

Riding the Sooner Range

By TED BEAIRD

DID you ever experience a Southwestern Oklahoma whirlwind? Did you ever stand and try to adjust yourself after the twirling and whirling of such a breeze had passed? Did you ever, after a pounding like that, try to get your feet back on the ground? No? Well, you have not then, been through an O.U. Homecoming!

Yes, indeed, one may have novel experiences in Riding the Sooner Range, but in an attempt to *fly the Sooner Range* in the midst of Homecoming—well, that's a different sensation! Homecoming with its many, many activities, its many crowded programs, one stacked on top of another, gives all of those Sooners participating the sensation of being thrown about at will! The sensation after the whirl is like that one experiences in a Southwestern Oklahoma whirlwind.

But at that, the 1941 Homecoming, as we look back in retrospect, was worth the "fling" that we gave it! Being grounded by the American Air Line officials at the St. Louis, Missouri, field on the trek home from Indianapolis, Indiana, just a few hours prior to the opening gun of the 1941 Homecoming, only added to the anxiety in the stormy St. Louis area. What a relief when the "Marshal of the Day" commanded, "*AIR TRAVEL*," in time for us to reach the Oklahoma City port and make connections for the big dinner dance in the Skirvin Tower Hotel sponsored annually by the Oklahoma City Alumni group.

That, indeed, was the beginning of our Homecoming whirl for 1941. Congressman *MIKE MONRONEY*, '24ba, Washington, D.C., was more than up to his old style and far beyond par as Master of Ceremonies at the 500-plus assembly at this Homecoming Dinner Dance. *FISH MULDRON*, '22 Ardmore, accompanied by the Mrs., was on the spot and performing his duties as Prexy of the Corporation. The old time quartet, giving songs of years back from 1908 on down, really strutted its stuff, and too, it was the official quartet back in those early days; namely, *DENVER DAVISON*, '15law, of Oklahoma City, *Dr. TOM LOWRY*, '14med, Oklahoma City, *SAM NEFF*, '30, Oklahoma City, along with *Dr. ROSCOE WALKER*, '09bs, of Pawhuska. Yes, they floored the house!

Prexy Joe, (Dr. plus. Prof. plus Pres. plus Mr. *JOSEPH A. BRANDT*, '21ba, to you on the outside), made his first official Presidential—Alumnus appearance before this annual assembly of rootin'-tootin'-gang-o-Sooners—and he did a swell job. Little *SNORTER LUSTER*, '22law, (the big coach to you on the outside) rang the bell with his cracks and comebacks, more especially, his comment, "Prexy Joe, in case he thinks he has difficulty with his mail, well—he should a read mine on the morning after the Texas game!" *LEW MORRIS*, '17law; *BOB KERR*, '16; *KERMIT HARDWICK*, '29bus; "*COOKIE*" *COOK*, '26law; *FRANK DOUGLASS*, '16law; *KITTY SHANKLIN ROUNTREE*, '23ba; *DON NICHOLSON*, '23; *LOUIS WOODRUFF*, '35law; *JULIAN ROTHBAUM*, '38 law; *BERNICE FORD PRICE*, '25, plus husband *DAVE*, '26; "*COLEY*" *HAYES*, '26law, and dozens plus dozens of other Oklahoma City-ites were in their places—at their tables—whooping it up on this Friday eve prior to the Saturday to follow when the Sooners developed the race track over Iowa State on Owen Field!

As for this annual function—the dinner dance at Oklahoma City sponsored by the Oklahoma City-ites—well, it grows bigger and better year by year. The prize crack of the evening was voted by the "multitude" to Congressman *MIKE MONRONEY* when, in opening the festivities of the evening as Master of Ceremonies, he commented: "Kitty Shanklin Rountree is a great Sooner and has made a great president of the Oklahoma City O.U. Club. I am certainly glad to be back with her tonight and

I'll say this, Kitty, if you are ever in Congress and election is coming up the following spring, I'll have you back as Master of Ceremonies at my dinner party. I understand the Oklahoma City Committee and the alumni of this state have had a most difficult time trying to select a toastmaster or master of ceremonies. Finally, they decided on me as fifth choice. In making their preliminary survey for a toastmaster they found it extremely difficult to select one of our Sooners who is *not* planning to run for governor next spring!"

