



The City of Miami, seen here at night, will play host to the teams, alumni and friends of Oklahoma and Maryland before and after Orange Bowl game.

The Center of Attraction

With the Nation's No. 1 football team meeting the No. 3 ranked squad, the Orange Bowl will undoubtedly be the major bowl attraction January 2. Sooners, at home or abroad in Miami, will watch the finest offense in America collide with one of the best defensive elevens.

THE BLUSHING ORANGE BOWL, until recent years the handmaiden of the Rose and Sugar Bowls, will make its formal debut as the nation's leading lady January 2. Cast as a supporting player for many years to the Rose and Sugar Bowls, she will find herself the center of attraction on bowl day. The reason: The nation's only two major

undefeated teams, Oklahoma and Maryland, will battle it out in the most natural pairing achieved in many years by the bowl producers.

The game has everything. Among the attention getters: 1) the nation's No. 1 (Oklahoma) team opposed by the No. 3 (Maryland) team; 2) the drama of the 1954

Orange Bowl still lingers; 3) the natural conflict that results from a former O.U. coach meeting his former assistant; 4) the nation's finest offense (Oklahoma) meeting one of the nation's best defenses (Maryland).

No one who follows bowls or Oklahoma's teams will need a refresher on the

Some indication of the comparative merits of Oklahoma and Maryland resulted from a poll of mutual opponents. Consensus: Oklahoma should be favored on basis of speed and deception.

1954 Orange Bowl get-together. Oklahoma moved into the game with a national ranking of No. 4 against Maryland, then ranked No. 1. There were goal-line stands of the Sooners and rugged defensive play of both teams to remember. And the final score left nothing to be desired from the Oklahoma side of the field, Oklahoma 7, Maryland 0. There can be little doubt that Maryland, this time 'round the underdog, will welcome the opportunity to turn the tables on Oklahoma.

Some of the Maryland assets that she hopes to parlay into a win include fine defensive work and a stable of stars. With final ranking unavailable at press time, but on the basis of statistics through the next-to-last week of the football season, Maryland stood first in rushing defense and third in total defense for the nation. Her offensive work did not measure up and she was not included in the top ten.

Among her stars were names to be conjured with—Bob Pellegrini, All-American center; Bill Walker, end; Mike Sandusky, All-American tackle; Ed Vereb, halfback; and Frank Tamburello, quarterback.

Pellegrini, the 6-3, 225-pound center, has been a standout for Maryland for three seasons. He played guard the first two and moved to center this year. In pre-season guessing, Coach Tatum speculated, "He could easily be the nation's lineman-of-the-year." He has already won that honor in one selection. He was one of the first picked in the annual pro draft.

Bill Walker, 185-pound end, was well on his way to All-American honors until replaced by Pellegrini on some selections and Sandusky on others. He was a standout in the 1954 Orange Bowl game as a sophomore.

Sandusky, 235-pound junior tackle, has been named to at least one All-American team this year. Ed Vereb, 185-pound senior halfback, is co-captain. He has speed, power and deception. Frank Tamburello, 185-pound senior quarterback, is a top passer and signal caller from the Split-T.

To meet this array of defense and star performers, the Sooners take to the Orange Bowl the fastest team that Bud Wilkinson has developed and a fine offense. Nor are the Sooners without star performers of their own, although their strength is in the fine team play.

In final unofficial figures, the Sooners topped the nation in rushing offense with an average of 328.9 yards per game and in total offense with an average of 410.7 yards per game. They have blanked their last four opponents and allowed ten opponents 58 points—less than a touchdown per game. They have scored 365 points or 36.5 points per game.

Oklahoma stars include Guard Bo Bolinger, currently making every selection for All-American; Halfback Tom McDonald, a popular second team All-American choice and the Big Seven's leading scorer and runner, and Center Jerry Tubbs.

From a team standpoint, the Orange

Bowl will offer the team with the nation's best offense and the team with one of the nation's best defenses. How even are the two teams and how will they fare January 2? As reliable a factor as any other (and there are no reliable factors) are the opinions of the two teams which played both Maryland and Oklahoma this year—North Carolina and Missouri.

North Carolina, beaten 13-6 by Oklahoma and 25-7 by Maryland, gave the nod to Oklahoma. Among the comments from 12 North Carolina players who saw action against both teams, ten sided with Oklahoma and two with Maryland. Among the players' comments were these:

End Will Frye—"They are two different types of football teams. And it's hard to compare them. Oklahoma will try to deceive you and Maryland will try to run over you. I'd go with Oklahoma."

