

Baseball Team Schedules Intra-Squad Contests

Intra-squad games have been the order of the day for Coach Joe Bedenk's Lion baseballers the past week. The Blue and White diamondmen open their 1949 slate against Temple April 13.

"Wednesday was the fifth day that we've used the diamond for practice games, and as a consequence our hitting is starting to improve slightly," said Coach Bedenk.

Bedenk still rates the catching position as a toss-up among Clarence Buss, John Kurty and Dick Ford.

With three of the five returning lettermen seeking to retain their infield positions of last year, the infield, with the exception of third base, is fairly well set. Veterans Dick Wertz, first base; Gene Solomon, second base, and Captain Hal Hackman at short, head the aspirants for those berths, but the hot corner spot looms as a battle-royal between Red Mayer and Bill Tegtmeier.

John Shaffer ranks behind Wertz at first, while basketballer

Joe Tocci and Harry Little are still potential second sackers. Jerry Vesling and Bill Ondick are after the shortstop post.

Hen Albright, Stan Laganosky, Pete Gorinski and Steve Vargo head the outfield candidates. Albright and Laganosky have been playing left and center field, respectively, in regular practice skirmishes.

Lettermen Cy Miller and Al Tkac top the pitching list. Tkac was the Lions' right fielder in 1948, but Bedenk has switched him to the mound for the current campaign.

The Nittany Realm

Houck—'Fair-Haired Boy'

By GEORGE VADASZ

Twenty-seven years ago in a small hotel room in Philadelphia, Hugo Bezdek, then athletic director at Penn State, talked Leo Houck into hanging up his gloves and coming to the campus to teach the students the art of self defense.

That day, when Leo accepted to come to the Nittany Valley, marked the end of a thrilling chapter of ring exploits which stretched from 1902 to 1922 and covered 250 fights in every weight division. He fought 12 world champions and, although never given a shot at the middleweight championship, he was considered the "uncrowned champion."

FOUGHT AT 14

Houck's boxing fortunes date back to the early part of this century. He fought his first fight at the age of 14. It was a four-round draw for which he received a silver dollar and a pair of boxing gloves. But that was only the beginning.

He was then off on a leather swinging trail in which he met the cream of the crop for the next 20 years. He met all comers from coast to coast, from Halifax to Havana, from Lancaster to London and Paris.

Although he was never an official champ himself, he defeated middleweight George Chip four times before Chip became champion. After being crowned middleweight king, Chip refused Houck a crack at the title. Leo went on to tag Johnny Wilson twice before he became champ. Wilson likewise snubbed Houck. Houck also met Gene Tunney twice for non-title matches.

FLUTTER, STING

Leo put the world's best in their place. He outboxed the sluggers and outpunched the boxers. One of his opponents once said that he had the flutter of a butterfly and the sting of a bumble bee.

"The fair haired boy from Lancaster," as he was known to most pugilistic fans, "possessed one of the greatest pistons ever to be put on the port side of a right-handed boxer," said Harry Pegg, editor of The Veteran Boxer.

Houck is never downhearted in defeat nor is he ever ungentlemanly. He is always watching out for the safety of the contestants. As the "father" of collegiate boxing Houck has helped set up the rules which now govern all collegiate bouts.

He has also developed the present 12-ounce glove that is used in collegiate fisticuffing. He says he often looks back to the first fights in his 'teens and the beatings he took. He vowed that he would make sure the present generation had it better.

Leo's favorite phrase and advice at ring side is: "Keep your left working in his face and follow through with your right when you see an opening, Fred."

HABIT

He has the habit of calling everyone "Fred" and when he says "Fred" around the ring about six managers and about the same number of boxers turn around to see what the genial doctor wants. One can easily pick out varsity boxers on campus for they will invariably call all their friends "Fred."

Many coaches and other boxing fans give most of the credit for the success of collegiate boxing to Houck. College boxing is here to stay despite the many attempts by a few to eliminate the sport from American college campuses, he says.

Leo has consistently been a producer of champions. Only once in 25 years of title tournaments has he failed to turn out at least one individual champion, the barren year being 1945. As the only college coach who has entered teams in every one of the Eastern Intercollegiate Boxing Tournaments, the veteran Houck owns the distinction of producing more individual champions than any other coach in active service.



Between Lions—

Continued from page four

some of the psychology that went into the upset is a tribute to Lawther's ability as a leader and as a coach. John was behind (press) stories that told of the gloom in the Lion camp and the glory of a West Virginia team composed of nothing but All-Americans.

"The West Virginia boys read the papers and probably were reading clippings most of the game. Meanwhile, a State team inspired as only Lawther could inspire, was running its way to victory. . . ."

