

Booters fall to Quakers; was season a success?

By **TIM PANACCIO**
Collegian Sports Writer

About the only thing that seems certain concerning Penn State's booters (8-2-2) is that the season is over. As to it being a success (Penn State style), is open to debate.

The Lions struggled through a fall of injuries, scoring slumps, scoring splurges and line-up juggling. The struggle ended with an invitation to the NCAA Tournament.

Insider Tom Kehan scored his second three-goal "hat trick" of his career in leading the Lions to a 5-3 win over Philadelphia Textile in the opening round.

But that was the brightest playoff picture would get as Herb Schmidt's old nemesis, Penn, walloped the Lions 4-0 on Franklin Field's Astro Turf in Philadelphia.

It had to be disappointing to Schmidt for Penn State also lost last year to the Quakers in the NCAA post-season play. At least two players, Tom Kehan and Chris Bahr, differ on whether or not the season was a success.

"I was a little disappointed with this season," said halfback Chris Bahr. "Our overall performance wasn't had, but we had the potential to be better than we were."

"We should have beaten West Virginia (3-1 loss) and we should have beat Penn, but we didn't. By the end of the first half against Penn we could have had three goals, but we didn't. Penn will panic if they fall behind. But they play very well when they're ahead."

Penn led at the half 2-0, scoring one goal with 41 seconds remaining. It was a game where Penn State could do nothing right and Penn

nothing wrong. The Lions blew at least two breakaways and the Astro Turf gave them problems.

"On natural surface," said Tom Kehan, "it would have been a completely different game. We would have beat Penn on grass but the Astro Turf hurt us."

"Like myself, I'm helpless on turf because it's too quick. You have a quicker ball and this requires a soft touch on a pass. You can't cut well and we're not overwhelmingly quick, so it all figures."

Kehan feels the season was a success unlike Bahr, which is strange considering Kehan sat out two games and played sparingly in two others due to leg injuries.

"Things turned out pretty well considering all of our problems this year," Kehan said. "The biggest problem of course was getting 11 people together on the field and keeping them healthy. I think everyone who played this year was hurt or bothered at one time or another."

Kehan had his leg injuries of course. So did fullback Bob Viehweger. Tim Dantzig and Mike Arnold, the due goals, were hurt. Dantzig took some roughing up against Army and Arnold suffered a partially collapsed lung in Penn State's opener against West Chester.

Dantzig got the NCAA shaft in the playoffs also. After having confirmed that he was eligible to play this year, the NCAA reversed its decision at playoff time and ruled him ineligible. The hassle goes back to the late-arriving transcripts from Navy.

Defensively, the Lions were good. Dantzig had a 1-14 goals against average in seven games and Arnold had a 1-66

average in six games. Penn State outscored its opponents 32-14.

Some have tried to compare this season's Lions to last year's 9-1-2 club that featured All-American turned pro, Andy Rymarczuk.

Rymarczuk will best be remembered for his winning goal with 18 seconds left against Penn two years ago that made the Lions a 2-1 victor in the NCAA playoffs.

Herb Schmidt doesn't like to compare this year's booters with last year's. He does admit that last year's squad was more offensive minded, however.

But Penn has changed according to Kehan who played on Penn State's winning team in 1971.

"Penn is a lot stronger now," admitted Kehan. "They're very deep and they drew some players from St. Louis so the quality runs right down their lineup."

Kehan likes the Penn State-Penn rivalry. "Penn has a large following in Philly and about three-fourths of our team is from the area so there's a rivalry that gets better each year thanks to this and Herb expanding the soccer program. I'd like to see Penn during the regular season."



Photo by Randy J. Woodbury

Halfback Chris Bahr and Lions suffered scoring woes and dropped a 4-0 decision to Penn in the NCAA regionals

Penn State waiting for real gym season

By **MARK SIMENSON**
Assistant Sports Editor

December gym scores are about as important as a 400 batting average in May. They look good, but they don't mean much.

Penn State began defense of its Eastern Intercollegiate Gymnastics League championship with a modest 154.85 total Saturday against Cornell which could muster only a 134.85 score in its first league appearance.

Down the road at Temple, the Owls and Southern Connecticut matched routines and both schools topped the 157 range. That makes Penn State in third place, right? Don't bet on it.

The Lions, who placed second to Iowa State at the Nationals last April, own 17 EIGL titles, including the last and are shooting for their final crown because Penn State withdrew from the Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference in July.

Penn State earned the 154 without six of its regulars, attesting to the depth Gene Wettstone has ready in the South gym. Because the Lions have a soft schedule and February when the face Massachusetts, Temple and Southern Connecticut, the absent gymnasts won't be missed.

Wettstone is counting on the league to be a five team race with the three February opponents plus Navy to be contenders along with the Lions.

The major force behind the squad this season is co-captain Jim Kruest, who is on his own after warming up the crowd for teammate Marshall Avener the past two years. Kruest easily won the all-around against Cornell and added four firsts in the individual events. In vaulting where he is a two-time EIGL champ (1971, 1972) as the 5-8, 135-pound senior teammate Jay Cooper.

When he hasn't been hampered by injuries, Kruest has looked like he belonged with the long line of Penn State gymnasts like Greg Weiss, Steve Cohen, Bob Jones and Avener.

"He looks better on every event than last year," Wettstone said of Kruest. Penn State, without NCAA all-around winner Avener, must also look better on each event if it hopes to take an 18th and final EIGL title.

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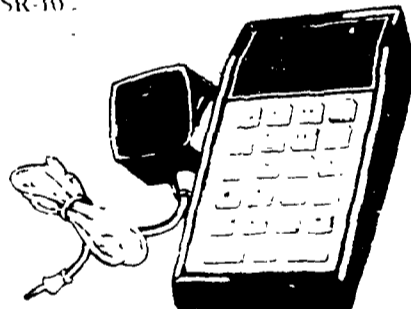
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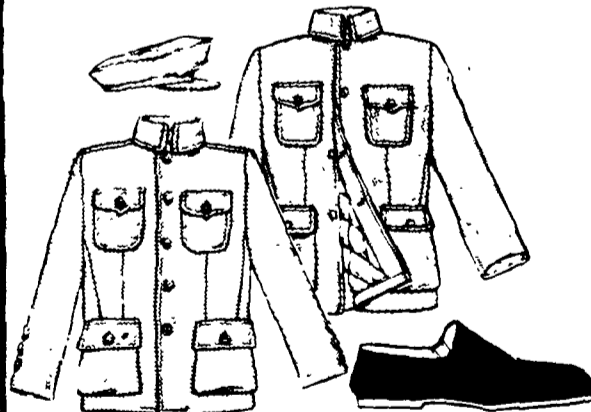
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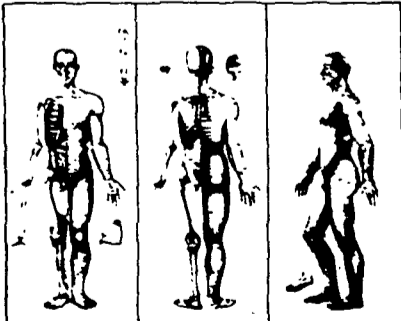
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