

## High-scoring show expected at Big 33

By NICK ZULOVICH  
Collegian Sports Writer

HERSHEY — While having a quality defense is always important, having an explosive offense might be the top priority in the PNC Bank Big 33 Football Classic at 7 p.m. tomorrow at Hersheypark Stadium.

If last year's game — in which a total of 81 points were scored — is any indication, the teams compiled of recent high school graduates from Pennsylvania and Ohio will need to reach paydirt early and often.

"It's going to be a wide-open game," Pennsylvania coach Jack McCurry said. "We let the kids call some of their own plays. And when they call their own play, you know the ball is going downtown. You've got kids that can throw the ball 60 or 70 yards down the field and guys who can both run and catch the football."

A total of 10 Penn State recruits were selected to play in this year's Big 33 Football Classic. One

recruit, Ohio's Bob Jones from Wadsworth High School will sit out due to an injury.

Other major football programs represented in the game include Ohio State, Michigan, Syracuse and Northwestern.

With such a collaboration of players, various personalities are forced to mesh, which has been going well for the Pennsylvania squad.

"Everyone here has got a lot of character and it's just accentuated because it's an all-star game," Pennsylvania running back/linebacker LaVar Arrington said. "It's a pleasant situation because you're competing with new teammates. Everybody plays their part and fills their roles. We have leadership on this team, too, which is a good thing."

Arrington is one of the players whose role might change.

After being the main running back at North Hills High School, the Penn State recruit will see quite a bit of action in the slot position and be used in motion

across Pennsylvania's offensive sets.

"I guess that's where the coaching staff feels I can best help the team," he said. "I don't if they (Ohio) have a defensive back that can cover me one-on-one."

Another Penn State recruit expected to be a prime offensive target is tight end Tony Stewart from Allentown Central Catholic. Stewart said he fits in well in the passing game and is looking to make an impression tomorrow.

The Ohio club is not short on talent either. Coach Vern Long has at his disposal the Ohio High School Player of the Year, running back Derek Combs. Combs, headed to Ohio State, is expected to be one of the main cogs in Long's offensive strategy.

