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Alabama Crimson Tide Championship Seasons

By Brian Kelly

Book starts at the beginning of football-- goes past
the 2017/2018 National Championship





E. B. Deacon #1
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



M. S. Harvey #7
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Thomas Kelley #14
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Jennings Whitworth #20
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



D. Franchione #26
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Eli Abbott #2
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



W. B. Bloom #9
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Xen C. Scott #16
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Bear Bryant #21
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



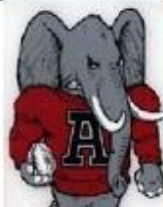
Mike Price #27
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Otto Wagonmaster #3
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Jack Leavenworth #10
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



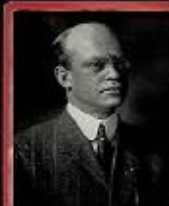
Roy Perkins #22
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



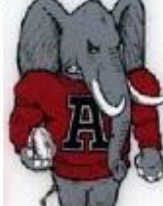
Mike Slade #25
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Allen McCants #4
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



J. W. H. Pollard #11
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Bill Curry #23
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Joe Kiser #29 Int.
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



W. A. Martin #5
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Ghy Lowman #12
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Wallace Wade #17
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



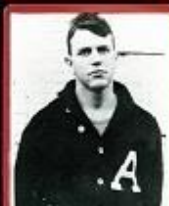
Gene Stallings #24
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Nick Saban #30
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE



Malcolm Griffin #6



D. V. Graves #13



Harold Drew #19



Mike DuBose #25



Bear Bryant #21
ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE

Alabama

Crimson Tide

Championship Seasons

Book starts at the beginning of Football and goes past the 2017/2018 National Championship

The book of championships is written for those of us who love Alabama Crimson Tide Football. We cannot wait until their next win. Those who are not fans of Alabama football also want this book so they can get a leg up on the facts missing from the bookshelves of those fellow Alabama fans who don't have the book.

The book first tells the story about The State's Premier University's founding in 1831 and quickly gets to the first football game ever. The university's first football team and then its first season come later as the Thin Red Line that later became the Crimson Tide makes itself known as perennial National Champions.

In 1892, the University's first football team assembled calling itself the "Thin Red Line." From a bit thin in the ranks, to later becoming the crushing "Crimson Tide," this book gets you there with many smiles. From there, the progression leads, to the Tide's first football game.

The first game in Alabama football history was played on November 11, 1892, against Birmingham High School and was won by the Cadets 56-0. They then split a pair of games with the Birmingham Athletic Club, and closed out the season with a 32-22 loss in the first Iron Bowl against Auburn on February 22, 1893. From then on, Alabama football is a story of fulfilled dreams and many championships.

This book captures the great moments in Alabama Football by taking the reader through stories about Alabama's great coaches to stories about 126 seasons worth of great games. It reflects on the coaches who created the great Alabama teams of the past – coaches such as Wallace Wade, Frank Thomas, Paul "Bear" Bryant, Gene Stallings, and of course Nick Saban. These coaches brought Alabama 17 national championships, the most of any team ever.

The book often also stops in time and talks about a particular great player such as Harry Gilmer, Bart Starr, Kenny Stabler, AJ McCarren, Joe Namath, Cornelius Bennett, Mark Ingram and others. I can't wait to read it.

You will not be able to put this book down

Brian Kelly



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Alabama's Championship Seasons

Editor: Brian P. Kelly
Author: Brian W. Kelly

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Release Date: August 2019

Alabama Season Records from 1892 through Aug. 2019

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>C-Record</u>
1892	E. B. Beaumont #1	Independent	2-2-0	
1893	Eli Abbott #2	Independent	0-4-0	
1894	Eli Abbott	Independent	3-1-0	
1895	Eli Abbott	SIAA	0-4-0	0-4-0
1896	Otto Wagonhurst #3	SIAA	2-1-0	1-1-0
1897	Allen McCants #4	SIAA	1-0-0	0-0-0
1898	No Season			
1899	W. A. Martin #5	SIAA	3-1-0	1-0-0
1900	Malcolm Griffin #6	SIAA	2-3-0	1-3-0
1901	M. S. Harvey #7	SIAA	2-1-2	2-1-2
1902	Eli Abbott #8	SIAA	4-4-0	2-4-0
1903	W. B. Blount #9	SIAA	3-4-0	3-4-0
1904	W. B. Blount	SIAA	7-3-0	4-3-0
1905	Jack Leavenworth #10	SIAA	6-4-0	4-4-0
1906	J. W. H. Pollard #11	SIAA	5-1-0	3-1-0
1907	J. W. H. Pollard	SIAA	5-1-2	3-1-2
1908	J. W. H. Pollard	SIAA	6-1-1	1-1-1
1909	J. W. H. Pollard	SIAA	5-1-2	4-1-2
1910	Guy Lowman #12	SIAA	4-4-0	0-4-0
1911	D. V. Graves #13	SIAA	5-2-2	2-2-2
1912	D. V. Graves	SIAA	5-3-1	3-3-1
1913	D. V. Graves	SIAA	6-3-0	4-3-0
1914	D. V. Graves	SIAA	5-4-0	4-3-0
1915	Thomas Kelley #14	SIAA	6-2-0	5-0-0
1916	Thomas Kelley	SIAA	6-3-0	4-3-0
1917	Thomas Kelley	SIAA	5-2-1	3-1-1
1918	B. L. Noojin #15	SIAA	* WWI No games	
1919	Xen C. Scott #16	SIAA	8-1-1	6-1-0
1920	Xen C. Scott	SIAA	10-1-0	6-1-0
1921	Xen C. Scott	SIAA	5-4-2	2-4-2
1922	Xen C. Scott	SoCon	6-3-1	3-2-1
1923	Wallace Wade #17	SoCon	7-2-0	4-1-1
1924	Wallace Wade	SoCon	8-1-0	5-0-0
1925*	Wallace Wade	SoCon	10-0-0	7-0-0
1926*	Wallace Wade	SoCon	9-0-1	8-0-0
1927	Wallace Wade	SoCon	5-4-1	3-4-1
1928	Wallace Wade	SoCon	6-3-0	6-2-0
1929	Wallace Wade	SoCon	6-3-0	4-3-0
1930*	Wallace Wade	SoCon	10-0-0	8-0-0

1931	Frank Thomas #18	SoCon	9-1-0	7-1-0
1932	Frank Thomas	SoCon	8-2-0	5-2-0
1933	Frank Thomas	SEC	7-1-1	5-0-1
1934*	Frank Thomas	SEC	10-0-0	7-0-0
1935	Frank Thomas	SEC	6-2-1	4-2-0
1936	Frank Thomas	SEC	8-0-1	5-0-1
1937	Frank Thomas	SEC	9-1-0	6-0-0
1938	Frank Thomas	SEC	7-1-1	4-1-1
1939	Frank Thomas	SEC	5-3-1	2-3-1
1940	Frank Thomas	SEC	7-2-0	4-2-0
1941*	Frank Thomas	SEC	9-2-0	5-2-0
1942	Frank Thomas	SEC	8-3-0	4-2-0
1943	No games WW II			
1944	Frank Thomas	SEC	5-2-2	3-1-2
1945	Frank Thomas	SEC	10-0-0	6-0-0
1946	Frank Thomas	SEC	7-4-0	4-3-0
1947	Harold Drew # 19	SEC	8-3-0	5-2-0
1948	Harold Drew	SEC	6-4-1	4-4-1
1949	Harold Drew	SEC	6-3-1	4-3-1
1950	Harold Drew	SEC	9-2-0	6-2-0
1951	Harold Drew	SEC	5-6-0	3-5-0
1952	Harold Drew	SEC	10-2-0	4-2-0
1953	Harold Drew	SEC	6-3-3	4-0-3
1954	Harold Drew	SEC	4-5-2	3-3-2
1955	Jennings Whitworth #20	SEC	0-10-0	0-7-0
1956	Jennings Whitworth	SEC	2-7-1	2-5-0
1957	Jennings Whitworth	SEC	2-7-1	1-6-1
1958	Bear Bryant #21	SEC	5-4-1	3-4-1
1959	Bear Bryant	SEC	7-2-2	4-1-2
1960	Bear Bryant	SEC	8-1-2	5-1-1
1961*	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-0-0	7-0-0
1962	Bear Bryant	SEC	10-1-0	6-1-0
1963	Bear Bryant	SEC	9-2-0	6-2-0
1964*	Bear Bryant	SEC	10-1-0	8-0-0
1965*	Bear Bryant	SEC	9-1-1	6-1-1
1966	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-0-0	6-0-0
1967	Bear Bryant	SEC	8-2-1	5-1-0
1968	Bear Bryant	SEC	8-3-0	4-2-0
1969	Bear Bryant	SEC	6-5-0	2-4-0
1970	Bear Bryant	SEC	6-5-1	3-4-0
1971	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-1-0	7-0-0
1972	Bear Bryant	SEC	10-2-0	7-1-0

1973*	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-1-0	8-0-0
1974	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-1-0	6-0-0
1975	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-1-0	6-0-0
1976	Bear Bryant	SEC	9-3-0	5-2-0
1977	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-1-0	7-0-0
1978*	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-1-0	6-0-0
1979*	Bear Bryant	SEC	12-0-0	6-0-0
1980	Bear Bryant	SEC	10-2-0	5-1-0
1981	Bear Bryant	SEC	9-2-1	6-0-0
1982	Bear Bryant	SEC	8-4-0	3-3-0
1983	Ray Perkins #22	SEC	8-4-0	4-2-0
1984	Ray Perkins	SEC	5-6-0	2-4-0
1985	Ray Perkins	SEC	9-2-1	4-1-1
1986	Ray Perkins	SEC	10-3-0	4-2-0
1987	Bill Curry # 23	SEC	7-5-0	4-3-0
1988	Bill Curry	SEC	9-3-0	4-3-0
1989	Bill Curry	SEC	10-2-0	6-1-0
1990	Gene Stallings #24	SEC	7-5-0	5-2-0
1991	Gene Stallings	SEC	11-1-0	6-1-1
1992*	Gene Stallings	SEC	13-0-0	8-0-0
1993	Gene Stallings	SEC	9-3-1 (1-0)	5-2-1 (0)
1994	Gene Stallings	SEC	12-1-0	8-0-0
1995	Gene Stallings	SEC	8-3-0	5-3-0
1996	Gene Stallings	SEC	10-3-0	6-2-0
1997	Mike DuBose #25	SEC	4-7-0	2-6-0
1998	Mike DuBose	SEC	7-5-0	4-4-0
1999	Mike DuBose	SEC	10-3-0	7-1-0
2000	Mike DuBose	SEC	3-8-0	3-5-0
2001	D. Franchione #26	SEC	7-5-0	4-4-0
2002	D. Franchione	SEC	10-3-0	6-2-0
2003	Mike Price #27	SEC	5 months --- No games	
2004	Mike Shula #28	SEC	4-9-0	2-6-0
2005	Mike Shula	SEC	6-6-0	3-5-0
2006	Mike Shula	SEC	10-2-0	6-2-0
2007	Shula Sanctions	SEC	0-2-0	0-2-0
2008	Mike Shula	SEC	6-7-0	2-6-0
2009	Joe Kines #29 Interim	SEC	0-1-0	0-0-0
2007	Nick Saban # 30	SEC	7-6-0	4-4-0
2008	Nick Saban	SEC	12-2-0	8-0-0
2009*	Nick Saban	SEC	14-0-0	8-0-0
2010	Nick Saban	SEC	10-3-0	5-3-0
2011*	Nick Saban	SEC	12-1-0	7-1-0

2012*	Nick Saban	SEC	13-1-0	7-1-0
2013	Nick Saban	SEC	11-2-0	7-1-0
2014	Nick Saban	SEC	12-2-0	7-1-0
2015*	Nick Saban	SEC	14-1-0	7-1-0
2016	Nick Saban	SEC	14-1-0	8-0-0
2017*	Nick Saban	SEC	13-1-0	7-1-0
2018	Nick Saban	SEC	14-1-0	8-0-0

Seasons **124** (takes into account no season in 1898, 1918, 1943 -127 yrs)
Total Wins **906**
Total Losses **329**
Total Ties **43** **Prior to Overtime Rules**
Stats from **1892** **Through August 2019**

Alabama Coaches Over the Years

Year Coach

1892	E. B. Beaumont	#1
1893	Eli Abbott	#2
1896	Otto Wagonhurst	#3
1897	Allen McCants	#4
1899	W. A. Martin	#5
1900	Malcolm Griffin	#6
1901	M. S. Harvey	#7
1902	Eli Abbott	#8 & # 2
1903	W. B. Blount	#9
1905	Jack Leavenworth	#10
1906	J. W. H. Pollard	#11
1910	Guy Lowman	#12
1911	D. V. Graves	#13
1915	Thomas Kelley	#14
1918	B. L. Noojin	#15
1919	Xen C. Scott	#16
1923	Wallace Wade	#17
1931	Frank Thomas	#18
1947	Harold Drew	#19
1955	Jennings Whitworth	#20
1958	Paul "Bear" Bryant	#21
1982	Ray Perkins	#22
1983	Bill Curry	#23
1984	Gene Stallings	#24
1985	Mike DuBose	#25
1986	D. Franchione	#26
1987	Mike Price	#27
1988	Mike Shula	#28
1989	Joe Kines Interim	#29
2007	Nick Saban	#30

Those are the seasons and the coach's number, folks!

**LETS
GO**

PUBLISH



Dedication

As a person with a big family on my side and on my wife's side. I am pleased to dedicate this book to my wonderful family.

Thank you to all of the Piotroski's—(Marty & Cathy), (Stan, Archie & Carol), (Sue & Mitch), and all their progeny—for support in all of my publishing efforts.

Wily Ky Eyeley, my sage niece, offers most appreciated advice continually.

And, of course, my own brothers and sisters, from my older brother Ed who continually helped me go for it—even when it seemed hopeless, to all of my other brothers and sisters – (Nancy & Jim), & the Twins (Mary + Bill) & (Joe + Diane), for staying with me in support as I tried to write the world's best something about something.

I really appreciate my entire family's help in everything I do. My wife Pat is phenomenal as are my children, Brian, Michael and Katie.

My family and friends make life easier for me in writing books and everything else. Thank you all—all the people I love the most in life for always being in my corner.

Thank you—for making me, me, God bless you!

Acknowledgments:

I appreciate all the help that I received in putting this book together, along with the 209 other books from the past.

My printed acknowledgments were once so large that book readers needed to navigate too many pages to get to page one of the text. To permit me more flexibility, I put my acknowledgment list online at www.letsGOPublish.com. The list of acknowledgments continues to grow. Believe it or not, it once cost about a dollar more to print each book.

Thank you all on the big list in the sky and God bless you all for your help.

Please check out www.letsGOPublish.com to read the latest version of my heartfelt acknowledgments updated for this book. Thank you all!

References

I learned how to write creatively in Grade School at St. Boniface Grade School. The great Sisters of Christian Charity would not let me get away with a dangling participle or a misplaced comma. I even enjoyed reading some of my own stuff from the first words that I wrote.

At Meyers High School and King's College and Wilkes-University, I learned how to research, write bibliographies and footnote every non-original thought I might have had. I learned to hate *ibid*, and *op. cit.*, and I hated assuring that I had all citations written down in the proper sequence. Having to pay attention to details took my desire to write creatively and diminished it with busy work.

I know it is necessary for the world to stop plagiarism so authors and publishers can get paid properly, but for an honest writer, it sure is annoying. I wrote many proposals while with IBM and whenever I needed to cite something, I cited it in place, because my readers, IT Managers, could care less about tracing the vagaries of citations. I always hated to use stilted footnotes, or produce a lengthy, perfectly formatted bibliography. I bet most bibliographies are flawed because even the experts on such drivel do not like the tedium.

I wrote 209 books before this book and several hundred articles published by many magazines and newspapers and I only cite when an idea is not mine or when I am quoting, and again, I choose to cite in place, and the reader does not have to trace strange numbers through strange footnotes and back to bibliography elements that may not be readily accessible or available.

Yet, I would be kidding you, if in a book about the great championships in Alabama Football, I tried to bluff my way into trying to make you think that I knew everything before I began to write anything in this book. I spent as much time researching as writing. I might even call myself an expert of sorts now for all the facts that I have uncovered.

Without any pain on your part you can read this book from cover to cover to enjoy the stories about the many great moments in Alabama Football without being an English Major.

This book is not intended for historians but it does teach a lot of history. It is for regular people of all levels of intelligence. It is for people that want to have a fun read, who like smiling when Alabama Football is the topic. It is for people who love the University of Alabama and perhaps for some Alabama haters who want some more facts.

There are lots and lots of facts in this book. This book is not for sticklers about the mundane aspects of writing that often cause creative writers to lay bricks or paint houses instead. It is for everyday people like you and I who enjoy Alabama because it is Alabama and who enjoy football because it is football. It is that simple.

When Alabama plays a team, and wins or loses, that is a historical fact, but to discover such facts, it does not require fundamental or basic research. The University itself copyrights its material but only so it can say "no" if somebody else's creativity affects them negatively. Even Alabama does not own well-known facts that are readily available about legacies such as Wallace Wade, Bear Bryant, Gene Stallings, Nick Saban, and the sixteen National Championships.

This is not a book about heavy math algorithms, or potential advances to the internal combustion engine, or space travel, or the eight elements necessary to find a cure for cancer. So, I refuse to treat this book 100% seriously. If you find a fault in this book, I will fix it. This is a book about sports and sports legends and stories about sporting events that have been recorded seven million times already someplace else. The greatness in this book is that it is all in one place. Though I tried for sure to get it all right and I used the work of others to assure so, I bet I made a mistake or two. I am not perfect but I like perfection.

What is my remedy for the *harmed* if I have made a mistake? I did not write this book to harm anybody. If I did not write this book, would the *harmed individuals* from the book be unharmed. So, at the very least, I can *unpublish* those parts of the book. If any reader is harmed, let me know, and I will do whatever must be done for all to be OK.

If somehow, I did not cite a fact that a person owns or a quote somebody once spoke first, it surely was not my intention. If you find any such instances in this work, I will do my best to cite in place before the next printing or take the offensive fact or quote out of the book completely at your pleasure. I use a printing systems that prints books as ordered so there would be no waste to change books to reflect any

needed updates. Just let me know. This book is built for fun, not to create anybody angst.

It took me about two months to write. If I were to have made sure a thought that I had was not a thought somebody else ever had, this book never would have been completed or the citations pages would exceed the prose.

I used Alabama season summaries from whatever source I could to get the scores and as many details as possible of all the games. I could not include everything that I found because you only have one lifetime to read this book. I verified facts when possible. For other notions, I used reasonability tests.

There are many web sites that have great information and facts. Nobody knows 100% what is true but this books is as accurate as it could be. Ironically most Internet stories are the same exact stories so the original source is often difficult to discern. While I was writing the book, I wrote down a bunch of Internet references that I include within the paragraphs and sections and stories that I cite.

There are many great sources for information available for your perusal on many sources on the Internet—including the fine archives of the Crimson White Student Newspaper and of course the www.rolltide.com web site. Enjoy!

Preface:

Thank you for choosing this book of Alabama championships. There are sure many and an awful lot of them came from the work of Coach Paul “Bear” Bryant

We all know that Paul 'Bear' Bryant is one of college football's most legendary coaches. As a head coach at Maryland, Kentucky, Texas A&M, and Alabama, Bryant impacted the lives of many and left a lasting legacy on the sport and the schools where he worked. He had a short life filled by leading the greatest football teams of all times. He always offered his thoughts about the notion of football and the strategies of many against whom he competed. The Bear took prisoners but he released them right after the games.

As a student and an athlete at Alabama, Bear Bryant represented all the greats who did not get his fame – Wallace Wade, and Frank Thomas, and Gene Stallings especially. He knew how to win in football and in life: “If you want to walk the heavenly streets of gold, you gotta know the password, ‘Roll, Tide, Roll’ “—Bear Bryant.

There is a reason for everything in life.

"Crimson tide" is a term coined by an Alabama reporter to describe the University of Alabama football team's brilliant defense against rival Auburn during a 1907 football game played in a "sea of red mud." The term stuck and is, to this day, the nickname of the University of Alabama football team.

On October 8, 1930, sports writer Everett Strupper of the Atlanta Journal wrote a story of the Alabama-Mississippi game that he had witnessed in Tuscaloosa four days earlier. Strupper wrote:

"That Alabama team of 1930 is a typical Wade machine, powerful, big, tough, fast, aggressive, well-schooled in fundamentals, and the best blocking team for this early in the season that I have ever seen. When those big brutes hit you I mean you go down and stay down, often for an additional two minutes.

"Coach [Wallace] Wade started his second team that was plenty big and they went right to their knitting scoring a touchdown in the first

quarter against one of the best fighting small lines that I have seen. For Ole Miss was truly battling the big boys for every inch of ground.

"At the end of the quarter, the earth started to tremble, there was a distant rumble that continued to grow. Some excited fan in the stands bellowed, 'Hold your horses, the elephants are coming,' and out stamped this Alabama varsity.



Wade's way was to use the second team to soften the other team. The real elephants however, were only for show.

"It was the first time that I had seen it and the size of the entire eleven nearly knocked me cold, men that I had seen play last year looking like they had nearly doubled in size."

Strupper and other writers continued to refer to the Alabama linemen as "Red Elephants," the color referring to the crimson jerseys. Thus, today's elephant mascot for the Tide, is known as Big Al and Al is an elephant. But, Why?

Throughout the 1940s, for instance, the University kept a live elephant mascot named "Alamite" that was a regular sight on game days, and it would carry the year's Homecoming queen onto the field every year prior to kickoff at the Homecoming game.

In the early 1960s, Melford Espey, Jr., then a student, was the first to wear an elephant head costume to portray the Crimson Tide's unofficial mascot.



The mascot known as "Big Al" today was the brainchild of University of Alabama student Walt Tart in 1979 as he was working with Ann Paige on homecoming festivities.

Big Al appeared officially in the 1980 Sugar Bowl in which Alabama won handily 24-7. Big Al helped launch the 12-0 Crimson

Tide as another of Bear Bryant's undefeated, untied, national champions.

Big Al celebrated his first year with Bear Bryant's 300th win against the Kentucky Wildcats and a victory against the Baylor Bears in the 1981 Cotton Bowl. Big Al has been part of the Alabama scene ever since.

Alabama built its first version of Bryant-Denny Stadium in the 1920's. It opened in 1929 and was originally named Denny Stadium in honor of George H. Denny. Today, for every home game, every Alabama player walks down the tunnel right before every home game. You will see in this book in the chapters about the most recent seasons, the coach shown in a photo with his football team right behind him waiting to take the field. It is the most exciting part of the pre-game—and then comes the action.

Before the festivities begin for the game, it is fun to visit a few spots on campus. Of course all 101,821 Bryant-Denny Stadium fans cannot be in the same place at the same time before the game but they sure try. On the opposite side of Bryant-Denny Stadium from The QUAD is an area known as 'The Strip'.

This stretch of road consists of a few bars, restaurants, and retail shops. You can party on the patio of the Houndstooth Sports Bar, catch some live music at The Jupiter, purchase all the Crimson Tide apparel you'll need at the Alabama Bookstore and make sure to stop by Galette's and try their original drink, The Yellowhammer. One of the most popular pre-and post-game drinks in town!

On the way to the game, fans and players take on the Walk of Champions. The Walk of Champions begins approximately 2 hours and 15 minutes prior to kickoff. The team is dropped off in the team buses on the north side of the stadium at University Boulevard and proceeds through the Walk of Champions into the stadium. It is a grand experience.

Another major UA tradition is the Elephant Stomp. 4. It is a great name for what Alabama likes to think of as an exciting Million Dollar Band pep rally! The fun of the Stomp begins on the steps of the Gorgas Library and it ends with a march to the stadium. The

band begins one hour before kickoff but the drum line begins two hours prior to kickoff. It gets everybody in the spirit.



Today, the *Crimson Tide* as noted above are joined in the campus pre-game festivities to celebrate the goodness of football to the university. They join with members of the student body, faculty population, alumni, and fans to get the team into a mood for winning the day's game.

Fans are swept in by the stories, and the tradition, and the winning ways of the University of Alabama. This book reenacts many of the same emotions game and will remind all the Alabama faithful about why they are Alabama faithful.

Under its charter, the school is officially the University of Alabama and has been educating young minds since back in the 1820's. The football program began in 1892 and was very successful from the "Cadets" first moment on the QUAD Field. It took a few years before the Crimson White became the Crimson Tide in 1907.

This new book by Brian Kelly, which highlights the great championships in Alabama football, is one of the items that is

available all 52 weeks and in fact all 365 days each year. It is now available to add to your Crimson Tide football experience. Once you get this book, it is yours forever unless, of course you give it away to one of the many who will be in awe.

Whether you get to the festivities and the great games on campus or not, this nearly 600-page book brings the glory of Alabama football right to your bookshelf, your pocket, or right to your hands. Reading this book is like reliving the last game, the last football season, and / or all the seasons before last season without ever having to get on or off a plane.

The book examines more than just great championship. There are some documented times that are not so great that are shown to get the proper perspective for those great moments. Not all of Alabama's 30 football coaches for example, are named Bryant or Saban or Wade or Thomas. However, their teams were Alabama tough, nonetheless. That means they all fought hard for wins as the Fighting Irish. I hope you enjoy the contrast.

Opening its first story at the very beginning of Football as a sport in America, this book goes all the way to Coach Nick Saban's last win.

It is written for those of us who love Alabama University (UA) Football. The book first tells the story about Alabama's founding in 1820. In story-telling mode, it recounts the events leading to the first football game in 1867, and it continues to the first Alabama Football Game in 1892.

It then advances through the years when a coach lasted just about a year, onward to the great immortal University of Alabama Coaches of historical fame—Wade, Thomas, Stallings, and the inimitable Coach Bear Bryant through the present day.

Predicting that another future immortal great is in our midst, the book takes us up to the current season with Coach Nick Saban, who is clearly on a path of excellence. Finally, to sum it all up, Brian Kelly, your author, caps off the experience with a substantive chapter of the great players in Alabama football from way back to the present. These are the young men who made Alabama the football legacy that it is.

This book is all about the great championships in Alabama Football. It touches every aspect of the historical and mythical championship Alabama Football teams as well as some seasons where there were no championships. We do say something about every season and more. The book tells exhilarating stories about Alabama's 30 coaches and its 124 seasons worth of great games (906 wins, 329 losses, 43 ties = 1278 games).

The Book stops every now and then, and takes the reader on a side excursion in time to learn about a particular event or a great player such as Bart Starr, Cornelius Bennett, Joe Namath, AJ McCarran, Ozzie Newsome, Derrick Thomas, Kenny Stabler, and others.

I predict that you will not be able to put this book down

You are going to love this book because it is the perfect read for anybody who loves the University of Alabama and Alabama Football and wants to know more about one of the most revered athletic program of all time.

Few sports books are a must-read but Brian Kelly's Alabama's Championship Seasons will quickly appear at the top of America's most enjoyable must-read books about sports. Enjoy!

Who is Brian W. Kelly?

Brian W. Kelly is one of the leading authors in America with this, his 98th published book. Brian is an outspoken and eloquent expert on a variety of topics and he has also written several hundred articles on topics of deep interest to Americans.

Most of Brian's early works involved high technology. Later, he wrote a number of patriotic books and most recently he has been writing human interest books such as The Wine Diet and Thank you, IBM. This is his fourth major sports book. Last year he actually wrote three children's books. He enjoyed writing the children's books almost as much as everybody enjoyed reading them. His books are always well received.

Brian Kelly's books are highlighted at www.letsgopublish.com. They are for sale at Amazon and Kindle, and most can be viewed by linking to amazon.com/author/brianwkelly.

The best!

Sincerely,

Brian P. Kelly, Editor in Chief
I am Brian Kelly's eldest son

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction to the Book	1
Chapter 2 Alabama’s First Football Team	11
Chapter 5 The Evolution of Modern Football	23
Chapter 4 Alabama’s Great Football Fields & Stadiums	29
Chapter 5 Alabama Football – The First Ten Years.....	43
Chapter 6 Alabama Football – The Next Thirteen Years 1902-1914.....	51
Chapter 7 Alabama Football – The Next Eight Years 1915-1922.....	65
Chapter 8 Alabama Football – The Wallace Wade Era 1923-1930.....	77
Chapter 9 Alabama Football – The Frank Thomas Era 1931-1945.....	97
Chapter 10 Alabama Football – Harold Drew & J.B. Whitworth Eras 1947-1957 ...	123
Chapter 11 Alabama Football – The Paul Bear Bryant Era -1 st 15 Yrs 1958-1972...	135
Chapter 12 Alabama Football – The Bear Bryant Era- Last 10 Years--1973-1982...	167
Chapter 13 The Post Bryant Years – Ray Perkins & Bill Curry, 1983-1989	189
Chapter 14 Alabama Football – The Gene Stallings Era -- 1990-1996.....	205
Chapter 15 UA – Pre-Saban – Du Bose, Franchione, & Shula-- 1997-2006.....	223
Chapter 16 Alabama Football – The Nick Saban Era 2007-2017, etc.....	239
Other Books by Brian W. Kelly: (amazon.com, and Kindle).....	313

About the Author



Brian Kelly retired as an Assistant Professor in the Business Information Technology (BIT) Program at Marywood University, where he also served as the IBM i and Midrange Systems Technical Advisor to the IT Faculty. Kelly designed, developed, and taught many college and professional courses. He continues as a contributing technical editor to a number of technical industry magazines, including "The Four Hundred" and "Four Hundred Guru," published by IT Jungle.

Kelly is a former IBM Senior Systems Engineer. His specialty was problem solving for customers as well as implementing advanced operating systems and software on his client's machines. Brian is the author of 210 books and hundreds of magazine articles. He has been a frequent speaker at technical conferences throughout the United States.

Brian was a candidate for the US Congress from Pennsylvania in 2010 and he ran for Mayor in his home town in 2015. He loves Alabama Football and thoroughly enjoyed writing this book about Alabama football's great championships.

Chapter 1 Introduction to the Book

Alabama celebrates its many national college football championships in its 125th year.



Nick Saban, Immortal Alabama Coach “Post Bear” Leading the Crimson Tide

In 2017, Alabama celebrates its 125th year and its 122nd football season (no games were played in 1898, 2018, and 1943). As part of the celebration, the University would be pleased for you to visit its athletic website that honors all Crimson Tide Sports. I promise that if UA chooses to create a new web site commemorating this great moment in its football history of 125 years in 2017, I will create a new version of this book to provide you all with the link and I will update the Kindle version so it can be downloaded immediately. Thank you for reading this book. I know you will love it as you love the Alabama Crimson Tide.

This book is proud to celebrate Alabama University Football; its founding; its struggles; its greatness; and its many great championships. People like me, who love the greatness of Alabama University, will love this book. Alabama haters will want their own copy of just for additional ammo (facts). Yet, it won't help them! Hah!



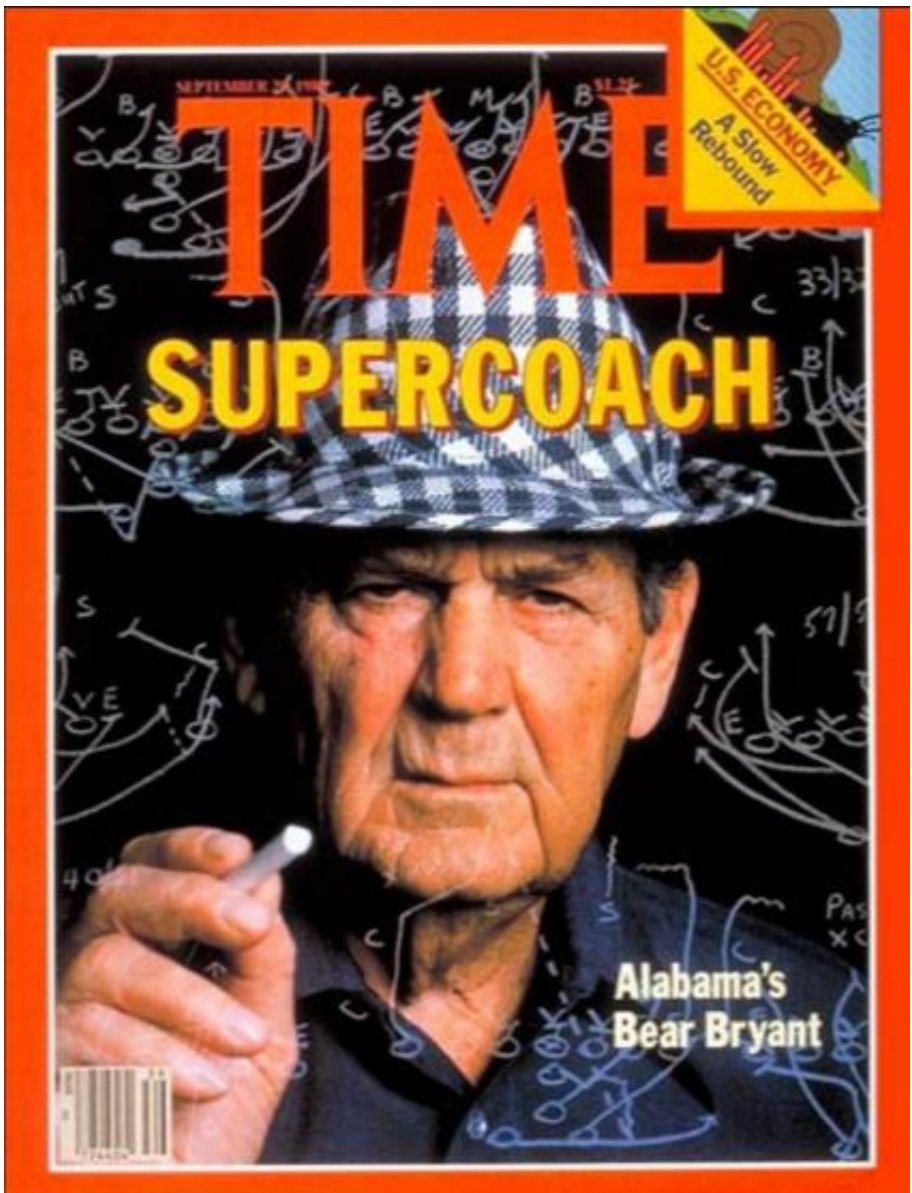
We begin the rest of the Alabama Football Story in Chapter 2 and we continue in subsequent chapters right into the founding of the football program in 1892, and on to the many championships.

In defining the format of the book, we chose to use a timetable that is based on a historical chronology. Within this framework, we discuss the great moments in Alabama Football History, and there are many great moments. No book can claim to be able to capture them all, as it would be a never-ending story, but we sure try.

Any former coach or player from Alabama can attest to the fact that despite all the great coaches and players perhaps no Alabama jerseys could be retired because with all of the history of this great program, there would be no numbers left.

I like to use this idea to help promulgate the notion that nobody can write a full book about Alabama Football History that is all inclusive, because even if it can be written, it would be too big to ever be read. I hoped this book would come in at a little over 200 pages, but if it had, you would not have liked it. Read what you can

in this book when you can. If you love Alabama, it will surely be a fun experience.



I capture all the great moments in this book. OK, I get most of them! If I missed any and you tell me, then we'll do a second edition and a third and a fourth but we'll get it right. The great moments naturally

include a lot of great people, including players and the 29 great coaches that over time would make or break the University of Alabama

If Alabama were ever to break because of any coach, as some believe it has at times, (but the UA legacy proves these were only bends, not breaks) simply because it is Alabama U, the University not only would continue from any issue coming its way. it will always continue. History proves that. Alabama has a he** of a lot of moxie as an institution. Roll Tide on that for sure.

After 30 mostly great coaches and as non-fans actually believe -- a zillion national championships, UA has been able to again become the most respected program of its peers and it is also now the most feared and the most respected college football team of the modern era. If you don't believe that, then you are simply not paying attention.

Ask any coach in 2017, which team would you prefer not to play, and the answer would not be anything other than Alabama U. That is the reality of having a winning record and a coach who can win anywhere!

Alabama has been able to survive a number of coaches who could not survive themselves, while the university and the football program have both grown in acceptance and popularity.

We all as individuals and as honest institutions, such as Alabama do our best in life and sometimes it is just enough. Sometimes it is just not enough. Even if we survive and become more than OK, detractors may suggest our success is not enough. I disagree. Let the naysayers say "nay," and go away! Who can deny Alabama is the greatest football team that ever lived. I bet Knute Rockne would give today's coach Nick Saban a fine "High Five."

Let me please assure you that I have done my best to portray an accurate depiction of Alabama Football History, displayed in a properly summarized format so that none of us are reading this book forever. There are a ton of great stories for sure. More importantly, none of us should need to search further than this book for the truth about many of the depictions in this book.

I worried from the inception of this project about how I could reduce Alabama Football championship to a book. I can't! Nobody can! But we can do something close to satisfying what needs to be said about this outstanding football program, fully supported by the institution as well as the whole state of Alabama.

In fact, I can, and I have done so in this book. We can deliver an understanding of Alabama Football and all of its championship years without talking about the mice that ate the cheese in the men's locker room in game X of season Y. Yes, indeed. I am pleased that I have achieved this objective in this book.

Who thinks that in 2019, there is a better team in college football than Alabama? Pardon my French but only an idiot!

Alabama has its own legacy as do many great college programs but an honest look says Alabama is so unusual, it is undeniably the greatest program ever in college football. It does not matter from which university you gained your alma mater. If you like Football and you like honesty and you like winning, Alabama is the only good bet in town.

The secret in writing this book has been to know that there is always more. My job has been to show things that are known already in encyclopedias, and the vast resources of the Internet. I did not have to personally speak with Mr. Bryant or Mr. Stallings, or Mr. Saban to get the truth about what was happening in their lives or the football time-period in which they excelled. It shows in their records.

Alabama has no revered history of groups of players such as the *four horsemen* of Notre Dame gaining recognition above and beyond the program and the team. Alabama's coaches over the years especially Bear Bryant and now Nick Saban have taken great athletes, who had no clue how far they could go, without fanfare, and these great coaches turned them into great players.



Alabama won lots of games with teams on offense and defense better than any others

The players for their own reasons did not group together into the four horsemen or the five oxes or the three birds or anything like that as their mission was to play great for the University of Alabama and they gained their reputations from doing exactly that.

I have performed no magic in this book and I know it well. But nobody else has ever done what I have done with a project such as this. I have taken the well-known Alabama football history of our times and I have made it both readable and exciting, even without including every phrase, paraphrase, paragraph, sentence, conjunctive verb, or otherwise forgotten notion that may have been included in somebody else's description of events.

If this book were written to be 75,000 pages, I still could not have included everything. But, then again, I knew I was not writing a tax code for the US. Who reads the tax code anyway?

My job was to bring this work about UA great moments together, and to show enough to the reader to make the journey through the beginning of football through Coach Saban's last win much easier to make than otherwise it could have ever been. As I read and reread this book myself, I do believe I achieved that objective.

What reader wants to do the research in order to be fulfilled about Alabama football history other than me? This book makes UA history and its great moments in football history both exciting and

real. Of course, it is also much easier than if the reader had to look up all this great stuff by himself. It brings the Crimson Tide and Crimson Tide football to life for the reader.

Instead of lots of work, we can just sit in our easy chairs or lounges at the pool or beach and we can learn and enjoy and enjoy and learn about a football team and a university that we have come to love. Along the way, every now and then, we'll probably fall asleep with a smile on our faces, and we'll dream about a fine story starring "the Bear" "AJ McCarren," "Kenny Stabler," "Joe Namath", "Gene Stallings," Xen C. Scott, or Nick Saban himself!

How did I do it? How did I make this book inclusive and yet not exhaustive or exhausting?

I started right at the beginning of the football era, while football was being invented, and the rules were being formed by the greats of the day. Then, I began to write about things as they were happening back then. I moved the book chapter by chapter through the beginning of the University of Alabama; the beginning of football; and then the beginning of Alabama Football. I made sure that I got the essence and that the tales were not boring.

I took the flow of the book through periods in which student athletes were coaching football at Alabama. I took it to eras in which coaches did not last much more than a year while better coaches lasted two to four years. Then, before I knew it I was sneaking up on the decades in which more coaches made an impact in more years than in the beginning through the 1920's. I then took the flow of the book to the era of the great Wallace Wade and Frank Thomas

Then I moved to Bear Bryant and Gene Stallings and I went through each and every one of the thirty University of Alabama football coaches in just enough measure so that we all would know their mission and their results. I made sure that we captured their best stories.

Eventually, as the flow took us through twenty-nine coaches, in 2007, we got to examine a thirtieth coach. That's when Coach Nick Saban was hired by the university. Then, I examined and wrote all

about the Nick Saban era, through 2017 and into the next year with the championship game. As I am reviewing Chapter 1 again, making sure I did all I said I would, I find that I have completed the University of Alabama story and the Alabama football story so you can now fill your leisure time with smiles and wonderment. Don't you dare put this book down!

I thought you would like this print by Larry Pitts. Would you not like to have such a print in your rec room? This and other great Larry Pitts Alabama Prints are available at:

http://www.redelephants.com/acatalog/Alabama_Prints_By_Artist_Larry_Pitts_.html



From left to right: Gene Stallings, Nick Saban, Frank Thomas, Wallace Wade, Paul Bryant

This is a Golden Flake Special Edition. Only 2000 prints available.

“ BAMA HOLD ‘EM ”
Golden Flake Edition

This is a print Larry Pitts did with all the National Champion coaches at Alabama, in a poker game. They are left from right, Gene Stallings, Nick Saban, Frank Thomas, Wallace Wade, and of course, Bear Bryant.

Even if you choose never to take a break while reading this book, I get the whole teaching job done in something just less than 600 pages of the most enjoyable content you will ever read. It's all about Alabama Football. Who could ask for more?

Coach Saban extended the great Alabama coaching era right to today. Coach Nick Saban, not the least of the greats for sure, is also

not the last. I see the current coach as he directs this team, to continue to become the best of the best. And the hallowed immortals will not be able to deny Coach Saban his immortality claim. Nor would they want to do so. Let Nick Saban live long and prosper!

Using this format of *enough told* to get the story told, in the rest of the chapters in this book, we examine every football season from the first in 1892 to the last, which as of today is the Nick Saban Era's 2016 season with his four Alabama National Championships and fifth overall championship making up his great record.

Within each season, as depicted in the book, we highlight its great moments but we also do one thing that makes this book useful as a reference document about all of the Alabama Football Teams of the past. We chronicle each and every game in text summary form. Some games are portrayed with great detail after the summation because of their historical significance or simply to tell a great story about a great game; great coach; great player; or sometimes even a great opponent.

Nonetheless, all games are listed and chronicled from 1892. You will absolutely love this book from page 1 to the end. Each time I read it now that it is built, I enjoy it even more.

In this book, we tell you the season, the opponent, the venue (home or away), and of course we tell you the outcome with a score that is easy to find. And, then to make it even easier to analyze and browse for specifics, we designate each win or loss with a big W or a big L so that it stands out in the text.

The University of Alabama is proud of its history and its founding by the state legislature and its first president Alva Woods. And, of course Alabama is very proud of its football program, and its legacy. The Crimson Tide was, is and will continue to be a great university first, and a great home for the greatest football teams that God has ever created or will create.

Thanks for choosing to take this fun ride with us through Alabama Football History. The great moments noted in this book are simply great! You'll love them!

Chapter 2 Alabama's First Football Team

Alabama



Alabama Cadets First Football Team – 1892

1892: Over 70 years from the founding

Alabama Lunches its first football team

They say that Alabama football began with a game in Birmingham on a Friday afternoon in November of 1892. But, there was more to the story than just showing up for the game.

The University itself was begun a bit earlier than that. Its origins are from 1818 even before Alabama was a state

The University of Alabama is naturally proud of its history; its formal founding on December 18, 1820; and its founder, the very astute Alabama Legislature (State Assembly). Prior to the founding of the University, the state of Alabama had its own great but short history.

Even before Alabama was a state, the history of The University of Alabama began with an act of United States Congress in 1818. This act authorized the newly formed Alabama Territory to set aside a township for the establishment of a "seminary of learning." Shortly after this, Alabama was admitted to the Union on March 20, 1819 and a second township was added to the land grant.

The seminary was established by the General Assembly on December 18, 1820, which is recognized today as the founding date of the institution. The seminary was formally named The University of the State of Alabama. And that was that.

One of my favorite sayings in life is that "nothing worth having in life is easy." Even something as simple as forming a football team at a premiere university that had little knowledge or inclination of the game. Sometimes, a little help from the outside is all that is needed to start a tide rolling.

It happens that for the University of Alabama, all the historical logs suggest it was not the President or Board of Directors or an Athletic Director or a local sports club that got the Tide rolling for Alabama Football. No, it was none of those. It was a law student William G. Little of Livingston, Alabama.

He had learned how to play American football as it was evolving in the US, while he was attending prep school in Andover, Massachusetts. Little was smitten by the game and he soon began teaching the sport to fellow Alabama students in early 1892.

For full context, there was no football at Alabama in 1891. From then to now, it was a rarity when there was no football season for the University of Alabama. Only an event such as a poor

administrative decision or a World War would stop Alabama's great football teams from playing.

Later that year (1892), thanks to Little and a dedicated crew of fellow football lovers, the school put together an official team of 19 players. Across the country, more and more colleges and universities were beginning to officially get on board with American football, so this was not exactly new but it sure was groundbreaking for the University.

It is said that when Little arrived, he was "carrying his uniform and a great bag of enthusiasm for the game in 1892." A number of students joined in with him when the season began in October, 1892 after a lot of time spent on formative activities. There is an account in the Crimson White Student Paper from Nov. 25, 1926 that chronicles this trailblazing experience.

Little became the captain of the fledgling group and E. B. Beaumont was the first official head coach. The Collegiate newspaper remarked that Beaumont was fired at season end because he knew too little about the game.

The history for this time in football history is not perfect but it is known that among others on the team was William B. Bankhead, future U.S. Speaker of the House, and Bibb Graves, future governor of Alabama. This first team was referred to as the "Cadets", the "Crimson White", or simply as "the varsity. The guys on this team had one heck of a love for the game.

The 1892 Alabama Cadets football team represented the University of Alabama in the 1892 college football season. The Crimson Tide moniker had not yet been applied. The team was led by their head coach E. B. Beaumont and played their home games at Lakeview Park in Birmingham, Alabama.



Alabama's First Football Coach E. B. Beaumont

In what was the inaugural season of Alabama football, the team finished with a record of two wins and two losses (2–2). For this point values were different from those used in contemporary games. In 1892, for example, a touchdown was worth four points, a field goal was worth five points and an extra point was worth two points

Back to William Little of Livingston, Alabama. He is credited with being responsible for the introduction of football at the university. After playing the game in 1891 while in attendance at a northern prep school, he played a huge role in establishing the first team for the 1892 season.

The first game in Alabama football history was played on November 11, 1892, against Birmingham High School and was won by the Alabama Cadets 56–0. They then split a pair of games with the Birmingham Athletic Club, and closed out the season with a 32–22 loss in the first Iron Bowl against Auburn on February 22, 1893. After the season, Beaumont was fired as head coach and replaced by Eli Abbott for the 1893 season.

After Beaumont's departure, William G. Little continued the training of the team until Abbott was formally brought-in to serve as head coach for the 1893 season.

In early newspaper accounts of Alabama football, the team was often simply listed as the "varsity" or the "Crimson White" after the school colors.

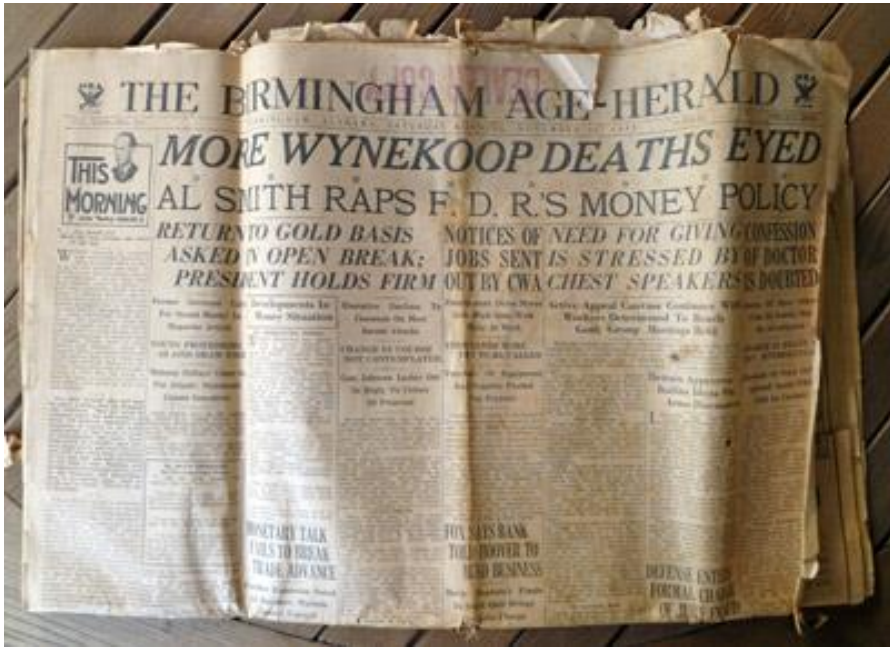
The first nickname to become popular and used by headline writers was the "Thin Red Line." The nickname was used until 1906.

Folklore is sometimes lore but it sometimes is mixed with all the facts needed. The name "Crimson Tide" is supposed to have first been used by Hugh Roberts, former sports editor of the Birmingham Age-Herald. He used "Crimson Tide" to describe an Alabama-Auburn game played in Birmingham in 1907.

This ironically was the last football contest between the two schools until 1948 when the series was resumed. The 1907 game was played in a sea of mud and Auburn was a heavy favorite to win.

But, evidently, the "Thin Red Line" played a great game in the red mud and held Auburn to a 6-6 tie, thus gaining the name "Crimson Tide." Zipp Newman, former sports editor of the Birmingham News, is credited with popularizing the name more than any other writer. Everything that is has a beginning and often beginnings recounted from times past are a little murky if not downright muddy.

In 1930, Everett Strupper of the Atlanta Journal described the team as 'elephants' when they stomped over Ole Miss, and the mascot stuck. This is a fitting sized animal to describe a program with a successful history of mammoth proportions.



Birmingham Age Herald Front Page Circa 1933 (Last Edition in 1950)

The football team didn't garner national acclaim until a game in Philadelphia in 1922, where Alabama defeated the University of Pennsylvania 9-7. Wallace Wade became the coach the following season. The University of Pennsylvania was an early football powerhouse and had enjoyed prominence trouncing the better teams of the day, including Notre Dame.

Let me tell you all how much of a big win this was. Penn still was a tough team when Coach Wade took them on and won. Looking back, the Quakers have had 63 First Team All-Americans, and the college is the alma mater of John Heisman (the namesake of college football's most famous trophy). The team has won a share of 7 national championships (7th all-time) and competed in the "granddaddy of them all" (The Rose Bowl) as far back as in 1917. Penn's total of 837 wins puts them 11th all-time in college football (3rd in the FCS). Most would not know this.

<http://bryantmuseum.com/page.asp?ID=19>

The Bryant Web Site offers this account of the early goings:

“Alabama's first game was played in Birmingham on Friday afternoon, Nov. 11, 1892, at the old Lakeview Park. Opposition was furnished by a picked team from Professor Taylor's school and Birmingham high schools, with Alabama winning, 56-0. Early teams were a bit tougher than current squads, it seems, as the following afternoon Alabama played the Birmingham Athletic Club, losing 5-4 when Ross, of B.A.C., kicked a 65-yard field goal. Impossible though it may seem, this field goal was listed as a collegiate record at one time and Birmingham papers of the day featured its distance in writeups of the game.

“The gridiron sport rapidly caught the students' fancy and the game became a favorite with University athletes. In 1896 the University's board of trustees passed a rule forbidding athletic teams from traveling off the campus. The following season only one game was played and in 1898 football was abandoned at Alabama. Student opposition to the ruling was so strong that the trustees lifted the travel ban and football was resumed in 1899, to continue without interruption until the First World War forced cancellation of the 1918 games.

“Alabama first gained national recognition in 1922 when the University of Pennsylvania [a well-known major powerhouse at the time] was defeated, 9-7, in Philadelphia. The following season Wallace Wade became head coach and in 1925 led the Crimson Tide to its first undefeated and untied season and its first Rose Bowl invitation. On Jan. 1, 1926, an unheralded, underrated team from Tuscaloosa came from behind to upset Washington, 20-19, in the Rose Bowl and established a precedent of colorful play that Crimson Tide teams have continued to uphold.”

Additional Crimson Tide information can be found at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alabama_Crimson_Tide_football

Crimson Tide football through the years

The Alabama Crimson Tide football team represents the University of Alabama (aka Alabama, UA, or 'Bama) in the sport of American football. Alabama today competes in the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the Western Division of the Southeastern

Conference (SEC). Currently coached by Nick Saban, UA is one of the most storied and decorated football programs in NCAA history.

Having begun play about 127 years ago in 1892, the program boasts of 17 national championships. These have been coming for a long time—over and over and over again...and they are still coming today.

Ironically, as good as Alabama's program has been since its first Championship in 1925, and despite numerous other national and conference championships, it was not until 2009 that an Alabama player received a Heisman Trophy. It was running back Mark Ingram. He became the university's first winner. In 2015, Derrick Henry became the university's second Heisman winner.

When the 2015 season was completed, Alabama had amassed 864 official victories in NCAA Division I and for those counting at home folks, there were an additional 21 victories that were vacated and another 8 victories and 1 tie were forfeited for various reasons over the years.

The Crimson Tide today plays its home games at Bryant–Denny Stadium, located on its campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. It is a huge stadium. With a capacity of 101,821, Bryant-Denny Stadium is the 8th largest non-racing stadium in the world and the seventh largest stadium in the United States.

Head Football Coaches

Since 1892 when the program was formed and 1893, when the first game was played, Alabama has played 122 seasons with 30 head coaches. This includes a 1918 coach in a season in which no games were played and a temporary coach who coached one bowl game after his predecessor was fired.

Like all teams of the era save a few from the East, football, in the early years, was not such an easy college sport in which to form a competitive program.

Soon after beginning of play and after a shutdown of the 1898 season due to a ban on away games. The "Crimson Tide" picked up its cherished nickname after the 1907 season. Overall, UA has played more than 1,200 games in their 125 seasons.

In that time, 12 coaches have led the Crimson Tide in postseason bowl games: Wallace Wade, Frank Thomas, Harold D. "Red" Drew, Bear Bryant, Ray Perkins, Bill Curry, Gene Stallings, Mike DuBose, Dennis Franchione, Mike Shula, Joe Kines, and Nick Saban. Eight of those coaches also won conference championships: Wade, Thomas, Drew, Bryant, Curry, Stallings, DuBose, and Saban. During their tenures, Wade, Thomas, Bryant, Stallings, and Saban all won national championships, totaling 16 with the Crimson Tide.

Of the 30 different head coaches who have led the Crimson Tide, Wade, Thomas, Bryant, and Stallings have been inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame. The current head coach is Nick Saban. Saban was hired in January 2007, and he fits the Alabama tradition like a glove. With the 2015 Championship season in the bag, and a 14-1 record in the 2016 season, Saban has amassed 120 victories which includes the great SEC Championship game and the 2016 Peach Bowl.

Alabama National Championships

Alabama is generally credited with 17 national championships though not all have been of the consensus variety. Most universities today give themselves the benefit of the doubt when there is doubt on a championship in a given year.

National Championships before the CFP bowls were hotly contested. National championships in NCAA FBS college football are debated but the NCAA does not officially award the championship. However, it does provide lists of championships awarded by organizations that it does recognizes.

There is an official NCAA 2009 Division I Football Records Book, and this states that: "During the last 138 years, there have been more than 30 selectors of national champions using polls, historical

research and mathematical rating systems. Beginning in 1936, the Associated Press (AP) began the best-known and most widely circulated poll of sportswriters and broadcasters. Before 1936, national champions were determined by historical research and retroactive ratings and polls.

The criteria for being included in this historical list of poll selectors is that the poll be national in scope, either through distribution in newspaper, television, radio and/or computer online.

Since World War II, Alabama only claims national championships awarded by the final AP Poll or the final Coaches' Poll. This policy is consistent with other FBS football programs with numerous national title claims, including Notre Dame, USC, and Oklahoma.

