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# VERSUS

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**OREGON DUCKS** (4-0)

(3-0) **PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS**



Graphic by Isabella Viteri  
 Photos by Sienna Pinney,  
 Tyler Mantz, Kate Hildebrand

# White Out Ready

## James Franklin talks White Out, starting fast vs. Oregon

By Lexie Linderman  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Once again, James Franklin has a chance to help turn around the “big game James” narrative that surrounds him and his program, as the veteran head coach is 4-20 against top-10 opponents.

No. 6 Oregon will be his latest test against an elite opponent, and the whole nation is looking on at Franklin and the White Out as Penn State prepares for the 2024 Big Ten championship rematch.

Franklin met with the media Wednesday after practice in anticipation of Saturday’s contest, where he discussed the White Out environment, Drew Allar’s mentality in big games and more.

### The White Out

Franklin always says how lucky he and his team are to play in Beaver Stadium seven games a year. The Happy Valley faithful are as passionate as they come each week — even against teams like Nevada — but their true legacy comes from the White Out.

What began as a tradition has turned into an event. Media personalities all over the country rate it as the best atmosphere, and nearly every Big Ten coach said it’s the toughest environment to play in. The Ducks will have to deal with that for the first time this weekend.

“When you’re able to get a night game against an opponent like we do with the sky, the black sky and the white crowd and the contrast of the dark uniforms and just the anticipation and the build up. The students sleeping outside the stadium all week,” Franklin said. “It’s just turned into a special event, and not just in football, really. In sports, if you’re a sports fan, this is like a bucket list thing that you need to attend.”

With the White Out comes other responsibilities for Franklin and his players. Ticket allocations are a big one, with Franklin joking Monday that he’s had people text him for tickets he hasn’t heard from in years.

It can be the same for the players, but Franklin said it’s a topic they discuss before the season even starts so they’re prepared when the time comes.

“That has to be part of their routine. I had a players meeting. I talked to them about it. We have a



Joe Klein/The Daily Collegian

Head coach James Franklin speaks to the press in Holuba Hall on Wednesday, Sept. 24, 2025 in University Park, Pa.

parents meeting,” Franklin said. “Everything we try to do is try to create a routine and also to try to find ways to eliminate distractions. That’s one of them. So by this week, I’m not saying people aren’t going to hit them up, but they should all have a routine about how their tickets are handled.”

### Another big game for Drew Allar

Allar said on Zoom Wednesday he’s learned “what it feels like” to play in a big game with his three years of starting experience. Franklin touched on the same topic that night.

“I think you can prepare all you want to be the quarterback at Penn State, and I’m not undervaluing the preparation that they need to do to become the star quarterback at Penn State,” Franklin said. “But the reality is, there’s an aspect that until you’re actually back there and dealing with everything that comes with it, it’s hard to totally prepare for that kind of thing.”

Franklin added Allar shared stories with the team about his freshman year and how he has deleted social media as the attention given to players on it — both negative and positive — can consume the thoughts and hurt the mind.

“They understand the opportunity that we have this week. We’ve had three of these now, and this

is the fourth, and it’s obviously a little bit different, based on how everybody talks about this game, and all the people that will be in town and all the attention that this game is getting nationally,” Franklin said. “But I think our guys, for the most part, they recognize what this is, but it’s been business as usual.”

### Starting fast, finishing strong

A big emphasis for Penn State against Oregon is starting fast. Franklin talked about it Monday,

Allar discussed it Wednesday and Franklin spoke on it again after practice.

“We’ve talked about it and made sure everybody understands that’s a big part of this game,” Franklin said. “We’ll always start practice with some type of individual competition, whether it’s one-on-one routes, whether it’s one-on-one pass rush, whether it’s angle-tackle drill and then we do some type of good on good period, whether it’s two minute, third down, red zone, whatever it may be. Good-on-good, so we’re getting that speed work and that



Kate Hildebrand/Collegian file photo

Penn State defensive players attempt to block an extra point kick during the Big Ten championship football game between Penn State and Oregon in Lucas Oil Stadium on Saturday, Dec. 7, 2024 in Indianapolis.

## OREGON DUCKS

No.	Name	Position/Elig.	No.	Name	Position/Elig.	No.	Name	Position/Elig.	No.	Name	Position/Elig.
0	Daylen Austin	DB/So.	15	Solomon Davis	DB/So.	36	Atticus Sappington	K/Sr.	71	Alex Harkey	OL/Sr.
0	Alex Branch	RB/Fr.	15	Akili Smith Jr.	QB/Fr.	38	Will Straton	LB/So.	72	Iapani Laloulu	OL/Jr.
1	Bear Alexander	DT/Jr.	No.	Name	Position/Elig.	39	Cormac O’Flaherty	DB/Fr.	73	Kawika Rogers	OL/Jr.
1	Dakorien Moore	WR/Fr.	16	Austin Nobosad	QB/So.	40	Zander Quinn	RB/Jr.	74	Dave Iuli	OL/Jr.
2	Gary Bryant Jr.	WR/Jr.	17	Cooper Perry	WR/Fr.	No.	Name	Position/Elig.	75	Emmanuel Pregonn	OL/Sr.
2	Kingston Lopa	DB/Fr.	18	Dorian Brew	DB/Fr.	42	Aydin Breland	DL/Fr.	76	Isaiah World	OL/Sr.
3	Kyle Kasper	WR/Jr.	19	Tobi Haastrup	LB/Fr.	43	Luke Basso	LS/Sr.	No.	Name	Position/Elig.
3	Sione Laulea	DB/Jr.	19	Mark Wiefert	QB/Fr.	44	Zach Grace	TE/So.	77	Matthew Bedford	OL/Sr.
4	Malik Benson	WR/Sr.	20	Makhi Hughes	RB/Jr.	44	Teitum Tuioti	LB/Jr.	78	Gernorris Wilson	OL/So.
5	Theran Johnson	DB/Sr.	21	Aaron Flowers	DB/Fr.	45	Torrence Williams	LB/So.	79	Lipe Moala	OL/So.
5	Dante Moore	QB/So.	21	Da’Juan Riggs	RB/Fr.	46	James Ferguson-Reynolds	P/Sr.	80	Dillon Gresham	WR/Fr.
6	Noah Whittington	DB/Jr.	22	Jadon Canady	LB/Sr.	46	Jay Harden	LB/Fr.	81	Vander Plogg	TE/Fr.
7	Ify Obidegwu	DB/Fr.	22	Jay Harris	RB/Jr.	47	Elijah Rushing	LB/Fr.	82	Nathan McCoy II	WR/Fr.
7	Evan Stewart	WR/Sr.	23	Dierre Hill Jr.	RB/Fr.	50	Tionne Gray	DL/Fr.	83	Roger Saleapaga	TE/So.
8	Trey McNutt	DB/Jr.	23	Brayden Platt	LB/Fr.	50	Demetri Manning	OL/Fr.	84	Jovon McRae II	WR/Fr.
9	Jamari Johnson	TE/So.	24	Zach Grisham	DB/Jr.	52	A’Mauri Washington	DL/Jr.	85	Kade Caton	TE/Fr.
9	Black Purchase	LB/So.	25	Rocco Graziano	K/Fr.	53	Devin Brooks	OL/Jr.	86	Darrrian Anderson	WR/Jr.
10	Luke Moga	QB/Fr.	25	Kilohana Haasenritter	DB/Sr.	54	Jerry Mixon	LB/Jr.	87	A.J. Pugliano	TE/Fr.
10	Matayo Uiagalelei	LB/Jr.	26	Devon Jackson	LB/Jr.	55	Matthew Johnson	DE/Fr.	88	Jack Ressler	WR/Fr.
11	Dakoda Fields	DB/Fr.	27	Jayden Limar	RB/Jr.	56	Trent Ferguson	OL/Fr.	88	Xadavien Sims	DL/Fr.
11	Jeremiah McClellan	WR/Fr.	28	Bryce Boettcher	LB/Sr.	57	Zac Stascausky	OL/Fr.	89	Brady Bidwell	WR/Fr.
12	Brock Thomas	QB/So.	29	Ashton Porter	LB/So.	58	Ziyare Addison	OL/Fr.	92	Ross James	P/Sr.
13	Ryder Hayes	QB/Fr.	30	Xavier Barksdale	DB/Jr.	59	Fox Crader	OL/Fr.	96	Nick Duzansky	SN/So.
13	Gavin Nix	LB/Fr.	31	Dillon Thieneman	DB/Jr.	66	Bryce Boulton	OL/So.	97	Gage Hurych	K/Fr.
14	Justius Lowe	WR/Jr.	32	Nasir Wyatt	LB/Fr.	67	Beau CressAllen	OL/So.	98	Andrew Boyle	K/Sr.
14	Na’eem Offord	DB/Fr.	33	Kamar Mothudi	LB/Fr.	68	Auston Mims	OL/So.	99	Terrance Green	DL/So.
			34	Cruz Rushing	DB/Jr.	70	Charlie Pickard	OL/Sr.			

## PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS

No.	Name	Position/Elig.	No.	Name	Position/Elig.	No.	Name	Position/Elig.	No.	Name	Position/Elig.
0	Dominic DeLuca	LB/Sr.	17	Ethan Grunkemeyer	QB/Fr.	38	Jackson Pryts	LB/Jr.	71	Vega Ioane	OL/Jr.
1	Kyron Hudson	WR/Sr.	17	Kenny Woseley Jr.	CB/Fr.	38	Winston Yates	LB/So.	72	Nolan Rucci	OL/Sr.
2	Liam Clifford	WR/Sr.	18	Joey Schlaffer	TE/So.	39	Ty Blanding	DT/So.	73	Caleb Brewer	OL/Fr.
2	Audavone Collins	CB/Jr.	18	Max Granville	DE/Fr.	39	Jashaun Green	S/Jr.	74	J’ven Williams	OL/So.
3	Antoine Belgrave-Shorter	S/Fr.	19	Josiah Brown	WR/Fr.	40	Anthony Speca	LB/Fr.	75	Matt Detisch	OL/Jr.
3	Koby Howard	WR/Fr.	19	Chaz Coleman	DE/Fr.	42	Mason Robinson	DE/So.	76	Mason Carlan	OL/Sr.
4	Tyseer Denmark	WR/Fr.	19	Jack Lambert	QB/So.	43	Dayshaun Burnett	DE/Fr.	77	Owen Aliciene	OL/Fr.
4	A.J. Harris	CB/Jr.	20	Mylachi Williams	DE/Fr.	44	Jaylen Harvey	DE/Fr.	78	Malachi Goodman	OL/Fr.
5	Daryus Dixon	CB/Fr.	21	Vaboue Toure	S/Fr.	44	Matt Henderson	TE/Fr.	79	Donnie Harboure	OL/Fr.
5	Devonte Ross	WR/Sr.	21	Jabree Coleman	RB/Fr.	45	Enai White	DT/Jr.	80	Jeff Exinor Jr.	WR/Fr.
6	Zakee Wheatley	S/Sr.	23	Tikey Hayes	RB/Fr.	46	Cortez Harris	DE/Fr.	81	Donte Nastasi	CB/So.
6	Matt Outten	WR/Fr.	23	Jahmir Joseph	CB/Fr.	47	Aidan Probst	DE/Fr.	82	Ethan Black	WR/So.
7	Kaden Saunders	WR/Jr.	24	Corey Smith	RB/Fr.	48	Tyler Duzansky	SN/Sr.	83	Brian Kortovich	TE/Fr.
7	Zion Tracy	CB/Jr.	24	Amare Campbell	LB/Jr.	50	Cooper Cousins	OL/So.	84	Peter Gonzalez	WR/Fr.
8	DaKaari Nelson	LB/So.	25	Quinton Martin Jr.	RB/Fr.	50	Alonzo Ford Jr.	DT/Sr.	85	Luke Reynolds	TE/So.
8	Trebot Pena	WR/Sr.	25	Alex Tatsch	LB/Fr.	51	Michael Troutman III	OL/Fr.	86	Aaron Enterline	WR/So.
9	Elliot Washington II	CB/Jr.	26	Cam Smith	LB/Fr.	52	Randy Adirika	DT/Fr.	87	Andrew Rappleyea	WR/So.
10	Nick Singleton	RB/Sr.	26	Cam Wallace	RB/So.	52	Dominic Rulli	OL/Jr.	88	Andrew Olesh	TE/Fr.
10	DeJuan Lane	S/So.	27	Lamont Payne Jr.	CB/So.	53	Nick Dawkins	OL/Sr.	88	Sam Siafa	DT/So.
11	LaVar Arrington II	LB/Fr.	28	Lance Durant	DT/So.	53	Xavier Gilliam	DT/Fr.	89	Finn Furmanek	TE/So.
11	Lyrrik Samuel	WR/Fr.	28	Karon Kiesewetter	S/So.	54	Ian Harvie	OL/Jr.	90	Liam Andrews	DT/Fr.
12	Anthony Ivey	WR/Jr.	29	Daniel Jennings	DE/Fr.	54	TJ Shanahan Jr.	OL/So.	92	Andrew Dufault	SN/Fr.
12	Xxavier Thomas	CB/Fr.	30	Amiel Davis	RB/Sr.	55	Chimdy Onoh	OL/So.	93	Bobby Mears	DE/So.
13	Kaytron Allen	RB/Sr.	30	Kari Jackson	LB/Fr.	58	Kaleb Artis	DT/Jr.	94	Ryan Barker	K/So.
13	Tony Rojas	LB/Jr.	31	Logan Cunningham	WR/Jr.	59	Brady O’Hara	OL/Fr.	94	De’Andre Cook	DT/Fr.
14	Braz Thomas	S/Fr.	31	Kolin Dinkins	CB/Jr.	61	Liam Horan	OL/Fr.	95	Jordan Mayer	DE/So.
14	Riley Thompson	P/Sr.	32	Keon Wylie	LB/Jr.	63	Alex Birchmeier	OL/So.	98	Matthew Parker	K/Fr.
14	Jaxon Smolik	QB/So.	33	Dani Dennis-Sutton	DE/Sr.	64	Eagan Boyer	OL/Fr.	99	Yvan Kemajou	DE/Fr.
15	Drew Allar	QB/Sr.	34	Tyler Holzworth	RB/Sr.	65	Jim Fitzgerald	OL/Jr.	99	Gabriel Nwosu	P/Sr.
15	Joshua Johnson	CB/Fr.	34	Owen Waffle	DT/Fr.	66	Drew Shelton	OL/Sr.			
16	Khalil Dinkins	TE/Sr.	35	Blaise Sokach-Minnick	SN/Jr.	67	Henry Boehme	OL/So.			
16	Bekkem Kritza	QB/Fr.	35	Tyler Armstead	CB/Fr.	68	Anthony Donkoh	OL/So.			
16	King Mack	S/Jr.	36	Zuriah Fisher	DE/Sr.	70	Garrett Sexton	OL/Fr.			

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**Column | Drew Allar’s performance versus Oregon will impact his reputaion**

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# Snap into success

By Lyle Alenstein  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

prolific camp for the position.

Through the camps, Tyler found his footing at the position as well as a hunger to improve.

“All of a sudden, (Tyler’s) asking me, ‘Can I borrow some of the new turf that we have? Extra pieces that we have so I could take it home and practice,’” McMillen said. “He became more and more infatuated with being a long snapper. Obviously, going to some of these camps that he did, he ended up taking off and doing really well. His name got out there.”

Tyler got his mom involved. “We practiced at home,” Jane said. “I do remember many afternoons of me catching the ball. He’d snap it and I’m catching it, and my hands were covered in bruises. And then finally, we invested in a long-snapping net and I was very thankful.”

Just as Jane was grateful for the long snapping net, Tyler was glad he dedicated his time to the position.

“Going into my junior year, that was a position that was opening up because there was a senior the year before,” Tyler said. “So I was like, ‘let me jump in there. Let’s see what we can do.’ Definitely glad I did that. Really happy that everything worked out.”

## Taking off

Tyler’s recruiting process came during COVID restrictions, and prior to a Zoom call with James Franklin, he had offers from Cornell, Penn and St. Thomas. Instead, he committed to the Nittany Lions on Oct. 21, receiving the offer nine days prior.

He sat behind Chris Stoll, who is currently on the Seattle Seahawks after signing as an undrafted free agent in May 2023. It shocked some that Stoll came back for another year.

It was hard for Tyler because he was ready to take over as the starter. But, he also realized the pros of his return.

“Looking back on it now, I wouldn’t change it for anything,” Tyler said. “Another year under the best long snapper in the country is never going to hurt anybody.”

Stoll won the 2022 Patrick Mannelly Award, which is

given to the nation’s top long snapper. In high school, Tyler took a photo with Patrick Mannelly, a long-time Bears snapper.

Tyler was nominated for the preseason watch list for the award, but that’s not the only recognition he received. Ahead of his redshirt senior year and third campaign as the starter, he was named a captain.

“It was a goal for a couple of years now,” Tyler said. “Really excited that I was able to achieve that honor.”

He was also a captain his senior year of high school as a result of his exemplary leadership.

“That’s the epitome of Tyler Duzansky, right there. He was always a leader. He was always the kid that went out there and led by example,” McMillen said. “Spoke up when he needed to, but really wasn’t one of those rah-rah type guys, but he was the guy that went out there and would do whatever it took to help the team win.”

