



HE IS THE VOICE

OF THE GAME

From sports to snow, he's in the know

By Danielle Vickery
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

If you know Penn State sports, you know Dean DeVore. If you've been to a Penn State football game since 2000, you know him. If you've been to a women's volleyball game or a men's volleyball game or a wrestling match or a men's gymnastics meet or a men's lacrosse game — you know him.

At least, you know his voice. "Touchdown Penn State," he announces to the more than 100,000 fans in Beaver Stadium. With emphasis on the "touchdown."

"Joe Sunder with the kill," he says, at a men's volleyball game in Rec Hall. "Point ... Penn State."

With emphasis on the "Penn."

DeVore, a Penn State alumnus who used to play the trumpet in the Blue Band, was living with some men's lacrosse players in 1990. That year, he started announcing at men's lacrosse games.

"I got kind of really goofy," DeVore said. "Other coaches would want me to announce for their sports."

So he did. He's been, at one time or another, the public address announcer at every Penn State sport except for tennis and fencing. But his biggest break came in 1993, when he started announcing for women's volleyball.

"Our program eventually went from having no announcer to having a good, quality announcer," women's volleyball coach Russ Rose said. "He has a good knowledge of the game, so there's not dead time where he's trying to figure out what happens. He knows what's going on. He knows the players. He has an ability to be a part of the game."

It got DeVore noticed. In 2000, he earned the PA announcer spot for football after his predecessor, Fran Fisher, retired. He said while some announcers draw attention to themselves, he tries to focus on the athletes. And that starts with pronouncing everyone's name properly.

DeVore spends an hour to an hour and a

half before games just going over the teams' rosters. Sometimes, he checks with each team's sports information director. Other times, he just asks the athletes.

He tries to mimic the pronunciations of foreign-born players. Sometimes they laugh at him, he said, but they seem to appreciate the effort and some players thank him.

"Those are the kinds of things that give me pride about what I'm doing," DeVore said.

Fans are important to him, too. "My philosophy for PA is, I'm here to make sure people understand what's going on," he said. "I take on the role of the average fan."

DeVore says he doesn't have a favorite sport to call, though he admits some sports are easier than others. In football, he has two spotters — one for offense and one for defense — who help point out what's going on.

There's a rhythm to it, he said, because there's so much happening.

"Don't ever ask me the score afterward," he said. "I go home and watch it on DVR — I'm so focused in the moment, I don't even remember if we played well."

DeVore announces about two or three games a week. So most people, he said, assume that's what he does for a living.

But it's not. DeVore wakes up at 2 a.m. on weekdays to go to his "real" job — as a broadcast meteorologist and manager of radio operations at AccuWeather.

DeVore sits in a small booth in Room 246 of the AccuWeather Building — Radio Booth #17. There are maps on every wall, a small paper cup overflowing with pens and markers. He's wearing a set of headphones and looking at one of the four computer screens in front of him.

An "ON AIR" light above his door turns red every few minutes. He jumps in on radio stations all over the country — 25 of them — to broadcast a weather forecast.

He does about 10 hits an hour, he said — New York City. Houston. Detroit. New York City again. San Antonio. York. Orlando. New Bedford, Mass. Atlanta.



To view a video of DeVore talking about announcing and broadcasting as a job: psu.collegian.com

Detroit again. Portland, Maine. Back to New York City. Allentown.

Later in the morning, he gives a few weather broadcasts in Los Angeles.

DeVore said he's always loved weather. He likes its changing nature and the challenge it provides him. He likes that people talk about it. It's impactful.

In fourth grade, he used to give weather presentations to his class every morning. Now, he does it for a living at AccuWeather. He gets there at 3 a.m. and works until 11 a.m. — even if he started announcing a men's volleyball game at 7 p.m. the night before.

"I can get by on about five hours a night," he said. "As long as it's a good five hours."

It's 8:03 a.m. on a Wednesday. He was scheduled to go on air at 8:02, but a one-minute commercial spot is playing instead. He glances at the analog clock hanging on the wall in front of him and picks up the phone.

"This is going to have to be quick — I have another thing at 8:04," he said.

He speaks hurriedly when he's given the go-ahead and gives a forecast of cloudy skies. He pushes some buttons and glances at his computer screen. Tells listeners in Houston it's 48 degrees and chiller temperatures are on the way. The light above his door goes off.

"You hope you say the right thing — that in your mind, you're in the right city," he said. "I don't like that. I just barely made it."

For DeVore, one minute can feel like a long time.

Sometimes, when DeVore is announcing sporting events, he messes up. Sometimes he misses something or gets bad information, he said. Or maybe a referee makes a bad call, and he just repeats it.

Sometimes, he thinks the microphone is

If you know

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turned off — but it's not — and the audience hears his offhand comment. Or he said something before he turns the mic back on. When that happens, he said, it makes him feel like "a dork."

