

Sooner Sports

By HAROLD KEITH

FOOTBALL crowds at Oklahoma's home games will be as big as ever if the fans can solve the transportation problem, believes Lawrence "Jap" Haskell, Sooner athletic director.

The war is a tremendously serious proposition but President Roosevelt's recent endorsement of professional baseball and the plea for more, instead of less, participation in contact sports, issued by heads of various branches of the Nation's army, navy and air corps, prove that there is still a place for sports even in time of war.

Haskell believes the proximity to Norman of several big war industry plants is bound to help football attendance this fall.

The Sooner director thinks the class of competition will be slightly poorer, owing to the youth of the players, but that this will be more than compensated for by the spirited "high school" hustle the younger boys will put into their competition.

In other words, with defense bound to suffer because so many experienced boys have gone to war, there should be more offense, more runs the length of the field in football, and more action in every phase of the game.

The football schedule this fall:

Sept. 26, Oklahoma Aggies at Stillwater.
Oct. 3, Tulsa at Tulsa.
Oct. 10, Texas at Dallas.
Oct. 17, Kansas at Lawrence.
Oct. 24, Nebraska at Norman.
Oct. 31, Iowa State at Ames.
Nov. 7, Kansas State at Norman.
Nov. 14, Missouri at Norman (Homecoming).
Nov. 21, Temple at Philadelphia.
Dec. 5, William and Mary at Norman.

Spring Football Finishes on Schedule

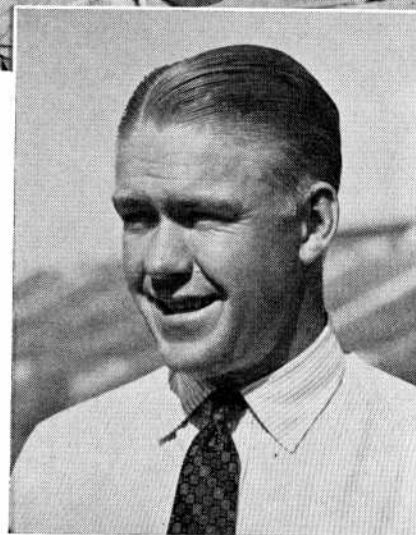
Dewey "Snorter" Luster, Oklahoma's football coach who believes in highly concentrated spring football drills with every player present, but doesn't believe in dragging spring practice out longer than five weeks, just completed his second one at Oklahoma.

In spite of such handicaps as vaccinations, loss of time because some of the players were in national defense, and nasty weather, the Sooners accomplished a lot and played practice games the last three Saturdays, all of which were won by the Reds, 13-7, 14-2 and 20-7. The drills were finished by March 14.



BASEBALL WEATHER

With spring's bold advance skirmishing with winter's departing host in gusty March days, baseball players Johnny Chyz (left) and Hal Cumberland eagerly listen for the first whistle of the lark, harbinger of the balmy weather so necessary for baseball. On the right is Jack Baer, Oklahoma's new baseball coach, former Sooner football and baseball star who later played on farm clubs owned by the Boston Red Sox and Boston Bees



The surprise of the drills was the fact 66 boys reported for the Sooner Junior Football varsity, Coach Luster's creation in answer to the government's plea for enlargement, instead of curtailment, of contact sports to condition more fighting men for war.

Baseballers Make Foray into Texas

The University's oldest sport got under way in March when Jack Baer, the new Sooner coach who was a Sooner player only four years ago, took the young Oklahoma team into sunny Texas.

There the Sooners split two games with Texas Aggies at College Station 9-4 and 11-17, defeated Baylor at Waco 11-3, lost to Randolph Field at San Antonio 5-6 and dropped a double-header to Coach Bib Falk's Texas Longhorns at Austin, 8-10 and 4-6.

Johnny Chyz, junior catcher from Shawnee whom the Sooner players have nicknamed "Bee Bee Eyes," and who ranked tenth in hitting last year, became a slashing batsman on the Texas trip, hitting the ball at a .450 clip and driving in 11 runs.

Dee Sanders, Indianola sophomore, was

the club's steadiest pitcher, submitting 15 steady innings during which he passed only three batsmen and struck out 16.

Walter Stephenson, veteran leadoff man and center-fielder, injured himself crashing into a fence at Waco while shagging a long drive and was lost to the team the last three games, spending all three days in a Waco hospital.

The remainder of the Sooner schedule, which does not include several service games Oklahoma may schedule within the next few days, is:

April 20, 21 Oklahoma Aggies at Norman.
*April 24, 25 Kansas State at Norman.
*May 4, 5, Iowa State at Norman.
*May 8, 9 Nebraska at Norman.
*May 11, 12 Missouri at Columbia.
‡May 14, 15 Oklahoma Aggies at Stillwater.

