

A feeling on a million dollar season

By RICK STARR
Assistant Sports Editor

Turning down a sure million dollars is a thought that would make most sane persons sick. Joe Paterno did that last year, but Paterno isn't like most sane people. He has a good feeling.

All talk of materialism aside, that good feeling comes over Paterno whenever he pauses to consider the potential of his '73 edition of the Nittany Lions. Paterno is not noted as a bubbling cauldron of optimism so, more often than not, a good feeling on Paterno's part almost always reflects in the standings.

Paterno's feeling has a solid basis. Part of it is the running game complimented by senior tailback John Cappelletti. Second only to Lydell Mitchell

in the Penn State record book for ground gained in one season, Cappelletti returns to work behind a seasoned offensive line.

Cappelletti will also get blocking help from either Bob Nagle, last year's starter, or Tom Donchez, an excellent blocker who Paterno red-shirted last year due to a knee operation.

The fact that Penn State's greatest yardage gainer in history, John Hufnagel, has moved on has not dampened Paterno's feeling. Junior Tom Shuman, Paterno feels, can step right in and do the job even though he handled the ball only 17 times last year. Four of those 17 plays went for touchdowns.

Dick Barvinchak, who missed all of last year while playing basketball for Penn State, was most impressive in the final spring scrimmage and will supply secondary depth at quarterback.

Defensively, Paterno's feeling has been aided by a healthy Randy Crowder. Sick at the prospect of playing without a tackle that he had praised as "the best tackle at Penn State since Mike Reid," Paterno feels better now that Crowder has returned.

The improvement at defensive tackle also improves the situation at defensive end as Dave Graf has been returned to his former position at the end of the line.

"Graf would be a good tackle, but he wouldn't make the big plays that he can make at end and Crowder can make at tackle," Paterno said. Both are now free to make their big plays.

A solid group of linebackers who have had to absorb the loss of All-America linebacker

John Skorupan, will be steadied by Ed O'Neil and Doug Allen. Chris Devlin and Tom Hull round out the starters. At defensive halfback, Buddy Ellis will lend a considerable share of experience. The durable senior has started every game for the past two seasons and he will combine with Jim Bradley at halfback and either Jack Koniszewski and or Scott Mitchell at safety to shut off the air waves.

"We look a little quicker in the secondary than we were last year and some of our young people give us more depth," Paterno said.

"I have a good feeling about this squad. They appear to like each other. That's a big plus."



A good feeling...

Collegian sports

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Cover: John Cappelletti (22) is stacked up by North Carolina State defense. Photo by Randy J. Woodbury.

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