



THE FRIENDS OF PENN STATE MEN'S HOCKEY, Inc. NEWSLETTER

FALL 2019

FROM PRESIDENT WENDY JO HARTSOCK

Editor's note: With this season, Wendy Jo Hartsock becomes the 3rd President of the Friends of Penn State Men's Hockey. Wendy Jo has been active in club affairs since its inception, and we eagerly look forward to her leadership in the coming years.

On May 20, I began my term as the President of this incredible club; this is a job that I don't take lightly and will strive to exceed your expectations over the next two years. The primary goal of the club is to show support for the student-athletes and staff that represent Penn State Men's Hockey and to reach out to all hockey fans of PSU and the community that supports it.

We recently held our annual FOPSMH membership social (see picture below). Everyone had a wonderful evening, especially considering the sweep over Wisconsin. We had the opportunity to see and hear from the incoming freshman class; they are a fine group of student-athletes and will bring great talent to the team.



Coach Gadowsky and the team at the FOPSMH membership social.

I want to thank those who have renewed and those who have become new members of our club. It is with everyone's help that we continue to support the hockey endowment scholarship that was established in 2016. We are excited to announce that, for the 4th year in a row, Brandon Biro (#10) is the recipient of our scholarship. Brandon is from Sherwood Park, Alberta, Canada; he's a senior forward and captain of the Nittany Lions!

Buttons, buttons, who has the button? Everyone loves buttons, and hockey fans are no different. This year, we created a button to salute one of the Roar Zone's famous sayings - "It's All Your Fault" - for all of our members. We hope this becomes a tradition for years to come. If you have an

idea, saying, or something that you would like to submit for next year's button, please reach out to me. We hope you like them and wear them proudly.

I have spoken to and heard from many of you regarding ideas for game watch parties, social events, bus trips, and potential partnerships with other clubs. Your continued support goes a long way. I, along with our Board of Directors, want to make sure that YOU are getting the most value out of your membership. We welcome all input on how we can build membership and increase the awareness of our purpose and the club, all of which enhance the overall Penn State hockey experience. If you have any questions or ideas, please drop me an email.

Please visit our website, Facebook page, and twitter to keep abreast of our activities, what's new, and to see exciting photos that get submitted by our fans, along with any important updates.

I look forward to seeing many of you at Pegula and again, thank you for being part of our club. We are... Penn State!

WJo



HOLDING THEIR OWN

During the 2012-2013 season (Penn State's first season with a men's varsity hockey program), the Nittany Lions played three future Big Ten opponents, defeating Ohio State in Pittsburgh and splitting a two-game series at both Michigan State and Wisconsin. Since the start of Big Ten play in 2013 and through the 2018-19 season, Penn State has a winning Conference record vs. Michigan State (13-11) and Wisconsin (18-12). The Nittany Lions have a winning Conference record at Pegula vs. Michigan (7-4), Michigan State (7-5), Minnesota (8-6), and Wisconsin (10-5), and are 37-31 at home against all Conference foes. In neutral site games, Penn State has a winning Conference record vs. Michigan (3-2) and Minnesota (1-0), split 2 games with Wisconsin, and lost to Ohio State once. In Big Ten Tournament games, the Nittany Lions are 10-6 while defeating every team except Michigan State (0-0) and Notre Dame (0-2).

ASK COACH GADOWSKY

Question: What are the significant rules changes and/or points of emphasis going into this season, and are they consistent nationwide or do they vary by conference?

Coach Gadowsky: Rules change nationwide every two years, this is a “non-change” year. There are no new points of emphasis either, but college hockey will continue cracking down on embellishment. There is also some refining of what can and can’t be challenged, and I’m all for this, it will speed up the game.

Question: Do you (or does Penn State) have an opportunity to propose, participate in discussions, and/or vote on implementing new rules or changing existing ones?

Coach Gadowsky: There are discussions among, and recommendations made by, coaches and administrators. Recommendations then are considered during regularly scheduled formal meetings. The results are forwarded to a rules committee for further discussion and evaluation. Eventually all proposals get voted on. There are a lot of layers.

QUESTION: What are the downsides, if any, of starting the season with nine straight home games?

Coach Gadowsky: We’ll find out. A lot of coaches say they like to get on the road early, let the guys do some bonding, and you face some different obstacles before getting to come home. I don’t think we pay too much attention to it.

INTERNATIONAL NIGHT

Against Alaska-Fairbanks on October 17, players from all four nations represented on the Nittany Lions scored goals: Tyler Gratton and Paul DeNaples (USA), Aarne Talvitie (Finland), Liam Folkes and Brandon Biro (Canada), and Nikita Pavlychev and Denis Smirnov (Russia).

