

Tigers Have Plenty of Talent

West Heads Group Of Fleet Backs

By SANDY PADWE

Missouri football coach Dan Devine, like Frank Sinatra, has high hopes.

Nineteen lettermen, a veteran backfield, and good depth at the ends are the reasons for Devine's rosy outlook for 1959.

The Tigers, who host Penn State Saturday, have their backfield intact from last year's team which compiled a 5-4-1 record.

Heading the list of fleet Missouri backs is junior Mel West, who finished as the 12th best ground game in the nation last fall.

The 5-9, 185-pound West is regarded as a breakaway threat because of his fine speed. His best showing last season came against Kansas when he rushed for 170 yards in 26 carries.

"He's one helluva football player," commented Rip Engle after watching game movies of West against Oklahoma.

Engle was just as high on Phil Snowden, a two-year letterwinner who is back to direct Missouri's multiple offense. Snowden is rated as one of the finest collegiate passers in the midwest, having completed 46 aerials in 86 attempts good for 548 yards last fall.

He has been the starting quarterback at Missouri since his sophomore year but Devine and other observers on the Missouri scene feel this will be his best year.

Norris Stevenson is Missouri's right halfback. He does the hundred in 10 flat in football gear and is a junior.

Ed Mehrer, another junior is slated to be the starting fullback. He joined the first string midway through the 1958 season because of his defensive work but he wound up with the best rushing average in Missouri's backfield.

The ends are as strong as the backfield. Danny LaRose, an all-big eight choice last year while a junior holds down the right end, post while lanky Russ Sloan, a senior, is the other wingman.

He finished second to LaRose in the pass catching department with 16 nabs for 211 yards. Backing up these two is Dale Pidcock, a senior who lost his starting job to LaRose.

Mike Magae, the Bengal captain will be one of the starting tackles while Bill Wegener, a 215-pound senior will probably get the nod at the other tackle post.

The other co-captain Tom Swancy will be the center. He's a two-year letterwinner and has centered for Snowden the past two seasons.

Guard is the only place where Devine has troubles. Graduation claimed his two starters. And



Mel West

what losses they were. Both Don Chadwick and Charley Rash were all-conference picks and Rash was mentioned on some All-American teams.

Replacing them will be a sophomore and a junior. Paul Henley at left guard was a standout on the freshman team in 1958 and junior Rockne Cal-

Injury Shelves Stellatella; Lions Train For Bengals

Veteran guard Sam Stellatella is the latest Penn State gragger to go on the injured list. The two-year letterman sprained an ankle during practice and is expected to miss the opener against Missouri.

Penn State coach Rip Engle is putting the Lions through some tough conditioning drills to get them prepared for Saturday's game with Missouri.

The Nittanians saw movies of the Missouri-Oklahoma game and are working on offensive and defensive moves which should help them Saturday.

Halfback Jim Kern is running well again after missing a few practices due to a pulled muscle.

Captain Pat Botula is nursing a bruised hip but is expected to be ready to go full speed Saturday.

Engle said he would name his starting team by the end of the week.

Richie Lucas continues to impress all visitors to the Lion training sessions.

The Lion quarterback is Penn State's top hope for All-American honors.

Frank Yeutter, well known sports writer for the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin has checked into the Nittany Valley for a close look at the Blue & White.

He'll be covering them this fall. Al Jacks and Bob Scrabias, two quarterbacks from last year's team will help coach the Lion's frosh this season.

The Lions' first home game will be against V.M.I. a week Saturday.

Another home game with Colgate follows Oct. 3.

Future opponent Army opens at Boston College Sept. 26.

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Losses Hurt Lions At Center, Wing

By JOHN BLACK

(Second in a three part series on Penn State football by positions. Today's story covers the ends and centers.)

The loss of two key players, All-East center Steve Garban and collegiate all-star Maury Schleicher, coupled with a few freak injuries in the first week of practice has left Penn State's end and center slots "greener" and somewhat weaker than in recent years.

Garban, captain of last year's Nittany Lion gridders, and Schleicher, whom Coach Rip Engle rates as "possibly the best defensive end we've ever had," both graduated.

Wayne Berfield, Garban's understudy at the middle position had to sit out spring practice because of a broken arm, then rebroke the same arm in the first week of fall drills.

Jim Schwab one of the top end candidates injured an ankle on picture day, before practice even started.

Berfield's injury left the Nittanians thin center crew with only one varsity returnee and three green sophomores.

Two of these sophs are fighting to fill the gap in the first unit line. Jay Huffman, a 188-pounder from Clairton, who played end in high school but worked at center for the frosh is battling it out with Dick Wilson, a 208-pound tackle and end for the '57 frosh. He returned to school this fall.

Behind them come Jim Graham and Chuck Vogelsong. Graham is a 195-pound senior whose right thigh had to mend this summer from a gunshot wound suffered last spring. Vogelsong stands 6-1, 198 and hails from Upper Darby.

A problem arises on the defensive side of the slate here too—teaching someone to handle the middle-linbacking spot, to analyze the play and fill up the hole like Garban.

At the terminals the Lions will have to operate without defensive ace Schleicher, who was also the team's leading pass-catcher last year.

With Schwab out via the injury route, the starting left end slot is being contested by Hank Opperman, Dave Truitt and Dave Alexander.

Opperman notched the most playing time of the three last years. The junior 200-pounder from Connellsville saw 76 minutes of action in '58 and is also one of the team's place-kicking specialists. He has been doing all the booting chores since Sam Stellatella's injury Monday.

Truitt is a speedster who ran the hurdles for Chick Werner's trackmen last spring. The 6-3



Norm Neff ... returning starter

junior saw 55 minutes of playing time on last year's grid squad.

Alexander was under fire for 47 minutes last fall but in the spring worked his way to the number one unit. The 6-foot 194-pounder from New Castle has two years of competition left.

At right end last year's starter Norm Neff is back and seems to have earned the nod again. He is backed up by John Bozick and Bob Mitinger.

Neff a 6-2, 204-pound senior, hauled in nine aerials for 106 yards and two touchdowns in the '58 campaign and was second only

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