

YOU HAD ME AT HELLO SPORTS

Sports betting growing fast

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Type in sports betting on Google and it is easy to find a wealth of websites purely dedicated to placing bets on a wide variety of sporting events and on those who provide the information needed to make those bets. While sports betting is illegal in all but four states (Nevada, Oregon, Delaware, and Montana) in the U.S., it is vastly done by many age groups. With the amount of places that teens and adults alike can go to place bets on different sporting events, such as on the internet and through friends and co-workers, it is easy to see why gambling has become a normal activity for people of all ages.

Today, it is not just the informed adult who participates in sports betting; a vast number of teens also participate in this activity. A 1998 study by the Harvard Medical School and Boston's Children's hospital showed that by senior year of high school, more than 75% percent of all teens have gambled at least once. By 2005, that percentage would have surely increased. With relatively easy topics for teens to understand, such as fantasy football teams, where an individual has the ability to pick players from any sports team to create their own unique superior team, one can see how addictive sports betting can be even to teens.

Freshman Amy DiPasquale said, "I think that fantasy sports teams are great. Not only do the team drafts get you more in-tuned with the individual players, but participating in the actual fantasy sports experience provokes you to get more involved with all the teams instead of just the ones you originally favored."

In many workplaces, employees have the ability to take part in office pools with fellow employees on different sporting events, making gambling more accessible. One of the most prevalently betted on sporting events in office environments is the NCAA tournament (nicknamed "March

Madness") basketball games. In 2004, only \$1.6 billion was placed on bets on the NCAA tournament online, whereas \$3.5 billion was gambled in millions of office pools across the country. With many employees engrossed in their basketball brackets, an estimated \$1.5 billion is lost in productivity in the American workplace during the two-week tournament, claims MSNBC.

Even though March Madness is the largest market for office betting pools, it only ranks second in terms of dollars wagered on a particular sport/sporting event. Coming in at number one is the betting that is done on the National Football League.

"The NFL is no longer just a Sunday game. They now have Monday Night Football, Thursday night football, wild card weekends — it just goes on and on. They've expanded the franchises and therefore expanded the game," said Dan Gilroy, screenwriter and executive producer of the new film *Two For The Money*.

In reference to watching the network games Gilroy also said, "You realize that they kind of cater to gamblers. They talk about point spreads, favorites, who they're picking and make it interesting."

Gilroy is definitely an informed source as he spent a long time researching for his movie, *Two For The Money*, which opened in theatres on Friday, October 7, and stars Matthew McConaughey and Al Pacino. The film, which was based on a true story, centers around Brandon Link and how he became wrapped up in the \$200 billion a year world of sports betting. The film was typically received well by critics, but many made mention to fact that while the treatment of addiction is touched upon, viewers are not given any real insight into the struggle these individuals face on a daily basis.

If any individual needs to seek help for a gambling addiction, websites such as www.gamblersanonymous.org and <http://www.gam-anon.org> can be of assistance.

By JIM PAUL
Associated Press Writer

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — Michael Robinson has played wide receiver and running back, but there is no doubt he's as comfortable as could be as Penn State's quarterback.

Robinson threw four touchdown passes and ran for two more scores — all in the first half — leading the 12th-ranked Nittany Lions to a 63-10 rout of Illinois Saturday night. The win keeps the Penn State in a tie with Wisconsin for the Big Ten lead.

"This is as consistent as he's been all year," said coach Joe Paterno, who won his 350th game. "He read things well, hit a couple of open guys and got them the ball in a hurry."

Robinson had scoring throws of 35 yards to Ethan Kilmer, 31 yards and 19 yards to Deon Butler, and 3 yards to Patrick Hall during a first quarter in which the Nittany Lions (7-1, 4-1) averaged more than 11 yards per play on the way to a 28-3 lead. He had

touchdown runs of 4 and 31 yards in the second quarter before he was replaced by Anthony Morelli with 1:24 left in the half.

Linebacker Dan Connor ran a fumble back 18 yards for another score and Rodney Kinlaw scored on a 1-yard run 26 seconds before halftime. Nolan McCready ran an interception back 76 yards for Penn State's only second-half score.

"You never expect it to be this easy," Robinson said after completing 11 of 18 passes for 194 yards and leading the team in rushing with 69 yards on seven carries.

The victory was so decisive that Robinson and most of his fellow starters did not play after the Nittany Lions built a 56-3 halftime lead to spoil Illinois' homecoming. The win moved Paterno's record to 350-117-3 in 40 seasons, second on the all-time Division I-A coaching victory list behind Florida State's Bobby Bowden.

"Did I know it was No. 350? No," Paterno said. "It's nice to hear, though."