All national championships claimed by the University of Alabama were published in nationally syndicated newspapers and magazines, and each of the national championship selectors, and are cited in the Official 2010 NCAA FBS Record Book.

In addition to the championships claimed by the university, the NCAA has listed Alabama as receiving a championship for the 1945, 1966, 1975, and 1977 college football seasons.

In Alabama's own 1982 media guide, the last for Coach Bryant, 1934 is listed as the only national championship before Coach Bryant in a small footnote about the school's SEC history.

In the 1980s, Alabama's Sports Information Director Wayne Acheson began to recognize five pre-Bryant national championship teams (1925, 1926, 1930, 1934, 1941). He added them to the University's Football Media Guide.

Acheson said that he made the effort in the context of disputed titles being claimed by other schools, and "to make Alabama football look the best it could look" to compete with the other claimants. Acheson believes that the titles are the school's rightful claims.

And, so the UA 2009 Official Football Media Guide states that Alabama had 12 national championships prior to winning the 2010 BCS National Championship Game. The 2009, 2011, 2012, and

2015 titles extend the total number of national championships claimed by Alabama to 16. Eleven of Alabama's national championships were awarded by the wire-services (AP, Coaches' Poll) or by winning the BCS National Championship Game.

In January 2013, CNN suggested that Alabama was college football's new dynasty, and in May 2013, Athlon Sports ranked Alabama's ongoing dynasty as the fourth-best since 1934, behind Oklahoma (1948–58), Miami (1986–92), and Nebraska (1993–97). Watch out to the top three for sue as Alabama is not done yet.

Conference Championships

Alabama has a winning tradition. A gambler can get rich betting on Alabama games. The teams over the years have won a total of 30 conference championships; this includes 4 Southern Conference and 26 SEC Championships.

UA captured its 4 Southern Conference titles in 1924, 1925, 1926, and 1930. Alabama captured the first SEC title in 1933 and the team has won a total of 26 SEC Championships (1933, 1934, 1937, 1945, 1953, 1961, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1981, 1989, 1992, 1999, 2009, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018).

The school has won more SEC football titles than any other school, including seven since the conference split into separate divisions and added the Championship Game in 1992. Alabama is the only SEC school to win an SEC Championship in every decade since the conference was founded in 1933. Alabama is synonymous with winning. Bear Bryant fit the Alabama winning tradition 100%. Nick Saban looks like a Bear Disciple.

Divisional Championships

Since the 1992 season, the SEC has been split into two divisions. Alabama competes in the SEC West. Alabama has won or shared 12 division titles, and has posted a 9-4 record in the SEC Championship Game as of 2018.

Those of us who root always or often for Alabama are seldom disappointed. What a football tradition. Roll Tide.

Heisman Trophy

One can certainly make the case that with such a phenomenal record, Alabama is either fully team-oriented and consistently lack individual talent; have been victimized by a biased voting system; or a simply victims of circumstance. No Alabama Heisman's during Bear Bryant's storied career? It just does not seem right.

There is always irony in every story. Bear Bryant did coach one Heisman winner, John David Crow. However, Crow played for the Texas Aggies when the Bear coached there. Bryant then moved on to Alabama and the Crimson Tide are quite pleased that he did.

I have to admit, I scoured for sources that could explain the lack of Heisman Trophies at Alabama. If you are reading this and you know, let me know, and in a future update to this book, I will more than likely include your perspective.

On December 12, 2009, the Heisman drought ended. Mark Ingram became Alabama's first Heisman Trophy winner. In the closest race, ever, he edged out Stanford running back Toby Gerhart by 28 points. The previous best finish for an Alabama player occurred in 1993, when David Palmer finished 3rd in the Heisman voting. AJ McCarron finished as runner-up for the 2013 season. Derrick Henry became Alabama's second Heisman trophy winner on December 12, 2015.

Alabama fans are typically very happy

Overall, those of us who root always or often for Alabama are seldom disappointed. What a football tradition. Roll Tide.

Chapter 3 The Evolution of Modern Football



Lots of playing before playing became official

The official agreed upon date for the first American-style college football game is November 6, 1869. If you can find a replay of this game someplace in the heavens, however, you would find it would not look much like football as we know it. But, it was not completely soccer or rugby either.

Before this game, teams were playing a rugby style similar to that played in Britain in the mid-19th century. At the time in the US, a derivative known as association football was also played. In both games, a football is kicked at a goal or run over a line. These styles were based on the varieties of English public school football games. Over time, as noted, the style of "football" play in America continued to evolve.

On November 6, 1869, the first football game in America featured Rutgers and Princeton. Before the teams were even on the field it was being plugged as the first college football game of all time. Alabama did not have a rugby team at the time, but nobody at UA, from what I could find, was even thinking about the game of football back in 1869.

The first game of intercollegiate football was a sporting battle between two neighboring schools on a plot of ground where the present-day Rutgers gymnasium now stands in New Brunswick, N.J. Rutgers won that first game, 6-4.

There were two teams of 25 men each and the rules were rugby-like, but different enough to make it very interesting and enjoyable.

Like today's football, there were many surprises; strategies needed to be employed; determination exhibited, and of course the players required physical prowess.



1st Game Rutgers 6 Princeton 4 College Field, New Brunswick, NJ

At 3 p.m. the 50 combatants as well as 100 spectators gathered on the field. Most sat on a low wooden fence and watched the athletes discard their hats, coats and vests. The players used their suspenders as belts. To give a unique look, Rutgers wore scarlet-colored scarfs,

which they converted into turbans. This contrasted them with the bareheaded boys from Princeton.

Two members of each team remained more or less stationary near the opponent's goal in the hopes of being able to slip over and score from unguarded positions. Thus, the present day "sleeper" was conceived. The remaining 23 players were divided into groups of 11 and 12. While the 11 "fielders" lined up in their own territory as defenders, the 12 "bulldogs" carried the battle.

Each score counted as a "game" and 10 games completed the contest. Following each score, the teams changed direction. The ball could be advanced only by kicking or batting it with the feet, hands, heads or sides.

Rutgers put a challenge forward that three games were to be played that year. The first was played at New Brunswick and won by Rutgers. Princeton won the second game, but cries of "over-emphasis" prevented the third game in football's first year when faculties of both institutions protested on the grounds that the games were interfering with student studies.

This is an excerpt of the Rutgers account of the game on its web site. A person named Herbert gave this detailed account of the play in the first game:

"Though smaller on the average, the Rutgers players, as it developed, had ample speed and fine football sense. Receiving the ball, our men formed a perfect interference around it and with short, skillful kicks and dribbles drove it down the field. Taken by surprise, the Princeton men fought valiantly, but in five minutes we had gotten the ball through to our captains on the enemy's goal and S.G. Gano, '71 and G.R. Dixon, '73, neatly kicked it over. None thought of it, so far as I know, but we had without previous plan or thought evolved the play that became famous a few years later as 'the flying wedge'."

"Next period Rutgers bucked, or received the ball, hoping to repeat the flying wedge," Herbert's account continues. "But the first time we formed it Big Mike came charging full upon us. It was our turn for surprise. The Princeton battering ram made no attempt to reach the

ball but, forerunner of the interference-breaking ends of today, threw himself into our mass play, bursting us apart, and bowing us over. Time and again Rutgers formed the wedge and charged; as often Big Mike broke it up. And finally, on one of these incredible break-ups a Princeton bulldog with a long accurate, perhaps lucky kick, sent the ball between the posts for the second score.

It was at this point that a Rutgers professor could stand it no longer. Waving his umbrella at the participants, he shrieked, "You will come to no Christian end!"

Herbert's account of the game continues: "The fifth and sixth goals went to Rutgers. The stars of the latter period of play, in the memory of the players after the lapse of many years, were "Big

Mike" and Large (former State Senator George H. Large of Flemington, another Princeton player) ...

The University of the State of Alabama did not get into the football act until the early 1890's. At this time, the rules of rugby kept changing to accommodate the infatuation for the Americanized style of "football" play that would ultimately become the American game of football.

Walter Camp: the father of American football?



Walter Camp was a very well-known rugby player from Yale. In today's world, he would have been characterized as a rugby hero. It was his love of the game, his knowledge of the game as it was played, and his innovative mind that caused him to take the evolution of football even further. He pioneered the changes to the rules of rugby that slowly transformed the sport into the new game of American Football.

The rule changes that were introduced to the rugby and association style of play were mostly

those authored by Camp, who was also a Hopkins School graduate. For his original efforts, Walter Camp today is considered to be the "Father of American Football". Among the important changes brought to the game were the introduction of a line of scrimmage; down-and-distance rules; and the legalization of interference (blocking).

There was no such thing in those days as a forward pass and so the legalization of interference in 1880 football permitted blocking for runners. The forward pass would add another dimension to the game that made it much different than rugby or association football.

Soon after the early football changes, in the late nineteenth and into the early twentieth centuries, more game-play type developments were introduced by college coaches. The list is like a who's who of early American College Football. Coaches, such as Eddie Cochems, Amos Alonzo Stagg, Parke H. Davis, Knute Rockne, John Heisman, and Glenn "Pop" Warner helped introduce and then take advantage of the newly introduced forward pass. College football as well as professional football, were introduced prior to the 20th century. Fans were lured into watching again and again once they saw the game played.

College football especially grew in popularity despite the existence of pro-football. It became the dominant version of the sport of football in the United States. It was this way for the entire first half of the 20th century. Bowl games made the idea of football even more exciting in the college ranks. Rivalries grew and continued and the fans loved it! This great football tradition brought a national audience to college football games that still dominates the sports world today.

This book has little to do with pro-football or any other sport. However, there is no denying that the greatest college football players more often than not eventually found their fortunes in professional football. Pro football can be traced back to the season Alabama got into pro football.

It was 1892 when William "Pudge" Heffelfinger signed a \$500 contract to play for the Allegheny Athletic Association against the Pittsburgh Athletic Club.

Twenty-eight years later, the American Professional Football Association was formed. This league changed its name to the National Football League (NFL) just two years later. Eventually, the NFL became the major league of American football. Originally, just a sport played in Midwestern industrial towns in the United States, professional football eventually became a national phenomenon.

We all know this because from August to February, in America, many of us are glued to our TV sets or chained to our seats in some of the most intriguing pro-football stadiums in America.

The Heisman



Jay Berwanger (above) was the 1st Heisman Winner. In 1935, New York City's Downtown Athletic Club awarded its first Heisman Trophy to University of Chicago halfback Jay Berwanger (left).

He was also the first ever NFL Draft pick in 1936. The trophy continues to this day to recognize the nation's "most outstanding" college football player. It has become one of the most coveted awards in all of American sports.

Chapter 4 Alabama's Great Football Fields & Stadiums

Not every university is so fortunate

You may wonder why this chapter (sideshow) is positioned after you first begin to learn about Alabama Football from way – back. Well, it is only simple to explain if you have already read the book. Few teams of which I am aware, consistently play home games at fields other than their one home field.

Without this chapter, it would take you a lot of chapters to figure out how fortunate Alabama has been. Being so close to the state capital and its adopted field aka Legion Field and lots of other fields in Alabama, and being a state institution. Alabama played its home games wherever it wanted to play them in Alabama. Make note of this chapter and if you are interested in the home venue. Please come back to this sideshow to renew your perspective.

When you finish reading this whole book, you will know that The Alabama Crimson Tide Football Team represents the University of Alabama and the team has competed in football since 1892. Although the Alabama campus is physically located in Tuscaloosa, through the history of the program, several stadiums located in Tuscaloosa, Birmingham, Montgomery and Mobile have played host to the fine Alabama football teams during UA football's 125 seasons.

Few universities have had such a plethora of stadiums to choose from in their history. Today, the variety has been over for a number of years as Alabama will play all of its home games in a nice new big facility called Bryant-Denny Stadium which is on campus in Tuscaloosa, AL. It is a huge and wonderful stadium. It was once a little field before it was made into a big stadium in 1929.

The QUAD

Before 1929, as you will see in the next chapter and some following that, the spot where many games were played on Campus at Tuscaloosa was called the QUAD. There really was no stadium per se, so they made a section of the campus into a field and they put the lines on it and the goal posts and whatever was necessary for the brand of football played at the turn of the prior century.

At the time the photo below was taken, the University of Alabama football team played their games on the QUAD. This would have been prior to 1916 when Denny Field was constructed behind Little and Moore Halls. Denny Field was used until 1929 when the football team moved to the present site of Bryant Denny Stadium.



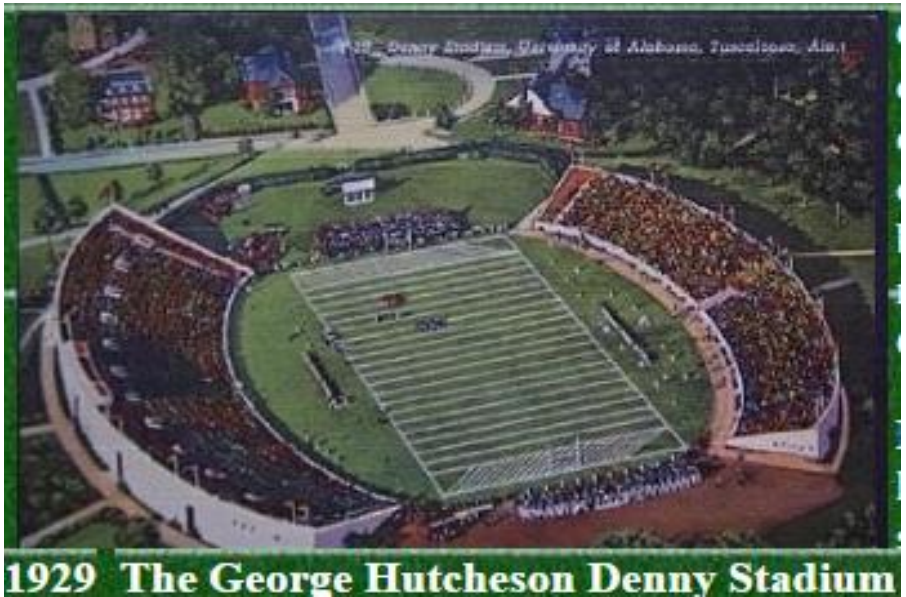
The QUAD

The first home of Crimson Tide football was located on The QUAD at the center of the Alabama campus in Tuscaloosa. The Crimson as they were known then compiled an overall record of 42 wins to only 11 losses between the 1893 through the 1914 seasons. The location of the playing field on The QUAD was located at two locations. The first location of the field was at the southeast corner,

with the field running parallel to 6th Avenue, and its second location was moved 90-degrees to the west to run parallel to University Boulevard.

Bryant-Denny Stadium

That which today is known as Bryant–Denny Stadium has served as the on-campus home of the Crimson Tide since its opening on September 28, 1929. Originally this historic stadium was known as the George Hutchenson Denny Stadium or simply Denny Stadium after the university president of the same name,



Since Alabama is a state-run institution of higher learning, the state has some say in how the football team conducts the business of football as well as where it plays its games.

in 1975, for example, the Alabama state legislature renamed the stadium Bryant–Denny Stadium in honor of then coach Bear Bryant. Because the Bear was Bear and nobody else has ever been or could come close to BEAR, Alabama fans and supporters have a major affinity to Paul “Bear Bryant”



DENNY FIELD FROM THE TOP OF THE GYM

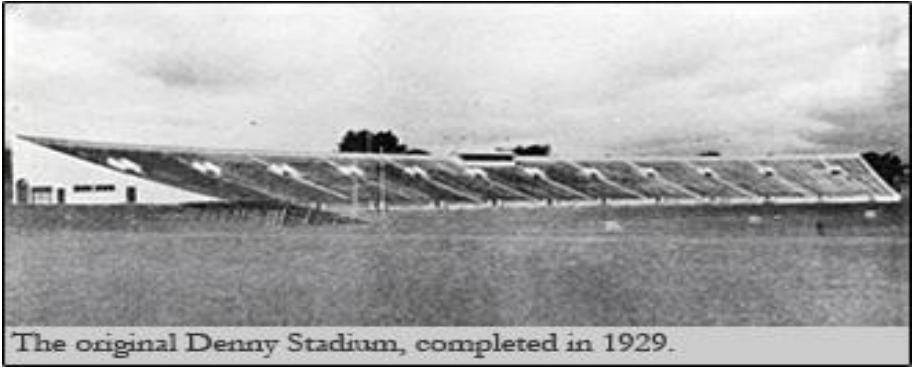
Image courtesy of the W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama | Reproduced with permission | www.lib.ua.edu/libraries/hoole



Denny Field

Denny Field served as the home stadium for the Crimson Tide football team from 1915 through the 1928 seasons, excluding 1918 when a team was not fielded due to World War I. Originally named University Field, but renamed in 1920, during its tenure as the team's home field, Alabama amassed an overall home record of 43 wins to only 3 losses.

Originally, Denny Stadium only had seating for 12,000 fans. But, further expansions in 1950, 1961, and 1966 raised capacity to 25,000, 43,000, and 60,000, respectively. The first upper deck was added on the west side of the stadium in 1988, adding 10,000 more seats for a capacity of 70,123. 2nd pic below Denny Stadium 1966



On September 5, 1998, the stadium's eastern upper deck was opened, and raised its official seating capacity to 83,818 at a final cost of \$35 million. The University moved all home games here from Legion Field in exchange for the funding given to the project by local municipalities.



1998 Expansion of Bryant-Denny

It did not end there. After the 2004 football season, the university spent another wad of money -- approximately \$47 million on an expansion to the north end zone. This was completed days before the 2006 season opener against Hawaii. The expansion added a new upper deck to the North end zone area, complete with three different levels of skyboxes, which collectively are known as "The Zone."

There is so much revenue to be generated by the same game when a stadium is large, that more and more schools are spending money on expansions to accommodate fans and to assure future football program revenue.

This last expansion as discussed brought the number of skyboxes in the stadium to 123. Everybody one day in their lives should be able to watch a game from a skybox. This expansion brought Bryant-Denny capacity to 92,138 by the 2006 season.

Another expansion to the south end zone, completed during the Summer of 2010, increased its capacity to over 101,000 to make it the 8th largest stadium in the world by seating. All-time. There are times at Bryant Denny that there are no seats available. That is good of course but bad for fans who wish to attend games to support the Crimson Tide. Maybe still more seats are needed?



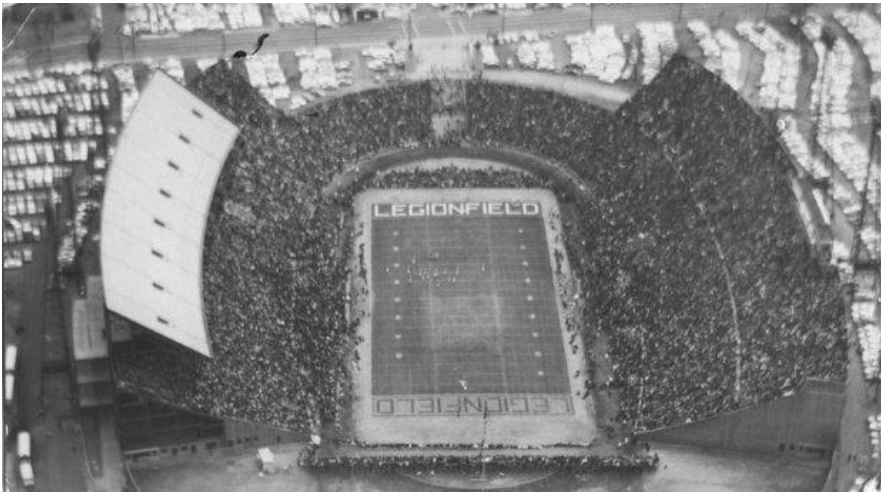
Bryant-Denny Stadium Today

It is nice to find different writers with different perspectives about the same stuff. I have added my two cents to mostly everything in this book and won't stop now. If you already know the stuff about the stadiums below, skip forward to learn more about the many UA stadium venues.

Please tell me about Legion Field and its Role at Alabama

Legion Field

Well into the 1980s, Alabama played most of its important games, as well as the Iron Bowl, at Legion Field—to the point that most of Alabama's "home" football history from the 1920s to the 1980s took place in Birmingham and not on the campus field in Tuscaloosa.



Birmingham's Legion Field stadium hosted its first game on Nov. 19, 1927, when Howard College met Birmingham-Southern in a cross-town rivalry.

Here are some of the important dates and events in the 87-year-old stadium's history:

1927 - Legion Field stadium opened with 21,000 seats; Howard College (now Samford University) meets Birmingham-Southern in the first game.

1946 - The annual Alabama State-Alabama A&M game, later known as the Magic City Classic, was played at Legion Field for the first time.

1947 - Legion Field doubled its capacity to about 42,000, including the addition of the south end zone "horseshoe."

1948 - After not playing each other for 41 years, Alabama and Auburn renew their intrastate rivalry at Legion Field in the Iron Bowl.

1961 - An upper deck was added to Legion Field's east side, increasing capacity to about 54,600.

1964 - A stadium bond issue funded an additional 14,000 seats in the north end zone; The Birmingham News and Birmingham Post-Herald donated \$10,000 for two new scoreboards.

1965 -- A new press box was built, with elevators from the ground level to the top of the stadium.

1970 - An artificial surface, Poly-Turf, replaced the natural grass. Five years later, AstroTurf replaced the Poly-Turf.

1974 -Banks and Woodlawn high schools played before an estimated 42,000 fans, the largest crowd ever to watch a high school football game in Alabama.

1974 - The Birmingham Americans defeated the Florida Blazers to win the WFL's first and only World Bowl; the league folded a year later.

1977 - Another 7,000 seats were added by closing in the south end zone to create an enclosed bowl; Legion Field hosted the first Hall of Fame Classic bowl game.

1981 - Paul "Bear" Bryant won his 315th game to become college football's all-time winningest coach.

1988 - For the last time, Alabama and Auburn met in an Iron Bowl in which the tickets were split 50-50; Auburn moved its home games to its campus the next year.

1989 - The Rolling Stones bring their Steel Wheels tour to Legion Field; the Stones return five years later.

1991 - The stadium expands for the final time, bringing seating capacity to slightly more than 83,000.

1992 - Legion Field hosts the first SEC Championship Game between Alabama and Florida; the game moves to Atlanta's Georgia Dome two years later.

1996 - A Legion Field-record crowd of 83,810 fills the stadium to watch the United States play Argentina in an Olympic soccer match.

2003 - Alabama plays its final home game at Legion Field against the University of South Florida.

2005 - In need of serious repairs, the east-side upper deck is removed, reducing the stadium's capacity to its current level of about 71,000.



Because of structural problems that were too costly to repair, the Legion Field upper deck was torn down in 2005. (Joe Songer/jsonger@al.com)

2008 - Legion Field hosts the Alabama High School Athletic Association's "Super 6" state football championships for the final time.

2014 - The UAB Blazers play their final game at Legion Field; UAB President Ray Watts shuts down the football program 10 days later.

Other UA Football Field / Stadium Venues

Rickwood Field

Rickwood Field provided for the fifth location of Alabama home games in Birmingham, and is located at the corner of 2nd Avenue West and 12th Street West in the West End. Alabama would play home games at Rickwood between the 1912 and 1927 seasons, with an all-time record at Rickwood Field of 23 wins, 12 losses and 5 ties.

Birmingham Fairgrounds

The Birmingham Fairgrounds provided for the fourth location of Alabama home games in Birmingham, and is located in western Birmingham at the location of Birmingham International Raceway. Alabama would play home games at the fairgrounds between the 1905 and 1911 seasons, with an all-time record at the Birmingham Fairgrounds of 12 wins, 6 losses and 2 ties.

West End Park

West End Park, also known as "Slag Pile Field", and also the home of the Birmingham Barons before Rickwood Field was constructed, was the third location of Alabama home games in Birmingham. The Crimson would play home games at West End Park between the 1901 and 1904 seasons, with an all-time record at West End Park of 3 wins, 5 losses and 1 tie

Lakeview Park

Located at the present-day intersection of Highland and Clairmont Avenues, Lakeview Park has the distinction of being the first home of Alabama football. On November 11, 1892, Alabama would win its first all-time game against Birmingham High School 56–0 and lose the first Iron Bowl against Auburn 22–32 on February 22, 1893 at Lakeview. Alabama would play home games at Lakeview between the 1892 and 1894 seasons, with an all-time record at Lakeview Park of 2 wins and 5 losses.

Cramton Bowl

The Cramton Bowl provided for the fourth and final location of Alabama home games in the capital city. The Tide played home games at the Cramton Bowl in the 1922 through 1932 seasons, in 1934, between the 1944 through 1946 seasons and again between the 1951 through 1954 seasons. Alabama's all-time record at the Cramton Bowl was 17 wins and 3 losses.

Highland Park

Highland Park provided for the second location of Alabama home games in the capital city. The Crimson Tide would play home games at Highland in the 1901, 1903, and the 1907 seasons. Alabama's all-time record at Riverside was 1 win, 0 losses and 2 ties.

Ladd Peebles Stadium

Opening for Crimson Tide football on October 2, 1948, Ladd Peebles Stadium played host to Alabama through the 1948 and the 1959 seasons, the 1961 and the 1963 through the 1968 seasons. The Crimson Tide posted an all-time record at Ladd-Peebles Stadium of 10 wins, 7 losses and 2 ties.

Here are two more places on the next page. It is simply amazing the variety of stadiums and fields UA has used over the years.

Mobile



Ladd Peebles Stadium in 2003

Murphy Stadium

Murphy Stadium played host to Alabama for the 1944 season. The Crimson Tide posted an all-time record at Murphy Stadium of 2 wins, 0 losses and 0 ties. 1940—Alabama 26, Spring Hill 0 (Sept. 27, 1940, Mobile) In the first night game in Alabama football history, the Crimson Tide beat Spring Hill College, 26-0, in front of 7,500 fans at Murphy High School in Mobile.

Monroe Park

Records of the 1907 season indicate that Alabama played LSU at Monroe Park in Mobile on November 23, 1907, and defeated the Tigers 6-4.

Chapter 5 Alabama Football – The First Ten Years

The No Coach Years

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Conference</u>
1892	E. B. Beaumont #1	Independent	2-2-0	
1893	Eli Abbott#2	Independent	0-4-0	
1894	Eli Abbott	Independent	3-1-0	
1895	Eli Abbott	SIAA	0-4-0	0-4-0
1896	Otto Wagonhurst #3	SIAA	2-1-0	1-1-0
1897	Allen McCants #4	SIAA	1-0-0	0-0-0
1898	No Season			
1899	W. A. Martin #5	SIAA	3-1-0	1-0-0
1900	Malcolm Griffin #6	SIAA	2-3-0	1-3-0
1901	M. S. Harvey #7	SIAA	2-1-2	2-1-2



1892 Alabama's 1st Football Season Coach E.B Beaumont Coach # 1

The Alabama Cadets football program began its 1892 football season on November 11 with a game against Birmingham High School. The Cadets won the game 56-0.

Alabama was led by their head coach E. B. Beaumont and played their home games at Lakeview Park in Birmingham, Alabama. In what was the inaugural season of Alabama football, the team finished with a record of two wins and two losses (2–2). William Little of Livingston, Alabama has been credited with being responsible for the introduction of football at the university. Little served as captain of the team in 1892.

After the 56-0 win, the team then split a pair of games with the Birmingham Athletic Club, and it closed out the season with a L (22–32) loss in the first Iron Bowl against Auburn on February 22, 1893. Think of how long the Iron Bowl has been going on! After the season, Beaumont was fired as head coach and replaced by Eli Abbott for the 1893 season.

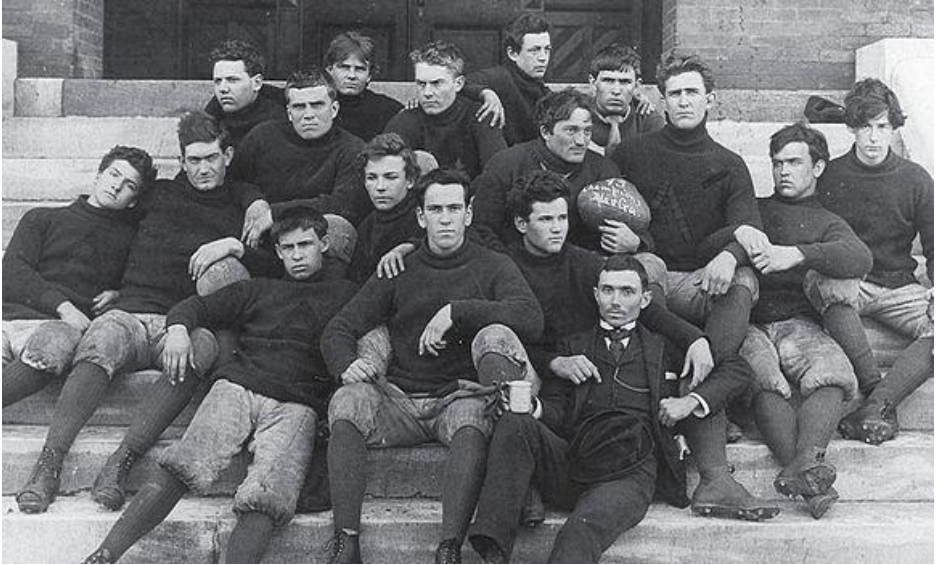
In 1892, football as we know it was not completely defined. Association football, rugby, and even soccer was having a major influence at the time on the college football rules and game play. Unlike other startup teams its early years, UA was blessed with a coach. There were teams competing at the college level that had no coach other than some players who stepped up to the plate.

1893 Alabama Football Season Eli Abbot Coach # 2

The 1893 Alabama Crimson White football team represented the University of Alabama in the 1893 college football season. The team changed its name after the 1892 season. It was called the "Crimson White" from 1893 to 1906, when their name changed to the currently used "Crimson Tide.

The team was led by first year head coach Eli Abbott and played their home games at Lakeview Park in Birmingham and The QUAD in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. It was not such a good second year as the Crimson White finished with a record of zero wins and four losses (0–4).

They had finished their inaugural year with a .500 record, and afterwards, head coach E. B. Beaumont was fired and replaced with Abbott prior to the start of the season. The 1893 squad opened the season with a pair of losses against the Birmingham Athletic Club, first in Tuscaloosa and then again, a month later at Birmingham.



1893 Alabama Crimson White Football Team Eli Abbott Coach

The Crimson White was then shutout by Sewanee at home. This was first game against an out-of-state opponent, and then closed the season with a 40–16 loss in the Iron Bowl against Auburn at Montgomery. The winless season was the first of only three in the program's entire history.

1894 Alabama Football Season Eli Abbot Coach # 2

The 1894 Alabama Crimson White football team, (aka "Alabama", "UA" or "Bama") played a much better third season than in 1893. The team was led by second-year head coach Eli Abbott, the team finished with a record of three wins and one loss (3–1).

After a winless season in 1893, Abbott returned as a player-coach and led the 1894 squad. The Crimson White opened the season with a loss against Ole Miss in what was their first away game ever

played outside the state of Alabama. UA then won their final three games.

After a victory over Tulane at New Orleans, Alabama returned to Birmingham where they defeated Sewanee in their only home game of the season. They then closed the year with their first all-time win over Auburn at Montgomery in the Iron Bowl.

1895 Alabama Football Season Eli Abbot Coach # 2

In a repeat performance of the 1893 season, UA never got started and finished with another 0-4-0 record. The 1895 the Alabama Crimson White football team was again led by head coach Eli Abbott, in his third season.

The 1895 squad also was the first to compete in a conference, the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). After a one-loss season in 1894, Abbott returned as head coach and led the 1895 squad. Alabama opened the season with a loss at Columbus against the Georgia Bulldogs L (6-30).

The Crimson White next lost a pair of games L (0-32), and L (6-12) in Louisiana over a span of just three days. After a loss to Tulane at New Orleans, Alabama was defeated by LSU in the first all-time game between the schools. They then closed the year with a L (0-48) to Auburn in the first Iron Bowl ever played at Tuscaloosa. UA would go winless just one more time in its football history

1896 Alabama Football Season Otto Wagonhurst; Coach # 3



The 1896 Alabama Crimson White football team was led by head coach Otto Wagonhurst (left) in his first season. Eli Abbot had graduated. They played their home games at The QUAD in Tuscaloosa, Alabama in what was the fifth season of Alabama football. UA finished with a record of two wins and one loss (2-1, 1-1 in the SIAA).

In spring 1895, the University Board of Trustees passed a rule that prohibited

athletic teams from competing off-campus for athletic events. As such, all games scheduled for the 1896 season were played on campus at The QUAD. In their first game, Alabama shutout the Birmingham Athletic Club before they lost their only game of the season against Sewanee. The Crimson White then closed the season with their second shutout victory of the year against Mississippi A&M. It was tough to schedule teams when they knew that Alabama would never be the visiting team.

1897 Alabama Football Season Coach Allen McCants #4

The 1897 Alabama Crimson White football team was coached by Allen McCants in his first season. They played home games at The QUAD in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. This was the sixth season of Alabama football, the team finished with a record of one win and zero losses (1–0, 0–0 SIAA).



1897 Football Team Coach Allen McCants

As noted, in the spring of 1895, the University Board of Trustees passed a rule that prohibited athletic teams from competing off-campus for athletic events, and as such only one game was scheduled for the season. In their only game, the Crimson White shutout the Tuscaloosa Athletic Club W (6-0) on The QUAD. SIAA teams were not interested in playing only away games and thus no conference games were scheduled. The following year UA found no teams willing to play.

1898: No season.

In the spring of 1895, the University Board of Trustees passed a rule that prohibited athletic teams from competing off-campus for athletic events. As such the 1898 season was canceled; however, the board subsequently rescinded this rule and the squad returned to the field for the 1899 season.

1899 Alabama Football Season W. A. Martin Coach # 5

The 1899 Alabama Crimson White football team was led by first year head coach W. A. Martin. They played their home games at The QUAD in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Since there was no sixth season in 1898, this was the seventh season of Alabama football.



UA 1899 Football Team

The team finished with a record of three wins and one loss (3–1, 1–0 SIAA).



<< W A Martin left...

On October 21, UA played Tuscaloosa Athletic Club at the QUAD in Tuscaloosa, for a win W (16–5). On November 11, the Montgomery Athletic Club came to The QUAD for another win W 16–0. On November 24, the Crimson White traveled to Mississippi Driving Park in Jackson, MS (and won another W (7–5)). With an undefeated season on the line, the

next day on November 25 the New Orleans Athletic Club in the Athletic Park in New Orleans, LA, the Crimson White suffered its only defeat of the season, in a very close match L (0–2).

1900 Alabama Football Season--Malcolm Griffin; Coach # 6

The 1900 Alabama Crimson White football was led by head coach Malcolm Griffin in his first season, and played their home games at The QUAD in Tuscaloosa and one game at North Birmingham Park in Birmingham, Alabama.



In what was the eighth season of Alabama football, the team finished with a record of two wins and three losses (2–3, 1–3 SIAA).

<<< Malcolm Griffin Left.

The Crimson White opened the season with three consecutive games at the QUAD. After a shutout victory over the Taylor School W (35-0), Alabama opened SIAA play with a W (12–5) victory over Ole Miss.

However, the Crimson White did proceed to lose their final three

games en route to a 2–3 record. After a L (0-6) loss to Tulane, Alabama traveled to Montgomery where they were defeated L (5-53) by Auburn and they closed the season with a L (0-35) loss to Clemson at Birmingham.

1901 Alabama Football Season M. S. Harvey Coach #7

The 1901 Alabama Crimson White football team was led by head coach M. S. Harvey, in his first season. The team played its home games at The QUAD in Tuscaloosa and one game each at Highland Park in Montgomery and at West End Park in Birmingham, Alabama.



It was the ninth season for Alabama football, the team finished with a record of two wins, one loss and two ties (2–1–2, 2–1–2 SIAA).

<<< Coach M S Harvey Left

On October 26 at home v Ole Miss, Alabama triumphed W (41-0). This was followed by a zero-zero tie on November 9 at Georgia in Montgomery Alabama T (0-0). In the Iron Bowl on November 15, Auburn played well and defeated the Crimson White L (0-17). Mississippi A&M then came to town and lost to the Crimson White in a blowout W (45-0) The next game was November 28 v Tennessee at West End Park T (6-6)

Chapter 6 Alabama Football – The Next Thirteen Years 1902-1914

Seven coaches in thirteen years

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>C-Record</u>
1902	Eli Abbott #8	SIAA	4-4-0	2-4-0
1903	W. B. Blount #9	SIAA	3-4-0	3-4-0
1904	W. B. Blount	SIAA	7-3-0	4-3-0
1905	Jack Leavenworth #10	SIAA	6-4-0	4-4-0
1906	J. W. H. Pollard #11	SIAA	5-1-0	3-1-0
1907	J. W. H. Pollard	SIAA	5-1-2	3-1-2
1908	J. W. H. Pollard	SIAA	6-1-1	1-1-1
1909	J. W. H. Pollard	SIAA	5-1-2	4-1-2
1910	Guy Lowman #12	SIAA	4-4-0	0-4-0
1911	D. V. Graves #13	SIAA	5-2-2	2-2-2
1912	D. V. Graves	SIAA	5-3-1	3-3-1
1913	D. V. Graves	SIAA	6-3-0	4-3-0
1914	D. V. Graves	SIAA	5-4-0	4-3-0



1892 Alabama's Thin Red Line

1902 Alabama Football Season Eli Abbott Coach #2 & # 8

Eli Abbott one of the many good guys in Alabama football history (April 1, 1869 – February 13, 1943) was very athletic. He played and coached football and baseball at the University of Alabama and the University of Pennsylvania, the best team in the country at the turn of the century. Abbott coached the Alabama Crimson Tide football team from 1893 to 1895 and again in 1902.



The 1902 Alabama Crimson White football team was led by <<< Coach **Eli Abbott (Left)**, in his only season of his second stint (fourth season overall). The team played home games at The QUAD on campus in Tuscaloosa and at West End Park in Birmingham, Alabama.

James O. Heyworth served as a co-head coach with Abbott for this particular season. In what was the tenth season of Alabama football, the team finished with a record of four wins and four losses (4–4, 2–3

in the SIAA).

At this time, in the evolution of American football as played at colleges and universities, teams, especially those in Conferences, were becoming able to schedule more games each season.

1903 Alabama Football Season W. A. Blount Coach # 9

The 1903 Alabama Crimson White football team was led by head coach W. B. Blount, in his first season. As teams before them, they played their home games at The QUAD in Tuscaloosa as well as the West End Park in Birmingham, Alabama.



<<< left W. A. Blount was the head football coach at the University of Alabama for two seasons in 1903 and 1904, leading the Crimson Tide to a 10-7 record during that time. After finishing just 3-4 in 1903, Blount led the Tide to a 7-3 season in 1904. He also coached at Howard College, which is now known as Samford University. Blount passed away in 1918 at the age of 39.

This was the eleventh season of Alabama football. This fine team finished with a record of three wins and four losses (3-4, 3-4 SIAA). In 1903, the UA administration did not know this exactly, but there was a secret formula for football at Alabama that kept Crimson White; later the Crimson Tide from never having another losing season until 1951. And, my friends, that is about as long as long is.

Alabama upset the Alabama Polytechnic Institute (now known as Auburn University) 18-6 before 1,200 fans at Riverside Park in Montgomery. J. V. Boyles scored a touchdown for Alabama to cap a 19-play, 79-yard drive on their opening possession and with the extra point took a 6-0 lead.

In the second half, Alabama extended their lead to 12-0 after Truman Smith scored on a 45-yard touchdown run. After Auburn cut the lead to 12-6 with a W. G. Boyd touchdown run, Alabama scored the final points of the game on a 25-yard Smith run for the 18-6 victory. The victory brought Alabama's all-time record against Auburn to 2-6. Things would get better over time.

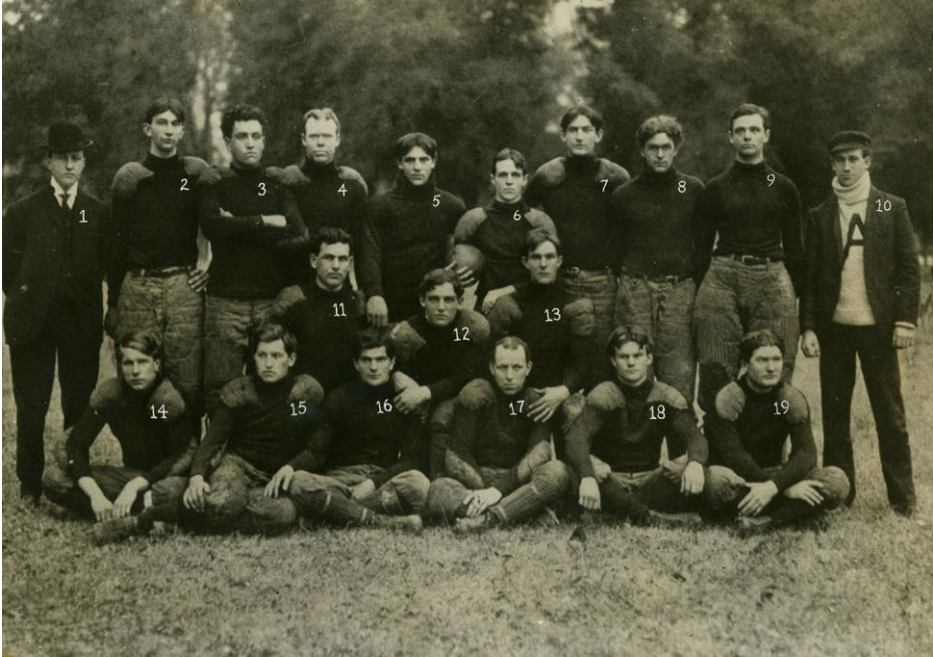
Sewanee was always tough and they were again tough again on November 2 as UA went down L 0-23. LSU came to The QUAD in Tuscaloosa on November 9 and UA prevailed W 18-0.

This was Alabama's first victory over LSU with its 18-0 win at Tuscaloosa. Both John Roberts Peavy and W. S. Sherrill scored first half touchdowns for Alabama, and Truman Smith scored on a fake punt returned 65-yards to secure the 18-0 victory. This brought

UA's all-time record against LSU to 1–2. These were the beginning years of a great program.

1904 Alabama Football Season--W. B. Blount; Coach # 10

The Head Coach of the 1904 Alabama Crimson White football team was W. B. Blount, in his second season. They played their home games at The QUAD in Tuscaloosa and at West End Park in Birmingham, Alabama. This was the twelfth season of Alabama



1904 Team

football, the team finished with a record of seven wins and three losses (7–3, 4–3 SIAA). This was not a championship season but it was about as good as Alabama had played since the beginning,

Prior to the 1897 season a touchdown was worth four points. Beginning in 1897, a touchdown was worth five points, a field goal was worth four points and a conversion (PAT) was worth one point.

1905 Alabama Football Season Jack Leavenworth Coach # 10

In 1905 the Alabama Crimson White football team was coached by Jack Leavenworth in his first and only season as head coach and as history suggests, coaching any other college sport at any time.



<<<Coach Leavenworth -- left

It was Alabama's 13th overall and 10th season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team finished the season with a record of six wins and four losses (6–4 overall, 4–4 in the SIAA).

1906 Alabama Football Season J. W. H. Pollard Coach # 11



The 1906 Alabama Crimson White football team was in its 14th season overall and its 11th season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team was led by head

<<< Coach J. W. H. Pollard (Left).

This was Pollard's first year, he serving as UA's eleventh football coach in just fourteen seasons.

Alabama finished this season with a record of five wins and one loss (5–1 overall, 3–1 in the SIAA). The team finished fourth of seventeen teams in the SIAA.

Of particular note during this season was Alabama's embarrassing 78–0 loss to Vanderbilt. This loss was so bad that it still stands as the record for most points ever allowed by Alabama in a game and the most lopsided Alabama loss.

In this game, the Commodores led 57–0 at the half, and Alabama attempted to cancel this game after seven of their regular players were sidelined by injury but Vanderbilt refused.

It was the only loss of the year for the Alabama Crimson Tide (New name this year). It was its biggest ever loss to Vanderbilt, 78–0.

Seven of Alabama's regular players were out with injuries. Vanderbilt executed several onside kicks from scrimmage. Owsley Manier scored five touchdowns as: "the back field frequently went twenty-five or thirty yards over the line". Alabama was held to just a single first down. Due to its injuries, Alabama had not wished to play, and: "the comparatively few who came to see them play were scarcely rewarded by seeing touchdowns made every two minutes." It was not a good day for Alabama and it was a much better day for Vanderbilt than it should have been.

Against Auburn in the Iron Bowl, Pollard unveiled a "military shift" never before seen in the south. This was executed as star running back Auxford Burks scored all of the game's points in a W (10–0) victory. Auburn contended that Alabama player T. S. Sims was an illegal player but nothing came of this.

J. W. H. Pollard was a college football coach for seven seasons, four of which he spent coaching the Alabama Crimson Tide from 1906 through 1909. Pollard was a great coach for Alabama going 21-4-5 as coach, losing exactly one game in each of his four years in Tuscaloosa. He also coached baseball at UA 1907-1910. He passed away in 1957 at the age of 85.

1907 Alabama Football Season—J. W. H. Pollard Coach # 11

The 1907 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played their 15th overall and 12th season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team was led by head coach J. W. H. Pollard, in his second year. They finished the season with a record of five wins, one loss and two ties (5–1–2 overall, 3–1–2 in the SIAA).

1908 Alabama Football Season—J. W. H. Pollard; Coach # 11

The 1908 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 16th overall and 13th season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team was led by head coach J. W. H. Pollard, in his third year. They finished the season with a record of six wins, one loss and one tie (6–1–1 overall, 1–1–1 in the SIAA).

In this section, we have opted to detail the season, taking more time to explain and showcase games so that we can all get a better feel for the state of Alabama football in its seventeenth year.

After opening the 1908 season with three consecutive shutouts, Alabama lost their only game of the season 6–11 at Georgia Tech. After a victory over Chattanooga and a tie against Georgia, Alabama played the Haskell Institute. Against Haskell, Alabama scored a touchdown on a 65-yard interception return, Haskell missed a field goal, and another Haskell drive ended with an interception deep in Alabama territory. In the season finale against Tennessee, Alabama back Derrill Pratt attempted eight field goals and made only one for a 4–0 Alabama victory. The details of the season follow:

On Oct. 3., Alabama won easily against the Wetumpka Agricultural School on the campus by the score of W (26-0). In the first half, Gresham scored on a tackle over tackle play and Henry Burks scored twice on line plunges. In the second half, Hurd scored on a pass. Another pass, Peebles to Hurd, carried the ball to the Wetumpka 5-yard line and Reidy went over for the touchdown.

On Oct. 10, UA defeated Howard in Birmingham by the score of W (17 to 0). Early in the game, Peebles passed to Derrill Pratt for 40 yards and the first score. Burks kicked the extra point. Howard commenced a passing attack and Burns passed twice to Denny and the ball was on the Alabama 5-yard line. UA held and the ball went over on the one yard line. Coach Counselman of Howard protested vigorously that Alabama was offside on the play. In the second half, Pratt circled end for 35 yards and a touchdown from the "military formation." Later, with the ball on Howard's 30-yard line, Pratt was hurt. Mudd, substituting for him, broke through the line and ran 30 yards for a touchdown. Burks kicked the goal after.

On Oct. 17, Alabama met a heavier University of Cincinnati team at the Fairgrounds in Birmingham and won despite the weight disadvantage, W (16-0). Cincinnati played a great defensive game but showed little on the offensive. Early in the game, Burks scored on a tackle over tackle play after Alabama had forced a punt

from Cincinnati from deep in the latter's territory. Reidy kicked goal. Near the end of the half, Derrill Pratt kicked a place kick from the 30-yard line. In the second half, with only one minute remaining, Peebles passed to Burks, who ran 30 yards for a touchdown, being aided by some fine blocking by Noojin, who had substituted for Reidy. Burks kicked the goal.

On Oct. 24, Georgia Tech resorted to some new trick plays to defeat Alabama L (6-11) in Atlanta. Alabama scored six minutes after the kickoff. Hightower of Tech fumbled on the first Alabama punt and Alabama recovered. Alabama soon punted to Hightower, who fumbled again and Alabama recovered. Austill scored three plays later and Burks kicked goal. That was Alabama's only offensive threat of the day as Tech stopped every play Alabama attempted including the "military formation."

On Oct. 31, UA defeated Chattanooga on the campus by the score W (23-6). The visitors scored in the first half when an Alabama punt was blocked and the ball was caught in the air by Ross, halfback of Chattanooga, who ran for a score. Burks, Reidy, D. Pratt and G. W. Pratt did not play because of "faculty trouble." Thus, the play was slow and marked by many fumbles. Austill scored on a line play ending a drive of 60 yards. Joe Mudd, halfback, Alabama's star of the day, made three touchdowns on line plays and a delayed pass. Peebles kicked three goals after touchdowns.

On Nov. 14., Alabama played Georgia in Birmingham in one of the most spectacular and interesting games ever played between the two schools. The issue was unsettled until the final whistle. The score was tied T (6-6).

There was plenty of excitement from the beginning. Georgia kicked to Alabama's 10. A pass was attempted, a fumble resulted and Georgia recovered. Burks intercepted a Georgia pass and ran the ball out of danger. Alabama fumbled and Georgia recovered. A forward pass from a place kick formation was completed on Alabama's 5-yard line. Alabama stopped Franklin and Bostwick for a one yard gain before Newsome went over by inches. Hodgson kicked the goal.

Alabama fumbled the kickoff and Georgia recovered on Alabama's 30-yard line. After two plays failed, Alabama blocked a place kick by Hodgson, recovered the ball but was soon forced to punt. Georgia soon tried another place kick which Alabama again blocked but Woodruff of Georgia recovered. Hodgson later made a third attempt at goal from placement which failed, Greene of Alabama recovered the ball. He was tackled from behind by Woodruff and a touchdown prevented.

Reidy and Pratt circled ends for 10 yards each. Burks and Gresham gained 20. After two plays failed, quarterback Peebles called the signal for the "military formation." No one thought that Alabama would punt from this formation. And certainly no one expected an "onside" kick. Peebles gave them both in one dose. Pratt kicked to the Georgia 5, the ball bounded over the goal and Arant, right guard, fell on the ball for a touchdown. Reidy kicked the goal and the score was tied.

Georgia was completely fooled by the play. An additional element of surprise was in the fact that a guard and not an end or halfback was standing away from the team and behind the kicker to be eligible to recover the free ball.

Starting the second half, Alabama marched to the Georgia 30-yard line. Pratt circled end for 25 yards, Woodruff nailing him and preventing a touchdown. Alabama fumbled, Georgia recovered and promptly punted. Alabama then drove to Georgia's 30-yard line where the prettiest play of the game occurred.

Pratt and Reidy got into position for a place kick with Reidy piling up the dirt and kneeling to receive the ball from center. Instead, the ball was snapped to Pratt, who rushed forward faking a kick and throwing his headgear into the air. He slipped the ball to Reidy, who tore out around right end for a 25-yard gain. But Georgia tightened, got the ball on downs and punted to safety. Pratt later tried a placement which failed.

Both sides punted frequently for the rest of the game. Alabama gained on the exchanges as Pratt out kicked Derrick and Hodgson. This advantage, however, was offset by Alabama fumbles

and brilliant returns by Woodruff. It was Georgia's ball on the Alabama 15-yard line as the game ended. The star of the game was Woodruff, a fine field general, a very fast open field runner and a deadly tackler.

On Nov. 20., in the writer's viewpoint, Alabama played the most spectacular game ever on the University campus. UA accomplished the seemingly impossible by defeating the Haskell Indians by the score of 9 to 8 W (9-8). The Crimson were outweighed 25 pounds to the man, but fought determinedly against their more experienced opponents, who presented a fast, daring and resourceful team.

Time after time, the Indians drove from one end of the field to the other only to surrender the ball to a lion-hearted Alabama team who put up a stone wall defense when a touchdown appeared certain.



As described by pundits of the era, "The Indians played with a hot headedness and a savageness... They lacked the coolness of the Thin Red Line. They slugged, jumped with their knees on Alabama ball carriers already downed and were unnecessarily rough against their younger and lighter opponents. They were heavily penalized as a result, Smith was ejected for slugging."

Alabama scored first when Derrill Pratt kicked a placement from the 35-yard line at a difficult angle for four points. A few plays later, the Indians made two points when an Alabama man was tackled behind the goal.

Just before the end of the first half, Roberts, tackle, scored on a 20-yard run and Captain Island Eagle kicked goal. The half ended with the Indians leading 8 to 4. In the second half, Alabama was almost swept off the field as the Indians employed powerful line plunges, end runs, executed with blinding speed and a variety of trick plays.

The crowd was amazed at the spectacle of the Thin Red Line holding such giants. The play was almost entirely in Alabama territory. Alabama would hold, take over on downs and punt out of danger. But the relief was only temporary as the Indians would come charging back only to be stopped again by the Alabamians or by fumbling as a result of Alabama's fine tackling.

Time and again, this happened, and, with only five minutes remaining to play, Alabama's magnificent efforts were rewarded with a huge break. Stillwater attempted to pass to Good Eagle. Arant, guard, broke through the line to rush the passer. And how he did rush him! He leaped into the air, deflected the ball just as it left Stillwater's hands into the arms of Edwards, Alabama's end, who made a sensational catch near his shoe tops and ran 65 yards for a touchdown. Burks furnished excellent protection on the run. Burks missed the goal.



Some Haskell School Players

The scene that followed can be better imagined than described. But the game was not over. Down the field the Indians thundered toward Alabama's goal but a drop kick was wide. Alabama punted and back the opposition came employing all of their speed and power and deception. "Trig" Palmer intercepted a pass and Alabama breathed easily but not normally again. Alabama punted and the Indians came storming back but the Thin Red Line held and punted to safety.

But it was not over yet. With dazzling speed, the Indians circled Alabama's ends for 5, 10 and 15 yards per play but the referee's whistle sounded with the ball deep in Alabama's territory. Final score: Alabama 9, Haskell Indians 8.

Every man on the Crimson team was a star and but for their superhuman efforts, the game would have been lost instead of resulting in a magnificent victory. Edwards was more in the limelight because of his sparkling run that won the game but he also played a brilliant defensive game. Mudd played a fine game on offense and defense. Pratt played his usual consistent game but had to leave the game in the second half because of injuries. Reidy and Gresham were injured and did not play at all. Captain Island Eagle, the fastest back Alabama met during the year, and Roberts were outstanding for the Indians.

On Nov. 26, Alabama won a surprising victory over Tennessee in Birmingham before 4,000 spectators by the score of 4 to 0 W (4-0). It was the annual Thanksgiving Day game.

The only score of the game came near the end of the second half when Derrill Pratt kicked a placement from the Tennessee 37-yard line. He missed seven other attempts.

Alabama outplayed Tennessee and the entire game was played in Tennessee territory except for five minutes. The score does not indicate Alabama's domination of the play as Alabama gained ten times as much ground as Tennessee, who made only one first down and never threatened the Crimson's goal.

1909 Alabama Football Season—J. W. H. Pollard Coach # 11

In 1909 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 17th overall and 14th season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team was led by head coach J. W. H. Pollard, in his fourth and final year. They their home games at the University of Alabama QUAD in Tuscaloosa and the Birmingham Fairgrounds in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of five wins, one loss and two ties (5–1–2 overall, 4–1–2 in the SIAA).

Defensively, Alabama had six consecutive shutouts to go 5–0–1 before they surrendered their first touchdown against Tulane in their 5–5 tie. Alabama completed their season with a 12–5 loss to LSU at Birmingham to finish 5–1–2.

1910 Alabama Football Season—Guy Lowman; Coach # 12

The 1910 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 18th overall and 15th season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA).

The team was led by head coach Guy Lowman, <<< left in his first and last year. UA played home games at the University of Alabama QUAD in Tuscaloosa and the Birmingham Fairgrounds in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of four wins and four losses (4–4 overall, 0–4 in the SIAA).

1911 Alabama Football Season—D. V. Graves; Coach # 13

The 1911 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 19th overall and 16th season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA).



D. V. GRAVES

The team was led by head coach << D. V. Graves, in his first year. They finished the season with a record of five wins, two losses and two ties (5–2–2 overall, 2–2–2 in the SIAA).

