

A capacity crowd of more than 76,000 sun-drenched fans witness the half-time spectacle in the New Year's Day football classic in the Orange Bowl.

Bound for the Orange Bowl

The past football season wasn't the best the Sooners have known. There were a number of close calls, one upset. But Oklahoma won the conference title.

BUD WILKINSON KNEW—though no one else seemed to—that the 1957 season was going to be a controversial one. Months ago, before the Sooners had played their first football game, Wilkinson warned that Oklahoma was doomed to be overrated.

How right he was. At season's end, O. U. was still in the top ten of all news-wire polls, but down several notches below the number one position it had occupied at the time of the first, Pittsburgh game. Still, Oklahoma plowed through its sched-

ule and emerged winner of nine games, loser of only one. Since the Wilkinson group once again took the conference title, it found itself Orange Bowl bound.

Just how good a team is Oklahoma sending to Miami, Florida, for the New Year's goings-on? Everyone has his own opinion, and some of these speculations seem more emotional than factual. Probably it has been years since the rating of the Sooners has proved so difficult.

When Oklahoma played the first 1957

game, the event had already been called the "toughest." It didn't turned out that way. Almost 59,000 fans flocked to Pitt's stadium, many genuinely expecting a start-of-the-season upset. Oklahoma's young and inexperienced team ran off with the game, 26-0, and players like Clendon Thomas, Bill Krisher, Carl Dodd, Bobby Boyd, Jakie Sandefer, Don Stiller and David Baker looked like a million. In the hot, humid weather Sooners gave every indication of making up another great team. There were

the brilliant cutbacks of Thomas, a scoring Dodd-to-Stiller pass that flew 17 yards, valuable quick kicks by Baker.

Next came Iowa State, and, though Oklahoma won 40-14, it wasn't as easy as the score indicated. The Sooners did score twice in the first quarter, and they are known for playing best in the third. It was 19-7 at half time. Baker racked up 61 yards in passes to Coyle, and Sandefer carried back an Iowa State punt for 81 yards to the touchdown. But it was a tough one, all the same. "We were fortunate to defeat Iowa State," said Wilkinson. Both offensively and defensively, Iowa State was truly a dandy.

No one knew quite what to expect from the University of Texas on October 12 in the Dallas Cotton Bowl. A year earlier the Sooners held the Texans scoreless while rolling up 45 points for themselves. Now they were pitted against a team which, it was suspected, would be stronger; Darrell Royal, a former player under Wilkinson, was Texas' new head coach.

As things turned out, Oklahoma won 21-7, but it was a battle all the way. The score was tied 7-7 through the third quarter. Oklahomans expect much aerial activity when they meet a team from the Southwest Conference, and there was much passing on this occasion. Not all of it was successful, by any means, for O. U. intercepted five passes, Texas four. Many of the 75,000 fans came away disappointed because of a low score. Some said they could have sworn that Oklahoma was playing Oklahoma that day, because Royal's tactics so closely resembled those of Wilkinson.



Coach Bud Wilkinson of the University of Oklahoma guided football teams to a modern record of forty-seven consecutive victories.

The game against Kansas brought the desired higher score, Oklahoma triumphing 47-0. Sooners still weren't feeling well, recovering from a bout with the Asian flu, and Wilkinson felt they weren't quite up to their usual form. But Kansas, also flubbed, was feeling worse. O. U.'s alternate team scored five of the seven touchdowns. The close of the first quarter was indicative of the final result, for the score was 21-0 at that point.

Until the game against Colorado, the weather stayed unusually warm. Sitting in the broiling sun slanting down into Owen Stadium, fans at earlier games had waited through to the final gun with maddening thirst and singed foreheads above their visors, or else they simply got up out of their seats and left during the games' fourth quarters.

A miserably cold, knife-sharp wind came to Norman for the Colorado game on October 26. It seemed that perhaps only the sports writers in the press box were comfortable. Yet few fans dared leave their seats until the last few seconds of play. Colorado gave the Sooners the scare of their lives.

Again, said Wilkinson, Oklahoma was fortunate to win—at a score of 14-13. Colorado's coaching was brilliant, and its offense was fine. Near the end of the game Colorado led 13-7, but Oklahoma brought the ball all the way back from a kickoff and clinched the victory with a conversion boot from Carl Dodd. The single wing of the Golden Buffaloes had worked fine—almost too well, in fact, and Colorado had been quick to cover Sooner fumbles. The crowd of 61,000 which saw the nail-biter against Colorado was the largest to ever witness a game in Owen Stadium.

