THE OHIO STADIUM

By ELGAR BROWN

WASYLIK has the ball on the Illinois forty yard line. He's going back, back, back; he's going to pass, and there it goes, a beautiful forward pass to McDonald; it's complete, and over he goes standing up for a touchdown. The crowd goes mad; the air resounds with the wild shouts and groans echoing from thousands of throats; the very earth itself trembles from the roar of some fifty thousand or so spectators. The time is November, 1937, the afternoon of the Illinois-Ohio State football game. The scene is the Ohio Stadium, that modern counterpart of the Colosseum of Ancient Rome.

When Mr. John Q. Jones, football fan, attends a Big Ten football game in this twentieth century structure, how little consideration he gives to the fact that engineers spent years in untiring effort in order to make possible this thing that we accept as just another part of our everyday lives. Years were spent in planning this architectural marvel, the Ohio Stadium. Years more were spent in raising funds and in actual construction so that although the project was first proposed before the entrance of the United States into the World War, the necessary $1,000,000 was not raised and ground not broken until August, 1921. The necessary funds were raised by popular subscription, and over half of the total amount was furnished by students and residents of Columbus.

The original site selected for the Stadium was the old Ohio Field near the space now occupied by the Education Building. Because of the limited space provided, the double deck design was deemed necessary. The location was later changed to a spot west of the campus where some additional land had been newly acquired by the board of trustees because it was feared that a structure of this size would probably dwarf the buildings along High Street. The original design was retained in as much as the members of the Stadium board had not only thoroughly convinced themselves as to the merits of the double decker idea, but had discovered too that this plan would prove less costly. The more important arguments advanced for the merits of this design included the fact that it shortened materially the distance of the average spectator from the playing field, and that it presented a much more compact and pleasing appearance than the conventional type.

The Stadium is laid out in the shape of a huge five-centered horseshoe opening to the south, with the radii of 1352, 500, and 273 feet respectively for the sides, intermediate sections and closed ends. Either end of this horseshoe is terminated by a massive tower five stories high. The entire east tower is reserved for use by the athletic department, while the west tower is shared by visiting football teams, the track team, and one of the most unusual dormitories in the world, the Tower Club.

This club, which has served as a pattern for similar organizations in several other universities, is a co-operative where a select group of students may obtain room and board for approximately four dollars per week. It originated in 1933 with a group of seventy-five men selected by the entrance board, was enlarged by an addition in 1934 to house two hundred men, and was again enlarged by a new and more modern addition in 1937 to its present capacity of three hundred and twenty-five.

Construction was of concrete reinforced with steel, and although engineering principles were not sacrificed for aesthetic reasons, beauty was considered to be of almost the same importance as sound construction. As a reward for his work in designing this structure, Mr. Howard Dwight Smith, the architect, was awarded the "Public Buildings" exhibition medal at the annual convention of the American Institute of Architects in 1921 for designing a stadium that was both sound from an engineering standpoint and beautiful. After its dedication, October 21, 1922, Professor Clyde T. Morris, the chief engineer, was also widely acclaimed by other members of his profession for the extreme care with which he had executed his duties in selecting and inspecting the materials used and in generally supervising construction.

The seats in the Stadium are arranged in three sections. "A" deck consists of those seats of the first deck not covered by "C" deck. "B" deck consists of those seats above "A" and covered by the upper deck. "C" deck consists of the seats on top. The entire Stadium has a permanent seating capacity of 60,110, and the capacity can easily be increased to 80,000 by the use of temporary bleachers across the open end of the horseshoe.

Beneath the seating area is a large sheltered space which serves as reserve area to avoid congestion both before and after athletic contests. After the close of the football season, this space is used for other athletic purposes during periods of bad weather and as a place for the military bands to rehearse. The R. O. T. C. units also use this space on spring parade days and for federal inspection in case of rain. During the spring quarter, the Ohio Stadium is the scene of many colorful track events. It was here that such men as "Jess" Owens brought much glory to Ohio State by their proficiency in establishing track records.

The building of the Stadium also proved to be the

Capacity crowds, such as this, are not rare.

stimulus necessary to cause the Ohio State University Marching Band to step forward into its place as one of the most brilliant units of its kind in the entire world. This band was one of the first in the country to inaugurate the plan of playing marches throughout all formations. During the 1937 football season, it was very ably handled by the drum-major, "Wes" Leas, Engineering 4.