

# The President Speaks

By DR. GEORGE L. CROSS

THE number of inquiries received concerning the recent Big Seven Conference eligibility dispute, in which the University of Kansas figured so prominently, leads me to believe that this matter has been of greater interest to alumni than any other during the summer. I thought it might be well to discuss the controversy this month in my page for the *Sooner Magazine*.

Most of our alumni know, from the newspapers, that Kansas now is safely back in the Conference fold where we all very much want her to be. However, there is a general lack of information in regard to what really happened. Here, roughly, is a log of it. I shall try to relate the events plainly and in such a way that all the readers will understand.

During the war, Conference eligibility standards were relaxed everywhere. With so many college men in service, there was a serious lack of boys available for collegiate sports. For example, the manpower shortage in collegiate athletics became so desperate that one conference in the Midwest even suspended all of its eligibility rules. The University of Oklahoma's basketball team, in 1944, played a team from a neighboring conference which had in the line-up one player with a Bachelor's Degree, and another who not only had graduated, but had been a professional baseball player as well.

## *Liberal Rules at War's End*

When the war ended and the service men trooped back to resume their schooling, the old Big Six Conference (Faculty Representatives from the member schools) passed a number of very liberal rules regarding eligibility.

The Conference awarded all ex-servicemen, as did most conferences after World War II, four years of varsity competition. It was even possible for an athlete to have participation in more than four varsity years through the ruling that no competition would be counted which an athlete might have incurred in wartime while a member of a campus military unit.

For example, Derald Lebow, Oklahoma's all-Big Six football tailback of 1942 and 1943, was a member of the University ROTC unit both of those seasons, and had he chosen to compete three or four years more, he could have played a total of five or six varsity seasons at Oklahoma. Actually Lebow did not abuse this liberal interpretation. After receiving a leg injury which prevented him from competing in 1946, he graduated in geology without playing any more football after he returned from service. But the rule proves the generosity with which the Big Six Conference Faculty Representatives were wont to view the eligibility of war veterans in the period immediately after the peace.

As time went on, a reaction set in. The minutes of the Faculty Representatives show that on March 2, 1946, the Conference adopted a rule stating that all eligible veterans shall have "a total not to exceed four years of competition." Later, on December 13, 1946, the phrasing was changed to read "a total of four years participation."

When the faculty group met in Kansas City last winter, the question was raised as to what was meant by the two almost similar phrases quoted above. Dean Earl S. Fullbrook of Nebraska, who had just succeeded Dean Thompson, Nebraska's long time Faculty Representative, declared that "From the discussion that followed, it seemed clear that in passing the rules of March 2 and December 13, 1946, a majority of the Faculty Representatives had never intended to do more than permit four years of competition, whether it be varsity, freshman, or junior college."

The new Nebraska representative made a motion during the same meeting, that the term "competition" be interpreted according to Article 2, Section 4, b, which states that, "Playing on a team or against a team in a contest in which either one of the institutions represented ranks above high school grade shall count as participation" with the exception that the first year of participation in a junior college shall not count.

Although there was apparent agreement on this proposed interpretation, it was decided to table the motion, according to Dean Fullbrook, until the annual May meeting because "Dr. Davis of Kansas University had already left the meeting to return home."

## *School 'Jumps the Gun'*

The motion was debated at the May meeting of the Faculty Representatives and was passed 5 to 2, with Kansas and Kansas State vigorously opposing it. One Conference school already had "jumped the gun" and ruled some of its athletes ineligible on the basis of the interpretation given at the previous meeting because the Faculty Representatives, at that meeting, had decided to go home, investigate the eligibility of all of their athletes and be ready to set their houses in order before the May meeting.

The Fullbrook motion was not actually passed until the May session at Lincoln, Nebraska, and in the meantime, Kansas and Oklahoma had quite properly used their protested players in spring football practice.

