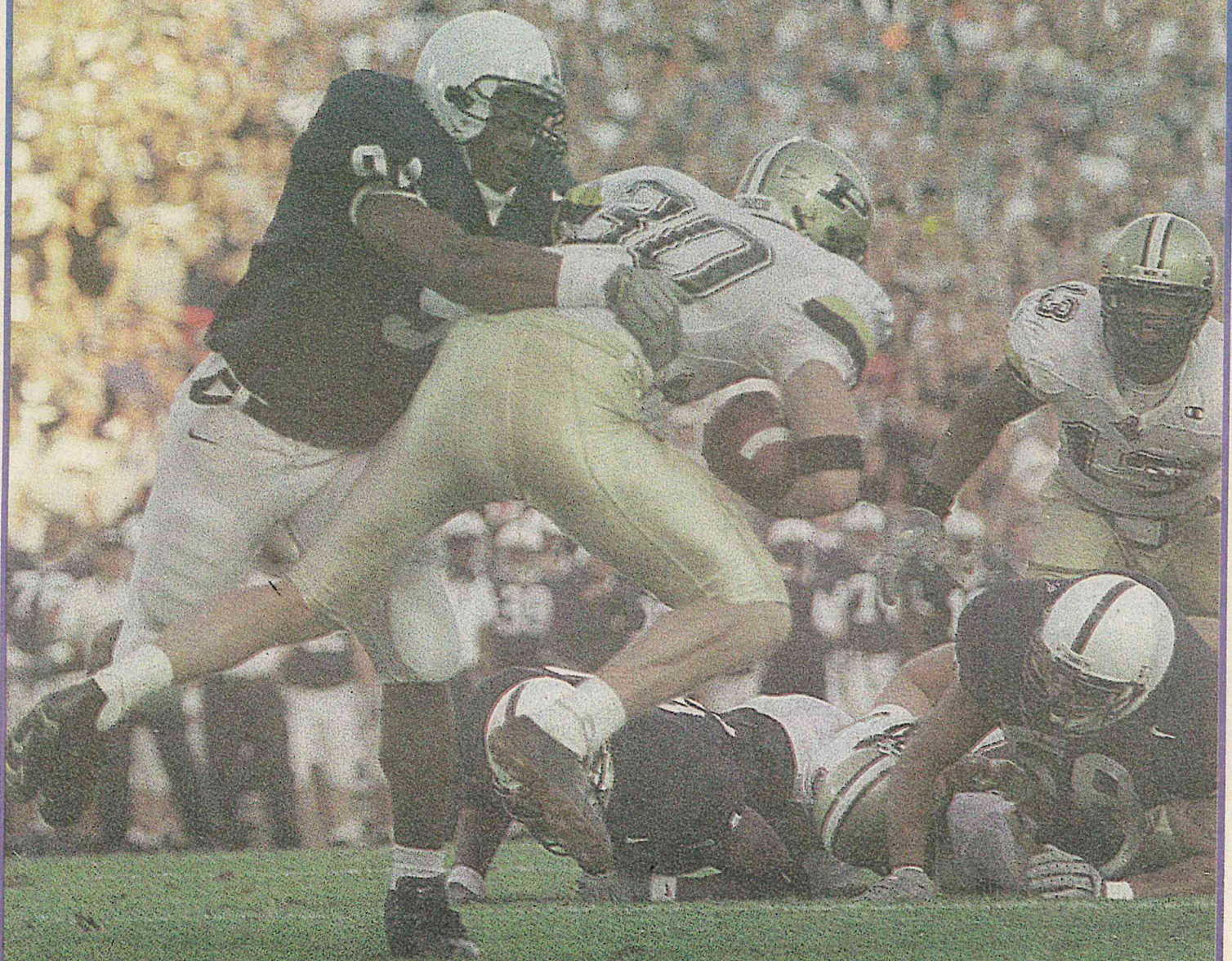


**GOLD & BLACK**  
VOLUME 11, ISSUE 6 • OCT. 6, 2000  
ILLUSTRATED

# NOT VERY SPECIAL



**Same Old Mistakes Doom Boilers At Penn State**



# No One's Pointing Fingers

BY BRIAN NEUBERT

Each Sunday, *Gold & Black Illustrated* talks with Coach Joe Tiller following Saturday's game, getting his most recent thoughts on the contest after he's analyzed it on film.

**Q: What are your thoughts on the Penn State game a day later?**

**Tiller:** "We played a very physical Penn State team that was emotionally charged. The biggest thing we talked about as a coaching staff, though, is that we still had a chance to win. Maybe it's encouraging that we were that close to them, because they are a very talented team. They came out and played their best game of the year against us."

**Q: You had two more punting disasters against Penn State. What's wrong with your team's protection?**

**Tiller:** "Our problem is a technique issue, not a personnel issue. We think we can solve that as we work on it, and we better improve at it. Our guys haven't done a lot of it, but they've done some, so it's no excuse."

**Q: How frustrating was it knowing you'd spent so much time shoring up the wing protection, only to see the pressure come right up the middle this time?**

**Tiller:** "That's exactly what went through my mind. We spent the whole week clearing up the issues on the wings and we sprung a leak somewhere else."

"We're going to get challenged in the kicking game through the balance of the year, that's what we told the team. We've got to get better at it, because we're going to see it every week until we demonstrate an ability to handle pressure of all types."

**Q: What exactly were the technique problems you talked about?**

**Tiller:** "We were sprinting out into coverage before we took care of our blocking assignment. You've got to block No. 1, cover No. 2. We were doing the opposite."

**Q: Do you feel comfortable then with the players you have on special teams now?**

**Tiller:** "We might make a change or two, but it's not going to be anything wholesale. I think it's just a matter of improving with what we have."

**Q: Considering special teams breakdowns have now contributed heavily to both your team's losses, are there fingers being pointed in the locker room?**

**Tiller:** "That's a good question and that has to be one of our goals. As I told the team in our meeting afterwards, that we can't focus on the negative and assign blame to anyone. We have to move forward and not dwell on the negative."

**Q: Did the team come out of the game healthy?**

**Tiller:** "We did in the sense that we're not going to miss anybody in games."

"Brent Botts took a helmet right on the ankle he had surgery on a while back and it's pretty bruised, but those things usually clear up in 48 hours. And we've got little rotator cuff muscle strains on (Akin) Ayodele and (Matt) Mitrione. The early word I'm getting from the training staff is that we'll have everybody for practice Tuesday, and that's good news."

**Q: Talk about your decision to send everyone after Penn State's final punt, leaving no one back to return it (the ball bounced toward the goal-line and was downed at the Purdue 5).**

**Tiller:** "If you'd have watched the tape with me, you'd have understood perfectly. We wanted to block the punt, turn the field over and put ourselves in a position to score. We blocked a punt earlier, and we had two guys run free on the last one, but just didn't get it."

"We figured if he kicked the ball to the 10 and we fair caught it, we'd still have 90 yards to go. We figured we'd roll the dice and go for the block. Making the call at the time, and now



Coach Joe Tiller is 0-4 against Penn State's Joe Paterno.

*"We've got to be careful to not get involved in the blame game. We can't blame people for what's happened. We're all part of it. We need to correct the mistakes and move on."*

Coach Joe Tiller

after watching it on tape and seeing those two guys run free, unblocked, I think it was the right call."

