

Dear Reader:

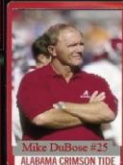
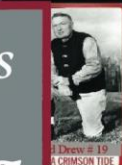
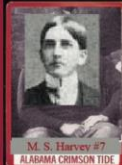
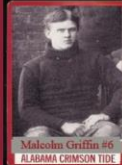
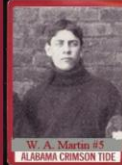
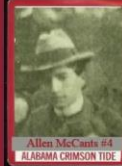
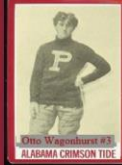
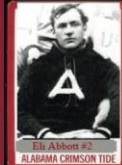
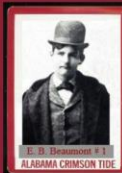
<https://www.letsGOPublish.com/collegefootball/alabaman.pdf> Thank you very much for downloading this free book about the Alabama Crimson Tide Football Team -- **Great Moments in Alabama Football.**, which I finished in January 2017.

Most of my books had previously been published on Amazon.

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Enjoy!



Great Moments
in
**Alabama
Football**
by
BRIAN KELLY







Great Moments

in

Alabama Football

This book starts at the beginning of Football and goes to the Nick Saban era.

The book is written for those of us who love Alabama Crimson Tide Football. And cannot wait until their next win. Those who hate Alabama football will also want this book so they can get a leg up on the facts missing from the bookshelves of those fellow Alabama fans who do not have this 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 its first season come later as the Thin Red Line that later became the Crimson Tide makes itself known.

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.

This book captures the great moments in Alabama Football. It takes the reader through stories about Alabama's great coaches to stories about 124 seasons worth of great games. The book often stops in time and talks about a particular 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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Great Moments in Alabama Football

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

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Alabama Season Records from 1892 through 2017

<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—WW I			
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 # 29	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

Total Wins 879

Total Losses 327

Total Ties 43 * **Prior to Overtime Rules**

Stats from 1892 * **Through December 2016**

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 numbers, 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 66 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 97 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 moments 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:

We all know that Paul 'Bear' Bryant was 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 who he competed against. 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.

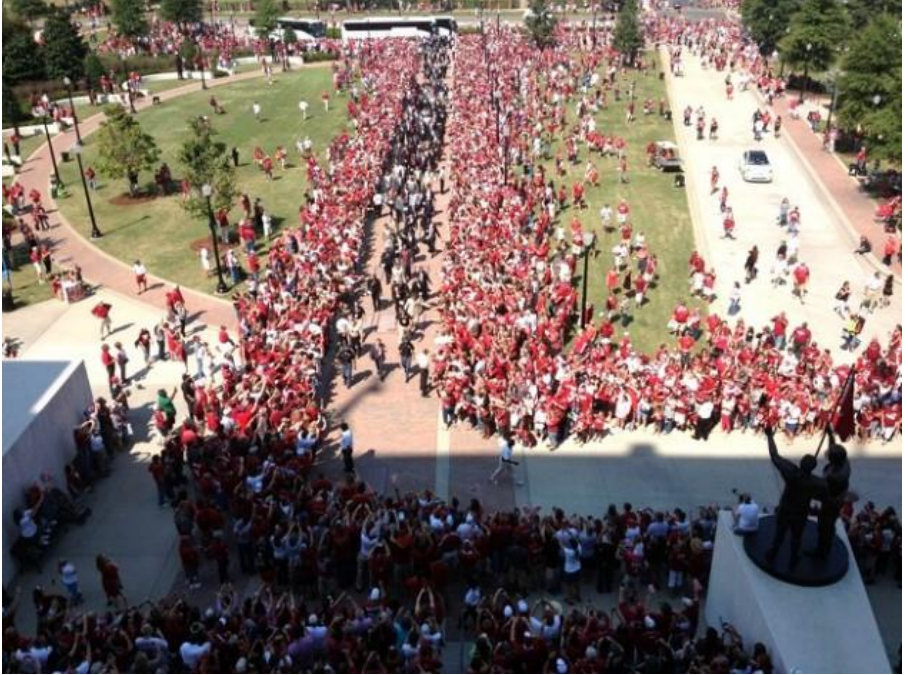
Before the festivities begin for the game, it is fun to visit a few spots on campus. Of course all 101,821 Bryant-Denny Stadium fans cannot be in the same place at the same time before the game but they sure try. On the opposite side of Bryant-Denny Stadium from The QUAD is an area known as 'The Strip'.

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 Moments 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 moments. There are some moments 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 (AU) 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 moments in Alabama Football. It touches every aspect of the historical and mythical Alabama Football Teams. It tells exhilarating stories about Alabama's 30 coaches and its 125 seasons worth of great games (900 wins, 326 losses, 43 ties = 1289 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 Great Moments in Alabama Football 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

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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 98 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 moments.

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. 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 AU 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 long-lasting impact on American life. 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!

