

Up front, in his traditional seat behind the pilots, Coach Wilkinson has difficulty relaxing as game with Notre Dame approaches.



Gomer Jones moves up and down the aisles of the plane, talking over assignments with his linemen and helping them release their nervous tension as they near South Bend.

## Mission: Notre Dame

Aboard the plane to South Bend, all minds had a single thought: To play best game possible before national television cameras.

Photographed by NED HOCKMAN, '49ed

When the plane left Norman in late October everything seemed about as usual. The weather was mild, the team in good condition, the inevitable confusion as the team found seats for the trip.

The good-natured banter from teammate to teammate seemed a little restrained, but then any game approached with the "right attitude" would have been much the same.

Once in the air, the team settled back with magazines or conversation. Moving up and down the aisles, Gomer Jones could be seen talking over assignments with a lineman. But Wilkinson stopped for a word to a player or moved in for a huddle with his quarterbacks.

A look at the faces in the plane indicated that the team was mentally "up" for the game. Some seemed to be running play possibilities over and over in their minds. For there was nothing ordinary about their assignment for Saturday. They were flying to play Notre Dame in the Irish backyard.

Ned Hockman, '49ed, official cameraman for the team, also was aboard the plane. As an Air Force cameraman and long-time O. U. movie maker, Hockman has had an opportunity to see many great figures in tense situations.

As the plane moved across the Mid-West, photographer Hockman began a series of candid shots of coaches and players. His pictures show the tension of the team as it prepares for action and the happy aftermath (see next page).



Tom McDonald's face shows the pre-game strain and how much the Sooners wanted to win. Waiting was about over.

# Mission Accomplished

And then the game was over. Before a national television audience, O. U. had earned a 40-0 victory over Notre Dame. For Oklahoma partisans, the outcome was a signal for celebrating. For the rest of the viewers, it was notification that Oklahoma was the best team in the nation.

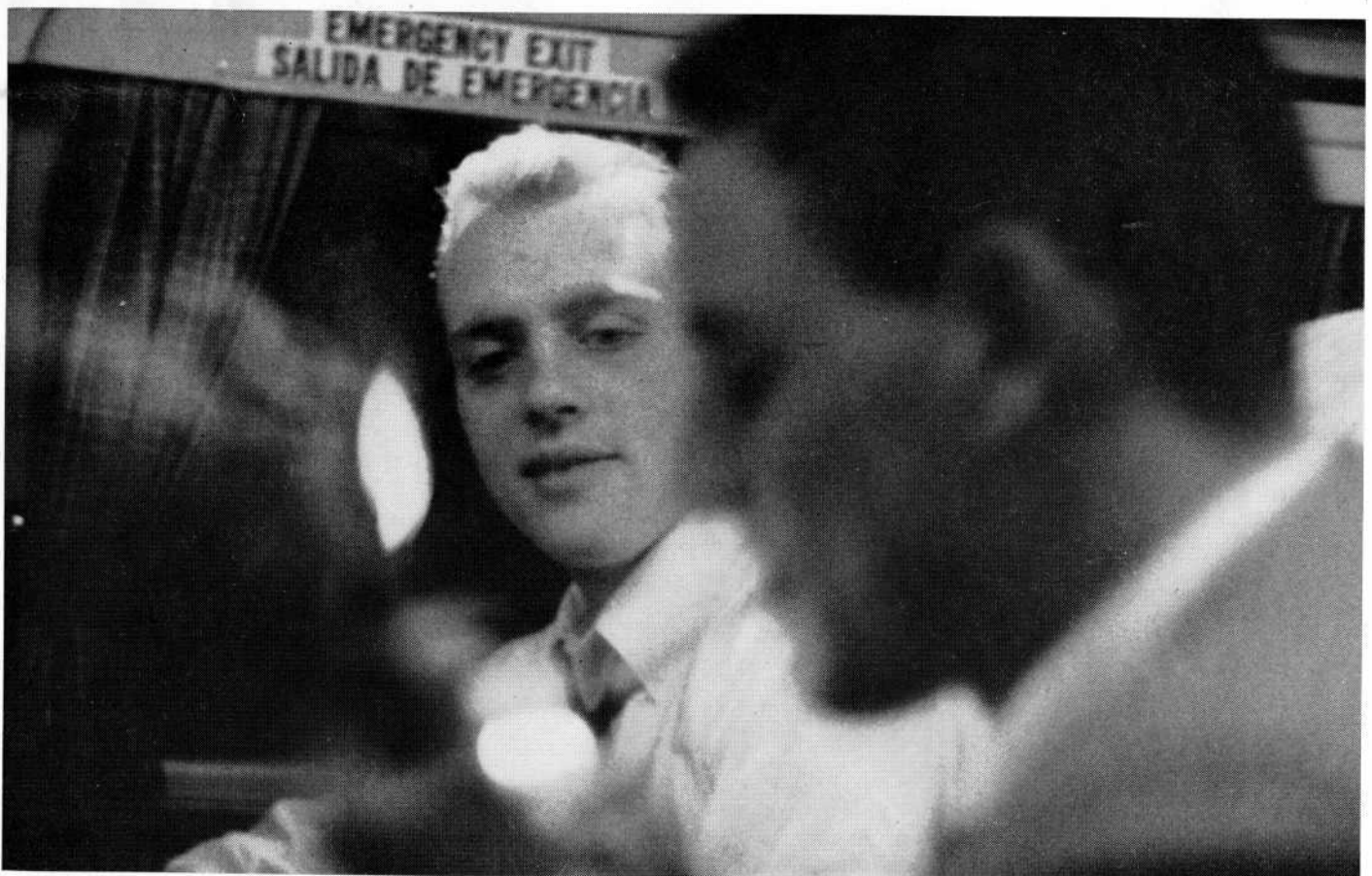
The team, poised and confident on the field, were as much in character after the game. Before loading for the flight to Norman, they accepted the congratulations of friends. One received a hero's reward after the plane was in flight. But most were tired, quiet and calm as the plane returned them home.



Tension is gone as Gomer Jones and Tom McDonald prepare for flight home after the 40-0 victory.



Billy Pricer, with prompting from teammates, gets a hero's welcome from stewardess after the game.



Jay O'Neal is relaxed and content as he watches Coach Gene Calame light a cigarette on homeward flight. Like champions, team took victory in stride.