



*Oklahoma's new football staff. Left to right, Tom Stidham, head coach, Dale Arbuckle, assistant coach; Robert "Doc" Erskine, backfield coach; Stanley Williamson, line coach, and Pete Smith, end coach.*

## Sports Review

By Harold Keith

**W**ITH the engagement of Stanley Williamson as line coach and Dale Arbuckle as assistant coach, Tom Stidham, Big Chief of Sooner football, quickly put his University of Oklahoma football house in order late in February and at this writing the green but potentially powerful Sooner spring practice squad is busily working at Owen field.

Williamson, a big, graying 200-pounder possessing excellent personality and a fine knowledge of line tactics, captained and played center for Howard Jones' strong Southern California eleven of 1931 that stopped a Notre Dame winning streak of 24 consecutive games at South Bend that year. After his graduation from the Trojan institution, Williamson coached at Oklahoma City university and later at Kansas State college.

Arbuckle, whose undergraduate football was played at Enid High School and his college football from 1923 through 1926 (he missed the 1924 season because of an injury) on Bennie Owen's Sooner elevens, tutored at both Duncan and Oklahoma City Central high schools prior to his coming here and developed outstanding teams.

Stidham reorganized his staff, moving Robert "Doc" Erskine, freshman coach,

to the backfield coaching slot vacated by Dewey "Snorter" Luster's recent resignation, and shifting Lawrence "Jap" Haskell, efficient Sooner line coach the past three years, to the freshman coaching job. Pete Smith, end coach, stays on in his capacity.

Haskell's switch to the freshman coaching job was particularly welcomed by Haskell himself since it released him from football spring practice duties which badly hampered his baseball coaching. After this season Haskell loses off his Big Six championship baseball team such outstanding players as Roy Myers, Popeye Lasater, Jack Riley, Herb Scheffler, Carol Berryman and Jimmy Pope, not to mention Infielders Joe Gullede and Jerry Crosby who just recently passed up further Sooner competition by signing with the Boston Bees of the National league and the Tulsa Oilers of the Texas league respectively. The loss of all this playing talent necessitates the development of almost an entirely new team and will require all of Haskell's expert coaching time in the spring, hence Coach Stidham's decision to release him from his line-coaching duties and switch him to another staff position.

Tragedy struck the Sooner football

squad February 28 when Justin Bowers, Oklahoma's All-Big Six right tackle from Waukegan, Illinois, was accidentally killed in an automobile wreck near the little Negro town of Boley. Bowers and Jack Steele, sophomore fullback from Lone Wolf, were driving back from an alumni banquet at Muskogee where they had been guests. Steele was driving, Bowers asleep in the back seat, when the car struck a bridge abutment and was practically demolished. Steele was uninjured save for severe shock but Bower's neck was broken and he died instantly, in spite of the ministrations of a Negro physician who soon happened by the scene. A short funeral service was held for the popular tackle at the Catholic chapel in Norman with Father Joseph Hallisey in charge and hundreds of students attending the sad event. Coaches Stidham and Erskine then accompanied the body to Waukegan, Illinois, Bowers' home, where final services were held and burial made.

Bowers' death not only shocked and saddened the whole squad but left the Oklahoma football problem more acute than ever. Gone are nine starters of last fall's eleven: Ends Frank Ivy and John Shirk, Tackles Bowers and Gilford "Cactus Face" Duggan, guards Ralph Stevenson

and J. R. Manley, and backs Bob Seymour, Dick Favor and Beryl Clark. Also lost are such valuable reserves as ends Alton Coppage and Charles Starr, tackle George Wilhelm, guards Jerry Bolton and Capt. Norval Locke and fullback Byron "Ten Yards" Potter.

Besides, back J. S. Munsey's shoulder had to be re-operated which means he cannot participate in the spring exercises. Neither can L. G. Friedrichs, another back, nor Ray Mullen, end, both of whom underwent knee cartilage operations, although all three will be available next fall.

