

OKLAHOMA LANDMARKS INVENTORY NOMINATION

Oklahoma Historic Preservation Survey, Oklahoma State University, 502 Math-Science Bldg., Stillwater, OK 74078

SOURCE OF NOMINATION: Contract Survey

MUSKOGEE HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELD AND STADIUMS

LOCATION: North S and Elmira Streets, Muskogee, Oklahoma 040, Muskogee County 101

CLASSIFICATION: structures; public; public acquisition--N/A; occupied; unrestricted; present use--athletic

OWNER: Board of Education, Muskogee Public Schools, 507 N. 6th, Muskogee, OK 74401

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Muskogee County Courthouse, Muskogee, OK 74401

DESCRIPTION: excellent condition; altered; original site

The Muskogee High School Athletic Field and Stadiums consists of a football field, a track and two grandstands. The football field and the track are identifiable by definition, but the grandstands are rectangular. The west stands extends 286 feet, while the east stands extends 178 feet. Both are constructed from poured concrete which fashions a superstructure and risers. Each stands rises 25 tiers, the interiors of which are accessed via two "tunnels" and walkways at either end. Beneath the stands the superstructure was exposed, although portions between the "tunnels" were enclosed with tile blocks to form concession outlets. To the rear of each stands are two ticket booths constructed of poured concrete, even the curved and incised roofs. The exposed superstructure of the west stands has been partially enclosed to form rooms suitable for storage, training, and toilets. These and the addition of a press box atop the west stands have not impeached the integrity of the structures.

SIGNIFICANCE: 1936; builder/architect: unknown

The Muskogee High School Athletic Field and Grandstands were quickly dubbed the "Indian Bowl." The name came from the fact that Muskogee set in the center of a large concentration of Native Americans and the facility itself was impressive enough to be a "bowl." The community put the complex to immediate use, and the highschool became one of, if not "the" football power in the state of Oklahoma. Graduates of the team went on to the University of Oklahoma where they contributed to a establishing a football powerhouse second to none. If nothing else, the Indian Bowl is significant because it as much as anything else was responsible for the football tradition in Oklahoma. Of course, construction of it put destitute and unemployed laborers to work during the depths of the depression, activity that also infused into the Muskogee mainstreet wages for some 50,000 man-hours of labor. Architecturally, the Indian Bowl constituted the largest football complex built in Oklahoma.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Acreage: six acres

Quadrangle: Muskogee SE, Okla.
1:24,000/7.5 min.

UTM: A-15 287920 3957950; B-15 287990 3957950

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: From a point 104 feet south and 208 feet east of the NW corner of the SE 1/4, SE 1/4, of Sec. 25, T 15 N, R 18 E, go 624 feet north, 416 feet west, 624 feet south, and 416 feet east.

PICTURE REFERENCE: 62-a; 62-b; 62-c; 62-d