1912 Alabama Football Season—D. V. Graves; Coach # 13

The 1912 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 20th overall and 17th season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team was led by head coach D. V. Graves, in his second year. They finished the season with a record of five wins, three losses, and one tie (5–3–1 overall, 3–3–1 in the SIAA).

1913 Alabama Football Season—D. V. Graves Coach # 13

The 1913 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played the Crimson Tide's 21st overall and 18th season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team was led by head coach D. V. Graves, in his third year. They finished the season with a record of six wins and three losses (6–3 overall, 4–3 in the SIAA).

1914 Alabama Football Season D. V. Graves Coach # 13

The 1914 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played the Crimson Tide's 22nd overall and 19th season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team was led by head coach D. V. Graves, in his fourth and final year. Alabama always had tough and resilient teams right from its inception as a football power. However, even with the fine four years that D. V. Graves put in at Alabama, they had yet to have a coach last more than four years, and unfortunately, Graves would not be the exception. Alabama from 1910 was a great football institution looking for a champion coach to move it forward and deeper into the win column. The team finished the season with a record of five wins and four losses (5–4 overall, 4–3 in the SIAA).

Chapter 7 Alabama Football – The Next Eight Years 1915-1922

Kelley & Scott were both well acclaimed coaches. Noojin was a place holder.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>C-Record</u>
1915	Thomas Kelley #14	SIAA	6-2-0	5-0-0
1916	Thomas Kelley	SIAA	6-3-0	4-3-0
1917	Thomas Kelley	SIAA	5-2-1	3-1-1
1918	B. L. Noojin	SIAA	* WWI No games played	
1919	Xen C. Scott #15	SIAA	8-1-1	6-1-0
1920	Xen C. Scott	SIAA	10-1-0	6-1-0
1921	Xen C. Scott	SIAA	5-4-2	2-4-2
1922	Xen C. Scott	SoCon	6-3-1	3-2-1

Alabama was making the big turn to better seasons in 1915 as Kelley and Xen Scott brought some of the best so far. Championships and almost championships were coming. In 1915 Kelley's Crimson Tide tied Vanderbilt at 5-0-0 in the SIAA for the championship.

1915 Alabama Football Season Thomas Kelley Coach # 14 Championship tie



Alabama V Texas 1915

The 1915 Alabama Crimson Tide football team was becoming noticed. Newt Rockne was already playing college ball. Alabama as

an institution wanted to make its mark in academics and also athletics. This was the Crimson Tide's 23rd overall and 20th season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team was led by brand new head coach Thomas Kelley, *below*, in his first year. Kelley was a get-it-done guy.



It was in 1915 that Alabama moved its on campus home games from the QUAD, where all on-campus home games had been played since 1893, to a new location, University Field (later renamed Denny Field in honor of school president George Denny in 1920).

To accommodate “excessive” fans, home games were also played at Rickwood Field in Birmingham, Alabama. The Crimson Tide finished the first Kelley season with a 6-2 record. They were 5-0 in their own conference the SIAA. It was their best year ever in the conference. Maybe Kelley would be the magic.

William T. "Bully" Van de Graaff was an all-everything player at UA. He punted, kicked, and played tackle. For his valiant and alert play, he was named Alabama's first All-American in 1915, when he was selected second-team All-America by Walter Camp. Walter Camp, as noted in this book was continuing to refine the rules of American Football while the game was being played across the US.

Alabama opened the season 5-0 with four shutout victories W (44-0; 67-0; 40-0; 16-0, and a 23-10 win over Sewanee, an unusual event for sure. The lineup for the losses had never lined up before: Howard, Birmingham, Mississippi, Tulane, and Sewanee. What a rip for Alabama in 1915. What a beginning to any season. Was Kelley a Rockne – to – be?

Against Mississippi College Van de Graaff kicked four field goals and missed a fifth from 54 yards out when the ball hit the upright.

The victory over Sewanee was the first for Alabama in that series since 1894. Alabama led the Tigers 10–0 at the half and continued to lead by that score after Sewanee marched inside the Alabama 20 four times in the third but came away with no points. The Tigers finally scored a touchdown on the first play of the fourth quarter, then blocked a punt and kicked a field goal to tie the game 10–10. However, van de Graff knocked the ball out of a Sewanee player's hand and ran it back 65 yards for a touchdown, then tacked on two more field goals as the Tide beat the Tigers for only the second time in 12 meetings. Like most teams, Alabama had dreaded playing Sewanee, now they had beaten them in unquestionable terms/

Coach Kelley was hospitalized with typhoid fever two days prior to the Tulane game, and as a result, he missed the last five games of the season. Athletic director B. L. Noojin and former quarterback Farley Moody then served as co-head coaches for the remainder of the season. They helped for sure bring a good season in “good.”

The Crimson ties lost in this period on Nov 6 to Georgia Teach away (L (7-21). They then lost to Texas on Nov 13, at Texas L (0-20). Finally they regrouped and bet the tar out of Ole Miss at home W (53-0)

1916 Alabama Football Season—Thomas Kelley; Coach # 14

The 1916 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played in the 24th overall and 21st season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team was led by head coach Thomas Kelly, in his second year, and played their home games at University Field in Tuscaloosa and at Rickwood Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of six wins and three losses (6–3 overall, 4–3 in the SIAA).

Three brothers, Dexter, Walter, and Jack Hovater, were starters for the 1916 Tide. Alabama began its season with six consecutive victories Sept 30 Birmingham College W (13-0) at University Field, and Oct 7 Southern College (now combined as Birmingham–Southern College) W (80-0), Oct 14 Mississippi College W (13-7), Oct 21 away at Florida W (16-0), Oct 28 Ole Miss W (27-0) and Nov 4 Sewanee @ Rickwood Field W (7-6).

In those first six games, Alabama outscored their opponents by a margin of 156 to 13. Sewanee almost beat Alabama after making two interceptions and stopping the crimson Tide on 4th and goal at the 1, but Alabama scored late and kicked the extra point. Sewanee's kick had failed. UA got the victory over a really tough squad. This performance was almost a championship in itself.

1917 Alabama Football Season--Thomas Kelley; Coach # 14

The 1917 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 25th overall and 22nd season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team was led by head coach Thomas Kelly, in his third and final year. It played home games at University Field in Tuscaloosa, as well as Rickwood Field in Birmingham and also at Soldiers Field in Montgomery, Alabama. It depended on the size of the anticipated crowd. They finished the season with a record of five wins, two losses and one tie (5–2–1 overall, 3–1–1 in the SIAA).

1918 Alabama Football Season—B. L. Noojin; Head Coach #15

The 1918 Alabama Crimson Tide football team (variously "Alabama", "UA" or "Bama") was prepared to represent the University of Alabama in the 1918 college football season. However, the season was canceled due to the effects of World War I.

B. L. Noojin had been expected to serve as head coach for the season. Because he was named, even though he never coached he is listed as coach # 15. University officials canceled the season as a result of multiple opponents canceling their contests against Alabama and a military policy that only allowed for the team to practice for less than one hour per week. World War I was the biggest thing on anybody's mind at the time.

1919 Alabama Football Season-Xen C. Scott; Coach #16 Championship SIAA



Coach Xen C. Scott

The 1919 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 26th overall and 23rd season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team was led by head coach Xen C. Scott, in his first year. They continued to play home games at University Field in Tuscaloosa and at Rickwood Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

They finished the season with a great record of eight wins and one loss (8–1 overall, 6–1 in the SIAA). UA won eight games in a season for the very first time, and was awarded a share of the SIAA title by a number of groups.

This was the year after not fielding a team for the 1918 season because of World War I. In May 1919 Xen C. Scott was hired to serve as head coach of the Head Coach of The Crimson Tide.

Alabama then opened the season with four consecutive shutout victories at University Field in Tuscaloosa. After Scott defeated Birmingham–Southern on October 4 in his debut as Crimson Tide head coach (17-0), the next week on October 11, he defeated Ole Miss W (49-0) for his first SIAA victory.

After a pair of blowout victories over both Howard on October 18 and the Marion Military Institute on October 24, on November 1, Alabama defeated Sewanee 40–0 in what was the most anticipated game of the season at Rickwood Field.

After the Sewanee win, Alabama traveled to Nashville on Nov. 8, where they lost their only game of the season against Vanderbilt L (12-16). After the loss, the Crimson Tide rebounded with wins on at Nov. 15 at LSU W (23-0) and Georgia on Nov. 22 W (6-0), and at Birmingham over Mississippi A&M on Nov. 27 (Thanksgiving) to close the season W (14-6).

After the departure of Thomas Kelley as head coach of the Crimson Tide following their 1917 season, then athletic director B. L. Noojin was chosen as his successor. However, as previously noted, Noojin never led the team as head coach since the 1918 season was canceled due to the effects of World War I.

When football was brought back for the next season, Xen C. Scott was hired to serve as head coach in May 1919. Scott was not a newbie and he had coaching experience as head coach of the Cleveland Naval Reserve team that had upset the national champion Pittsburgh Panthers to close their 1918 season. There were great expectations for Scott.

After two weeks of practice, Scott divided the players into four teams to determine starting line-ups. At his time Scott also did not utilize a quarterback, but instead would simply snap the ball directly to the runner.

Before game preparation began for their game against Birmingham–Southern, Isaac Rogers was selected as team captain for the season by the returning lettermen on September 25. Rogers was previously elected to serve as team captain for the 1918 season that was cancelled. It was expected to be a great season and it was—despite no football at all the prior year.

A look at a few of the games

Alabama opened the 1919 season against Birmingham–Southern and shutout the Panthers in the first all-time game between the schools. The opening kickoff was at 1:30 and was played in a newly expanded University Field (capacity 2000) with seating for 800 spectators. Charles Bartlett scored the final points of the game with his fourth quarter touchdown that made the final score 27–0.

In their second game, Alabama shutout their SIAA rival, the Ole Miss Rebels 49–0 at Tuscaloosa. After being held scoreless for the first ten minutes, Alabama scored their first touchdown on Mullie Lenoir run late in the quarter. A pair of second quarter touchdown runs from first Riggs Stephenson and then by Charles Bartlett that made the halftime score 18–0. The victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Ole Miss to 9–2–

In what was the most anticipated game of the season, the entire University population and educators traveled to Birmingham for their game against Sewanee. In the game, Alabama defeated the Tigers 40–0 at Rickwood Field, in the largest margin of victory ever for Alabama over Sewanee to date. UA took an early 7–0 lead in the first quarter on a 15-yard Riggs Stephenson touchdown run and then extended it to 14–0 at halftime on a 45-yard Walter E. Hovater touchdown run in the second.

The Crimson Tide then closed the game with four Mullie Lenoir touchdown runs, two in the third and two in the fourth quarter. The

victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Sewanee to 3–9–2. Sewanee always came ready to play.

In its final game of the season, Alabama defeated the Mississippi A&M (now known as Mississippi State University) Aggies 14–6 on Thanksgiving at Rickwood Field. After a scoreless first half, H. S. Little scored the Aggies' only points of the game with his 80-yard kickoff return that opened the third quarter. Alabama then took the lead later in the third on a short Riggs Stephenson touchdown run.

They then made the final score 14–6 in the fourth after T. L. Brown blocked an A&M punt that was recovered by Isaac Rogers in the end zone for a touchdown. The victory improved Alabama's record against Mississippi A&M to 7–4–1. It was a great season for Alabama. First-year coach Scott had surely proven his worth to the Crimson Tide.

1920 Alabama Football Season—Xen C. Scott; Head Coach #16

The 1920 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 27th overall and 24th season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team was led by head coach Xen C. Scott, in his second year, and played their home games at University/Denny Field in Tuscaloosa and at Rickwood Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a phenomenal record of ten wins and one loss (10–1 overall, 6–1 in the SIAA).

This was the first ten-win season in the history of Alabama football. Starting with Coach Scott, the 16th Alabama coach every Alabama coach has won ten games in a season at least once, except for Jennings B. Whitworth, the 20th coach. Even though Alabama came in fourth of 26 SIAA teams, it sure seemed like a championship.

1921 Alabama Football Season Xen C. Scott Head Coach #16

The 1921 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played the 28th overall and 25th season as a member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA). The team was led by head coach Xen C. Scott, in his third year, and played their home games at Denny Field in Tuscaloosa and at Rickwood Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of five wins, four losses and two ties (5–4–2 overall, 2–4–2 in the SIAA).

1922 Alabama Football Season—Xen C. Scott; Head Coach #16

The 1922 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 29th overall and 1st season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). No more SIAA for Alabama.

For the fourth and his final head coaching year, the team was led by Xen C. Scott. UA played home games at Denny Field in Tuscaloosa, Rickwood Field in Birmingham and the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of six wins, three losses and one tie (6–3–1 overall, 3–2–1 in the SoCon).

So, the 1922 season marked the first for the Crimson Tide as a member of the SoCon, as Alabama was one of the twenty members of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association that left the Association to form the SoCon following the 1921 season.

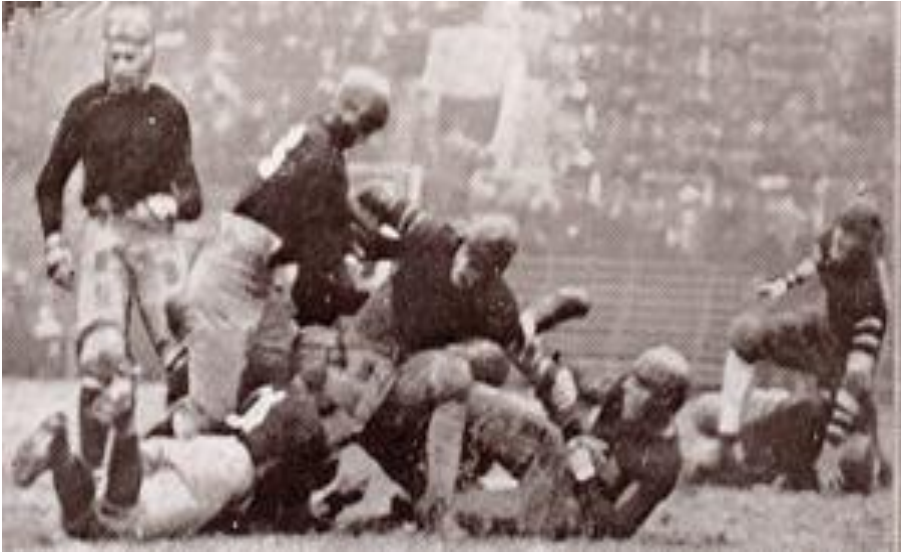
With a record of 2–2–1, the Crimson Tide played undefeated Penn, an Eastern Powerhouse for years. On November 4. UA were clear underdogs but they must have liked the air in Philadelphia's Franklin Field as they prevailed by a few nails W (9-7) in their first encounter with the always tough Quakers.

The following game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

UA V The Penn Quakers – A Great Game!

OK Let's look a bit deeper into one of the greatest UA games of all time. 1922—Alabama v Pennsylvania – After the game the crowds were saying “These Southern Boys Really Can Play!”

After starting the 1922 season 2-2-1, the Crimson Tide traveled to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on November 4 to take on the Penn Quakers. In the 1920s, the Ivy League was considered the best college football in the country. Penn, along with Harvard, Princeton, and Yale, were the class of the game. Southern football was not respected, but Xen Scott and the Tide were looking to change that impression.



Alabama v Penn 1922

Alabama was a big underdog going into the game, having gone 0-2-1 in their last three games. Penn was coming off of a big win over Navy. Legendary sportswriter Grantland Rice famously predicted that Penn would easily beat the Tide, 21-0. Rice and the rest of the country were wrong, as Alabama used a late sack to secure a 9-7 victory over coach John Heisman's Quakers. Yes, that's Heisman as in the "trophy!"

Alabama's quarterback Charles Bartlett led the drive that resulted in the only touchdown for the Tide and would later receive an All-American honorable mention. After defeating the Quakers, Alabama would return home the following week and cruise to a 47-3 win over the LSU Tigers. The Crimson Tide finished the 1922 season with a 6-3-1 record.

This game, three seasons before the famed Rose Bowl victory over Washington, was an early claim to the legitimacy of Southern football teams. A year earlier it hadn't seemed possible that a team that finished in the middle of the Southern Conference could beat one of the great old Ivy League teams, but that's exactly what the Tide did.

The Crimson Tide then completed its season with a homecoming win W (47-3) on November 10 over LSU; a loss L (0-6) at Kentucky

on November 18, and a win (10-6) over Georgia in Alabama's first game at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery AL. UA garnered another win on November 30 over Mississippi A&M W (59-0) to close the season.

Scott was a great coach. He had a very tough personal year in 1922. He coached the 1922 season while dying of oral cancer. He spent the whole season suffering from the effects of his illness, losing weight, barely able to speak, coaching against the advice of a doctor who told him to quit immediately.

He loved the team and the game of football. He was bedridden except when attending practices and games. After the Oglethorpe game, Scott tendered his resignation, effective at the end of the season. Scott died in April 1924 at age 41. He was clearly one of the good ones in football and in life. With today's modern medicine, he would have been with us for many more years.

Chapter 8 Alabama Football – The Wallace Wade Era 1923-1930

Wallace Wade was a highly competitive Rockne Era coach. Some say he put Alabama on the “map.”

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>SoCon</u>
1923	Wallace Wade #17	SoCon	7-2-0	4-1-1
1924	Wallace Wade	SoCon	8-1-0	5-0-0
1925	Wallace Wade*	SoCon	10-0-0	7-0-0
1926	Wallace Wade*	SoCon	9-0-1	8-0-0
1927	Wallace Wade	SoCon	5-4-1	3-4-1
1928	Wallace Wade	SoCon	6-3-0	6-2-0
1929	Wallace Wade	SoCon	6-3-0	4-3-0
1930	Wallace Wade*	SoCon	10-0-0	8-0-0

* National Championship



Tide Legend Coach Wallace Wade

Please Tell Me About Coach Wallace Wade

Author Lewis Bolling wrote a wonderful book about Alabama Coach Wallace Wade in 2006 that he titled: Championship Years at Alabama and Duke.

If you like great historical sports book, especially about Alabama, this is recognized as a great read. When I examined the book, it was selling for \$25.00 and readily available. One thing about a point in time history books, such as Wallace Wade up to 2006, the history rarely changes so this book is as current today as when it was written. Let's learn a bit of Wallace Wade from this book:

Wallace Wade is without question one of the greatest college football coaches in the history of the game. He won three national championships at Alabama and took Duke to two Rose Bowls. His Alabama team won what is the most important victory in the history of southern football, when they defeated Washington in the 1926 Rose Bowl.

He is the man who established the tradition of outstanding football at Alabama, and also is credited with bringing big-time college football to the state of North Carolina with his powerhouse Duke teams of the 1930s and 1940s. The Wade biography chronicles the life of Wallace Wade's life in football, and also his participation in two world wars and his time as commissioner of the Southern Conference.

“Wallace Wade, Alabama's first 'Bear' three decades before Bear Bryant, is one of the most important and least known figures in the history of college football. Lewis Bowling's biography brings him out of the shadows for the first time and puts clothes on a ghost. This book should have enormous appeal to the fans of Duke, Alabama, and every other school where college football is a tradition.”

—Allen Barra, author of *The Last Coach—A Life of Paul “Bear” Bryant*

“The narrative is enlivened with numerous quotes from Wade and contemporary sources. Wade's decision to leave a championship program at Alabama for the challenge of building the football program at Duke is particularly well documented and fascinating... Summing up: Recommended.” — CHOICE Magazine

1923 Alabama Football Season Wallace Wade Head Coach #17

The 1923 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 30th overall and 2nd season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). The team was led by head coach Wallace Wade, in his first

year, Home games were played at Denny Field in Tuscaloosa; at Rickwood Field in Birmingham; and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of seven wins, two losses and one tie (7–2–1 overall, 4–1–1 in the SoCon). They placed 4th out of 20 teams in the SoCon.



Alabama opened its 1923 season September 29 v Union University at Denny Field, and defeated the Bulldogs W (12–0) in what was Wallace Wade's first game as head coach of the Crimson Tide. In a game dominated by both defenses, Alabama did not score any points until the fourth quarter. Pooley Hubert scored first on a one-yard run and was followed by a six-yard Allen Graham MacCartee touchdown pass to Ben Hudson with only 00:15 left in the game. The victory brought Alabama's all-time record against Union to 2–0.

<<< **Coach Wade -- Left**

1923 marked the first season for new head coach Wallace Wade, a former assistant at Vanderbilt.

1924 Alabama Football Season #17 Wallace Wade Coach SoCon Champs

1924 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 31st overall and 3rd season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). The team was led by head coach Wallace Wade, in his second year, and played their home games at Denny Field in Tuscaloosa, at Rickwood Field in Birmingham and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of eight wins and one loss (8–1 overall, 5–0 in the SoCon) and as Southern Conference champions.



The 1924 Alabama Crimson Tide football team

In the Season Finale on November 27, Georgia's Bulldogs were no match for UA as the Crimson Tide gained its eighth victory of the year W (33-0). The Crimson Tide had started its season with seven consecutive victories, and was only really challenged once—in the Georgia Tech game. In the 14-0 victory over Georgia Tech, Tech drove the ball to the Alabama 6 in the third with a chance to tie the game up but was stopped on 4th and 1. Another Tide TD in the fourth clinched the victory.

Alabama lost their only game of the season to Centre at Rickwood Field. Alabama would not lose another game until the 1927 season. Centre quarterback Herb Covington overwhelmed all opponents that year and was named to the 1924 College Football All-America Team.

After its season finale victory over Georgia a week after its loss to Centre, Alabama secured its first SoCon championship. "Two TD passes by Hubert, two field goals by Compton and a 65-yard interception return for a TD by Brown sewed up the contest for UA.

1925 Alabama Football Season Wallace Wade National Champions

The 1925 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 32nd overall and 4th season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon).



1925 National Champions—Alabama Crimson Tide

The team was led by head coach Wallace Wade, in his third year. Home games were played at Denny Field in Tuscaloosa; at Rickwood Field in Birmingham; and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. The Crimson Tide finished this season with its first ever perfect record (10–0 overall, 7–0 in the SoCon), as Southern Conference champions and as national champions after they defeated Washington in the Rose Bowl. This was Alabama's first national championship claimed of 17 total. Four are unclaimed.

1925 was right in the middle of the Knute Rockne era. Rockne had led ND to its first championship with the infamous Four Horsemen in 1924 and so it was a great honor for Wallace Wade to win the National Championship in the Rockne Era. College Football was really taking off and Wallace Wade was ready to lead the Crimson Tide to victory after victory. He sure did.

The Crimson Tide entered the 1925 season as the defending Southern Conference champions after finishing the 1924 season with

an 8–1 record. Alabama would then go on and shutout all but one of their regular season opponents while gaining a second consecutive Southern Conference championship. UA then accepted an invitation to participate as the first Southern team in the annual Rose Bowl Game. In this game, UA defeated Washington 20–19. This was a huge victory in Crimson Tide history. It subsequently has been recognized as one of the most important games not just for Alabama but for Southern football history. It was deemed "the game that changed the South."

Alabama as an institution was ready to win all the time. Xen Scott had gotten UA moving in that direction. Wallace Wade was the perfect coach to continue the UA winning tradition. He remembered that in the prior year, the Tide had been upset by Centre. The University did not want something like that to happen again. So, Former center and alumnus Shorty Propst was hired to the coaching staff to help the team perform even better.

There was no summer practice other than unofficial. The regular season began on September 26 against Union University from Tennessee at Denny Field W (53–0). On Oct. 2, Birmingham–Southern played at Denny Field. UA prevailed W (50–7). On Oct. 10, The Tide traveled to LSU at Tiger Stadium in Baton Rouge, LA for the traditional rivalry W (42–0). Then, on Oct. 17, UA picked off a tough Sewanee Team at Rickwood Field W (27–0)

UA traveled to Georgia Tech in Atlanta on Oct 24 and won a nail biter W 7-0). On October 31, it was Mississippi A&M at Denny Field in another one too close for the faint of heart in the middle of an undefeated season, W (6-0) On November 7, Kentucky played UA at Rickwood Field in Birmingham, and were shut out W (31–0). Next was Florida in on Nov 14 in the Cramton Bowl W (34–0). On Nov. 26, The Georgia Bulldogs came to Rickwood Field in the UA season finale W (27-0).

The season topper was played in Pasadena California as UA engaged in its first Rose Bowl on January 1, 1926 for the National Championship. UA toughed it out and beat Washington in a nail-biter (20-19). UA completed a 10-0 season and won the National Championship before 55,000

1925 Some Game Highlights

Week 3: Alabama at LSU

In a game described by some as "perfection itself," Alabama defeated the LSU Tigers at Baton Rouge 42–0 in what was both their first road and conference game of the season. UA scored their first of six touchdowns on the opening drive of the game after Pooley Hubert scored on a three-yard run over center. In the second quarter, Hubert scored again on a one-yard run and David Rosenfeld scored on a five-yard run as time expired in the first half that gave Alabama a 21–0 halftime lead.

Alabama received the second half kickoff and drove 65 yards for their fourth touchdown scored by Grant Gillis on a one-yard run. Hubert then scored his third touchdown of the game on a short run that gave the Crimson Tide a 35–0 lead as they entered the fourth quarter. In the fourth quarter, Hubert scored his fourth touchdown on another short run that made the final score 42–0. The victory brought Alabama's all-time record against LSU to 8–3–0

Week 4 Alabama v Sewanee

1925 saw the South's widespread use of the forward pass, and Alabama brought it out to defeat the Sewanee Tigers 27–0 at Birmingham. In the first quarter, a 28-yard pass from Hoyt Winslett to Red Barnes set up the first touchdown score on a short Pooley Hubert run for a 6–0 lead.

The Tide extended their lead to 13–0 at halftime behind Hubert's second touchdown of the game on a three-yard run. After a scoreless third, Alabama scored their third touchdown on a 35-yard pass from Grant Gillis to Herschel Caldwell, and the last set up by a 35-yard pass from Hubert to Winslett.

Hubert then scored the final points of the game late in the fourth after he recovered a Caldwell fumble in the endzone for a touchdown and the 27–0 victory. The victory brought Alabama's all-time record against Sewanee to 8–10–3.

The starting lineup was Hudson (left end), Perry (left tackle), Buckler (left guard), Holmes (center), Jones (right guard), Camp (right tackle), Winslett (right end), Gillis (quarterback), M. Brown (left halfback), Caldwell (right halfback), Hubert (fullback).

January 1, 1926 Rose Bowl

The UA season was extended when Alabama received an invitation to play in the Rose Bowl. It was the school's first bowl game ever and the first time any southern team had ever been invited to play in what then was college football's only bowl game... the granddaddy of them all. The Washington Huskies were heavy favorites.

As the game progressed it did not look good for the Crimson Tide but the team kept battling. Washington's star halfback George Wilson intercepted a pass in the first quarter and then led his team 63 yards for a touchdown and a 6–0 lead. In the second quarter Wilson ran for 36 yards and then threw a 22-yard touchdown pass, and Washington went up 12–0. Both extra point tries failed.

At the half, coach Wade changed his game style. Pooley Hubert would now run more often. In the third quarter Alabama struck finally scored. A short punt set up them up on Huskies' 42 and Alabama quickly capitalized, Hubert scored on a 1-yard run to make the score 12–7. The Huskies couldn't move the ball without Wilson, who had injured his ribs in the first half.

Shortly thereafter Hubert hit Brown on a 59-yard touchdown pass and suddenly Alabama led 14–12. Washington fumbled in their next possession and the Crimson Tide recovered at the Husky 30.

Hubert found Brown for another touchdown pass on the very next play. The extra point failed, but Alabama still led 20–12. The Tide scored three touchdowns in seven minutes of clock time. Wilson was able to return to the Huskies lineup in the fourth quarter and he threw a late touchdown pass, but the two missed extra points in the first half proved decisive, and Alabama won this exciting match 20–19.

It was Alabama's first real perfect season in school history. (The school was undefeated in 1897 when the Tide played and won its

only game.) The NCAA retroactively deemed Alabama to be the consensus "national champion" for 1925 due to its selection by a majority of authorities. Johnny Mack Brown and Pooley Hubert were later inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame. Brown capitalized on his Rose Bowl exposure in southern California by signing a motion picture contract with MGM and beginning a 40-year career in the movies.

Brown played mostly in Westerns. He was very handsome and his athleticism gave him a powerful physique. He was once the athlete portrayed on Wheaties cereal boxes. Soon after he began his movie career, in 1927 in Hollywood, he played a role as silent film star Mary Pickford's love interest in her first talkie *Coquette* (1929, for which Pickford won an Oscar).

1926 Rose Bowl "The Game That Changed the South"

This is recognized as one of greatest games ever played by Alabama

The 1926 Rose Bowl is called "the game that changed the South" because it was the first bowl game appearance of the Alabama Crimson Tide. Alabama's opponents in their very first Rose Bowl appearance were the Washington Huskies. Alabama won the game 20 – 19 and earned its very first national championship.

Alabama almost didn't get to play in the game though; the Rose Bowl originally invited Tulane to play Washington. Tulane turned down the invitation to the Rose Bowl however because they felt like they weren't big enough to play against the Huskies.

Alabama scored all of their points in the third quarter... so we guess that even in 1926 Bama had already established their brand of making Crimson Tide fans panic until the second half.

Alabama was coached by legendary coach Wade Wallace and the MVP of the game was Johnny Mack Brown. Johnny Mack Brown was the first star running back that lead Alabama to a national title.

Johnny Mack Brown's performance led to him being featured on a Wheaties box and then paired with his good looks to a career in Hollywood starring in western movies.

The 1926 Rose Bowl is important because it's the game that started it all. Alabama's championships wins and traditions can all be traced back to this first Rose Bowl in January 1926. This could be argued to be the most important game in Alabama history since it kind of started it all, but there's just so much more to come.

**1926 Alabama Football Season Wallace Wade #17 SoCon Champs
Declared retroactively as 1926 National Champions**

The 1926 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 33rd overall and 5th season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). The team was led by highly successful head coach Wallace Wade, in his fourth year. The team played its home games at Denny Field in Tuscaloosa, at Rickwood Field in Birmingham and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama.

Alabama finished the season with a record of nine wins, zero losses and one tie (9–0–1 overall, 8–0 in the SoCon), as Southern Conference champions.

It was another great season—the second in a row. They tied undefeated Stanford in the Rose Bowl. The 1926 Alabama team was retroactively named as the 1926 national champion by Berryman QPRS, Billingsley Report, College Football Researchers Association, and Poling System, and as a co-national champion by the Helms Athletic Foundation and National Championship Foundation. Back then, a consensus of various sources determined National Championships.

In 1925, the team lost many fine starters from graduation. They had just ten lettermen to start the season. Key players such as Pooley Hubert, Johnny Mack Brown, Bill Buckler and other stars from the 1925 team were not part of the 1926 squad. Yet, with Alabama Pride, and Coach Wallace Ward's expert coaching, the mostly new squad gained what was necessary to carry on Alabama's winning tradition.

The season began on September 24 v the Millsaps at Denny Field W (54-0). UA traveled to Dudley Field in Nashville on Oct 2 to face Vanderbilt. The Crimson Tide came home with a win W (19-7). Continuing its road trip, on October 9, UA beat Mississippi A&M at the Meridian Fairgrounds in Mississippi W (26-7) At Georgia Tech the following week, UA prevailed at Grant in Atlanta, GA W (21-0). With a baseball-like score, the Crimson Tide on Oct 23 defeated Sewanee at Rickwood Field W (2-0)

On Oct 30, LSU played UA at Denny Field W (24-0). Again, at home (Rickford), on Nov. 6, UA beat Kentucky W (14-0). Then it was Florida at the Cramton Bowl on Nov. 13 (W (49-0). Georgia was next on November 25, at Rickwood Field W (33-6).

For the second year on a row, the Crimson Tide was invited to the Rose Bowl at Pasadena California v Stanford on January 1, 1927. The Cardinal played the Crimson Tide to a T 7-7) tie

Week 5 Sewanee – An unusual game

Against Sewanee, Alabama could not convert yet it had multiple scoring opportunities. The score ended at 2-0 with a victory for the Bama Tide. Orin Helvey was a stalwart for Sewanee's defense. Once Bama was stopped at the Sewanee nine-yard line, and in the fourth quarter Alabama was stopped at the Sewanee one-yard line.

Sewanee did not move the ball as readily as Alabama did but reached the Alabama 6 in the second quarter before a 15-yard penalty threw them back. The game almost ended in a scoreless tie, but late in the fourth Fred Pickhard blocked a Sewanee punt which rolled out the back of the end zone for a safety and a 2-0 Tide victory.

This Alabama win over Sewanee was the last close game in a series that dated all the way back to 1893. The series had been dominated by Sewanee early (9-1-1 Tiger advantage between 1893 and 1915). Sewanee was one of the Tide's biggest rivalries. They had dominated the entire South in the early days of college football.

In the later 1920s the Tigers were left behind by the growing football powers of the Southern Conference. The Alabama-Sewanee series continued as a series of blowouts periodically through 1938 until eventually Sewanee began to play NCAA Division III football, which they do today.

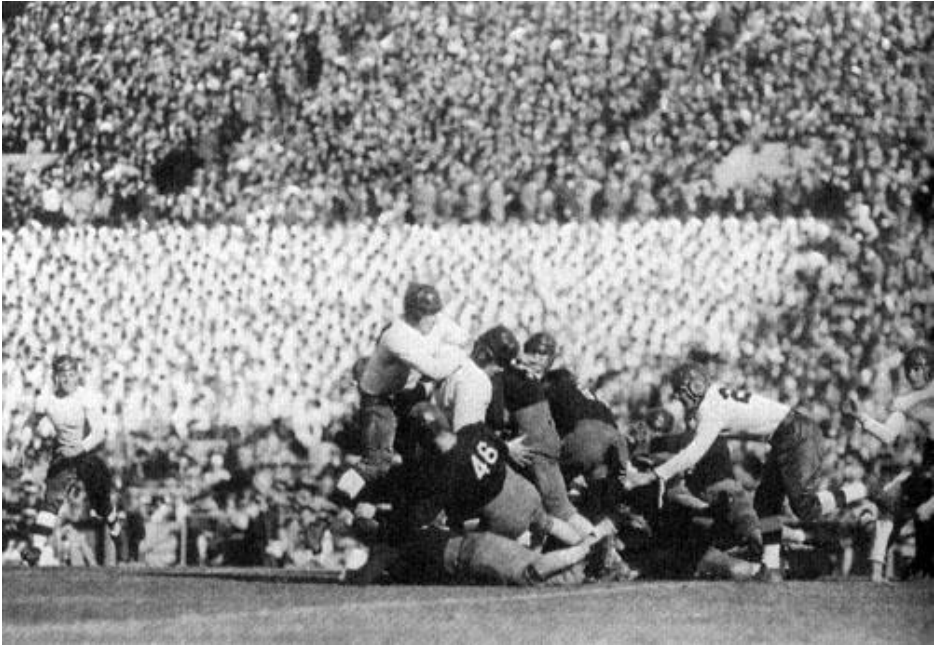
The 1927 Rose Bowl game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

With an undefeated and untied season, the Rose Bowl game again extended the season to January 1, 1927. The 1927 Rose Bowl was the first sporting event to ever be nationally broadcast on radio. Alabama's worthy opponent was the Stanford Cardinal, also 9–0. They were coached by football legend Pop Warner. The game was both exciting and dull.

Stanford started off gangbusters, mounting a 63-yard drive in the first quarter to take a 7–0 lead. Stanford dominated play for much of the rest of the game, outgaining Alabama 305 yards to 98, but the Cardinal could not score again.

Late in the fourth quarter, the Tide got the big play it needed: Clark Pearce blocked a punt by Frankie Wilton of Stanford, setting up UA at the Cardinal 14. Five plays later, with only seconds remaining, Alabama punched it in from the 1 to make the score 7–6.

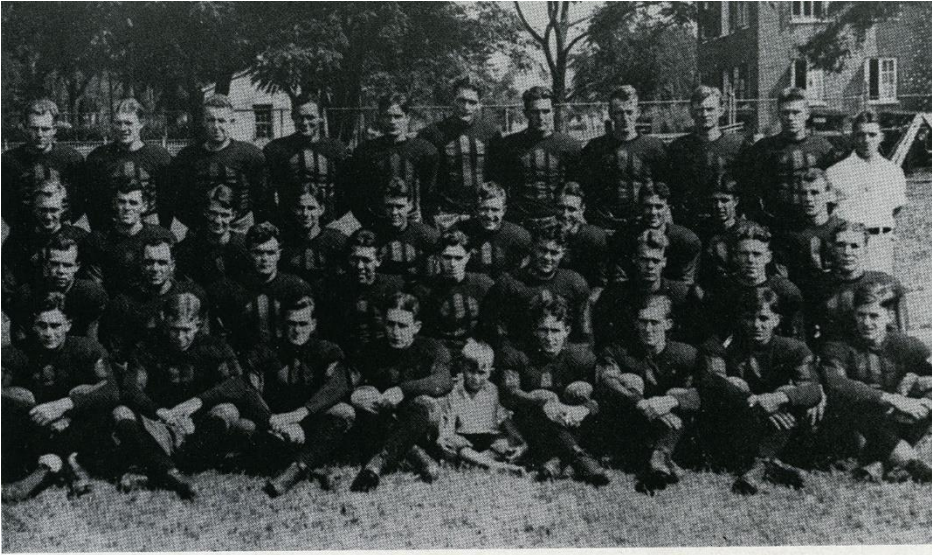
The two-point conversion would not become a rule in college football for another 32 years, so Alabama lined up for the game-tying extra point. As the teams came to the line, Emile Barnes of Alabama shouted "Signals off!". Stanford took that to mean that Alabama was resetting and relaxed. Instead, Alabama promptly snapped and kicked the extra point to tie the game. Stanford ran only two plays before time expired and the game ended a 7–7 tie.



The NCAA retroactively named Alabama and Stanford co-national champions for 1926 due to each being chosen by several of the ranking authorities. It was a second consecutive national championship for Wallace Wade and the Crimson Tide. The tie with Stanford snapped a 20-game winning streak that for years was the second-longest in school history, behind two 28-game winning streaks from 1978 to 1980 and another from 1991 to 1993.

1927 Alabama Football Season Wallace Wade Head Coach #17

The 1927 Alabama Crimson Tide football team (played its 34th overall and 6th season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). The team was led by head coach Wallace Wade, in his fifth year, The Tide played their home games at Denny Field in Tuscaloosa, at Rickwood Field and Legion Field in Birmingham and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. In what one would call a rebuilding year after two national championship titles in a row, they finished the season with a record of five wins, four losses and one tie (5–4–1 overall, 3–4–1 in the SoCon).



1927 TEAM—Top Row: Patton, Helm, McDonald, Bowdoin, Brasfield, Pickhard, Payne, Hurt, Garrett, E. Smith, Partlow, Manager. Third Row: Spetz, Skidmore, Douglas, M. Smith, Pearce, Dye, Eberdt, Black, Starling, Robinson. Second Row: Rogers, Dabbs, Hagler, Dismukes, Griffin, Sailor, McClintock, Brown, (Red) Hamner. Bottom Row: Fowler, Newton, Hicks, B. Brown, Wallace Wade, Jr., Ellis, Holder, Tuck, Bowman.

1927 Alabama Football Team

Miscellaneous Game Notes

When Alabama's lost 13-0 to Georgia Tech, it snapped a 24-game unbeaten streak. It was the team's first loss since an upset defeat to Centre on November 15, 1924. Alabama outgained Tech 188-144 in the game, but Tech scored a touchdown in the second quarter and scored another after recovering a fumble at the Alabama 1 with two minutes to go in the game. It could have been different but it was not because that's the way the ball bounces.

1928 Alabama Football Season Wallace Wade Head Coach #17

The 1928 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 35th overall and 7th season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). The team was led by head coach Wallace Wade, in his sixth year. It played its home games at Denny Field in Tuscaloosa, at Legion Field in Birmingham and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of six wins and three losses (6-3 overall, 6-2 in the SoCon).

1929 Alabama Football Season Wallace Wade Head Coach #17

The 1929 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 36th overall and 8th season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). The team was led by head coach Wallace Wade, in his seventh year. It played its home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, at Legion Field in Birmingham and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. The team finished the season with a record of six wins and three losses (6–3 overall, 4–3 in the SoCon).

**1930 Alabama Football Season Wallace Wade Head Coach #17
SoCon Champions & National Champions.**

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The 1930 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played in its 37th overall and 9th season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). The team was led by head coach Wallace Wade, in his eighth and final year. They played home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, at Legion Field in Birmingham, and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. They finished the season with a perfect record (10–0 overall, 8–0 in the SoCon), as Southern Conference champions and as national champions after they defeated Washington State in the Rose Bowl. This was Coach Wade's **third national championship**

The Crimson Tide opened on September 27 against Howard at Denny Stadium. W (43-0). On Oct 4, it was Ole Miss at Denny Stadium W (64-0). The next game on Oct 11 was Sewanee at Legion Field W (25–0). The annual Tennessee game was next on October 18. For the first time since the series reopened, UA defeated the Volunteers. The game was played at Denny Stadium W (18-6).

A tough Vanderbilt team could have ruined Coach Wade's perfect season in a close game on Oct 25. UA hung on to won W (12-7) before 20,000. On November 1 at Kentucky, in McLean Stadium—Lexington, UA prevailed W (19-0). The Tide traveled to Florida on Nov 8 to play at Gainesville before 18,000. UA collected another win W (18-0. On November 15 UA played LSU inside the Cramton Bowl, Montgomery. The Crimson Tide beat LSU W (33-0).



National Champion 1930 Alabama Crimson Tide Coach Wallace Wade

Undefeated and looking to stay that way, on November 27, at Legion Field before 28,000, Alabama defeated Georgia W (13-0) in a tough game. The Crimson Tide had finished undefeated for the third time under Coach Wade Wallace. For their accomplishments, they were invited again to the Rose Bowl in Pasadena California for a January 1 encounter against Washington State.

In April 1930, coach Wallace Wade announced his resignation effective at the end of the 1930 season. Pundits suggest that his last Alabama team might have been his best.

Wade was a unique coach for sure. He knew how to get his team ready to win and he kept the opponents guessing. Of example, for psychological effect, Coach Wade routinely started games with his second team. The backups always played hard and never gave up a point. The first team defense only allowed the opposition to score 13 points over the course of this season on the way to a 9-0 record.

Only the Vanderbilt game was close, as the Commodores scored a late touchdown that cut Alabama's lead to five in their 12-7 loss. Vanderbilt's touchdown and a touchdown scored by Tennessee accounted for all of the scoring by Alabama's opponents in 1930.

The Crimson Tide received its third Rose Bowl invitation in six seasons, this time against the also undefeated Cougars of

Washington State. In the game, Wade started his second team. Once again, the second team did not allow any points and neither did the first team in their 24–0 victory. The win clinched the second perfect season in school history after 1925, and the Crimson Tide claimed the 1930 national championship along with Knute Rockne's Notre Dame Fighting Irish.

UA had a great team. Johnny Cain starred at fullback, and in the days of iron man football he also handled the linebacker, and punting duties. Cain was later inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame. Other fine players from the 1930 Alabama National Championship Football Team included Fred Sington, who went on to play baseball for the Washington Senators and Frank Howard, who later became famous as the long-time head coach at Clemson.

Jennings B. Whitworth, who kicked a field goal in the Rose Bowl, was hired as Alabama's football coach a quarter-century later.

More on the Wade resignation

After eight seasons as Alabama's head coach, on April 1, 1930, Wallace Wade announced he would resign his position at the conclusion of the 1930 season to take the same position with Duke. When he made his announcement, Wade did not give a reason for his departure other than that his contract was set to expire on September 1, 1931.

The rumors were that Wade himself, friends and former players attributed his resignation to criticism he received during the 1927, 1928, and 1929 seasons, as well as his desire to return to a private university. Wallace Wade completed his Alabama tenure with a 61–13–3 record (.812). He was an outstanding coach as were many in Alabama history. He won four conference titles, and three national championships. He also coached several star players as well. Wade followed up his success at Alabama with a longer and almost as successful run at Duke. He was later inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame.

1931 Rose Bowl

Immediately after their victory over Georgia in the season finale, University president George Denny accepted an invitation to play in the 1931 Rose Bowl against the Washington State Cougars. The Crimson Tide overwhelmed the Cougars with their 24–0 victory before 60,000 fans at Pasadena.



The game went like this: After a scoreless first, Alabama scored three second-quarter touchdowns in a six-minute blitz to take a commanding 21–0 lead. The first score came on a 61-yard Jimmy Moore touchdown pass to John Henry Suther with the other two coming on touchdown runs of one and 43-yards by John Campbell. Jennings B. Whitworth scored the final points of the game with his 30-yard field goal to give Alabama the 24–0 victory.

The starting lineup was: Dobbs (left end), Clement (left tackle), Sanford (left guard), Sharpe (center), Whitworth (right guard), Godfree (right tackle), Elmore (right end), Tucker (quarterback), Long (left halfback), Holley (right halfback), and Boykin (fullback).

About the “consensus” National championships

The NCAA recognizes consensus national champions as the teams that have captured a championship by way of one of the major polls

since the 1950 college football season. Prior to 1950, such as in 1930, national championships were chosen by a variety of selectors.

Over fifty years after the season—in the 1980s, Alabama finally claimed the 1930 championship as one of its claimed/recognized national championships. As such, Alabama claims a share of the 1930 national championship, with Notre Dame, due to each school being selected national champion by various major selectors.

Specifically, Alabama was selected national champion by Football Research, Parke Davis, and Sagarin and Sagarin (ELO-Chess). I would suspect that Notre Dame and Knute Rockne prior to his death in a plane crash in 1930, were pleased to share such honors with such a fine team as the Alabama Crimson Tide with a coach as tuned into winning as Knute Rockne himself.

This 1931 Rose Bowl game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. An expanded narrative of the game is provided below from bamahammer:

1931 Rose Bowl – Remember the Name Jimmy Moore

In 1931, Alabama and Wallace Wade were returning to the Rose Bowl once again, and once again they were facing a team from Washington, but this time it was the Washington State Cougars.

Washington State dressed in all red: shoes, socks, pants, jerseys, and helmets. This might be the first example of a team trying to beat Alabama with a stunt of this kind. It didn't work for Washington State then any better than it did for Georgia in 2008.

You don't think of big pass plays being a part of the early years of Alabama football, but this game started off with a doozy. John "Flash" Suther caught a 61-yard bomb... though it wasn't thrown by the "quarterback" of the team but by an end, Jimmy Moore.

Moore has one of the saddest stories in Alabama football history. After throwing a huge touchdown to help Alabama win a Rose Bowl

and the 1930 national championship Moore contracted spinal meningitis and tragically died in June of 1931.

So, the next time you talk about Alabama's national championships remember the 1931 Rose Bowl and remember Jimmy Moore. The 1931 Rose Bowl is important because it marks Alabama's second Rose Bowl win and their second national championship. Two isn't a tradition yet, but it's a trend.

Chapter 9 Alabama Football – The Frank Thomas Era 1931-1945

Frank Thomas was one of the best college football coaches of all time. Wallace Wade got the Crimson Tide moving while Frank Thomas put the metal to the pedal and kept them moving with two more national championships..

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>		<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>SoCon/SEC</u>
1931	Frank Thomas	#18	SoCon	9-1-0	7-1-0
1932	Frank Thomas		SoCon	8-2-0	5-2-0
1933	Frank Thomas		SEC	7-1-1	5-0-1
1934*	Frank Thomas		SEC	10-0-0	7-0-0
1935	Frank Thomas		SEC	6-2-1	4-2-0
1936	Frank Thomas		SEC	8-0-1	5-0-1
1937	Frank Thomas		SEC	9-1-0	6-0-0
1938	Frank Thomas		SEC	7-1-1	4-1-1
1939	Frank Thomas		SEC	5-3-1	2-3-1
1940	Frank Thomas		SEC	7-2-0	4-2-0
1941*	Frank Thomas		SEC	9-2-0	5-2-0
1942	Frank Thomas		SEC	8-3-0	4-2-0
1943	WWII No Alabama games played this year				
1944	Frank Thomas		SEC	5-2-2	3-1-2
1945	Frank Thomas		SEC	10-0-0	6-0-0
1946	Frank Thomas		SEC	7-4-0	4-3-0

* National Championship



1931 Alabama Football Team Frank Thomas Coach

1931 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

The 1931 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 38th overall and 10th season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his first year. It played its home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, at Legion Field in Birmingham and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. The team finished the season with a record of nine wins and one loss (9–1 overall, 7–1 and 3rd place of 23 teams in the SoCon).

The Crimson Tide's 1930 team had won the Southern Conference championship, the 1931 Rose Bowl and a share of the national championship in Wallace Wade's final year at Alabama. The Crimson Tide lost each and every one of its starters from their 10–0 1930 team except for Johnny Cain, but the team still played almost as well. It was unexpected.

Frank Thomas was a very capable coach. He was hired as Wade Wallace's successor, and you could have fooled the fans. It was as if the highly competent Wallace was still coaching.

Alabama won its first three games of the 1931 season against Howard, Ole Miss and Mississippi A&M before they suffered their only loss of the season against Tennessee. The Crimson Tide responded from the loss to win their final five regular season games against Sewanee, Kentucky, Florida, Clemson and Vanderbilt.

Alabama then competed in a pair of charity games scheduled in early November to follow the regular season finale against Vanderbilt. In these two games, the Crimson Tide defeated Chattanooga and then three separate Washington, D.C. schools in an exhibition that featured an all-star collection of former Crimson Tide players. Even after the season, the team was enjoying football along with its new coach.

Although Alabama did have considerable success on the field, tragedy did strike the team on November 17 when freshman center James Richard Nichols died from complications due to a spinal injury he suffered during a football practice.

His death was the first major accident associated with the Alabama football program in its history. It was a sad day, indeed.

Prior to the start of the 1930 season, as previously discussed, head coach Wallace Wade announced his resignation in order to become the head coach at Duke. On July 26, 1930, former Chattanooga head and then Georgia assistant coach Frank Thomas was announced as Wade's successor by the University Athletic Committee. Thomas was signed to a three-year contract,

Frank Thomas would take over as head coach on January 1, 1931, with the 1931 season being his first as head coach. For the 1931 season, coach Thomas retired Wade's single-wing offense and installed the Notre Dame Box formation that he learned as both a player and assistant coach at Notre Dame under Knute Rockne.

1932 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

The 1932 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 39th overall and 11th and final season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his second year. The team played its home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, at Legion Field in Birmingham and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of eight wins and two losses (8–2 overall, 5–2 in the SoCon).

1933 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18 SEC Champions

The 1933 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 40th overall and 1st season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his third year, and played its home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished a fine season with a record of seven wins, one loss and one tie (7–1–1 overall, 5–0–1 in the SEC), and as the first SEC champions. Today the SEC is recognized in the US by all the pundits as the powerhouse conference—even more powerful than the Big Ten.

1934 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18
National Champions & SEC CO-Champions

The 1934 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 41st overall season and 2nd as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his fourth year. It played its home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. The team finished this season with a perfect record (10–0 overall, 7–0 in the SEC), as Southeastern Conference champions for the second consecutive season. At the end of the season, they knocked out Stanford in the Rose Bowl on January 1, 1935. Frank Thomas knew how to win.

Five of the 13 selectors recognized as official by the NCAA (Berryman, Dunkel, Houlgate, Poling, and Williamson) recognize the 1934 Minnesota team as the national champion. Sportswriter Morgan Blake called it the best football team he ever saw. The 1934 Alabama team had a right to contest their opinion.

The season went like this: On September 29 UA defeated Howard at Denny Stadium W (24–0). On Oct 6, notice Sewanee, losing perspective as a powerhouse in football became an early season warm-up team. UA defeated this former rival team W (35-6). For its own reasons at the time Sewanee had joined the SEC.

On Oct 13, Mississippi State lost to UA at Denny Stadium W (41–0). On Oct 20 Tennessee at Legion Field in Birmingham came in to be defeated in the (Third Saturday in October) W 13–6 before 18,000. Then, on Oct 27 Georgia pulled in to Legion Field and were defeated W (26–6) before 15,000. On November 3 after traveling to Kentucky's McLean Stadium. The Tide brought home the win, W (34–14) before 13,000.

On November 10, Clemson, a team beginning to form its roots came into Denny Stadium and were soundly defeated W (40–0) before 8000. Then on Nov 17 at Georgia Tech's Grant Field in Atlanta, GA, The Crimson Tide overwhelmed their opponents 40–0 before 14,000. On November 29 v Vanderbilt at Legion Field in Birmingham, UA was victorious W (34–0) before 24,000.

Though there was a fight for the National championship to be played on January 1, 1935 v Stanford in the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, CA (Rose Bowl), UA beat Stanford handily, W (29–13) before a record 84,474 in attendance.

Post Season Rose Bowl v Stanford Indians

Immediately after its victory over Vanderbilt in the season finale, University president George Denny accepted an invitation to play in the 1935 Rose Bowl against the Stanford Indians.

In the game, which was a rematch of their draw in the 1927 Rose Bowl, the Crimson Tide overwhelmed the Indians with their 29–13 victory before 84,474 fans at Pasadena. The Stanford defense shined in the first quarter, as Alabama had only four yards' total offense.

The Indians then took a 7–0 lead later in the quarter after Bobby Grayson scored on a short run to complete a drive set up after Keith Topping recovered a Joe Demyanovich fumble. Early in the second, Dixie Howell scored on a five-yard run, but Riley Smith missed the extra point and Stanford still led 7–6.

After the Alabama touchdown, Stanford chose to kickoff rather than receive the ball after the score. On the resulting Alabama possession, the Crimson Tide took a 9–7 lead after Smith connected on a 27-yard field goal.

For the second time, Stanford chose to kickoff rather than receive the ball, and two plays later Howell scored on a 67-yard touchdown run and made the score 16–7.

Then Alabama intercepted a Stanford pass, and took the ball at the 46-yard line with only eight seconds left. Joe Riley then threw a 46-yard touchdown pass to Don Hutson to put Alabama up 22–7 at halftime.

Stanford scored in the third on a 12-yard Elzo Van Dellen touchdown run but could get no closer to the lead. Alabama finished the game with a 59-yard Howell to Hutson touchdown pass in the fourth and made final score 29–13.

After the season, Alabama had three players selected by consensus to become members of the 1934 College Football All-America

1934 was a great year for the team. They were declared National Champions with an exceptional 10-0-0 record and 7-0-0 in Alabama's second year in the SEC.

This 1935 Rose Bowl Game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. This expanded narrative comes from bamahammer:

1935 Rose Bowl – Now We Can Call It a Tradition

When Alabama performed so well in the 1935 Rose Bowl, it was no longer a fluke that a fine Southern School could beat the big guys from the North and West.

In the 1935 Rose Bowl and Alabama is once again headed out west to teach the Pacific Coast Conference a lesson. This time the Crimson Tide would face off against the Cardinal of Stanford. And this time the Tide would be led by their new head coach Frank Thomas, who was about as good a coach as there could be.

Stanford took the lead in the first quarter on a 1-yard run by Bobby Grayson. The Tide came roaring back in the second half, scoring three touchdowns and kicking a field goal. Alabama won the 1935 Rose Bowl over Stanford by a score of 35-19.

End Don Hutson's 54 yard catch for a touchdown might have been the highlight of the game, but halfback Dixie Howell was the MVP of the game. Howell would of course go on to coach Furman's baseball AND football team.

The other end besides Hutson was a young man named Paul "Bear" Bryant. Can you imagine the humility of this man? The 1934 national championship was the first Alabama national championship involving the Crimson Tide's future head coach

This was the third Rose Bowl win for the Crimson Tide, and their third national championship. After three it's safe to move the needle up from trend to tradition. From 1935 on Alabama would be the favorite, the great, Alabama Crimson Tide.



1935 Rose Bowl Champion Alabama coming home to a huge crowd



Alabama's 1934 All-Americans Don Hutson and Dixie Howell pose with a Hollywood actress (possibly Jean Rogers) with a Los Angeles newspaper proclaiming the ...

Celebrating the Rose Bowl Win Over Stanford

1935 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

The 1935 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 42nd overall and 3rd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his fifth year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of six wins, two losses and one tie (6–2–1 overall, 4–2–0 in the SEC).

1936 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18 #4 National Rank; #2 rank in SEC

The 1936 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 43rd overall and 4th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his sixth year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of eight wins, zero losses and one tie (8–0–1 overall, 5–0–1 in the SEC).