In spite of these exceedingly gloomy tidings, there is some fine football material available at Norman even though most of it is green as an engineer's shirt. Stidham's move to offset the almost irreparable loss of All-American Ivy, Shirk, Coppage and Starr at end was to shift center Cliff Speegle and right half Bill Jennings to that position. Louis "Tree Top" Sharpe, 210-pound, 6-foot 5-inch junior from Checotah and Lyle Smith, 200-pound junior from Fairview, are returning along with half a dozen husky sophomores.

Take out Roger Eason, Duggan's alternate, and Howard Teeter, letterman from 1937 who is trying a comeback in spite of the handicap of weak underpinning, and the tackles will all be green as emerald. But they are big and willing, particularly four sophomores, 215-pound John Funk of Okmulgee, 225-pound Joe Allton of Claremore, 230-pound Homer Simmons of Seminole and 215-pound Laddie Birge of Duncan, and Clovis Pierce, last year's squad man, and the outlook at tackle is at least hopeful.

Stidham has shifted Harold Lahar, senior right tackle, to guard this spring to capitalize Lahar's speed and downfield and weakside blocking skill. Also returning at that position are Olin Keith, Hollis junior who became a real hand last year, and Ralph "Fats" Harris, 240-pound Stroud junior who missed most of the 1939 games because of a leg injury, and also Allan Fender and Willie Wick, two 1939 squad men who saw no competition, and such sophomores as Sammy Stephens and Mitch Shadid.

Novel Wood, up to 202 pounds, will handle the center position with Jack Marsee, his and Speegle's alternate last autumn, right behind him, followed by sophomores Bill Roberts of Seminole and Clare Monford of Lawton.

Favor's competent substitute at the blocking back position last year, Marvin Whited of Hollis, is looking great at that job with sophomores Bill Campbell of Pawhuska, Dene "Pug" Harp of Fairview and Roy Cagle of Oklahoma City all battling for the right to play behind him.

Beryl Clark's loss at left half hurt but



*The five seniors who graduated from the Sooner basketball team this spring. Left to right, Herb Scheffler, Marvin Mesch, Gene Roop, Marvin Snodgrass and Jimmie McNatt*

juniors Jack Jacobs, Orv. Mathews and Friedrichs are still on hand and also sophomores Lindell Hayes of Wagoner and Boyd Bibb of Sayre. Although Munsey, smartest signal-caller of last fall's team, is out of the spring drill, he will be ready this September at right half and so will Gus Kitchens, his alternate, and sophomores Bill Mattox of Meridan, Mississippi, and Tom Rousey of Quincy, Illinois, while the versatile Jennings can be shifted back to that spot if necessary. Stidham also plans to try speedy Orville Mathews there as well as at left half.

Seymour and Potter will be hard to replace at fullback, yet two big, fast sophomores, Jack Steele, 194, of Lone Wolf and Huel Hamm, 200, Oklahoma City, are running and blocking viciously in scrimmage while Pat Shanks, Drumright sophomore, and Johnny Martin, Broken Bow senior who played next to Seymour last year, should strike their stride soon as they recover from petty scrimmage hurts.

Although Oklahoma must concede a great deal to experienced teams like Nebraska, Texas, and Santa Clara, the Sooner football situation is far from hopeless in spite of the tremendous casualties. Although some lickings are in store this fall for Stidham's young squad, Oklahoma should be a power in 1941 with a junior-senior team. Next season's losses—backs Jennings, and Martin and forwards Wood, Speegle, and Lahar—total only about one-third of the veteran talent flown from this year's club.



#### **Tie for basketball title**

The tipsy-turvy Big Six basketball race ended in a triple tie between Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma as Coach Bruce Drake's senior team drubbed Iowa State at Ames March 2, 51 to 42, and

closed the home season with a decisive 47-36 spanking of Dr. F. C. "Phog" Allen's Kansas Jayhawkers.