**Q: What was Penn State's secondary doing to your receivers to prevent them from getting open, especially in the first half?**

**Tiller:** "They put better athletes out there than we did and they were gloving them up. I think our guys just competed and stayed with it. I'll give Seth Morales a high grade because he had his best game as a Boilermaker so far and really competed well. And then John Standeford and Vinny Sutherland did in the second half."

**Q: Speaking of better athletes in the secondary, with teams such as Michigan, Ohio State and Wisconsin left on the schedule, how concerned are you with your receivers' ability to get open?**

**Tiller:** "We're going to see it all. We just have to get better at those positions. We can't change our offense. We're not going to the wishbone."

**Q: Your team has lost two games now that can be directly attributed to the punting team. How frustrating is it for that small a part of the game to have that much impact?**

**Tiller:** "We've got to be careful to not get involved in the blame game. We can't blame people for what's happened. We're all part of it. We need to correct the mistakes and move on."

**Q: What happened on the missed field goal near the end of the game?**

**Tiller:** "He just shanked it. The snap was OK and the protection was OK. They had two leapers over the middle, but they didn't have any effect on the kick. The kick just started left and stayed left."

**Q: Have you had players volunteering to help on special teams?**

**Tiller:** "That's encouraging, because there have been some guys come up and say, 'If you want me, I'm there.' They all have a sense of frustration. Our experience in the kicking game, though, has always been that if you keep changing, it's impossible to get better. I think we're OK with the guys we've got out there. I can tell you right now we won't go past two changes, if we make any changes at all."

### IN THIS EDITION OF THE JOHN PURDUE CLUB REPORT:

- A message from Leroy Keyes
- Ticket information for the John Wooden Tradition Coaches Luncheon

### Publishing Schedule

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### ON THE COVER

The special teams have cost Purdue dearly this season. Two punts have been blocked, one snap sailed over punter Travis Dorsch's head and Dorsch couldn't get two punts off because of poor blocking in a 22-20 loss Sept. 30 at Penn State. Here, Dorsch is buried by Lion linebacker Derek Wake, which put Penn State up for good in the third quarter.

Cover photo and University Spirit photo of Shaun Phillips by Tom Campbell



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## CAN THE DREAM SEASON BE SALVAGED?

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — Not even the gold pants could help Purdue end its string of road losses to the Big Ten's upper echelon.

You won't ever find a more beatable Penn State team. You see, only once in the past 68 years have the Nittany Lions had a losing season. So, arriving in Happy Valley to face a 1-4 Joe Paterno-coached squad was a bit shocking, to say the least.

In fact, the more I looked at newspapers, listened to Lion fans complain about their team and looked at the point spread (Purdue was a 13-point favorite), the more I knew a loss was inevitable.

The local paper said the Boilermakers would cruise to a 31-6 win. *ESPN College GameDay's* Kirk Herbstriet and Lee Corso said Purdue should win easily. The *Associated Press* liked the Boilers 34-24.

Throw in the fact freshman corner Adam Taliaferro was lying helpless in a Philadelphia hospital bed following a spinal injury Sept. 23 at Ohio State, and this was a recipe for a Boilermaker disaster.

Speaking of disasters, Hurricane Drew couldn't even save his team on this beautiful sunny afternoon. Sure enough, the punt team came through to deliver yet another catastrophe or two in this case. As I joked to co-workers in the press box, wouldn't Purdue have been just as successful short snapping to back-blocker Alex Tone and having him take a

knee?

Had that happened, at least the Nittany Lions would have had a few more yards to negotiate against Purdue's stingy defense.

The special teams atrocities Purdue has committed this year are completely unacceptable. But the entire blame does not rest on two botched punts and a missed field goal against Penn State.

I'm sorry, but I thought this offense was supposed to deliver 30-40 points a game. While it is averaging 34.4 points in three victories, it has mustered a disappointing 20.5 in the two losses. I know the coaching staff will say, "our goal is to score one more point than they do." Well, what happened to putting 45 on the board and burying an opponent?

It was so bad against the Lions that the offense got the ball on the PSU 48-yard line early in the second quarter and couldn't move the ball an inch. To make matters worse, the Boilermakers repeated the trick later in the period.

Freshman wide receiver John Standeford blocked a punt giving Purdue the ball again on the PSU 48. With a chance to gain some much-needed momentum before halftime, the offense sputtered, had costly penalties and gained a whopping two yards.



This, mind you, was the productivity of the Big Ten's top-ranked offense.

Typically when you see the Boilermaker offense running off the field so often, it's after they've just put seven points on the board. In Beaver Stadium, though, it was after three-and-outs and drives stopped far too soon.

Brees felt more of the ground in the opening five minutes than he has in the past four games. Penn State was able to get to Purdue's usually untouchable signal caller early and often. How does this happen with what is supposed to be one of the best offensive lines in school history?

Bottom line is there's not enough talent at wide receiver this year for this offense to be ultra-effective in big games. I'm talking about making plays and getting off blocks against the Notre Dames, Penn States, Michigans, Wisconsin and Michigan States of the world. Oh yeah, and let's not forget to add resurgent Northwestern in that group.

Think back to August and all of the youth and inexperience we talked about on the Boilermaker 'D'. Many of us were scared Purdue would have to win a handful of 48-45 games to get eight wins. Instead, we're witnessing a defense playing out of its mind and

being punished by a horrible punt team. That's a shame.

Now the focus should be salvaging a season that could fast be on a downward spiral.

If you thought the Michigan game was going to be big before the loss at Penn State, it may be bigger now. This gridiron war Oct. 7 in Ross-Ade Stadium will make or break the Boilermakers.

A win over the sixth-ranked Wolverines would keep players from pointing fingers at one another. A loss sends Purdue to Evanston with its proverbial chin glued to its chest. That's not where you want to be against anyone, let alone the No. 24 Wildcats.

"If we don't win (against Michigan), there's going to be some serious attitude problems," receiver Vinny Sutherland said.

"Whatever you think (after this loss) you just have to keep to yourself," junior defensive tackle Matt Mitrione said.

While I took incredible amounts of criticism for my pregame prediction published in last week's *Gold & Black Illustrated* (Penn State 21, Purdue 20), the very reasons for my pick ultimately came true.

