

B A S K E T B A L L at O. U.

By JIM JONES, '59



“I WOULDN'T predict at all that we will have as good a season as last year, but I do believe we'll have a better team.”

With the sound of basketballs pounding against the Field House floor outside his office signifying the start of another practice session, Coach Doyle Parrack summed up Oklahoma's outlook for the coming roundball season.

“I think we should have a better team than last year,” the soft-spoken Sooner coach continued. “We have all but one boy back from last year, and we've got more height and depth than ever before.”

Then why the cautious outlook for the coming season? “The conference will be a lot better balanced,” Parrack explained. “Kansas State should be the toughest team in the league again, but Kansas will be real tough too. Iowa State, Missouri and Nebraska will be a lot better this year too.”

Oklahoma's non-conference schedule isn't going to be any easier either. The Sooners tackle Southern Methodist, Minnesota, Hardin-Simmons and Texas Western in non-league games at Norman and meet Texas Tech, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois on the road.

“Our toughest non-conference games will be the Big Ten competition,” Parrack prophesied. “Southern Methodist will be

tough too. They're definitely one of the best teams in the Southwest conference.”

Oklahoma opens with a pair of home games meeting Texas Western, December 2, and Hardin-Simmons, December 5. The Sooners are at home with S.M.U. on December 15 and Minnesota on December 23 and then journey to Kansas City, December 26-30, for the Big Eight conference tournament and their final non-league games. Oklahoma opens Big Eight competition at Colorado, January 8.

Oklahoma will definitely have more height and depth than at any time since Parrack took over the head coaching reins in 1955. One of Parrack's toughest problems in pre-season workouts will be to pick a starting team from the 16 to 20 players who have proven almost equal in ability so far.

With nine returning lettermen and one of the tallest and most talented freshmen crops ever assembled at Oklahoma battling for positions, it's no wonder Parrack can safely say, “we'll have a lot better team.”

Not a player on the team stands under 6-1, and senior Denny Price is the only man that short. More than half of the 20 varsity players are 6-6 or taller. Heading the treetop parade are 6-9 Robert Bridwell; John Elias and Brian Etheridge, both 6-8;



Lewis, a reserve during his sophomore season and for the first half of last year, became Oklahoma's hottest scorer down the stretch. The southpaw pumper ended with an average of 7.6 points per game.

Kerneck led the freshman team in scoring last year with a 13.5 average while McCurdy ranked third with an even 10 points per game.

Parrack continued with his personnel outlook, "We've been working a sophomore, Connie McGuire, and Marsh (Jack, a senior) mostly at center so far. McGuire has shown the most up to now. But he had a pretty bad knee injury the other day, and I don't know how serious it is yet. Another sophomore, Darrell Hohmann, might play some."

Oklahoma is probably strongest at forward where three lettermen and at least four outstanding sophomore prospects hold forth.

"Our forwards right now are Joe Lee Thompson, Buddy Russell, Del Heidebrecht, Bill Hammond, and sophomores Etheridge, Lee (Jack) and Fouts," Parrack noted. "Etheridge has a good chance of making the starting team, and he'll probably double at center."

Etheridge, an all-stater from Denver, was the second best freshman scorer last year with a 13.3 average per game. A former high school football letterman and also a shot putter on the O.U. outdoor track team, the 6-8 by 210-pound Etheridge shoots the hook well and is deadly with either a set or jump shot from around the circle.

Heidebrecht, a 6-6 senior who missed most of last season because of an injured knee, had the second best scoring average on the varsity with 10.3 points per game. The lefthander was a junior college all-American at Arkansas City.

Hammond holds the Sooners' best field goal percentage record for a single season, connecting on 46.5 per cent of his shots as a sophomore. At 6-6 and 210 pounds, he is always dangerous around the basket.

While many people might think that having to choose the top five players from so many promising prospects would cause the coach to sprout gray hairs, Parrack will be the first to disagree.

