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Okies / Watcher

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made the All-Tournament second team. Others sharing the team spirit included Peaches Brown, Stephanie Davis, Dena Phelps, Amelia Green, Trainer Billy Eggers, Sandra Smith, Tracie Wynn, Sherri Suggs, Tanya Andrews, Michelle Denton, student coach Jason Maxwell, and manager Donna Brence. The women finished the season with 21 consecutive wins and a 30-2 record.

Cheers were loud as the team displayed its fourth "NAIA National Champions" banner. They were welcomed home in Weatherford by several hundred fans, and Coach Loftin was lauded for his amazing record (179-16) since his 1981 start at Southwestern.

How can young women from different backgrounds and states play together so well to continue this spirited winning tradition? They like their coach, even though he is tough and tries "to keep them straight." He says the women share two characteristics as players--coming from winning programs and having winning attitudes.

In Loftin's efforts to guide the Lady Blues, several noteworthy accomplishments have been made. A few should

be mentioned. Kelli Litsch is the only athlete in NAIA history, man or woman, to be named a four-time All-American in any sport. In addition to Kelli, Chelly Belanger, Anita Foster, and Shelly Brown were named NAIA All-Americans. Numerous free-throw and field-goal records are held by Litsch, both locally and nationally. Some of the women have also played in special honor games.

Is there life after being a Lady Bulldog? The closeness of the team players does not diminish with graduation from Southwestern; in fact, it is not unusual to see some of the former teammates eating pizza together or enjoying a game of tennis. Although they are geographically scattered, they keep in touch. Just what are these past champions doing? Kelli Litsch is still assistant coach with the Lady Bulldogs. Cari Hayes assists with coaching at East Central. Susan Mounts coaches at Plainview, Texas, while Thel Shelby and Deana English both coach at Duncan. Chelly Belanger is a veterinarian in Dallas. Anita Foster works in a Dallas post office. Mary Champion

continues her coaching duties, and Marilu Dunard coaches in Wichita Falls, Texas. Coach Loftin remarks that seventy percent of the players on the championship teams have graduated from college. That in itself is commendable.

Will the dazzling Southwestern tradition continue? The fans think so. Although they see the future as producing improved teams at East Central of Ada, Northwestern of Alva, Oklahoma City's Oklahoma Christian College, and Shawnee's Oklahoma Baptist University, most predictions say that the Lady Bulldogs are still the team to beat. With their astounding record and brilliant coaching, the Southwestern team has helped to develop women's basketball into top-quality competition for both players and spectators.

Because of that spark of competition and success on the basketball court, people forget temporarily the declining economy and troubles of Western Oklahoma. They realize that competitive excitement is still possible.

Thanks, Lady Bulldogs, for sharing that special Southwestern spirit! ■

the people, yes

Okies

By Margie Snowden North

THOSE CALIFORNIANS SPAT OUT THE WORD
AS THOUGH IT WERE SOUR GREEN APPLES.
GO BACK WHERE YOU CAME FROM, THEY SAID.
FRUIT TRAMPS. OKIES.

BUT WE PICKED THEIR PEAS IN BUSHEL BASKETS
AND THEIR FRUIT IN CRATES
AND WORKED IN THEIR CANNERIES
AND BUILT THEIR HIGHWAYS.
OKIES DID ALL THAT
AND WE DIDN'T NEED A THANK-YOU
NOR A SMILE,
BUT A PAYCHECK THAT BOUGHT A CAR
AND BUILT A TRAILER HOUSE
AND GOT GAS WITH SOME LEFT OVER
SO WE COULD GET BACK TO WESTERN OKLAHOMA
WHERE WE WANTED TO BE
IN THE FIRST PLACE.

of sky and trees

Watcher

By Margie Snowden North

Autumn sunlight flashes,
plays on car windows
Tires hum on concrete
going somewhere,
places unattainable
to the watcher in the field.
Cotton rows beckon
Cotton sack awaits

The watcher bends over his work,
resolute
Duty and the cotton sack weigh heavily
pull him back
from places out there.