

Oxnard High School



HISTORY OF THE CALIFORNIA
INTERSCHOLASTIC FEDERATION
SOUTHERN SECTION
(CIFFSS)



48th historical “tidbit.”

Dr. John S. Dahlem

LEMUEL CLARENCE “BUD” HOUSER
OXNARD HIGH SCHOOL
OLYMPIC CHAMPION
(High school field named for him while still in school)



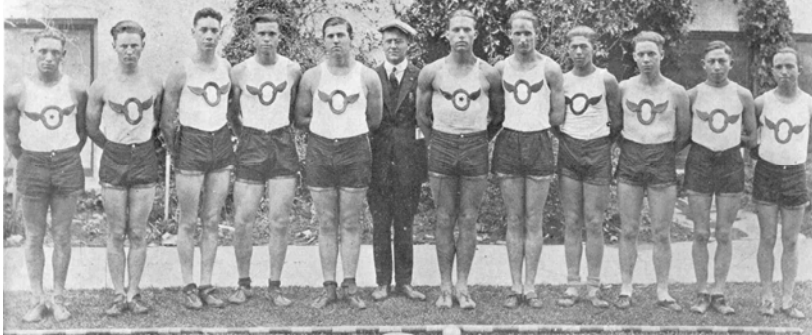
Lemuel Clarence “Bud” Houser was born in Winigan, Missouri on September 25, 1901. He was a large baby with very big hands and was referred to as “Little Brother,” by his siblings. In 1911, after both his parents died, he moved to live with his sister Martha in Oxnard, California because of the continued drought situation in Missouri. Martha married Walter Conklin and the two of them raised Bud. Bud entered Oxnard High School in 1918 as a chiseled young man who had gained strength working in the fields. He was a tremendous athlete, the best ever to grow up in Oxnard, and participated in several sports in high school. He was around 6’1” tall, weighed 187 pounds and possessed well defined arms. During his career at Oxnard High School he helped the school win “ten silver loving cups,” along with seven cups he won himself, 38 gold medals and was the National Champion in the shot put and discus throw. He would go onto star at USC in track and field and at the 1924 Olympics in Paris, won both the shot put and discus throw. In the Amsterdam 1928 Olympics, he repeated as the discus gold medalist. He was a successful dentist with a practice in Palm Springs and died on October 1, 1994 at the age of 93. Upon his graduation from Oxnard High School on June 9, 1922, the local newspaper ran this story:

“Houser Field Named in Honor of Youth”

“One of the most important classes ever to graduate from the Oxnard Union High School was presented diplomas today... among its members the famous ‘Bud’ Houser, world champion shot putter...Never again will he enter track meets for Oxnard High, but while he will be absent from the school his name will remain. The new athletic field with every possible piece of equipment installed, will be named Houser Athletic Field in honor of the great student.”

TIDBITS ON “BUD” HOUSER

- Roy Wilhite, Cliff Argue and Bud Houser were the best athletes to ever show up at Oxnard High School during the 1920’s.



Houser

- He built his strength by carrying rocks in his hands to overcome his shyness as an orphan boy.
- During a National High School competition (Stagg Interscholastic Classic) held in Chicago (1922), Bud represented Oxnard High before a crowd of 8,000. He broke the high school shot put record with a put of 56 feet, won the discus, was third in the hammer heave, fifth in the javelin, and helped Oxnard place 3rd out of schools representing 28 states all by himself. In the newspaper the next day it stated, “**BUD HOUSER SENSATION OF INTERSCHOLASTIC TRACK MEET AT CHICAGO...Oxnard youth Heaves 12-pound Shot 56 Feet in Chicago Contest – His Work Easily The Feature of Big Meet.**”
- He put the 16 lb. shot 48 feet his senior year to rank as the best in the United States for any age.
- At the 1921 Santa Barbara Tri-County meet he set a record of 16 seconds for the high hurdles.
- In the 1922 State CIF Track Championships Bud, by himself, led Oxnard High to a 4th place finish.
- Bud was also a star basketball and baseball player at Oxnard High.
- Bud Houser was the first member inducted into the Ventura County Sports Hall of Fame. He is also in the National Track Hall of Fame and the USC Athletic Hall of Fame.
- He attended USC because he wanted to become a dentist. He lettered three years in track and helped the Trojans win their first NCAA Championship in 1926 even though he had to miss practice time and meets due to his dentistry studies.

