

# Softball Proves Faster Than Pro Baseball Game

By **KEN DENLINGER**  
Sports Editor

Imagine the unlikely prospect of your date hurling a shoe at you across a dance floor at 96 mph. Even the most athletic of men would have a hard time ducking. But men actually make a living trying to hit an even smaller object hurtling toward them at greater speeds. These men play softball, a game that when played by skilled athletes, is much faster than professional baseball.

While the object in both games is to score more runs than the opposition, the methods of achieving this goal are quite different.

Baseball has been stricken with the home run disease. This disease began quite calmly when Babe Ruth found it more profitable to utilize his muscles as a slugger rather than as a pitcher.

**UNFORTUNATELY**, this disease has turned into an epidemic. It has reached the point where such basic skills as speed, defense and bunting are overshadowed by thick-armed Goliaths whose only talent is the ability to propel the ball out of sight 25 times a season.

Club owners claim that the game is more lively with the power, and they pay accordingly. They claim that the game would become a travesty if homers decreased.

Major league attendance has dropped considerably within the last decade, as noted by the constant franchise shifts. It can be

said that the power game no longer captivates people as it once did. Fans need variety.

Softball, on the other hand, combines timely if not awesome hitting, excellent defense and a far greater emphasis on pitching.

**A GOOD SOFTBALL** player cannot get by on just his ability to hit the ball.

Considering that in most softball games the combined run total for both teams rarely exceeds four, a sharp defense must exist.

With defense is combined superlative pitching. In no other major team sport does one player so dominate the outcome of a contest.

The softball pitcher is responsible for 90 per cent of his team's success.

**TO ILLUSTRATE** this fact, consider The King and His Court, a four-man barnstorming team that consistently defeats nine-man All-Star teams. Why? They have Eddie Feigner, considered to be the finest softball hurler in the game.

A few dry statistics are necessary to demonstrate the calibre of his talents.

Feigner's bullets have been timed at speeds exceeding 110 mph. The fastest baseball pitcher

yet timed was Bob Feller of the Cleveland Indians, but he couldn't break the 100 mph barrier.

What is even more significant is that Feigner is throwing the ball 14 feet closer to the batter than baseball pitchers. The batters are obviously at a great disadvantage.

**THERE ARE FEW** 300 hitters in softball. In fact, at last year's World Softball Tournament held in Clearwater, Fla., the champion Aurora, Ill. club had a team batting average of only .164.

The won because a raw-boned six footer named Harvey Sterkel averaged two strikeouts per inning in the 39 innings he pitched and an air-tight defense backed him up. But this does not mean that softball hitters are a bunch of weaklings who couldn't hit well enough to make a Little League team. Four of the Aurora starters were former pro baseball players.

Unlike the home run derby in baseball, the pitching domination makes for a faster more exciting game.

Softball is on the rise. In some parts of the country such as Florida and Connecticut it outranks pro baseball in attendance. And all because the fans prefer a hustling spirited 1-0 game to a drab 9-4 slugfest.

# Grid Practice Begins in One Week; Successor to Hall Must Be Found

Rip Engle, who in 12 seasons at the Penn State coaching helm has almost three victories to show for every defeat, invited 63 players to return to campus for pre-season football drills which will begin next Saturday.

From that group Engle must find a worthy successor to quarterback Galen Hall and must develop the "seconds" and "thirds" he believes will be necessary if his team hopes to match a 1961 record that saw his Nittany Lions post a 7-3 record, win the Eastern title, and whip Georgia Tech in the Gator Bowl.

**THE LION CHIEF** is frank to admit that his all-lettered tentative starting eleven shapes up as a strong one, but he rightfully resists the suggestion that 11 outstanding players can succeed against the likes of Navy, Air Force, Rice, Army, Syracuse, California, Maryland, West Virginia, Holy Cross, and Pittsburgh.

"We proved by our recent success with alternating units and specialists that it takes at least 25 or 30 good players to succeed on our level of competition," Engle said. "With potential problems at end, guard, center, and among linebackers, we must develop depth quickly if we hope to come close to last year's record."

The only question mark on Engle's "potentially strong first unit" is at quarterback, where letterman Don Caum is a slight favorite over four other candidates—lettermen Pete Liske and Gary Wydmian and sophomores Ron Coates and Frank Potter. The battle for this position looms as the highlight of pre-season drills.