Tyler did the latter by stepping up his senior year to play offensive tackle after a teammate’s injury. But even that was clearly not enough, as he has made strides for his fifth season in Happy Valley.

“He’s not afraid to challenge guys if they’re not doing the right thing,” special teams coordinator Justin Lustig said. “You hear him saying things like, ‘this is not how we do it here, you need to do better.’ I hadn’t heard him saying those types of things before.”

## Brotherly love

When Tyler signed with Penn State, Joe Lorig was his coordinator. As always in college football, worlds collide as Lorig now coaches Tyler’s younger brother and fellow snapper, Nick, at Oregon.

Thanks to last season’s conference expansion, the pair’s squads faced off in the 2024 Big Ten championship, where the Ducks emerged victorious, 45-37. Nick, now a redshirt sophomore, didn’t play but the day was still a family affair for the Duzansky’s.

“It was amazing. We were able to bring some family and friends to the game, and some sat on



Jane Duzansky/Collegian file photo

**Penn State long snapper Tyler Duzansky (left) and Oregon long snapper Nick Duzansky (right) pose for a photo during the Big Ten Football championship game between the Nittany Lions and the Ducks.**

the Penn State side, some sat on the Oregon side,” Jane said. “I’ll admit, it was stressful knowing that one team was going to come out on top. But at that point, we said ‘we have to remind ourselves how blessed we are as a family, that we’re in this situation.’ Not many families could say that.”

Jane wore a jersey made by her sister-in-law — one half for Tyler and the other for Nick.

“She had a jersey for both of the boys, and so she cut up her own jerseys, which I was so appreciative of,” Jane said. “I didn’t have the heart to do it to mine and she had it made for me.”

Jane will once again be wearing the split jersey when her kids clash on Saturday with Oregon coming to Happy Valley for the White Out.

While Tyler remains a full-time starter, Nick’s the backup snapper with the Ducks, participating in two games this season.

It remains to be seen whether Nick sees the field Saturday, but regardless, Tyler wants to leave the field with a victory over his younger brother, who he laid the foundation of playing long snapper for.

“Growing up, you always want to play against each other at the next level,” Tyler said. “So we played with each other in high school, and now the opportunity to play against him again will be awesome.”

Tyler has seemingly done it all.

He played football in third grade. Stopped. Picked it back up in 10th grade. Made a position switch. Committed to Penn State. Now, he’s a captain and will compete against his younger brother for a second time.

Tyler’s grateful for that journey, and he’s ready to put his best foot forward and send his best snaps backward in his final season as a Nittany Lion.

“Coming into a place like this, you’ve got no idea what to expect,” Tyler said. “So every year, just building that confidence and building the trust from everybody else is a huge piece. I feel like I’m in a very good spot going into this year, confidence wise, to help lead this team.”

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TDC26SEP25

# ALLAR READY FOR OREGON

By Lexie Linderman  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

To say Drew Allar's first three weeks of 2025 didn't match the expectations set for him this offseason would be an understatement.

He missed easy throws, had trouble reading the field and didn't throw for more than 217 yards against the highly inferior opponents.

But Allar has a chance to turn the page in a big way. The senior had a week off before arguably the biggest regular season contest of his career in the blue and white with No. 6 Oregon coming to town for a bout that could potentially go down as one of the greatest White Outs ever.

All eyes are on Saturday's game. College GameDay is already setting up shop in Happy Valley, and tickets are being sold for over \$1,000 on Ticketmaster. For Allar, however, all that attention means nothing as he prepares for the Ducks.

"I think it's just about focusing on myself and what I need to do for this team to be successful," Allar said. "At the end of the day, I never look at outside noise, whether good or bad, because I think it's unfair to take advice from an outside world where they don't really know what's going on inside the building."

Despite this being Oregon's



Noah Aberegg/Collegian

**Quarterback Drew Allar (15)** throws the ball during the Penn State football game against Villanova at Beaver Stadium on Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025 in University Park, Pa. The Nittany Lions beat the Wildcats 52-6.

second season in the Big Ten, Allar already has experience against the Ducks, and that came on just as big of a stage.

In the 2024 Big Ten championship, Allar had one of his best performances versus the elite opponent — even if the Nittany Lions came out on the losing end. He had three touchdowns, one of which he zipped to Omari Evans as the gunslinger's jersey was

being pulled, and 280 total yards, but Allar did have two interceptions that he would've loved to have had back.

"But I mean, at the end of the day, it doesn't matter what I did last year, we're a different team. They're a different team, and we're different players as well," Allar said. "I think everybody has grown and gotten better on both teams. So just because I had

a good game last year doesn't mean I'm guaranteed to have a good game this year."

Penn State is going to need a good game from Allar this year, though. Sure, the Nittany Lions have won while their quarterback isn't having his best day, but with more weapons out wide and Nick Singleton not playing his best, more pressure is on Allar to lead them to a top-10 victory.

The best way to do that historically for Allar would be starting fast, as he plays best when he gets into a rhythm early.

"We've always stressed that no matter the opponent," Allar said. "But we know it's really critical this week because they do a great job in their own right of starting fast on both offense and defense. So we got to get off to the right start for us on the offensive side of the ball, and that really just starts with our process throughout the week."

Allar has plenty of experience in big games at this point, but he's still yet to win one outside of the College Football Playoff wins over SMU and Boise State in 2024. Regardless, the three-year starter has learned plenty from the losses, and he's ready to show that against Oregon under the lights of Beaver Stadium.

"I just kind of know what it feels like throughout the game, when it feels good, when things aren't going right, like, what's the right response, what's the wrong response," Allar said. "Because going into this game, it's going to be a heavyweight fight between two really talented teams with really great coaching staffs on both sides of the ball."

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Sienna Pinney/Collegian file photo

**Safety Zakee Wheatley (6)** runs onto the field before the Penn State football White Out game against Washington on Saturday, Nov. 9, 2024. The Nittany Lions beat the Huskies 35-6.

## Harris locked in

By Will Horstman  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Through Penn State's first three games, opposing offenses are avoiding cornerback A.J. Harris.

According to PFF, Harris has been targeted once this season, but he disagrees. He said he doesn't recall a target at all, but he's staying focused as a key piece in the Nittany Lions' defense.

"It's just about being international," Harris said. "There will become times when I do get tested, and you never know when. I'm just going to be ready for my moment when it comes next."

Harris was a 2023 247Sports composite 4-star and committed to Georgia, where he played his freshman year. He appeared in seven games during his lone season with the Bulldogs, tallying eight tackles.

The Phoenix City, Alabama, native transferred to Penn State ahead of the 2024 campaign, and he made an immediate impact. Harris started 15 games last year, finishing with 48 tackles, five pass breakups, four tackles for loss and an interception.

Entering his junior year, Harris was projected to be a starter again, but he had to acclimate to a new system. The Nittany Lions hired Jim Knowles to replace departing defensive coordinator Tom Allen, and Harris likes where fits in.

"(Knowles) allows me to look at the quarterback," Harris said. "I could still play my press man. I feel like I could still kind of showcase everything that I do ... There'll come a time when I could showcase my talents, and I'll just let that take care of itself."

With the lack of targets, Harris hasn't had much of a chance to record many statistics. He's totaled just three tackles so far this season, not often being given a chance to make a play.

While his role leads to less

opportunities for himself, Harris is still happy with the overall defense, which has let up just 17 points throughout Penn State's 3-0 start.

"It's still a team sport, and collectively as a defense, I like the way we played," Harris said. "It's been fun to play in this defensive scheme, so sure, I would like to have a little bit more production. But I mean, when we winning ball games like this, I can't really complain."

The Nittany Lions are about to see a ramp up in competition when No. 6 Oregon comes to State College for the White Out game Saturday.

As described by Harris, the Ducks have "very dynamic" wide receivers. Dakorion Moore leads the position group with 207 receiving yards, and Malik Benson is right behind at 201 receiving yards.

Harris and Penn State went up against Oregon in the Big Ten championship last season, and he said that matchup helped him gain experience in big games, especially in his approach.

It remains to be seen if he'll see more action against the Ducks this weekend than compared to his first three games, but Harris said he's prepared for a potentially larger workload.

"I'm always ready for it," Harris said. "That's kind of what you sign up for when you play corner. You got to kind of have that confidence in yourself. So I'm always ready for any type of action my way. But for me, it's just about always staying on your P's and Q's, and even though I may not have had the production, real ball players kind of know why they don't come to that side of the field. So if you really watch the tape, you know."

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Follow him on X @WillHorstman\_.

## Seniors' final White Out

By Lyle Alenstein  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

There's an unwritten pedigree that comes with being a 5-star recruit whether players acknowledge it or not.

Nick Singleton and Dani Dennis-Sutton were both of that pedigree. They had upper echelon collegiate programs foaming at the mouth trying to get the pair on board.