*Big Six conference games.

‡Night games.

Tennis Team Needs New Balls

"If you hit a ball over the Armory, go get it!" is Coach Leslie Hewes' advice these warm spring days to his University of Oklahoma tennis squad which is practicing for the 1942 season.

With four traditional opponents, Missouri, Kansas, Kansas State and Oklaho-

ma A. and M., dropping tennis as an intercollegiate sport until after the war and the government's priority on rubber threatening the supply of balls, it looked doubtful, for a while, if there would be any teams left for the Sooners to play or any balls to play with.

Happily, Hewes has been busily casting about for both.

Scouring drug stores, sporting goods stores, five-and-ten cent stores and borrowing from private players, the Sooner coach has collected enough new balls to last a month.

The Sooners won't want for opponents, either. Michigan State invades March 27 and 28 for a doubleheader duel and Hewes has also booked the annual Texas tour and Big Six conference matches with Nebraska and Iowa State abroad. Southern Methodist and Wichita University will play at Norman.

Bob Davis and Eddie Bedwell are the returning "O" men. Gerald Tucker, Winfield, Kansas, Drew Putty and Lloyd VonTungeln of Oklahoma City and Bob Faulkner, Electra, Texas, are the leading sophomores. Sam Johnson, squad man, is back.

Cagers Bloom into Championship Club

Oklahoma's Cinderella basketball squad with no seniors and little else to suggest a championship team before the campaign began, tied for the Big Six conference pennant of 1942. It was the third time in four years that Sooner teams coached by Bruce Drake, '29, have gone into deadlocks for the title. No one Big Six school has won the flag outright since 1938.

Kansas' superior point spread between offense and defense qualified that great scoring aggregation to represent the Big Six in the N. C. A. A. fifth district playoff with Oklahoma A. and M., Missouri Valley co-champions, but in no wise affected the title tie.

Listed briefly, here are the Sooner achievements in basketball for 1941-42:

(1) Oklahoma had the lowest defense average in the league for the first time in 13 years, since 1929.

(2) In defeating Kansas at Norman February 27, Oklahoma built the highest score ever made against a Jayhawker basketball team since basketball started at Kansas in 1899. The Sooners won, 63 to 51, amazingly hitting 39.6 per cent of their field goal attempts and bottling 15 of 18 free throws as they played like men on fire to avenge what Oklahoma regarded as the injustice of the Gerald Tucker incident.

(3) Coach Bruce Drake came up with the top job of coaching in the loop. With no seniors on his squad, Gerald Tucker, competent sophomore, suddenly declared ineligible for the first half of the conference season, and five experienced players who would have been eligible gone to the

armed services, Allie Paine, Garnett Corbin, Bill Bentley, Shelby Green and Mitch Simon (Simon played the first semester), Drake still produced a fighting team that was good enough to tie a great Kansas club that lost no players and kept its playing personnel intact.

(4) Although he played in only the last five Big Six games (each team plays 10 conference games), Tucker, the big Sooner sophomore center over whom the vicious conference eligibility fight was

FINAL BIG SIX STANDING, 1942

| | W | L | PCT. | PTS. | OPP. PTS. | MAR-GIN |
|--------------|---|---|------|------|-----------|---------|
| Kansas | 8 | 2 | .800 | 521 | 394 | +12.7 |
| Oklahoma | 8 | 2 | .800 | 446 | 390 | +5.6 |
| Iowa State | 5 | 5 | .500 | 395 | 411 | -1.6 |
| Nebraska | 4 | 6 | .400 | 375 | 423 | -4.8 |
| Kansas State | 3 | 7 | .300 | 361 | 407 | -4.6 |
| Missouri | 2 | 8 | .200 | 386 | 459 | -7.3 |

waged in early January, compiled the greatest individual scoring average in the history of the conference, bottling 99 points, an average of 19.8 per game. Back in 1930 Jack Roadcap of Iowa State led the Big Six with 99 points in ten games, twice as many as Tucker played. At the season's close, Tucker was placed on practically every Big Six team named.

(5) Oklahoma finished all-victorious on her home court.

OKLAHOMA 63, KANSAS 51

This was the game the grim Oklahoma team had been waiting for.

