

PENN STATE MEN'S GYMNASTICS



12 NCAA Championship Titles // 3 Big Ten Championships // 6 Nissen-Emery Award Winners // 316 All-America Citations

2017 Schedule / Results

January

Jan. 13-14	at West Point Open #	412.350 (1st of 7)
Jan. 21	ARMY WEST POINT	W, 414.200-396.050
Jan. 29	at Springfield College	W, 408.100-384.500

February

Feb. 3	at Illinois *	L, 411.350-404.650
Feb. 11	OHIO STATE *	L, 419.150-417.750
Feb. 16 & 18	at Winter Cup %	NTS
Feb. 25	at Navy	2 p.m.

March

Mar. 4	at Nebraska w/Iowa *	5 p.m.
Mar. 18	MICHIGAN *	2:30 p.m.
Mar. 25	IOWA *	3 p.m.

April

Apr. 7-8	Big Ten Championships ^	7 p.m.
Apr. 21-22	NCAA Championships #	1/7 p.m.

BOLD CAPS - Home Meets

* - Big Ten Meet | # - West Point, N.Y. |
% - Las Vegas, Nev. |
^ Champaign, Ill.
All Times Eastern

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PSUMGYM



at Navy
Saturday, Feb. 25, 2017
Annapolis, Maryland

Series: Penn State, 55-10-0
Last Regular Season Meeting: W, 412.350-391.250
Jan. 21, 2017 • West Point, N.Y.

Live Stats: Navysports.com
Video: N/A

Penn State Season Records
Overall Record: 8-2
Conference Record: 0-2

2017 EVENT LEADERS

FLOOR EXERCISE	POMMEL HORSE	STILL RINGS	VAULT	PARALLEL BARS	HIGH BAR	ALL-AROUND
WYATT TYNDALL SOPHOMORE	STEPHEN NEDOROSCIK FRESHMAN	DOMINIC DIFULVIO SENIOR	DOMINIC DIFULVIO SENIOR	SAM ZAKUTNEY FRESHMAN	MICHAEL BURNS SOPHOMORE	SAM ZAKUTNEY FRESHMAN

2017 BEST: 14.550 2017 BEST: 14.800 2017 BEST: 14.750 2017 BEST: 14.500 2017 BEST: 14.900 2017 BEST: 14.650 2017 BEST: 83.150

NOTES AND HEADLINES

MEN'S GYMNASTICS HEADS TO NAVY

After a week away from team competition, the Penn State men's gymnastics team will travel to Annapolis, Maryland for a dual with Navy Saturday, Feb. 25. The Nittany Lions and the Midshipmen have met up once in the 2017 season with Penn State earning the 412-.350-391.250 victory at the West Point Open.

SERIES HISTORY WITH THE MIDSHIPMEN

Penn State holds the 55-10-0 all-time series lead over Navy having not lost a regular season to the Midshipmen since the 1988 season. The Nittany Lions fell 275.300-275.600 to Navy on the road in Annapolis, Maryland. Earlier this season at the West Point Open, Penn State earned all six event victories, while Navy saw its highest score on the vault (68.500) and scored a 67.300 on the still rings in the season opener.

SCOUTING NAVY

The No. 12 Midshipmen head into the dual against Penn State with a 6-6 overall record having defeated William & Mary in its lone dual victory. Navy also came away with two victories at the West Point Open and three wins in the Navy Open. As a team, Navy ranks No. 11 in nation averaging a 399.070, while it ranks No. 10 on the still rings with a 67.800 average.

Individually, Jonathan Tang ranks fourth in the all-around with an average of 80.710 and ties for 12th on the parallel bars with an average score of 13.710. Wyatt LaPointe has been strong for the Midshipmen on the still rings with a season average of 13.920 and a season-high score of 14.550, while Tanner West ranks 12th in the all-around with a season-best 82.250.