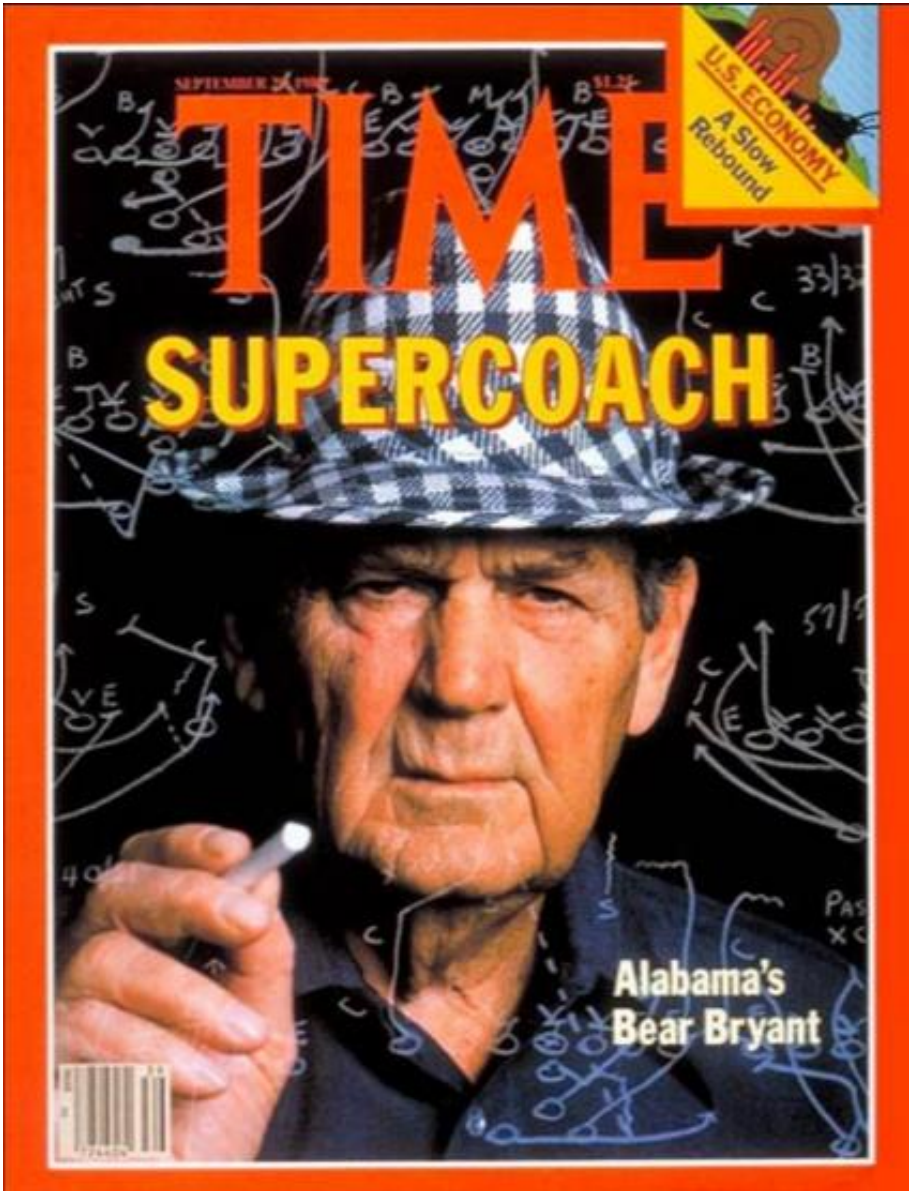


We begin the rest of the Alabama Football Story in Chapter 2 with the founding of the institution and we continue in subsequent chapters right into the founding of the football program in 1892.

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 29 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 Sabin 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 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 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 2017, 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 won lots of games with teams on offense and defense better than any others

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.

The players for their own reason 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 done 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 2004 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 1992. 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 The Founding of the University of Alabama



University of the State of Alabama

Origins from 1818 before Alabama was a state

The University of Alabama is naturally proud of its history; its 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.

At the time, to get the project moving, the legislature appointed a Board of Trustees to handle the building and the opening of the campus. These appointees were to carry over to the operation of the school and the campus. The Board, taking over from the legislature, selected Tuscaloosa, then capital of the Alabama, as the site of the university in 1827, and opened its doors to students on April 18, 1831. It took about thirteen years from the early dream of a seminary for learning to the first day of operation for The University of the State of Alabama.

The first President of the University (UA) was Reverend Alva Woods, (1794–1887). He was already into a distinguished career as an American minister, university professor and university president when he came to UA in 1831. He had been interim President of Brown University, 1826–28, and the President of Transylvania University, 1828-31. Of most historical significance of UA of course is that he served as the first President of the University of Alabama from 1831 to 1837.