The bottom line is it's hard enough playing a 1-4 Penn State team in dire need of a victory in its backyard. But it's absolutely impossible to win when you beat yourself — regardless of the color of your pants. ■■■

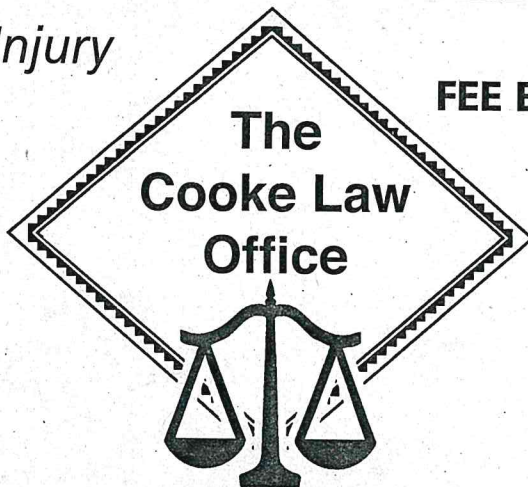
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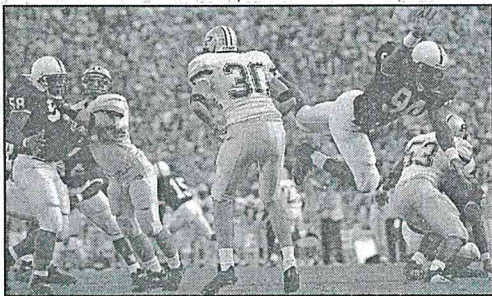
# WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN, WASN'T

Botched Punts, Missed Field Goal Cost Boilers Dearly

## INSIDE THE BOILERMAKERS

Whos **HOT**

Matt Mitrone had five tackles, including two for loss, two pass deflections and several quarterback pressures giving him this honor. Mitrone's second deflection of the day ended up in the hands of linebacker Joe Odom on the first drive of the second half. He is playing much more like the active tackle he was two years ago.



Purdue punt team... again  
Once again, the punt team. There's no need to repeat this disappointing information and you'll surely read it elsewhere in this issue.

Whos **NOT**

Ian Allen did not make the trip to Happy Valley because of he went to Georgia to attend his grandmother's funeral. Allen's absence forced sophomore Rob Turner to play the entire game. On its second possession, Penn State used the shotgun formation for what some in the press box thought was the first time in Joe Paterno's 35 years as a coach. Purdue subsequently sacked quarterback Rashard Casey for a 7-yard loss. The shotgun was used on the next play (third-and-16) but not again in the game.

**INSIDE SCOOP**



starter or not, who can.

First, we'd have a tryout to see which player wants to be on the field the most. We would take punt team volunteers who are interested in blocking their man every time. Simply put, it's time for the guys on the punt team to either perform at the highest level, or find someone,

Redshirt freshman Shaun Phillips had his best game of the season. He was all over the field making big plays and seems to play more like a seasoned veteran each week. Also, it was nice to see sophomore middle linebacker Joe Odom back in the starting lineup. Odom brings tremendous speed and experience to the field. True freshman Gilbert Gardner has untapped potential, but Purdue is a better team with Odom on the field.

**KEEP YOUR EYES ON**



Tom Campbell

BY KEVIN KECKLER

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — The mistakes can occur at home against a lower-division Big Ten team. They can't, however, on the road.

And so the Boilermakers found a way to once again beat themselves and return to West Lafayette with a heart-breaking 'L' in the record books. This time, it was at the hands of 14 Penn State in Happy Valley.

With the loss, Purdue is now 3-2 overall, 1-1 in the Big Ten heading into an Oct. 7 home meeting with No. 6 Michigan. It was Purdue's sixth consecutive loss to Penn State (2-4, 1-1) and yet another Big Ten road defeat.

Obviously, there weren't many happy Boilers following the 22-20 defeat Sept. 30 in Beaver Stadium, which was played in front of a boisterous sellout crowd of 96,023.

"This is a team game and we lose as a team, but if we want to have a chance to compete in this league and be Big Ten Champions or win on the road, we need to clear some things up," senior quarterback and team co-captain Drew Brees said. "We need to take pride, whether it's offense, defense or special teams. I'm not going to harp on

The Boilers resorted to trickery as quarterback Drew Brees scores on this 5-yard pass from receiver Vinny Sutherland to put Purdue ahead 13-6 with 11:05 left in the third quarter.

the special teams all day long. I think everyone knows that needs to clear up before we can compete."

Brees is referring specifically to two more gigantic special teams errors that led directly to 13 Penn State points. Two botched punts inside the Boilermaker 20-yard line essentially gave the Lions the game. The pair of critical punt team errors now gives the No. 22 Boilermakers six special teams' miscues in the past three games.

On both botched punts against the Nittany Lions, Penn State's Derek Wake came racing through the middle. And in both scenarios, punter Travis Dorsch had no chance to get off a kick. Instead, the junior was tackled immediately giving Penn State tremendous field position. You'll recall Purdue's problems in previous games on the punt team came from opponents bringing pressure from the perimeter.

"We didn't expect to clear up our problems coming off the wing and then still have breakdowns coming up the middle," Coach Joe Tiller muttered after the loss.

Wake, Penn State's hero of the day,

said they practiced different stunts prior to the game in hopes of making a big play during the game.

"We practiced going after the punter hard all week in practice," Wake said. "The rest of the punt return team opened the hole for me."

What makes the errors even more noticeable is the timing of the plays. Purdue was leading 13-9 midway through the second half when everything fell apart. Penn State took its first lead after Wake's first tackle for loss. It took the Nittany Lions four plays to go 11 yards for the go-ahead touchdown, a 1-yard TD run by Paul Jefferson.

If you thought the Purdue defense was put in a tough spot after the first botched punt... think again. Penn State, which was off to its worst start in 36 years, was able to take over at the Purdue 6-yard line after Wake again rushed seemingly unblocked through the line.

"I was working off adrenaline on the second one," Wake claimed.

"We blocked the thing correctly and we were solid on the left side," Tiller said. "The guy crossed and the





Junior wide receiver A.T. Simpson (80) provides a key block as Sutherland finishes off his 39-yard scoring pass reception early in the fourth quarter. Sutherland had five catches for 94 yards in the game. Tom Campbell

## MOVIN' ON UP

Following is a list of career records quarterback Drew Brees is chasing or has eclipsed. Against Penn State Sept. 30, Brees became the Big Ten's all-time leader in total offense surpassing Iowa's Chuck Long. Brees needs one more touchdown pass to move ahead of Long in the Big Ten's career touchdown passing category. This year, Brees has set Big Ten standards for passing attempts and completions. He's Purdue's all-time leader in total offense and passing touchdowns, as well.

School Career Record	Record Holder (Record)	Brees Has	Needs To Break
Passing Yards	Mark Herrmann (9,946)	9,768	179
Touchdowns	Drew Brees (74)	74	—
Completions	Drew Brees (843)	843	—
Total Offense	Drew Brees (10,360)	10,360	—
Big Ten Career Record	Record Holder (Record)	Brees Has	Needs To Break
Passing Yards	Iowa's Chuck Long (10,461)	9,768	693
Touchdowns	Iowa's Chuck Long (74)	74	—
Completions	Drew Brees (820)	820	—
Total Offense	Iowa's Chuck Long (10,254)	10,360	—
NCAA Career Record	Record Holder (Record)	Brees Has	Needs To Break
Passing Yards	BYU's Ty Detmer (15,031)	9,768	5,263
Touchdowns	BYU's Ty Detmer (121)	74	48
Completions	Louisville's Chris Redman (1,031)	843	188
Total Offense	BYU's Ty Detmer (14,665)	10,360	4,305

Note: Brees needs 1,532 passing yards, 14 touchdowns, 90 completions and 1,107 total yards to move into fifth-place all-time on the NCAA Records list in each of those categories.

personal protector has to step up and hit the guy (Wake) flush, and he stepped up and chicken-winged him. The guy went right by him."

The Nittany Lions capitalized yet again, this time on a 3-yard TD run by quar-

terback Rashard Casey. The score gave Penn State a 22-13 cushion at the end of the third quarter.