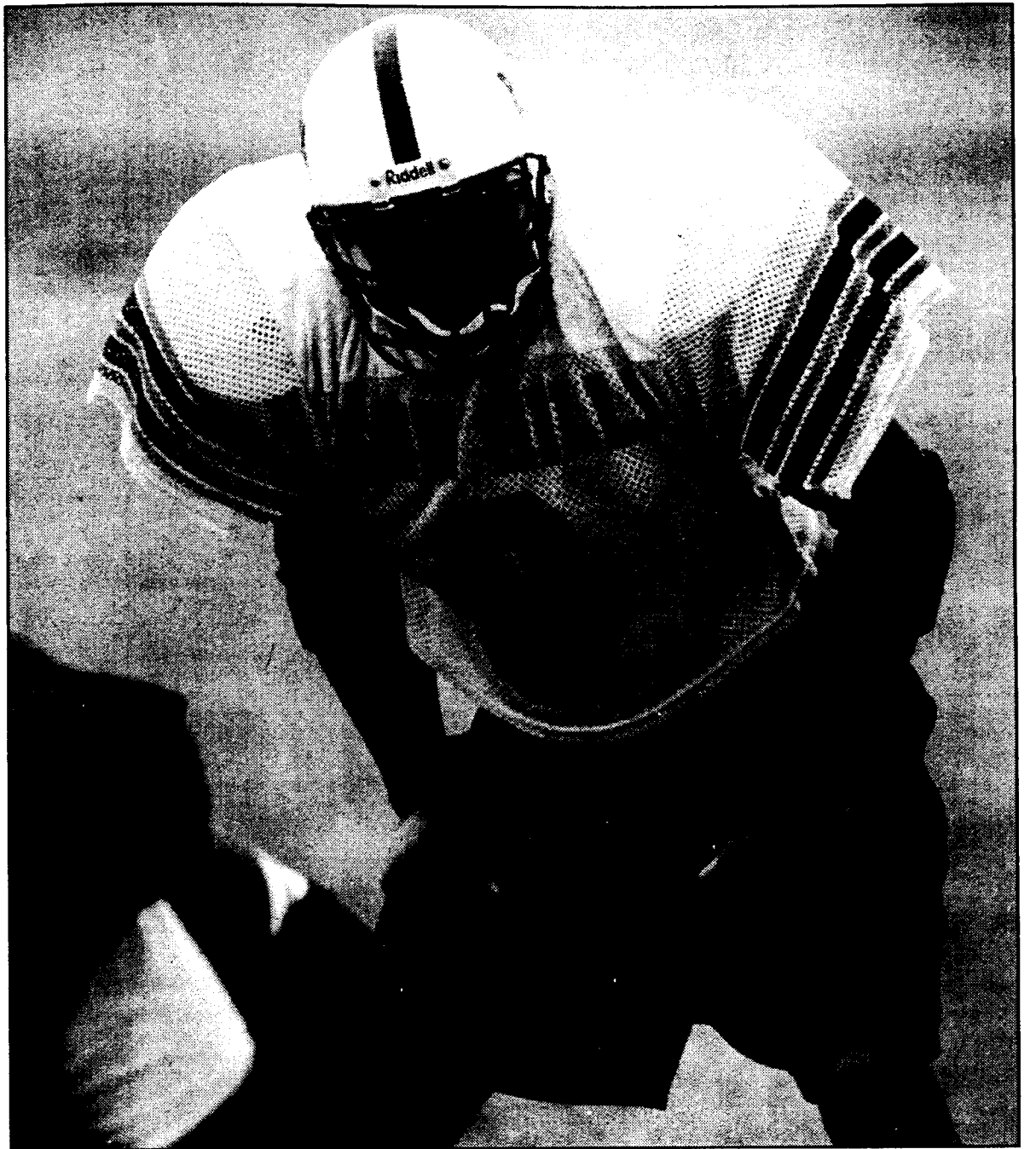
Ohio's offensive game plan will also include running backs Sean Penny and Greg Simpson, both Ohio State recruits, and wide receiver Chris Chambers, a future Wisconsin Badger.

"Our strength is the depth that we have at the skilled positions," Long said. "We're in a situation that we'll rotate everybody in. We have a lot of kids who can do a lot of things well. The game will showcase the talents these guys have."

Not only could both the Pennsylvania and Ohio offenses have the upper hand in the Big 33 Football Classic, but defenses are semi-handcuffed because they cannot stunt on the defensive line or blitz up the middle.

Both coaches said they are looking forward to turning their players loose and finding out just what their capabilities are in a game situation. Each said the game should be very entertaining for the fans and added the key to victory is simple.

"I think both teams can score some points," McCurry said. "You've got to make big plays and you can't make mistakes. That's the key."



Collegian Photo/Kurt Redeker

Ron Graham, a member of the Big 33 Pennsylvania team, gets ready for the 40th annual Big 33 game which takes place at 7 p.m. tomorrow at Hersheypark Stadium. Graham will be attending Penn State in the fall.