He resigned from the University of Alabama in 1837 to become a prison minister. He died in Hamilton, New York, on August 11, 1887. Reverend Woods just missed being the first UA President to live in the new President's Residence. That honor belongs to Basil Manly the second President of UA.

Rev. Basil Manly. Sr., D. D, (1798-1868) was a leading Baptist minister and educator . He shepherded UA in its initial growth as a major university. As noted, he served as the second president of the University of Alabama for eighteen years from 1837 to 1855. While he served as President, he was also an evangelist, preaching across the state and helping lead the First Baptist Church in Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa County.



AU tells a lot about the institution on its own web site.

<https://www.ua.edu/>

There is a big welcome from the South's premier student-centered research university and one of the top 50 public universities in the country.

Since its inception UA has been committed to supporting the aspirations of its students. That commitment is reflected in an educational experience that demonstrates an unwavering commitment to teaching excellence, the advancement of scholarship and service to society.

If you are fortunate enough to select Alabama University, the state's flagship university, you will soon know that this fine institution endeavors to creating and sustain an environment that encourages all members of the UA family to fulfill their highest potential. I'll bet you find the word welcome in US signage and campus literature and its web site thousands of time because this University means it. You're welcom and you are welcome.

A welcoming and inclusive campus for our students, faculty, staff, visitors and alumni is one of UA's top priorities. The members of this family are the lifeblood of this great university.

Academic Affairs

The Office for Academic Affairs is key to student success at UA preparing students for the world of life. It serves the faculty, students and academic administrators in all aspects of teaching, research and service. UA strives for excellence in all that it does to meet its vibrant scholarly community demands. Academic Affairs is part of a bod that provides the support needed to help everybody from the deans, esteemed faculty, and dedicated students to achieve their goals in the classroom, in their research and creative endeavors, as well as in community outreach and engaged scholarship.

Whether providing data through institutional research, working with accrediting agencies or administering budgets in support of academic excellence throughout the University, UA Academic Affairs is there to serve and support the academy of scholars that is The University of Alabama.

The Provost and Office for Academic Affairs staff members serve the greater academic community in all endeavors maximizing efforts in support of academic achievement at the highest level.

Intercollegiate Athletics

Of course, there is great pride in Alabama's great success in Intercollegiate Athletics. More than likely, that is why you are reading this book. Yea Alabama, Crimson Tide!

If you enjoy watching or participating in championship sports, or revel in a unique gameday atmosphere, then you will feel right at home at The University of Alabama.

Intramural sports, club sports, sports for students with disabilities and two student recreation centers rank among the best in the nation. They give every student an opportunity to participate in the pride and tradition that define Alabama athletics.

From football, to gymnastics, to basketball, to baseball to rowing, cross country, golf, soccer, softball, swimming/diving, tennis, track and field, and volleyball, The University of Alabama has won more than two dozen national championships and countless more conference championships and individual achievements.

The Crimson Tide is just as impressive in the classroom, leading the nation once again with a dozen Capital One Academic All-Americans.

A History Review

It always helps to remember from whence one comes. The University of Alabama is the state of Alabama's oldest public university—almost 200 years in existence. It is a senior comprehensive doctoral-level institution. The University was established by constitutional provision under statutory mandates and authorizations. Its mission is to advance the intellectual and social condition of the people of the state through quality programs of teaching, research and service. It serves the people of Alabama and students from across the nation in the highest manner

Many states have many universities but in almost all cases one university is designated by decree or by tradition as the best in the state. As the state of Alabama's flagship university, The University of Alabama has always focused on being the best. It is The Capstone of Higher Education.

We have discussed its 1831 founding as the state's first public college. From its first day, The University of Alabama has been dedicated to excellence in teaching, research and service. If you have an educational need, in almost every case it can be attained by attending this storied University

UA provides a creative, nurturing campus environment where students become the best individuals possible. They learn from the best and brightest faculty, and when they go out on their own, they make a positive difference in the community, the state and the world. UA knows that you will like what you find on its beautiful

campus and they encourage all prospective students to become part of The University of Alabama family.

A well-done encapsulation of the almost 200-year history of this fine university is provided at <https://www.ua.edu/about/history>. It is worth your time.

Welcome to The University of Alabama!



President Bell and His Family Welcome You to the University of Alabama

The Capstone is a special place characterized by a deep commitment to excellence in all we do.

As the state's flagship university, we serve our students, our region, our state and the nation through outstanding teaching, research that matters and service that strengthens our communities. We make a positive difference in the lives we touch every day by creating and sustaining an environment that encourages all members of the UA family to fulfill their highest potential.

One of our highest priorities is to provide a welcoming and inclusive campus for our students, faculty, staff, visitors and alumni. You are the lifeblood of this great university.

Dr. Stuart R. Bell
President

Chapter 3 The Mission of The University of Alabama



Context

This statement speaks of the University of Alabama (UA) as a place of teaching and research, of scholarship and publication, of service and community. These components flow from many characteristics of life that find worth in everyday life, goodness, and specifically scholarship.