November 2 at Manhattan, Kansas, was the time and place for the 13-0 victory over Kansas State. A defensive game, the fracas seemed literally filled with forced punts and fumbles. Kansas State fought



Coach Bill Murray of Duke University, North Carolina, calls his Blue Devils "spirited, organized."

harder than anyone had expected. The two Sooner scores came in the middle of the second and third quarters.

By the time Oklahoma met Missouri, in Columbia, fans and experts alike were trying hard not to think This Is Probably It. But the chilly crowd—thankful that the rains of the past week had ceased—saw O. U. win 30-14. The game decided the conference championship of the Big Eight (which now includes Oklahoma State, though that school will not compete until 1960). It also determined the Orange Bowl bid. A record crowd saw Missouri let go with a passing attack, stopped cold by an O. U. interception. Also in evidence was an Oklahoma record of 120 offensive plays.

No one is going to forget November 16. Oklahomans had been looking forward to the day for 50 years, so to speak. It was Statehood Day, the official day of the Semi-centennial. It was also Homecoming at the University, and students had worked hard, often in the rain, to build lawn decorations featuring Indians, the Russian satellite

Sputnik, giant football players, and the like.

Governor Raymond Gary had declared the day University of Oklahoma Day as a tribute to the progress made by the 65-year-old institution, and he and such celebrities as Will Rogers, Jr., were on hand to wish the school well in person. Down for the Notre Dame game, also, were members of the 1907 football team and their coach, the "grand old man" of Oklahoma football, Bennie Owen. Tickets to the game were well-nigh impossible to get hold of, and Norman bulged turgid with holideers.

The game came, the game became history, and, as Wilkinson said, Oklahoma lost to a great football team that day. Thousands left Owen Stadium, most stunned, some joyous, but all with downright disbelief. They had witnessed a nerve-racking game which went scoreless into the fourth quarter, then saw Notre Dame score and win 7-0.

The eyes of the nation were on Norman that afternoon. One fan remarked that the upset *would* have to come when Oklahoma

was playing on a national television network, and in color too. Another superstitiously claimed he had known from the kickoff, because of a bad omen: the football fell over twice when the Oklahoma player tried to kick, and finally a teammate had to hold it up.

The Sooners played the game as well as they knew how. Notre Dame was simply a better team that day. Ended was an Oklahoma winning streak of 47 games, a modern record. It was the first game in a total of 123 that Oklahoma had not scored. The last time the Sooners had lost a game was in 1953, and that had been against Notre Dame, too.

Besieged by newsmen after the game, Wilkinson admitted that, no, "It was not a relief" to finally lose. Newspapers and national news magazines ran lengthy stories on the game as though it was the sports event of the year. Some of the stories were, frankly, a little silly. Two in particular hard-pedaled the grey weather over the game, the moodiness of the last quarter, and, in general, sought to make Okla-

Thousands left Owen Stadium, most stunned, some joyous, but all with downright disbelief. Wilkinson told reporters, No, it was not a relief to lose.



A swift end run in the 1956 Orange Bowl game between Oklahoma and Maryland stirred up plenty of excitement. Oklahoma won, final score 20-6.

homa's defeat look a bit like Greek tragedy. For example, one story had Oklahomans shuddering in a silence greyer than the weather, Sooners bursting into tears as they returned to the dressing room and one sobbing, "We should have pulled it out. We've been doing it for a long time."

Another concentrated on Wilkinson's faint and presumably forced smile when interviewed by reporters, and on the way he kicked cigarette butts in frustration while standing on the sidelines during the game.

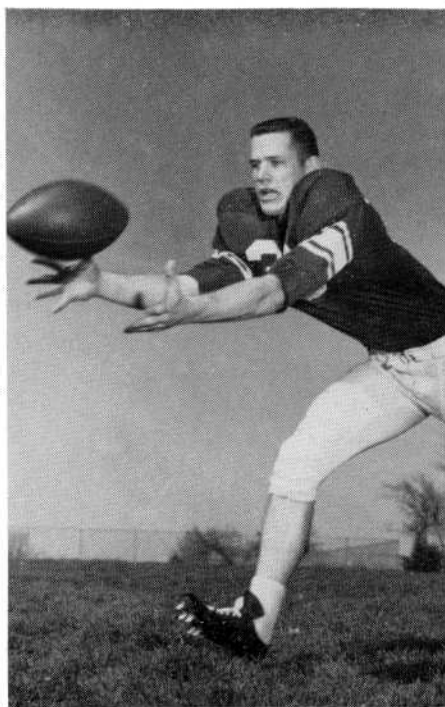
What the press seemed to have missed sight of was that, though no Oklahomans felt really "relieved" to finally watch a losing game, few took the defeat so hard that they went home weeping. The crowd gave both the Sooners and the Irish individual hands at game's end. The public address system jokingly urged fans to tune in their radios the following Saturday, to listen to O. U. start "another winning streak," and there was nothing forced in the humor.

