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DAILY COLLEGIAN

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Photo by Joey Tiger

OFF TO A SNOWY START

Winter weather causes challenges for students during spring move-in

By Vida Lashgari
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

A winter storm hit State College during Penn State's spring move-in weekend, causing difficulty for some students as they returned to campus.

For Christina Ho, her bus ride back to campus on Saturday was extended due to the storm.

Ho, a first-year studying biochemistry and molecular biology, said the bus had to make two stops because of accidents on the highway.

According to Ho, both accidents seemed serious and caused a significant delay.

"I have been in snow storms in the past, but this was my first time being on the road during one," Ho said. "I was feeling nervous."

The storm affected roads within State College as well as its surrounding cities.

Heather Kubinsky Vedell, a parent of a first-year student, pushed back her child's flight because she was concerned about cancellations.

"It is a small commuter plane, so I bought her another ticket into (Harrisburg International Airport) on Monday as a hedge," Vedell said.

Vedell looked into several other options on Friday night, including one from Philadelphia International Airport to State College Regional Airport. However, many flights were fully booked until after Tuesday.

"With another front coming in, it didn't seem worth the risk," Vedell said. "I hate that she has to miss the first day of class; however, she will get in (Tuesday) afternoon."

Despite inclement weather conditions, many families of students were able to connect with others among the Penn State community.

Parent Theresa O'Sullivan Conlon's car got stuck in the snow and a Penn State hockey player helped one of her three daughters push the car.

Conlon said she arrived at 6:45 p.m. at Packer Hall after the "longest car ride ever."

"The whole experience was a great testament to Penn State camaraderie," Conlon said.

Despite the adjustments families had to make to their original travel plans, many parents were able to find positive experiences while attempting to arrive on campus.

Parent Lucille Pilny Mankowich and her son stayed in a local hotel when they arrived on campus on Saturday night.

Mankowich said she arrived at East Halls at 8:15 a.m., with open parking, bins ready for move-in and no wait for an elevator.

"Easiest drop off ever," Mankowich said. "(I drove) back to Long Island and (got) home by 1:40 p.m."

Other parents shared a similar experience during their journey back to Penn State.

"(We) left Raleigh, North Carolina, at 1 a.m. and arrived at 8 a.m. Saturday morning to avoid bad weather," parent Colleen Downey Kuppinen said. "The drive was an easy seven hours with no traffic through D.C. or bad weather."

Kuppinen and her family slept at the Stevens Motel on Atherton for a few hours before moving her student into the dorm, which was an easy process, she said.

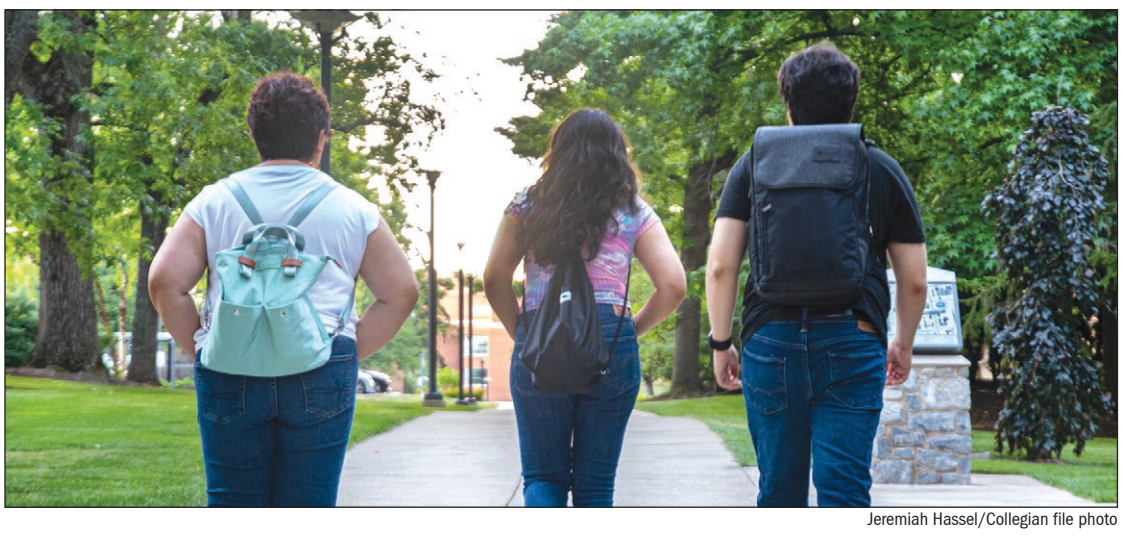
After move-in, they went to a Penn State hockey game, shopped at Walmart and ate dinner at Raising Cane's.

"It was a great weekend, and we got to enjoy the snow on Saturday in State College without all the travel issues," Kuppinen said. "I arrived back in Raleigh on Sunday night at 8 p.m."

For Terri Heerboth, two "remarkable" families proactively reached out to offer her daughter, a first-year student, a ride to campus after hearing about her travel challenges.

"The kindness and generosity shown by PSU families are unsurpassed," Heerboth said. "It can be quite a humbling experience, not to mention helpless, sending your child to a school nearly 800 miles away and taking a leap of faith that a support system will come into play."

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Jeremiah Hassel/Collegian file photo

Students stroll along the walkways in the heart of the University Park campus. Many students like to take walks to relieve stress amidst the busy semester to help balance mental and physical health.

Events to commemorate MLK Jr. Day

By Avery McGurgan
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Penn State plans to commemorate the life and legacy of civil rights leader and orator, Martin Luther King Jr., with a lineup of historical and cultural activities beginning on Monday.

The activities will continue throughout the month of January. See the list below for how to get involved within the community.

Monday, Jan. 15

4:30 p.m. — Penn State's Forum on Black Affairs will host its 49th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Banquet in King's honor at the Bryce Jordan Center.

The event will celebrate this year's theme: "The Movement Continues: Embracing MLK's Dream of a Better World for All."

Tickets can be purchased in advance online, and participants will have access to a buffet dinner, cash bar, live performances and the FOBA awards ceremony and scholarship presentation.

Tuesday, Jan. 16

7 p.m. — Soledad O'Brein, award-winning speaker and author, will be visiting Heritage Hall in the HUB-Robeson Center to reflect upon her work in sharing diverse stories across the media and empowering disadvantaged youths to seek a college education.

O'Brein is the founder of Soledad O'Brien Productions, a production company that "specializes in developing and producing thought-provoking television and film," and the PowHerful foundation, which seeks to connect young women with educational and mentoring opportunities.

