopher of "Superman"
- 19 Abandons
- 21 Two bean-shaped excretory organs
- 23 Low grade
- 24 Prefix with photo
- 25 Choose
- 28 Out of harm's way
- 30 Painter's tool
- 35 Motivate
- 37 Songbird
- 39 1944 Gene Tierney classic mystery
- 40 Cork's place
- 41 Pedigree figures
- 43 Road shoulder
- 44 Derby prize
- 46 Old Italian money
- 47 Organ knob
- 48 Bouquets
- 50 Feminine suffix
- 52 A.A.R.P. members
- 53 Perjurer
- 55 German resort
- 57 Theory type
- 61 Went 'round and 'round
- 65 Steer clear of
- 66 Calendar abbr.
- 68 Impressive display
- 69 Bakery items
- 70 Extinct flightless bird



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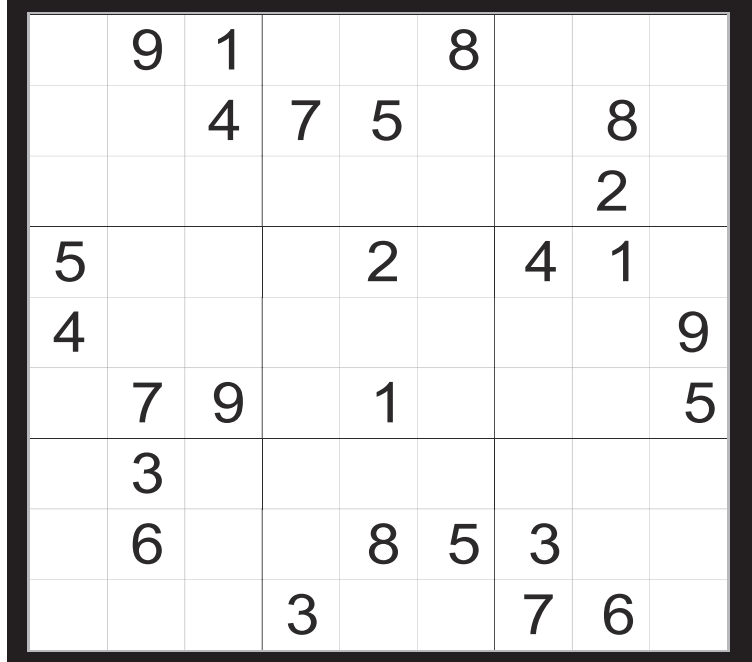
- 71 Recycle
- 72 Bygone blade
- 73 "Is that ___?"
- 74 Leg joints
- 10 Sheltered, nautically
- 11 Impose, as a tax
- 12 Ticks off
- 15 Tough going
- 20 Dabbling ducks
- 22 Off one's feed
- 24 Airedale
- 25 Bizet work
- 26 Former
- 27 Trunk
- 29 Go belly up
- 31 Applies lightly
- 32 Twosomes
- 33 Miscue
- 34 Stadium walkways
- 36 Regard
- 38 "Ol' Man River" composer
- 42 More rational
- 45 They can be tossed
- 49 Fall from grace
- 51 Start out
- 54 Terrestrial lizard
- 56 Femme fatale
- 57 Flying mammals
- 58 Nobelist Pavlov
- 59 Horror film staple
- 60 Angler's hope
- 61 Kind of agreement
- 62 Test choice
- 63 The good life
- 64 Henna and others
- 67 Neighbor of Ger.

Down

- 1 Sheepskin holder
- 2 Hard to find
- 3 Intentions
- 4 Mount with spirit
- 5 San Diego team
- 6 Still-life subjects
- 7 Polynesian paste
- 8 Chinese zodiac animal
- 9 Demeanor

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WORD SEARCH

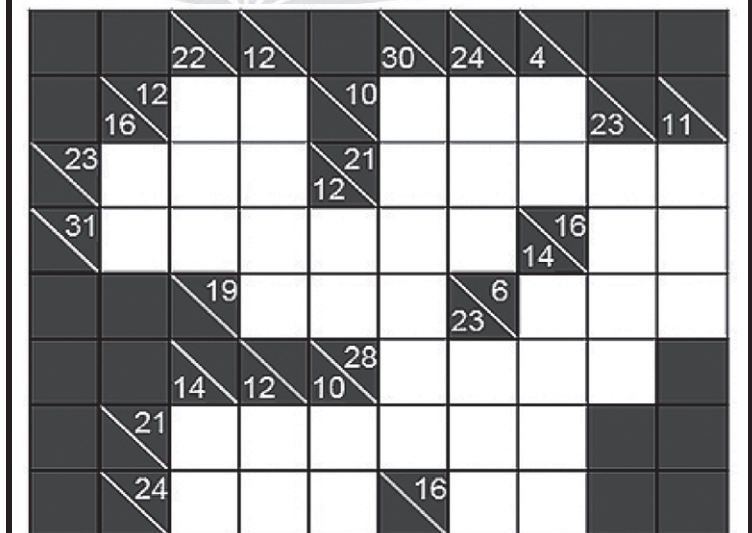
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The Old Testament

