

The Unfriendly Witnesses

Notre Dame, Pittsburgh, Texas, Missouri, Nebraska were called by investigating committee as unfriendly witness for O.U.'s '53 football prospects.

Investigations are not the sole property of any one person, organization or publication. The *Sooner Magazine* reports on a hearing of its own investigating committee of this season's O.U. football team and its 1953 opponents. Quotes attributed to Bud Wilkinson and to others specifically cited are theirs and have previously been published. The committee chairman's quotes are fictitious but are based on pre-season facts and estimates.

Chairman of Investigating Committee

"The purpose of this investigation is to explore a statement emanating from Oklahoma that several football coaches and teams throughout the nation are preparing, I believe the expression was, 'bad medicine,' for O.U.'s Sooners. In an effort to bring this subversion or attempted subversion of Oklahoma's football record into the open, this committee has subpoenaed several coaches and football writers.

"Call the first witness.

"It seems to me, Mr. Wilkinson, that we can get to the bottom of the conspiracy to defeat your team this fall best if you will explain to this committee your chances to foil the plot. If you can win despite the opposition, as you have so many times in the past, it would seem that this investigation is unnecessary."

Coach Bud Wilkinson

"Our team will look much different this year. Our offense won't be capable of moving the ball as we have in past seasons. We've lost the personnel that gave us this threat. And since our defense won't be any better than last year, when half of our opponents scored at least three touchdowns per game on us, it looks like a long season.

"We must develop a sounder defense, a stronger kicking game and try to work out some sort of an offensive threat."

Committee Chairman

"Your situation is not too comfortable. I shall now ask our first unfriendly witness to take the chair. You are attempting to thwart Mr. Wilkinson and his team September 26, I believe. We would like to know how well you are prepared."

Notre Dame Coach Frank Leahy

"I'll be amazed if we make a single first down in ten games."

Committee Chairman

"I would like to read into the records of this hearing an Associated Press report on the Notre Dame varsity-alumni football game, 'Notre Dame lifted the wraps Saturday from a powerful varsity football team, laced with fast, tough freshmen, that rolled over the 'old timers' 34 to 7 in the annual game climaxing spring drills . . . Notre Dame played without its ace, All-American Johnny Lattner, sidelined with a shoulder injury.' That doesn't sound like you are in too miserable a condition. Besides, you return nine starters from the offensive team and six from the defensive team that beat Oklahoma last year.

Coach Leahy

" . . . We'll have to do plenty of work in September on passing and pass receiving. And you noticed that we were unable to score in the second half against what is about our own third team." (Hearsay testimony reported by Joe Doyle, sports editor, *South Bend Tribune*, but accepted by the committee concerning a spring game.)

Committee Chairman

"The thought has crossed my mind that perhaps your third team is as good as your first team. The committee is aware that you have 23 of 32 lettermen returning. This committee called you on the advice of sports writers and broadcasters as an unfriendly witness. You have impressed this committee as being very friendly. We shall instruct the reporters in the hearing room to designate you as a friendly witness. Mr. Wilkinson, what do you think your chances are of beating Notre Dame?"

Coach Wilkinson

"It is fantastic for anyone to expect that we might defeat Notre Dame. The only department in which we hope to match them will be in desire and spirit."

Committee Chairman

"Next witness please. You too were called as an unfriendly witness. Many sports publications are rating you as the strongest team in the East. What do you consider your chances to be to defeat Oklahoma?"



LARRY GRIGG & ROGER NELSON

. . . Halfback and Tackle—Sooner Co-Captains

Pittsburgh Coach Ray Dawson

"We made limited progress in adjusting toward the non two platoon football during spring drills. We are going to be very green in the middle of the line, and by the time the centers and guards gain the necessary experience, we could lose key games. . . . We'll be pressed to be as successful as we were a year ago."

Committee Chairman

"I want the following facts read into the record. The Pitt varsity won the alumni-varsity spring game 21-13. The varsity was able to make a successful march every time it got the ball against the Old Timers, but the varsity second outfit was always in trouble. Pittsburgh returns seven starters from the offensive team and six from the defensive unit. Twenty-four lettermen return.