Wednesday, Jan. 17

2:30 p.m. — The Paul Robeson Cultural Center and State College Borough will host a "Peace March and Celebration Ceremony."

The march will start at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Plaza in downtown State College and end at the HUB's Lions Lair, where the subsequent Celebration Ceremony will be held.

The event will feature guest speakers and student performances.

Wednesday, Jan. 17

7 p.m. — Available online after registration, the "Waste and Labor" film follows the months-long strike by sanitation workers in Memphis, Tennessee, that culminated in Dr. King's arrival to show his support — and his subsequent assassination.

The film explores King's involvement in the labor movement and how his impacts, and those of others, are reflected years later in the sanitation industry.

Thursday, Jan. 18

6 p.m. — Faculty, students and staff are welcome to participate in "Poetry, Prose, and Performance Night" in the HUB-Robeson Center Room 008.

A featured spoken word artist will perform. Those who are interested in performing can register here.

Saturday, Jan. 20

4 p.m. — Penn State choirs, Essence of Joy and Essence 2 Ltd. will be joined in a choral performance by Howard University's Howard Gospel Choir and the State College Area High School Master Singers in the Eisenhower Auditorium.

"A Choral Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr." will feature hymns, protest songs and other staples of King's era, as well as dance ensemble performances by Penn State's Afrique Fusion Dance Team, BLK Elites Dance Company, Dark Storm Step Team and Island Fever.

Tickets can be purchased online.

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Students plan to maintain well-being

By Rachael Keller
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

As the spring semester begins, students are back to juggling their mental and physical health, alongside classes, extracurricular activities and internships.

Mazie Kemper said she gives herself "personal time" to relax and do things she enjoys.

"I like to just walk around campus," Kemper, a first-year studying graphic design, said. "Just listening to music and just being able to relax, stuff like that."

For Mia Rajakovic, balancing her mental health includes "keeping herself grounded."

Rajakovic, a first-year studying graphic design, said this includes calling friends from home and "getting the vibe going."

Bethel Abe said some goals she has are to take care of herself, prioritize school and surround herself with people she loves this semester.

"It could be stressful … but being around people I love takes my mind off of it," Abe, a third-year studying organizational leadership, said

Similar to Abe, Omar Niazy said it's important to him to maintain a balance between his academics and social life.

"Just be in the moment," Niazy, a first-year studying chemical engineering, said. "There is no reason to stress over one test."

In addition to maintaining one's mental health, Alexis Pupo said she wants to target her physical health more this semester as well.

Pupo, a fourth-year studying political science and sociology, said she plans to sign up for more classes at the IM Building, specifically a yoga class.

Similarly, Evan Astromovich also has plans to maintain his physical health this semester.

Astromovich, a first-year studying mechanical engineering, said he works out at the gym at the IM Building and plays video games in his spare time.

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NEW MUSIC IN 2024

Artist releases to look out for in the upcoming year

By Teresa Phelan
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

After Olivia Rodrigo, Taylor Swift, Miley Cyrus and boygenius released critically acclaimed albums in 2023, music fans are ready to see what 2024 has to offer.

Here are the most anticipated confirmed and potential releases for 2024.

Jennifer Lopez

Lopez hasn't released new music since her 2014 album, A.K.A, leaving fans waiting a decade for a new project.

"This Is Me...Now" is being released on Feb. 16 alongside a documentary on Amazon Prime with the same name. The two works will reflect on Lopez's love life and will feature 13 different songs highlighting her ups and downs during her relationships.

Bleachers

Jack Antonoff, a music producer best known for his work with Taylor Swift, Lorde and Lana Del Rey will be releasing another album of his own.

The band's fourth album, "Bleachers," will be available on March 8 and will be the first under new record label Dirty Hit. "Modern Girl" and "Alma Mater," two singles for the album, have already been released, and the overall album will feature 12 additional tracks.

Sheryl Crow

Almost 30 years after the release of her first album, "Evolution" is for all to hear on March 29.

After her induction to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Crow shocked fans with the announcement of her newest album after vowing to never create music again.

Kid Cudi

American rapper Kid Cudi's career includes iconic hits such as "Day 'n' Nite" and "Pursuit of Happiness," leaving fans waiting for the Jan. 12 release of "Insano."

He teased the features on the album including rappers, Travis Scott, Lil Yachty, Young Thug, Pharrell Williams, Lil Wayne and A$AP Rocky.

Usher

Eight-time Grammy winner Usher has cultivated a large audience since rising to fame at the age of 15, and three decades later he's releasing his ninth studio album, "Coming Home."

After being announced as the headliner of Super Bowl LVIII, he revealed the release of the album on Feb. 11.



Andrew Swartz/AP file photo

Green Day will release its 14th studio album in January. The Band is known for songs like "American Idiot."



Greg Allen/AP file photo

Ariana Grande teases a possible album on her Instagram story. She releases her single "yes, and?" Jan. 12.

Ariana Grande

Although there has been no formal album announcement yet, Grande's newest single "yes, and?" will be available to stream on Jan. 12.

Fans of Grande speculate a new album should be coming soon after an Instagram post showed her in the studio.

Green Day

American rock band Green Day will be releasing its 14th studio album on Jan. 19.

The band, known for classics like "Boulevard of Broken Dreams" and "Holiday," has been producing music since the '80s.

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Top sledding spots in SC

By Justina Geosits
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

The one thing that makes the season bearable when the temperature drops below freezing is waking up to a big fluffy white pillow of snow covering the ground.

The only reasonable thing to do on a day like this is to get bundled up and go sledding. Here are some options around campus to try out.

Medlar Field at Lubrano Park

The hill below Penn State's baseball stadium is the perfect place on campus to go sledding. If you're looking for a place packed with kids having a blast rolling around in this winter wonderland, it's here.

Bring your friends or just yourself with some sledding equipment on a snow filled winter day for a little outdoor fun.

Even if you don't have sleds, you can still have a good time. Get crafty, use a trash bag or plastic laundry basket and go full college student mode down the hill.

Fraternity row

If you want a change in scenery, the houses down frat row are fun to guess and try to name as you zoom down the street on your sled, adding to your delightful winter weather experience.

Going past each house gives you and your buddies the chance to bond over learning the Greek alphabet.

The HUB-Robeson Center lawn

The HUB lawn is great for both fun sledding with your friends and sipping on something sweet when you are taking a break.

