

Everything you wanted to know about 'Burghers'

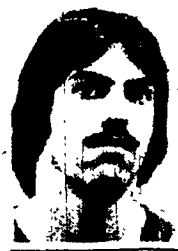
We filed out behind a golden-haired man of middle age, dressed smartly in a blue sport coat and matching plaid slacks. On his left arm was a woman appearing much more like his date than his wife, and his right hand held a golden trumpet at his side. But he really didn't hold it there for long. The horn, which hadn't had a break all day, was not yet to get one. In his blue and gold the man appeared not unlike a bugler of days past as he sounded reveille.

But the throng of happy people crying 'Charge!' with each bugle call could not fill the role of soldiers at this time. Soldiers can't step through life with the relaxed, party kind of atmosphere that was then and often synthesized at Pittsburgh's Three Rivers Stadium.

This writer had greatly anticipated an afternoon at Three Rivers, if for no other reason than to discover home and hearth and constitution of a brotherhood known often in local circles as "The Burghers."

Burghers, by way of explanation, is an abbreviated form of Pittsburghers applying most directly to those of the Pittsburgh vicinity with a vested interest in sports. Burghers are also a topic of frequent discussion, from the pages of Sports Illustrated to places around this campus.

So to satisfy my own curiosity as well as that of others far removed from Pittsburgh, I sought knowledge of just what makes a Burgher a Burgher. And I hadn't picked just any old afternoon and any old Three Rivers Stadium happening either. It was Sunday, November 3 and the Philadelphia Eagles were in town to do battle with the Steelers. To say that there is



Jeff Young
Ass't Sports Editor

a rivalry between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh is a lot like saying that Watergate didn't help the public image of the Republican party. So there were multitudes of Burgher specimens for me to observe.

Between the hours of 12:45 and 4:00 that afternoon, while their beloved Steelers obliterated the Eagles by 27-0, I assembled a mental list of the requirements of a Burgher. Here it will be presented.

(1) Artistry. Burghers have a sense of artistry that perhaps appears most clearly in the signs they display about Three Rivers Stadium.

Examples of such graphic display I viewed included a black and gold banner lauding The Steel Curtain, displaying the names of the Steelers' front four — Dwight White, Ernie Holmes, Joe Greene and L.C. Greenwood — in their positions

on the defensive line. Another sign, multicolored and skillfully printed, marked the location of Kolb's Cowboys, vigorous supporters of offensive tackle Jon Kolb.

(2) Musical ability, or at least Rhythm. Burghers love to sing and/or chant as their men go about their work. A popular song, consisting of two notes and the words Go Steelers is used extensively by the Burghers. The higher note is sung on the syllables Go and -ers and Go is held for four counts so the song goes like this: Gooooo Steel-ers!

Chants include Home Run, shouted every time Roy Gerela kicks off for Pittsburgh. Home Run, Home Run, Home Run. Also another one, Steee-ers, Steee-ers, Steee-ers. Notice the difference in pronunciation from the aforementioned song. This chant can be used at any time and usually is.

(3) Appreciation, for the opponent when it is deserved. The Burghers wowed all afternoon at Eagle punter Merrit Kersey, whose consistent booming spirals made him possibly the only Philadelphian worth noting after the game.

The Burghers also seemed to like Eagle middle linebacker Bill Bergey, who was always around the ball. When a small scrap materialized in the second half, a Burgher yelled, "Hey Bergey, get in there!" I supposed they may have also liked Bergey's last name.

(4) LOYALTY. This one is capitalized because it is the one thing that a real Burgher can't do without.

Loyalty means that when you're waiting in line for a couple Iron City beers and cheers go up in the stands, you leave the line for the nearest entrance to see what's happening. The

time that you've spent waiting in line means nothing.

Loyalty also means when the Steelers are driving for another touchdown to tack onto a 27-0 lead and are penalized twice in a row you let the ref know that there's another team out there too. And loyalty means that every time the Steeler defense brings the opposition's punter onto the field, it gets a generous round of applause.

All in all, Burghers are found to be a group of loyal, artistic, rhythmic people who love sports and who go to Three Rivers Stadium to have some fun.

Oh yes, they need some humor too. Like when you're waiting with several thousand other Burghers to climb the staircase of the bridge crossing the Allegheny river into Pittsburgh, you joke "Pittsburgh's mass transit system," and everybody chuckles.

Is Flyers image slanted?

By BRIAN EK

The sports press is rapidly becoming the Philadelphia Flyers' best insurance for retaining the Stanley Cup in the 1974-75 NHL season.

