

PSU FOOTBALL

Penn State's finest import

SHAWN ANNARELLI
sports editor

Jack Crawford came to the United States to play basketball. And then he found football.

Crawford moved to New Jersey from London when he was a 16-year-old basketball prodigy, but he got hooked onto football after watching the 2006 BCS Championship game between USC and Texas.

Crawford decided he liked the USC Trojans despite their loss. He figured he would give football a shot the next fall as a junior at St. Augustine Prep.

A good call.

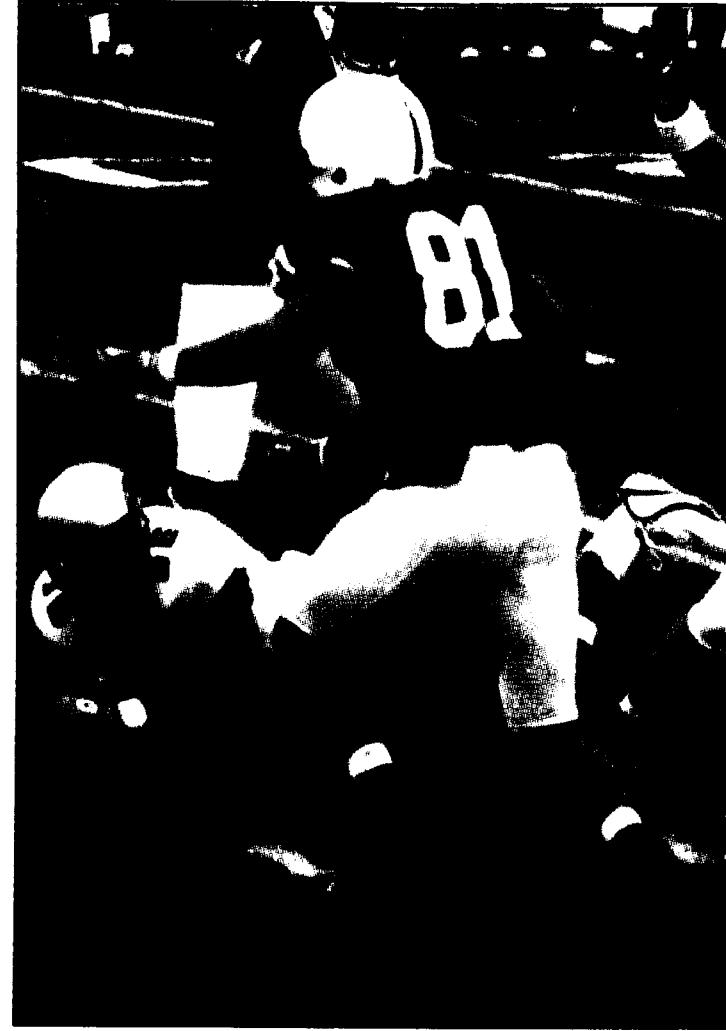
Crawford's physical attributes were nearly unmatched as often single-handedly controlled games. A young man who had never really given football a shot before his last two years of high school caught attention around the country. Coming out of high school he was rated the fifteenth best defensive end in the nation by scout.com.

Crawford chose Penn State, because he was told it would be an honor to play for legendary coach Joe Paterno.

His freshman year at he joined with running back Brandon Beachum and linebacker Michael Mauti as the only true freshman to play in every game. He got to play 127 snaps, which is pretty impressive considering he was behind Maurice Evans, Aaron Maybin, Josh Gaines and Jerome Hayes on the depth chart.

He has impressed coaches and teammates alike with his tremendous work ethic.

After Penn State's Blue and White game last spring, defensive coordinator Tom Bradley happened to spot Crawford watching game film late at night. Most other players were either hanging out with friends



Jon Klein / The Behrend Beacon
Jack Crawford hails from London, England. He came to the United States to play basketball, but found a knack for sacking quarterbacks.

or relaxing with family.

Crawford got better physically, too.

After adding 12 pounds of muscle in the offseason and being listed at 6'5" and 262 pounds, Crawford has stepped up as the Nittany Lions' greatest threat to opposing quarterbacks.

In fact, with a team-leading 12 tackles for losses and five and a half sacks, Crawford is practically setting up camp in the opponents' backfield week in and week out.

He is only getting better. This

past weekend against Michigan he had a sack, a forced fumble and three tackles for losses. His sack and three tackles pushed the defense back 14 yards.

Crawford also played an integral role in foreshadowing a safety against Michigan. On plays prior to the errant snap through the back of the end zone he provoked holding and false start penalties against left tackle Mark Ortmann.

And the Brit is only a sophomore. He has got the rest of this season and all of next to continue raising bloody hell.

MLB

MLB season is too long

The NFL is heading into their eighth week of the season, most NHL teams have played over 10 games, the NBA season is underway and MLB is still in their season.

Let's face it: things will never change. But the professional baseball season seems to drag on for far too long.

The MLB season takes place in 182 days spanning April to October. In that time frame, teams play 162 games. That's just the regular season.

In 182 days, teams have a total of 20 days off. That's about one day off per week, for 24 weeks.

Do you know what those off days are used for? Forget about practicing; the teams need that day off to travel to the next city they have to play in or they'd probably play every day of the week.

Now I haven't even included spring training (preseason) and the playoffs yet.

Spring training begins in the last week of February, and the World Series goes into the first week of November.

So both teams that play in the World Series play a total of seven and a half months, including all three parts of the season.

Now most of the major sports leagues in America last as long as baseball season does, however there aren't as many games played in those time frames.

The NHL and NBA seasons last about the same amount of time as MLB's, but each league only plays an 82-game regular season. That's about three games per week.

The NFL season lasts about the same amount of time as MLB's, but they only play a 16-game regular season, due to the physicality of the sport.

I just don't understand why MLB has to play so many

games in a single season. What does it accomplish?

It's not necessarily that their season is too long, considering that other major sports have a season of the same length, it's how many games that are played within that season.

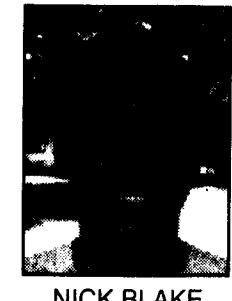
Baseball season seems to drag on forever, and I think it's because they play so many games in their season.

It may be due to the fact that baseball isn't as physically demanding as other sports. I'm

not saying that baseball players aren't athletes, but compared to hockey, football and basketball, baseball doesn't take as much out of you.

That fact is that the baseball season has a dragging effect that causes me to lose interest as the season wears on, and I think that may be the case for other fans as well. I think that a shortened

season, or less games, would make for a more interesting sport.



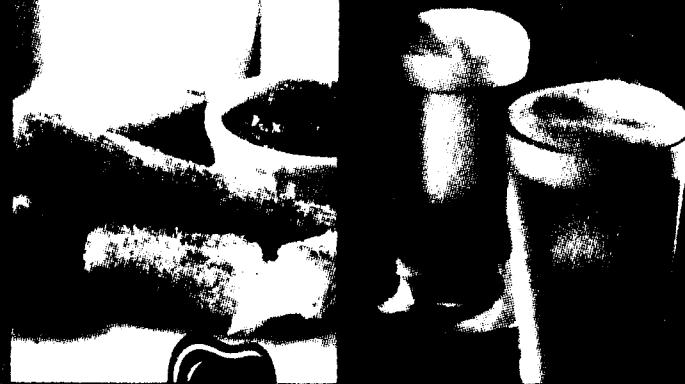
NICK BLAKE
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MLB's teams play 162 games in 182 days during the regular season. Then one team may play up to 19 playoff games in one month.

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