

47th Football Campaign

[Sooner Sports]

By HAROLD KEITH

DEWNEY "Snorter" LUSTER, the University of Oklahoma's diminutive football brigadier, has speeded up production of gridiron munitions, called his envoys home and is grimly mobilizing an eager squad of 50 Sooner players at Owen field for a declaration of pigskin war September 10.

It will be the University's 47th annual football campaign since John A. Harts, a long-haired expression student from Winfield, Kansas, back in 1895 recruited the Norman fire chief, one puzzled but game barber, half a dozen rough farm boys and filled out his squad from the University's scant male enrolment to organize the first Sooner football team of all time, only to see it licked 34 to 0 by the Oklahoma City town team on a make-shift prairie field north of the present Fine Arts building.

Nobody is going to belt General Luster's Sooners 34 to 0 this autumn, nor is it probable that the Sooners themselves will administer that severe a hiding to any of their opponents, but until the firing starts and you can see it for yourselves, here are some early communiques from the front that might interest you.

Praises His Assistant Coaches

Luster declares he will lean heavily this fall upon his two varsity assistant coaches, Lawrence "Jap" Haskell, line mentor, and Dale Arbuckle, backfield coach.

Luster says he has great confidence in both Haskell and Arbuckle and isn't afraid to give either full authority in any part of the field.

"I'm like the farmer and his cow," the Sooner headmaster asserts, simply. "I want to get every drop of usefulness out of my assistants."

No More Honorary Game Captains

Oklahoma will not use honorary football game captains this fall, Luster says.

"We're going to select two or three of our smartest boys, break them in as captains and let them do all the executive work out on the field," the Sooner coach promises.

"It won't matter to us whether this boy is a sophomore or a senior so long as we're satisfied he can run the deal. He probably will be a senior, since seniors have more experience, but we're going to be open minded about it.

"If you've got a smart boy on your squad, why not use him?"

Luster said an honorary captain would continue to be elected at the close of the season, as has been the custom at Oklahoma for several years.

Even Our Own Coaches Go to School

Ted Owen, veteran trainer of Oklahoma athletic teams, was the fifth member of the Sooner football staff to attend a clinic this summer.

Owen went to Denver to attend a school for football trainers. Dale Arbuckle, Sooner backfield coach, and Frank Crider, freshman mentor, sat in on clinics at the training camps of the Chicago Bears and New York Giants professional clubs.

Dewey "Snorter" Luster, Sooner head coach, and Lawrence "Jap" Haskell, Sooner line coach and athletic director, attended the Texas High School Coaches' Association school at Houston, Texas.

Haskell said it would be his policy to frequently send Oklahoma staff members to national clinics so each might stay abreast of modern developments in his field.

Sooners Will Use Five-Man Defense

For the first time in its football history, Oklahoma will use a five-man line right along with its six and seven-man line defenses.

Not only does Coach Luster like the five because it is an effective check against enemy runs as well as passes off certain formations, but because it complicates the preparation a foe team must do the week before the game.

"The primary benefit of the five-man line," believes Luster, "is that it forces the offensive team to prepare for an entirely different defensive distribution than

WNAD Will Broadcast All Sooner Games

Since the University's own broadcasting station will be able this year, for the first time, to get statewide coverage with its programs, the Athletic Department has decided to broadcast all Sooner football games over WNAD and not grant any exclusive rights to any radio station or network.

Under the new plan, WNAD will handle the game broadcasts on a strictly non-commercial basis. The Athletic Department will permit any commercial station to pickup the broadcast from WNAD for a nominal fee.

WNAD will broadcast both home and foreign games of the Sooners. With the favorable new wave length of 640 kilocycles, and a new 300-foot antenna tower erected in August, the University station is expected to reach all parts of Oklahoma with the exception of a few scattered spots where local conditions interfere with the signal.

the six-man line most teams work basically against, thus adding to the confusion and uncertainty.

"In other words," he adds, "the enemy team must learn two new assignments on each offensive play, the assignment against a five-man line and the assignment against a six-man line, because a team that uses both won't always have its defense in the same place."

New Assignments For Four Seniors

Luster doesn't believe the ancient saw that "you can't teach an old dog new tricks."

Four senior veterans of Oklahoma's 1941 football team, Tackle Roger Eason and Backs Orv Mathews, Marv Whited and Jack Jacobs, were assigned new duties in the Sooners' Spring drills and did so well at them that Luster will use them permanently at their new chores this fall.

Eason, a slashing 206-pound tackle, will play guard on offense because he is an excellent blocker and so fast he can outrun half the backs.

Mathews will play safety on defense and quarterback on offense. Last year he was used at defensive half on defense and at wingback on the attack.

Whited, a rugged blocker who never carried the ball last fall, will be shifted to fullback this season where he will become a blocker-bucker in Luster's new formation A.

Jacobs has been switched from safety to defensive half. The Indian is 6 feet 1 inch tall, weighs 185 pounds, is a great man against passes and probably the finest open field tackler on the Oklahoma squad, talents the average fan probably didn't realize he possessed.

Blocking Backs Get a Break

Every man in the Oklahoma backfield will carry the football this fall.

"Every back a ball-toter" was one of Luster's maxims in the Sooners' preparation last February and March for the 1941 season as he introduced the eager Oklahomans to their new formation, the tricky "A" alignment used by the New York Giants professional club.

Even the faithful Oklahoma blocking backs who last year didn't lug the leather a single time from scrimmage, flowered into some sort of ball-luggers in the Sooner spring drills and for the first time in history will read their names in the newspaper yardage tables this fall.