"Coach Dawson, our preliminary investigation that resulted in calling you as an unfriendly witness seems inaccurate. Clerk will properly note your friendliness. I think we can assume that the next witness is unfriendly. Will Coach Ed Price please take the witness chair. Coach Price what are you preparing for your neighbors?"

Texas Coach Ed Price

"Our 1953 team will be young and inexperienced but one of spirit."

Committee Chairman

"Please add to the record the following facts. Texas returns five starters from the offensive team and three from defensive team. It figures to have a big reconstruction assignment. The major problems are to find a good quarterback and replacements for center and fullback.

"Coach Price, the committee wishes to thank you for your terse but candid testimony. Since the next two witnesses were called as friendly witnesses, we will ask them to take the stand to be interrogated together. Will Kansas Coach J. V. Sikes and Colorado Coach Dal Ward please take the chair. Mr. Sikes and Mr. Ward, what do you gentlemen have in store for Oklahoma?"

Kansas Coach Sikes

"We expect to have a pretty fair line. Our backs will be green. We hope to improve as the season progresses."

Colorado Coach Ward

"Oklahoma looks like the champion again although they may not be as far ahead of the rest of the conference as in the last couple of seasons. Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri should have a good battle for the runnerup spot with possibly a slight edge going to Nebraska in the early ratings. Colorado, Iowa State, and Kansas State appear to be a notch behind those three."

Committee Chairman

"Will the coaches from Iowa State and Kansas State please take the stand. Do you agree that you are not in the championship battle with Oklahoma?"

Kansas State Coach Bill Meek

"We are going to try real hard to get out of the cellar. . . ."

Iowa State Coach Abe Stuber

"In the Big Seven, it must be Oklahoma again. Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas and Colorado will be tough. The most improved team will be Kansas State."

Committee Chairman

"The committee wishes to thank the four coaches just heard. As a matter of record, I want to read into the minutes of this hearing the following remarks.

"Kansas returns six starters from last year's offensive team and five from the defensive team. Kansas must build a completely new backfield unit.

"Colorado returns three starters from the offensive and four from the defensive teams. Prospects are for a season below last year's mark due to the loss of 18 lettermen. However, 22 lettermen return, including tailback Carroll Hardy.

"Kansas State looks improved. Six starters from the offensive team and eight from the defensive team return. Outstanding returnee, Veryl Switzer, safety.

"Iowa State lost one-half of their 42 lettermen from last year, and keep seven starters from their offensive team and four from their defensive team.

"An observation, not for the record, is

that, although the Kansas and Colorado coaches seem friendly, they may be guilty of trying to lull Oklahoma to sleep. Both Iowa State and Kansas State seem chummy about Wilkinson's cause."

"Will Coach Don Faurot and Coach Bill Glassford take the witness chair please. From other witnesses at this hearing, we have formed the opinion that you two are plotting to stop Oklahoma's drive this fall. Will you please give this committee a report on your efforts?"

Missouri Coach Faurot

"Our team ought to be improved this season. We feel our personnel will adapt quite well to the new substitution rule. . . . Defensively, we should be pretty sound, with eight of last year's regular starters due back. . . ."

Nebraska Coach Glassford

"For the first time since I have been at Nebraska, we expect to have next fall a maximum number of players with two years' varsity experience. The 1952 Cornhusker team was the best I have ever coached. . . ."

Committee Chairman

"At this time I would like to ask Floyd Olds, sports editor, *Omaha* (Nebraska) *World-Herald* to give testimony as an expert witness."

Mr. Olds

"Other coaches around the Big Seven are pretty well agreed that Nebraska will be the No. 1 candidate to end Oklahoma's

Continued page 30

Pick the Scores

Win Crowder's Helmet



How would you like to have Eddie Crowder's helmet in your trophy case?

