

Six positions later, Sidler settles at middle guard

By KIM SMITH
Daily Collegian Sports Writer

Ask Randy Sidler, middle guard of the 1977 Nittany Lion football squad how many positions he's played, and he has to stop and think about it, there have been so many.

"Oh, let's see . . . tight end . . . defensive tackle . . . defensive end . . ." he says, mentally adding a few more. "I guess I've played about six now."

He has. As a matter of fact, the Danville, Pa., native was the first Penn State freshman in 23 years to start a game when, in the 1974 season, he replaced the injured Dan Natale for two games. At tight end, Sidler caught 10 passes for 200 yards.

Happy Valley was the natural choice for Sidler, who said he was looking for a school with a good football program that was close to home.

"I guess the location was the main thing," Sidler said of his decision to come to Penn State. "It's hard to pinpoint why I came here—I just had a feeling about it."

Sidler is an athlete with the ability to play many positions and several sports, and proved it earning letters in football, basketball and baseball while attending Danville high school.

No one recognizes those abilities better than coach Joe Paterno.

"Randy is one of our best football players," Paterno said. "He is very versatile and could play many positions for us, but our present plans are for him to be a defensive lineman."

Having played offense and several positions on defense, Sidler had plenty of opportunities to decide which position he favors.

"I guess I like it best where I am now," he said. "It's hard to say why. Once I got used to playing a down lineman, I took a liking to it."

Besides being the middle guard, Sidler also snaps the ball for field goal and extra point attempts and punts. Snapping the ball for those plays is reputed to be one of the hardest—and least liked—positions on the team. And usually, one of the team's best athletes is drafted for the spot.

"I guess they just started trying people there," Sidler said, explaining how he got the job. "It's very different from a center snap. For a center snap, the ball isn't in the air at all. But this is sort of an underneath pass."

"The reason it's supposed to be the worst position is that everyone expects you to have a good snap all the time. No one notices who the snapper is, until he does it wrong—then they notice."

But being football's jack-of-all-trades doesn't limit Sidler's time for other sports too much. He skipped spring football practice last year to play baseball for the Lions, and says he's planning on playing again this spring.

"Playing two sports is not that hard," Sidler said. "In fact, playing baseball is probably a lot easier physically than playing spring football. There's not nearly the amount of physical conditioning, it concentrates more on batting practice and working on technique."

But after football, and after baseball, what then? Does Sidler have any thoughts of playing on a pro football team?

"I don't know, I don't think I'd be that big of a hit with the pros," Sidler said. "I may want to go home and work for Graham Electric Company."

But since Graham Electric Company doesn't even exist, according to the Danville phone book, do you think maybe Sidler really would like a shot at the pros?

"I don't know, it's hard to say," he said. "I wouldn't mind. If the chance would come along I'd try it; but I'm not really planning on it."

But that all will have to wait, because right now the Lions' attention must be focused on analyzing past performances and preparing for future games.

Speaking of the past, what about Syracuse?

"I think the offense played really well," Sidler commented. "But the defense—you can't say we played that well. They gained a lot of yards on us."

"There wasn't one weakness—we just didn't play as well as we could have."

Sidler refused to blame the defensive secondary for the many passes completed last Saturday by Syracuse quarterback Bob Hurley.

"They (the secondary) are not really having that much trouble," he said. "Their (Syracuse's) set-up put more pressure on the secondary."

"It was the line's fault as much as the secondary's—we didn't rush the passer as well. The completions were as much our—the line's—fault."