Our Mission

Every University has a formal mission. The University of Alabama's mission is to advance the intellectual and social condition of the people of the state of Alabama, the nation and the world through the creation, translation and dissemination of knowledge with an emphasis on quality programs in the areas of teaching, research and service.

“Nothing in life worth having is easy”

Our Vision

The University of Alabama is to be known as the university of choice for the best and brightest students in Alabama, and all students who seek exceptional educational opportunities. The University of Alabama will be a student-centered research university and an academic community united in its commitment to enhance the quality of life for all Alabamians and the citizens of the nation and the world.

Our Core Values

The University of Alabama is committed to:

- Undergraduate education that produces socially-conscious, ethical and well-rounded leaders who are grounded in their subject matter and capable of controlling their own destinies.
- Graduate education that is deeply vested in subject matter knowledge, professional content, research skills and creative activity.
- Public outreach and service that is held in the highest regard and fosters impactful public engagement to enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Alabama, the nation and the world.
- Campus life that embodies collaboration, collegiality, respect and a culture of inclusivity.
- Our Strategic Goals
- Provide a premier undergraduate and graduate education that offers a global perspective and is characterized by outstanding teaching, high-quality scholarship and distinctive curricular and co-curricular programs.
- Increase the University's productivity and innovation in research, scholarship and creative activities that impact economic and societal development.
- Enrich our learning and work environment by providing an accepting, inclusive community that attracts and supports a diverse faculty, staff and student body.
- Provide opportunities and resources that facilitate work-life balance and enhance the recruitment and retention of outstanding faculty and staff.

Chapter 4 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.

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 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.



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

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.

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 125 years ago in 1892, the program boasts of 16 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 16 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 Atcheson began to recognize five pre-Bryant national championship teams (1925, 1926, 1930, 1934, 1941). He added them to the University's Football Media Guide.

Atcheson 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.

Atcheson 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).

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 7-4 record in the SEC Championship Game as of 2016.

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 5 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.

Rules and Penalties

The big problem players from different teams and different geographies had when playing early American-style football in college was that the style of play was not standardized. The rulebooks were not yet written or were at best incomplete and disputable.

A rule over here, for example, would be a penalty over there. And, so in the 1870's there was a lot of work to try to make all games to be played by the same rules. There were minor rule changes such as team size was reduced from 25 to 20 but of course over the years, this and all other rules continued to evolve. For years, there was no such thing as a running touchdown. The only means of scoring was to bat or kick the ball through the opposing team's goal.

Early rugby rules were the default. The field size was rugby style at 140 yards by 70 yards v 120 X 53 1/3 (including end zones) in today's football game. There was plenty of room to huff and puff and almost get lost. There were no breaks per se for long periods. Instead of fifteen minute quarters, the game was more like Rugby and Soccer with 45 minute halves played continuously.

In 1873 to put some order to the game, Columbia, Princeton, Rutgers, and Yale got together in a hotel in New York City and wrote down the first set of intercollegiate football rules. They changed a few things along the way but the end product was a much

more standard way of playing football games. Rather than use the home team's rules, all teams then were able to play by the same rules

Harvard did not to comply with rules

For its own reasons, Harvard chose not to attend the rules conference. Instead, it played all of its games using the Harvard code of rules. Harvard therefore had a difficult time scheduling games. In 1874, to get a game, Harvard agreed to play McGill University from Montreal Canada. They had rules that even Harvard had never seen. For example, any player could pick up the ball and run with it, anytime he wished.

Another McGill rule was that they would count tries (the act of grounding the football past the opponent's goal line. Since there was no end zone, which technically makes a football field of today 120 yards long, a touchdown gave no points. Instead, it provided the chance to kick a free goal from the field. If the kick were missed, the touchdown did not count.

In 1874 McGill and Harvard played a two-game series. Each team could play 11 men per side. This was in deep contrast to the even earlier days of college football before standard rules when games were played with 25, 20, 15, or 11 men on a side.

The first game was played with a round ball using what were known as the "Boston" rules (Harvard). The next day, the teams played using the McGill rules, which included McGill's oval ball which was much like an American football, and it featured the ability to pick up the ball and run with it.

Harvard enjoyed this experience especially the idea of "the try" which had not been used in American football. Eventually, the try evolved into the American idea of a touchdown and points were given when a try was successful.

Not all the rules lasted the duration and some were very strange by today's standards. One of the most perplexing rules was that a man could run with the ball only while an opponent chose to pursue him. When a tackler abandoned the ball-carrier, the latter had to stop,

and was forced to kick, pass or even throw away what was called "his burden."

McGill has a great account of this match on their web site. Type *mcgill web site football against Harvard* into your search engine.

Their players wore no protective pads. Woolen jerseys covered the torso, while white trousers encased the players' legs. Some trousers were short and some were long. It did not seem to matter for the game. A number of the men wore what they called black "football turbans" which were the ancestors of the modern helmet; others chose to wear white canvas hats.