From Virginia

Forgive us if we revert to this year's Penn State-Virginia boxing meet to quote sporadically from the Cavalier Daily, Virginia student organ.

Fans will recall the Johnny Benglian-Al Hollingsworth EIBA bout in which Benglian was the continual aggressor but lost the decision. The Cavalier's account of the previous dual-meet bout between the two presents a striking parallel with the EIBA fray. The one difference is that, in the dual meet at Charlottesville, Benglian floored his man twice, but still lost the fight. We quote:

" . . . The surprise decision of the night followed as . . . Hollingsworth won over previously undefeated . . . Benglian. Hollingsworth was floored during the second and third rounds of the bout. However, Referee Al Mann of Duke University admitted after the bouts that Hollingsworth slipped the first time and further stated that he definitely outboxed his Yankee opponent. . . ."

" . . . The partisan Virginia

Lacrosse Squad 'Shaping Up Pretty Well' --- Coach Thiel

Despite the fact that three varsity lacrosse regulars will be unable to join the Lions' squad before April 2, Coach Nick Thiel expressed satisfaction with recent scrimmages yesterday and announced that the squad is "shaping up pretty well."

Absent because of out-of-town practice teaching commitments are lettermen Ernie Baer, Harrie Bragg and Rocco Iannetta, the

entirety of Penn State's alternate midfield.

Most recent lacrossers whose efforts have thrown them into the practice session limelight are Bob Lee, 6 foot 1-inch 175-pound defenseman, who has been looking impressive; Tom Smith, veteran varsity defenseman, and Gene McNamara, a member of last year's jayvee corps, fighting for a close-attack job.

According to Thiel, two football players — John Finley, of Paxtang, and Smith, Rockville Centre, L. I.—have already demonstrated their right to open the season in the starting lineup against Penn, April 13.

While hardy competition for

first string positions is still being waged, early progress indicates that Finley, Captain Rodger Nestor, of Sharpsburg, and Bob Louis, of Philadelphia, will handle the mid-field posts, with Smith, Dean Kissell, of Johnstown and John Szadziwicz, of Worcester, Mass., on defense.

NEHODA

John Nehoda, of Easton, appears to have the upper hand around the goal, while Augustus Thomas, of Harrisburg, Johnny Lux, of Philipsburg and Eddie Belfield, of Swarthmore, are the prospective starters on attack.

Last year Penn State began its lacrosse season at a hot clip, coping its first five contests consecutively, to wind up the campaign with six wins in nine outings.

However, this year, with Penn, Western Maryland, Washington and Lee, Virginia and Loyola packing plenty of power, the Thielmen will have to play headsup ball to even approach the 1948

Coach Gross Cites Cagers' Needs

Elmer Gross, head Lion basketball coach, urged yesterday that all athletes who have had some experience with the hardwood game plan to try for varsity berths next fall.

Gross layed special emphasis on football players reporting, stating that what the Lions need next year are big, rugged ballplayers.

crowd shouted its disapproval of the decision. . . . The referee's card was brought back twice to double-check the verdict in the 130 match. . . ."

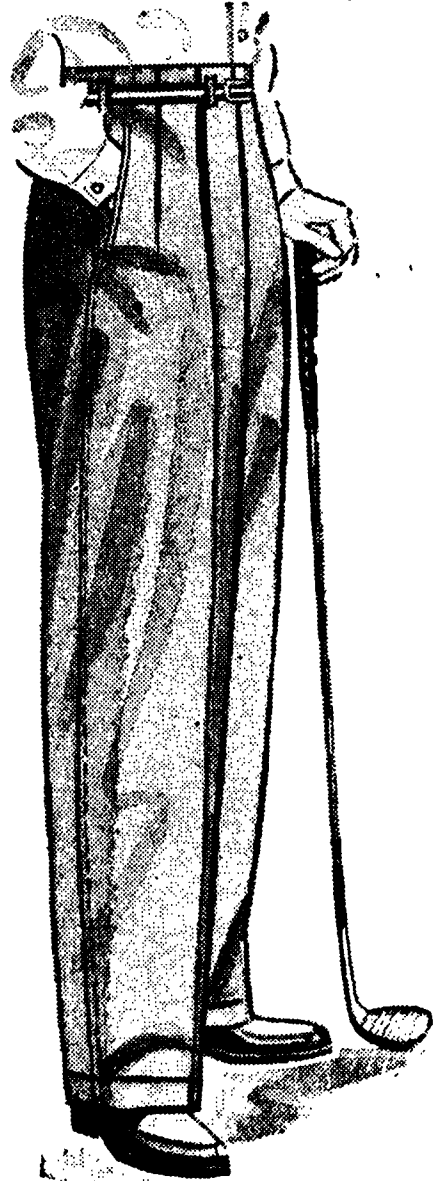
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