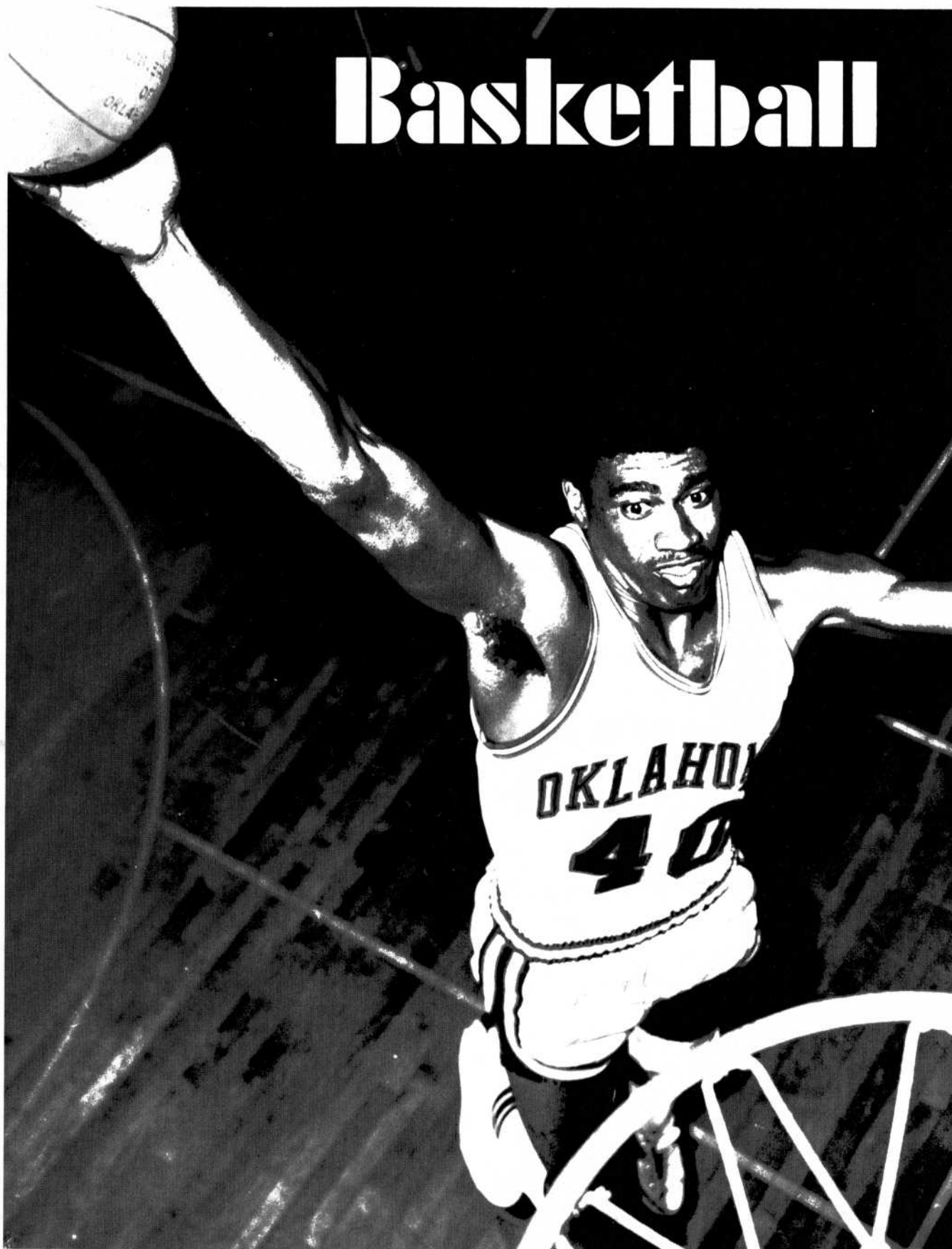


Basketball



The schedule this year (with home games indicated) shapes up like this:

December 1	Abilene Christian (h)
6	Nevada Southern
8	Texas Tech
12	South Alabama
15	Miami of Ohio (h)
19-20	Marshall Invitational at Huntington, West Virginia
22	Arkansas (h)
26-30	Big Eight Tournament at Kansas City, Missouri
January 10	Kansas State
12	Missouri (h)
26	Washington of St. Louis (h)
28	Colorado
31	Nebraska (h)
February 2	Kansas
7	Oklahoma State (h)
9	Missouri
14	Iowa State (h)
16	Colorado (h)
21	Iowa State
23	Nebraska
28	Kansas State (h)
March 2	Kansas (h)
7	Oklahoma State

opposite page: Garfield Heard

With the dust hardly settled on the football field at Stillwater, Coach John MacLeod and his basketball squad took to the court December 1 in their opening game against Abilene Christian.