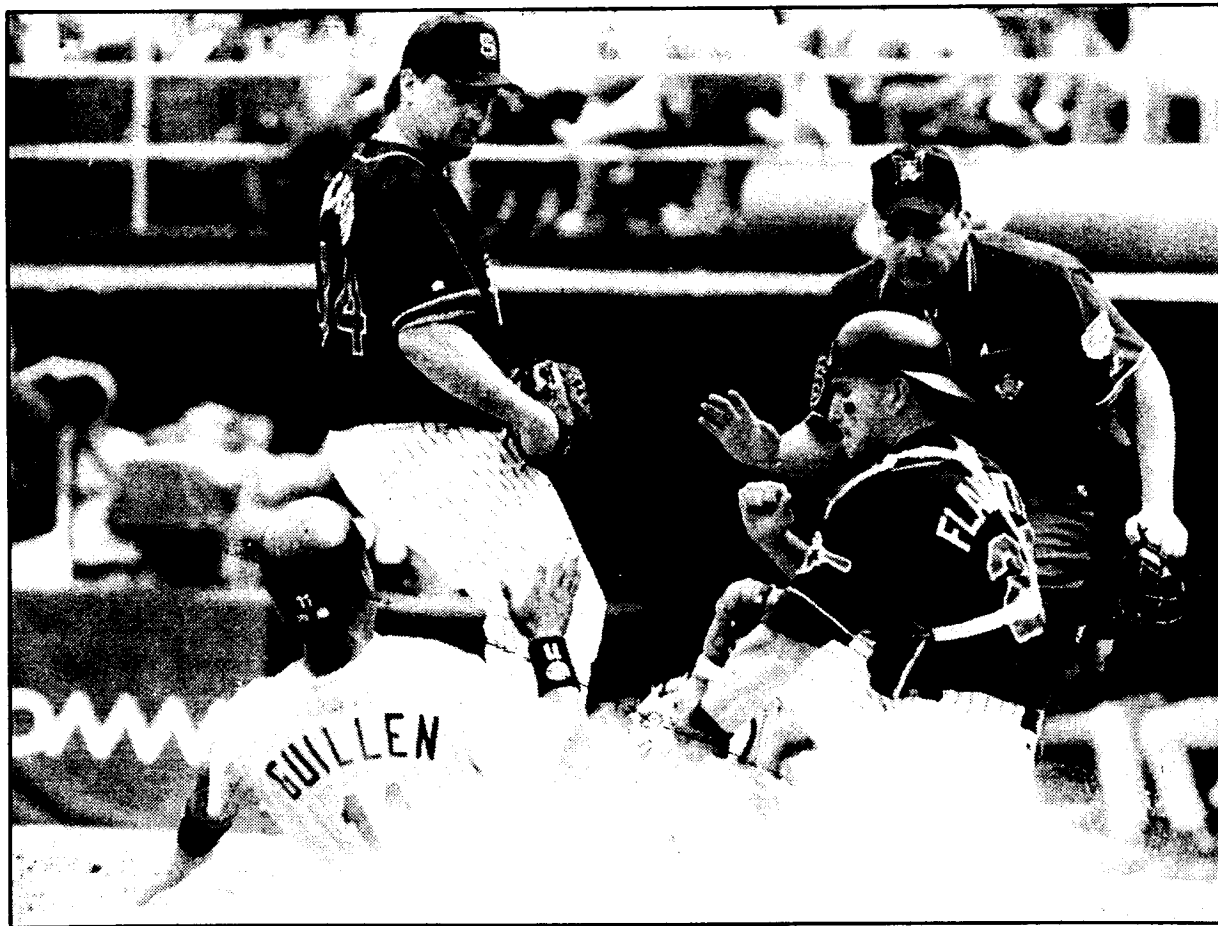
### Recruits on display

The following is a list of Penn State recruits who will play in the Big 33 Football Classic

Pennsylvania	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.	High School
Ron Graham	6'-2"	240	TE/LB	Penn Hills
Travis Blomgren	6'-1"	195	QB/S	Central Bucks West
LaVar Arrington	6'-4"	228	RB/LB	North Hills
Joe McKinney	6'-3"	240	OG/LB	Mars Area
Josh Mitchell	6'-5"	280	OT/DT	Central Bucks East
Jason Bisson	6'-8"	300	OT/DT	Upper St. Clair
Tony Stewart	6'-6"	235	TE/DE	Allentown Central Catholic
John Gilmore	6'-4"	235	TE/DE	Wilson
Ohio	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.	High School
Joe Hartings	6'-4"	250	OG	St. Henry
Bob Jones	6'-4"	250	TE/DE	Wadsworth

Source: Big 33

Collegian Graphic/Walter Barrueto



AP Photo

Pittsburgh Pirates right fielder Jose Guillen is out at home at San Diego Padres catcher John Flaherty tags him during the fourth inning of their game yesterday. The Padres beat the Pirates, 8-6.