The botched punts had several Boilers angry after the game, including junior defensive tackle Matt Mittrione.

"The coaches are very intelligent people and they get paid to figure things out," he said, following a stellar performance against the Lions. "I hope it gets worked out by the time

the next game rolls around. I hope to everything holy that I get put on a special team next week."

Although the momentum was clearly in the Nittany Lions' favor heading into the final 15 minutes of play, Purdue was able to strike early in the final stanza making things interesting.

Brees, who was not spectacular finishing 23-of-50 passing for 281 yards, found senior Vinny Sutherland for a 39-yard touchdown pass. The score would not have occurred had junior receiver A.T. Simpson not given Sutherland a great block near the goal line.

So, with 11:30 left in the game, the Boilers had closed the gap to 22-20.

That's when the Purdue defense again stepped up big. The Lions moved the ball just 12 yards following the Boilmaker score allowing Tiller's team to regain possession with 7:50 remaining. Starting at its own 27-yard line, Purdue put together an important 13-play, 44-yard drive that ate up 5:23 on the clock.

Similar to the Notre Dame loss, the

## BOILER BITS BOYD BASHES BOILERMAKERS

Prior to the game Penn State safety James Boyd was asked his thoughts on the Boilmaker offense. Needless to say, he wasn't impressed with one of the nation's top units.

"I think our secondary, if not the best, is one of the best in the country," Boyd said. "If they think they're going to throw on us and beat us, they're in for a long day. If we threw the ball 85 times a game, we'd have three of the top five receivers, too. They do pretty much the same things Louisiana Tech does. They really don't go upfield too much. They have a short passing game."

Boyd and the Lion secondary backed the trash-talking up with a solid performance. Penn State limited Purdue to just 286 passing yards as Drew Brees completed 46 percent of his passes.

## PLAYING FOR ADAM

The number 43 was literally everywhere in Beaver Stadium Sept. 30 as Penn State fans, players and coaches paid tribute to freshman Adam Taliaferro, a freshman cornerback who seriously injured his spinal cord Sept. 23 at Ohio State.

The Nittany Lions dedicated the game to Taliaferro, who remains in a Philadelphia hospital after successful spinal fusion surgery Sept. 25 in Ohio. The Nittany Lions wore No. 43 on the back of their helmets to honor their fallen teammate.

"As a coach, it was my toughest week," said Joe Paterno, now just five victories away from breaking Bear Bryant's Division I-A record of 323 wins. "It was a struggle not knowing how to handle the squad."

"Adam had a hand in it somehow. We can't help him back, but we can make his road easier," senior Justin Kurpeikis said.

Coach Joe Tiller knew Paterno's squad would play especially hard for Taliaferro.

"We felt like they would rally to the side of their comrade," Tiller said. "We got exactly what we expected."

Receiver Vinny Sutherland showed tremendous class during the postgame press conference adding, "Our prayers go out to him and his family."

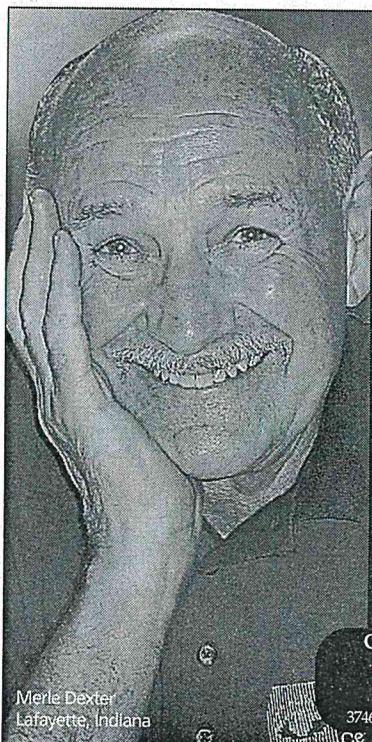
## SLOW STARTS

Here is how the Boilers have fared on their first possession of the game in 2000:

Central Michigan	Three plays, punt
Kent State	Two plays, fumble
Notre Dame	Three plays, blocked punt
Minnesota	Three plays, fumble
Penn State	Three plays, punt

## NEXT TEST

Purdue returns home to face No. 6 Michigan Oct. 7. The Wolverines are 4-1 overall, 2-0 in the Big Ten, after a 13-10 Sept. 30 home win over No. 14 Wisconsin. For more on Michigan see pages 18, 21-22.



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Boilermaker offense had a chance to take the lead in the waning minutes of the last quarter. However, unlike the drive in South Bend, the one in State College resulted in no points.

After getting to the Penn State 29-yard line, following a successful conversion on fourth-and-one, the Boilermakers were unable to gain another yard in the next three plays. That gave Purdue no choice but to have Dorsch attempt a 46-yard field goal.

The kick was long enough, but was wide left.

"Everything was fine in front of me," said Dorsch, who is now 6-of-9 on field goal attempts this fall. "It was a tough kick but one that should have been made."

Penn State's ensuing possession gave it a chance to run out the clock, but the Boilermaker defense held. With the help of three time-outs, the offense got the ball back but was forced to start at its 5-yard line after a 42-yard punt from David Royer.

Still, 1:23 was on the clock and Brees and Co. thought they could drive the length of the field to win the game.

"We think we can pull it off every time in a situation like that," Brees said. "It makes me so mad because we are in every game regardless of the situation. Here we are with no time-outs on our 5-yard line with more than a minute left. Most teams would think that's impossible. We got to the 45-yard line with no time-outs and that's with me not putting every ball right on guys or them not making every catch."

The Heisman Trophy candidate did move his team 50 yards, but it wasn't enough as a last-second Hail Mary pass attempt was incomplete.

"There's never a time where we're out of the game and this is a situation we're all too familiar with," Brees said. "We like having a last chance in the game. We practice the Hail Mary once a week. I throw it up, the tall guys try and catch it or tip it and have shorter guys outside the huddle hoping it falls to them. I know the likelihood of that happening isn't very good, but it was the only shot we had."

While the second half provided some offensive fireworks, including a reverse to Sutherland-which was thrown back to Brees for a touchdown, the opening two quarters was a defensive struggle.

The Boilermakers were able to get little going offensively in the opening quarter, as Penn State did a tremendous job bottling up receivers and getting pressure on Brees.

In the first half, Brees was a disappointing 11-of-28 for 135 yards. And it wasn't as though the rushing game was working, either. Brees and running back Montrell Lowe combined for 52 yards on 17 carries. In all, the Boilermakers averaged just more than four yards per play (in the first half), compared to the 6.1 they normally post. Purdue punted on six of its eight possessions in the first 30 minutes.

"I thought we were a little tight in the first half," Tiller said. "I thought we were much more productive in the second half. What we talked about at halftime was we wanted to go out there, have some fun, play the game a little more reckless, not worry about making mistakes and just play with more enthusiasm."

"Penn State's scheme wasn't messing us up," said Brees, who threw for his 74th career touchdown tying a Big Ten record. "Our execution wasn't great, first-down efficiency was not good and we had too many third-and-longs. When just about every third-down is third-and-long, there's only so much you can do."

