

= Myron Cope =

Myron Cope (January 23 , 1929 ? February 27 , 2008) , born Myron Sidney Kopelman , was an American sports journalist , radio personality , and sportscaster . He is best known for being " the voice of the Pittsburgh Steelers . "

Cope was a color commentator for the Steelers ' radio broadcasts for 35 years . He was known for his distinctive , nasally voice with an identifiable Pittsburgh accent , idiosyncratic speech pattern , and a level of excitement rarely exhibited in the broadcast booth . Cope 's most notable catch phrase was " yoi " / ?j?? / . Cope was the first football announcer inducted into the National Radio Hall of Fame . Cope 's autobiography , Double Yoi ! , was published in 2002 . Legislation honoring Cope is currently pending before the United States House of Representatives , having already passed in the United States Senate .

= = Education and early career = =

Born in Pittsburgh , Pennsylvania , to Jewish parents of Lithuanian ancestry , Cope graduated from Taylor Allderdice High School in 1947 and was inducted into their alumni hall of fame in 2009 . He also graduated from the University of Pittsburgh . He was originally a journalist before becoming a broadcaster . His first job was in Erie , Pennsylvania , with the Daily Times , and by the summer of 1951 , he was working for the Pittsburgh Post @-@ Gazette . Cope then became a freelance journalist , most notably for Sports Illustrated , the Saturday Evening Post , and the Pittsburgh Post @-@ Gazette . In 1963 , Cope received the E.P. Dutton Prize for " Best Magazine Sportswriting in the Nation , " for a portrayal of Cassius Clay . Cope spent the 1983 college football season as a color analyst for the Pittsburgh Panthers . In 1987 , he was named by the Hearst Corporation as a noted literary achiever , along with Mark Twain , Jack London , Frederic Remington , Walter Winchell , and Sidney Sheldon . At its 50th Anniversary , Sports Illustrated selected Cope 's profile of Howard Cosell as one of the 50 best written works ever published in the magazine .

= = Family life = =

Cope married Mildred Lindberg of Charleston in 1965 , and the couple moved to Mt . Lebanon . In 1972 , the Copes moved to nearby Upper St. Clair . Mildred died on September 20 , 1994 . In 1999 , Cope moved back to Mt . Lebanon , to a condo in the Woodridge neighborhood . He remained there until his final days , when he entered a Mt . Lebanon nursing home , and is claimed by Mt . Lebanon as a " native . "

Cope had three children , Elizabeth , Martha Ann , and Daniel . Martha Ann died shortly after her birth . His son , Daniel , was born with severe autism ; he has lived most of his life at the Allegheny Valley School , an institution specializing in intellectual developmental disabilities . Cope devoted much of his time and energy to Pittsburgh causes addressing autism , and spoke candidly about his experiences as the parent of a child with autism and his efforts to better educate the public at large about autism .

= = Steelers broadcasting = =

In 1968 , Cope began doing daily sports commentaries on what was then WTAE @-@ AM radio in Pittsburgh . His unique nasal voice , with a distinctive Pittsburgh area accent , was noticed by the Steelers ' brass , and he made his debut as a member of the Steelers ' radio team in 1970 .

During Cope 's 35 @-@ year broadcasting career with the Steelers ? the longest term with a single team in NFL history ? he was accompanied by only two play @-@ by @-@ play announcers : the late Jack Fleming , with whom he broadcast until 1994 , followed by Bill Hillgrove , who still fills this broadcast role today .

In keeping with his comic personality , a series of television commentaries on WTAE @-@ TV saw Cope calling himself " Doctor Cope " and wearing a white lab coat while pretending to examine the

opposing team 's strengths and weaknesses . His predictor was known as the " Cope @-@ ra @-@ scope . "

= = = Catchphrases and Nicknames = = =

Like other sports announcers in Pittsburgh , particularly Penguins commentator Mike Lange and the late Pirates announcer Bob Prince , Cope had a repertoire of unique catchphrases employed in his broadcasts , such as " Mmm @-@ Hah ! " and " Okel Dokel " (his version of " okey dokey ") . Cope often used Yiddish expressions , especially " Feh ! " and " Yoi ! " (sometimes multiplied as " Double Yoi " or rarely " Triple Yoi ") .

