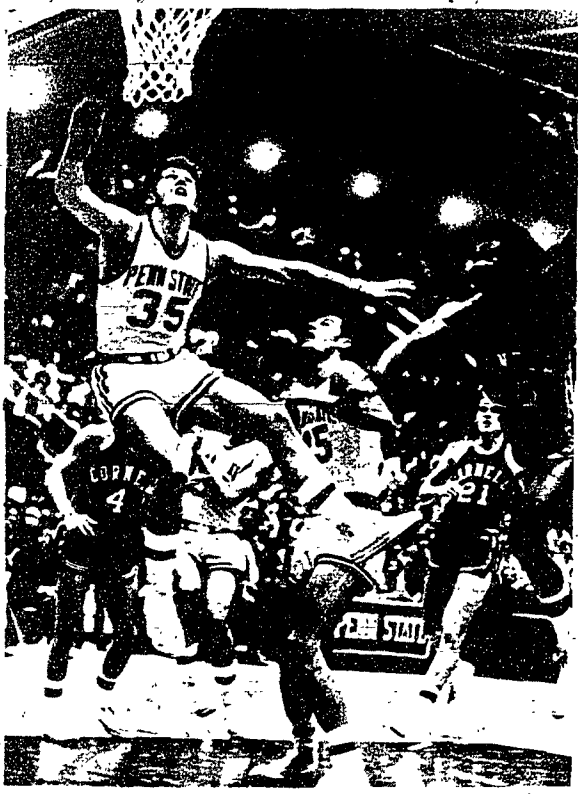


PSU cagers host Rutgers in season finale



Last roundup

TOMORROW'S game with Rutgers at 2:30 in Rec Hall may be the last one for seniors Chuck Crist (above), Bob Fittin, Bob Hodgson, Andy Popelas and Pat Lukasavich. Only an NIT bid would prolong their finale. It will definitely be their last appearance in Rec Hall, that is, unless they have any phys. ed. requirements still at large.

By WARREN PATTON
Collegian Senior Reporter
There is a basketball collecting dormitory dust in the room of Ron Brown, which should come as little surprise to anyone on the Penn State campus who isn't blind, crippled or crazy.

This particular basketball isn't likely to see future dribbles, layups or any one of the numerous things that Brown has shown that he can do with objects of its nature. For if there is one thing that you don't do with a game ball, it's taking a chance on jeopardizing its game-ball lustre.

Brown received the moment from a beaming coach John Bach seconds after he stepped off the foul line during the Kent State game Tuesday night. His two successful free throws had just etched his name into the record books as the highest scoring sophomore in Penn State basketball history.

"I knew that I had a chance to break the record this season but I thought that I might do it against Rutgers," Brown reflected in Rec Hall yesterday. "Late in the game, I became aware that I had about 20 points and only needed three to reach the record."

When some athletes become similarly "aware" of reaching immortality, their play often deteriorates into one huge ego trip, usually

with good results for the opposition. Not so with Brown.

He didn't fill the air with a series of bad shots or call for the ball every time the Lions approached the offensive zone. Brown took only 16 shots, slightly less than his season's average, making good on nine of them. His form at the foul line was similarly efficient, nitting on all six attempts for a well-deserved 24 points. And the record.

When Brown suited up for his first varsity competition this year, a lot of people thought he could possibly fulfill a lot of great expectations, something you'd naturally expect from a high school all-American.

With only the Rutgers game remaining tomorrow, it is apparent that he has. Even if disaster should strike in Rec Hall, Brown will lead the team this season in scoring, rebounding, and assists. He has added a new dimension to Penn State basketball, that of the do-everything player who forces rival squads to rack their brains for some kind of stop-gap defenses. His play has been the difference between a so-so Lion team is presently aspiring for an NIT bid.

"It's been a great personal experience for me to play in

this level of basketball," he said. "I've developed some great personal relationships with some guys on the squad and I'm really looking forward to playing here for two more years."

"But I also feel disappointment for the seniors on the squad, too," he continued. "Guys like Bob Fittin, Bob Hodgson, Chuck Crist, they've been here for three

years and were looking forward to going to a tournament at the end of this one. I've still got two more years to play and if we don't get a bid now, their careers end with the game tomorrow."

The Rutgers seniors themselves will be finishing out this season with a few pangs of remorse. The pre-season banners were all printed and distributed in

northern New Jersey lauding Dick Lloyd's first effort at coaching the Scarlet Knights one surely to finish up in a tournament of some sort. Getting adjusted to back-court transfer John Somogyi proved more difficult than pre-supposed. New Jersey's all-time leading prep scorer who wandered into Rutgers after averaging 39 a game for the New Mexico frosh two

seasons ago, Somogyi's gunning style forced a revamping of the Knight's attack.

It took half the season to complete the adjustments. Now, Rutgers has won five of six and will come to Penn State tomorrow with a front line of Eugene Arntstead (a high school teammate of Dan Tarr) 6-9 Steve Kaplan, 6-7, and Vince Roundtree, 6-6.

NIT still eyeing Penn State? Committee chairman says 'yes'

By GLENN SHEELEY
Assistant Sports Editor

Second chances seem to be the latest thing for Penn State athletic teams.

Football coach Joe Paterno, forced to swallow a nationally televised nightmare in Tennessee, could lean back with the upcoming Cotton Bowl still on tap as a potential face-saver. And a 30-6 demerol of Texas eventually bailed the Lions out with a fifth-place finish in the polls.