The reason was obvious. Dr. F. C. "Phog" Allen, the Kansas coach, had originated the protest against Gerald Tucker and also charged Oklahoma with flagrant professionalism. The Kansas team had licked the crippled Sooners the day after Tucker was disbarred, 54 to 32 at Lawrence. Just before the return game at Norman, Allen was quoted as follows in the *Kansas City Star*:

"I don't consider Oklahoma important enough to spend our money for a scouting trip. I'm not convinced that Oklahoma's Gerald Tucker is the best scorer in the conference. Bob McCurdy, the Oklahoma guard, may be 'Manacles' McCurdy at Norman but he's just another guy named Joe to us."

The game officially drew 5,796 fans at Norman. Oklahoma took great pains to see that good sportsmanship prevailed. Athletic Director Lawrence "Jap" Haskell distributed gratis programs which contained a statement from him pleading for courtesy to the Kansas team and coach. Coach Bruce Drake of Oklahoma made a statement from the floor before the game, asking for improved crowd behavior. He got it. Although resentment was hot in Oklahoma against the loquacious Kansas coach, the huge crowd hushed itself to a whisper during the Kansas free throws, and otherwise comported itself with decorum.

The game itself was a thrilling, sav-

agely-fought spectacle. Together, the two teams tallied 114 points, a new Big Six high. The great crowd roared itself hoarse at the unmitigated scoring.

Oklahoma led all the way after the first four minutes of play but Kansas battled valiantly. Allen used a zone defense in the first half to clog the post lane to Tucker, whereupon the Sooners coolly began to pump long goals through the black ring over the heads of the retreating Jays.

Scoring 22 points and ranging all over the floor, the 200-pound Tucker was magnificent and unstoppable.

At ten minutes out, Oklahoma led 25-15. But Kansas rallied and with Ralph Miller shooting sensationally and Charlie Black rebounding superbly, pulled up 27-28. The Sooners pushed ahead again 34-28 at the half.

When Kansas changed from zone to man-for-man in the last half, Oklahoma cleverly began to screen and with nine minutes left to play had whirled to a 17-point margin, 53-36. However Kansas closed with desperate, beautiful battling and when Miller hit three goals in a row, the last one while falling flat on his back, the Sooner throng roared with alarm and Oklahoma's lead had been cut to six points, 55-49. But the Sooners finished fast themselves just before the gun to win going away.

Bob "Guy Named Joe" McCurdy, the Sooner sophomore Allen had disparaged in the Kansas City newspaper, hit six field goals to make the Kansas coach eat his words.

O. U. 19, OKLAHOMA AGGIES 27

Held to seven field goals by Coach Hank Iba's ghoulish-guarding Oklahoma Aggies, the Sooners dropped their eighth straight defeat to the Farmers at Stillwater there March 6.

The Aggies won because Iba shrewdly instructed his players to drop off away from the ball. In other words, when the Sooners passed the ball left, the Aggies on the right side of the court left their assigned opponents and converged upon Tucker, and vice versa. Tucker got only five shots all night, sinking three. It looked like the whole Cowboy team was guarding him.

Oklahoma was held to an all-time low of 28 shots, as the Cowboys followed their effective tactics of withholding the ball from play once they took a commanding lead.

OKLAHOMA 39, OKLAHOMA AGGIES 32

But at Norman six nights later, the Sooners bored into Iba's water-tight defense like hungry squirrels into a hickory nut and closed their season all-victorious on their home floor by trimming Iba's team, 39-32. Oklahoma led all the way after the first 12 minutes of play and might have won by 15 or 20 points had her players been hitting their shots better.

Between the two games the never-say-die Drake dreamed up an offense to split

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the tenacious Aggie defense and it worked beyond his fondest hopes. The Sooners lined up offensively on one side of the basket, thus engaging four Aggies in thick traffic there and leaving the other half of the court open for post passes to Tucker who got 16 shots. At that, Tucker was cold, dubbing 12 shots, although he was still the game's high point scorer with 13 points.

The new Sooner alignment also was cleverly designed for shooting over screens on the crowded back line which explains the timely long goals by McCurdy, Heap and Rousey of the Sooners. Dick Reich, back in form after three weeks of puzzling illness, made the most field goals, five, and shagged the most rebounds, nine, while Rousey's and Tucker's cool ball-handling in the exciting final moments broke a courageous Farmer rally. Lon Eggleston's all-round competency and Bud Millikan's play direction were Aggie features.

A crowd of 6,435, second largest in the history of basketball at Norman, saw the clash.

Oklahoma Second in Indoor Track

Oklahoma's Track Commando came through for second place in the 14th annual Big Six Indoor conference track and field meet February 28 at Kansas City's new Municipal auditorium.

Nebraska's powerful entry won with 47½ points, followed by Oklahoma with 30, Missouri 24½, Kansas State 22, Iowa State 8 and Kansas 0.