D	B	M	C	V	I	Y	S	O	P	N	G	S	N	M	O	H	O
S	A	O	W	I	H	S	B	E	G	O	I	T	A	L	S	M	F
Q	D	N	C	Q	V	E	H	I	X	A	P	D	A	N	U	H	P
R	O	L	I	A	J	S	K	M	B	H	A	R	E	B	A	T	H
P	O	T	E	J	A	Q	P	A	L	R	D	O	N	L	P	Q	
T	L	P	F	X	L	U	M	D	V	E	E	J	O	P	Q	E	S
B	F	Y	C	A	I	N	O	V	K	M	L	J	Z	C	H	C	T
K	Z	G	Y	B	K	G	E	N	E	S	I	S	M	U	I	E	T
M	I	E	H	E	R	T	V	K	K	L	G	H	U	J	F	G	T
K	V	N	L	T	A	U	J	M	J	K	G	B	W	X	J	G	P
E	R	X	G	J	S	E	V	O	M	E	H	K	Y	E	S	H	C
Y	K	N	M	J	R	E	E	S	O	M	C	T	R	C	A	K	S
A	H	M	R	I	A	L	A	A	S	I	N	U	U	R	L	L	L
E	G	O	C	I	N	M	N	Y	E	X	S	Z	A	R	Y	F	M
S	C	H	J	Y	U	P	E	C	S	A	H	O	F	Q	B	I	S
S	O	T	N	E	P	R	E	S	L	M	H	T	W	S	A	K	L
Q	Y	S	L	E	S	B	P	E	G	A	R	D	E	N	U	L	P
I	W	X	J	K	C	Z	M	K	A	P	P	L	E	S	Y	V	G

Kakuro (Cross Sums)

The rules are easy to learn: A number above the diagonal line in a black square is the sum of the white squares to the right of it. A number below the diagonal line is the sum of the white squares in the sequence below it. You may only use the digits 1 to 9, and a digit may be used only once in any sequence.



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Lost in Translation: The issues with book-to-film adaptations

Since it was released in late November, “Heated Rivalry” has snowballed into the sensation that it is today. Whether you’ve seen it or not, you’ve

Strickling probably come across some aspect of the hockey romance online. But before it became such a worldwide phenomenon, its story was housed in the 368-page book of the same title written by Rachel Reid.

Whether there’s a creative drought or not, Hollywood has always seemed to turn to their local library to find their latest project. Adaptations have been part of the movie industry since the beginning of film’s history. Today, it’s no different. Academy Award-nominated films “Hamnet” and “Frankenstein”, which were released last year, both came from books.

Emerald Fennell’s controversial adaptation of “Wuthering Heights” will be released next month. The trailer of the movie suggests the film will frame the story as an erotic romance rath-

er than focusing on the intensity, obsession, and at times cruelty that’s present in Emily Bronte’s novel.

Even the film’s depiction of Heathcliff based on the casting choice, seems to directly contrast with the descriptions established within the book.

Evidently, book-to-movie adaptations can be difficult. But if the base story already exists, why is it so hard to produce a good adaptation?

I think, primarily, it lies within the film industry’s fondness for capitalizing on stories that already exist. A recent survey revealed 63% of Americans are more likely to see a movie if it was based on a successful book, according to People Magazine. Basically, these adaptations are an easy way to make money, because people are familiar with the name.

With a well-known name comes expectations surrounding the film. People are going to want to see the characters in the world that has been described to them.

However, creative control (and perhaps some arrogance as well) can end up steering the project further and further away

from its origins, in an attempt at making the film something more palatable for the screen.

For those who aren’t familiar with the original, it doesn’t make much difference. But for those who are familiar, they end up feeling disappointed, repeating their mantra of “the book was better” on the way out of the theater.