Penn State set a new school

record for scoring in a half, breaking the old mark of 55 set on Oct. 11, 1947, in the first half of a 70-0 victory over Fordham.

"You kind of feel bad," said Robinson, a senior who played running back and receiver, as well as quarterback, during his first three seasons. "You don't want to do that to teams, but nobody felt bad when we were losing like that the past couple of years."

The defeat was the worst for Illinois (2-5, 0-4) since a 69-13 loss to Michigan on Nov. 1, 1986, and marked the second consecutive home game that the Illini have given up more than 60 points, after a 61-14 loss to Michigan State on Sept. 24.

"There's really not a whole lot you can say," said Illini coach Ron Zook after watching his team's losing streak reach five games. "We're going to keep pushing and squeezing and turning. I know there were some good things out there tonight. We've got to keep going."

The Nittany Lions rolled up 438 yards, while Illinois gained 244, its lowest offensive output of the

season.

"I never really felt comfortable back there," said Illini quarterback Tim Brasic, who was 8-of-16 for 49 yards. "When you're uneasy back there, you make mistakes."

Illinois took the opening kickoff and marched from its own 20 to the Penn State 23. But a holding penalty stopped the drive and the Illini had to settle for Jason Reda's field goal and a 3-0 lead.

They would gain only 42 more yards and get only one more first down for the rest of the half. They committed nine penalties for 78 yards before halftime.

Just 1:16 after Reda's field goal, Robinson found Kilmer over the middle and he outran two Illini defenders to the end zone with 8:58 left in the quarter. The Nittany Lions scored on seven of eight first-half possessions.

Chris Pazan relieved Brasic in the third quarter and threw the interception that McCready returned for a touchdown. But he also threw a 3-yard TD pass to Rashard Mendenhall to complete a 12-play, 91-yard drive with 2:19 left in the game.

