

# Positioning Is Secret To Lions' Sliding Zone

Ever since the days when John Lawther had charge of Penn State basketball teams, the Lions have been famous for their sliding-zone defense, an intricate three and two variation that has turned back some of the best offensive teams in the country.

Lawther taught his famous defense to two of his pupils—Elmer Gross and John Egli. Gross used it with amazing effectiveness last year, and now Egli will put it to work for him this season.

Basically the defense appears to be just a conventional 3-2 zone, but it is actually an entirely different system. Where the standard zone attempts to cover the individual offensive players, the sliding zone works primarily against the man with the ball.

In the regular zone, defensive players are assigned to cover a particular area or "zone" on the playing floor. They move about within this area. But in the sliding zone, there is an entirely different movement used.

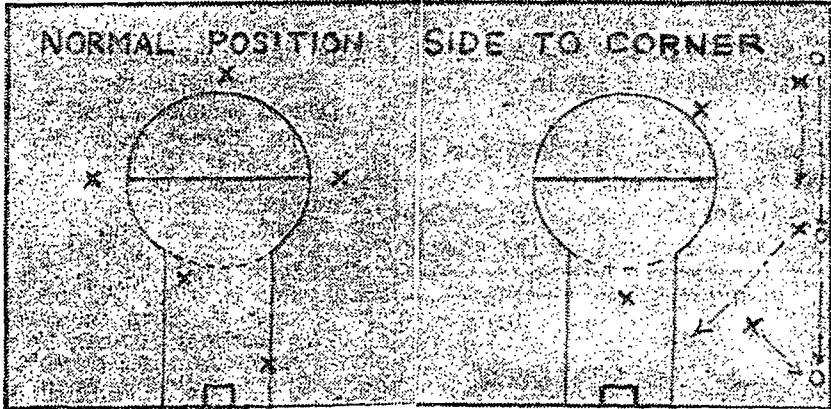
Its basic principle is to jam the area which the ball might be in. One man presses the ball handler and two more move in behind, blocking off any path to the basket. The remaining two defensemen slide into positions near the basket, but still between the man with the ball and the net.

This means that for the defense to be effective, the defensive team must move as a unit. It must be able to shift rapidly, and one man out of his proper position will create a channel for the ball to move toward the basket.

"To be effective," Egli explains, "the zone must have players with certain abilities and physical qualifications in particular places."

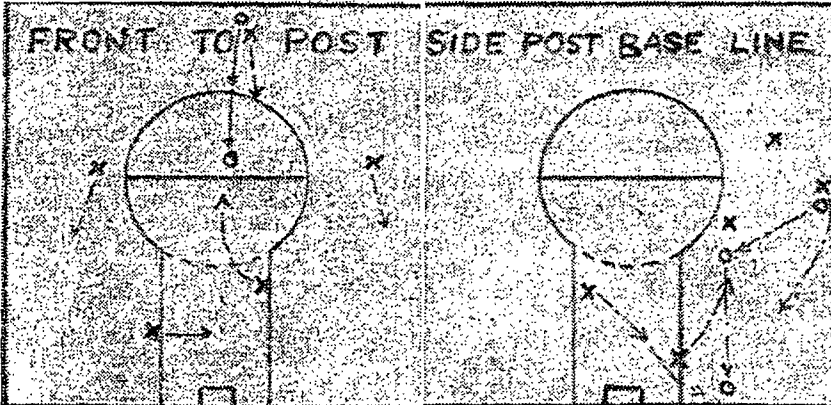
For instance the front middle man, usually the key ball handler on fast breaks, can be small, but a tall agile man is the ideal prospect. He should be a good ball handler, passer, and dribbler.

## BASIC DEFENSIVE PATTERNS



This is the normal alignment for the 3-2 sliding zone defense. Three men out front, and two in the back line.

Shift made when ball is passed down side to corner. Back right covers ball. Front right and front center form screen behind. Back left and front left protect basket.



Shift made when ball is passed to pivot. Left back moves in front of basket. Front center and back right converge on ball. Right and left front drop back between ball and basket.

Shift made when ball is passed from side, to pivot, and in to base line. Back right and center front cover at post with front right shooting back to protect. Back right and left cover at base line.

Should the defense intercept the ball he is the important man.

The two front side men should be fairly tall and rugged, good rebounders, and ball handlers to help in the fast break. The right side man should be able to score

on driving lay up shots from the right. The left side man should be able to do it from the left.