Question: In your nine years here, have you made changes to your preparatory, practice, and game day routines?

Coach Gadowsky: We always look to improve, that’s a constant process. When we have breaks at the end of the season, we do thorough reviews on every aspect of our program, al-



PSU Athletic Communications

though we’re constantly doing that as time allows. After the season, we evaluate at a very in-depth level and then make significant changes if that’s what it takes. Then, as we move on, we tweak things. We have a very well-defined idea of the end-product, but to stay ahead of the curve, and combat new strategies, there are always changes. We constantly evaluate every single aspect of the program, it’s really important, REALLY important.

Question: How difficult is it to stay in touch with former players?

Coach Gadowsky: I don’t think it’s difficult, I think it’s wonderful. That’s probably the best part of being a college coach, in any sport. You really get to see these young men grow up. The goal is always, especially here at Penn State, to prepare them for a lifetime of impact. Watching that happen is incredibly rewarding, and particularly when the alumni contact you back and talk about the lessons, at the university and the program, that helped them be successful in their communities. Obviously they’re busy too, so when we do get the opportunity to reconnect, it’s wonderful, it’s one of the best parts of this job.



Stephanie Corcino

ASK THE LIONS

Question: Why did you choose to come to Penn State?

Tyler Gratton (freshman): I'm from Pennsylvania, I wanted to be close to home. Penn State is unreal – the hockey and academics are unparalleled. I'd never been in Pegula before last Sunday (the "International Game") and it was awesome. I can't wait for the regular season to begin.

Kevin Wall: I was at Pegula two years ago, I did not have a scholarship offer at the time. That's when I fell in love with Penn State. I wanted to be part of an up-and-coming program, what they've accomplished is incredible, and they keep improving. On the academic side, the resources, the alumni network, it's all great. I hope to be admitted to the Smeal College of Business.

Clayton Phillips (junior transfer from Minnesota): I played against Penn State when I was with the Gophers – both in Pegula and in Mariucci (Minneapolis). I liked Penn State's style, always fast, always strong in transition. The combination of academic and athletic resources makes it a perfect fit for me.

Connor MacEachern (freshman): Penn State offers the best possible opportunity for me to be the best hockey player I can be, and at the same time be a great person and do well academically. I want my degree to mean something. My goal is to play professional hockey. So Penn State gives me the best of both worlds. I have the opportunity to play with phenomenal guys; I knew a couple of the guys before I got here, so that helped. It's been a great fit so far.

Question: How did it feel playing in Pegula?

Connor MacEachern: I'd never been to a game at Pegula so the "International Game" was my first experience. I was completely blown away. It was so amazing, the student section and the whole atmosphere around the rink. I had some friends and some of my family here so it was really special. I think we have the best fans in college hockey, there's no question about that. So we just want to play as well as we can for ourselves and for them.

Question: What did you focus on during the off-season?

Kris Myllari: My skating – getting my feet to move faster, moving pucks more quickly, changing directions faster, and being more explosive.

Question: Has being the captain affected your on-ice performance?

Brandon Biro: I don't think I've changed anything in my game. One thing that Gads (Coach Gadowsky) said to me when I was made captain was "Don't change the kind of player you are, there's a reason you were chosen to be the leader." There's some increased responsibility when guys have questions and come to me, but in terms of changing anything that I do on a daily basis or who I am, it hasn't affected me.

Question: Chris Funkey was a leader on and especially off the ice. Who's the "new" Chris Funkey?

Brandon Biro: I don't know if anyone is the new Chris Funkey, I don't know if anyone at all is Chris Funkey (laughing). I'd say a guy who's pretty similar is Liam Folkes. He's the guy everyone gravitates to, he's the guy that everyone is always looking to hang-out with, he's the guy we all look up to in the dressing room. Liam Folkes is a special guy.

Peyton Jones: We've got a couple of guys. Pilewicz, he's a loose, fun guy, also Folkesy (Liam Folkes). Funkey was a special guy, it's hard to say that any one player replaced him, he did a lot of behind-the-scenes things to help the team, so he's a tough guy to replace. We have to have several guys fill his role.

Question: When there's a time-out on the ice, and your helmet's off, sometimes you are talking to one of the on-ice officials – is this game-type conversation, or just banter?

Peyton Jones: You know, a lot of times they'll ask how I'm doing, how my week was. We have them officiate so many of our games that they know us, so it's just small-talk in between the play.

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))) ON THE AIR WITH BRIAN TRIPP (((

This is my seventh year broadcasting Penn State hockey and time really does fly! I have enjoyed every moment on the job and take great pride in having the privilege of describing game action and helping represent a first-class program. I still remember the jitters I had during my first-ever hockey

broadcast on Pegula's opening night in 2013 against Army. The atmosphere, speed of the game, and significance of Penn State's venture into Big Ten hockey were almost overwhelming.