It's a great option for just enjoying the day and taking in the charming wintery landscape in the middle of campus.

Down your nearest staircase

Editor's note: Justina's editors do not endorse this.

Continue reading here:



Aaron Platt/Collegian

Sleds are a surefire way to make the snowy season more enjoyable. Penn State offers multiple sledding spots on and off campus.



Josie Chen/File photo

Cafe Laura will be open until April 26. The cafe offers themed dinners over the course of the semester.

Cafe Laura reopens for spring semester

By Milan Varia
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

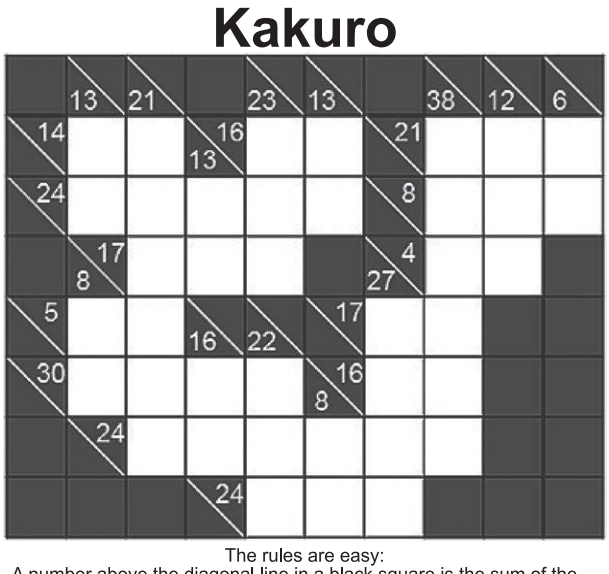
Cafe Laura, Penn State's student-run restaurant, reopened Monday, Jan. 8, and will remain open until April 26.

The cafe will have the Kings Espresso Bar and Grab & Go open day through Friday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Meanwhile, there will be lunch services on Tuesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Soup and pizza will be available until 1:30 p.m.

Theme dinners will also return on Feb. 21 and will run on Wednesdays and Thursdays until April 18. Reservations are currently not available, and the themes will be announced in the coming weeks.

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Kakuro



The rules are easy:
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 can only be used once in any sequence.

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Sudoku

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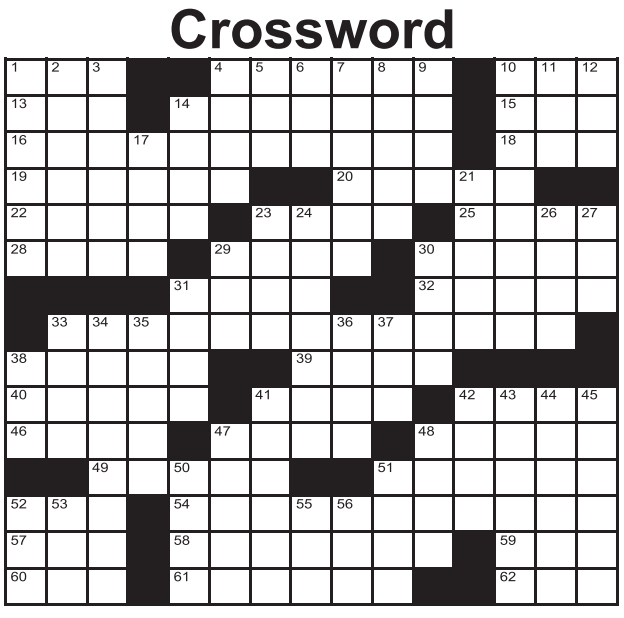
Word Search
Tea

N H G Y I G L T F S R V J F K N I G
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Leaves
Lemon
Milk
Mint
Mug
Oolong
Orange
Party
Potable
Relaxing
Steam
Steep
Sugar
Teapot
Water

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Crossword

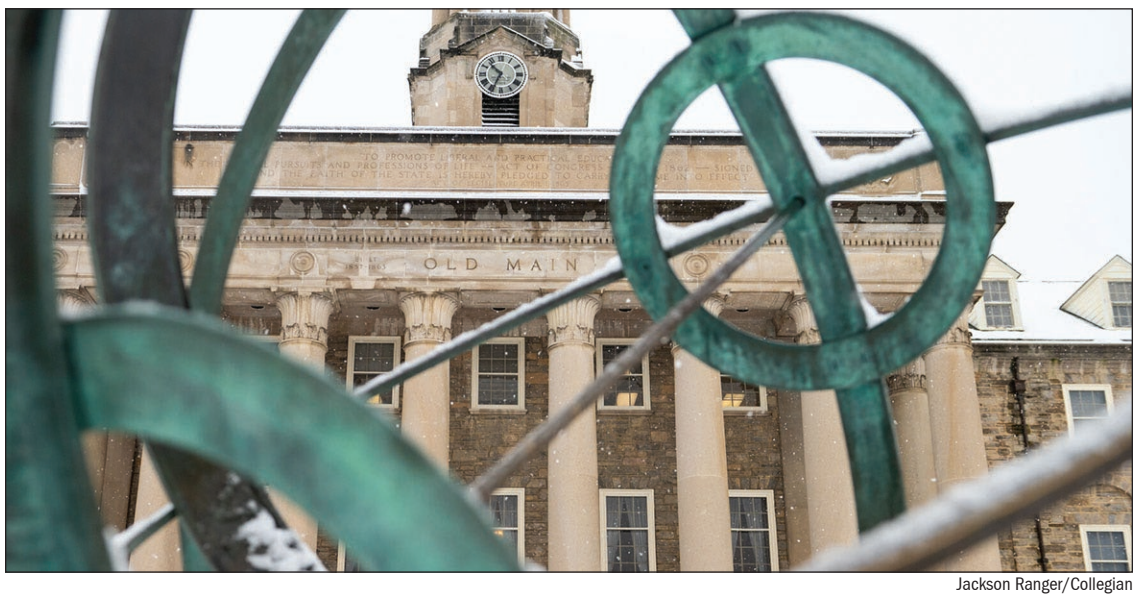


Across
1 Calendar abbr.
4 Arsenic, e.g.
10 French sea
13 "Maid of Athens, ___ we part": Byron
14 Blemish found on the skin
15 Possess
16 Used in place of handcuffs
18 It may be high in the afternoon
19 TV personality
20 Final approval
22 Ready for anything
23 Bearing
25 River through Kazakhstan
28 Off-color
29 Alpine sight, ___ Blanc
30 Stingless flier
31 Playwright O'Casey
32 Dress with a flare
33 Baroque or rococo, e.g.
38 Deflect
39 Written reminder
40 Reduces to bits
41 Grimm beast
42 Seats with kneelers
46 Like some chatter
47 Calliope, for one
48 Rope fiber
49 Dostoyevsky novel, with "The"
51 Playpen toy
52 Lady lobster
54 Kind of street
57 Colorado native
58 Found in London, among other places
59 Part of a litter
60 Long-snouted predatory fish
61 One of the Gorgons
62 Sloppy digs