The two teams left the field at halftime tied

at 6, thanks to Ryan Primanti and Dorsch each nailing two field goals. Primanti actually nailed a career-best 46-yarder to start the scoring, which also was the first time this season Penn State has scored on its opening drive.

"They played as good defensively in the first half as anyone has played against us," Tiller admitted.

Also playing well for the Nittany Lions were quarterback Rashard Casey and running back Eric McCoo. Casey only completed 11-of-25 passes for 109 yards but managed 48 yards rushing, including a long of 27, while McCoo rushed for 106 yards. Casey was particularly effective at improvising during busted plays.

His athleticism gave Penn State a handful of crucial first downs.

"I thought their quarterback was the difference for them," Tiller said. "Rashard Casey is a heck of a football player. He certainly was a difference maker in this ball game. He made some outstanding plays. Without his play, I think in spite of what we did in the kicking game, we could have won the football game."

After it was said and done, the Boilermakers returned home still scratching their heads as to why they can't beat the Nittany Lions. Purdue finished with more total offense (404-330) than Penn State, and ran 23 more plays, but was still defeated.

The last time Purdue beat Penn State was 1951. Since Tiller has arrived at Purdue, the Boilers are 0-4 against the Lions and have been outscored 126-75.

"In spite of what we did in the kicking game we still could have won this football game," Tiller said. "Obviously those errors in the kicking game jump out at you, but you have to realize Penn State gave great effort. We thought they would be very emotional and we would draw their best game. We got exactly what we expected."

"It was obviously a heck of a football game by an emotional Penn State football team." ■■■

## Game Stats

Purdue vs. Penn State

### Rushing

Purdue	Att	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Lowe	26	77	3.0	18	0
Brees	9	43	4.8	19	0
Sutherland	1	9	9.0	9	0
Brown	3	9	3.0	7	0
Team	2	-20	-10.0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>

Penn State	Att	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
McCoo	16	106	6.6	30	0
Casey	14	48	3.4	27	1
Easy	7	45	6.4	18	0
Johnson	4	13	3.3	6	0
Cerimele	2	8	4.0	6	0
Jefferson	1	1	1.0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>2</b>

### Passing

<b>Purdue</b>							
<b>Player</b>	<b>Att</b>	<b>Comp</b>	<b>Yds</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>TD</b>	<b>Int</b>	
Brees	50	23	281	46.0	1	0	
Sutherland	1	1	5	100.0	1	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>47.1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Penn State</b>							
Casey	25	11	109	44.0	0	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	

Receiving						
Purdue						
Player	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD	
Standeford	7	90	12.9	33	0	
Sutherland	5	94	18.8	39	1	
Morales	5	56	11.2	19	0	
Lougheed	2	22	11.0	12	0	

### Receiving

Purdue						
Player	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD	
Standeford	7	90	12.9	33	0	
Sutherland	5	94	18.8	39	1	
Morales	5	56	11.2	19	0	
Lougheed	2	22	11.0	12	0	
Stratton	2	12	6.0	9	0	
Simpson	1	6	6.0	6	0	
Brees	1	5	5.0	5	1	
Brown	1	1	1.0	1	0	
Total	24	286	11.9	39	2	

<i>Penn State</i>					
Watson	3	38	12.7	20	0
Stewart	2	49	24.5	26	0
Cerimele	2	11	5.5	6	0
Drummond	1	8	8.0	8	0
Easy	1	5	5.0	5	0
Johnson	1	2	2.0	2	0
Casey	1	-4	-4.0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>

### Punt Returns

Purdue					
Player	Att	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Sutherland	1	5	5.0	5	0
Johnson	1	4	4.0	4	0
Penn State					
Watson	1	4	4.0	4	0
Perry	1	0	0.0	0	0

### Kickoff Returns

Purdue						
Player	Att	Yds	Avg	Long	Td	
Sutherland	2	44	22.0	22	0	
Ferrell	2	16	8.0	11	0	
Penn State						
Johnson	2	34	17.0	18	0	
Watson	1	21	21.0	21	0	

### Field Goals

Purdue	Player	Att	Good	Made	Miss
Dorsch	3	2	44, 25	46	
Penn State	Player	Att	Good	Made	Miss
Primanti	3	3	46, 32, 25	—	

### Punting

Purdue	Player	Att	Yds	Avg	Long
Dorsch	3	145	48.3	51	
Kurz	3	80	26.7	33	
Penn State	Player	Att	Yds	Avg	Long
Royer	6	248	41.3	43	
Team	1	4	4.0	4	

### Scoring Summary

**First Quarter**  
 PSU: Primanti 46 field goal, 12:42 left; Drive: 5 plays, 33 yards, 1:43  
 Purdue: Dorsch 44 field goal, 2:50 left; Drive: 12 plays, 49 yards, 3:46  
 PSU: Primanti 32 field goal, 0:27 left; Drive: 7 plays, 61 yards, 2:23

### Second Quarter

Purdue: Dorsch 25 field goal, 0:00 left; Drive: 7 plays, 63 yards, 0:52

### Third Quarter

Purdue: Brees 5 pass from Sutherland (Dorsch kick) 11:05 left; Drive: 6 plays, 42 yards, 1:58  
 PSU: Primanti 25 field goal, 6:23 left; Drive: 10 plays, 74 yards, 4:42  
 PSU: Jefferson 1 run (kick failed) 2:15 left; Drive: 4 plays, 11 yards, 1:01

PSU: Casey 2 run (Primanti kick) 0:00 left; Drive: 3 plays, 6 yards, 0:54

### Fourth Quarter

Purdue: Sutherland 39 pass from Brees (Dorsch kick) 11:30 left; Drive: 7 plays, 80 yards, 3:25

### Team Statistics

Category	Purdue	PSU
First downs	22	17
Rushing	7	11
Passing	14	5
Penalty	1	1
Total offensive plays	92	69
Rushing plays	41	44
Net yards rushing	118	221
Net yards per rush	2.9	5.0
Passing plays	51	25
Completions	24	11
Nets yards passing	286	109
Net yards per completion	11.9	9.9
Total net yards	404	330
Avg. gain per play	4.4	4.8
Kick returns-yds	4-60	3-55
Punt returns-yds	2-9	2-4
Fumbles-lost	0-0	0-0
Interceptions by-yds	1-12	0-0
Third down conversion	9-23	4-14
Time of possession	30:57	29:03
Sacks by-yds lost	5-31	1-5
Penalties-yds	5-42	7-56

### Defensive Leaders

Purdue	Player	Solo	Asst	Total	For	Loss	Yds	FR-Yds	Int	Pass Def	Sack-Yds
	Schweigert	6	3	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Dinkins	6	2	8	2-10	0	0	0	0	0	2-10
	Johnson	5	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mittrione	3	2	5	2-5	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Ayodele	2	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Odum	1	4	5	0	0	0	1-12	1	0	0
	Phillips	4	0	4	4-12	0	0	0	0	1	1-6
	Woodyard	3	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Clopton	2	2	4	1-7	0	0	0	0	3	1-7
	Turner	1	3	4	1-9	0	0	0	0	0	1-9
	Botts	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Terrill	2	0	2	1-6	0	0	0	0	0	1-6
	Doe	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Loerzel	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Moore	1	0	1	1-1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Ennis	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Koutovides	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Reeves	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>12-50</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1-12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5-31</b>
Penn State (top six)	Player	Solo	Asst	Total	For	Loss	Yds	FR-Yds	Int	Pass Def	Sack-Yds
	Yisrael	7	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
	Finney	7	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Kurpeikis	5	3	8	1-1	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Haynes	5	1	6	2-7	0	0	0	0	0	1-5
	Adams	4	1	5	2-4	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Boyd	4	1	5	1-1	0	0	0	0	5	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>10-35</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1-5</b>



VIEW FROM THE PENN STATE LOCKER ROOM

# EMOTIONAL LIFT

## Nittany Lions Rally Around Fallen Teammate

BY BRIAN NEUBERT

Laying in a hospital bed, Adam Taliaferro had a greater impact on Penn State Sept. 30 than he ever could have dreamed of if he'd suited up and taken the field.