Teams throw a lot at recruits to entice the to join a team. For the tandem, it was the White Out that played a role in committing to Penn State. Now, Singleton and Dennis-Sutton are some of many Nittany Lions preparing to play in their final one.

"It's definitely special. I came as a recruit for the first time when they played Michigan — the timeout and all that," Singleton said. "So it was a great environment, and playing here these past couple years, doing the White Out has been phenomenal."

Dennis-Sutton was in attendance for the 2021 contest against Auburn as a high schooler, but knows how famous that Michigan game was.

The crowd of 110,669 on Oct. 19,

2019, rocked on the Wolverines offense's first snap. The deafening roar of the Happy Valley faithful behind a "Mo Bamba" by Sheck Wes soundbite forced a timeout.

"Obviously, every year you see the Michigan clip where they playing the 'Mo Bamba' song and they got called a timeout," Dennis-Sutton said.

But his perspective doesn't beat Singleton's.

"The first play, they couldn't hear nothing," Singleton said. "I couldn't hear myself talking. My friend came there too. I couldn't hear him. We were right next to each other."

Penn State brought back a ton of players from last year's time for what they hope to be a season that ends with a national championship. As a result, a large contingent of the contributors on the 2025 squad are seniors.

In turn, the guys that are on their last ride will have their last White Out when Saturday's matchup against the Ducks comes to a close.

"It's going to be a lot different when a lot of them young guys actually go into the stadium for the first time. But I've been telling them that this is my last one,

so it's kind of like a happy, sad moment," safety Zakee Wheatley said. "It's a blessing to go on that field and play in front of fans and die hard fans like that, and play for this environment of football. This is what we all dreamed of. So I'm really telling them, take it all in. Walk out that tunnel ... take it all in."

For wide receiver Kyron Hudson, he's in his final year of college football and will be playing in his first White Out. He knows how special the moment will be.

"Being a kid that loves football, everybody knows about the White Out," Hudson said. "It's something that you watch on YouTube, or you're seeing it live on TV. It's something special."

Saturday brings a 2024 Big Ten championship rematch, a top-10 matchup and a game that has a lot at stake, and for the seniors that won't get to play in another White Out, they want to come out on top.

"I got to end it with a bang," Singleton said.

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# COLLEGIAN FOOTBALL STAFF PREDICTIONS

AVERY HILL

LEXIE LINDERMAN

LYLE ALENSTEIN

WILL HORSTMAN



PENN STATE: 34  
OREGON: 31

PENN STATE: 24  
OREGON: 21

PENN STATE: 21  
OREGON: 27

PENN STATE: 27  
OREGON: 20



# The Daily Collegian

For the students. For the glory. Since 1887.

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## 'We work for the students'

UPUA executive branch, chief justice share plans to prioritize transparency

By Mia Debelevich  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN



Matt Cropp/Collegian

University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA) members sit in the HUB-Robeson Center during a UPUA meeting on Sept. 10, 2025 in University Park, Pa.

Several months after President Rasha Elwakil's April removal and subsequent reinstatement in July, the University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA) has made its primary focus increasing transparency in its operations and communication with students.

Elwakil, a fourth-year studying geography, said she wants to reflect on April's events in a way that allows her to envision how UPUA can move in the "right direction."

"There are times where I am a bit concerned about trust and transparency internally," Elwakil said. "But I think I'm trying to move forward in a positive manner, because I don't want to bring down this organization because of what happened."

This decision made by UPUA members initially raised concerns for transparency and accountability amongst students and representatives.

Vice President Noah Youcheff said the decision to remove Elwakil behind closed doors was "a mistake." After her removal, representatives were not allowed to speak to the press without a public relations representative present during interviews — a rule that has since been reversed.

"I hope the fact that we are no longer barring anyone from talking to reporters maybe encourages student representatives to talk more about what they're doing," Youcheff, a third-year studying security and risk analysis, said.

While not in office during

Elwakil's removal, Chief Justice Hunter Steach overturned the decision in late July after a judicial review when he assumed the chief justice role. He acknowledged the trust between UPUA and the student body had been "hurt."

"It was a major issue to a lot of students that they felt the statements weren't being transparent right away," Steach, a fourth-year studying political science, said. "From my standpoint, that's why I tried to be very open with the opinion (the judicial board) wrote."

Steach said working toward transparency has been the main focus of the Steering Committee, which is overseen by Elwakil and made up of the vice president,

chief of staff, chief justice and chairs of the legislative committees.

"A lot of this year is being dedicated to mending those relationships and rebuilding that trust," Steach said. "When things happen, our public statements about it are going to be discussed and agreed upon by everybody in Steering and then sent out. I can speak for everybody else when I say they have learned from the situation."

Steach believes that, on occasion, UPUA doesn't do a "good enough job of disseminating and spreading out what (they're) actually doing."

Improving UPUA's outreach is very important, according to Youcheff. He said there's more

room to grow for students to become better engaged with the organization, including student awareness around what occurs at UPUA's general assembly meetings.

Part of UPUA's efforts include adjusting for a growing digital presence. Posting agendas prior to general assembly meetings on UPUA's Instagram account has been reintroduced by Speaker Kat Hogan, which Youcheff said allows students to see if meetings are of interest to them.

"One of the things we're looking into as a possibility is live streaming general assembly meetings, or at the very least recording them," Youcheff said. "We are looking at that as an option to hopefully make general assembly

meetings a bit more accessible for students. There would also be that record for everyone to go look back on and hold their representatives accountable."

According to Elwakil, UPUA is planning to put out Google Forms for student questions outside of open forum during general assembly meetings. Additionally, Elwakil and Youcheff will be hosting office hours open to all students.

Elwakil also shared plans to start posting blogs that summarize any large initiatives UPUA is working on, as well as anything that "directly impacts the student body."

"We just want to be ... approachable and accessible to students while sharing out information that affects them because, again, they are paying (to be) here," Elwakil said. "They should know what their money is being allocated towards. They should know what's directly impacting them."

Looking ahead, Youcheff said gathering a wide range of perspectives will be a priority when addressing the student body, while Elwakil emphasized that transparency remains central to UPUA's decision-making.

"Nothing that happens — the UPUA's business — is confidential," Youcheff said. "It just isn't."

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## Student perspectives on political division

By Rubi Orellana  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Politics shape how people connect and engage with one another, and there is no exception at Penn State as students navigate politics in friendship, classrooms and campus organizations.

Kai Holden, president of WiredIn, believes politics can have a negative impact on certain groups of students at Penn State.

"I feel more comfortable with people who share the same ideas as me," Holden, a fourth-year studying cybersecurity analytics and operations, said.

He said he believes some students at Penn State separate themselves due to judgemental comments and how it may affect group interactions socially.

"Some people may feel singled out or the minority of the groups, which makes it harder for them," Holden said.

Technology is a major factor in shaping these political divisions, according to Holden.

"I feel like because of social media and AI and the nonstop flow of political content our generation is more divided," Holden said. "There is so much influence and misinformation like echo chambers that makes disagreements more intense."

Combined with activism on campus, Holden believes that division can sharpen further.

"I think that (speakers and rallies) make divides feel way stronger and make people feel isolated, scared and also alone instead of bringing people together," he said.

Contrarily, Kendall McDaniel, president of the Multicultural Undergraduate Law Association (MULA), believes politics hasn't harmed her relationship and has instead given her the chance to build stronger ones.

"It takes a certain level of

maturity to engage in discussions where opinions and beliefs differ and still walk away with mutual respect, and I'm proud to say that's been my experience here,"

McDaniel, a fourth-year studying political science and health policy and administration, said.

McDaniel said she believes Penn State's culture is open to different perspectives.

"It's natural for people to gravitate toward those with similar perspectives, but that doesn't necessarily mean they're closed off to others," she said.

As a political science major, McDaniel said there's many political topic discussions in her classrooms where students are respectful, open-minded and any differences in belief are rarely a source of division in the classroom or among peers.

She also believes younger generations are approaching politics with major visibility.

"While I can't speak for everyone, I've noticed that many of my peers and I are very vocal about what we believe in," McDaniel said. "That courage to speak up is something I deeply admire."

The numerous student-led rallies and movements happening on campus and within State College is evidence that students aren't afraid to stand up for their beliefs, according to McDaniel.

While McDaniel believes her views haven't shifted, the environment has encouraged growth.

"Being around people with different experiences and views has helped me grow in my ability to engage in respectful and productive conversations, even when we don't agree," McDaniel said.

Barron Owusu, president of the Penn State National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), believes politics has had a personal impact on his life.

"I'm the type of person who definitely would like to consider himself non-partisan, especially with the work that I do in NAACP," Owusu, a fourth-year studying psychology and economics, said.

Owusu said at times, he refrains from participating in classroom discussions out of fear.

"A lot of the classes I take, whether be an honors or regular class, I am one of ... few Black people in class," Owusu said. "I feel like I would get targeted."