The Sooners were a consistently formidable aggregation in the closing weeks of the 1940 campaign, winning eight of their last eleven games. Drake, the youthful Sooner coach who always has his boys clicking their finest down the home stretch in March, cannily accomplished it by shifting Herb Scheffler, 6-foot 3-inch center, to a position in the outside line on attack where Scheffler's cool generalship, skillful spot passing and deadly long shooting could be utilized (Scheffler scored 55 points in his last five games), and also by introducing a new star in Hugh "Flyrod" Ford, 6-foot 6-inch center, from Billings, and so eternally polishing his bewildering offensive system of single and double screens that it shone with increasing lustre in each game, introducing the deadliest Sooner set shooting since Hugh McDermott turned out his great Oklahoma teams of 1928 and 1929.

Ford demoralized Kansas at Norman March 8 with his leaping larceny off the lip of the Jayhawk goal and also some elegant pivot post shooting. Nearly every time Kansas tried for a goal, Ford simply took the heart out of Doctor Allen's fine team by jack-knifing spectacularly above the ring to pick the well-aimed Kansas shots right out of the hoop, and his unguardable turn shooting, in which he dunked the ball after a giant body swing that looked like the slow revolution of a horse-drawn hay boom, helped swell the Oklahoma score. The popular Sooner Irishman, Jimmy McNatt, hit seven field goals that night to give a gorgeous shooting exhibition and win the Big Six individual scoring championship for the season by ten points while Marvin Snod-

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grass, the "Human Handcuff," whose bristly blond hair stands straight up as he dogs great enemy scorers, slipped the steel bracelets on both Ralph Miller and Howard Engleman, Kansas' great scorers, who were permitted only one field goal each.

All this made Oklahoma look very good in the Big Six playoff for representation in the National Collegiate tournament and the Sooners justified this rating on the small, exceedingly slippery neutral floor of the Forum at Wichita, Kansas, on March 11 by defeating Missouri 52 to 41 in their first round game.

With seven minutes to go, the score was tied 39 to 39, thanks to Missouri's great spree of one-handed shooting. Here Coach Drake sent Ford, his slim giant who had been resting, back into action and the Billings rookie broke up the ball game. First he leaped his length to steal two Missouri shots out of the hoop. Then he was fouled by Blaine Currence, Tiger center, which proved a four point mistake as Ford not only canned the field goal Currence sought to prevent, but also coolly pocketed both free throws.

However Ford's next goal completely fractured the Missouri morale. Standing with his back to the basket although he had its location nicely gauged by the position of his feet, Ford suddenly and audaciously flipped the ball back over his head in a totally "blind" shot that to everybody's amazement swished through cleanly. That was the play the big crowd talked about as it filed from the Forum. Incidentally, big Scheffler's excellent spot passing and point-blank gunnery from semi-long set positions, and Captain Marvin Mesch's accurate long shooting from behind Drake's cleverly conceived screens, not to mention Ford's feat of scoring 19 points and doing some very telling defensive rebounding, also were factors.

Oklahoma lost the finale the following night to the fresh Kansas team, which had drawn a bye and had the additional advantage of thoroughly scouting the Sooner tactics during the Missouri battle. Kansas won 45 to 39. The Missouri victory the night before while the Kansas players were resting and studying the Sooner attack, had taken a costly toll of speed and stamina from Oklahoma although Kansas's spirited rebound play which netted her 25 more shots than Oklahoma got, and her aggressive throttling of Ford deserve credit.

Doctor Allen's Jayhawks won the game in the closing ten minutes of the first half when they whirled into a 27 to 16 lead that tired Oklahoma could never quite overcome.

The dogged rally of the exhausted Oklahomans in the second half, as Drake's seniors, realizing it was their last game

together if they lost, gamely resolved to sell themselves as dearly as possible, was a beautiful and thrilling sight to the hundreds of Sooner alumni and well-wishers present among the noisy throng of 3,500 that packed the Forum.

