

a dean's view



Make Way Penn State, Here Comes Hoffman

By DEAN BILLICK
Sports Editor

A roll call of Penn State basketball greats might ring with names like Jack Biery, Jesse Arnelle, Marty Costa and Mark DuMars. But if you listen real closely, another name is inching its way on to the list.

He's the co-captain of this year's 9-3 Lions and one of the top 40 scorers in the country. He's a prime candidate for All-East honors and one of the best shots in State history.

He's a 6-5 senior who has fired in 240 points so far this season for a 20-point average and has shot 47.5 per cent from the floor. He's a dead-eye shot from 15 feet and it's this one-handed jumper that has amazed rival fans and coaches alike.

HIS NAME is Earl Hoffman.

"He's an amazing shot," West Virginia coach George King said in the locker room after watching Hoffman score 22 points at Morgantown in a losing effort last week. "Hoffman has been a good one at State for the last three years."

Bucknell coach Gene Evans was even higher in his praise after watching the Nittany star perform.

"One of the best shots I've ever seen," Evans said after watching Hoffman score 30 points to almost single-handedly top the Bisons in overtime.

Lion coach John Egli has guided All-American Arnelle and Little All-American DuMars, but he ranks Hoffman right among the best.

"If he continues at the present pace, I'd have to say he's the best shooter I've coached in my nine years here," Egli said at practice last night. "He's going to get my vote for All-American. When he gets that one-hander off, he doesn't miss too often. And the amazing thing about his shooting percentage is that most of the shots are from 12 to 20 feet away. He doesn't get many easy shots."

Admittedly, Hoffman is just an average rebounder and at times a rather poor ball handler. But when he starts shooting, there aren't too many that are any better.

In fact it was that soft, one-hander that caused Egli to devise a new pattern of plays for State's offense. They are called the "super" and the "special," but by any name the idea is to set-up a double screen so Hoffman can shoot his one-handed specialty.

HIS BEST PERFORMANCE this season was a 33-point outburst against Marshall in the Alpine Classic. This coupled with 18 points the next night against Miami of Ohio earned the Nittany forward a spot on the All-Tourney team. In fact, his 51 points was an individual high for the tournament.

Temple, however, was probably Hoffman's best game and his showing didn't go unnoticed. He scored 26 points in the Lions' upset victory and helped control the boards. The following week he was named to the All-East team as a candidate for final honors.

All hasn't been "peaches and cream" for the former Steelton High School star. After leading the Lion frosh in scoring his first year, Hoffman jumped into a starting role as a sophomore. Inexperience, a bad start and an injury put him in a firm rut and made his first two varsity years close to nightmarish.

"I was really rattled on the floor my first year especially," Hoffman admits now. "There was some guy who came to every home game and he sat there and yelled the whole game, 'Hoffman, you stink. You can't do anything right. Egli why don't you take that jerk out?'"

But things seem to be breaking Hoffman's way this season and even that fan has stopped yelling.

"I DON'T KNOW whether he graduated or just quit yelling," Hoffman said, "but I haven't heard him this year. I never did find out who he was, but he sure had me rattled."

In high school, Hoffman led his team to a 20-3 record with an 18.5 average. He was voted honorable mention All-State and first team All-League. He came to State because "he liked the campus."

What has made the difference between last year and this?

"We have a lot more team play this year," Hoffman explains. "If someone gets hot, the other guys set him up. I'm not shooting any differently."

Different or not, Hoffman has roared to a great first half, and with a couple breaks and that trusty one-hander, he could push his way into the State honor roll of greats.



EARL HOFFMAN

... favorite one-hander

Seward, Cohn Set To Meet In Unofficial Gym Battle

By JOE GRATA

It'll be State's Tom Seward versus Mark Cohen of Temple in an unofficial gymnastics battle for individual prestige Saturday at 3 p.m. in Rec Hall.

That's where and when the Nittany Lions, victors in their only start of the season, try to blast unbeaten (4-0) Temple.

In four meets this season, Cohn, a sophomore, has captured 11 of a possible 12 first places. In the Owls' latest effort, a 59-37 cakewalk over Navy, the all-around standout scored a first on the parallel bars, a second on the high bar and a first on the side horse by individual scores of 99, 99 and 98.

SEWARD, meanwhile, won first places in free exercise (95), on the horizontal bar (94) and on the parallel bars (95.5) to lead the Lions to a 54-42 opening engagement win over Springfield College. Unofficially, these combined scores rank among the highest, if not the highest, ever recorded by a State gymnast in an away meet.