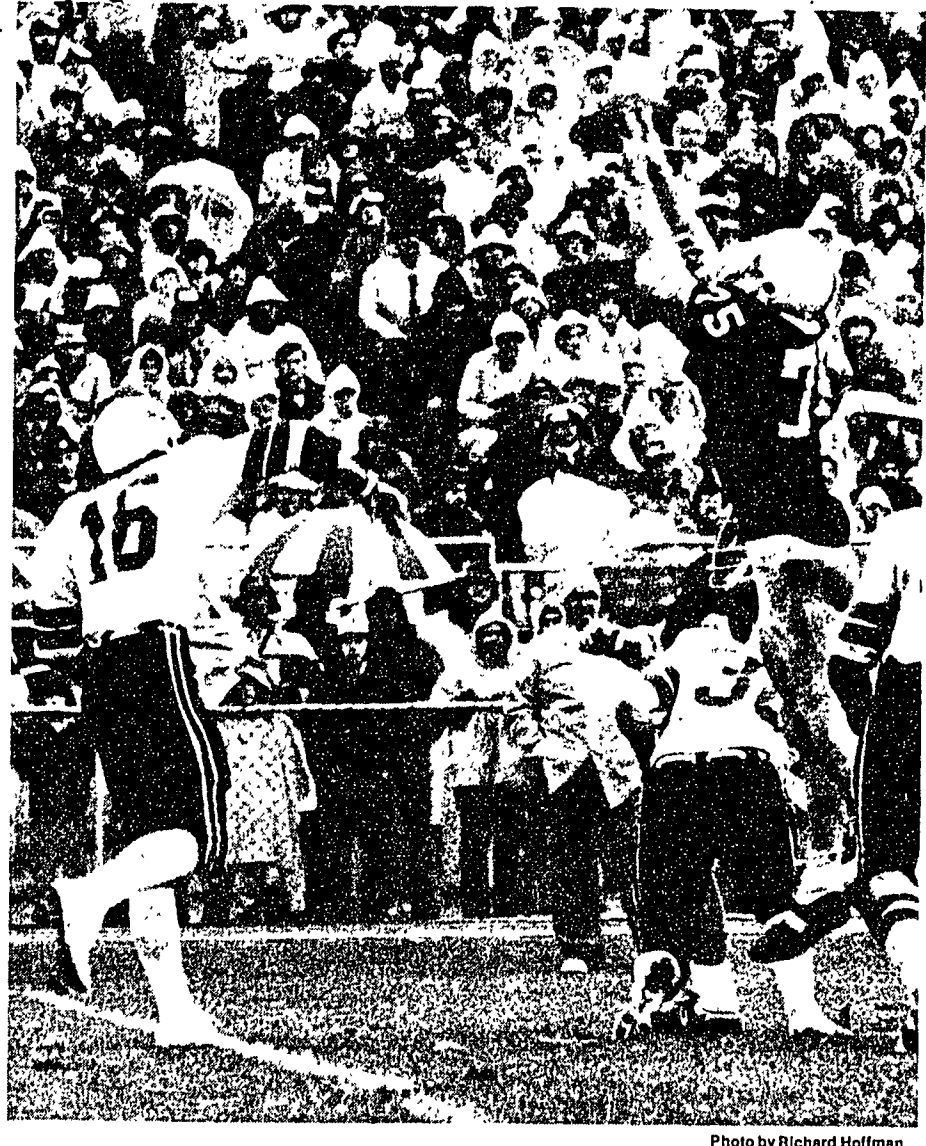
And what does the defense look to do for this week's game with West Virginia?

"We're not going to do anything differently," Sidler said. "Just play a little better overall."

"West Virginia looks good on film from what I've seen. They only lost to Kentucky and Boston College."

Ask Sidler about this year's team and, after all the problems both the offense and the defense have run up against lately, he still echoes the sentiments expressed by his teammates following the Lions' string of victories over Rutgers, Houston and Maryland.

"I think this team has the best attitude of any team I've been on since I've been here," he said. "We just have to wait and see how we do."



Randy Sidler, the jack-of-all-trades during his four years with the Lions, is now in his most comfortable spot as a middle guard.

Mountaineers don't have 'any depth at all'

MORGANTOWN, W. Va. (AP) — It's not a case for Sherlock Holmes, or even the Hardy Boys, but where is West Virginia University's football team? Where is the team that easily outclassed Richmond 36-0. Where's the team that ended Maryland's lengthy regular season winning streak.

The answer isn't hard to figure out. All you have to do is look at West Virginia's injury list.

Although West Virginia Coach Frank Cignetti claims he doesn't want to use injuries as an excuse for the Mountaineers' 2-2 record in their past four games, he's also trying to be realistic. And it isn't hard to figure out that the team Cignetti currently is putting on the field barely resembles the one that opened the season against Richmond.

