

Sports Thru

# The Lion's Eye

By JAKE HIGHTON  
Collegian Sports Editor



For the first time since 1950, Penn State is honored as host for a National Collegiate championship tourney. Prior to this Friday and Saturday's NCAA wrestling shindig, the last occasion was the NCAA boxing tourney in 1950 which was dedicated in Memoriam to Leo Houck. Fortunately wrestling Coach Charlie Speidel is still living and isn't eligible for dedication, so let's recall some memories of the Old Boxing Maestro:

### 'LIVES OF GREAT MEN ALL REMIND US.'

Chuck Drazenovich, a former Penn State NCAA boxing champion and an extremely rugged football blocking back, wasn't the type you would expect to shed any tears of sentimentality. But on "Leo Houck Night," Jan. 14, 1950, Draz was on the verge of flooding the Rec Hall boxing ring.

It was just prior to the Minnesota-State fistic clash. Draz was asking nearly 8000 heart-panged students to contribute to a "Friends of Leo Houck" drive. Leo, who had started the ring sport at Penn State 28 years before, lay critically ill at his home. Townspeople, faculty, and Leo's friends throughout the country had already contributed \$2000. But 20 billion wouldn't have helped Leo on that first night he was ever absent from the ringside of a Nittany bout. One week later he died.

It would be stretching the truth for dramatic effect to say that the entire sports world was shocked. However, for a "mere" collegiate coach in the relative insignificance of a Nittany Mountain retreat in a still more obscure sport, Houck had an unbelievable amount of renown. His friends were legion and a few "names" like Jack Dempsey and Tony Zale were personal pals. Even taking into consideration the tendency to glorify a popular public hero who dies, his encomiums were glowing.

### 'WE CAN MAKE OUR LIVES SUBLIME'

Associated Press sports columnist Hugh Fullerton penned this eulogy out of New York City two days post-mortem: Leo Houck died the other day—knocked out for the first time in his career. It was his proud boast that in more than 200 professional fights he had been knocked off his feet only three times and never was put down for the count of ten. . . . It was a sad oversight that the boxing writers never honored him with an award for his long and meritorious service to the sport. . . . He produced five national champions and 48 Eastern champions, among them two outstanding professionals, Billy Soose and Steve Hamas.

### 'AND, DEPARTING, LEAVE BEHIND US.'

Among his ex-pupils who speaks with endearment is Glenn Hawthorne, NCAA champ in 1947 and one of the finest boxers State has ever had. Hawthorne enjoys telling of the only two occasions he can remember that "The Doctor" got angry. Once was in an NCAA tourney semi-final. Glenn, who generally followed Houck's incessant demand to "jab, move, jab," felt in a slugging mood. In the first round he caught his opponent along the ropes and dropping from a toe to a heel stance, began to flail away. After the bell he came back to the corner with a Pepsodent grin. It soon vanished as Leo reamed him out unmercifully. Sheepishly Glenn went back to work with Houck's style of stiff left jab—no flick—and waited for his right-hand opening, which Leo said would develop—and usually did.

As to losses, they never perturbed Houck. As he said, "Fred"—friendly and personable but short on memory like "Doc" Speidel, Houck called everyone Fred—"Fred, some you win and some you lose. The ones you lose forget—except the lessons they teach you."

### 'FOOTPRINTS IN THE SANDS OF TIME'

With this philosophy no "raw decision" could get up his Dutch. But wait, he was human and one decision did rile him. Hawthorne was boxing in Syracuse's own domain, where it's darn tough to beat the press, the officials, and the crowd of that boxing-crazed community. With the fight even after two rounds, Hawthorne opened up. He made beefburger of his foe's nose with repeated left jabs. Then he fired a steaming left hook and smashing right uppercut which crumpled the Syracuser. Suddenly feeling ashamed, Glenn moved in to stop his foe's fall. At the same time the ref grabbed the Orange boxer and dragged his heels across the canvas to a corner just as the bell rang.

When the announcer audaciously bawled, "the winnah, Syracuse," Hawthorne and Houck's corner-second, present coach Eddie Sulkowski, threatened to tear the place down. But Houck, marvelously containing himself, grabbed both enraged Nittanians by the rear and saved much embarrassment. Afterwards in the dressing room Hawthorne overheard Houck berating the ref. In a burst of unaccustomed anger, Houck wound up his tirade with a "mouth-filling oath." It was the first time Hawthorne had ever heard the "saint" unsaintly.

## Lions Put Emphasis on Pitching . . .

# Bedenk to Count on Returning Aces

By DICK McDOWELL

(This is the first of a series on Penn State's baseball team. It will attempt to examine the squad, position by position, to see who will represent State on the diamond this spring. Today, the pitchers.)