Oklahomans felt a sharp, momentary sense of disaster when they finally realized Notre Dame had got the best of the Sooners. Then they went home and did some writing: on the Monday following the game, Wilkinson's office was flooded with letters and telegrams, hundreds of them, from loyal fans who wanted the coach to know just how remarkable they considered his record.

Two weeks later a news magazine learned that there were obviously a large number of other football fans around the country that had been eager to see Oklahoma lose. In their Letters to the Editor column, the magazine printed remarks from readers to this effect: "Oklahoma didn't even have the best football team in Norman . . . November 16, much less the best one in the nation." "One tough game a year tucked in among a bunch of patsies doesn't mean a thing . . . Oklahoma is a very big frog in a very little puddle." "An overrated team with a fair defense, no passing game, and a mediocre running attack. And brother, are they dull to watch!"

In an article designed to explain what was wrong with the Sooners, the Associated Press came out and flatly said that a big factor was the loss—by graduation—of quarterback Jimmy Harris last year. Harris did spark what was Wilkinson's greatest team. Then AP stated that Oklahoma's usually fine offensive power had "stalled this season."

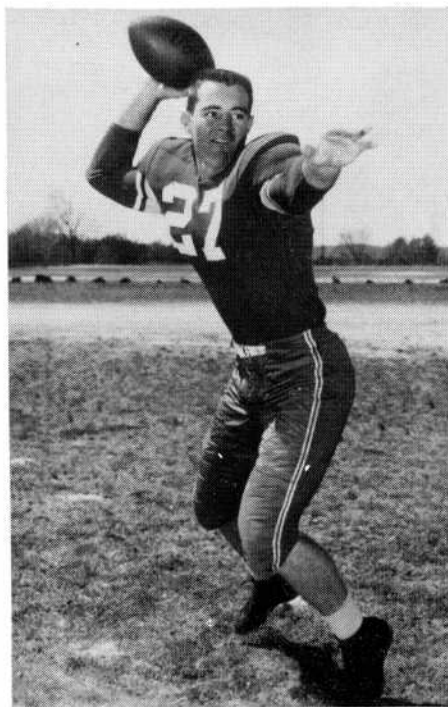
Notre Dame was not "the end" for the Sooners. The following week O. U. bounced back and beat Nebraska 32-7, then went on to close the season with a



Oklahoma's Clendon Thomas

win over Oklahoma State, 53-6. These last two games were, naturally and unfortunately, anti-climactic. The Wilkinson edition had won its conference championship and was headed for Miami.

This will be Oklahoma's fourth game in the Orange Bowl. The first performance there was in 1939, and Oklahoma lost to Tennessee, 17-0. Sooners have also played



Duke's Wray Carlton

in Sugar and Gator Bowls on New Year's Day.

Four years ago the Sooners met Maryland, the number one team in the country, at Miami and defeated her 7-0. One of the most stirring plays in Oklahoma's gridiron history occurred when a determined Sooner eleven held Maryland for four downs when the latter was a few feet from the goal. Two years ago the two met in the Orange Bowl again. This time Oklahoma was top-ranked and, again, threw Maryland (third-ranked) for a loss. Final score was 20-6.

The Orange Bowl has, in a sense, grown up fairly recently. Whereas at one time all eyes appeared to be turned to California's Rose Bowl, that attraction now comes in for some sturdy competition from the Florida festival, and from other bowl games. The Orange Bowl has strengthened its bid for attention in the manner followed by most bowls: national televising, spectacular and expensive parades and coronations, and, through good fortune or just plain good thinking, by often latching on to top teams.

This year all bowl games look like fairly good bets. Ohio State will meet Oregon at Pasadena's Rose Bowl. Mississippi meets Texas in the Sugar Bowl at New Orleans. Gator Bowl spectators in Jacksonville will watch Tennessee challenge Texas A&M, and the Cotton Bowl brings Rice and Navy to Dallas.

Oklahoma, of course, challenges Duke University, choice of the Atlantic Coast Conference. The Duke Blue Devils, coached by William D. Murray, are traditionally a tough crew. Taking into account the performance of all football teams for the past quarter-century, the Associated Press listed Duke as fourth best (numbers one through three are Notre Dame, Tennessee and Oklahoma). Of the ten games played by the North Carolina school in 1957, six were wins, two were ties and there were two losses. Maryland and Rice were a couple of the teams that went down to Duke, and Duke went down to Georgia Tech and North Carolina.

