Celebrating a Legacy: K-State’s Memorial Stadium

17 July 2015
Career & Employment Services
Employer Advisory Board Meeting
Cliff Hight, University Archivist
Presentation outline

• Previous athletic fields
• Historical background for building stadium
• Construction of it
• Highlights over the decades
• Recent developments
• Q&A time
Previous athletic fields

- Students played as early as 1887, unknown location
- Student teams played in 1892, “City Park”

The Industrialist, 3 December 1892
Previous athletic fields, II

- First team supported by faculty, 1894
- First African-American athlete, Charles Groves, 1903

Football team, 1894

Football team (Groves in upper middle), 1903
Previous athletic fields, III

- Athletic field at present-day Bluemont Elementary
- Moved to present-day Alumni Center

Baseball game at athletic field, 1910

Football players Harvey Roots and Jack Gingery at athletic field, 1909

Scene of K-State vs. KU game from grandstand
Previous athletic fields, IV

K-State (in striped sleeves) vs. KU, 1915 or 1917
Army vs. Navy at Polo Grounds (42,000 attended), 1913
Historical background, II

Memorial to K-Staters who died in World War I
Building the stadium

President William Jardine

Julius Willard

Right: Mike Ahearn (R) & Phog Allen (L)
Building the stadium, II

• Memorial Stadium Corporation
  – To raise funds
  – To make contracts
  – To pay for construction

• Fundraising
  – Students pledged $40 each
  – Faculty gave sliding percentage of salary (2.6%–5%)
  – Students & faculty gave $157,000
  – Community gave $62,500

Coach Charles Bachman
Building the stadium, III

Drawings of new stadium in various forms
Building the stadium, IV

Status of construction on day of K-State vs. Washburn game, 1922
Building the stadium, V

Under construction during football season, 1922
Building the stadium, VI

Construction of east side of stadium, 1924
Building the stadium, VII

Enclosing east side of stadium, February 1928
Highlights

Streetcars on 17th Street and east side of stadium not enclosed on game day, 1924
Highlights, II

From 1947 Royal Purple
Highlights, III

Commencement, 1968

1929 Commencement program
Highlights, IV

Above: 1924 K-State vs. KU game

Below: Game action
Highlights, V

First team to be Big 6 Conference champions, 1934
Highlights, VII

Veryl Switzer evading a tackler, 1953
Highlights, VIII

Homecoming game vs. KU, 31 October 1964
Aerial view, October 1965
Highlights, XI

Ray Watson, notice his missing right hand in left image

Ivan Riley

Ward Haylett & Thane Baker
New stadium construction, 1968
Highlights, XIV

- Activities since football left
  - Band director workshops
  - Purple Masque Theatre
  - Pottery gallery
  - Track and field (through 1972)
  - Numerous club sports (soccer, rugby, etc.)
  - Campus offices
  - Building (at right, 1982)
  - Marching band practices
Homecoming bonfire at Memorial Stadium, 1989
Highlights, XVI

From Collegian story about pillow fight, 27 September 2004
Recent developments
Thanks!

Questions?

Library: www.lib.k-state.edu
Special Collections: www.lib.k-state.edu/special-collections

My email: chight@ksu.edu