



# Varsity 'S' Newsletter

## Varsity 'S' Day set for Michigan

More than 800 alumni, family and friends have responded to participate in Varsity 'S' Day activities Oct. 12.

The Varsity 'S' Day Tailgate will be conducted from 2 to 4 p.m. on the concourse of Medlar Field at Lubrano Park and after that Varsity 'S' Club members are invited to help form the pre-game human tunnel that members of the football team will run through before the Homecoming game against Michigan. Kick off is at 5 p.m. in Beaver Stadium.

Last year's Varsity 'S' Day was the first to include a human tunnel of former letter winners and the day attracted more than 350 letter winners, including past and current Olympians.

"The only thing that can make going to the Olympics better besides representing the United States is to represent Penn State," said alumna Natalie Dell ('07), who won a bronze medal at the London Olympics in the quadruple sculls. "It's great to be back."

Many alumni shared her feelings.

"When you come back to Penn State it's like being home," said Corrine Leparik ('78, women's basketball). "It's great to see some old friends at the tailgate."

For some in attendance, such as Marc Dinacci ('94, men's soccer), returning to campus is a common practice.

"I come back most weekends and it's always fun to be back,"



Members of the football team sing the Penn State alma mater after last season's victory over Northwestern, a game that started with the first-ever Varsity 'S' Day tunnel. (Photo by Mark Selders.)

said Dinacci. "I'm looking forward to seeing some familiar faces."

Meeting student-athletes from across generations was a high-point for several attendees.

"It's really fun to look around and talk to people and see when they were in school and the difference in time," said Lynne Hairston ('86, gymnastics).

For more information about this year's Varsity 'S' Day and Tailgate, call 814-867-2202. A limited number of tickets for the football game remain. Only letterwinners are permitted on the field for the human tunnel.

## Women's soccer claims crown(s) as challenge begins for 2013-14

Alumni from the women's soccer team helped that program finish with the highest percentage representing their sport in supporting Penn State Athletics, and with the highest percentage increase from the previous year during the 2012-2013 Penn State Alumni Challenge for Former Student-Athletes.

The top five programs for the highest percentage of former student-athletes giving back were: women's soccer (42.9 percent), football (37.1), men's ice hockey (33.2), men's lacrosse (29.2) and men's volleyball (26.5).

The top five teams for the highest increase from 2011-2012 were: women's soccer (26.1 percent), men's lacrosse (14.6), men's gymnastics (9.5), field hockey (8.5) and women's gymnastics (8.3).

The Varsity 'S' Club, coaches, and current teams thank everyone who participated in the 2012-13 challenge. Overall, 28 percent more former student-athlete donors supported their team compared to

**Penn State Alumni Challenge  
for Former Student-Athletes**  
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2011-2012, and more than \$400,000 more was donated to Penn State Athletics from former student-athletes in comparison to the previous year. Nearly every team increased its giving numbers.

"The challenge represents the pride and passion that our former student-athletes have for Penn State Athletics and

their programs, said Clint Eury, Varsity 'S' Club and sport specific giving coordinator. "The support and commitment from our former student-athletes throughout this year exhibits a special bond between our alums and our student-athletes for Penn State that shows the commitment to success of our programs long after they take off their blue-and-white uniform."

With the start of the new fiscal year, the Challenge has been renewed as well. Alumni may again compete to support their former team—and current coaches and student-athletes—by giving.

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## GYMNASTICS GROUP

Dozens of men's gymnastics alumni, spanning several generations, returned to campus for a reunion and related events this past spring.

## University, gymnastics program, many beyond mourn Wettstone

Penn State and college athletics continue to mourn the passing of former men's gymnastics coach Gene Wettstone, a legend in the sport and the record-holder for most NCAA men's team championships by a single coach in the sport.

Wettstone, who celebrated his 100th birthday in July, passed away Tuesday, July 30, in State College. Known for his foresight in the gym and his promotional knack, Wettstone was inducted into the United States Gymnastics Hall of Fame in 1963.

A member of the Penn State coaching staff for 36 seasons, Wettstone led the Nittany Lions to an astonishing nine NCAA team championships and 13 Eastern Intercollegiate Gymnastics League crowns. He compiled more than 200 dual meet victories, coached his student-athletes to 35 individual national titles, and produced 13 Olympians before retiring from coaching.

