



Congestion

A Penn Stater throws into a crowd in last spring's rugby action. The 1976 season starts this weekend.

Photo by Edward Pals

Taveras key to Bucs' rebound

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Just as improbable as the Pittsburgh Pirate comeback is the fact that its been sparked by willowy, once weak-hitting shortstop Frank Taveras. "He's the key to our ball club this year," teammate Al Oliver said of the man who's called "The Pittsburgh Stealer." Taveras deftly demonstrated the reason for his nickname Wednesday night as he got his 53rd stolen base against the Philadelphia Phillies, who dropped their third straight to the Pirates 6-1.

The loss was Philadelphia's 11th in 12 outings and it leaves the Phillies only 4½ games ahead of the surging Pirates in the National League East. On Aug. 24 that lead was 15½ games.

"I don't know. I really don't know," muttered Philadelphia

Manager Danny Ozark after the latest loss. "I think we're going to snap out of it... We should, and I feel we will, win it." The Phillies have 23 outings left after today's home game against Chicago and Taveras says he thinks Pittsburgh will overtake them.

"I feel it," said Taveras, who has stolen the most bases for the Pirates since the late Max Carey got 58 in 1918. "It won't be easy, but that's what I feel. The Phillies have got to be thinking about us right now. We've been playing good ball and I think they're worried."

The 6-foot, 160-pound shortstop typifies the improvements in the Pirates. Taveras began his third major league season this year with a .227 batting average. Now he's hitting .260 and is firmly established as the team's leadoff hitter.

"Frankie's always a threat to run, so the pitcher has to be concerned with him. They can't always pay as much attention as they should to the man at the plate," said teammate Richie Zisk.

"His base stealing has improved, he improved his hitting and there's nothing he can't do, except hit home runs, of course," Oliver said of Taveras.

The 25-year-old native of the Dominican Republic has never hit a major league home run, which is something of a team joke. Willie Stargell has promised him \$100 if he ever hits one out of the park.

Taveras will have 24 more games to try with the first opportunity coming today as Pittsburgh opens a three-game home stand against last-place Montreal.

But even though the Expos are 36 games off the pace, Pirate third baseman Richie Hebner isn't taking them lightly. "Two weeks ago, I was just hoping to beat the Mets out of second-place," admitted Hebner, who had four RBIs in Wednesday's game against the Phillies.

"Then all of a sudden it was nine games behind, eight games, seven games and now here we are, right back in the thing."

Kansas City offers tryout to Hanratty

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Former Pittsburgh Steeler quarterback Terry Hanratty will be invited to tryout with the Kansas City Chiefs. "I really have to wait to get their tone of voice and see what their feelings are," said Hanratty cautiously. He was informed of Coach Paul Wiggin's plans by a reporter.

Waived Monday as the Steelers trimmed their squad to the 43 player limit, Hanratty was not picked up by another team within the 24

hour period. He can now make a deal with any team as a free agent.

Wiggin said Hanratty was not officially picked up because he did not want to disrupt the team to include the seven-year veteran from Notre Dame.

Hanratty also said the Philadelphia Eagles have asked the Steelers for his home phone number but have not yet contacted him.

Susquehanna hosts State Ruggers debut on road

By GEORGE WEIGEL
Collegian Sports Writer

While thousands of spectators are swarming en masse into Beaver Stadium tomorrow to watch the Penn State-Stanford football game, the Penn State rugby team will be "sneaking" into action with their season opener at Susquehanna.

"We have a lot of new people out this fall," Coach John Lesko said before last night's practice. "There's a lot of big guys out who have the talent, but I think we might be lacking in experience."

Lesko is also worried about a lack of depth in backs since a lot were lost from last year's team.

However, a good nucleus does remain with the return of team captain Terry Ryland, fullback Chris Mather, wing forward Ed Montgomery, and outside center Jim Dolphin.

Mather, probably best known for his kicking ability, tried out for placekicker with the football team last spring but gave it up due to a conflict with the rugby seasons.

Montgomery was last year's forward of the year and Dolphin was voted back of the year.

Also returning are wing Bruce Hale, Fraser "Scott" Gregor, number eight from Scotland, hooker Gary Greenburg, second row John Longfellow and Ken Kempton, club

president Al Ashton at wing, and wing forward Kevin O'Toole. Kicko Reidel also will return after he recovers from an illness.

Susquehanna usually has a decent team, according to Lesko, but they're usually better in the spring than in the fall, because football players can participate since they don't have

spring workouts.

All home games are on weekends and are played on the field adjacent to East Halls. The team is in the process now of finalizing their schedule so home dates will be announced later.