Taliaferro, a freshman defensive back, hasn't been able to move his fingers or legs since suffering a cervical spinal injury while making a tackle Sept. 23 at Ohio State. He has undergone successful spinal fusion surgery, and is improving about as well as can be expected, doctors have said.

Taliaferro's plight provided the Nittany Lions with all the emotion they needed in their 22-20 upset of No. 22 Purdue.

"When something like this happens, it breaks down even the toughest people, people who are usually hard as a rock," Nittany Lion fullback Mike Cerimele said. "It humanizes people. There were a lot of emotions shown all week, and that's what brought this team together."

The focus leading up to the game was centered around Taliaferro, for whom Penn State held a prayer rally Sept. 29. Penn State players, who wore Taliaferro's No. 43 on the backs of their helmets, admitted days before the game to having a difficult time focusing on playing Purdue.

Whatever lack of focus there was, however, was offset by raw emotion.

"When you play with heart and emotion, this is what happens," defensive end Justin Kurpeikis said after the game. "And I think Adam had a hand in it somehow. We can't help him back, but maybe we can make his road easier."

The victory concluded a week that Coach Joe Paterno called one of the most difficult of his legendary career. Immediately after the game, television reporters approached Paterno on the field. When Taliaferro's name came up, the veteran coach nearly broke down in tears.

The same happened in the postgame press conference.

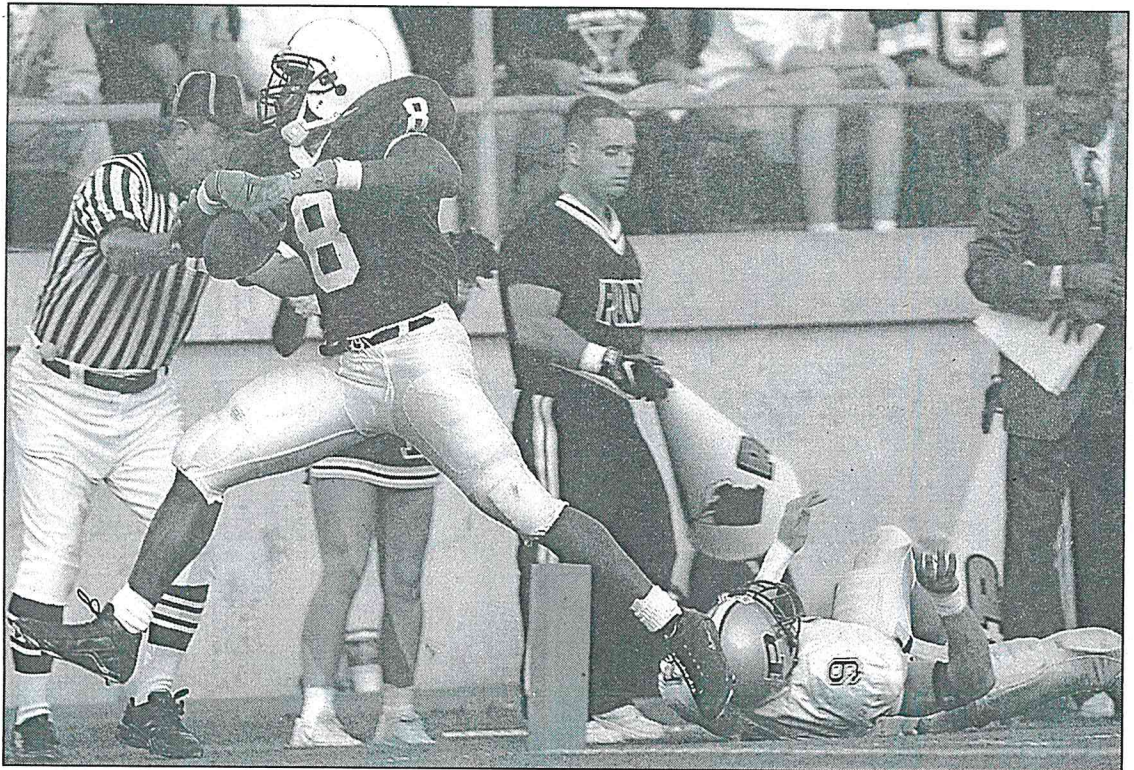
"Except for maybe when my boy (David) got hurt (in a trampoline accident years ago), this may have been the most difficult thing I've gone through," Paterno said, "but as far as my role as a coach, it was difficult for me. I have a difficult time talking about it."

"It's hard not to choke up talking about Adam. Adam, if you're out there watching, we're praying for you kid."

The win came at a time when Penn State was in dire need of something to smile about. In addition to Taliaferro's tragic injury, Paterno's squad entered the game an uncharacteristic 1-4.

"We've needed something positive to happen around here for a very long time," Cerimele said. "Especially after what went on last week. This place was just a wreck the first couple days after Adam got hurt."

As Paterno admitted after the game, though, emotion can only take a team so far. The real key to Penn State's victory was its



**"When you play with heart and emotion, this is what happens. And I think Adam (Taliaferro) had a hand in it somehow. We can't help him back, but maybe we can make his road easier."**

— Defensive end Justin Kurpeikis

ability to exploit Purdue's Achilles' heel this season - punt protection.

Freshman linebacker Derek Wake rushed up the middle and disrupted consecutive Boilermaker punt attempts, setting up Nittany Lion scoring drives of 11 and 7 yards, quickly turning a 13-9 second-half deficit into a 22-13 lead.

Protecting the punter has been a problem for Purdue all season, and Penn State took full advantage.

"We practiced going after the punter hard all week," Wake said. "The rest of the punt return team opened the hole for me. I was working off adrenaline on the second one."

Purdue's special teams blunders bailed out a Penn State offense that has struggled to move the ball all season.

"Special teams were unbelievable for us," Cerimele said. "Any time you can get the ball inside the 20, it's definitely going to help you. Offensively, we still need some work."

When all was said and done, though, Penn State had a win it absolutely had to have to salvage its season.

"Today was a combination of a lot of things: Heart, believing, dedication to the program, as well as execution," running

back Eric McCoo said. "We mustered up a lot of energy and pride to go out there and play the best game we had in us. We couldn't do it any better." ■■

After bottling up tailback Eric McCoo in 1999, the Nittany Lion had a great day with 106 yards rushing on 16 carries against the Boilermakers Sept. 30.

