

Sport SPOTLIGHT

By **DICK McDOWELL**
Assistant Sports Editor



ON BASKETBALL

That eternal squabble is on once again. The college basketball coaches are yelling louder than ever about the present style of play on the collegiate courts.

Some say the game is played too fast, some want the center jump returned, others are worried about the astronomical scoring, and a few—oh so very few—are happy with the present situation.

We ran across an article recently, written by Leo Fischer, Sports Editor of the Chicago American entitled "Is Basketball Too Frantic?" Fischer bought the whole situation to light, bringing together comments from leading coaches all over the country, but in the end it appeared to us that basketball is not "too frantic" but that maybe the coaches should calm their ulcers a little and begin to realize that basketball has become one of the most enjoyable spectator sports in the nation. Why? Because it is played today in a manner that is naturally attractive to thrill-loving fans.

Last season the seven leading gardens in the nation, headed by New York's Madison Square, packed in 526,203 cage happy fans with attractive basketball battles. Colleges all over the nation enjoyed a healthy year at the turnstiles. Here at Penn State 44,000 spectators watched Elmer Gross' cagers perform on the Rec Hall court.

Basketball is riding high. We can't see any reason why any radical changes should be made.

For instance Phog Allen, Head Coach of the University of Kansas wants a rotation center-jump installed in the sport. Under this plan the ball would be brought "out" after each basket is scored and a center-jump would be held with the players on each team rotating like a baseball batting order to take turns at the jump. Allen says that the rotation jump would help "correct defensive and offensive faults."

A game of this sort would be more boring than a Pitt freeze as far as we're concerned.

Seton Hall's Honey Russel, who once played with the dazzling New York Celtics suggests that the foul lane be widened to 12 feet (as they have done in the pro game) to make it tougher to operate the pivot play. Russel also advocated more "defensive freedom," claiming that the offensive team is favored in today's game. He suggests that fouls be called against the defense only when a player is fouled in the act of shooting.

Please Mr. Russel let's be sensible. Football is played in the fall. We play basketball in the winter. It's easy to picture the outcome of a hotly-contested game with this rule in effect.

Adolph Rupp, Kentucky's great mastermind, fights for the game as it stands today. "Basketball today is far more interesting than the controlled game of years ago," he maintains. "Defense is just as good as ever, but offensive teachings have completely out-run defensive techniques."

"The game hasn't changed much as far as speed is concerned, but definite plays and patterns are far better than they were ten years ago."

Tippy Dye of the University of Washington is another defender. He explains the recent trend this way.

"Individuals are working harder and longer to improve themselves. Boys are getting better coaching in high school, too, and coming to college with greater ability."

"I think the game as it is played now is improved and that increased scoring is good for the game if we coaches will do our best to tighten up the defenses."

On the contrary Edward (Moose) Krause, one-time all-American basketball player at Notre Dame, and now athletic director there, is worried about the high scoring in today's fire-house game. He says that scoring has been cheapened to a point where a player doesn't care about scoring two points anymore.

"Team-work and the old thrill of watching a team work the ball in for a shot have long since vanished," he said.

As far as we can see the team work is still there. Sure it's a different type of teamwork, but it's still teamwork in our book. It's a dazzling, lightning fast, passing offense that requires quick reflexes and fast thinking.

Yes, the arguments will continue, and some rules will be changed, but we think American basketball as it is played today is here to stay. Just as the whole pattern of life has changed with time, so has the game of basketball. It was inevitable. We're living faster and harder today—and we're playing our sports the same way.

Yanks Named Top Sport Team

GLENDALE, Calif., Jan. 5 (AP)—Casey Stengel expressed delight today that his New York Yankees had swept the field, for the fourth straight year, as the nation's finest team in 1953, as voted in the 23rd annual poll by Associated Press.

"I feel wonderful to be the manager of a baseball club that can win this honor four times in a row and the American League pennant and the world championship five straight times."

"I am indebted to the organization and the players, they being the guys that play with the baseball, and the coaches and Del Webb and Topping, Dan, the owners, and me being manager, I feel wonderful about this honor."

The poll gave the Yankees 79 first place votes for 289 points. Next was Maryland's college football team, 10 firsts for 109, followed by the Cleveland Browns professional football team, 13 and 106 points. Notre Dame football, Indiana basketball, Milwaukee baseball, Detroit Lions football, Minneapolis Lakers basketball, Naval Academy rowing and Brooklyn baseball rounded out the top 10 teams.

Yankees-Redlegs Named As Foes

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y., Jan. 4 (AP)—The New York Yankees and Cincinnati Redlegs will meet in the 13th annual Hall of Fame game at Doubleday Field, Cooperstown, Monday, Aug. 9.

National League teams hold a 7-5 edge over the American in the series dating back to 1940 with a one-year lapse in 1945. The Yankees made one previous appearance in 1947, losing to the Boston Braves. Cincinnati will be making its third appearance. Cincinnati defeated the Chicago White Sox, 16-6, last summer.

Dukes Push Kentucky's Cage Lead

NEW YORK, Jan. 5 (AP)—Kentucky still leads the pack in this week's Associated Press basketball poll but coach Ducey Moore's sky-scraping Duquesne team is closing in fast.

A week ago coach Adolph Rupp's Kentucky boys enjoyed a 150-point lead. Now their margin is 81 points although they enjoy almost a 2-1 ratio in first place ballots. Duquesne's sweep of the Garden Holiday Festival boosted its stock.

