

Outcome Secondary . . .

Leahy Praises Wolverines; Sorry Teams Didn't Meet

By Jerry Liska

South Bend, Ind., Jan. 6 (AP).—Football Coach Frank Leahy of Notre Dame praised Michigan unstintingly today in commenting on the Associated Press poll which designated the Rose Bowl Champion Wolverines as a 2 to 1 national choice over the also-unbeaten Irish, but had this meaningful afterthought:

"Isn't it a shame that the two teams couldn't have met—as a treat, say, for 85,000 fans in Michigan Stadium who would see the football game of the century. The outcome even might prove secondary."

If there was any chagrin over the reversed decision by the Nation's sportswriters, who last December 8 voted Notre Dame the top team and Michigan second, soft-spoken Leahy kept it buried.

"This is a good opportunity to congratulate Coach Fritz Crisler on his wonderful team and a really marvelous job from every conceivable angle," said Leahy. "Michigan had splendid material and excellent school spirit which represents gridiron strength in any season and in any league."

Asked his opinion of the relative merits of Michigan and Notre Dame, Leahy diplomatically replied:

"It doesn't make any difference whether Michigan or Notre Dame won the poll. I guess all the Notre Dame fans will look upon the Fighting Irish as the No. 1 team and all the Michigan fans will look upon the Wolverines as the No. 1 team."

Leahy declined comment on the likely outcome if Notre Dame again met Southern California, the mutual opponent whose 49-0 pasting by Michigan last Thursday precipitated the landslide vote for the

Wolverines. Notre Dame defeated Southern California, 38-7, on December 6.

Nor would Leahy speculate on whether the Irish could have matched Michigan's seven touchdowns against Southern California if they had turned All-American Quarterback Johnny Lujack loose on a passing attack during the last 40 minutes in which not a Notre Dame aerial was tossed against the Trojans.

Leahy was to leave today for New York to attend the National Collegiate Athletic Association Coaches' meeting in New York.

Concerning constant rumors that he may resign momentarily to accept a more lucrative position with the Los Angeles Dons or some other professional team, Leahy asserted: "I'll be struggling here next fall."

Leahy will return from New York in time for the Notre Dame football banquet next Monday night at which Tom Hamilton of Navy and George Munger of Pennsylvania will be among the speakers.

Leahy, who missed his train, made public the text of a telegram he sent Crisler. It said:

"Congratulations to you and your squad on your amazing football achievements of 1947. I regret that I did not have the opportunity of seeing your great team in action. Regards."