Heresy! A Penn State computer (and friends) picks Texas

WISeful VISTA — Will Penn State 'flirt the cattle'? Who will be lane in Sugar Bowl? ST Will the Big Eight representative fold in the Orange Bowl again? Can a crew of shrewd, enterprising sportswriters enter head-to-head combat with a Penn State computer and live to tell about it?

Only the shadow knows for sure, of course, but, undeterred by all the trysts of the atmosphere, several members of The Mirror's sports staff and a pre-football expert from Pine Grove Mills have combined intelligence with and against a Penn State computer operated by computer science major Larry Fall.

It should be no stranger to Central Pennsylvania sports fans. Last May he finished in the record-smashing time in the third annual Ph. Ph. Ph. 100 marathon race as a representative of the Tavern A.C. He is expected to begin serious training for this year's race under the watchful eye of his coach and值得 Pat Daugherty some time in January.

In the sweet by and by, however, Fall had programmed his 366 computer with an offensive and defensive power rating for each collegiate game he foregamed. For the coming bowl games, he has taken into account the offensive and defensive performances of each team in every game it has played this season.

Somehow it works out that team A's offensive rating is multiplied with team B's defensive rating and the national scoring average. This produces the computer the number of points team A should score in its game with team B. Then the same procedure is followed for team B's offensive rating to come up with B's total points. Ergo, a winner.

Fall, who started his computer projections as a term project in a computer science course, claims 73.8 per cent accuracy throughout the collegiate season. So far in the Bowl season, he has hit correctly the winners of the Liberty, Sun and Fiesta Bowls.

As far as the Cotton Bowl is concerned, though, it looks as if the Penn State computer has had news for Penn State football fans. The prediction: Texas 20, Penn State 17.

Fall, a dedicated Nittany Lion fan, feels pretty badly about this: "If I don't include the Tennessee game (a 21-11 whomp job by the Volunteers), we can beat Texas 21-10. He sniffs with a grin that fades under the burden of scientific objectivity. Tennessee has to be included, and, as the computer tells it, Penn State has a low.

What's more, Fall's computer has been known to go wrong in the past. For example, PSU 19, Tennessee 13."

Here's how Fall's computer sees the Bowl games:

- Cotton-Texas 20, PSU 17
- Sugar—Oklahoma 45-14, Rose—Michigan 26-7, Orange—Nebraska 35-21, Astro-Bluebonnet—Colorado 21-6, Gator—Georgia 26-23, Peach—Georgia Tech 17-17

His computer was not programmed for the pros.

And here's how The Mirror sports staffs see the Bowls and the pros.

Sports editor Bill Greene's picks: Cotton—Texas 21-17, Sugar—Oklahoma 45-14, Rose—Michigan 26-7, Orange—Nebraska 35-21, Astro-Bluebonnet—Colorado 21-6, Gator—Georgia 26-23, Peach—Georgia Tech 17-17

Guest expert Jim Landis's picks: Cotton—PSU 34-14, Sugar—Oklahoma 45-14, Rose—Michigan 26-7, Orange—Nebraska 35-21, Astro-Bluebonnet—Colorado 21-6, Gator—Georgia 26-23, Peach—Georgia Tech 17-17

Sports writer Dennis Gildea's picks: Cotton—Texas 20-17, Sugar—Oklahoma 45-14, Rose—Michigan 26-7, Orange—Nebraska 35-21, Astro-Bluebonnet—Colorado 21-6, Gator—Georgia 26-23, Peach—Georgia Tech 17-17

There you have it. We will see what we will see.

—dennis gildea