



*Paul Heap, Oklahoma's sophomore guard (with ball), fiercely beset by three University of Oregon players in Oklahoma's first basketball game of the 1940-41 season. Oregon won, 42 to 29, although Oklahoma led 16-8 at one point in the last half.*

## Sooner Sports

By HAROLD KEITH

**W**ITH basketball, America's top winter sport, dribbling onto the scene, interest at the University of Oklahoma is centered on the youthful but steadily-improving Sooner squad Coach Bruce Drake is developing.

At this writing the Sooners have played two games, dropping their opener to Oregon's superb "Tall Firs," at Norman December 9 by a score of 29 to 42, but defeating Southern Methodist University at Norman December 11 by a count of 43 to 34.

With such well-known Oklahoma players of the last three years as Jimmy McNatt, all-American forward; Marvin Mesch, all-Big Six guard, Herb Scheffler, all-Big Six center and Marvin Snodgrass, possibly the greatest defensive guard in the 33-year-old history of the game at Norman, all having served out their eligibility, Drake has had to construct his 1940-41 team from last year's substitutes and new sophomores, all of which he is trying to forge into a formidable unit before the team makes its Big Six conference debut here January 8 with Dr. F. C. "Phog" Allen's Kansas Jayhawkers, Big Six co-champions and N. C. A. A. finalists.

Drake's adolescents looked only fair in their first two games. Their biggest improvement seemed to be defense. They held Oregon's experienced giants to eight points in the first twenty-two minutes of that battle, and limited Southern Metho-

dist to seven points in the first fifteen minutes of that clash.

Moreover, the Sooners have shown a new disposition to guard cleanly (Oklahoma led the Big Six conference in personal fouls the last two seasons), committing only eighteen fouls in the two games to Oregon's and Southern Methodist's twenty-eight.

Oklahoma seems to have completely shelved her traditional fast-break offense that Coach Hugh McDermott so immortalized here from 1922 through 1938. Instead Drake is concentrating on defense, careful screening and ball control.

Hugh Ford, 6-foot 6-inch Sooner center, has been the spine of Oklahoma's tight defense. The tall Billings, Oklahoma boy has been showing his teeth around the defensive backboard and has been doing an excellent job on assigned opponents, too, smothering Archie Marshik, Oregon's 6-foot 7-inch center, and Virgil "Country Boy" Wilkerson, Southern Methodist's Southwest conference scoring champion, with two field goals each.

Members of the Sooner squad are:

**LAST YEAR'S SUBSTITUTES**—Hugh Ford of Billings, Matt Zollner and Bill Bentley of Oklahoma City, Dale Carlile of Enid and Mitch Simon of Tipton.

**NEW SOPHOMORES**—A. D. "Ug" Roberts, Allie Paine and Rex Walters from Oklahoma City, Paul Heap and Shelby Green of Tulsa, Warren Lehman of Ardmore,

Jim Martency of Cherokee, Louis Bailey of Bartlesville, J. P. Toler of Hominy, and Tom Rousey of Quincy, Ill.

1939 **LETTERMAN**—Garnett Corbin of Oklahoma City who was out of school last year.

The complete Oklahoma schedule:

- Dec. 9 Oregon 42 at Oklahoma 29.
- Dec. 11 Southern Methodist 34 at Oklahoma 43.
- Dec. 13 Southern Methodist at Dallas.
- Dec. 21 St. Johns at New York City
- Dec. 23 Temple at Philadelphia.
- Jan. 8 Kansas at Norman.
- Jan. 11 Kansas State at Manhattan.
- Jan. 13 Nebraska at Lincoln.
- Jan. 24 Missouri at Norman.
- Jan. 31 Kansas State at Norman.
- Feb. 5 Okla. Aggies at Norman.
- Feb. 8 Iowa State at Norman.
- Feb. 12 Okla. Aggies at Stillwater.
- Feb. 15 Bradley Tech at Peoria.
- Feb. 17 Iowa State at Ames.
- Feb. 22 Nebraska at Norman.
- March 1 Missouri at Columbia.
- March 7 Kansas at Lawrence.

### Indoor Teams Training

The Sooner wrestling, indoor track and swimming teams have begun training. . . . Oklahoma finished second in the annual Big Six two-mile meet November 16 at Columbia, Missouri, Nebraska winning. . . Sooner Bill Lyda was third and Sooner Dick Smethers fourth in the 24-man grind . . . Coach John Jacobs' Oklahomans had defeated Nebraska 19 to 17 in a dual race at Norman two weeks earlier.