QUICK FACTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Location University Park, Pa.
 Founded 1855
 Enrollment 47,261
 Colors Blue and White
 Conference Big Ten
 Nickname Nittany Lions
 President Dr. Eric J Barron
 Director of Athletics Sandy Barbour
 Athletic Website www.GoPSUsports.com

COACHING STAFF

Head Coach Randy Jepson
 26th Season (Penn State '82)
 Record at Penn State 372-74
 Assistant Coach Carlos Vasquez
 Fifth Season (Temple '84)
 Assistant Coach Tony Beck
 Second Season (Penn State, 2013)

TEAM INFORMATION

Captain Dominic DiFulvio
 Twitter PennStateMGYM
 Facebook Penn State Men's Gymnastics

2016 RECAP

2016 Record 10-4-0
 2016 Big Ten Finish Fourth (427.150)
 2016 All-Big Ten Honors One
 2016 NCAA Finish Fifth (425.400)
 2016 All-American Honors Five

ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS

MGYM Contact Megan Samassa
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 Fax 814-863-3165
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 University Park, PA 16802

PRONUNCIATIONS

Brayden Borrromeo Bore-o-mayo
 Dominic DiFulvio DI-ful-vio
 Stephen Nedoroscik Ned-o-row-sick
 Noah Roberson Row-bur-son
 Wyatt Tyndall Tin-dal
 Favian Valdez Fa-vee-ON
 Sam Zakutney Za-coot-knee

2017 ROSTER

Name	Event	Yr.	Ht.	Hometown/High School
Brayden Borrromeo	AA	Fr.	5-6	Littlestown, Pa./Littlestown Senior
Joseph Boyle	AA	R-Jr.	5-7	Colts Neck, N.J./Colts Neck
Michael Burns	AA	So.	5-9	Baltimore, Ohio/Liberty Union
Franz Card	AA	Sr.	5-8	Nashua, N.H./Nashua South
Leroy Clarke, Jr.	AA	R-Sr.	5-9	Maplewood, N.J./Columbia
Colin Coates	AA	Jr.	5-8	Emmaus, Pa./Emmaus
Benjamin Cooperman	AA	Jr.	5-7	Southborough, Mass./Algonquin
Dominic DiFulvio *	AA	Sr.	5-4	Marietta, N.Y./Tully
Isaac Hammett	AA	Fr.	5-4	Sacramento, Calif./Jesuit
Quest Hayden	AA	Jr.	5-9	Harrisburg, Pa./Home-schooled
Christian McSwain	AA	Sr.	5-8	Jamestown, N.C./Southwest Guilford
Jeremy Munn	AA	Sr.	5-7	York, Maine/Home-schooled
Stephen Nedoroscik	AA	Fr.	5-5	Worcester, Mass./Worcester Technical
Noah Roberson	AA	R-So.	5-4	Williamsville, N.Y./Williamsville South
Chris Sands	AA	So.	5-10	Lancaster, Pa./Lancaster Catholic
Alex Thomason	AA	R-Fr.	5-5	Houston, Texas/James E. Taylor
Wyatt Tyndall	AA	Fr.	5-6	Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada/Holy Cross
Favian Valdez	AA	Fr.	5-6	Kearny, N.J./Kearny
Sam Zakutney	AA	Fr.	5-6	Ottawa, Ontario.E.S.C. Franco Cite

Head Coach: Randy Jepson (Penn State, 1982; 26th Season)

Assistant Coach: Carlos Vazquez (Temple, 1984; Fifth Season)

Assistant Coach: Tony Beck (Penn State, 2013; Second Season)

* - Team Captain

PROJECTED LINEUP

FLOOR EXERCISE

Wyatt Tyndall
 Chris Sands
 Favian Valdez
 Christian McSwain
 Sam Zakutney

POMMEL HORSE

Michael Burns
 Colin Coates
 Favian Valdez
 Stephen Nedoroscik
 Leroy Clarke, Jr.
 Sam Zakutney (AA)

STILL RINGS

Noah Roberson
 Chris Sands
 Isaac Hammett
 Leroy Clarke, Jr.
 Dominic DiFulvio
 Sam Zakutney (AA)

VAULT

Wyatt Tyndall
 Favian Valdez
 Jeremy Munn
 Sam Zakutney
 Dominic DiFulvio

PARALLEL BARS

Wyatt Tyndall
 Franz Card
 Leroy Clarke, Jr.
 Michael Burns
 Sam Zakutney

HIGH BAR

Wyatt Tyndall
 Franz Card
 Leroy Clarke, Jr.
 Michael Burns
 Sam Zakutney

NATIONAL POLL

MEET SEVEN: NEWS & NOTES

COLLEGE GYMNASTICS ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL POLL
As of Feb. 20, 2017