Kansas seems to have regarded the ruling or interpretation as a move to wreck her 1948 football team. Although I doubt very much if this were true, I can see where it might seem that way to Kansas. In twenty years of Big Six Conference football, Kansas had won only one football championship; and this title, won in 1930, had been beclouded by the barring of Jim Bausch, Kansas halfback, because of alleged violation of conference subsidization rules. Then after a lapse of sixteen years, Kansas had tied for the championship in 1946 and 1947, whereupon eligibility misfortune again had descended upon her. It probably looked to the people in Kansas like it was "against the law" for their University to have a good football team.

As a matter of fact, the Conference team suffering the most by the new interpretation was the Kansas State championship basketball team, which lost Shannon, Brannum, and Howey—sixty percent of its starting line-up. Oklahoma's football losses were a shade more severe than those of Kansas University. The Sooners lose this fall, one starting halfback, Charles Sarratt; two third-teamers, tackle Earl Hale, fullback Don Anderregg, and one year's competition for halfback Jack Mitchell, the leading ground-gainer in the Big Six during the season just past. Mitchell played in a couple of freshman games while at the University of Texas before the war. He already has played two years of varsity football at O.U., 1946 and 1947, and therefore will have one additional year of varsity eligibility, whereas he had counted on two. In my opinion, Mitchell is the outstanding football casualty of the disputed interpretation.

## *Kansas Losses Hurt*

Kansas's football losses hurt more because the institution has less experienced manpower with which to replace those who become ineligible. Kansas lost by the ruling two starters, left end Marvin Small and All Big Six guard, Don Fambrough; Tom Scott, second team back; and Gene Sherwood, reserve tackle. This totaled only four men,



but the loss was staggering because the Jay Hawkers, notoriously short of line reserves last year, had already lost such outstanding linemen as Don Ettinger, Otto Schnellbacher, Dick Munroe, not to mention their all-American back, Ray Evans, and Bill Hogan. With such losses from the 1947 first eleven, and with only a few experienced reserves to fill their places, the University of Kansas faces a serious problem in rebuilding its football team.

After the ruling on interpretation was announced, events began to happen in rapid-fire order. Chancellor Mallot of Kansas University, backed by the Kansas Board of Regents, defied the Conference ruling by announcing that the four ousted Kansas football players, and Jack Eskridge, basketball star, could play in 1948, if they wished.

The Conference, which now has become the Big Seven through the recent admission of Colorado, called an emergency meeting (July) in Kansas City, at which it passed by a 5 to 1 vote (Kansas State passing) a resolution stating that unless Kansas should notify the Conference of its intentions to abide by the new interpretation, other Big Seven schools would cancel all games and all sports with the Jay Hawkers. However, this meeting was friendly, and the action was softened by the other schools through their statement in the resolution that they "regretted the necessity of their action and hoped Kansas would reconsider its decision so as to prevent this action from becoming effective."

## *Kansas Athletes Yield*

Kansas yielded, or rather the five protested Kansas University athletes yielded for her when they voluntarily announced that they would withdraw from future competition so that their school could abide by the unpopular interpretation.

It was a difficult situation for Kansas, and I feel there was much to sustain her position, including precedent. Many coaches and athletic directors of the Conference schools thought that by "competition," the Conference rules had always meant varsity competition. The wartime rules of the competition had already awarded some Big Six athletes—Ray Evans of Kansas, Dick Reich and Allie Payne of Oklahoma—four varsity years in addition to a non-active freshman year. All freshmen who came in during wartime were immediately eligible and received four varsity years.

To give one full varsity year the same valuation as a freshman session, in which only two games are played, seems a bit unfair. Also, the timing of the new interpretation was bad; it came suddenly and with little preparation. That Kansas State staunchly supported Kansas University seems to provide evidence that there was much right on the losing side. Oklahoma, with the embarrassing experience of the 1942 Gerald Tucker eligibility case fresh in mind, sympathized with Kansas, but its Faculty Representative voted for the new interpretation. In the controversy which followed, our Faculty Representative felt duty bound to abide by the majority rule principle. I am very glad that Kansas, when confronted with an ultimatum, had the sportsmanship to accept the decision of the majority, and I admire her splendid struggle against an action she considered discriminatory with respect to her ex-service students.

