

Losing not Rooney's game plan

By The Associated Press
Having once been a loser for 40 years doesn't make it any easier for Art Rooney.

His Pittsburgh Steelers, the National Football League's most dominant team of the 1970s, are on the brink of becoming just another team once more.

Not since 1973 have they been anything but division champions. Not since 1971, the year before they won their first title of any kind, have they lost as many games as the six they've lost this year.

And for the patriarch of the Steelers, every one of those losses this year has been as painful as the hundreds his boys absorbed from the 1930s to the 1960s. He is, after all, a winner.

"I don't think, whether you're lost for 40 years or won for 40, that you ever get used to losing. Win 'em all or lose 'em all, I think every game you lose, you feel that same frustration," said the gentle man with the big cigar.

"I think that's the way it went for George Halas, for Paul Brown, for Vince Lombardi, for Steve Owens. . . I think they were just as frustrated when they lost maybe one game and win 10 or 11 in a season," Rooney added. "It hurt them just as much as it hurt the guy who won maybe one and lost the rest."

It would be nice, he mused, if parity, that long-desired goal of NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle, was finally being reached, wherein just about every team in the league had a chance to make the playoffs.

"I guess," Rooney said, "in the overall picture, that would be best, for everybody to have a chance. Unfortunately, we need help. Other than

Cleveland Browns or Houston Oilers or somebody else a chance willingly, mind you. "We're not doing this by design," he said with an ironic sort of cackle. "But I think the teams, the best and worst, are getting closer together."



Art Rooney

"The day of the powerhouse team is probably gone. There's no doubt in my mind that that saying, 'On any given day . . . has arrived.'"

And Rooney, who never lost faith in each of those long seasons, when even mediocrity seemed like something beyond the Steelers' reach, hasn't lost faith that they'll get that fifth championship ring, that "one for the thumb."

"I still think right now that we're on our way to the Super Bowl," he said. "Even with all our injuries, we're capable of getting there. Unfortunately, we need help. Other than

winning our last two games, it's out of our hands. But we still plan to win those two."

Rooney was portrayed by Art Carney in "Fighting Back," the recent made-for-television film about running back Rocky Bleier, who was wounded in Vietnam and, thanks to Rooney's gratitude, was given a second chance to make it with Pittsburgh in the early '70s.

"Long before I ever thought there'd be a movie, Carney was a favorite of mine," said Rooney, who still lives in the same working-class neighborhood where he was raised. "He portrayed — especially with Jackie Gleason — my neighborhood, my people, the people I came up with."

He met Carney briefly at a crowded party, he said, and enjoyed the film. But it seemed to bother him that, in the eight or so days that the movie people swarmed around Three Rivers Stadium, nobody — not even Carney — bothered to come into his always-open office to sit down and chew the fat.

"I didn't have anything to do, but I didn't want to bother them. . . Maybe I should've," Rooney said, his voice sounding almost sad. "I would've given him a much better chance to know me, and I would've liked to know him."

"And I'd have liked to gotten him to know my friends, the friends that I lost with. . . It would've been good for him and good for me."

"I'm glad it was Carney who played me," he said. "If anybody could've done it — that is, if he would've known me — he would've been the guy who would have been able to do it. And I'd blow an opportunity to meet a guy I'd admired for all these years."

Navy guard in dry dock for bowl game

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) — Frank McCallister, Navy's third-team All-American offensive guard, is used to being shifted around but he never dreamed he'd be drilling the scout team defense for Sunday's Garden State Bowl meeting with the University of Houston.

McCallister is one of Navy's few healthy offensive linemen — he split the season between guard and tackle out of necessity — but he entered college six years ago and fell victim to a National Collegiate Athletic Association rule that permits four years of competition within a five-year period.

"I knew about it, but I kind of forgot about it until now," the 255-pound McCallister said yesterday. "It was part of the agreement for me to get into the Naval Academy. I was more than willing to make that sacrifice."

McCallister, from Penn Hills, Pa., a Pittsburgh suburb, spent his freshman year at the University of North Carolina and started about half the season for the Tar Heels.

McCallister left North Carolina and applied for the Naval Academy. First he had to spend a year at the Navy Prep School getting his grades shipshape before entering the academy as a freshman. It would have been his junior at North Carolina if he had lasted that long.

