

J A Y H A W K R E B O U N D S

June 25, 1945

No. 17

Dear Fellow Jayhawkers:

Yesterday was Commencement day for 334 Kansas seniors. George Nettles, the captain of my 1920 Kansas football team, was one of the proud fathers who saw the second of his children, Mary "Mimi", march down old Mt. Oread's slopes at twilight to the Kansas Memorial Stadium, which has served as the spacious amphitheatre for thousands of Kansas sons and daughters who had graduated there before. This giant concrete horseshoe opens beautifully to Nature's mammoth horseshoe upon whose rim are located the beloved buildings and campus of your alma mater.

George came down to the house with his family before the University dinner Sunday afternoon. I never see George Nettles but what I think of that great Kansas comeback of 1920 against Nebraska. Kansas was outweighed 27 pounds to the man and faced a first half defeat of 20 to 0 against them. The Jayhawkers rallied and pushed over three touchdowns against a giant scarlet-clad Nebraska team. That was the game that built the Kansas stadium.

But I remember that on page 18 of last month's Jayhawk Rebounds No. 16, I promised you that I might tell the story of the "Dream Touchdown" game. This game was against Iowa State College of Ames. Dr. Red Parsons, one of Stagg's great players at the University of Chicago, was coaching the Iowa State team. We had early season success, having defeated Bill Hargiss's Emporia Teachers 42 to 0 at Lawrence, and then Ernie Berg's and Dwight Peam's Washburn College team 6 to 0. Dr. Mal Stevens was the quarterback for Washburn College. Later Dr. Stevens went to Yale and played three years of sterling football for the Yale Bulldogs. Dr. Stevens made football history as coach of several eastern teams, New York University and others. Brinley, a great dropkicker who had played professional football for the Rock Island team the year before, dropkicked a field goal for Coach Banks's Drake University Bulldogs from the 42 yard line. Kansas finally scored a touchdown on a pass from Lonberg to Mandeville, the Jayhawkers winning that game 7 to 3. And then came the Iowa State Cyclones, big, tough and aggressive. But why go further, when I promised you the Dream Touchdown story.....

The Dream Touchdown

A load of barrels was always good luck to the batting eyes of the New York Giants under Muggsy McGraw, but never have I looked over my left shoulder at the moon for good luck, nor am I afraid of the so-called hoodoo number, 13. Even a black cat crossing my path has held no terrors for me.

However, I have always played hunches and do to this day. That is why the dream touchdown -- the only touchdown of the game -- materialized.

In the early fall of 1920, as Director of Athletics at the University of Kansas, I found myself confronted with the combined duties of Head Coach of Football and Head Coach of Basketball.

Our football team, averaging but 162 lb. to the man, was the lightest in our athletic history at Kansas. This team, relying entirely upon forward passing and place kicking, had won its first two preliminary games, against the Emporia Kansas