- He won the California State Track and Field Championships three years in a row for the shot put and discus. Today, the winners of the State CIF meet for the shot put receive the Bud Houser Boys Varsity Shot Put Trophy.
- His shot put record toss of 56 feet in 1922 stood up for 38 years.
- At the 1928 Summer Olympics in Amsterdam, he was the flag bearer for the American team.
- When he died in 1993, he was the oldest gold medalist still alive at that time.
- When the field was named for him at the graduation ceremony he knew nothing about the presentation...a truck drove onto the field with a big tarpaulin over a sign and the principal Mr. Bannister told the truck driver to remove the sign and it said “BUD HOUSER FIELD.” Tears ran down Bud’s face and he spoke a few words of thanks to the audience.
- During his career he developed a discus technique of doing one and a half rapid turns in the circle before the release which became the standard of all discuss throwers.
- Football was not yet a sport at Oxnard when Bud attended, but he was heavily recruited by USC because of his strength.
- He always competed against men much large than he.
- The famous track coach at USC, Dean Cromwell, said, “I don’t care how far you can toss the shot, Bud can toss it farther.”
- Bud put the shot for the Los Angeles Athletic Club after he left USC and was named their “Finest Athlete-Sportsman.”



Los Angeles Athletic Club

- During his summers at Oxnard High School he would load 100 pound hay bales in Cocoran, California sometimes during weather that reached 110 degrees.
- Bud married Dawn Evelyn Smith, the daughter of a dentist. She was a USC coed and Bud said that her father was his mentor in becoming a dentist and cutting back in sports to keep up his studies.

- He was a member of the Sigma Chi Fraternity at USC.

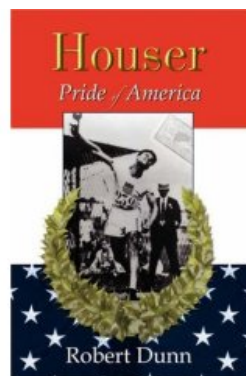


USC

- Bud Houser could have signed a major league baseball contract (Chicago Cubs) but met with the great Jim Thorpe who, because of his amateur status problems, told Bud to stick with becoming a dentist.
- When he won the gold medal in 1924 for the shot put he did it on his final throw. When he won the discus in the 1928 Olympics he did it again on his last throw.



- He was a dentist to many famous Hollywood stars. He moved his practice to Palm Springs. He had two children, both graduates of USC along with several Trojan grandkids. He was an avid golfer with a four handicap and a commodore of the Lake Arrowhead Yacht Club. He loved to hunt, fish and water-ski. He even met General Douglas MacArthur. Dawn, his wife, died in 1987 and Bud is buried alongside her in the Inglewood Cemetery.