"It feels real nice," the dark-haired Sooner coach said with a conservative smile. "It makes coaching much easier. There is also considerably more interest and competition on the squad—and that makes for a good team."

But Parrack quickly admitted that there was a bad side to having several players of nearly equal ability. "There is a problem involved in having to get down to the 10

or 12 boys who'll do most of the playing," he pointed out. "When we do this, we're liable to neglect a boy who might come along a little later in the year with some work. But we try to leave the gate open to them if they should develop."

Parrack said that there are two ways a coach can handle a squad, "depending on the material at hand. You like to have two teams of equal ability," he explained, "so that you can substitute freely by the unit system or substitute individually where no man will weaken the unit. But generally you don't have 10 boys who can win against any team they play."

He added, "The other way is to get down to five boys and keep working with them. You'll get a better effort from them because they learn to work together."

What will Oklahoma try? "We'll try to get down to five or seven men if possible," Parrack remarked.

"We certainly have a better team in talent and depth than we've ever had at Oklahoma," Parrack went on. "As far as playing other teams, we will come nearer than ever before in matching them. Always in the past we've been on the short end of talent against other teams. We still don't have the top big boy we need," the coach said tugging at his red and white "Oklahoma" jacket.

It's been a long haul up the basketball ladder for Parrack in his four years at Oklahoma. Improvement has been steady, but the mentor must have thought several times that success was certainly slow. His first Sooner team was 4-19 for the season, and the next year Parrack's Big Red went to 8-13.

The 1957-58 club had a 13-10 record to become Oklahoma's first winning cage team since 1950. Last winter's 15-10 mark was the best Oklahoma season record since the 1946-47 Sooner outfit won 24 games.

Parrack attributes last season's second place finish in the Big Eight conference to better talent and a different offense. "We changed our style of play in the latter part of last year, and we felt we played better," he said.

"In the past, we ran more of a set type of offense with the high-low post with variations each year," Parrack recalled. "But we changed to a single post, free lance type of offense last year. We plan to use that more this season," he said picking up a list of play patterns from his desk.

"We call it a free lance offense regulated by rules," he explained. "It gives each boy a better opportunity to develop his indi-

and Warren Fouts, Connie McGuire, Darrell Hohmann and Kenneth Burd, all at 6-7. Burd is the only "non-sophomore" in the skyscraping section.

"It's hard to tell who'll play at this stage," Parrack confided. At this point the noise of bouncing basketballs on the hardwood surface became more pronounced as the entire squad took warm-up shots. Two-year letterman Price bobbed his head into the office for a pre-practice conference with the coach.

After advising Price to work this practice lightly and rest his injured leg for next week, Parrack swung around in his chair and leaned back. "Our top guards will probably be Ray Lewis and Denny (Price) if they continue as they did last year. Price will definitely be in there, but Roger Potts and Buddy Hudson and Phil Leonard are also very good. Then we have a couple of sophomores—McCurdy (Tom) and Kernek (George)—who could play," he continued.

Price led the Sooner scorers last year with a 13.1 point average per game. A highly inspirational player on both offense and defense, Price was named to the All-Big Eight second team chosen by the Associated Press and United Press International last year.

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BASKETBALL

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vidual skills. In this offense, no man is more important than another. It's designed for better balance. The double post offense put the burden on our post men. If anything, the free lance will increase the possibility of guard play a little."

The changing from a set style of offense to the free lance may slow the Sooner sophomores' progress until they catch on to its workings.

"The free lance is harder to teach than the set pattern," Parrack admitted. "You have to spend more time teaching individual skills such as driving, shooting, passing and straight fundamentals. These

sophomores were brought up under the set pattern, and it may take them longer to adapt."

A lack of talented personnel prevented Parrack from employing the free lance at Oklahoma before last year. "Poorer material must have a regulated play to give them something to do that they can't do on their own," Parrack reasoned.

