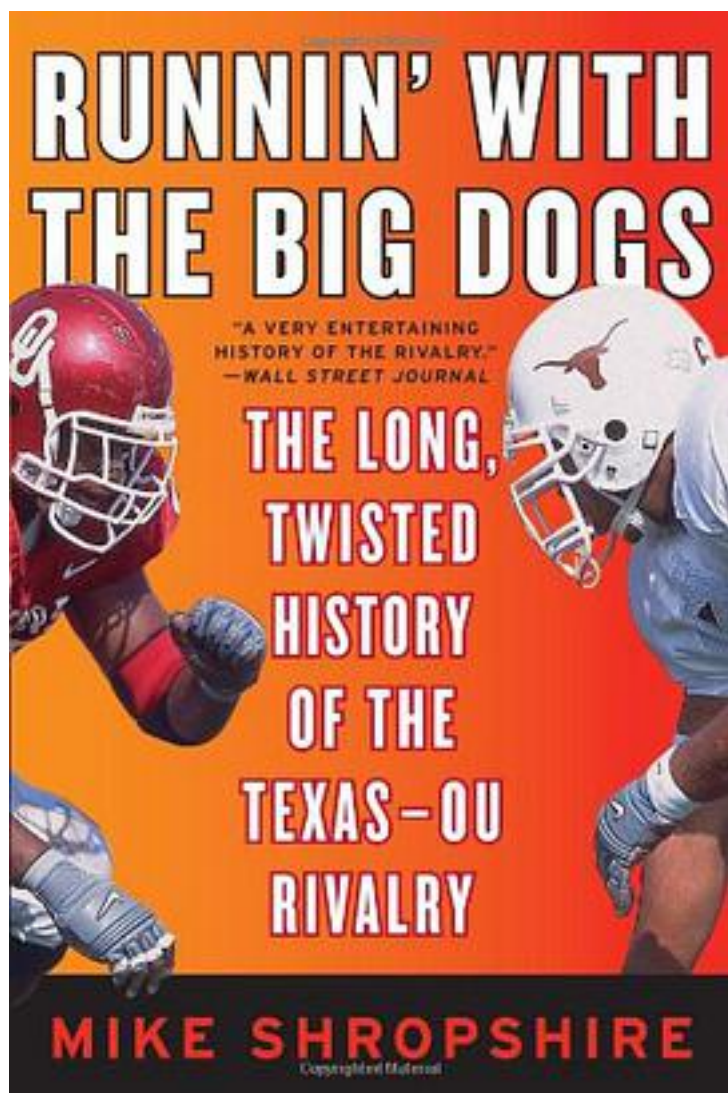


Runnin' with the Big Dogs



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Raucous, raw, and reliably remarkable, the century-old football rivalry between the state universities of Texas and Oklahoma stands as testimony that hate-based relationships are the most enduring. Texas and Oklahoma have been top-level programs for a long time, but in the last few years the rivalry has garnered ever more national attention. Mike Shropshire, an observer of this football war for more than 40 years, chronicles the long and colorful history of this fierce rivalry that has endured for more than a century. The teams have been playing at the Texas State fair since 1929—just a three-hour drive from each campus. This is the only football game in the country that is louder than a NASCAR race, because there's no place in the country that's more football-mad than Texas. Animosity runs deep in this relationship—but beyond the emotional urgency that the Texas-OU followers expend on this event, this is a union of like-minded spirits. They were brought up amid the simple mantra of the Red State road to success: "Get up early. Work hard. Find oil." Football would naturally become the spectator sports of preference in these parts. RUNNIN' WITH THE BIG DOGS is an account of that game and of the game and the events that lead up to the three-and-one-half hours when, deep in the heart of the heartland, it's the day the earth stands still. It will also chronicle the long and colorful history of this fiercest of football rivalries, and inundate the reader in the craziness of the week preceding the game. Year in, year out, the Texas-OU celebration equals or trumps any other rivalry in sheer excitement and entertainment value—and presently, these two teams more than any other pairing are consistently in the hunt for a national championship. The excitement is due in large part to the raw and dynamic history of the two states involved, from the Indian wars to the oil boom. Before statehood Oklahoma was known as Indian Territory, so this Red River Shootout is Cowboys and Indians all over again.

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