Outstanding Duke players to watch for are fullback Harold McElhane, halfback Wray Carlton, guard Ambrose Hord, tackle John Topping and end John Thompson. According to Coach Murray, Duke's problem at the start of the season was to replace "a truly great quarterback" (Sonny Jurgensen) and six starters from the first team line. But Murray predicted a "spirited, well-organized squad with enough experienced candidates at each position," and he was correct.

**BOUND FOR THE
ORANGE BOWL**
Continued

Oklahoma gridders planned to leave Norman on December 26, flying to Florida in two chartered planes. After arrival in Miami in the afternoon, the schedule called for the team to check into the Bal Harbor Hotel on Miami Beach.

The University of Miami's practice field at Coral Gables was decided on as the site of Sooner workouts. "Although this necessitates a punishing 40-mile daily round trip bus ride through heavy traffic," said Harold Keith, O. U. sports publicity director, "the Miami U. athletic facilities are so superb that it was decided to train there anyhow. Oklahoma also practiced there in 1953 and 1955."

The schedule called for five days' workout, and some thought the Sooners might

be the wiser for planning it that way. Oklahoma is good on defense, lacking on offense, and Duke is a fine team. Said Wilkinson, "Duke has played a difficult schedule most successfully. They are an exceptionally sound, strong, big football team, excellently coached."

Wilkinson knew. He and Bill Murray had exchanged five films each of their 1957 games.

The Orange Bowl classic is to be televised. Channels and times will naturally vary with the viewers' locations. Probable starting lineups for both teams follow:

OKLAHOMA		
No.	Name	Position
35	Clendon Thomas	RH
65	Bill Krisher	RG
54	Bob Harrison	C
28	Jakie Sandefer	LH

22	Carl Dodd	QB
51	Dennit Morris	FB
89	Don Stiller	LE
76	Byron Searcy	LT
68	Joe Oujesky	LG
61	Doyle Jennings	RT
80	Joe Rector	RE

DUKE		
No.	Name	Position
82	Dave Hurm	LE
76	John Topping	LT
60	Roy Hord	LG
56	Wade Byrd	C
63	Buzz Guy	RG
78	John Kersey	RT
81	Bill Thompson	RE
17	Bob Brodhead	QB
23	Eddie Rushton	LH
47	George Dutrow	RH
35	Hal McElhanev	FB



This year's Orange Bowl queen and four princesses get together on Miami Beach. From left, Rosemary Morris, Paula Parsons, Queen Marcia Valibus, Francine Coffey, and Sue Manion.



Basking in the famous Florida sun are the City of Miami and City of Miami Beach (background). Visitors flock to the two resorts for the Orange Bowl.

Parrots, flamingoes, tropical fish, coral, orchids, bougainvillea-draped trees—they're all fairly common sights to residents of Miami and Miami Beach. So are the coronations, parades and grid battles of the Orange Bowl as the new year approaches. This Jamboree attracts 500,000 spectators, nothing unusual, for Miami entertains four million yearly.

Miami was bracing itself for the 1957-58 festivities. Hotels, motels and tourist attractions expected a record influx of visitors for the extravaganza (which actually lasts nine days.) The festival starts off Christmas night with the annual Shrine North-South College All-Star football game.

Then the five-day Orange Bowl Regatta gets underway, and on December 31 is held the Orange Bowl Junior Tennis Tournament.

The King Orange Jamboree, called "America's outstanding nighttime parade," comes New Year's Eve, and more than 500,000 spectators usually line Miami's streets to watch it pass.

Theme of this year's extravaganza is "A Wink at the World," a sort of interna-

tional salute to America's good neighbors. About 50 floats and 25 marching bands bring the parade's cost to around three million dollars.

The 76,000 persons who jam the Orange Bowl New Year's Day go for two things: the football game and the halftime show. The latter is kept secret until the final moment. The show is repeated on the following night in the Bowl, and in addition there is a fireworks pageant.

A new item on the festival program this year is the National Sports Car Races.

What is Miami like? Residents claim it is startlingly different from any other city anywhere. It is large and metropolitan, has a population of 750,000 and grows yearly by about 50,000. Four million people flock to this resort annually.

Entertainment ranges from opera through horse and dog racing, swimming, football, boxing and stock car racing.

There are strange "missing links" in Miami's face. For example, there are no ancient buildings or structures except for a solitary lighthouse. There are no mountains or even hills in the landscape.

The city's scenery is tropical and marine. The Everglades lie nearby, and the Florida Keys just to the south. Parrots, flamingoes, tropical fish, coral reefs, orchids and bougainvillea-draped trees are fairly common sights.

It's all pretty fascinating and constitutes another good reason why Oklahomans flock there to see out the old and ring in the new, along with people from all over the United States.