## Pirates drop one to hot Padres

By BERNIE WILSON  
AP Sports Writer

SAN DIEGO — In Tony Gwynn's appraisal, the San Diego Padres are just two games away from being back in the NL West race.

Buried in fourth place for much of the first half and 13 games behind San Francisco on July 6, the defending division champion Padres are the top team in baseball since the All-Star break. They've vaulted Colorado into third place, and with yesterday's 8-6 win over Pittsburgh have won 12 of 15 since the break.

Craig Shipley homered in the first inning and hit a two-out, two-run single to break a tie in the sixth for the Padres, who won their fifth straight and pulled within seven of the Giants.

More importantly to Gwynn, the Padres are within two games of .500.

"For us to get back to .500 is really important," Gwynn said. "We've picked a good time to start playing well. You can't really say you're in it until you're at .500. A lot of people will say you're in it now; some people are going to say you're not in it at all."

Regardless, the Padres like the direction they're headed.

"We're playing a lot better," Shipley said. "Everything's going in the same direction — pitching and hitting."

Ken Caminiti and Shipley hit consecutive homers in the four-run first inning. Shipley finished 3-for-5 with three RBIs and Caminiti, who had a two-run homer, was 2-for-4 with two runs scored.

It was a big game for Shipley, who has missed 57 games because of injuries to his left hamstring and right hip flexor. He was making a spot start at second in place of Quilvio Veras, his first start since June 6.

It was only the second time this year that he's had five at-bats in a game.

"I still don't feel 100 percent," Shipley said. "I think the longer you play, especially offense, the more you can relax up there, trying to take it slow and see the ball. I think that makes a huge difference in what's going to happen when you swing the bat."

Pittsburgh's Jason Kendall set a career high with four hits, including a leadoff home run in the ninth. Kevin Young had three hits for the

Pirates, who lost their third straight game.

San Diego starter Danny Jackson failed to hold a 5-1 lead, and the Pirates tied the game at 5 in the sixth.

But Clint Sodowsky (1-2) allowed three runs and two walks in the sixth and the Padres swept the three-game series.

San Diego loaded the bases in the sixth on Wally Joyner's leadoff infield single and walks by Chris Jones and Caminiti. Shipley then hit a chopper over third baseman Young's head for a 7-5 lead.

"I didn't hit it good, but I hit it in the right place," said Shipley, who felt that his line out to left in the eighth was his best at-bat of the game.

Gwynn, who didn't start because of a slight hamstring injury, pinch-hit for reliever Jim Bruske (3-0) and singled for another run.

Shipley "is an awfully good ballplayer," Pittsburgh manager Gene Lamont said. "To have a guy like that coming off the bench is a big plus."

Said Sodowsky: "I had one job to do, and that was to get us into the seventh still tied. I didn't do it, and no one feels worse than I do."

## 'Taxi Driver' of the sports world

Editor's Note: This is the seventh in a series reviewing sports movies. This is a review of Tony Scott's 'The Fan.'

By J.P. GRAMLICH  
Collegian Sports Writer

A long time ago, before baseball players were making ten times the money of the President of the United States, before disgruntled managers were wagering thousands of dollars against their own teams, before ratings-happy television networks were putting video cameras inside catchers' masks, a story like *The Fan* wasn't even imaginable.

But that was a long time ago. *The Fan* is a movie about today.

*The Fan*, director Tony Scott's baseball-oriented touch-up of Martin Scorsese's 1976 eye-opener *Taxi Driver*, is just as convincing in portraying the collapse of a psychopath's thoughts to total violence as a result of the world he lives in — this time with a sports twist, of course.

