

Between The Lions

WITH TED RUBIN

It looked like the Lion opener against Washington State might be a repetition of last year's rainy night game against Syracuse, when Saturday afternoon saw the morning's drizzle turn into a steady downpour. But, fortunately, the rain slackened in the late afternoon, and by the time 8:30 rolled around, a crisp, clear night was present, and the slippery green grass remained the only symbol of J. Pluvius' work.

Penn State's nifty white uniforms made a splendid appearance under the lights, with the visitors from the Northwest garbed in crimson socks and jerseys, grey pants, and red and white helmets.

Coach Sorboe of the Cougars sent three of his biggest players (tri-captains) out to mid-field for the pre-game toss-up; but the size of 9'3", 220-pound Nittany co-captain Johnny Nolan prevented any derogatory actions by the three when referee Harry Dayhoff's coin flip agreed with Nolan's and companion Potsklan's request. With fleet Larry Joe in the starting line-up, Penn State received.

Against the Washington State T-formation, the Hig used a 5-3-2-1 defense, with the Drazenovich boys and "Shag" Wolosky backing up the line, but good! Line coach Joe Bedank has whipped into shape another hard-charging forward wall, and our opponents this year will have to take to the airplanes to make any headway.

The Lion first and second string lines were so suped-up, that Washington State backs gained a meager three yards the entire first half. The end play was marvelous throughout on both offense and defense; Negley Norton was a tower of strength in his first post-war appearance at tackle.

Blue and White guards, on the offensive, were constantly pulling out and running interference for the backs. Joe Drazenovich caused a little confusion when he once pulled out a little early and gave State a five-man backfield. This unusual formation brought frowns to the opposition, but a five-yard penalty to us.

Another oddity involved guard Steve Suhey. Late in the second quarter, Steve pulled out to give Larry Joe a blocker on a play around left end. As he prepared to launch one of his devastating blocks at an incoming tackler, Steve was suddenly surprised when his man flew through the air and tackled him! Granting that Suhey's hands are more like hams, it still is hard to mistake one for a pigskin.

It looks like this will be a great year for tail-back Larry Joe. Perhaps the fastest man on the squad, Larry electrified the crowd four or five times when he broke into the secondary. His fumbling, an old nemesis, appears to be malignant, for he bobbed the ball a couple of times. His second quarter fumble brought Coach Bob Higgins off the bench to yell, "Don't give him a direct pass." So, instead of receiving the ball direct from the center, Larry received the next one on a pass-off from Joe Colone and roared around end for fifteen yards.

The Hig was quite active in jumping off the bench all evening. Early in the game, Hig popped up, ran over to the sidelines and shouted to the field judge that he should be a lot more careful in watching the close play, for the Cougars' right half, Don Paul, was not too gentle in ramming Wally Triplet to the ground.

Later in the fray, when State was penalized fifteen yards, the field judge held up his hands asserting for the reason, defensive holding. The Hig again stomped over to the sidelines and barked at the official that defensive holding was only a five-yard penalty, whereupon the signal was changed to an illegal use of hands.

One of the evening's prettiest plays was the Lions' altered edition of the famed Statue of Liberty play. Elwood Petchel, whose work was outstanding every minute he performed, dropped back as if to get off a quick kick. Instead he searched for pass receivers and at the precise moment that two Cougar linemen thudded against Petch, Larry Cooney swept around from the wing, snatched the ball, and scampered down the right side of the field for a neat 32-yard gain.

Six tailbacks—Petchel, Larry Joe, Bill Luther, Bobby Williams, Walt Cominsky and Clarence Hummel (the latter two up from California State Teachers) shared the number 4 back position.

Fullback Joe Colone exhibited his punting skill to the onlookers and started the Higginsmen on the road to their first touchdown with a beautiful quick kick which spanned 63 yards from the line of scrimmage. The stage for number two "TD" also was created by Colone when he boomed a long punt out on the enemy's four-yard line. From here, Tamburo, Potsklan and two other linemen broke through to block a return punt; Potsklan received credit for the deed, and burly Bill Kyle recovered for the six-pointer.

The fullback post is another reason for Bob Higgins' smiles these days. Colone, of course, is top man, and under him are three really good ball carriers. Nineteen year old newcomer Francis Rogel has shown the determination and ability to land for himself the first substitute's berth. Rogel fears no man; churns like a locomotive, and, according to end Donnie Hoggard, is the hardest State back to put down. Behind Rogel are Bob Weitzel and Clarence Gorinski, both of whom are really capable boys.

Mild-mannered Cougar coach Phil Sorboe's only comment as he crossed the playing field to congratulate the Hig was, "They've got a swell ball club, and I sure wish them a lot of luck."

Ex-Lawtherman



Egli Named to Court Position

Johnny Egli, former Penn State court star, is the newly-elected basketball coach at the DuBois Undergraduate Center. He will assume his new duties this semester.

Egli, a protege of John Lawther, played high school football and basketball at South Williamsport, where he captained the court team in his senior year. He also served as co-captain of the 1942-43 Penn State court squad.

A veteran of World War II, Egli taught physical education and health courses at Derry Township High School last year and also coached the basketball team. He was an assistant in football and baseball. This summer, he finished his formal education at Penn State and qualified for his bachelor of science degree in physical education.

A 6-feet-3 guard who excelled at following up shots, Egli is remembered by Coach Lawther as a rugged defensive player whose season point totals always were above the 100-mark. He was a member of the 1941-42 squad that defeated Illinois and lost to Dartmouth in the National tournament at New Orleans.

At DuBois, Egli will teach physical education in addition to his coaching duties.

SPORTORIAL

The widening wake of favorable national football publicity following the Penn State thumping of Washington State, 27-6, lends impetus to the encouragement of local "groundhogs" who predicted at early practices that the Lions were loaded this season.

Is it really the year? Will a mighty Penn State football machine roar through an unbeaten season and wallop into a major bowl game, as sportswriters already are booming? Or will the Lion fall before the Pitt Panther out in Smogland as happened in 1941, when the Hig had a Rose Bowl bid in his pocket while the Panther proceeded to tear his hopes to shreds.

Navy, Syracuse, and West Virginia also present tall, tough hurdles for the prowling Lion. The Nittany eleven has strength in depth. There's a top-notch kicker in Colone, an accurate jump-passer in Petchel, stalwart tackles and game-wise ends. The center of the line yielded but grudgingly against Washington State in the opener.

As Coach Bob Higgins said, "Last year was too early, next year will be too late—this must be the year." And loyal Nittany rooters and the sportswriters of the East watched the Blue and White perform at Hershey last Saturday night and took up the chant—"THIS IS THE YEAR."



Suhey



Joe

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