



Photo by Andy Gumberg

Jim O'Hora, whom Joe Paterno refers to as "one of the great people in Penn State athletic history," retires tomorrow from a coaching career at Penn State that began in 1946.

## Looks back on 31 years of grid duty

# O'Hora bids adieu to Lion coaching

By JOYCE TOMANA  
Collegian Sports Writer

After 31 years, Jim O'Hora will retire tomorrow from the Nittany Lion coaching staff, his alma mater.

Since he joined the Penn State staff in 1946, it has been the players that have made his fondest memories. He has coached Lion All-Americans Steve Suhey, Glenn Ressler, Mike Reid, Randy Crowder and Mike Hartenstine. Such talents as Rosey Grier, David Rowe, Stew Barber, Charley Janerette, Andy Stynchuka, John Nolan, Frank Ahrenhold and Steve Smear were also under his direction.

"I think that's what made coaching for me — the association with the great young people," O'Hora says. "You enjoy the associations with coaches and other people, but the real joy for me was being around the enthusiasm of the players. I couldn't wait to get to work."

O'Hora first arrived at Penn State as a freshman in 1932. He played center under coach Bob Higgins and earned three varsity letters in 1933, 1934, and 1935.

While studying for his master's degree in physical education he joined Higgins on the gridiron as a line coach in 1936. Eventually, O'Hora would serve under three more Penn State head coaches: Joe Bedenk, Rip Engle and Joe Paterno. He was appointed assistant head coach by Paterno in 1974.

"Jim has been a great football coach in every sense," says Paterno. "He has been an outstanding teacher, strategist and an example for young people. On a personal note, he has been a confidante, a great personal friend and a man whose opinion I respect very much."

"It is hard to imagine that any man has made a greater contribution to Penn State athletics. The Lions have come a long way since the

early seasons, and O'Hora has played a large part in the program's growth.

"I never played or coached on a losing team at Penn State," he said. "We had a losing record when I came here as a freshman, but we didn't have any losing seasons the three years I played under Higgins and we haven't had one since I've been coaching."

The 1938 record of 3-4-1 was the last time the Lions had a losing season. O'Hora recalls how difficult those early years were.

"It was a down time for us," he reflects. "Scholarships had been abolished in 1929 and there was a feeling that the bottom had fallen out of the football program. The coaches were discouraged because there weren't any blue chip athletes around."

He gives a great deal of credit for Penn State's building of a consistently high ranked squad to the increased alumni interest during his undergraduate days.

"Bill Griffiths, Casey Jones and some of the other alumni got interested in bringing football back to where it had been, he said. "That was the start and each year it got little better."

Looking back, O'Hora has quite a list of unforgettable moments: the undefeated team which marked the return of some outstanding athletes to Penn State; the 1950 season when the Lions snapped back to win their final five games after a 1-4 start; a top-ranked team of Paterno.

"That 1964 season really stands out O'Hora remembers. "We had some people who knew adversity, but came back to be good a team as there was in the country. It was thrilling and satisfying to be part of it."

"I know I'll miss something — that natural — but the physical demands of the game today are great," he says. "It's a different game today. It takes more out of an individual to coach."

## New pilot pleases Leafs' brass

TORONTO (AP) — Roger Neilson never played professional hockey but his years of coaching successes have paid off in a contract to coach the Toronto Maple Leafs of the National Hockey League.

"When you look at players Neilson coached in junior hockey who are in the NHL now, you see that they're excellent technical players," Leafs captain Darryl Sittler said yesterday after the club announced the appointment of Neilson to replace Red Kelley, who was dismissed earlier this month.

"Neilson has been one of the leading candidates for the job all along," said club owner Harold Ballard. "We were very impressed with the development of our young players under his coaching last season in Dallas."

"Neilson has been a coach who has demanded discipline from his players and he's been a teacher, both professionally and in hockey. His reports on players in Dallas were the best I've ever seen."

Neilson, a 43-year-old Toronto native who spends his summers at a cottage near Peterborough, managed and coached minor hockey and baseball teams since he was a teenager.

He started as coach of the Peterborough club in the Ontario Hockey Association major junior A series during the 1967-68 season and under his guidance the team never finished worse than third and once won the Ontario championship.

Some of the excellent technical players developed by Neilson at Peterborough included Bob Gainey and Doug Jarvis, now with the NHL Montreal Canadiens and Craig Ramsay of the Buffalo Sabres.

Last season, Neilson coached the Dallas Black Hawks in the

Central Hockey League, the farm team shared by Toronto and the Chicago Black Hawks.

Neilson is a student of the game after the style of Philadelphia Flyers Coach Fred Shero, whom he admires.

"Roger read every available article about hockey," said Ed Redmond, owner of the Peterborough junior club. "He was devoted to a study about everything to do with the game. He was a systematic student always alert for progressive methods. His is the basic up-and-down hockey with emphasis on top physical training."

"Look, if we hadn't hired him, you can bet some other NHL team would have snapped him up," said Ballard, who wrapped up contract talks with Neilson via a long-distance telephone call to South Africa where the new coach is on vacation.

## Tickets remain for 3 home grid tilts

Hark! There are a limited number of tickets remaining for three, count 'em, three Penn State HOME football games.

Four of the seven scheduled home affairs have been officially sold out, but tickets are still available for Houston, Sept. 17, Utah State, Oct. 8 and Miami, Oct. 29.

A lottery system was used to determine who got tickets for the other home games but since Houston, Miami and Utah State did not require as many for their fans, some tickets still are remaining,

athletic business manager William Meredith said.

If you are interested in the tickets, you should in great haste send a check to the Penn State Ticket Office, 237 Recreation Building, University Park, Pa. 16802. Tickets are \$8 each. Add a buck on each ticket for mailing and handling charges and make those checks payable to "The Pennsylvania State University."

Tickets also remain for road games with Rutgers, Sept. 2, Syracuse, Oct. 15, North Carolina State, Nov. 5, and Pittsburgh, Nov. 19.

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(answers to page 4 puzzle)

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