

Benjamin Gilbert Owen starts his thirtieth year on the Sooner sports staff as director of a rejuvenated intramural sports program.



A New Sports Era

By BOB CLARK, '33as

INTRAMURAL sports were strengthened and intercollegiate sports placed under a new leadership by action of the University board of regents at its quarterly meeting early in June.

The changes announced by the board came as a result of a movement for a new athletics director and also fitted in with a plan of President W. B. Bizzell to place greater emphasis on intramural athletics.

The regents took the following steps:

1. Ben G. Owen was made director of intramural athletics and professor of physical education.

2. The executive committee of the athletic council was appointed to act as director of athletics for the 1934-35 school year.

3. Intercollegiate athletics, as directed by the executive committee, and intramural athletics, as directed by Owen, were separated, completely.

4. William Cross, formerly secretary of the athletic association, was made business manager of intercollegiate athletics.

As a result, the five-man executive committee has gone to work under the leadership of the athletic council president, Dr. Guy Y. Williams, '06bs, '10M.S., head of the department of chemistry, to plan the 1934-35 intercollegiate athletic program, and Owen has started to work to give the University its finest intramural program in history.

Owen, as he starts his thirtieth year in the Sooner sports department, is enthusiastic about the outlook for sports for the masses of students. He has pitched into

the job of building a program that will bring all students into some form of athletic activity during the school year.

Where once his work was to win games and preserve the scholastic standing of Sooner athletics, his job now is to build an intra-school program that will afford thousands of students a year the opportunity to enjoy healthful recreational games.

On the other hand, the executive committee is tackling its new assignment with a definite policy before it.

"Coöperation between coaches with more responsibility and greater freedom" is the goal for the new year. The executive committee is composed of the president of the council, Dr. Williams; the vice-president, L. N. Morgan; the Big Six faculty representative, Dr. S. W. Reaves; and two members elected from the council, Neil Johnson, '15as, '17law, and Walter Kraft, superintendent of University utilities.

Sports coaches already are experiencing freedom in the making of schedules, the selection of equipment and the many other details of administering to their sports programs. Final approval of each coach's recommendation will rest with the executive committee, but wherever practical the wishes of the coaches will be followed.

Doctor Williams has been appointed chief executive and will spend several hours each day at the Fieldhouse disposing of such details that may be handled better by one man than the committee of five.

Bill Cross' status will be changed to

some extent. He will have complete charge of ticket sales and will be in fact, "business manager" of the department. All orders and claims will pass through his hands, and he will be held solely responsible for business management of the entire intercollegiate sports program.

Coaches will be asked to coöperate in every possible way to assist each other in making all sports programs a success. The five-man directorate will hold frequent conferences with the staff to dispose immediately of any problems within the department.

Already the various branches of the association are looking forward and making plans for the opening football game in the autumn. Centenary University will play the opening game at Norman, September 29. Five conference opponents, Oklahoma A. and M. college and George Washington University will complete the schedule.

Owen, with his new responsibilities that offer an entirely different type of reward for success, is planning an enlargement of the program that will bring together fraternity teams and independent teams.

For the first time since 1905, he will not be worried with the problem of placing on the field a football team that must win games, draw crowds and, most important, pass courses required for eligibility. His great record as Sooner football coach for twenty-two years and athletic director for seven have earned him the rest from the trials and worries of inter-

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He was an all-conference end on the Sooner football team for two years and played three years on Coach Jap Haskell's baseball teams.

Lolay H. Wells, '29geol, who has been engaged in field work in Wyoming, has moved to Dallas, Texas, with his wife and small daughter.

Eleven recent graduates of the University have secured positions in geophysical work within the last month. Seven of the alumni have taken positions with the Humble Oil and Refining company, Houston, Texas, and will engage in seismograph work. They are Ralph Lynn, '33M.S.; Hayl M. Thralls, '34M.S.; James R. Harms, '34bs; Walter L. Metcalfe, '34M.S.; Ralph Dale, '34as; Hal C. Wynne, who will graduate in January; and Herman J. Wirtz, '34eng.

J. E. Handley, '34eng, and John M. Crawford, '34M.S., have secured positions with the Continental Oil company in Ponca City. Earl L. Hassler, '34M.S., has taken a position with the Champlin Refining company at Enid. Elbert G. McCullin, '34bs, has secured a position with the Geophysical Service, Dallas, Texas.

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collegiate competition, Sooner followers feel generally.

His remarkable record in intercollegiate sports stands for itself. During his twenty-two years as football coach, he brought Oklahoma into the lime-light as one of the greatest football schools in the middle-west. His teams developed the forward pass formation that has completely changed the technique of football. More important than his victories, is the type of leadership he gave Sooner sports. Never was the University anything but fair, honest and above-board in athletic relations.

Owen believed, during his long tenure, that Sooner athletics were important secondarily to the purposes of the University, and his athletes had to be students, first, then participants in University sports.

It is significant that during the past seven years—his years of directorship—that the Sooners won the all-sports championship of the Big Six in six of the seven years. True, there were no football championships, but for a well-balanced, all-around athletic program, Sooner teams were far ahead of any other school in the conference.

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Sports Councilmen Named

The three alumni representatives to the Sooner Athletic council were re-appointed for the coming year by Dr. W. B. Bizzell.

They are Hubert Ambrister, '12as, '14law, Oklahoma City; Neil Johnson, '15as, '17law, Norman; and Henry Wooten, '21as, Chickasha.

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"John L." in the Race

John L. Keith, two-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Keith, Norman, was one of the first babies entered in the state fair health contest.

Keith, who is director of University sports publicity, was graduated from the University in 1928 and has been a regular contributor to *The Sooner Magazine*.

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