Indiana, squeaking past Michigan and Wisconsin in Big Ten competition, held third place and Minnesota remained in sixth place but the rest of the standings were shuffled.

Oklahoma A&M moved up a peg to fourth after winning the All-College tournament at Oklahoma City and Western Kentucky, unbeaten in 12 games, took over fifth place by winning the Louisville Invitational.

Holy Cross, Duke and Oklahoma City all moved into the top 10 ousting Illinois, North Carolina State and Fordham. Holy Cross placed seventh. Duke's triumph in the Dixie Classic at Raleigh put the Blue Devils in eighth place. Oklahoma City climbed from 11th to ninth.

The battle for 10th place was hot with Oregon State nosing out unbeaten Rice (10-0) for the position. Oregon State lost two games in the Dixie Classic, bowing to Duke and Tulane, sliding down from fourth place.

Illinois, eighth a week ago, slipped to 15th after losing to Minnesota. North Carolina State's defeats by Navy and Wake Forest dropped the Wolfpack from ninth to 20th and Fordham, No. 10 last week, wasn't ranked among the first 20 after bowing to Louisiana State.

Lewis Replies To Bench Play

MOBILE, Ala., Jan. 5 (AP)—Tommy Lewis wearily concluded today that nothing fires up the folks like the fellow who does the wrong thing at the wrong time.

Literally overwhelmed by the storm of publicity stirred up by his 12th man act in the Cotton Bowl New Year's Day, the handsome University of Alabama full-back said he'd like nothing better than to turn everything off.

He was out on the football practice field here today working up beads of perspiration in preparation for Saturday's Senior Bowl football game and he said it really felt good.

Lewis said the toughest part of the whole thing about his off-the-bench tackle of Rice back Dick Moegle was that "people are so nice."

Crosby May Sell Pittsburgh Stock

PITTSBURGH, Jan. 5 (AP)—The Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph said today it learned from a reliable source that singer Bing Crosby plans to sell his stock in the Pittsburgh Pirates baseball club.

The newspaper said Hugh Grant, a wealthy oil operator from Bradford, Pa., reportedly is anxious to buy stock in the National League team. He is a friend of John Galbreath, Pirate president.

Smith Harrier Captain

Lamont Smith is the newly-elected captain of Penn State cross-country.

Werner Starts 'Treasure-Hunt'

Like the fortune-hunters of old, Nittany Track Coach Chick Werner is in search of riches. No, the Lion mentor has not donned his miner's cap, nor has he bought a "genuine gold mine" out West. He is merely in search of talent for this season's track team.

Werner feels there are hidden treasures right here on campus. However, he cannot uncover the local riches by using his gold pan for sifting out the treasures.

The main hope of Werner and his assistant, Norm Gordon, is that flocks of candidates will answer the call for this season's track squad.

Many of the students love to run, but they feel that they are not good enough for intercollegiate competition, Werner said. "My only requirement," the Nittany coach pointed out, "is that they have the will to perform. When it comes to ability or ambition, I'll take ambition."

Many of Penn State's finest runners, never competed before they came to college. Among the most notable examples are Horace and Bill Ashenfelter.

Horace Ashenfelter is one of the finest runners the University has ever produced. He has blossomed into one of the world's finest runners since his graduation and hit his peak in the 1952 Olympic Games at Helsinki by pulling an upset victory in the 10,000-meter steeplechase event.

The former Lion great is a two-fold example of the theory that the will to win is one of the greatest assets any athlete can possess. In the first place, he had never run competitively before he came to Penn State. Secondly, he had never run the steeplechase prior to his dramatic achievements in the Olympic tryouts and at Helsinki.

The outstanding example at the present is sophomore Doug Moorhead. Like the Ashenfelter bro-

thers he too had never run competitively before coming to Penn State. Together with Lamont Smith and Red Hollen, Moorhead forms the Nittany Triple Trouble Trio.

Anyone who would like to go out for track this season should report to either Werner or Gordon after 4 p.m. on the balcony track in Recreation Hall.

Werner is not expecting stars to blossom forth after a few days of practice. He too knows that even gold has to be washed and cleaned before its true brilliance can shine forth.

Whether Werner's treasure hunt fails to pan out, or whether it turns into a stampede like the Gold Rush of 1849 depends upon the "hidden" talent that turns out for the coming season.

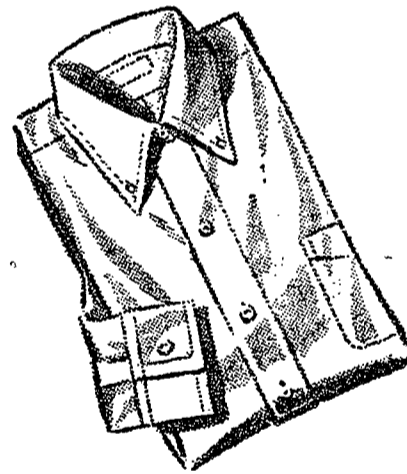
Malinak to Play In Senior Bowl

Don Malinak, Lion football co-captain of the past season, will take part in the Annual Senior Bowl in Mobile, Ala. this Saturday.

The Nittany end was chosen to participate in the classic as a result of his fine, consistent play throughout the season, according to the selections committee. Perhaps his best performance of the campaign was the Pitt game when he was on the receiving end of six passes, they said.

Jack Harper

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By



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