The Harvard players wore undershirts made of gauze. Think about that for a while. They also wore what were called *full length gymnasium costumes*. They also wore light baseball shoes. Most of the team wore handkerchiefs, which were knotted about their heads.

The gauze undershirts were a trick. There was strategy in this choice of top uniform. When a player was first tackled, the gauze would be demolished and the next opponent would have nothing to grab other than "slippery human flesh." Harvard won this game by a score of 3-0

The next go at playing by the rules was when Harvard took on Tufts University on June 4, 1875. This was the first American college football game played using rules similar to the McGill/Harvard contest. Tufts won this game. Despite the loss, Harvard continued pushing McGill style football and challenged Yale.

The Bulldog team accepted under a compromise rule set that included some Yale soccer rules and Harvard rugby rules. They used 15 players per team. It was November 13, 1875 for this first meeting of Harvard v Yale. Harvard won 4-0. Walter Camp attended the game and the following year he played in the game as a Yale Bulldog.

Camp was determined to avenge Yale's defeat. Onlookers from Princeton, who saw this Harvard / Yale game loved it so much, they brought it back to Princeton where it was quickly adopted as the preferred version of football.

Once Walter Camp caught onto the rugby-style rules, history says he became a fixture at the Massasoit House conventions. Here the rules of the game were debated and changed appropriately. From these meetings, Camp's rule changes as well as others were adopted.

Having eleven players instead of fifteen aided in opening the game and it emphasized speed over strength. When Camp attended in 1878, this motion was rejected but it passed in the 1880 meeting. The line of scrimmage and the snap from center to the quarterback also passed in 1880.

Originally the snap occurred by a kick from the center, but this was later modified so the ball would be snapped with the hands either as a pass back (long snap) or a direct snap from the center.

It was Camp's new scrimmage rules, however, which according to many, revolutionized the game, though it was not always to increase speed. In fact, Princeton was known to use line of scrimmage plays to slow the game, making incremental progress towards the end zone much like today during each down.

Camp's original idea was to increase scoring, but in fact the rule was often misused to maintain control of the ball for the entire game. The negative effect was that there were many slow and unexciting contests. This too would be fixed with the idea of the first down coming into play.

In 1882, at the rules meeting, Camp proposed that a team be given three downs to advance the ball five yards. These rules were called the down and distance rules. Along with the notion of the line of scrimmage, these rules transformed the game of rugby into the distinct sport of American football.

Among other significant rule changes, in 1881, the field size was reduced to its modern dimensions of 120 by 53 $\frac{1}{3}$ yards (109.7 by 48.8 meters). Camp was central to these significant rule changes that ultimately defined American football. Camp's next quest was to address scoring anomalies. His first cut was to give four points for a touchdown and two points for kicks after touchdowns; two points

for safeties, and five points for field goals. The notion of the foot in football /rugby explains Camp's rationale.

In 1887, game time was fixed at two halves of 45 minutes each. Additionally college games would have two paid officials known as a referee and an umpire, for each game. In 1888, the rules permitted tackling below the waist and then in 1889, the officials were given whistles and stopwatches to better control the game.

An innovation that many list as most significant to making American football uniquely American was the legalization of blocking opponents, which back then was called "interference." This tactic had been highly illegal under the rugby-style rules and in rugby today, it continues to be illegal.

The more those who know soccer and football find rugby to be more like soccer.

Though *offsides* is a penalty infraction today, *offsides* in the 1880's in rugby was very much the same as *offsides* in soccer. The prohibition of blocking in a rugby game is in fact because of the game's strict enforcement of its *offsides* rule.

Similar to soccer, this rule prohibits any player on the team with possession of the ball to loiter between the ball and the goal. Blocking continues as a basic element of modern American football, with many complex schemes having been developed and implemented over the years, including zone blocking and pass blocking.

Camp stayed active in rule making for most of his life. He had the honor of personally selecting an annual All-American team every year from 1889 through 1924. Camp passed away in 1925. The Walter Camp Football Foundation continues to select All-American teams in his honor.

With many rule changes as noted, as American style rugby became more defined as American football, more and more colleges adopted football as part of their sports programs. Most of the schools were from the Eastern US. It was not until 1879 that the University of Michigan became the first school west of Pennsylvania to establish a bona-fide American-style college football team.

Back then, football teams played whenever they could in the fall or the spring. For example, Michigan's first game was in late spring, near the end of what we would call the academic year. On May 30, 1879 Michigan beat Racine College 1–0 in a game played in Chicago. In 1887, Michigan and Notre Dame played their first football game, which did not benefit from Camp's rules. Alabama did not play football until 1892.

The first night time game

It was not until September 28, 1892 that the first nighttime football game was played. Mansfield State Normal played Wyoming Seminary in Mansfield, Pennsylvania. These schools are close to where I live. The game ended at a "declared" half-time in a 0–0 tie. It had become too dark to play.