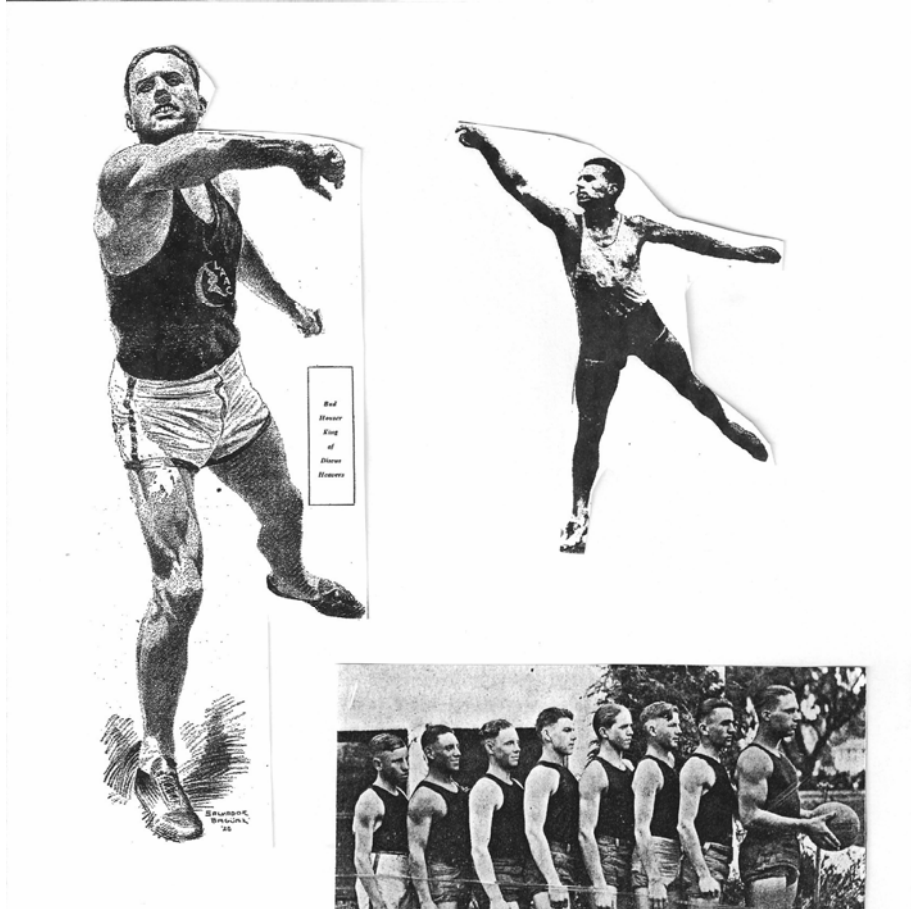
Southern California Track Stars on

the twelve local athletes on Uncle Sam's track team. Houser was first in the discus, Wykoff first in 100-meter run, Kuck third in shot-put. Pr
 yault, Harlow second in javelin, Borah first in 200-meter run, Carter third in 1500-meter run, Casey first in hop, step and jump, Stewart s





1924 Olympics...Houser 3rd from left back row next to Coach Dean Cromwell



Oxnard Basketball Team...Houser on right (note size of arms compared to other players)

Bud Houser Finishes His High School Career
Los Angeles Times (1886-Current File); Jun 9, 1922;
pg. III3

Bud Houser Finishes His High School Career

NOTED ATHLETE - GETS DIPLOMA

*Houser Field Named in
Honor of Youth*

*Oxnard Star Has Medals by
the Dozen*

*Holds Flock of Titles for
Amateur Competition*

OXNARD, June 8.—One of the most important classes ever to graduate from the Oxnard Union High School was presented diplomas yesterday at the graduation exercises. It is important not only because it is the first class to graduate from the magnificent new building but also because it has among its members the famous "Bud" Houser, world champion shot putter. This is Bud's last year in high school. Never again will he enter track meets for the Oxnard high, but while he will be absent from the school his name will remain. The new athletic field with every possible piece of equipment installed, will be named Houser Athletic Field in honor of the great student.

Bud was only an average at sports when he first entered the school four years ago. He was of no account in the shot put or at track meets. He developed all his talent during his high school days and today is one of the greatest athletes in the world. Besides helping the Oxnard High School to win ten silver loving cups, Bud has won seven cups for himself besides thirty-eight gold medals, three silver medals and three bronze trophies. Bud holds the national session shot put title in addition to his title in the discus. He captured the honors in the latter when he slammed the platter out for a mark of 147 feet one and one-half inches.

In the shot put he defeated Pat McDonald of the New York Athletic Club at Pasadena, with a heave of 46ft. 11 3/4-in. in the A.A.U. championship. Later in the season at Sacramento, he put the sixteen-pound shot forty-eight feet and three-quarters of an inch, an unprecedented world's high school record, and then made the wonderful record of 47ft. 1 1/2-in. in the discus at the all-southern prep meet this year.

His most recent victory was at the Chicago meet in May, when Bud broke the interscholastic record by heaving the twelve-pound shot fifty-six feet. This record was made before 3000 people at the Chicago University Field. He also won the discus throw at 136 ft. 3 in., was third in the hammer heave, fifth in javelin and tied for high points. He won third place in the entire meet of 1000 entries for the Oxnard High School.

Bud has done more to put Oxnard on the map than any other individual in this neighborhood. He is loved by all Oxnard and Ventura county.

Who Gets This Prize?



One of the Most-Sought-for Athletes of the Day

Bud Houser, the Oxnard youth who holds the world's interscholastic weight championship, would be an asset to any college track team, and a dozen or so colleges realize it. To date Bud has not announced which institution he will favor with his presence. He holds the world's interscholastic records in the 12-pound shot, 16-pound shot, discus and junior discus.