Could it be that the current holder of that often important ace in the hole is basketball coach John Bach? His 16-8 cagers, whom even Bach had counted out as prospects for the NIT tournament, still seem to be in the running for a New York trip.

Before the Kent State game, which the Lions won, 61-51 Tuesday night, Bach faced the not so pleasant fact that Penn State "seemed to be out of the tournament."

But, nevertheless, yesterday Bach decided to "make a telephone call to NIT committee chairman Ben Carnevale, the athletic director at New York University, just to make sure there was nothing more than a good season on the line for tomorrow's game with Rutgers."

The telephone company is constantly hounding its customers about the value of a phone call and as it turned out Bach thinks he made a real "tele-bargain."

"I asked him that as chairman of the committee to have a frank appraisal of the situation," Bach said from his Rec Hall office. "He said that they were waiting until the conferences finished their season Monday night but Tuesday morning they were going to sit down and take a look at us. But it all depends on how we do against Rutgers."

"They're aware of our record and what it might be at the end of the season," Bach said. "Our credentials are interesting and a win would give us a strong finish. It would match the records of St. John's and Fordham (both already accepted for the NIT). The door is ajar," Bach metaphorized. "Maybe we can open it a little wider if we do our job. If we don't we don't belong in the tournament."

Regardless of how much validity there is in the sudden rejuvenation for Penn State's tournament hopes, it certainly is an abrupt turnaround from the situation after the Pitt loss. In the locker room, you couldn't help but sense the utter frustration in Bach's mind. Sure, he said they still had a chance, but down deep you knew it was rationalization at its finest.

"I was depressed about our chances," Bach said. "I knew



SHEELEY

Crist most valuable?

Penn State basketball coach John Bach cites team captain Chuck Crist as one of the main reasons the Nittany Lions have far exceeded their preseason expectations.

"We have had great leadership from Chuck," Bach said. "He is a good leader off the floor and his hustle and desire on the court make us play harder."

Bill Gibson, coach of Virginia's nationally-ranked team, had similar praise for the Lion captain. "Crist is the guy that makes them go," Gibson said following the Lions' 86-74 victory over his team last month.

Crist, a football quarterback in high school, has made some important plays to pull out victories this year.

With one second remaining in the Georgetown game, Crist threw the ball the length of the court (96 feet) to Ron Brown, who deposited the ball in the basket for a one-point win.

At West Virginia, Crist made a steal and a layup in the last eight seconds to give the Lions another one-point victory.

"Chuck's value to the team doesn't really show up in the statistics," Bach said. "That was true last year when he was voted the team's Most Valuable Player and it is equally true this season."

Gymnasts step ahead in EIGL

By MARK SIMENSON
Collegian Senior Reporter
Penn State puts its gymnastic prowess on the line next weekend when it hosts the Eastern Intercollegiate Gymnastic League Championship at Rec Hall.

The undefeated Lions are confronted with two obstacles before their season is over. Penn State has to master the competition in both the EIGL and NCAA Championships if

it wants to attain the number one ranking in gymnastics.

This season State breezed through an eight-team schedule without any major problems and scored over 160 points in three meets. Coach Gene Wettstone, owner of 15 EIGL crowns, indicated the winning score will be about 160, well within the Lions' range.

In the Eastern scoring set up, it is possible for a team to represent the EIGL in the NCAA meet in April and still not win the Eastern title.

The representative to the Nationals is determined by adding the compulsory and optional scores together. The team with the top combined score will then compete in the NCAA Tournament along with eight other conference victors.

The Eastern winner is picked by assigning two points for each dual meet win and two points for each team it places ahead of in the optional routines.

Penn State has 14 points while Temple, Massachusetts, and Springfield are tied for

second with ten points a piece.

"We are odds on favorites to win (the Easterns)," Wettstone said, in an understatement.

With no one to challenge the Lions for the crown, Wettstone is working toward two goals.

"We want our all-around men to place high and have them qualify for the Olympic trials," he stated.

Any gymnast who totals more than 100 points in his compulsory and optional exercises qualifies for the Olympic semi-finals held in late May at the University of California at Berkeley.

Last year Marshall Avenir scored a 103.55 in the compulsory-optional part of the tourney held at Massachusetts. Avenir will need about a 46 on the difficult compulsories to go with a 54 in the optionals.

Both sophomore Jim Kruest and senior Billy Mitchell, have a chance to qualify for the Olympic trials if they improve on their showing at Amherst. Kruest placed third in the

all-around with 94.35 while Mitchell knothed sixth place with a 89.45. Both gymnasts had troubles with compulsory routines.

Wettstone doubted that his team would take home "the same number of Eastern berths to the NCAA tourney. "There are so many better specialists around this year," he concluded.

In 1971 State took 13 of the 21 Eastern NCAA qualifying slots. This year the Lions are concentrating on team unity and not going out for individual medals.

We blew it

The Collegian inaccurately reported that swimmer John Piatt's 3.79 cumulative average was the highest of any current Penn State athlete. In reality, Bruce Bannon, junior defensive end on the Lion football team, heads the list with a 3.89 average. It was quite a "degrading" slight.

Gun bill intact

HARRISBURG (AP) — The House Tuesday voted to leave Philadelphia's gun control law intact, excluding from it legislation which would have prohibited all local gun registration ordinances.

The 107-81 vote left the broader measure in position for final action, and set the stage for a battle on the emotional gun registration issue.

If the bill is passed, only the Commonwealth could enact a gun registration law.

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