# PENN STATE ICE HOCKEY

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## Surging Icers prepare for ASU Desert Classic and a rematch of last year's title bout with Illinois in the upcoming New Year as Coach Battista goes for win # 500

University Park, Pa – December 24, 2005

At the commencement of the 2005-06 campaign, the Penn State Nittany Lion Icers began the season ranked second in the American College Hockey Association (ACHA) and looked true to form ripping off three convincing wins to open the season. A remarkable road victory at NCAA Division I Robert Morris University (Pa.), 3-2, was sandwiched between a couple of convincing wins against Mercyhurst, 8-0, and Washington and Jefferson, 5-1.

But following the impeccable start to the season, Penn State (14-4-2) came down with a case of the Friday night woes, going 0-3-2 from Oct. 14 – Nov. 11 on those dreaded winless nights. Overall, during that time frame, the Icers went 3-4-2, including back to back losses for the first time in 63 games thanks to #3 Rhode Island and 2nd ranked rival-Ohio, and dropped them to fourth overall in the ACHA rankings. Following their demotion in the rankings, the Icers have ripped off eight-straight victories (including a redeeming 5-4 win over Ohio in the Saturday match-up). Over the Thanksgiving break at the East-West Showcase, the Icers stunned host University of Michigan-Dearborn in a 9-0 win that Coach Joe Battista called "our most complete victory of the season". The Icers dominated the tournament with an 8-3 win over Eastern Michigan and a 6-2 win over Western Michigan in addition to the 9-0 win over #7 Michigan-Dearborn.

The Icers are on a full head of steam as they prepare to travel to the Arizona State Desert Classic January 5-8 where they take on #5 Iowa State, #11 Arizona and #10 Arizona State. The Icers return home January 13 and 14 to host the reigning national champions, Illinois, who beat the Icers in last year's title game 4-3. It was Penn State's eighth-straight championship game appearance.

The Icers' leading scorer is junior-forward Mike McMullen, who has racked up 18 goals and 19 assists (37 points) during the fall semester. The highlight of McMullen's season occurred when he recorded his first career hat trick against the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Other notables for the Icers this season have been freshman scoring sensation Luke DeLorenzo, who is second on the team in scoring with 17 goals and 17 assists (34 points) in 16 games played and one of the talented 14 new, young faces for Penn State; and the goalkeeping-duo Chris Matteo and Paul Mammola, who both held the #6 Lindenwood Lions scoreless on Nov. 18 and 19 at the Greenberg Ice Pavilion. Mammola played the Friday night game rejecting all 32 shots he faced and Matteo denied all 25 shots fired his way. It was the first time since January 2001 that Penn State posted back to back shutouts.

The next Icers victory will be a milestone for head coach Joe Battista, who is in his 19th year at Penn State and is one win shy of 500 during his tenure in Happy Valley.