Alabama opened the season with three consecutive shutouts at Denny Stadium-- first on Sept 26 against Howard, W (34-0) then on Oct 3 v Clemson W (32-0) and the third on Oct 10 was a nail biter at Mississippi State W (7-0). After these three fine wins, the Crimson Tide they suffered its only blemish of the season on Oct 17, a scoreless tie against Tennessee T (0-0) at Legion Field. The Tide rebounded to win their final five games.

After the victory over Vanderbilt in the season finale, Alabama was in contention (along with Pittsburgh and LSU) for a place in the 1937 Rose Bowl opposite Washington.

In addition to the Rose, Alabama was also under consideration to compete in the 1937 Sugar Bowl as was Pittsburgh, LSU and Santa Clara. Unfortunately, on December 3, Rose Bowl officials chose Pittsburgh and Sugar Bowl officials announced their match would be LSU v Santa Clara. With such a fine undefeated record, Alabama did not gain enough favor to play by those who voted to play in a bowl game.

After the season, UA stalwarts James Nesbit and Arthur "Tarzan" White were selected to various 1936 College Football All-America Teams. Additionally, several varsity lettermen from the 1936 squad were drafted into the National Football League (NFL) between the 1937 and 1939 drafts.

Point of Note

The 1936 coaching staff included former player and Alabama favorite Bear Bryant in his first year at a coaching position. Bryant came back to Alabama after serving as an assistant coach at Union for their spring practices in early 1936. He later went on to serve as head coach at Maryland, Kentucky, Texas A&M and of course at Alabama. During his career, Bryant won 323 games, appeared in 29 bowl games, won 15 conference championships and six national championships. We will be reporting about Paul "Bear" Bryant substantially when we cover his outstanding coaching career at UA and his many championships.

1937 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18 #4 National Rank; #1 rank as SEC Champions

The 1937 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 44th overall and 5th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his seventh year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of nine wins and one loss (9–1 overall, 6–0 in the SEC), as SEC champions and with a loss against California in the 1938 Rose Bowl.

The Crimson Tide opened the season with three consecutive shutouts Sept 25 against Howard W (41-0), Oct 2 Legion Field v Sewanee W (65-0) and Oct 9 Denny Stadium v South Carolina W (20-0). In their fourth game on Oct 16, Alabama surrendered their first points of the season on defense in their victory W (14–7) over Tennessee.



Alabama's 1937 coaching staff: Tilden Campbell, Henry Crisp, Head Coach Frank Thomas, Harold Drew, Paul Burnham, **Paul W. Bryant**

They then shutout their next two opponents, at George Washington on Oct 23 W (19-0), and Kentucky at Denny Stadium on Oct 30 W (41-0). Against the Green Wave of Tulane in New Orleans, on Nov 6, the Crimson Tide won W (9-6) on a game-winning fourth-quarter field goal by Hayward Sanford. After their sixth shutout of the season on Nov 13, at Legion Field against Georgia Tech W (7-0), on Nov 15, The Crimson Tide won its second game of the season on a fourth quarter Sanford field goal against Vanderbilt W (9-7), and clinched the SEC championship with the win.

With this well-played undefeated and untied regular season, Alabama accepted an invitation to play in the 1938 Rose Bowl on January 1, 1938. They lost this game L (0-13) to California before 87,000.

After the 1936 season, the first expansion of Denny Stadium was undertaken. The stadium originally opened for the 1929 season, and the concrete stands had a seating capacity of 12,000.

Designed after the Yale Bowl, at the time of this expansion the school envisioned an eventual build-out of Denny Stadium at a

much larger capacity. As you will see in this book, this vision became a reality.

The Rose Bowl – one blemish in an otherwise perfect season

On November 30, Alabama accepted an invitation to play in the 1938 Rose Bowl against the California Golden Bears. In the game, the Crimson Tide were defeated in their only game of the season with a 13–0 shutout loss before 87,000 fans at Pasadena.

Vic Bottari scored both touchdowns for the Golden Bears on runs of four-yards in the second and five-yards in the third. UA simply could not hold onto the ball. In the loss, the Crimson Tide turned the ball over eight times, on four fumbles and four interceptions. Alabama had two scoring opportunities end within the California ten-yard line, one was lost on a fumble at the one-yard line and the other at the six-yard line. The loss was also Alabama's first in the Rose Bowl Game. Close game but no cigar.

After the season, UA's Leroy Monsky was a consensus selection and both Joe Kilgrow and James Ryba were selected to various 1937 College Football All-America Teams.

1938 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

The 1938 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 45th season overall and 6th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his eighth year. UA played home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of seven wins, one loss and one tie (7–1–1 overall, 4–1–1 in the SEC).

Prior to the season, on December 5, 1937, Frank Thomas announced the 1938 schedule. The intersectional game against USC was announced in August 1937 and was the first between the two football powers. The remaining schedule included road games at Kentucky and Georgia Tech with the remaining three games split evenly between Denny Stadium and Legion Field.

USC Trojans

In August 1937, university officials announced Alabama would open the 1938 season in Los Angeles against the University of Southern California (USC). Looking for some level of "revenge" after their January loss in the Rose Bowl, the Crimson Tide defeated the Trojans 19–7 at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum.

The first quarter was scoreless. Then, Alabama scored two touchdowns in the second quarter to take a 13–0 halftime lead. The scores came on a pair of Herschel Mosley touchdown passes, the first on a seven-yard pass to Billy Slemmons and the second on an 18-yard pass to Gene Blackwell.

The Trojans came right back after the first Alabama touchdown with their deepest drive into UA territory of the game. On the drive, Robert Peoples connected with Grenny Lansdell for a 36-yard gain to the Alabama 22. However, the stingy Alabama defense held, and USC failed to score after they turned the ball over on downs at the Alabama 13-yard line.

UA held its 13–0 lead through the third quarter, Hal Hughes intercepted an Oliver Day pass and returned it 25-yards for an Alabama touchdown to make the score 19–0. Vic Bradford missed his second extra point of the game.

Later in the fourth quarter, the Trojans scored their only points of the game. The one-yard Day touchdown run was set up after Al Krueger recovered a Charley Boswell fumbled punt at the Alabama one-yard line. The victory was their first all-time against USC.

Six thousand happy and excited Crimson Tide fans greeted the team at the Alabama Great Southern Railroad station in downtown Tuscaloosa upon their arrival the following Tuesday to celebrate their victory. It was a fine celebration indeed, but then the season had just begun. Howard had to be defeated the following Saturday.

Vanderbilt Game

In their season finale against the Vanderbilt Commodores, Alabama won 7–0 at Legion Field on Thanksgiving Day. The only scoring

drive began in the third and ended early in the fourth with a two-yard Vic Bradford touchdown run. Bradford's extra point was then blocked, but George Zivich recovered it and took it in for the point to give Alabama the 7–0 lead. The victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Vanderbilt to 11–9.

Some Season Notes:

After all of the regular season games were completed, the final AP Poll was released in early December. In the final poll, Alabama held the No. 13 position. UA was also recognized by the Associated Press for having the best record (40–4–3) and highest winning percentage (.909) of any major, college team for the five-year period between 1934 and 1938. Statistically, the 1938 defense was one of the best in school history. The 1938 squad still holds numerous defensive records. Frank Thomas was a great coach.

1939 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

The 1939 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 46th overall and 7th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his ninth year. Alabama played home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. I

The 1939 team finished the season with a record of five wins, three losses and one tie (5–3–1 overall, 2–3–1 in the SEC). This was

1940 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

The 1940 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 47th overall and 8th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). This team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his tenth year. It played home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. UA finished the season with a record of seven wins and two losses (7–2 overall, 4–2 in the SEC).

1941 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18 Share 1941 National Championship

The 1941 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 48th overall and 9th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his 11th year, and played home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of nine wins and two losses (9–2 overall, 5–2 in the SEC)

With a victory in the Cotton Bowl Classic over Texas A&M. Alabama also claims a share of the 1941 national championship due to its selection as national champion by the Houlgate System.

The Crimson Tide opened the 1941 season on Sept 27 with a non-conference victory over Southwestern Louisiana W (47-6) at Denny Stadium. UA lost on Oct 4 in its second contest of the season to Mississippi State L (0-14). UA rebounded very well with six consecutive victories over Howard on Oct 11 W (61-0); at Tennessee on Oct 18 W (9-2); Georgia on Oct 25 W (27-14), Kentucky Nov 1--W (30-0); at Tulane in New Orleans on Nov 8—W (19-14) and then on Nov 15 at Legion Field v Georgia Tech W (20-0).

As they entered their game at Vanderbilt, the Crimson Tide was nationally ranked at #7 in the AP Poll, but were upset L (0-7) in Nashville. Alabama then closed the regular season on Nov 28 with a road victory over Miami W 21-7) and on January 1, 1942, they defeated Texas A&M W (29-21) in the Cotton Bowl Classic Bowl Game.

This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

1942 Cotton Bowl Classic

In the 1942 Cotton Bowl Classic against Texas A&M in Dallas Texas before 38,000 excited fans, Alabama was outgained 309 yards to 75 and earned just one official first down, but were able to win the game 29–21 nonetheless.



It was amazing.

Alabama's defense was tougher than nails as it forced 12 turnovers (seven interceptions and five fumbles). The Crimson Tide scored touchdowns on events such as a 72-yard punt return and a 12-yard interception return. They also two touchdowns after recovering A&M fumbles on the A&M 21 and 24-yard lines and on another occasion, they kicked a field goal after they intercepted a pass on the Texas A&M 17. Who says you can't win when your offense does not produce?

UA bona fide National Championship claim

As we have discussed in other places in this book, the NCAA of today recognizes consensus national champions as the teams that have captured a championship by way of one of the major polls since the 1950 college football season. Prior to 1950, however, teams were claiming national championships. Before 1950, national championships were chosen by a variety of selectors.

In the 1980s, Alabama chose to claim the 1941 championship as one of its 16 claimed and recognized national championships. As such, Alabama claims a share of the 1941 national championship, with Minnesota. Each school was selected national champion by at least one selector. Specifically, Alabama was selected national champion in 1941 by the Houlgate System.

The Houlgate System was a mathematical ranking system devised by Dale Houlgate that was syndicated in newspapers between 1927 and 1958 to determine the national champion. It was respected in its day for the job that it did.

This championship claim may or may not be true on multiple fronts but regardless present day football genius and Alabama Coach Nick Saban, if he can continue under the extreme pressure of being flawless, is destined to put Alabama way ahead of all college teams for National Championship Wins. Saban is a born winner.

Some pundits did not like the often-scribed Alabama claim to a championship in 1941.

Let me go through one of the rants against this so we know the disputers think they have the facts down pretty well. Here it is:

“The AP ranked Alabama 20th in the nation in this season with 14 teams having better records above them. Once again, it is the Football Thesaurus that retroactively awards the Tide this title. Alabama finished third in the SEC that year, while Mississippi State won the SEC title. It completely baffles me that 'Bama claims a national title in 1941.”

The explanation is simple. No team, especially one with such a history of greatness wants to miss out on an opportunity in any year to gain or to have gained the national championship.

I think UA has a right to claim what may rightfully be theirs. It was a great year for the Thomas-led team for sure and most listings show Alabama as having gained the title in 1941. Nothing is fair when men sit down with beers and cigars, and cigarettes—and smoke to decide things. Look at the 10-0-0 year (7-0-0) in the SEC, in which Alabama did not get even a piece of the championship. In an imperfect system, things come out imperfect.

Nobody can deny Alabama is either the best or one of the best football teams that there ever was and it is because, not in spite of their university officials' acute awareness and dedication to the support of their teams. Let a defining authority make the decisions

but surely in a world of claimants and no valid referees, Alabama has its rights to the 1941 college championship title. I dare you to prove conclusively otherwise.

1942 Cotton Bowl – A Year of Contention

This game is considered one of the greatest ever played by the Crimson Tide.

Frank Thomas' 1941 Crimson Tide did not end the season undefeated. The Tide had an 8-2-0 record after losses to the Vanderbilt Commodores and the Mississippi State Bulldogs. So, when the Tide went into the 1942 Cotton Bowl against the Texas A&M Aggies, it didn't have the same feeling of importance as perhaps other games with undefeated teams in the Rose Bowl had in the past.

Alabama wasn't favored in the game and Texas A&M ended up looking like the better team on the stat sheet... in everything but the final score. The Aggies had 13 first downs to Alabama's 1, but Alabama carried the day.

Alabama defeated Southwest Conference champion Texas A&M Aggies.

Alabama claims a national championship for 1941 because some champion selectors picked Alabama as the champion that year after their Cotton Bowl win. This seems crazy by today's standards considering Mississippi State won the SEC that year.

At the time, though, the selectors could pick whomever they wanted as the national champion. It's not a clear championship by any means, but Alabama isn't completely inventing it either.

1942 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

The 1942 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 49th overall and 10th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his 12th year at the helm. UA played home games at Denny Stadium in

Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and sometimes at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery.

They finished the 1942 season with a record of eight wins and three losses (8–3 overall, 4–2 in the SEC). They also secured a victory in the Orange Bowl over Boston College. It was another fine Frank Thomas season.

The Crimson Tide had measured up well enough to play in the Orange Bowl where they handily beat Boston College W (37-21).

1943 Orange Bowl v Boston College – Game Notes

After their loss to Georgia Pre-Flight in their regular season finale, on November 30 Alabama accepted an invitation to play in the Orange Bowl at Burdine Stadium in Miami Florida before 25,200 against the Boston College Eagles.

At that time, the final AP Poll was also released with Alabama in the No. 10 position and Boston College in the No. 8 position. Both teams had fine seasons and had played respectable teams. In the Orange Bowl, the Crimson Tide overcame a 14–0 first quarter deficit to defeat the Eagles 37–21.

BC took a 14–0 lead with first-quarter touchdowns scored on a 65-yard Mike Holovak pass to Ed Doherty and on a 33-yard Holovak run. Alabama came back with three consecutive touchdowns in the second quarter to take a 19–14 lead on a 14-yard Russ Mosley pass to Wheeler Leeth pass; a 17-yard Johnny August pass to Ted Cook; and a 40-yard Tom Jenkins run.

The Eagles chose not to play dead. They scored their final points of the game on a 1-yard Holovak touchdown run before the Crimson Tide took a 22–21 halftime lead on a 15-yard George Hecht field goal.

UA went on to shut-out the Eagles for the rest of the game and score on a 15-yard August run in the third and on a 1-yard Jenkins run in the fourth. Joe Domnanovich then tackled Harry Connolly for a safety to make the final score 37–21. It was a great game.

1943 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

Due to the World War II effort, there was no football season for UA in 1943

The 1943 Alabama Crimson Tide football team was prepared to represent the University of Alabama in the 1943 college football season. However, the season was canceled due to the effects of World War II.

1944 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

The 1944 Alabama Crimson Tide football team has been referred to over years as "Alabama", "UA" or "Bama, or The Tide, or Tide").

This 1944 team played the 50th overall and 11th football season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his 13th year, (though he was employed by UA in the non-functional 1943 season).

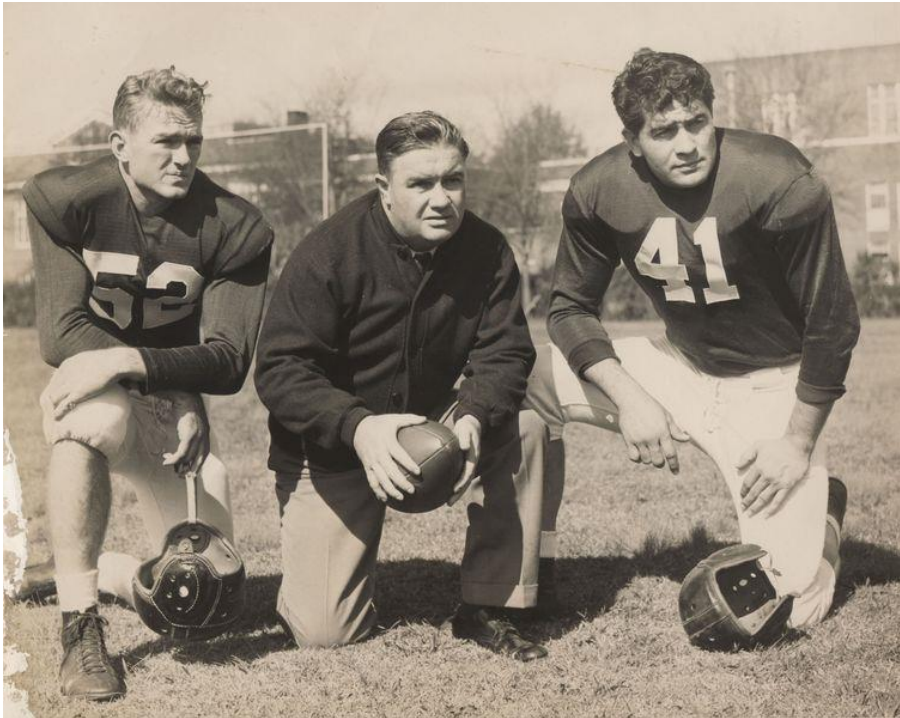
Though the field houses and the stadiums grew to more capacity. UA still played its home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham and occasionally at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery. They finished the 1944 season with a record of five wins, two losses and two ties (5–2–2 overall, 3–1–2 in the SEC) and they lost the Sugar Bowl to Duke.

The Sugar Bowl – A Fitting Tribute

On November 25, UA officials announced that Alabama had accepted a bid to play in the 1945 Sugar Bowl against the Duke Blue Devils. What an accomplishment for a bunch of scrappers doing their best while the boys were fighting the war.

In the game, the Crimson Tide were barely defeated L (26–29) before 66,822 fans at Tulane Stadium. Duke score a late, game-winning touchdown. Take nothing away from Duke, please as its efforts were for the greater honor and glory of their fine university.

The Blue Devils took an early 7-0 on a 14-yard George Clark run before a pair of one-yard, Norwood Hodges touchdown runs gave the Crimson Tide a 12-7 lead at the end of the first. Alabama extended its lead further to 19-7 after Harry Gilmer threw a 12-yard touchdown pass to Ralph Jones. Duke responded with a pair of short, Tom Davis touchdown runs to take a 10-19 lead into the fourth quarter.



Harry Gilmer QB # 52 with Coach Frank Thomas

In 4Q, Hugh Morrow gained a touchdown on a 78-yard interception return; however, the Crimson Tide lost the game after Gilmer took a safety and George Clark scored the game-winning points on a 20-yard run. For a bunch of great scrappers playing big man football, this UA team played like big men throughout the season. They were ready for a better game nonetheless the next season.

1945 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18
SEC Champion Undefeated/untied #2 national ranking almost championship

The 1945 Alabama football team played the Crimson Tide's 51st overall and 12th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference

(SEC). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his 14th year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery.

They finished with a perfect season (10–0 overall, 6–0 in the SEC) and with a victory in the Rose Bowl over USC. This team was the second season of the "War Babies" as coined by head coach Thomas. They kicked butt (a "b" word recognized by many as an acceptable alternative to the "a" word). After Wallace Wade and Frank Thomas, Alabama was moving from just being a great team to being a great tradition at Alabama University and the United States. Wow!

The 1945 season was the fourth perfect season in Alabama history, following the perfect seasons of 1925, 1930 and 1934. Those reading these accounts know how many "almost there's" there were over the years but this was the real deal. Frank Thomas, years before Bear Bryant stood for Alabama, had the winningest program in the nation. Bravo UA!

However, despite its clear dominance of opponents, Alabama did not win the national championship in 1945. In a world swept up with patriotism and a military team that had run roughshod over all of the best in US Universities from across the country, that honor went to the Army Cadets team that went 9–0 and outscored its opponents by a 412–46 margin. The Crimson Tide finished second in the AP poll behind the Cadets. Nobody complained. We were winning the war. The Crimson Tide may have beaten Army in its finest year but who is going to ask that question? There was no UA – Army game.

During the War, most Americans were not thinking of how great were the Crimson Tide or the Army Football Team. The people were so pleased that when the boys left the football field they manned-up enough to defeat the mortal WWII enemies of the US. That, of course is why we all can play football at the college level in freedom today. Amen!

However, years later, the issue of 1945 champion was brought up again and this time 71 years had passed. Somehow Oklahoma presented a case and it was retroactively declared National Champions for 1945. The Cowboys went 9-0 in 1945, finishing the season with a 33-13 win over St. Mary's in the Sugar Bowl. Unfortunately for Oklahoma State, it was one of a few teams to go undefeated in 1945.

Army finished the season ranked No. 1 at 9-0, with 10-0 Alabama checking in at No. 2, a 7-1-1 Navy at No. 3 and 9-0-1 Indiana at No. 4. The Cowboys had to settle for No. 5.

As if all this isn't enough, if this stands, Oklahoma State is now the first school to win a national title in both football and basketball in the same season, as the school's basketball team won its second consecutive basketball title in 1945. The 2006 Florida team thought it owned this distinction Sorry, it's now the second to do it. Interesting what a group of men can do after 71 years.

This 1946 Rose Bowl Game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

The 1946 Rose Bowl

On November 23, University officials accepted an invitation to participate in the 1945 Season's Rose Bowl on January 1, 1946. The opponent was USC. The Crimson Tide defeated the Trojans 34-14 to complete a perfect season.

Alabama took a 34-0 lead into the fourth quarter before the Trojans scored their first points. Alabama touchdowns were scored on a pair of one-yard Hal Self runs, a five-yard Lowell Tew run, a one-yard Norwood Hodges run and on a 20-yard Self pass to Harry Gilmer.

The victory improved Alabama's all-time record against USC to 2-0. This edition of the Rose Bowl also marked the final one that did not feature a matchup between teams from what are now both the Big Ten Conference and the Pac-12 Conference until Miami played in the 2002 Rose Bowl.

This was the case as the Pacific Coast Conference and the Big Nine Conference entered into an agreement to place their conference champions in the Rose Bowl effective for the 1946 season.

1946 Rose Bowl – The Wooden Horse Arises

This game is highlighted here in this section because it has been identified as one of the greatest Alabama games of all time.

The 1946 Rose Bowl featured Alabama facing the mighty USC Trojans.

USC had won eight straight Rose Bowls coming into the game against Alabama, but all that changed on January 1, 1946.

Alabama led USC 20-0 at the half and USC didn't make a first down until the third quarter. Frank Thomas' 1946 Alabama Crimson Tide football team was so dominant in their victory over the Trojans that they began to be called "The Wooden Horse" in reference to the wooden horse the Greeks used to defeat the ancient Trojans in Homer's Iliad.

Alabama dominated on the offensive side of the ball as well, racking up 351 yards of offense compared to USC's 41. The Tide were of course led by the legendary Harry Gilmer at quarterback.

This was the last Rose Bowl to take at large teams instead of picking PAC and BIG schools exclusively. You might say that Alabama's 34 -14 drubbing of the Trojans taught the PAC that perhaps they should be trying to play northern teams instead of SEC teams. This is perhaps the earliest example of a team regretting wanting Bama.



Coach Thomas with his Rose Bowl stars: Harry Gilmer, Thomas Whitely, Gordon Pettus and Henry Self.

1946 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

The 1946 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played in the 52nd overall and 13th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Frank Thomas, in his 15th year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery. They finished with a record of seven wins and four losses (7–4 overall, 4–3 in the SEC).

Mississippi State Game Notes Denny Stadium

On what was both homecoming and the final game of the season before 25,000 at Denny Stadium, Alabama upset the Mississippi State Maroons 24–7. After a scoreless first quarter, Alabama took a 10–0 halftime lead after a six-yard Hugh Morrow field goal and a two-yard Lionel W. Noonan touchdown run in the second quarter. They extended their lead further to 17–0 in the third after John Wozniak returned a blocked punt 38-yards for a touchdown.

The game then concluded with a pair of fourth-quarter touchdowns. The first was scored by Alabama on a one-yard Harry Gilmer run and the second for State on a short Wallace Matulich run. The victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Mississippi State to 23–7–2.

Frank Thomas resigns

The struggles of the 1946 team might have been caused in part by the deteriorating health of coach Frank Thomas. High blood pressure left him bedridden for most of the 1946 season, unable to stand for long periods, and forced to ride in a trailer to conduct many Alabama practices. After the 1946 season his ill health forced his resignation when he was only 48 years old, and Thomas later died in Tuscaloosa on May 10, 1954.

During his fifteen seasons as head coach at Alabama, Thomas won four SEC championships and compiled an overall record of 115 wins, 24 losses and seven ties (115–24–7) record, for an .812 winning percentage.

Prior to the conclusion of the season, speculation began as to who would succeed Thomas as the head coach of the Crimson Tide. In early November, sources indicated that former Thomas player, and then head coach at Kentucky, Bear Bryant was to become the next head coach of the Crimson Tide.

On November 11, Bryant stated that he had not been in contact about the Alabama job and indicated his focus was on the Wildcats. After an exhaustive search, on January 14, 1947, former Thomas assistant and then head coach at Ole Miss, Harold Drew was introduced as the new head coach of the Crimson Tide.

Frank Thomas – A Great One’s Great One!

Being a football coach is a demanding life. Sometimes it is an unrequited life though the impact on young players surely makes it worthwhile. While researching this particular chapter—for this book, I was caught up in the mastery and the mystery of Frank Thomas. History will prove that one of the finest coaches in the history of football has the name of *Frank Thomas*.

All of the writers (me) and readers (you) as you have just read the facts can recognize that Frank Thomas is unquestionably worthy of major accolades. One of his star players, the late Coach Paul “Bear” Bryant would surely attest to that. Within the story of Frank

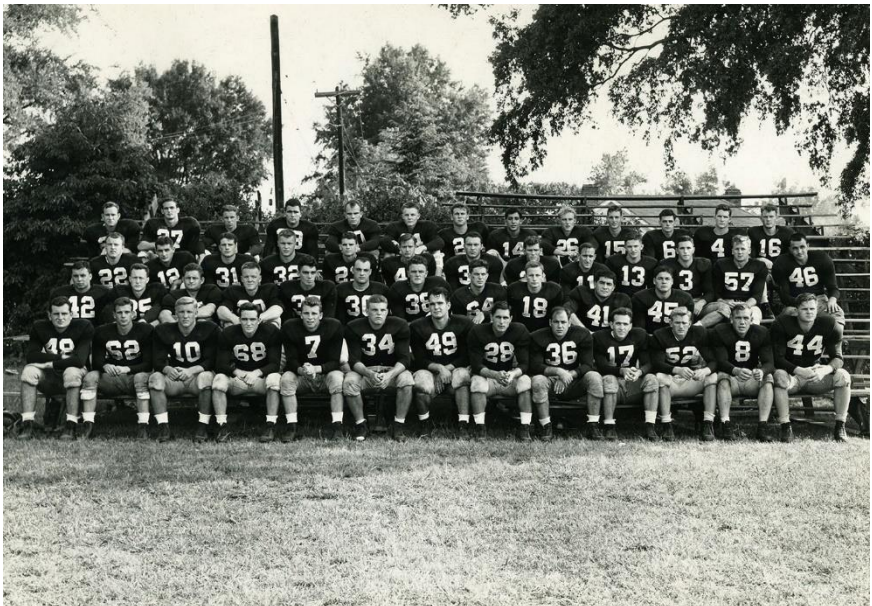
Thomas, it is easy to find a gentleman, who was respected and loved by many, and many more to come.

Ask an Alabama fan who the greatest Crimson Tide coach was and the answer is known by everyone: Paul "Bear" Bryant. I'm inclined to agree with that assessment. But I would be willing to bet you if Bear himself had a vote, he would probably choose Coach Frank Thomas.

Chapter 10 Alabama Football – Harold Drew & J. B. Whitworth Eras 1947-1957

Harold Drew & Jennings Whitworth were post Frank Thomas and pre-Bear Bryant. With Thomas gone, the Tide's game slipped but Coach Drew played a lot of fine games.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>SEC</u>
1947	Harold Drew # 19	SEC	8-3-0	5-2-0
1948	Harold Drew	SEC	6-4-1	4-4-1
1949	Harold Drew	SEC	6-3-1	4-3-1
1950	Harold Drew	SEC	9-2-0	6-2-0
1951	Harold Drew	SEC	5-6-0	3-5-0
1952	Harold Drew	SEC	10-2-0	4-2-0
1953	Harold Drew	SEC	6-3-3	4-0-3
1954	Harold Drew	SEC	4-5-2	3-3-2
1955	Jennings Whitworth #20	SEC	0-10-0	0-7-0
1956	Jennings Whitworth	SEC	2-7-1	2-5-0
1957	Jennings Whitworth	SEC	2-7-1	1-6-1



1947 Alabama Crimson Tide -- Harold Drew, Coach

1947 Alabama Football Season Harold Drew Head Coach #19

The 1947 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 53rd overall and 14th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference. The team was led by head coach Harold Drew, in his first year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished with a record of eight wins and three losses (8–3 overall, 5–2 in the SEC) and with a loss in the Sugar Bowl.

The 1947 season was the first for Harold Drew as head coach for the Crimson Tide. As noted, Drew was hired as the replacement for long-time head coach Frank Thomas after he resigned his post due to personal health conditions in January 1947.

1948 Alabama Football Season Harold Drew Head Coach #19

The 1948 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played the Crimson Tide's 54th overall and 15th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Harold Drew, in his second year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. They finished with a record of six wins, four losses and one tie (6–4–1 overall, 4–4–1 in the SEC).

The Crimson Tide took a 7–0 lead in the first quarter after Gordon Pettus threw an eight-yard touchdown pass to Butch Avinger. Alabama then extended its lead to 21–0 at halftime with a pair of second-quarter touchdowns. Points were scored on a 20-yard Ed Salem pass to Clem Welsh and then on a six-yard Welsh reverse. The Crimson Tide then scored six second half touchdowns and continued to hold the Tigers scoreless in the 55–0 rout.

Third-quarter touchdowns were scored by Salem on a 17-yard run and on a 53-yard Salem pass to Rebel Steiner. Alabama then closed the game out with three touchdowns in the fourth quarter. Points were scored on a 20-yard Salem pass to Howard Pierson, a punt blocked by Larry Lauer and recovered in the end zone by Tom Salem and on a 20-yard Don Spurrell interception return. The victory improved Alabama's full record against Auburn to 5–7–1.

1948 Iron Bowl

This game is recognized as one of the greatest Alabama games of all time.

The 1948 Iron Bowl was the first time Auburn and Alabama had faced each other in football since 1907. That's 41 years in the state of Alabama without an Iron Bowl, something that sounds unthinkable now.

The Iron Bowl was discontinued because the schools said there was too much animosity and the rivalry had become too heated. In truth, it probably also had a lot to do with an Alabama State Legislature full of Alabama graduates who spent much of the early 1900s trying to do away with Auburn. So, to say that there was some bad blood between the schools would be an understatement.

In 1948 though, the Iron Bowl was brought back to life. Students of Alabama and Auburn actually went into the woods and buried a hatchet together to show that feelings had changed... and they might have for just that one afternoon.

Auburn and Alabama is a rivalry in sports like no other; it's just not something that can be shook on and forgotten. You have to assume that the 55-0 beat down that the Alabama Crimson Tide put on the hapless Auburn Tigers that day also didn't do anything to help relations cool.

1949 Alabama Football Season Harold Drew Head Coach #19



<<<< Coach Harold Drew

The 1949 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 55th overall and 16th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Harold Drew, in his third year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and Ladd Stadium in

Mobile, Alabama. They finished with a record of six wins, three losses and one tie (6–3–1 overall, 4–3–1 in the SEC).

Following a tie on Oct 15, the UA luck changed and UA they were on the top of the score for the next five weeks. The first of their five consecutive wins came on Oct 22 at Mississippi State W (35-6). Then, at Georgia on Oct 29, UA prevailed W 14-7). Then on Nov 12 Georgia Tech W (20-7), followed on Nov 19 by Mississippi Southern W (24-26) and Nov 26 at Florida W (35-13). Alabama lost the Iron Bowl on Dec 3 to Auburn in a squeaker L (13-14). In this game, Alabama closed its season with the L 13-14) loss to Auburn in the Iron Bowl after Ed Salem missed an extra point that would have tied the game with less than two minutes left.

1950 Alabama Football Season Harold Drew Head Coach #19

The 1950 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 56th overall and 17th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Harold Drew, in his fourth year, and played its home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. They finished with a record of nine wins and two losses (9–2 overall, 6–2 in the SEC).

1951 Alabama Football Season Harold Drew Head Coach #19

The 1951 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 57th overall and 18th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Harold Drew, in his fifth year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham, Ladd Stadium in Mobile and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. They finished with a record of five wins and six losses (5–6 overall, 3–5 in the SEC).

1952 Alabama Football Season Harold Drew Head Coach #19 Orange Bowl Champion v Syracuse 61-6

The 1952 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 58th overall and 19th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Harold Drew, in his sixth

year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham, Ladd Stadium in Mobile and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. They finished with a record of ten wins and two losses (10–2 overall, 4–2 in the SEC) and they gained a nice victory over Syracuse in the Orange Bowl.

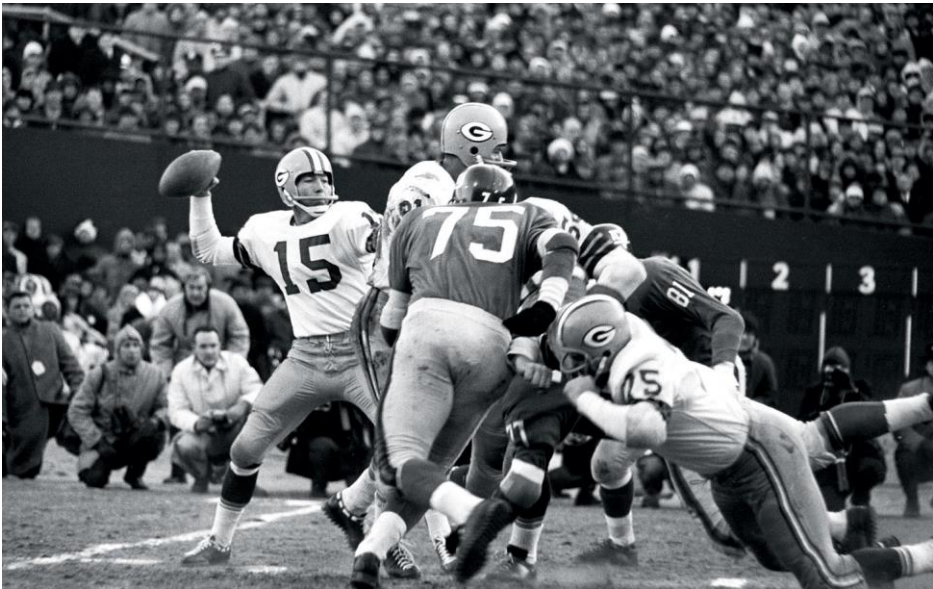
Bart Starr, football legend

Bart Starr was a bit luckier than the players in WWI and WWII who missed a whole year due to those war efforts. The Korean War was in progress during his freshman year. Since a number of players signed up to fight in the service of the US, the Southeastern Conference— of which Alabama is a part—permitted freshmen to play varsity ball. This had been forbidden in years past.

Bart Starr was not a starter for the varsity in his freshman year. However, he did get enough time (measured in minutes) to earn his varsity letter. His high point of this season was in the Orange Bowl, where in quarterback relief, he completed eight of 12 passes for 93 yards and a touchdown. Not bad for a kid who was not even supposed to play.

Starr, jersey #15, began his sophomore year as Alabama's starting quarterback, safety and punter. He was multi-talented. His punting average of 41.4 yards per kick ranked second in the nation in 1953 behind Zeke Bratkowski. Alabama had a 6–2–3 record in 1953 and lost in the Cotton Bowl to Rice by a score of 28–6. He completed 59 of 119 passes for 870 yards, with eight touchdowns that season.

In May 1954, Starr was in love and he eloped with Cherry Morton. The couple chose to keep their marriage a secret. Colleges often revoked the scholarships of married athletes in the 1950s, believing their focus should remain on sports. His wife remained in Jackson, Alabama, while Starr returned to the University of Alabama.



15 Bart Starr in action for Alabama

That summer, Starr suffered a severe back injury during a hazing incident for his initiation into the A Club. Concerned about the repercussions of ratting on the culprits, he covered up the cause by creating a fake story about being hurt while punting a football. He rarely played during his junior year due to the injury.

The back injury disqualified him later from military service, and would occasionally bother him the rest of his football career. After a disappointing season of 4–5–2, Red Drew was replaced by J.B. Whitworth as coach of Alabama.

Whitworth conducted a youth movement in Alabama for the 1955 season and only two seniors started for the team. While supposedly healed from the back injury, Starr rarely played in his senior season either. Starr played briefly in the Blue–Gray bowl of 1955.

Johnny Dee, the basketball coach at Alabama, was a friend of Jack Vainisi, the personnel director of the Green Bay Packers. Dees recommended Starr as a prospect to Vainisi. The Packers were convinced that Starr had the ability to succeed in the NFL and would learn quickly. They were in no hurry, however, and waited until the 17th round of the 1956 NFL Draft. Bart Starr was selected by the Packers, with the 200th pick.

Starr spent the summer of 1956 living with his in-laws and throwing footballs through a tire in their backyard, in order to prepare for his rookie season. The Packers offered \$6500 to sign Starr and he accepted, with the added condition, requested by Starr, that he receive \$1000 up front.

The moral of the story is that a great coach would have had Bart Starr on the field, not on the bench. Look at Whitworth's record. 0-10. Sophomore Albert Elmore was Whitworth's QB. Although he was relegated to a role as a backup senior quarterback in 1955, Bart Starr completed 55 of 96 passes for 587 yards and showed flashes of the brilliance he would enjoy as one of the NFL's greatest players. He threw a touchdown pass in the Miami game. Alabama did not score much in Starr's Senior Season -- 1955, and few scores were from passing.

About the 1952 Orange Bowl v Syracuse

This was the first bowl game that the Crimson Tide competed in since the 1948 Sugar Bowl. Alabama dominated the Syracuse Orangemen 61-6, and the 55-point margin of victory remained the largest for a bowl game until the 2008 GMAC Bowl. In the first quarter, Alabama scored on a 27-yard touchdown pass from Clell Hobson to Bobby Luna to take a 7-0 lead. Syracuse responded on the following possession with their lone touchdown of the game on a 15-yard Joe Szombathy touchdown run to make the score 7-6.

From this point, the Orangemen did not score again and the Crimson Tide dominated with 54 unanswered points. Alabama extended their lead to 21-6 at halftime on a one-yard Bobby Marlow touchdown run and a 50-yard Thomas Tharp reception from Hobson. In the third quarter, the Crimson Tide scored three more touchdowns on a 38-yard Bobby Luna run and on Tommy Lewis runs of one and 30-yards.

With a 41-6 lead at the end of the third, Alabama scored another three touchdowns in the fourth quarter on a 21-yard Joe Cummings reception from Bart Starr, an 80-yard Hootie Ingram punt return and a 60-yard Marvin Hill interception return. The victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Syracuse to 1-1.

1953 Alabama Football Season Harold Drew Head Coach #19 Cotton Bowl Loss

The 1953 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 59th overall and 20th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Harold Drew, in his seventh year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham, Ladd Stadium in Mobile and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. They finished with a record of six wins, three losses and three ties (6–3–3 overall, 4–0–3 in the SEC), as SEC Champions and with a loss against Rice in the Cotton Bowl Classic. Rice won the game W (28–6).

1954 Alabama Football Season Harold Drew Head Coach #19

The 1954 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 60th overall and 21st season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Harold Drew, in his eighth year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham, Ladd Stadium in Mobile and at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Alabama. They finished with a record of four wins, five losses and two ties (4–5–2 overall, 3–3–2 in the SEC).

Post script on Coach Harold Drew

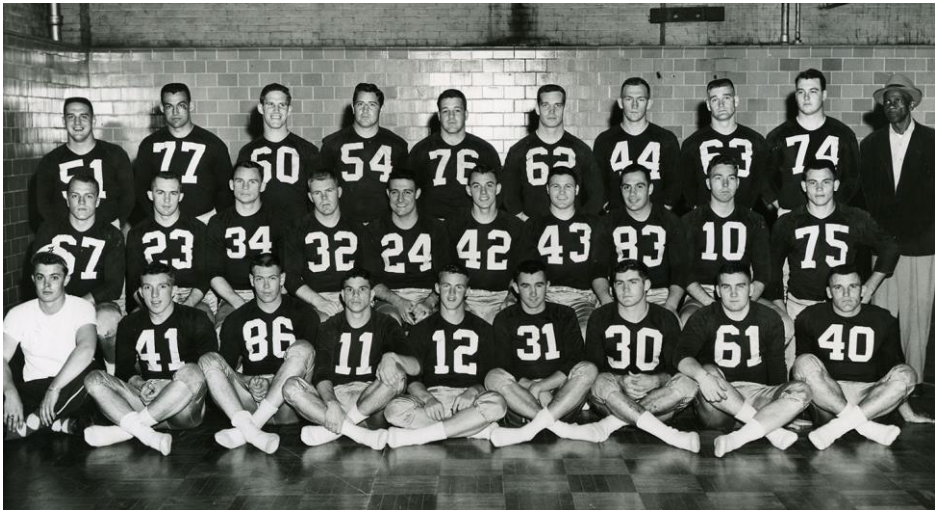
Harold D. Drew was not Wallace Wade or Frank Thomas or Bear Bryant but he was not a bad coach. His successor on the other hand was a bad coach. As we discussed, Drew coached the University of Alabama football program from 1947-54, leading the Crimson Tide to 54 wins, 28 losses, and 7 ties. His tenure was highlighted by a 1952 major defeat of Syracuse in the Orange Bowl W (61-6) and a victory in the SEC Championship game in 1953.

Drew's successor, J.B. "Ears" Whitworth, led the Crimson Tide to its worst three-year stretch in school history, posting a 4–24–2 record before being fired following the 1957 season.

1955 Alabama Football Season Jennings B. Whitworth Head Coach #20

The 1955 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 61st overall and 22nd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Jennings B. Whitworth, in his first year, and played home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and at Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. They finished with a record of zero wins and ten losses (0–10 overall, 0–7 in the SEC).

On December 2, 1954, Harold Drew resigned as head coach of the Crimson Tide, and Jennings B. Whitworth was introduced as his successor. Whitworth brought a new system that was more oriented towards the running game. As a result, senior quarterback Bart Starr and the other Tide seniors saw little playing time. Whitworth, for his part, was only allowed to hire two assistants and required to retain the rest of Coach Drew's staff.



1955 Alabama Crimson Tide Football Team Jennings B Whitworth Coach

To put it mildly, Alabama football hit rock bottom in 1955, going 0–10, the worst season in school history. It was only the third winless season in the history of the Crimson Tide, the others being the 0–4 teams in 1893 and 1895 when the program was just starting.

1956 Alabama Football Season Jennings B. Whitworth Head Coach #20

The 1956 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 62nd overall and 23rd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Jennings B. Whitworth, in his second year. UA played home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and at Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. They finished with a record of two wins, seven losses and one tie (2–7–1 overall, 2–5 in the SEC).

1957 Alabama Football Season Jennings B. Whitworth Head Coach #20

The 1957 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 63rd overall and 24th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Jennings B. Whitworth, in his third year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and at Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. They finished with a record of two wins, seven losses and one tie (2–7–1 overall, 1–6–1 in the SEC).

Wrap Up on Coaches Harold Drew & Jennings B. Whitworth From Wiki Audio

Drew and Whitworth (1947–1957)

In January 1947, Harold Drew was hired as the head football coach of the Alabama Crimson Tide. In his first year, "Red" Drew led the 1947 Alabama team to an 8–3 record, a berth in the 1948 Sugar Bowl, and a number eight ranking in the final AP poll. In November 1948, he led Alabama to a victory over Georgia Tech that The Tuscaloosa News called "the upset of the season."

In November, he led the Crimson Tide to a 55–0 victory over Auburn, a score which remains the most lopsided in the history of the Alabama – Auburn football rivalry. In August 1951, Drew led the East team to a 15–6 victory in the Third Annual All-American High School game in Memphis. He also led the 1952 team to a 10-1-2 record and a 61–6 victory over Syracuse in the 1953 Orange Bowl.

Alabama's 55-point margin of victory remains the largest in the history of the Orange Bowl; it was also the highest point total in Orange Bowl history until West Virginia scored 70 points in the 2012 Orange Bowl. When the Orange Bowl bid was announced in November 1952, former Alabama athletes organized to urge the University to sign Drew to a long-term contract, and The Tuscaloosa News reported:

The invitation also is a fine tribute to Coach Harold (Red) Drew and his staff. We doubt if there is a coaching staff in the country that has done a better job than the one done by the Crimson Tide staff in getting Alabama ready for the Georgia Tech and Maryland games.

Drew was selected as the SEC Coach of the Year in 1952, and he was given a two-year contract extension in December of that year. The following year, he led the 1953 team to a Southeastern Conference (SEC) championship and a berth in the 1954 Cotton Bowl Classic.

However, the 1954 team finished in sixth place in the SEC with a 4–5–2 record. With the poor showing of the 1954 team, rumors began to spread that Drew would not return as the head coach. On December 2, 1954, Drew was fired as the head coach and replaced with J. B. Whitworth. Drew was retained as Alabama's head track coach and associate professor of physical education. Drew stayed on as Alabama's track coach for 23 seasons and through at least 1964.

At the end of his tenure as Alabama's head football coach, Drew's salary was reported to have been about \$12,000 per year. In eight years as Alabama's head football coach, Drew compiled a 51-28-7 record. He was inducted into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame in 1970.

Alabama had grown into a major football power and enjoyed consistent success over the past three decades, but Drew's successor, J.B. "Ears" Whitworth, would lead the Crimson Tide to its worst three-year stretch in school history. From 1955 to

1957, Whitworth coached Alabama, where he posted a 4–24–2 record that included a 14-game losing streak from 1955 to 1956.

In his first year at Alabama, Whitworth was only allowed to hire only two of his own coaches and forced to retain the rest of former coach Harold Drew's assistants. This included athletic director Hank Crisp, Whitworth's boss, who was in charge of the defense.

Whitworth brought assistant coach Moose Johnson with him from Oklahoma A&M. Following successive 2–7–1 seasons in 1956 and 1957, Whitworth was fired and replaced by Bear Bryant.

Chapter 11 Alabama Football – The Paul “Bear” Bryant Era -1st 15 Years 1958-1972

Paul “Bear” Bryant is Alabama’s Most Renowned and Most Winning Coach

"No coach has ever won a game by what he knows; it's what his players know that counts." -Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant The “bear” had a lot of smart players, made smarter by him over the years.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>SEC</u>
1958	Bear Bryant #21	SEC	5-4-1	3-4-1
1959	Bear Bryant	SEC	7-2-2	4-1-2
1960	Bear Bryant	SEC	8-1-2	5-1-1
1961*	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-0-0	7-0-0
1962	Bear Bryant	SEC	10-1-0	6-1-0
1963	Bear Bryant	SEC	9-2-0	6-2-0
1964*	Bear Bryant	SEC	10-1-0	8-0-0
1965*	Bear Bryant	SEC	9-1-1	6-1-1
1966	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-0-0	6-0-0
1967	Bear Bryant	SEC	8-2-1	5-1-0
1968	Bear Bryant	SEC	8-3-0	4-2-0
1969	Bear Bryant	SEC	6-5-0	2-4-0
1970	Bear Bryant	SEC	6-5-1	3-4-0
1971	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-1-0	7-0-0
1972	Bear Bryant	SEC	10-2-0	7-1-0

* National Championships (6 in total for the Bear)



1958 Alabama Football Season Paul "Bear Bryant Head Coach #21

The 1958 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 64th overall and 25th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his first year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and at Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama.

UA finished 1958 with a record of five wins, four losses and one tie (5–4–1 overall, 3–4–1 in the SEC). As they finished the season above .500, Alabama gained its first winning season since 1953, and their five victories gave Bryant more wins in one season than former head coach Jennings B. Whitworth had achieved in previous three.

1959 Alabama Football Season Paul "Bear Bryant Head Coach #21

The 1959 Alabama Crimson Tide football team (in other forms known as "Alabama", "UA" or "Bama") played its 65th overall and 26th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his second year, and played its home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and at Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. This year's team finished with a record of seven wins, two losses and two ties (7–2–2 overall, 4–1–2 in the SEC). Additionally, the team suffered a loss against Penn State in the inaugural Liberty Bowl.

Because I am a name dropper, and because it shows the talent bear Bryant's teams faced, let me say that to open the 1959 season, Fran Tarkenton led the Georgia Bulldogs to a 17–3 victory over the Crimson Tide at Athens. Enough said.

Penn State & the Liberty Bowl

After their victory over Auburn in their season finale, Bryant turned down an invitation to play in the Bluegrass Bowl. However, two days later Alabama accepted an invitation to compete in the inaugural Liberty Bowl against the Penn State Nittany Lions in the

first all-time meeting between the schools. Two soon-to-be coaching titans were to compete.

As they entered the contest against Penn State, Alabama finished the season with the No. 10 ranking and the Nittany Lions with the No. 12 ranking. At Municipal Stadium, the rankings did not matter. The results did. Alabama played well but Penn State this time played just a little better. UA was upset 7–0 by Penn State with the only touchdown scored in the second quarter on a 17-yard TD reception by Roger Kochman from Galen Hall on a fake field goal attempt. This bowl game marked the beginning of a school record 25 consecutive bowl appearances for Alabama.

1960 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

The 1960 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 66th overall and 27th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his third year, and played its home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished 1960 with a record of eight wins, one loss and two ties (8–1–2 overall, 5–1–1 in the SEC) Alabama was invited and accepted an invitation to play Texas in the Bluebonnet Bowl. The result was a tie. Great game.

After Alabama upset #13 ranked Georgia in week one on Sept 17, they entered the polls for the first time at the No. 5 position for their game against Tulane. However, they tied the Green Wave on Sept 24 and dropped like a rock to No. 15 prior to their win W (21-0) over Vanderbilt on Oct 1. Two weeks later on Oct 15 at the meeting of the Third Saturday in October teams at Tennessee Alabama was upset in Knoxville by a tough Tennessee Volunteer’s team L (7-20).

The Crimson Tide then proceeded to win all six of its remaining regular season games. They played almost flawlessly. Bear Bryant had made his connection and Alabama would be a voice forever heard from this season on.

Immediately after its victory over Auburn in the season finale, Bryant accepted an invitation to play in the Bluebonnet Bowl against Texas. As played against the Longhorns, each team only scored a

single field goal in this 3–3 tie. Tommy Brooker connected on a 30-yard field goal for Alabama in the third and Dan Petty tied the game in the fourth for Texas with his 20-yard kick. The tie brought Alabama's all-time record against Texas to 0–4–1. The long-term difference for Alabama was that the “Bear” had arrived. Long live the Bear. Bear Bryant had another 22 seasons in him before he would choose to retire after the 1982 season.

1961 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21
National Championship ACC Championship

The 1961 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 67th overall and 28th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his fourth year, and it played home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. The team finished the season undefeated with eleven wins (11–0 overall, 7–0 in the SEC). Alabama added a victory over Arkansas in the Sugar Bowl for good measure and they became the 1961 NCAA consensus national champions.

At 11-0, it was unmistakable that the Bear had done it. The 1961 national championship was the first of the six that Bear Bryant would win as head coach of the Crimson Tide. 1961 was the beginning of a nice and very sweet legacy for Alabama as Bear Bryant a favorite son, would bring many victories home one by one.

Alabama opened the season on September 23 with a win W (32-6) over Georgia on the road in week one. Moving on, they defeated Tulane—W (9-0) in their home game on Sept 30 at Ladd Stadium in week two. After they won their second road game of the season on Oct 7 at Vanderbilt W (35-6), Alabama returned to Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa where on Oct 14, they defeated NC State W (26-7) in the first Denny Stadium game of the season. The next week, Oct 21, Alabama defeated Tennessee W (34-3) for the first time since the 1954 season in the first Legion Field game of the year.

The Crimson Tide then on Oct 28 defeated Houston W (17-0) in their final road game of the season. After this game, they returned home on Nov 4 and defeated # 4 ranked Mississippi State on homecoming in Tuscaloosa W (24-0). The next week on Nov 11,

Alabama scored their most points in a game since the 1951 season when they defeated Richmond 66–0.

They then closed the regular season with wins over Georgia Tech—W (10-0 on Nov 18, and then as # 1 v Auburn in in the Iron Bowl—W (34-0) and with this win, they captured the national championship as awarded by the major wire services. No losses and no ties against a tough schedule is a tough case against which to argue. And, So UA simply won the whole deal. The Crimson Tide then closed the season with a victory over Arkansas in the Sugar Bowl. Four seasons into the duties of head coach, Bryant mastered an undefeated, untied season. Not too shabby!

After the Crimson Tide was recognized as national champions by the major wire services, they defeated the Arkansas Razorbacks 10–3 in the 1962 edition of the Sugar Bowl in what was the first all-time meeting between the schools.

The game was tough but easy to retell the story. The Crimson Tide took a 10–0 halftime lead after they scored on a 12-yard Pat Trammell touchdown run in the first quarter and on a 32-yard Tim Davis field goal in the second quarter.

Although Alabama was held scoreless in the second half, the Razorbacks only managed to score a 23-yard Mickey Cissell field goal in the third quarter that made the final score 10–3 in favor of Alabama. And, so it goes!

– Nine Heart Attacks

The nine heart attacks game is recognized as one of Alabama’s greatest games of all time. Expanded narrative provided by bamahammer.

Alabama legends Pat Trammel and Bear Bryant had led Alabama to a perfect regular season, but the Sugar Bowl wouldn’t be as easy. Alabama was facing the Arkansas Razorbacks of the Southwest Conference under their own legendary coach Frank Broyles and they were determined to make it hard on the Tide.

This team was an Alabama defensive juggernaut though. Bear Bryant said “they played like it was a sin to give up a point.” The Bear wasn’t exaggerating either; over 10 games Alabama only allowed 22 points in 1961. Before the bowl game Alabama hadn’t allowed a point in 5 games.



1962 Sugar Bowl & Nine Heart Attacks

The first half of the game went Alabama’s way, and the Tide was able to put 10 points on the board. Alabama’s first score came on the sixth play of the game. This wasn’t an offensive minded team though and those would be the only points Alabama would score in the contest.

Alabama depended on their defense to win the game and was able to hold off Arkansas with a few well-timed interceptions. Bear Bryant described the experience by saying that he “had about nine heart attacks out there.”

Arkansas did manage to get a field goal in the third quarter and Alabama ended the game with a 10-3 victory.

Alabama was once again named national champions; so, the 1962 Sugar Bowl is just more proof that defense wins championships.

Alabama got a lot of awards this season

After the season, Alabama saw several of its players recognized individually for their on-field performances. For example, Billy Neighbors was a unanimous selection to the 1961 College Football All-America Team at the tackle position. Second Team All-America selections included Lee Roy Jordan at center and Pat Trammell at quarterback. Additionally, Alabama had four players selected to the All-SEC First Team: Mike Fracchia at back, Jordan, Neighbors and Trammell. Trammell was also selected as the SEC Most Valuable Player for the 1961 season and Neighbors won the Jacobs Blocking Trophy.

In having led his team to both the SEC and national championships, Bear Bryant was recognized as the AP, UPI and coaches' SEC Coach of the Year Who could ask for anything more?

The AFL was rolling along well at the time as was the NFL. A number of varsity lettermen from the 1961 squad were drafted into the National Football League (NFL) and the American Football League (AFL) between the 1962 and 1965 drafts. Alabama had become a major supplier of talent to the NFL. UA of course wanted all players to graduate but could not deny them their right to earn an exceptional living in the NFL

1962 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21 #2 in SEC & Orange Bowl Champions

The 1962 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 68th overall and 29th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his fifth year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished this season with ten wins and one loss (10–1 overall, 6–1 in the SEC) and with a victory over Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl.

The Crimson Tide opened the season on Sept 22 with a win over Georgia W (35-0) at Denny Stadium before 54,000. Many saw this as an opportunity for another National Championship for the Bear and it was. They missed it by a hair. Bear would get his next

championship through the great QB play of a sophomore on the 1962 team—Joe Willie Namath

I loved watching Joe Namath play as a kid. He was from his own mold. Bear Bryant saw a lot in Joe Namath as he chose him above the rest of the QB talent he had to run the Crimson Tide as its on-field general. Yet, when necessary, Bear would mete out sanctions v Joe when he did not measure up to Alabama's discipline standards.

