



O.U.'s BEST-PAYING GAME

*View of the huge crowd that saw the Sooner-Texas game in the Cotton Bowl*

## It's Easy to Criticize College Football Schedules, But Don't Forget the Headaches Faced By the Men Who Book Games

**A**RRANGING football schedules in the big-time intercollegiate circuits is a good deal like planting a flower garden.

You plan it a long time in advance, but the results are frequently disappointing when they finally appear. No matter how hard you work on it, the products are never 100 percent satisfactory. Your best friends will view the garden politely and then tell you about better looking flowers they have seen somewhere else. Sometimes a good friend will give you a cutting, and you have to plant it and look after it for at least a while in order to keep from hurting his feelings. And nobody ever knows all the spade work that has to be done all during the year to bring the garden into bloom.

Before straining the analogy too far, we will go on to explain that Jap Haskell, Sooner director of athletics, and his co-workers have agreed with a special committee from the Executive Board of the University of Oklahoma Alumni Association that O.U. fans ought to know something about how football schedules get that way.

The subject is shrouded in considerable secrecy, not because of any desire to cover up anything, but because it is a long and complicated business to try to explain the whole story. The athletic director is like a cook who has prepared an extra big and

difficult meal—he's sick of the whole business by the time it's finished.

But athletic officials agree that answers ought to be supplied to some of the questions that fans are asking—and have been asking for years.

At the Homecoming meeting of the alumni executive board a committee was appointed to investigate alumni sentiment on the proposal for a home-and-home schedule with Texas, and to see what could be done about it, if any. The committee investigated and concluded that nothing could be done about it, except to explain the whole situation to alumni.

All right, let's make this a quiz session, and try to supply the answers.

*Question: Why not play a home-and-home schedule with Texas instead of playing at Dallas every year?*

Contrary to general opinion, the University of Oklahoma and the University of Texas do *not* have a contract requiring that their games be played in the Cotton Bowl at Dallas. The determining factor in the situation is that the University of Texas has a formal five-year contract directly with the Texas State Fair Association, calling for Texas to play a game in the Cotton Bowl every year—opponent not specified—and the fair board has indicated that it has no desire to change that contract. That is only natural, with Texas one of the nation's best football attractions.

Texas, then, is going to play a Cotton Bowl game every year, and if Oklahoma won't play there, Texas would be free to schedule some other opponent for that particular spot on the Texas schedule. There is just a gentlemen's agreement between

Texas and Oklahoma that the Sooners will have this spot.

Another important factor is that the Texas game, played at Dallas, is the Sooners' best-paying game. The Sooners' received \$31,000 for the Dallas appearance last season, which was \$10,000 more than the combined returns from the Kansas State game at Manhattan and the Nebraska game at Lincoln. The Iowa State Game, Kansas State and Kansas games have all been poor revenue producers, and nothing can be done about it as the Big Six rule requires a 50 percent split on receipts of conference games. The money game at Dallas therefore helps offset poor returns from some of the conference games.

The plain, hard fact seems to be that if Oklahoma wants to play Texas at all, it will have to play at Dallas. So much prestige and money are involved, that few alumni probably would advocate giving up the game entirely.

So it appears likely that O.U. will go on playing Texas at Dallas in spite of three major criticisms of the Dallas game: (1) Many alumni who would be able to see the game in Norman in alternate years on a home-and-home basis, can't go as far as Dallas to see the game; (2) The annual migration of Oklahomans to Dallas takes a considerable amount of money out of Oklahoma business channels—some estimate it at over \$100,000; (3) The student migration to Dallas with its loss of sleep and the considerable drinking noticeable before, after and during the game is hardly a wholesome influence on student life.

So much for the Texas game. Got another query ready?

*Why not have a set date for the Homecoming game so it can be the same each year?*

Schedule making is just such a complicated business that it seems inevitable for the Homecoming date to fluctuate. The best that Athletic Director Haskell will promise is to try to keep it in the last week of October or the first two weeks in November. The complete round-robin of Big Six conference games has to be figured out, and horse-trading done to get the best possible non-conference games before much thought can be devoted to a choice of a Homecoming date. It's not practical to select an ideal Homecoming attraction and try to build the rest of the schedule around that.

*Why not designate a game with some major opponent for the Homecoming game, instead of a team that doesn't draw so well?*

Without going into the complex story of how such things happened in recent years, we can say that prospects are good for doing something constructive along this line. Beginning in 1944, the Texas Aggies will play the Sooners in Norman for five years straight, and beginning in 1945 the Sooners are tentatively scheduled to play Rice for

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UNDERGRADUATES

Harold Reedy, Ned O'Reilly, Charles Stephens.

HONORARY

(Non-Alumni)

S. W. Reaves, William Schriever, Ben G. Owen, Paul V. Keen, Robert Waters.

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## Football Futurities

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four years, on a home-and-home basis. So it is possible that Rice or the Texas Aggies might be the Homecoming Day opponent on years in which neither Nebraska nor Missouri is scheduled in Norman.

*Why not play more Western Conference teams?*

Because they don't want to schedule Oklahoma on a home-and-home basis. The Sooners could book plenty of "Big Ten" games if they were willing to play them all away from home, but O.U. alumni and other fans wouldn't be very enthusiastic about that. Western Conference teams don't want to come to Norman because they expect larger financial cuts than O.U. can afford to guarantee. Also, they are unwilling to give O.U. an option of 50 percent on gate receipts, and instead offer a small guarantee.

*Why not play Arkansas?*

This is not a question to be answered lightly, gentlemen. Breathes there a former Arkansawyer anywhere who doesn't think the Arkansas football team good enough for anybody's schedule? As a matter of fact, there has been some correspondence along this line, but the scheduling of any such game appears difficult as the Sooners are booked up with nine games every year through 1948, and a tenth game cannot be scheduled without permission of the Big Six conference. Ten games were authorized for 1942 in order to permit the special Semicentennial game, but the nine-game rule still stands for succeeding years.

*Why play Tulsa University?*

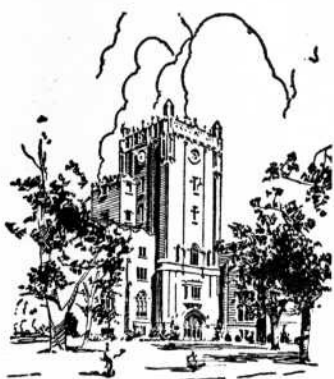
Let's be philosophical for two years and pass on to the next question.

*Why schedule games six years ahead? Maybe we'll change our mind about something in all that time.*

As in the case of a good many vices, the answer is that "they all do it." If you don't book all your games far ahead, you find pretty lean pickings when you try to fill in the open dates.

*What effect will war have on football?*

It's too soon to make any predictions, as this is written. England and Russia both have kept their principal sports activities going on a somewhat restricted scale. They believe that some entertainment is good for civilian morale. Whether college coaches will have any players on hand next fall is another problem. Many will undoubtedly be in training or on active military duty.



### Your "Campus Clubhouse"

More and more, O. U. alumni are getting in the habit of dropping into the Union whenever they visit Norman. It's the natural thing to do, because one of the basic functions of the Union is to provide a "clubhouse" for visiting alumni. You'll enjoy using the lounge and cafeteria and other facilities, and you'll enjoy seeing many faculty members and Sooner friends.

### Oklahoma Memorial Union

University of Oklahoma, Norman