

# The President Speaks

BY DR. GEORGE L. CROSS

**Stadium building, contract letting, and bond issuing are the discussion topics this month. President Cross explains graphically what major improvements are in store and outlines what new facilities will be available to grid fans.**

WHEN the Regents of the University met in regular monthly session on Wednesday, February 9, they took action designed to solve at least one vexing problem associated with athletics at the University. A contract was awarded to the Harmon Construction Company which provides for enlarging the stadium to a total capacity of approximately 55,000 seats. The contract provides also for constructing many improvements, including a new press box, larger entrance ramps for the east and west wings of the existing stadium and improved rest room facilities for the thousands who come to the campus each fall for our games.

The need to enlarge the stadium has been obvious to many disappointed fans who have failed to secure seats during the past three years. After the O.U.-Missouri game of 1948, when between fifteen and twenty thousand people failed in their efforts to buy tickets, the need became very obvious to the University administration and the Board of Regents. Evidence of the need had accumulated even before the game in the form of telephone calls, telegrams and letters written by the dozens or even by the hundreds to the Alumni Secretary and to the President of the University. The game itself demonstrated beyond any doubt that the University had simply outgrown its stadium.

Immediately after the Missouri game the Athletic Council was requested to study the problem and make a recommendation to the President's office. This started a chain of events which culminated in the awarding of a contract for the enlargement of the stadium at the meeting of the Regents held in February.

The present stadium, it will be recalled, was built in 1925. It consists of two wings, one on the east and one on the west side of the football field. These two wings have a seating capacity of approximately 31,500. It cost about \$288,000 to build these two wings and otherwise develop the stadium, but it would cost over \$650,000 to replace these properties because of the increase in building costs since the stadium was constructed in 1925. There is no indebtedness against the present stadium. The bonds issued at the time of its construction have been retired for the past several years.

The problem of how to most efficiently enlarge the stadium has been a perplexing one. There were three possibilities for increasing the seating capacity. One possibility was to close either the north end or south end of the stadium, thus adding approximately 17,500 seats. The second possibility was to construct a second deck above the existing stadium on one or both wings. It was suggested that a second deck above the west wing, which would provide approximately 8,000 new seats, might solve the problem. The third possibility was to excavate the playing field to a depth of from six

to twelve feet, eliminate the track and build new seats down to or near the edge of the playing field.

All three of these possibilities were investigated carefully during the preliminary planning and it was soon found that the idea of building a second deck above either of the existing wings would need to be discarded because of the excessive costs involved. It was estimated that seats provided on a second deck would cost approximately \$70.00 each, while seats provided by closing either end of the stadium or by excavating the field could be provided for less than \$30.00 each. It was finally decided to close the north end and excavate the field to a depth of approximately six feet. This plan would provide for about 24,000 new seats.

The tentative plans were approved by the Regents of the University at the December meeting of 1948. The completed plans were studied carefully by the Board at the January meeting, were approved and the President was authorized to advertise for construction bids. In the meantime Mr. Cate had been engaged in laying the groundwork necessary for a bond issue to cover the cost of construction. The Regents decided that the bond issue should be made sufficiently large to provide not only for enlarging the stadium, but for the construction of a press box, the plans for which had been completed a year ago but which had not been constructed because of excessive building costs at that time.

With favorable weather conditions, the project of enlarging the stadium should be well underway within the next few weeks. The north end of the stadium will be enclosed to the height of the existing stands and will be continuous with the east and west wings. The new addition will be enclosed with masonry wall and windows, with a finished appearance, and will have a structural floor system which will make possible in the future two floors around the perimeter of the addition. The concourse will be paved and the addition will be equipped with adequate rest room facilities. Seventeen thousand one hundred and fifty seats will be added to the capacity of the stadium when the north addition is completed.

It is expected that the field can be excavated to a depth of six feet and the sod on the new playing field re-established by late spring. The present cinder track which encircles the football field will be removed and the rows of seats will be extended downward ten rows on both sides and both ends of the field. This will provide for 7,000 new seats, of which 4,600 will be on the sides and 2,400 will be at the end. Lowering the field, of course, creates a drainage problem and the plans provide for a 1,700 foot storm sewer line operating on a gravity principle in such a way that a pumping system will not be required.

The new press box, with facilities for press and



radio, will be among the finest in the entire Southwest. It will have a combination of desirable features not found elsewhere in any single stadium. The press box will consist of three levels with adequate accommodations for 64 sports writers, eight broadcasting booths and space for television, photographers and scouts. One feature of the press box which will be welcomed heartily by sports writers slightly on the portly side, or by photographers with heavy equipment is the elevator, which may be used to transport personnel and equipment from the ground level to each of the three levels of the press box.

Those who have been caught in traffic jams entering or leaving the west stadium will be glad to hear that the new plans provide for remodeling and increasing the width of the present ramps to accommodate 50% more traffic. Also, the outer bay concourse under the west stand will be paved and the stand will be provided with new and modern rest room facilities.

The enlarged stadium, when completed, will not only provide more comfortable seating for our student body, a larger number of seats for our increasing group of fans and better facilities for sports writers, photographers and television personnel, but will also make possible the scheduling of "big name" teams which could not be induced to come to Norman to play before a maximum crowd of 31,500. For the past several years the Athletic Director has been negotiating with outstanding universities outside the Southwest, and most of these negotiations have revealed that while the University of Oklahoma would in every instance be considered a desirable opponent, the schools involved could not be persuaded to sign contracts on a home and home basis until the Norman stadium could be enlarged to 50,000 or more. With the completion of a four lane highway between Norman and Oklahoma City, we should have no trouble filling the enlarged stadium for our more important games.