Craig Stephenson makes the case that Joe Namath is a great quarterback who made a spectacular debut in 1962 as a sophomore and Jim Gill makes a broader case for why he is the best Quarterback who ever played the game. He makes a great case. I include both pieces right here as the introduce Joe Namath as he should be introduced – as a champion. I agree with them both.

Joe Namath

Joe Namath was born on May 31, 1943, in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania. His success in high school football in Beaver Falls led to a scholarship to the University of Alabama under coach Paul “Bear” Bryant. His success with Bear Bryant and Alabama led Namath to become the first overall pick in the 1965 draft by the AFL New York Jets.

Namath may be best known for his guarantee to win Super Bowl III against the favored Baltimore Colts. He led the Jets to the AFL's first Super Bowl victory which earned him the nickname “Broadway Joe.” After a successful twelve-year career, Namath was inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame in 1985.

Looking back: Joe Namath's debut was stellar as Alabama routed Georgia 35-0 in 1962

By Creg Stephenson | cstephenson@al.com

Submitted on October 01, 2015 at 6:30 AM;

Updated October 08, 2015 at 8:20 AM

Next page...



Few players in the history of college football have had a more spectacular debut than Joe Namath.

Alabama began its season against Georgia on Sept. 22, 1962, rolling to a 35-0 victory behind a sophomore quarterback making his varsity debut. Namath completed 10 of 14 passes for 179 yards and three touchdowns as the Crimson Tide opened defense of its national championship in dominating fashion before what was then a record crowd of 54,000 at Birmingham's Legion Field.

Namath threw scoring passes of 52 yards to Richard Williamson (who died just last week) and 10 and 12 yards to Cotton Clark. Alabama head coach Paul "Bear" Bryant pulled Namath midway through the third quarter, with Jack Hurlbut handling quarterback duties the rest of the way.

Clark also ran for a touchdown, as did Hudson Harris, part of a 273-yard rushing night for Alabama. The Crimson Tide defense,

led by All-America linebacker Lee Roy Jordan, limited Georgia to just 116 total yards.

The win was Alabama's 12th straight, and 19th in a row without a loss (a 3-3 tie with Oklahoma in the Bluebonnet Bowl being the only blemish). The Crimson Tide's defense extended its streak of not allowing a touchdown to 34 consecutive quarters.

...

Despite Namath's season-long brilliance and Alabama's continued defensive dominance, the Crimson Tide ultimately failed to defend its national championship. Alabama dropped a late-season game to Georgia Tech 7-6 and finished 10-1 after beating Oklahoma 17-0 in the Orange Bowl. Southern Cal and Ole Miss claimed that season's national titles.

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Of course, Alabama's domination on the field that night in 1962 is only half the story. The game would have lasting fame not only for launching Namath's legend as well as other reasons...

Why Joe Namath Is the Greatest Quarterback of All Time!

By [Jim Gill](http://bleacherreport.com/articles/318394), Contributor <http://bleacherreport.com/articles/318394>
Jan 2, 2010

...

Summary of article on next page:

Most of this is about his prop career.

<http://bleacherreport.com/articles/318394-why-joe-namath-is-the-greatest-quarterback-of-all-time>

...

He was the only QB to win both a College National Championship and Super Bowl in Football History. He was the

first bonus baby in the history of sports (400,000 dollars in 1965). In 1967, He threw for over 4000 yards in a 14-game season (Hey was 1967 good year?).

He won the AFL championship in 1968 against the powerful Raiders (Hey to all of you that say that he had one good game, was that a good game and was 1968 considered a good year?). He defeated the Baltimore Colts in Super Bowl III which was the biggest upset in Super Bowl History.

The next year (69) the Kansas Chiefs rolled over everyone, including the Raiders and the Vikings in Super Bowl except the Jets. They barely won. The Jets failed to punch it in from the 1 yard line. In the final minute, down by 7, Namath and the Jets drove down the field (typical Namath coming through at the wire) deep into Chief territory. On the final play, he threw into the end zone. Pete Lammons caught the ball but his right foot barely stepped on the line.

The Jets with a little luck could have had another one (Hey was that a good year?). The Undefeated Dolphins in 72 defeated everyone by 7 or more points. Wait, there is one team that they barely beat. Yes, it was Joe Namath and the Jets. Down by 4, Namath drove his team down to the 10-yard line in the final minute but could not capitalize.

Finally, I have a question. Why is there a Super Bowl? It is because that the NFL had to merge with the AFL. Why did they have to merge? It was because the whole country was watching Namath go at it with several other great QBs.

The merger would have never taken place without the performance of Joe Namath. The league would have folded and the game would still be called the NFL Championship. By the way, the merger was decided before Super Bowl III took place which indicates that Namath had everyone's attention before that game. It was not that game that forced the merger.

A couple of facts: Vince Lombardi said that he was a perfect passer. Bear Bryant said that he was the best athlete he ever

coached. John Madden put him on his All-Super Bowl Team along with Joe Montana and Roger Staubach. Don Shula (Coach of the Colts in Super Bowl III said that all of the other teams that they played could not handle the Colt Blitz. Shula said that Namath picked it up and because of his quick release, he was able to capitalize. Bill Walsh said that he was the most gifted QB he had ever seen. Namath revolutionized football. He showed everyone how to do it.

So, the next time that you watch the Super Bowl or see a great passing offense in action you can Send your Thanks to Joe Willie Namath because he is the one that showed everyone how to do it.

It's OK if you don't think Joe Namath is the best but he sure was a great quarterback. My other two favorites are Kenny the Snake Stabler and Bart Starr.

1963 Alabama Football Season Paul "Bear" Bryant Head Coach #21 Sugar Bowl Champs

The 1963 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 69th overall and 30th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his sixth year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. They finished season with nine wins and two losses (9–2 overall, 6–2 in the SEC) and with a victory over Ole Miss in the Sugar Bowl.

Additional Notes:

After their loss in the Iron Bowl on November 30, Alabama officially accepted an invitation to play the SEC champion Ole Miss Rebels for the first time since the 1944 season in a Sugar Bowl that featured a pair of SEC teams. As each team entered the game, Mississippi finished in the No. 7 position and Alabama in the No. 8 position in the final AP poll of the season.

With starting quarterback Joe Namath still suspended, the Crimson Tide offense struggled, but four Tim Davis field goals proved to be enough for Alabama to win 12–7 over the Rebels. Davis gave the

Crimson Tide a 12–0 lead as then entered the fourth quarter after connecting from 31-yards in the first, 46 and 22-yards in the second and 48-yards in the third quarter.

Ole Miss responded in the fourth quarter with their only points on a five-yard Perry Lee Dunn touchdown pass to Larry Smith that made the final score 12–7. For his four-field goal performance, Davis was named the Sugar Bowl MVP. The victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Ole Miss 17–3–2.

1964 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21
National Championship ACC Champions

The 1964 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 70th overall and 31st season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his seventh year. UA played home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama.

UA finished the season with ten wins and one loss (10–1 overall, 8–0 in the SEC). They were SEC champions. They picked up a loss after the season to Texas L (17-21) on January 1, 1965 in the Orange Bowl. The major wire services at that time awarded national champions prior to the start of bowl season. Therefore, Alabama was also recognized as national champions by the AP and UPI before their loss to Texas.

After the bowl games, the Football Writers Association of America as stated in 1964 college football season named the undefeated Arkansas Razorbacks as the national champions. The Razorbacks had defeated Texas during the regular season. So, it was a split decision.

The Crimson Tide opened the season on Sept 19 ranked in the No. 6 position. They gained wins at Denny against Georgia W (31-3), and on Sept 26 at Tulane W (36-6). in Mobile and at Birmingham (Legion Field) on Oct 3 against Vanderbilt W (24-0). After a W (21-0) victory over NC State on Oct 10, in their first non-conference game of the season, on Oct 17 Alabama defeated Tennessee in their first road game of the season at Neyland Stadium W (19-8).

The Crimson Tide then returned to Tuscaloosa on Oct 24 at Denny Stadium where they defeated a #9 ranked Steve Spurrier-led Florida team on homecoming before they gained their second road victory on Oct 31 at Mississippi State at Jackson W (23-6)



Bear Bryant & Joe Namath
<<<Alabama then on Nov 7 defeated LSU W (17-9) in a newly expanded Legion Field and captured the SEC championship.

The next week on Nov 14, UA defeated Georgia Tech W (24-7) in what was the final

game of their annual series.



Coach Bear Bryant, right, quarterback Joe Namath and Alabama lost to Texas in the first Orange Bowl played at night, in 1965. Credit University of Alabama

In the annual Iron Bowl on Nov 26 against Auburn W (21-14), the Crimson Tide completed an undefeated regular season with their victory. Right after Bama accepted a bid to play Texas in the Orange Bowl. Although recognized as national champions at the conclusion of the regular season, Alabama closed the season with a loss to the Texas Longhorns L (17-21) in the Orange Bowl.

After the season, Joe Namath was selected as the first overall pick by the New York Jets in the 1965 AFL Draft. In addition to Namath, eleven other lettermen from the 1964 squad were drafted into the National Football League.

Although officially recognized as national champions at the conclusion of the regular season, Alabama went on to lose against Texas in the Orange Bowl. Due to this and the increasing number of top ranked teams participating in bowl games, 1964 was one of the final years the AP released its final poll before the completion of bowl season. The AP would permanently switch to a final poll conducted after the bowl games starting with the 1968 season. Arkansas (the only major team that finished the season undefeated), Notre Dame, and Michigan were also recognized as national champions by various other selectors for the 1964 season.

1965 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21
National Championship **SEC Champions** **Sugar Bowl Champions**

The 1965 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 71st overall and 32nd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his eighth year. It played home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. They finished this season with nine wins, one loss and one tie (9–1–1 overall, 6–1–1 in the SEC), as SEC champions and with a victory over Nebraska in the Orange Bowl. Alabama was also recognized as national champions by the AP Poll after their Orange Bowl win.

Alabama opened the season on September 18 ranked No. 5, but were upset by Georgia 1 (17-18) in the first game of the season. They rebounded with their first win of the season on Sept 25 at Tulane W (27-0) and followed that with a W (17–16) win over Ole Miss on Oct

2 in a game in which Alabama had to rally from a nine-point fourth quarter deficit for the victory.

The next week, Oct 9, the Crimson Tide defeated Vanderbilt in Nashville W (22-7) before they returned home Oct 16 for their "Third Saturday in October" rivalry game against Tennessee T (7-7) Against the Volunteers, the score was deadlocked 7-7 in the closing seconds, but Alabama had driven to the Tennessee four-yard line. Ken Stabler believing that it was third down, threw the ball out of bounds with six seconds left to stop the clock. However, it was actually fourth down, possession went to Tennessee, and the game ended in a tie.

After the tie, the Crimson Tide won five in a row over Florida State Oct 23 at Denny W (1-0), at Mississippi State Oct 30 W (10-7), at LSU Nov 6 W (31-7), South Carolina Nov 13 at Denny W (35-14) and then the Iron Bowl on Nov 27 v Auburn at Legion Field W (30-0) on the way to Bryant's fourth SEC title at Alabama.

Because the Associated Press was holding its vote until after the bowl games instead of before for the first time, No. 4 Alabama still had a chance to win the national championship when they played No. 3 Nebraska in the Orange Bowl. On New Year's Day, No. 1 Michigan State lost in the Rose Bowl and No. 2 Arkansas lost in the Cotton Bowl Classic, and on New Year's Day 1966, Alabama defeated Nebraska W (39-28) in the Orange Bowl and so UA captured its third AP National Championship in five years.

1965-1966 Orange Bowl Notes:

For the second year in a row, Alabama played in the Orange Bowl. In the 1966 edition of the game, the Crimson Tide defeated the Nebraska Cornhuskers 39-28 and finished the season 9-1-1 and as AP national champions.



The NCAA recognizes consensus national champions as the teams that have captured a championship by way of one of the major polls since the 1950 college football season. As they entered the Orange Bowl, the Crimson Tide was ranked fourth by the AP behind Michigan State, Arkansas and Nebraska.

After losses by the Spartans and Razorbacks in their bowl games, coupled with an Alabama victory over Nebraska in their contest, the Crimson Tide vaulted into the No. 1 position in the final AP poll of the season and therefore won the national championship. Michigan State was also recognized as national champions by various other selectors for the 1965 season, including the UPI.

**1966 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21
SEC co-champion; Sugar Bowl Champions (34-7); Retroactive national championship.**

The 1966 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 72nd overall and 33rd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his ninth year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. They finished season undefeated with eleven wins

(11–0 overall, 6–0 in the SEC), as SEC co-champions and with a victory over Nebraska in the Sugar Bowl.

Before the season even began, Alabama was recognized as national champions from the Associated Press for the 1965 season after they defeated Nebraska in the Orange Bowl and finished with an overall record of 9–1–1. In February 1966, SEC commissioner Bernie Moore penalized Alabama for scholarship violations with its freshman squad. Moore found that Alabama awarded 42 freshman scholarships instead of the 40 allowed by the league. As such, the Crimson Tide were penalized with a scholarship reduction of two to 38 for the 1966 recruiting class.

Alabama opened the season on September 24 with a victory over Louisiana Tech in Birmingham's Legion Field w (34-0) and the team followed that with a victory at Ole Miss on Oct 1 W (17-7) for their first conference win of the season. The Crimson Tide then returned home on Oct 8 and defeated Clemson W (26-0) in the first Denny Stadium game of the season before they traveled to Knoxville on Oct 15 for their annual rival game against Tennessee W (11-10).

In this game, Bama trailed the Volunteers 10–0 in the fourth quarter before they rallied for an 11–10 victory that saw Tennessee miss a game-winning field goal in the final minute of play. Close call for sure.

Alabama then alternated home games between Birmingham (Legion Field) and Tuscaloosa (Denny Stadium) over the next four weeks and on Oct 22, they defeated Vanderbilt W (42-6). Then on Oct 29-- Mississippi State W (27-14); LSU on Nov 5 W (21-0); and South Carolina Nov 12 W (24-0).

After they defeated Southern Miss W (34-0) in their annual Ladd Stadium Mobile game on Nov 26, the Crimson Tide defeated Auburn W (31-0) in the Iron Bowl on Dec 3 and captured a share of the SEC championship.

In the January 1 game that followed, Alabama defeated Nebraska W (34-7) in the Sugar Bowl and finished the season undefeated.

National Champions?

Although they were the only undefeated and untied college team at the conclusion of the football year, Alabama was not selected as national champions for the season. On the 1966 squad, Green Bay Packers head coach Vince Lombardi stated: "I don't know, we haven't played Alabama yet" when asked how it felt to have the world's greatest football team for the season after his Packers won the Super Bowl. "Sometimes the pundits get it plum wrong!"

Notes on Bowl Game & National Championship

This Sugar Bowl has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

For the second year in a row, Alabama played Nebraska in a bowl game, and for the second consecutive year. Alabama defeated the Cornhuskers. As we look at this year's Sugar Bowl, the Crimson Tide defeated Nebraska 34–7 and finished the season undefeated.

UA opened with a 17–0 lead in the first quarter on touchdown runs of one-yard by Leslie Kelley, 14-yards by Ken Stabler and on a 30-yard Steve Davis field goal. Bama then extended the lead to 24–0 at halftime after a six-yard Wayne Trimble touchdown run in the second quarter.

After a 40-yard Davis field goal in the third for the Crimson Tide, Nebraska scored its only points early in the fourth quarter on a 15-yard Bob Churchich touchdown pass to Dick Davis that made the score 27–7. The Crimson Tide then closed the game with a 45-yard Stabler touchdown pass to Ray Perkins made the final score 34–7.

For his stellar performance, Ken Stabler, *aka the Snake*, who later was my father-in-law's favorite pro player with the Broncos, was recognized as the game's MVP. The victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Nebraska to 2–0.



Lefty Ken Stabler in the 1967 Sugar Bowl Alabama dominated 34 - 7. Stabler scored TDs on runs of 1 and 14 yds. Stabler was selected as the MVP.

As noted several times in this book, the NCAA recognizes consensus national champions as the teams that have captured a championship by way of one of the major polls since the 1950 college football season. Although Alabama was the only team with a perfect record at the end of the season as Notre Dame and Michigan State tied in their meeting, they were not recognized as national champions.

Keith Dunnivant suggests in his book about the 1966 season, that the continued segregation of the Alabama football team (the Crimson Tide did not integrate until Wilbur Jackson and John Mitchell made the 1971 team), as well as violent resistance by white Alabamians to the Civil Rights Movement, cost the Crimson Tide support with voters in 1966 and led to the third-place finish. Many believe that football and politics are two different things and should be kept separate.

The 1966 squad was retroactively recognized as national champions by Berryman and Sagarin (ELO-Chess) but Alabama does not claim either in their official national championship total.

1966-1967 Sugar Bowl– AU Dominance Denied

This game is recognized by the major pundits as one of the greatest Alabama football games of all time.

Alabama is very often described as being a “dominant” football team, and what they did to Nebraska in the 1967 Sugar Bowl was clearly a show of dominance.

Alabama put a beating on Nebraska, winning the game 34-7 with Nebraska’s 7 coming in the fourth quarter after the game was all but decided.

The thing about the 1967 Sugar Bowl is that Alabama didn’t end up winning the national championship. Even though Alabama had a perfect season, beat some really great teams, and Notre Dame had tied Michigan State in the regular season—the Tide was denied a national championship.

Alabama had been awarded the national championship the last two seasons, in 1965 Alabama was given a national championship even though they lost their bowl game.

Perhaps this was the awarding bodies’ trying to correct the mistake of 1965... or perhaps this was some of the first Bama hate from the media. Whatever the reason, Alabama did not get a national championship that they most certainly should have been awarded in 1966.

Instead Notre Dame and Michigan State claim the 1966 national title. If you were looking for a reason to dislike the Michigan State Spartans...

So, when you’re complaining about the playoff and the bowl system now, just remember how bad it was after the 1966-1967 Sugar Bowl.

1967 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21 #2 SEC; Loss in Cotton Bow

The 1967 Alabama Crimson Tide football team (played its 73rd overall and 34th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference

(SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 10th year, and played its home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. They finished the season with eight wins, two losses and one tie (8–2–1 overall, 5–1 in the SEC) and with a loss against Texas A&M in the Cotton Bowl Classic.

During the spring practice sessions, five African American students attempted to walk-on to the football team. Two of the five, Dock Rone and Andrew Pernel participated in the annual A-Day Game. Although none of the five made it to the varsity squad, their participation as part of the team marked the beginnings of the desegregation of the football program that culminated in the signing of Wilbur Jackson to an athletic scholarship in 1970.

This Iron Bowl Game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

1967 Iron Bowl – The Run in the Mud

This game is another one that the pundits have described as one of Alabama's best football games ever and so we show their textual description about the game. Here it is:

This is an Alabama legend. The 1967 Iron Bowl is one of those moments in Alabama football history that grabs the imagination and will bring chill bumps to your skin even after all this time.

The 1967 Iron Bowl is of course Kenny Stabler's famous "run in the mud."

The 1967 Iron Bowl was played under the lights at Legion Field. It's strange to us now since we are used to the 7pm CBS start, but this was the first Iron Bowl to ever be played at night.

It had been raining all evening and so Legion Field had naturally (as opposed to artificially, perhaps using sprinklers) been turned to mud. It was a defensive battle with Alabama holding off Auburn at the goal line several times. Auburn was able to get a field goal in the third quarter to take a 3-0 lead... then Kenny Stabler happened.

On an option play, Kenny “the Snake” Stabler kept the ball bobbing and weaving around Auburn Tigers all the way down to the end-zone. Alabama would win the game 7-3.



The infamous Ken Stabler Run in the Mud

Bear Bryant simply said “I could watch that all night” about Stabler’s run.

The 1967 Iron Bowl had it all, Alabama vs Auburn, mud and blood, defense, and a win on a big play by Kenny “The Snake” Stabler.

Although UA officially had desegregated in summer 1963, full integration of the athletic teams did not occur at that time. By spring 1967, the athletic program was warned by the Office of Education that the lack of African Americans under athletic scholarship was a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In February 1967, Dock Rone, an African American student enrolled at the University from Montgomery, met with coach Bryant about potentially trying to make the football team as a walk-on. At that time, Coach Bryant believed a non-scholarship, African American walk-on would help pave the way to complete integration of the football team.

On April 1, the football team opened spring practice. Rone then became the first African American to wear the Alabama uniform. An additional four African American students reported to practice, but were unable to participate at that time as they had not yet been academically cleared to play.

These African American students that reported were Melvin Leverett of Prichard, Arthur Dunning of Mobile, Andrew Pernell of Bessemer and Jerome Tucker of Birmingham. By the second practice all except for Tucker were declared academically eligible to compete on the football squad and joined the team on April 3.

Throughout spring practice, Rone played as an offensive lineman and Leverett, Dunning and Pernell played as backs. On May 5, Rone and Pernell participated in the annual A-Day Game and became the first African American players to play at Denny Stadium as members of the Crimson Tide football team.

Although Rone was on track to potentially become the first African American player on scholarship at Alabama, in the summer that followed family problems forced him to leave school. Three years later, Wilbur Jackson became the first African American to sign and play under athletic scholarship for the Alabama football team.

Cotton Bowl Notes

After Texas A&M upset Alabama 20–16 in the Cotton Bowl Classic, Bear Bryant carried the Aggies head coach Gene Stallings (later a great Alabama coach) off the field to celebrate the victory as he was both a former player and assistant coach under him. After Alabama scored first on an eight-yard Ken Stabler touchdown run, A&M responded with a 13-yard Edd Hargett touchdown pass to Larry Stagent that tied the game 7–7 at the end of the first quarter.

In the second quarter, UA scored first on a 34-yard Steve Davis field goal and Texas followed with a seven-yard Hargett touchdown pass to Tommy Maxwell that made the halftime score 13–10.

Each team then scored their final points in the third quarter. The Aggies scored first on a 20-yard Wendell Housley touchdown run followed by Ken Stabler on an eight-yard touchdown run that made

the final score 20–16. The loss put Alabama's all-time record against Texas A&M to 1–1.

1968 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

The 1968 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 74th overall and 35th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 11th year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. They finished the season with eight wins and three losses (8–3 overall, 4–2 in the SEC) and with a loss against Missouri in the Gator Bowl.

1969 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

The 1969 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 75th overall and 36th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 12th year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished season with six wins and five losses (6–5 overall, 2–4 in the SEC). UA also suffered a loss against Colorado in the Liberty Bowl.

This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

1969, Bama v. Ole Miss—College Football Goes Big Time

This game has been identified by the pundits as one of the most significant in Alabama football. And so, we repeat some information below:



It may seem strange to us now, but college football wasn't always on TV. In 1969 ABC decided to take a shot at airing a college football game in primetime and the game they picked was Alabama vs. Ole Miss. This great game between two deep rival teams was shown to the world on television.

Alabama was quarterbacked by the amazing Scott Hunter, and Ole Miss was quarterbacked by the young Archie Manning, the father of Peyton and Eli Manning of pro-football fame.

College football had not ever been on national TV before and the 9:00 PM start time in 1969 had some ABC executives doubting if this was a good idea. Boy, were they wrong.

The game may have gone on until midnight, but it was one heck of a game for those who tuned in.

Archie Manning was Archie Manning of course and in the words of Bama QB Scott Hunter "did everything in that game but make the popcorn."

Manning went 33 out of 52 for 436 yards and two touchdowns; then Manning ran for three more touchdowns.

Hunter was no slouch either, throwing for 22 of 29 for 300 yards himself. The two quarterbacks combined for over 700 yards of passing offense in an era of running football.

Alabama got the better of Ole Miss when Hunter found George Ranager with a pass for the winning touchdown on 4 and 14. Alabama was already a legend of college football, now that legend had been proven on national television.

1970 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21 Bluebonnet Bowl Champs

The 1970 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 76th overall and 37th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 13th year. Alabama played home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished this season with six wins five losses and one tie (6–5–1 overall, 3–4 in the SEC) and with a tie against Oklahoma in the Astro-Bluebonnet Bowl.

As a result of a newly enacted rule by the NCAA that allowed teams to schedule an eleventh regular season game, Alabama opened the season against USC on September 12th before 72,175. Led by Sam Cunningham, the Trojans defeated the Crimson Tide L (21- 42) at Legion Field. Alabama came back on Sept 19 and defeated Virginia Tech W (51-18) also at Legion Field in Birmingham AL. It was a long season after that. No plaudits.

Blue Bonnet Bowl

On November 21, Alabama accepted an invitation to play in the Astro-Bluebonnet Bowl v Oklahoma of the Big Eight Conference on December 31. Against the Sooners, Alabama played to a T (24–24) tie in the 12th annual Astro-Bluebonnet Bowl. After UA took an early 7–0 lead on a four-yard Scott Hunter TD pass to Randy

Moore, the Sooners scored the next three touchdowns on the way to a 21–7 lead.

After Joe Wylie scored on a two-yard run in the first, Greg Pruitt scored a pair of second quarter touchdowns on long runs of 58 and 25 yards. The Crimson Tide came back with a five-yard Hunter touchdown pass to David Baily and made the halftime score 21–14.

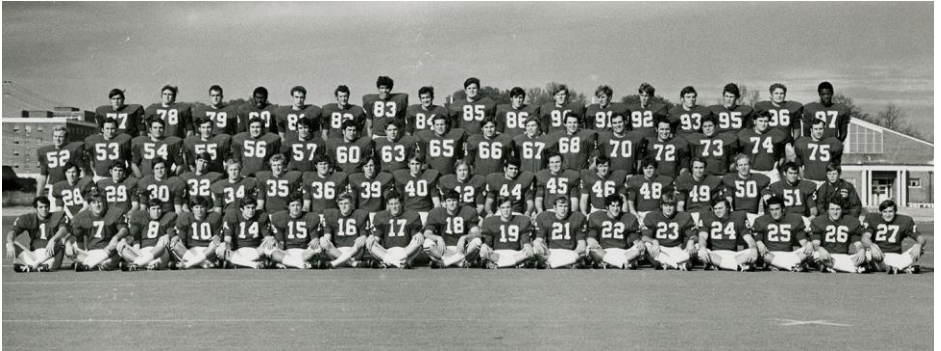
After a 20-yard Richard Ciemny field goal in the third brought the Crimson Tide within four points of the Sooners, UA took a 24–21 lead on a 25-yard Hunter touchdown pass to Johnny Musso in the fourth quarter. Oklahoma tied the game T (24–24) late in the fourth on a 42-yard Bruce Derr field goal.

However, Alabama had a chance to win as time expired, but the 34-yard Ciemny attempt sailed wide left and the game ended in the tie. The tie brought Alabama's all-time record against Oklahoma to 1–0–1.

1971 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21 SEC Champions

The 1971 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 77th overall and 38th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 14th year, and played its home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

They finished the season with eleven wins and one loss (11–1 overall, 7–0 in the SEC), as SEC champions. They finished the season with a loss to Nebraska in the Orange Bowl, dampening their championship hopes.



Alabama Football 1971 Coach Bear Bryant

The 1971 squad had a number of Alabama football firsts. Although several African American students had competed during spring practice in 1967, Wilbur Jackson was the first African American awarded a scholarship to play for Alabama. He competed as a member of the freshman squad in 1970 and played for the varsity team in 1971. For the 1971 season, John Mitchell became the first African American to play on the varsity squad for the Crimson Tide during the regular season after he transferred from Eastern Arizona College.



Alabama QB Terry Davis Scampers with the ball in Tide Win

Before 1971 Tennessee had won 4 straight against Alabama and for the first time in history the Vols had taken a lead in the series. So, every Tennessee win from that point forward would have just increased their lead. Alabama and its pride in winning could not permit that notion to stand.

By the end of the streak Alabama had acquired a ten-game lead, today as research shows, that lead stands at 14 games.

Playing again for the National Championship, the Crimson Tide could not pull it off and were defeated by #1 Nebraska in the Orange Bowl on January 1 1972.



!972 Orange Bowl Action

The Bear changed his offense. The change to the wishbone was kept under such secrecy that when the media would visit practice, Bryant had the team practice the pro-style system that had been phased out. Alabama later opened the season with an upset victory over USC that was credited to the surprise switch to the wishbone that caught the Trojans off-guard.

The Orange Bowl

It was billed as #1 v #2 and it was nothing less. It was for all the marbles--the national championship. Alabama was dominated by the Nebraska Cornhuskers L (6-38) in the game. Nebraska came out like gangbusters and captured a 28–0 halftime lead by scoring a pair of touchdowns in each of the first two quarters. Jeff Kinney scored on a two-yard run and Johnny Rodgers on a 77-yard punt return in the first; Jerry Tagge scored on a one-yard run and Gary Dixon on a two-yard run in the second quarter.

Alabama then scored its only points on a three-yard Terry Davis touchdown run in the third and made the score 28–6. But, the Cornhuskers had not stopped playing. They closed the game with a 21-yard Rich Sanger field goal in the third and a one-yard Van Brownson touchdown run in the fourth that made the final score L (6-38). The loss brought Alabama's all-time record v Nebraska to 2–1.

1972 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

The 1972 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 78th overall season and 39th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 15th year, and played its home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with ten wins and two losses (10–2 overall, 7–1 in the SEC), as SEC champions and they suffered a loss to Texas in the Cotton Bowl Classic.

The Crimson Tide then closed their season with a second-consecutive defeat, this time against Texas in the Cotton Bowl Classic.

Cotton Bowl Notes

In what was supposed to be a positive finale for its 1972 season, it did not happen that way. Alabama was upset by the Texas Longhorns 17–13 in the Cotton Bowl. The Crimson Tide played well from the start and took a 10–0 first quarter lead behind a 50-

yard Greg Gantt field goal and a 31-yard Wilbur Jackson touchdown run.

Chapter 12 Alabama Football – The Bear Bryant Era- Last 10 Years -- 1973-1982

Paul “Bear” Bryant is Alabama’s Most Renowned and Most Winning Coach

"No coach has ever won a game by what he knows; it's what his players know that counts." -Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>SEC</u>
1973*	Bear Bryant #21	SEC	11-1-0	8-0-0
1974	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-1-0	6-0-0
1975	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-1-0	6-0-0
1976	Bear Bryant	SEC	9-3-0	5-2-0
1977	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-1-0	7-0-0
1978*	Bear Bryant	SEC	11-1-0	6-0-0
1979*	Bear Bryant	SEC	12-0-0	6-0-0
1980	Bear Bryant	SEC	10-2-0	5-1-0
1981	Bear Bryant	SEC	9-2-1	6-0-0
1990	Bear Bryant	SEC	8-4-0	3-3-0

* National Championship



1973 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21
National Champions SEC Champions

The 1973 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 79th overall and 40th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 16th year, and played their home games at Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

The Crimson Tide finished the season with eleven wins and one loss (11–1 overall, 8–0 in the SEC), as SEC champions and with a loss to Notre Dame in the Sugar Bowl. Although they did lose in the Sugar Bowl, Alabama was recognized as national champions by the Coaches' Poll (UPI) as their selection was made prior to bowl season at the time. UA had a great football year.

The Crimson Tide opened the season on Sept 15 with a victory at Legion Field over California W (66-0). The next week on Sept 22, they defeated Kentucky W (28-14). This was Bryant's first game in Lexington since he had resigned as head coach of the Wildcats after their 1953 season.

After the Tide played at Vanderbilt on Sept 29 and defeated them for their second shutout of the season W (44-0), on Oct 6, Alabama prevailed over Georgia W (28-14) in the first Denny Stadium game of the season. After that, on Oct 13 at Florida, Alabama fought for another victory W (35-14) before 64,864. This was the largest crowd to date at the Florida Field.

Against Tennessee on Oct 20, in the traditional “Third Saturday in October” match with Tennessee, Alabama defeated their rivals behind three fourth quarter touchdowns. This extended the Crimson Tide record to 6–0. The following week on Oct 27, the Crimson Tide shattered numerous offensive records with their W (77–6) blowout win over Virginia Tech.

After victories over both Mississippi State on Nov 3 W (35-0) at Jackson and Nov 17 v Miami—W (43-12 on homecoming, Alabama then captured their third consecutive SEC championship on Nov 22 with their win over LSU—W (21-7).

Alabama then closed the season on Dec 1 with a W (35-0) win over Auburn in the Iron Bowl, but then lost L (23-24) to #3 Notre Dame on December 31 in the Sugar Bowl.

Sugar Bowl Notes

Without the benefit of the Bowl Games, at the conclusion of the regular season, Alabama was selected as national champions in the UPI Coaches' Poll for 1073. Back then this poll was taken before the bowl games were played. However, the Crimson Tide would not win the AP championship as they lost 24–23 against Notre Dame, coached by Ara Parseghian in his tenth year with the Irish. It was a classic Sugar Bowl tough game. The two polling factions were not yet in synch as they were independent of the NCAA.

Notre Dame took a 14–10 by half-time with a big play coming on a 93-yard kickoff return for a touchdown by Al Hunter. Each team scored a touchdown in the third quarter. With this, the Irish were up 21–17 going into the fourth. Alabama took a 23–21 lead on a flea flicker touchdown pass from running back Mike Strock back to quarterback Richard Todd. However, Bill Davis missed the extra point and Alabama was up by only two.

Notre Dame drove the ball downfield and kicked a 19-yard field goal to go up 24–23 with 4:26 to go. Bama could not move the ball well enough to answer. However, the punt left Notre Dame backed up to their own goal. With time ticking away and Notre Dame facing a third and eight, Alabama had a chance to get the ball back in excellent field position.

Then, came the “but.” But Irish QB Tom Clements threw a 35-yard pass to tight end Robin Webber and Notre Dame held on to win the game and the AP side of the national championship. Football games are often decided on razor-thin margins.

1974 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21 #2 National Rankings. SEC Championship

The 1974 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 80th overall and 41st season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 17th year, and

played their home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with eleven wins and one loss (11–1 overall, 6–0 in the SEC), as SEC champions and with a loss to Notre Dame in the Orange Bowl.

As they entered the 1974 season, the Crimson Tide were one of the favorites to compete for the national championship.

Some Game highlights – Florida State

After their victory over Ole Miss, Alabama retained its #3 position in the AP Poll prior to its game against Florida State. Against the Seminoles, the Crimson Tide struggled and trailed until the final minute of regulation. The team moved close enough for a field goal try with time running out. Bucky Berrey toed the game-winning field goal for the 8–7 victory.

The Seminoles started the scoring early when they took the opening kickoff and drove 78-yards on nine plays for a 7–0 lead behind a six-yard Larry Key touchdown run. Florida State continued to hold their touchdown lead through the third quarter when the Crimson Tide scored their first points on a 44-yard Berrey field goal. With just 1:27 left in the game, Seminoles head coach Darrell Mudra elected to take an intentional safety instead of attempting a punt out of the end zone. Sometimes Avant-garde strategies fail like this one did.

The coach made this decision as Alabama had been close on a couple of previous attempts to block punts during the game. He did not want a block to occur in the end zone, and felt that he had the two points to spare to protect his victory. The safety would provide a free kick with no onrushing Bama linemen.

Down now 7–5, after the safety free-kick the Crimson Tide drove into field goal territory and Berrey hit the game winner from 36-yards out with only 0:33 left in the game. The victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Florida State to 2–0–1

Orange Bowl Notes

Playing for what should have been a second consecutive national championship against Notre Dame, Alabama played the Irish tough but

just not enough. They were upset again by the Fighting Irish L (11-13) in the Orange Bowl.

UA had come back well after Notre Dame took a 13-0 lead behind touchdown runs of four-yards by Wayne Bullock in the first and nine-yards by Mark McLane in the second quarter. A 21-yard Danny Ridgeway field goal for Alabama made the halftime score 13-3.

After a scoreless third period, the Crimson Tide scored the final points of the game on a 48-yard Richard Todd touchdown pass to Russ Schamun that made the final score 13-11. It was a game that was as close as it could get. Well-played. The loss brought Alabama's all-time record against Notre Dame to 0-2.

1975 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21
Sugar bowl Champion; SEC Champions; #3 in National Champs race.

The 1975 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 81st overall and 42nd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 18th year, and played its home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

Bama finished the season with eleven wins and one loss (11-1 overall, 6-0 in the SEC), as SEC champions and with a victory over Penn State in the Sugar Bowl.

1976 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

The 1976 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 82nd overall and 43rd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 19th year, and it played its home games at the new Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and the long-time Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. UA finished a fine season with nine wins and three losses (9-3 overall, 5-2 in the SEC) and with a victory over UCLA in the Liberty Bowl.

Watching the great Bear Bryant coach his teams in these years that we have covered one by one, a reader must remember the Bear's

basic philosophy that "No coach has ever won a game by what he knows; it's what his players know that counts."

Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant preached that there is a mixture of player talent, player knowledge, coaching, and player experience in success on the field. By examining the Bear and his teams and other great coaches and their teams, I know that the element that Bryant never harped about but that he understood so well, was that luck has a role in every football game. Perhaps if the game were played with a round ball, the bounces would be more predictable? What do you think?

Luck adds the element of suspense to the game and makes it even more enjoyable to watch. Even the best coaches find luck on their side at times. I see all these one-loss seasons over such a great coaching career and I know deep down it was not the coaching that failed – almost never – Bear Bryant was the best – no doubt from me! “Luck, be a Lady Tonight!”

Denny Stadium was then officially renamed as part of the halftime ceremonies to Bryant-Denny Stadium during the 1976 A-Day game. At the time of its re-dedication, Bryant was quoted as saying "this is a tremendous honor and I am proud and humble."

My own take on the name is that the people of Alabama knew whose name should be first but alphabetical order saved the day.

1977 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21 SEC Champions National Championship?

The 1977 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 83rd overall and 44th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 20th year, and played their home games at BryantDenny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished season with eleven wins and one loss (11-1 overall, 7-0 in the SEC), as SEC champions and a victory over Ohio State in the Sugar Bowl (35-6) should have made AU into national champions.

The Crimson Tide had been invited to the Sugar Bowl to play on January 2, 1978 vs. Woody Hayes' No. 9 Ohio State at the

Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans, UA prevailed v OSU W (35–6) before 76,811

BONUS FEATURE: Woody Hayes and Bear Bryant were the show at the 1978 Sugar Bowl by Rob Oller for the Columbus Dispatch, 12/24/14

"We thought we had 'em then."

Lou Green, an Alabama guard, had Ohio State right where he wanted the Buckeyes - under his foot.

He had cut out pictures of Buckeye stalwarts like Aaron Brown, Tom Cousineau, Byron Cato and Dave Adkins and put them in his sock.

"I wanted to paste Brown's picture in my helmet," Green deadpanned, "but some of the guys talked me out of it. I just kept them down there where they couldn't raise any hell."

The Buckeyes never get out from underfoot - either Green's or the 'Bama team - despite 10 Crimson Tide fumbles, though only two were lost.

Even with that, from start to finish, Alabama was in command.

"The plan," center Dwight Stephenson said, "was to take it right to them." And 16 of Alabama's first 17 plays went right into the teeth of the Buckeye defense. The Crimson Tide held the ball for eight minutes, gaining 60 yards, while Ohio State appeared to be just hanging on, even at that early stage.

David Sadler, Green, Bob Cryder and Jim Bunch, the 'Bama offensive line, thrashed their opposition as the Tide backs consistently gained yardage off tackle. The drive ended short of points when quarterback Jeff Rutledge was stopped on a two-yard pickup on fourth-and-goal from the 5.

"We had a little further to go than I thought," commented Alabama coach Paul Bryant. "We should have kicked the field

goal. It was a stupid call, and I made it."

The ease in which 'Bama handled Ohio State, points or not, on that drive carried a message: "We thought we had 'em then," Rutledge admitted.

With almost embarrassing efficiency, Rutledge guided the Tide 76 yards on its second possession. A 29-yard pass to Ozzie Newsome, with a 15-yard roughing the passer penalty tacked on, put the Buckeyes in serious trouble. Tony Nathan bounded into the end zone from the 1 after Bruce Bolton put the ball there on a six-yard run that wasn't supposed to be.

"Ozzie came off when Bolton went in, and he (Newsome) was supposed to carry on the play," Bryant moaned with a smile, "The Good Lord called that one for us."

Bolton also figured in the next 'Bama touchdown, which came on a play Bryant hadn't used all season. Rutledge and the Crimson Tide line had Ohio State backpedaling on its next series, an 11-play, 76-yard touchdown drive. The points came when fullback Johnny Davis swung right on a fake at the Buckeye 27 while split end Bolton, who had lined up as a right halfback, rolled out of the backfield and shot down the sideline.

Anticipating the run, the Buckeye cornerback stepped forward - and Bolton was almost instantly clear. Rutledge dropped back and got the ball to Bolton, barely inbounds. The extra point was missed, but with 4:32 left until the half, Alabama led 13-0.

The Tide had scored on two of only three first half possessions.

Quarterback Rod Gerald had the Buckeyes in position to get back in the game, guiding Ohio State to the Alabama 3. Coach Woody Hayes, however, passed up a field goal attempt on fourth down. "I thought about it being bad football," he explained. "When you're down 13 points, field goals don't look so big...if we had gotten the touchdown we may have played better ball."

But they didn't.

After 'Bama again held Ohio State at its 28, Rutledge took the Tide 72 yards where he hit Richard Neal with a three-yard TD pass. Another pass to Neal on a two-point conversion made the score an out-of-reach 21-0.

"There in the third quarter, when we had the ball on the short end of the 50 twice and didn't move," smoldered Hayes, "their defense rose to the occasion and our offense didn't. That definitely sealed the ball game right there."

Buckeye players continued to talk about their exhaustive beating to Michigan, and why they should've been in Pasadena as Big Ten champions. While embarrassed Sugar Bowlers cleared their throats, and avoided eye contact after one of the game's worst matches, reporters wondered how one team could fumble 10 times and still win by 29 points.

Answers came from the Alabama locker room. Tackle Lloyd David Sadler felt it was because there simply was no better team. "Anyone who doesn't vote for us," he said with an eye toward the next day's final balloting after finding out that in the Cotton Bowl Notre Dame beat Texas, the only team ahead of the Tide in the poll, "isn't voting with a clear conscience."

Story excerpted from the book "Sugar Bowl Classic: A History" by Marty Mulé, who covered the game and the organization for decades for the New Orleans Times-Picayune.

**1978 Alabama Football Season Paul "Bear" Bryant Head Coach #21
SEC Championship; National Championship Sugar Bowl Champs 14-7 v Penn State.**

The days of wondering how good Alabama football actually is ended in 1978 for sure. But for the skeptics, it should have ended much sooner.

The 1978 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 84th overall and 45th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 21st year, and played their home games at Bryant–Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

They finished this championship season with eleven wins and one loss (11–1 overall, 6–0 in the SEC), as SEC champions and as national champions after a victory over Penn State in the Sugar Bowl. Alabama's costumed "Big Al" mascot officially debuted this season, appearing at the Sugar Bowl.

Each year, the games began sooner than the last year. This year, 1978, the first game was played on September 2 v # 10 Nebraska at Legion Field in Birmingham, AL, broadcast on ABC with the Tide winning W 20–3 before 77,023.

On Sept 16 at Missouri the win column was active W (38–20), before 73,655. On Sept 23 at USC Bama lost its first game at Legion Field L (14–24) before 77,313.

On September 30, Vanderbilt was defeated by UA at Bryant-Denny W (51–28) before 56,910. On October 7 at Washington, the # 8 Seattle Huskies put up a good fight but lost W 20–17 before 60,975. Then, on Oct 14, Florida played at Bryant–Denny Stadium and lost W (23–12) before 60,210. And, on Oct r 21 at Tennessee's Neyland Stadium in Knoxville on the (Third Saturday in October), UA prevailed W (30–17) before 85,436.

Oct 28 finally came and Virginia Tech came in to play at Bryant–Denny Stadium but did not play too well. Bama won W 35–0 before 60,210.

On November 4, perennial nemesis Mississippi State arrived at Legion Field and lost W 35–14 before 74,217. Then, on Nov 11, a top-ten ranked LSU team played at Legion Field and lost to Bama on ABC TV W 31–10 and before 76,831. On Dec 2 v Auburn at Legion Field in the Iron Bowl, UA won the game W (34–16) before a whopping 79,218 fans.

After the season. On January 1, 1979 Bama played # 1 Penn State at the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans, LA on ABC TV and the Crimson Tide brought home a big V—W (14–7). Bear Bryant had upset another coach Joe Paterno opportunity for a National Championship.

Sugar Bowl Notes—The Goal Line Stand:

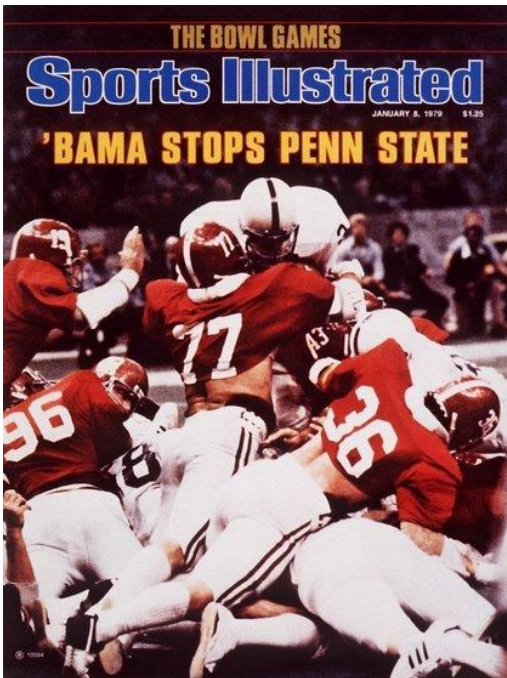


This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

The anticipation for this game was high. Two legends were to take their teams and face off on National TV for the National Championship.

The 1979 Sugar Bowl against Penn State has gone down as a

classic. What a game.



Alabama scored in the second quarter, then Penn State answered in the third, then Alabama took a 14-7 lead on a touchdown set up by a 62-yard punt return. Penn State had a chance to tie in the fourth, but quarterback Chuck Fusina threw an interception into the Alabama end zone.

Then Alabama had a chance to put the game away, but fumbled the football back to Penn State at the Nittany Lion 19-yard-line with four minutes to go. Penn State drove to a first and goal at

the Alabama eight. On third and goal from the one, the folklore says that Fusina asked Bama defensive lineman Marty Lyons "What do you think we should do?", and Lyons answered "You'd better pass."

On third down, Penn State was stopped inches short of the goal line. On fourth down, Penn State was stopped again, Barry Krauss met Mike Guman and threw him back for no gain. Alabama held on for a 14–7 victory.

The Crimson Tide split the national championship, winning the AP poll while Southern California won the UPI Coaches' poll. Roll Tide. All teams in the split won the national championship and that includes Alabama.



1979 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21
National Champions; SEC Champions; o
The 1979 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 85th overall and 46th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 22nd year, and played its home games at Bryant–Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season undefeated (12–0 overall, 6–0 in the SEC) and they gained a victory over Arkansas in the Sugar Bowl. For their collective efforts, the Crimson Tide were recognized as consensus national champions for the 1979 season. Roll Tide!

Nobody touched the Bear Led Crimson Tide in 1979.

In 1979 the Alabama Crimson Tide capped off a decade of remarkable success with the program's seventh perfect season in college history after 1925, 1930, 1934, 1945, 1961, and 1966 (discounting the 1897 “season” in which Bama played and won only one game). The Tide defense recorded five shutouts and allowed only two teams to score in double digits. The offense scored thirty points or more seven times.

Despite this dominance, Alabama had three close calls. Against Tennessee on October 20, Alabama fell behind 17–0 in the second quarter before rallying to win W (27–17). Three weeks later, against LSU on November 10, all the Tide offense could scrape up was a single field goal, but it was enough to win W (3–0).

In the regular season, Iron Bowl finale on Dec 1 against Auburn, after leading 14–3 at the half Alabama let Auburn take an 18–17 fourth quarter lead before winning the Iron Bowl W (25–18). The Auburn and Tennessee games were the only two times in the 1979 season that Alabama trailed. A 24–9 victory over Arkansas in the Sugar Bowl on January 1, 1980 capped a 12–0 season and a unanimous national championship, Alabama’s sixth wire service national title.

The rest of the games this season (out of sequence) went like this:

On September 8, Alabama got off to great start at Georgia Tech in Atlanta W (30-6) September 22 at Legion Field. The Crimson Tide beat Baylor W (45–0) before 77,512. On Sept 29 at Vanderbilt Bama won big W (66-3). On Oct 6 at Bryant-Denny, UA shut out Wichita State W (38-0). On Oct 13 at Florida, #2 Alabama won big W (40-0). The Tide was rolling through a great year.

On Oct 27, at Bryant Denny, #1 Alabama won against Virginia Tech W (31-7). On November 3, Mississippi State played and lost at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (24-7) before 60,210. On November 17 at Bryant-Denny, Miami was well-beaten W (30-0)

1980 Sugar Bowl Notes

On January 1, 1980, # 6 Arkansas was ready and they came serious to play # 2 Alabama at the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans, LA before 77,846. The game was broadcast on ABC. Nonetheless, despite the hype, AU beat the Razorbacks 24-9.

This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. Here comes the narrative as provided by the Sugar Bowl people:

1980 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

The 1980 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 86th overall and 47th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 23rd year, and played their home games at Bryant–Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

They finished season with ten wins and two losses (10–2 overall, 5–1 in the SEC) and with a victory over Baylor in the Cotton Bowl. Though some zealot Alabama fans might say that 10-2 is unbecoming for Alabama, think about the Lean years and this looks quite excellent. Alabama often achieves perfection but in its off years it achieves excellence while continually striving for perfection.

A 6–3 loss to Mississippi State ended Alabama's school record 28-game winning streak and all-time SEC record 27-game conference winning streak, and was Alabama's first loss to Mississippi State since 1957. It also cost the Tide a share of the SEC championship, the first time since 1976 they failed to win the SEC. Despite surrendering 35 points to Ole Miss, the Alabama defense still allowed only 98 points for the entire season.

1981 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21 SEC Co-champions

The 1981 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 87th overall and 48th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 24th year, and played its home games at Bryant–Denny Stadium in

Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished season with nine wins, two losses and one tie (9–2–1 overall, 6–0 in the SEC), as SEC co-champions with Georgia and with a loss against Texas in the Cotton Bowl.

The 1982 Cotton Bowl

Alabama's Cotton Bowl Classic loss to Texas dropped the Tide's all-time record against the Longhorns to 0–7–1. This iteration was played before 73,243 in Dallas Texas at the Cotton Bowl.

We thank rollbamaroll for this excellent recap of the 1982 Cotton Bowl.

<http://www.rollbamaroll.com/2009/12/18/1196640/alabama-vs-texas-1982-cotton-bowl>

In the long history of the Alabama and Texas football programs, the two teams have met just eight times on the gridiron. This week Roll Bama Roll is looking back on each of these contests. Today we revisit the most recent game between the two, the 1982 Cotton Bowl in Dallas, Texas.

The 1982 Cotton Bowl marked the last time Alabama and Texas faced each other on the football field and was the penultimate post-season game for the Crimson Tide's legendary coach Paul W. Bryant.

After almost a quarter-century in Tuscaloosa and 37 years as a head coach, Bryant's career was in its twilight and his legacy was almost complete. The 1981 season had seen Bryant pass one of the most revered milestones in college football - Amos Alonzo Stagg's 314 career head coaching wins.

On Nov. 14, Bryant tied Stagg's record with an emotional victory against Joe Paterno's Penn State squad in Happy Valley. Two weeks later, at Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama beat arch-rival Auburn 28-17 and Bryant became the winningest coach in the history of the game.

The pursuit of Stagg's record had drawn unprecedented media attention on Bryant and the team during the season and it left both on unusual down note in its wake. But Alabama had a lot at stake going into the bowl season.

The Crimson Tide shared the SEC Conference championship with Georgia. The Bulldogs - boasting the powerful running attack of Hershel Walker - were ranked No. 2 at the end of the season and tapped for the Sugar Bowl vs Pitt. As the number three team in the nation, Alabama drew the matchup with No. 6 Texas in the Cotton Bowl.

A victory in Dallas would give Bryant two of the few achievements that had eluded him in his long career - a win over Texas as coach at Alabama and an NCAA record seven straight bowl wins. And a longshot national championship was also not out of the question either.

The Texans, though, had other plans. When Darrell Royal stepped down following the 1976 season, one of his former assistants, Fred Akers, was selected to fill his place. Although Royal stayed on as athletic director, Akers went to work making his own mark on the program.

Gone was the wishbone and in came the "I" - an offense designed specifically to capitalize on the talents of running back Earl Campbell. An 11-1 record followed the Longhorn record of success rolled on. Texas tallied a respectable 9-3 record the next two seasons but 1980 brought a 7-5 record and a fair bit of grumbling by the faithful.

Akers and his program responded with a rebound in 1981. The Longhorns suffered one tie and one loss during the regular season - although the loss was a doozy, a 42-11 bashing by Lou Holtz's Arkansas squad. The Cotton Bowl marked a chance to finish the campaign on a high note.

Cotton Bowl Stadium was packed on New Year's Day 1982 with 73,243 people on hand in the 42-degree weather to see the

contest. The game began as a defensive struggle as neither offense could much progress for almost a quarter and a half.

Midway through the second period Alabama got the ball on their own 18-yard-line and began working their way down the field. On the seventh play of the drive, quarterback Walter Lewis completed a six-yard pass to receiver Jesse Bendross and put the Crimson Tide on the scoreboard. It would be the only score in the first three periods of the contest but the fourth quarter proved to be a roller coaster.



Coach Bryant at the 1982 Cotton Bowl.

Just more than two-and-a-half minutes into the fourth quarter, Alabama kicker Peter Kim tacked another three points onto the Crimson Tide lead. Then, suddenly, the momentum started swinging the other direction.

Texas return man Jitter Fields took the kickoff 22 yards, all the way to the Texas 40-yard-line. The Alabama defense finally slacked a bit and the Longhorns were able to drive to the Crimson Tide 30-yard-line, the farthest the Texans had managed all afternoon.

A pair of incomplete passes had the Longhorns staring at 3rd & 10. When Texas quarterback Robert Brewer stepped up to take the snap he didn't like the defensive formation he saw across from him and called a timeout.

Akers discarded the planned sprint-out pass and dialed up a quarterback draw - a play Texas had not run the entire season. When Alabama then brought an all-out blitz but the Longhorn line parried it perfectly. Brewer followed his blocks and reeled off a 30-yard run into the end zone. Alabama 10, Texas 7.

On their next possession, Texas kept up the pressure on the Alabama defense. In 10 plays the Longhorns had traversed 72 yards and had the ball on the Crimson Tide eight-yard line. Texas fullback Terry Orr punched it in to give the Longhorns the lead.

Alabama's defense controlled the game for three quarters.

With more than two minutes left in the game, Alabama had plenty of time to put together a scoring drive. The odds got even better when Joey Jones returned the kickoff 61 yards to Texas 38-yard-line - the longest return in Cotton Bowl history.

Lewis threw for the end zone on the first play of the Alabama possession and Texas free safety William Graham reeled it in. The Longhorn was immediately tackled on the one yard line.

Three quarterback sneaks (and a delay of game penalty) made it 4th down on the 2-yard-line with just less than a minute left in

the game. Akers then instructed his punter, Josh Goodson, to take the snap and step out of the end zone for an intentional safety.

Alabama got the ball back but with 43 seconds left on the clock and no timeouts, the team was not able to put any more points on the board. Texas walked away, once again, with a win: 14-12. Burns you up!



Akers later said it was the greatest victory of his coaching career and Bryant gave him full credit for the win and praised the call for the intentional safety. What the Crimson Tide coach didn't put any stock in was the idea there was any jinx at work on Alabama for facing the Longhorns.

"I don't think there is a Texas whammy on Alabama," he said. "Their players and coaches beat us - not a whammy."

Bryant would go onto coach for one more season. He announced his retirement two weeks before the Liberty Bowl and the 21-15 win over Illinois in the Bowl Game was his final victory - the 323rd of his head coaching career.

Less than a month later the “Bear” passed away of a heart attack at the age of 69. He was a heck of a man. He was a heck of a coach!

