They've got their dander up

BY HAROLD KEITH, '28

It's a "Big Six" championship contender this fall because it has shown a sustained sweep of fine fighting spirit, because nothing much was expected of it at the start of the year and it could therefore, play without tenseness, because so far it has suffered few serious injuries, because it has players on its roster who rank technically with any in the conference and because of a splendid spirit of teamwork and comradeship among the men themselves.

Then there's another thing. The twenty-seven men on the squad, incidentally the smallest Sooners football in the last ten years, are enrolled in the University of Oklahoma because they prefer it to any other school. They don't get big salaries, in fact most of them barely make board and room, so they are here because they like it here.

Frederick Ware, sports editor of the Omaha World-Herald, who hadn't visited the Sooner campus for two years, came to Norman last month to cover the Oklahoma Nebraska contest for his newspaper and hadn't watched Adrian H. Lindsey's
On the opposite page you see the squad from which Ad Lindsey is moulding his Big Six championship football contender. Below is Band Director Wehrend’s proteges forming O. U. for the Homecoming football crowd. On this page, below, you see Bus Mills (No. 7) starting on his fifty-three yard run in the Nebraska game, a run that resulted in a touchdown and the husking of the Cornhuskers. The team reacted to a man and by superlative blocking cleared the path for the speedy Mills. Fred Cherry (No. 1 in the picture), end, is bringing down Young, Nebraska half back, Captain Fields (No. 2), tackle, is after the Nebraska safety man, Guy Warren (No. 3), halfback, and Paul Young (No. 4), center, have just disposed of Frahm, Nebraska guard, while Hilary Lee (No. 5), guard, and Dwight Reahm, umpire, are following the ball. (Latter photo courtesy of The Last Yard)

1930 team play a full quarter before he recognized in the fierceness and impetuosity of the Sooner fighting a burning pride in the fact they were Sooners, and not Jayhawers or Cornhuskers or Tigers.

Returning to Omaha he wrote:

The Sooners that overwhelmed the Huskers did so because they fought with a spirit that money cannot buy. There are no salaried boys in the Sooner ranks. They’re down there at Norman because they want to be there, and many of the pool parlor experts believe they are there because no other school wanted them, for Director Bennie Owen and his staff refuse to buy football talent.

Before the Nebraska game nobody much could “see” the Sooners of 1930. Both Head Coach Adrian H. Lindsey and Line Coach Dewey “Snorter” Luster were openly morbid concerning the team’s prospects, especially before newspapermen, who remained credulous even after the 47-to-0 flogging of New Mexico, imputing the hugeness of that score to New Mexico’s weakness rather than Sooner brilliance, although Tom Churchill, the big all-around Sooner athlete of last year and now the New Mexico assistant coach, who had seen his charges fail to make a single first down, wasn’t fooled.

“Somebody’s been puttin’ out a lotta hooey down here,” declared Tom in his plain unburnished athletic speech. “We came down here expecting to face a bunch of underfed midgets and instead found a bunch of socking huskies. Those Sooners are going to surprise a lot of teams this year. They’ve got the stuff to beat Nebraska. They look to me like the best team Oklahoma’s had in years.”

However the general football going public, outside of Norman, couldn’t see any grounds for cheerfulness. Nebraska, long the lord of Missouri Valley and “Big Six” conference football, was invading Owen field the following Saturday for the first conference game. The big boys from the Cornlands had threshed the Texas Aggies by two touchdowns the same afternoon Oklahoma was defeating New Mexico. They had gained 290 yards from scrimmage on open football against the Texans and boasted a 190-pound line that three weeks later held Pittsburgh scoreless just seven days after the Panthers had touchdowned three times against Knute Rockne’s Notre Dame team.

State sports editors prepared bandages and obituaries and made ready to pick up the pieces. It looked like a slaughter.

However nearly everyone was ignorant of the fine fighting spirit the Oklahoma coaches had built up. Jim Hopkins, sports editor of the Oklahoma News and the team’s staunchest newspaper friend all through the unpleasant hostility shown Sooner coaches and players last year, saw this new spirit and also its prototype among the student body.

Before Oklahoma had played a game this fall he wrote:

The spirit of the Sooner followers and most of the gridsters is better than it has been in the three years I have been closely associated with football here. Such spirit causes me to stand unqualifiedly behind the University of Oklahoma football team, Bennie Owen and Ad Lindsey although I never went to school at the University of Oklahoma. The team doesn’t look so good and deep down in my heart I can’t expect so much of it, but win or lose, it’s my team.

Coach Lindsey himself, in a later interview declared that “he had never had a bunch of lads with better spirit,
and that makes up for a lot physical shortcomings.

All the pre-game predictions were pessimistic.

B. A. Bridgewater, sports editor of the *Tulsa World*, who is not unfriendly to Sooner teams and policies, nevertheless wrote: "I have an idea Nebraska is three or more touchdowns better than Oklahoma this year," while Bus Ham, sports editor of the *Daily Oklahoman*, who was a bit more conservative than Mr. Bridge water, forecast a Nebraska victory by "upward of fourteen points."

