

He almost didn't run...

By RICK WEBER
Collegian Sports Writer

Sports fans, writers and announcers frequently focus their attention on the super, national-class athlete who turns in sensational individual performances. Many times, the steady but not spectacular athlete is overlooked. But, in the case of the Penn State track team, one such athlete cannot be neglected — Steve Hackman, a 5-11, 155-lb. senior sprinter from State College.

Hackman was a member of Penn State's All-America indoor mile relay team and All-America national sprint medley relay team in 1974. In addition, he ran legs on the 440, 880, one-mile, and sprint medley relay teams which still hold Penn State records. His best performances are :9.6 in the 100, :21.5 in the 220, and :48.0 in the 440.

Sounds like he's a seasoned track veteran, an athlete who certainly gained his experience at an early age, right? Wrong. Amazingly enough, Steve Hackman gained little experience in high school. He competed in ninth grade and part of tenth, but then completed his high school career playing baseball.

"I really wasn't ready to run back then," Hackman says. "I really became interested in track back in junior high, but I enjoyed baseball and I'm glad I played."

The big break for Hackman came four years ago when he was a second term freshman. He had track coach

Harry Groves for a track and field physical education class and was doing well in the jumping events. Groves was impressed and asked Hackman to come out for the team.

"I came out and worked with the jumpers," said Hackman. "Then I started running time trials in the sprint events and did well. From then on, I was a sprinter."

Steve Hackman's walk-on success was certainly an unusual occurrence, as Groves notes. "You don't see it happen very often where a guy will come out and make the team like he did," Groves said, "but Steve is good and physically strong and he was just able to close the gap in college. I don't think he knew how good he was when he was in high school."

"The thing that surprises me is that he comes from a baseball-oriented family. I don't know why he didn't go out for baseball," Groves concluded.

Hackman gives much of the credit for his rapid development to the Penn State track program. "Each year, the thing that helped me the most was the guys that I worked with — guys like Doug Finkel, Mike Sands, Fred Singleton, and, of course, Mike Shine. Harry Groves is really a good coach, too. He's played a definite part in my development."

"I considered myself lucky," Hackman continued. "I was in the right place at the right time. I just happened to be running in the right event with the relay teams. I think it took a little bit of skill and a lot of luck."

Hackman's modesty and his liking for the team-oriented events is obvious. "The most exciting and enjoyable thing to me is running in the relays," he says. "I really enjoy working with three other guys, because each guy has to do his part if the team is to succeed. If we win a big race, I'm satisfied. I really haven't set any goals; I'd like to hit a :47.0 quarter mile, but that's not important."

"I think I'm satisfied with my career," the senior sprinter says. "I know I've been fulfilled with it and have enjoyed it. I've had the chance to run against some of the best in the world. The big part is being with the team and making friends — there's a lot of great guys on the team."

After graduation, Hackman would like to head toward the teaching and coaching aspects of sports (particularly track and baseball). In the more distant future, he says he'd like to start his own business, too.

"Right now, my brother and I have a small construction business and I've been working with that during the summer," he says. "I've really enjoyed that. It's given me an insight into the business world."

Steve Hackman's success story is certainly an interesting one. In his own mind, he was lucky. But in all probability, he had the innate talent to do it all along. Harry Groves can only hope that another Steve Hackman shows up in one of his track and field classes in the future.

Caravella hot in last home game

By JERRY LUCCI
Collegian Sports Writer

"I wish we could play Penn all year long, Mama Mia!" an ecstatic Penn State lacrosse goalie Rich Caravella shouted from amidst a crowd of well-wishers after leading his team to a 20-13 victory over Penn with 29 saves.

The senior captain seems to have some sort of jinx over the Quakers, for in last year's 12-10 victory at Penn, Caravella again was superb in goal, making 22 stops.

"What a way to end it all," Caravella, who played his last game at Jeffrey Field along with fellow seniors Ken Schwartz, Karl Hertzog and Dan Pinkerton. "I guess you could call it my last hurra."

Not exactly. You see, the Lions have one more regular season game left against a none too powerful Bucknell squad. More importantly at this point, there is a possibility the laXers may line up a game with 7th-ranked Massachusetts to help give them a boost towards getting the last spot in the eight-team NCAA playoffs.

Penn coach Jim Adams is the chairman of the selection committee, but after the game he had no positive comment on Penn State's chances.

Adams also has doubts about a State-UMass matchup. "I don't know why they would want to play Penn State," Adams said. "They have the seventh spot in the playoff tourney all but sewed up. It would be foolish on their part to play."

