

# Bezdek Brought Sports 'Within the Walls'

## IM Program Developed After 1915

By JOHN LAWRENCE

Operating with a total of 16 different sports during a school year, Penn State's intramural athletic program has hung up a record of 14,570 scheduled and supervised contests over the past eight years.

This record is even more remarkable when it is considered that during those years (1946-54), the program functioned with a total participation of 119,380 students.

State's intramural program dates back to 1915 when an interclass council was organized for the purpose of supervising all interclass sports and also to promote athletic competition.

### Tugs-of-War Popular

However, it wasn't until 1926 that the program began to take form. Although there was no formal organization, intramural action witnessed contests between classes and various student groups. Tugs-of-war and other forms of class scraps were popular.

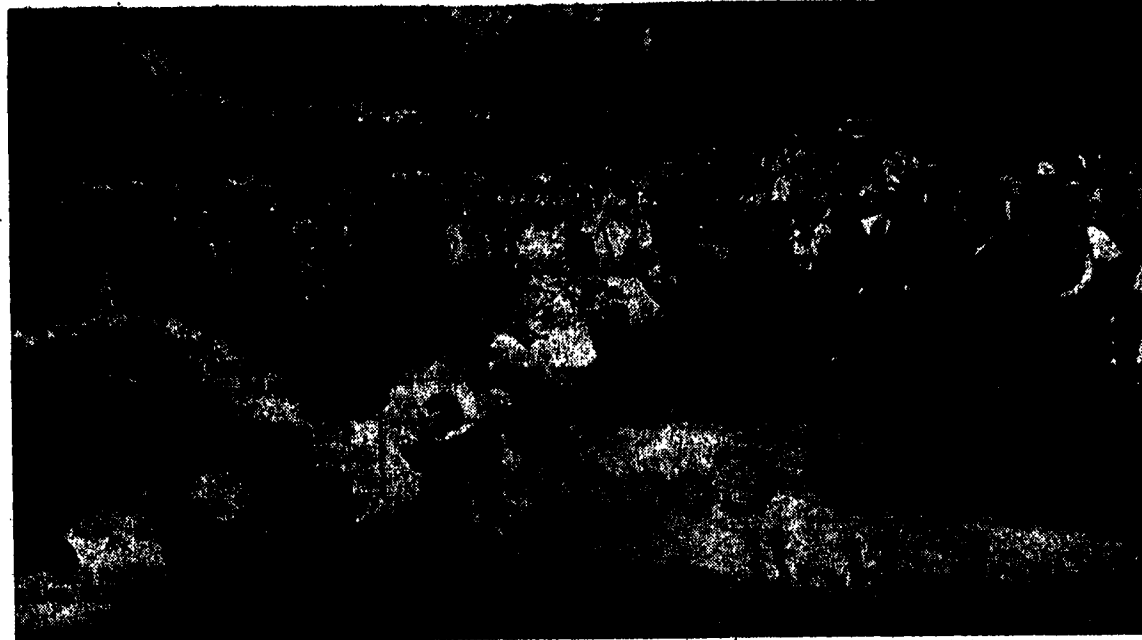
In 1929 when athletic interests were moved to Recreation Hall, the famed Hugo Bezdek jumped into the intramural picture and two years later, 1931, under the guidance of Bezdek, Penn State's intramural program was born. Bezdek contacted campus leaders and through his endeavors a voluminous program was organized with both outdoor and indoor contests.

A strong point of the continual success of the program was the arrival in 1926 of Eugene Bischoff. The intramural program owes much of its success and position at Penn State to this man who was instrumental in the finer points of organization.

### Records Accurate

The entire intramural program is under the jurisdiction of the IM office. All names, entries, postponements and schedules find their way through this office. This accomplishment is unusual in the fact that other colleges make use of a student board of commission. However, as a result of this excellent supervision, accurate records have been preserved which relate a tale of athletic achievement, comedy and human interest to the interested bystander.

One of the most popular fall sports, intramural football gained its hold on the Nittany Lion campus in 1934 when regulation rules were employed—even to the issuing of equipment. However, the number of participants and teams



THE TUG-OF-WAR was a favorite past-time during the University's early development, and class scraps like these might be considered the first intramural athletic events. Here, a group of hearty men drag their opponents through a stream of water while several hundred spectators look on.

were limited and the factor of conditioning became a serious question—on this basis the game was changed to an eleven man, two-handed touch version. A few years later, the game was revised to its present condition to allow more students to participate and also to highlight an emphasis of safety.

"Based on the number of teams entered and student activity, intramural football constitutes a very successful part of the fall program," Bischoff said.

During the war, intramural action was curtailed due to the presence of service groups; however, since 1946 student activity has grown immensely, with the only drawback being the lack of intramural expansion with student enrollment.

Three major changes since 1946 involved the dropping of cross

country from the intramural calendar and also softball because of a lack of playing space. The golf putting tournament was changed to a golf medal tournament in 1950.

In 1946, Clarence Dutch Sykes joined the intramural program and through his hard work and planning, the success of the program has benefitted greatly.

"Virtually every outstanding Penn State athlete was a participant in IM sports, other than their varsity sport," Sykes pointed out.

This list is endless and also equally impressive; however, the following are just a few of the personalities: Barney Ewell, Joe Colone who holds the IM 100 yard dash record of 9-9; Elwood Petchel, Franny Rogel, Tony Rados, Jan Cronstedt, Jack Sherry, Homer Barr and many others who have

(Continued on page 36)

### Telegram Brought Sad News of Loss to Yale

Lacking modern newspaper services, students who followed the destinies of their young football team in 1889 had to rely on word-of-mouth reports or brief notices of scores posted on the board of the downtown post office.

However, when the Lions met Yale, manager Rolland "Killer" Diller, rushed a telegram to the home forces. However, the student fans were severely disappointed by Diller's report. It read: "Yale 42, Penn State 0. The team played well."

### Students Ran Athletics

During the first 20 years of its participation in athletics, Penn State met 36 colleges and won over two-thirds of 300 intercollegiate contests played. However, until 1907 the College's athletic program was directed by student managers and committees. The present system was established in 1908 and can be considered the beginning of the present era of athletics.

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