According to Owusu, he feels a lot safer in more inclusive environments, such as the NAACP, where they can have panel discussions and have many students come to discuss the issues.

However, Owusu said some of his views have shifted during his time at Penn State.

"My family emphasized to me that being part of a LGBTQ+ community was wrong," Owusu said. "After being around a diverse population at Penn State, it is something that did change for me and I am trying to (educate) my family about (that) as well."

As a student leader, he said he has a responsibility to create space for dialogue.

"It is very important for us as students to take a stand on the things that are going on and create more environments in which open dialogue can occur," Owusu said. "I definitely do think that you drive to create a world in which people can actually speak up for what they believe is right without repercussions and without drastic measures ... so I definitely think it is important to have those discussions."

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## SCI Rockview to close

By Kiera Ginn  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC) announced the decision to close the State Correctional Institution (SCI) Rockview in Bellefonte on Friday.

The closing procedures will begin immediately according to a press release from the DOC, and expects the process to be done within four months.

The DOC held a public hearing in April about the proposed closure of SCI Rockview where current employees would experience commutes of up to two hours if they were relocated to another correctional facility according to the DOC's 2025 closure report.

Compared to other facilities being closed, SCI Rockview has much greater maintenance needs in a five year span approaching \$75 million in comparison to the \$6.9 million in maintenance needs at Quehanna Boot Camp, according to the DOC's 2025 closure report. Both employees and inmates of SCI Rockview

will likely be relocated to SCI Benner Township, SCI Houtzdale or SCI Huntingdon.

The closure of SCI Rockview will not bring about a repurposing of the building due to the age and design of the facility, making it not readily available for another business or organization to utilize the space, according to the DOC's 2025 Closure Report.

The closure of SCI Rockview is expected to have economic impacts throughout the region as jobs are moved elsewhere. With SCI Rockview's 658 employees, plus the additional spending power supporting just under 300 jobs in Centre County, the local economy may lose 5.8 million in potential expenditures and a loss of 167,000 per employee that leaves Centre County, according to the DOC's 2025 Closure Report.

According to the DOC press release, the Commonwealth will save 100 million dollars annually from the closure of SCI Rockview.

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## Acacia, Sigma Pi join SCIC

By Anisa Daniel-Oniko  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

The State College Interfraternity Council (SCIFC) announced Monday that Acacia and Sigma Pi have joined the organization.

The two fraternities join Pi Kappa Alpha, Sigma Chi and Tau Kappa Epsilon, which established the council in March. The council also allows member groups to operate outside of university and Interfraternity Council (IFC) oversight.

Each chapter property is monitored by the council's risk partner, Standing Stone Consulting, which also oversees events, SCIFC administration said in an email. All member organizations are recognized and in good standing with their respective national headquarters.

Acacia was suspended due to hazing violations on May 7,


while Sigma Pi had been on an organizational suspension due to hazing violations since July 17. Both suspensions are expected to end in 2029.

Sigma Chi was suspended through summer 2024 for COVID-19 policy violations, and Pi Kappa Alpha was suspended through fall 2025 for alcohol violations and failure to comply. Tau Kappa Epsilon began operating independently in August 2024.

Although all five member fraternities have been barred from the privileges of recognized status, like access to campus facilities or university resources, their operations have continued off campus.

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The Collegian is collecting student perspectives on how COVID-19 has impacted our generation. Scan the QR code to take our short, anonymous survey and help us tell the story.





Sawyer Hadlum/Collegian

Forward Amelia White runs with the ball during the Penn State women's soccer game against Nebraska.



Jayden Rhoney/Collegian

Two people sit outside Uncle Eli's Artist Marketplace and Frame Shop

# VIEWS FROM HAPPY VALLEY



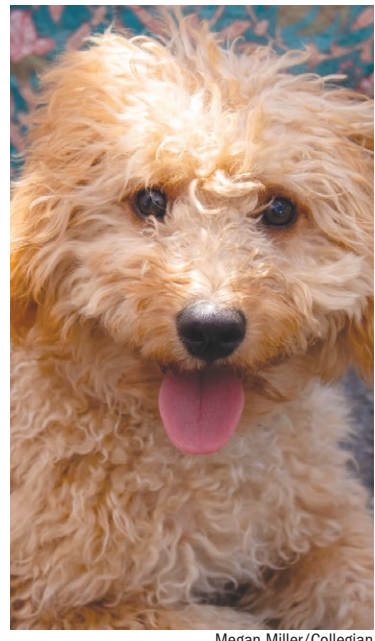
Matt Cropp/Collegian

Lillian Guleserian hits the ball during the Women's golf Nittany Lion Invitational.



Megan Miller/Collegian

Libero Gillian Grimes serves the ball during the Penn State women's volleyball game against Pitt.



Megan Miller/Collegian

Piper sits in the shade at the Pop Up Ave urban flea market.



Geraldine Cruz/Collegian

Defensive specialist Ava Falduto and middle blocker Jordan Hopp celebrate a point during the Women's volleyball game against Princeton.



Geraldine Cruz/Collegian

A community member dances at the Happy Valley Latin Festival.

# NITTANY LIONS IN MOTION



Matt Cropp/Collegian

A groundhog eats during the Penn State women's golf Nittany Lion Invitational.



Geraldine Cruz/Collegian

A community member poses for a photo at the Happy Valley Latin Festival on Fraser Street on Saturday, Sept. 20, 2025 in State College, Pa.



Megan Miller/Collegian

A shopper browses through records at the Pop Up Ave urban flea market.



Sawyer Hadlum/Collegian

Midfielder Caden Grabfelder goes up for a header during the men's soccer game against Maryland.

# Students on maintaining strong friendships

By Lexi Cannan  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN



Joe Klein/Collegian

Students lounge on Old Main Lawn on a warm day on April 24, 2025 in University Park, Pa.

transitions. “During life transitions, such as the college years, supportive friendships help with coping, engagement and problem-solving and enhance feelings of well-being,” Bierman said.

Associate Teaching Professor of Psychology Beth Gerace said maintaining a healthy long-term friendship means supporting each other, but also acknowledging differences in lifestyles.

“Friends may have different schedules or routines, so give each other grace if you don’t talk as much as you’d like,” Gerace said. “Set some time aside to talk, text or visit, but also give each other space when you’re busy. When you’re both home, take time to see each other.”

Gerace added that friends should be open to the fact that things might change and feel different over four years of college, and that’s healthy.

“The most important thing is to support each other in your

separate endeavors,” Gerace said.

Frazer and London said they’ve learned not to expect constant plans, and instead focus on effort and intention. Sending a short text to check in or planning a quick coffee break has helped them maintain closeness during the busiest weeks of the semester.

London said she believes this mindset has kept their friendship from fading.

“It’s the reassurance that our friendship is built into my schedule that makes long stretches of assignments feel lighter,” London said.

For Frazer, even just laughing with London when things get overwhelming helps take the pressure off.

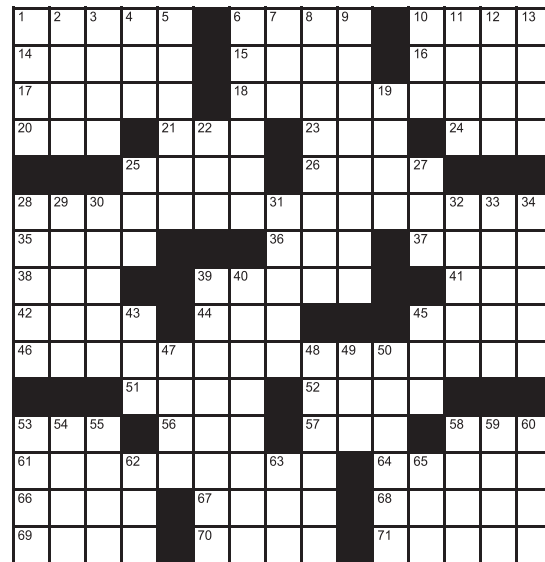
“Sometimes that’s all I need — just someone who gets it,” Frazer said.

