

# Vega to Quit Lions For One Season

By FRAN FANUCCI  
Collegian Sports Editor

Lion gymnastic champion Armando Vega said last night he will not compete in inter-collegiate gymnastics for Penn State next season.

Vega, who won the Eastern and National all-around titles this year to reign as the country's top collegiate gymnast, said in an interview with this writer that since he has only one more year of eligibility remaining he has decided against competing next year. He will instead compete in amateur tournaments and possibly in the World Championships in Moscow, Russia, next year.

Vega said one of his main reasons for deciding not to compete next year was the fact he wishes to enter the World Championships. "I have three semesters left at Penn State," he said, "so I would rather compete in the World Championships next year and come back to the gym team in my senior year."

Vega continued: "I want to be in top shape for the World Championships and the only way I can do that is to concentrate on the compulsory events. In college they hardly have any of the compulsory events that are in the World Championships. So if I stay out of competition next season I will be able to devote all my time to those specific events."

If Vega holds true to this statement then the brunt of the Lion attack next season will have to be borne by Jay Werner and Lee Cunningham, both of whom starred with the freshman team this year. But in Vega's senior year the Lions should have one of their strongest teams in history, since



Armando Vega  
Retires for 1 Year

both Werner and Cunningham will have had a year of experience.

Coach Gene Wettstone had no comments concerning the move.

Vega's decision was regarded as a wise move by most of his teammates. Captain Dion Weissend said, "Personally I think it is a good idea. He is looking at the point of view of a national championship team two years from now when Werner and Cunningham will be more seasoned. Those three could be three of the greatest all-around men we've ever had."

Gil Leu had this comment: "I think it is good for him because he will go to the World Championships, and they (Penn State)

will still have a good chance next year. Vega will then compete for them in his senior year, which is the year before the Olympics. The team won't be any worse next year because we have those two freshmen coming up."

Senior Jack Biesterfeldt disagreed with Vega's decision. "I hope he changes his mind," he said, but then added, "but perhaps he does need the rest."

Vega's motivations for wishing to remain idle next year are undoubtedly to remain in top physical condition until the 1960 Olympics. By competing in the World Championships and then returning to the Lions in his senior year (1959), Vega will obviously be in peak form.

The 142-pound ace from Los Angeles was the instrumental factor in the Lions' NCAA Championship win last weekend. He scored 54½ of the team's 88½ points as he won the parallel bar title and took second in the free exercise, third on the horizontal bar, tied for third on the sidehorse, fourth on the flying rings, and tenth in tumbling.

He took first in two all-around events—the still rings and long-horse vault, which are not part of the individual competition.

### Spring Soccer Practice

Spring soccer practice will begin April 1. All students interested in trying out for the squad must procure a physical card from either Dave Bischoff, Tony Puglisi or Bob Lueft, at the equipment room in the gym before Friday.

Gene Wettstone, twice United States Olympic gymnastics coach, fielded winning teams 14 times in his 18 years at the Penn State helm.

# National Mat Crown Evades Eastern Teams

By LOU PRATO

Penn State's Eastern champion wrestling team will be up against an almost impregnable barrier when they seek the National Collegiate Athletic Association mat crown this weekend in Pittsburgh.

In 26 years of competition in the National carnival, only one

year are veterans of the National tournament grind, but the closest that anyone of them has ever come to an individual title was second place.

Co-captain Dave Adams, 147-pound Eastern titan, was beaten by Ed Eichelberger of Lehigh in last year's finals, 6-2, after leading the Engineer matman, 2-1, going into the third period.

John Pepe, the 137-pound Eastern champ for 1957, finished third



Jim Craig  
Iowa's 167 Pound Ace

Eastern college has been able to capture the coveted NCAA title. And that honor goes to the unbeaten 1953 Penn State alignment which beat strong Oklahoma, 21-15, for the crown.

Coach Charley Speidel's powerhouse, which took double honors that year by also grabbing the Eastern laurels, had only one individual champion, 191-pound Hud Samson, but overall team strength plus the failure of the Sooners to win any personal titles gave the Lions the victory.

Once again Oklahoma looms as the tourney favorite and, despite Penn State's victory in the Eastern tournament this year, the Nit-tanians are given only an outside chance of stopping the undefeated Sooners.

But nothing is impossible! With three 1957 Eastern champions, two runner-ups, and a third place finisher entering the tournament for Penn State, the Lions pose a major threat to the Oklahoma grapplers.

Four of the Lion entries this

at 137 in the 1956 tourney, but the other "National" returnees, Sid Nodland, 123, and Johnny Johnston, 130, failed to qualify last year.

Adams, Pepe and Nodland are seniors and will be getting their last crack at a highly-prized title. Johnston, the 1957 Eastern 130-pound king, is only a junior.

Adams beat John Sforzo, Ohio University, 8-2; Claudell Wright, Oklahoma Aggies, 5-2; and pinned Bob Weinhold of Colorado A&M in 5:30 before losing the decision to Eichelberger.

Pepe was eliminated in the semifinals by Michigan State's Jim Sinadinos, 8-4, but went on to lick Lehigh's Joe Gratto, 6-2, for third place. In preliminary action Pepe had beaten Cornell's Bob Majors and Oklahoma A&M's Bill Muthers.

Nodland was eliminated in the second round by Bob Royce of Wyoming, 6-1, after defeating Colorado's Bill Hayden, 5-4. Johnston was beaten by Jerry

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—Daily Collegian Photo by Sam Price

NCAA GYM CHAMPS pictured above are front row Bob Fohl, Phil Mullen, Dave Dulaney, and Adie Stevens. Back row Coach Gene Wettstone, Ed Sidwell, Gil Leu, Dick Rehm, Captain Dion Weissend, Chuck Fegley, Armando Vega, Jack Biesterfeldt and manager Jim Shultz.

B. A. (Dutch) Hermann, retired history professor, formerly coached Penn State football and basketball.

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