

Sooner Sports

By HAROLD KEITH

IT'S A PLEASURE this month to chronicle the progress of the youthful Oklahoma basketball team. After losing three of their first four games, Coach Bruce Drake's Sooner rookies won the Oklahoma City All-College tournament and at present are riding an unbroken string of five straight victories, all but one of them achieved in road games.

The Sooner record since the last issue of the magazine:

- Dec. 22 Sooners 36, NAS Zoomers 29.
- *Dec. 27 Sooners 47, Phillips U. 31.
- *Dec. 28 Sooners 45, Southwestern Texas U. 31.
- *Dec. 29 Sooners 31, NAS Zoomers 27.
- Jan. 8 Sooners 61, Kansas State 28.

*Oklahoma City tournament.

The young Oklahoma team's remarkable resurgence dates from December 22, four days after they had been ignominiously flogged by the veteran Norman Naval Air Station Zoomers, a powerful service club that was all-victorious, 51 to 29 at the Sooner Fieldhouse. Four nights later the Sooners defeated the same team 36 to 29 at the North Base Drill Hall and kept going from there.

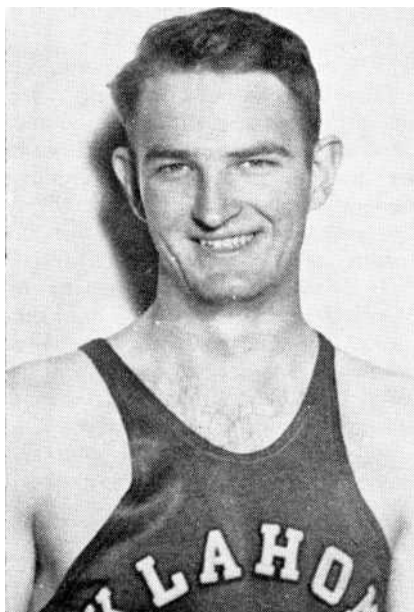
The reasons for this pleasing Sooner brace can be identified. Obligated to build his team from so many new players this year, Drake was forced to experiment, in the early games, until he found out what boys could play well under fire and what style of play fit them best. The team has achieved its late success with a slow-break offense predicated upon careful screening and passing. It is a vogue that emphasises tight guarding and careful ball control and has been productive of some of the most deadly Sooner set-shooting in the memory of the oldest fan.

But let's briefly describe the games, one by one.

OKLAHOMA 36, NAS ZOOMERS 29

This was the team that had annihilated the Sooners by 22 points at the Fieldhouse four nights earlier. In this game, Coach Drake used both his big men, Grover Ramsey, 6-foot 4-inch Oregon State freshman, and Richard Vaughan, 6-foot 3-inch last year's sub from Ardmore, together at the same time, and Vaughan and Ramsey got most of the rebounds. Handling the ball carefully and pot-shooting cleverly from long range, the Sooners moved into early leads of 9-2 and 18-5 and were ahead at the half 22-11.

They lost Paine, the captain, leading scorer, and brain of their club, while lead-



SOONER GAIN

An outstanding Navy V-12 basketball acquisition for O. U. this season has been Grover Ramsey, a 6-foot 4-inch former Oregon State freshman.

ing 29-21 with six minutes left to play. However, Drake replaced Paine with Freshman Don Buelow, the cool fellow who last season captained Enid to the state high school championship, and Buelow skillfully engineered a delayed offense from stalling tactics that had the Sooners out in front by 12 points with a minute and 15 seconds left to play, when Drake put the second team in and it yielded five Zoomer points.

OKLAHOMA 47, PHILLIPS U 31

This was the first round game of the Oklahoma City tournament, played in Oklahoma City's palatial Municipal Auditorium. The superior Sooner playing personnel and team tactics left the hustling Enid club little chance. Ramsey's and Vaughn's height assured 80 percent of the rebounds, too.

Oklahoma led 27-6 at the half. Kenneth Pryor, freshman cager from Oklahoma City Capitol Hill high school via Terral and Friendship Consolidated Schools, was Oklahoma's high scorer with six field goals and showed the crowd some nifty floor work.

OKLAHOMA 45, SOUTHWESTERN 31

This game was much more of a battle than the score shows. With only ten minutes of play left, Southwestern's all-

victorious Pirates led by a point. And satisfying to Sooners was the fact that the three finest players of mighty little Texas college, swollen by Navy V-12 transfers, were three Sooner freshmen from last year, Harold Hines, Charles Pugsley, and Jim Mitchell.

But Pugsley fouled out midway of the last half and meanwhile the Sooners, with Paine smothering Jack Maddox, began to roll fast, running out the game without trouble. Ramsey was the hero. The big Oregon boy forked in 9 field goals in 14 tries and also hit 4 four foul shots in 5 throws.

OKLAHOMA 31, NAS ZOOMERS 27

While eliminating the Oklahoma Aggies 25-19 in the semi-finals, easily the tournament's upset, the Norman Naval Air Station Zoomers lost a lot of their strength and Lt. Rem Meyer, one of their best players, and fell before the Sooners in the tournament finals, 31-27.

With Paine shooting and passing flawlessly, the Sooners dipped into early leads of 8-1, 17-9 and were in front 17-13 at the half. They held that four-point margin through the thrilling last half although their shooting was ragged. Their defense held them up. Paine was the championship game's high scorer with six field goals.

Paine was chosen the tournament's most valuable player and given a beautiful silver trophy. Paine and Pryor made the first all-tournament team and Ramsey the second.

OKLAHOMA 61, KANSAS STATE 28

With ten days rest, the Sooners were fresh for their Big Six opener January 8 with Kansas State at Norman. The game was played on the same Fieldhouse floor where two weeks earlier the Sooners had been humbled 29-51 by the Zoomers, but in a striking reversal of form they wiped out the sting of that defeat by overwhelming the all-civilian Wildcats by 33 points.

Paine was the high scorer with 19 points, Ramsey had 15, Jack Landon 12 and Ken Pryor 10. The Sooners hit 26 of 59 field goal tries for 44 percent, astonishingly accurate firing. The Wildcats bucketed only 9 of 51 for 17 percent.

Remainder of the games for this month:

- Jan. 12 (W) Oklahoma Aggies at Stillwater.
- *Jan. 15 (Sat) Missouri at Oklahoma City.
- *Jan. 17 (M) Nebraska at Norman.
- *Jan. 21 (F) Kansas at Lawrence.
- *Jan. 22 (Sat) Kansas State at Manhattan.
- Jan. 26 (W) Phillips U. at Enid.
- *Jan. 29 (Sat) Missouri at Columbia.

*Big Six games.