Wyoming Seminary was not a college and to this day it is not a college. I live about five miles from the school. It is a private college preparatory school located in the Wyoming Valley of Northeastern Pennsylvania. During the time period in which the game was played, it was common for a college and high school to play each other in football—a practice that of course has long since been discontinued.

The reason that it got too dark to play, ironically was not because the game began at dusk. Mansfield had brought in a lighting system that was far too inadequate for game play. This historical game lasted only 20 minutes and there were only 10 plays. Both sides agreed to end at half-time with the score at 0-0. Though it may seem humorous today, for safety reasons, the game was declared ended in a 0-0 tie after several players had an unfortunate run-in with a light pole.

Mansfield and Wyoming Seminary are thus enshrined in football history as having played in the first night game ever in "college football." History and football buffs get together once a year to celebrate the game in what they call "Fabulous 1890's Weekend." This historic game is reenacted exactly as it occurred play by play just as the actual game is recorded in history. Fans who watch the

game are sometimes known to correct players (actually actors) when they deviate from the original scripted plays. Now, that shows both a love of the game and a love of history.

Mansfield and Wyoming Seminary's game added additional fame to both schools when the 100th anniversary of the game just happened to occur on Monday, September 28, 1992. Monday Night Football celebrated "100 years of night football" with its regularly scheduled game between the Los Angeles Raiders and the Kansas City Chiefs at Arrowhead Stadium. The Chiefs won 27–7 in front of 77,486 fans. How about that?

More football history was recorded when Army played Navy in 1893. This was during the second season of Alabama football. In this game, we have the first documented use of a football helmet by a player in a game. Joseph M. Reeves had been kicked in the head in a prior football game. He was warned by his doctor that he risked death if he continued to play football.

We all know how tough the Midshipmen and Black Nights (Cadets) are regardless of who they may be playing. Rather than end his football playing days prematurely, Reeves discussed his need with a shoemaker in Annapolis who crafted a leather helmet for the player to wear for the rest of the season.

Football conferences

Things were happening very quickly in the new sport of football. Organization and rules became the mantra for this fledgling sport. It was being defined while it was being played. Formal college football conferences were just around the corner. In fact, the Southeastern Conference and the Atlantic Coast Conference both got started in 1894.

The Southeastern Conference (SEC) was established on December 8 and 9, 1932, when the thirteen members of the Southern Conference located west and south of the Appalachian Mountains left to form their own conference.

Ten of the thirteen founding members have remained in the conference since its inception: the University of Alabama, Auburn University, the University of Florida, the University of Georgia, the

University of Kentucky, Louisiana State University ("LSU"), the University of Mississippi ("Ole Miss"), Mississippi State University, the University of Tennessee, and Vanderbilt University.

Many, throughout the country see the SEC as a money-printing, championship-winning behemoth across college sports. It is home to 14 schools that compete in just about every sport across college athletics, it has its own television network and it inspires regional pride unrivaled across the nation.

The forward pass

None of Walter Camp's rules for American Football included the most innovative notion of them all – the forward pass. Many believe that the first forward pass in football occurred on October 26, 1895 in a game between Georgia and North Carolina. Out of desperation, the ball was thrown by the North Carolina back Joel Whitaker instead of having been punted. George Stephens, a teammate caught the ball.

Despite what most may think or surmise, it was Camp again when he was a player at Yale, who executed the first game-time forward pass for a touchdown. During the Yale-Princeton game, while Camp was being tackled, he threw a football forward to Yale's Oliver Thompson, who sprinted to a touchdown. The Princeton Tigers naturally protested and there appeared to be no precedent for a referee decision.

Like many things in football including a game-beginning coin-toss, the referee in this instance tossed a coin, and then he made his decision to allow the touchdown.

Hidden ball trick

Dome one-time tricks have not survived football. For example, on November 9, 1895 Auburn Coach John Heisman executed a hidden ball trick. Quarterback Reynolds Tichenor was able to gain Auburn's only touchdown in a 6 to 9 loss to Vanderbilt. This also was the first game in the south that was decided by a field goal.

The trick was simple but would be illegal today. When the ball was snapped, it went to a halfback. The play was closely masked and well screened. The halfback then thrust the ball under the back of the quarterback's (Tichenor) jersey. Then the halfback would crash into the line. After the play, Tichenor "simply trotted away to a touchdown."

The end of college football?

Football was never a game for the light of heart. You had to be tough physically and tough mentally to compete. Way back in 1906, for example complaints were many about the violence in American Football. It got so bad that universities on the West Coast, led by California and Stanford, replaced the sport with rugby union.

At the time, the future of American college football, a very popular sport enjoyed by fans nationwide was in doubt. The schools that eliminated football and replaced it with rugby union believed football would be gone and rugby union would eventually be adopted nationwide.