#	TEAM	Total PTS.	1st Place VOTES
1.	Oklahoma	280	14
2.	Stanford	266	
3.	Illinois	246	
4.	Ohio State	244	
5.	Minnesota	221	
6.	<i>Penn State</i>	<i>209</i>	
7.	Nebraska	198	
8.	California	172	
9.	Air Force	163	
10.	Iowa	162	
11.	Michigan	147	
12.	Navy	123	
13.	Army	110	
14.	Arizona State *	100	
15.	William & Mary	87	
16.	Springfield College	70	
17.	UIC	54	
18.	Temple *	39	
19.	Washington *	35	
20.	SC United *	14	

2017 Opponents in **Bold**
* - NCAA Club Program

WINTER CUP HIGHLIGHTS

The Nittany Lions had a strong showing at the Winter Cup, getting all four of their competitors into the event finals along with former gymnast and current volunteer assistant coach **Trevor Howard**.

Sophomore **Michael Burns** had two top 20 finishes in the finals, tying for 14th on both the parallel bars and the high bar, scoring a 13.000 and a 12.950, respectively. In his second career appearance at the Winter Cup, redshirt-senior **Leroy Clarke, Jr.** placed seventh on the pommel horse, scoring a 14.450 representing the Nittany Lions. Senior **Dominic DiFulvio** had the best showing on the floor for the Blue and White, placing 22nd overall, while also earning a top 20 finish on the still rings with a 13.650. Freshman **Favian Valdez** placed 19th overall in the all-around in his first collegiate appearance at the Winter Cup. The freshman all-arounder notched a 19th place finish on the pommel horse, scoring a 13.300, while tying for 17th overall on the parallel bars with a 13.200.

VALDEZ GARNERS FOURTH BIG TEN FRESHMAN OF THE WEEK HONOR

For the sixth-straight week a Penn State men's gymnastics freshman notched Big Ten Freshman of the Week honors as Favian Valdez (Kearny, N.J.) garnered the award for the fourth time in the 2017 season as announced by the conference office Monday, Feb. 20.

Valdez placed 19th overall in the all-around in his first collegiate appearance at the Winter Cup. The freshman all-arounder notched a 19th place finish on the pommel horse, scoring a 13.300, while tying for 17th overall on the parallel bars with a 13.200. In the prelims, Valdez earned a top 30 finish on the pommel horse and the parallel bars, scoring a 12.750 and a 12.950 respectively.

MGYM WINS BEST DANCE AT 2017 THON PEP RALLY

In an event that raises money for pediatric cancer, the Penn State men's gymnastics team took home the top spot in the student-athlete pep rally. The Nittany Lions dance on Saturday night was part of a student-run philanthropy committed to enhancing the lives of children and families impacted by childhood cancer. Penn State student dance for 46 hours in order to raise money and awareness for pediatric cancer. This year, Penn State raised \$10,045,478.44 for the kids.

ZAKUTNEY TAKES SECOND BIG HONOR

The Penn State men's gymnastics team continues to prove that it has recruited the top freshman in the country as **Sam Zakutney** earned his second Big Ten Freshman of the Week honor as announced by the conference office Monday, Feb. 13. The award marks the fifth-straight week that a Nittany Lion has earned the nod as fellow freshman **Favian Valdez** has earned the honor three times and Zakutney has garnered it twice.

Zakutney was the lone event winner for the Blue and White against Ohio State, earning the victory in both the parallel bars and the all-around. The Ottawa, Ontario native notched a career-high 13.800 on the floor exercise for a sixth-place finish before coming in eighth on the vault with a 13.900. The freshman all-arounder capped off the day with three podium finishes which included a 14.750 score and a victory on the parallel bars, while finishing second on the high bar with a 14.300. Finally, Zakutney earned a career-high 83.150 on the all-around to win his second title of the 2017 season.

