

The Sportseer



To Correct It, Not Condemn It

By Lou Prato
Sports Editor

It seems there are a "few" persons who found my article "State Basketball Almost Lost Art," in last Thursday's paper, quite disturbing, to say the least. Especially critical of my journalistic endeavor are the members of the Rec Hall athletic fraternity—and a reader, Bob Rankin, whose rebutting letter appeared in Saturday's issue.

There are many items we would like to clear up with our crucifiers and we might as well start with Mr. Rankin's criticisms.

First of all, I'd like to assure Mr. Rankin and his gloating

followers that although I may have the physical characteristics of said "empty barrel," I think there is enough grey matter inside to enable me to recognize poor basketball when I see it.

You and many others have criticized me for attacking Coach John Egli. I did no such thing. All I did was state a simple fact that applies in any athletic situation when the team is performing badly—that is, it is either the coach's fault or the material or possibly both.

I did not call for the resignation of John Egli. But I did hint that the team's trouble might be his fault—and any "loyal" Penn Stater knows that you should never say such things, at least in print.

In fact, many of my castigators agree that a troublesome basketball situation exists. But they have hollered louder than anyone over my reference to Egli.

Instead, they blame the present predicament on the lack of athletic scholarships—stating that Egli has not had the wealth of material to fully express his true ability.

If so, then the trouble lies with our present overall athletic policies—and here we are in partial agreement. Let's provide more scholarships for Egli, and then if the situation isn't corrected, he is the only person to be blamed.

Mr. Rankin also criticized me for not mentioning "the good points" of the Rutgers game. Now, if he had read my column intelligently, he might not have made this statement.

For as I said before, the Rutgers game was typical of the type of basketball that we have seen the "last four years." I did not comment on the Rutgers game as such, but only used it as an example because it was fresh in my mind. I certainly can remember other games I have seen over the past four year that were just as bad.

If anything, we must say that the current Lion quintet is a great improvement over the teams of the last three seasons. And why—because Egli has been able to open up his offense somewhat, what with two smoothies like Mark DuMars and Wally Colender in the backcourt.

It is Egli's system which I personally disagree with—that of a slow-moving, deliberate offense and a zone defense. To me, the fast break type of attack and a

man-to-man defense make for more exciting and interesting basketball.

Don't get me wrong. Although I prefer the faster style, I also enjoy watching a good deliberate-minded team in action. But in my four years at Penn State, the Lion cagers have not played a consistently good deliberate game. They have looked tremendous in spots, but they have not been steady.

Mr. Rankin also tried to take a few shots at my "ignorance" of the educational aspect of the athletics. If he would refer to Athletic Director Ernest B. McCoy, I'm sure he would discover my ardent interest in the promotion of education within athletics. In fact, he would find that a series of articles are soon to be written on the subject.

One more thing, Mr. Rankin, I'd be glad to give up my seat at the basketball games—if there weren't so many empty seats around me. Let's face it, attendance at basketball games does not come near that of the other winter sports—wrestling and gymnastics.

And here are the facts—straight from the files at Recreation Hall. Gymnastics this year has averaged crowds of 4800-4900, including two meets against weak foes—Temple and West Virginia. Wrestling has averaged 4200 and basketball has hit between the 2500-2800 figures.

Yes, the weekday crowds are smaller than the weekend ones, but only by slightly more than 1000. It's a known fact that on nights of sports double headers at Rec Hall, people leave after the first event—wrestling or gymnastics—is over.

In closing, Mr. Rankin and the rest of my ostracizers, I want to remind you that the sports editor does not know all the answers. But neither does anybody else.

In our way of life, we try to put our minds together when a situation comes up and emerge with the best solution for correcting the situation.

"Basketball at Penn State is practically a lost art." Let's correct the situation!

IM Wrestling Deadline

Male students interested in intramural wrestling must sign up at the intramural office by 4:30 p.m., Thursday, February 26. No entries will be considered after this date.

Record Set By All Stars In Bowling

The All Stars, led by Don Costanzo, set a new alley record as they trounced the Holy Rollers, 4-0, in intramural independent bowling League A Monday night. The All Stars rolled a 1083 game to post the new mark. Costanzo rolled a 243 high game and a 602 series.

Other individual games for the All Stars as they set the record were: Ron Kohler—231, Jack Gambatese—185, Bob Nelson—226, and Lou Klukosky—196.

In other League A action, the Zeros beat the Terrors, 4-0; the Poconos took the Spares, 3-1; Watts Warriors blanked the Harts, 4-0; McKee Aces defeated the Thompsons, 3-1; and the Splinters beat Glenn Road, 3-1.

In Independent League B, Hi-Five, led by Warren Slothower, shut out the Peanuts, 4-0. Slothower rolled a 583 series as the Hi-Fives had an 876 game and 2432 total pins.

In other League B action, House of Wax blanked the Gutterballers, 4-0; Twenty and Three shut out the Hamilton Hornets, 4-0; King Pins beat the Boozers, 4-0; Hamilton Fours defeated Nittany 36, 3-1; and the Strikes beat the Labache Club, 3-1.