## Stidham Record .771

Cutting back briefly through Oklahoma's 1940 football season, the following points seem most significant:

(1) The Sooners finished with their poorest winning percentage of Tom Stidham's four-year coaching reign, winning 6, losing 3 for .667.

And yet only one Oklahoma team in the fifteen years preceding Stidham's head coaching had a better record than the 1940 Sooners, that Bennie Owen eleven of 1926 that won five, lost two and tied two. And only one other in those fifteen seasons can show as good a mark as the 1940 Sooners, and that was the first Oklahoma team Biff Jones coached, the Sooners of 1935.

(2) The big Indian's life-time coaching average at Oklahoma dipped from .807 to .771. Stidham's complete record follows:

|      | W  | L | T | PCT. | PTS. | OPP. PTS. |
|------|----|---|---|------|------|-----------|
| 1937 | 5  | 2 | 2 | .714 | 98   | 39        |
| 1938 | 10 | 1 | 0 | .909 | 183  | 29        |
| 1939 | 6  | 2 | 1 | .750 | 186  | 62        |
| 1940 | 6  | 3 | 0 | .667 | 121  | 105       |
|      | 27 | 8 | 3 | .771 | 590  | 235       |

(3) For the first time since Stidham has been the Oklahoma coach, Oklahoma's combined opponents actually out-yarded the Sooners this autumn. The figures:

|                    | OKLAHOMA | OPPONENTS |
|--------------------|----------|-----------|
| Yards rushing      | 1,125    | 1,075     |
| Yards passing      | 779      | 859       |
| Intercepted passes | 54       | 200       |
| Kick returns       | 924      | 867       |
|                    | 2,882    | 3,001     |

(4) Defense was the team's most glaring weakness. Oklahoma yielded more yards in each of the four defensive departments this season than in any since Stidham became coach.

A comparison of the statistics of this year's club against Stidham's 1937, 1938, and 1939 aggregations proves the 1940 team was much the poorest defensively:

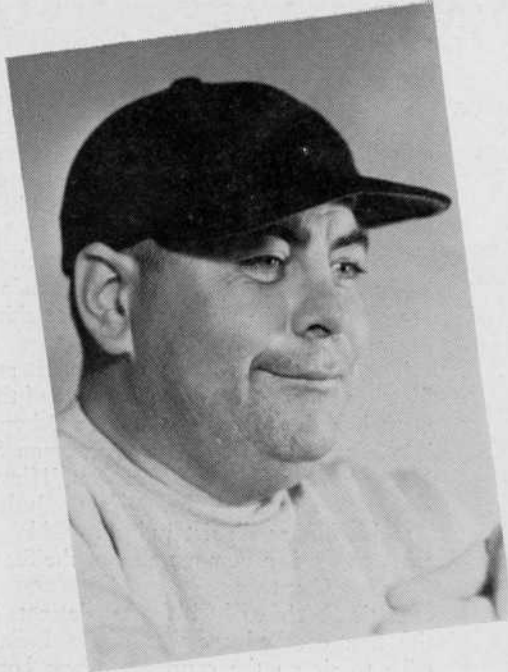
|                    | 1937  | *1938  | 1939  | 1940  |
|--------------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| Opp. rushed        | 561   | * 406  | 1,032 | 1,075 |
| Opp. passed        | 369   | * 539  | 581   | 859   |
| Opp. intc. passes  | 83    | * 134  | 83    | 200   |
| Opp. kick runbacks | 760   | * 660  | 769   | 867   |
|                    | 1,773 | *1,739 | 2,465 | 3,001 |

\*1938 team played 10 regular games, all other teams played only nine.

