

Michigan, Springfield challenge grapplers

By JACK PATON
Collegian Sports Writer

The Penn State wrestling team, after savoring its win in last week's Invitational, will face another formidable challenge tonight at 7:30 and tomorrow at 2:00 when unbeaten Michigan and Springfield come into Rec Hall for dual meets.

The Lions will send out the same team that performed so impressively last weekend, with one exception. As a result of this week's elimination bouts, senior Denny St. Clair will be the heavyweight in place of Rich Boehmer (2-2 this season). St. Clair beat Boehmer twice in practice to gain the spot.

According to coach Bill Koll, his wrestlers are ready to put the Invitational victory behind them and concentrate on this weekend's meets. "As a matter of fact," he said, "we're really looking forward to the next two weeks, counting the meet with Clarion (Dec. 20).

"Michigan should be one of the best meets of the season and we certainly can't afford to overlook Springfield. These two meets are very crucial for us having an outstanding season or just a good season."

Considering Michigan's 5-0 record and second-place finish in its tournament last weekend, the Lions may have a problem with regarding Springfield (1-0) too lightly. Koll dismisses this, claiming he's more frightened by teams without the good reputations than of the so-called powerhouses.

"There's an absolute in wrestling that if you



compete long enough against someone, you'll get beat," he said.

"If you take anyone too lightly, you're in trouble. We went up to Springfield about seven or eight years ago, expecting to whip them. Instead, nothing went right and we got our fannies whipped.

"Our wrestlers are mature enough to respect both teams equally. Besides, if you can't get up for a team, you don't deserve to be on our team."

"The Lions will have three wrestlers putting their unbeaten streaks on the line this weekend. Invitational champs Wayne Packer (118), Jerry Villecco (167), and Bill Bertrand (190) are all 4-0.

Packer will go against Michigan sophomore Greg Haynes (4-5) and Springfield's LeRoy Witherspoon, a soph who will be making his seasonal debut. Villecco faces two unbeaten, in Michigan's Ed Neiswender (2-0) and Springfield's Nick Porillo (1-0). Bertrand is pitted against Harold King (8-1) on

Friday and against Bill Fiore (1-0) on Saturday.

Here are the other matchups:
126—Jimmy Earl (2-2) vs. Jim Boyd (S), making his first start of the season, and freshman Amos Goodlow (M), who is 8-3.

134—Rich Kepler (1-3) vs. Michigan's Rich Lubell (3-0) and either Larry Tremblay (0-1) or Chris Shaddock (0-0).

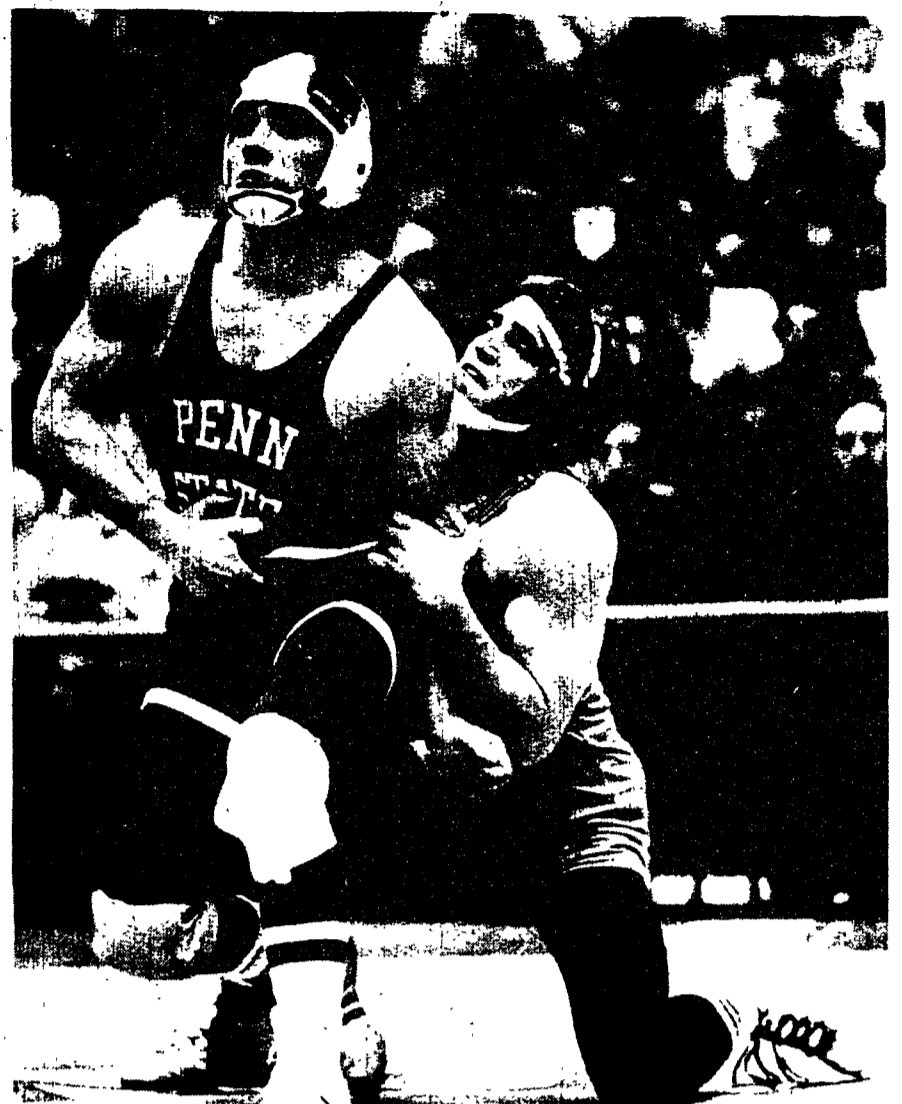
142—Denny Sciabica (3-1) vs. Karl Briggs (3-0) of Michigan, and Springfield's Bob Walsh, making his first varsity start.