1982 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

The 1982 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 88th overall and 49th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his 25th and final year, and played their home games at Bryant–Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished this season with eight wins and four losses (8–4 overall, 3–3 in the SEC) and with a victory over Illinois in the Liberty Bowl.

Bear Bryant may have said “I don’t think there is a Texas whammy on Alabama...Their players and coaches beat us - not a whammy.”

In the Bear Bryant Era’s last game on December 29 at 7:00 p.m.vs. Illinois at Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium in Memphis, TN in the recently new Liberty Bowl. The Bear and the Alabama team got their last win in the Bear Bryant Era W (21–15) before 54,123 and a nationwide TV audience. It was the end of a major era in Alabama sports.

"No coach has ever won a game by what he knows; it's what his players know that counts." -Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant

You can’t write about a fella for twenty-five years of his life and not become attached. I know I am going to miss Bear Bryant as I write the rest of this book but I have a feeling I’ll find him again before I am done.

Let’s take a look at Bear’s last game.

The Liberty Bowl is held annually at Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium in Memphis, Tennessee. The Bowl is the seventh oldest college bowl game and is one of the most tradition-rich and patriotic bowl games in America.

The Liberty Bowl game was founded in Philadelphia in 1959 and the inaugural game featured a match-up between Penn State and

Alabama. That game began a tradition of great stars and exciting football and was the first of many thrilling chapters in the history of the Liberty Bowl Football Classic.

Bear Bryant's last game as we know was the 1982 Liberty Bowl v Illinois. Coaching in his final game, Paul Bryant and his Crimson Tide beat Illinois 21-15 at the Liberty Bowl played in Memphis, Tenn. Jeremiah Castille, a senior cornerback, was the MVP after intercepting three Illini passes. Craig Turner scored the final TD of the Bryant Era while Peter Kim's PAT is the final point of the legendary coach's career.

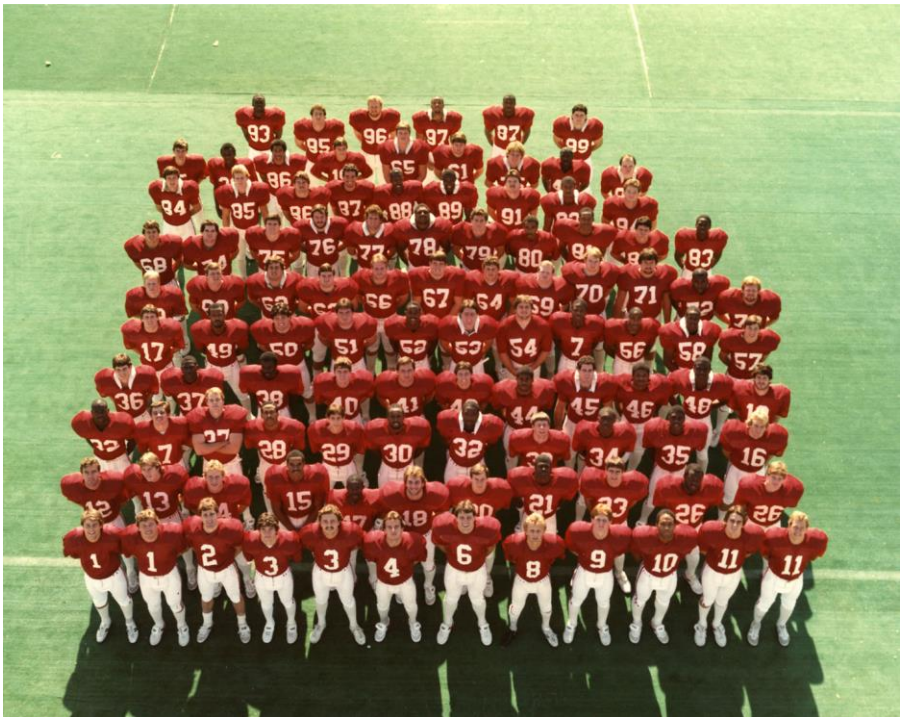
What a great lithograph! The Bear!



Chapter 13 The Post Bryant Years – Ray Perkins & Bill Curry, 1983-1989

“No coach in his right mind would want to take a team whose predecessor was a legend.”

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>SEC</u>
1983	Ray Perkins #22	SEC	8-4-0	4-2-0
1984	Ray Perkins	SEC	5-6-0	2-4-0
1985	Ray Perkins	SEC	9-2-1	4-1-1
1986	Ray Perkins	SEC	10-3-0	4-2-0
1987	Bill Curry # 23	SEC	7-5-0	4-3-0
1988	Bill Curry	SEC	9-3-0	4-3-0
1989	Bill Curry	SEC	10-2-0	6-1-0



1983 Alabama Football Team ready for coach Ray Perkins

“No coach in his right mind would want to take a team whose predecessor was a legend.”

Can you imagine being asked to replace Jesus as the Savior of the world. For Alabama fans, that was Ray Perkins mission. Only a tough guy like Ray Perkins, a great coach could have straightened the ship that Bear left behind so that Alabama would again be the greatest.

Bear Bryant himself would not have agreed to such a task in my opinion. Ray Perkins in my opinion did a fine job but who could be the Bear who no longer was the Bear?

When Ray took over team, he knew he could win but nobody else did. He would have been more respected if he took over for Whitworth instead of Bryant. But, Perkins was no slouch and he could have done it... and in some ways, he really did. But you have to look! Check out these great articles that I found about what the folks at the time thought:

PERKINS TO SUCCEED BRYANT AS ALABAMA COACH

Our thanks to the New York Times for this great perspective article on Ray Perkins.

By FRANK LITSKY, Special to the New York Times
Published: December 16, 1982

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J., Dec. 15— On a day of rapid developments here and in Tuscaloosa, Ala., Paul (Bear) Bryant retired as football coach at the University of Alabama, Ray Perkins announced that he would leave as coach of the Giants to succeed him, and the Giants named Bill Parcells, their defensive coordinator, to replace Perkins (picture below).



In 38 years at Maryland, Kentucky, Texas A&M and Alabama, Bryant has won 322 games, more than any other college head coach in history. The 69-year-old Bryant will coach Alabama in the Liberty Bowl game against Illinois Dec. 29 in Memphis. Then he will devote full time to his

job as athletic director.

The 41-year-old Perkins is in his fourth season as head coach of the Giants. He will stay on the job for the regular season's three remaining games - at Washington, St. Louis and Philadelphia - and any playoff games should the Giants get that far.

Perkins was an all-America end at Alabama under Bryant, a man he has described as being like a father to him. He was born and reared in Mississippi, and he said today that he had dreamed for years of returning to the South and coaching at his alma mater.

Perkins to Get 5-Year Pact

"It's just something I've wanted to do very, very much," he said. Dr. Joab L. Thomas, the university's president, said in Tuscaloosa that Perkins had agreed to a five-year contract at

\$100,000 a year. But the newly appointed coach is expected to earn additional income from television and radio programs.

Because of a three-year extension that he signed before the start of this season, Perkins was bound to the Giants as head coach through 1985, until the team released him from his contract. His salary here is estimated at \$150,000 to \$200,000 a year.

General Manager George Young and the 41-year-old Parcells said they had a handshake agreement on a multiyear contract. Though Bryant's salary figures have not been made public, a source close to Alabama athletics said that for years the coach's annual salary was \$99,999.99 because he did not want it to equal the university president's \$100,000. During the last few years, the source said, Bryant's salary has been \$110,000, a figure he has matched with added income from television, radio and commercials.

Leaving with Mixed Emotions

"I am leaving the Giants with mixed emotions," Perkins said at a morning news conference at Giants Stadium. "This new job does me great honor for many reasons, being my alma mater and a great university in the part of the country where I was raised. My two children were born there. And it's an honor to follow the greatest coach of all time."

When Perkins was hired by the Giants, after the 1978 season, the team was in turmoil. The Giants had been chronic losers, and friction had developed between Wellington Mara, their president, and his nephew Tim Mara, a vice president, over how to improve them. Each controlled 50 percent of the stock.

...

1983 Alabama Football Season Ray Perkins Head Coach #22

The 1983 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 89th overall and 50th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Ray Perkins, in his first year. Alabama played its home games at both Bryant–Denny

Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a fine record of eight wins and four losses (8–4 overall, 4–2 in the SEC).

Ray Perkins, who played as a wide receiver for Bear Bryant in the 1960s, was named as the new head coach at Alabama on December 14, 1982, to succeed Bryant after his 25-year tenure as Alabama's head coach.

After opening the season with four consecutive wins v Georgia Tech at on Sept 10 @ Legion Field W (20-7), Ole Miss Sept 17 W (40-0); At Vanderbilt Sept 24 W (44-24), and Memphis State Oct 1 W 44-13 at Bryant-Denny. This great record brought Alabama to #3 in the AP poll.

Out of nowhere, on Oct 8, the Tide suffered a controversial L (28-34) loss to Penn State at University Park PA. Trailing 34-7 entering the 4th quarter, Alabama rallied and seemed to be an extra point away from victory after tight end Preston Gothard appeared to catch a game-tying touchdown pass with eight seconds left in the game. One official signaled a touchdown but was overruled by the back judge who ruled Gothard was out of bounds. Video replay indicated otherwise, however instant replay in college football was still decades away. It was a loss regardless.

Alabama played and lost to Tennessee on Oct 15 L (34-31) at Legion Field and then on Oct 29 at Bryant Field, it was Mississippi State with a different outcome on Oct 29 W (35-18). Bama avenged the previous year's losses to LSU on Nov 5 W (32-26) and Southern Miss on Nov 12 W (28-16) but lost to Tennessee on Oct 15 L (34-41) and Auburn again L (20-23) The Crimson Tide completed its season with a 28–7 victory over SMU in the Sun Bowl.

1984 Alabama Football Season Ray Perkins Head Coach #22

The 1984 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 90th overall and 51st season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Ray Perkins, in his second year. Alabama played its home games at both Bryant–Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. The team finished the season with a record of five wins and six

losses (5–6 overall, 2–4 in the SEC). This marked Alabama's first losing season since the Tide went 2–7–1 in 1957 under Jennings B. Whitworth, and this season ended Alabama's streak of 25 consecutive bowl appearances. For Crimson Tide supporters, all of this matters.



1984 Alabama Crimson Tide Coach Ray Perkins

1985 Alabama Football Season Ray Perkins Head Coach #22

The 1985 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 91st overall and 52nd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Ray Perkins, in his third year, and played their home games at both Bryant–Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of nine wins, two losses and one tie (9–2–1 overall, 4–1–1 in the SEC). The Perkins-coached team also gained a victory in the Aloha Bowl over USC.

1986 Alabama Football Season Ray Perkins Head Coach #22

The 1986 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 92nd overall and 53rd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Ray Perkins, in his fourth year, and played their home games at both Bryant–Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of ten wins and three losses (10–3

overall; 4–2 in the SEC) and with a victory in the Sun Bowl over Washington.

On Oct 4 v Notre Dame @ Legion Field UA got the win W (28–10) before 75,808 fans. Alabama fans loved beating Notre Dame for the first time.

This was such a happy game for the Crimson Tide, let's recap it below:

Tide v ND Recap

This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. Here comes the narrative:

Late in the fourth quarter of the game, after the contest had long since been decided, a roar rose from the 75,808 patrons in Birmingham's Legion Field. The commotion was caused by a sign that had been unfurled and paraded around the stadium. The banner pretty much summed up the thoughts and emotions of the Crimson Tide fans. "This One's for You Bear," it read.

Finally, Alabama had beaten Notre Dame. Finally, the thorn had been removed from its side. And most Tide fans felt that, somewhere legendary coach Bear Bryant knew the 28-10 outcome and was smiling. That made them happy. Bear Bryant is to Alabama fans what Rockne, Leahy and Parseghian are to Irish enthusiasts. He is the man who made Alabama football what it is today.

National championships, conference championships, coach of the year honors, All-Americans were all things Bryant had achieved during his tenure. But he had never beaten Notre Dame. The week before the game Alabama fans, players and media pondered the Notre Dame jinx and wondered aloud if they would ever manage a victory against the Irish. Notre Dame had pinned a dramatic 24-23 loss on the Tide during the '73 Sugar Bowl to snuff out Alabama's dream of a national title and claimed it themselves in the team's first meeting.

Again in '75 the Irish dethroned the top-ranked Crimson Tide 13-11 during the Orange Bowl in Ara Parseghian's finale to end another Tide national championship quest. Two regular season clashes saw Notre Dame prevail 21- 18 in '76 and 7-0 in '80. More than half a decade had passed, but still Alabama fans had not forgotten the string of stinging defeats.

Coach Perkins was not spooked but knew this was not going to be easy. Perkins prophesied the week of the game that, "For us to have an opportunity to win the game we've got to somehow stop Beuerlein. He's the key." Bennett took care of that task in a hurry.



Bennett sacks Beuerlein to change complexion of game before it really started.

On the second Irish possession quarterback Steve Beuerlein dropped back to pass and was smashed into the Legion Field turf for an eight-yard loss by the blitzing, untouched Bennett coming at fun speed from the blind side. "It's my job to pressure the quarterback and I knew I was going to get him," said Bennett who finished with six tackles. "I was coming fun speed for the quarterback. I didn't get blocked. It was just a free shot. I had a big smile the whole day because I really did have some fun."

"That hit Bennett made really did pick us up," said middle guard Curt Jarvis, who later sacked Terry Andrysiak for a 13-yard loss.

"That's probably one of the most vicious licks I've ever seen on a quarterback. It set the tempo for the rest of the day." Bennett's play also made things fun for the Tide fans as the capacity crowd roared its approval in front of ABC's national television audience.

Somehow, during the celebrating, Beuerlein managed to regain his senses and even complete a pass on the next down. But the drive stalled, and with the crowd still cheering wildly in the 90-degree heat Dan Sorensen's punt was fielded by Greg Richardson at the 34-yard line.

"The punt return was something we had been working hard on all week," said Richardson, an all-Southeastern Conference sprinter. "We thought we could break one against them. They had a lot of big guys, but they were real slow. I got a couple of good blocks and was gone." Richardson sidestepped two onrushing coverage men and exploded down the Alabama sideline for 66 yards and the first score.

Just to make sure he made it into the end zone, Bennett provided the final block, sending Sorensen sprawling at the 15-yard line. Beuerlein, who alternated with Andrysiak for the remainder of the game, admitted afterwards the decision to remain in the game was probably not a wise decision.

"I didn't say anything about it at first," said Beuerlein. "But, I probably should have taken myself out. In the second half, I realized I was making some pretty stupid mistakes, like going the wrong way on plays and stuff. I remember seeing a lot of mouths moving, but I didn't hear the words that well."

With Beuerlein still woozy and Andrysiak under constant pressure and forced to flee the pocket, the Irish had trouble executing their game plan. Despite eventually piling up more total offense than the Crimson Tide (324 yards to 318 yards) Notre Dame could penetrate the 20-yard line just once.

Midway through the second quarter Andrysiak's handoff to tailback Mark Green squirted free and was covered by the Tide's Greg Gilbert to kill Notre Dame's deepest penetration at the Alabama 36. Several plays later quarterback Mike Shula found speedy-quick

receiver Albert Bell in single coverage downfield for a 52-yard touchdown strike. Van Tiffin's extra point made it 14-0.

"I knew as soon as I threw it that we had a completion, but I didn't know whether he'd be able to outrun everybody for a touchdown," said Shula who set up the play with a three-yard sneak on third down the previous play to keep the drive alive. Speed had played another part in the Irish demise. We wanted to eliminate the bomb, but we gave it up today," said cornerback Marv Spence. "You can't do that against a good team. They try to put you to sleep with their running, then all of a sudden they throw long."

The first half closed with a flurry of action. The Irish quickly drove to the Alabama 29 but John Carney's 46-yard field goal attempt was wide left. Notre Dame then received a break when Shula fumbled while being sacked by Darrell Gordon. Three plays later Beuerlein hit Tim Brown in the flat for a touchdown to close the Tide's lead to 14-7.

Shula promptly marched Alabama to a third touchdown on an 80-yard drive in two minutes, tossing an 11-yard strike to Greg Richardson. The drive was keyed by Shula's 18-yard pass to Richardson from the Barna 40 which amounted to a 33-yard gain when Troy Wilson was whistled for a late hit on the play.

With only a minute remaining in the half, Andrysiak took over for Beuerlein, scrambled for six yards, tossed a screen to Green for 11, hit Brown for 24 and then found an open Joel Williams for eight yards to bring the Irish to the Tide's 26-yard line with 10 ticks left on the clock. After a timeout Andrysiak hooked up with Milt Jackson on the left sideline for a 22-yard completion before he was knocked out of bounds.

With time for one play, coach Lou Holtz opted for the field goal which Carney provided. The Irish went into the locker room down 14-10, but with momentum on their side.

Momentum is a funny thing. Sportswriters love to use the cliché of comparing it with a pendulum because of the way it can quickly swing and shift. It was a word that was tossed around a lot in both

locker rooms after the game. It took just one play for momentum to abandon the Irish in the second half.

After galloping up the Irish sideline for 22 yards on the opening kickoff, Brown was hit by Desmond Holoman and the ball popped free. Holoman smothered it to end Alabama's final big play for the game and the Tide fans went berserk.

Three plays later Shula's lofty pass was picked out of the air by Bell for the final score. It was 28-10 and although there were nearly 28 minutes left to play, this one was over. "We knew they were a good second half team," Holtz relayed. "And they didn't need any encouragement."

Just to make sure Notre Dame didn't creep back into the game Freddie Robinson picked off two errant Irish passes to kill drives. And when Mike Haywood intercepted a Shula toss late in the third corner and appeared ready to turn a corner and head 70 yards for a score Richardson's blazing speed caught him from behind.

Speed and Alabama's coming up with the big plays again killed the Irish. "Speed is our key," said Bennett in agreement. "It's the key to our season."

It was the key the Irish couldn't stop,

Afterward, as the team filed out of the locker room for the bus trip back to the Birmingham airport, several thousand Bama fans continued to engage in postgame tailgate parties. They basked in the late afternoon sunshine relishing the win. As the Irish bus caravan pulled away, the Tide supporters turned to wave goodbye in a warm display of sportsmanship. And for the first time, they saw Notre Dame off with a smile on their (Alabama) faces.

End of Tide v ND Recap.

Head Coach Ray Perkins coached at the pro and college levels for nearly 40 years, and is best known among college football fans as the man to succeed Bear Bryant as head coach at the University of Alabama. Perkins coached at Alabama for four seasons from 1983-

1986 and accumulated a record of 32-15-1 during that time, including a 3-0 record in bowl games. Perkins eventually left Alabama following the 1986 season and signed a lucrative contract to take the head coaching job with the NFL's Tampa Bay Buccaneers. He was inducted into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame in 1990.

Bill Curry is new Bama Head Football Coach for 1987

LA Times January 5, 1987 TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — Bill Curry signed a multiyear contract as football coach at Alabama Sunday, and Steve Sloan, a former Crimson Tide quarterback, accepted the athletic director's job at his alma mater.

Both resigned as coaches at Atlantic Coast Conference schools, Curry at Georgia Tech and Sloan at Duke.

University of Alabama President Joab Thomas, who did not disclose terms of the contracts, said at a news conference that the two would take the posts vacated by Ray Perkins, who resigned Wednesday to become head coach and vice president of operations of the NFL's Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Perkins led Alabama to a 10-3 record in his final season.

Thomas said the jobs of athletic director and head football coach would be divided because they were too much for one person.

Curry, 44, said that until he received the offer from Alabama, he never thought he would surrender the coaching job at Georgia Tech, his alma mater, that he held for seven years, compiling a 31-43-4 record.

1987 Alabama Football Season Bill Curry Head Coach #23

The 1987 the Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 93th overall and 54th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bill Curry, in his first year, and played their home games at Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of seven wins and

five losses (7–5 overall, 4–3 in the SEC) and with a loss in the Hall of Fame Bowl to Michigan.

Due to a major renovation project that resulted in the completion of the western upper deck, Alabama played all of their home games at Legion Field instead of splitting them with Bryant–Denny Stadium for the 1987 season.

1988 Alabama Football Season Bill Curry Head Coach #23

The 1988 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 94th overall and 55th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bill Curry, in his second year, and played home games at both Bryant–Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of nine wins and three losses (9–3 overall, 4–3 in the SEC) and with a victory in the Sun Bowl over Army.

In the season finale on December 1 at 7:30 p.m. at Texas A&M's Kyle Field, Alabama prevailed W (30–10) before 59,152. Then to cap off a winning season, on Dec 24 at 11:00 AM Alabama beat Army in Sun Bowl Stadium in a really close game W (29-28)

The 1988 Sun Bowl:

The full recap of the Sun Bowl from sunbol.org is as follows:

Alabama edged Army 29-28 in the final minutes of the fourth quarter, led by the efforts of David Smith and Derrick Thomas.

Smith, a senior quarterback from Alabama, set two Sun Bowl passing records (52 attempts and 412 yards) en route to being named the C.M. Hendricks Most Valuable Player. Thomas, an All-American linebacker, picked up six tackles, was named the Jimmy Rogers, Jr. Most Valuable Lineman and also claimed the 1988 Butkus Award.

The key play of the game occurred with under two minutes to play in the half. With a 14-6 advantage, Army attempted a Keith

Walker field goal on the Alabama 24-yard line. However, Derrick Thomas broke through and blocked the kick with 1:47 remaining in the half.

The Tide seemed to rise as Smith completed five passes for 76 yards. Alabama scored its first touchdown of the game with 35 seconds left.

Army refused to back down and quickly drove to the Alabama 27-yard line. Just as the half ended, Walker went to kick and was blocked for the second time by the ferocious Thomas.

In a battle for momentum, the third quarter opened to four scoreless drives before Alabama was able to put some points on the scoreboard with a Smith-Payne connection for 23 yards.

Army quickly responded with the help of a 58-yard run by Ben Barnett that led to a touchdown by Mike Mayweather to regain the lead 21-20.

The next Alabama drive ended with an interception by O'Neal Miller who returned the ball 57 yards for an Army touchdown with seven seconds left in the third quarter.

Unwilling to relent, Alabama rallied back to kick a Phillip Doyle field goal, force an Army punt with a three-and-out defensive stint and score on David Casteal's two-yard run to win the game.

Despite the nail-biting intensity, the Alabama-Army contest provided, the game drew the lowest television rating to date as it went head-to-head with the AFC wild-card game.

Alabama remains undefeated in the Sun Bowl, with the other wins coming in 1983 against SMU and 1986 against Washington.

1989 Alabama Football Season Bill Curry Head Coach #23 Championship SEC

The 1989 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 95th overall and 56th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference

(SEC). The team was led by head coach Bill Curry, in his third year, and played their home games at both Bryant–Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of ten wins and two losses (10–2 overall, 6–1 in the SEC), as SEC Co-Champions and with a loss in the Sugar Bowl against national championship winner Miami.

Alabama won its first ten games on the way to its best record since 1980 and its first SEC championship since the 1981 season, its 19th overall.

In the Sugar Bowl, Miami would defeat Alabama 33–25 in a close hard fought match and would thus be named national champions. In the week following the Sugar Bowl loss, on January 7, 1990, Bill Curry resigned his position to take the head coaching job at Kentucky.

New York Times Comments on Coach Curry's Resignation

Alabama's Curry Resigns

Published: January 8, 1990 by The New York Times

TUSCALOOSA, Ala., Jan. 7— Bill Curry, the football coach at the University of Alabama, announced today he would resign his job and seemed headed for the head-coaching post at Kentucky.

Curry was in Lexington, Ky., tonight and told WLEX-TV, "We're up here to meet with C. M. and other officials and hammer something out," a reference to the Kentucky athletic director, C. M. Newton.

Another Lexington station, WKYT-TV, reported that Curry, who spent three seasons at Alabama, told Newton earlier in the day that he would accept an offer to coach the Wildcats. The Kentucky coach, Jerry Claiborne, recently resigned.

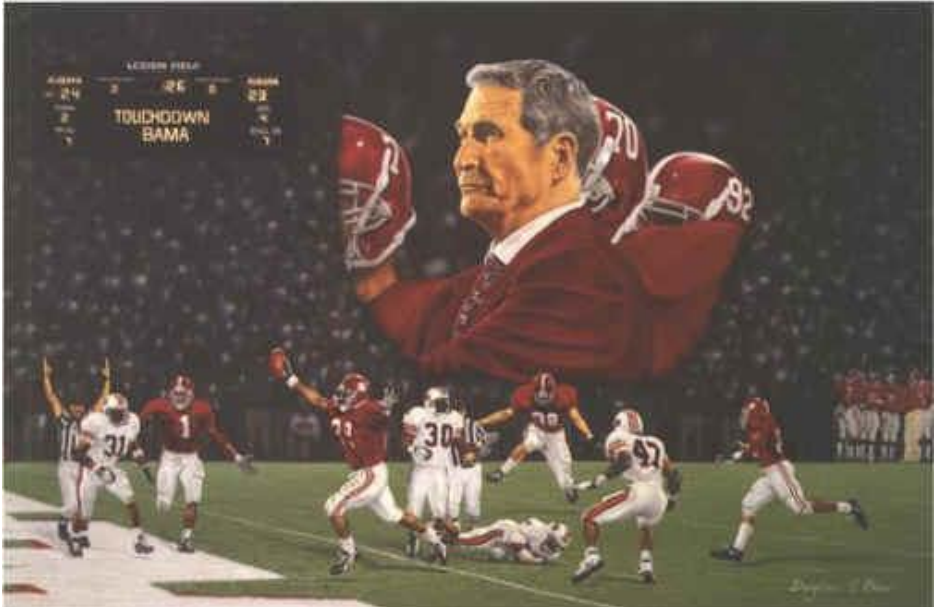
Chapter 14 Alabama Football – The Gene Stallings Era -- 1990-1996

“You don’t have to flaunt your success; but you don’t have to apologize for it either.”

Gene Stallings had great years and a national championship with Alabama.

1990	Gene Stallings #24	SEC	7-5-0	5-2-0
1991	Gene Stallings	SEC	11-1-0	6-1-1
1992*	Gene Stallings	SEC	13-0-0	8-0-0
1993	Gene Stallings	SEC	9-3-1 (1-0)	5-2-1 (0-8)
1994	Gene Stallings	SEC	12-1-0	8-0-0
1995	Gene Stallings	SEC	8-3-0	5-3-0
1996	Gene Stallings	SEC	10-3-0	6-2-0

* National Championship



1990 Alabama Football Season Gene Stallings Head Coach #24

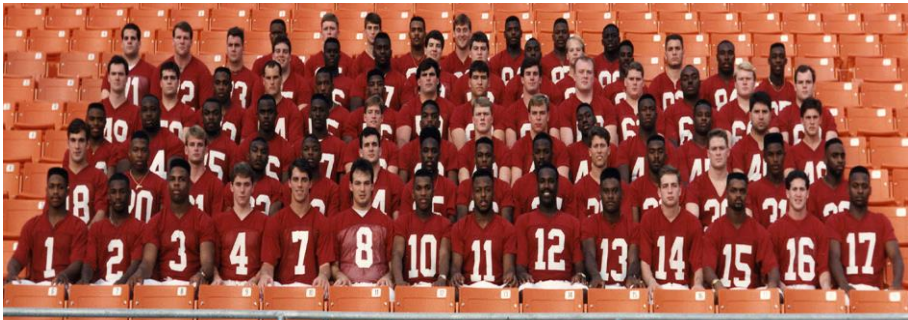
The 1990 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 96th overall and 57th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference

(SEC). The Crimson Tide was led by first-year head coach Gene Stallings, replacing Bill Curry who left for the University of Kentucky. The season ended with a lopsided L (7-34) bowl loss to #18 Louisville in the Fiesta Bowl on January 1, and Alabama finished 7–5, 5-2 in the SEC.

**1991 Alabama Football Season Gene Stallings Head Coach #24
Blockbuster Bowl Championship; National Rank of #5; and #2 in the SEC**

The 1991 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 97th overall and 58th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Gene Stallings who was in his second season at Alabama. The team played their home games at Bryant-Denny Stadium, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and at Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

The team substantially improved upon the 7–5 record from Stallings's first season as they ended with an 11–1 overall record, while going 6–1 in their conference games. The September 21st win against Georgia would prove to be the first in a school record tying 28-game winning streak and a school record 31-game unbeaten streak (counting the ties).



1991 Alabama Crimson Tide Team Picture

Alabama was invited to a major bowl game for its fine season and it faced off against the Colorado Buffalos in the Blockbuster Bowl and it won another nail biter 30–25 behind a punt return TD and 146 all-purpose yards from Palmer. Alabama's 11–1 record was its best since the 1979 team went 12–0 and won the national championship.

In this season, there were moments in all of these close call games in which Gene Stallings and staff had to get into the heads of their

Alabama Crimson Tide team to continually ensure them that they could win. Plus, as the great Bear Bryant would acknowledge for sure. Stallings had a little luck on his side and Bear believed a little luck always helps. Amen to that! Nineteen Ninety-Two would be filled with talent, luck and hard earned success. -

**1992 Alabama Football Season Gene Stallings Head Coach #24
National Champions; SEC Champions; Sugar Bowl Champion**

While I write this great-championships book, I first refresh facts then I gain missing facts about a given Alabama football year, I typically use my own words to describe the happenings. Whenever I think that a referenced (see my reference notes in the front matter) citation should be used, I include it in-line rather than force the reader to follow a footnote and/or a bibliography.

Nobody likes their stuff stolen. The raw facts are that guys like me who write books that folks like you want to read do not want you to have to be checking references or ferreting through superscripts and subscripts throughout the book.

So, let me say one more time that as I present facts that are indisputable, I am pleased to reference RollTide text, Text from online and newspaper articles, blogs, even Wikipedia text, though as a college professor, I know it may not be academically exact—but it is for the most part pretty darned good.

So, if you are a writer and you find your private stuff in any of my material and it is unauthorized, let me know and I will remove it if you wish, and I will find an official source for the same information. As for clearly original material by me, you may feel free to use it as you wish in a positive way. Don't ask for permission. Just use it. If you choose to cite me, I will be honored but that is up to you. Make your words roll as sweet as they can for your reader, the same reader who may also like my books. Amen!

The 1992 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 98th overall and 59th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). How about that folks? Alabama played almost 100 years of the finest football any college or university could ever hope to provide for its student fans, alumni fans, and just plain fans.

Like most Americans, Alabama as an institution saw winning as important right from the start. The University hired the coaches and picked the players for scholarship who understood their notion of winning. Losers have no conception of what winners are all about. Alabama is about winning in all facets – the classroom, the rec field and the competitive fields. Alabama knows how to spot winners. Bravo Alabama! Bravo Crimson Tide!

This was the team's third season under head coach Gene Stallings, one of the good guys. They played their home games at both Bryant–Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season undefeated with a record of 13–0 (8–0 in the SEC) and as National Champions. It was a record that nobody could possibly improve upon.

The team was noted especially for its strong defense, which led the nation in fewest points allowed (9.2 per game during the regular season) and, in a strong bowl game performance, prevented defending national champion Miami from scoring an offensive touchdown. Gene Stallings knew how to motivate his great players to play at their best. He played for the Bear, and he was a fine coach.

The 1992 Crimson Tide won its twentieth Southeastern Conference title by defeating the Florida Gators 28–21 on December 5 in the inaugural SEC Championship Game. The team then capped off Alabama's eighth perfect season by winning the 1992 national football championship, defeating the heavily favored Miami Hurricanes W (34-13) in the 1993 Sugar Bowl on January 1, 1993. This was a matchup resulting from the first ever Bowl Coalition national championship game.

As we have already noted, The Alabama Crimson Tide celebrated 100 years of Alabama Football in the 1992 season. Since there were two war years in which no football was played, it was their 98th year of play but their 100th season in the mix.

1992 was just another ordinary winning season for Alabama for sure. Of course, Alabama has had many great winning seasons, even more than even more storied programs, winning has in fact become ordinary business for the Crimson Tide. While researching for this

book, and for books I have written about several other top American college and /or university football programs, I learned that talent is the most special ingredient of a football player.

Merlin Olson told a story that I heard first-hand about how he knew that if Rosey Greer chose not to fully engage on the very next play, it meant defeat for the team. In the huddle and on the line Olsen was in Greer's head and he performed well and the team won the game. They held. It does not even matter which game. Attitude wins over talent when everybody has talent. That's why Gene Stallings was a great coach!

Take a look at the Fearsome Foursome on the next page. Attitude, Attitude, Attitude. Read about Merlin Olsen when you have a moment. He was another great man and a great football player.



1960's Los Angeles Rams Fearsome Foursome of Merlin Olsen, David "Deacon" Jones, Lamar Lundy, and Roosevelt Greer. Attitude! Attitude!

On December 5, # 2 ranked Alabama played a tough # 12 ranked Florida team home at Legion Field for the SEC Championship Game. It was shown on ABC. Alabama won the championship W 28–21 before an attendance of 83,091.

This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. Here comes a second narrative on the game from bamahammer:

1992 SEC Championship Game, Alabama vs. Florida – The First Conference Championship Game

The inaugural SEC Championship Game was between Alabama and Florida. The 8-3 Gators had nothing to gain but a conference title, while the 11-0 Crimson Tide hoped for a trip to the Sugar Bowl, with a chance to play for the national championship on the line.



Alabama's Derrick Lassic scores one of his two touchdowns in the game

SEC Commissioner Roy Kramer had been criticized for creating a championship game in his newly expanded league. If a team in contention for a title stumbled in the championship game and lost the revenue of a title, what would that do to the league?

Skeptics of the game got a first look at this possibility when undefeated Alabama met three-loss Florida in Birmingham. Alabama beat Florida in dramatic fashion, securing their bowl

game against Miami and reminding everyone that championship teams find ways to win. The format was soon adopted by the Big 12 and eventually all the major football conferences.

Florida quarterback Shane Matthews led the best offense in the SEC, while Alabama's defense was one of the best in the country. As the saying goes, defense wins championships.

The Gators scored first but Alabama responded with 21 unanswered points and led 21-7 in the third quarter. Florida wasn't done yet and scored twice to tie the game. Then Antonio Langham intercepted Shane Matthews for the game-winning touchdown.

The game (and Langham's pick-6) were recently the feature of an episode of SEC Storied, "The Play That Changed College Football." National championship contender Alabama was able to win a game over a quality opponent, which proved that the 12-team conference with a championship game was a valid format for major college football.



Alabama Celebrates After Winning 1992 SEC Championship

On January 1, 1993 at 7:30 p.m. Alabama had the privilege of playing in the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans against #1 ranked Miami for the National Championship. The game was played in the fabulous NO SuperDome. Alabama won the game W 34–13 before a total of 76,789 comfortable football fans.

1993 Sugar Bowl – Defense Really Does Win Championships

This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. Here comes the narrative:

Alabama faced #1 Miami in the Sugar Bowl for the national championship. The result was an emphatic 34–13 Alabama victory that completed the perfect season and won a national championship for the Crimson Tide.

Jay Barker managed only 18 yards passing in the Sugar Bowl and threw two interceptions, but the Tide running game punished Miami for 267 yards, including 135 rushing yards by Derrick Lassic. 1992 Heisman Trophy winner Gino Toretta threw for 278 yards but, critically, also threw three interceptions, all of which led to Alabama touchdowns. Like the Bear would say, it was mostly the student athletes who won the game but Lady Luck showed up on the side of the Tide.

On the opening possession, Alabama drove deep into Miami territory but could not get into the end zone, settling for a Michael Proctor field goal and a 3–0 lead. A 34-yard pass from Toretta to Kevin Williams set up a 49-yard field goal that tied the game. Jay Barker threw an interception in the first quarter that gave Miami the ball at the Alabama 39, but Lamar Thomas fumbled it right back after catching a pass from Toretta and the opportunity was wasted.



1993 Sugar Bowl Alabama v Miami

Barker's second interception killed a drive at the Miami 23 before the first quarter ended. In the second, Alabama drove down to the Miami 1, the key plays being runs of 24 yards and 10 yards by Lassic and a six-yard pass from Barker to Palmer to move the chains on a third down. However, after Lassic's 10-yard run he and Alabama were penalized 15 yards for unsportsmanlike conduct (Lassic had spun the ball on the ground as he got up), and the Tide was pushed back 15 yards.

Alabama settled for another Proctor field goal and a 6–3 lead. Sam Shade intercepted a Toretta pass in the second quarter and returned it to the Miami 31, setting up a five-play drive that ended in a 2-yard TD run by Sherman Williams, putting Alabama ahead 13–3. A late Miami field goal made it 13–6 at the half.

Early in the third, Tommy Johnson intercepted a Toretta pass and returned it 23 yards to the Miami 20-yard line. A Lassic TD followed soon after. On the first play from scrimmage after Lassic's

touchdown, George Teague picked off another Toretta pass and ran it back 31 yards for another touchdown and a 27–6 Alabama lead

Later in the third, Toretta hit Lamar Thomas on what briefly appeared to be an 88-yard touchdown pass. George Teague somehow caught Thomas from behind, so the play briefly appeared to be an 82-yard completion, but instead Teague stripped Thomas of the football.

Miami retained possession of the ball due to an offsides penalty on Alabama, but Teague's feat in catching Thomas and stripping him of the ball prevented a Hurricane touchdown and sent the ball back deep in Miami territory. Miami was forced to punt three plays later.

Kevin Williams ran a punt back 78 yards for Miami in the fourth quarter to cut the deficit to 27–13, but Derrick Lassic's four-yard run with 6:46 to go for his second touchdown of the game closed the scoring. Alabama beat Miami 34–13 and finished 13–0.

It was Alabama's twelfth national championship and seventh by vote of either the AP Poll or Coaches' Poll. It was the first 13–0 season in Alabama history, and it was the eighth perfect season in Alabama history, following the perfect seasons of 1925, 1930, 1934, 1945, 1961, 1966, and 1979 (the 1897 season consisted of a single game which Alabama won).

**1993 Alabama Football Season Gene Stallings Head Coach #24
SEC West Division Champs Gator Bowl Champs**

Nine wins were forfeited and 5 SEC wins forfeited for a rules infraction.

The 1993 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 99th overall and 60th season as a member of NCAA Division I-A football competing in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Western Division. The team was led by head coach Gene Stallings, who was in his fourth season at the position.

Alabama entered the season as the defending national champion, following their victory in the 1993 Sugar Bowl, and ranked #2 in the AP Poll, behind Florida State. Most wins were forfeited. I can't tell that whole story. Sorry!

In 1995, the NCAA found Antonio Langham guilty of receiving improper benefits after signing with an agent following the 1992 season, forcing Alabama to forfeit all games in which Langham competed. Officially, Alabama finished the season with a 1–12 record, only winning their bowl game.

In the Gator Bowl Game on December v #12 North Carolina, # 18 Alabama defeated by the Tar Heels in Jacksonville, FL's Gator Bowl W (24–10) before 67,205

**1994 Alabama Football Season Gene Stallings Head Coach #24
SEC Western Champs; Citrus Bowl Champions; 8-0 SEC record**

The 1994 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 100th overall and 61st season as a member of NCAA Division I-A football competing in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Western Division. The team was led by head coach Gene Stallings, who was in his fifth season at the position. The team played their home games at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

Gene Stallings led the Crimson Tide to a perfect 11–0 regular season, only to see the Crimson Tide lose to the Florida Gators by one point in the SEC Championship Game. Highlights include a win over then unbeaten Auburn, and a dramatic victory over Georgia which is rebroadcast occasionally as part of the ESPN "Classic" series. Alabama beat Ohio State in the 1995 Florida Citrus Bowl to finish their 1994 season with a 12–1 record. 8-0 in the SEC

The Crimson Tide rebounded against #13 Ohio State in the 1995 Citrus Bowl in Orlando, FL with a close win W 24–17 before 71,195 fans. Alabama finished the 1994 season with a phenomenal 12–1 record. 8-0 in the SEC. The team lost one game by just one point and that was the essence of the season results. There are some who still claim this Gene Stalling season was truly as a national championship. That's how I see it.

Citrus Bowl Highlights

The facts for this recap come from

http://www.al.com/sports/index.ssf/2015/01/20_years_ago_the_alabama-ohio.html

On a gray and warm Florida afternoon, two vaunted members of college football's ruling class last collided.

Neither then-No. 6 Alabama nor No. 13 Ohio State had designs on being at the Citrus Bowl on Jan. 2, 1995. Three weeks earlier the Crimson Tide had fallen by one point to Florida in the SEC championship game--it was the only start of quarterback's Jay Barker career he lost after finishing the game upright. The Buckeyes had dropped three of their first nine regular-season games, and come in second in the Big 10 after beating rival Michigan 22-6 that November, a victory that saved the job of coach John Cooper, who signed a new five-year contract days before facing Alabama.

"I remember meeting Jay Barker at an event before the game and I couldn't believe how nice and straight-laced the guy was," says Matt Finkes, a defensive end on that Ohio State team. "A lot of us were out having a good time and enjoying ourselves, but Jay and the rest of the Alabama players were dead serious. I knew right then it was going to be an intense game."

A few hours before the game Finkes, who now hosts a pre- and postgame television show on the ABC affiliate in Columbus, walked onto the playing surface and saw, for the first time, the Alabama team on the opposite sideline. He was thunderstruck: The Tide players were so big the field seemed to tilt in their direction.

The opening whistle blew and the pads started to pop, pop, pop. The first 15 minutes were scoreless, but late in the opening quarter a most unusual sight appeared: galloping through the tunnel that led to Alabama's locker room came a blond-haired dog that was part-German Shepard, part Labrador retriever. For nearly five minutes, play was halted as Leo, the dog, ran around like he was at a neighborhood park, tongue out, evading stadium workers, to the delight of the 70,000-sellout crowd.



OSU v UA Citrus Bowl 1994 Action Shot

Stadium officials later said Leo, who lived a few blocks from the stadium, had walked through the turnstiles and past security, which mistook him for a seeing-eye dog. After being caught, Leo was let go; tail wagging, he showed up at his owner's door shortly after the game ended. His picture appeared in newspapers as far away as London.

Midway through the second quarter, with Ohio State leading 14-7, Finkes was on the field when he noticed five new offensive linemen break the huddle for Alabama, their white jerseys perfectly clean. He looked to Mike Vrabel, the other starting defensive end. "When are our replacements coming?" Finkes joked. At halftime the score was knotted at 14.

"We were used to being the most physical team in every game," Finkes said. "We'd run the ball down your throat with [running back] Eddie George, [linemen] Orlando Pace and Korey Stringer and we'd stop the run-on defense. But after the first quarter of playing Alabama, we all knew they were just as physical as we were."

Neither team scored in the third quarter, as the defenses dominated. With 8:41 to play in the game, Ohio State's Josh Jackson drilled a 34-yard field goal. Four minutes later, the Tide's Michael Proctor split the uprights from 27-yards. Up in the television booth, commentators Mark Jones and Tim Brant rightly called it the most thrilling game of the day.

With 53 seconds remaining and the ball at midfield, Barker dropped back to pass. Ohio State rarely blitzed in the game, but now the Buckeyes sent seven defenders after Barker. Running back Sherman Williams, instead of staying in the backfield to block, ran a four-yard route. Just before Barker was leveled, he rose from the grass and lofted the ball to Williams, who caught it in stride and ran untouched 50 yards down the belly of the field for a touchdown.

"Nine times out of ten, when you blitz like we did on that play the running back will stay in and block, but that obviously wasn't the case," Finkes said. "Sherman came out on [defensive end] Mike Vrabel's side, and there was no way that Vrabel could keep up with him. Just a great play by Jay Barker. I thought he'd be ready when I saw him before the game, and it turns out he was." (Artist Daniel Moore--Alabama's Michelangelo--capture the play for posterity in a painting called, "The Winning Connection.")

Williams, who rushed for 166 yards and caught eight passes for 155 more, eventually handed the ball to his mother in the stands--just as he did when he scored the first touchdown of his Alabama career, against Vanderbilt in 1991.

After the final whistle, Barker, who had finished fourth in the Heisman balloting, ran to the south end zone and saluted the Alabama fans. What a moment it was: The quarterback from Trussville had led a senior class that had seized a national championship, gone 32 games without a loss, and won 45 total games--the most victories by one class in school history.

On the other side of field, Finkes was as sore as he'd ever been after a college football game. "It took me about a week physically recover from that game," said Finkes, a two-time All-American at Ohio

State who would play one year with the New York Jets. "Looking back on it, that Alabama game was draining on both sides."

...

1995 Alabama Football Season Gene Stallings Head Coach #24

The 1995 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 101st overall and 62nd season as a member of NCAA Division I-A football competing in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Western Division. The team was led by head coach Gene Stallings, who was in his sixth season at the position. UA played its home games at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

Gene Stallings led the Crimson Tide to an 8–3 record. Due to NCAA sanctions, no bowl appearance was made.

1996 Alabama Football Season Gene Stallings Head Coach #24

The 1996 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 102nd overall and 63rd season as a member of NCAA Division I-A football competing in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Western Division. The team was led by head coach Gene Stallings, who was in his seventh and last season at the position. Alabama played its home games in two locations -- Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

Gene Stallings led the Crimson Tide to a 10–3 record in his final year with the program. Though many try to deny Stallings his rightful honors, no coach wins every game. Stallings was a fine coach. He won a National Championship and almost another.

Outback Bowl Game Notes:

In only their second meeting ever (both in Tampa), these two college football powerhouses (Michigan and Alabama) gave the fans another exciting game. It would also be the final game for Bama coach Gene Stallings.

The Wolverines tested the Alabama defense repeatedly with solid drives, however, Bama would not break. In what was a day of big

defensive plays, fittingly an Alabama defensive play would change the course of the game.

With Michigan driving deep in Bama territory late in the third quarter, Wolverine QB Brian Griese tried to toss a pass over the blitzing defense when Dwayne Rudd intercepted the pass and returned it 88 yards for the go-ahead touchdown.

The momentum changed instantly. RB Shaun Alexander added a 46-yard TD run in the final period to take an eleven-point lead and The Crimson Tide held-off a Michigan comeback in the final minutes to preserve the win.

Stallings ended his college coaching era with a victory and a ride off the field on his players' shoulders. Overcoming a heartbreaking loss, Brian Griese and the Wolverines would go on to win the national championship the very next season. Roll Tide!

This nice recap on the Gene Stallings era can be had at the below link. It is from Roll Bama Roll. Our grateful thanks are extended. <http://www.rollbamaroll.com/2011/7/15/2268665/gene-stallings>

The Gene Stallings Era In Retrospect

by outsidethesidelines Jul 15, 2011, 10:00am CDT

Source: The Crimson White (Student Newspaper – their perspective of the coach from observation)



Gene Stallings – Quite a Coach

Chapter 15 UA – Pre-Saban – Du Bose, Franchione, & Shula-- 1997-2006

No quotes can describe these mostly poor coaching records

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>SEC</u>
1997	Mike DuBose #25	SEC	4-7-0	2-6-0
1998	Mike DuBose	SEC	7-5-0	4-4-0
1999	Mike DuBose	SEC	10-3-0	7-1-0
2000	Mike DuBose	SEC	3-8-0	3-5-0
2001	D. Franchione #26	SEC	7-5-0	4-4-0
2002	D. Franchione	SEC	10-3-0	6-2-0
2003	Mike Price #27	SEC	5 months ---	No games
2003	Mike Shula #28	SEC	4-9-0	2-6-0
2004	Mike Shula	SEC	6-6-0	3-5-0
2005	Mike Shula	SEC	10-2-0	6-2-0
2005	Shula Sanctions	SEC	0-2-0	0-2-0
2006	Mike Shula	SEC	6-7-0	2-6-0
2006	Joe Kines #29 Interim	SEC	0-1-0	0-0-0



Mike Du Bose with the Alabama Team

1997 Alabama Football Season Mike DuBose Head Coach #25

The 1997 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 103th overall and 64rd season as a member of NCAA Division I-A football, competing in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Western Division. The team was led by head coach Mike DuBose, former Defensive Coordinator, who was in his first season at the position. Alabama played its home games in two locations -- Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

Du Bose's first season could be called a disaster. It was a tough year for the team and the fans. Alabama would finish with a record of 4–7 record and 2-6 in the SEC, in suffering the program's first losing season since the 1984 season. The loss against Kentucky marked Alabama's first ever overtime game, as overtime rules for college football had gone into effect the previous season. Prior to 1996, tie games were kept as ties.

1998 Alabama Football Season Mike DuBose Head Coach #25

The 1998 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 104th overall and 65th season as a member of NCAA Division I-A football, competing in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Western Division. The team was led by head coach Mike DuBose, in his second year with the Crimson Tide. Alabama played its home games in two locations -- Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

This year, the team improved upon a 4–7 record from the 1997 season by finishing the 1998 campaign with a 7–5 record and an appearance in the Music City Bowl. The win against Ole Miss during the season marked Alabama's first ever overtime victory.

1999 Alabama Football Season Mike DuBose Head Coach #25
#8 National Rank; SEC Championship; Orange Bowl Champs

The 1999 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 105th overall and 66th season as a member of NCAA Division I-A football, competing in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Western Division. The team was led by head coach Mike DuBose, in his third year with the Crimson Tide. Alabama continued to play its home games

in two locations -- Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

The DuBose-led team entered the season trying to build upon a 7–5 record from their 1998 season. The 1999 team had tremendous success. After a stunning last second upset loss to Louisiana Tech early in the year, The Tide eventually finished with a 9–2 regular season record (7–1 in the SEC).

This record included defeating Auburn on the road for the first time ever. For much of the 20th century, the game was played every year at Legion Field in Birmingham, with Alabama winning 34 games and Auburn 19. Four games were played in Montgomery, Alabama, with each team winning two. Since 2000, the games have been played at Jordan–Hare Stadium in Auburn every odd-numbered year and in Tuscaloosa every even-numbered year

Alabama went on to the 1999 SEC Championship Game where they defeated Florida for the second time for the year. Alabama then played Michigan in the 2000 Orange Bowl and suffered a heart-breaking 35–34 loss in overtime, due to a missed PAT. Ironically, Alabama had beaten Florida during the regular season by a single point in overtime, also due to a missed

After two poor DuBose-led seasons, this one started well and ended up as a fine season overall.

On Dec 4 Alabama qualified for the 7:00 p.m. SEC Championship Game and defeated #5 Florida to gain the Championship for 1999. Game was played at the Georgia Dome • in Atlanta, GA (SEC Championship Game) W (34–7) before 74,309 fans

This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. Here comes the second narrative from bamahammer:

1999 SEC Championship Game – Gators Again

After a baffling home loss to Louisiana Tech in September, Alabama managed a 9-2 (7-1 SEC) regular season and an SEC West division title.

Florida and Alabama met in the regular season in a game that was an instant classic. Steve Spurrier's #3 Gators were on a 31-game home winning streak and were expected to easily defeat the #21 Crimson Tide. Instead, Alabama won an overtime thriller 40-39 on the back of a four-touchdown performance from Shaun Alexander.



Shaun Alexander makes some yards v Florida in 1999 SEC Championship

Two weeks after the upset in the Swamp, Alabama lost to Tennessee, but the Tide's first win over Auburn on the plains secured Bama's division title and their rematch with Florida.

The rematch was as lopsided as the regular season meeting was thrilling. Florida scored on a four-play opening drive and would be held scoreless for the rest of the game. Alabama's offense was slow to get going, settling for two field goals before finally managing a touchdown in the final minute of the second quarter when Andrew Zow threw a 27-yard touchdown pass.

The Tide continued to roll, including a 4th quarter pick-6 of Florida quarterback Jesse Palmer. Freddie Milons finished the game with 116 rushing yards. The Gators managed only 114 offensive yards.

The 2000 Orange Bowl

On January 1, 2000 in another one-point nail-biter that went the other way, the #5 ranked Crimson Tide faced off against # 8 Michigan at Pro Player Stadium in Miami Gardens, FL in the Orange Bowl on ABC L (34–35) in OT before 70,461

Michigan erased a pair of 14-point deficits in winning a thrilling 35-34 overtime game against Alabama in the 2000 FedEx Orange Bowl at Pro Player Stadium. The Wolverines played in, and won, their first overtime contest in school history. Alabama had already been a few OT games

The game could have gone either way. Alabama had the edge the whole game until the end. With the score knotted at 28 at the end of regulation, Michigan scored on its initial play of overtime when quarterback Tom Brady found tight end Shawn Thompson on a 25-yard TD pass. Kicker Hayden Epstein hit the extra point to give U-M a 35-28 lead, its first of the OT contest.

On Alabama's first possession of overtime, Andrew Zow hit Antonio Carter with a 21-yard TD pass on the second play of the drive. However, Alabama's Ryan Pflugner pushed the extra point attempt wide right and Michigan claimed the victory.

Sophomore wide receiver David Terrell was named Orange Bowl MVP after setting career bests in receiving yards (150) and receiving touchdowns (three) as well as equaling his career-high in receptions (10). Brady capped his career with a career-best four TD passes on 34-of-46 passing for a UM bowl record 369 yards.

During regulation, Michigan trimmed the deficit to 14-7 with 58 seconds left in the first half when Brady hit Terrell on a 27-yard scoring strike.

Michigan held Alabama on its first offensive possession of the second half and marched 59 yards to even the score at 14. The Crimson Tide responded with back-to-back touchdowns from Shaun Alexander and Freddie Milons.

Michigan closed the gap when Brady and Terrell connected on a 20-yard TD pass with 5:42 left in the third quarter. After holding Alabama on its next possession, Michigan tied the game (28-28) as junior tailback Anthony Thomas scored on a three-yard run. Michigan blocked 36-yard Alabama field goal attempt on the final play of regulation. This sent the game into overtime.

2000 Alabama Football Season Mike DuBose Head Coach #25

The 2000 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 106th overall and 67th season as a member of NCAA Division I-A football, competing in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Western Division. The team was led by head coach Mike DuBose, in his fourth and final year with the Crimson Tide. Alabama continued to play its home games in two locations -- Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.



Mike Dubose Coached 2000 Alabama Crimson Tide

The team entered the season trying to build upon a fine 10–3 record from their 1999 season, which included a 34–7 victory in the SEC Championship over the Florida Gators. The 2000 team would not

have the same success. Despite a preseason #3 ranking they eventually finished with a 3–8 record (3–5 in the SEC). It was almost inexplicable. But for sure Coach DuBose got the blame.

Du Bose Resigns as Alabama Football Coach By John Zenor, ABC News, Tuscaloosa, Nov. 1

Alabama coach Mike DuBose, whose team has failed to approach lofty expectations in the fourth year of his turbulent tenure with the Tide, is resigning effective at the end of the season.

Athletic director Mal Moore made the announcement at a news conference today.

“We both agreed that new leadership is needed to move the program forward,” Moore said.

Moore said DuBose would be paid his salary and benefits through January 2002 — one year beyond his stepping down as head coach — and there would be “no lump sum payment.”

DuBose, 47, a former Alabama player and longtime assistant coach, is under contract through Jan. 31, 2004. His total annual compensation is \$525,000.

...

2001 Alabama Football Season Dennis Franchione Head Coach #26 Independence Bowl Champs

The 2001 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 107th overall and 68th season as a member of NCAA Division I-A football, competing in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Western Division. The team was led by head coach Dennis Franchione, in his first season with the Crimson Tide. Alabama continued to play its home games in two locations -- Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. The team

finished with a victory in the 2001 Independence Bowl and an overall record of 7–5.



Coach Dennis Franchione

2002 Alabama Football Season Dennis Franchione Head Coach #26 SEC West Championship

The 2002 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 108th overall and 69th season as a member of NCAA Division I-A football, competing in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Western Division. The team was led by head coach Dennis Franchione, in his second and final season with the Crimson Tide.

Alabama continued to play its home games in two locations -- Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

They finished the season with a record of 10–3 (6–2 in the SEC) to finish in first place in the SEC West; however, the team was ineligible to compete in the 2002 SEC Championship Game or a bowl game due to a two-year postseason ban imposed as part of the penalty for National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) violations.

The team was led by second-year head coach Dennis Franchione.

2003 Alabama Football Season Mike Price Head Coach #27 – 5 mos.

2003 Alabama Football Season Mike Shula Head Coach #28

The 2003 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 109th overall and 70th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 12th season within the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Mike Shula in his first-season with the Crimson Tide. Alabama continued to play its home games in two locations -- Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of four wins and nine losses (4–9, 2–6 in the SEC).