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In addition to the regular "A" team game, "B" games and often "C" games are played, depending upon the number of players on each team.

Rugby is a club sport affiliated with the University but players are not restricted to undergraduates. Many of this year's players are grad students, and some are even out of school altogether.

The ruggers usually travel to away games in vans provided by the University. Game time tomorrow is 1 p.m.



Tables turned

Pittsburgh's Frank Taveras, a fleet-footed baserunner himself, puts the tag to Cincinnati's Ken Griffey earlier this season. Taveras' efforts have been a key factor in the Buc comeback.

Trade with Nets not finalized

KC Kings may dump Archibald

NEW YORK (AP) — Kansas City's Nate Archibald, the only player ever to lead the National Basketball Association in scoring and assists in the same season, likely will be traded to the New York Nets for Brian Taylor, Jim Eakins and other considerations, it was learned last night.

"The deal has been agreed upon but it has not yet been finalized," a source told the Associated Press.

Archibald, an exhilarating 6 foot 1, 160-pound guard, has been with the Kings' franchise since joining the pros in 1970. But earlier this year the 28 year-old veteran expressed dissatisfaction with

playing in Kansas City and said he wanted to finish out his pro career in New York, where he was born.

The four time All-Star had his greatest season in 1972-73 when he averaged 34 points per game and handed out 910 assists, leading the NBA in both categories. Last season he finished fourth in scoring, averaging more than 24 points per game, and was second in assists.

After the 172-73 season, Archibald signed a seven year contract for an estimated \$450,000 per season.

Taylor, a 6-2 veteran guard of four ABA seasons, is considered a standout

defensive player. He played out his option year with the Nets last season, when the club won its second American Basketball Association championship in three years. If he did not sign a new contract by Sept. 15, he would have become a free agent.

The 6-11 Eakins, president of the old ABA Players' Association, joined the Nets in mid-season last year in a trade with Virginia. He previously played with ABA teams at Utah, Washington and Oakland.

Should the deal be completed, the dynamic Archibald would be teamed with Julius Erving.

N.Y. tries for legalized betting

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — The Western Regional Off-Track Betting Corp. said yesterday it hopes to accept wagers on professional football under present pari-mutual and lottery laws.

John J. Gannon, general counsel of the state-sanctioned horse-race betting organization, said he believes the present laws are broad enough to permit the booking of bets on National Football League games.

But Gannon and Fred A. Herman, the general managers, said they would try to arrange a meeting with Gov. Hugh Carey to win his support.

The next step, they explained, would be to go to the state Racing and Wagering Board for an okay to proceed.

"Should further legislative action be required," Gannon said, "we feel confident that western New York area legislators will prove capable of securing the passage of such legislation."

Gannon noted that Delaware now has a pro football lottery, although the plan is under attack in the courts by the National Football League.

Herman said that if the Western Regional football wagering plan goes through, the wagering could be expanded later to include other pro sports, such as hockey and basketball.

"We are only considering the professional level," he said. "We are not thinking of college or high schools." He also said it would require only a few weeks to set up the computer system and the betting parlors for pro football wagering once legal approval is received.

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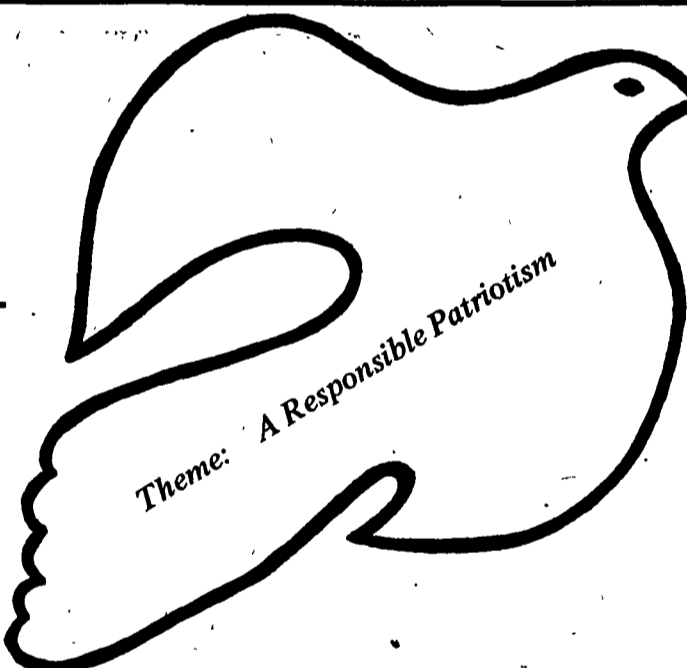
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