Then compete in *Sooner Magazine's* score-guessing contest. All you do is select the scores of each of O.U.'s 10 games this fall. Write them on a sheet of paper, sign your name, and mail them to the *Sooner Magazine*, University of Oklahoma, Norman. The winner will win Crowder's helmet that he wore last year while confusing the opposition and television cameramen with his wizardry. It will be autographed by this year's team for the winner.

Husbands, wives and children of alumni may compete, also. They must sign their selection sheet and note the relationship to the alumnus or alumna. Remember, select the scores of the games, not just the winners. Entries must be postmarked before 10 a.m. September 26. (O.U.'s schedule is shown at left.)

- _____ Oklahoma-Notre Dame _____
- _____ Oklahoma-Pittsburgh _____
- _____ Oklahoma-Texas _____
- _____ Oklahoma-Kansas _____
- _____ Oklahoma-Colorado _____
- _____ Oklahoma-Kansas State _____
- _____ Oklahoma-Missouri _____
- _____ Oklahoma-Iowa State _____
- _____ Oklahoma-Nebraska _____
- _____ Oklahoma-Oklahoma A&M _____

Hal Muldrow, Jr.

'28

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The Unfriendly Witnesses . . .

long football reign next fall—if anybody
is going to get the job done.”

Committee Chairman

“The committee wishes to thank the
three witnesses. They have courageously
stated their case in the face of Oklahoma’s
public opinion. No further facts need to
be inserted in the record to add to the ap-
praisal given by them.

“Our next witness, J. B. Whitworth,
was unable to attend this meeting. So I
would like to add to the record of this hear-
ing the following estimate. Oklahoma
A.&M.’s prospects are improved. Twenty
lettermen of last year will return. In ad-
dition, the Aggie freshmen of last year,
who were undefeated, will augment the
squad. Eight offensive and five defensive
starters will return. It is the most expe-
rienced team Coach Whitworth has had in
his four years at Stillwater.

“Our last witness has done this investi-
gating committee a service by appearing as
an expert witness. He is Mr. Stanley Wood-
ward, noted football writer. Mr. Wood-
ward, will you please take the chair and
inform this committee of how Oklahoma
is meeting the threat to its 1953 football
record.”

Mr. Stanley Woodward

“For five years, Oklahoma teams have
been the most consistent winners in the
country. Each of the past five of Bud Wilk-
inson’s ensembles has finished among the
nation’s ten top teams in the Associated
Press final poll.

“At first glance, it would appear the
Sooners should be down-rated in 1953, for
their losses—including Billy Vessels, Eddie
Crowder and Buck McPhail, backs of such
talent that all three made somebody’s All-
America team—seem staggering. How-
ever, the astute Wilkinson has been quiet-
ly reorganizing his remaining manpower
resources and now appears ready to put
out his sixth successive member of the na-
tion’s Top Ten.”