Down
1 Small spineless globe-shaped cactus
2 Camden Yards player
3 Family member
4 Exterminator's target
5 Crumb for Fido
6 Intense anger
7 Photographer's choice
8 Neptune's realm
9 ___ a soul
10 Automotive lubricating substance
11 Flock member
12 Genetic inits.
14 Widespread
17 Henry, Gerald or Edsel, for example
21 Bad-tempered
23 Castle defense
24 Baseball game divisions
26 Last Stuart ruler
27 Jeans brand
29 ___ amis
30 Palm fruit
31 Takes a chair
33 Passionate
34 Lounger
35 In a tough spot
36 Reactor part
37 ___-Foy, Que.
38 Paul's "Exodus" role
41 Win the auction
42 Big East team
43 Prevents legally
44 Waldorf salad ingredient
45 One of the Seven Dwarfs
47 Dudley of "Foul Play"
48 Impudence
50 Part of a nuclear arsenal, for short
51 Sofer of soaps
52 Embrace
53 Pilot's announcement, briefly
55 Heat unit inits.
56 ___ Lunas, New Mexicot

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SNOW STORM HITS HAPPY VALLEY DURING SPRING MOVE-IN WEEKEND.



Jackson Ranger/Collegian

Old Main is framed through the Armillary Sphere as snow falls on State College during a winter storm during move-in weekend of the spring semester.



Chris Eutsler/Collegian

Snow falls onto a bush during a winter storm in State College.



Tyler Mantz/Collegian

Piles of snow grow in front of Beaver Stadium as students return to campus during a winter storm raging over State College. The National Weather Service recorded 4.6 inches by Saturday night.



Chris Eutsler/Collegian

The Bellisario College of Communications sign welcomes students on the first day of classes surrounded in piles of snow as a winter storm consumes State College.



Joey Tiger/Collegian

SPIN bikes sit in a line under piles of snow as students arrive in State College for spring move-in.

AMID FLURRIES OF SNOW, STUDENTS TAKE ON THE FIRST WEEK OF SPRING CLASSES.



Tyler Mantz/Collegian

The U.S.S. Pennsylvania Bell is covered in snow days after Penn State students moved back on campus for the spring semester.



Joey Tiger/Collegian

A snow plow clears the path to Old Main for students to get to class during the first week of the spring semester.



Jackson Ranger/Collegian

A student trudges through the snow after a winter storm hits State College on a frigid first day of spring classes.

Campus free speech: private vs. public


Seelig

The First Amendment, a cornerstone of the United States' constitutional foundation, has stood resolute for over two centuries.

Embedded within the Bill of Rights, this amendment emplaces the principles of a free and just society with the fundamental right to freedom of speech.

"Congress shall make no law… abridging the freedom of speech."

A succinct affirmation of this cherished liberty.

However, as global events unfold and perspectives diverge, hateful rhetoric has engulfed college campuses across the nation.

At a standstill between what is righteous and what is protected under the constitution, university authorities have muttered their individual condemnation of hateful speech while reinforcing the institution's commitment to this constitutional right.

This perpetual cycle, prompted by diverse events that unfold on campuses, raises crucial questions about the limits of free speech.

Former Harvard President Claudine Gay recently succumbed to the obscurity of what is protected under the freedom of speech in a testimony she gave at a congressional hearing on antisemitism following the Hamas attack on Israel.

When questioned about the term "intifada" in the context of the latest Israel-Hamas war, Gay responded with "that type of hateful speech is personally abhorrent to me." With a follow up question asking if such "hateful speech" is allowed at Harvard, Gay said, "We embrace a commitment to free expression, even of views that are objectionable, offensive, hateful."

While no speech of such demeanor should ever be spoken, individuals in the public eye who face outside pressure crumble when the topic of free speech is involved.

For example, in October 2022, Penn State university leaders released a statement addressing an event hosting far-right commentators Gavin McInnes and Alex Stein on campus.

"We can emphatically say that our university neither supports nor condones the vitriolic and hateful language targeting particular groups," the statement said.

However, the statement concludes that the university is "unalterably obligated under the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment to protect various expressive rights, even for those whose viewpoints offend our basic institutional values and our personal sensibilities."

While such speech may be prohibited by other university guidelines, authorities solely focus on what is seemingly protected under the First Amendment.

Yet, there's one major difference between Harvard and Penn State's approach to addressing vile speech on campus. It boils down to private versus public institutions.

Private institutions, such as Harvard, are not bound by the First Amendment — which only limits government action.

While such institutions should continuously uphold individual's fundamental rights, this allows private universities to limit hateful rhetoric spread on campus.

So, as Penn State officials remain stuck at a crossroad between free speech and protecting its students, Harvard has the ability to prohibit its students from using repugnant speech.

Was the revolting testimony given by president Gay simple oversight as to Harvard's leniency with constitutional rights or something more heinous?