But the year at North Carolina plus the year at Navy Prep and four years at the academy add up to six and that's one year too many for NCAA-approved postseason play. The service academies have a special waiver of the five-year rule during the regular season.

Coach Bill Hausher, who recruited Frank, came to me late in the season," head coach George Welsh said. "He showed me the letter we had written to Frank and his parents when he entered the academy and said, 'Remember this? Losing him has got to hurt us because it means another change in our offensive line.'"

"He saved the line during the season but now he's gone from left guard to right tackle to the bench."

PSU may host prep all-stars

By TOM VERDUCCI
Daily Collegian Sports Writer

The Pennsylvania High School Football Coaches Association will meet tonight and tomorrow to decide where to play its 1981 all-star game, and one of the more likely locations is Beaver Stadium.

Penn State athletic officials submitted a proposal to host the game, as did groups from Altoona, the site of the game last summer, and Hershey, host of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association's Big 33 game before that.

Penn State's detailed proposal includes a meeting between Pennsylvania all-stars and New Jersey all-stars in late July, and, possibly as early as 1982, following that game with a National Football League exhibition game, preferably a Pittsburgh Steelers-Philadelphia Eagles matchup.

"Penn State's proposal is awesome when you look at it," said Hershey football coach Bob May, president of the coaches association. "It's so well done."

"It's going to be a difficult situation; especially difficult because you have to say no to two groups. . . Approximately 30 high school coaches from the state's 12 districts will discuss the proposals at the

Sheraton Motor Inn in Milesburg at 8 tonight and at 10 tomorrow morning.

May said that tonight the group will attend to normal meeting procedures before "we make sure we have clear-cut objectives" for the game. Tomorrow morning the coaches will work toward a final vote on which proposal to accept.

The Penn State proposal, chiefly engineered by administrative assistant Tim Curley, takes into account limitations established by the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

Penn State sports promotion director Fran Fisher said according to the NCAA, the University may not assist in the promotion of the game, may not use its Sports Information department for publicity and may not allow its coaches to help in the coaching of the teams.

Fisher said all Penn State facilities and equipment could be used and that the NCAA regulations "are not all that restrictive."

A Steelers-Eagles game in Beaver Stadium would not be possible for next year, Fisher said, because the clubs are already committed to their 1981 schedules. But he said "both programs have indicated a willingness to sit down and talk about the potential."

While Penn State officials like a

Pennsylvania vs. New Jersey high school game, May said the groups from Altoona and Hershey also favor that format.

New Jersey has its own all-star game — a North-South contest at Rutgers Stadium sponsored by the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association — but sources involved in that game said it would not mean the all-stars could not play the Pennsylvania all-stars. In fact, 20 players from both the North and South teams would be chosen.

The coaches association's work "will be a little easier" this year, May said, because the rival Big 33 all-star game has been dropped.

PIAA Executive Director Russell Werner said the PIAA passed a motion last Friday to adopt what amounts to a hands-off policy for all-star games. No games would need "the approval or disapproval of the PIAA," Werner said, but eligibility rules would still apply.

The NCAA limits a high school senior from appearing in no more than two post-season exhibitions, and since other area all-star games were held along with the Big 33 and coaches games, the coaches association could not attract all the all-stars it wanted in the past.

Women thinclads compete at Princeton

Women's indoor track coach Gary Schwartz will get his first chance this year to look at his freshmen and young runners in competition at the Princeton Developmental Meet on Sunday. Schwartz is gearing the Lady Lions towards the major meets in January and February, so he is only taking a small team of mostly young runners to Princeton. No team scores will be kept at this meet and few relay events will be run, taking some of the pressure off of the women who have little or no experience running in intercollegiate meets.

None of the members of the Eastern Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women championship cross country team will make the trip, Schwartz said, because the longest race at Princeton will be 500 meters.

In the meantime, the distance women are logging miles in preparation for the major meets, which start in January. Schwartz said two Lady Lions to watch for at this meet are freshman Stephanie Weeks and Tammy Hart. Weeks is a hurdler from Durham, N.H., and Hart is a sprinter from Williamsport.

"It's my first college race, so I'm nervous," said Weeks, who will run the 55-meter hurdles. "I'm anxious to see how I'll do." "I'm excited," said Hart, slated to compete in the 500-meter dash and the mile relay. "I never ran indoors before."

