

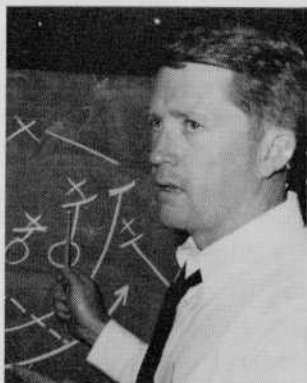
Ten Cracks in the Crystal Ball

A panel of unsung alumni football fans presumptuously offer views of the coming season

EDITOR'S NOTE: I'm sure you are acquainted with many, many authorities on football. I know I am. In a step to channel some of this available knowledge for the benefit of humanity, Sooner Magazine has asked ten

self-proclaimed experts to forward their views on OU's 1967 season. The evaluations presented here, some cryptic, some illogical, some vague, will, if nothing else, offer some insights on what coaches must bear from alumni.

A Panel of Preeminently Prescient Prognosticators (Possibly)



Bob Amis (upper left)
Oklahoma City

Jack Cain (above)
Oklahoma City

Ralph Thompson
Oklahoma City



These three attorneys are noted for their football acumen and loyalty to their alma mater, though athletic department officials were rumored to have

approached Kansas State and offered the three in exchange for 10 boxes of tape, a megaphone, and 12 practice jerseys.

Prognosticators deserve mercy and understanding

"WE HAVE to pay in countless ways for the absence of prophetic vision." So spoke Supreme Court Justice Benjamin Cardozo in his *Nature of Judicial Process*. Accordingly, we hazard our predictions on the Sooners' next season painfully aware of our own "absence of prophetic vision" but fearless in the belief that the gods of fortune will smile upon us, if not collapse in derision.

It is, after all, only fair to expect some special justice for those of us who have followed every huddle; who have bled and been bruised with each block and tackle; who thrill in recalling the "swinging gate," Crowder's magic, Royal's punting, McDonald and Thomas on the option play; who still talk about Orville Mathews, Jack Jacobs, John Rapacz, Merle Greathouse, Plato Andros, Billy Vessels, Stan West, Jim Weatherall, Tom Catlin, and the rest; who almost believed Bud's convincing TV predictions of collapse at the hands of always awesome Kansas State; who await each fall like warriors preparing for their own personal jousts and who, believing Sisco to be a reincarnation of Hermann Goering, would happily have traded their souls for a small hunk of his hide—and all this since the days of Snorter Luster, without let-up, till today. (Some of us are already concerned about Southern Cal in 1971.)

When you think about it, there are all too few who know, for instance, that an OU guard, Clare Morford, once ran 61 yards to

score against mighty Marquette or that Bill Panze intercepted five passes for OU against Tulsa in 1931 or that OU edged Weatherford Normal, 140-0, in 1916. But, then, some people just don't care.

Perhaps, too, fortune will also be with those of us who spent our years at the University with such classmates as McDonald, Thomas, Tubbs, Boydston, and Bolinger—as if, by some reflection or osmosis, we were part of the "golden era" ourselves. The truth is, of course, that the closest we came to intercollegiate athletics was raising knots on each other's heads in Beta-Sig Alph games of "touch"—a doubtful designation.

You may have noticed that we have based our hopes for success on some sort of vague, mystic special consideration and luck and not on a clever, knowledgeable analysis of such factors as weights, speeds, depth, experience, pass defense, and the like. The truth is, we tried analysis last year; this year we're looking for something more dependable. Here are our picks:

Washington State University—The white-hot Cougar-Sooner rivalry will be renewed in Norman after a 29-year hiatus, Washington State still smarting from a 28-0 whitewashing at the hands of the 1938 Big Red. OU should prevail.

Maryland—The Terrapins, in three prior encounters with OU have averaged but one point per game. A safety by the Sooners should take it, 2-1. (We realize that some nitpicker might question the Maryland score of "1.")

Texas—"Tough," according to Webster, among other things, means "unruly, vicious, extremely difficult to cope with." Your writers envision the word synonymous with "Horns." Ever modest, as always, Texas claims "Super" Bill, "Super" Chris, "Super" Linus, and others. Regrettably, we must agree and predict a super-long afternoon in the Cotton Bowl.