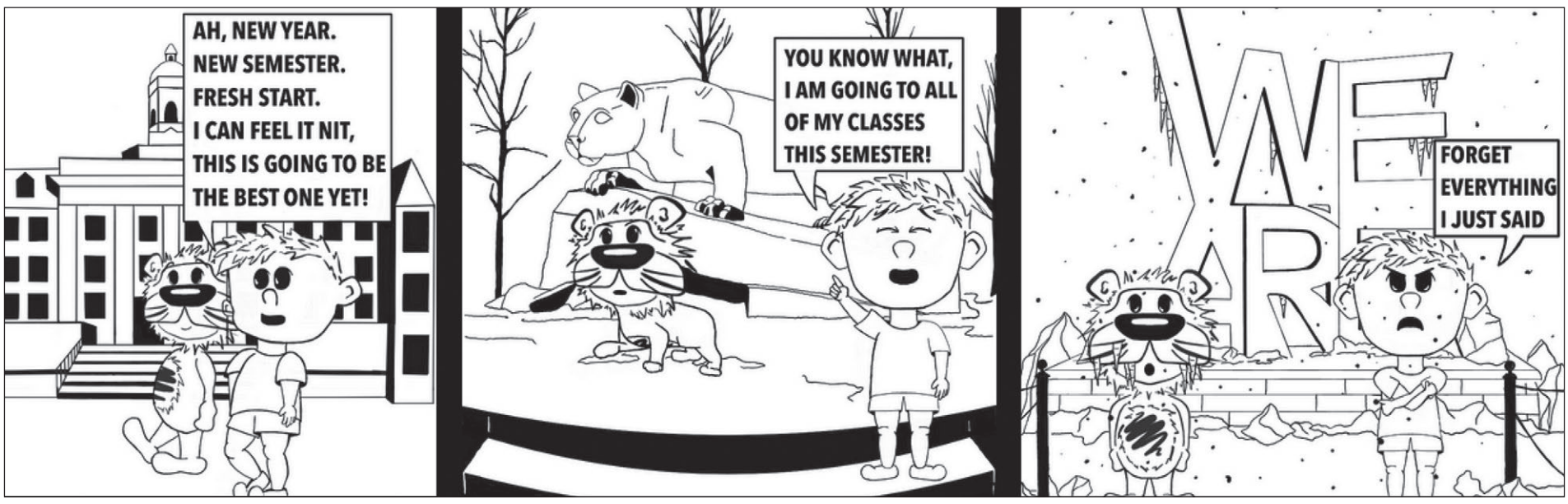
Nonetheless, with the inability to decipher the ambiguity of the constitution without its founder's guidance, the Supreme Court is able to place limitations on what is protected under free speech.

The limited categories of speech that the government may regulate because of its content include obscenity, defamation, fraud, incitement, fighting words, true threats, speech integral to criminal conduct and child pornography.

While staying true to the freedoms of the United States yet protecting targeted groups, a question arises.

Should the Supreme Court rule that government-funded universities should be granted more leniency in limiting hate speech on campus? Or would this lead the United States to take a step toward an autocracy?

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Cartoons by Maddie Seelig

Watch your mouth in public


Vargas

On Penn State's campus, many students appear to be fairly foul-mouthed.

Profanity, expletives, swearing, cursing, cussing, you name it. This is an expected and excused part of casual conversation within the confines of campus.

Obviously, this isn't some new thing. All adult people say bad words. Professors do it. Bosses at summer internships do it. It's part of life, and that's more than OK.

Where students run into trouble and their more aged counterparts do not is when they open their mouths off campus in public.

This past Sunday was the opening day of ski season at Tussey Mountain, and my roommates got up before sunrise to catch one of the first chairlifts.

The mountain had a wide range of skiers and snowboarders. There was an even distribution of college students, high schoolers, kids and parents.

Since getting back to campus after break, our only interactions had been with one another. Our language was already back to the steady rate of swear words that would be expected, but our subtlety in public was out of practice.

While waiting in line for the lift, we would accidentally drop a four-letter word. It would cut abrasively in the cold air, leaving behind a palpable silence in its wake.

Whether it's in a restaurant or on a downtown sidewalk, not every member of the public is accustomed to — or consenting to — hearing how students speak with one another.

Cursing in public has the same effect as poor manners.

Hearing a student drop an F-bomb just a little too loudly in the middle of Plaza Mexican would gather a similar reaction to hearing a loud fart from the booth behind you.

Although some may view it as more harmful, a Penn State student dropping an explicit word in front of a child may seem like picking your nose and eating a booger in front of a kid.

> "Where students run into trouble and their more aged counterparts do not is when they open their mouths off campus in public."
> **Luke Vargas**

Don't pass on poor habits to them. Don't infect an innocent mind with a foul tongue.

It's a certainty they will discover swearing either on their own or when their parents stub a toe just a little too hard — but it's far from a student's job to expose them to curse words unintentionally.

These comparisons are a bit outlandish, but it points to a key reality. Not all adult people swear in daily life. Whether it's by choice, tradition or accident, not everyone is accustomed to hearing foul language constantly, and understandably, it can be offensively shocking for them to hear it.

Ultimately, hearing a bad word uttered by a student every now and then is not a major concern. Language is fickle and arbitrary. Its meanings and power ebbs and flows.

But what does matter is using words with intention and discipline. What does matter is having awareness, perception and the maturity to know when to show control over your words and when to let them fly.

There is a time and a place. The public, where anyone can hear, is simply not one of them.

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Kasak steps up big

By Shannon Tanczos
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

WRESTLING

After initially being listed at 141 pounds before the season began, true freshman Tyler Kasak moved up to 149 pounds in wake of Shayne Van Ness' injury.

Kasak has won his match in both of the dual meets he competed in thus far.

During the Nittany Lions' most recent match against Oregon State, associate head coach Cody Sanderson admired the Pennsylvania native's ability to apply corrections during a meet.

"We had a little bit of a break in there where (Kasak) came over when he was on top," Sanderson said. "We gave him specific instructions, and he went right out and followed them and just finished right where he needed to be."

Sanderson added onto this by saying that with Kasak being a freshman, it's important for younger members of the team to be able to understand what they need to accomplish on the mat after having it communicated to them.

In his matchup against the Beavers, he earned a 4-1 win over No. 15 Nash Singleton with an essential takedown with 30 seconds left in the third period.

However, with this being Kasak's first year, there are still areas of his wrestling that need to be tweaked. Sanderson liked how composed Kasak was in the situation, he mentioned what the first-year could continue working on this season.

"I think from him, we're just going to be looking for more points from him because he can score more points," Sanderson said. "You know, that's what we want to see."

Initially, the obvious pick for 149 pounds was Van Ness, who secured third at the NCAA championships last season. Van Ness wrestled at the Journeymen Collegiate Classic where he started the season with a 3-0 record via three first-period falls.

On Dec. 5, Cael Sanderson confirmed Van Ness would be out for the entire season due to injury.

Since this news, Kasak and redshirt freshman Connor Pierce have wrestled at 149 pounds, with Van Ness coaching from the sidelines.

While Van Ness isn't able to wrestle because of his injury, he still makes his presence known in the practice room.

"(Van Ness) has really done a great job of staying engaged and looking for opportunities to help guys," Sanderson said. "He's still here on a daily basis, but I watch him move around the room, point out technique, talking to guys, check in on them."

Sanderson said since Van Ness has seen both sides of the spectrum, as he was out for most of his true freshman season to being through a full season, he's able to provide wisdom and understanding to his teammates.