The bonds to finance the enlargement of the stadium will be a special obligation, payable entirely and solely from net revenues of the stadium. They will not be an indebtedness of the State of Oklahoma or the University of Oklahoma or of the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma. The bonds will be issued under provisions of Senate Bill Number 41 under the Acts of 1945, Oklahoma Legislature, as amended by Senate Bill Number 143 of the Acts of 1947. Sealed bids for the bonds were received and opened on February 9, 1949, at the meeting of the Regents of the University and the bonds were sold to the bidder offering the lowest net interest cost to the issuer. The



*Founded At O.U. in 1911*

## Lambda Chi Alpha

The Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity was founded at Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts, March 22, 1906, by a group of students desirous of an intellectual, social, and moral organization. Today the fraternity is one of the largest national fraternities with 118 active chapters in 40 states, Canada, and the District of Columbia, and a living membership role of more than 40,000. National headquarters are located in Indianapolis, Indiana, with a full-time Administrative Secretary, adequate staff and four traveling secretaries employed solely for chapter service and one alumni secretary. The headquarters building and chapter houses are owned at a value of over \$2,550,000. The fraternity magazine, *Cross and Crescent*, is issued six times annually to all members and pledges.

Chapter representation in the State of Oklahoma is strong with chapters at Oklahoma A.&M. College, at Stillwater; The University of Tulsa, at

Tulsa; Oklahoma City University; and the University of Oklahoma; and 18 chapters at leading universities in this Southwest region. Alumni in the state number over 1,500, with an active alumni association in both Tulsa and Oklahoma City.

The University of Oklahoma chapter originated from Phi Delta Chi (a national pharmacy fraternity) established on the Oklahoma campus in 1911. The members decided to change over to a social fraternity and in 1926 became Gamma-Rho Zeta of Lambda Chi Alpha.

Men of Lambda Chi are leaders in whatever field they enter. In the state, District Judge A. P. Van Meter, '27Law; Judge A. P. Murrah, '28 Law, 10th Circuit Court of Appeals; W. H. Carson, Dean of the College of Engineering at the University; Dr. Elmer Lucas, Chairman of the Geology Department; and Everett Truex, Chairman of the Statistics Department are all very prominent as

are many others.

Lambda Chi Alpha's social life is both plentiful, yet varied. A planned social is held once a month either in the chapter house or outside in the form of formal dances and picnics. The scholastic code of colleges is not forgotten in the social whirl. A close check is made of the grades periodically and help is given to those needing assistance.

The Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity sets as its supreme goal contribution in the largest measure possible to the pre-eminence of truth and justice and the well-being of human kind. Toward this end, it is the aim of the Fraternity to develop in its members the traits of academic progress, moral courage, and chivalry in their highest standards. It is a fundamental principle of this fraternity that no finer means is offered for the achievement of these aims than the brotherly association of men with similar tastes and inclinations.

successful bidder was B. J. Van Ingen and Company, Inc., and Associates of Chicago.

The beginning of construction will not await the delivery of the bonds, but construction will be started immediately under a plan of temporary finance for which preliminary arrangements have been begun.

The excavation of the football field to a depth of six feet will, of course, eliminate the cinder track. Many alumni and fans interested in this fine sport have expressed concern as to the future of track at the University of Oklahoma. The location of a new and improved track was approved by the Regents at the February meeting. A new track will be constructed directly east of the stadium just across Lindsay Street. The 220 yard straightaway will run east-west immediately north of the expandable trailer settlement, and the loop will be constructed north of the straightway in the intra-mural field.

The new track will be an improvement in that it will provide for nine lanes instead of the six available in our present facilities. When our new fieldhouse is constructed it will be located di-

rectly south of the track and just east of Jefferson House. There will be sufficient space between the new fieldhouse and the track to provide for bleachers and the spectators will be shielded by the fieldhouse from the brisk southerly winds. It is expected that the new track will be completed in time for our outdoor meets this spring.

### Barter Brings Collection

Bartering may be a long-gone profession, but Dr. J. W. Stovall can still swap for a bargain and keep both sides happy. Now the University museum has a collection of rare prehistoric Eskimo tools and weapons.

Stovall traded Caddoan pottery and flints with the University of Alaska anthropology department for the exhibit, so the exchange works both ways. Both schools have something they didn't have before. When the museum opens next spring, visitors will see seal, whale and fishing equipment, ice and land hunting weapons, tools, household articles, ornaments and toys. The crudely shaped items are made of ivory, bone and stone.

### ATTENTION, ALUMNI

Before you lay this issue of the *Sooner Magazine* aside, please do two things:

(1) Make a notation on your calendar that Tuesday, April 12, 1949, is the date of the Second Annual Achievement Day at the University of Oklahoma; and

(2) Send a note to Ted Beard, Alumni Office, University of Oklahoma, Norman, reserving your plate for the Achievement Day Dinner.

The persons designated to receive the Distinguished Service Citation, given by the University of Oklahoma and the University of Oklahoma Association, have already been selected, and complete details concerning this important event will be given in the next issue of the *Sooner Magazine*.

You will recall that last year the recipients of the Distinguished Service Citations were Congressman Mike Monroney, '24ba, General W. S. Key, General Raymond S. McLain, Everette Lee DeGolyer, '11ba, and Lynn Riggs, '23.