

*As the Winter Sports program moved toward an end in early March, Sooner athletes were (1) being named to Olympic teams, (2) winning wrestling and swimming championships (3) proving O.U.'s well-balanced sports program was capable of staying*

# Up Front!

**M**ARCH and the Sooner swimming and wrestling teams greeted Big Seven opposition like a lion. Two more conference championships were picked up in sports tourneys held in early March.

With nine straight dual meet wins, the wrestling triumph was hardly unexpected. Many observers thought as early as January that the Sooners would show their heels or their holds to the rest of the wrestling fraternity.

The grapplers demonstrated their class by taking six of the eight individual championships for a total team score of 48. Iowa State won the other two firsts and placed

second with 33 points. Far down the line was the rest of the pack.

Oklahoma's winners with class in parenthesis: Bill Borders, defending Big Seven champ (123); Don Reece, (130); Harold Reece (137); Tommy Evans, defending Big Seven champ (147); Byran Rayburn (157); Frank Marks, defending Big Seven champ (167). In addition Joe Butler (177) and Doc Hearon (heavy-weight) took second places.

Only one more laurel tempted the team—the NCAA tournament in late March. It would be a wonderful season if they could win the national championship two years in a row. Still to come for team members: Olympic wrestling tryouts.

**Olympic** trainer Joe Glander's swimmers pulled off the biggest coup of the winter sports season in the Big Seven swimming tournament at the University of Nebraska. With a good team and a few outstanding performers, the O. U. paddlers streaked home with a team championship that had been doped largely as belonging to the perennial champs, Iowa State. This year Iowa had to settle for second money with a point total of 131 and, as in wrestling, again the Big Seven pack trailed far behind.

The big splash for O. U. was provided by Graham Johnston, Glander's prize free style swimmer from Bloemfontein, South Africa, and Coach Glander's son, David Glander. Johnston, who has been nominated by his South African selectors to represent that country at the Olympic games in Helsinki in July, won three free style events and broke Big Seven records in each. His Big Seven records (not necessarily Johnston's best times): 220 (2:13.1), 440 (4:46), 1,500 (19:14.4). Glander captured both the high and low-board diving competition.

Johnston and Glander provide five firsts for O. U., but Iowa State took firsts in the remainder of the 14 events. Team strength, capturing seconds and thirds, pulled out the win. The team score is computed on a 7-5-4-3-2-1 basis and the following Sooners picked up points for O. U.:

50 free style: Stan Shechter (2), Tom Adams (5).

100 free style: Stan Shechter (2).

220 free style: Johnston (1), Jack Hudack (3).

440 free style: Johnson (1), Hudack (3).

1,500 free style: Johnston (1), Hudack (2).

100 breast: Captain Bob Thatcher (3), Jim McKinney (4) and Bill Sloger (5).

100 back: Clarke Mitchell (2), John Green (3).

200 back: Clarke Mitchell (2), Green (3).

150 individual medley: Thatcher (2), McKinney (3), Mitchell (5).

300 medley relay (2).

400 relay (2).

3 meter diving: David Glander (1), Earl Hallum (2), Don Strausbaugh (4).

1 meter diving: Glander, (1), Hallum (2), Strausbaugh (4).

**The basketball** team that needed experience, reserve strength and height, ended its season in mid-March with a 7-17 overall record and a 4-8 conference record. Although a Bruce Drake '29 phys.ed. team finally fell below .500 per cent in conference championship play, it's happened less to him than to any other coach in the Big Seven.

Oklahoma's coach turned out 13 straight teams at Norman, winning or tying for the Big Six or Big Seven title six times and playing in the NCAA finals once, before he finally handled a club that dipped below 50-50.

All the other Big Seven coaches underwent the experience long before Drake did, most of them several times, too.