Tom Campbell

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# NOT ENOUGH

## First-Half Struggles Prove Too Much To Overcome

BY MATT BRANN

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — The Purdue offense put up good numbers against the Nittany Lions, but it wasn't enough in a 22-20 Sept. 30 road loss. Following the game, *Gold & Black Illustrated* talked with offensive coordinator Jim Chaney to get his thoughts on Purdue's performance.

**GBI:** On the second-to-last drive before the missed field goal, you seemed to be moving the ball pretty well. What happened on the last few plays that stalled the drive?

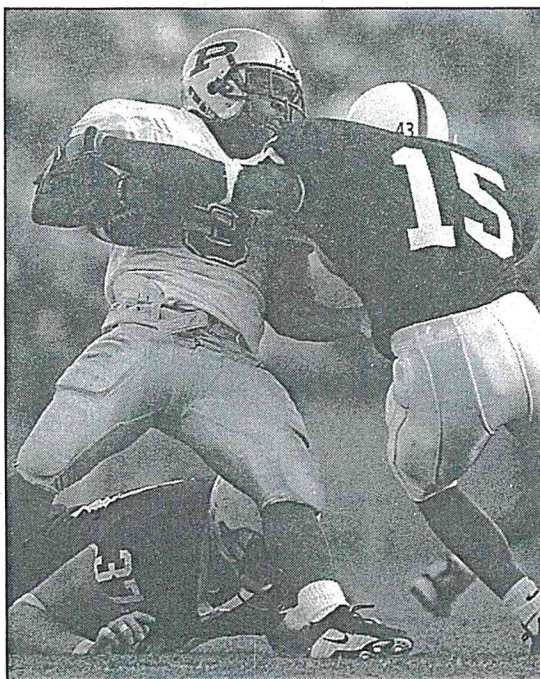
**Chaney:** "Simply put, we didn't get a first down. I don't even remember what I called. It was third-and-long and we thought we were in pretty good position to kick a field goal, so I didn't think we needed to press things to get much closer. It just didn't work out for us."

**GBI:** After the defense gave you the ball with less than a minute left, did you feel confident you could go down and win the game?

**Chaney:** "You're damn right. We thought we would get in position to win the ball game. The crowd noise bothered us a little and we didn't get the ball snapped as soon as we needed to, so we lost about eight seconds during that drive. We didn't run the two-minute drill as well as we would have liked. But we started on the 3-yard line, and the odds are definitely against you."

**GBI:** It would have been about a 62-yarder, but was there any thought of attempting a field goal with four seconds left?

**Chaney:** "No. There was no thought of



Tom Campbell

Montrell Lowe found the going tough for most of the game as he averaged less than three yards per carry against the Lions. The sophomore running back had 77 yards rushing on 26 carries.

that. We were going with a Hail Mary all the way."

**GBI:** Purdue had difficulties on first downs. What was the problem?

**Chaney:** "Penn State was playing good football. My hat is off to their defense, because they played real well. In the first half they were kicking our butt on first down, so we made some adjustments at halftime, came out and got a little more successful on first down in the second half."

"Things just weren't clicking for us, but a lot of that had to do with Penn State because they were playing hard. They were getting pressure on us and were covering our receivers pretty good on third downs. When we came into the locker room at halftime tied 6-6, we were pleased with where we were because Penn State was playing good and we were playing good. It was an old-fashioned smash-mouth Big Ten

football game. It's just too bad it had to end the way it did."

**GBI:** Two of your first-half drives started on Penn State's side of the 50-yard line, but you couldn't move the ball either time. How frustrating was that?

**Chaney:** "It's very frustrating. Ideally, when you get such good field position against a team like this, you've got to capitalize on it. When you don't, you're really frustrated. We needed to be excited about getting the ball on their side of the 50."

"The defense gave us the ball all day in fantastic position. We just weren't clicking then and it came back to haunt us in the end when we couldn't score enough points."

**GBI:** After the game, I noticed Chukky Okobi walking off and he could hardly breathe. Is that pretty indicative of how physical the game was?

**Chaney:** "It was a very hard-fought football game. If you go into either one of these locker rooms, you've got about 50 kids who laid it on the line out there for their respective universities. I'm real proud with our kids' effort."

"It's just too bad we didn't come out on the right end of the scoreboard. We're playing hard and doing some of the things we need to get done to win some games, but we're still having some breakdowns that are costing us victories."

**GBI:** Did you think Penn State's secondary played like Notre Dame, bumping your receivers coming off the line of scrimmage?

**Chaney:** "They did. They made us make some adjustments at halftime. We did a nice job of that and came out after the defense got us the ball and moved it down there and scored a touchdown."

**GBI:** When a team is bumping your receivers, what can you do to help get them open?

**Chaney:** "You've got to beat the press—coverage yourself as a wide receiver. If you can't, we'll put them in motion to try and help them or use some adjacent wide receivers to try and help get them free."

**GBI:** Tight end Tim Stratton was called back into the line to stay and block quite often. How much did that take you out of your passing game?

**Chaney:** "It takes you out of a lot, but then you are in man coverage across the board. So someone else has to get open and make a play."

**GBI:** The touchdown pass from Vinny Sutherland to Drew Brees, did you set that up by running the reverse to Sutherland earlier in the drive?

**Chaney:** "No. On the reverse, we ran into a blitz and it was a nightmare. If Vinny wasn't as fast as he was, he probably would have lost 10 yards. He made a nice play out of nothing."

"We've had that pass play on the shelf for two or three weeks and haven't had much opportunity to use it down there. We thought it would be a good time to do it today, so we pulled it out of our bag of tricks and it worked. We'll use that. I like it."

**GBI:** On Sutherland's touchdown run, talk about the job wide receiver A.T. Simpson did locking up his guy and keeping his block so he could score.

**Chaney:** "A.T. is playing very well for us. I was real pleased with that downfield block, and it helped get Vinny in the end zone. We needed a big play at that time because the momentum had slipped back to them. We can't emphasize enough that this is a team game, and we had some guys make good plays on Vinny's score."

"That got the momentum back in our favor, and we had a chance to win the football game and did not do it. I'm sick to my stomach about that."

**GBI:** After losing close games at Notre Dame and now at Penn State, plus a few last year, do you think fans are going to start questioning whether you can win a big game on the road?

**Chaney:** "Anytime you lose the fans will question anything. That's their prerogative. I have no problems with the fans and how they look at our football program. Our job as football coaches is to put our kids in a position to win games, and to win them. We are losing games right now that we shouldn't be losing, so we need to go back to the drawing board and get things corrected."

**GBI:** Where does this loss put Purdue in terms of the Big Ten race?

**Chaney:** "We are 1-1 in the league, and I think the league champion will probably have a loss. It will be tough to get through the league undefeated. So I don't know how much it harms us. Our main focus has got to be improving as a football team, and not worrying about those things." **MB**

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# GETTING LITTLE HELP

## Boilermaker 'D' Plays Well Enough To Win In Another Tough Loss

BY MATT BRANN

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — Following each game, *Gold & Black Illustrated* talks with defensive coordinator Brock Spack and gets his thoughts on the Boilermakers' performance.

**GBI:** For the fifth game in a row, you have to be pleased with how the defense played?

**Spack:** "Yes. As the game went on, standing on the sidelines I didn't feel Penn State could drive the length of the field and score a touchdown on us. We had a couple of drives when they kicked field goals, but I didn't think they could sustain a drive and score a touchdown.