"That's one thing that he asked me when he knew he was going to be out is just, help remind him to stay engaged with the guys and he's done a fantastic job," Sanderson said.

For now, though, it's unclear who will start for the rest of the season. If Kasak does wrestle against Indiana on Sunday, he'll have another opportunity to take home another ranked win against No. 14 Graham Rooks.



Tyler Mantz/Collegian

Penn State's Tyler Kasak wrestles Lehigh's Drew Munch, winning 7-6 in decision during the meet at Rec Hall.

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Chris Eutsler/Collegian

Guard Tay Valladay and forward Ali Brigham celebrate the shot on the bench during the Penn State women's basketball's win against Northwestern.

Midseason report cards

Grading Lady Lions' six new acquisitions

By Noah Aberegg
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Coming into the 2023-24 season, coach Carolyn Kieger has praised each of her six transfers joining Penn State this season, awing at the depth that they will provide.

Through 14 games, the transfers have combined for 1,126 minutes, helping the Lady Lions to a 10-4 record.

However, each transfer has had a different impact on the team from being third-highest scorer for the blue and white to not playing a single minute yet.

Based on each player's performance, or lack of, each player has received a letter grade based on their contribution to the team.

Ashley Owusu

After making headlines in early June for joining Penn State's roster, teammates and fans alike were ready to experience Ashley Owusu's impact on the Lady Lions.

Despite her highly anticipated debut, the 2021 All-American guard continues to recover from an injury while playing at Virginia Tech and has not made a presence on the blue and white's lineup yet this season.

Kieger has said Owusu will be ready when it matters during conference play, meaning the graduate guard should see the floor in upcoming games.

Penn State is 1-for-2 in the conference stretch, losing a heartbreaker 11-point game at home against Michigan State to end the year.

Regardless of Owusu's All-American persona, her presence could have reversed the outcome against the Spartans and other close losses this season, resulting in a less-than-ideal grade.

Grade: C-

Tay Valladay

Coming to Penn State after two seasons at Virginia where she started all but four games, Chicago native Tay Valladay has made an instant impact.

Starting the first four games of the season, Valladay terrorized opposing offenses. In the first five games of the season, the graduate guard recorded two five-steal games.

Valladay's downfall has been committing the second-most turnovers on the team. The former Cavalier gave up five turnovers each against Navy and West Virginia, aiding in the Mountaineers' 31 points off of turnovers to win the game on Dec. 4.

In the team's second conference matchup of the season against Michigan State, Valladay recorded a career-high 32 points, the third highest on the team this season.

Grade: A-

Moriah Murray

After sitting out the 2022-23 season due to NCAA regulations regarding her transfer from Drexel, Moriah Murray made her collegiate debut against Bucknell in early November.

The Dunmore, Pennsylvania, native made her presence known on Penn State's opening day, scoring 10 points, five assists, a block and three steals.

On Nov. 26 against Providence, Murray owned the highlight reel, draining three consecutive triples en route to Penn State's 73-66 thrilling victory.

Since then, Murray's efficiency from deep has hindered her shooting ability, as she's had three games with five or more misses from behind the arc.

In the last four games, Murray has shot 34.6% from deep. Over the final stretch of the season, improving her shooting efficiency could be key for the Lady Lions.

Grade: B-

Grace Hall

Following an injury at Wabash that caused her to redshirt her second season, Grace Hall has had a slow start in her redshirt sophomore year at Penn State.

Over her first six games early in the season, the Homewood, Illinois, native scored just seven total points.

As the season progressed, Hall began to find her footing. Over the last four outings, she's averaging 3.5 points per game.

Against Northwestern, Hall had one of the best nights in her career, scoring a season-high six points along with two blocks, two rebounds and a career-high three steals.

Grade: D+

Jayla Oden

After recording 11 double-digit scoring contests in her two seasons at Illinois, Jayla Oden picked up right where she left off in Penn State's opener against Bucknell, scoring 10 points on 100% shooting from the field.

The Baltimore native has been the team's best deep-shooter off the bench, shooting 46.7% with 14 makes.

When the Lady Lions faced off against Kansas in November, Oden shot lights out from deep, making each of her four 3-point attempts to help Penn State win 91-85 against last year's WNIT champions.

While Oden's presence on the floor is beneficial when she's hot, she's had her fair share of rough nights this season.

The junior guard has recorded five games this season with five or less points, shooting a devastating 31.3% from the field compared to her season percentage, 47.4%.

Grade: B

Kylie Lavelle

A former Drexel Dragon and member of the CAA All-Rookie team, Kylie Lavelle started the season with her best game as a Lady Lion to this point.

Lavelle scored a season-high 13 points to accompany her five rebounds, steal and block against Bucknell.

Since then, Lavelle has only seen the double-digit scoring mark once, recording 10 points in Penn State's first loss of the season against USC.

However, the Moosic, Pennsylvania, native has seen more action defensively, pulling in a season-high 10 defensive rebounds against Saint Francis (PA) and the third-most blocks this season on the team.

Grade: C

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FOOTBALL

Posluszny elected to HOF

By Zach Allen
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

One of Penn State's greatest linebackers was elected into the 2024 College Football Hall of Fame on Monday. Paul Posluszny was selected as one of 19 players to be inducted in the 2024 Hall of Fame class.

The Nittany Lions have consistently churned out professional-grade linebackers for decades, which has earned them the nickname of "Linebacker U" in some fans' eyes.

Out of all the linebackers that Penn State has developed over the years, Posluszny had one of the most accomplished careers in a blue-and-white uniform.

In 2006, Posluszny set the program record at the time with 372 career tackles over his four-year college career, before teammate Dan Connor broke it a year later. To this day, though, Posluszny ranks second on the Nittany Lions' all-time tackle list.

Posluszny also won the Butkus Award in 2005, which is an annual award given to the nation's best linebacker.

Posluszny went on to have a solid professional career with the Buffalo Bills and Jacksonville Jaguars, recording four seasons with at least 100 tackles and a Pro Bowl selection in 2013.

Now, Posluszny will see his achievements cemented when he's officially inducted on Dec. 10, 2024.

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Junior Kalen King accepted to Senior Bowl

By Joel Haas
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Thanks to a new rule change, Kalen King will be taking the field one more time before heading to the NFL draft in late April.

The Penn State cornerback accepted an invite to participate in the annual Senior Bowl, an opportunity typically reserved for players with at least four years of collegiate experience.

King will become the first underclassmen in school history to participate in the event, after a new rule granted underclassmen eligibility to play.