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# Crossword

Across

- 1 Unexciting
- 6 Canvasback kin
- 10 Crooked
- 14 Sharp as a tack
- 15 Wife of Hercules
- 16 *Star Wars* name
- 17 Cast
- 18 Formerly
- 20 Envision
- 21 Down and out?
- 23 Toni Morrison’s “\_\_\_ Baby”
- 24 *Casablanca* pianist
- 25 Lepton’s locale
- 26 Away from the wind
- 28 Ampersand, e.g.
- 35 Oklahoma tribe
- 36 Vacation spot
- 37 Design
- 38 Lady’s man
- 39 Wipe clean
- 41 Krona part
- 42 *Tickle Me* name
- 44 Negative joiner
- 45 Greek titaness
- 46 Housing authority in some places
- 51 Sicilian resort
- 52 Kon-Tiki Museum site
- 53 Piano piece
- 56 Handgun, to Capone
- 57 Pod resident
- 58 Unrefined
- 61 Leisurely
- 64 Literary genre
- 66 Abstruse
- 67 Monk parrot



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- 68 Word to a visitor
- 69 Lady bighorns
- 70 Hitch
- 71 Impertinent
- 11 *Superman* character
- 12 Talipot palm leaf
- 13 Terza rima, e.g.
- 19 Songbird
- 22 Bud’s buddy
- 25 Expert
- 27 Working person (Abbr.)
- 28 Tough question
- 29 Helpful
- 30 *Camille* actress
- 31 Headdress
- 32 Hilo hello
- 33 Less common
- 34 Work dough
- 39 Tangles
- 40 Orbital motion
- 43 Arena cheer
- 45 Likewise
- 47 Trainman, for short
- 48 Leader, to some
- 49 Compass pt.
- 50 Swords
- 53 Impolite
- 54 Over again
- 55 Drawn butter
- 58 Vermin
- 59 TV’s *Daniel Boone* actor Ed
- 60 Suspicious
- 62 Increases
- 63 Time period
- 65 Part of a cell nucleus

Down

- 1 Distillery items
- 2 Flu symptom
- 3 Unpolluted
- 4 Japanese admiral
- 5 Joyce of *Three’s Company*
- 6 Geena Davis role in \_\_\_ & *Louise*
- 7 Always (Poet.)
- 8 Fasts
- 9 Not to mention
- 10 Flue residue

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© Pappocom

2				7				4
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		2	3		5	4		
	4			9				2
9				4				7

# S-Zone traditions

By Jocelyn Bilker  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Amid the sea of blue and white at Beaver Stadium, one section stands out and it’s not just because of the matching T-shirts.

The S-Zone, a game-day tradition that turns a section of students into a striking block-letter “S,” is visible from almost every seat in the stadium and often appears on national TV.

Run by the Lion Ambassadors, the S-Zone is a celebration of school pride, student unity and the power of tradition at one of the country’s most spirited universities.

The preparation starts days before kickoff. Every Thursday before a home game, Lion Ambassadors spend hours tying shirts with shakers, bagging them by row and color and loading them into Beaver Stadium.

On game day, they’re on-site three hours before kickoff, setting up, welcoming students and making sure the “S” takes shape even as fans are still filing in.

“Adrenaline’s high, and the energy is contagious,” Olivia Fisher said. “It really comes to life about 30 minutes before the game starts.”

Fisher oversees all Lion Ambassadors’ large-scale projects, including the S-Zone.

“For the actual layouts of the S-Zone, it’s somewhat of an intricate process,” Fisher, a fourth-year studying marketing and executive vice president of Lion Ambassadors, said. “There’s about 25 rows that make up the S-Zone with 32 seats that are filled within those rows.”

The S-Zone tradition dates back to the late 1980s, originally

created using card blocks held by students to form the letter, according to Fisher. In 1998, the Lion Ambassadors and the Penn State Alumni Association transitioned to the now-signature T-shirts, which offers a cleaner, easier way to maintain the visual tradition.

Today, the S-Zone includes blue and white shirts for regular home games, pink and black for Homecoming and special ribbon-themed designs for THON games.

“I’ll never forget the awesome opportunity to work the playoff game last year,” Fisher said. “I was able to stand in the front row with a free ticket and loved hanging out with my best friends in Lion Ambassadors. It was one of the best games I’ve experienced during college.”

Max Gibbard said everyone recognizes the S-Zone as a uniquely Penn State thing.

“It’s our most outward-facing tradition,” Gibbard, a fourth-year studying computer science and president of Lion Ambassadors, said. “Students and alumni expect to see the S-Zone each game. You’ll see people wearing the free shirt around campus, to bed, to class or even to games when they’re not in the S-Zone.”

For students, joining the S-Zone is simple: arrive early with a student ticket, grab an S-Zone wristband as you enter the stadium and become part of the display.

“You’re literally part of Penn State tradition,” Gibbard said. “It’s fun and loud.”

Hunter Markel said she feels a sense of pride when she sees the “S” at each game.

“It’s the heart of the student section,” Markel, a fourth-year

studying biochemistry and molecular biology and one of the S-Zone ad-hoc leads, said. “It brings everyone together.”

Markel said she helps coordinate the S-Zone for each home football game, from folding hundreds of shirts to prepping with fellow ambassadors on early Saturday mornings.

“It’s a major sense of pride,” Markel said. “We’re coordinating over 800 people and setting up for game day.”

Markel said she feels like she’s leaving her mark on the stadium as she prepares to graduate.

“It’s especially meaningful when you see the Alma Mater being performed and everyone links arms,” Markel said. “You’re enjoying this experience since you only get four years of your life as a student at Penn State.”

Though rooted in football, the S-Zone has extended its reach. Ambassadors have hosted smaller versions at ice hockey games, basketball games and Be a Part From the Start, the annual pep rally for first-year students.

“Whether you’re wearing blue or white, you’re coming together as students,” Fisher said. “You’re unified and cheering on Penn State as one.”

The S-Zone also builds bridges between generations. Each shirt features the logo of the Penn State Alumni Association, a nod to the lifelong connection many students feel to the university.

“If you want to be part of Penn State tradition, the S-Zone is one of the best ways to do it,” Fisher said. “It’s simple, but powerful — you wear the shirt, and you’re part of something bigger.”

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Sienna Pinney/Collegian

Students form the S-Zone at the Penn State football Stripe Out game against UCLA on Oct. 5, 2024 in Beaver Stadium in University Park, Pa. The Nittany Lions beat the Bruins 27-11.

## WORD SEARCH

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### Getting Around

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

- Airplane
- ATV
- Bicycle
- Blimp
- Bus
- Car
- Dogsled
- Dune Buggy
- Go Kart
- Gondola
- Helicopter
- Helicopter
- Horse
- Kayak
- Locomotive
- Monorail
- Moped
- Motor Home
- Motorcycle
- Mule
- Sailboat
- Skates
- Steamboat
- Subway
- Taxi
- Tractor
- Train
- Tram
- Trolley
- Truck
- Uber
- Van
- Wagon
- Yacht

## 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.

	4	9	18	26		21	14		
27					17				
					29				
28								33	4
	10	26					8		
						7	6		
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						20			
12				27					3
					4			8	
10									
3					17			10	

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## Penn State must find a way to persevere WPSU

Central Pennsylvania's only full-service NPR station is set to close by June 2026 after Penn State's Board of Trustees voted against a \$17 million subsidy transfer of WPSU's assets to WHYY amid financial pressure. WPSU is one of the nation's first stations to be impacted after Congress approved Trump's proposal to cut federal funding to public media in July. In 1964, WPSX-TV became the first educational TV station in Pennsylvania to be licensed to a university, where they eventually rebranded as WPSU. Its TV services reach over 515,000 households in 24 counties throughout the state, while radio has 450,000 listeners in 13 counties. Members of the Daily Collegian share their perspectives on the decision.

**Mercedes Hamilton, Editor-in-Chief**

This decision will have monumental impacts on the hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvanians who rely on the station for news and culture. Penn State's commitment to serving the Commonwealth has faltered severely in light of recent decisions, from shutting down WPSU to closing seven campuses — all while making President Neeli Bendapudi the second highest-paid president at a public university in the nation. The university boasts of its impact on the state economy and its broad reach, but is falling short of its responsibility as a land-grant institution. Public media is essential to keep-

ing rural communities informed, connected and represented. The university must reconsider ways to sustain that service for central Pennsylvania.

**Kahlie Wray, Managing Editor**

The decision to close WPSU is reckless and indicative of the Board of Trustees' misguided priorities. I'm very worried about the future of public media, not just in Pennsylvania, but across the United States. The optimist in me hopes there'll be an eleventh-hour intervention. My heart is with both the employees and the communities served by the station.

**Avery Tortora, Digital Managing Editor**

I worry how the closure of WPSU will impact the station's journalists and the generations of students who have received hands-on experience in the field at the media outlet. It's disappointing that Penn State would decrease funding and support for the station, given that it provides great opportunities for the community and keeps the general public informed.

**Daniela White, News Editor**

It's horrible that WPSU is going to close down, especially during a time when freedom of speech is at risk. From 'Jimmy Kimmel Live!' being taken off the air (though it returned to some networks) to public media funding cuts, this decision amplifies concern about what media organization or figure will be on-

the chopping block next.

**Rachael Keller, News Editor**

When I heard WPSU would be one of the first stations to go dark, it was extremely disheartening. I see public media as the backbone of this country. I grew up listening to NPR with my family and watching PBS every day before school. I didn't expect a decision like this to be made so quickly, let alone so close to home. I truly wish Penn State did more to preserve an integral part of Pennsylvania's media landscape. And I hope that soon there are strides to protect public media nationwide.