Oklahoma's defense this year will be basically the same as in the past—a sinking man-to-man. "But I hope it's better," Parrack grinned. "I feel in practice so far that our defense is farther along than our offense."

Across the hall in another office, freshman coach and chief recruiter Paul Geymann was buried behind stacks of mimeographed play patterns to be used in Okla-

homa's first annual high school coaching clinic.

Asked how he felt about Oklahoma's freshman crop this year, Geymann leaned back clasping his hands in front of his chin and beamed, "I'm real pleased. We got everybody we were trying to get except maybe one boy."

By then it was time for practice to get underway. Whistles swinging from their necks, Parrack and Geymann sauntered onto the gym floor for a talk with the squad.

Oklahoma may bear out Parrack's prediction and not improve a great deal on last year's record. There are those who don't agree. But one thing is certain—the Sooners are well on their way to becoming a basketball power in the Southwest.

ARCHITECTURE

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Just what constitutes beauty in a building is a moot and subjective question. Beauty is not attained by novelty, the bizarre or the quaint.

Mr. Estes also states that in his opinion designing a home is "a relatively artless matter." Contrary to this, my architect colleagues and I find the design of a house for an individual client as much a problem as the design of any other building and far from the "simple kind of challenge" that he says it is.

We also find that in relation to the amount of work involved the financial compensation is less than for other types of building. Some architect's offices will not accept a commission for a dwelling for that reason. On the other hand, many architects find the design of a house a challenge they enjoy taking, even though their financial compensation is relatively less.

Mr. Estes takes our schools of architecture to task for "soft-pedaling" such basic considerations as building codes, selection of appropriate materials and staying within a budget. We "do not get down to earth" he says.

He apparently knows nothing of our curriculum here at the School of Architecture of the University of Oklahoma, nor how it is taught. Had he taken the trouble to inquire, he would have learned that we start our beginning classes in structure with the use of the National Building Code.

We begin with elementary structure in the freshman year, and continue through indeterminate structures in the fourth year. We discuss costs and budgets and practical construction methods and details.

Just plain draughting and lettering is taught and heavily stressed throughout the five years.

But we do not lose sight of the fact that we are a school of architecture in a university—an institution of higher learning—and not a trade school. Our aim is to prepare the student for the practice of architecture, a very difficult and demanding profession that requires creative artistic talent, technical knowledge in many fields and the capacity to co-ordinate the work of other professions and many trades.

We must not only strike a balance between art and science, theory and technique, but in addition make as well-rounded an individual as is possible in five years, and not a narrow specialist. He should have a knowledge of history, of the evolution of art and architecture, some conception of economics and government, and a command of the English language, spoken and written.

That's a big order, even in five years, and throughout we must encourage the exercise and development of inherent talent and creativity under a discipline of the techniques of structural design and the limitations of building materials and costs.

In the 10 years that I have been a teacher at this university, our faculty has been continually at work on the curriculum, examining subject matter and methods, texts and reading material. We are all architects and engineers with years of experience in design, actual building and teaching. We think we have one of the best-balanced curricula in architecture—and we are still working on it.

The "high-flown ideals" Mr. Estes derides so glibly have a place in a college curriculum; but we do not neglect the practical, as he seems to believe.

ROTARIANS

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nating committee for president of Rotary International in 1961-62. Dr. Procter is a former member and past president of the Ada club and a member of the Chickasha club while serving as president of the Oklahoma College for Women. He is now a member of the Rotary Club of Houston, where he is vice president of the Star Engraving Company.

Other University men who have served as Rotary International District Governors in recent years are Joe W. McBride, '28bus, Anadarko publisher and former University Regent; Earl Gray, '10ba, Ardmore attorney; R. Boyd Gunning, '37ba, '37Law, executive secretary of the University of Oklahoma Association, Norman; J. Phil Burns, '27ba, Oklahoma City; Hugh Southwick, '21pharm, Garber pharmacist, and Robert V. Peterson, O.U. professor of journalism.

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