Cohn and Seward will compete in two events together—the horizontal bar and parallel bars. Cohn



TOM SEWARD

... Lion gym captain

will be on the side horse for his third event and Seward will perform in free exercise.

"Tom is the type of performer who's self-sufficient," explains State gym coach Gene Wettstone. "He develops his own style. It's not so much coaching that's made him good but rather his own

brain-power and independence." The self-assuming Seward gets nothing but respect and admiration from his teammates. Prior to the Springfield meet, they elected him as this year's captain.

Besides contending for Eastern gymnastics honors in the all-around category, Seward of urban Philadelphia, maintains high academic standards.

The Nittany captain was named to the Dean's List last term for an almost-perfect record in the University's language curriculum. One source reports that Seward, a senior, holds mastery over "four or five" languages.

Apparently Seward feels weight-lifting and gymnastics go hand-in-hand; he's often up at Rec Hall working on a self-supervised weight-training program.

"TOM'S A STUDENT of gymnastics," Wettstone remarked yesterday. "He has superior knowledge of proper mechanics and studies the intricate parts of routines."

After a close study of the individuals involved, Saturday's bout between Seward and Cohn may turn out to be as close as the Temple-Penn State meet promises to be, but probably more interesting.

Sonny, Floyd May Ink Pact This Weekend

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Promoters and advisors have agreed on all points and formal contracts are expected to be signed later this week for the Sonny Liston-Floyd Patterson heavyweight championship fight here April 4, it was reported yesterday.

Jack Nilon, Liston's advisor who has been demanding the \$207,000 withheld from Liston's purse after the first fight in Chicago last September, said the matter had been resolved.

Nilon asked \$85,000 cash in hand and the remainder in escrow before signing contracts for the April 4 re-match.

"We have agreed on all points," Nilon said. "I will select a training site before Sonny comes down to go into training next month."

He said contracts are being prepared by Garland (Bill) Cherry, Liston's attorney, and will be ready for presentation to the Miami Beach Boxing Commission by the end of this week.

"Everything has been reduced to the drawing up of contracts and their submission to the boxing commission for approval," said Al Bolan, vice-president of Championship Sports, Inc., which will promote the fight.

Bolan said the contracts will be drawn to include a 15-point list of proposals the boxing commission laid down Monday night.

"There are no more minor details to be worked out," Bolan added.

Liston is training at a gym in Chicago and Patterson is at Highland Mills, N.Y.

Patterson chose Miami Beach for the fight and Julius November, his attorney, said the former champion was expected to arrive here four or five weeks before the April date.

Baker Named Captain Of 1963 Grid Squad

By JIM BUKATA

Versatile Ralph Baker of Lewistown, Pa., was elected captain of the 1963 Penn State football team at a banquet honoring the players last night at the Hetzel Union Building.

The 6-3, 215 pound center, who also has played guard and end, succeeds outgoing captain Joe Galardi.

"I don't know what to say — I'm very honored and happy," Baker said.

Baker thus becomes the fourth straight lineman to be named the Nittany Lion captain. Henry Opperman, Jim Smith and Galardi preceded him.

"I'm looking forward to next season," Baker said. "I only hope that I can do as good a job as Galardi did."

THE NEW CAPTAIN played end and guard during his first two years, but was switched to center last spring when there appeared to be a major shortage at the position.

Baker adapted well to the switch and climaxed a fine spring practice by being named the winner of the Red Whorrel Trophy, given to the player that shows the most improvement during the practice period.

He alternated most of the year at offensive center with Galardi and Jim Williams, but held down a linebacking spot on defense. Baker capped a great season when he was credited with 14 tackles in the Pitt game.

Lion linebacker coach Dan Radakovich calls Baker "a boy with the potential to become State's best linebacker ever before he's through."

COACH RIP ENGLE praised the members of his 1962 squad and told the returning players, "I'm looking to 1963 with great interest. It should be our toughest season since 1950."



RALPH BAKER

"We play our roughest schedule ever, and Woody Hayes of Ohio State and Len Casanova of Oregon already told me they will be ready for us. They both have debts to repay," Engle added. The Lions upset the Buckeyes a few years back and trounced Oregon, 41-12, in the 1960 Liberty Bowl. "However, I know that the coaches and the players will work hard to represent Penn State," he added.

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Interviews Tuesday, February 5, 1963

Further information and appointments: Office of Student Aid, 218 Willard Building