Caravella ended any slim playoff hopes the Penn squad had early in the game as he spurred his teammates on with 10 important saves in the first quarter. Several were point blank shots that seemed destined for the net. Others came low through a web of five or six players in front.

"I was getting tired out there so I jokingly told Richie Mauti to get things going," Caravella said. "It's really good to have guys like we have out there to get the game moving."

Caravella kept things moving himself several times during the game when he started two important fast breaks with long passes from behind the goal. He even came outside the crease to flatten a would-be Penn shooter.

The 6-5 260-pound former football player had a little extra incentive going for him because the day before the Penn victory, Caravella talked to representatives of the Washington Redskins who invited him down for a look-see this weekend.

Caravella indeed is getting his shot at the big time, but his teammates must wait for Athletic Director Ed Czekaj's decision on the tentative game with Massachusetts.



Penn State goalie Rich Caravella poses here with a friend — the goal post. Caravella, the one with the stick, doesn't need his friend very often

McCarron bumped from Cojak

BALTIMORE (AP) — All jokes aside, trainer Hubert "Sonny" Hine figures Cojak will better his sixth-place Kentucky Derby finish in Saturday's 101st running of the \$150,000-added Preakness Stakes.

Right now, it's a fair bet because there were only six certain starters for the 13-16 mile classic at Pimlico Race Course after Play The Red was added late yesterday. But Hine's confidence transcends the size of the field.

"It's no disgrace to lose the Kentucky Derby by eight lengths," Hine said yesterday, "but Cojak lost more ground than that on the first turn. He should have been on the board."

Jockey Chris McCarron,

Hine said, "tried to save ground and drop back in, but it didn't work and he never got over. On the first turn, Cojak was in back of the come-from-behind horses."

Tony Agnello, Cojak's regular rider until he was seriously injured in a spill at Bowie Race Course on Feb. 21, will be back aboard the Maryland-bred horse in the Preakness.

"I'm not criticizing McCarron," said Dr. Jean F. Poirier, Cojak's breeder and one of his three owners, "but Tony seems to suit the horse very well."

Last year, when he was named the champion Maryland-bred 2-year-old, Cojak won four times and finished second in two of his other starts under Agnello.

He won three stakes races and earned \$127,651.

"Cojak will be with the pace on Saturday," Poirier said in a telephone interview from his home in Frederick, Md. "I don't know how far he'll go, but he'll be 1-2-3 as long as he can go."

If Agnello does take Cojak to the front, he undoubtedly will be joined there by Bold

Forbes, the winner of the Kentucky Derby, and Honest Pleasure, the beaten Derby favorite.

The same two went to the front at the start of the 11-mile Derby on May 1, with Bold Forbes and jockey Angel Cordero beating off a stretch bid by Honest Pleasure and Braulio Baeza.

SPORTS TRIVIA

Yesterday's answer: The Boston Bruins. Bobby Orr is the only other two-time Conn Smythe Trophy winner, besides Bernie Parent, as the most valuable player in the NHL playoffs.

Today's question: Jackie Robinson was the first black to play in the National League; who was the first to play in the American League? Hint: He played for the Indians.

Nuggets face rocky road back

DENVER (AP) — Larry Brown says his Denver Nuggets still might lose the American Basketball Association championship playoffs, but "it will be our way, not New York's way."

The ABA Coach of the Year sent the Nuggets back to the basics yesterday and scheduled another practice this morning, eight hours before the fifth game of the series between the Nuggets and the New York Nets.

The Nets lead the series 3-1 after a 121-112 victory Saturday night in Uniondale, N.Y.

"We may lose this thing, but we're going to lose it with the methods that got

us this far, not with what we've been doing in this series. I promise that," Brown said.

"We're going to get back to the basics of defense, with every man working hard and not begging for help, and play with enthusiasm. Our offense depends on our defense, and you cannot run if the other team is scoring almost at will."

That was the situation at Uniondale, as ABA Player of the Year Julius Erving had little trouble leading the Nets to a two-game sweep there. In Saturday night's loss, New York's John Williamson, Brian Taylor and Jim Eakins also scored heavily.

Brown attributed part of the problem to rough work under the boards by the Nets.

"We can't let the officials psyche us out or give up because of a few bad things," Brown said. "If a guy gives you an elbow once, you go on. But the second time you've got to stand up for what's right, and we're not going to let the Nets just get away with shoving us completely around."

Despite the hole the Nuggets currently find themselves in, Brown predicted success. "We're going back to New York for the sixth game," he said. "We can still win."

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(answers to page 4 puzzle)

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