BIG TEN RECORDS

	BIG TEN		OVERALL	
	W-L	%	W-L	%
Illinois	2-0	1.000	8-0	1.000
Ohio State	2-0	1.000	7-1	.857
Minnesota	2-1	1.000	5-5	.500
Iowa	1-0	.000	5-5	.500
Penn State	0-2	.000	8-2	.800
Nebraska	0-1	.000	7-4	.636
Michigan	0-1	.000	3-4	.429

BIG TEN WEEKLY AWARDS:

Jan. 16

G: Jake Martin, Ohio State
 F: **Favian Valdez, Penn State**

Jan. 23

G: Chris Stephenson, Nebraska
 Jake Dastrup, Ohio State
 F: **Favian Valdez, Penn State**

Jan. 30

G: Alex Diab, Illinois
 F: **Sam Zakutney, Penn State**

Feb. 6

G: Jake Martin, Ohio State
 F: **Favian Valdez, Penn State**

Feb. 13

G: Sean Melton, Ohio State
 F: **Sam Zakutney, Penn State**

Feb. 20

G: Sean Melton, Ohio State
 F: **Favian Valdez, Penn State**

Feb. 27

G: --
 F: --

Mar. 6

G: --
 F: --

Mar. 13

G: --
 F: --

Mar. 20

G: --
 F: --

Mar. 27

G: --
 F: --

G - Gymnast; F - Freshman

PENN STATE HAS STRONG SHOWING AGAINST OHIO STATE

Penn State men's gymnastics team suffered its second-straight Big Ten Conference loss as it fell to the Buckeyes of Ohio State University, 419.150-417.750, Saturday, Feb. 11 at Rec Hall. Despite the loss, the Blue and White posted a season-best 417.750 and notched two season-high scores. The Nittany Lions first posted a season-high 71.300 on the pommel horse and capped off the day with a season-best 68.000 on the high bar. Freshman **Sam Zakutney** notched two titles for Penn State with his second parallel bars win of the season and his second all-around victory.

FRESHMAN CONTRIBUTING EARLY

Head coach **Randy Jepson** brought in one of the top freshman classes in the nation and they are quickly proving themselves amongst the elite of collegiate gymnastics. Freshman **Favian Valdez** leads the pack as he has earned four Big Ten Freshman of the Week honors just five weeks into the season. Valdez has notched three titles for the Blue and White with a floor title at the West Point Open, a pommel horse title against Army and most recently the all-around title at Illinois. Also starting strong for the Nittany Lions in his freshman season is **Sam Zakutney**. Zakutney notched Big Ten Freshman of the Week honors in week three after earning three titles at Springfield. The Ottawa, Ontario native clinched both the parallel bars and high bar title against the Pride before going home with the all-around title in hand. Most recently, Zakutney garnered his second Big Ten Freshman of the Week honors after winning the parallel bars and all-around title against Ohio State.

After an adjustment period in the first two weeks of the season, **Stephen Nedoroscik** has found his groove on the pommel horse, winning the title in two of the last three weekends. Nedoroscik returned to his home state of Massachusetts to clinch the first win of his career before following it up with a victory on the pommel horse at Illinois. **Brayden Borromeo** and **Isaac Hammett** have also found places in the Nittany Lion lineup with Borromeo competing on the vault in all four weeks and Hammett earning two second-place finishes on the still rings.

VALDEZ CAPTURES THIRD FRESHMAN OF THE WEEK HONOR

For the fourth-straight week a Penn State men's gymnastics freshman notched Big Ten Freshman of the Week honors as **Favian Valdez** garnered the award for the third time in the 2017 season as announced by the conference office Monday, Feb. 6. Valdez picked up his first collegiate all-around title against Illinois, earning an 80.950. The title marks the third title of Valdez's career in four collegiate meets. The Kearny, N.J. native also had two other podium finishes placing third on the pommel horse with a 13.850 and third on the parallel bars with a 14.100.

BURNS CONTINUES TO BE STEADY FOR THE NITTANY LIONS

Sophomore **Michael Burns** has been a go-to gymnast for Penn State in the 2017 season and has taken more of a leadership role this year for the Nittany Lions. Last weekend, Burns competed on four events for the Blue and White against Illinois, notching a career-best 14.000 on the vault and tying for fourth overall, while also place fourth on the pommel horse with a 13.750, on the still rings with a 13.900 and on the parallel bars with a 13.900. Finally, Burns paced Penn State on the high bar with a 14.300 and second-place finish for the Nittany Lions.

