

Flyers-style hockey too much for Flyers

Flyers coach Fred Shero couldn't win an All-Star game to save his life. So he typed up a letter explaining to his Campbell Conference squad how they should go about beating the Prince of Wales Conference stars Tuesday.

The letter was nothing more than a boiled-down version of the strategy he won two Stanley Cups with in Philadelphia: play the man, take short shifts, forecheck, be careful with the puck in the defensive zone.

His squad still lost, but the strategy wasn't anything new to the players.

Success breeds imitation and imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Nowhere else could those cliches apply better. Since winning those cups in 1974 and '75, every team in the NHL has adopted the Flyers' style — even the lofty, free-skating Canadiens. If you're looking for why the Flyers haven't dominated the league the last two years like they used to, look no farther than here.

It's simply that the Flyers' brand of hockey can beat any team — including the Flyers. And the Flyers' brand of

NHL Hockey

By ERIC YODER



hockey is not just gooning it up, as their detractors used to scream in their Dave Schultz days.

Sure, they were physical and often too physical. Intimidation won them many a game, especially against teams like the Rangers and Sabres, who preferred to tiptoe around the ice.

Initially, teams tried to copy the physical aspect of the Flyers, loading up their rosters with moose who thought goal mouths were something to punch people in. The Rangers hired the all-time NHL bad guy, John Ferguson, to coach; Minnesota took Ted Harris, a bruiser who had finished his career under Shero. Soon, nearly every organization had designated hitters either on or behind

the bench.

When the Flyers met the Sabres in the '75 finals, Buffalo was over its head in praise for its bad guy, Jerry "King Kong" Korab. That was a switch, because Buffalo is usually over its head in snow only.

In any case, Korab's performance in that series showed that the goons were not what made the Flyers champions. As a fitting conclusion to a dismal showing, Korab was mostly responsible for both the Flyers' goals in the clinching game.

Although one can still hardly hear the word hockey used apart from its adopted modifiers, "violence in," hockey has learned putting fists in the other guy's face doesn't win games. Putting the

puck in his goal and keeping it out of yours does. That's where "the system" comes in.

Shero's system has much maligned as being more complicated than Penn State registration, probably because writers don't have the hockey smarts or the patience to figure it out. But basically, it was in the instructions Shero handed out to the All-Stars. The key is discipline.

Hockey players aren't known to be a particularly disciplined bunch, possibly because of the free-flowing nature of the game itself. Teams like the Canadiens, Rangers and Sabres succeeded in the past because of their superior talent with which they free-styled. When the Flyers — a team with inferior talent — came along, they succeeded because they played a system.

The discipline and the system came mostly from Europe — Russia especially — at a time when North American hockey blindly clung to the illusion that its game was better. It took Shero to have the courage to say otherwise, and again an incident involving the Flyers proved it.

In the middle of the 1974-75 season, a Soviet touring team ravaged the best of the NHL, not losing a single game. Until they met the Flyers. Shero shoved the Russians' game in their faces like Julius Erving on a dunking rampage. He proved he was a better student than the Soviets were teachers.

Since then, the NHL has had 18 teams of Philadelphia Flyers.

The teams that have little talent still rely on their goon squads, even after the Flyers have traded Schultz and claimed Bob Kelly, Andre Dupont and Don Saleski. Those teams still get minimal results because they have neither the skill nor the discipline to play the system style of hockey. They play it superficially, incompletely.

But for the teams that have talent and can control it, teams like the Islanders, and, yes, even the Canadiens, the results have been quick and impressive.

The Flyers still have that talent and discipline, and may capture the cup this year. But no matter who wins it all, they'll do it in a way Fred Shero pioneered.

ISC Invitational Tourney a look at future

By LESLIE BOBB

Daily Collegian Sports Writer

A snow-covered ground, temperatures in the mid-teens and a gusty wind doesn't seem like perfect soccer weather, but it won't bother the members of the Women's International Soccer Club.

These sub-arctic conditions won't be upsetting because the club is participating in the first Women's Invitational Indoor Soccer Tournament to be held at the I.M. Building and Rec Hall this weekend.

"This is the first women's indoor soccer tournament in the United

States, as far as I've heard," said Wendy Coyle, tournament director and ISC president.

Competition begins Saturday in Gym 3 of the I.M. Building. Eight teams will compete, representing four states. Coming from Virginia are the Great Danes and the Hell Cats. The Meteors and the Gypsies hail from New York City and the Title Bason Blues play their home games in Washington, D.C. Rounding out the field is the ISC.

"The competition is pretty high caliber," Coyle said. "The team from Washington D.C. finished in first

place in its region."

The tournament marks a triumph in the women's battle to achieve equality with the men's division of the ISC. Ever since the women's club was initiated last winter, Coyle has been trying to think of new ways to improve its program.

"In the past, the men's ISC division has had indoor soccer tournaments. So, I came up with the idea of also having a women's indoor soccer tournament," Coyle said.

Not only will this tournament help the women's program at Penn State, but it may also have far-reaching

effects on the future of women's soccer.

"People will look at it and realize that women do play soccer all over the United States," Coyle said. "Look at California and the state of Washington. They have women's leagues of a couple thousand members. This tournament is a kind of precursor for organizing some kind of nation-wide organization."