(5) The 1940 team was out-ranked in total yards gained offensively by both the powerful 1938 and 1939 Sooner squads, but gained more yards than Stidham's first Oklahoma team, the Sooners of 1937:

|                    | 1937  | *1938  | 1939  | 1940  |
|--------------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| Okl. rushed        | 974   | *1,366 | 1,561 | 1,125 |
| Okl. passed        | 561   | *1,101 | 817   | 779   |
| Okl. intc. passes  | 170   | * 228  | 194   | 54    |
| Okl. kick runbacks | 1,068 | * 903  | 848   | 924   |
|                    | 2,773 | *3,598 | 3,420 | 2,882 |

(6) The 1940 Sooner team had by far the poorest margin between its total yards gained and its total yards lost of any team Stidham has coached here:



After four years' coaching at Oklahoma, Indian Tom Stidham can still smile. His Sooner teams have won twenty-seven, lost eight, tied three, for a percentage of .771

|              | YARDS GAINED | OPP. YARDS GAINED | MARGIN     |
|--------------|--------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1937 Sooners | 2,773        | 1,773             | plus 1,000 |
| 1938 Sooners | 3,598        | 1,739             | plus 1,859 |
| 1939 Sooners | 3,420        | 2,465             | plus 955   |
| 1940 Sooners | 2,882        | 3,001             | minus 119  |

Now let's run to the strong side a few plays and see what the 1940 club accomplished:

(7) It licked every team in the Big Six conference save Rose Bowl-bound Nebraska, finishing a clean-cut second. Its 1940 conference percentage topped that of the 1937 and 1938 teams. Under Stidham's coaching, Oklahoma has won fifteen, lost four and tied one Big Six conference football games for a percentage of .789.

Oklahoma's complete Big Six record the past four years:

|      | W  | L | T | PCT.  | PTS. | PTS. | RANK   |
|------|----|---|---|-------|------|------|--------|
| 1937 | 3  | 1 | 1 | .750  | 62   | 13   | second |
| 1938 | 5  | 0 | 0 | 1.000 | 90   | 0    | first  |
| 1939 | 3  | 2 | 0 | .600  | 91   | 43   | third  |
| 1940 | 4  | 1 | 0 | .800  | 54   | 20   | second |
|      | 15 | 4 | 1 | .789  | 297  | 76   |        |

(8) The Sooners of 1940 had Stidham's finest kicking game of all time. In fact, the American Football Statistical bureau's averages show Oklahoma ranked fifth in the nation on length of punts, kicking 78 times for 3,224 yards or an average of 41.3 yards per each boot.

Besides, the Sooners held opposing punters to an average of 36.2 yards per kick, blocked three opponents' punts while yielding only one blocked punt themselves, returned opponents' punts 544 yards to 395 yards in runbacks against Sooner punting, scored touchdowns on Orv Mathews' 77-yard runback of a Temple punt and Mathews' 92-yard runback of a Santa Clara kickoff and in Jack "Straight Line" Haberlein, the McAlester specialist, had the finest extra-point converter in the Nation, Haberlein booting 13 of 14 one-pointers after touchdown.

(9) Oklahoma was penalized only 337

yards this season as against 586 yards last season when the Sooners led the Nation in penalties according to the American Football Statistical bureau.

(10) Lack of seasoned reserves was the team's outstanding weakness. The only games lost were to schools possessing strong, veteran second teams—Texas, Nebraska, and Santa Clara.

Oklahoma had as fine a first team as any foe it met. In Oklahoma's 13-33 defeat to Santa Clara in the season's finale, the big Sooners kicked the Bronco first team all over the Kezar stadium field, in the first quarter, scoring two touchdowns and narrowly missing two others, gaining 196 yards to Santa Clara's 21 in all departments and keeping the ball 20 of the first 23 scrimmage plays.

Further proof of this may be had in the quarter-by-quarter totals for all of Oklahoma's games this past season. Study them and you will readily see how Oklahoma dominated the scoring in the first and third quarters, but was in turn out-scored in the second and fourth periods, when the rival second teams were on the field.

(11) Although the average attendance per each home game dropped a little below last year's average of 23,200 per contest, the Sooners drew the record home crowd of all time at Norman when Nebraska played November 2, an official "full house" of 33,377. Also, the Texas-Oklahoma game at Dallas drew its record crowd of all time, 33,006.

The complete Oklahoma record for 1940:

|              |                 |    |
|--------------|-----------------|----|
| Oklahoma 29, | Oklahoma Aggies | 27 |
| Oklahoma 16, | Texas           | 19 |
| Oklahoma 14, | Kansas State    | 0  |
| Oklahoma 20, | Iowa State      | 7  |
| Oklahoma 0,  | Nebraska        | 13 |
| Oklahoma 13, | Kansas          | 0  |
| Oklahoma 7,  | Missouri        | 0  |
| Oklahoma 9,  | Temple          | 6  |
| Oklahoma 13, | Santa Clara     | 33 |