150—Bill Vollrath (3-1) vs. the Wolverines' Mark Churell (8-1) and Springfield's Ed Gibbons, making his seasonal debut.

158—Jerry White (3-1) vs. Michigan junior Mark Johnson (9-0) and the Indians' Jay Mulligan (1-0).

Heavyweight—St. Clair will make his debut against Michigan freshman Mike McDowell (2-2-1) and Springfield's freshman Jeff Blatnick (0-0-1).

NOTES: Michigan picked up two individual championships in their tournament, via Churillo and Johnson.... Springfield has three New England champions in Porillo, Munroe, and Mulligan, but will be missing their regulars at 118 and 142 due to injuries.... Porillo handed Villecco one of the Lion captain's four losses last year.... Kepler fought off the challenge of senior Com Teagarden in eliminations to retain the 134 spot. Each wrestler beat the other once.... Koll dismissing the effect of a last-minute pin in the Invitational on Jerry White: "Just like the Okies say, 'Every horse can get rolled, and every wrestler can get thrown'."



Dave Becker (standing up) will meet two undefeated opponents

Photo by Eric Felack

Whelan, UMass—different tango

By BRIAN MILLER
Assistant Sports Editor

The first time Gene Whelan attempted a backhandspring, he broke his wrist. For most, an experience like that would end a gymnastic career, not begin one.

Except Gene Whelan had never really excelled at other sports and since his brother Jay was a gymnast, Gene decided to stay with the sport. U.S. and Penn State gymnastics fans are glad he did.

Whelan went on to become a member of four U.S. national teams, including stints with the 1974 World Games squad and last summer's Pan Am Games team. And tomorrow, the senior from New Hampshire will travel with the rest of Penn State's gymnastic squad to the University of Massachusetts for the season's first dual meet.

It will be a homecoming of sorts for Whelan, who transferred from UMass to Happy Valley two years ago.

"I didn't really want to leave and I miss it academically," Whelan said. "But I don't miss it gymnastically."

It seems Whelan and UMass athletic director had a difference of opinion over the schools' gymnastic program.

"I went to the AD at UMass and asked him to tell me what the future of the gymnastic team was going to be," Whelan said. "He said he didn't know and wasn't going to know. He said gymnastics at UMass was going to be turned into an All-New England school."

Which according to Whelan, signaled the end of opposition any where near national power calibre.

"What it all meant was that



Photo by Joe Tori

Gene Whelan will lead Penn State's gymnastic team into the University of Massachusetts tomorrow night for the season's first competition

gymnastics was on the decline there," added So Whelan read the vibes

and decided that he'd just as soon perform elsewhere. But Penn State was far from his first choice.

"Actually I wasn't going to Penn State originally, every school hated Penn State because they always won," Whelan said. "In fact, I planned to go to Oklahoma."

"But Tom Dunn (Whelan's former coach at UMass and now an assistant coach at Penn State) highly recommended it (Penn State). Plus it was the one gymnastic program in the country that I knew wouldn't be dropped."

Whelan will be one of four Penn State all-around performers this year, but with his experience in international competition and his fourth place finish in the NCAA all-around two years ago, Whelan will emerge as the Lions' key AA competitor.

"This team (Penn State) is different from last year in that this year, they are doing compulsories," Whelan said. "That's where you win. 75 percent of it is compulsories."

It's also where most American gymnasts seem to be lacking.

"Americans work on optional because optional have more difficult tricks," Whelan added. "Other countries are very sure of their optionals so they spend a lot more time doing compulsories."