Doctor F. C. "Phog" Allen coached 11 straight Kansas teams from 1908 to 1928 before he finally handled a loser, his 1929 club finishing 2-8 for .250 per cent. Sparky Stalcup's first below .500 team came in his fourth year at Missouri but Jack Gardner of Kansas State and Harry Good of Nebraska suffered theirs in their first seasons at Manhattan and Lincoln. So Drake's feat of having headed it off until his 14th season is tops in that department, too.

Here's the breakdown on the five Big



**BILLY BORDERS**  
... Big Seven Champ



Graham Johnston, outstanding free style swimmer from South Africa, broke three Big Seven swimming records and was the Big Seven tourney's outstanding performer as Oklahoma won conference swim meet. He'll represent South Africa at Olympics.

Seven coaches who have the longest terms of service in the conference.

Harry Good, Nebraska's coach, has had three sub-.500 seasons in Big Six or Seven play in five years at Lincoln. He went 4-6 in 1948, 4-8 in 1951, stands 3-7 to date this year.

Jack Gardner, Kansas State's coach has had four sub-.500 seasons in nine years of league play, 2-8 in 1940, 3-7 in 1941, 3-7 in 1942 and 3-7 in 1947.

Sparky Stalcup of Missouri has had one sub-.500 season in league play during his six years at Missouri, 4-8 in 1951. However

Sparky finished exactly .500 in three others of his six seasons.

Phog Allen of Kansas has had three sub-.500 seasons in 24 years of Big Six and Big Seven play, 2-8 in 1929, 4-8 in 1948 and 3-9 in 1949. That includes the 1947 season during which Phog retired at 0-1 when ordered to take a rest after a head injury. But his team finished 5-5. Phog's career record at Kansas, 1908-1952, figures out only three losers in 37 seasons for an excellent 91.8 per cent of sub-.500 avoidance but still ranks behind Drake's 92.8.

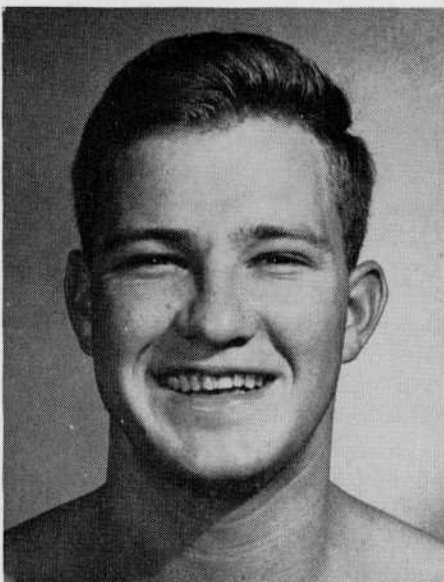
Here's each coach's Big Six-Seven career record of sub-.500 avoidance: Drake of Oklahoma has avoided it 92.8 per cent of his period as coach, Phog Allen of Kansas 87.5 per cent, Sparky Stalcup of Missouri 83.3 per cent, Jack Gardner of Kansas State 55.5 per cent and Harry Good of Nebraska 40 per cent.

The baseball team will have initiated their bats in scheduled competition by the time you read this. Whether they can reproduce their Cinderella act of a year ago remains to be seen. With good pitching and a show of determination, the Sooners rallied from six initial losses and took the NCAA championship.

This year's team will have some of last year's performers but will be weak in the pitching department. Some of Coach Jack Baer's ('42ed) young hurlers are going to have to come through in fine style if Oklahoma is to defend her crown.

Most of the ailing members of last year's squad are back on their feet and reportedly in good condition. Billy Vessels, who missed play following the Texas game accident to his leg, apparently doesn't favor the injury and is going along smoothly.

With just 20 practice sessions allotted them this year, Bud Wilkinson is wasting no time getting his team into harness. On the first day of practice he sent his charges through a scrimmage session. The spring training drills will come to an end April 5 when the varsity will tackle the alumni in another of their spring classics.



DAVID GLANDER  
... Tops on Low Board



BRUCE DRAKE  
... Best Coaching Record