Time constraints don’t help either. Generally speaking, the average book is around 200-400 pages, which is difficult to try and fit into a two-hour time frame. This leads to important plot lines being cut, leaving viewers feeling like something is missing.

This issue is probably why

“I think, primarily, it lies within the film industry’s fondness for capitalizing on stories that already exist.”

Emma Strickling

we’re seeing more books turn into TV shows, which can sometimes be a better alternative to film, as there’s more room to go in-depth into the story.

Perhaps these films shouldn’t be solely looked at as “adaptations.” Yes, they are being adapted to fit the screen format. However, they are more of a translation of the source into TV shows or movies. Like any translation, there are versions that translate well and some that don’t, but regardless of whether or not it’s translated well, something will get lost in the process.

Tone and nuance are things that can be left omitted, leaving the material unlike the original and not quite right. Even if you read a book that was translated from a different language, it still wouldn’t be exactly the same as the original because there’s no such thing as an exact translation. This is the same for a book to movie adaptations as it’s being translated from one language (literature) into another (film).

I caution filmmakers — because I know they are avid readers of my column — that, in

order to make an adaptation, one must have an incredible familiarity with the source text. While no adaptation is 100% perfect, it could be close if there’s an awareness, understanding and reverence of the book it comes from.

While some people aren’t sticklers about every detail being exactly how it’s written, if trying to equate a movie with the book it came from, then the adaptation should be as faithful as possible. If the source material is altered significantly in terms of plot, characters and setting then it shouldn’t attempt to be passed off as a direct version of its origin.

While I do love both film and literature, I think their interaction with one another should be much more limited than we have seen and continue to see. Because honestly, how many film versions of one book do we need?

Emma Strickling is a columnist for The Daily Collegian. She is a fifth-year studying English with minors in film studies and Italian. Email her at eks5726@psu.edu



Cartoon by Nate Campbell

MY VIEW | Jadzia Santiago

Satire | Sure TikTok, take my data

So, you’ve read TikTok’s new terms of service. Or, rather, you opened the app and hit “Agree”, only to look at the news three hours later and read that (allegedly) you just sold

everything but your soul for your 8 a.m. dose of hopelessness and hot influencers.

That didn’t faze you at first. As someone who’s terminally online, you’re no stranger to making problems for yourself.

But now that sale (also allegedly) has sociopolitical implications?

I mean, they’re tracking information “you disclose” about your “racial or ethnic origin, national origin, religious beliefs, mental or physical health diagnosis, sexual life or sexual orientation, status as transgender or nonbinary, citizenship or immigration status, or financial information,” eh-hh macarena.

Sounds like a lot, and feels a little relevant. Well, doomscrollers rejoice, because this really isn’t that big a deal!

First off, as your local tinfoil hat would argue, it’s nothing that Big Tech wasn’t doing anyway. Anyone familiar with the demonic wiles of 5G (and the terms and conditions of other social media apps) knows just

how much information *They* take from you anyway.

Now they’re just being open about it, which isn’t worrying at all. Privacy, in the digital age? Pssssh.

And besides, best case scenario is that they’re using that data for, you guessed it, ads!

All they wanna do is sell you solutions to your deepest insecurities and darkest fears.

Acne? There’s an unregulated supplement with no ingredient list for that. Stomach fat? Brutal shapewear that crushes your lungs. All followed by 20 videos about how unlovable those traits are, so you gotta get rid of them stat.

Speaking of love, are you worried about coming out to your parents (because *you* may not know how many times you watched that thirst trap, but your *data* does)? Don’t worry, they’ll send more and more ads for pride merch to the family TV!

Never worry about being homesick again, because having someone to strategically gather your secrets and use them against you will make you feel like you’re always with your family.

Who needs to use that information for something like diagnosing health conditions when you can sell it?

All harmless — of course, unless you’re starting to develop the Wrong Opinions. And they can tell when you are, you know.

But like, with an all-seeing presence devoted to moral goodness like this, how could you ever go wrong in life? When not even your step count or your resting heart rate are yours anymore, it feels a little like having a guardian angel.

Considering how lonely we all are right now, I think we need a companion. And the algorithm might just be the snuggliest machine gun the world has ever seen.

Come on, not even your boyfriend listens to you this much.

Even if the government really is collecting your data to use it for who knows what, that doesn’t matter. Don’t you know that your seasonal allergies, tarot cards, celebrity crushes and pronouns are all matters of national security?

Forget anything else, you, the little nerd scrolling through fan edits of Joe Keery and Maya Hawke in “Stranger Things” should be our biggest priority as a nation.

