

At Palo Alto, Sept. 15

Stanford: a sneaky optimism awaits

By GLENN GARVIN
Sports Editor
The Stanford Daily

STANFORD, Calif. — There's a sort of sneaky optimism on the Stanford campus this fall. Everyone is ignoring the Cardinal football team again.

That makes it just like old times, and that's why Stanford fans feel a touch of optimism about the upcoming season.

It seems the Cards play their best football when nobody is paying attention. That's what happened in the 1970 and 1971 seasons, when Stanford dominated the Pacific-8 conference and upset heavily-favored Bid 10 opponents in the Rose Bowl.

Last year everyone expected the team to be headed for big times — but they never materialized. Without much of an offensive

line, the Cards had moments of brilliance, but stumbled to a 6-5 record.

Now the spotlight has shifted down south to the University of Southern California, and Stanford fans are hopeful that the return to obscurity will work some magic, as it did in 1970-1971.

The tools are certainly there. Returning quarterback Mike Boryla was named to Playboy magazine's All America first team, no surprise to those who saw him destroy enemy secondaries for three months last fall.

As a sophomore, Boryla was injured in the first game and never made it back but gained an extra year of eligibility. His junior year was spent backing up All America Don Bunce and last year he finally got a chance to play.

Boryla connected on 183 of 350 passes for 2284 yards and 14 touchdowns, totals good enough to make him the fourth leading passer in the nation last year. They might have been even higher if the Stanford line had offered any protection.

But it didn't. Boryla was sacked for 295 yards last season, and the biggest Stanford problem will be to plug those holes, which also severely damaged the Card running game. It won't be easy, since five starters graduated, but coach Jack Christiansen hopes that veteran tight end Glen Stone will be able to anchor a capable group of young players in the line.

The other question mark is the defensive line. Seniors Roger Stilwell and Pete Hanson can hold down one side — but that leaves two spots open, and so far no one has been particularly impressive trying to fill them.

The rest of the defense is excellent. Junior Forrie Martin, a 6-1, 225-pound human wrecking machine, leads a fine corps of linebackers, and senior Randy Polt is a pre-season first team All America at defensive



QB Mike Boryla and center Bill Reid



Running back John Winesberry


back. James Ferguson, Craig Zoltosky and Max Goldstein round out what is generally regarded as one of the top two or three secondaries in the country.

Stanford's running game looks good — if John Winesberry can stay healthy. Winesberry, another pre-season All America, hurt his ankle in the third game of

the season last year, and was never quite right after that. Junior fullback Scott Laidlaw adds muscle to the backfield, while Winesberry is an explosive break-away threat.

If the Stanford line can give him running room, and provide Boryla with time to pass, the spotlight may return to Stanford.

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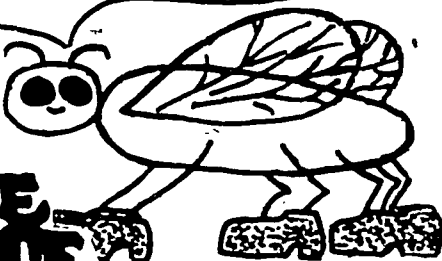
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