The tallest back man ordinarily plays slightly forward in the foul lane to screen down the alley. But he may be the back man should the ball be on the opposite side of the court. The fifth man plays back nearer the basket, but will move forward when the ball enters his side of the court.

He should be the biggest man on the team, rugged, hard working, and able to rebound both from a standing position and while in motion. He usually starts the fast break and should have a good one hand pass—both short and long. He must be able to move fast to cover the corners.

### Moore 'Held' Twice

Only twice in nine games was Penn State's fleet halfback, Lenny Moore, restricted to fewer than 100 yards. Pitt limited him to 68 yards, Syracuse to 87. His nine-game total of 1082 yards set a new Penn State record.

Lindenberg, Richard Dollinger, and Paul Kauffman.

Among the 35 people attending the banquet were guests of honor President Milton S. Eisenhower, Harold Gilbert, assistant director of athletics, and James Coogan, assistant director of public information at the University.

Hosterman, who has ended his second year as soccer coach with a top-rate squad, named ten undergraduate lettermen who will return for action next fall. They are Packer, Dick Matacia, Ihor Stelnyk, Tom Nute, Mert Springer, Jerry Bijur, Steve Flamporis, George Geczy, Chuck Snyder, and Bob Little.

# Dierks Named Top Soccerman for Season

Paul Dierks, rugged all-around booter for Coach Ken Hosterman's undefeated soccer team which posted a 9-0 record this fall, was awarded the outstanding player trophy last night at the annual soccer banquet.

Senior lettermen Captain Jack Pinezich, Galen Robbins, Gerry Gillispie, and Joe Mijares, were also honored at the Allencrest Tea Room.

Junior Dick Packer, high-scoring lineman, was chosen captain for the 1955 season by popular vote of his teammates.

Dierks expressed his appreciation for the trophy and said that only his teammates' "family" type of ball playing enabled him to gain the recognition. Dierks said the entire team fitted together like a jig-saw puzzle and that the team spirit and cooperation was an important reason why it was undefeated.

Retiring head manager Dick Gordon named Leo Tarkett head manager for 1955. Tarkett's first three assistants will be Stanley

# Werner Seeks Track Candidates

By HERM WEISKOPF

With road map and compass in hand, track Coach Chick Werner is embarking on his annual search for talent for this season's team.

"Desire," Werner emphasized, "is more important than experience. The opportunity is here for those who want to compete. We have some good men left from last year, but there is no such thing as a 'set' team."

Sure, the Lions will have such star returnees as speedster Art Pollard and weight man Rosey Grier, but "there's always room for one more."

Werner has good reason for placing so much weight on the element of "desire." Some of his finest performers have risen from the ranks of the unknown to stellar heights through their love for the sport. Werner feels that experience can be gained, but that desire must be present from the start.

Among the prime examples of Penn State track and field stars who have made good despite their lack of experience are Horace Ashenfelter and Doug Moorhead. Ashenfelter was a Nittany star during the 1940's. Curt Stone, another Lion track standout, had to convince Ash that he had a bright future in track. Once Ash decided to devote his interests to track rather than baseball he slowly improved until he hit the top. His brightest victory came in the 1952 Olympics at Helsinki, Finland, when he sped to one of the greatest upset wins of all time by copping the 3000-meter steeplechase grind.

It was only fitting that Werner, the man who guided Ash in his rise from obscurity, should also have coached him for his great Olympic victory.

Moorhead's story closely parallels Ashenfelter's. Before he came to Penn State, Moorhead had

never actually competed in any track events. However, under the coaching of Werner and his assistant Norm Gordon, Moorhead has been turned into one of the top distance runners at the University. Moorhead was the No. 1 man on this year's cross-country team. He is also a fine two-miler. On Tuesday Moorhead was selected by his teammates as captain for next season's cross-country squad—a tribute to his climb up the ladder of success.

Although there will be no freshman schedule for the indoor season, there will be plenty of action on the banked boards for both frosh and varsity candidates. One of the main advantages of indoor track, Werner said, is that it will prepare the team for the more important outdoor campaign which will get underway in the spring.

The schedule for the indoor season is still in the making and will not be released for some time, but the track and field hopefuls have been practicing for several weeks.

Students interested in competing in track and field events are asked to report to Werner in Rec Hall as soon as possible. "Even if they can't come out to practice at this time," Werner said, "we would like to at least talk to those who are interested."

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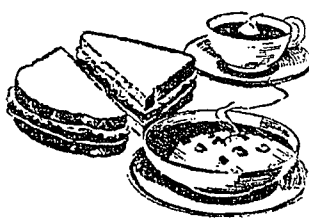


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