Kansas State—In the past years, Kansas State teams have been characterized by (1) fierce pride and determination, (2) hustle and spirit, (3) grit and scrappiness, and (4) an uncanny ability to lose football games. No doubt, at least one of these traits will be present this year. During the preceding ten years the Sooners have amassed a 410-34 advantage in total point production. This year should produce no departure from the past.

Missouri—Coach Dan Devine, despite his seasonal condition which we diagnose as "bellyache," has no reason to complain this year. With Russ Washington and a good backfield, Mizzou will be a favorite. However, waiting since 1963 is waiting long enough, and we predict a win for the Sooners in a major conference upset.

Colorado—Football games are frequently won by "breaks." The best break for OU in this one is for CU to get weathered in at Boulder. Otherwise we feel that the Homecoming welcome extended to Eddie Crowder will be far too generous.

Iowa State—Searching for a distinguishing characteristic of the 1967 Cyclones, we find only their khaki football trousers and luminous gold helmets. The Sooners should add to their series lead of 34-4-1.

Kansas—The inexperienced Jayhawks have gained a new coach and have regained their top rusher, Don Shanklin, a good one. OU should make this game its fourth conference victory of the season.

Nebraska—"Red shirt" is an appropriate description for Nebraska in more ways than one. At least six of last year's holdouts will be starters for the Huskers this year. We predict a good, but losing, showing for the Sooners.

Oklahoma State—We are sorely tempted to pause here to relate one of the many "Aggie" jokes, but propriety compels us to stick to football which has ceased being a joke when these two teams meet. We predict that those battered black plastic helmets will be bowed, those toe-curling cow bells will be silenced, and Pistol Pete will



Bob Carey

New York City

Carey is, as he refers to himself, "one of the golden boys of United Press International." A journalist of the old school, Carey is known as "Scoop" to his Fourth Estate colleagues, chiefly for his skill with an ice cream dipper at a 1964 wire services picnic.

NOT SINCE I served as moderator of the junior police executive committee at Shawnee's Jefferson Grade School back in 1945 have I been associated with so august a panel. The responsibility weighs heavily but then it is a job that must be done and someone must do it. Wasn't it Telly Savalas, on location with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer shooting "The Dirty Dozen," who said, "Some are born great, others achieve greatness, while other have greatness thrust upon them?" I accept then the "thrust." Knowing myself inadequate to the task, I know, too, that kings upon their silken couches, wielding their jeweled scepters, wonder also why they have been chosen above all the rest.

So be it. On then to the task. In truth it was only recently that I heard Arkansas Coach Frank Broyles, addressing a high school coaches clinic in Baton Rouge, say that mathematical training was the most important background a coach could have. I wonder if we could extend this hypothesis to one equally tenable: that the most important training a football prophet can have is in that same field.

Here I shine. I point to my impressive credentials. I studied Math A at this very same University of Oklahoma we are now called upon to analyze. Later, in an extension course offered by the Air Force, I learned how to spell trigonometry and differential calculus and other large and difficult words.

Thus by education and inclination I feel the best approach to the task is one of science. Others on the panel may approach the problem more intuitively, or be governed by emotion, or yet shrug off the whole assignment completely, arguing with some logic that the chore is too difficult for any one man to attempt. I bear them no



Bob McCandless

New York City

A native of Hobart who has brought the cold, sophisticated East to its knees, McCandless, though his vocation is in the legal field, is an accomplished writer, a protege of Mollie Shepherd, renowned columnist. In 1947 he won the Short Grass Country Legible Scribblin' Award at the Kiowa County Fair. Above, our man calmly cooks up his predictions.

I SUPPOSE I must have been an obvious choice as a contributor to the panel; however, it would seem to be a dubious distinction to be typeset with such a rookie-studded aggregation of alumni roller-rollers. Knowing that Shirley and Volney (Povich and Meece) annually await my oracular articulation before publishing their usually puerile predictions, I cannot, nay, will not hide under a bushel that which might otherwise penalize such prescience as I humbly

hang up his chaps after OU takes its revenge in the final game.

While we stand firmly behind our predictions (and they may even be bankable by most handicappers), we would caution all readers to heed the weary admonition of the past: "On any given Saturday. . . ."

malice nor would I demean their approach. For, after all, we are all God's children.