As in *Taxi Driver*, we have shady Mafioso, relentless avenger and general tough guy Robert De Niro in the lead role, that of troubled knife salesman (always a good combination) and baseball fan Gil Renard. And just as in *Taxi Driver*, De Niro gives the audience a chilling insight into the skewed mind of his character. Throw in the typically energized performance of supporting actor Wesley Snipes and *The Fan* lives up to its billing as a four-star modern morality tale.

Gil Renard is your average, run-of-the-mill loser. Through the opening scenes of the movie, he is in the process of losing his job, losing his wife and losing touch with his son — baseball serving as the lone, vague bond between the two.

In fact, the only thing going in Gil's life is the dawn of the 1996 baseball season and the great prospects of his hometown team, the San Francisco Giants, for which he has season tickets. The Giants, you see, have just picked up \$40 million slugger Bobby Rayburn (Snipes), who happens to be Gil's favorite player and one of the league's best hitters.

As Gil's job, marriage and family life go down the drain, Rayburn and the Giants play superb baseball. They play well enough to keep Gil's mind on the diamond and away from the strains of his personal life, which lie idly in the background.

Until it all goes wrong. Out of nowhere, Rayburn hits a career slump at the plate. The more he swings, the more he misses, and the media are quick to

question the worth of his \$40 million salary. Although cocky teammate Juan Primo (Benicio Del Toro) picks up the slack for the struggling Rayburn, Gil blames him for attempting to be the Giants' big hitter when he's not meant for the role. He also blames Primo for single-handedly causing Rayburn's pathetic hitting streak.

The longer Rayburn's paralyzing slump continues, the more frustrated Gil becomes. After all, Rayburn is a mere extension of the person Gil always wanted to be — a successful baseball player with a loving wife and child and the nation's captivation under his wing. When Gil sees that things aren't quite perfect in his hero's visionary state, he understands that problems are a universal epidemic. He also understands that his are far greater than most.

In a swirl of converging feelings — spearheaded by his unemployment and by his wife's harsh diatribe against him in an earlier scene — Gil punches the insane button on his personality console. He hunts Primo down between games and orders him, matter-of-factly, to conform to his role on the team and let Rayburn take charge. When Primo refuses, Gil has no problem murdering him with a souvenir from the hunting knife company that not too long ago released him as an employee.

To prevent *The Fan* from ending well short of its climax, Gil avoids

arrest for the murder of Primo. But he doesn't exactly tone down his vehement behavior, either.

Proud of what he's done and convinced he has ended his idol's batting slump by eliminating the competition, Gil begins to stalk Rayburn in search of thanks. When Rayburn refuses to celebrate the death of a teammate and begins to suspect Gil is the killer, the latter kidnaps the former's son out of sheer anger.

Gil realizes his idealized image of Rayburn as the ultimate, win-at-all-costs ball player is fictitious, as are all his preconceptions of sports in general.

Through a finale that has more unexpected fireworks than a hyped-up version of *Speed*, Gil proceeds to take two more lives — don't worry, the kid lives — and establishes himself as an authentic psychopath very reminiscent of *Taxi Driver*'s lunatic caddy, Travis Bickle.

The movie appropriately ends at Candlestick Park — the location where it indirectly took place all along. Gil is put to rest by man-hunting police forces, his demise coming in the very stadium that elicited his demented convictions of sport.

While the screenplay will have you believe *The Fan* is a condemnation of one man's twisted beliefs, it is indeed a condemnation of an entire world — the sports world. Scott paints Gil Renard more as a victim than as a culprit, the human result of the cold-blooded, billion-dollar enterprise known as major-market sports.

Gil is the tool Scott uses to decry the bizarre notion that being a fan comes before the likes of being employed, being a husband and being a father.

Sports Movie Review



Photo Courtesy of TriStar Pictures

Robert De Niro stars in the Tony Scott film *The Fan*. De Niro plays Gil Renard, a baseball fan whose obsession with his favorite player, Bobby Rayburn (Wesley Snipes) turns homicidal.