When Coach Joe Bedenk's ball players put away their spikes after their final game last spring, they belonged to the third best college baseball team in the nation, sporting a 13-4 seasonal record, plus two district playoff wins and two victories at the NCAA "Little World Series" in Omaha, Neb.

One of the big factors in the Lion diamond success in 1952 was its fine pitching staff. Bedenk boasted three exceptionally fine starters in Bill Everson, Jack Krumrine, and Keith Vesling.

### To Be Mainstays

Early this February, when Bedenk and trainer Chuck Medler went to work with pitchers and catchers under the Beaver Field stands, two of the Lions "big three"—Krumrine and Vesling—were back at work.

According to the Nittany skipper, the two powerful right handers will be the mainstays on this year's diamond contingent. With regular infielders Bill Mihalich, and Carmen Triosi, and outfielders Bill Hopper and Chris Toney gone, pitching will tell a bigger story than ever.

### Vesling Won In NCAAs

Vesling, a strong armed fast baller, is figured to have another good season. Last year the big righthander finished the season, including the District Two playoffs, with a 6-2 record and a 2.22 ERA. He worked 65 innings and struck out 52 batters.

In the national championships at Omaha, he won the opening game, spinning an eight-hitter against powerful Texas. Then against Missouri, he struck out 11, but lost a tight 3-2 game.

### Krumrine in Relief

Krumrine, the cutie on the Lion staff, picked up four wins over the season, including the playoff tourney, and dropped only one decision. Throwing mostly a sharp-breaking curve and a tricky slow ball, the big righthander finished the season with a 2.40 ERA in 33 1/3 innings.

However, some of Krumrine's best mound work came in relief stints. Bedenk found him not only a top-notch starter, but his ace fireman as well. In the final district playoff contest against Villanova, he came on the hill for Everson in the fourth and pitched three hit ball the rest of the way.

### Lost to Holy Cross

Besides Vesling and Krumrine, Bedenk will have two more hold-over moundmen on his pitching corps. Righthanders John Moore and Jerry Troy, both of whom saw limited action last year, are back and are expected to get some work this season. Moore worked in only three games last season, all in relief.

He got a starting assignment against Holy Cross in the NCAAs, losing that one 15-4 behind some shoddy fielding. Troy saw action only once last year, a three inning relief stint, and had no record.

Righthanders Larry Bayer, Garland Gingrich, John Wolfinger, Dick Christianson, and lefty Sam Curtis all have shown promise in pre-season workouts, and will probably be included on the staff when the regular season gets under way April 10.

## What Do I Do Now?



Photo by Hoopes

MICKEY WEBB, Chi Phi, strains for a takedown in his 121 pound match with Sigma Nu's Chuck Frey in last night's intramural wrestling semi-final matches. Webb finally got his takedown and went on to win the bout, 5-3. The semi-finals began last night and will continue tonight. The finals are slated for Monday night.

## Sigma Nu Leads —

(Continued from page six)

the nod over Ed Weiser for the same reason as the other decision. The agile Hall spent 3:35 riding his opponent to a win in the 165 pound loop.

At 135 pounds: Theta Chi's Bill Wendel forged a 3-1 win over Delta Tau Sigma's Dave Moorhead; Whitey Messerman, Delta Chi, bowed to Bob Brubaker, Delta Upsilon, in a close 4-3 decision.

### McIntyre Wins

Norm Naylor, the 145 pound representative for Phi Kappa Tau, won over Don Fields, Phi Sigma Kappa, to the extent of a 9-0 de-

cision, never quite being able to pin the squirming Fields.

Acacia had Lefty McIntyre take a 155 pound decision over Phi Kappa Psi's Dick Rostmeyer, 3-2.

A 1:23 fall in the 135 pound class over George Resh of Lambda Chi Alpha was the boast of Don Holler, Alpha Chi Sigma. There was time for only one takedown by the victor before the bell tolled.

Only forfeit win of the night went to Jim McGraw of Phi Sigma Kappa who was supposed to have met Joe Walk, Pi Kappa Alpha.

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## WRA Results

### VOLLEYBALL PLAYOFFS

Phi Sigma Sigma beat Chi Omega  
Alpha Kappa Alpha beat Women's Building

Kappa Kappa Gamma beat Mac Hall

Zeta Tau Alpha beat the Tri-Delts

### BOWLING

Leonides beat Phi Mu

Alpha Chi Omega beat Kappa Kappa Gamma

The Tri-Delts beat Alpha Epsilon Phi

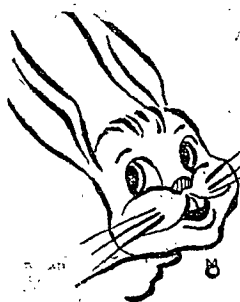
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