In the past two games alone, Cignetti has — at one time or another — been without: fullback Walter Easley, tailbacks David "Duck" Riley and Robert Alexander, offensive tackles Wayne Gatewood, Tom Creedan, Jed Dojan and Jeff Cortileso, defensive backs Tom Pridemore, Glen Corbin and John LaSavage, middle guard Joe Jelich, tight end Randy Swinson, linebacker Ken Braswell, wide receiver Steve Lewis, and defensive tackle Norm Patterson.

It's enough to start calling WVU the Black and Blue instead of the Gold and Blue, but Cignetti doesn't want to start using ill as an alibi.

"Injuries are a part of football," Cignetti said after Boston College stopped WVU 28-24 here last Saturday. "But I said before the start of the season that freshmen would be our depth, and now here we are with four or five freshmen alone playing on defense. Not only have freshmen become our depth, in many cases we've had to rely on freshmen to either start or see considerable playing time at a certain position."

"I'm not faulting our younger players, but we don't have the depth right now to be a real good football team. We don't have any depth at all."

Cignetti is hopeful some of the walking wounded will be ready for Saturday's game at 10th ranked Penn State 5-1, a team the Mountaineers haven't beaten since 1955. But then Cignetti also was hopeful last week some of his injured people would be back in action but instead, the injury picture got worse instead of better.

"Our younger players are doing a good job under adverse circumstances," Cignetti said. "But we're just not the same football team we were earlier in the season, so we've had to adjust as best we can."

Suffer second loss of year, 2-1

Fieldwomen crack under 'Rock'

By BARBARA KLEIN
Daily Collegian Sports Writer

An upset, a disappointment . . . a loss for the Penn State women's field hockey team.

The Lady Lions went down to defeat, again. This time it was at the hands of hosting Slippery Rock, 2-1.

The fieldwomen are not accustomed to losing to nationally unranked teams and this could be an indication that trouble lies ahead, for the worst of the season is yet to come.

Slippery Rock is not considered to be one of the more powerful teams in field hockey. Maybe the Lady Lions relaxed a little too much, maybe that homefield advantage was just overwhelming.

But no matter how it is rationalized the result remains the same—add another loss to the record and make it 5-2.

Slippery Rock scored first on a corner shot from Jane Machuga. Then Chris Larson quickly tied the game and that's how the half ended. As it turned out Larson scored the lone Penn State goal.

"Their first goal was deflected off the feet of our defense, making a save impossible," Lady Lion coach Jill Rattray said. "It trickled over the goaline."

So that was Penn State's downfall? It must have been; for in other respects the game was still close.

The Lady Lions actually took more shots, 14 to 12; had more corners, 15 to nine; and achieved more penetration time, 7:33 to 7:12.

But their dominating character was not present. They were never in command of the game. They had an edge as far as statistics are concerned, but it did not amount to an impressive advantage.

None of that really matters now. What is important is their ability to recover in time for Saturday's match against Rutgers, another away game.

FIELD HOCKEY NOTES: Larson continues her streak of scoring in every game. . . The team surpassed the total goals scored during last year's entire season by four with a total of 28. . . The JV squad was able to pull out a 4-1 victory.

During the second half Ceil O'Doherty scored the game winning goal for Slippery Rock.

The Lady Lions then came up against a defense they could not cope with, for Slippery Rock wanted and needed insurance for that one goal lead.

It was a barricade, or at least that's what they called Slippery Rock's defensive use of all 11 players.

"The team became frustrated and tense," Rattray said, "particularly in our attacking circle when they brought everyone back on defense."

THE WILD BUNCH

William Holden, Ernest Borgnine, Robert Ryan, Edmond O'Brien

Warner Brothers; Directed by Sam Peckinpah
Color; Rated R, A-4; 135 minutes

THE WILD BUNCH is one of Sam Peckinpah's most ambitious movies, imaginatively conceived and stunningly executed. It is a gripping film about the savage West and the ruthless men—greedy, clever, brutal and cruel—whose outlaw violence 10 or 15 years before would have been considered heroic. "The performances—particularly by William Holden and Robert Ryan—are faultless, and the film is one of the year's best." TIME MAGAZINE.

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