

University of Oklahoma

Sooners have magical reputation

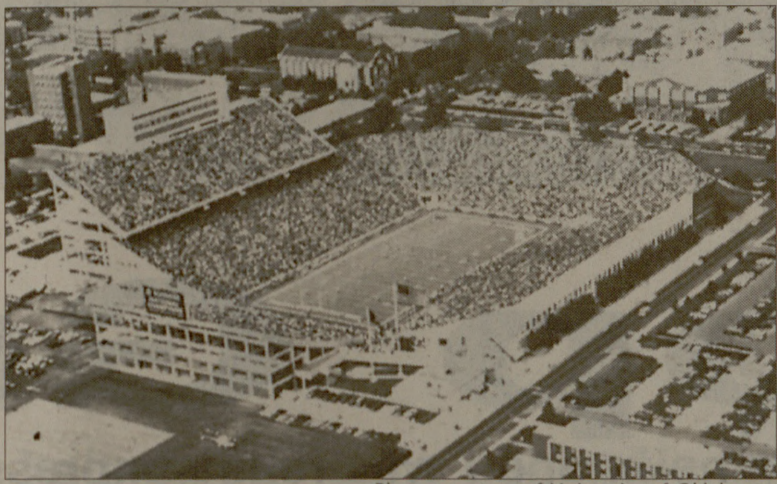


Photo courtesy of University of Oklahoma
The University of Oklahoma's Memorial Stadium seats 75,004 people.

By MATTHEW FLUME
THE BATTALION

In the middle of America's heartland between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans lies the pride of Sooner country, The University of Oklahoma.

The Sooners have always claimed to have a special "Sooner Magic" that helps them win in situations that seem to be a losing battle.

This "magic" guided the Sooners to an unprecedented victory over Nebraska in 1956, earning an invitation to the national championship game. Some might recognize one of OU's heroes, former Head Football Coach Barry Switzer, who now leads the Super Bowl Champion Dallas Cowboys.

This "Sooner Magic" is not limited to troublesome situations on the football field, but presides over the entire campus.

Established in 1890, 17 years before Oklahoma became a state in the Union, the University of Okla. is located in Norman, Oklahoma just south of Oklahoma City.

With an enrollment of more than 25,000 students, OU has 19 colleges on the main campus in Norman along with health science centers in Tulsa and Oklahoma City.

OU's wide variety of colleges, ranging from architecture and liberal arts to busi-

ness to engineering, offers students an array of academic disciplines.

The university has the largest library system in the state of Oklahoma and offers an honors program with classes of no more than 20 students.

OU's History of Science Collection is one of the top in the nation. It offers over 80,000 volumes, including rare and historical works by world famous scientists. The collection even boasts some of the original works of Galileo in his own handwriting.

The school has a reputation as an outstanding academic institution. It has been ranked first per capita among universities in the number of National Merit Scholars and Oklahoma's medical school has been ranked in the Top 20 over the past years.

Oklahoma's football team comes to the Big 12's inaugural season with little more than rebuilding in mind. The Sooners come to College Station on Nov. 12 to try to upset the Aggies on Kyle Field.

The Sooner baseball team has also enjoyed a great deal of success in the recent past. In 1994, the Oklahoma baseball team won the NCAA national championship.

With a great academic and athletic reputation, Oklahoma has built its reputation as one of the top institutions in the country.

University of Oklahoma



Location: Norman, Okla.
Founded: 1890
Enrollment: 25,000
Coach: John Blake
Colors: crimson and cream
Stadium: Memorial Stadium. Seats 75,004.
1995 record: 5-5-1
Lettermen returning: 35
Returning starters: 9
Titles won: Six national championships, 15 Big Eight titles, two Missouri Valley titles, five Big Six titles, nine Big Seven titles.

Blake focuses on team's stability

By KRISTINA BUFFIN
THE BATTALION

As the Oklahoma Sooners welcome their third coach in three seasons to Norman, the team is looking for stability while rebuilding a program that has fallen to pieces.

Former Dallas Cowboy Assistant Coach John Blake will succeed former coaches Gary Gibbs and Howard Schnellenberger and is hoping to restore the pride and tradition that has long been a part of the Sooner football program.

The Sooners return just nine starters from 1995, and previous years' recruiting classes under Gibbs and Schnellenberger were a little less than desirable.

To combat the player losses, Blake hired former Ohio State Offensive Coordinator Bill Young, former Texas Tech

Offensive Coordinator Dick Winder, and retained the Sooners senior assistant offensive line and tight ends coach Mel Johnson.

The Sooners face one of the nation's toughest schedules this year. They will face six of the top 23 teams in last year's final poll, and will play only five home games, three of which are against teams in last year's final top 25.

Sophomore quarterback Eric Moore is one of only three offensive starters returning and his performance was far from spectacular. Although he beat out former starter Garrick McGee for the job, he completed only 45 percent of his passes for 105.3 yards per game and he threw more passes to the opposing team than to his own players.

Freshman Justin Fuente is expected to challenge Moore for the position this season. Fuente set an Oklahoma high school record at Tulsa Union by passing for 2,934 yards his senior year.

Senior fullback James Allen, who was rated the nation's No. 1 high school running back four years ago, will return to stoke his college career. He has started all three years, but has run for only 1,617 yards.

The sore spot for the offense will be filling the void in the offensive line — all five starters from last year will have to be replaced. However, OU is not in need of wide receivers — it is four-deep at both split end and flanker.

Six starters from last year's 15th-ranked defense will return. Junior right tackle Martin Chase highlights the defensive line.

The OU linebacker corps looks to be the deepest area on the defense.

Senior middle linebacker Tyrell Peters has been OU's leading tackler for two straight seasons and senior linebacker Broderick Simpson was not far behind him.

Senior free safety Anthony Fogle is the only returning player for the secondary, however, and he is recovering from arthroscopic knee surgery.

This season is definitely a year of rebuilding for the Sooners — starting from the bottom up. After all, Rome wasn't built in a day.



Photo courtesy of Oklahoma Sports Info.
Linebacker Tyrell Peters



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