Cope also created nicknames for many players and opposing teams . It was Cope who popularized " The Bus " as a nickname for former Steelers running back Jerome Bettis , " Jack Splat " for Jack Lambert , and he gave Kordell Stewart the nickname " Slash . "

Cope also used the term " Cincinnati Bungles " to describe their division rivals , known during the 1990s for a string of bad seasons and numerous draft busts .

= = Terrible Towel = =

Cope played a large role in the invention of the Terrible Towel . Needing a way to excite the fans during a 1975 playoff game against the Baltimore Colts , Cope urged fans to take yellow dish towels to the game and wave them throughout . Originally , Cope wanted to sell rubber Jack Lambert masks , but realizing the high costs for the masks , opted for the inexpensive option for the Terrible Towel . The Terrible Towel has gained much popularity since its invention and " is arguably the best @-@ known fan symbol of any major pro sports team " .

In 1996 , Cope gave the rights to The Terrible Towel to the Allegheny Valley School in Coraopolis , Pennsylvania . The school provides care for more than 900 people with intellectual disabilities and physical disabilities , including Cope 's son who has severe autism . Proceeds from the Terrible Towel have helped raise \$ 3 million for the school .

= = Retirement and death = =

Cope announced his retirement from broadcasting on June 20 , 2005 , citing health concerns . Eight days later , it was announced that Cope was the recipient of the Pete Rozelle Award for " long @-@ time exceptional contributions to radio and television in professional football . " Upon his retirement , the Steelers did not replace Cope , opting instead to downsize to a two @-@ man broadcast team .

On October 31 , 2005 , Cope was honored for his lifetime accomplishments at halftime of the contest between the Steelers and the Ravens . In addition , the Steelers produced a special commemorative edition Terrible Towel with his familiar expressions printed on it . As seen on the towel , production was limited to 35 @,@ 000 towels , representing 35 years of service to the Steelers . Later that season when the team advanced to Super Bowl XL , many Steeler fans wanted Cope to come out of retirement just to call " The one for the thumb . " Cope declined partially for health reasons and partially to enjoy retirement .

Cope died of respiratory failure at a Mt . Lebanon nursing home on the morning of February 27 , 2008 . In the days following his death , many ceremonies were held in his honor , including the local sporting events of the Pittsburgh Panthers college basketball team . Two days after his death , hundreds of people gathered in heavy snow in front of the Pittsburgh City Hall to honor Cope ; included in the ceremony was one minute of silent Terrible Towel waving . His funeral , which was held on February 29 , 2008 , was private . Due to Cope 's large impact on the Pittsburgh area , Bob Smizik , a local sportswriter wrote ,

= = List of awards and honors = =

Cope received many awards and honors , including :

1963 - E.P. Dutton Prize for " Best Magazine Sportswriting in the Nation " for his portrayal of Cassius Clay

1987 - Named as a noted literary achiever by Hearst Corporation

2004 - His profile of Howard Cosell was selected as one of 50 all @-@ time classic articles by Sports Illustrated

2005 - Became the first pro football announcer elected to the Radio Hall of Fame

2005 - Pete Rozelle Radio @-@ Television Award for long @-@ time exceptional contributions to pro football in television and radio

Held the title of " special contributor " at Sports Illustrated

Served as a board member of the Pittsburgh chapter of the Autism Society of America and the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix

Co @-@ founded the Myron Cope / Foge Fazio Golf Tournament for Autistic Children

The only broadcaster appointed to the Pro Football Hall of Fame 's Board of Selectors , serving for 10 years

The asteroid 7835 Myroncope was named in his honor in 2008 .