



Steve Hamas

Football Hero Turns Fighter

Steve Hamas, Eleven Letter Man at Penn State, Says Gridiron Sport Has Aided Him in Boxing

By J. WARREN McELIGOT

the love of his alma mater, he invariably jeopardizes his chances for subsequent success on the big league diamond. Participation in the famous gridiron sport is unquestionably a menacing barrier to future achievements as a professional ball tosser.

Ernie Nevers and Red Grange, college football luminaries of a few years back, might have developed into great major league pitchers had not football injuries intervened and precluded the possibility of their gaining laurels in fast baseball company. Countless other college football players had potential diamond careers ruined by participating in the rough and tumble sport. Not so, however, with boxers and wrestlers. Take the case of Jumping Joe Savoldi, Jim McMillen, Steve Hamas, Tiny Roebuck, Joe Maculoso and others.

Hamas, one of the most promising heavyweights to come up in years, the boy who recently knocked out Tommy Loughran, has found that playing college football has aided him materially in his progress as a boxer. Ball players might have had their prospective careers blighted by the rugged football play, but Steve claims the sport has helped in his success in the professional ring just as it has done for the many college football stars who have made good in wrestling.

While the gridiron sport has taken its toll in ruining baseball careers by rendering useless an arm, a leg or body motion, the game has taught Steve some essentials necessary in the sport he is now pursuing and in which he is making his livelihood. Steve learned how to take the hard knocks, the rude jolts and the knockout punch while he was lugging the ball around and backing up the line for dear old Penn State a few years ago.

The football that Steve played taught him to be aggressive, shifty, and elusive. He learned how to take knockout punches and shake them off. Football gave him confidence which he can use to advantage in the professional ring. The favorite college sport supplied Hamas with an animated spirit, a quick thinking brain, and the power and ability to attack and defend.

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HAMAS' football career at Penn State covered three varsity seasons. He played regularly at fullback. Steve was pitted against some of the outstanding teams in the country during his career, including Notre Dame, Pennsylvania, Bucknell, Army, New York University, Lafayette and Pittsburgh.

What he lacked in the finesse of a ball carrier, he made up in aggressiveness and winning spirit. Hamas was the college's greatest all-around athlete. He participated in almost every sport and when he had concluded his years at the institution, he had eleven letters to show for his athletic efforts as well as a favorable scholastic record.

During his senior year, he won five varsity insignia including one each in football, boxing, basketball, track, and lacrosse.

During the winter of 1929, he took part in a dual boxing

WHEN a baseball player of major league potentialities engages in college football for the love of the sport, or for

match against Temple on a Saturday afternoon. After scoring a technical knockout over Swede Hanson, Temple's heavy-weight, Steve appeared a few hours later on the basketball court and played a full game, after which he attended a dance.

The Passaic fighter won the intercollegiate heavyweight title twice, once in 1927 and again in 1929. He lost his boxing crown in 1928 when Leonard Grant of New York University, subbing for Al Lassman, outpointed Penn State's formidable puncher. However, Steve came back strong the next year, to regain the title.

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DURING his college days Hamas was beaten only twice. He was never considered a heavy puncher while a collegian. He developed a more terrific wallop after he had left the campus and came under the tutelage of his able mentor, the genial veteran, Charley Harvey. Hamas was more scientific in college than he now is, but he has developed a fine punch since starting his professional boxing career.

He learned lots about fighting, too, while a Penn State student. Leo Houck, boxing coach of the Nitanny Lions, is the man who taught Hamas the art of self-defense. Houck, a classy fighter in his day, a keen student of the game, saw great possibilities in Hamas from the start and his judgment was vindicated. He firmly believes that Steve some day will win the heavyweight title.

No, Hamas never regrets that he served a long tenure on the gridiron where he tore up the turf for good old Penn State and where he became more accustomed to the hard knocks which he knew would subsequently follow in the roped arena.

He is on the threshold of fistic fame, but that has not given him a swelled head. When he recently knocked out Tommy Loughran and put an end to that famous fighter's career, he did not gloat over it. Instead, sitting in his dressing room, he remarked:

"I feel sorry for Tommy, but I suppose if I had not done it, someone else would have turned the trick sooner or later. I suppose I ought to be happy that it remained for me to rise at Tommy's expense, but I really don't feel that way."

That's the type of boy Hamas is. He remains the college bred lad, the courteous gentleman who made athletic history at Penn State. His Alma Mater is rooting for him and from present indications, his success seems assured.

Now a few words for the man who has brought him forth and has raised him from a comparative unknown in fisticuffs into one of the most-talked-of present day fighters—Charley Harvey, the veteran mentor of the State College boy.

Although the scribes in the Metropolitan district shook their heads when the match with Loughran was made and harbored the belief that Tommy would halt the progress of Hamas, neither Steve nor his tutor agreed with that opinion. Hamas has an abundance of faith in Harvey and when the veteran manager informed Steve that Loughran was ready to be taken and that Hamas could do it, Steve accepted that statement as coming from a knowing one. Hamas felt he had placed his trust in the proper hands and would make good for Charley's sake. And make good he did.