Barth, Baldwin Win In Fraternity H-Ball

Monday night's intramural handball results were marked with six forfeits, but eight other games were completed.

Dick Barth of Theta Xi defeated Kappa Sigma's Cheta Blank, 21-3, 21-1. Phi Sigma Upsilon's Norm Baldwin beat Maurice Bailing of Phi Gamma Delta, 21-4, 21-3. And Beta Theta Pi's Bob Paris topped Alpha Sigma Phi's Dick Grob, 21-14, 21-12. Other winners were Dave Reeder of Acacia, Claude Rhen of Sigma Nu and Alpha Zeta's Don Robinson.

Only two games were played in the indie tourney. Bruce Blanning took Steve Calebotta, 21-4, 21-5 and Jim Bush beat Ed McDeavitt, 21-8, 20-21, 21-14.

Bedenk in 29th Season

Joe Bedenk will begin his 29th season as Penn State baseball coach when the Nittany Lions open their '59 campaign on April 8.

Broad Jump Mark Old

Oldest track record on the Penn State track and field books is the broad jump mark of 24 feet, 10½ inches set in 1928 by Al Bates.

50 EIWA Tickets on Sale

Fifty series tickets for the Eastern Wrestling championships at Cornell on March 13 and 14 are on sale at the ticket office in Recreation Hall.

The office is not handling tickets for the Eastern Gymnastic championships at Pitt March 7 and 8. Ticket director Ed Czekaj said plenty of tickets would be available since Pitt does not expect to sellout the field house.

The tickets for the wrestling

Gymnasts Face Problems In Tumbling, Side Horse

Coming back from Syracuse Sunday, the conversation between Lion coach Gene Wettstone, Armando Vega, Lou Savadove and this writer naturally turned to gymnastics.

Unlike other post-game discussions, this one put aside the past and concentrated on the future—how to beat Pitt. And the three "experts" weren't too optimistic about the outcome.

On the surface, it looks like just another meet for the undefeated Lions. Pitt has lost to two opponents the Lions have defeated—Army and Navy.

But the Lions will not field their strongest lineup against the Panthers and the lineup against the Orange just wasn't too potent.

One of the weakest events (all year) has been the side horse. That turned out to be the major topic of the discussion.

In five previous attempts the Lions have been able to win the horse only twice. Frank Donatelli turned the trick against West Virginia but has expired from the scene due to scholastic difficulties.

Vega won the event last Saturday in his first and only ride this year. He could win the event against the weak Pitt horesmen, but his use on the horse pulls him off the rings.

And Wettstone has only one ringman, Jay Werner as it is. He needs his consistent champion to back up Werner against the Panthers who have Dave Hirst, a senior who could beat Werner if the Lion ace has another bad day.

That leaves only erratic Dave Palmer, Ernie Lofgren and the injured Lee Cunningham for the event. And Cunningham missed the Syracuse meet because of a bad hand and has been unable to work out this week.

Werner may be inserted on the horse—and could win it. But the problem is depth. Therefore, the littlemen—Palmer and Lofgren—will play a more important part in swinging this meet than ever before.

Tumbling also appears a headache for Wettstone. Even with defending champion Dave Dulaney the tumblers have lost the

Danks' Family Faces Loyalty Problem on Mats

Gordon Danks, Penn State wrestler, has a spy in the heart of enemy territory. His father, Dr. A. Gordon Danks, is a member of the Cornell University faculty. Cornell was Eastern Intercollegiate Wrestling champion in 1958.

The 1959 tournament will be held in Ithaca and the Big Red is favored to repeat, with Penn State a strong contender.



—Photo by Mathews
Armando Vega
... side horse solution?

event three times this year. And Pitt has two of the best matmen in the East in Hirst and Don Need. The latter finished third in the Easterns last year and Hirst, who did not compete last year, is considered better on the mats than Need.

Again the Lions will count heavily on their second and third competitors—probably Werner and Lou Savadove—to keep the event close. Graeme Cowan was given an outside chance of competing this weekend but re-injured his knee yesterday and his effectiveness is in doubt.

With an even break in these first two events, Wettstone should have few other problems in winning the last meet of the season. But that's a big "IF."

—By MATT MATHEWS

? Cage Loops End in Ties

Intramural league H wound up in a four-way tie for first place at the end of the regular schedule Monday.

The Jordan Jokers whipped into contention by defeating the Hungry Five, 24-20. The Ugly Men also managed to stay on top as they edged the Diggers, 27-24. The Diggers had won five in a row.

In fraternity action, Tau Kappa Epsilon beat Alpha Kappa Lambda, 25-11, but wound up tied with Alpha Chi Rho for the top spot in League D. The Achi-Rho's trounced Kappa Delta Rho, 32-19.

Tau Phi Delta, Delta Tau Delta, Delta Chi and Beta Theta Pi also won.

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