The Gene Wettstone Award, which is awarded to the top Nittany Lion gymnast each year, was founded in 1976 upon his retirement. Internationally acclaimed artist Richard MacDonald created the sculpture that was dedicated in honor of Wettstone in 2006. The sculpture, which is on permanent display in the Penn State All-Sports Museum,

### The Wettstone Initiative

Led by former letterman Ira Stolzer ('76), a group of alumni are in the midst of a fundraising effort dubbed The Wettstone Initiative. Initially timed to coincide with the coach's 100th birthday, the initiative hopes to fund new equipment and expansion of the team's locker room and training room in White Building.

"When you think about Penn State gymnastics, you think of Gene and his legacy," coach Randy Jepson ('83, '90) said. He and others want to ensure that legacy continues.

Anyone interested in making a gift can contact Clint Eury at [cee126@psu.edu](mailto:cee126@psu.edu). Ultimately, Jepson envisions future Penn State national champs training in the renovated Wettstone Gymnastics Complex.

depicts a gymnast strained in the execution of a move called the "Flair" and exalts the determination, tenacity, and dedication inherent in the pursuit of excellence for which Wettstone constantly strove.

At Penn State, Wettstone oversaw 26 major events at Rec Hall, including three NCAA men's championships (Penn State won in 1960) and four Olympic Trials.

Penn State also set a then-national record

when 8,114 spectators attended a home meet versus Southern Connecticut State on Feb. 4, 1978. Crowds in excess of 7,000 were the norm in the late 1960s after Rec Hall's expansion.

Three of Wettstone's student-athletes went on to win the Nissen-Emery Award, given annually to the nation's top gymnast. Steve Cohen (1967), Bob Emery (1969), and Gene Whelan (1976) all earned the distinction, with Emery having his name attached to the award in 1997 for his contributions to the sport.

Wettstone made two tours as the head coach of the U.S. Olympic men's gymnastics team, serving as the frontman in 1948 and 1956, and was the manager of the 1976 U.S. Olympic squad. He was an Olympic judge during the 1952 and 1968 games and served on the U.S. Olympic Committee for 20 years. He also served as the national AAU Vice-Chairperson from 1948-1956 and was a member of the NCAA Gymnastics Committee for 18 years.

Considered the Dean of Collegiate Gymnastics, Wettstone gave the sport of gymnastics amazing gifts of safety, visibility, and affection that transferred to his many protégés.

## Robinson becomes sixth Nittany Lion enshrined in Canton

Former Penn State All-America end Dave Robinson became the sixth member of the Penn State football family to be enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in July.

He was part of the 50th class inducted into the recently renovated Hall of Fame, which is located in Canton, Ohio.

Robinson joining Jack Ham, Franco Harris, August Michalske, Lenny Moore, and Mike Munchak.

"It's very special; it means an awful lot," said Robinson, a resident of nearby Akron, Ohio. "I have been around the Hall of Fame and involved with the Board of Directors since the 1980s. I'm getting a whole new look at the Hall of Fame.

"The big thrill is, every single man in the Hall of Fame, they are the elite. This is the last team you will ever be elected to. The Hall of Fame is the top; there's nothing beyond it."

From Mount Laurel, N.J., Robinson was a first-team All-American for the Nittany Lions in 1962 and a three-year letterwinner under coach Rip Engle. He helped Penn State to a 24-8 record from 1960-62, including wins over Oregon in the 1960 Liberty Bowl and Georgia Tech in the 1961 Gator Bowl.

An offensive and defensive end, Robinson was the MVP of the 1962 Gator Bowl, despite the Nittany Lions falling to Florida, 17-7 to complete a 9-2 season. He was inducted into the Gator Bowl Hall of Fame in 1996.

The Green Bay Packers and Coach Vince Lombardi selected Robinson in the first round of the 1963 NFL Draft (14th overall selection) and he played linebacker 12 years in the NFL. He played with the Packers from 1963-72 and the Washington Redskins in 1973-74.

Robinson was selected to the Pro Bowl three times (1966-67, 1969) and twice earned Associated Press first-team All-Pro honors (1967, 1969) during his career in Green Bay. Robinson was a starter on teams that won three consecutive NFL Championships (1965-67) and Super Bowls I and II. He was named to the NFL's All-Decade Team of the 1960s. He intercepted 27 passes in his 12-season career.