Maybe it’ll make you a little nervous if you’re politically outspoken, but we live in a democracy with freedom of speech, so that shouldn’t be an issue ... right?

Anyway! All in all, these open, honest changes to TikTok really make me hopeful for the future. Years from now, I can still see myself opening the app for a dopamine hit when the real

world becomes just too much.

And one day, when the algorithm notices I’m spending .0002 seconds too long watching another woman’s makeup tutorial, they’ll set to work to protect the streets from my moral poison.

Onto my friends’ feeds will come a slew of posts on *How to Spot Female Narcissists and Energy Vampires*, top traits being *Has opinions, thoughts and feelings* and *Wants to hang out occasionally*.

The solution? *Grab your essential oils and cut her off, girlfriend!* And just when I’m isolated enough to have no character witnesses, they’ll put me in front of the almighty Thought Crimes tribunal.

There, ChatGPT will convict me of the capital crimes of vanity, envy and lust before sentencing me to the Grok-powered death ray that, because I’m a woman, will only vaporize my clothes. *#FeministOwned*.

Jadzia Santiago is a columnist for The Daily Collegian. She is a fourth-year studying English and Communication Arts & Sciences. Email her at jas9280@psu.edu and follow her on X @ [JadziaASantiago](https://twitter.com/JadziaASantiago)

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'She's got incredible drive'

Janecke's path to becoming Penn State women's hockey's first US Olympian

By Andrew Mercer
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

One player stands alone at the pinnacle of Hockey Valley.

HOCKEY

Tessa Janecke has tallied 193 points and counting across four seasons, led the Nittany Lions to three-consecutive AHA championships and is now headed overseas to play for the United States Women's Ice Hockey Team in the upcoming 2026 Milano-Cortina Winter Olympic Games.

Janecke, the team's captain, is Penn State's program leader in points and goals. She recently played her last regular-season series with the blue and white before her break from collegiate action to compete against her teammates, Nicole Hall (Sweden) and Matilde Fantin (Italy), in the most prestigious tournament in concurrent sports history.

"It's always an honor to get to throw on your flag," Janecke said. "To be able to take in that moment and appreciate what's led you to that moment, and have appreciation for Penn State and my teammates and teammates in the past as well."

Janecke is the first Penn State ice hockey player to compete on behalf of the United States in the Olympic Games. Prior to Milano-Cortina, the lone Penn Stater to appear in the games was Sweden's Jessica Adolfsson, who'll be returning to international action to play alongside Hall and face her fellow Nittany Lions.

From the moment Janecke stepped into the locker room at Pegula Ice Arena, coach Jeff Kampersal said he noticed one thing — her innate drive to win.

"(Janecke's) got incredible drive and she also has a mean streak, too," Kampersal said. So, if you look at Tessa or Abbey Mur-



Matt Cropp/Collegian

Forward Tessa Janecke (15) skates with the puck during the Penn State women's hockey game against Cornell in Pegula Ice Arena on Tuesday, Dec. 30, 2025 in University Park, Pa. The Nittany Lions beat the Bears 1-0.

phy from Minnesota, those kids can stay by you. They can run you over, and they're driven towards their goals, whether it's making the Olympics or it's trying to win a national championship."

Among the many Olympic rosters are a mix of talent from the Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL), top-tier collegiate players and veterans of international competition, making the Olympics the truest form of "best-on-best" hockey.

"People only see a fraction of the work that (Janecke) puts in, that our team puts in, so for her to go out there knowing that this was her dream, there's no way you can put it into words," Katelyn Roberts said. "As a friend, I'm proud. As her teammate, I'm proud. As a watcher of hers, I'm proud. There's no other way to say it."

Janecke isn't merely a face amongst the many other superstars; she's carved a legacy of her own.

With the U.S. National Team, Janecke is a two-time IIHF

Women's World Champion and one-time runner-up, winning her first in 2023 and most recently in 2025, with a silver medal in 2024 between the victories.

She also earned a silver medal in the 2022 IIHF U18 Women's World Junior Championship.

Last April in Czechia, Janecke tapped in the "golden goal" on a backdoor feed from the Minnesota Frost's Taylor Heise with 2:53 remaining in overtime to win the 2025 IIHF Women's World Championship, 4-3, over Canada. Before her teammates swarmed her in celebration, Janecke leapt into the air and hoisted her stick into the stands.