Prior to broadcasting hockey, I was handling play-by-play duties for Penn State women's volleyball. The experience I gained broadcasting the fast-paced action and working with one of college athletics' most legendary teams and iconic head coaches prepared me for the new position. As

with any job, the more repetitions, the better you become. And, like so many here in Hockey Valley, I was glad to be along for the ride! I had always been enamored with the sport of hockey and the opportunity to call games at Penn State has really been life-changing for me.

The Penn State Sports Network is providing audio coverage for every home and away hockey game this season. Broadcasts can be heard on our regional radio affiliates (including Happy 103.1 in the State College area), the Tune-In Radio app, and online via GoPSUsports.com's LionVision. I am thrilled to once again work with analyst Eric Ohlson and engineer Bob Taylor. It takes a team to execute our broadcasts and Eric and Bob are two of the best in the business.

I hope that our broadcasts exude the passion and pride we have for the Penn State hockey program. We are so fortunate to work with exceptional student-athletes, coaches, and support staff members. There have been so many incredible moments already and I can't wait to see what's next!

EXCERPTS FROM COACH GADOWSKY'S WEEKLY MEDIA SESSIONS

On coaching hockey: Hockey is unique, it's a game of constant transition. You can't call a time-out to devise a play and send it in. The goal is to get everyone on the same page, even without setting up. Who you are and how you practice must carry over on to the ice.

On recruiting: When we are recruiting, we try to be genuine and honest. We don't sell anything.

On what's most important: Work ethic, commitment to the program, how you represent yourself.

On what happens on-ice: There are referees, goalies, and rubber pucks. Put those all together and you can't always control the result.

On the impact a goaltender has: At any time, when your goaltender is playing well, obviously you play with more confidence, but you also play faster, you don't have as much worry, you do things that you should do and are not scared to do. It does really help. The goaltender's performance when it's consistent like that helps you play a better all-around game.

On getting a goaltender off his game: You can make things difficult on a goalie with traffic.

On the "Olympic-size" rinks at Minnesota and Wisconsin: I think it's a disservice to believe you're going to play a different game on a bigger ice sheet, the game is still the same. Guys that get around the ice better have maybe a little advantage, but it's still hockey.

On team activities during road trips: Our time is pretty full. We don't go bowling or anything. We usually go for dinner the night we arrive. Other than that, it's much like being at home, except they miss classes. We'd rather guys do really well in school than schedule road activities.

On the current team's defense: We're much more mobile than we've ever been. We join the rush better than we ever have. And it's not just playing offense, it's defending with your feet, and your agility. This is for sure the deepest D-core we've ever had, the most agile we've ever been.

THE VOICE OF PEGULA, RODNEY MARTIN

And so begins another season of Penn State hockey, and it continues to be my honor to serve as the PA announcer in Pegula Ice Arena for both men's and women's hockey. As I have mentioned before, it gives me chills when I walk in and marvel at how amazing the arena is. I hope that I never get over that.

Typically, when we start a new season, I come in cold having not used my "announcer voice" since mid-spring, ending with the annual Penn State Ice Show at the rink. However, this year was different in that I had a couple of opportunities to get behind the microphone for some other events in the area.

FUN FACT

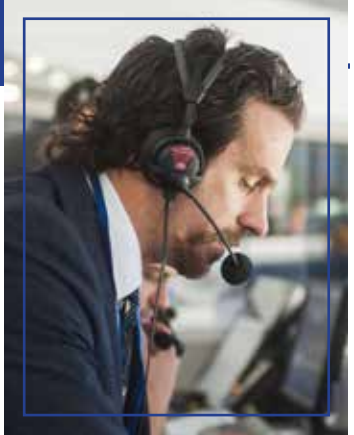
FAMILIAR COMPETITION: Through its first 7 seasons fielding a varsity team, Penn State has played more non-conference games against Robert Morris than any other school. The Nittany Lions hold a 6-3 edge over the Colonials entering the 2019-2020 season, meeting in every season except 2016-2017. The teams will play 2 more times during the current season. Next comes Arizona State, which has faced Penn State 8 times; the Lions lead that series 6-2, although the teams split 2 games in 2012 when the Sun Devils were still an ACHA team.

I have announced lacrosse before, but I had the opportunity to work for the first time in the new Panzer Stadium (another wonderful facility) for one of the bigger games of the men's lacrosse season - the "White Out" against Ohio State. Here is a tip, if you love hockey, you will love lacrosse. Just

like the hockey team, the lacrosse team plays a very up-tempo, high-octane game. It was an amazing experience - even though there was no goal horn for me to press!

