

'48 Cagers Were Giant Killers

Oklahoma closed its rebuilding year in basketball with a thrilling 56-52 victory over Kansas State's 1948 Big Seven champions in the home field house. It was their second victory of the season over the Wildcats whose 21-4 record is one of the best of the nation.

Although they lost such starters from the 1947 national collegiate runner-up team as Gerald Tucker, twice All-American and named Player of the Year by Helms Foundation; Allie Paine, All-American and all-Big Six; Dick Reich, all-Big Six; Jack Landon, twice all-Big Six, and other lettermen like Jimmy Mitchell, Dayton Spaulding and Charles Pugsley, the Sooners' rebuilt 1948 aggregation:

1. Tied for second place in the conference.
2. Won eight straight games on its home court.
3. Was the only team anywhere to stop Kansas State's champions on their home floor at Manhattan.
4. Broke even with Oklahoma A.&M.'s powerhouse, trimming Hank Iba's Missouri Valley Conference champs, 37-28, at Norman. (The Aggies finished their regular season with a 26-3 record.)
5. Defeated both Big Nine Conference opponents it met, annihilating Wisconsin's defending champions, 75-49, at Norman and nipping Ohio State, 62-53, at Columbus.
6. Established two new Big Seven Conference scoring records, 81 points and 34 field goals against Nebraska at Lincoln.

The young Sooners, who had a 13-9 record for the year, also had their bad nights, losing by 20 points to Iowa State at Ames (after flogging the Cyclones 66-39, at Norman), losing by 17 points to Tulane at New Orleans and losing by 15 points to Oklahoma A.&M. at Stillwater.

In clawing Kansas State in the season's finale, the Red and White athletes were paced by Ken Pryor who was blazing hot all evening. The little Oklahoma City guard sank 20 points, most of them on long, arching fielders, as the Sooners beat the Wildcats in a game featured by sensational fast breaks, long shots and wild scrambles for the ball.

Paul Courty, who dumped in 15 points, and Bill Waters turned in fine performances, particularly in under-the-basket play, and hustling Paul Merchant was outstanding in the ball-handling department.

Everything from fifth-place Nebraska's feat of setting a new Big Seven team scoring record to Coach Bruce Drake's use of Bill Waters as a "secret weapon" against Kansas State happened in the zany Big Seven Conference basketball race this year.

Coach Harry Good's Nebraska Cornhuskers were the new league's freest spenders. They succeeded so well making other teams play their hell-for-leather style that they set a new team scoring mark of 56.1 points, breaking the old mark of 55.7 set by Kansas in 1946.

But their defense was so porous that they also yielded the league's all-time average per game, 61.1, and it was against the Nebraska defense that Oklahoma built the new team scoring record of 81 points for one game, and that Jack Eskridge, Kansas forward, accumulated 30 points in the last half alone, an all-time record for 20 minutes.

Although there may be a difference of opinion about who is the conference's best center, there's no argument but what Bill Waters, Oklahoma's meaty pivot, has the broadest posterior.

During Oklahoma's 56-52 victory over Kansas State in the finale here, Jerry Patrick, Wildcat sub center, "blacked out" when the 230-pounder accidentally sat down on Patrick's head while they wrestled for the ball during Oklahoma's final ball freeze. Patrick had to be revived on the court. In the war Patrick, an infantryman, suffered head wounds in battle and Waters sat down on his "soft spot."

Among other new records set this year were

Oklahoma's 34 field goals against Nebraska at Lincoln, Oklahoma's achievement of averaging 80 points in its year's series with Nebraska, Oklahoma's 46 points for the last half against Nebraska at Lincoln, and Nebraska's and Oklahoma's 155 points and 63 field goals together in one game. Nebraska set another record when it counted 74 points against Oklahoma at Lincoln, yet lost. Kansas State's title was the first that school has won in 31 years.

Oklahoma won't be in either national tournament yet the Sooner club swept its league series at Manhattan and Norman with Kansas State's champions and defeated Oklahoma A.&M.'s Missouri Valley champs 37-28 at Norman recently, holds victories over both the NCAA fifth district's principals in the playoff game Monday at Kansas City.

All this made it the weirdest Big Seven season of all time.