Whelan also has some ideas why the U.S. has trouble with foreign gym squads, like the Japanese.

"The country is so big, there might be a technique change here but it doesn't change there," said Whelan. "Plus the country can't subsidize athletes. Athletes

can't work all day, then work out five hours in the gym. It can't be done physically."

So many of the country's top gymnasts compete in college but stop progressing after graduation because of a lack of funds.

"They don't train until they're 27 or 28, when they should be really good," Whelan added, "they never reach their potential."

Whelan will be trying to reach or near his potential tomorrow against UMass although the one time Minuteman isn't more up for this meet than the others, adding "I'll just go through the routines."

As for the spectacular in Whelan's routines, Whelan said THE move for him is his high-bar dismount.

"It's called a brani-ot flifus," Whelan said. "It's a double front with a half twist. I don't think any one else is doing it."

For goals, even the Olympics take second seat for Whelan. "Everybody wants to be in the Olympics," Whelan said. "But my main goal is to be a good gymnast. I'd rather be a good gymnast that didn't make the teams than a bad gymnast who made all the teams."

Gym notes: Massachusetts is 2-1 so far this season with its competition reflecting what Whelan mentioned, All-New England and of poor quality — Boston University, West Point (which UMass lost to), and Lower University. Top AA performers are the Marks brothers, Paul and Steve. The Lions trounced UMass 210.45-198.4 last year in Rec Hall.

Bucs get Medich

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. (AP) The New York Yankees, frustrated in their bid to win the American League pennant last season, completed two trades yesterday, unloading slugging outfielder Bobby Bonds to California and acquiring five players — three from Pittsburgh.

As the trading market finally picked up at baseball's winter meetings, the Yankees landed pitcher Ed Figueroa and speedy outfielder Mickey Rivers from the Angels for Bonds.

In announcing the trade with California, Gabe Paul, Yankees president, said the move cleared the way for further trades and, shortly afterwards, the Yankees sent pitcher Doc Medich to the Pittsburgh Pirates for Willie Randolph, a highly regarded young second baseman, and veteran pitchers Dock Ellis and Ken Brett.

A total of 32 players have been involved in 10 deals this week during the meetings as the clubs raced the midnight inter-league trading deadline.

The Yankees were picked by most experts to win the AL East last season after obtaining

Bonds and signing free agent pitcher Catfish Hunter, but finished third, 12½ games back of first place Boston.

In another trade, the San Diego Padres acquired third baseman Doug Rader from the Houston Astros for right-handed pitchers Joe McIntosh and Larry Hardy.

Meanwhile, National League owners voted to extend their financial support of the San Francisco Giants until Dec. 30, pending sale of the club.

Indications were that the Giants would remain in San Francisco despite poor attendance in recent seasons and the generally accepted opinion that the Bay Area can't support both them and the American League's Oakland A's.

Charles Feeney, National League president, said Giants' owner Horace Stoneham has had "several offers, more than two," to buy the club. Another source said there were at least seven or eight offers.

The trade of Bonds was a surprising move for the Yankees. Bonds had been involved in a straight player deal last year, going from the Giants for outfielder Bobby Murcer.

Kopay reveals homosexuality

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Dave Kopay, a pro football running back for 10 years, says he believes a Washington Star report which contended about five per cent of National Football League players are homosexual or bisexual, including three starting quarterbacks.

In an interview which the Star published yesterday Kopay admitted he prefers sex with men.

"I hope it, the disclosure, might help some people," he told the Star. "Especially young people who are going through similar experiences and haven't had anyone to

talk to about it."

Kopay, who played for six NFL clubs and the Southern California Sun of the defunct World Football League before quitting last year, said he doubted if any active pro player would admit homosexuality.

UMass tough but Lady Lion gymnasts confident

By LAURIE KARDON
Collegian Sports Writer

The women's gymnastics team begins its season tomorrow with a lot of hope, a lot of eagerness, and a lot of freshmen. And surprisingly, a lot of confidence.

Surprising is the confidence because they will meet highly ranked University of Massachusetts in a meet that UMass coach Judy Avenier has described as "super important and the toughest" on the schedule this season.

Five wide-eyed newcomers to the Penn State squad will be heavily depended upon by Avenier and the rest of the team to take up the slack left by last year's star Colette Bizal. Out of a squad of nine traveling to the meet, this lack of experience may loom as an important factor.

The match, which may remain as the most pressured the women will face this year, is also viewed as sort of a grudge meet for UMass.

Last season, Penn State was the only team to beat the Minutewomen, although they did so by the skin of their teeth. The final score was 100.30 to 97.10, with Karen Schuckman winning every event, including the all-around. Colette Bizal came in second in the AA, and UMass gymnast Jeannine Burger placed third.