A preseason All-American, King led the Big Ten with 21 passes defended and 18 pass breakups in 2022. This past season, however, he saw a major drop in targets and tallied just two pass breakups.

Tight end Theo Johnson, defensive end Adisa Isaac, cornerback Johnny Dixon all previously accepted invitations to the event and will join King in Mobile, Alabama, on Feb. 3.

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Steelers release Trace McSorley

By Joel Haas
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Former Penn State quarterback Trace McSorley is looking for a new home after he was released by the Pittsburgh Steelers, the team announced on Tuesday.

McSorley was signed to the Steelers' practice squad last month after being released by the Chicago Bears in November.

The former Nittany Lion was previously with the New England Patriots, Arizona Cardinals and Baltimore Ravens, who drafted McSorley in 2019.

McSorley never saw the field during his short stint in Pittsburgh and hasn't played since 2022 when he was with the Cardinals.

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Caitlin Lee/Collegian file photo

Quarterback Trace McSorley says goodbye to fans after the game against Maryland at Beaver Stadium.

'I JUST LOVE IT'

Nittany Lion Ace Baldwin Jr. and team win in the Palestra

By Spencer Ripchik
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

MEN'S BASKETBALL

The Palestra, which opened in 1927, has seen many teams walk out of it victorious. On Sunday afternoon, Penn State completed a 10-point comeback to beat Michigan, adding another win within the confines of the Philadelphia arena.

Sunday's game was considered a home game for the Nittany Lions. In a small arena that holds just 8,725 people, the fans dressed in white made it sound like the Palestra was in State College, Pennsylvania, despite being over three hours away from the Bryce Jordan Center.

Ace Baldwin Jr. led the team with 25 points in his first performance at the Palestra.

"I wish we could play every home game here," Baldwin said. "I just love it."

While Penn State playing every game in the Palestra certainly won't happen with the stadium being almost 200 miles from its campus, coach Mike Rhoades said he wants to make it an annual event.

Along with a trip to Madison Square Garden, Sunday's game was Penn State's second this season at a unique location, not counting the ESPN Events Invitational and the exhibition game at the start of the season.

Rhoades wants to play in even more unique locations in the coming years. He mentioned New York, Washington D.C. and Hershey, Pennsylvania, as other places Penn State could play in the future.

"We have the biggest alumni network in the world and that's really cool," Rhoades said. "Let's use that. We want to invite our alumni, meet our alumni and get them on our wagon, the basketball wagon. It takes time and it doesn't happen overnight. This is an example of what could be really cool because of our alumni network."



Chris Eutsler/Collegian

Ace Baldwin Jr. led his team to mount a 10-point comeback against Michigan to know what it's like to win in Palestra.



Chris Eutsler/Collegian

Coach Mike Rhoades and his squad step foot inside the Palestra to take down Michigan.

The matchup with Michigan wasn't Rhoades' first time at the Palestra.

He's been to multiple games growing up, but Sunday was his first game coaching in the arena. It was also the first time for a lot of his players to see the inside of the Palestra.

The stadium, which is an old gymnasium, is almost 100 years old. It holds around half the fans the Bryce Jordan Center does. After hearing some high praise for the Palestra, it was a shock for some of the players.

"What is this coach?" Rhoades said one of his players asked him. "What? This is the Palestra? They know a little bit more about the Garden or the United Center. They didn't watch games at the Palestra or go to games at the Palestra like we did growing up."

Rhoades wished he had more time in the arena. Penn State had a short week after playing at Michigan State on Thursday, and that week became even shorter when the team's plane had trouble. The Nittany Lions had to spend an extra day in East Lansing, Michigan.

He wanted to show his players all the history and great players who had played there so they could see how historically significant the Palestra is.

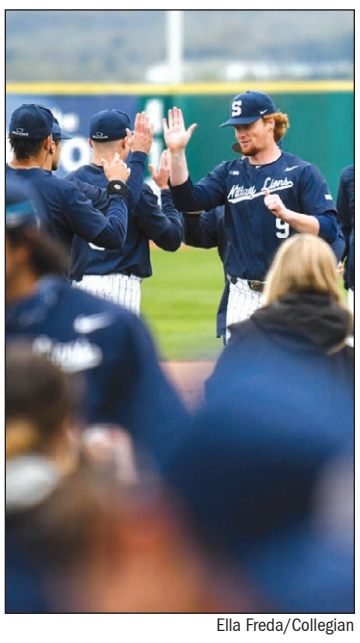
"You try to give them a lesson that everyone has played in here, Kobe, Dr. J.," Rhoades said. "I had to explain to them that when they walked in, it's one of the oldest basketball arenas in the world. You're gonna get to put a uniform on and play a college basketball game in it."

Rhoades' squad took advantage of the opportunity. Penn State came back from a 10-point deficit to beat Michigan, and it advanced to 8-7 on the season and a 2-2 record in the conference.

Penn State's players created a memory on Sunday they'll never forget.

"In their basketball life, that's a bucket list," Rhoades said. "'I played in the Palestra.' They can tell their grandkids someday. 'We beat Michigan in the Palestra.'"

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Ella Freda/Collegian

The team high-fives after its game against Ohio State at Medlar Field at Lubrano Park in April 2023.

Penn State releases 2024 schedule

By Adam Waxman
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

BASEBALL

Just a day after announcing the addition of three pieces to its squad, Penn State dropped its 2024 schedule highlighted by key matchups.

The Nittany Lions will play 15-straight games on the road to open the season, with contests against Monmouth, Army, Stanford, Davidson, Virginia and Harvard. However, seven of those games will be considered home matchups in Cary, North Carolina.

The blue and white will return home to Medlar Field at Lubrano Park on Friday, March 15 when it hosts UMass Lowell for its home opener. The team will go on to play at home for a week and a half before going back on the road.

The 2024 campaign will see the Nittany Lions host 22 games on their home turf as well as 14 games against 2023 NCAA Regional teams and four contests against 2023 College World Series teams.

The season kicks off when Penn State hosts the Monmouth Hawks on Friday, February 16 at the USA Baseball National Training Complex.

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Taking down Oregon State

By Zavier Gussett
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

WRESTLING

After traveling across the country to Gill Coliseum in Corvallis, Oregon, Penn State took care of business with a 36-3 out over Oregon State in front of a record crowd.

The Nittany Lions came into their third dual meet this campaign with a perfect 2-0 record. After Friday's slate of matches, Penn State remained undefeated.