Captain Mesch launched it on a fast break by feeding the speeding McNatt for a setup. Then Scheffler dodged a lunge by John Kline, burly Kansas guard, and banked in a long goal. Don Ebling countered for the Jayhawkers with a follow-in after a missed Kansas free throw but the red-clad Sooners, cool opportunists now where they had seemed slow and lethargic in the opening half, scored three more field baskets in a row to cut the Kansas lead to 29 to 26 and force the rattled Jayhawkers to sue for time out.

The third of these quickly manufactured Oklahoma goals was the most spectacular play of the night. Howard "Rope" Engleman, Kansas forward, had the ball in Kansas's outside line of offense. Suddenly McNatt, who was coiled in front of Engleman watching him like a cat does a bird, hurled himself upon the Jayhawker, wrested the bulb from him, sprawled to the floor and sprang up in one continuous motion, and spanking the leather into a fast bounce, wove like a snake between Jayhawkers Allen and Harp and fled dribbling to the distant goal, gaining ground on his three Kansas pursuers with every stride until he doubled his lithe body into the air beneath the Kansas basket to deliver the ball hoopward and then hurtle on into the crowd. But behind him the sphere lay safely in the meshes.

Kansas braced, forced big Ford's ejection from the clash because of personal fouls, and stretched her lead only to have Captain Mesch, who was shooting stunningly, deposit his sixth, seventh and eighth field goals of the evening to cut the Kansas lead to 37 to 35 with three minutes left to play.

Then pandemonium reigned. Oklahoma got the ball and rushed it to the Kansas goal while the crowd, on its feet roaring, threatened to go mad. But every time a Sooner raised his arms to shoot the tying basket, some Jayhawker threw himself upon him. The turning point of the game occurred when Bobby Allen, alert son of the Kansas coach, wrenched the ball away from the heroic but totally tuckered Mesch and Kansas didn't surrender it thereafter until she had scored another goal, then froze the ball just inside the center line, spreading and weakening the Sooner defense and driving through its thinned salient for two more goals.

The game was the last for five Oklahoma seniors, Captain Mesch, McNatt, Snodgrass, Scheffler and Reserve Gene Roop who made glorious basketball history for Oklahoma the past three years. It was also the finish of young Drake's

second season as Sooner coach, in each of which Oklahoma has won a Big Six championship.

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## Art work praised

Woodrow Crumbo, '39ex, Indian artist, was interviewed last month for the *Evening Star* in Washington, D.C., where he was painting Indian murals in the new Department of Interior Building.

Mr. Crumbo is head of the art department at Bacone College, near Muskogee.

"Young Woodrow Crumbo waved a paint brush at a reporter today," the interview began, "and announced that he is going to give the District its first taste of American art." He declared, "There's not an American painting in any of your famous galleries here—every last picture is European. The true 'American' art is Indian art."

The article was generous with praise for the "warm, subdued earth colors perfected before the white men knew the world was round; for the dignity and pride which characterize the symbolism which the red-skinned painter creates in two dimensions."

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## Faculty

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Dr. Charles E. Decker, professor of paleontology, headed a geological field trip last month which was sponsored by the Oklahoma City Geological Society.

At the request of President W. B. Bizzell, Dean S. W. Reaves has appointed a committee of thirteen from the College of Arts and Science to study the curriculum of the college and to make recommendations for its revision in the interest of economy, efficiency, and scholarship.

For the regular Thursday afternoon tea at the Faculty Club March 14, the committee was as follows: Mrs. B. J. Heinrich, Mrs. A. B. Sears, Mrs. Leroy Smith, Mrs. A. K. Christian, Mrs. Cecil Brite, Miss Laura Miller.

A faculty luncheon for the Junior Honors Group was held in the ballroom of the Union Building March 14. High scholarship was recognized. President Bizzell was the principal speaker.

Three faculty members participated in a regional conference on citizenship and government at Dallas, Texas, last month. The three and their subjects are Dr. H. V. Thornton, "The Manitowoc Plan of a Citizenship Day;" Dr. Cortez A. M. Ewing, "Training for Competent Citizenship;" and Dr. Joseph C. Pray, "Tax Justice—How It Can Be Achieved?"