All the same, many observers called the win a fluke, pointing to the fact that UMass star Susan Cantwell did not participate in the meet due to an injury. So, while UMass looks to this meet to prove its loss was pure bad luck, the Lady Lions are more or less up to show that last year's win was no fluke.

Massachusetts, by the way, went on to capture the Eastern title last year and place second in the Nationals.

"Last year, we were worried that hopefully we wouldn't look like a lesser team than UMass," recalled Avenier. "We wanted to

look like we were on their level. Then they had a big injury at the last minute, and we won. Everybody said it was a fluke, and I think that we have to beat them again this year to prove that it wasn't."

Since this year's schedule begins a month earlier than usual, Penn State can't only worry about its inexperienced personnel, but first meet jitters as well, let alone that the first meet is against a powerhouse team.

"We opened up against Towson last season, and by the time we met Mass, we had several meets of experience under our belts," continued Avenier. "Also, Bizal was the only freshman on the team. But this year, we're going to have five freshmen and just four upperclassmen competing in the meet."

Although UMass lost top performer Burger, reports indicate the team still has lots of depth, and will be strong again this year.

"UMass had a lot of freshmen last year, and were in a situation much like we are in now," said beam specialist Sue Bergstrom. "They just broke under the pressure of not having Cantwell. But we were good, we were hitting good. They just weren't hitting last year, but you could still tell they were good."

Bergstrom compared this with the pressure that might be felt by the Lady Lions. Is it possible Penn State might break under the pressure with so many freshmen, of competing without the steady high scores of Bizal?

"We'll just have to wait and see how they (the freshmen) handle the pressure," she said. "We're definitely going to need their scores, since Nancy (Park), Ellen (Cocagna) and I are only competing in one event. But I have this secret confidence that they are gonna do well."



Sue Bergstrom treads a narrow path

Cagers have want-to

Want-to. If the scoreboard only had a place for it.

Fans can't shout it, bands can't play it, and vendors can't sell it. But the players, they've gotta have it.

Want-to has been around for quite some time now. You can take it back to the Four Horsemen, Pepper Martin, Pete Gray, the guys that finally whupped up on Napoleon. You need it to be a winner and once you're a winner, you need it to stay that way. Its absence has abortive effect akin to that of your basic hurricane. The remains are helplessly inert.

Example? Take Penn State's basketball team, waiting with a 3-1 record to host Kent State this Tuesday night. And don't say "No, YOU take Penn State's basketball team," without taking at least a look or two at these guys.

Okay, big deal, right? They're three-and-one, they beat Lehigh by a lot of points and Delaware by a few. Wow. One of Penn State's many beautiful fans is so moved to yell things like "You guys SUCK!" during the first half of Ohio State's visit to Rec Hall this past Sunday. That fan got pretty quiet before the game was over. Unless, perhaps, he was joining in the cheers.

Want-to? There's so much there. In a Romel Raffin, pulling up for the short jumpers and battling a bigger man like Chris Taylor, there's nothing but want-to. In a Jim Ouderkirch, who is struggling but scoring, there is want-to. With Chris Erichsen looking like the man John Bach has waited for, and with Tom Doody as steady and all-around solid as he's ever been, there is want-to.

One year ago, Bach seemed somewhat reserved, but he talked of attitude — "the criterion of this season. Attitude has more to do with the performance of this team than any other factor." He hoped for motivation. Now he is much more definitive.

"We have to play more viciously, like the Junkyard Dog," he says, and somebody's listening to him. The Lions are making a lot of mistakes, some that just shouldn't be



Jeff Young

made, but most are marks of a team built on youth and aggressiveness.

And youth is one of the easiest places to find want-to. Jeff Miller, Harvey Wooten, Bob Kinzer, Carvin Jefferson all show a lot of potential. And it seems they've already realized the essence of desire. Miller's high-intensity, pressure defense, Wooten's composed ability to find the hoop — it's all been very evident in Penn State's first four games of 1975-76.

Basketball, regarding its standing among the great big Penn State sports family, has probably been in the doghouse more often than not in recent history. Whether that's been right or wrong — you can bet that around all day. People have. They question everybody and everything but the width of the floor boards in Rec Hall. But that one may come this year.

If questions like that should arise, however, they would be the cause of drastic changes in the performance Bach's team is presently giving. Without even making a pointed effort at running the ball, the Lions have played what seems to be some of the quickest basketball Rec Hall fans have seen in a while. Again, they've had some very slow moments as well. But it's not because they're a Penn State basketball team, it's because they're a young team.

Penn State is now playing .750 basketball. If they finish the season losing a lot more games than winning them. But it won't be because the players didn't have any want-to.