Sooner Sports

Swimmers Finish 3rd

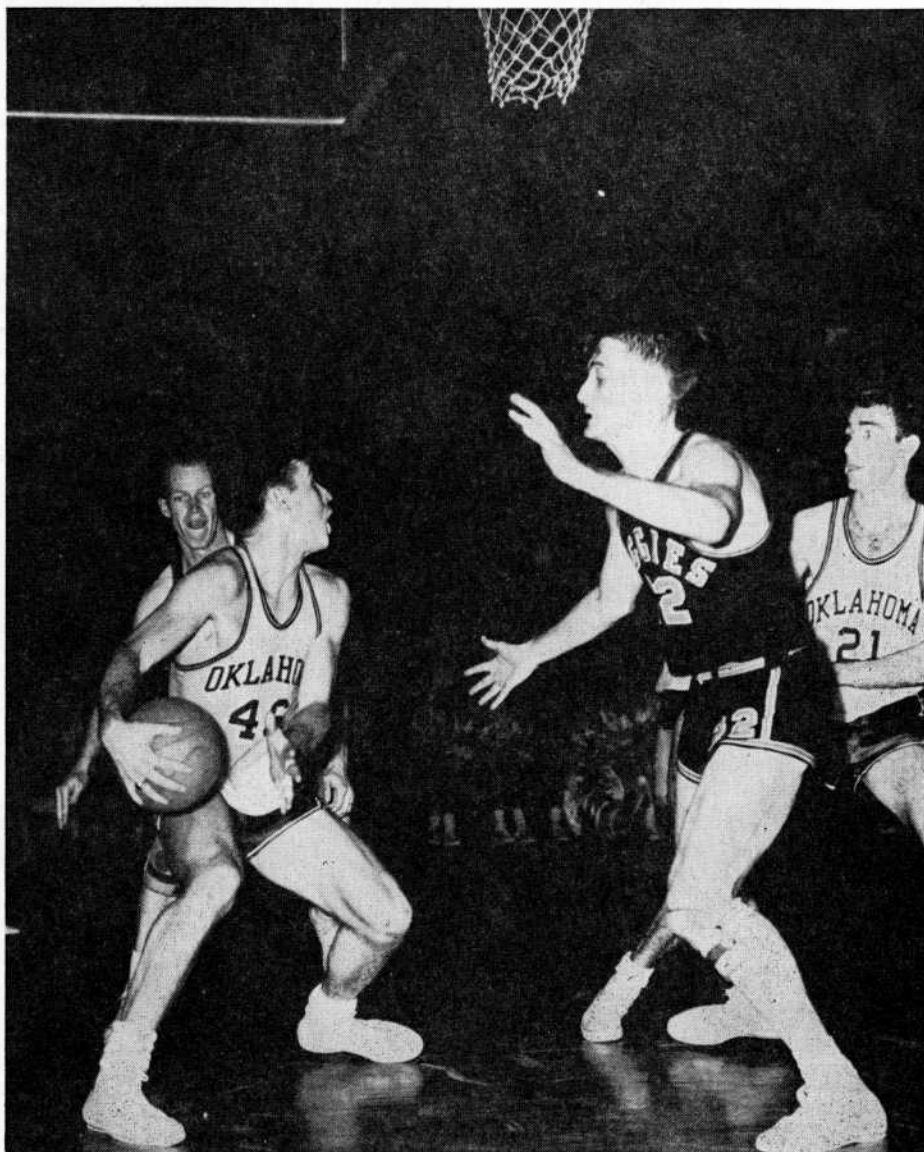
Coach Joe Glander's O.U. swimmers brought home third place in the Big Six swimming meet held March 5-6 at Lincoln, Nebraska, thus improving last year's standing by moving up one place.

Although O.U. finished behind Iowa State and the Nebraska Cornhuskers, Elvin Crowder, backstroking ace of the Sooner tank crew, splashed to a new conference record in the 150-yard backstroke in the preliminaries, setting a time of 1:42.6. He lost, however, in the finals to Iowa State's Doug Robinson, whom he had outraced earlier.