"Those are not only huge moments for (Janecke), which we're proud of her for, but also, they put our program on the map," Roberts said. "She is such a talented player, and we were so lucky to have her come here. It's a testament to the amount of skill that our team has and also how much the program has changed under coach Jeff, especially over the past couple of years, with him

being able to bring in that top-caliber talent."

In 2023, Janecke scored three goals and added three helpers throughout the tournament to aid the United States in winning the gold medal against the hosting Emai nation, Canada.

"(The Olympics are) going to be on a much bigger scale," Janecke said. "There are a lot more eyes on you, but I think for our team, nothing is going to change. We've got to go in there with the right mindset, but there can't be a moment that's going to be too big or one that we're not prepared for."

Janecke is currently riding the high of a 40-point season with the Nittany Lions, including an eight-game point streak. She leads Penn State with 19 goals and 21 assists heading into her break in action from the NCAA.

On the national stage this season, Janecke ranks ninth in points and eighth in goals. That includes her missing a few games due to her playing in the 2025 Rivalry Series, a four-game show-

case against Team Canada that the United States swept.

There, Janecke tallied a goal and two assists. "It's definitely posed more as an opportunity than a loss because it's an amazing opportunity for (Janecke) and there's no way she should pass this up," Roberts said. "For us, we kind of see it as an opportunity for our forwards to grow and to gain depth for our team, so that when she does come back, we're in a groove scoring and she'll be in her groove scoring, and all the pieces will fit together at the right time."

Despite having to miss collegiate action for a month in Europe, Janecke's senior season isn't over yet. With the AHA and NCAA tournaments waiting for her when she returns to Happy Valley, the captain has one more chance to secure the coveted National Championship with her alma mater.

"Maybe we're not as formidable without Tessa, Nicole and Matilde, but we're still pretty deep, and we're still going to show up and play hard," Kampersal said. "And I think our players want to prove that they can do it without those three players as well. When they come back, they'll be even stronger."

Having already left campus for training camps, Janecke will be missing the rest of the regular season as well as the first round of the upcoming AHA playoffs. This includes Penn State's first-ever outdoor game at Beaver Stadium against Robert Morris.

"I'm going to be missing games, but I have confidence in our team that they're going to be just fine without me," Janecke said. "And honestly, I think they'll play even harder knowing that I'm gone as well."

To email reporter: asm6548@psu.edu
Follow him on X: @ [amer0115](https://twitter.com/amer0115).

Hall represents Penn State at Olympics



Matt Cropp/Collegian

Forward Nicole Hall (21) skates with the puck during the Penn State women's hockey game against Cornell, Dec. 30, 2025.

By Noah Abergg
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Surrounded by her teammates, sophomore Nicole Hall received the call of a lifetime with an invitation to the 2026 Olympic Games.

HOCKEY

"One of the teammates filmed her getting the call from the Swedish officials, and it was just pure joy on her face and her reaction," coach Jeff Kampersal told The Daily Collegian. "It's a pretty genuine response, and I'm proud of her for putting in the time."

The Stockholm, Sweden, native competed on a pair of teams in the Swedish Women's Hockey League before representing her country on the 18U Swedish team at the 2021 and 2022 World Championships.

When Hall arrived at Penn State in 2024, she already had six years of international and semi-professional experience. "She's such a great teammate," sophomore Abby Stonehouse said. "She's super fun to be around, helps her teammates out, and then on the ice, is obviously a great player, high hockey IQ and makes her line mates better."

Right off the bat, Hall took the ice for the Nittany Lions and her presence had a positive influence on her team.

While playing in all 38 games in her freshman year, Hall recorded seven goals and four assists. Just two weeks into the season, the forward recorded

her first and second career goals in back-to-back games against Union and Dartmouth.

"All the practices, the games, (work) off the ice, on the ice has helped me," Hall said. "The coaches are willing to help all day, and my teammates are making me a better hockey player every day."

As a freshman, Hall stood up and helped her teammates down the stretch of a successful season as the Nittany Lions earned a spot in the AHA semifinals against RIT. "I watched her in the world championships when she was the captain of the U18 Sweden team," Kampersal said. "She made it with those little things like winning plays, having good habits and being a good teammate. We knew she had leadership capabilities."

Hall's success was on display throughout the postseason as she recorded two blocks and a faceoff victory as she wrapped up her first year as an AHA champion.

Entering her second season, Hall's efforts were even more on display as she increased her work ethic and put in the work ahead of Year 2.

