

a dean's view



## LaX Practice Begins—So What!

By DEAN BILLICK  
Assistant Sports Editor

What comes to your mind when someone mentions the word lacrosse?

I can just hear the answers now as you choke over your morning cup of coffee. "Lacrosse!" you say, "that's the sport the Indians invented hundreds of years ago and as far as I'm concerned, they should have kept it."

Or maybe you will say, "What's lacrosse? Is that the game that has players running around knocking each other on the head with big sticks, eventually trying to get a little ball into the net?"

If these are the type answers you would give to the above question, cheer up — you're the average Penn State student.

AT THE MOST, 300 of you usually attend home games. And if I told you that yesterday was the first day of lacrosse practice, you would say, "So what!"

Well, I can't blame you for not knowing much about lacrosse, for State has suffered through four losing seasons in a row. But things should be different this year. The Lions have good talent returning and a new coach that is just aching to make good.

Former Lion defense coach Dick Pensek was hired early in January to replace Ernie Baer, who left his job here to join a Baltimore sporting goods firm.

At 23, the new coach is the youngest lacrosse mentor in the country. But this is the very factor that Pensek has going for him. The two-time All-American lacrosse player at Rutgers is full of vigor and enthusiasm for his sport. He drives his players and he wants a winning team at State.

"THE MOST IMPORTANT part of this game is to get the boys to enjoy playing and winning will follow naturally after that," Pensek said yesterday as he watched his players working out. "These kids want to play and want to learn and that makes all the difference in the world."

Pensek won't make any predictions about the upcoming season, but one can tell by the tone of his voice when he talks of the prospects, that he thinks this could be a banner year. "I'm looking forward to a good season because we basically have good, individual ballplayers."

And the feeling among the players is that this could be the best team in the past eight or ten years. They have that much respect for their coach.

Pensek himself is a little leery about his young age. "I was really surprised when the University contacted me about the job," he said. "It took me about a week to get over the shock of it."

WHEN BAER RESIGNED, Pensek was an assistant lacrosse coach at the University of Massachusetts and a physical education instructor. "I was a little hesitant about coming to State because of all the administrative duties I have to handle," Pensek said. "I wasn't sure if I could handle it because I've never had a head coaching job before. But since I've arrived here, everyone has helped me and things seem to be going smoothly."

The new coach is no stranger to the lacrosse situation at State. Last year he served as defense coach under Baer and watched the Lions suffer through a 4-6 season. He also played against State when he was at Rutgers.

AT RUTGERS HE WON three letters as a lacrosse defenseman. He was named to the All-American lacrosse team in his junior and senior years, and in his senior year played in the annual North-South All-Star game.

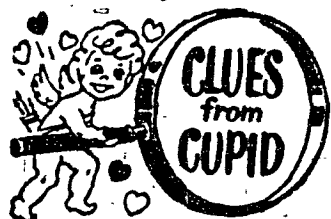
This, then, in the background for State's newest and by far youngest coach. He won't have an easy time trying to convince people that lacrosse is the most interesting and exciting of all spring sports.

But we'll bet that by this time next year, lacrosse will have a different meaning to most State students than it now does.

## VALENTINE'S DAY, FEB. 14

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# Middies to Provide Test For Talented Gymnasts

By JOHN MORRIS

Penn State's highly touted gymnastics team faces its first real test of the season when the Lions host defending Eastern champion Navy tomorrow night at 8 in Rec Hall.

Coach Gene Wettstone's reigning national champs have recorded wins over Springfield (64-32) and Temple (61½-34½), but neither of these teams measures up to Navy.

The Middies (3-1) have already trounced Springfield, 62-34, and Temple, 54-42. They also trampled hapless West Chester (69½-26½) but lost to powerful Syracuse (55½-40½).

Wettstone called his team "ready for Navy," but the veteran coach isn't likely to take this meet lightly.

THE MIDDIES romped to a shockingly easy 58½-37½ win over the Lions at Annapolis last year, and there may be a revenge motive behind the Lions' intent to kill tomorrow.

But avenging a romp with a romp will not be an easy task for the Nittanians.

Navy consistently has a good gym team, and the Middies seem to put forth a particularly strong effort when they come up against State.

TEAM CAPTAIN Jim Sloat is one of the big scorers for the Middies so far this season. A former flying rings star, Sloat has developed into a definite Eastern threat on the still rings.

Sloat, Dale Pearson and Larry Silver may give Navy an edge over the Nittanians' trio—Larry Yohn, Bud Williams and Jay Braude.

But the Midshipmen don't have anybody to compare to Greg Weiss and Tommy Seward, and that's where the Lions hold the aces.

Seward should win the free exercise and State's Gene Harlacher is a good bet for second. Midshipmen Bill Hahn, Art Day and Bill Kelley are all inexperienced in the event.

WEISS SHOULD win the side horse and parallel bars with a minimum of difficulty, and either Seward or Weiss should win the horizontal bar.

The Middies rely on Jerry Larsen, Fred Kenlin and Dick Murphy for their points on the side horse, but none of them should challenge Weiss.

Coach Chet Phillips will prob-



LARRY YOHN

...faces challenge

ably starts inexperienced Don Hunter, Lee Ewert and Frank Eissing against the Lions in the long horse vault.

## Delany Runs Tonight

NEW YORK (AP)—Ron Delany, the indoor mile record holder, returns to the boards tonight in the Millrose Games in Madison Square Garden as anchor man on an Irish 2-mile relay team.

Delany, who set the record of 4:01.4 in his last Garden appearance in 1959, refused to enter the Wanamaker Mile because he doesn't think he's in top condition.

The Irish team will be lined up against picked U.S. and Canadian teams.

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ACACIA

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9-12:30

JAMMY

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FEBRUARY 24th . . . 2 - 5:00 p.m.

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