Bill Lyda, Oklahoma's powerfully-engined senior, set a new Big Six indoor record of 49.3 seconds while sweeping the 440 yards dash by three yards, fine time when it is considered Lyda ran the distances around a 147-yard track which he circled three times, negotiating six tiny sharp curves.

Lyda also won the half mile in 1:57.9 (he set the Big Six indoor record of 1:56.5 last year in the same meet) and then anchored the Sooner mile relay team to a tie for first place with Nebraska.

Dick Smethers repeated his championship of last year in the two-mile despite a recent attack of influenza, doing 9:52.2 (he set a new Big Six indoor record of 9:36.9 last year).

Kenneth Farris, a transfer student, won the broad jump for Oklahoma with a leap of 22 feet 11½ inches, also a Big Six record for board tracks.

Orv Mathews was second in the 60 yards dash.

Texas College Boys Can Step

However when Coach John Jacobs took his squad south to Denton, Texas ten days later for a triangular meet with the fast East Texas college of Commerce, and the North Texas Teachers of Denton, the Sooners were narrowly out-run by one Texas team and barely out-ran the other in the pleasant heat.

The finish, and it was tighter than a fat woman's garter, was East Texas 57½, Oklahoma 53½, North Texas 51.

Outdoors since Christmas when they started their training, the Texas boys were in prime physical trim and gave the Sooners particular punishment in the 120-yard high and 220-yard low hurdle races in which Oklahoma scored but two of 22 points, chiefly because the promising Sooner timber-toppers had been running 50 and 60-yard hurdles indoors.

Orv Mathews won the 100 yards in 9.8 seconds. Bill Lyda took the 220 dead against the wind in 22.6, won the quarter around two full curves by ten yards in 48.5 seconds and ran fast legs on the 440-yard and mile relay quartets. Dick Smethers galloped off with the mile in 4:26.9, Platos Andros won the shot and Don Simecheck the pole vault.

Cossey's Superintendent Is Sooner Grad

In our description of the Burton Cossey "kidnaping" case in last month's magazine, we inadvertently stated that H. E. Doty, Centerview coach, was also the superintendent.

This was wrong. The Centerview superintendent is and has been for the past three years H. N. Richardson, a Sooner grad who took his master's degree at Norman in 1941. "I'm a Sooner and intend to stay one," Mr. Richardson writes good-humoredly.

Swimmers Fourth in Big Six

The short-handed Sooner swimming team dropped a dual meet to the strong University of Texas splashers at Austin, and then placed fourth in the Big Six conference meet at Ames, Iowa, early in March.

No first places were won in either meet, but University swimmers made it close in several of the events.

Who Said Freshmen Weren't Potent?

Football coaches who hold that freshmen aren't advanced enough physically

or basically to make their teams the first year they matriculate should have been at Denton, Texas March 18 to see how important a freshman can be to a track team.

One of the lads who wore the Black and Yellow livery of the strong East Texas College track and field team that nosed out the Sooners for first place in the triangular meet there was a wiry Mexican boy, Freshman Al Valls, who graduated only last May from Laredo, Texas high school.

When Senor Valls drops his mantilla and steps forth upon the scales in nature's adornment, he weighs only 138 pounds. He had had no spring practice. He is only 18 years old. Yet he won the high jump at 6 feet 3 inches and both hurdle races, scoring more points than any other man at the meet. In short, he won the meet for East Texas in spite of the fact the gloss still shines on a high school diploma he blushing received only last May.

Whether or not the Big Six legalizes freshman competition on varsity teams, Oklahoma in the next few years will be facing lots of grief on the sports field from gifted freshmen such as Senor Valls. And many of them will be performing on Missouri Valley and Southwest conference teams who will have the edge on the Sooners because their conferences permit freshmen competition in time of war.

Sooner Trainer Likes Sulfathiazole

Ted Owen, veteran Sooner trainer, is elated these days over Sulfathiazole, a new product he now uses on infected wounds sustained on the athletic field. . . . Sooners who turn up with an infection of any kind are quickly cured by use of this new product. The old treatment for infection was a hot boric acid pack but Owen says Sulfathiazole is faster and surer.

Director Lauds Sooner Cagers

Getting back to "Jap" Haskell, the Sooner athletic director recently gave Coach Bruce Drake and the Sooner basketball team credit for a great job this season. "Bruce's kids had to be fighters or they would have folded under all their handicaps this year," Haskell pointed out, "The average team would have tucked its tail and quit. The real test in sport is whether you can fight your way out when they've got you backed against the wall. Our young basketball team met the test brilliantly."