**Kaitlyn Murphy, Lifestyle Editor**

It's very unfortunate that WPSU, which has been operating in our community for so long, is being closed down. As a student journalist, I know many who came before me got experience in the field working for WPSU, and it's a shame future Penn State students won't have that. However, I admittedly don't listen to public radio. Like newspapers, they have historical significance and I'd love to see that form of news preserved, but they're just not embraced enough by modern consumers to keep pursuing.

**Andrew Deal, Sports Editor**

WPSU has been around for many, many years, and I'm surprised by the abrupt decision to shut it down. There should've been more open conversation

and public comment before the vote, even if it still would have come to this. I'm sad to see it go after such a long and historic run.

**Samantha Oropeza, Photo Editor**

I am deeply disappointed by the decision to shut down WPSU. The station has served as a vital source of trusted news, educational programming and cultural connection for our region. Its closure represents a significant loss to the community, particularly in an era when access to reliable local media is more important than ever. While I recognize the financial constraints involved, I believe more could have been done to preserve WPSU's mission and support its dedicated staff. The absence of WPSU will be felt for years to come and is living proof of the fall of journalism.

**Alex Antoniono, Investigations Editor**

The closing of WPSU undermines the importance of an informed public because it pushes the idea that public media isn't worth our time, money or support. Furthermore, I find Penn State's recent financial decisions concerning campus and community discourse has shown it's clear where the university's priorities lie when we look at what they're shutting down and what they're pouring more money into.

**Teresa Phelan, Opinions Editor**

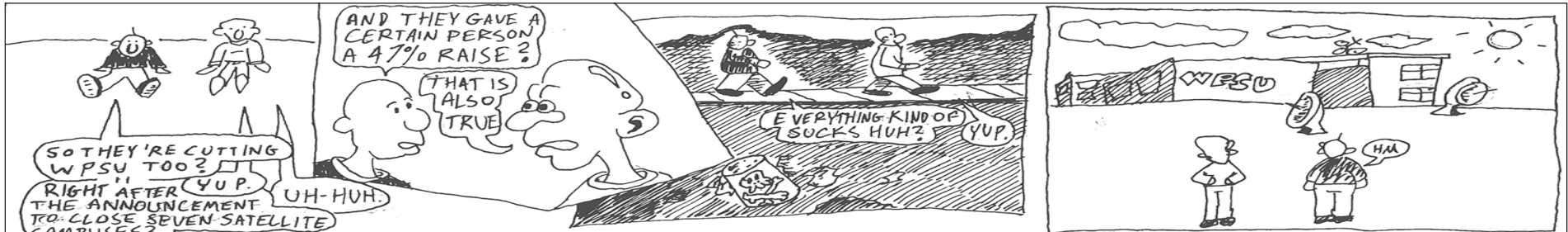
I am disappointed about the decision to close WPSU, and I don't think the university cares enough about the repercussions it's going to have. Removing public media is likely to create a spiral effect, one in which the work of journalists and newsrooms is underappreciated, and the media becomes filled with more misinformation. I hope the public pushback is enough for the university to reconsider their priorities and understand the role that the media plays in informing and educating the public.

**Kippi Hall, Visual Editor**

This decision is a huge blow to the Central Pennsylvania community. It'll prevent many rural residents from information about such a remote part of Pennsylvania much more than what's expected. WPSU is a crucial part of the national radio that reaches rural communities. Without it, I expect to see a lot more separation between the affected counties and urban areas on both sides of the state.

**Avery McGurgan, Newsletter Editor**

WPSU's closing says a lot about the devaluation of the news under the current administration. WPSU is a staple of our community and a pillar of accessible information. Closing the outlet disadvantages so many people and increases censorship.



Cartoon by Nate Campbell

MY VIEW | Jadzia Santiago

## Yikes...Coping with embarrassment

It's the middle of my CAS 404 class when my computer dies. I'm already not having the best day, having arrived just in time and ended up sitting in the middle of the room as a result. Notes are a lost cause without my laptop, so I figure I might as well open the Canvas app and check the professor's office hours. When I get the Microsoft Authenticator request, it's almost my last straw. But when I go to click the notification, a string of terrible events ensues: I click the wrong notification, which is, of course, a TikTok notification. The app opens and, rather than taking me to the source of the notification, it takes me to my For You page. My headphones, which had notified me that they were connected when I opened my phone, spontaneously betray me and disconnect. A random TikTok video screeches through the room, full-blast. As all heads turn to me, I think, *Oh, you have GOT to be—* You can imagine my abject horror, despair and subsequent desire to disappear into the Pennsylvania wilderness. But

this isn't the first time on this campus I've ended up — ahem — losing aura points (?) as the kids put it. Truly, compared to the time I fell dramatically in the middle of Pollock Road, the class a professor spent yelling at me (long story, not my fault), and that one party I still want to smack multiple people for (kidding!), this doesn't even break the top 10. So, I know what you're thinking: *Jaz, how have you not burst into flames by now? How do I avoid bursting into flames whenever I get embarrassed?* I won't lie, sometimes the only reason I'm not a pile of ash is my lack of ability to spontaneously combust. But other than that, my main coping strategy is this: drop your cynicism, just a little bit. I know I say this every column, but hear me out — let me break it down. In every embarrassing situation, there are three parts: the embarrassed (you, in this case), the embarrasser (the situation, person or thing that does the embarrassing), and the audience (everyone watching). Be as cynical and angry as you'd like about the embarrassers. In class, I wanted to frisbee my phone out of the window, and have since declared war on all technology, as it routinely ruins my life (and the visual editors' trust in my competence).

But when it comes to the audience, I can assure you that for every person who's judging or laughing at you, there are about three more who are either equally embarrassed for you or empathetic toward you — or will be. I'm not going to pacify you with "Nobody will remember;" because to be honest, I've learned from experience that it's B.S. However, people are more compassionate than you think. Whenever I or somebody else recalls someone else's less dignified moment, it's usually followed by "I felt so bad," no matter how funny the situation may have been. In many situations, I've been asked if I was okay, comforted and reassured that it wasn't my fault, that I couldn't have foreseen it, etc., by onlookers (and in one case, classmates) who were just as mortified as I was. And when in doubt, there's always your friends, who you can lament about said mortification to and have them respond, "I'm SO sorry." Additionally, if anyone can help you find the humor in the situation, it's usually them. Not only that, the humiliation and cringe-induced paralysis do eventually pass, and every situation becomes a story in your arsenal. Pull them out whenever your group needs a

laugh or your more recently-disgraced friend needs some reassurance that things could, in fact, be worse, or when someone else has gone through the exact same thing. That takes us to my last point: as my professor said when I went up to her to apologize for my phone going off (and actually ask about those office hours), we've all been there. It's hard not to react with visible shame when something horrifying happens, but if you remember that everybody's had at least one experience like that, it becomes a lot easier to handle in the moment. So, when you get embarrassed, take it on the chin, anticipate kindness more than judgment and know that the memory will eventually only surface in appropriate moments, like when you need to keep a conversation going. Or, of course, when you're trying to sleep.

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## Back on track

All-American shot putter Darrell Hill returns to Penn State as throws coach

By Noah Aberegg  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Once a Nittany Lion, always a Nittany Lion.

### TRACK & FIELD

This is the mantra of the new Penn State track and field throws coach, Darrell Hill, who returns to Happy Valley after a successful career there as an athlete.

“When looking at schools (to coach at), I never thought about this place because I didn’t think it would be a realistic possibility,” Hill said.

While head coach John Gondak believes that hiring an alumnus creates “amazing passion and excitement about Penn State”, Hill brings much more than that to his alma mater.

The Philadelphia native arrived at Penn State in 2013 after a year at the University of Houston, where he catapulted his career with an NCAA Western Preliminary Round-qualifying freshman year.

“As soon as he came in, he seemed so positive,” Michael Shuey, a former Penn State and Olympian javelin thrower, said. “He didn’t have the marks to back that up on the track, but you just knew he was going to be great.”

During his sophomore year, those marks started hitting as Hill made the podium at both the indoor and outdoor Big Ten championships, including an NCAA Eastern Preliminary Round appearance in the spring of 2014.

The following season, Hill continued to impress in the shot put circle as he moved into fourth place all-time during his indoor campaign and earned Big Ten weekly honors during the outdoor season. However, his performance at the 2014 Outdoor Big Ten Track & Field Championship is what began to solidify him as a Penn State legend.

After finishing sixth at the indoor Big Ten championship, Hill threw a lifetime best 67-foot-



Courtesy of Mark Selders/Penn State Athletics

Darrell Hill competes in the Penn State National, at the Horace Ashenfelter Indoor Track at the Multi-Sport Facility.