To begin, I divided the number of games I have seen in the past 10 years with the number of games I did not see to get the unstable quotient, .11. The unstable quotient, after the decimal point is removed, becomes eleven, the exact number of players on a football team. I think it is quite significant that we arrive at the number eleven, for it can be used to measure both offensive and defensive data interchangeably.

Next, leaving the unstable quotient for a moment, we need only to look at the coaching career of V. L. Parrington, a Harvard man, who coached the Sooner teams of 1897-1900 inclusively. The student of history is fully aware that Parrington's teams of 1897 and 1898 went undefeated, winning both of the games scheduled in each of those years. No other coach in Sooner football history ever began so impressively.

Now, from 1897 to the coming 1967 season is exactly 70 years. This becomes strikingly important when we remove the zero from its place to the left of the decimal in the unstable quotient and add it to 70 to come up with 700. As we bring the unstable quotient into play and invert our 700 we get "007." Interesting, isn't it?

But that's not all. Taking the first letter from the first name of each of Oklahoma's opponents this fall we come up with WMTKMCIKNO. Here we find that each of these letters may be found again in the twelve houses of the Zodiac except for "W" and "K." By now, I would imagine, even the most casual of readers is picking up our train of thought. The "W" stands for Willie, of course, the Republican presidential candidate in 1940, and the "K" for Kennedy, the Democratic nominee for the same office exactly 20 years later. (Both Kennedy and Coach Parrington attended Harvard which we need mention only in passing here. Had it been necessary to call the exact scores of each of the games, then we would have pursued this startling parallel further.)

Drawn to its logical conclusion, the exact same forces of nature, coming full cycle at last, are moving into the fortunes of new coach Chuck Fairbanks in 1967 as they did for new coach V. L. Parrington exactly 70 years earlier. Note, too, that Halley's Comet, which appears periodically in increments of just over 70 years, last appeared in this country in 1910 and is again in the ascendency.

Therefore, it would seem only logical that the Sooners of 1967 will go undefeated. That's right brother, 10-0 for the Big Red in regular season competition.

Now, if I could inject just one bit of speculation, I will go out on a limb and call it Oklahoma 24, Alabama 10 in the 1968 Sugar Bowl.

now bring. In other words, I'm happy to share the fruits of my football forecast freak-out with you.

But first a few words about the verities of vantage in prognosticating 1967 OU football. Certainly one has the dispassionate distance with which to objectively forecast this coming season when horizontally splayed across a Long Island sand berm. One's mind's eye remains clear and undilated by having missed spring practice and by being uncluttered with current statistics and stratagems and unfettered, in fact, of all else but an occasional bikini blink or a tippler's tic.

Having thus securely erected my ivory-towered vantage point on these sands, I proffer these predictions:

1—OU will have one fewer competitors for national honors now that George Washington University has quit football. (Mr. McCandless reportedly earned a BA from this institution which is somewhere in Pennsylvania, I believe, and his ties with the school are apparently still rather sturdy—Editor) 2—OU's overall pep squad strength will be significantly improved by the deployment of a full female cheerleader complement for the first time in the school's history. 3—The Sooners may be fortunate to have the services of the Harper boys, Butts, and McGehee, if the team's luck can hold against being so Jenks-ed. (Mr. McCandless regrettably holds a fondness for puns—Editor) 4—OU does not seem to have enough Betas on their roster to drastically hamper team performance. 5—Graduation continues to take its toll. "Cactus Face" Dug-

gan, Billy Vessels, Tommy McDonald, and "Mule Train" Heath will be missed—as indeed they have been for the last several years. 6—If the Sooners can be wowed by Washington State, can crawl by the Terrapins, and can hook the Horns, they shall have a 3-0 or a 1.000 percent rating, for those interested in the statistical aspects of football. 7—Lack of second half rebound, which has dogged the team in the past, should be rectified with renewed late-quarter enthusiasm since Louie Horaney has been put in charge of the water bucket. 8—OU should win her share, capped by a grand finale with USU. The Sooners will so handily drub Udder State University as to drive it back to playing its rather quaint game of field hockey inside a livestock pen. 9—In the conference, OU will nose out Iowa



Nick Seitz

Norwalk, Conn.

