

Hugh Hackett

Hugh Hackett is credited with putting track and field on a major sport level in Albuquerque, first at Highland High, later at UNM. He came to NM from Wisconsin in 1946 after World War II service as pilot in C-B-1 Theater ... He played halfback for UNM in 1946, gaining his bachelor's degree in '47, later his masters at UNM.



Hackett served as head football and track coach at Highland nine years (1949-58) . . . Had the good fortune

to have Tommy McDonald as one of his pupils . . . Under Hackett, the Hornets won seven state track championships . . . Rolled off 41 consecutive track meet wins . . . Set 32 state prep track records . . . Collected 146 track trophies . . . Compiled a 62 wins—23 losses—5 ties football record, starting with an all-freshman squad his first year, and climaxed by a state championship five years later (20-6 over Artesia, 1954) . . . Was football runner-up two other years.

Hackett was named head track coach at UNM in 1958 and proceeded to elevate Lobos into 'Top Twenty' bracket in the '60s. At UNM, he coached 37 All-Americans, two of whom are in Hall of Fame (Adolph Plummer and John Baker) . . . Other greats included sprinter Bernie Rivers, triple-jumper and NCAA champion Clarence Robinson, two-miler George Scott, javelin thrower and Pan-Am gold medalist Buster Quist, plus 1960 Olympic Bronze medalist hurdler Dickie Howard . . . His Lobos won eight WAC championships in track and cross country and boasted a 71-91-1 dual meet mark . . . His track excellence produced crowds of 10,000 against such powers as Southern Cal, Kansas, Abilene Christian, Arizona State, and Oklahoma State.

Hackett served as host for such national meets as U.S. Track & Field Championships (1966) . . . National AAU Indoor Championships (Tingley Coliseum 1967) . . . and the greatest of all — 1963 NCAA Championships . . . He directed the first-ever indoor meet in Albuquerque (1964) and headed the Jaycee Indoor Invitational meets throughout the '60s . . . Elected chairman of the National Rules Committee (NCAA) in 1967 . . . 'Coach of the Year' in 1967.

Hugh retired in 1977 and now teaches PE at Our Lady of Assumption. He and his wife, Carmen, have eight living children and 17 grandchildren.