

Color Keynotes State-Quaker Gridiron Series

While the Penn State-Penn series is something new and different for most students at the Nittany College, it's old stuff for metropolitan sportswriters who have been covering the colorful 36-game series since 1890.

A graphic headline and lead topped the details of a hotly-contested battle in 1929 in the Philadelphia Record. Gordon Mackay went all out as he blasted:

COOPER FRENCH RUNS 90 YARDS AS STATE WINS. MULTITUDE BOOS OFFICIALS AND VISITING HENCHMEN OF BEZDEK AS ROUGHNESS SHOWS THROUGH SPIRITED STRIFE BETWEEN INVETERATE FOES—CARLSTEN'S MAJESTIC PASS TO GRAUPNER OVER LINE ACCOUNTS FOR LOCAL TOUCHDOWN; Phila., Nov. 9—Away from his lair in the jungles of Nittany, the old lion of Penn State yesterday tipped, slashed, tore and clawed Pennsylvania into shreds and bits as the Blue and White of Centre County waved in triumph over the twin hues of its rival on Franklin field. Beaten 19-7, the Quakers learned that, while 20,000 090 Frenchmen might be strong, one French was all right.

From there the description of how Cooper French almost single-handedly conquered the "valiant" Penn team fills out the story of one of the more evenly-matched Penn-Penn State battles.

From 1890 until 1909 the Lions were unable to make a mark on the record books as they absorbed 13 straight losses ranging from a 40-0 contest in 1898 to 6-0 games in 1904 and '08. Finally in 1909 a field goal enabled the Nittany team to tie the Philadelphia squad and for the first time in 18 years, the Lions were able to walk off the field with their heads held high.

Penn tried to send the Nittany team back into the same rut in 1910 by winning 10-0, but the following year the Lions came

through with a long-awaited 22-6 victory and from that point until the present time, neither team has won more than two games in a row.

Writing about the closest contest of the series, a 7-6 verdict, Perry Lewis said in the Philadelphia Inquirer in 1922:

"It came to pass that poetic justice was done at Franklin field yesterday. Fate thrust a pair of scales into the hands of Euterpe, and Penn won a football game—won as she lost yesterday."

(Penn lost to Pitt the previous week by the identical margin).

Penn State avenged the one-point loss by smacking down Penn, 21-0, the following year. In 1924 the Inquirer said of the 0-0 tie: "Even though the snow and hail that had fallen throughout the greater part of the State-Pennsylvania game had failed to put a blanket on the spirit, the final whistle seemed to have stunned the multitude... there was no demonstration and Penn seemed unable to fathom the final score."

(Penn) Coach Lou Young said, "My, what a game that was!"

The Lions and Quakers did not meet in 1925, and in 1926 Penn back Paul Skull kicked a field goal for the only score in the game.

Allison Danzig stated in the New York Times:

"The largest crowd that has gathered in Penn's newly-en-

larged stadium this season, 65,000 persons, saw Lou Young's team narrowly avert a second defeat as it halted the Nittany Lions' attack in the second period on Penn's 1-yard line.

"It was a creditable performance for Bezdek's team to hold Penn to three points, but it can be said fairly that the better team won, in spite of the fact that the Quakers never seriously threatened State's goal-line."

The 20-0 win in 1927 by the Lions was described by Ed Pollock in the Bulletin with the colorful sentence:

"Leaving boys in red and blue sprawling in their wake, scarlet-jerseyed Nittany Lions thrice sped over the goal line for touchdowns to establish their supremacy by a 20-0 victory and to record in the annals of football the most surprising conquest of the 1927 season."

"Only a tremendous, stubborn fight on the part of a game State team that turned back three Penn attacks within its 10-yard line prevented a larger score," commented the New York Times on the following year's 14-0 defeat by the strong Penn eleven.

In '29 the Lions trounced the

Red and Blue, 19-7, and in '35, the Red and Blue smashed the Lions, 33-6. In the one intervening game, the Pennsylvania teams played to a 6-6 deadlock.

The "LIONS SCARE PENN IN HOT GAME, 19-12" headline told the story of how an underrated State team almost upset the Quakers until "superior weight and power finally told the story" in 1936.

The Lion's turn to roar came in 1937 when the "NITTANY

GRIDIRON MACHINE THROTTLES PENN, 7-0" banner headed a Daily Collegian story which started with the simple words, "At last!"

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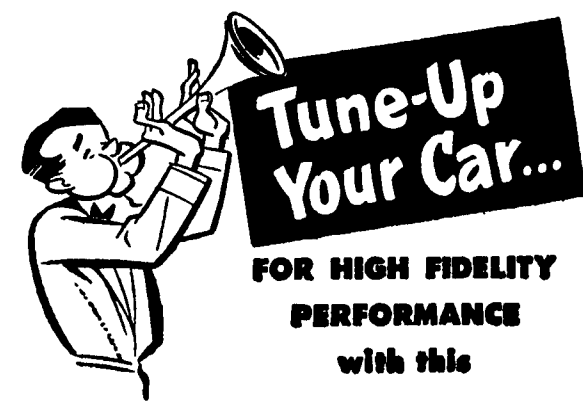


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