Perhaps the most effective non-player in hockey history, the sports reporter has out-performed Fred Shero's formidable stable of prizefighters in doing what they do best — disrupting opponents' game plans.

In a haze of mis-interpretation, the press has transformed the Flyers' success story from a calculated strategy of hard-nosed hockey, into a pathological craving for bloodshed and unrestricted violence, practiced by hulking creatures of uncertain relations to the human race.

Out of, primarily, a need for self-preservation and, secondly, a desire to win, several NHL teams have sent scouts scurrying, from zoos to boxing rings, in search of competition for Philly's Broad Street Bullies. The result has been early season disaster for many teams and media spokesmen gleefully predict that the 1974-75 NHL season will continue to be unequalled in the punishing exhibition of professional violence.

The sports press first donned a Flyer uniform in the aftermath of the 1974 Stanley Cup playoffs. Anxious to equate the Philadelphia success story with some miracle formula, reporters eagerly exploited Shero's liberal use of assumingly unethical tactics on the ice.

Sadly, those press members gathered in the victorious Philadelphia locker room that Sunday afternoon to hear Shero laud the virtues of controlled violence, forgot to bring their hearing aids along. Technical terms such as body checking and taking the man

out found their way into the newspapers under the new headings of legalized mugging and gang warfare.

What Shero, in fact, did say to that dwindling congregation of newsmen with no deadlines to meet, was that the Flyers' success keyed not on disorganized mayhem, but rather on an intricate formula of knowing exactly who to hit and when to hit them.

In hockey, body checking means nothing unless it accomplishes a specific purpose. If Dave Shultz does not take a certain man out of the play at a specific time, his check is wasted and, very possibly, could hurt his team by removing himself from the play.

Shero designs the Philadelphia game plan on a hybrid version of standard body checking strategy. Fighting also becomes an important form of body checking and, in many cases, functions more effectively. If his Flyers can disrupt an opponent's game plan by removing key attackers or defencemen from the ice, big guns like Bobby Clarke and Rick MacLeish can move in on opposing goaltenders with considerable ease, resulting in boosted goal production. In its purest form, Shero's strategy is an art, nowhere resembling the back alley reputation gained from the press.

If the press has the power to influence ideas, it certainly has those of prominent and respectable NHL coaches, particularly Montreal's Scotty Bowman and Boston's Don Cherry. Montreal has always relied on finesse, not brute strength to skate past, not over, opponents. Boston, previous holder of the heavy weight title of hockey, has become surprisingly subdued in past years, relying on skill rather than muscle to dominate their division.

Charges face Lock Haven

The Penn State stickwomen take a three game winning streak into the season's finale against arch rival Lock Haven at 3 p.m. today in Lock Haven.

The blue and white sticks will be vying for their sixth win against two losses and a tie, as they prep for the upcoming Susquehanna tournament on November 9 and 10.

"It's a new stimulus," Rattray said concerning Lock Haven and the tournament.

Penn State is coming off a ten day layoff since they tripped Millersville 4-2 in Lancaster. Rattray said she feels the gap is difficult especially at this stage of the season when the team has been finally putting it all together.

Another problem has been the dominance Lock Haven has had over Penn State the past decade in field hockey. Lock Haven has won nine of the ten games played.

Since last week the stickwomen have been working out under the lights on the astroturf.

"It is a different type of game on the astroturf," Rattray said. "The game is much faster and the practice on the astroturf will serve as good practice for the dirt field we will be playing on in Lock Haven."

Termed a "slow starter" by Rattray, her stickwomen in their patented 4-3-3-1 attack have scored more goals this year than last year with this game left.

Senior standout Peg Gerhart leads the Lion sticks with eight tallies. Anne Chamberlain has found the nets four times.

The junior varsity is sporting a 7-1 record as they go into their big showdown. The junior sticks are led by super soph Nancy Ringer.

—Gordon Blain

NHL, NBA STANDINGS

NBA Eastern Conference Atlantic Division				NHL Division 1					
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pts	GF	GA	
Buffalo	5	3	.625	Philadelphia	8	3	17	40	27
Boston	5	4	.556	NY Island	7	2	16	45	22
New York	4	4	.500	Atlanta	6	5	14	41	37
Philadelphia	3	5	.375	NY Rangers	5	4	12	37	34

NBA Western Conference Pacific Division				NHL Division 2					
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pts	GF	GA	
Golden State	7	2	.778	Chicago	7	3	16	53	29
Seattle	5	4	.556	Vancouver	6	3	14	42	30
Los Angeles	4	4	.500	St. Louis	3	5	9	35	39
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