Quarterback Dave Reed—"The backfields of the two teams are about even, but Oklahoma has better overall speed, or appeared to have against us. It is hard to compare the two teams. It would be easier if we hadn't played Oklahoma in the first game for both of us. This late in the season, I'd have to say Oklahoma."

Halfback Larry McMullen—"Oklahoma has the better backfield and its line fired out harder. Maryland probably has the better quarterback. I'd have to go with Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl, though. Maryland probably has the more outstanding individuals in the line with players like



The 1955 Sooner starting team includes Bell, Gray, Morris, Tubbs, Bolinger, Woodworth and Mobra in the line, and Burriss, Harris, Pricer and McDonald, backfield. This picture taken before season opened, offers a rarity. Seldom has the starting unit in September remained intact through season.

Oklahoma Makes Its Bid With . . .



Pellegrini, Mike Sandusky and Bill Walker, but Oklahoma has more overall ability."

End Paul Pulley—"Oklahoma has the better backfield. The Sooner halfbacks are good, but you have to consider Maryland's Ed Vereb in that department. Oklahoma seems to be a little quicker and Maryland a little bigger. It ought to be a good game, but I think Oklahoma will win."

Halfback Ken Keller—"Oklahoma is chiefly an offensive team and Maryland combines both offense and defense. If they meet in the Orange Bowl, it will be a matter of which prevails, Oklahoma's offense or Maryland's defense. I think Maryland's combined play will win."

Center Jim Jones—"They're about even in the backfield and in the line, but I favor Maryland."

The sixteen Missouri players who saw the most action against both Maryland and Oklahoma, ranked the Sooners above the

Terrapins. Their comments:

Guard Charles Mehrer—"Oklahoma plays harder. They hit harder and hustle more than Maryland."

Center Carl Osterleh—"The Sooners were much faster than any ball club we have faced."

Guard Bob Lee—"Maryland has the better linesmen, but Oklahoma's backs were the difference."

End Harold Burnine—"Both of our teams played hard. We just made too many mistakes. They were too deep. McDonald is a great back."

Quarterback Jimmy Hunter—"They were the hardest tackling team I've ever met. That Tubbs is a good lineman; he tackled like a demon. McDonald is fast and a great ball player—probably the best we have faced."

Tackle Al Portney—"Bolinger's a fine guard and he reacts real quick. They're

very deep and both of their teams are tough."

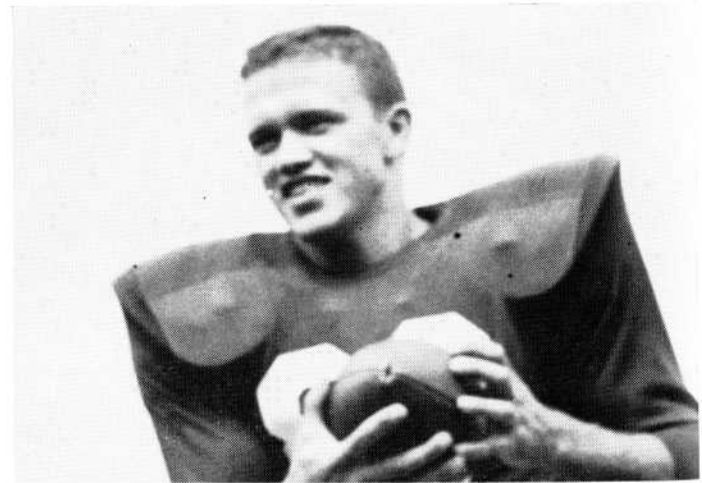
Coach Don Faurot also liked the Sooners' chances against Maryland. In commenting on the Sooner team he said, "They had too much for us . . . O.U. is a great team and deserves to represent the Big Seven in the Orange Bowl. McDonald is the best all-around halfback we've met." O.U. beat Missouri 20-0. Maryland beat them 13-12.

That's the opinion of the two mutual opponents Oklahoma and Maryland faced this year. From their comments, it appears that it will be a matter of the speed of Oklahoma pitted against the heavier defenses of Maryland.

