



# Owens Was About to Give Up on No. 1 Honor

**By GLEN STONE**  
Special Correspondent

NORMAN—Steve Owens, about ready to give it up and go home Tuesday, when the 400th-ranked phone call from Norm, Va. finally came and the Oklahoma tailback became the winner of the 1969 Heisman Memorial Trophy.

Owens and his partner Barbara were awaiting news in Oklahoma's Memorial Union Building, a short block from university president Dr. Bennett Holloman's office, the place where the call was received.

"I smiled at my watch as much as I'm there recalled," said Owens, "but I was still three or four minutes and then he had them."

Once that time the realization arrived. The phone call reached Holloman's office and Steve was immediately, although indirectly, notified.

"Nobody really told me," Owens laughed. "I just heard a loud roar go on from the people waiting outside and Barbara took off running to the president's office. I couldn't catch her."

About 100 newsmen and well-wishers greeted Owens in Holloman's piazza after Holloman was holding the line from New York. Owens' first act was to embrace Norman coach Chuck Fairbanks.

McMuller, secretary of the Downtown Athletic Club of New York, greeted Owens. "Steve, I've seen you play and you are very deserving of this award."

Thanking very much, Owens said cracked. "This is the greatest thing that has ever happened to me as long as I live."

About that time the phone system broke down

and Owens was disconnected. Five minutes elapsed before New York called back.

Barbara was crying and saying, "I can't believe it. I just can't believe it."

"I was getting kind of worried he wasn't going to call back," Owens joked with the New York press the second time the phone rang. "I was afraid you had changed your mind."

Maintaining the pose that helped him become college football's all-time rubber and soccer Owens was quick to thank her former teammates and the OC coaching staff.

"The biggest thing is to like to thank all my wonderful teammates and the coaches. Our players are a great bunch of boys," Owens said. "There's no anybody on our team. Everyone was pulling for me 100 per cent all season. I just wish we could have won more ball games. But without our

great bunch of players, I wouldn't even be here today."

Owens mentioned Mike Phipps, Purdue's senior quarterback who finished a close second in the Heisman balloting with 134 votes to Owens' 141.

"I met Mike earlier and he's a fine person," Owens said. "And a great ball player. If I couldn't win it, I was hoping Mike would."

Owens said he didn't have any trouble sleeping Monday night despite the Heisman activity. He spent Sunday and part of Monday in New York City flying a post-season Oklahoma TV show.

"I was on time for that trip. I just had to sleep around nine last night," he stated.

Then president Holloman took his turn praising Owens' accomplishments. "We have known for

long time that Steve is college football's most outstanding complete player," Holloman told the New York press gathered at the other end of the line.

"And, we are delighted that he has received the coveted Heisman Memorial Trophy which officially establishes him as the top player in the nation. Steve is not only an outstanding football player, but our campus leader."

Then Fairbanks took his turn at the telephone.

"I'm extremely proud for Steve and his integrity," he told the Heisman committee. "I think you will be very pleased with your winner this year. Steve is a quality youngster in every way. He's a great team player and an outstanding young man."

The Heisman Trophy signifies the outstanding

Continued on B-6

# UPI Names OSU's Gass Big Eight Coach of Year

Oklahoma State broke football coach Floyd Gass' record by winning the Big Eight Conference Coach of Year award by United Press International Tuesday.

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Herron had only a one-vice ever Missouri's tailback Joe Oliver. Steve was named OSU's first coach in the conference during the first freshman team was Kansas Intercollegiate Entry of 1956.

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UPI's Mike Phipps named Steve Owens as the first defensive team was Kansas Intercollegiate Entry of 1956.

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# Steve, Brand Named to UPI 'All-America'

Steve Owens of Oklahoma, who won the Heisman trophy, was the leading vote-getter on UPI's All-America team.

Owens got 122 votes from the UPI panel of 16 sports writers and broadcasters from throughout the nation. Ohio State and Southern California and Notre Dame each placed three men on the honor squad.

Joining Owens on the first team was Oklahoma center Steve Brand. No. 1 Big Four team has a player on the No. 1 defensive unit.

Oklahoma State and OSU were represented on the second team.

OSU's John Ward was at one tackle spot and OSU center Ken Mandall was also chosen.

Texas was not represented.

Mike McCoy, Notre Dame's guard, defensive tackle, was the runner-up in total votes with 106, just on the defensive spot.

Southern California and Notre Dame had two players each.

The entire All-America honor, Owens received for 100 yards rushing in 17 straight games until he is to be that figure last Saturday.

# SPORTS OF THE WORLD

**BY BILL CONNORS, Sports Editor**

BILLY VESSELLS WAS IN WASHINGTON TUESDAY, "NERVOUS and sweating a lot," he said. Vesella was in the nation's capital on business. But what he was nervous and sweating about had nothing to do with his position as a professional representative for some Florida land projects.

Vesella was sweating out Steve Owens Heisman Trophy chances. Seventeen years ago when Vesella was coach of the Oklahoma Sooners with the Heisman, there was an announcement over the radio, and again excitement when he won.

