

# Lawther Performs Wonders With His Team, Says Cassell, American U. Cage Skipper

By Ray Koehler

"For my money you have one of the finest basketball coaches in the country right here at Penn State in John Lawther."

These and other words of praise bestowed upon the Lions' head court sagem were offered by none other than Staff Cassell, coach of the just-vanquished American University Eagles Wednesday night.

Prior to the annual meeting of the two old friends in the misty A.U. shower room, Cassell, a one-time student of Lawther, was renewing old acquaintances on the edge of the floor where his team had just gone down to a decisive 63-50 mauling.

### ENTHUSIASTIC

Close friend of Lawther in private life, but an arch rival on the basketball court, the good-looking, 39-year-old Eagle mentor, although sorely disappointed over

the showing of his own Washington, D. C. club, was earnestly enthusiastic over his former prof's merits.

"If he (Lawther) can take a bunch of green kids like that," indicating with a sweep of his arm the noisy State shower room, "and mold them into the smooth, well-balanced group that played tonight, there's no telling what he'd do if he had the means of acquiring other players like some of the rest of us. He's a coach's coach."

Reflecting on the game while surrounded by a milling mob of curious and friendly onlookers, Cassell said he believed that if Lawther and he were to exchange teams there would be no question that Lawther's team would be ranked among the best in the country.

"I don't mean to contradict myself by reflecting any way on

State's fine team. It just goes to prove how greatly they have improved since the last time we met in December. Yes, they look like a new outfit."

The story of the friendship between the two outstanding zone-defense advocates began with Cassell's meeting Lawther while working for his M.A. at Penn State.

The two still keep in contact with each other through correspondence, planning new slants on the zone, and they usually spend part of the vacation period working out new theories.

While Cassell talked one couldn't help thinking of a slight switch on the biblical situation which saw the prodigal son return only to become the fatted calf feast of the Nittany Lion.

# Cagers Hit Road For 2-Game Test

Fresh from a 63-50 lacing of American U. Wednesday night, Penn State's basketball team entrained for New York this morning to close out the road portion of its 1948-49 season against Colgate tonight and Syracuse tomorrow.

Ordinarily Coach John Lawther should be on top of the world after seeing his amazing Lion cagers extend their current streak to two straight, but with opposition such as the Raiders and Orange facing him over the weekend, the Lion mentor realizes that State will have to play heads-up ball to gain even a split.

### FOREIGN JINX

To defeat Colgate, State will have to shatter its foreign floor jinx which has spanned six consecutive games. In direct contrast to their away mark, the Lions have won five of their seven home contests.

Penn State's chances of topping the .500 mark this season are still a mathematical possibility, but even with the vastly improved Lion offense, the view appears dim. This is the week that will tell.

Number one, and most immediately pressing problem facing the Nittany cagers, is the University of Colgate and its gift to the hardwood world, all-American Ernie Vandeweghe—plus a little guy named Ed Brett whose set shots earned him the title of king of Rec Hall point-producers the last time the two squads jostled here.

### VANDE, BRETT

It was Vandeweghe and Brett who put the kibosh on State's victory plans as the long and short of the Orange attack put on a great two-man show to carve out a 58-40 Colgate triumph.

Brett scintillated with his record-shattering 25 points to pace scorers that night, but it was 6-foot 3-inch, Canadian-born Vandeweghe who really earned the crowd's plaudits with his brilliant play-setting passes.

Penn State's record since the last scrimmage between the two teams has jumped to five wins against eight losses.

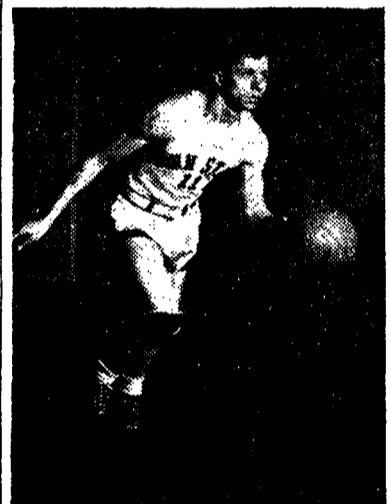
Lawther will probably stick with the lineup that has given him three wins in his last five times out. Marty Costa, who had a recurrence of his early season jitters against A.U., is being counted upon to hit his stride away from the home boards. Terry Ruhlman, Carl Nordblom or Lou Lamie are slated to go at the forward slots.