## Faculty in the News



RUTH E. ELDER, '34M.ED

### Lab School Practitioner

Miss Ruth E. Elder, '34m.ed, handsome, blue-eyed lady-principal of the elementary school of the University Laboratory School, fits into the pattern of things at the North Campus.

She is assistant professor of elementary education in the practical lab for University student teachers. The school is in the spacious, many windowed former North Base Administration Building.

Listen to the kindness in Miss Elder's voice and catch some of her enthusiasm about teaching children. Then you understand one of the reasons there is a 4 to 5 year student waiting list for the lab school.

Both her parents were teachers. Following her master's work at the University, Miss Elder was a special teacher of auditorium work in the Tulsa Elementary Schools, supervisor of county schools, and supervisor of elementary schools of Shawnee. She was supervisor-elect of Tulsa Elementary Schools at the time of her election to the faculty of the College of Education. She has served as member of the State Textbook Commission and on different state curriculum committees.

Miss Elder joined the University staff in 1937. The elementary school was then located in the wooden building just south of the present Union Building. The school later moved to the long wooden building east of Ellison Infirmary. That building now houses the University Employment Service and a classroom.

The North Campus quarters are roomy, modern and 10 degrees cooler than most Main Campus buildings. The school has approximately 10 permanent teachers besides the student teachers. Several hundred pupils enroll annually in the school.

Theoretically, we want children who will go all the way, from kindergarten through senior high school," says Miss Elder. "We like to choose children whose parents are interested and will cooperate."

During the summer session, those children who are ready to attend school are selected to start the fall term.

Four-year-old kindergarten pupils are picked up on the bus by a teacher from the school. The little students soon become independent. They like to get on the bus by themselves. They are proud when they no longer need help.

Miss Elder explains the working of the school as she strides through the airy classrooms, showing you marionettes and theaters which were made by the children. School is informal. Older and younger children have more contact with each other than do those in the average school. "We just have one big family," says Miss Elder.

People are taught in grade groups—the third and fourth grades study together as do the fifth and sixth grade students. Miss Elder and her staff not only teach children, but also teach future teachers. Sometimes there are more teachers and student teachers in class than there are students.

However, Miss Elder is concerned about the shortage of student teachers. "Young people are

### Briefs . . .

Dr. Lloyd E. Swearingen, '20bs, '21ms, director of Oklahoma University Research Institute, has been appointed a member of the research committee of the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation. Actual research activities will be formulated and executed through the committee.

Lucille Dora, emeritus professor of French at the University, met King George and Queen Elizabeth July 15 at a royal garden party at Buckingham Palace, London. Miss Dora, who has retired from active teaching at the University, is in England as an exchange professor.

Stewart Harral, '36ma, director of public relations, has been elected vice-president in charge of regions of the American College Public Relations Association, and will serve as one of the members of the national executive committee.

Albert A. Grau, who has taught at four universities, will join the O.U. faculty in September as associate professor of mathematics. He has taught at the University of Michigan, Drake University, University of Kentucky and University of Alabama.

Capt. George L. Milner, El Paso, Texas, has been assigned to the University R.O.T.C. staff as instructor. He saw service in France, Germany and Czechoslovakia as an anti-aircraft artillery officer, and also served with the American military government in Europe.

Dr. Thomas Pyles, professor of English and assistant dean of the Graduate College, has resigned to accept a position at the University of Florida.

*History of Oklahoma* by Dr. E. E. Dale, '11ba, research professor of history, and Dr. M. L. Wardell, '19ba, professor of history, has been released by Prentice-Hall Incorporated in New York. The book covers the history of Oklahoma from the early Spanish explorations to the Governor Roy Turner administration.

