

in the two previous conference races, and now in this third year fate seemed to decree an Oklahoma victory.

Swan Johnson, a one-time Swedish immigrant boy and father of Bill, had blazed the hot and dusty trail from Iowa to Oklahoma in 1889 to homestead much of the land that he possessed at the time of his death. He had, at all times, evinced an intense pride and interest in Bill's basketball achievements. On the day of his death, a half-page picture of Bill was printed on the sports page of his local paper. With justifiable pride he had commented to Bill's mother, "I hope Bill plays the game of his life, Saturday night."

This significant statement proved to be the real challenge in Bill's final decision to try to get back to play. Close friends of the family had counseled with his mother and had urged that, if at all possible for Bill to reach Lawrence, he should play in this, his final game, and thus fulfill the last wish of his father.

C. O. ("Cob") Burnside, residing in Bill's home town, a fraternity brother of Bill's and a loyal alumnus of Kansas, through his intimate friendship for the Johnson family, convinced Mrs. Johnson to send her boy by airplane to answer the call of Kansas.

Already the morning and the afternoon newspapers had announced that Kansas would play without her superstar, Bill Johnson. *

During the day, many offers from businessmen and from university groups to sponsor a flight to Oklahoma to get Johnson came to me. But all such proposals had received a deaf ear. Strong head winds and air pockets aplenty made a 400-mile hop under adverse weather conditions seem too perilous to consider.

However, during the afternoon, another fraternity brother of Bill's, Maurice L. Breidenthal of Kansas City, Kan., and a most loyal alumnus of Kansas, telephoned to me that he and Cob Burnside of Oklahoma City had arranged for a commercial plane to attempt the flight to bring Bill Johnson from Oklahoma City in time for the game.

The possible danger of a forced landing or a crack-up precluded the wisdom of informing the Kansas team of this contemplated air trip. The group reaction might have been most detrimental should the plan have failed.

The game between Missouri and Kansas State at Manhattan, Kan., was to be called for 7:30 p.m., the same time as was the Kansas-Oklahoma game to be called at Lawrence. After the information concerning Johnson was received, and since the home teams are responsible for setting the starting time of the games, we changed our starting time to 8:00 p.m.

Immediately bulletins were published in the press and broadcast by radio that the Kansas-Oklahoma game would be called at 8:00 p.m., instead of 7:30 p.m., as usual. On account of the possible effect upon the team, we were forced to keep our primary reason for this change of time a secret, giving as a reason for the postponement our desire to have Kansas followers listen in on the first half of the important Missouri-Kansas State game, being played at Manhattan.

We installed loud-speakers in the Kansas field house for these radio reports of the first half of the Missouri-Kansas State game. If Missouri should win their game, then the winner of the Kansas-Oklahoma game would be tied with Missouri for the title. But, if Missouri should lose and Kansas should win, Kansas would be the undisputed champion of the Big Six Conference for the third consecutive time. We were hoping that this additional 30 minutes would land Bill