For the Sooners the only way to go is up after finishing last in the Big Eight last season. This year the outlook is brighter. MacLeod has both height and experience returning to the front line with better shooting available in the backcourt.

Veteran squad members Clifford Ray, center, and Garfield Heard, forward, are the hard core of the Sooner team. Also returning are Bob Wooten, Harry Brown, Steve Ayers and Paul Cloar, all part-time starters at guard last year. Added to the list is a handful of bright prospects from last year's freshman team, which posted an 8-2 record.

MacLeod himself is entering his third season as head coach. Since coming to OU in 1966, his first collegiate coaching job, MacLeod's life has not been a bed of roses. Hopefully, the troubles are behind him and the prospects ahead will bring OU out of the cellar.

In his first coaching year in 1966, when he headed up the freshman squad, MacLeod's team posted a 7-1 record, most successful in the history of the school. In 1967, when he took over the head coach's slot, MacLeod guided the Sooners to a 13-13 record, the first .500 season in eight years at Oklahoma. That tally netted OU a third-place finish in the Big Eight with an 8-6 mark.

Last year, facing a rebuilding program and beset with internal problems, the Sooners fell to a 7-19 season with a 3-11 Big Eight total.

This year MacLeod says, "We plan to run more if we can control the boards. Not helter-skelter but a faster brand of ball. I think we have some guards who can direct a fast-break."

Controlling the boards, of course, will be a primary offensive tool. "We can't control games if we can't control the boards," MacLeod says. "I hope Clifford Ray, Garfield Heard, Charlie Hardin and Bobby Jack will give us a boost here."

Garfield Heard, the mainstay of the Sooner squad, hit a total of 329 points last season with a game average of 13.2 in 25 of OU's 26 games. This was in spite of a season spent recovering from a knee injury. At 6-6 and 210 pounds, Heard is entering his final year with the Sooners. Last year he hit 131 of 309 field goals and 67 of 123 free throws, got 243 rebounds and had a high-game score of 30.

Clifford Ray, a junior, towers at 6-9 and has a 10.5 game average from last season, scoring a total of 263 points. He nabbed 210 rebounds in his 25 games and scored 109 field goals in 228 attempts and 45 free throws out of 86 tries.

Other returning squad members and their game point averages are Steve Ayers, 4.6 in 24 games; Bob Wooten, 3.1 points in 15 games; Vester Marshall, center, 2.6 points in 16 games; Paul Cloar, 1.9 points in 22 games and Harry Brown, 1.8 in 20 games.

Making up the remainder of the varsity squad will be a bright group of sophomores from last year's freshman team and two junior college transfers.

The list includes Kirby Jones, 6-1, 170 pounds, a sophomore from Charlotte, N. C.; Skip Davis, 6-3, 195 pounds, a sophomore from Belpre, Ohio; Richard Dutter, 6-8, 205 pounds, sophomore from Wooster, Ohio; Andrew Pettes, 6-2, 175 pounds, junior from Las Cruces, New Mexico; Bobby Jack, 6-5, 195 pounds, sophomore from Ponca City; Charlie Hardin, 6-5, 205, sophomore from Fort Worth; Scott Martin, 6-0, 170, sophomore from Bartlesville; John Yule, 6-8, 210, sophomore from Newport Beach, California, and Jerry Matulis, 6-5, 195, sophomore from Chicago.

Ponca Citian Bobby Jack is one of the Sooners' most promising sophomores. At forward Jack averaged 20.9 points per game last year, setting a new OU freshman record, and he had game highs of 38 and 35 points.

Joining Jack in the high-hopes category is Scott Martin at guard, an outstanding leader and playmaker who averaged 12.1 for the Boomer squad.

Kirby Jones averaged 13.7 points per game last year at guard; John Yule, center, averaged 12.8 points and 10 rebounds.

Charlie Hardin at forward is another bright spot on the team. Hardin is a junior college transfer with sophomore eligibility.

