

# Ice Hockey ----

## in Oklahoma?

**T**HE whirr of ice skates and the swish of a hockey puck—both sounds a bit alien to the southwest United States—are currently being heard in an Oklahoma City ice-skating arena. Largely responsible are 12 University of Oklahoma students from Canada.

And the O.U. hockey addicts, who form the nucleus of the Oklahoma City Warrior ice hockey team, have their sights set on building a bright future for the sport in Oklahoma.

Hard-pressed for fan attention by the more widely-understood American winter sports, hockey got off to a winging start in the area last year as the then newly-organized team posted a 3-1 showing.

Playing in a small Oklahoma City arena with a seating capacity of about 400, the Warriors have had their difficulties in their early matches this year. However, with their enthusiasm undiminished, they are optimistically looking forward to a strong finish for the remainder of their schedule.

Matches this year have included a trip to Amarillo and an Oklahoma City contest with a team from Salt Lake City, Utah. "We also have hopes of scheduling a game in Dallas in late January if arrangements can be made," says Pete McGregor, one of the team's co-captains and an O.U. business junior.

The Canadians, most of whom cut their eyeteeth on a hockey stick, are among many

of their fellow countrymen who each year give up their favorite sport to come to colleges and universities in the United States where the game is practically unknown.

Most of the 12 now at O.U. had no intention of playing any competitive hockey at the University. However, their mutual interest in the game provided a unifying link and the team was the inevitable result.

Guided by Vern Turner, himself a long-time professional standout with the Duluth, Minn., team, the Warriors posted their lone win so far this season against the visiting Utah skaters.

Serving with McGregor as co-captain is Ed Wong, who played amateur hockey in western Canada. Actually, both the squad leaders are veterans of the Canadian rinks with McGregor playing in Calgary, Alberta, and Wong skating for teams in Olds, Alberta.

Other Calgary representatives on the Warriors are Bob Lawrence, business graduate student; Vic Lakusta, petroleum engineering junior; Gene Blazenko, geology sophomore; Jim Chaput, business junior; Paul Poffenroth, civic engineering graduate student; Jim Cullen, petroleum engineering senior; Jim Powell, geology senior, and John Brockbank, engineering junior.

Also listed as squad members are Bert Brown, Airdrie, Alberta, petroleum engineering student, and Don MacDonald, Edmonton, Alberta, architecture junior.

The team is rounded out by businessmen and students from Oklahoma City. Scheduling and expenses are chiefly handled by Dick Reno, a capital city hockey enthusiast who doubles as manager.

Whenever possible, the team holds practice sessions twice weekly and plays at least one game a week. Sometimes, though, classes and studies throw quite a crimp into the hockey activities for the Canadians, "especially with so many in engineering fields," explains McGregor.

Although an operation of limited size this season, the team has some ambitious plans for the future. "Our goal for next year is to organize an amateur league which will include teams in Dallas, Oklahoma City, Wichita, Amarillo and Tulsa," McGregor says.

If enthusiasm and love of the sport are any measure of potential, it would be a mistake to doubt the ability of the O.U. "rink rats" to make this plan a reality.