Soon other schools followed this travesty and made the switch. Eventually, due to the perception that West Coast football was an inferior game played by inferior men when compared to the rough and tumble East Coast, manhood prevailed in the West over the inclination to make the game mild.

The many tough East Coast and Midwest teams had shrugged off the loss of the few teams out West and they had continued to play American style football.

And, so the available pool of rugby union "football" teams to play remained small. The Western colleges therefore had to schedule games against local club teams and they reached out to rugby union powers in Australia, New Zealand, and especially, due to its proximity, Canada.

The famous Stanford and California game continued as rugby. To make it seem important. The winner was invited by the British Columbia Rugby Union to a tournament in Vancouver over the Christmas holidays. The winner of that tournament was rewarded

with the Cooper Keith Trophy. Nobody in America cared. Eventually the West Coast came back to football.

Nonetheless the situation of injury and death in football persisted and though there was a lot of pushback, it came to a head in 1905 when there were 19 fatalities nationwide. President Theodore Roosevelt, a tough guy himself, is reported as having threatened to shut down the game nationwide if drastic changes were not made. Sports historians however, dispute that Roosevelt ever intervened.

What is certified, however, is that on October 9, 1905, the President held a meeting of football representatives from Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. The topic was eliminating and reducing injuries and the President according to the record, never threatened to ban football.

The fact is that Roosevelt lacked the authority to abolish football but more importantly, he was a big fan and wanted the game to continue. The little Roosevelts also loved the sport and were playing football at the college and secondary levels at the time.

Meanwhile, there were more rule changes such as the notion of reducing the number of scrimmage plays to earn a first down from four to three in an attempt to reduce injuries. The LA Times reported an increase in punts in an experimental game and thus considered the game much safer than regular play. Football lovers did not accept the new rule because it was not "conducive to the sport."

Because nobody wanted players injured or killed in a game, on December 28, 1905, 62 schools met in New York City to discuss major rule changes to make the game safer. From this meeting, the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States, later named the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), was formed.

The forward pass is legalized

One rule change that was introduced in 1906 was devised to open up the game and thus reduce injury. This new rule introduced the legal forward pass. Though it was underutilized for years, this proved to

be one of the most important rule changes in the establishment of the modern game.

Because of these 1905-1906 reforms, mass formation plays in which many players joined together became illegal when forward passes became legal. Bradbury Robinson, playing for visionary coach Eddie Cochems at St. Louis University, is recorded as throwing the first legal pass in a September 5, 1906, game against Carroll College at Waukesha.

Later changes were in the minutia category but they added discipline and safety to the game without destroying its rugged character. For example, in 1910, came the new requirement that at least seven offensive players be on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap, that there be no pushing or pulling, and that interlocking interference (arms linked or hands on belts and uniforms) was not allowed. These changes accomplished their intended purpose of greatly reducing the potential for collision injuries.

As noted previously, great coaches emerged in the ranks who took advantage of these sweeping changes. Amos Alonzo Stagg, for example, introduced such innovations as the huddle, the tackling dummy, and the pre-snap shift. Other coaches, such as Pop Warner and Notre Dame's Knute Rockne, introduced new strategies that still remain part of the game.

Many other rules changes and coaching innovations came about before 1940. They all had a profound impact on the game, mostly in opening up the passing game, but also in making the game safer to play without diminishing its quality.

For example, in 1914, the first roughing-the-passer penalty was implemented. In 1918, the rules on eligible receivers were loosened to allow eligible players to catch the ball anywhere on the field. The previously more restrictive rules allowed passes only in certain areas of the field.

Scoring rules also changed which brought the scoring into the modern era. For example, field goals were lowered from five to three points in 1909 and touchdowns were raised from four to six points in 1912.

Star Players

Star players emerged in both the collegiate and professional ranks including Jim Thorpe, Red Grange, and Bronko Nagurski. There were also other stars. These three in particular were able to move from college to the fledgling NFL and they helped turn it into a successful league. Notable sportswriter Grantland Rice helped popularize the sport of football with his poetic descriptions of games and colorful nicknames for the game's biggest players, including Notre Dame's "Four Horsemen" backfield and Fordham University's linemen, known as the "Seven Blocks of Granite".



Jim Thorpe, Circa 1915

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.

As professional football became a national television phenomenon, college football did as well. In the 1950s, Notre Dame, which had a large national following, formed its own network to broadcast its games, but by and large the sport still retained a mostly regional following.

New formations and play sets continued to be developed by innovative coaches and their staffs. Emory Bellard from the University of Texas, developed a three-back option style offense

known as the wishbone. Bear Bryant of Alabama became a preacher of the wishbone.

The strategic opposite of the wishbone is called the spread offense. Some teams have managed to adapt with the times to keep winning consistently. In the rankings of the most victorious programs, Michigan, Texas, and Notre Dame for many years were ranked first, second, and third in total wins. Things have changed. Now, Alabama is recognized in this list in front of Notre Dame, which just came off an unusual four-win season.