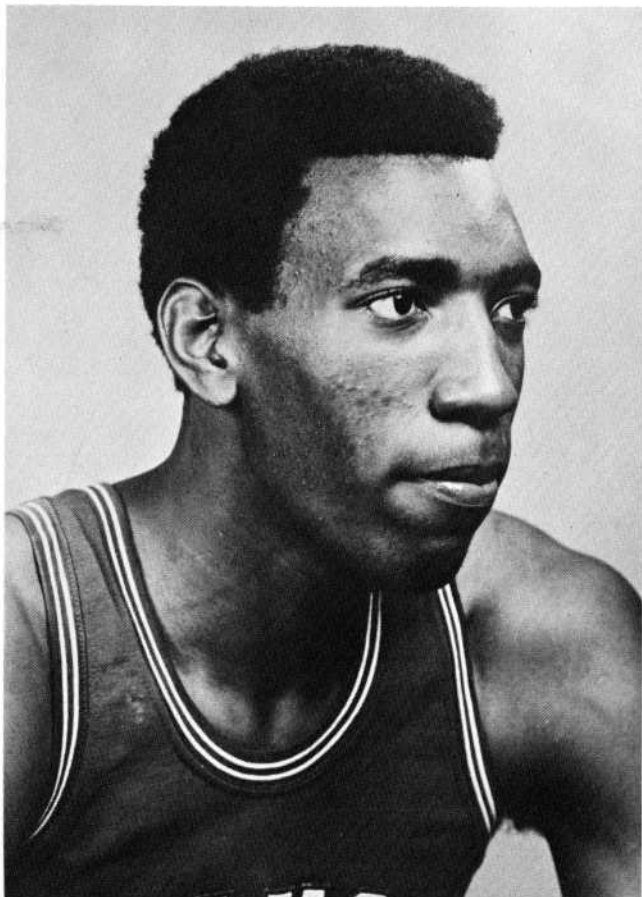
"Martin and Jones add to our backcourt speed," MacLeod says, "and our total speed should be better this year, especially if Heard's knee improves. As in the past we plan to push defense. We've got some pretty good guys, and we're capable of having a pretty good defense."

There are still a lot of "ifs" in OU's basketball future, and MacLeod has no illusions about them.

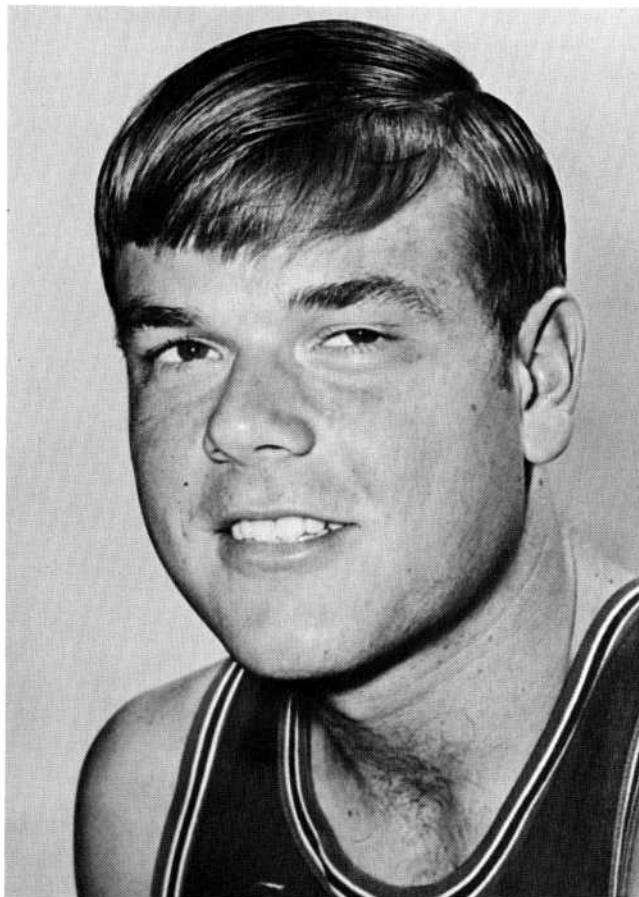
"I feel like we'll definitely be improved if we can get a consistent effort. Fewer offensive lapses is important. Last year we had games where we went as long as 10 to 12 minutes without scoring," he says.

"I feel that we're going to have better leadership at guard than we've had in the past. We should be a better shooting club — both at guard and forward positions."

Last year OU's seven wins were against Centenary, Texas Tech, Southwest Missouri, Missouri, University of Texas at Arlington, Oklahoma State and Iowa State, although the three Big Eight wins were offset by return losses.



Clifford Ray



Scott Martin