Vesella's support for the Heisman maneuvered late, following his super performance three times run touchdowns against Notre Dame. It is a long story. There will be no extensive publicity campaign in his behalf and, frankly, his selection caught OSU by surprise.

When OSU coach Dick Williams announced that Harold Keith informed Vesella he had won college football's most prestigious award, he was too puzzled to be fattered.

"I hate to admit this," Vesella said by telephone from his Washington hotel room, "but I didn't know what the Heisman was. The communitarians there were not what they are now. There was my knowledge, no talk or speculation in the papers about who would win it."

"Certainly, I had no idea I would ever be considered," Vesella said. "I had no idea I would ever be considered. I was just in it." Even when they explained, I did not fully appreciate what it meant.

# Muskogee Adds Wrinkle To Prep Alignment Plan

**By PHIL PARRISH**  
Sports Writers

Muskogee said it would go in independent rather than play in the Magic Empire Conference, which is placed there by the state athletic association.

This statement was made Tuesday by Muskogee Central principal James Smith at the annual fall meeting of the Oklahoma Seven and Magic Empire conferences at Ponca City, Okla.

"We are a charter member of the Magic Empire and our traditional ties with that league are strong," Smith said. "And we would like to stay in the Oklahoma Seven," Smith said. "We are a charter member of the Magic Empire and our traditional ties with that league are strong."

The final decision on the makeup of the new football district will be made Dec. 9 by the Board of Control, which is the Oklahoma Secondary School Athletic Association's governing body. Robert E. Ford of Ponca City and James Cochran of Sapulpa were present Monday.

Ford and Cochran asked the principals and athletic directors for their recommendations. They said a definite decision on how they would like the schools to be grouped.

The city athletic directors met last week and voted, apparently in near unanimity, to accept the following proposal:

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# Phipps' Coach Raps Sponsor

LAFAYETTE, Ind. — Mike Phipps, the third Purdue football player to just miss receiving the Heisman Trophy in recent years, said Tuesday he was "a little disappointed."

PHIPCO, coach Jack Mollenkopf, was "disappointed and a darn bit mad."

Mollenkopf said, "I'm not resenting the selection of Steve Owens. I'm sure he's a fine player. I'm sure he's a fine player. I'm sure he's a fine player."

"I'm afraid I built up Mike's hopes," Mollenkopf said Tuesday in Indianapolis. "I said Steve was in Indianapolis. I said Steve was in Indianapolis. I said Steve was in Indianapolis."

"I CAN REPEAT THAT," Phipps said, "but he was disappointed."

Phipps was the third Purdue player to be runner-up in four years. Leroy Myers was second last year and Bob Griese was second in 1967. Phipps and Griese weren't asked to be ready for telephone interviews. Mollenkopf said.

"Why do they have to kick us in the stomach?" the coach said.

# Special Owens Page on B-6

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# Realization Came Late

"It wasn't until we went to New York for the presentation ceremony that I began to realize what an honor it was. I had and Center Jones and the Ohio George Owens, former OSU president, with me."

"When we reached New York and went through the New York Athletic Club, I saw the pictures of the former recipients it really impressed me."

"I had a knock about a time what it meant, I suppose I would have been very nervous about it-like I have been the last few days. I bet Steve hasn't been as nervous about this thing as I have."

"I have thought all along he deserved it, and since that great performance against Texas I have felt he would win it. Still, the last few weeks have made me wonder."

Vesella has been an unofficial and unpledged campaigner for Owens, and spread the word in his many sports writing friends in the south, and a few in New York.

# Magic Empire Bonds

Last year when Owens broke Vesella's OSU season rushing record, the ludest applause came from Vesella. To those who point out how many more times Owens carried the ball, Vesella says, "I was just a coach. I was just a coach. I was just a coach."

Besides, Cleveland-area Vesella said of Miami-native Owens, "We kept the record in the Magic Empire."

Now, the Magic Empire has two Heisman winners.

Vesella was No. 23. Owens (who wanted his high school number) was No. 24. Vesella was No. 24. Vesella was No. 24.

Vesella was the next Oklahoma and Appalachian runner-up to join the Sooner varsity probably would want to wear No. 27.

"This is an angle," Vesella said. "Thruout it would be something to follow."

So was 20.

# Post Heisman Winners

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|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1951—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    | 1952—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    |
| 1953—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    | 1954—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    |
| 1955—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    | 1956—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    |
| 1957—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    | 1958—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    |
| 1959—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    | 1960—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    |
| 1961—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    | 1962—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    |
| 1963—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    | 1964—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    |
| 1965—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    | 1966—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    |
| 1967—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    | 1968—Bobby Layton, Ohio State    |
| 1969—Steve Owens, Oklahoma State | 1970—Steve Owens, Oklahoma State |
- We will be closed Thanksgiving at the Zunder Zee. STEVE OWENS AND MARIO REYNOLDS
- Only Byrds Eat of Memorial 622-2800