



**BEZDEK**

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to the "Granddaddy of them all".

So while Bezdek enjoyed success at both Oregon and Penn State, just who would he be cheering for in this year's Rose Bowl match-up between the two schools closest to his heart? After all, Bezdek took both schools to their first-ever Rose Bowls, a feat that not too many coaches can boast of.

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Bezdek, who was better known for his success at Penn State, was never to return to Oregon as he had promised. But his name will forever remain near and dear to Oregon fans' hearts as the man who took the Ducks to the promised land.

His decision to allow the players to spend Christmas at home before heading to the city of "oranges and roses" for what the 1916-17 *Emerald* sports editor described as "the biggest intersectional game of recent years" was met with understandable happiness.

But this was an isolated incident at best in Bezdek's storied coaching career.

Never known as a player's coach, he was better known for his tendency to make more enemies than friends in his days as a college coach. Described by many as a belligerent man with a keen football mind, Bezdek was a difficult man to get along with.

"He liked only people who had something that would improve his image," longtime Bezdek assistant coach Casey Jones said. "He never gave any of his assistants credit or even mentioned their names."

In an article on Bezdek, one writer was quoted as saying: "I don't know any man who could make as bitter an enemy as Bez had the knack of doing."

Bezdek pushed his players hard in

practices and it was not out of the ordinary for him to schedule full scrimmages on game days, although his players were said to have looked forward to Saturdays as a relief after a strenuous week of practice.

Sundays featured a long-running hike and on Mondays those who didn't play on Saturday had a lengthy scrimmage. "Bloody Tuesday" came next in the week, known as such because every player scrimmaged until they were half dead.

The rest of the week was filled with typical offensive and defensive workouts that always included at least 30 minutes of wind sprints.

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While Bezdek won many more games than he lost, his unique coaching ways and his occasional lack of control on the field were defining characteristics of the stocky man from the poor neighborhoods of Chicago's South Side.

Along those lines, Bezdek's third trip to the Rose Bowl with his 1922 Penn State squad proved to be one of the most colorful games of his coaching career — not for anything he did during the game, but for what he did prior to the game.

A capacity crowd of 52,000 was on hand and Elmer (Gloomy Gus) Henderson's USC Trojans stood prepared for Bezdek and his crew for the 2:30 p.m. kickoff.

But in one of the stranger incidents in Rose Bowl history, Bezdek and his mighty Penn State team were nowhere to be found. The incident caused quite a commotion.

Two explanations have been offered as to why Penn State over an hour late for its game with USC.

The first one is that Bezdek held the game up intentionally as it was a warm

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