PENN STATE FALLS AT ILLINOIS

The Penn State men's gymnastics suffered its first loss of the 2017 campaign in its first Big Ten Conference meet against the Fighting Illini of Illinois Friday, Feb. 3 at Huff Hall. The Nittany Lions saw bright spots in freshman **Stephen Nedoroscik**, who won his second-straight pommel horse title with a 14.300, while freshman **Favian Valdez** notched the all-around title for the first time in his career with an 80.950. Nedoroscik's win marks the fourth-straight match in which Penn State has come away with the pommel horse title as it has yet to be defeated in the event in the 2017 campaign.

2017 RANKINGS

TEAM RANKINGS

Team Score

5	Penn State	414.200
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>409.800</i>

Floor

11	Penn State	66.963
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>67.650</i>

Pommel Horse

3	Penn State	68.563
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>70.300</i>

Still Rings

5	Penn State	68.588
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>69.850</i>

Vault

9	Penn State	70.088
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>70.950</i>

Parallel Bars

3	Penn State	69.600
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>70.700</i>

High Bar

11	Penn State	66.000
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>67.300</i>

INDIVIDUAL RANKINGS (Top 10)

Pommel Horse

6	Leroy Clarke, Jr.	13.975
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>14.700</i>
7	Stephen Nedoroscik	13.960
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>14.800</i>
10	Colin Coates	13.742
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>14.700</i>

Still Rings

9	Dominic DiFulvio	14.163
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>14.750</i>

Parallel Bars

4	Sam Zakutney	14.270
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>14.900</i>
T7	Leroy Clarke, Jr.	13.513
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>14.600</i>

High Bar

T9	Michael Burns	13.686
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>14.650</i>

All-Around

9	Sam Zakutney	80.525
	<i>Season High Score</i>	<i>83.150</i>

(2017 Road To Nationals Rankings)

ZAKUTNEY NABS BIG TEN FRESHMAN OF THE WEEK HONORS

Freshman **Sam Zakutney** earned Big Ten Freshman of the Week honors, marking the first of his career and the third-straight week a Nittany Lion has garnered the award as **Favian Valdez** won it the first two weeks of the season. Zakutney found his groove at Springfield recording three victories for the Blue and White. Zakutney earned his first titles of his collegiate career, grabbing three wins at Springfield College. The freshman all-rounder started with a fourth-place finish on the pommel horse with a career-high 13.800 and notched his second career-high of the day with a 13.500 on the floor exercise and a fourth-place finish. The Ottawa, Ontario native secured his first podium finish with a third-place spot on the vault with a career-best 14.250 before sweeping the final two rotations of the day with a first-place finish on the parallel bars and a win on the high bar. Finally, Zakutney secured his first all-around title donning the Blue and White with an 82.650. Overall, Zakutney set five career-highs and earned three titles for the Nittany Lions at Springfield.

NITTANY LIONS SWEEP TITLES AT SPRINGFIELD

Penn State swept all six events for the first time in the 2017 campaign with senior **Dominic DiFulvio** and freshman **Sam Zakutney** earning three titles each for the Blue and White. DiFulvio picked up his first floor exercise win of the season, his third still rings title and his second vault title of his senior campaign, while Zakutney notched his first collegiate titles with wins on the parallel bars, high bar and all-around. Returning to his home state for the first time in his young collegiate career, freshman **Stephen Nedoroscik** collected his first victory for Penn State, securing the win on the pommel horse.

VALDEZ EARNS SECOND-STRAIGHT BIG TEN HONOR

Freshman **Favian Valdez** notched his second-straight Big Ten Freshman of the Week honor as announced by the conference office for week ending Jan. 22.

The freshman earns the honor for the second time in his career after garnering it following his first collegiate appearance at the West Point Open. The Kearny, N.J. native picked up three top-five finishes in his second collegiate outing for the Blue and White against Army, Jan. 21.

Valdez earned his second title of the 2017 season with a 14.050 on the pommel horse for a victory against Army West Point in Penn State's first home meet. Valdez also placed fourth overall on the vault with a 14.050 and placed third in the all-around.

PENN STATE EARNS VICTORY OVER ARMY

The Penn State men's gymnastics team picked up a 414.200-396.050 victory over Army West Point in its home-opener against Army West Point. All-rounder and senior captain **Dominic DiFulvio** notched his first all-around title of the 2017 campaign with an 82.600, while **Favian Valdez** placed third overall in the all-around with a 79.800. Penn State saw three season-best team scores and one tie as it put up a season-high 69.650 on the floor exercise, a 68.950 on the still rings and a 70.150 on the vault, while tying a season-best 67.300 on the high bar.