Seitz is associate editor of *Golf Digest* and former sports editor of *The Norman Transcript* and the *Oklahoma Journal*, where he displayed both inventiveness (he is credited with first using the expressions "cage squad" for a basketball team and "coffin corner"

for the end zone) and an innate sense of self-protection (he discovered that the weatherman's dodge of giving rain a, for example, "40 percent chance" had possibilities in forecasting: he gave OU 80 percent chance against Kansas State).

I DECIDED I needed a new perspective on Oklahoma football. So, after seven years of sports writing on Norman and Oklahoma City newspapers, I moved to Connecticut and went to work for a golf magazine. Talk about perspective. That's 1,900 miles of aesthetic distance as the crow flies sober.

Last year I predicted that OU would finish 6-4. The Sooners did, and nobody—*nobody*—congratulated me. I also predicted that Colorado would win the Big Eight championship. Nebraska did, and 7,493 people giggled me about it. This points up, I think, the despicable negativism that afflicts certain segments of our populace. So much for sour grapes.



Jim Metzger (left)

Oklahoma City

Tom Askew

Oklahoma City

Finance company manager Askew is known as "Double-up-and-catch-up" Askew for his dogged support of Cleveland in the 1954 World Series, which set back his education at OU a full semester. Metzger, an attorney, is chiefly recognized for his ability at 7-point

pitch. A tennis letterman, Metzger likes to recall that OU was No. 1 in the nation while he played—in football, however.

PICKING A WINNER in the Big Eight is no longer as easy as it once was. With three teams of almost equal caliber, it should be a dog-fight to the bitter end—possibly resulting in a tie. The three teams with a chance appear to be Nebraska, Colorado, and Oklahoma. Our pick? Colorado by a nose-guard, grabbing an invitation to the Sugar Bowl in the process.

Which raises the question of who will play them in the Sugar Bowl. We've given considerable thought to this and our research has led to the startling conclusion that its opponent *has* to be Raleigh Polytechnic, or Raleigh Poly, if you prefer. All of the "big" schools will be eliminated from Sugar Bowl competition. The Southwest Conference winner (probably Texas) will play in the Cotton Bowl against the best in the East (probably Syracuse with a 3-7

State to become the Big Eight runner-up to Kansas State, who will go undefeated to the Sun Bowl, only to be tied by Panzer College of Physical Education and Hygiene at East Orange, N.J., in a 4-4 scoring melee.

So there you have it. And although one swallow doesn't make a summer or a gulp, you'll see the foregoing pissant predictions slipping into autumn actualities, and then into December decisis.

P.S.: I am waving my usual \$1,000 lolly and helping save yours and Gunning's jobs for another year. Would you be so kind as to reciprocate with a year's free subscription to your rag? When dipped in kerosene and stuffed under a few birch logs, it does make such a nice fire starter.

Mainly because the non-league schedule is softer (with Notre Dame out of the picture it has to be) I would guess that OU will finish 7-3 under new coach Chuck Fairbanks. I would guess further that Colorado will win the Big Eight: out of obstinance on the one hand and a firm respect for Eddie Crowder and his well drilled, talented troops on the other. Bob Anderson is a comer at quarter.

Almost certain improvement on the part of Colorado—and Missouri and Oklahoma State and Kansas and Kansas State—will make it difficult for Oklahoma to move up in the conference. Watch out for Oklahoma State, and don't be surprised if K-State manipulates an upset or two.

The Sooners' biggest plus is a star-studded cast of running backs. If Eddie Hinton gets the ball more and fumbles it less he could be a great one. Bob Warmack is better than adequate at quarterback. The defensive secondary again should be solid, although Fairbanks won't be coaching it and it might not be quite up to its 1966 eminence.

I fear that injuries will keep Chebon Dacon from becoming the truly terrific quarterback Oklahoma has been seeking since the 1950's. Recruit, men, recruit. Are there any quarterbacks in Afghanistan? Is that how you spell Afghanistan?

Granville Liggins is potentially an All-American, but if he can play only fragments of games, as he did a year ago, middle guard might be no more than a big question mark instead of a big bright spot.

