



- Gail Folda

Oklahoma game is the same as a bowl game."

Juarez was the hot spot during the Sun Bowl trip, according to Alexander. Groups of bandsmen went there for dog racing, as well as other attractions.

One thing he especially remembers about the Sun Bowl trip was a confrontation with the football team. The band had been assigned a specific time to use the field for practice, and it was at that precise time the Nebraska coaches decided to hold an extra practice.

"Band members and football players were nose to nose for a while," he said. "Pretty soon the football team gave up and left."

Curiously, it seems that the band is a jinx on the hotels they stay in. Consider: a week after they departed the Hilton Air Motel in New Orleans, a plane crashed into it. They were the last residents of the Hotel Cortez in El Paso before it was torn down. A Holiday Inn in Oklahoma City



burned to the ground shortly after they left. And the Ocean Queen Hotel in Miami, where they stayed during the Orange Bowl, is now a church college.

No one is blaming the band for those catastrophes, but the band has been blamed for other things, occasionally.

"Someone wrote in once complaining because we played 'Jesus Christ Superstar' while forming the Star of David," Alexander said.

Sometimes even elaborate precautions against disaster fail, as during Alexander's first year with the band. It was after the Sugar Bowl and traffic outside the stadium was so heavy a police escort was needed to route the band's buses onto the highway. Things went well until soon after they got rolling, when a car smashed into one of the buses.

Most band members mention comradeship as the reason they stay in band year after year. Group cohesiveness is strengthened by an intramural football

team and a weekly underground newspaper called SCUM (Scarlet and Cream of Unorthodox Musicians).

Not surprisingly, then, the band has no trouble recruiting. Each year, more than 300 people try out for what is usually no more than 50 openings. According to one member, students write in about auditions two and three years before they graduate from high school.

"Our spirit isn't artificially put on," said another veteran. "It's a feeling that got built up 30 years ago. In 1941 the band went to the Rose Bowl and that was one of the first times in intercollegiate history that attention was focused on what sort of impact bands have on football teams and crowds.

"The administration had to justify the trip, so they decided it had to be an educational experience or it wouldn't be worthwhile," he said. "What happened was they routed the train through Juarez on the way out to California, which turned out to be pretty educational."

Just as the football team sees movies of their games, each Tuesday the band watches films of their previous weekend's show. There is criticism for those whose shoes aren't shined, or those who stand too close together or who are out of formation. And every game a "rummy of the week" is chosen. That person must wear an orange fluorescent vest during practice the next week.

"Usually it's the person with the worst attitude," said Alexander. "Two girls have gotten it so far."

Don't look now, but an old and venerated University of Nebraska institution is about to die a violent death.

For years, NU football fans have thrilled to and been amazed by the cunning inventiveness, the choreographed teamwork, the potent physical prowess of a legion of young fence climbers. Against seemingly impossible obstacles of linked steel, barbed wire and police, they would somehow manage to break into Memorial Stadium each Saturday.

But the day of the daring raid on Memorial Stadium may soon be at an end.

Borrowing from the experience of the best prisons in the world, the powers that be have instituted the ultimate of obstacles. Tall, sheer concrete now rises from the earth surrounding Memorial Stadium, offering no hand- or toe-hold to the would be fan. Above this sit double strands of barbed wire, placidly daring

anyone to try them. Then high above, in the maze of ramps, sit uniformed guards with high-power binoculars, watching for the foolish that challenge the system.

But do not despair, for one day a champion will rise who can lead us out of our boredom and thrill us with his antics.

Till that day **friday** offers this series of photographs as an object lesson to all who would try, and as a remembrance of those soon by-gone days.