**INCLUDED AMONG** the returnees are 20 players who lettered in 1961 and another—guard Bob Hart—who lettered in '60 but was limited to 33 minutes last fall because of knee surgery.

## Ex-Lion Gridders Shine in Exhibitions

Several ex-Penn State football players continue to show up well in pre-season professional exhibition games this season.

Last week against the Baltimore Colts, Galen Hall of the Washington Redskins flipped a 29-yard scoring pass to Dick James, Washington's leading ground gainer in 1961. Hall also threw a TD pass in the Redskins' first game against the Los Angeles Rams two weeks ago.

Former Lion Lenny Moore scored twice for the Colts in their victory over the Redskins.

**MILT PLUM** threw a TD pass as Detroit downed the Dallas Cowboys in another NFL exhibition last Saturday. Plum was traded to Detroit from the Cleveland Browns earlier in the year.

Don Jonas returned a punt 65 yards for the Philadelphia Eagles in their win over the Chicago Bears. According to club officials Jonas is a cinch to remain with the club.

## Syracuse Rivalry Tight

The Penn State-Syracuse football series, one of college football's most spectacular post-war rivalries, shows 18 wins for Penn State, 16 for Syracuse and five ties.

# Cricket Team Bows In Season's Finale

Special to The Summer Collegian

The Penn State cricket team, 11 men by now hardened to adversity closed the season with a final extravagant defeat at the hands of the British Commonwealth team in Washington's West Potomac Park last Saturday.

The Commonwealth team, composed mainly of English businessmen and a number of diplomats, opened the batting briskly. State captured an early wicket when Leahy accepted an incredibly simple catch behind the wicket off a mis-timed hook stroke.

**NO MORE** wickets fell until, with the score at 70, Price, the Commonwealth captain and a once English county-player, was retired by a fine ball from Hamilton.

But the batsmen continued to pile up runs at an alarming rate.

Finally Denny took a neat catch at long-on, and Harsha began bowling with remarkable length and direction. But it was too late.

A batsman's error between wickets led to a run-out. With that and the arrival of a welcome tea interval, plus the fact that Harsha was holding up the run-getting, led to the Commonwealth declaring the innings closed at 150 for five wickets.

State's batting was consistent inasmuch as it was quickly over and of disastrous proportions. Lacking Rustum Roy, who had been unable to make the trip, Vaughan and Dunbar opened the innings for reasons best known only to the captain who made the selection.


**DUNBAR LOOKED** good but unluckily chopped a bad ball onto the stumps with the score at four. Vaughan, with enough luck for both of them, hit lustily for eight runs. Denny batted solidly for a valuable 12, and Hamilton clouted a few in various directions before nipping one to the wicket-keeper.

Leahy, the captain, really looks like a batsman but in cricket looks aren't everything. A wild stroke outside the off-stump gave the wicket-keeper a straight-forward catch.

Carrier connected for five runs. Qazi got a single somewhere, and since Mehta hurt himself and couldn't bat, the innings closed for a total of 55, Penn State losing by 95.

## Rugged Ground Troops

Penn State backs rushed for 2,300 yards in 10 regular-season games last year, then added 137 more against Georgia Tech in the Gator Bowl.




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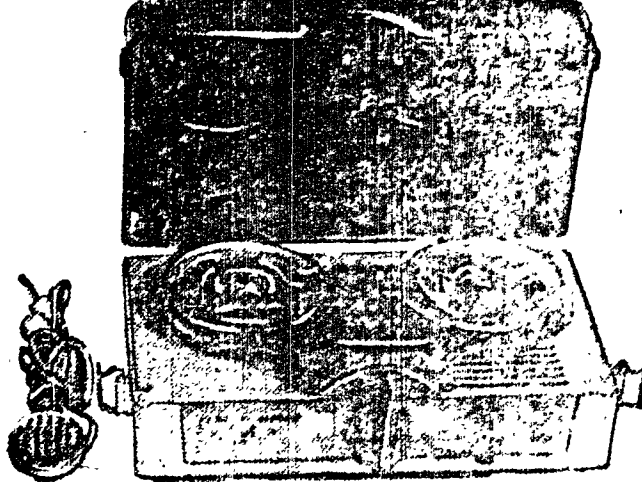
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