So the Monday after 1941 Homecoming was devoted to the regular routine; namely, taking care of hundreds of requests on the part of visiting alumni during the preceding week-end. Indeed, it was not hard to take care of the request of the hard-hittin', double-fisted school administrator of the Southwest, Superintendent *BENNIE McELYEA*, '36m.ed, of Hobart. After Bennie had participated in the many, many activities of the day during the Homecoming stretch in Norman, and at the annual Alumni Reception in the Oklahoma Memorial Union over his last cup of tea and munching his last and final cookie, he commanded of your hired hand: "Send me the credentials for a Life Membership in Monday's mail. I have been an annual all these years and now I want to get my feet wet as a Lifer." Thanks, Mr. Superintendent, and congratulations to you! You were at that hour the youngest Lifer of the Association—but not for long, Sir.

The evening is November 11. All of us were glancing back on the activities of the 23rd Armistice Day. Your hired hand was reiterating for his listeners his trek in Riding the Sooner Range at high noon for an Armistice Day Address at Shawnee where numerous Sooners of the Pottawatomie County Capitol were breaking bread.

The telephone dingles long, loud, hard and vociferously. Dubuque, Iowa, is on the other end of the line and the Dubuque operator is chasing down the old baseball pitcher of years ago who had placed the call one hour before. *Dr. JOHN PICKARD*, '26med, of the Dubuque Clinic. Presently, John is on the line.

Here goes this conversation: "Well, big boy, how many 50-yard tickets have you left for the Missouri-O.U. game in Columbia Saturday? What, nothing except two behind the goal posts? Well, send them along, the Mrs. and I have the old Sooner urge—Man, we're goin'! I want those two tickets, we are going up there and see the Sooners clean the Tigers of Missouri! Did you get my order? Yes, two tickets and send me a bill with the tickets for a \$60 Life Membership. I have been wanting to come in for some time and have just now gotten around to it by calling you halfway across America."

So it goes, day in and day out, the tinkling of a telephone bell, the facilities of Postal Telegraph or Western Union, or Uncle Sam's air mail—and occasionally, man to man, they *force us* to let them in to your Alumni Association as Life Members! Indeed, your hired hand has *no regrets!*

The annual board meeting on Homecoming morning in the Executive Board meeting rooms of the Alumni Association in the Oklahoma Memorial Union Building, was literally stacked ceiling high with officers of your Alumni Association. We saw faces of officers who had not been with us in months plus months in the assembly of 51 present for the official Homecoming Executive Board meeting. Among those that we were privileged to welcome back and have in the council room on that morning to help in the liaison work of the organized alumni, were Mrs. *LOUISE CLINKSCALES BURCKHALTER*, '28ba, Vinita; *J. PHIL BURNS*, '27ba, Fairview; Mrs. *LOUISE PIERCE EARLY*, '31ba, Cyril; *R. L. McLEAN*, '38m.ed, Anadarko; *KATHERINE RADER*, '36ba, '40ma, Alva; *HUGH D. SOUTHWICK*, '21ph.g, Garber; *B. C. SWINNEY*,

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This is the group that guides operation of the Oklahoma Memorial Union. Left to right, standing, are: Ted Beard, manager; Homer Heck, assistant manager; Harold Reedy, financial clerk; Charles H. Allen, auditor; Charles Nesbitt, M.G. A. president; E. R. Kraettli, board member; Edgar D. Meacham, board member; and R. W. Hutto, chairman of the board. Seated are Sue Starr, A.W.S. president and Virginia Reinecke, director of Union activities.



'41, Lawton; Dr. ROSCOE WALKER, '09bs, Pawhuska; JOHN R. WALLACE, '34ba, Miami; JOHN WORLEY, '29law, Chickasha. Yes, far more officers of the Association could be named than we have space in the columns of the Sooner Range, but we were particularly pleased to have the above named officers, along with a "bevy" of past presidents of the Association.

Among the past presidents of the Association present on this occasion were: RAYMOND TOLBERT, '13law, Oklahoma City, president during 1929; FRED E. TARMAN, '10ba, Norman, who served as alumni president in 1915; A. N. "JACK" BOATMAN, '14ba, '16law, Okmulgee, who headed the organized alumni during the fiscal year 1924; JUDGE EARL FOSTER, '13law, Oklahoma City, who guided the destiny of the Sooners in your Association during the fiscal year 1935; R. W. "BEP" HUTTO, '10ba, Norman, who was the executive officer of the Association for the year 1920; DAVE R. MCKOWN, '21geol, alumni president in 1922.