The Lady Lions' competitors will be mostly Eastern schools. Schwartz said, including Maryland, Rutgers, and Villanova. —Tom Sakell

Lady fencers shoot to finish in top 24

Four members of the women's fencing team will be making a special trip to New York tomorrow to fence in the America Cup tournament.

Jana Angelakis, Cathy McClellan, Phyllis Wert and Donna Perna will be trying their best to finish in the top 24 at the tournament. Those who succeed will be awarded points toward the national squad.

The tournament is an open meet which the Amateur Fencing League of America sponsors four times a year. A fencer must attend at least three of the opens to be considered for the Olympics.

"If you make the top 24, you break into the squad," Lady Lion coach Beth Alphin said. "And Cathy is already high enough, but Jana has to attempt to regain her position in terms of points to

stay on the national squad." McClellan, who is ranked 19th in the country and has a B rating, said she is ready for the tournament.

"I've worked really hard for this weekend," she said. "And I'm going to try really hard to place in the tournament and gain as many points as I can to see if I can qualify." —by Laurel Jacobs

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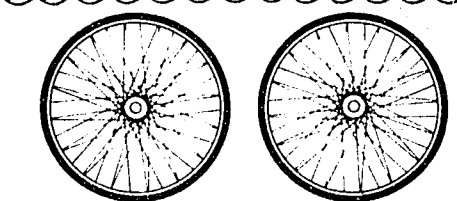
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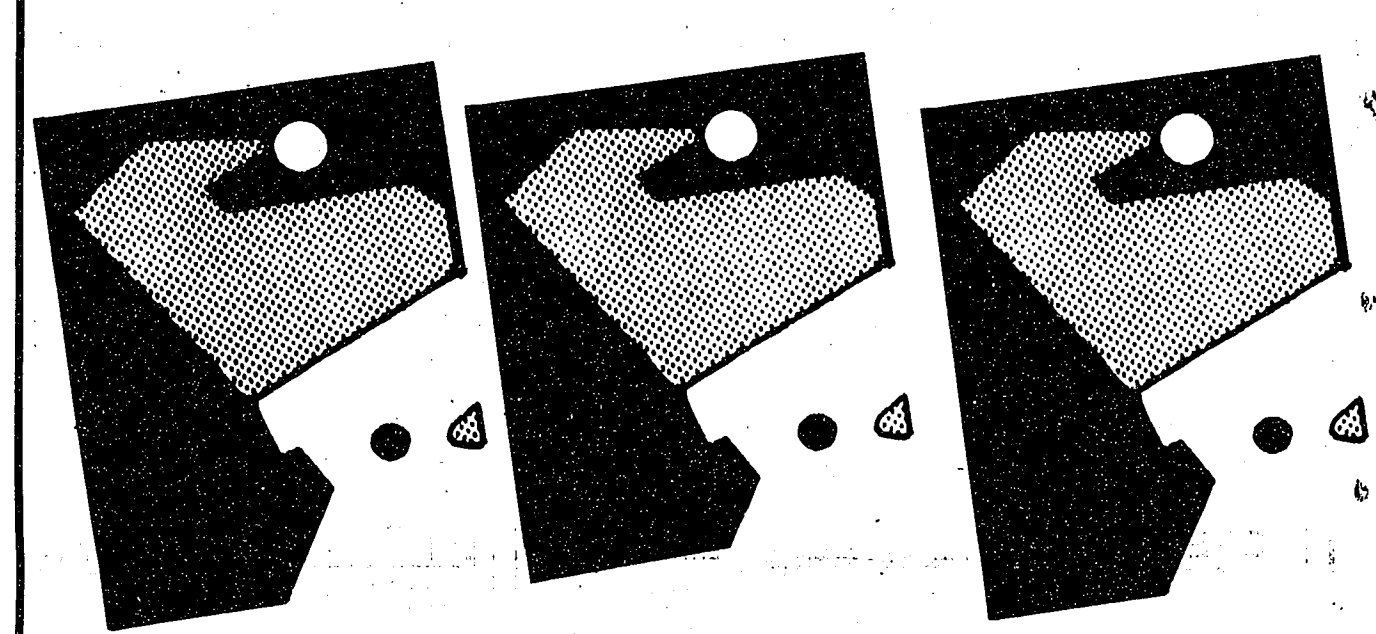
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