Milt Simon, who tied State's Rec Hall record with 23 points against American U., and Joe Tocci, diminutive play-setter who played a big part in Simon's record-knotting effort, will start at the ball-handling positions.

Karl Lawrence, Colgate mentor, will start Ed Brett and Curt Norris at forwards, Vandeweghe at center, and Jerry Palanti and Bob Plunket at the guards.

Probable lineups at Syracuse

Syracuse	
Nordblom	F
Lamie or Ruhlman	F
Costa	C
Tocci	G
Simon	G
Syracuse	
Rosen	F
Kiley	F
Newell	C
Stickel	G
Fash	G



Milt Simon, Lion forward, who Wednesday tied the Penn State varsity basketball record of 23 points in Rec Hall.

# Ticket Sales Rise For Boxing Show

Interest is mounting in the forthcoming Intercollegiate Boxing Association title tournament. Harold R. Gilbert, graduate manager of athletics at the College, says more than 900 reserved seat tickets have already been sold for the finals Saturday, March 12.

The special series ticket entitling the purchaser to the same seat at all three sessions has proved most popular, and nearly 700 of these \$4 tickets have already been sold. The general admission sale is not scheduled to begin until March 1.

### Correction

It was incorrectly stated in yesterday's Daily Collegian that Colgate's Ernie Vandeweghe and Ed Brett hold the all-time individual scoring record for Rec Hall. Brett alone owns the record of 25 points, registered this season. Vandeweghe's best mark in Rec Hall was 24 points recorded last year.

Co-owners of the Penn State varsity scoring record in Rec Hall are Milt Simon, 23 points against American U. Thursday night, and Jack Biery, 23 before the war and again last year.

### On Speidel

Wrestling Coach Charlie Speidel is the subject of an article by Tom Morgan, sports editor, which appears currently in Huddle, Western Pennsylvania sports magazine. The article is titled "Rasslin' Rave at State."

# Dutch Distance Star Nobody's 'Fal Guy'

Willem Slykhuis is nobody's fall guy. The little distance runner from Holland who has been burning up the indoor track at Madison Square Garden weekly was the subject of a two-hour class in track techniques, and everything was progressing smoothly until—

But let's start at the beginning.

### WERNER

Coach Chick Werner, who was teaching the class, invited Slykhuis and John Twomey, two milers who will compete in the special mile at the I.C.4-A meet Saturday, to discuss distance running in Werner's weekly track class.

After spending almost an hour on proper breathing methods, Coach Werner switched the topic to pacing and discussed the American viewpoint of running against time to break records against the European idea of winning the race regardless of time.

### GREAT

"Say for instance, Willy, you ran a 10:20 two-mile at home," said Coach Werner to Slykhuis. "Everyone in Holland would say that you're a great runner, right?"

The European distance runner nodded in assent.

"But suppose that in the next race you still ran 10:20 (the world's record is under nine minutes) and Emil Zatopek from Czechoslovakia, beat you by a hundred yards in 9:50, you'd be a bum then, right?"

Slykhuis turned slightly red, and was about to agree with the Nittany coach, but suddenly exclaimed, "Zatopek was never 100 yards ahead of me."

### In Top Ten

Two basketball players who opposed Penn State this season are among the nation's top ten scoring leaders. Colgate's Ernie Vandeweghe ranks third with an average of 21.4 points in 14 games, while West Virginia's Fred Schaus fills the tenth slot with a mark of 18.4 points per game in 17 contests.

### New Faces

Of Penn State's four new 1949 football opponents, only Boston College has never before played the Nittany Lions. Villanova, Army and Nebraska all have faced Penn State two or more times in the past.

### Boxing Mecca

For the 11th time since 1924 the championship tournament of the Intercollegiate Boxing Association will be held at Penn State March 11-12.

### Boxing 'First's'

First championship tournaments of both the Intercollegiate Boxing Association and the National Collegiate Athletic Association were held at the Pennsylvania State College in State College, Pa.



Here's Royce Newell, Syracuse's 6-foot 8-inch center, who faces the traveling Lion basketeers tomorrow.

Weekend Slate	
Today	
Basketball—Colgate	..... Hamilton, N. Y.
Tomorrow	
Basketball—Syracuse	..... Syracuse, N. Y.
Boxing—Michigan State	..... East Lansing, Mich.
Wrestling—Navy	..... Annapolis, Md.
Gymnastics—Navy	..... Annapolis, Md.
Fencing—Temple	..... Philadelphia, Pa.
Track—IC4-A	..... New York, N. Y.
Rifle—Lehigh	..... State College

# Lion Riflers Battle Lehigh In Last Meet

Lehigh University's 10-man rifle squad furnishes the opposition for Capt. Carl A. Unrath's Nittany riflers in the weekend's only home sporting event. The match, which is admission free, will take place on the Armory range at 2 p.m. tomorrow.

