The Winged Sooners
Fast Team Ready for One of Hardest Schedules
By Fayette Copeland, '18, University Publicity Director

SEASONED by only 15 days of practice, the 1928 edition of the Sooner football team, the second produced by Adrian H. Lindsey, was scheduled to swing into action against the Indiana Hoosiers at Bloomington, October 6.

An even dozen letter-men answered the first call for practice, September 17, and around these Lindsey is building the team that will represent Oklahoma in the newly-organized Big Six conference.

Although the nucleus of veterans is small, a wealth of reserve material came up from last year's Boomer squad, and side-line fans who have watched practice from the start predict that Oklahoma will have two full lines and at least three backfield combinations about on par.

Linemen back in the harness include three tackles and three guards who earned letters last season. The tackles are: Capt. Bill Hamilton, who is playing his third year for the Sooners; Tom Churchill, who played every tackle job this year, and Leon Smith, who won his spurs in 1927 by filling a wide gap when both regulars were on the injured list. Leon Phillips, Harry Berry and Victor Marsh, all of whom made letters at guard during their first year of participation here last season, are back in the harness.

The backfield has four halfbacks, one quarterback, and one fullback from previous years. Jack Carman, who earned fame as end at Bristow during his high school days and who played halfback his first year in '27, has been shifted to end again. The remaining three halfbacks are Frank Crider, Bus Haskins and Bruce Drake, all of whom figured prominently in Oklahoma's scoring last year. Al Mayhew, who started last season at quarterback, is running one of the four squads that are working out daily on Owen Field.

Paul Ward, who lettered for the last two seasons at fullback, completes the list of veterans. On paper the team appears complete with the exception of a couple of ends and a center, but the sophomore crew is demanding attention in such a manner that new blood may be injected in both the line and backfield before the season is well under way. Candidates for the line who cannot be overlooked include Weldon Gentry and Alvin Mulrow, guards, who tip the scales between 195 and 200 pounds and who have the build, speed and athletic background to make them fit readily into any good team.
Bob Fields, who was understudy at the center job last season, returned weighing 200 pounds, but he is facing competition from Bob Garrett, a 220-pounder, Finis Parham and Clifton Shearer, who weigh in at a little less than 190. The center job may fall to one of this quartet, but the duties of the post likely will be divided.

Sooner Schedule
October 6. Indiana at Bloomington.
October 20. Creighton at Omaha.
October 27. Kansas Aggies at Norman.
November 3. Iowa State at Ames.
November 10. Nebraska at Norman (Homecoming).
November 17. Kansas at Lawrence.
November 29. Missouri at Norman.

the Sooners are driving down the field, one of these youngsters will be snapping the ball back, but when Oklahoma takes the defensive Churchill, who has developed a satisfying habit of knocking down opponents' passes, will play roving center behind the line.

So far this season have given Fenton Taylor and Francis Roberts the inside track on the two wing jobs. Both are tall and fast and both can snatch forward passes from the air in a manner that is highly pleasing to Lindsey. But a football coach never was safe who had only two wingmen, and the Oklahoma mentor smiles when he looks over to the hustling ends on his squad. Carman has the advantage of a year's experience under Lindsey, and will have to be reckoned with whenever the starting lineup is selected. Heston Singletary, Buck Weever and Wyman Henry, all sophomores, have given promise of showing first string qualifications before the season is well under way. In addition to his two starting ends, Lindsey has four reserves who can be counted on to perform creditably under any emergency.

The abundance of material also is evident in the scramble for the guard positions.

Weldon "Spot" Gentry, a 198-pound husky seems to be headed for a sure berth at guard, although Harry Berry, Marsh and Phillips are back with O's from last year's team to show how well they performed. Gentry, despite his weight and his gorilla-like build is fast, is an incessant worker and a
heady lineman. Then there is Alvin Muldrow, a sophomore, who weighs 195 pounds, and who threatens to step into the shoes his brother Hal was graduated from last year. Walden Cooley, Ralph Cochrane and F. P. Schonwald, also eligible for the first time, are husky, dependable guards to be used at any time. Curtis Berry, member of last year's squad, is back with the added weight he needed last season.

Fewer candidates are out for the tackle positions than any others on the team, Churchill and Hamilton undoubtedly will get the first call for the starting lineup, but Leon Smith, letter tackle from last season, probably will get into every game this season. Then there are Ellis Orr, a 220-pounder, John Lee, and Ralph Cochrane, sophomores, and Roy Nelson and Chester Napps, heavyweight from last year's squad, who form a mountain of reserve strength.

Fans who have tracked up and down the sidelines since practice began have remarked often that this year's group of sophomore backs is the most impressive since 1920. Flint, Daugherty, Swinford, and Lynn, halfbacks; Buster Mills and Clyde Kirk, fullbacks; and Ray Fox and Abe Kitchell, quarterbacks, are on hand to offset the graduation of Ray LeCrone and Preston Wooley from the 1927 team. By sprinkling his veterans in with the sophomores, Lindsey has had three powerful backfields in action this season, each with three kickers, two accurate passers and a powerful line-plunger. And each of these combinations boasts of more speed than Oklahoma could produce last year.

CHECK of possible line and backfield combinations indicates that Oklahoma's line this year will weigh close to 185 pounds, considerably heavier than last year's line, and that the backfield also will weigh in considerably heavier, probably averaging 168 pounds.

After the first day's practice this season Lindsey remarked: "We're much better off than we were at this time last season." It might have been the strength of the reserve crop that prompted his remark, but more likely it was the added speed that this year's squad has over last year's.

"This extra margin of speed is expected to show results in yards gained from the very beginning of the season, since quick get-away has been the subject of coaches' harangues at every practice period.

Following the Indiana game, the team comes home for its annual game with the Boomers on October 13. The following Saturday will find Oklahoma at Omaha for a return game with the Creighton Bluejays who played the Sooners to a 13-13 draw here last season.

Kansas Aggies, who have either tied or defeated the Sooners every year since 1920, come to Norman October 27 for the first Big Six conference game. Then on November 3 the team invades Ames for its first clash with Iowa State, and comes back home for the homecoming game with Nebraska November 10. Two former games—Kansas at Lawrence on November 17, and Oklahoma Aggies at Stillwater on November 24—and then the final game of the season, with Missouri at Norman.

Only three major conference games here, with Kansas Aggies, Nebraska and Missouri, but each a whale of a game! Sooner fans should see more football from their seats in the two wings of the big stadium this season than they have seen in years.

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The Coaching Staff

It is a far cry from the day when Bennie Owen coached the Sooners, unassisted, to the present when a staff of eight directs the practice of the red and white gridders. Yet all of the eight are kept busy correcting the faults of the 50 squad members, perfecting formations and building the team.

Last season Bennie decided to devote all his time to directing the larger athletic program of the university, and turned the job of head football coach over to Adrian H. Lindsey, a former Kansas star. Claude Reeds, famous early-day Sooner fullback, is head line-coach and is being assisted in his work by Paul Keen, wrestling coach and former Oklahoma Aggie griddler, and Mort Brown, end, and "Granny" Norris, captain and tackle from last year's team. Hugh McDermott, Sooner basketball coach, and an Oklahoma backfield star in the war days is assistant backfield coach, L. E. "Jap" Haskell, end on the Sooners' Valley championship team of 1920 and now head baseball coach, serves as freshman football coach during the fall.

Sam Clammer, last year's tackle who is ineligible because of the three year playing rule, is assisting Reeds coach the linemen.

And Bennie, himself, is still very much a member of the football coaching staff.

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