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Every Monday, we will be running a weekly series titled "State of the Big Ten," which will be made available to all members of HawkeyeDrive.com. This series of columns will focus on one major headline regarding the conference and go in-depth on the subject at hand.

By Brendan Stiles

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For the second time in three years, Penn State found itself hiring a new football coach. It made an enormous splash over the weekend hiring James Franklin away from Vanderbilt, where he had been the coach for four seasons.

During his time in Nashville, Franklin was taking the Commodores to heights unforeseen and that's what will be expected of him coaching what he called his "dream job" during his introductory press conference. His passion for coaching, as well as his passion for selling the university, was on clear display upon first arriving in State College and has remained there.

The good news for Franklin is his predecessor, Bill O'Brien, left the cupboard somewhat full before leaving Penn State to become head coach of the NFL's Houston Texans. Franklin inherits a sophomore-to-be quarterback in Christian Hackenberg that will be considered by many to be the Big Ten's top signal-caller in 2014. The Nittany Lions also received a boost late last year when the NCAA reduced some of the sanctions it initially levied against Penn State back in July 2012.

Two things will be intriguing to watch unfold over the next few years. One is how Franklin handles the pressure of

coaching at Penn State versus coaching at Vanderbilt. Because even though the Commodores are a SEC team, they were never really known for their football before Franklin got there, at least historically speaking. In contrast, Penn State has always been considered one of college football's blue-bloods, and that was even before it joined the Big Ten back in 1993.

The other thing that will be interesting to watch is Penn State's recruiting. With the scholarship reductions continuing to evaporate, one would think it's only a matter of time before the Nittany Lions start bringing in highly-touted classes again year in and year out. Franklin talked about being committed to recruiting the state of Pennsylvania, as well as the entire Eastern seaboard.

If he finds success with the latter, then Penn State's going to be in excellent hands. That's because the Eastern seaboard consists of states like Maryland and New Jersey, which feature a pair of FBS programs that will become official members of the Big Ten later this year. If Franklin finds success recruiting the areas that Maryland, Rutgers and other Eastern schools need to thrive on in order to succeed, the Nittany Lions suddenly become an annual player in the Big Ten's East Division.

On the surface, it seems as though Penn State hit a home run in hiring Franklin. The only concern might have to do with patience and how much of it Nittany Lion fans will have should Penn State show signs of struggle early in Franklin's tenure, much like it did in the beginning stages of O'Brien's two brief seasons.

The key for Penn State in the short term is continuing to tread water like it has the past two seasons. A few more 7-8 win campaigns between now and when all the sanctions are completely gone should buy Franklin enough time with the fans to gain their trust and provide evidence that he was the guy for the job. Once 2016 comes around, that's probably when the

pressure first begins to mount. Until then, Franklin's in a good position and so might be Penn State.