What happened out on Owen field that Saturday afternoon astonished everyone.

Beautifully synchronized blocking, stupefying defensive play by a Sooner line of steel, two long runs by Sooner backs who proved themselves perfectly at home in a broken field and a well-thrown aerial to an end who crossed diagonally to take the ball within a few inches of the sidelines held the 8,571 spectators spellbound and brought an Oklahoma victory by 20 to 7.

The score could very well have been 20 to 0. Without belittling the Nebraska offense may one say it. Quarterback Ab Walker, who had cocked his arm and drilled a spiraling football thirty yards into the wind into Fred Cherry's arms for the last Sooner touchdown blocked a Cornhusker pass a little too aggressively in the third quarter and the grateful Huskers found themselves possessing the leather on the Oklahoma twenty yard line, from whence they scored although the light Red and White forwards made them travel four downs to tally from the five-yard mark.

The Sooner line, which had been well-drilled by Line Coach Luster, did what few lines have done in the past 25 years when it noticeably outcharged a Nebraska set of forwards, throwing Husker backs for 50 yards in losses to 19 for Oklahoma. Curtis Berry, the 185-pound Sooner tackle, probably tossed Nebraska for more yards in losses than the whole Sooner team itself yielded. It was a big afternoon for him.

The Oklahoma attack had more variety and speed than Nebraska's. The Cornhuskers, as usual, knew no strategem save straight football and gave a depressing exhibition of forward passing, muffing ten of eleven shots. Although the Sooner line loosened spinners, reverses and double reverses, their best ground-gaining play was an off-tackle buck from an unbalanced line with the ball-carrier taking a direct pass from center and delaying slightly until the owrestler could apply sufficient pressure on the enemy tackle and end. It was off this formation that the first Oklahoma touchdown was scored.

Starting from his forty-seven yard line in the first quarter, Buster Mills, the Sooner quarterback, burst off the Cornhusker left tackle, reversed prettily and running at top speed in a course that took him perilously near the white chalk of the left sideline, wrote a 55-yard touchdown dash into the records.

Biff Jones, the former Army coach, who was a guest at the game, declared he had never seen better blocking than that by which Oklahoma players protected Mills.

Teel and Massad splattered the Husker left end, Kirk and Ewing erased the tackle, Berry and Hillary Lee checked the end, probably tossed Nebraska for more yards in losses than the whole Sooner team itself yielded. It was a big afternoon for him.

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From then on it was Oklahoma's game. The defeat was Nebraska's first in her conference since Missouri nosed her out 7 to 6 back in 1927. Hilary Lee, the Sooner guard, was then a member of the Missouri team and now enjoys the odd distinction of having played on the last two conference teams to defeat Nebraska in football.

Cy Sherman, sports editor of the *Lincoln Star*, wrote:

Foemen of the Valley region have not had the habit of bruising the Cornhuskers by decisive scores to the achievement of the Sooners today was all the more unusual in light of the fact the reverse the Nebraskans sustained was the first stinging defeat by a Valley opponent since a University of Kansas team ran up 36 points against the Huskers of 1899.

Oklahoma's feat of administering to the cornland team its worst conference licking in 41 years gives cause for pride. So does the fact Nebraska has been able to repel the elevens of her own sector that length of time.

Then came the Texas game at Dallas. The powerful Longhorns, two weeks after they defeated the Sooners by a score that should have read 10 to 7, caused many a reader of sport page to rub his glasses in gazing at the margin of the Texas victory over Southern Methodist university which was beaten 25 to 7 by Texas and only 20 to 14 by Notre Dame.

Because of the splendid Sooner fighting spirit, the light Sooners entered the fourth quarter of its game with Texas leading 7 to 0. A long pass which Warren had spun to Cherry brought the Oklahoma touchdown and made it appear that would be the final score. For the Sooner first team proved itself more than a match for the Texas first eleven.

Then Coach Littlefield began running in his 190-pound substitutes who were about as good as his starting lineup, and Oklahoma, with neither adequate nor capable reserves, yielded a touchdown and a field goal, although it thrilled the new Fair Park stadium with a goal line stand on its own four-yard line when it frustrated three Texas rushes and forced the Longhorns to try the placekick, which

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**The Sooner Magazine**

**HOW SOONERS HAVE FINISHED SINCE 1920**

**In Missouri Valley**

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*Up to November 2.*
was well-executed and neatly bisected the crossbars.

The second Texas touchdown was a gift. A Steer back intercepted a poorly thrown Sooner pass on the ten-yard line and a play or two later Texas was across the goal. The final score was 17 to 7, although 10 to 7 better illustrated the comparative strengths of the two teams.

Approximately 14,000 Homecoming day spectators, thronged Owen Stadium with the expectation of seeing plenty of pyrotechnics in the football game between the Kansas Aggies and Oklahoma, were disappointed slightly although they reveled in the single spectacular play of the game, a 49-yard run by Mills in the first quarter. Although he had been forced to resort to no wise of his own save running during his long six-point sprint against Nebraska, Mills had to rebuff the Kansas tackling so viciously that three Quakers tackled with a long dive. Mills twisted and tore out of the grasp of another and Oklahoma had a touchdown.