"No one's going to be more critical of Dean than Dean," said associate athletic director Greg Myford. "And in the event that he would make a mistake, I think he's the first to realize it and make sure that he corrects it."

DeVore used to try to correct his mistakes more when he'd first started — until a friend told him to "just let it go."

"I'm a meteorologist — a job where I know I'm not going to get it right," DeVore said. "Sometimes, we don't get stuff right. You have to move on."

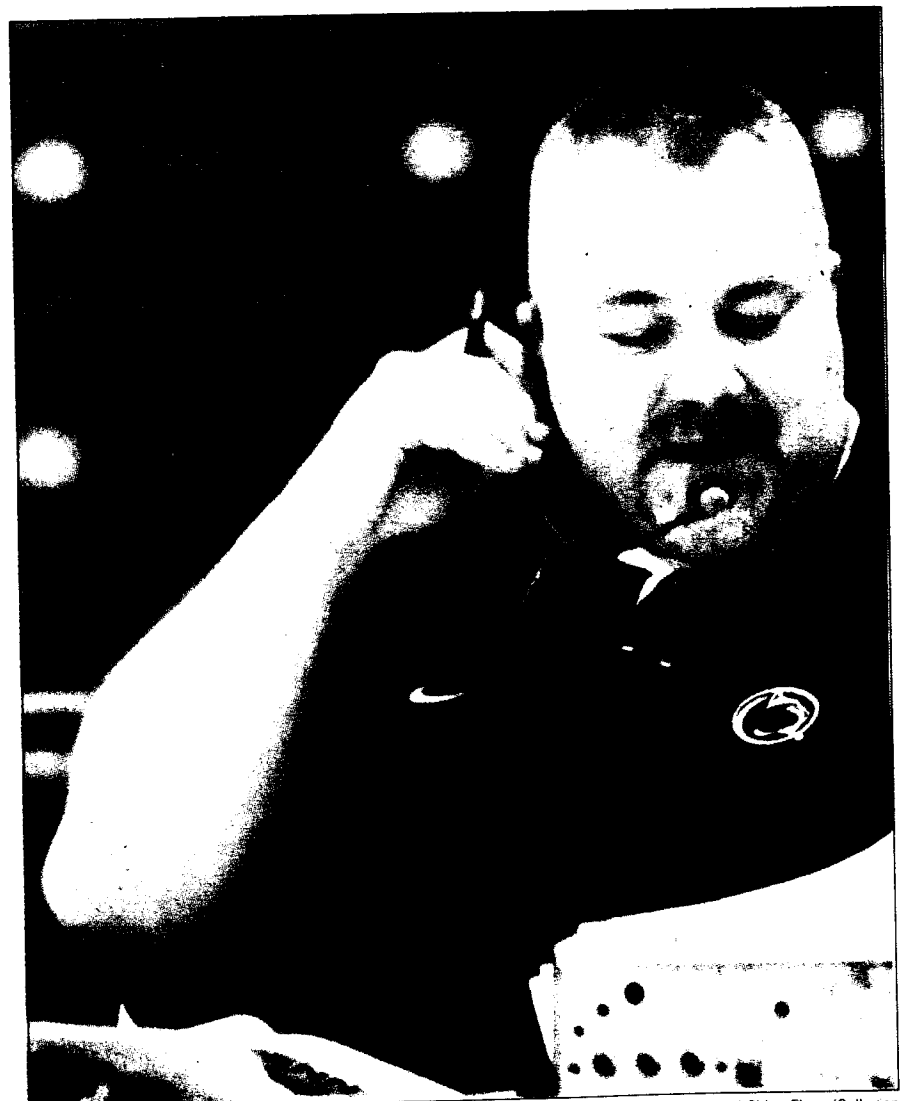
And he does. "I think the thing that stands out is, Dean has a real passion for Penn State," Myford said. "I know that he likes to have fun, has a lot of friends and really has a great passion for life. And I think that carries over to how he sounds at a lot of our events."

DeVore said he's grateful he can pursue both of his passions. His job at AccuWeather allows him to continue to be an active member of the Penn State community.

Myford said a lot of people overlook DeVore's impact on Penn State sports in his role as public address announcer.

"We all show up at an event, and we hear the public address announcer and we just kind of take for granted that that's going to be there," Myford said. "We're fortunate to have someone who puts a lot into it."

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Abby Drey and Chloe Elmer/Collegian

Left: AccuWeather meteorologist Dean DeVore works on his computer to be ready for his next radio weather update from his radio booth in the AccuWeather center in State College. Right: DeVore announces during the men's gymnastics meet on Sunday afternoon against William and Mary in Rec Hall. DeVore has been announcing sports since 1990.