Then of course there were present three other past presidents of the Association who now, as they have for years, and will for many more years, serve as Trustees on the Life Membership Endowment Fund of the Oklahoma Association, namely, TOM CAREY, '08ba, Oklahoma City, who has had two hitches as the presiding prexy of the organized alumni, the first term in 1912, while his second term was in 1928; NEIL R. JOHNSON, '17law, Norman, past president of the Alumni Association who served in 1919, and ERRETT R. NEWBY, '08ba, Oklahoma City, who served as the presiding

director of the Alumni Association and took charge of the president's chair during the fiscal year 1927.

All these, plus many, many more officials were present for the annual 1941 Homecoming board session. With such an array of talent and interest shown on the part of busy, yes very busy, professional men and women who give their time, money and energy to the development of this liaison work—well, why wouldn't any man's alumni association function for the best interest of its 75,000 clients scattered to the four corners of the world?

So much for Homecoming activities of '41 in this range rid'ng ramble—and so much for the incidents in connection with the related programs for Homecoming for 1941. Let's turn in the trail and observe some other spots where range riding has been in vogue.

The annual function in Houston, Texas, is always outstanding and interesting. Annually, on the Thursday evening prior to the O.U.-Texas game in Dallas, the Texas Alumni come out 100 percent strong and th's season was no exception. This season, of course, at Houston as in other places, the one big question of the hour among football enthusiasts, was: "What is this A formation we hear and read so much about that SNORTER LUSTER is teaching his men on the Field at O.U.? Where and when can we see the formation shaped up so that it will display the real A? How does it work?"

That ser'es of questions has been put not only to your hired hand but to all our men and women who are associated with campus work on numerous occasions during the past ten weeks. And in Houston, Texas, it was answered—answered by a specialist in

the field, a chap who was my official scout, co-worker and assistant in this pilgrimage to the Southland, namely, JACK BAER, '40, of the Athletic Department of O.U.

No sooner had we assembled at the Texas State Hotel with the mob rallying there than the questions began to fly in connection with the A formation. See the accompanying picture with this article, wherein JACK BAER is the teacher—instructor—or genial coach—explaining the meaning of the A formation on paper to an interested group of O.U. grads in the Houston meeting. You will note Dr. JOE WALKER, '22med; B. F. ORR, '14, "BIG BOY" RHYNES; DOW HAMM, '22ba, all of Houston. Dr. CHANCEY DOLPH, '26med, of Baytown, Texas, along with a past president of the Alumni Association who was in Houston on business this particular evening; namely, GLENN C. CLARK, '13ba, president of the Association in 1925, who had come down from Ponca City to "explore" in oil (and football) along with us. Indeed, oil and other business was thrown to the four winds on th's special evening until the boys had their lesson in the A formation.

Then, of course, we swing back on another ride of the Sooner Range to participate in another official alumni session, the monthly meeting of the Board of Managers of the Oklahoma Memorial Union—that policy forming group that carries out the business functions of th's division of the Alumni Corporation. We refer you again to an accompanying picture, in which we present the officers of the Board of Managers who this season, as in seasons passed, are doing lots of labor behind the scenes on the Oklahoma Memorial Union program. Here you find Sooners galore, HOMER R. HECK, '35, assistant manager of the Oklahoma Memorial Union; HAROLD REEDY, another Alum Lifer, financial clerk of the Business Office; Auditor CHARLES H. ALLEN of Oklahoma City, who for years has added, substracted and multiplied the figures for the corporation; EMIL R. KRAETTLI, '18, Dean ED MEACHAM, '14ba, R. W. HUTTO, '10ba, Norman, along with two student representatives; namely, the president of the Men's Governing Association and the "Gal Prexy" of the Associated Women Students organization on the campus of the University of Oklahoma: CHARLES NESBITT, freshman lawyer, Tulsa, and SUE STARR, arts and science junior, Oklahoma City. The "glamor" number in the picture—oh yes, no other than director of student activities in the Memorial Union Building, VIRGINIA REINECKE, assistant counselor of women, who has been with the organization since coming to us from Northwestern. A swell, swell job she is doing!

Yes, they are the group that does a lot of galloping along the Range, up and down the corridors, from one flight to another flight of stairs, in carrying out a well-balanced and well-executed program in the interest of thousands of students and visitors in the Oklahoma Memorial Union plant. They, too, are Range Riders, and they know how to steer their course!



This was a Sooner football conference in Houston, Texas, with Assistant Coach Jack Baer explaining the "A" formation. Around the table, left to right: Dr. Joseph D. Walker, B. F. Orr, Jack Baer, Irl Rhynes, Dow Hamm, Glenn Clark and Dr. Chancey Dolph.