Thereafter the Sooners seemed content to play defensive football and the fact that they didn't permit the Wildcats to get closer than 24 yards to their goal is mute attestation to how well they succeeded.

Coach Alvin "Bo" McMillin's men didn't try many of the intricate aerial formations for which they are noted, such as basketballing the football to one another behind the line of scrimmage until a pass receiver got loose. And Oklahoma didn't open up to any great extent as Warren, who had two ribs pulled and a knee injury, was given charge of the team the past three years because of a cotton-headed squad man who has been prevent from seeing much football action.

Buster Mills, who is making a regular first Big Six conference football championship. The Jayhawks have a heavy roster weigh more than 190 pounds. Almost every Oklahoma hauled him down from before it bounced across the goal line. It was Mills' puntng was good. The halfback averaged 42 7-12 yards in twelve kicks and one of his efforts, in the first quarter, traveled seventy yards from his toe before it bounced across the goal line.

Charles "Chalkie" Stogner, the little cotton-headed squad man who has been prevented from seeing much football action the past three years because of a knee injury, was given charge of the team in the first half by Coach Lindsey and ran it with the same consummate coolness and good judgment he formerly showed as a quarterback for Coach Luster's great Norman high eleven.

The Oklahoma-Iowa State game at Ames November 1 was a scoring extravaganza. The Cyclones were a better team than Oklahoma in the first half, emerging from the field with a 13-to-6 advantage. Oklahoma scored its touchdown in the second quarter on a drive by Massad. Previously Massad had caught a thirty-yard pass from Mills to take the ball to the one-yard marker. Oklahoma evened the count in the fourth quarter by recovering Tegland's fumble on the Ames' thirty-six yard line and traveling uninterrupted to the CycIone goal. Kirk was the big noise in this splurge, catching a twenty-yard pass from Warren and plunging across for the score from the one-yard strip. Mills kicked goal and the score was tied, 13-13.

The Sooners really went to work in that fourth quarter. They scored four touchdowns and would have won the game 32 to 13 had not two of the touchdowns been disallowed.

Buster Mills, who is making a regular Monday afternoon habit of such things, broke away from his own sixteen-yard line for an 84-yard run across the Ames goal. This gallop was probably the most spectacular one of the season in any game Oklahoma has played for Mills was sorely beset by enemy players at several points of his long ramble. The Cyclones nearly checked him over the right sidelines but he reversed cleverly to elude them and made a bee line for the left hand corner of the field. Ten yards from the goal an Ames man caught him. Mills fought him off with his straightarm. But the Ames man tripped him up. For an instant they fought like wrestlers down there on the green turf near the Ames goal posts and then Mills wrenched loose and rolled across the goal line. It was the greatest play of his career.

But officials found one of his clear marks over the side line on the Sooner 45-yard line and as the long parade of officials and players walked back to that spot, the crowd saw quite plainly the enormity of the distance Mills had traveled.

Now the Sooner blood was up. They tore into the fray with renewed energy and four minutes later had another touchdown. A thirty-four-yard pass which Substitute Quarterback Clarence C. Buxton, jr. rifled to Snell brought the winning points. The pass should have gone to Roberts but he was covered so Buxton threw to Snell. The try for point failed.

On the last play of the game Oklahoma scored a fifth touchdown. Hilary Lee intercepted an Iowa State pass and lumbered unmolested to the Cyclone goal. But the ball was brought back. An over-eager Sooner had been caught clipping. Before play could start again, the final gun went off.

There was still another play in that game that deserves to be related. Few people know about it for the newspapers botched it. Grefe, fleetest man on the Ames team, got loose for a sixty-seven-yard sprint and was apparently headed for a touchdown when Captain Bob Fields of Oklahoma hauled him down from behind. Grefe had eight yards start on Fields when the big Ponca City boy took up the pursuit yet Fields caught the Ames' speedster after fifty yards of sprinting and clasp about the waist sat down with him.

The Sooners made eleven first downs to Iowa State's nine, completed eight out of eighteen passes for total gains of 142 yards and were penalized eighty yards to Iowa State's twenty, four times as much as the enemy.

Final score was 19 to 13.

The Kansas game means everything to Oklahoma's chance for her first Big Six conference football championship. The Jayhawks have a heavy team. Twelve men on their roster weigh over 200 pounds. Seventeen men on their roster weigh more than 190 pounds. Although they were beaten 21 to 6 by a great Pennsylvania team Kansas earned 11 first downs to Penn's 10, gained 193 yards from rushing to Penn's 133 and tackled so viciously that three Quakers were removed from the game with injunctions.

By winning the Kansas and Missouri clashes the Sooners will be champions. Even if Kansas goes through undefeated and Oklahoma loses her two remaining conference games, she is assured of at least a tie for second place. No matter what happens the team will be a serious contender right up to the wire and that's something no Sooner team since 1920 has been.

Right now it looks as though the Sooners of 1930 are the greatest University of Oklahoma eleven of the past decade.