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Women's soccer settles for tie at Edinboro

By **Brandon Fox**
Rocket Sports Editor

When your team is 10-1-1 and still hasn't played its best game of the year, you know you're pretty good.

That is the "problem" currently facing Coach Noreen Herlihy as the Rock women's soccer team heads down the home stretch of the 2007 season.

"At 10-1-1, we still feel that we aren't firing on all cylinders," Herlihy said. "We want to become more consistent every game."

The Rock sits atop the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference West standings with a 6-0-1 conference record, good enough for an eight-point

lead over Edinboro, which tied with SRU 1-1 last Saturday.

Against Edinboro, the Rock struck first on an unassisted goal by Danielle Cooper, her fifth of the season, in the 34th minute of action.

The 1-0 lead almost proved to be enough for SRU's seventh conference win in as many games. But a defensive lapse in the 88th minute allowed the Fighting Scots to tie the game on a goal that left the Rock stunned.

"It was a defensive mistake and they took advantage of it," Herlihy said. "(It's) something that you learn from and move on."

In the game, Rock goalie Lauren McManus was credited with 12 saves, as SRU was outshot by an 18-5 margin.

Herlihy's squad is currently in the midst of a six-day idle period, which Herlihy said couldn't have come at a better time.

"It is a good thing, having no game mid-week is very good," Herlihy said. "It gives us a chance to take a deep breath, take an extra day off practice and it also allows us to focus a little more on some things we need to improve on as a team."

Herlihy also added that her team has moved into "consistency" mode for the month of October.

"We have a different mode for every month, and our mode for October is consistency," she said. "We have to start

SEE **HERLIHY'S**, PAGE C-4

Volleyball back on track after first PSAC victory

By **Haley Gaidosh**
Rocket Contributor

After winning three of its last four games, the Rock volleyball team may have found the right piece to the puzzle for success in the remaining part of the season.

The Rock improved its overall record to 11-8 and its Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference mark to 1-4 after last weekend's crossover match-up at Millersville University and PSAC-West tilt with Indiana University of Pennsylvania on Tuesday.

Slippery Rock went 2-1 at Millersville last weekend, beating Millersville and Cheyney University by 3-0 scores while falling to Kutztown, 3-2.

A switch in the lineup for the Rock could prove to be a turning point for this year's squad. Senior Louise Schultz is now setting back row and playing in the middle for three rotations each, otherwise known as a 6-2 lineup. Freshman Anna Bixler sets when Shultz is hitting out of the middle.

Head Coach Laurie Lokash said that she feels Bixler is more confident setting for three rotations rather than all the way around. Lokash also acknowledged that Schultz and Urbanik are two of the better middles in the PSAC, so adding them each into the middle for a few rotations is beneficial.

Junior outside hitter Jen Blasko said the switch

has helped.

"Louise is really a double threat out there and is good for us when she is setting and hitting," Blasko said.

She also said that the Rock volleyball team has been trying different lineups to try to find success.

Blasko added 36 kills and 26 digs last weekend, while freshman Alexa Erossy chipped in with 41 kills, 22 digs and six service aces.

After the loss to Kutztown, the Rock was hungry for a win.

"The win against Millersville really helped to bring back confidence in our team, and I think we are on the right track," Blasko said. "It felt good that we are starting to click, and I hope this is the spark that lights our fire."

Urbanik said that last weekend's games put the team on the right track heading into its match-up against IUP.

"The win against Millersville made us realize we can finish and we can win," Urbanik said.

While the game against Kutztown was one that Urbanik said the team should have won, the team kept a positive attitude to beat Millersville in the final game of the weekend.

"We had six different people and no one playing together as a team, which makes it tough to win," Lokash said. "We need to be able to work together, which we didn't do against Kutztown. But after the lineup change, things seemed to be working well. They were a lot looser and they seemed to be enjoying themselves against Millersville."

The consistency and chemistry of the team proved to be another key factor in the win against PSAC rival IUP as well.

Tuesday's win against IUP was the Rock's first in PSAC-West play.

"A large part was realizing we could win and play together," Lokash said.

She also said that the team served more consistently, played better defense, and was generally more aggressive.

"This is the best game we played as a team with the chemistry, defense, serving and blocking," Urbanik said. "We played right off the bat with a ton of energy, which is different for us because we usually start off slow."

The Rock will continue working with this lineup to try to find some consistency for the rest of the season, Schultz said.

"I really feel this may be the turning point for us because we have a lot more trust in this lineup, and we are playing with heart and confidence and playing to win," Schultz said.

The Rock has been searching for answers and has been patient in doing so, which Lokash feels is imperative for her team to win.

"We were just not meshing and trying too hard to make things work," Lokash said. "I give them a lot of credit, and I think we have found a way."

The Rock's next competition will be at the Wheeling Jesuit tournament today and tomorrow.



ARCHIVED PHOTO

Freshman Alexa Erossy sends a pass to the net during the Rock's 3-0 loss to California last week. Erossy and her teammates have won three of their last four matches, including their first PSAC win against IUP.

HEART BREAK

IUP hands Rock first loss in 2007



NATE DAYMUT/THE ROCKET

Junior defensive back Sam Morant stares in disbelief after watching rival IUP kick a game-winning field goal in the final seconds last Saturday. Morant, who had five tackles in the game, also forced a fumble and intercepted a pass. For coverage of the game and a look at this week's game at East Stroudsburg, see page C-3.

Men's soccer hits wall, loses second straight

By **Erin Fisher**
Rocket Contributor

After going on an eight-game unbeaten streak, the Slippery Rock men's soccer team has quickly been forced to come back to reality.

The team suffered a tough loss in overtime last week to California University of Pennsylvania, but they headed into an even tougher game Sunday afternoon against East Stroudsburg University.

ESU, which currently sits atop the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference standings, entered the game with seven straight wins and having suffered just one loss all season.

The match-up with SRU became the Warriors' eighth win, bringing their PSAC record to 9-1-0 and their overall record to 11-1-0.

The 3-1 loss dropped the Rock to 5-3-2 in the conference and 6-4-2 overall, but it didn't go down without a fight.

"We've played a couple tough games lately. We just needed to stay focused and prepared to battle," Rock Head Coach Matt Thompson said. "But this was the best game we've



ARCHIVED PHOTO

Jeremy Deighton, who leads the team with five assists, battles for a header in a game versus Shippensburg earlier this year. Deighton and the Rock have dropped two straight in PSAC play, falling to fourth in the conference standings.

played so far, a fantastic performance."

Senior midfielder Nick Christy agreed.

"We definitely hung with them. It was one of our best games of the year," he said.

After 30 minutes of play, Christy stepped up and put the Rock on the scoreboard.

"(Jeremy) Deighton

SEE **ROCK**, PAGE C-4