I was also fortunate enough to be able to fill in for the legendary Jeff Brown at Medlar Field for two State College Spikes games this summer. Medlar Field is another top-notch venue and the game production team there is phenomenal. I am really hoping that I will be invited back next season.

And finally, the "warm-up" game in Pegula this year was the return of the Sabres/Penguins and the NHL pre-season game. The minute it was announced, I sent a text to my boss that simply said "Yes, I am available" - even before I was asked. It's always awesome to see that level of talent in our own backyard.



It's Teddy Bear Toss night, and this fellow can't decide which side of the glass he prefers.

While all of those opportunities were great, there is absolutely nothing like being in the booth for a Penn State hockey game. The Roar Zone, the band, the fans - it is a pure adrenaline rush. We have a tremendous team this season and may be poised to add to Penn State's short but impressive Big Ten history. With all the great games and moments we have had in the last six years, I think that the most memorable moments are yet to come - and some of them may come this season. We are...



Halloween night at Pegula. Wisconsin never had a chance!

GAME ACTION

photos by Stephanie Corcino



In the season opener against Sacred Heart, goaltender Peyton Jones came up big time and time again.



Freshmen Connor MacEachern, Tyler Gratton, and Connor McMenemy (left to right in white) together in their first game with the Lions.



Sam Sternschein (27) slips it past the SHU goaltender late in the game.



On Saturday, Alex Limoges (9) weaves through the Pioneer defense as Evan Barratt (17) stays onside.



Freshman Mason Snell (16) stick checks an SHU skater.



Denis Smirnov (25) fires away as freshman Tyler Gratton (28) screens the goaltender.

GAME ACTION

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It's Thursday night at Pegula vs. Alaska-Fairbanks. Liam Folkes (26) slips the puck by the goaltender on a breakaway...



... and then points to the puck across the goal line. Video review confirmed the goal.



Even with a six goal lead, Kris Myllari (4) knows only one way to play.



It's the next night, and Paul DeNaples (3) feels the full fury of the Nanook defense...



... as does Evan Barratt (17).



The Alaska-Fairbanks defense stymied the Lions all night.



Editor's note: Taylor Somers is the Secretary of the Roar Zone, student member of the FOPSMH Board of Directors, and this year's Roar Zone contributor. She's a Communication Disorders major, and hails from Philadelphia. Here's her interesting take on the makeup of the Roar Zone.

I grew up in an ice arena. Between my weekend season tickets to the Flyers, traveling to watch my dad and uncle play, and seeing all of my friends having an ice skate party at Flyers Skate Zones growing up, I was born to be a hockey fan. Getting hockey season tickets for Penn State was a no-brainer. But what about others in the Roar Zone? Did they

Isabel Casiraghi, another sophomore, supported the New York Rangers for years, and she too watched her dad play. However, Isabel did not buy season tickets when she got here. Instead, she bought a single game ticket from another student early last season and made connections in the Roar Zone. Her new friends and the atmosphere of Hockey Valley kept her coming back. She knew Pegula offered an amazing experience, so for her season tickets were "well worth the money to buy them."

Nick Vaughn and Mackenzie Day are both freshmen who bought season tickets. Both grew up watching hockey and thought it would be better to buy season tickets instead of having to look for single game tickets. "The atmosphere, the energy, and the cheers made me keep coming back. I love how excited everyone is about the game and how everyone gets involved with the cheers" Mackenzie said. Nick "played ice hockey since early childhood and loved going to NHL games, so watching Penn State hockey is perfect."

The common thread here is that no matter their hockey background, students have a great experience being part of the Roar Zone, and the energy there keeps them coming back. Many have made new friends while attending home games. For those who were not hockey fans before, they found themselves be-

coming more and more interested over time. They appreciate having a source of new memories and meeting a group of college kids who just love to support the team. That is what we try to do here every game. We want to make the Roar Zone an unforgettable experience for every type of student. Whether one has no hockey experience or grew up watching or playing, the Roar Zone welcomes all with open arms as it remains one of the greatest student sections in college hockey.

Looking for The Friends of Penn State Men's Hockey on the web?

WEBSITE: <http://fopsmh.org>

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Stephanie Corcino



The best student section in college hockey.

have a hockey background, or did they pick up hockey once they got to Penn State? And for those who bought single game tickets last season, what kept them coming back? I decided to find out.

Sophomore Jess Thomas' experience with Hockey Valley began when she missed getting football tickets. She wanted season tickets for a sport, so she took a chance and chose hockey. With no prior hockey connection, she figured she could learn hockey (she originally thought of it as lacrosse on ice). She wanted to try something new and found a new family to be a part of. "I met some of my best friends through the Roar Zone and made some of my favorite memories there." Jess now has season tickets again and even started working at Pegula Ice Arena.