The problem is the lack of size and depth in the line, on both offense and defense. The quick scramble-blocking of the offensive forwards hopefully will prove sufficient to give the explosive backs running room; the defense against rushing, the major weakness of a year ago, ought to be stauncher. It will have to be if the Sooners are to finish 7-3. Perspective, you know.

record). The Big Ten winner (probably Michigan State) will play UCLA in the Rose Bowl. Alabama will play another Southeast Conference school in the Orange Bowl, leaving no one to play Colorado—except the winner of the Smoky Mountain Conference. And why not?

Most pro teams are staffed with personnel from small schools you've never head of—schools such as Grambling, Tennessee A&I, Kearney, and Oklahoma State, just to name a few. The only conclusion you can reach is that the best football *must* be played by small schools. And the best of the small conferences is clearly the four-team Smoky Mountain Conference of North Carolina, consisting of such juggernauts as Bald Creek A&I, Booneville U., Raleigh Polytechnic, and Nebo State Teachers College. We visited their spring drills, talked with their head coaches, and took in the Booneville U. alumni game. Following is a brief resume of our findings:

In talking with "Light Horse" Larry Lutz, head mentor at Baldcreek A&I, we learned that "desire is the name of the game." He returns three lettermen from last year's fourth place club and admits that he is short on experience but feels that "desire" will be the key to improving on their 1-9 record of last year. Lutz is relying heavily on Norman Smedley, the converted first-chair tuba player, to come through at fullback. If he does, they could take the crown. "We've weakened the band," Coach Lutz points out, "but our backfield is 100 percent better."

"Gentleman Bud" Wilks of Booneville U. was in a reflective mood when we talked with him. "We haven't won a conference title in seven years," he noted, "but we are extremely proud of the fine sportsmen we have graduated. We've only been penalized once in three years for unnecessary roughness and the player responsible for that was a junior college transfer. We dismissed him from the squad at halftime," he reminisced proudly.

Nebo State looks good on paper this year—no returning letter-

men, but 43 redshirts should pick up the slack. Coach "Razorback" Rowley, who learned this technique at his alma mater, Arkansas, pointed out that the average age of the redshirts is 33.4 years. "I think they're ready," he said.

Raleigh Poly is coming off probation this year. You will undoubtedly recall that their head coach, Wally Bryan, was severely criticized by the NCAA for his policy of granting a monthly cleaning allowance of \$500.00 to each player. Coach Bryan defended his policy by pointing out that not only was his team undefeated last



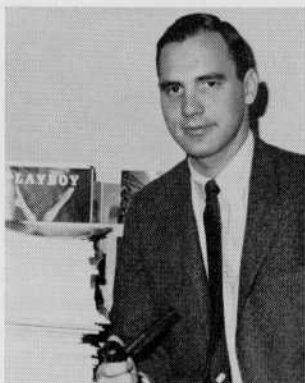
Jack Santee

Tulsa

An attorney, Santee's credentials as an expert are somewhat tainted by the fact that he actually played the game—at OU, 1950-52. Santee also coached a Tulsa high school team, which may account for his lack of respect for those fans he mentions in his piece.

I BELIEVE 1967 will be the kind of season in which the football team will perform much better than a number of its fans. The squad faces at least two teams in Texas and Colorado that should be clear favorites to win. Five more games can be rated no better than toss-ups (Washington State, Maryland, Missouri, Nebraska, and OSU) and the three games that we figure to win (Kansas State, Iowa State, and Kansas) will not be easy victories.

It boils down to a tough and interesting schedule. More than a



Charles Long

Chicago

A former associate editor of *Sooner Magazine*, Long is the author of "With Optimism for the Morrow," the 75-year history of OU (Sept. 1965). Now assistant director of Sigma Delta Chi, national journalism fraternity, Long is remembered still for his inspired

spotting for play-by-play announcers in the OU Press Box where he showed an uncanny knack for always coming up with a player's name, whether it was on the roster or not.

HAND IT to *Sooner Magazine* and its erudite editor to contrive the coup of the year. Conjuring up an unlikely panel of OU alumni, supposedly knowledgeable on the subject of Big Red, was extremely clever. "The real experts are ignored," Paul Galloway said in his letter of invitation to us, the so-called SMPPPP (Sooner Magazine Panel of Preeminently Prescient Prognosticators, Possibly) "who have devoted lives to the study of football, particularly OU football."

