

Mat Publication Tabs Lions No. 1 In Nation

By JOHNNY BLACK

The undefeated Penn State wrestling team received some surprise backing during Christmas vacation when the Amateur Wrestling News, official publication of the American Wrestling Coaches and Officials Association, went out on a limb and tabbed the Lions as its pre-season pick as the top college grappling squad in the country.

The publication, which is printed in Oklahoma City, bypassed Oklahoma, Oklahoma State and other perennial powers from the Big Eight, hotbed of collegiate wrestling, in selecting Penn State as the heir apparent to the national collegiate throne.

The front-page story of the December issue stated that the Nittany Lion team is rated by rival coaches as the best in the East. With last year's top three teams — Oklahoma State, Iowa State and Oklahoma — reportedly riddled by graduation and ineligibility it said the Lions may be the team to end the Big Eight's domination in the NCAA tourney this spring.

In picking Penn State as the No. 1 club, the paper pointed out that the Lions have practically the same team back that surged to a surprise second-place finish in the Eastern Intercollegiate tournament after an off and on season.

With the exception of last year's captain George Gray, all the Blue and White lettermen have returned and a fine group of sophomores have moved up to add depth and team rivalry. It also counted heavily on the tutoring of Coach Charlie Speidel, whom it called "a master teacher, well known for making the most of his material."

Although the Blue and White matmen racked up three straight victories before the Christmas break, the Lion mentor would be the last to be excited by his team's selection for he calmly takes each match as they come and worries about nothing else.

"Cautious Charlie," as he is known in the coaching circles knows that he has a lot of good potential on his club but his 33 years of coaching experience have taught him that an injury, ineligibility or maybe the failure of a sophomore to develop can quickly change the complexion of a season.

Says Charlie, "I just wrestle the best man I have in each class at any given time, and that's it."

And right now all Speidel is concerned about is preparing his team for what may well be its toughest match of the season this



Pifer

Saturday at Lehigh.

The Nittany matmen, who shut out Army, 31-0, and Colgate, 33-0, then looked less impressive in winning their home debut from Michigan by a 19-12 score, meet the always-tough Engineers at Bethlehem in a rivalry steeped deep in tradition.

"It's always hard to beat Lehigh," says Speidel, "and at Bethlehem it's twice as bad. They'll pack that gym and the fans really roar. Wrestling is the big sport up there."

"Maybe I should take a cue from our football cousins (before the Army game they practiced while Army songs blared from a PA

(Continued on page eight)

Grid Coaches Recommend Return of Free Substitution

NEW YORK (AP)—College football coaches yesterday strongly recommended the return of unlimited substitution and the platoon system, voted out of existence seven years ago. But there was no assurance that the National Rules Committee will accept this recommendation when it meets at Miami Beach next week.

The Rules Committee of the American Football Coaches Assn., a body with limited influence, came up with the suggestion to do away with all limitations on substitution after polling 602 coaches. More than two thirds of those casting ballots favored free substitution as opposed to the present system or a liberalized "wild card" substitution rule.

The decision, however, will be made by the NCA Rules Committee, which sets up the playing code for some 500 colleges. In the past the committee often has ignored or altered the recommendations of the coaches. Several members are known to have strong objections to the return of platoons.

Free substitution was ruled out in 1953 under a mandate from the NCAA Council to eliminate platoon football while preserving the beneficial features of liberal substitution.

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Deacon's Coach Quits

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (AP)—Paul Amen resigned yesterday as head football coach at Wake Forest College to take a job with a local banking firm.

Billy Hildebrand, No. 1 assistant to Amen and line coach, was recommended to succeed the 1959 Atlantic Coast Conference Coach of the Year award winner.

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ATTENTION SENIORS

Seniors in M.I. and P.N.Ed. have until Jan. 13 to have their 1960 La Vie portrait taken at the Penn State Photo Shop 9 A.M. to 4 P.M.

All seniors are requested to return their proofs as soon as possible.