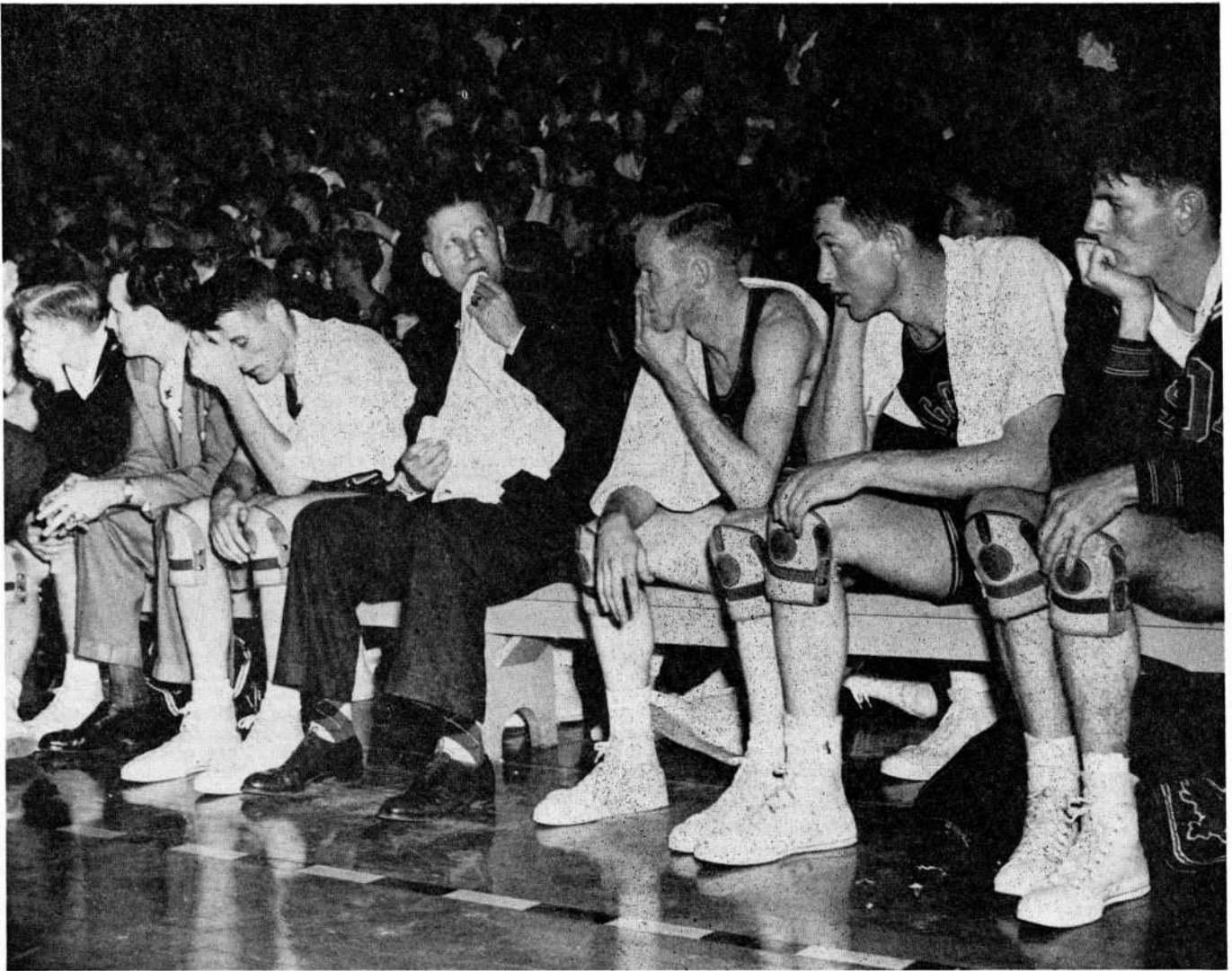
The Iowans set a new conference scoring record by marking up a total of 80 points. Nebraska was second with 39, Oklahoma third with 27. Colorado Kansas and Kansas State finished in that order for fourth, fifth and sixth places.

High scorer for Oklahoma was Kay Burns, second place winner of both the 220 and 440 yard free style contests. Besides Crowder and Burns, other Sooner scorers were Harry Hill, fifth in the 50 and 100-yard free styles, and Walter Farr, fifth in the 440-yard free style. O.U.'s 300-yard medley relay team was second to Iowa State, and the 400-yard free style relayers came in fourth.

Before entering the conference tourney, Glander's tankmen closed their dual meet season with a 6-2 record, losing 34-50 to Texas A.&M. and 34-41 to Southern Methodist, but defeating SMU later, 39-36; Colorado, 50-34; Kansas 55-29; Nebraska, 49-35, Kansas State 59-25, and Texas, 44-40.