## ALUMNI FEATURE: LAILA BROCK

When the first college football playoff comes to fruition in January 2015, one Penn Stater will play an important role in the championship game experience.

Laila Brock serves as director of team operations and logistics for the College Football Playoff. In that role, she coordinates everything from team arrivals to a variety of special events related to the first national championship game—scheduled Monday, Jan. 12, at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas.

Brock and her team have 17 months to work on everything from the biggest ideas (such as concerts, galas, and game-day fan zones) to the smallest details for those involved in the game or those just making the trip as fans. It sounds like a lot of time, but she anticipates many long workdays over the next year and half as they finalize things such as hotel and meeting space as well as pep rallies, VIP parties, and team transportation.

"We're trying to create a memorable experience for everyone involved," said Brock, who earned both her bachelor's degree in media studies ('00) and her master's degree in counselor education ('02) from Penn State. "It's early, so a lot of things are fluid at this point."

Before joining College Football Playoff in July, Brock was director of events and team operations for the Orange Bowl. She joined the organization after Penn State's 2005 appearance in that game and subsequently played an instrumental role with the logistics for seven Orange Bowl games and two BCS national championship games. Before that, Brown served as an academic coordinator for football at Florida Atlantic University and as an assistant director for the National Consortium for Academics and Sports.

Brock was a five-time letter winner for the Penn State track team and an Academic All-Big Ten selection. A sprinter, she finished her career with top-10 school times in the 200- and 400-meter dashes, and was a member of a similarly successful 4x400

relay team. She served as a team co-captain in her junior and senior years.

Brock moved from Miami to Dallas for her new position. Along with the challenges of the job, the Washington, Pa., native anticipates the opportunity to experience a change in weather. "Miami was great, but I did miss the seasons a little bit," Brock said. "It'll be nice to have that again."



In terms of team operations and logistics, Brock sees many possibilities for what will be a highly anticipated and scrutinized game and surrounding events. She knows the first College Football Playoff will be popular, and she's excited to help make it happen.

"The possibilities are endless, that's the beauty of it. It's great for the sport, great for the communities, and great for the student-athletes," she said. "For me, one of the events I look forward to the most is team arrival. The teams come in on a charter, we greet them on the runway and they see what we've done to honor their accomplishments. When you see their looks on their faces, you know they appreciate that we've gone the extra mile. As a former student-athlete myself, it's nice to be recognized for your accomplishments."

With the site of the national championship game changing from year to year, Brock knows that means annual challenges for her team. She anticipates the opportunity to tailor events and experiences whether the final game gets played in Atlanta, Dallas, Miami, Pasadena, Calif., or some other location. Sites after the first championship game in Texas have not been set.

Brock seems especially qualified for her role. She brings a mix of experiences—beyond her proven track record with the Orange Bowl—to handle such her duties.

"With my media studies background I'm able to speak the language that our media director speaks," she said. "I understand what the our student-athletes want and, with my masters degree focusing on higher education, I'm able to relate to counselors and other when they arrive on site."



## TRACK TURNOUT

Members of the men's and women's track teams returned in large number for a weekend full of alumni activities this spring.

## ALUMNI NOTEBOOK: Accomplishments aplenty for alumni across sports

● Former football standout **Mark Rubin ('08)** of Barclays Plc won the RBC Decathlon for the second year, successfully defending his title as the best athlete on Wall Street. Rubin, who played for several NFL teams after his college career, topped a field of 170 financial industry workers during a 10-event competition on July 28 that raised more than \$1.4 million for Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Rubin amassed 7,630 points—almost 300 more than the second-place finisher in the event.

● Former Lady Lion **Helen Darling ('00)** was recently named to the 2014 Ohio Basketball Hall of Fame class and will be one of 15 individuals to be enshrined next May. Darling starred at Brookhaven High School and led her team to the 1995 state championship before coming to Penn State where she became one of four players in school history to take home WBCA first team All-America honors. As a senior, Darling guided the Lady Lions to the 2000 Final Four and collected USA Today National Co-Player of the Year honors to go along with Big Ten Player of the Year accolades. The two-time All-Big Ten first team selection completed her career with 1,294 points, 672 rebounds, 791 assists, and 314 steals. Darling is the only player in school history with 1,000 points, 600 rebounds, and 700 assists. She ranks third in school history in steals (314) and assists (791).