The games will start at 1 p.m. Saturday in Gym 3 of the I.M. Building and continue until 7 p.m. Competition Sunday will start at 9 a.m. and end at 4 p.m.

Namath retires from grid play

PHOENIX, Ariz. (AP) — Joe Willie Namath, whose frolicking lifestyle was a standard for some and whose quarterbacking talent was a standard for others, has retired from professional football.

Namath, 34, confirmed his retirement from the National Football League at an airport mob scene of reporters and broadcasters Wednesday.

Baseball meeting

A meeting for all varsity baseball players of 1977, plus those invited back from fall practice, will be held at 7 p.m. today in 114 Rec Hall.

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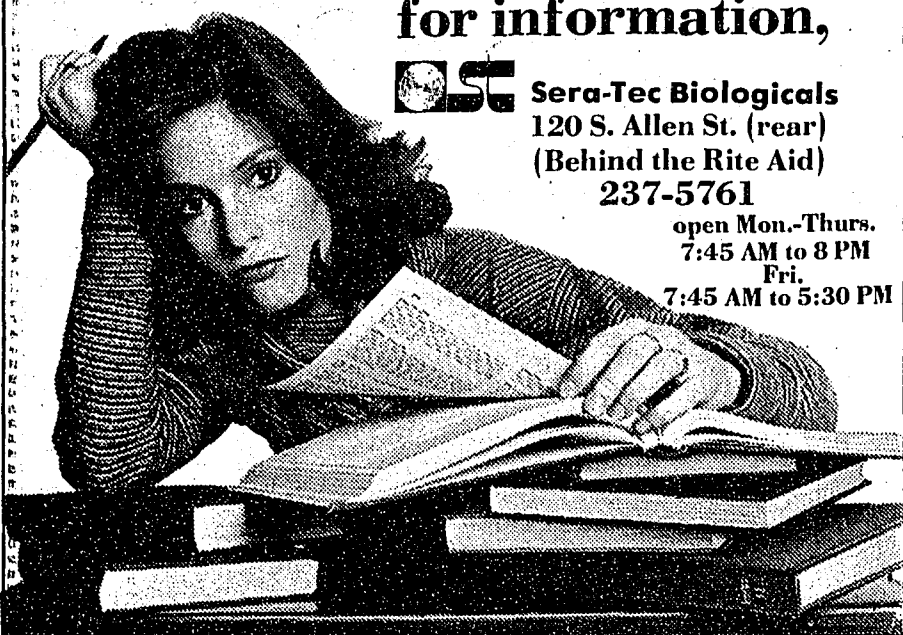
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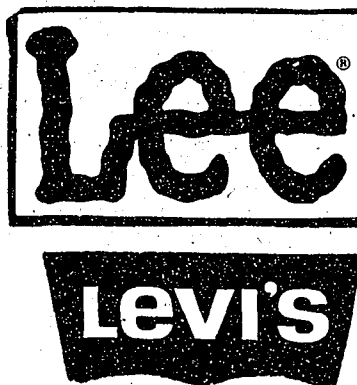
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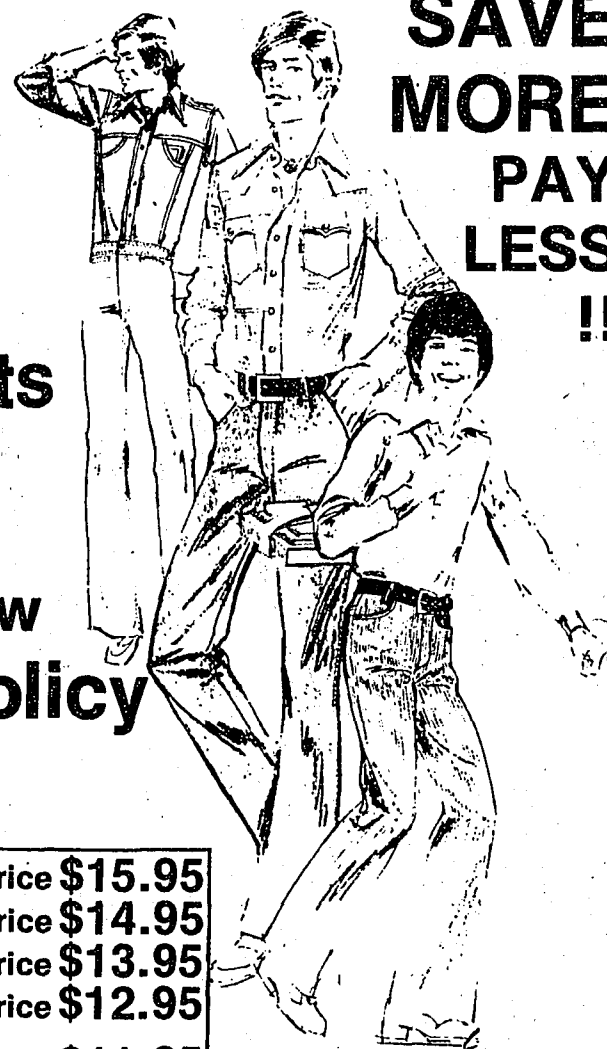
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