The Blue and White won five out of six events with **Wyatt Tyndall** taking the floor exercise, Valdez earning the pommel horse title, DiFulvio notching the still rings win and tying on the vault and **Franz Card** taking home the parallel bars title.

MEET SEVEN: NEWS & NOTES

BLUE AND WHITE CLINCHES FOURTH-STRAIGHT WEST POINT OPEN TITLE

The Penn State men's gymnastics team captured its fourth-straight title at the 26th Annual West Point Open Friday, Jan. 13. The Nittany Lions scored a 412.350 in their first meet of the season to win the open for the 19th time in program history.

Big Ten Conference foe Nebraska placed second overall with a 410.600 and Army rounded out the top three with a 393.500. The Blue and White used a strong parallel bars routine in its sixth rotation of the day to propel itself to the victory in West Point.

Freshman **Favian Valdez** picked up his first victory donning the Blue and White, notching a 14.500 on the floor exercise, while **Christian McSwain** placed second with a 14.400.

The Nittany Lions saw their second individual event title of the evening when **Colin Coates** nabbed the pommel horse win for the second-straight year with a 14.700. Last season, Coates helped Penn State to the individual event title sweep, winning the pommel horse with a 15.050 in the event. Red-shirt-senior **Leroy Clarke, Jr.** placed second on the pommel horse after finishing first in the team event Friday night, while Valdez placed fourth overall.

Penn State grabbed its third-straight individual event when senior **Dominic DiFulvio** came up big on the still rings with a 14.750 and **Benjamin Cooperman** placed second overall with a 14.250.

Sophomore **Michael Burns** capped off the four individual event titles for the Blue and White as he picked up his second-straight high bar title with a 14.650 at the West Point Open, winning the event in the 2016 season as well.

VALDEZ EARNS BIG TEN FRESHMAN OF THE WEEK HONORS

After capturing the floor exercise title at the West Point Open, freshman **Favian Valdez** notched Big Ten Freshman of the Week honors as announced by the conference office for the week ending Jan. 15.

The honor marks the first of Valdez's career as he made his first collegiate appearance at the West Point Open.

Valdez notched three second-place finishes in the team portion of the West Point Open, grabbing a 14.300 on the floor exercise, a 14.250 on the pommel horse and a 82.400 in the all-around. The Kearny, N.J. native capped off the individual event finals with a floor exercise title nabbing a 14.500 and a fourth-place finish on the pommel horse.

BURNS HAS CAREER WEEKEND AT WEST POINT

Sophomore **Michael Burns** posted four career-bests while also earning the high bar title in the individual event finals and the high bar and all-around title in the team event at the West Point Open, Jan. 13-14. Burns first earned the high bar title in the team portion with a 14.200 before posting a season-high 14.650 in the individual event finals to earn the title for the second-straight season. Burns also tallied a career-high 14.150 in the floor exercise, a 13.800 on the pommel horse, a 14.300 on the still rings and a 82.700 in the all-around.

NITTANY LIONS PICKED FOURTH IN BIG TEN PRESEASON POLL

Penn State was picked fourth in the 2017 Big Ten Men's Gymnastics Preseason Coaches' Poll, as announced by the conference office Thursday, Dec. 15. Along with the preseason coaches' poll, seniors **Leroy Clarke, Jr.** and **Dominic DiFulvio** were named to the Gymnast to Watch List for the upcoming season.

For the third-straight season Ohio State grabbed the top spot in the Big Ten Poll, while Minnesota was picked to finish second and Illinois rounded out the top three places. With the Nittany Lions coming in at fourth, Nebraska, Iowa and Michigan complete the Big Ten Preseason Coaches' Poll for the 2017 campaign.

PENN STATE COMES IN SIXTH IN THE CGA PRESEASON COACHES' POLL

The Penn State men's gymnastics team enters the 2017 campaign ranked sixth in the College Gymnastics Association (CGA) Preseason Coaches' Poll as announced Tuesday, Nov. 22.