This exciting bit of action in the O.U.-A.&M. basketball contest catches Paul Courty looking for a Sooner teammate to throw the ball to. Startled No. 21 is Paul Merchant. The Sooners won, 37-28.



Hank Iba, worried coach of the Oklahoma Aggies, wipes his chin and looks hopelessly at the big clock in the O.U. Field House while members of his squad despairingly watch the Sooners defeat the favored Aggies, 37-28.

Majors Hurt Baseball Chances

With his 1948 Oklahoma baseball team wrecked when five of his players signed with major league clubs while two more quit school to try out with the New York Giants at Sanford, Florida, Coach Jack Baer has begun practice with lettermen returning in only two positions, shortstop and pitcher.

Oklahoma will have a rebuilt team in virtually every position save shortstop where Lewis Eubanks, a fine fielder and thrower, returns. Oklahoma was to open its 1948 season and defense of its Big Six and NCAA fifth district championships by meeting Texas Christian March 26 at Fort Worth, Baylor at Waco March 27 and Texas at Austin March 29 and 30.

Bad weather has made such shambles of Oklahoma's early practices that Baer has been unable to see much of his squad. With Catcher Johnny Chyz gone, Bill Sims, sub backstop last year, Graydon Sheen and J. R. Baker are all battling for the position.

Letter pitchers returning include Elton Davis, who had the best earned run average last year and in summer won 12 of 13 games for the Enid Cardinals. Danny Burrell, Bob Reese and Ralph Parks are others trying out.

Joe Blake, last year's sub, has the edge at third base with Joe Ray and Frank Loveless close. Pushing Eubanks at short are Travis Wiginton and Cleo McIver. Kelly Green, Bob Stephenson and Fred Glassco are leading second-sackers. Five firstbase-

men are locked in the throes of a ding-dong battle, John Carter, Ed Boecking, Charles Wright, Albee Foye and Warner Lewis.

Among the outfielders reporting are Del Holt, Gus Hendrix, Russell Hill, Frankie Anderson, Vance Duvall, Harvey Mizel, Clyde Alton, L. C. Simmering and Lloyd Wright.

Pitchers Hal Cumberland and Jack Venable have signed with the Boston Red Sox. Outfielder Rudy Rufer signed with the Phillies for a \$10,000 bonus. Second-baseman Jimmy Mitchell and Outfielder Ray Ditto signed with the New York Giants. Outfielder Mace Avant and Catcher John Rapacz are trying out with the New York Giants. First-baseman Bob Cairns graduated, Pitcher Ray "Lefty" Lacer has quit baseball to graduate and Catcher Johnny Chyz has played out his eligibility but is still in school to graduate.

All the boys who signed with major league outfits had collegiate competition left.

Wrestlers Win Title

Oklahoma University won its first conference wrestling championship since 1938 at the Big Six tournament at Boulder, Colorado, March 5-6. Coach Port Robertson revived wrestling at O.U. only last year after a wartime lapse of six years.

The Sooners overpowered Nebraska, Iowa State, Kansas State and Colorado, who finished in that order, for the loop title.

Orville Wise, 128-pounder; Leonard Marcotte, 155, and Jim Eagleton, 165, won in their respective weights, with Charles Keiter, 136, and Kenneth, 145, reaching the finals to win second places.

Marcotte, tourney darkhorse, chalked up the major upset of the meet by defeating Delbert Bush, Iowa State's defending 155-pound champ, 7-6. Wise, diminutive Tulsan, was high point man of the meet with 15, winning each of his three matches with falls.

Eagleton was the only Oklahoma champion to defend his title. He had his own way in the 165-pound division by winning fairly easy victories.

Before capturing their first championship in 10 years, the Sooners were all-victorious in conference competition, beating Kansas State, 16-14, Nebraska, 14-11, and Colorado, 29-5. They also defeated Colorado A.&M., 17-10.

Their only defeats were 13-14 to Oklahoma A.&M. and 11-19 to Iowa Teachers, national collegiate runners-up last year.

Students in the University of Oklahoma law school contribute comments and case notes to the Oklahoma Bar Association Journal.

Washington Irving, in his tour of this region, described the Osages as "stately fellows, stern and simple in garb and aspect." The Creeks, according to the early-day American writer, were "gaily dressed."