

JACK MOLLENKOPF

By Tom Schott

HEAD COACH

CONVOY, OHIO | BOWLING GREEN UNIVERSITY

AT A GLANCE

Jack Mollenkopf served as head coach of the Boilermakers from 1956 to 1969. Beforehand, he was an assistant under Stuart Holcomb from 1947 to 1955.

With Mollenkopf at the helm, Purdue enjoyed the greatest sustained run of success in school history, hailed as the "Golden Years." Mollenkopf patrolled the sidelines longer than any coach before or after him and produced an 84-39-9 overall record (.670 winning percentage), which included a 57-32-5 mark in Big Ten Conference games.

Mollenkopf guided the Boilermakers to their only Rose Bowl victory on Jan. 2, 1967 (14-13 over USC) and a Big Ten tri-championship in 1967. Purdue finished second in the Big Ten twice (1959 and 1966) and third on four occasions (1964, 1965, 1968 and 1969).

In addition, the Boilermakers were nationally ranked for 80 weeks – tied for the most under any head coach – including the No. 1 spot the first five weeks of the 1968 season.

"Jack the Ripper" was 11-2-1 against Indiana and 10-4 against Notre Dame.

A total of 14 players were named All-Americans under Mollenkopf. Moreover, a Boilermaker finished in the top three in Heisman Trophy balloting four consecutive seasons: quarterback Bob Griese second in 1966, halfback Leroy Keyes third in 1967 and second in 1968, and quarterback Mike Phipps second in 1969.

A prominent figure on the sidelines of postseason all-star games, Mollenkopf served as head coach of the 1958, 1959 and 1960 Blue-Gray games; 1962 and 1963 East-West Shrine games; 1964, 1967 and 1970 Hula bowls; 1968 All-American Bowl; and 1969 North-South Shrine Game.

Mollenkopf was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1988 and was a member of the inaugural class of the Purdue Intercollegiate Athletics Hall of Fame in 1994. The Mollenkopf Athletic Center, which houses Purdue's indoor practice facility and football office complex, was named in his honor in 1990.

RECORD WATCH

Mollenkopf is Purdue's career leader in Big Ten wins, ranks second in overall victories and games coached (132), and third in winning percentage. Joe Tiller overtook Mollenkopf as winningest coach during the 2008 season.

YEAR-BY-YEAR RECORD

Year	Overall	Big Ten	Year	Overall	Big Ten
1956	3-4-2	1-4-2 (T7th)	1964	6-3	5-2 (3rd)
1957	5-4	4-3 (T4th)	1965	7-2-1	5-2 (T3rd)
1958	6-1-2	3-1-2 (4th)	1966	9-2	6-1 (2nd)
1959	5-2-2	4-2-1 (T2nd)	1967	8-2	6-1 (T1st)
1960	4-4-1	2-4 (T5th)	1968	8-2	5-2 (T3rd)
1961	6-3	4-2 (4th)	1969	8-2	5-2 (3rd)
1962	4-4-1	3-3 (T5th)	Totals	84-39-9	57-32-5
1963	5-4	4-3 (4th)			

1967 ROSE BOWL

Mollenkopf, a tell-it-like-it-is guy, was an immediate hit with members of the Los Angeles media. Lafayette radio station WASK reported Dec. 23, 1966: "He may be the most popular coach to have appeared here. Midwest writers who cover the Boilermakers week after week already know this, but when the hard core of the journalist world – the Los Angeles press – accepts a visiting coach with such idolist banners, Purdue can't miss."

POST PURDUE

On Jan. 7, 1970, while in Honolulu to coach in the Hula Bowl, Mollenkopf announced his retirement via a conference call. The fact that he would reach the Purdue Board of Trustees' established retirement age of 65 on July 1 had led to speculation about his future. Mollenkopf could have requested a waiver but opted against pursuing it.

Mollenkopf succumbed to intestinal cancer Dec. 4, 1975, at the age of 72.