6-inch throw at the outdoor championship. Hill’s performance not only named him a Big Ten champion, but put him just behind three-time Olympic medalist Joe Kovacs in school history.

“His mindset going into practice was always positive,” Shuey said. “It took a while for his body to catch up to his mindset, which was Olympian (level).”

Hill went out with a bang in Year 4 as he garnered even more honors and broke even more records for the Nittany Lions. Throughout his final indoor season, Hill broke the 25-year-old school record and continued to break his new school record two weeks later en route to another Big Ten championship and being named USTFCCA Mid-Atlantic Male Field Athlete of the Year.

The outdoor season continued to be a moment to shine for Hill as he earned his fourth Big Ten championship and booked tickets to the NCAA East First Round and NCAA championship, where he ultimately finished runner-up.

Things didn’t slow down for Hill as he departed Happy Valley, however. The four-time Big Ten champion quickly jumped

into the professional ranks as he suited up for the 2016 Summer Olympics.

“The throws have been an area of our program that has always brought great success,” Gondak said. “(Between Kovacs and Hill), two of the best throwers in the world have come through Penn State.”

Despite finishing 23rd at the Olympics, Hill continued to put his head down and trained at the Olympic training center in Chula Vista, California. Later that year, he earned his first international medal after finishing third in the 2016 Diamond League Final, and a year after that, became a Diamond League champion in 2017.

At the same time, Hill began to pursue coaching opportunities and came on as a volunteer assistant coach at San Diego State, where he hoped to use his extensive knowledge of throws to better his athletes.

“We both went from Penn State and then went to an Olympic program where I think we both learned more about the sport in that time than in college,” Shuey said. “To go back and give the kids the information that you get

from being a professional athlete at that stage, no one else can give it to you.”

While volunteer coaching with the Aztecs, Hill continued to earn first-place medals. In 2018, he won shot put in the U.S. outdoor track and field championships and was named the USATF Thrower of the Year.

Although Hill’s time with San Diego State ended in 2019, he continued to train and compete professionally until he joined the University of Delaware in 2023 as the throws coach.

“Being able to use my career to help explain to an athlete, it gives me credibility because they believe it,” Hill said.

In his two years with the Blue Hens, Hill experienced working with a girls-only throwing team, a shift from his years prior when he mostly worked with the men’s team at San Diego State.

“They’re not the same energy and it’s different,” Hill said. “You can’t coach them the same, so it gave me more tools to help me understand different ways to communicate to different people.”

This past summer, Penn State went in a different direction from

former throws coach Nathan Ott. Hill jumped on the opportunity to return to his alma mater this past summer.

“I was eager to help him because I knew he would be a great coach with his energy and enthusiasm,” Gondak said. “Watching him and his career, I’m just really thrilled to have him back with us.”

Across the track and field world, Hill’s hiring sparked an energy for the Nittany Lions months before the season even started.

“I think he’s going to bring new life to the Penn State program,” Shuey said. “And it’s interesting, because it’s all coming from just one hire.”

In addition to the excitement of others, Hill is looking forward to the opportunity to “get the throws at a high level (and) take the next step for the program”.

Between his experience at many international competitions, Hill brings an edge and advantage when it comes to coaching his athletes, and can provide many mentoring opportunities to those hoping to follow his path.

“If they aspire to be an Olympian, Darrell has been there and done it. If they want to be a Diamond League champion, Darrell has been there and has done it,” Gondak said. “The fact that he can bring all of those experiences to the table is really going to make the athletes excited.”

With the indoor track season just months away, Penn State is expected to be a premiere team as a result of hiring the Olympian and four-time Diamond League medalist.

“He’s going to be one of the better coaches in the NCAA and the power five conferences his first year,” Shuey said. “He’s such a personality for the Penn State team, it’s going to be really exciting to see how his career goes.”

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## Generational Talent

Women’s volleyball’s Alexis Ewing following in parents’ footsteps



Sawyer Hadlum/Collegian

Outside hitter Alexis Ewing (27) winds up to hit the ball during the Penn State women’s volleyball game against Bucknell in Rec Hall on Sept. 9, 2025.

By AJ Piazza  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

When people hear the name Ewing, they often assume it’s the famous New York Knicks center being discussed. But that could soon change, as outside hitter Alexis Ewing works to make a name for herself amid her family’s athletic legacy.

Ewing is the daughter of Patrick Ewing and Cheryl Weaver, who were both dominant in their respective sports.

Patrick was a legendary center for the Knicks and was an 11 time All-Star, 7 time All-NBA, and the 1986 Rookie of the Year. He was there for Alexis’s first start against New Hampshire and it meant a lot to the freshman to have her dad in the stands.

“It was great. I didn’t even know he was gonna come until like the day of or like the day before,” Alexis said. “I know he’s always gonna have my back, like I know my team has my back, but it’s my dad and he loves me to infinity. Just knowing that he was there was great.”

In her first start she had six kills, two digs, and had a .455 hitting percentage. So far this season she has 31 kills and a hitting percentage of .233.

Ewing is one of a growing number of famous NBA players daughters who are pursuing volleyball at the collegiate level. Among the group is Mike Bibby’s daughter Nylah Bibby, who’s committed to Arizona, and Kevin Garnett’s daughter Kapri Garnett who’s committed to Michigan.

“I just looked up to my mom a lot, and I tried basketball in middle school and absolutely hated it. I didn’t like being touched, I didn’t like being pushed, and I would foul out every time,” Alexis said. “Basketball just wasn’t my thing. I really enjoyed volleyball and that’s what I was better at.”

Ewing’s mother is a legend in the volleyball space. She was inducted into the Long Beach State Hall of Fame in 2011, and was a three-time first team All-American. The Hall of Famer finished her collegiate career with 1,589 kills and a hitting percentage of .386. Weaver was also the coach of Alexis in high school.

“Obviously you’re my mom, but I respect you as a coach, and I know that you know what’s best for the team,” Alexis said. “It was definitely a mutual respect thing.”

In high school, the Bethesda, Maryland, native registered 430 kills with a hitting percentage

of .312. During her high school career she had the opportunity to play against her new teammate, Emmi Sellman.

“We played at different high schools but in a similar area. I remember walking into a gym and I was like wow she’s pretty good,” Sellman said. “It was a good game.”

Coming to Penn State Alexis has shown flashes of being a great athlete and it’s starting to translate onto the court.

“Alexis is pretty quiet but super aggressive, and she asked great questions in practice and always wants to learn and get better,” coach Katie Schumacher-Cawley said.

Alexis’ teammates have noticed her athleticism in practice, feeling like she could be a big contributor to the future of the program.

“I mean she can touch like 11 feet. She hits over pretty much every single one of our blockers, she just elevates everything,” defensive specialist Jocelyn Nathan said. “I think she takes advantage of when she’s put in. I think this program is built on people that are just going to swing no matter what and that’s who she is.”

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## MKHY captains

By Chase Fisher  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Penn State has announced its captains for the 2025-26 season.

**HOCKEY** Forward Dane Dowiak was named the 12th captain in program history, the team announced via X on Tuesday.



Samantha Oropeza/Collegian

PSU forward Dane Dowiak warms up before the NCAA Frozen Four.

In addition to Dowiak, defenseman Jarod Crespo was selected by his peers to don the “A” as the lone alternate captain. Both Dowiak and Crespo are coming off career years, one in which Dowiak was named the Most Outstanding Player in the Allentown Regionals of the NCAA Tournament.

It’s a new set of leadership for Penn State, as last season, all four captains, defenseman Simon Mack and Jimmy Dowd Jr., and forwards Carson Dyck and Danny Dzhaniyev, graduated and are no longer with the team.

The team will likely add a third captain later in the season for the 2025-26 campaign, as Dzhaniyev was selected in November of last year, two months after Mack, Dowd, and Dyck.

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## MBB captains

By Will Horstman  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Penn State has its captains for 2025-26.

**BASKETBALL** Forward Saša Ciani, guard Kayden Mingo, forward Josh Reed and wing Eli Rice will be the Nittany Lions captains this upcoming season, the team announced Tuesday.

Ciani is entering his first season in the blue and white. He’s a junior and has played for Xavier and UIC during his collegiate career as well.

Mingo is Penn State’s highest-rated recruit of all time, according to the 247Sports composite. He was the Gatorade New York Player of the Year for his efforts with Long Island Lutheran High School in 2024-25.

Reed is a transfer from Cincinnati, and he’s the Nittany Lions’ only senior on the roster.

Rice is beginning his second

year with Penn State. He only appeared in one game last season due to injury.

Mike Rhoades’ squad’s regular season will start with a home game against Fairfield on Nov. 3.

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Noah Aberegg/Collegian

Coach Mike Rhoades looks at the scoreboard at a Penn State men’s basketball game.

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