OSLOOK

OWLS' JESS NEELY:
Legend That Walks

By MILTON H. NIRKEN

Coach Jess Neely, "The Man Who Walks Like a Legend," begins his 35th season as a head coach and his 22nd year at Rice with a team he rates comparable to any that he has coached.

The Rice Owls of 1961 are talented, tested, and tackle-rich. The only position with questionable strength is center. The team has as much or more available manpower in the backfield than any Neely team: 13 available backfielders, 16 ends, and guard positions are also manned by qualified lettermen.

SPEARHEADED BY 22 returning lettermen, the '61 Owls are rated a better than even chance to take the Southwest Conference title and gain national recognition as one of the country's top teams. In pre-season polls, Rice was rated as high as fourth in the nation.

The impressive '61 Owls will be hard-pressed to match their 7-3-1 1960 record. The '61 SWC race. In intersectional games, Rice four of the top twenty teams in the nation will be vying for a Cotton Bowl engagement on January 1.

RICE, ARKANSAS, Baylor and Texas are the pre-season favorites; but A&M and TCU cannot be counted out of the race. In intersectional games, Rice takes on LSU, always tough. Georgia Tech, and Florida, 1961 "Gator Bowl" champs.

EXAMINING THE Owl team by positions will demonstrate the capability and potential of the '61 squad. Starting at all five ends will be letterman Gene Raesz and Johnny Burrell. Raesz, a junior, is a good receiver and an excellent receiver. Burrell, a senior, made All-SWC last year. The talented receiver will be up for national honors this year.

Burrell is one of the '61 Tri-Captains, along with Tackle Ray Alborn and Fullback Roland Jackson. Raesz and Burrell will be backed up by lettermen Tommy Rees and Ronny Schults and several talented sophomores.

TACKLE IS the strongest position on the Owl team. Neely feels that his four lettermen — Robert Johnston, George Karam, John Cornel, and Ray Alborn — are among the best in the nation. Averaging 220 lbs., these four stalwarts will be backed by four blossoming sophomores averaging 240 lbs.

The Owls will feel the loss of their starting '60 guards, but lettermen Larry Anthony, Walter Ligon, Dickie Wooda, and Kenny Simmons will capably man this strategic position.

Coach Neely hopes that ranger, blond-headed Dan Malin will be able to fill the gap at center.
POOPED OWLS BOUNCE BACK—Coach Jess Neely and his tri-captains Ray Alborn, Johnny Burrel, and Roland Jackson will lead the Owls into their 50th football season September 23 against the LSU Tigers. The Owls are rated as high as fourth in the nation in pre-season polls and are sure to encounter strong opposition from other conference teams in the race for the championship.