

'68 Season Played Down Prof Attacks Lions

(Editor's Note.—The following column by Miss Penny Weichel, a regular Collegian sports columnist, is reprinted in a column by Pat Livingston in the Pittsburgh Press. It is in defense of Penn State's 1968 football team, which was sharply degraded in the Press story.)

By PENNY WEICHEL
Collegian Sports Columnist

"Wise Guy" Downgrades Penn State," read the headline of Pat Livingston's "Sports Beat" in last Sunday's Pittsburgh Press. It seems that a guy named Gordon L. Wise, a marketing professor at Wright State University (wherever that is), has more or less questioned the No. 2 ranking voted to the Nittany Lion football team in 1968 on the basis of its "weak" schedule, which according to his super-secret formula ranks only 77th nationally.

Wise wrote in his report entitled, "A Mathematical Analysis of the Difficulty of Football Schedules" that Penn State football fans have no right to suggest that their team be considered for the No. 1 ranking (and I take it he also considers No. 2 a little rocky). His whole argument is based on the fact that "Penn State's opponents for the year left a bit to be desired." Then he wonders "just how many of the 76 teams which faced stronger schedules than Penn State might also have finished unbeaten had they met such opponents."

Maybe it was a misprint, but I couldn't believe anyone could be naive enough to make a statement like that last one. It just so happens that good old cousin Pitt was ranked as having the eighth toughest schedule according to Wise's formula. Now tell me that cousin Pitt could have some undefeated 15-1 season on the Lions' schedule. Tell me cousin Pitt could have gone undefeated playing in the Central Penn League with the Little Lions of State College High and the Bellefonte Red Raiders.

Winners of three games in three years, cousin Pitt and Penn State played six common opponents in 1968 and the Panthers were beaten by all of them and slaughtered by some of them. The funny part is this—the four other teams on cousin Pitt's schedule are this year's four traditional college football weaklings, Air Force and William and Mary plus Notre Dame and Penn State. Since there were 69 places that separated State and cousin Pitt on Wise's list, it's interesting to wonder just how much class the Nittany Lions added to the Panthers' schedule. Certainly Notre Dame doesn't account for all 69 places.

Anybody who knows anything about college football, even if it's just the mere fact that O. J. Simpson

wore number 32, realizes that Penn State didn't exactly have to oppose the Pro-Football All-Stars every Saturday last fall. But the schedule is made up something like 10 years in advance and the State schedule makers, I'm sure, try to set up games with their traditional rivals.—Army, Navy, Syracuse, Pitt—plus other contests with schools with rich college football traditions such as UCLA, Miami, Maryland. What's the Penn State athletic department supposed to do? Go out and recruit and, in Pitt's case, hire decent coaching for their opponents just to make sure the Lions will be playing somebody tough?

This guy Wise wonders how many of the 76 teams ranked ahead of State in schedule-toughness (really 75 now that we've eliminated Pitt) would go undefeated. It's that interesting but unanswerable question. It's interesting because I wonder myself how many of those 75 would be gutsy enough to withstand the pressure that the Nittany Lions had to endure every week—that pressure of staying undefeated. It wasn't that none of the Lions' opponents weren't capable of an upset. And it takes a Top 10 type team to stay undefeated.

I wonder if Wise-Guy saw the Orange Bowl. Probably not. He was probably too busy building a computer or plugging numbers into one of his homemade formulas.

But notice I said SAW the Orange Bowl—not HEARD the final score. A one point victory doesn't sound decisive or impressive. You had to see the game. Bobby Douglass, Donnie Shanklin, John and Junior Riggins, sure they ran all over the Big 8 conference. But State's vaunted rushing defense stopped 'em cold. Translate that fact into a number and plug it into one of your formulas Mr. Wise-Guy.

And those miracle plays. The pass from Burkhardt to Campbell, the Burkhardt run for the TD, the Campbell run for the two point conversion. Yeah, just tell me how many of those 75 teams could have come up with those clutch plays. I can't see Northwestern, the team who played the toughest schedule in 1968 according to Wise, coming up with a clutch goal-line stand against their grandmothers. Pity the Wildcats who had to open the season with Miami, USC, Purdue, Notre Dame and Ohio State on successive weekends. But what lessons did they learn, what experience did they gain when they went out over the weeks later and lost to mediocre Iowa by 68-34?

These mathy guys like Wise absolutely slay me. Always trying to prove everything in sports with their stupid formulas. But Professor Wise's challenge to Penn State's bid for a high national ranking is ultra-assinine. All because its schedule wasn't tough enough to suit him. My point is this. It takes guts, not numbers, to stay undefeated and rank high in the football polls. And Penn State had the guts, Wise-Guy.

Angels Fire Rigney; Team Last in Division

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Bill Rigney was fired yesterday as manager of the California Angels, whom he had led since they came into organized baseball, and was replaced by Coach Harold "Lefty" Phillips.

The sacking of Rigney from his \$65,000 job came the day after the Angels returned from a 0-10 road trip.

General Manager Dick Walsh announced the firing at a press conference in Anaheim Stadium after informing Rigney of the decision earlier in the day.

O.J. Seeks \$600,000

Bills May Trade Simpson

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Buffalo Bills owner Ralph C. Wilson Jr. is locked with O. J. Simpson over money, said yesterday he would consider trading the All-American running back from the American Football League team.

"I said I would consider it," Wilson said of a request by

lawyer, David Lockton.

Simpson, who reportedly seeks a \$600,000 salary from the Bills, dropped his demand for an additional \$50,000 in bonus and salary, Wilson said in a statement released yesterday by his office here.

"Up until then I was prepared to raise the price I had previously offered," Wilson said. He never said how much he would pay Simpson.

Fuel Tests Set Today For Indianapolis 500

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. (AP) — Carburetion tests today at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway will be more important than in past years.

Some cars have fuel consumption problems that border on the disastrous possibility of not having enough gas to finish the Indianapolis 500.

The turbocharged Ford engines are the greediest fuel eaters. For instance, Mario Andretti admitted that a Lotus-Ford he was driving until a wreck last week was getting about 1.5 miles per gallon.

The four-cylinder Offenhauser engines use less fuel than the eight-cylinder Ford's. But Ford has a horsepower edge. There are 19 turbo Offys and 11 turbo Fords in the field of 33 cars.

Blue Devils Join Slate

Penn State has added Duke to its basketball schedule for next season. The game will be played Jan. 3 at Durham, N.C. State and Duke last met in the 1967-68 season, the Blue Devils edging the Lions, 89-84, at Duke.



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