Season Introduction

At the conclusion of the 2002 season, as noted above, Dennis Franchione resigned as head coach and took the same position with Texas A&M. After a two-week-long coaching search, Washington State head coach Mike Price was hired as Franchione's replacement as UA's 27th Head Coach. Price then signed the 2003 recruiting class and led the Crimson Tide through spring practice. However, he was fired in May 2003 due to detrimental conduct as an employee of the University. Less than a week later, Mike Shula was hired as Alabama's 28th head coach.

NCAA sanctions

The 2003 season was still impacted by sanctions imposed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) for violations that dated back as far as the late 1990s. On February 1, 2002, the NCAA lowered the boom. It imposed a two-year bowl ban; a reduction in athletic scholarships of 21 over a three-year period; and five years of probation.

Why would the NCAA do this? The NCAA sanctioned the University after they found 11 major violations and five minor ones as part of their investigation that included boosters who provided players and coaches with improper benefits in violation of NCAA rules.

On September 17, 2002, the NCAA rejected Alabama's appeal to reduce the severity of the sanctions. At the same time, the NCAA noted that it felt that the sanctions were quite appropriate. The bottom line was that it was only because of the cooperation of the University that the death penalty for the football program was not considered. Quite frankly, that is why so many fans and pundits find the NCAA quite often to exercise outrageous behavior.

The appeal was thus denied. And, so, for the 2003 season Alabama saw a smaller recruiting class and was ineligible for both the 2003 SEC Championship Game and for post-season bowl games. The latter penalty would end up essentially being meaningless due to the Tide's poor record during this period (4-9).

Dennis Franchione Resigns – One more look

In the post Bear Bryant Era and the Pre-Nick Saban Era, the 23 years from 1983 through 2006, Alabama had a tough time retaining coaches for a long duration. Gene Stalling's seven years at the helm—1990-1996 made him the only coach who lasted more than four years during this period.

With Franchione resigning after just two years and Price out even before the 2003 season began, Alabama's bad luck in coach retention continued. Mike Shula, in his first year this year, would last just four years. Four years had become the norm.

It was quite late in the 2002 season, when rumors got loud about head coach Dennis Franchione being ready to resign from Alabama to take the head coaching position with Texas A&M. The rumors as most rumors are, were true. On December 2, 2002, A&M head coach R. C. Slocum was fired after he served 14 seasons in the position. Three days later, Franchione left Tuscaloosa and formally accepted the Aggies coaching vacancy on December 6.

Immediately after the resignation of Franchione, athletic director Mal Moore started the search for his replacement. In the week of December 9, South Florida head coach Jim Leavitt was interviewed and then New Orleans Saints assistant coach Mike Riley was

actually offered the Alabama coaching position, which he later declined.

After Riley turned down the position, Moore considered several other candidates. Included in the search were head coaches Les Miles of Oklahoma State, Rich Rodriguez of West Virginia and Mike Price of Washington State. On December 17, Price was officially named as the new head coach for the Crimson Tide. Price did not fully assume his duties as head coach until January 4, after he coached Washington State in the 2003 Rose Bowl. Price appeared to be a good pick but he was let go in May for violations of Alabama conduct guidelines.

2004 Alabama Football Season Mike Shula Head Coach #28

The 2004 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 110th overall and 71st season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 13th season within the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Mike Shula in his second season with the Crimson Tide. Alabama stopped playing home games in two locations -- Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

This year, home games were played only in Bryant-Denny Stadium. The 2004 squad finished the season with a record of 6–6 following a loss to Minnesota in the Music City Bowl.
(6-6, 3-5 in the SEC).

The Music City Bowl Highlights

After finishing the regular season with an overall record of 6–5, the Crimson Tide on December 4, accepted an invitation to play in the Music City Bowl. The appearance was just the second for Alabama in the game. It also the first all-time meeting against the Minnesota Golden Gophers on the gridiron and a return to postseason play for the Crimson Tide following a two-year bowl ban imposed by the NCAA. Led by running backs Marion Barber III and Laurence Maroney who each rushed for over 100 yards, Minnesota defeated Alabama 20–16.

The Crimson Tide scored first when Spencer Pennington threw a two-yard touchdown pass to Le'Ron McClain for a 7–0 Alabama advantage. The Gophers tied the game later in the first on a defensive touchdown. The score happened after Anthony Montgomery forced a Pennington fumble that was recovered in the end zone by Keith Lipka.

Minnesota took a 17–7 lead in the second quarter after a five-yard Barber touchdown run and a 27-yard Rhys Lloyd field goal. The Crimson Tide responded with a one-yard McClain touchdown run to cut the Minnesota lead to 17–14 at halftime. The second half was dominated by both defenses with Minnesota only managing to score on a 24-yard Lloyd field goal in the third and Alabama only scoring on a safety in the fourth to make the final score L (20–16) in favor of Minnesota.

2005 Alabama Football Season Mike Shula Head Coach #28 Cotton Bowl Champs

The 2005 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 111th overall and 72nd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 14th season within the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Mike Shula in his third season with the Crimson Tide.

All Alabama home games were played at the revitalized Bryant-Denny Stadium on the campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The 2005 squad finished the season with a record of 10-2, 6-2 in the SEC before Sanctions.

Cotton Bowl Notes

On December 4 officials from the Cotton Bowl announced their 2006 contest would feature the Crimson Tide competing against the Texas Tech Red Raiders of the Big 12 Conference. In a game that featured the nation's number one passing offense of Texas Tech against the nation's number one scoring defense of Alabama, the Crimson Tide won 13–10.

Alabama scored its only touchdown of the game on just its second offensive play when Brodie Croyle threw a 76-yard touchdown pass to Keith Brown for a 7–0 lead. The Red Raiders responded later in

the quarter with a 34-yard Alex Trlica field goal to cut the lead to 7–3.

A scoreless second quarter saw the only scoring opportunities coming on a trio of failed field goal attempts. Alabama's Jamie Christensen missed a 39-yard field goal and the second blocked by Chris Hudler and recovered by Dwayne Slay. The Red Raiders' Trlica had a 37-yard field goal blocked by Mark Anderson as time expired to give Alabama the 7–3 halftime lead.

Christensen extended the Alabama lead to 10–3 early in the third quarter with his 31-yard field goal. Texas Tech then tied the game up at 10–10 late in the fourth quarter after Cody Hodges threw a 12-yard touchdown pass to Jarrett Hicks. The Crimson Tide responded on the following drive with Christensen kicking the game-winning field goal from 45-yards out as time expired to give Alabama the W (13–10) victory. Roll Tide!



Awards & Sanctions

Following the SEC Championship Game, the conference named its award winners. DeMeco Ryans was named by the coaches' as the SEC Defensive Player of the Year. Kenneth Darby, Roman Harper and Ryans were named to the Coaches' All-SEC First Team. Mark Anderson, Tyrone Prothro and Freddie Roach were named to the

Coaches' All-SEC Second Team. Antoine Caldwell, B. J. Stabler, Nick Walker and Bobby Greenwood were named to the 2005 Freshman All-SEC Team. In addition to his conference awards, Ryans was also named to the 2005 College Football All-America Team by AFCA and the Associated Press. He also won the Lott Trophy for 2005 season.

The NCAA sanctions finally took their tool. As noted several times in this book, in October 2007, the athletic department discovered a potential NCAA-violation present throughout the athletics program. The violations stemmed from athletes from several sports, including football, receiving improper benefits as a result of a failure in the distribution system of textbooks to student athletes from the university.

In essence, student athletes received textbooks for classes that they were not taking. Although it was not admitted that any excess textbooks amounted to an improper payment, it was possible that some athletes signed up for classes, received free textbooks, and then sold the textbooks. After a prolonged investigation, in June 2009 the NCAA ruled all athletes that received improper benefits related to the textbook distribution system were deemed ineligible.

As such, as part of the penalties imposed on the football program, all victories, which those included in the inquiry participated, were officially vacated from the all-time record. The penalty to vacate victories does not result in a loss (or forfeiture) of the affected contests or award a victory to the opponent.

As such, all ten victories from the 2005 season (Middle Tennessee, Southern Mississippi, South Carolina, Arkansas, Florida, Ole Miss, Tennessee, Utah State, Mississippi State and Texas Tech) were vacated making the official record for the season zero wins and two losses (0–2).

2006 Alabama Football Season Mike Shula Head Coach #28

2006 Alabama Football Season Joe Kines Head Coach #29

The NCAA destroyed Alabama's season with sanctions this year.

The 2006 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 112th overall and 73nd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference

(SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 15th season within the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Mike Shula in his fourth and final season with the Crimson Tide. Joe Kines, the Tides “D” Coordinator coached the Independence Bowl game after Shula was fired. Alabama lost the game L (31-34) v Oklahoma State.

After the Auburn regular season loss, Shula was fired as head coach and defensive coordinator Joe Kines served as interim head coach for the bowl game.

Independence Bowl Notes

With Joe Kines serving as interim head coach for the 2006 edition of the Independence Bowl, the Crimson Tide were defeated by the Oklahoma State Cowboys 34–31.

Post Season

Following the Independence Bowl loss, on January 3, 2007, Alabama announced that Nick Saban was hired from the Miami Dolphins to serve as the programs 30th head coach.

In the weeks that followed, Saban worked to fill his staff for the 2007 season. As part of the A-Day (Spring Football) celebrations on April 21, 2007, the 2006 team captains Le’Ron McClain and Juwan Simpson were honored at the Walk of Fame ceremony at the base of Denny Chimes.

Following the SEC Championship Game, the conference named its award winners. Simeon Castille was named to the Coaches' All-SEC First Team. D. J. Hall and Antoine Caldwell were named to the Coaches' All-SEC Second Team. Andre Smith, Prince Hall and punter P. J. Fitzgerald were named to the 2006 Freshman All-SEC Team. Prince Hall was also named the SEC Defensive Freshman of the Year by The Sporting News.

More info on the NCAA sanctions

As we have previously noted, in October 2007, the athletic department discovered a potential NCAA-violations present throughout the athletics program. The violations stemmed from athletes from several sports, including football, receiving improper benefits as a result of a failure in the distribution system of textbooks to student athletes from the university.

After a prolonged investigation, in June 2009 the NCAA ruled all athletes that received improper benefits related to the textbook distribution system were deemed ineligible. As such, as part of the penalties imposed on the football program, all victories which those included in the inquiry participated, were officially vacated from the all-time record. In this book, we opted to show the on-field results.

Chapter 16 Alabama Football – The Nick Saban Era 2007-2017, etc.

“There are two pains in life. There is the pain of discipline and the pain of disappointment. If you can handle the pain of discipline, then you'll never have to deal with the pain of disappointment.”

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>SEC</u>
2007	Nick Saban # 30	SEC	7-6-0	4-4-0
2008	Nick Saban	SEC	12-2-0	8-0-0
2009*	Nick Saban	SEC	14-0-0	8-0-0
2010	Nick Saban	SEC	10-3-0	5-3-0
2011*	Nick Saban	SEC	12-1-0	7-1-0
2012*	Nick Saban	SEC	13-1-0	7-1-0
2013	Nick Saban	SEC	11-2-0	7-1-0
2014	Nick Saban	SEC	12-2-0	7-1-0
2015*	Nick Saban	SEC	14-1-0	7-1-0
2016	Nick Saban	SEC	15-0-0	8-0-0
2017*	Nick Saban	SEC	13-1-0	7-1-0
2018	Nick Saban	SEC	14-1-0	8-0-0

* Championships



Nick Saban Leads Alabama Football Team onto the Field

We extend a big thank you to al.com for this great piece provided below on Nick Saban as he took over the reins of what had been a floundering Alabama Football Program. Nick Saban may not wrestle bears but he knows how to handle a ton of huge men—brutes for sure—who want to play great football for Alabama.

This fully copied and well attributed piece is a great perspective on the state of affairs at Alabama at the time and it is aptly titled. I hope this is OK as I did not get permission to run it. It is too good to leave on the shelf. Look at the title and smile. If Kevin wants me to remove this from the book I will. You can always get it from his web site. I hurried this book up to get it out as most pundits expect Alabama to win another championship in January, 2020. But, that may not happen but we sure hope it does. Kevin's words will always be out there even if not here depending on what he thinks. This is a classic well-written Alabama article regardless.

The day Rich Rodriguez said no to Alabama, Nick Saban said yes

By Kevin Scarbinsky | kscarbinsky@al.com

December 08, 2016 at 1:02 PM, updated December 08, 2016 at 1:13 PM

KEVIN SCARBINSKY COLUMNS

The day Rich Rodriguez said no to Alabama, Nick Saban said yes

Dec. 8, 2006, is not a date which will live in infamy in Alabama football history. Instead Dec. 8, 2006 is a date which should be remembered in this state as Rich Rod Day.

It's not a stretch to suggest that Rich Rodriguez did almost as much for Crimson Tide football as anyone who doesn't have a statue on the Walk of Champions.

And all he did was say no.

No to following Mike Shula as the Alabama coach after the 2006 season. No to accepting the Alabama job at the perfect moment in the program's history.

Because he said no, Nick Saban was able to say yes. That very same day.

Not completely, not directly and not in any detail, but the day the Rodriguez door closed for Alabama, the Saban door re-opened. More on that forgotten part of the story in a minute.

Had Rodriguez said yes, had he signed off on the deal his agent and Alabama had reached in principle, there's no way to know exactly where Alabama football would be today, but here's a hypothesis.

There's no way Alabama is celebrating its fifth SEC championship in the last 10 years and preparing for a playoff run at its fifth national title in this decade of dominance. There's no way Rodriguez is still the Alabama coach. [Note: Alabama got its fifth on January 8, 2018, and we're looking for #6 in January 2020].

What really happened between Alabama, Rich Rod 10 years ago

Looking back at the moment Rich Rodriguez turned down Alabama 10 years ago, and the long-lasting impacts of that decision.

He didn't get the job done in three years at Michigan, where he had a losing record, and he's not getting it done after five years at Arizona, where he's yet to lose fewer than four games in a single season and is coming off a dud of 3-9 overall and 1-8 in the Pac-12.

It's impossible to imagine how he could've lasted in the cutthroat SEC as long as Saban has or approached Saban's incomparable record of success.

It's fun to look back on the series of events that put Rodriguez so close to the big office in Tuscaloosa. It was a historic coaching search that lasted more than a month, a story that was maddening and fascinating to chase at the time.

As we reported four days before Shula was fired, Alabama targeted Saban early. The first time Saban's agent, Jimmy Sexton, mentioned the possibility to him, Saban got angry. Not because he wasn't interested in returning to the college game. Because he didn't want to deal with distractions during his NFL season with the Miami Dolphins.

Despite his public denials, Saban privately was intrigued by the idea of becoming the Alabama coach. His camp conveyed that interest to the Alabama camp, but some Alabama decision-makers got cold feet.

They feared, if they agreed to Saban's demand to wait until after his NFL season ended, he might back out in the end, and they'd be left at the altar as they had been in previous searches by the likes of Butch Davis and Mike Riley.

So, Alabama turned to Rodriguez. On Rich Rod Day, with West Virginia supporters up to and including the governor showering him with love and inducements to stay, Rodriguez turned Alabama down.

Some athletics directors would've panicked. Not Mal Moore. That same day, as he realized the Rodriguez deal was falling apart, the Alabama AD turned back to his original target. As we reported at the time, a member of Moore's camp quickly reached out to Saban's camp to see if Saban was still interested in the Alabama job. Would it not be nice to have a camp?

Saban was at practice with the Dolphins at the time. Afterward, he returned a message and let Sexton know he was very much still interested. One person familiar with that conversation told me at the time that Saban said, "They wouldn't be in this mess if they'd listened to us. Get me the dang job."

Or words to that effect. Sexton communicated Saban's interest to Alabama that day, which turned out to be the bigger news on Rich Rod Day.

Here's the first line from my Dec. 9, 2006, column in The Birmingham News: Don't be shocked if the University of Alabama's long and winding search for a new head football coach ends up right where it began. At the doorstep of Nick Saban.

There would be more twists and turns from there to the journey's end, but Rich Rod Day was momentous in two ways. Alabama football got rejected by a coach who wasn't its first or best choice - and got encouraged to stay the course by the coach who was.

End of quote

Nick Saban is not only a great coach. Like the Bear before him, he is also quite a man. It is now time that we explore the obvious as well as the mysteries of the Nick Saban era here at Alabama. The date of completion for this book is January 9, 2017. I waited until Alabama won the national Championship to complete this book. Until Alabama plays again, this book right now ends with a big happy period---● Amen! Roll Tide!

2007 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30

The 2007 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 113th overall and 74th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 16th season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban, a former head coach of rival LSU. This was Nick Saban's first of many seasons with the Crimson Tide.

All Alabama home games today and in the foreseeable future are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The 2007 squad tried to improve from a disappointing 6-7 record with a 4-4 record in the SEC before sanctions. Nothing in life worth having is easy. So, it was with Mr. Saban's first year; but he did fine.

Despite a strong 6-2 start, the team finished out the season by losing four of its final five games. Alabama thus closed the regular season

at 6–6 (4–4, SEC) and they lost for a sixth-straight time to rival Auburn. Nick Saban had a baptism of fire as expectations were high; but he was up to it. He took notes on everything and he took notes on losing games and did not like reading them back to himself, so he fixed the problems.

The Tide ended the season positively by defeating Colorado in the 2007 Independence Bowl 30–24 to finish its first season under Nick Saban at a 7–6 overall with an SEC record of (4–4).

Alabama had 18 returning starters from the previous season for 2007, including nine on offense, five on defense, and four on special teams. The most notable departures from the previous year were Kenneth Darby and Le'Ron McClain on offense and Dominic Lee, Jeremy Clark, Juwan Simpson, Terrence Jones, Jeffrey Dukes and Ramzee Robinson on defense. It was up to Nick Saban to bring the returning players and the new players around to his kind of no-nonsense football.

Nick Saban's Crimson Tide offense returned all three quarterbacks at the top of the depth chart, including starter John Parker Wilson. The entire starting offensive line returned, anchored by freshman All-American Andre Smith, along with reinforcements by the top four tight ends from the 2006 depth chart.

Alabama's receiving unit was led by its wide receivers D. J. Hall, who broke nearly every Alabama-receiving record in school history in 2006 even without Nick Saban.

The Alabama defense returned five starters for 2007, based on the 3–3–5 scheme that was run in 2006. The Tide in 2007 had a new starting nose tackle, outside linebacker, strong-side linebacker, cornerback, and a starting safety. Nick Saban's to-be team was ready for business when the season began in 2007.

Examine the games of 2007, you will notice a few things but the most prominent notion is that no game was lost by more than one touchdown. Several games were lost by less than a touchdown. Another thing you will notice is that after losing its last four games of the regular season by no more than a touchdown, Alabama pulled

itself up by the bootstraps and with determination, won the Independence Bowl against a rugged Colorado Buffaloes team.

In accordance with SEC Conference rules, Alabama's official schedule had to assure that they faced all five Western Division opponents: Arkansas, Auburn, LSU, Mississippi State, and Ole Miss. They also faced three Eastern Division opponents: official SEC rival Tennessee, Georgia, and Vanderbilt. Alabama did not play SEC opponents Florida, Kentucky and South Carolina. Alabama also played four non-conference games each year for the fun of football.

As you will soon see, head coach Nick Saban brought life to Alabama's program and to those who had continually been disappointed over the years. There was reason for hope and Saban as you will see delivered on the expectations. Despite many disappointments over the past 20 + years, the fans had some level of patience, a rare gift for a fan. Nick Saban had support as he was molding the future of Alabama football in front of our eyes.

Look at how lasting the Saban mold has become. Nobody likes being beaten by a professional caliber Saban-coached team, yet all friend and foe alike credit Mr. Saban with being one of the best coaches that ever lived. He knows the secrets of the ages. He may not be Bear but Bear would love him.

Getting a Coach

On January 3, 2007, Alabama announced that Nick Saban was hired from the Miami Dolphins to serve as the program's 27th head coach. In the weeks that followed, Saban worked to fill his staff. The first hires came on January 9 with Kirby Smart hired from the Dolphins to serve as defensive coordinator; Kevin Steele from Florida State to serve as head defensive coach; and Lance Thompson from Central Florida to serve as linebacker's coach.

On January 11, Joe Pendry of the Houston Texans was hired to serve as an assistant head and linebackers coach. On January 12 Saban hired two more assistants. Ron Middleton was hired from the Tampa Bay Buccaneers to serve as both the tight ends and special

teams coach and Bo Davis from the Dolphins was hired as defensive line coach. On January 13, Major Applewhite was hired from Rice to serve as both offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach.

On January 16 Burton Burns was hired from Clemson to serve as both associate head and running backs coach. On February 19 Curt Cignetti was hired from NC State to serve as both receiver's coach and recruiting coordinator to fill the final position on Saban's inaugural coaching staff.

Head coach Nick Saban entered his first year as Bama's head coach for the 2007 season and there are few who do not admire his work

The Alabama–LSU football rivalry

In the game dubbed "Saban Bowl I", in which Nick Saban's new Alabama team faced a LSU Tigers team that featured several players that Saban himself had recruited during his tenure in Baton Rouge, the Tide found itself in an SEC shootout, but lost 41–34.



Alabama struck first with a 36-yard Leigh Tiffin field goal. However, the Tigers then scored 17 unanswered points. After Colt David connected on a 43-yard field goal to tie the game at 3–3.

Matt Flynn connected with Early Doucet for a ten-yard touchdown reception and Jacob Hester scored from one-yard out to give LSU a

17–3 lead early in the second quarter. Alabama responded with 17 points in the second quarter, and the Crimson Tide led 20–17 at halftime.

The third quarter saw no scoring until the last two minutes. With 1:19 left, Keith Brown caught a 14-yard touchdown pass from Wilson to make the score 27–17. The Tigers quickly responded on their next drive when Flynn threw a 61-yard touchdown pass to Demetrius Byrd to bring the Tigers back to within three points of Bama.

Then, with 11:21 left in the game, Colt David kicked a 49-yard field goal to tie it up 27–27. The Crimson Tide took a 34–27 lead when Javier Arenas returned a punt for a 61-yard touchdown. With 2:49 left, LSU was able to tie the game again when Flynn threw a 32-yard touchdown pass to Doucet. It appeared the game might go into overtime until Wilson fumbled the ball and LSU recovered on the Alabama four-yard line. Two plays later, Hester ran it in for the game-winning touchdown to make the score 41–34.

The 2007 Independence Bowl Highlights

After a four-game slide to end a once promising season, Alabama defeated the Colorado Buffaloes in the 2007 Independence Bowl 30–24 to finish the season with an overall record of 7–6.

Alabama scored on its opening drive on a 41-yard Leigh Tiffin field goal to lead 3–0. Colorado's first offensive play of the game resulted in an interception by Rolando McClain. Alabama got another field goal from Tiffin to push their lead to 6–0. Later in the quarter, John Parker Wilson threw touchdown strikes of 15-yards to Keith Brown and 34-yards to Matt Caddell to push the Tide lead to 20–0 after one quarter. Colorado cut the Alabama lead to 27–14 at the half on a pair of Cody Hawkins touchdown passes.



Alabama's Roy Upchurch takes to the air v Colorado during the Independence Bowl.

The only score in the third quarter would come from Kevin Eberhart on a 39-yard Colorado field goal. Tiffin kicked a field goal as the Crimson Tide lead 30–17 with just over four minutes remaining in the game. Colorado came back on the following drive with a 14-yard Hawkins touchdown pass to DeVree to cut the Alabama lead to 30–24 with 3:51 remaining in the game.

Alabama ran the clock down, and after receiving the 49-yard P.J. Fitzgerald punt, only 0:01 remained in the game. On the final play of the game, Colorado attempted several lateral passes but fell short of midfield. The 30–24 victory sent Alabama to a 7–6 overall record as they avoided a second consecutive losing season.

2008 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #29
Western SEC Division Champs; Sugar Bowl Champs

The 2007 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 114th overall and 75th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 17th season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his second year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The 2008 squad improved substantially from the 7-6 record 4-4 in the SEC.

Alabama finished 2008 with an undefeated 12–0 regular season, their first since 1994. They won their first SEC Western Division Championship since 1999. They finished the season with a record of 12–2 (8–0 in the SEC) after losses to Florida in the SEC Championship Game and to Utah in the Sugar Bowl. There was no national championship but there were a lot of cigars and a lot of victories.

In February 2008, Alabama signed the No. 1 recruiting class per both Rivals and Scout. Spring practice began on March 13 and concluded with the annual A-Day game on April 12. Before a crowd of 78,200, the Crimson team defeated the White team by a score of 24–14 in Bryant–Denny Stadium. For their performances, Alfred McCullough earned the Dwight Stephenson Lineman of the A-Day Game Award and Terry Grant earned the Dixie Howell Memorial Most Valuable Player of the A-Day Game

On Sept 27, The Crimson Tide upset No. 3 Georgia at Athens W (41-30) and moved into the #2 ranking.

This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. Here comes the narrative from bamahammer:

2008 Georgia—The Black Out

The third ranked Georgia Bulldogs were flying high. After a road win over South Carolina to open SEC play and a big non-conference win at Arizona State, they returned home to face #8 Alabama.

College Gameday was in town. Lee Corso picked the Bulldogs with his headgear pick. Georgia was wearing black jerseys for just the third time in school history. They were ready to have the season of a lifetime, and they wanted everyone to know what they were doing.

But nobody cleared that plan with Nick Saban.

Instead of letting the Bulldogs announce their intentions for the season, Nick Saban had his coming out party.

Alabama got the ball first, and a 7-yard Mark Ingram touchdown run completed a 73-yard drive. Georgia was held scoreless in the first half and the Tide just kept coming with touchdowns by Glen Coffee, Roy Upchurch, and Julio Jones. At halftime, Bama lead 31-0.

Georgia scored 10 in the third quarter to come back within three scores, but the Tide poured on ten more points and the final score of 41-30 looks much closer than this game ever was.



Eryk Anders makes a nice hit v a Georgia Player

Even believers in Nick Saban had expected it to take him more than two years to turn the Tide into even a shadow of what the powerhouse program had been under Bear Bryant, but after big wins over Clemson and Georgia in the first half of the 2008 season, even the most skeptical eyes were turned on Tuscaloosa.

2009 Sugar Bowl Highlights

After falling to the eventual national champion Florida Gators in the SEC Championship Game, the Crimson Tide were selected with an

at-large bid to play in the 2009 Sugar Bowl against the Mountain West Conference champion Utah Utes. Before the game, Alabama's All-American left tackle Andre Smith was suspended.

Utah took a big 21–0 lead in the first quarter and did not give it up for the rest of the game. The Utes scored first on a seven-yard Brent Casteel reception from Brian Johnson, second on a two-yard Matt Asiata run and third on an 18-yard Bradon Godfrey reception from Johnson. Alabama responded and cut the lead to 21–10 at the half after a 52-yard Leigh Tiffin field goal and a 73-yard Javier Arenas punt return for a touchdown.

The Crimson Tide brought the score to 21–17 early in the third when John Parker Wilson threw a four-yard touchdown reception to Glen Coffee. However, Utah closed the game with ten unanswered points on a 28-yard David Reed touchdown reception from Johnson and a 28-yard Louie Sakoda field goal to secure their 31–17 victory.

2009 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30
National Champions; SEC Champions

The 2009 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 115th overall and 76th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 18th season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his third year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. At 14-0; 8-0 SEC, and National Champions, the 2009 squad improved substantially from the prior year's 12-2 record 4-4 in the SEC.

Looking to build on the successes of the 12-2 2008 campaign, Alabama entered the 2009 season as the favorite to win the Western Division and meet the Florida Gators in the 2009 SEC Championship Game. Alabama closed the regular season with a 12–0 record including four wins against Top 25-ranked teams—and met the Gators for the SEC Championship in a rematch of the 2008 contest. Alabama was victorious by a final score of 32–13. The following day, final Bowl Championship Series (BCS) standings were unveiled. No. 1 ranked Alabama would meet No. 2 ranked Texas for the BCS National Championship. In the BCS National

Championship Game, the Crimson Tide defeated the Longhorns 37–21 to capture their first-ever BCS Championship.

Alabama earned their third SEC championship since the inception of the SEC Championship Game in 1992, and their 22nd SEC title. The victory over Texas gave Alabama their 13th national championship in football (their eighth wire service title since the AP Poll began in 1936) and their ninth perfect season since 1925. The season included victories over the previous three national champions: Florida, Louisiana State University (LSU), and Texas.

The season marked the first time a player for Alabama won the Heisman Trophy: Mark Ingram won the award over Stanford running back Toby Gerhart. Other award winners included Rolando McClain, who won the Butkus Award and the Jack Lambert Award, and defensive coordinator Kirby Smart, who won the Broyles Award as the nation's top assistant coach. Also, six players were named to various All-America Teams with Terrence Cody, Mike Johnson, and Javier Arenas being consensus selections and Ingram and McClain each being unanimous selections.

Games of the 2009 Season

On Sept 5 # 7 Virginia Tech played the #5 UA team at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA in the Chick-fil-A Kickoff Game W (34–24). Then on Sept 12, Florida International lost big at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (40–14) before 92,012. On Sept 19, North Texas lost big to UA at home W (53–7). On Sept 26 Arkansas made the trip to Bryant–Denny Stadium to be beaten by #3 Alabama W (35–7).

The recap of the season's games gets a little boring as Alabama brought the bacon home every game. Such as the game on Oct 3 v Kentucky at Commonwealth Stadium • Lexington, KY W (38–20), and the game on Oct 10 at #20 Ole Miss at Vaught–Hemingway Stadium in Oxford, MS W (22–3). On Oct 17, another win at home v #22 South Carolina at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (W 20–6). Then on Oct 24 on the (Third Saturday in October) UA just got by Tennessee at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (12-0).

This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. Here comes the second narrative by bamahammer:

2009 Tennessee – Rocky Block

The Alabama Crimson Tide was supposed to be unchallenged by first year head coach Lane Kiffin's Tennessee Volunteers. Instead, a sluggish offense set up a defensive struggle and a dramatic finish.

After coming into the season as an unknown at quarterback, Greg McElroy took over the starting job after the graduation of three-year starter John Parker Wilson. McElroy had a great September and went from potential problem to one of the most efficient passers in the SEC.

Then October came, and as the Tide got into the toughest stretch of their schedule, Greg McElroy started to struggle. He came into the Tennessee game not having thrown a touchdown in either of his last two starts. Mark Ingram had entered the national spotlight during McElroy's struggles, but the Volunteers had success containing Ingram.

Bama couldn't move the ball on its first two drives. An interception by Mark Barron gave the offense favorable field position, and instead of a punt Alabama was able to kick a field goal and take a 3-0 lead. Tennessee responded with a field goal, then Leigh Tiffin kicked two more and Tennessee missed one late in the second quarter. Alabama led 9-3 at the half.

Early in the fourth quarter, Tennessee's short field goal attempt to bring the score to 9-6 was blocked by Terrence Cody. Leigh Tiffin hit a long field goal on the next Bama possession to bring the Tide's lead to 12-3.

Then Mark Ingram lost his first career fumble, giving the Volunteers the ball near midfield with 3:29 to play. Tennessee scored on an 11-yard touchdown pass. The Volunteers successfully recovered an onside kick down 12-10. Tennessee set

up for a 45-yard field goal as time expired, but Terrence Cody came up with his second block of the quarter to preserve a 12-10 Alabama win.



On the game's last play, Daniel Lincoln's 44 field-goal attempt was blocked, far right, by Alabama's Terrence Cody. Cody blocked two field-goal attempts.

LSU came to Bryant Denny next. They were defeated by a #3 Bama team W (24–15). Next, on Nov 14 at Mississippi State's Davis Wade Stadium in Starkville, MS, #3 Alabama beat the Bulldogs W (31-3). On Nov 21 at Bryant Denny v Chattanooga, Alabama prevailed again in a shutout W (45-0). Finally, on Nov 27, Nick Saban got another chance to win another Iron Bowl, and Alabama brought home the victory over Auburn W (26-21) in another hard-fought battle.

This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. Here comes a more complete narrative from bamahammer:

2009 Iron Bowl – The Drive

With just one win over Auburn since 2002, the Tide traveled to the Plains to try to finish their second straight perfect regular season. First year coach Gene Chizik's Tigers were more than ready to play. After forcing an Alabama punt on their first

possession, Auburn scored on a 67-yard reverse to go up 7-0. It was the longest touchdown play Alabama had allowed under Nick Saban.

Auburn kicked off with an onside kick, recovered, and scored another touchdown on that possession to go up 14-0 in the first quarter. The Tide was on their heels, trailing by two possessions for the first time in the 2009 season.

Alabama responded with two second quarter touchdowns, and the teams went into the locker room at the half tied at 14 points each.

Auburn used another long touchdown early in the third quarter to gain another lead. Two drives ending in Leigh Tiffin field goals had Alabama down 21-20 at the end of the third.

With under 9 minutes to go in the game, Alabama got the ball on their own 21. Greg McElroy then led a 15-play drive to march 79 yards into the endzone and eat over 7 minutes of clock. McElroy completed seven straight passes, including the 4-yard touchdown pass to senior Roy Upchurch. Up 26-21, Alabama attempted the two-point conversion but did not convert.



Alabama's Roy Upchurch (5) reacts after scoring on a 4-yard pass from quarterback Greg McElroy late in the fourth quarter of an NCAA college football game against Auburn at Jordan-Hare Stadium in Auburn, Ala., Friday, Nov. 27, 2009. At right is Auburn's Neiko Thorpe (15). Alabama won 26-21. (AP Photo/Dave Martin)

Leigh Tiffin kicked off to Auburn. The Tigers made it to midfield quickly, but were unable to get within range. The time ran out on the Tigers comeback and the Tide's dreams of an undefeated matchup with Florida were a reality.

Alabama had won the Western Division SEC and so on Dec 5, the #2 Crimson Tide played a tough #1 ranked Florida team at 3:00 PM before a national audience and they won convincingly over the Gators at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA in the SEC Championship Game W (32-13).

This SEC Championship Game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. Here comes the narrative from bamahammer:

2009 SEC Championship Game, Alabama vs. Florida

After an embarrassing defeat at the hands of Urban Meyer's Gators in 2008, the Tide had another opportunity to win the SEC and advance to the program's first BCS National Championship Game.

Both teams entered the game undefeated, a first in the 15-year history of the SEC Championship Game. The game was advertised as a play-in game for the title game. Both teams also featured Heisman Trophy candidates on offense.

Alabama scored first, with a 48-yard field goal to end their first drive. The Tide led for the rest of the game.

Florida went in to the locker room at halftime down by only 6 points and got the ball to start the second half. The Gators punted on their first two possessions of the second half, but Alabama scored touchdowns on both possessions to put the game away.



Mark Ingram bangs out some yardage in SEC Championship

Quarterback Greg McElroy used his 239 passing yards and 1 touchdown to claim MVP honors for the game. He also collected some broken ribs that didn't become public knowledge until after a lackluster performance in the national championship game. Now that's toughness built by Bama.

Mark Ingram's 3 touchdowns and 113 yards on 28 carries vaulted him to the top of the Heisman Trophy conversation. Ingram would go on to win the award by the narrowest margin in its history.

Alabama's win sent the team to Pasadena to face the Texas Longhorns with a national title on the line. I'm sure you don't need the reminder, but it's always fun to say – Alabama beat Texas 37-21 to claim the program's 13th national championship.

Alabama, ranked at #1, was thus invited to the BCS Championship Game on January 7, 2010 at 7:39 p.m. vs. then #2 Texas in the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, CA in a game known as the (BCS National Championship Game. Alabama won W (37–21) before 94,906

This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

National Championship Game Highlights from RollTide

1/7/2010 12:00:00 AM

Jan. 7, 2010

PASEDNA, Calif. -The No. 1-ranked Alabama football team held true to its ranking, defeating second-ranked Texas, 37-21, Thursday night in the 2010 BCS National Championship at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena. The 2009 national championship is the 13th in Alabama history.

"Our message to the team at halftime was that it's a 60-minute game," head coach Nick Saban said. "I'm proud of the way we hung in there and bounced back at the end of the game."

The Crimson Tide defense ended any hopes of a Longhorns comeback when Eryk Anders forced a fumble out of the hands of Texas quarterback Garret Gilbert with 3:08 remaining in the game.

Alabama would force two more turnovers and score two touchdowns to seal the 2009 national championship.

After Texas jumped out to a 6-0 lead on a pair of field goals in the first quarter, the Crimson Tide took the lead when sophomore Heisman Trophy winner Mark Ingram scored on a two-yard rush, putting Alabama up 7-6 with 14:18 remaining in the second quarter.

Freshman Trent Richardson joined in on the ground attack when he busted a 49-yard touchdown run at the 7:59 mark in the second quarter.

The long touchdown run stretched Alabama's lead to 14-6. Senior Leigh Tiffin would extend the Tide's lead further connecting on a 26-yard attempt. Two plays later Marcell Dareus intercepted Gilbert's shovel pass and returned it 28 yards for an Alabama touchdown. The 10-point swing gave the Crimson Tide a 24-6 lead heading into the half.

With Texas' offense scoring 11 unanswered points in the second half and pulling within 24-21, Anders swung into action, forcing a fumble at the three-yard line with Courtney Upshaw recovering for the Tide.

Ingram capitalized on the turnover, scoring on a one-yard touchdown run three plays later, putting Alabama up 31-21. Senior Javier Arenas came up with his second interception of the night with 1:55 remaining in the game. Richardson turned the turnover into points once again, scoring a touchdown on a two-yard run. Tiffin missed the extra point attempt, making the score 37-21.



Alabama Celebrates first BCS Championship under Nick Saban

With the win, Alabama head coach Nick Saban becomes the first head coach in major college football history to win a national championship at two different schools, also winning the BCS national championship in 2003 at LSU.



How Sweet It IS!

Saban also becomes the second head coach to win two BCS national championships, joining Urban Meyer of Florida.

The victory in Pasadena comes 84 years after Alabama won its first national championship in the 1926 Rose Bowl game and makes this the fifth Alabama team to end their national championship campaign at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena.

Alabama officials planned and held a national championship celebration for Saturday, Jan. 16.

2010 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30

The 2010 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 116th overall and 77th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 19th season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his fourth year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. At 10-3; 5-3 SEC, The Squad had a fine year.

Alabama entered the season as defending national champions, and began the 2010 season as the preseason number one team in both the AP and Coaches' Polls.

Favored to win a second consecutive SEC championship and be in contention for the national championship, the Crimson Tide opened the season with five consecutive victories and appeared to be unstoppable but its luck had run out. After five great wins, The Crimson Tide completed the regular season with only nine victories and the devastating losses began. The team finished fourth in the Western Division.

After the regular season, the Crimson Tide accepted an invitation to compete in the Capital One Bowl in Orlando. Against Big Ten co-champions Michigan State, Alabama won by a final score of 49–7 and captured both a third straight ten-win season and top ten finish.

2011 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30

National Championship

The 2011 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 117th overall and 78th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 20th season in the

SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his fifth year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. They finished the season with a record of ten wins and three losses (12–1, 7-1 in the SEC) and they were crowned consensus National Champions.



UA v Michigan State

Despite the positive outlook, Alabama lost to the LSU Tigers in their regular season matchup, and as a result did not qualify for the 2011 SEC Championship Game. Despite not winning their conference championship, when the final Bowl Championship Series rankings were released, Alabama had the number two ranking thereby qualifying for the 2012 BCS National Championship Game. In the rematch against LSU, the Crimson Tide defeated the Tigers 21–0 to capture their second BCS Championship in three years.

At the conclusion of the season, the Alabama defense led the nation in every major statistical category, and was the first to do so since the 1986 season. Additionally, several players were recognized for the individual accomplishments on the field. Barrett Jones won both the Wuerffel Trophy and the Outland Trophy; and Trent Richardson won the Doak Walker Award, was a finalist for the Heisman Trophy and was named the SEC Offensive Player of the Year.

The Games of the 2011 Season

Alabama got started on September 3 with Kent State with a crushing win W (48-7) before 101,821 at Bryant-Denny. It was just a little bit harder on Sept 10, but the Crimson Tide went into Happy Valley determined to win against Penn State and did despite the 107,846 noisy fans W (27-11)

On Sept 17, North Texas played at Bryant-Denny and were shut-out W (41-0). Arkansas was next at Bryant-Denny on Sept 24 and Alabama beat them 38-14).

The next week on Oct 1 the Crimson Tide traveled to Florida to play at Ben Hill Griffin Stadium • Gainesville, FL. UA prevailed W 38–10 against the Gators. Before 90,888 fans. On October 8, Vanderbilt played at Bryant-Denny to be defeated W (34-0). On Oct 15, #2 Alabama beat Ole Miss at Vaught–Hemingway Stadium in Oxford, MS W (52–7).

On Oct 22, the (Third Saturday in October) at Bryant-Denny, #2 Bama defeated Tennessee W (37–6). On Nov 5, Alabama faced its biggest challenge of the season in LSU. In a hard-fought battle, LSU won the game in a close call L (6-9) in OT.

Highlights of the Second LSU Game for the National Championship

On December 4, 2011, the final Bowl Championship Series standings were unveiled with a rematch between #1 LSU and #2 Alabama in the BCS National Championship Game. In the game, played on January 9, 2012 the Crimson Tide defeated the Tigers 21–0 to clinch their second BCS Championship in three years.

The first points of the game were set up after Marquis Maze returned a Brad Wing punt 49-yards to the LSU 26-yard line in the first quarter. Five plays later, Jeremy Shelley connected on a 23-yard field goal to give Alabama a 3–0 lead. After his first attempt was blocked by the Tigers' Michael Brockers, Shelley connected on second-quarter field goals of 34 and 41 yards to give the Crimson Tide a 9–0 halftime lead.

Shelley extended the Crimson Tide lead to 12–0 after he converted a 35-yard field goal on Alabama's first possession of the second half. He then missed a 41-yard field goal attempt wide right before he connected on a 44-yard attempt to give the Crimson Tide a 15–0 lead at the end of the third quarter.

Midway through the fourth quarter, the LSU offense crossed the 50-yard line for the first time of the game only to be pushed back to the 50 after Dont'a Hightower sacked Jordan Jefferson on a fourth down play to give possession back to Alabama. On that possession, the Crimson Tide scored the only touchdown of the game on a 34-yard Trent Richardson run to make the final score 21–0.

In the game, Alabama outgained LSU in total offense 384 to 92 yards, and the shutout was the first ever completed in a BCS game since the advent of the BCS in 1998. Jeremy Shelley established the all-time bowl record with seven field goal attempts and tied the all-time bowl record with five made. For their performances, Courtney Upshaw was named the defensive player of the game and AJ McCarron was named the offensive player of the game.

McCarron became the first sophomore QB to lead a team to a BCS National Title.



This BCS Championship game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

From Rolltide – 2012 BCS Bowl Game Highlights

1/9/2012 12:00:00 AM

Jan. 9, 2012

NEW ORLEANS –

A staunch defensive effort, combined with a record-setting night from kicker Jeremy Shelley, propelled the University of Alabama football team to its 14th national championship with a 21-0 victory over LSU Monday night in the BCS National Championship Game.

The Crimson Tide's defense held LSU to just 92 total yards and five first downs as Defensive Player of the Game Courtney Upshaw and Jerrell Harris each had seven tackles. As a unit, the defense had 11 tackles for loss, four sacks and an interception.



"I think it's a great team win," UA head coach Nick Saban said. "Our offense controlled the tempo of this game. We did a great job on special teams. It was just a great team win for every guy here, every fan that we have, every supporter of this program. This is great for Alabama."

Fifteen of UA's 21 points came from the leg of kicker Jeremy Shelley, who converted on a bowl-record five field goals from 23, 34, 41, 35 and a career-long 44 yards. The defense provided the offense with excellent field position all evening and quarterback AJ McCarron did a masterful job under center completing 23-of-34 passes for 234 yards to earn Offensive Player of the Game honors.

"We knew that he [McCarron] was going to have to play well because we knew that we were going to throw the ball," Saban said of his quarterback. "He showed great leadership and poise in making good decisions."

Thanks to Shelley, the Tide carried a 15-0 lead into the final quarter when LSU mounted its first legitimate charge after being held to just 55 yards in the previous three quarters. Upon crossing midfield for the first time all game, the drive stalled and left the Tigers facing 4th and 18 to gain on the UA 40. The Tide defense came through again as Dont'a Hightower sacked LSU's Jordan Jefferson and knocked the ball loose at the 50-yard line. Nick Gentry fell on the fumble to end the drive and set the UA offense up at midfield with 6:15 left in the contest.

Four plays later, Trent Richardson raced 34 yards for the first touchdown of the game and the Heisman Trophy semifinalist finished with 96 yards on 20 carries and 107 all-purpose yards.

Alabama put up the first points of the game when Shelley capped off a five-play, 20-yard drive with a 23-yard field goal with five minutes left in the first quarter. Shelley would come up big for the Tide on two more occasions in the first half, connecting from 34 and 41 yards to give Alabama a 9-0 lead at the break.

Alabama held LSU to one first down throughout the first half, while collecting 13 of its own. The Tide also collected 156 total yards compared to the Tigers' 26 total yards in the first 30 minutes.

The title is the Tide's 14th in program history adding to the national championships won in 1925, 1926, 1930, 1934, 1941, 1961, 1965, 1966, 1973, 1978, 1979, 1992, 2009 and 2011. The Crimson Tide finished the 2011 season with a 12-1 record. The combined record of UA's 14 national championship teams stands at 157-7-2.

2012 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30 National Championship; SEC Championship

The 2012 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 118th overall and 79th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 21st season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his sixth year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

The Tide finished the season with a record of thirteen wins and one loss (13–1, 7-1 in the SEC), as SEC champion and as consensus national champion after it defeated Notre Dame in the Bowl Championship Series (BCS) National Championship Game.

The Crimson Tide opened the season with nine consecutive victories that included one over Michigan at a neutral site and a come-from-behind victory on the road at Louisiana State University (LSU).

Those games / victories are as follows:

On Sept 1 #2 UA defeated # 8 Michigan at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, TX (Cowboys Classic) W (41–14) before 90,413. Then on Sept 8 WKU played at Bryant–Denny Stadium and were lost W (35–0) On September 15 at Arkansas' Donald W. Reynolds Razorback Stadium in Fayetteville, AR were defeated by the #1 ranked Crimson Tide W 52–0. Alabama held the ranking til the Texas game. On September 22, Florida Atlantic came to Bryant-Denny and were defeated by UA W 40–7.

On Sept 29 Bama beat Ole Miss at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (33–14). On Oct 13, UA traveled to Missouri's Faurot Field in Columbia, MO and beat the Tigers W 42–10. On the Third Saturday in October, Oct 20, Au went to Tennessee's Neyland Stadium in Knoxville and beat the Volunteers W 44–13 before 102,455 fans.

On Oct 27, it was Mississippi State at Bryant-Denny Stadium for the loss W (38–7). On Nov. 3, UA played an always tough #5 LSU squad in a close match at Tiger Stadium in Baton Rouge, LA W (21–17)

On Nov 10, #15 Texas A&M came to Bryant–Denny Stadium and in a close match delivered the first loss of the season to the Crimson Tide L (24–29). That would be the last loss of the season. Bama would win its last four games. The next two home games were runaway shutouts. The first was on Nov 17 v Western Carolina in a shutout W (49–0). At home, again in the Iron Bowl, UA routed Auburn on Nov 24 W (49-0).

In the SEC Championship Bowl, on Dec 1, #3 Georgia played # 2 Alabama in the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA W (32-28). Bama won the overall SEC Championship.

Notre Dame was having a banner year and the Irish were ranked #1 before they met #2 Alabama in the BCS Championship game on January 7, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. in Sun Life Stadium Miami Gardens, FL. Alabama dominated the game and won handily over the Irish W (42–14) before 80,120 fans and a nationwide TV audience.

At the conclusion of the season, the Alabama defense had led the nation in total defense, scoring defense and rushing defense and ranked 7th in passing defense. Offensively, the Alabama offense ranked 12th in scoring offense, 16th in rushing offense, 31st in total offense and 75th in passing offense.

Starting quarterback AJ McCarron was ranked first nationally in pass efficiency. Additionally, several players were recognized for their individual accomplishments on the field. Starting center Barrett Jones won both the Rimington Trophy and the William V. Campbell Trophy, and was named as the Academic All-America of

the Year; defensive coordinator Kirby Smart was named the 2012 American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) FBS Assistant Coach of the Year. Also, five players were named to various All-America Teams with Jones and C. J. Mosley being consensus selections and Dee Milliner and Chance Warmack being unanimous selections. Nick Saban knows how to produce winners and then coach them to win.

The 2012 SEC Championship game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

SEC Championship Game Roll Tide Recap

SEC Championship Game No. 2 Alabama Outlasts No. 3 Georgia, 32-28

12/1/2012 12:00:00 AM

What a game! Some say it was the best game of 2012. It was certainly one of the most exciting games of all time. Two of the finest football programs put on a classic battle in the Georgia Dome. It was a rip-roaring showcase of national importance that pushed both teams to their limits, but somebody ultimately had to win. Second-ranked Alabama (12-1 overall) had just enough to outlast third-ranked Georgia (11-2 overall). The Crimson Tide beating the Bulldogs, 32-28, to win the 2012 Southeastern Conference Championship before a crowd of 75,624.

After the game, Alabama had over a month of practice drills before it would play in the National Championship Game against undefeated Notre Dame (12-0 overall). The BCS National Championship Game was scheduled for Monday, January 7, at Sun Life Stadium in Miami, Fla. Alabama defeated Notre Dame and won the National Championship but let's first discuss this fine game against Georgia.

Alabama running back Eddie Lacy rushed for 181 yards and two touchdowns on 20 carries to earn Most Outstanding Player honors

as the Tide amassed 512 total yards, with Lacy and freshman T.J. Yeldon (153 yards on 25 yards) both eclipsing the century mark on the ground. Wideout Amari Cooper caught seven passes for 127 yards and a touchdown and quarterback AJ McCarron passed for 162 yards and a score while completing 13 of 21 passes with one interception.

Safety Robert Lester led the Tide defense with eight tackles, linebacker C.J. Mosley had seven stops and linebacker Xzavier Dickson had five tackles and two quarterback sacks.

The Tide needed every bit of those offensive heroics to withstand a Georgia team that proved to be explosive and opportunistic, building an 11-point second-half lead before the Alabama running game proved to be the difference. But not by much.

Alabama outgained Georgia, but Bulldogs quarterback Aaron Murray passed for 265 yards and running back Todd Gurley rushed for 122 yards and two scores on 23 carries. Flanker Tavarres King had five catches for 142 yards for the Bulldogs.

Georgia fans would read the games headline as: "Georgia Falls Just Short in SEC Championship to No. 2 Alabama 32-28." There is no question that the #3 Georgia Bulldogs fought valiantly but they ultimately fell 5-yards short and lost 32-28 to the No. 2 Alabama Crimson Tide in the 2012 SEC Championship.

Georgia used a balanced attack with freshman Todd Gurley picking up 121 yards and a pair of touchdowns. Aaron Murray passed for 267 yards and a touchdown. After a scoreless first quarter, Murray got Georgia on the board first with a 19-yard touchdown pass to tight end Jay Rome. Alabama answered with a 41-yard score by Eddie Lacy and added a field goal as time expired to take a 10-7 lead into halftime.

Georgia came out of the locker room and used 9 plays to go 75 yards as Gurley punched it in from the three to give Georgia the 14-10 lead. Such flip-flops were the story of this great game.

On the ensuing drive Alabama attempted a 49-yard field goal but Cornelius Washington blocked the kick and Alec

Ogletree returned it for a 55-yard touchdown to give Georgia a 21-10 lead.

Alabama wasted no time to answer right back with a 4-play 72-yard drive when T.J. Yeldon scored and converted the 2-point conversion cutting the lead to 21-18. Then, as the fourth quarter started, the Crimson Tide took the lead with a 1-yard run from Lacy giving the Alabama a 25-21 lead.

Murray brought Georgia back with a 5-play 75-yard drive with a big pass to Tavarres King for 45 yards that set up a Todd Gurley 10-yard score. It still was not over.

AJ McCarron gave Alabama the lead to stay with a 45-yard touchdown pass to Amari Cooper. Murray led Georgia on an 8-play 80-yard drive but time ran out before Georgia could get into the endzone.



BCS Championship Crimson Tide v Fighting Irish

Neither the NY Times staff nor any other pundits or any reporters gave ND a break after this game. Notre Dame played poorly. All pundits had major praise for Nick Saban and his powerful Alabama Crimson Tide team. It was no contest.

This BCS National Championship Game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

All Alabama in Title Game

By **GREG BISHOP** JAN. 8, 2013

Newyorktimes.com

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. — They called the football game played here Monday night a national championship, a title clash for the ages, epic, monumental, historic.

Then Notre Dame kicked the ball off.



Immediately, Alabama drove down the field, unimpeded, as if out for a nighttime stroll. It all went downhill from there, for Notre Dame and for those interested in the most overhyped college football game in years. Instead, this national championship ended early, almost immediately, in a flurry of Alabama touchdowns that allowed the Crimson Tide to seize their third title in four seasons, 42-14, with all the ease predicted by the odds makers, sapping this game of all competitiveness or drama.

This was “Rudy,” the sequel, after he stumbled onto Elm Street.

Alabama jumped to a 14-0 lead after one quarter and opened up a 28-0 advantage by the half, as Notre Dame fans streamed for the exits and the beer lines. Afterward, Alabama fans held newspapers with the headline “BAMA! AGAIN!” and chanted “S!E!C!”, as defensive lineman Quinton Dial grabbed the school flag from a cheerleader and sprinted across the end zone.

The game itself brought to mind a famous quote from Mike Tyson. Everybody has a plan, he said — until getting punched in the face. On Monday, Alabama bludgeoned Notre Dame, repeatedly. It controlled the game with both lines, on offense and defense, putting on a clinic in power football. It ran all over a defense known for its ability to stop the run. Alabama (13-1) so dominated that it reminded sports fans that N.B.A. games were also available for viewing Monday night, and that Notre Dame’s best chance for a national title is now in women’s basketball. NT

This only strengthened the claim few at Alabama dared to make before Monday night: that Coach Nick Saban, who flopped in two forgettable seasons on this very field at Sun Life Stadium as coach of the Miami Dolphins, has created a college football dynasty. This was his fourth national championship and third since he left the Dolphins to return to college football at Alabama. One could easily argue it was his most impressive.

In the locker room, surrounded by the teammates in gray championship hats and T-shirts, linebacker Nico Johnson

blurted out words that only a senior could. For the underclassmen, Saban continued to ban the d-word. "OK, I can say it now," Johnson said. "This is a dynasty."

Only two other college coaches can claim at least four titles. One is John McKay of Southern California. The other is Paul Bryant, the coach known as Bear who made Alabama football famous.



Amari Cooper Scores – chased by ND Defenders

Now there is Saban, a coach who must contend with fewer scholarships than afforded coaches from the Bryant era and who faces far stiffer competition. Yet despite those limitations, Saban runs a program that resembles a 33rd N.F.L. team as closely as a college football powerhouse. This season, despite a close loss to Texas A&M, only reinforced that notion.

Saban spent all of last week scoffing at any comparison between himself and Bryant, and this from a man with a 9-foot-tall statue of himself outside his office. Those close to him knew what another championship meant. "There's no question," said Kirby Smart, his defensive coordinator.

"There's no question he is driven to be the greatest coach in the game."

Monday was another step, for Saban's legacy and for Alabama's program and for the Southeastern Conference, from which a team secured the national championship for the seventh straight season. As "Sweet Home Alabama" predictably blasted from the stadium speakers — Roll! Tide! Roll! — Mike Slive, the conference commissioner dodged confetti and smiled a smile that seemed to stretch from here to South Beach.

"You don't see something like this coming," he said. "One can enjoy it. But one cannot anticipate it."

The suspense this year ended almost immediately. Almost. Notre Dame (12-1) stuffed the Crimson Tide on their first play from scrimmage. On the next snap, quarterback A J McCarron found receiver Kevin Norwood for a 29-yard gain. Notre Dame compounded that with a face mask penalty, then compounded that with a defensive offsides. Its vaunted defense, led by linebacker Manti Te'o, was generally ineffective.

Running back Eddie Lacy finished off the drive with a 20-yard scamper into the end zone, his path largely unchallenged, his body largely untouched. It was the first time this season Notre Dame allowed a touchdown in the first quarter. The 82-yard drive was also the longest this year against the Fighting Irish.