Oklahoma was picked to finish first in the nation for the third-straight season with 17 first-place votes, while Stanford was picked to finish second with one first-place vote and Ohio State was projected to round out the top three with one first-place vote. Minnesota and Illinois ranked fourth and fifth, respectively with Penn State coming in as the No. 6 team to start the 2017 season.

MEET SEVEN: NEWS & NOTES

NITTANY LIONS SET TO APPEAR ON BTN THREE TIMES

The Penn State men's gymnastics team will have two home meets featured on the Big Ten Network, while the network will also air the 2017 Big Ten Championships. The Nittany Lions and the Wolverines of Michigan will square off at 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Mar. 18 on BTN before the Blue and White closes out its season against Iowa Saturday, Mar. 25 at 3 p.m. on the Big Ten Network.

The 2017 Men's Big Ten Championships will be hosted by Illinois in Champaign, Ill. Friday, Apr. 7 and Saturday, Apr. 8. The team championship will be handed out on Friday, while individual event winners will be crowned Apr. 8. Both sessions will be aired live on BTN starting at 7 p.m.

JEPSON KICKS OFF 26TH SEASON AT THE HELM OF MEN'S GYMNASTICS

The 2017 campaign marks the 26th season for Head Coach **Randy Jepson** as the program leader of the Nittany Lions. Jepson came to Penn State in 1982 as a senior gymnast, earning All-America honors on the rings and being a Nissen-Emery Award nominee. From there, he went on to be the graduate assistant for two seasons before becoming an assistant coach from 1985-1991. In 1992, Jepson served as the acting head coach and was promoted to head coach in 1993 and since has led the Nittany Lions to three national championships and three Big Ten titles.

Jepson has been the National Coach of the Year on three occasions (2000, 2004 and 2007) and garnered the prestigious CGA Honor Coach Award in 2011, which is given to the coaches who have 25 years of service or more to the sport of gymnastics. Additionally, Jepson is a two-time Big Ten Coach of the Year honoree and has coached 43 All-Americans on 100 occasions, 30 First Team All-Big Ten selection and 11 NCAA Individual Event Champions.

CLARKE RETURNS FOR FINAL SEASON AFTER ALL-AMERICAN FINISH IN 2016

The 2017 men's gymnastics team sees the return of senior **Leroy Clarke, Jr.**, who is the lone All-American returner for the Blue and White. Clarke capped off the 2016 season with an All-American finish on the still rings, placing eighth overall. The redshirt-senior from Maplewood, N.J. will be in search of his third All-American title in his final season with Penn State as he earned the honor on the parallel bars in the 2015 season.

JEPSON WELCOMES FIVE FOR 2017

Head Coach Randy Jepson will welcome five freshman in the 2017 campaign. The five newcomers include: **Brayden Borromeo, Isaac Hammett, Stephen Nedoroscik, Favian Valdez** and **Sam Zakutney**. Nedoroscik, Valdez and Zakutney have been tabbed as three of the top pommel horses performers in the country in their respective classes, while Borromeo and Hammett will hope to make an impact on a variety of events in their freshman campaigns.

SEVEN NITTANY LIONS COLLECT CGA ALL-AMERICA SCHOLAR-ATHLETE HONORS

Seven Penn State men's gymnasts earned College Gymnastics Association (CGA) Academic All-America Scholar-Athlete honors, while the 2016 team ranked in the top 10 with a 3.123 team grade point average in the 2015-16 academic year. Five Nittany Lions earned first team All-America Scholar-Athlete honors with sophomore **Noah Roberson** leading the way with a 4.0 grade point average. Also earning first team honors for the Blue and White were **Michael Burns, Wyatt Tyndall** and **Chris Sands**.

Along with the four first team honorees, three Nittany Lions notched second team honors with **Franz Card, Benjamin Cooperman** and **Dominic DiFulvio** all earning grade point averages between 3.399-3.30.

As a team, Penn State ranked 10th nationally with a 3.123 grade point average, while William and Mary paced the nation with a 3.512 team GPA and Stanford came in second with a 3.427 team grade point average.

Since the inception of the award in 1991, the Nittany Lions have received 65 first team All-America Scholar-Athlete honors and 43 second team All-American Scholar-Athlete honors. Penn State's 65 first team honors ranks 13th all-time, while its 43 second team honors are tied for third all-time.