

Football, a PSU fixture from Hollenback to Paterno

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set national defensive records.
All-American Guard Steve Suhey led ball carriers through opponents' lines.
On defense, he joined squad members to give up the fewest yards in one game, the fewest average yards per game, and the lowest average allowed per rush. In those days, teams played "both ways" — offense and defense.
The '47 season ended in a 13-13 tie with Southern Methodist University in the Cotton Bowl.
The bowl invitation introduced Lion teams to the racial difficulties of playing football in the South. Because Dallas hotels would not accept black guests, the Lions had to stay at a Naval Air Station 18 miles from the city.
Black players Wally Triplett, half-back, and Dennie Hoggard, end, nevertheless broke the racial barrier at the Cotton Bowl.
Penn State teams were the first to use black athletes in several other contests.

Lenny Moore, a Lion who later played with the Baltimore Colts, was the first black to play college football in Fort Worth, Texas. The running back gained 113 yards in the 1954 contest with Texas Christian.
In 1961, Penn State's Dave Robinson opened both the University of Miami and the Gator Bowl to black athletes. In the bowl game, the Lions beat a highly ranked Georgia Tech team, 30-15.
In the 1950s, scholarships for athletes were once more made available at the University. Athletic subsidies for players had been banned since 1927, two years before "Bulletin 23," the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching report condemning financial aid to athletes.
In the opinion of the foundation, scholarships and special tutoring for athletes were inconsistent with educational and ethical values.
When Charles A. "Rip" Engle became coach in 1950, he had 45 athletic

scholarships to help build a team. Engle encouraged recruitment, confident that the young high school players who were entering college could challenge the outgoing veterans who dominated play in the post-war era.
Illinois was ranked No. 1 in polls before the 1954 season, but the Lions upset the Illini, 14-12.
Roosevelt Grier, a '51 Engle recruit, stymied the Illini running game, while quarterback Milt Plum directed the Lion backfield.
The 1954 team won seven of nine games, including a 35-13 success over Penn, in the Lions' first nationally televised game.
Syracuse plagued the Lions between 1956 and 1960, taking four out of five contests. The Orangemen then boasted backfields that included Jim Brown, later of Cleveland Brown fame, Floyd Little and Ernie Davis.
Syracuse won the 1957 match by two points, and the Lions, previously highly

ranked, tumbled from the Top Ten.
Coach Engle paid little attention to polls after that, according to Max Rappoport's book, "Nittany Lions."
Rappoport quotes Engle as saying: "a two-point loss to one of the best teams in the country dropped you out of the Top Ten, then the polls aren't a fair judge of college football teams."
Engle's 16-year career as coach was marked by four bowl game appearances, two at the Liberty Bowl and two at the Gator Bowl.
The 1959 season was the last for New Beaver Field.
Additions boosted the stadium's capacity from 46,284 to 60,203 by 1977.
By the end of 1977, the Nittany Lions ranked ninth in overall game victories with 39 years of non-losing seasons.
Since 1974, when the University withdrew from the Eastern College Athletic Conference, Penn State has tried to "establish a national football image as the East's top university in-

spiration," Riley said.
The most infamous slight to Lion football was delivered on national television by President Richard M. Nixon.
Nixon pronounced Texas the nation's No. 1 team in 1969, despite the Lions' possession of an Orange Bowl victory that year, and the nation's longest unbeaten, untied streak of 19 games.
The Lions made it 30 undefeated games before succumbing to Colorado in 1970.
Following Engle's dignified retirement in 1966, Paterno took over the coaching spot. The English literature major established a reputation — football's "winningest" coach.
Paterno perhaps best summed up the problem of winning when he said, "I think if it is just a question of winning and losing, football is a silly game."

B. D. Kunkle, '07



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