"(The biggest thing I learned from her) is how hard she works," Stonehouse said. "She never takes a shift off. She's always in there, so she just taught me to always keep my feet moving and work hard."

Just as the Nittany Lions opened 2025 with success — earning 16 straight wins — Hall found her own success with goals in each of the first two games of the year.

"Nicole and her teammates kind of run the show in terms of how they want their season to go," Kampersal said. "She just brings that lunch pail, work hard mentality to Penn State."

After 16 straight wins, Penn State suffered its first loss of the season against Northeastern on Nov. 28. With the help of Hall's mentality, the blue and white came back and went on an 8-3 stretch since then.

"Sometimes you can get frustrated a bit, but she just keeps up the positive energy," graduate student Mya Vaslet said. "She just keeps saying, 'Just trust the process, it'll come,' and I think that's really important too."

On Jan. 12, Hall received a phone call from the Swedish national team, giving her the news that she would be competing in her first Olympic Games.

"We were all really excited," Vaslet said. "I know she was waiting to get the call, but there wasn't a doubt in any of our minds she wasn't going to get it."

While Hall has played for the senior women's team in 15 contests, February will mark her first time suiting up for the Olympic Games, a memory she'll never forget.

"I started crying right away when they told me I have a ticket for the Olympics," Hall said. "I was speechless, I didn't know what to say."

In addition to Hall taking the big stage, her teammates Matilde Fantin, Tessa Janecke and former Nittany Lion Jessica Adolfsson will all compete in the Olympics as well.

"No matter (what position) you play at Penn State hockey, we get better day in and day out," Vaslet said. "It shows with people going to the Olympics."

After competing in their first preliminary contest on Feb. 5 against Germany, Hall and Team Sweden will face off against Fantin and Team Italy on Feb. 7.

"Let the best woman win," Hall said.

To email reporter: asm6548@psu.edu
Follow him on X: @ [aberegg_noah](https://twitter.com/aberegg_noah).

Hastings, no handshake?



Stella John/Collegian

Guy Gadowsky speak in Pegula Ice Arena, Jan. 12, 2026

By Greg Finberg
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Following No. 5 Penn State's 3-1 victory over No. 8 Wisconsin last Saturday,

HOCKEY

coach Guy Gadowsky wore a confused expression, his hands extended in bewilderment as he stood on the Nittany Lions' bench.

He intended to greet Wisconsin coach Mike Hastings at center ice for a postgame handshake, as is tradition at the end of a college hockey series. But Hastings never showed.

The Badgers' coach instead walked toward his team's locker room as the Nittany Lions mobbed goaltender Kevin Reidler on the other end, boos raining down from a disgruntled Kohl Center crowd after they witnessed their team get swept in a crucial Big Ten series.

Gadowsky remained unsure of the exact reason behind Hastings's actions but guessed it was linked to his postgame celebration with Green Bay Packers linebacker and Penn State alum, Micah Parsons.

"I think it was just the timing of it," Gadowsky said. "There was Micah Parsons behind our bench, and I think I was celebrating with him, and maybe took a little too long, I guess."

It's possible Hastings, who wore an angered expression as he appeared to yell "What the f—" as he walked away

from center ice, was dismayed by the last-minute brawl that ensued in the third period of Saturday's contest.

The fighting started when Wisconsin forward Tyson Dyck jabbed at Reidler's glove after the netminder covered the puck with 10.2 seconds remaining in a 3-1 game. Penn State defenseman Nolan Collins cross-checked Dyck from behind, which sparked an extended brawl that saw Dane Dowiak take down a Badgers skater and Gavin McKenna grab another by the facemask.

All 11 skaters involved in the scuffle were handed game misconducts.

Dowiak, his hand still attached to a Badgers skater long after the brawl ended, gestured with his other hand toward the scoreboard, which

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Guy Gadowsky

showed Penn State's 3-1 advantage. The crowd roared with boos, but the junior forward didn't care.

He said the Nittany Lions were simply giving back what Wisconsin fans had given them all weekend.

"I don't waste my time on (opposing fans)," Dowiak said. "Fans like to chirp at us, say a lot of things, and emotions kind of get the best of you at the end of the sweep. Sweeping in the Big Ten doesn't come around often. We were just giving back what they gave us."

Penn State and Wisconsin will meet again, this time in Happy Valley, for a two-game series on March 5-6. It will mark the team's final series before post-season play begins.

To email reporter: gaf5266@psu.edu
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2016 and it's
the same
but not since
it's 2026