"Their quarterback is a great athlete, but they didn't score unless they got the ball on a short field. You can't put them in a situation where the field is short, because they are going to score points."

**GBI:** On Penn State's final drive you had to get the ball back quickly and you did.

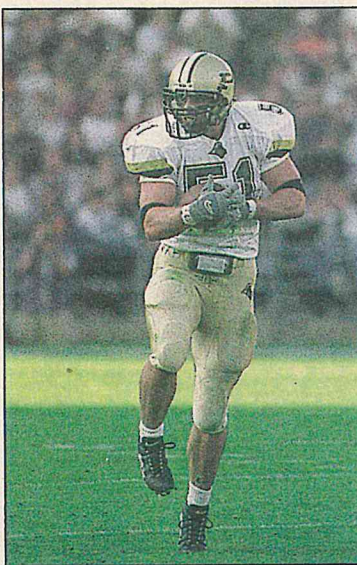
**Spack:** "We work on that, with what we call the two- or four-minute drill, when we've got to get the ball back for our offense. We tried to force them into some bad plays, and we executed that part of the game really well and used our time-outs to give the offense some time to work with. We gave ourselves a chance to win, but came up a little short."

**GBI:** Penn State rushed the ball better than it had in past games this season. Were you surprised the Lions came in to this game averaging only 98.4 yards on the ground?

**Spack:** "I tried to tell people, their rushing game is a lot better than people were giving them credit for. We played a very inspired team, and they played better than they had in past games. Eric McCoo is a great running back and they have great linemen. I knew we would see a real good Penn State team."

**GBI:** How tough is it to contain quarterback Rashard Casey. The defense did a good job against him, but he was able to squirm out of trouble for big plays a couple times.

**Spack:** "All of the big runs were off broken plays. I don't know what else you can do. He broke us down athletically a couple times, like a good basketball player would do to a defender in a one-on-one situation. He breaks you down and takes you to the basket. That's what happened to us a couple of times. We had him trapped, but he's an athlete and you've got to give him credit for turning those plays into positive yardage. It's hard to defend that."



Tom Campbell  
Sophomore linebacker Joe Odom's interception after junior defensive tackle Matt Mitrione's deflection led the Boilermakers to their first touchdown of the game.

**GBI:** The defense sacked Casey five times and was in the backfield a lot. What kind of things did you do to pressure Casey?

**Spack:** "We have our pressure game, and sometimes we used that and sometimes we just beat them up front. I thought our front played very well. We just mixed things up and showed them different things."

"We were worried early because they were doing a lot of naked bootlegs, and they caught us going the wrong way. In the second half we tried to play a little more base defense. It worked out fine. If they had been on a longer field, I think we would have been in good shape."

**GBI:** For the third game in a row your defense has been put in tough situations after punt team mistakes. Your unit was put inside the 10-yard line twice. At what point does that become very frustrating?

**Spack:** "I don't think there's anybody who feels worse than our punt team. Two weeks prior we had trouble on the wing, and this week it looked like they beat us inside. When you lose a little confidence as a player or team, you go out there a little passive. They just need to get their confidence back and correct the mistakes."

**GBI:** Do you not only have to tell yourself, but your players not to point fingers at other aspects of the team in losses like this?

**Spack:** "There's no question. You can't do that; it tears your team apart. That doesn't do anybody any good. Everybody knows what happened in this game, and it does no good to point fingers."

**GBI:** Middle linebacker Joe Odom got his first start of the season and saw extended minutes. How well do you think he played?

**Spack:** "We directed the ball to him, and he made some nice plays. I thought we covered the naked and boots better in the second half, and that is extremely difficult on linebackers. I thought we defended that well, so Joe must have played pretty well in the second half."

**GBI:** Freshman Stuart Schweigert seemed like he was in on a lot of tackles. What are your thoughts on how he played?

**Spack:** "It's really not good for him to have a lot of tackles. But we were playing a lot of eight-man fronts, so that will happen. He is getting some great experience. I don't know what else you could ask for as a freshman than to play at Notre Dame and at Penn State. He's playing in tight ball games, and that's good for him. But it's not just him, we've been real pleased with a lot of our young players. They are doing a great job and we have to keep building on that."

**GBI:** Schweigert has the cast off his hand. How much is that going to help his progress?

**Spack:** "He should be able to get his hands on the ball, make some plays and get some interceptions. I don't know if he had any opportunities like that today, but I think he'll play better without the cast."

**GBI:** Another young player who seemed to play well was defensive end Shaun Phillips.

**Spack:** "He's a real good player. I'm ecstatic with Shaun. I enjoy watching him play and I am glad he's only has

freshman eligibility. People now see why we moved Akin, because Shaun is really that good. He's going to continue to get better, and I don't think he'll let this success go to his head. He loves to play, is a real good athlete and a hard worker. Because of that, good things will happen for him."

**GBI:** Defensive tackle Matt Mitrione played well and had a couple of tipped passes.

**Spack:** "Matt is a very emotional player. I liked his emotion on the sideline and the field. He was a little dinged up with a sore shoulder. In year's past he might not have been able to perform like he did under those circumstances, so it was good to see him play well. That might be a sign he is maturing."

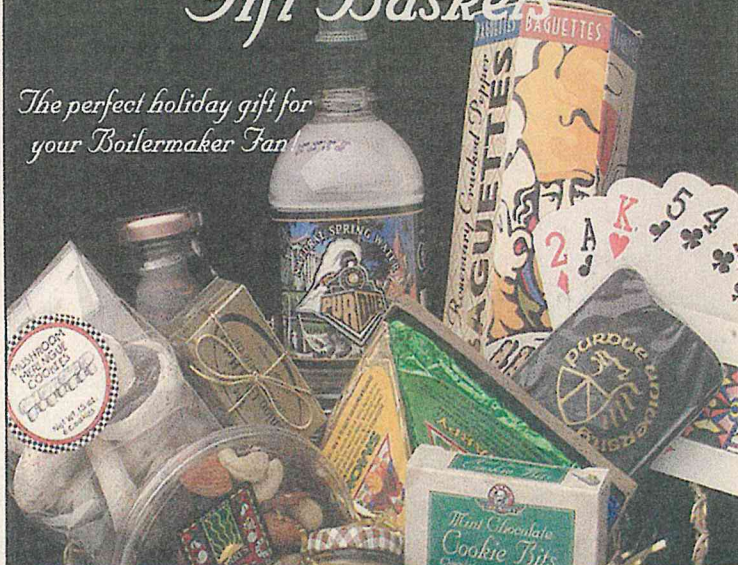
**GBI:** Coming into this game, Purdue's defense was first in the Big Ten. While your unit has been playing well, what areas would you like to see improvement in?

**Spack:** "Today was a good building block for us. In the Notre Dame game I thought we played not to lose. What I liked today is we didn't do that this time. We had a chance to win the game and our players never hung their heads, even after the two punt problems. We played to win."

"We need to continue to gain playing experience and mature in the weight room. We're not the biggest team, but we play tough and physical. But there's nothing we can do about that right now. We have a great strength program at Purdue and they'll need to get stronger in the off-season. Other than that, I'm very encouraged by our young players." ■■

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