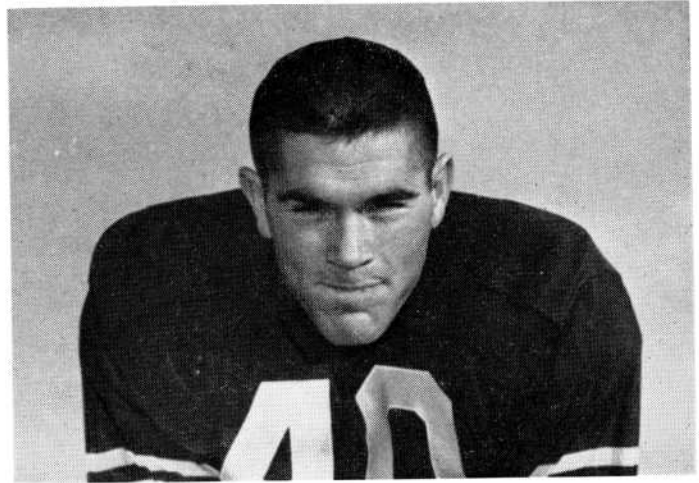
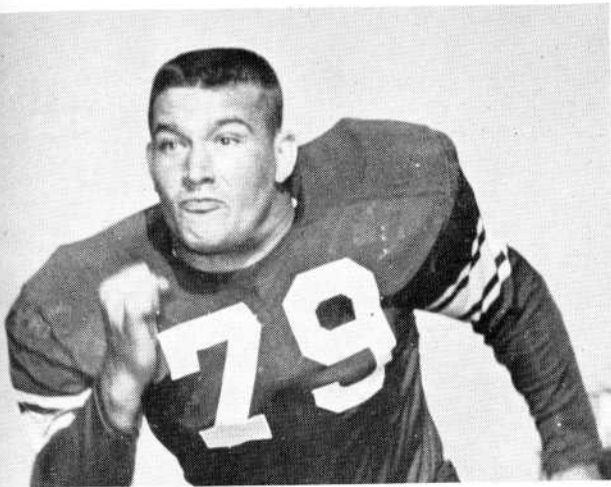
The feeling of optimism that prevails in Oklahoma is in marked contrast to the 1954 pre-bowl atmosphere. Then Oklahoma was the underdog.

Too much optimism can lose ball games, and Bud Wilkinson was having none of it

Maryland Expects to Win With . . .



. . . McDonald, Tubbs, Bolinger, Burris & Co.



as he prepared his team for their bowl appearance.

Said Bud, "We feel we face the most difficult assignment we have ever had. In bowl play, the favorite rarely wins. At Miami, the position of the two teams will be exactly reversed from what it was two years ago. Maryland will have all the underdog psychology on her side. Before the season began, Coach Tatum said publicly he expected this to be his greatest team. Their play throughout the year has made him an accurate prophet. We're going to do our best but we hope the Oklahoma people won't be too high on our chances."

It will be amazing if Oklahomans are not too high on the Sooners' chances. The Sooners blazed through another 10-game schedule like a prairie fire. Opening slugishly against North Carolina (13-6) and Pittsburgh (26-14), they began to mow down the opposition. Texas fell 20-0, the

first time since 1938 that O.U. has held Texas scoreless. Kansas, Colorado, Kansas State succumbed 44-6, 56-21, and 40-7. Missouri made a tough battle of it, 20-0. Iowa State suffered to the tune of 52-0. Nebraska, playing for the Big Seven championship, lost 41-0, and Oklahoma A&M lost 53-0.

In addition, the undefeated season was the fourth in seven years for Oklahoma, and a string of consecutive feats was kept intact. Among them—Oklahoma is the only team in the nation which has placed in the nation's top ten as rated by the AP poll for the past eight years in a row; Oklahoma has won 29 games in succession; Oklahoma has played 53 consecutive Big Seven games without defeat; Oklahoma has scored in 105 consecutive games, a new national record.

In addition, Bud's bowl record has been a fine one with three wins and one loss. The loss, incidentally, came at the hands

of Kentucky in the 1951 Sugar Bowl shortly after the Sooners had been named the nation's No. 1 team.

No one could deny that, even with the fine accomplishments of past Oklahoma teams, there was reason for worry. Maryland will want to win as badly as any team Oklahoma has ever met. She has the manpower to accomplish the trick if Oklahoma is not at top form.

As the encounter approaches, the tension mounts—tension that team and fans alike are feeling. The campus is empty for the holidays; the team is in Miami preparing for the game; fans are enroute or adjusting their television sets. The stage is set for one of the finest bowl matchings yet in this day of conference-bowl tie-ups. Oklahoma vs. Maryland. Wilkinson vs. Tatum. No. 1 vs. No. 3. Speed vs. Strength.

The Orange Bowl becomes queen of the post season attractions January 2.

. . . Pellegrini, Walker, Tamburello, Vereb & Co.