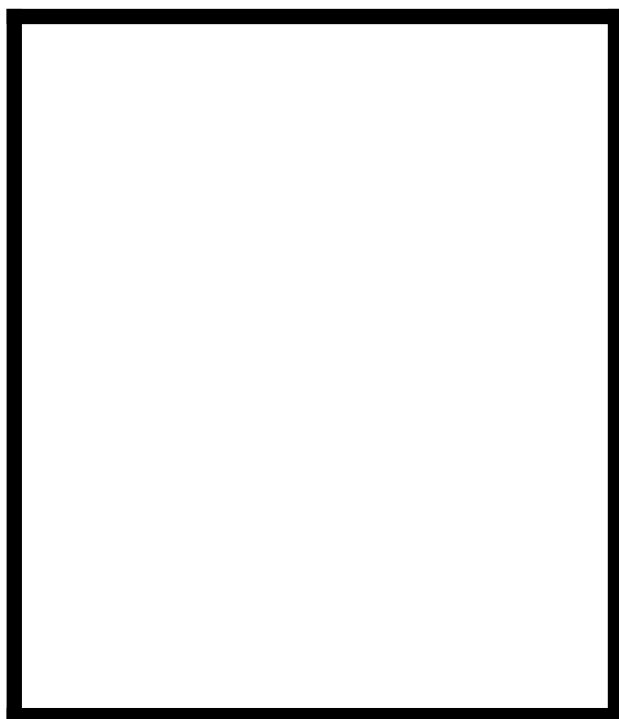
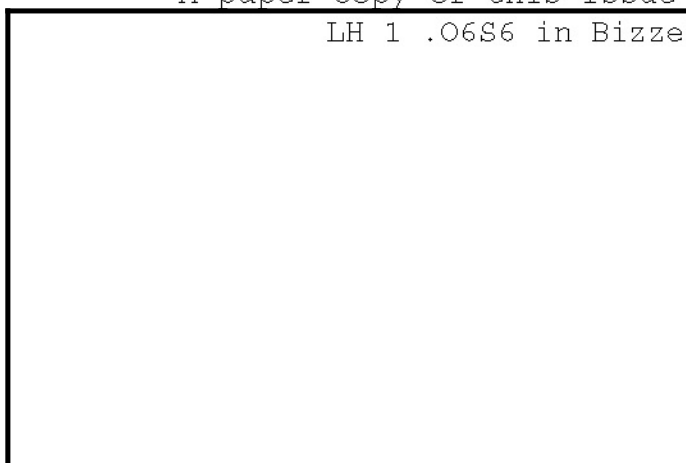
Committee Chairman

“This committee wishes to thank each
one of the witnesses who appeared before
it. As there are no further witnesses to be
heard, and as there has been a good deal
of conflicting testimony, the committee
will retire and will make a public an-
nouncement of its findings in December
of this year.”

(Many of the quotes from coaches and
most of the facts and estimates contained
in this report appear in Harold Keith’s
football facts and figures book, the excel-
lent *Oklahoma—Press, Radio & TV Guide*
for 1953. Alumni may answer their own

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arguments about O.U. football by purchasing a copy. Just send \$1.00 to the Athletic Business Office, University of Oklahoma, Norman. The quote from Stanley Woodward appeared in his *Football* 1953 magazine. Other quotes were taken from newspaper stories.)

Summer's Death Toll . . .

has worked is included the first railroad laid out in western Oklahoma. He also designed the sewer plant at Weatherford and the water purification plant at Clinton.

Busy in an active career until his death, Mills was teaching classes this summer.

Joe A. Smalley. The University lost a life-long friend with the death of State Senator Joe A. Smalley.

The Norman-born political leader died of leukemia July 15 following a year-long illness.

Smalley was graduated from O.U. in 1934 and remained on to receive his law degree in 1937. During World War II he served under Gen. George S. Patten with the 179th Field Artillery. At the war's end he was discharged as a lieutenant colonel.

Smalley served two terms in the state house of representatives and in 1948 was named floor leader by Gov. Roy J. Turner.

In the last legislative session, Smalley served as chairman of the senate appropriations committee for higher education.

Commented O.U. President Cross: "During the entire period of Senator Smalley's service with the state legislature, he did everything possible to improve the welfare of the institution and asked no favors from the University in return.

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His passing means a great loss to the University of Oklahoma."

Dr. J. Willis Stovall. Few O.U. faculty members have been better known and liked throughout the state than Dr. John Willis Stovall, 62-year-old professor of paleontology and director of the University museum.

Dr. Stovall died in the University infirmary July 24 of a heart condition. He had suffered an attack a few days earlier in Wyoming where he was on a summer field trip, and had flown back to Norman.

Famous for his research into pre-historic life in the southwest and his collection of

vertebrate fossils, he had been associated with the University since 1930.

A native of Bowie, Texas, he attended Texas Christian university, Vanderbilt, Yale and the University of Chicago, where he received his doctorate. From 1924 until 1927, he taught at Union university, at Jackson, Tennessee, and Peabody college at Nashville, Tennessee.

Dr. Stovall was author of dozens of technical papers on geology and paleontology. A mild-mannered, friendly person who occupied his spare moments with painting or his mineral collection, Stovall assembled a museum at O.U. valued above a quarter of a million dollars.

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