I, for one, was momentarily lulled into thinking this was a considerate demonstration of friendship by Editor Galloway. He had finally given me an opportunity to express my knowledge of *The Game* for all to read—why the Sooners would beat Kansas State and lose to Nebraska, who the No. 1 quarterback should be—anything and everything I wanted to say about my heroes. I might even have thrown in a few winning tips to help Coach Fairbanks along the way.

As it turns out, Dr. Galloway's motives are more ingenious than generous. It dawned on me only after hearing the rumor from some of my syndicate pals up here that Paul, Harold Keith, David and Carol Burr, and Jim and Mary Lyle Weeks had met secretly in Paul's windowless office and schemed this whole nasty affair. My

year, but it was also voted "best groomed" in the conference. "Being on probation did not hurt our recruiting," he smiled. As one example he pointed to Laslo Sandoz, a newly acquired ace field goal kicker who played last year for the Budapest Barefoots. "We've got the best team money can buy," Coach Bryan joshed proudly.

Conference winner? Raleigh Poly in a breeze, defeating Colorado in the Sugar Bowl by a score of 21 to 20. We can even predict who will be voted the game's most valuable player. It will be Laslo Sandoz. Who else ever kicked seven field goals in one bowl game?

few of the games will be decided in the closing moments. I am confident our squad and coaching staff will work hard; I am sure they will continue to do so even when behind or after defeat. But what about those fans I mentioned? How will they perform? When our team is showing courage in the face of defeat on the field, what will our front-runners in the stands be showing? If I answered, you couldn't print it. We all recognize this group. It's the bunch that jumps up in the third quarter after a bad play or a bad break and stomps out. It's those who probably never got closer to a football field than where they sit, yet who criticize the ineptness of our players or their lack of hustle. It's those who wouldn't make a move in their own lives without professional advice, yet who are obviously experts on football and know more about the personnel of our squad than our coaches. It's those who, like many of us, compete vicariously by associating themselves with the boys on the field, but who unfortunately do not have the courage to accept defeat vicariously. This is the bunch that will shout with our team in victory and at it in defeat.

But so be it. The above is simply what I was asked to give: my thoughts on the coming season. There will always be real fans and there will always be the others. That everyday common sense prevail over emotion in football is just too much to ask of a lot of people, for football is a very emotional game—as evidenced by the foregoing tirade.

fellow panel members may not realize that the aforementioned characters have been through this prognosticating business before for *Sooner Magazine*. True, they all wrote marvelously stimulating stories as they had been trained to do; but what these same conspirators don't like to admit outside Paul's windowless office is that they were uniformly wrong in their annual football predictions.

I used to laugh openly at how wrong they were and concluded that the other panelists must have had similar amusement thumbing through old September issues of the magazine. We show the same kind of mercy to the guys who tell us in August who the top ten teams will be in December. The sports expert is the easiest prey in the world, and it's fun shooting him down.

It should have occurred to me before now, since I was a member of the *Sooner Magazine* staff for nearly five years. Never during that period was I asked for an opinion having anything to do with football despite attempts to express myself on the subject. Editor Galloway thought I was more at home discussing ballet with Miguel Terekhov or writing on the adventures of the archeology department, annual library acquisitions, and such. When football season rolled around each year, Paul locked himself in his windowless office, alone with typewriter and Harold Keith's press guide for security, and settled down to making what would become erroneous and embarrassing predictions. He didn't fully understand until the end of the '66 season that he, like his predecessors, doesn't hold any supernatural powers for prognosticating, although he, like they, certainly sound like an expert before the season started, a la Jean Dixon.

My sports predictions, unfortunately, are usually labeled "wild," "unrealistic," or "stupid," just because I perennially pick the Boston Red Sox and Los Angeles Rams to win in baseball and football, respectively (although, admittedly, in the past sometimes you couldn't have told which one was playing which).

For example, some would consider it preposterous for me to predict that Oklahoma and Colorado will tie for the Big Eight championship. However, that's what usually happens when two teams finish with the same record, and what's so unlikely about the possibility of OU upsetting the Buffs and getting knocked off only by Nebraska (horrors, national TV again!)? Wouldn't it be unique if I picked a tie in the Big Eight, while the other panelists are straining their brains trying to figure out who's going to win the damned thing? (Yes—Editor) END