● Former Lady Lion **Nikki Greene ('13)** was one of 10 Americans selected in the Korean WKBL Foreigner Draft. The Samsung Life Blue Minx selected Greene and Ashley Robinson of the Seattle Storm and University of Tennessee. The Korean WKBL allows two foreigners on each roster. The season in the Koreans WKBL runs

from November 10 until April 7.

● Women's lacrosse alumna **Katie Guy ('13)** competed as a member of the Canadian National Team at the 2013 Federation of International Lacrosse World Cup, held in Oshawa, Ontario, in mid-July.

A Whitby, Ontario, native, Guy was making her third appearance for Team Canada at a World Cup event. The defender helped Canada to the bronze medal as the team's youngest member at the 2009 FIL World Cup in Prague, Czech Republic, and was a fixture for the country's fourth-place team at the World Under-19 Championship in 2007.

A four-year Nittany Lion and team tri-captain as a senior, Guy helped lead Penn State to its second straight NCAA quarterfinal appearance in 2013. A defensive stalwart, Guy set career highs in draw controls (49), ground balls (46), and caused turnovers (42) as Penn State captured a share of its first ALC regular-season championship.

● Men's lacrosse alumni **Chris Schiller ('99)**, **Greg Gurenlian ('06)**, **Pat Heim ('07)**, **Drew Adams ('09)** and **Matthew Mackrides ('12)** were invited to try out for the U.S. National Team. The tryout, which will be held Aug. 30 through Sept. 1 at Goucher College in Baltimore, will help determine the final team for the 2014 Federation of International Lacrosse Championship in Denver. Collectively, 98 players were selected to participate in the tryouts. The six Penn State invitees—current goalkeeper Austin Kaut (Morton, Pa.) was invited as well—represent the fourth-most invitees from a single university behind only Virginia, Maryland and Johns Hopkins. Another Penn State connection is coach Jeff Tambroni, who will once again serve as an assistant for the U.S. squad.

# Varsity 'S' Club Newsletter



## Clint's Corner: A year of great success



Find us. Follow us.  
Varsity 'S' Club

Dear Varsity 'S' Club members,

What a great year for Penn State Athletics. We had another strong finish in the Learfield Cup, as 21 of a possible 31 varsity teams participated in their respective NCAA championship in 2012-2013.

Penn State student-athletes won a school record 11 conference championships and a record eight Big Ten crowns, adding Big Ten Titles in women's outdoor track and field, women's basketball and wrestling to the fall crowns by field hockey (regular season and tournament), men's soccer, women's soccer, and women's volleyball.

In addition to the success of our current student-athletes, I am happy to say that you, as former student-athletes, have also represented record breaking numbers for Penn State and your respective programs.



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This year, we had 1,354 alums return to Happy Valley for alumni events as well as more than 2,600 former student-athletes representing their sport in the Penn State Alumni Challenge for former student-athletes.

This truly is inspiring to our student-athletes to see the support of our former student-athletes. I am also very pleased to announce that the Varsity 'S' Club, Nittany Lion Club and Director of Athletics Dave Joyner will once again support a Challenge this year. The criteria for the challenge will remain the same.

I hope that I will see you back in Happy Valley for this year's Varsity 'S' Day Tailgate and Letterwinners Tunnel. It should be a fun day.

Go State!  
Clint

## SAVE THE DATE!

Team reunions and special events:

Men's Golf.....	Sept. 13, 14	Varsity 'S' Day .....	Oct. 12
Men's, Women's Lacrosse.....	Sept. 27, 28	Women's Soccer .....	Oct. 12-14
Field Hockey .....	Oct. 4-6	Women's Ice Hockey .....	Oct. 18-20
Baseball and Softball .....	Oct. 12	Women's Tennis .....	Nov. 1, 2



**Ticket Info**  
**1-800-NITTANY**  
Capacity – 6,300  
General public – 4,200  
Students – 2,100

### Ticket On-Sale Dates

**Sept. 10**

NLC season ticket holders  
and Hoops Club members

**Sept 16**  
Season ticket holders

**Sept. 24**  
General public

**October TBA**  
Students