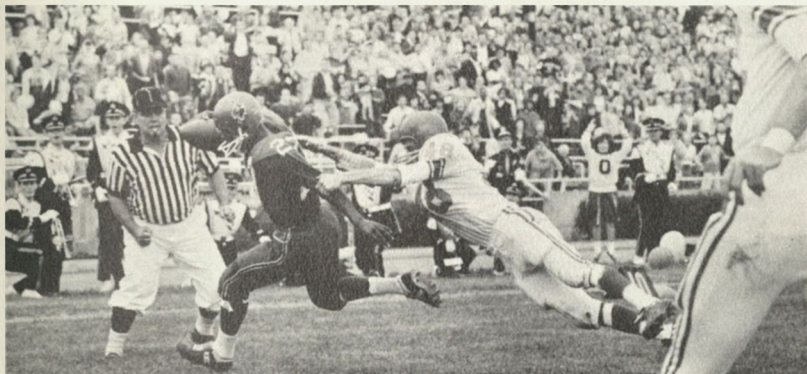


INDIAN OUTLOOK FOR '67



A BIG YEAR AHEAD

by Mike Moran, Sports Publicity Director

Omaha University's football team will be facing its biggest year in history under great pressure. The school has joined a wonderful new league called the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference. That factor may have a lot to do with squad morale, because this stepped-up loop will mean greater rewards for all concerned. True, the first competition is two years away, but many of the future RMAC opponents are listed on the schedules of Omaha and the other present CIC schools before then.

The 1967 Indian football team could go a long way, at least on paper. 28 lettermen are returning to head coach Al Caniglia's fold. However, these same men suffered through a tragic 1-9 disaster in 1966 and some won't lose the scars.

Brightness on the horizon is the return to action of two-time ALL-CIC quarterback Marlin Briscoe, who missed last season with a neck injury. The scrambling field general set nine OU records during an 8-2 season in 1965. Needless to say, his absence last fall was chiefly responsible for the collapse which dulled what might have been Omaha's finest hour.

The little quarterback is going to be under intense pressure week after week from opponents who will mark him as the main way to stop the varied Indian attack that netted 381 yards per game in 1965 under Briscoe's direction.

However, OU foes are going to find a rock-hard defense up front to go with the explosive offense. Linebacker Buddy Belitz returns to head up a dedicated defensive unit that promises to be among OU's best in history.

The Indians return three-fourths of the league's 2nd Team All-Star defensive backfield in Lew Garrison, Pat Smagacz and Gary Paporello. Dom Polifrone (220), '65 Rookie of the Year Ed Jackson (240), Nebraska transfer Len Canarsky (245), and frosh tackles John Brennan (250) and Richard Luger (240) will be the core of the front wall that will have to handle a big load.

Offensively, tackle Bob Kreitner leads the way. The big sophomore appears to be able to handle some leadership along with senior split end Bill Haas (215), who was the quarterback last fall. Cincinnati transfer Tom McKernan, a 6-4 end who was a standout in the spring game, may move

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OUTLOOK CONT'D

to flanker and give the Indians a big, fast and mobile split pair for the aerial thrusts of Briscoe.

Backing up Briscoe will be a pair of talented rookies in ex-marine Gary Peters, the passing sensation of the spring game, and rookie Rocco Gonnella, who broke all of Cornell All-American Gary Wood's records at Heninger High in Syracuse, New York.

Three-year regular Ken Pelan returns at center as does tackle Tom Hutchison, who may be a question mark with a knee that has been slow in healing after surgery last spring.

Big (6-2, 2-0) Ron Sayers, a junior who was a rushing leader in '66, will head up a cast of good ball carriers who will share a great load with Briscoe. Sayers, whose brother Gale is the NFL Chicago Bear star, has developed great speed and some good moves, but must control a tendency to fumble if he is to blossom into the star class that observers predict for him.

Little Rick Davis (5-7, 180) will handle the fullback chores to start. However, junior Greg Kavan will be right behind after making great strides in '66.

Davis, who has led the Indians in receiving in both '65 and '66, may be shifted to flanker or running back if the situation demands. He is a versatile athlete who can go both ways and play a corner on defense as well.

LETTERMAN SITUATION. 28 Lettermen return, including nine starters on each unit.

DEPTH SITUATION: Exceptional in backfield, very thin in offensive line (especially at guards), good in defensive line and secondary.

CHIEF WEAKNESSES: Offensive line at guard spot, where vets Bernie Kanger (190) and Oscar Pulliam (220) are the lone experienced players. However, transfer Kerry Larma, junior Rick Shuckman and newcomer Mel Washington might solve problem.

TOP NEWCOMERS: Tackles John Brennan (250) and Richard Luger (240) may move in right away on defense. Quarterback Rocco Gonnella is a highly regarded frosh from Syracuse, New York. Guard Mel Washington, Rochester, N.Y., comes to OU with good credentials as does Omaha Creighton Prep grad Ted Scholz, an end who made the All-Metro team. Linebacker Jim Musil (180) was a surprise with aggressiveness in the spring game and may get a starting shot.

ALUMNI KICKS IN \$3,234

Omaha, Nebr.—Omaha University's Alumni Association kicked in with its largest donation to the athletic department, \$3,234, during the spring sports fete in the Milo Bail Student Center. Mark Gautier, a former OU athlete and now Alumni President, presented the check to Athletic Director Virgil Yelkin on behalf of the Association.

Gautier, news director at television station KMTV in Omaha, has been instrumental in projects designed to help his alma mater's athletic program and the alums have promised all-out support in this direction.

The donation will go to the school's athletic grant-in-aid fund.