To begin the action, true freshman Braeden Davis matched up against No. 15 Brandon Kaylor in the 125-pound bout.

Davis saw a takedown early in the opening period to take a 3-0 lead, before a Kaylor escape to make it 3-1. Davis took another three points before the end of the first period to push his lead to 6-1.

To start the second period, Kaylor made a few moves but couldn't manage to score. Penn State's freshman saw a 6-2 lead with 2:24 riding time through the first two intervals.

Davis caught a quick four points in the third period, as an escape followed by a strong takedown pushed his lead further. Kaylor landed a takedown late, but Davis finished with an 11-6 win in a statement victory that opened up the scoring in Penn State's favor.

With the score set at 3-0 after the 125-pound match, No. 4 Aaron Nagao and No. 26 Gabe Whisenhunt faced off at 133 pounds.

Nagao took a three-point lead early with a takedown and finished out the period without allowing any points to keep the score 3-0 going into the second interval.

The Nittany Lions' offseason transfer saw another score in the second period to push the score to 5-0. The period ended with the same score, as Nagao recorded 1:51 in riding time through two periods.

The third period saw action stopped with a stalemate call, before another takedown by Nagao saw him gain an 8-0 lead while capturing the riding time bonus.

After a strong performance, Nagao defeated Whisenhunt with a 9-0 major decision that led Penn State to a 7-0 lead through the opening two bouts.

After two Penn State wins to start the night, two more ranked wrestlers came out for the next match.

No. 2 Beau Bartlett saw No. 25 Cleveland Belton on the mats, and the first period didn't see any points scored. However, Bartlett landed a takedown on Belton along the boundary almost immediately into the second period that warranted review, but was confirmed.

After Bartlett's takedown and two escape points, Bartlett led 4-1 with 0:20 of riding time.

The third period saw Belton capture another escape point soon into the action followed by his first takedown soon after, giving the Beaver a 5-4 lead.

Bartlett managed one point in the period to tie it at 5-5 before a sudden-death period was needed.

A back-and-forth overtime period came to an electric conclusion, as Belton attempted to grab Barlett before Barlettt countered with a takedown with just eight seconds left to capture the 8-5 win.

Penn State's lead pushed to 10-0 after the first trio of matches went in their favor.

The 149-pound headlined another Nittany Lion freshman, as Tyler Kasak lined up against No. 12 Nash Singleton.

The first period went scoreless between both wrestlers, and continued that way through the second period. Kasak managed to earn an escape point late into the second interval and led 1-0 going into the third period.

Singleton earned an escape himself to push it back to a 1-1 tie, but it didn't last for long. With about 30 seconds left in the third period, Kasak captured a crucial takedown on Singleton to take the lead back before securing a win.

Although Kasak came into the bout unranked, the 4-1 victory was a huge showing of his talents and contribution to the lineup in wake of Shayne Van Ness' season-ending injury.

The Nittany Lions dominated early in the Beavers' home opener, and held a 13-0 lead going into the next matchup.

No. 1 Levi Haines faced Oregon State graduate student Isaiah Crosby at 157 pounds.

Despite the lopsided ranking, Crosby took a lead right away with an early takedown. Crosby earned another takedown a bit later, leading 6-2 against Haines after the first period.

The second period was back and forth among both wrestlers, but Crosby still led 6-3 still after two periods of action. However, Haines earned three points early into the third period, cutting his lead to 7-6 before another huge takedown pushed him to a 9-8 lead.

Haines took another point via riding time bonus, and captured a 10-8 decision against Crosby after an eventful final period that saw Haines earn seven points.



Tyler Mantz/Collegian

Penn State wrestler Braedan Davis finished with an 11-6 win to set the tone for his unit to take down Oregon State on the road.

After Haines' close victory capped off a 5-match winning streak to start the dual meet, Penn State held a 16-0 lead at the midway break.

A closely-ranked matchup between No. 12 Mitchell Mesenbrink and No. 10 Matthew Olguin at 165 pounds resumed the action out of the break.

Mesenbrink has seen fast starts this season, and repeated that phenomenon by taking down Olguin within the first minute. A second takedown by Mesenbrink, followed by four near-fall points pushed his lead to 10-1 after the first period.

Mesenbrink began the next period on the bottom, and earned a quick escape to build on his momentum. Two more takedowns by Mesenbrink secured the 17-2 tech fall at the 3:44 mark, cementing his 10-0 record so far this season.

The action at 174 pounds included two top-10 wrestlers, as No. 1 Carter Starocci faced No. 7 Travis Wittlake.

Starocci earned two takedowns through the first period, and led 6-1 while holding 1:09 in riding time. Another takedown on Wittlake earned Starocci his third of the match, along with a 10-1 lead through two periods.

Although the bout was a headliner, Starocci was in command throughout the match and earned another bunch of takedowns in the final period on his way to a 19-3 technical fall.

Starocci's win secured the dual meet victory for the Nittany Lions, who extended their lead to 26-0 after the 174-pound bout.

The 184-pound matchup featured No. 2 Bernie Truax and No. 6 Trey Munoz, which went in favor of Oregon State early into its action.

Munoz earned a takedown score, before Truax escaped to make it a 3-1 score going into the second period.

The second period saw Munoz take 1:14 in riding time, as the lead remained just 3-2 before the final period. Munoz held on for a 5-2 victory against Truax to ruin Penn State's shutout bid.

The Beavers' first win on the night pushed the scoreboard to 26-3 with two bouts left.

No. 1 Aaron Brooks and No. 30 Justin Rademacher faced each other in the 197-pound matchup.

Brooks landed two takedowns in the first period for an early 6-1 lead, before landing another soon into the second period for the 10-1 lead.

Rademacher continued to stay aggressive, but Brooks quickly took three more takedowns to capture a 19-4 tech fall 4:53 into the bout.

Ahead of the dual's heavyweight matchup, the blue and white held onto a 31-3 lead.

No. 1 Greg Kerkvliet and No. 12 Boone McDermott both headlined the final matchup of the night, and it saw a strong start for Penn State once again.

Kerkvliet captured three takedowns through the first period along with 1:41 in riding time, which gave him a 9-2 lead before the second period.

After looking strong initially, Kerkvlient continued by earning another three points just seconds into the period. He managed two more takedowns for a 18-5 lead through two periods, before securing a 21-5 tech fall, the Nittany Lions' fourth in the last five matches.

The Nittany Lions dominated the scoreboard 36-3 to defeat Oregon State in a strong overall showing, pushing their record to 3-0 this season.

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