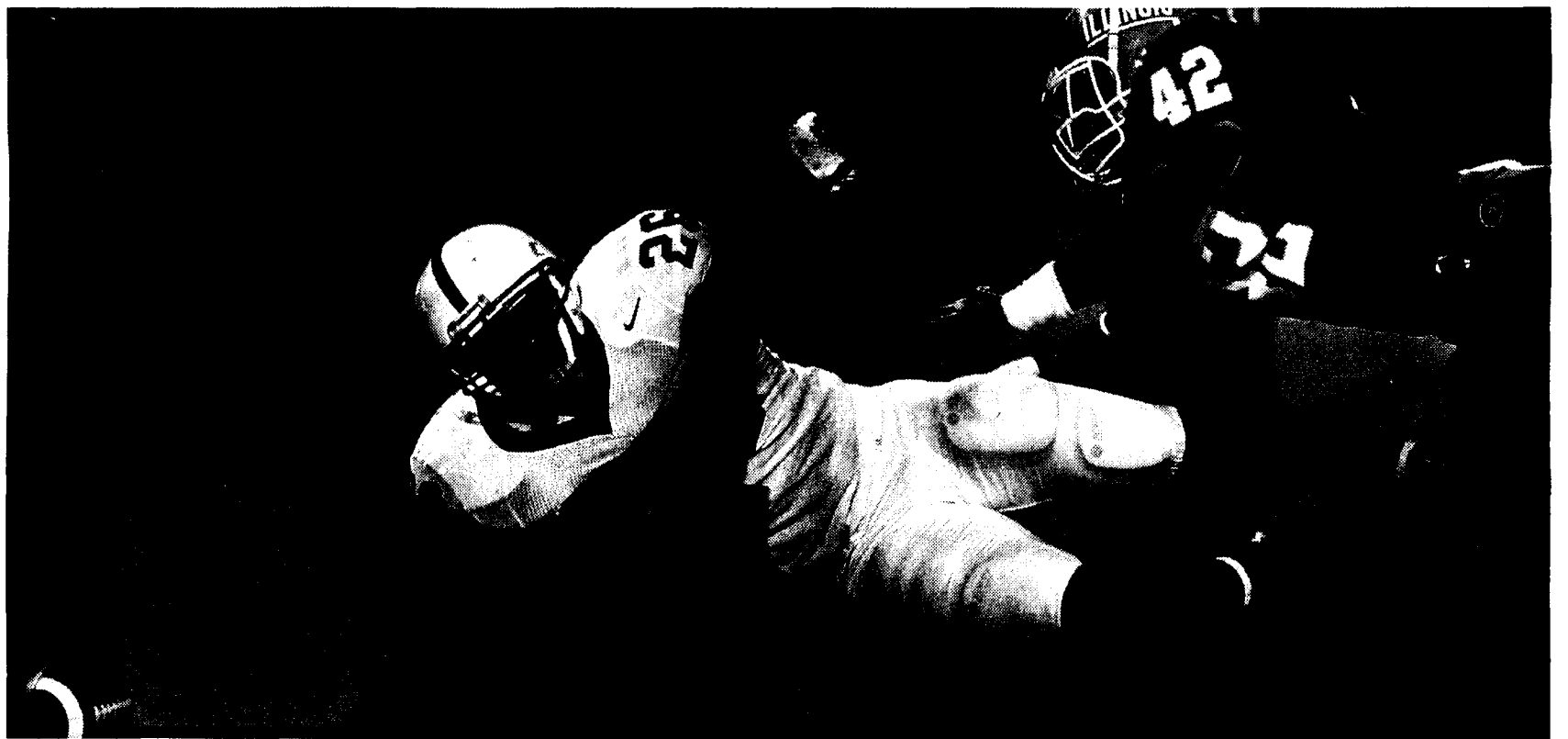


Photo courtesy of AP Sports

Penn State's Tony Hunt (26) is forced out of bounds by Illinois' Kevin Mitchell (42) while trying to dive across the goal line at the University of Illinois in Champaign, Ill.

Bruins triumph over Penguins

By HOWARD ULMAN
AP Sports Writer

BOSTON - Joe Thornton knows power plays will increase this season and the Boston Bruins must do a solid job on them. They were very productive Saturday night.

The Bruins scored on four power plays in a 10-minute span of the second period and extended the Pittsburgh Penguins' longest winless streak at the start of a season with a 6-3 victory.

With tighter enforcement against holding and interfering, the Penguins were called for 14 penalties and the Bruins 10.

"I think you're going to see that all year," Thornton said after setting an aggressive tone for Boston and scoring his first two goals of the season with two assists. "You definitely have to capitalize when you get those opportunities."

Dave Scatchard scored his first two goals as a Bruin, and Sergei

Samsonov and Glen Murray had one each to help Boston snap a three-game losing streak. Three goals came on power plays sparked by constant movement that forced the Penguins to grab players.

"We're the ones that are going to have to find a way to play a disciplined game," Pittsburgh coach Ed Olczyk said.

Former Bruins defenseman Sergei Gonchar tied the game 1-1 at 18:36 of the first period, but the Penguins fell to 0-4-4 after Boston had three two-man advantage opportunities in the second. Before this year, Pittsburgh's longest season-opening winless streak was six games when it went 0-3-3 in 1969-70.

"I just want to win," said Penguins rookie Sidney Crosby, who had two assists and has points in seven of his eight games. "Team points is what matters."

The NHL record for most power-play goals in one period is six

set by Washington in a 10-2 win over Toronto on March 13, 1987, and the Bruins' record is five in an 8-0 win at Minnesota on Jan. 4, 1975, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

"Your special teams better be good because that could be the difference between a lot of wins and a lot of losses," said Scatchard, who signed as a free agent after spending four full seasons and part of a fifth with the New York Islanders.

Boston had just eight power-play goals in its other eight games this season but outshot Pittsburgh 47-21.

Crosby, the first pick in this year's draft, assisted on goals by Ryan Malone and Brooks Orpik in the third period after Boston had taken a 5-1 lead. He also missed an excellent chance 1:33 into the third period when he hit the left post on a breakaway.

Thornton, playing his second game after missing three with a

back strain, began the night with six assists and was a physical presence near the net.

"He was our leader just by his actions," Bruins coach Mike Sullivan said. "He's trying to make a concerted effort to be a scoring threat himself."

Scatchard gave Boston a 1-0 lead at 6:50 of the first period before Gonchar tied it on a power play.

Then Scatchard gave the Bruins the lead for good with a power-play goal 4:46 into the second. Murray passed from the left circle across to Thornton who fed Scatchard in the slot for a five-foot forehead past goaltender Jocelyn Thibault.

"It's frustrating," Thibault said. "When you're playing 5-on-3, it's tough."

Samsonov got his fourth goal of the season while the Bruins had a two-man advantage before Thornton scored with a one-man advantage and Murray got his fifth



Photo courtesy of google.com

Sidney Crosby was the first pick in this year's draft.

goal while Boston had two extra skaters. The four goals came in a stretch of 9:08 and made it 5-1.

After the goals by Malone and Orpik, Thornton scored with 5:20 left on an pass from Travis Green.

Notes: @ The first of Crosby's two NHL goals came Oct. 8 against goaltender Hannu Toivonen in a 7-6 Boston win.

... Pittsburgh has led in only one of its eight games, in the Oct. 8 contest against the Bruins.

... Before the game Boston's Brian Leetch received the NHL Milestone Award after becoming the seventh NHL defenseman to score 1,000 points. He reached it last Tuesday with a goal and an assist in a 4-3 loss at Montreal.