### WINS

Victorious in two of four telegraphic meets last week, the Lion shooters make their only home shoulder-to-shoulder match appearance of the year, and it will be the last meet of that type until the Nationals next month.

Against top-flight opposition in the telegraphic tilts, the Nittanians triumphed over Illinois and Niagara, but were outscored by the Michigan State and Oregon State combinations.

"If we fire at the rate we've been going, we'll whip them easily," Assistant Coach Captain Brian O'Neill said.

### PRANGE

Co-captains Gerry Prange and Lyle Root head the Blue and White squad, while other members who will fire against the Engineers are Harold Schwanger, Sam Carnahan, Jack Heper, Norman Phillips, Charles Kirk, Alfred Darrach, Jack Agosta and John Stout.

Heper garnered a 281 point-total to pace the Lions in the telegraphic duels.

# Lawther Selected For NCAA Group

Nittany Lion Coach John Lawther was named to the 1949 NCAA basketball selection committee, the group that will select eight teams for the championship tournament this year.

Teams selected from the four Eastern districts will play in the Eastern playoffs at New York, March 21-22. The four Western teams will compete at Kansas City, Mo., March 18-19. Winners and runners-up of each playoff will meet in the finals March 26 at the University of Washington, Seattle.

# Between The Lions



By Tom Morgan  
SPORTS EDITOR

### On Midgets

Scoring-table banter at the Lion-American basketball clash: The little fellow with all the fight, American's Jack Neer, rates no higher a jersey number than "00" because his coach, Staff Cassell, doesn't think his 5-foot-4 height warrants anything more. Neer made giants by comparison out of the Lions' Joe Tocci, Milt Simon, et al.

### About Reese, Maurey

That the varsity wrestling team is plagued with vital wounds is no cause for consternation to Coach Charlie Speidel. He says philosophically, "Why cry? We're still fighting, and we'll be strong again next year."

Here's how Speidel tells about two of his key men, 121-pounder Johnny Reese and 145er Jim Maurey, who are now termed "out for the season":

"In his knee, Maurey had a split cartilage that had to be removed through an operation. Although the operation was successful, time is not sufficient for him to recuperate to the extent of returning to the mats this season. Reese had an infected shoulder which may have been aggravated by activity. It was not a physical injury, but will still take time to heal."

Speidel continues: "We don't intend using either of them against Navy or in the intercollegiate at Cornell. They wouldn't be ready for competition even if they were apparently healed and desired, themselves, to take part."

Both Reese and Maurey had been accorded good chances for Eastern titles this year.

### Harlow Returns

Dick Harlow, who preceded Leo Houck as Penn State boxing coach and who was active in the founding of college boxing, will attend the annual championships here March 11-12 as guest of the Intercollegiate Boxing Association, popularly called the I.B.A.

### Concerning Lawtherism

Penn State's basketball style has often been dubbed "glue-footed," "uninspiring," "molasses-slow," and some descriptive adjectives of unprintable nature.

Such verbal broadsides aimed at Coach John Lawther's sliding zone defense and intentionally-slow offense originate from many Lion students, other fans, the press and some opposing coaches. Unlike the caustic comments of fans and the press, however, those of most of Lawther's colleague coaches are tempered with respect for the Lawther system.

They will damn it publicly, but admit privately that—given the right material—it is capable of winning games in an era of fire-engine, fast-break basketball.

For all its slowness and unpopularity, the Penn State system gets results in that it is an effective score-checker. Lawther's deliberate basketball style wreaks mayhem on high-flying teams accustomed to climbing to 70 or 80 in one game.

We quizzed the Lion coach about his reply to the annual demand of many fans that he forsake the slow offense and sliding zone defense and employ the fast break and man-for-man defense, exclusively, to produce higher scores. To all this Lawther has but one answer:

"If you can't outrun your opponent, you can't beat him by fast-breaking. Penn State can't outrun its opponents."

We see an analogy between Lawther's methodical offense in basketball and the single wing in football. Both seem based on the axiom that your opponent can't score as long as you hold the ball.

The usual style of a Lawther. Continued on page five