

SOONER MAGAZINE

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The Cover

Wade Walker, North Carolina's contribution to the Red and White Sooners, comes charging off the page with the fierceness which may make him an All-American. Artist Wayne Barrett, Norman, did the cover which shows the expanded stadium in the background.

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1949-50 Representatives on the O.U. Athletic Council: Granville T. Norris, Muskogee; Paul Reed, Sulphur, and Hal Muldrow, Jr., Norman.

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Riding the Sooner Range

BY HAROLD KEITH, '29BA, '39MA
FOR TED BEARD

Special Note—The writer of the Sooner Range, T. M. B., being out on green pasture on Oklahoma soil as we go to press, has instructed that two featured range riders of the University of Oklahoma—President George L. Cross and Athletic Council President Walter Kraft—be placed center stage by another cowhand who has long galloped over the soil of Oklahoma's plains. His name is Harold "Grantland" Keith, Sooner sports publicist and editor of the now famous football story, *Oklahoma Kickoff*.

In substituting for Range Rider Ted, ole "Grantland" gives an advance story to our multiplied thousands of alums who will make the trek of the '49ers back for this season's homecoming.

It is the story back of the story of the expansion of the famous landmark at the University, namely the addition to Memorial Stadium on Owen Field. Indeed, the two galloping riders of this sector of the range have displayed foresight in providing for Sooner Alums as they will gallop in from over the trails, nation and world-wide to renew and extend Sooner friendships in years to come, while riding the Sooner Range—David Burr.

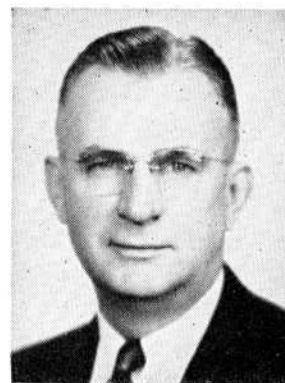
Sooner Homecomers who re-visit the campus October 29 to see the Sooners' game with the strongest Iowa State team of the past 20 years, will be delighted with renovation of the stadium at Owen Field.

Coach Bud Wilkinson's defending Sugar Bowl and Big Seven Conference champions now play in a three-wing layout that has been expanded from 30,000 to 55,000 seats. Visiting alums will also find widened ramp walkways, additional comfort stations, a new three-deck press box with an elevator and a new electric scoreboard.

The new seating arrangement at Owen Field is the most modern that could be devised. The old field was submerged six feet and the cinder running track removed so that approximately 7,000 new ringside seats could be constructed on all four sides, and the crowd brought close to the sidelines and endlines of the new playing rectangle.

A new north wing, connecting the old east and west wings, was built straight across the north endline of the new field, assuring its occupants a seat much closer to the field of play than if the new wing had been built around the north curve of the old track, as has been done in so many stadiums around the nation.

The new project was originated by President George L. Cross, who vigorously pushed it to completion in time for the 1949 season. Worried at the inadequate seating capacity of the old plant



WALTER KRAFT

during the Missouri game last year when nearly 7,000 had to sit or stand around the field while additional thousands were warned to stay away from the game, the Sooner president saw that instant action was necessary and boldly took both the initiative and the responsibility.

Walter Kraft, director of the physical plant, president of the athletic council and Oklahoma's Big Seven Conference faculty representative, suggested the close-up north wing that put spectators there 160 feet closer to the playing field than would have been possible had the new wing been built in the usual horseshoe around the cinder running track.

Starting from Kraft's recommendation, Wright and Selby, the architects, then created plans calling for the six-foot submersion of the old field that made possible the additional 7,000 ringside seats. Bud Wilkinson, Sooner coach and athletic director, also contributed some fine ideas and gave his blessings to the project.

So cleverly was the whole expansion devised that every one of the 55,000 seats is comparatively close to the gridiron.

The snug Sooner stadium now rates as the best in the Southwest as far as practicality and accessibility is concerned.

► James H. Bragg, '36ms, head of the University photographic service, and Charles N. Hockman, '49bs, University motion picture producer, were in Kansas City, Missouri, October 3-8, to record sound for two films for the State Planning and Resources Board.