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This might be Dewey "Snorter" Luster, new Sooner football coach, trying to read his first Oklahoma team's future in the coffee grounds at the bottom of the cup. Actually it isn't. It's just Luster having one of the several morning cups of coffee that are as much a part of his system as wingbacks or spinners.

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New Line Must Prove Ability

Tackle is the strongest position in the Oklahoma line, center and guard the weakest and the ends are just average, declares Jap Haskell, Sooner line coach.

"We've got the numbers but we lack the physical ability of our big 1938 and 1939 lines that had Young, Ivy, Shirk and Coppage at end, Duggan, Bowers, Lahar and Teeter at tackle, Stephenson, Bolton, Manley, Keith and Locke at guard and Wood and Speegle at center," the plain-spoken Oklahoma line mentor drawled.

Haskell should know about the prowess of the sturdy Sooner lines of two and three years ago. He coached the Oklahoma line of 1938 that led the nation in defense against rushing with an average of only 43.3 yards per game against it. The Alabama line was second nationally to the Sooners that year, followed by Duke, Santa Clara and Southern California.

Haberlein Must Go to Work

The Oklahoma guard situation is so serious this fall that Haskell is going to hitch Jack Haberlein, last year's place-kicking specialist who hit 13 of 14 extra points but didn't muss his hair otherwise, into heavy duty harness.

"We won't have any extra points for Jack to kick unless we make some touch-downs first," Haskell declares. "And since we're so short of guards, Jack's got to help us make 'em."

Here's why guard is such a problem position in the Sooner line: Harold Lahar,

outstanding guard in the Big Six last year, graduated. Senior Olin Keith, slated for a starting berth this fall, quit football to join the Air Corps. Paul Woodson, burly second stringer, is out of school and Harvey Stone, of Cushing, greatest freshman prospect in years, joined the Navy.

Crider Is New Drill Sergeant

Burly Frank Crider, newly-elected freshman coach, will direct the Sooner squad's calisthenics when fall practice starts here September 10 and furthermore, the Oklahoma squad will be expected to stay up with him, Coach Luster says.

Crider was an all-Big Six back in 1929, his senior year, and one of the finest blocking backs ever developed at Oklahoma, ranking with Claude Reeds, '11, and Roy "Sol" Swatek, '20.

Crider has been a football coach for 11 years, having served at Altus, El Reno, Seminole, Norman and Wewoka high schools.

Four Teams To Scrimmage at Once

Newspaper correspondents are going to find Oklahoma football practices difficult to cover this autumn.

Coach Luster will again adopt the four-team scrimmaging system that he so successfully introduced here last spring.

"I like it because it means 44 men can be kept in action rather than just 22," Luster explains. "Every kid gets to scrimmage and that's what he wants. He doesn't come out to block the dummy.

"Also, I like it because it gets away

from sideline tea parties. When just two teams are scrimmaging, the other 30 players who sit out along the sidelines do lots of visiting and wrestling instead of keeping their eye on what's going on."

But the Norman scribes wonder how they can watch two fields at once!

Freshmen Start With Varsity

Sooner freshmen football players this fall won't have to spot the varsity a two-weeks advantage of early practice, promises Coach Luster.

The new Sooner yearlings will start work September 10 right with the Oklahoma varsity.

Milk Gulpers Slowed Down

Milk is a poor appetizer for football players and will be served at the Sooner football training table this fall only after the players have begun their meals, says Coach Luster.

"When a player troops in from the practice field and gulps down a pint of cold milk when he first sits down, he won't have much appetite for the rest of his dinner," he opines.

"We believe strongly in milk and plenty of it, but it's a food, not a drink, and we prefer to bring it on later in the meal," the Sooner coach said.

Strong Material For 1942, '43 and '44

Incidentally, when Frank Crider, pug-nosed Sooner freshman football coach, looks over his new material this fall he may not feel so glum about that matched game his Sooner yearlings are booked to play against Coach Luster's Sooner varsity October 4 at Owen Field.

Some promising high school players have announced their decision to enrol at Norman this autumn and 34 of the 40 are from Oklahoma. The list includes:

Ends: Arch Bradley, Muskogee; Mack McGuire, Muskogee; Bill Jonsen, Perry; Jim Tebow, Enid; Buddy Goodall, Ada; O'Quinn Dunn, Chickasha.

Tackles: Thurman Garrett, Blackwell; Harold Simeroth, Purcell; Lee Kennon, Tulsa; Albert Downs, Atoka; Chris Lambert, Enid.

Guards: C. F. Bryce, Altus; Walter Tanner, Oklahoma City Central; J. D. Guffey, Shawnee; Charles Floyd, McAlester; Darrel Harris, Madill; Charles Bagley, Wewoka, and Stanley Greene, Burkburnett, Texas.

Centers: Otis Schellstede, Blackwell; Bud O'Day, Durant.

Backs: Bill Reimers, Tulsa; Son Riley, Oklahoma City, Capitol Hill; Virgil Elliott, Blackwell; Clyde LeForce, Bristow; LeRoy Neaher, Altus; Don Fauble, Shawnee; Jim Shafer, Gotebo; Joe Whisenant, Duncan; Myrle Greathouse, Amarillo, Texas; M. T. Johnson, Jr., Amarillo, Texas; Boone Baker, Amarillo, Texas; Olen Andrews, Vernon, Texas; Bob Corrotto, Fort Smith, Arkansas; Jack Betchold, Perry; Clinton Carr, Marlow; Dudley Carson, Muskogee; Dave Wallace, Oklahoma City Classen; Bob Findley, Oklahoma City Classen; Bill Hollis, Mangum, and Ben Tillman, Chickasha.