

# Sooner Sports

By HAROLD KEITH

THE UNIVERSITY athlete with the highest service rank in the present war is Roger Wood Peard of Enid, a colonel in the Marines, who for the past thirteen months has been assistant chief of staff and Force Law Officer of a South Pacific area involving five island garrisons where 30,000 marines, army and navy troupes are stationed.

Replying to a request by the sports editor, Colonel Peard has written interestingly of early-day basketball at the University when he attended here and played forward on Bennie Owen's all-victorious Sooner quintet of 1910. Excerpts from his letter follow:

"I graduated from Enid, Okla., high school in the spring of 1904. At Enid I had played only baseball and football but when I got to college I competed in track and basketball and did not even go out for baseball and football.

"I enrolled at the University of Oklahoma in the fall of 1904 but after going only a few weeks contracted typhoid and was seriously ill with several relapses and consequently lost that entire year of college.

"In the fall of 1905 I entered Kansas University at Lawrence and four years later, in 1909, received my A. B. degree there. I had taken one year of law at Kansas my senior year and desiring to complete my law course, I decided to enroll again at Norman as my father was in business at Enid and I had lived in Enid ever since I was nine years old.

"So I attended the school year 1908-09 at Norman until my father died six weeks before school ended. This was another emergency that caused me to miss the last month and a half of school (I had to go home and look after business affairs) but I later returned to the University and took all final examinations, failing one, receiving a condition in one and passing all the others. The six weeks I had missed were difficult to make up.

"As to the 1910 basketball team at Oklahoma, they were the best I ever played with and I had played three years at K. U. before enrolling at Oklahoma, and during the three years at K. U. we had won the Missouri Valley title twice (under Coach Phog Allen the Kansas basketball team of 1908 won 18 of 24 games and in 1909 won 25 of 28 games). There weren't any eligibility rules in those days forbidding my playing at Oklahoma after graduating from Kansas. No one seemed to care.

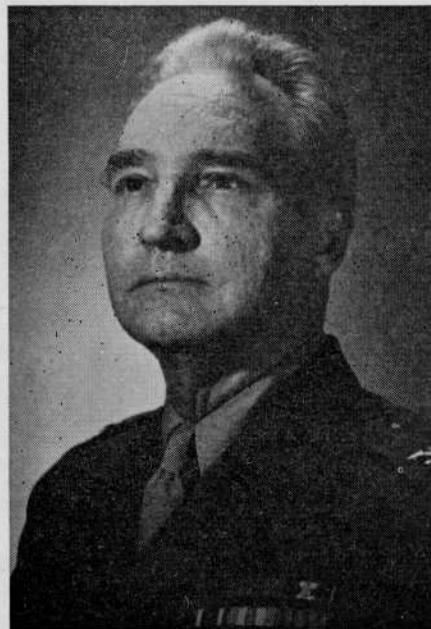
"Charley Wantland was our captain and played guard. While he wasn't much of a scoring threat, he was a tower on defense.

"Ernest Lambert was our scoring demon but he had to be 'fed.' His strong forte was an overhead hook shot at which he was very adept from practically any position. He was high point scorer of the team, as I remember it. It is possible I have confused Lambert with Harry Diamond. One was a very strong guard with goal-throwing ability (probably Diamond) but the one who played forward with me was the real high scorer of the team (this was unquestionably Lambert. Frank Parson of Civet, in Garvin County, was the center).

"My game was a mixture of 'ball hawk,' feeder and some success as a goal-shooter.

"Arte Reeds was just starting in those days and played that year mostly as my substitute at forward, as Bennie knew I might not be back the following season. He showed promise of becoming an outstanding player.

"In those days the man-to-man defense was the only one used anywhere; even at Kansas under Phog Allen none of the later zone defenses, five-man defenses, etc. had even been heard of. As you can imagine, a man-to-man defense properly played is a man-killer unless the coach has plenty of high-class substitutes. However



HIGHEST RANKING ATHLETE

*Stationed for more than a year with American forces in the South Pacific, Roger Wood Peard, '04-'10, Enid, holds the high rank of colonel in the Marine Corps.*

in those days good players were so scarce that most teams carried only six or seven. This was before a player could be banished for personal fouls.

"At Kansas each year I was there, we took a 14-day road trip to Chicago and back, playing ten games in the 14 days with only six men on the squad, and the one substitute *did not get into a single game*. Such a system could only succeed when the other teams played without substitutes, too. Today a team that did this would have to be 50 per cent better than their opponents to win.

"In our 1910 rules, an out-of-bounds ball went to whomever could get it and as you can imagine it was pretty tough on spectators sitting around the court of the old gymnasium at Norman, as well as upon the players who dove into the crowds after the ball. However it made the game very interesting for the spectators.

"The one-handed 'shot-put' type of goal-shooting so popular today was unknown in those times. When the shooter was closely guarded he employed the one-handed hook shot, and when room permitted or he wanted to try a long goal, the two-handed breast push shot.

"Excessive roughness was strictly called. We did not give the dribbler any right-of-way as is done today. Slight and accidental body contacts were ignored by the referees. Most of us used knee guards, otherwise our knees would have been open sores for the entire season.

"In later years I took up tennis and was twice selected, after four-weeks try-outs at Annapolis, as a member of our Navy Leech Squad team in our annual competition against the Army. Both years I played, we won from Army.

"I entered the regular Marine Corps in September, 1915 and have been in it ever since. When the first World War started, I was a second lieutenant. After thirteen months in France, I returned to the United States in the spring of 1919 as major. Soon after we were all demoted to our permanent ranks and I wound up a captain. I was made regular major in 1930, lieutenant colonel in 1936, and full colonel in June, 1942.

"I left San Francisco in January, 1942 after a very pleasant four-year tour in that city. For the two years previous to that, I was in Honolulu. I have been on my present assignment in the South Pacific since April 13, 1942.

"I had one semester in the law school (Faculte de Droit) at the Sorbonne (University of Paris, France) spring term of 1919, and one year of law at the University of San Francisco, in 1938-39."