The worst start Notre Dame could have imagined only worsened from that point. Officials ruled a completion incomplete that would have gone for a first down, and when the Irish appeared to recover a fumble on the ensuing punt, they were flagged for catching interference.

Alabama simply resumed its rush to judgment. McCarron continued to hand the ball to Lacy, who continued to plunge forward. The Crimson Tide mostly attacked the right side of Notre Dame's defense, which looked like a matador, with Lacy playing the role of bull.

"The toughness of our team came out in the beginning," defensive back Hunter Bush said. "We attacked them exactly as we wanted to."

By the time Alabama scored its second touchdown, on a pass from McCarron to tight end Michael Williams, the Crimson Tide boasted a 123-8 advantage in total yardage. By the time Alabama scored its third touchdown, a T. J. Yeldon run on the first play of the second quarter, the Fighting Irish had 23 yards — and the Crimson Tide had 21 points.

The most pertinent news in the rest of the first half came when Alabama actually did punt. Alabama wound up with two 100-yard rushers: Lacy had 140 yards on 20 carries, and Yeldon had 108 on 21. McCarron, meanwhile, played as if intent on earning a statue of his own. He threw four touchdowns and said afterward that he would return for his senior season and the chance to win a third straight national championship.

“Our offense did an exceptional job,” Saban said, his face absent even a hint of emotion. While his players danced and hugged and shouted, Saban looked out at a mass of reporters and deadpanned, “I’m extremely happy.” They would have to take his word for it.

As the game approached, the hype ballooned so as to dominate the national conversation about sports, until this felt less like a national championship game and more like a history lesson. Here they stood: Notre Dame and Alabama, golden helmets against red elephants, storied tradition opposite storied tradition, football in the heartland versus football in the South.

If college football released an encyclopedia, these schools would occupy two of the larger volumes. Alabama claimed 14 national championships before Saturday; Notre Dame had 11. Alabama employed Bryant; Notre Dame had Knute Rockne, Frank Leahy, Ara Parseghian, and Lou Holtz.

“A couple of us were joking the other day that it’s ‘Rudy’ versus ‘Forrest Gump,’” said receiver Robby Toma, in reference to two movies made about these football programs.

Before Saturday, the most-watched college football game took place between Texas and Southern California, in 2006, and it

averaged 35.6 million viewers. This contest was expected to challenge and ultimately trump that number, at least until they played it.

The assembled expected a game as old-school as its participants. Even in this era of spread offenses and fancy passing, Alabama and Notre Dame won with size more than speed. They won with linemen, with bulk, with two defenses ranked among the top five in the nation.



“It’s not about the crazy receiving numbers or passing yards or rushing yards,” Notre Dame Coach Brian Kelly insisted. “This is about the big fellas, and this game will be decided unquestionably up front.”

Kelly was right, of course, but not in the way he wanted to be. His team did score in the third quarter and end the shutout. It will eventually celebrate a season that brought the return of Notre Dame to college football’s elite.

But not on Monday night. In this dud, Notre Dame flopped and Alabama triumphed and the SEC ruled again. The folks in Hollywood are unlikely to turn this season into any script, but Saban may get another statue anyway.

Alabama will be among the favorites for next season. And the season after that. And for as long as Saban is the coach. The former Alabama and N.F.L. running back Shaun Alexander said on the field after the game: "You know what makes this more exciting? I think next year's team will be better than this year's team."

So how many championships can Saban win? "Who knows?" Johnson said. "How many years can he coach?"

2013 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30 **SEC Western Co-Champion**

The 2013 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 119th overall and 80th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 22nd season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his seventh year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Bama finished the season with a record of eleven wins and two losses (11–2 overall, 7–1 in the SEC) and with a loss in the 2014 Sugar Bowl to Oklahoma

The Crimson Tide opened the season with eleven consecutive victories. In their twelfth game, Alabama was upset by Auburn on November 30 in the Iron Bowl. The loss at Jordan–Hare Stadium Auburn, AL kept the Crimson Tide out of the SEC Championship Game. Although they did not qualify to play for their third consecutive national championship with a final BCS ranking of third, Alabama did accept an invitation to play in the Sugar Bowl. Against Oklahoma on Jan 2, 2014 in which the Crimson Tide lost L (31-45).

2014 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30 **SEC Championship**

The 2014 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 120th overall and 81st season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 23rd season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban

in his eighth year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Alabama was 12–2 overall and 7–1 in SEC regular season. The Crimson Tide won the SEC Western Division title for the tenth time, advancing to their ninth SEC Championship Game, where they defeated Missouri 42–13. The Crimson Tide played in the inaugural College Football Playoff as the #1 seed, netting a berth in the CFP semifinal 2015 Sugar Bowl, where they were defeated by the #4 seed Ohio State Buckeyes 42–35.

2014 SEC Championship Game – Blake Sims’ Day in the Spotlight

After a dramatic 55-44 win over Auburn in the Iron Bowl, Alabama advanced to Atlanta to face the Eastern Division champion Missouri Tigers.



Derrick Henry takes it in for the score

2014 marked Alabama's ninth appearance in the SEC Championship Game, after going 4-4 in eight previous contests. The Tide was also 0.500 overall against Missouri in school history. The win gave Alabama a winning record in SEC title games and against Missouri. After securing a winning record over Mizzou, the Tide was over .500 all-time against all SEC programs.

Missouri's much vaunted pass defense wasn't much of a factor early, as Alabama relied on short passes and an imposing rushing attack. Derrick Henry and TJ Yeldon had two touchdowns each in a game that quickly became a rout of the Tigers. The defense was suffocating, holding Mizzou quarterback Maty Mauk to under 50% completion percentage and the Tigers were able to gain only 41 yards on the ground.

After being criticized for much of the season, fifth-year senior Blake Sims finished the game as the offensive MVP after a 23-27 performance for 262 yards and two touchdowns. His 85.2% completion percentage is an SEC Championship Game record. Amari Cooper's 12 catches are also a championship game record.

Mizzou's only touchdown came early in the third quarter, on a 4th down conversion from Maty Mauk to Bud Sasser. Mauk had some success late in the game with the deep ball, but was unable to rally his team to a comeback.

After this 42-13 win, the Tide advanced to the inaugural College Football Playoff as the #1 seed in the CFP Semi-Final Game against Ohio State in the Sugar Bowl on January 1 at the Superdome.

In a one-score game, UA lost L (35-42). Ohio State then went on to win the national Championship in a 42-20 win over Oregon.

Sugar Bowl V Ohio State from *Roll Tide*

NEW ORLEANS, La. - Ohio State running back Ezekiel Elliott rushed for 230 yards and two touchdowns on 20 carries,

including an 85-yard touchdown run, and Buckeyes quarterback Cardale Jones threw for 243 yards in only his second career start to lead No. 4 Ohio State (13-1 overall) to a 42-35 victory over No. 1-seeded Alabama (12-2) in the College Football Playoff Semifinal at the Allstate Sugar Bowl before a crowd of 74,682 on Thursday night in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome (capacity: 72,500).

With the victory, Ohio State advanced to the College Football Playoff National Championship Game to take on No. 2 seed Oregon (13-1), which defeated No. 3 seed Florida State, 59-20, in the other CFP Semifinal at the Rose Bowl earlier in the day.

2015 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30

National Championship SEC Championship

The 2015 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 121st overall and 82nd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 24th season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his ninth year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

UA finished the season with a record of 14 wins and 1 loss (14–1 overall, 7–1 in the SEC), as SEC champions and as consensus national champions after they defeated Clemson in the College Football Playoff (CFP) National Championship Game. Alabama also secured its 10th Associated Press (AP) national title.

2015 Season Games

The Crimson Tide won its first two games before it ran into # 15 Ole Miss on September 19 at 8:15 p.m. at Bryant–Denny Stadium. In a back and forth game, the Rebels hung on to deliver the only loss of the season to the Crimson Tide L (37-43). That was it for losses for Alabama. Before running into the Ole Miss Juggernaut, Alabama had won its first two games.

On Sept 5, Alabama played at AT&T Stadium in Arlington TX., v #20 Wisconsin in the (Advocare Classic) W (35–17). Then, on Sept

12 Middle Tennessee came to Bryant–Denny Stadium and were beaten by UA W (37–10). Then came Ole Miss. On Sept 26, Louisiana Monroe played a #12 ranked Bama at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (34–0) before 101,323

On Oct 3 at #8 Georgia in Sanford Stadium Athens, GA, UA defeated the Bulldogs W 38–10 before 92,746. On Oct 10, it was Arkansas at Bryant–Denny W (27–14). Then on Oct 17, Bama traveled to #9 Texas A&M and played in Kyle Field College Station, TX. UA beat the Aggies W (41–23) before 105,733 fans. On Oct 24, in the Third Saturday in October rivalry, # 8 Alabama beat Tennessee at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (19-14). On Nov 7. UA beat LSU at Bryant Denny W (30–16)

On Nov 14, #2 Alabama played the #17 Bulldogs of Mississippi State at Davis Wade Stadium in Starkville, MS and UA prevailed W (31–6). On Nov 21 at Bryant-Denny, UA played #9 Charleston Southern (FCS) and beat them big W (56–6). In the Iron Bowl at Auburn, Alabama won W (29–13). Alabama won the Western Division and would play in the SEC Championship game.

On Dec 5 at 3:00 p.m., #18 Florida squared off against the # 2 Crimson Tide at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA for the SEC Championship Game. Bama won the championship by beating Florida W (29–15) before 75,320.

This SEC Championship Game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. Here is a more extensive narrative from bamahammer:

2015 SEC Championship Game – Tide and Gators Yet Again

The Tide's 2015 SEC Championship Game win over the Florida Gators marked Alabama's second consecutive SEC Championship, a feat that no team in the SEC had accomplished since Steve Spurrier's 1995 and 1996 Florida Gators.

Alabama came into the game 11-1 and heavily favored. Florida had clinched the SEC East early in November, but their dominant defense hadn't been enough to overcome a struggling

offensive in close games against South Carolina and Florida Atlantic and a loss to rival Florida State. The 10-2 Gators traveled to Atlanta as a double-digit underdog.

2015's game was the 8th meeting between Florida and Alabama in the SEC Championship Game, over twice as many as any other matchup in series history. In the last meeting (in 2009), underdog Alabama had upset Urban Meyer's #1 Florida Gators on the way to a national championship.

The first quarter was a defensive struggle, with the only points recorded on a Florida punt blocked through the back of the end zone for an Alabama safety.

Florida broke through with a punt return touchdown early in the second quarter to take a 7-2 lead, but the next two quarters were all Alabama. Derrick Henry's 189 yards on 44 carries boosted a Tide offense that couldn't find consistent success through the air and Alabama cruised to a 29-15 victory and a second straight conference championship.



The next day, Alabama was announced as the #2 seed in the College Football Playoff, marking 2015 the tenth consecutive year where the SEC Champion was invited to play in the CFP Championship or the College Football Playoff.

Alabama was invited to the Cotton Bowl.

On Dec 31 at 7:00 p.m. v #3 Michigan State at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, TX in the Cotton Bowl Classic – also the CFP Semifinal, Alabama shut out Michigan State W (38–0). This entitled the Crimson Tide to fight for the National Championship on January 11.

On January 11, at the University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale, AZ, the CFP National Championship contest featured #1 Clemson v # 2 Alabama. The game got underway at 7:30 P.M before 75,765. Alabama won in a back and forth shootout W (45-40).

This CFP Championship Game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

Clemson vs. Alabama final score: Crimson Tide win national championship in 45-40 classic

Alabama rolls again from SB Nation.

by Andy Hutchins Jan 12, 2016, 12:22am EST

In the desert, Alabama and Clemson played a doozy. When it was over, the Crimson Tide had a 45-40 victory, their fourth national title since 2009 and the glory of prevailing in one of the best national championship games ever.

Jake Coker threw for 335 yards and two touchdowns, Derrick Henry ran for 158 yards and three more scores, and Alabama poured on 24 points in the fourth quarter to hold off the Tigers, who kept it close with a phenomenal performance from Deshaun Watson (405 passing yards, four touchdowns and 73 more rushing yards) that topped even Vince Young's magisterial night for total yardage in a national title game.

The Crimson Tide came through in the fourth quarter with plays from players who weren't even their most reliable playmakers all year. Tide kicker Adam Griffith executed a beautiful surprise onside kick that set up the touchdown that put Alabama up for

good. Kenyan Drake, Henry's backup, returned a kickoff 95 yards for a touchdown to put Alabama up by double digits for the first time. Tight end O.J. Howard had a career-high 208 receiving yards and two touchdowns. Howard also set up the Tide's final score with a huge catch-and-run.

Clemson played a great game against Alabama's fantastic defense, but got hammered repeatedly by big plays on defense and lost the special teams battle.

That more than provided the margin of victory and handed over the Tide's 16th national championship.

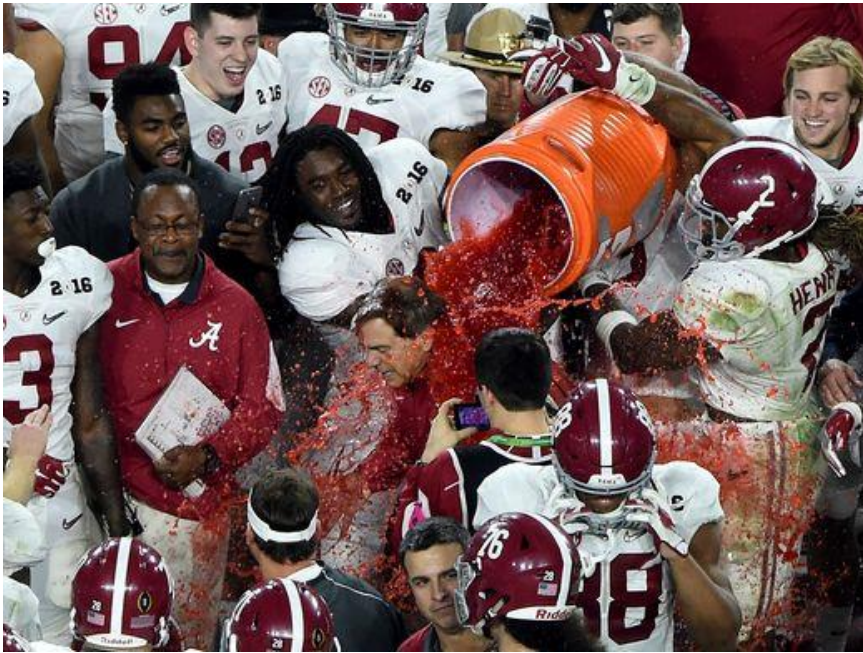
Three things to know

1. We got a phenomenal game, finally. The 2015 bowl season had largely been a bust up until Monday night, with just 14 of 40 bowls being decided by seven or fewer points. None of the New Year's Six bowls were decided by fewer than 14 points, either.

But this? This was a classic. Alabama and Clemson went back and forth for 12 great rounds and the winner prevailed by landing the last combination of the evening and withstanding a final flurry from the loser.

Few national title games this century were on par with this one - - maybe Ohio State upsetting Miami, Texas outdueling USC and Florida State surviving Auburn would be in the conversation. But for sheer quantity and variety of big plays, this one will stand the test of time.

2. Deshaun Watson became college football's newest superstar. Clemson's Heisman finalist had a better passer rating than Heisman winner Marcus Mariota did in 2014 and improved throughout 2015 despite losing his leading receiver, Mike Williams, to a neck injury early in the year. Watson lost another elite talent, Deon Cain, prior to the Playoff. The quarterback still stepped up.



His performance on Monday put him on a plateau by himself:

2016 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30
SEC Championship; 2nd Place National ranking

The 2016 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 122nd overall and 83rd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 25th season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his tenth year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

UA finished the season with a record of 14 wins and 1 loss (14-1) overall, 8-0 in the SEC), as SEC champions and as a 2nd place finish in the national champions CFP series they were defeated by Clemson L (31-35) in the College Football Playoff (CFP) National Championship Game. Alabama was trying for its 10th Associated Press (AP) national title. Next year for sure!

On September 3, an always tough #20 USC team played Bama in the Advocare Classic at AT&T in Arlington TX. They got whooped back to California W (52-6) Get back! Get back! Get Back to where you once belong!

On Sept 10, Western Kentucky played at Bryant–Denny Stadium and UA beat them handily W 38–10 before 101,821. On Sept 17, a stubbornly strong #19 Ole Miss team took on the #1 ranked Alabama Crimson Tide and they were like a dog on a pantleg. They would not let go until the final whistle blew. UA may have gotten a few bite s but the Crimson Tide won a close one at Vaught–Hemingway Stadium W (48–43). Then on Sept 24, Kent State volunteered to play # 1 Alabama at Bryant–Denny Stadium and despite their chutzpah, they were shut out W 48–0).

On Oct 1 at 6:00 p.m. Kentucky was ready to face the Crimson Tide. They stood up well at Bryant–Denny Stadium but not well enough. They fell to the power of Alabama W (34–6). Then, on Oct 8, again at 6:00 p.m. #1 UA had traveled to play #16 Arkansas at Donald W. Reynolds Razorback Stadium in Fayetteville, AR. It was a good trip as the Tide rolled in a nice victory W (49–30) before 75,459 fans.

The Third Saturday in October comes every year and every year Tennessee and Alabama tangle. Some win Some lose. The one with the lower score always gets the blues. On this Oct 15 at 2:30 p.m. as the Tide moved in to # 9 Tennessee at Neyland Stadium in Knoxville, TN. UA had the better hand, and foot and game prowess in beating the tough Volunteers W 49–10 before 102,455 fans.

Though Alabama has always had a tough time with Texas teams, especially the Longhorns over the years, they are always willing to play Texas at home or away. On October 22, this year it was the Aggies from # 6 Texas A&M who came to Bryant–Denny Stadium to play #1 Alabama. The Tide walked away with a victory over a tough opponent W 33–14.

On Nov 5, the kind of team that could put a #1 ranked team down hosted the Crimson Tide in a long-time rivalry game at 7:00 p.m. at Tiger Stadium in Baton Rouge, LA (Rivalry). Despite the battel, Bama survived and won W 10–0 before 102,321.

On November 12 at 11:00 A.M, an always-tough Mississippi State entered Bryant–Denny Stadium to knock off the Crimson Tide. Maybe another day but not today as The Tide overwhelmed their

out-of-state rivals—W (51–3). On Nov. 19 FCS #12 Chattanooga came to play the #1 team in the nation, Alabama before an over 100,000 crowd. Alabama won big W (31–3)

Nobody wants to get hit on the head with an Iron Bowl especially if Auburn has hold of the handle. So, on November 26 at 2:30 p.m. #1 Alabama took # 16 Auburn at Bryant–Denny Stadium very seriously. You never know. This time, Alabama won this tough game W (30–12). Since Alabama was undefeated it had won the Western Division and would play for the SEC Championship.

SEC Championship

On December 3 @ 3:00 p.m. the opponent from the other division was #15 Florida. The #1 Crimson Tide was playing the Gators in the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA in what is known as the (SEC Championship Game. UA won handily against an always-tough Gators Team W (54–16). Alabama became the SEC Champion.

The SEC Champ was invited to the Peach Bowl. On Dec 31 at 2:00 p.m. vs. No. 4 Washington, #1 Alabama played in the Peach Bowl at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA (Peach Bowl – CFP Semifinal)

Since when I was originally writing this, it is was December 12, 2016 Alabama would need two more wins in order to sew up its fifth Championship for Nick Saban. I finished the book on January 10 and added the results of the CFP Bowl game.

The first win came after December 12 came for Alabama in the Peach Bowl on December 31. Then, unexpectedly for me and many fans, the Crimson Tide lost to Clemson in the CFP bowl and finished #2. Nick Saban and Alabama fans must wait another year.

The Peach Bowl

The pundits noted after the Peach Bowl game between the Alabama Crimson Tide and the Washington Huskies went almost exactly according to script. Alabama Crimson Tide's combination of speed and power on both sides of the ball proved too much for the

Washington Huskies in a 24-7 UA victory to secure a spot in the College Football Playoff National Championship.

Things did not start out well for Alabama, as Washington struck first when Jake Browning hit Dante Pettis for a 16-yard touchdown in the first quarter. Alabama thus found itself trailing in a game, though there was plenty of time to make things right. It was a first for Alabama as throughout the 2016 season, the Crimson Tide virtually never played from behind.

It wouldn't take long for Alabama to make its comeback by tying the game at seven. The Tide scored on the ensuing possession. Bo Scarbrough, a great running back, capped off the Tide's 78-yard drive by doing what he always does best:

Alabama would later settle for a field goal after an Anthony Averett turnover from Wide Receiver John Ross. This 10-7 lead would not be relinquished for the rest of the game. The game was basically over at that point for Washington. Things would slow down for both teams as the next six drives ended in punts.

One of the big keys to Alabama's success all season long has been creating points off turnovers. The Crimson Tide entered the Peach Bowl with 14 non-offensive touchdowns, so it was hardly a secret they would be aggressive and Washington needed to protect the ball.

Unfortunately for the Huskies, Browning made a critical mistake with less than two minutes remaining in the second quarter by trying to force a throw after getting pressured that Ryan Anderson picked off and returned for a touchdown.

A three-point deficit against Alabama would normally be manageable but Alabama got very stingy. It wound up not making a difference either way because Washington's offense was completely stymied in the second half.

Browning had his worst game of the year with 150 yards on 20-of-38 passing with one touchdown and two interceptions, compounded by the fact the Huskies could only muster 44 rushing yards on 29 carries.

Washington's pass defense did step up to keep Alabama from creating big plays down the field. Crimson Tide quarterback Jalen Hurts threw for a season-low 57 yards on just seven completions, but he did get support from the running game.

Scarborough finished with 180 yards on 19 carries and two touchdowns, marking the third straight game in which he's broken the 90-yard barrier.

Alabama head coach Nick Saban explained the team has been working to include Scarborough in the game plan more often because of his recent success.

"Bo's been playing pretty well for us the last three or four games," Saban said, per the Associated Press (via ESPN.com). "We wanted to play him more. He's hard to tackle. He's big and powerful. He's playing with a lot of confidence."

Until the actual 2017 CFP bowl, Alabama was on the verge of winning its fifth national championship since 2009. If there is a dynasty in any sport, pro or college, at this moment, the Crimson Tide stand tall over everyone else because of their nearly decade-long run of dominance. Of course Clemson had a lot say about denying the fifth championship since 2009.

2017 CFP Championship Game Recap

Uncommitted football fans across the world enjoyed one of the best football games of all-time on Monday evening January 9, 2017, from 8:00 PM to way past bedtime at 12:25 AM. For the committed Clemson fans the victory was sweet after waiting a year for a rematch. For the committed Crimson Tide fans, the loss was simply heartbreaking.

In this game, the song lyrics, *what a difference a day makes* took a back seat to *what a difference a few seconds make*. The Crimson Tide came literally one second away from a repeat title. With Alabama holding a three-point lead after rolling down the field and scoring on a Jalen

Hurts' 30-yard touchdown run with just 2:01 remaining, Clemson took the second-last kickoff of the game and refused to be stopped.

Deshaun Watson was the game's super-hero. However, Watson had to perform all night to get the win and he had the ball in his hand as the game ended after a Clemson onside kick was recovered by Clemson with just one tick left on the clock.

Just before that, without his two-yard TD pass with 1-second left, the super-hero acclaim would have gone to the Alabama defense. The big guys from the Crimson Tide spent the night chasing Watson, keeping the talented QB from overcoming Alabama's early lead.

But, not this time. Not this game. Clemson would not be denied and the Tigers had both the talent and the luck, and some might even say, even the officials on their side. Clemson's heralded QB, and the best QB in the nation per his coach, Dabo Swinney calmly led his team to victory and to him goes the credit as game super-hero.

This QB, who is also a two-time Heisman Trophy finalist, performed flawlessly on this all-important drive down the field. Watson was the master on the field and the results have already made the history books. Clemson won by four. They are the National Champions. Tough to admit that on the Alabama sideline.

Watson guided the Clemson Tigers 68 yards in nine plays, completing a 24-yard pass to Mike Williams to Alabama's 39-yard line and a 17-yard pass to tight end Jordan Leggett that gave Clemson a first-and-goal at the 9. The Tigers got to the 2 when Alabama cornerback Anthony Averett was flagged for pass interference in the end zone.

From the two-yard line, with about 6 seconds left, Alabama was either going to be playing in OT with a field goal if Clemson's next play did not work; or time would run out by mistake; or of course option 3 was that the play would result in a touchdown.

Much to Alabama's chagrin, option 3 was operative. When Alabama double-teamed 6' 3" Mike Williams on the left side,

Clemson decided to go right against man to man coverage. They executed a clearly designed pick play, that even Watson admitted after the game was by design.

It was no accident and Alabama fans are still wondering where the pass-interference call v Clemson when on the prior play, Alabama had gotten flagged for a similar violation.

Regardless, the referees did not call it. On the play, Deshaun Watson's rolled right and threw a perfect 2-yard touchdown pass to Hunter Renfrow with just 1 second remaining.

This gave Clemson their wild 35-31 win over Alabama in the College Football Playoff national championship game. Clemson fans were ecstatic as they felt they should have won the marbles one year earlier. Alabama fans are not whiners or poor sports but came away in fact generally heartsick. Many fans that understand how a pick play works wonder how it could be used twice by Clemson with neither resulting in a penalty call. Bad luck?

Studying the rules, we know that a "pick play," is a pure judgment call by the referees that is not reviewable, just like holding or defensive pass interference. One would think that at the worst, the referees would have gone one way one time and the other way the next time. In this game, both calls were given to Clemson. Just asking: Is that fair? Let's say I am asking both as an Alabama fan and a pundit. I am not whining. I am asking though!

There were a lot of ups and downs in the game, especially at the end. Alabama quarterback Jalen Hurts had just given the Crimson Tide a 31-28 lead on his 30-yard scramble with 2:01 remaining. This had countered Wayne Gallman's 1-yard touchdown run with 4:38 remaining that had put the Tigers up 28-24. Two minutes is an awful long time and Watson engineered a drive that used it all up right to the last second before he passed for the score.

Clemson packed in 511 total yards to 376 by Alabama and the Tigers posted a 31-16 edge in first downs. Alabama's bright side in the game was not its offensive production and because of that, its D had little time to rest.

Clemson ran 99 plays. All season long it was only Arkansas W (49-30) that had anything close to that (84 plays). Though in great shape, the D was not as well backed up as the 2016 team. Some say that this huge number of plays helped wear down the mighty Tide defense with tempo and consistent movement on offense.

Nick Saban's Crimson Tide were clearly denied a fifth national championship in eight seasons under coach Nick Saban. The Tide managed just 131 passing yards, as Hurts had a tough night going 14-of-32. Nick Saban saw it as it was. "They made the plays and we didn't," It was a big loss for Nick Saban. It was his first ever in a championship game. In six tries. Afterwards, speaking with ESPN's Tom Rinaldi, he was very gracious in defeat. Saban praised his team for all it accomplished in 2016, while also congratulating Dabo Swinney and Clemson on the victory. The next year, Saban's Crimson Tide was back at it, Being Alabama and bringing in the National Championship.

2017 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30
SEC Western Division Champions; National Championship

The 2017 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 123rd overall and 84th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 26th season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his eleventh year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Coming off a national title-game loss v Clemson in January 2017, Alabama began the 2017 fall season ranked #1 in the AP poll. They ended this season as consensus national champions by winning their second College Football Playoff national championship. This was their 17th claimed national title in school history, and fifth under head coach Nick Saban. They finished the season with a record of 13 wins and 1 loss (13-1) overall, 7-1 in the SEC), as Western SEC champions and as 1st place finishers in the national champions CFP series where they beat Georgia for the title

The team opened the year with a victory over then-No. 3 Florida State in the Chick-fil-A Kickoff Game. This went down as the highest ranked season-opening match-up in the history of the AP

Poll. Alabama won its first 11 games convincingly, but fell on the road to major rival Auburn in the regular season finale (The Iron Bowl).

Since both teams were tied atop the SEC West Division at 7–1, Auburn advanced to the 2017 SEC Championship Game on the basis of the head-to-head tiebreaker. This hurt the Crimson Tide rankings as Alabama fell to number six leading up to conference championship weekend. In the final College Football Playoff rankings of the year, an 11–1 Alabama team somehow came in number four after sitting idle in the SEC Championship Game. In their way to #4, they passed 12–1 Wisconsin, 11–2 Big Ten Conference champion Ohio State as well as 12–0 American Athletic Conference champion UCF.

This turn of events won for Alabama a place in the national semi-final to be played at the Sugar Bowl against first-seeded Clemson. This would be the third consecutive playoff meeting between the two schools. Alabama won the rubber match v Clemson 24–6 and this was an auto-entry ticket to the 2018 College Football Playoff National Championship against SEC Champion Georgia.

The Crimson Tide pulled off a dramatic come-from-behind overtime victory to win the championship game 26–23 and take away the national title for the fifth time.

Alabama's offense this season was led by sophomore quarterback Jalen Hurts, who finished with 2,081 passing yards, 17 passing touchdowns and just one interception. He added 855 rushing yards and 8 rushing touchdowns on the ground. Freshman quarterback Tua Tagovailoa served as the backup and was named game MVP of the national championship game when Hurts was benched at the halftime mark.

Alabama running back Damien Harris led the rushing attack with 1,000 rushing yards (exactly) and 11 touchdowns on the year. Wide receiver Calvin Ridley and offensive tackle Jonah Williams were season heroes and were named first-team All-SEC. The Crimson Tide defense, which topped the country in scoring and yards allowed, was led by consensus first-team All-American and Chuck Bednarik Award-winning safety Minkah Fitzpatrick. He was joined

on the All-SEC first team by defensive tackles Daron Payne and Raekwon Davis, linebacker Rashaan Evans, and safety Ronnie Harrison. It was a great Alabama year

Games of the season

In the battle of the greats to begin the season, on Sep 2, #3 Florida State was beaten by #1 Alabama at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta W (24–7) before 76,330. It was a great (Chick-fil-A Kickoff Game and a celebrated College GameDay. On Sep 9, the #1 Crimson Tide whooped Fresno State at home W (41–10) before 101,127 in Tuscaloosa, AL. On Sep 16, Colorado State was defeated by the Tide at home W (41–23) before 101,821. Then, on Sep 23 at Vanderbilt in Vanderbilt Stadium, Alabama thumped the Commodores W (59–0) before 40,350 in Nashville, TN.

At home on Sep 30, #1 Alabama clobbered Ole Miss W 66–3 before 101,821. On Oct 7 at Texas A&M at Kyle Field, Alabama defeated the Aggies W 27–19 in the closest game of the season so far, before 101,058 in College Station, TX. Then, on Oct 14, the Crimson Tide pounded Arkansas at home 41–9 before 101,821 in Tuscaloosa, AL. On Oct 21, #1 Alabama beat Tennessee at home W (45–7) before 101,821 in Tuscaloosa, AL.

At home on Nov 4m #1 Alabama beat # 18 LSU W (24–10) before 101,821 in Tuscaloosa, AL. At #19 Mississippi State, on Nov 11, #1 Alabama prevailed W (31–24) before 61,344 in Starkville, MS. Then, on Nov 18, at home, #1 Alabama beat Mercer W (56–0) before 101,821 in Tuscaloosa, AL. In the Iron Bowl at Auburn, on Nov 25, #1 Alabama was beaten by # 6 Auburn in Jordan–Hare Stadium L (14–26) before 87,451. This was both an Iron Bowl and a College GameDay) celebration.

On January 1, #4 Alabama played v #1 Clemson (Alabama went from #1 to #4 after the Auburn Loss), the Crimson Tide beat the Tigers in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome W (24–6) before 72,360 in the Sugar Bowl, New Orleans, LA, which was also the CFP Semifinal.

The following week came the national championship. #1 Clemson had been eliminated and this week, #3 Georgia, the SEC Champion faced off against #4 Alabama on January 8 in Mercedes-Benz Stadium W (26–23) in OT before 77,430 in Atlanta, GA. This was the CFP National Championship and another College GameDay celebration.

84th Allstate Sugar Bowl ~ January 1, 2018

#4 Alabama 24 (Postgame Record: 12-1)

#1 Clemson 6 (Final: 12-2)

Facts by allstatesugarbowl.org/classic/2018-game-recap.

The fourth-seeded Crimson Tide scored 14 points off a pair of third quarter turnovers to key its 24-6 victory against top-seeded Clemson in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome on Monday night before a sellout crowd of 72,360. Bama (12-1) held Clemson (12-2), the defending national champion, to 188 yards of total offense, including just 99 through three quarters when it held the commanding 24-6 lead. Without their star from last year, Sean Watson, it was a different game for sure for Clemson.

It was the third straight season the teams met in the College Football Playoff. Alabama won in the championship game in 2016 against the Tigers with Clemson taking the title game in 2017 over the Tide. This time was in the semifinals and Bama prevailed with defense.

Alabama will face third-seeded Georgia, the SEC champion, next Monday (Jan. 8) in the National Championship game in Atlanta. It will be the first time two teams from the same conference will battle for the national crown since Bama defeated LSU in the BCS Championship game in 2011 in the Superdome.

It will be the Tide's third straight trip to the title contest. Like the previous two trips, defense, the cornerstone of Bama coach Nick Saban's success with the Tide, had a lot to do with it.

But an unlikely hero emerged, Alabama noseguard Da'Ron Payne. He intercepted a pass in Tide territory that set up Bama's first third-quarter score and, in a move that had everyone – red and orange

clad included – surprised, caught a touchdown pass on the ensuing drive.

The interception couldn't have come at a better time. Clemson, which trailed 10-3 at the half, had cut Alabama's lead to 10-6 with 12:45 left in the third quarter after a 42-yard field goal by Alex Spence, a score that came off a Bama turnover.

Clemson forced Alabama to a three-and-out on the ensuing series and drove from its 32 to the Tide 35. That's when the Tide forced its first turnover. Clemson quarterback Kelly Bryant dropped to throw on second-and-2 but was hit from behind by Tide linebacker Anfernee Jennings as he threw.

Payne intercepted the errant pass at the Tide 37 and returned it to the Clemson 42. A horse-collar penalty was assessed to Clemson on the play and Alabama set up shop at the Tigers' 27.

Seven plays later, Payne became a Bama hero when, lined up at the tight end spot, he caught a pass from Tide quarterback Jalen Hurts for a 1-yard touchdown that gave Alabama a 17-6 lead with 5:40 left in the third quarter. It was the senior from Birmingham's first reception of the season.

"I had been talking to Coach lots about [the team passing to him in a goal-line situation]," Payne said. "He said, 'Just keep on working, and you might get it.' And I tried my best to go out and practice and work hard, and they finally gave it to me."

"When he made the interception, there was no doubt that we were going to throw him the ball on the goal line," Saban said with a laugh afterwards.

It didn't take long for Bama to make it 24-6.

On the first play from scrimmage on the ensuing possession, Bryant again dropped to pass from the Clemson 13. But his throw was deflected by Bama cornerback Levi Wallace. Tide middle linebacker Mack Wilson grabbed the tipped pass and brought it back 18 yards for a touchdown and the 24-6 lead with 5:27 left in the third quarter.

Clemson, the ACC Champion, was never able to recover.

“This was a great team effort by our entire defense,” Saban said. “The front guys did a good job of controlling the line of scrimmage. The linebackers did a great job of adjusting. The secondary guys did a pretty good job of covering all day. So this was really a great team effort. And the guys played about as hard as any of our defensive teams that I can ever remember in this particular game.”

The Tide led 10-3 at the half and it was a familiar Bama blueprint that gave it the margin. Alabama held Clemson's offense to 73 yards and four first downs and led in time of possession 18 minutes, 34 seconds to 11:26 for the Tigers. A total of 54 of those yards and three first downs came on Clemson's only drive that yielded points in the first half, a 44-yard field goal by Spence that cut Bama's lead to 10-3 with 10:00 left in the second quarter.

Led by running back Damien Harris, who picked up 55 yards on 12 carries, the Tide had 182 yards on offense with 11 first downs in the first half. Hurts was efficient, completing 10 of 13 passes for 87 yards and a touchdown.

Clemson struggled in the first quarter, as it was held to no first downs and minus-7 yards of offense while Alabama jumped to a 10-0 lead. The Tigers didn't manage their first first down until 14:18 remained in the second quarter.

But as lopsided as the first half stats were, the Tigers only trailed by a touchdown at the half. It felt like it should have been worse. On its second possession of the game, aided by superior field position as the drive started at the Tide's 47, Alabama went 47 yards to Clemson 6 when it was forced to settle for a 24-yard field goal by Andy Pappanastos. That gave the Tide a 3-0 lead with 5:23 left in the first half.

After another three-and-out showing by Clemson's offense, Alabama again started with outstanding field position, taking over at the Tigers' 46. The Tide drove 46 yards in eight plays for its first touchdown of the game. Hurts passed 13 yards to Calvin Ridley for the score and a 10-0 lead with 12 second remaining in the first quarter.

Clemson cut the lead to 10-3 on the ensuing possession with a 13-play, 54-yard drive that featured a 20-yard scramble for a first down by Bryant and a 19-yard completion by Bryant to wide receiver. Deon Cain for another first down. But the drive stalled at the Alabama 27 and the Tigers settled for the field goal.

Alabama drove deep into Clemson territory late in the first half, advancing from its 41 to the Tigers 15. But on fourth-and-9 at the Clemson 20, Pappanastos missed a 38-yard field goal with 17 seconds left as the Tide led 10-3 at the half.

“At the end of the day, when you take a deep breath and you step back a little bit, this will be one of the best teams that we have had,” Clemson coach Dabo Swinney said. “I mean, this has been a remarkable team. This has been a fun team to coach. I have thoroughly enjoyed being around this group of guys. They have been easy to coach. They have come to work all year. They have had an unbelievable attitude and work ethic and belief. And it’s been fun. They really have — again, this was a bad night. But that doesn’t change how I feel about the type of season.”

Most of this recap was by Trey Iles.

College Football National Championship Recap

January 8, 2018 by the Beaver Creek Beacon. Our thanks

Cory Kunkel, Student Journalist

January 10, 2018

What. A. Game!

In the final game of the college football season, Georgia and Alabama traveled to Atlanta to face off in the College Football Playoff National Championship. After four exciting quarters and an overtime period, Alabama came out on top.

After opening the game with an interception on the first drive, true freshman Georgia quarterback Jake Fromm bounced back in a major way and made several decisive throws to put the Bulldogs up 13-0 at the half. Meanwhile, Georgia's defense was shutting down sophomore Alabama quarterback Jalen Hurts in the passing game and had limited the Tide to a mere 21 passing yards in two quarters of play.

With a stagnant offense and little momentum, Alabama head coach Nick Saban made an unexpected change at the half and benched Hurts in favor of true freshman quarterback Tua Tagovailoa.

While it's already uncommon for a quarterback to be benched in a national championship game after starting all season, this move was even more surprising considering that Jalen Hurts had a 25-2 record as a starter and that Tagovailoa was a mere true freshman. This change, however, was the spark that Alabama needed. [Is Nick Saban a genius or the luckiest man on earth?]

Tagovailoa played incredibly well for a freshman with little playing experience and made several big-time throws, and in doing so, he put Alabama in winning position by tying the game at 20-20 and bringing his team within field goal with one second remaining.

Unfortunately, Alabama kicker Andy Pappanastos missed from 36 yards out, sending the game into overtime.

Georgia had the ball first and looked ready to score a touchdown until quarterback Jake Fromm took a huge sack on third down. As a result, Georgia kicker Rodrigo Blankenship was sent out to kick a 51-yard field goal, which he successfully accomplished to put the Bulldogs up with a score of 23-20.

During Alabama's first play on offense in overtime, Tagovailoa was sacked for an enormous 16-yard loss. Only one play later, however, Tagovailoa threw a 41-yard touchdown to a wide-open Devonta Smith in the end zone, effectively winning the game for Alabama with a final score of 26-23.

Beavercreek Senior Liam Dipple had this to say after the game: "It was a good game. Georgia choked. I hate (Nick) Saban."

Alabama head coach Nick Saban has now won six total national championships [five at Alabama], further cementing his legacy as one of college football's greatest all-time coaches.

Overall, this game was a great way to finish another exciting year of football. Fans across the country are already looking forward to what next season has to offer.

2018 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30
SEC Champion; Orange Bowl Champion; 2nd Place National Ranking

The 2018 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 124th overall and 85th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 27th season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his twelfth year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Coming off a national title championship in January 2018, Alabama began the 2018 fall season ranked #1 in the AP poll for the third consecutive year and fifth time with Nick Saban as coach. They ended this season as #2 after a stinging loss to Clemson in the final championship game.

They finished the season with a record of 14 wins and 1 loss (14-1) overall, 8-0 in the SEC), as SEC champions and as 2nd place finishers in the national champions CFP series where they lost to Clemson for the title

The team opened the year with a victory over Louisville in the Camping World Kickoff played in Orlando Florida. The Crimson Tide enjoyed all victories throughout the rest of the season until the last game, the Championship.

In the final College Football Playoff rankings of this year, Alabama was ranked first, which earned them their fifth consecutive playoff berth and a spot in the 2018 Orange Bowl against fourth-ranked Oklahoma. The Crimson Tide won that game 45–34 to advance to the 2019 College Football Playoff National Championship against Clemson. It was their fourth consecutive playoff match-up against

Clemson and it was their third to be in a national title game. The Crimson Tide lost something between the Orange Bowl and the CFP Championship and they lost the game in a blowout, 16–44. This turned out to be Alabama's worst loss in the Saban era.

Jalen Hurts was on the bench this year but played a substantial amount of time. He had lost his starting position in the championship game v Georgia the year prior. Thus, the Crimson Tide were led on offense by sophomore quarterback Tua Tagovailoa. Tagovailoa had set the NCAA FBS record for passing efficiency rating (199.4), was a consensus first-team All-American, and finished second in voting for the Heisman Trophy behind Oklahoma's Kyler Murray.

Hurts, despite losing the starting role, received praise for sticking with the team and helping to mount a comeback in the SEC Championship Game when Tagovailoa went down with an ankle injury. Also receiving consensus first-team All-America honors on offense were wide receiver Jerry Jeudy, winner of the Biletnikoff Award, and offensive tackle Jonah Williams. On defense, Alabama featured two consensus All-Americans, defensive lineman Quinnen Williams and defensive back Deionte Thompson. It was a tough way to finish the season.

The unbeaten regular season's games were as follows

Date	Opponent	Result	Attendance
1-Sep	vs Louisville	W 51–14	57,280
8-Sep	Arkansas State	W 57–7	100,495
15-Sep	at Ole Miss	W 62–7	62,919
22-Sep	No 22 Texas A&M	W 45–23	101,821
29-Sep	Louisiana*	W 56–14	101,471
6-Oct	at Arkansas	W 65–31	64,974

13-Oct	† Missouri	W 39–10	101,821
20-Oct	at Tennessee	W 58–21	97,087
3-Nov	at No 4 LSU	W 29–0	102,321
10-Nov	No 18 Mississippi State	W 24–0	101,821
17-Nov	(FCS) The Citadel	W 50–17	101,681
24-Nov	Auburn	W 52–21	101,821
1-Dec	SEC Championship vs No 4 Georgia	W 35–28	77,141
29-Dec	Orange Bowl vs No 4 Oklahoma	W 45–34	66,203

SEC Championship December 1, 2018

WHNT 19 News

We haven't seen Alabama with their backs against the wall all season long, but we saw that today. The Tide responded to the challenge.

Nick Saban and his team taking on the Georgia Bulldogs with the winner going to the College Football Playoff.

In the first quarter, the Tide knocking on the end zone. Tua Tagovailoa drops back to pass. He'll look to the end zone and it is intercepted by Richard Lecounte. That is only the third interception by Tagovailoa all season. He would throw two in this game.

Later in the quarter, Jake Fromm, standing tall in the pocket fires it to the end zone and there's Isaac Nauta on the 20 yard pass and catch for the score. Georgia strikes first and would lead 7-0.

The Crimson Tide would answer back on the ensuing possession Josh Jacobs takes the hand off and finds the hole and makes his way down to the one yard line. He would punch it in for the score a few plays later and the game would be tied at 7.

Next drive for the bulldogs, the hand off goes to Deandre Swift who breaks a few tackles and fights his way into the end zone for the 7-yard score.

Later in the half, Alabama, down 21-7, Josh Jacobs fumbles the ball and regains possession in the end zone.... The play is reviewed and was ruled a touchdown. Alabama would trail at the half 21-14 with only 35 yards passing from Tagovailoa.

In the second half, Georgia's first possession Jake Fromm drops back and fires end zone and hits Riley Ridley for the 23 yard score.... Georgia goes up 28-14. The Crimson Tide down just 7 after a Tagovailoa touchdown to Jaylen Waddle; however, Tagovailoa would have to be helped off the field after injuring his ankle and he would not return.

Jalen Hurts enters the game to the rescue and you couldn't have scripted this any better. Hurts rolls out and hits Jerry Jeudy for the 10 yard score which ties the ball game.

Georgia would face fourth down from mid field and then goes for a fake punt. It goes to backup quarterback Justin Fields and he's swarmed by the Crimson Tide. They would take over on downs with under two minutes to go in this game....

When Alabama gets the ball back, Hurts calls his own number with 15 yards out and he scored the game winning touchdown. Alabama back on top of the SEC, winning a thriller against Georgia, 35-28. Alabama Head Football Coach Nick Saban had high praise for Hurts and his team.

"Well, I guess that I can say wow. I think our players showed a tremendous amount of credit for the resiliency they showed in the game. The competitive spirit they never gave up in the game they kept fighting. I'm very proud of Jalen. He got an opportunity at the

end of the game. I told him this is your time and he certainly took advantage of it," said Alabama Head Coach Nick Saban.

"It kind of feels like I'm breaking my silence. You know I haven't said anything all year. You know this team has worked really hard. In the off season, last spring. We know what adversity looks like and sometimes we're going to get hit in the mouth but we know that we're going to respond," said Alabama quarterback Jalen Hurts.

"I mean Jalen, he just came in and did his thing. Just like he always does. We needed him to make plays with his legs he did that. Make plays with his arms. He did that. He led us and we won this game," stated Irv Smith Jr.

"It was epic. It was really epic. It was very epic. Georgia has a great offensive line. Great team in general. Everybody in general did their thing and we just had to come out and be physical. And we were just physical. Georgia was a great team," explained Quinnen Williams.

Orange Bowl Dec 29, 2018

Alabama coach Nick Saban said he would rather throw oranges than head-sets after their victory over Oklahoma Saturday, Dec. 29, 2018, in the Orange Bowl at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Fla. Article by Miami Herald CHARLES TRAINOR JR. It was a great game for Alabama.

The “Roll Tide” chants began before 10 minutes of football had even been played at Hard Rock Stadium on Saturday.

The top-ranked Alabama Crimson Tide had just scored their second touchdown against No. 4 Oklahoma in their College Football Playoff semifinal against No. 4 Oklahoma — a contested 10-yard pass from Tua Tagovailoa to Henry Ruggs.

It looked like the beginning of a rout.

Tagovailoa threw four touchdown passes, the Alabama defense contained Heisman Trophy winner Kyler Murray enough early to

take a commanding lead and the Crimson Tide is once again heading to the national championship game after defeating Oklahoma 45-34 in the Orange Bowl. Alabama will face No. 2 Clemson, which throttled No. 3 Notre Dame 30-3 in the Cotton Bowl earlier in the day. It will be the third matchup in five years between Alabama and Clemson for the national championship.

“It was no surprise to me that they would come back in the game,” Alabama coach Nick Saban said. “I kept telling our players on the sidelines, we have to keep playing, we have to keep grinding. We’ve got to play for 60 minutes. This team is very capable.” The Crimson Tide did just that.

Alabama’s domination began from the very first play. Tagovailoa dropped back and fired a pass up the middle to receiver DeVonta Smith, who shook past an Oklahoma defender and went downfield for a 50-yard gain. Six plays — and an overturned fumble — later, Damien Harris punched in Alabama’s first touchdown of the night from 1 yard out.

Alabama (14-0) led 21-0 at the end of the first quarter (an Orange Bowl record for most points by one team in the opening period), added another touchdown before Oklahoma could even get on the board and had a 31-10 edge at halftime before Oklahoma made it interesting.

A 14-play, 66-yard drive to open the second half ended with a 26-yard field goal by Austin Seibert to cut the Sonners’ deficit to 31-13. An Alabama punt on the ensuing drive led to a six-play, 75-yard Oklahoma touchdown drive, with Murray hitting Charleston Rambo in stride in the end zone for the 49-yard score. A 28-point lead had dwindled to 11.

Oklahoma might be capable, but Alabama proved to be just that much better.

Alabama and Oklahoma then exchanged a pair of touchdown drives — Alabama with a 10-yard pass from Tagovailoa to Smith and Oklahoma with a 10-yard pass from Murray to CeeDee Lamb — before the Crimson Tide struck its final blow.

Tagovailoa, calm and collected like he had been all night, found wide receiver and Deerfield Beach High alumnus Jerry Jeudy for a 13-yard touchdown to re-extend Alabama's lead to 18 with 6:08 left to play. That was the **Ballgame**.

Murray gave Oklahoma (12-2) one more trip to the end zone with an 8-yard rushing touchdown, but a failed onside kick attempt sealed the Sonners' fate.

"It's been a hell of a ride," Oklahoma coach Lincoln Riley said.

"Hate that it ends right now, because you're sick, you feel like you're right there, being ready to play next week. It was certainly a game we fully expected to win."

Tagovailoa completed 24-of-27 passes for 318 yards and four touchdowns. Smith caught six passes for 104 yards. Running back Josh Jacobs ran for 98 yards.

Murray finished with 308 passing yards and two touchdowns on 19-of-37 passing and added 109 rushing yards and another score for Oklahoma. Lamb led all receivers with 109 yards on eight catches.

"Me and Kyler just told each other, 'Great game,'" Tagovailoa said. "He said, 'I love you.' I told him, 'I love him, too.' Aside from that, I just told him, 'Great season.' He had a great season. He told me I had a great game, and 'Go win it all.'"



Prior page: Alabama coach Nick Saban and quarterback Tau Tagovailoa throw oranges from the trophies after defeating Oklahoma in the College Football Playoff Semifinal at the Orange Bowl game at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Sunday, December, 30, 2018. CHARLES TRAINOR JR CTRAINOR@MIAMIHERALD.COM

CFP National Championship Recap

Orange Crush: Clemson topples No. 1 'Bama for national title

<https://www.freeplays.com/recap/2019/1/7/ncaaf/clemson-vs-alabama/234619/>

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) Dabo Swinney kissed the championship trophy and proclaimed this Clemson team the greatest of all time.

He's got a case.

With stunning ease - and a freshman quarterback - Clemson toppled college football's greatest dynasty again to become the first perfect playoff champion.

[Surely, Alabama for some reason was discombobulated. I see no other reason for the lopsided victory. Even Clemson is not that good.]

Trevor Lawrence passed for 347 yards and three touchdowns and the second-ranked Tigers beat No. 1 Alabama 44-16 on Monday night in the College Football Playoff national championship game.

In the fourth consecutive playoff meeting between the Tigers and Tide, Clemson evened the series and beat 'Bama for the national championship for the second time in three years. Clemson is the first college football team to finish 15-0 since the 1800s, and the first team since the playoff started five seasons ago to get through a season unscathed.

"I mean, our guys had the eye of the tiger, but I'm so proud, and then for our seniors to be able to go out 15-0 and truly be the best ever - there was a lot of talk about best ever all year long," Swinney said, talking about Alabama. "We were never in that conversation. But tonight, there's no doubt. First 15-0 team, to beat Notre Dame and to beat Alabama to do it, this team won 13 games by 20 points

or more and led by an unbelievable group of seniors, amazing group. I'm just thankful to be a part of it."

Alabama coach Nick Saban and the Tide (14-1) were looking for a sixth national championship in 10 years, trying to add to an already unprecedented run in the sport. Instead, Clemson crushed Alabama, becoming the first opponent to beat the Tide by more than 14 points since Saban became coach in 2007.

Swinney's Tigers sealed their status as a superpower, no longer just 1A to Alabama's 1.

"We're 15-0, we beat the best team ever, nobody's taking that away from us," Clemson All-American defensive tackle Christian Wilkins said.

Two seasons ago it was Deshaun Watson dethroning the Tide with a last-second touchdown pass. Clemson's new star quarterback didn't need the late-game heroics. The long-haired Lawrence cut through Alabama's defense with the help of another fabulous freshman.

Justyn Ross made a juggling grab, a one-handed snare and broke a 74-yard touchdown about midway through the third quarter that made it 37-16 and had Swinney high-stepping down the sidelines.

Ross, who scored two touchdowns in the semifinal rout of Notre Dame, had six catches for 153 yards against his home-state team.

Swinney takes a different approach than Saban, running a more fun-loving program than Alabama's all-business organization. But the results have been every bit as good. And on Monday night at Levi's Stadium, in a championship game played more than 2,000 miles away from Clemson's South Carolina campus, the Tigers were way too much for an Alabama team that had spent the season mauling its opposition. The Tide won their first 14 games by an average of 31 points.

Alabama's Tua Tagovailoa threw two crucial interceptions in the first half, the first returned 44 yards for a touchdown by A.J. Terrell to put Clemson up 7-0. The Tide came in scoring 48 points per

game, but was shut out over the final 44 minutes by an opportunistic Clemson defense.

Saban lamented numerous mistakes: blown coverages on third down (Clemson was 10 for 15), stall outs in the red zone and special teams mishaps, including a fake field goal that flopped on the first possession of the second half.

He laid the blame on himself. The Alabama program has set a championship-or-bust standard under Saban, but he didn't want this season looked at as a failure.

"One game doesn't define who you are," Saban said. "But I also told the players that sometimes we learn more when things don't go well, when we lose."

Tagovailoa, the sophomore who came off the bench to win the championship game last year for the Tide, went 22 for 34 for 295 yards and two touchdowns.

"We had a great season, but five words: Good is not good enough," Tagovailoa said. "We didn't finish the way we wanted to finish. We didn't do the things we needed to do to execute and be successful in this game, and that's all it is."

The Heisman runner-up was also the second-best quarterback on the field in the championship game. Lawrence finished 20 for 32, and went 18 for 25 for 277 yards over the final three quarters.

The teenager who took over as the starter four games into the season raised the Tigers' play, giving them an explosive offense to match a suffocating defense, led by All-American linemen Clelin Ferrell and Wilkins.

"Just these seniors, just taking me in, and they kind of dragged me along until I got my feet under me, and they just - they're awesome people as well as players," said Lawrence, the first freshman starting quarterback to lead his team to a national title since Oklahoma's Jamelle Holieway in 1985.

Clemson hit Alabama with a 31-point first half, capitalizing on the Tide's mistakes and unleashing Lawrence's rocket arm.

Tagovailoa threw a second interception in the second quarter, this time into triple coverage, and Trayvon Mullen's 46-yard return put Clemson in Alabama territory. That led to Travis Etienne's third touchdown of the half, a 5-yard shovel pass from Lawrence.

With a chance to stamp itself as the best team in Saban's remarkable 12 seasons at Alabama, the Crimson Tide played maybe the worst half of the coach's tenure. The 15-point halftime deficit was the largest the Tide has ever faced under Saban.

Alabama seemed panicked in the third quarter, running a fake field goal into a waiting Clemson defense instead of kicking from 40. Three plays later, Lawrence faced down a pass rush and slung a pass to Ross, who was alone after Alabama defensive back Saivion Smith went down with an apparent leg injury.

Ross sprinted away and the shocking rout was on.

Almost as shocking as Clemson, a program that promoted an obscure receivers' coach to lead the program 10 years ago, climbing over the traditional powers to the top of college football. Clemson finished No. 1 in the AP poll for the third time.

'Our goal is not to win a national championship. People don't believe that. Our goal is to win the closer right there. The national championship is just a byproduct of that. It's never been my goal," said Swinney, who now has as many titles as Hall of Famers Bobby Bowden and Joe Paterno. "I don't measure teams by that, and I know we've got some rabid people that that drives them crazy, but I measure our team based on did we get better, did we reach our potential."

Alabama will be back in contention again this fall, you can bet on that. Will we see another rematch and another alternating victory? That we don't know that yet, will make this an exciting season.

Thanks for hanging in there with the rest of us who revel in the Crimson Tide. I can't wait for ten national championships in the

next ten years. Nick Saban is one of the few coaches ever who just might pull it off. I say “yes.”

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