John H. Casey, University journalism professor, spent the summer in Colorado doing real estate work in Denver.

John J. Hanlin, who has been instructor in journalism at the University, will go to the University of London, England, in September, where he expects to spend two years working toward the Doctor's Degree in English.

Dr. Helen B. Burton, professor of home economics, acted as regional counselor and adviser to executive officers at the annual meeting of the American Home Economics Association in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Regents named Lewis S. Salter, former dean of the college of fine arts, dean emeritus in honor of his long service to the University. Salter, who will continue his teaching duties, resigned the deanship in June, 1947, to return to the status of professor. He joined the O.U. faculty as an instructor in 1911 and was named dean in 1936.

going into professions more lucrative," she says. Before the war student teachers at the lab school sometimes numbered 60 a semester. During this summer session there were 20 student teachers, last spring only about 15.

University lab school graduates have made excellent records. Hunter McMurray, '48ba, was among the first students in the school. Miss McMurray was awarded the gold Letzeiser Medal in June as the outstanding senior woman in the University. She has been given a fellowship by the Institute of International Education and will study French for a year at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland. She sails September 24. She expects to become an interpreter in the diplomatic service.

Of the little children, Miss Elder says, "They're the cutest things you ever saw. We have the most interesting and intelligent children—and we have lots of fun."

### Building Named Kaufman Hall

The University's new classroom building, located on the south oval behind the new Research Building, has been named Kaufman Hall as a memorial to the late Kenneth C. Kaufman, '16ba, '19ma, a member of the modern languages staff for many years, who died in April, 1945.

Kaufman served as chairman of the modern languages department, managing editor of *Books Abroad* and edited and translated many foreign publications. As editor of the book review page in the *Daily Oklahoman* for 12 years, he encouraged students and young writers and gave prominence to southwestern writing.

He was head of the foreign language department of Central High School, Oklahoma City, from 1916 to 1929, and active in the O.U. modern language department until his death.

### O.U. Deeded North Campus

The University acquired title to 1,650 additional acres of land August 4. The War Assets Administration delivered to the University a deed for the airport portion of the \$7,096,465 former Norman Air station—better known as the North Campus.

The deed was presented by John Montgomery, W.A.A. official from Dallas, to Erl E. Deacon, Cushing, president of the University Board of Regents, and to President George L. Cross in a luncheon ceremony in the Union Building.

The land was taken over from the Navy in 1946 on a revocable permit. Roscoe Cate, financial vice-president, said that the University is now in process of acquiring title to barracks converted to living quarters by the F.H.P.A.

### Pre-Fabs to Be Insulated

Sooner City will boast something newer than its 500 veteran families and newlyweds this September. The pre-fabricated housing area will soon have some insulation improvements.

The installation of a one-inch thickness of insulation is designed to make the houses warmer in winter and cooler in summer. It is estimated that the improvements will reduce the heat requirement in winter 75 percent, thus cutting down on gas bills. Summer temperatures will be reduced by 15 to 20 degrees.

In addition, a plastic-covered wallboard will be installed on the interior walls of the houses. These inner-walls will be washable and require no painting. As well as increasing comfort for residents, the new improvements are expected to lessen maintenance costs.

### Crews Speed Dormitory Project

With work crews speeding construction on a \$2,400,000 women's housing project, the University plans to have one dormitory ready for coeds this fall, President George L. Cross announced.

Four dormitories and a dining hall are being constructed to provide housing for 848 women students. Located north of Sooner City, the University's pre-fab city, the dormitories are within walking distance of Main Campus classrooms.

Sixteen living units are included in the four dormitories, with 53 coeds and one graduate counselor assigned to each division. Separate lounges with outside entrances are being constructed for each unit.

Dr. John B. Cheadle, David Ross Boyd professor of law at the University, is named in the 1948-49 volume of "Who's Who in America."

F. Donald Clark, assistant radio professor at the University, once served as director of the Little Theatre in Amarillo, Texas.