1	Michigan	935
2	Yale	890
3	Nebraska	889
4	Ohio State	888
5	Texas	891
6	Alabama	878
7	Notre Dame	874
8	Oklahoma	864
9	Harvard	860
10	Penn State	867

And so, that is as far as we will take it in this chapter about the early evolution of football. With so many conferences and sports associations as well as pro, college, high school, and mini sports, something tells me we have not yet seen our last rule change.

Chapter 6 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 AU football's 125 seasons.

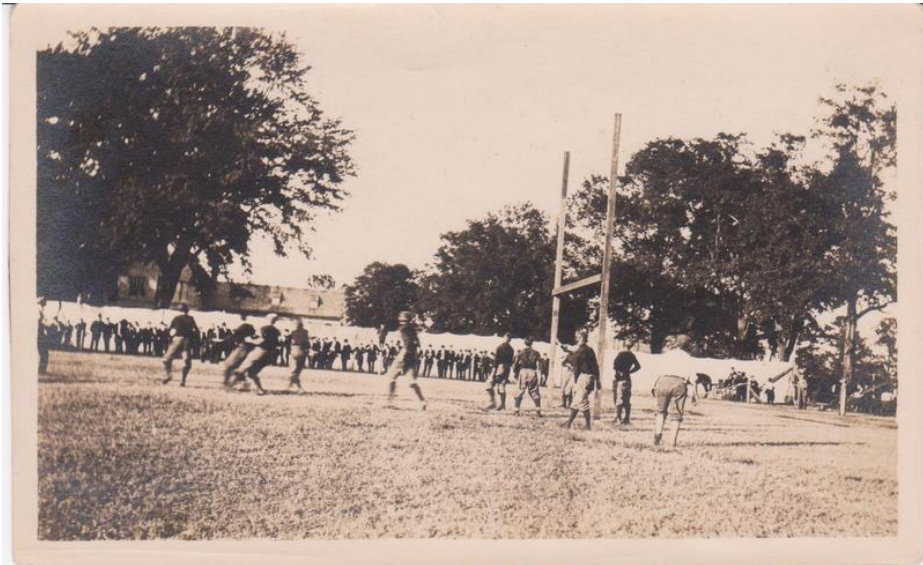
Few universities have had such a plethora of stadiums to choose from in their history. Today, the variety has been over for a number of years as Alabama will play all of its home games in a nice new big facility called Bryant-Denny Stadium which is on campus in

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.



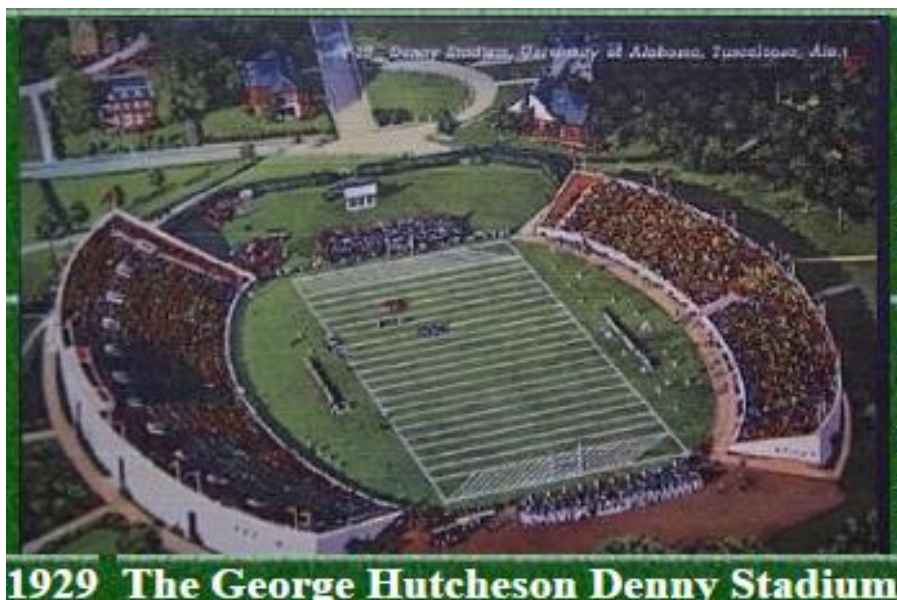
The QUAD

The first home of Crimson Tide football was located on The QUAD at the center of the Alabama campus in Tuscaloosa. The Crimsons 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 AU stadium venues.

I edited the material below significantly to avoid repetition. It is from a slide show about the stadium(s).

Slide 1

In December of 1928, the ground was broken as Davis Architects began its construction of the complex that would replace Denny Field. In September of 1929, Denny Stadium was open for the season.

The new stadium held a maximum capacity of roughly 12,000 fans. Denny Stadium began its historic debut as the Crimson Tide defeated Mississippi College, 55-0, in their first home game. The

next month, Denny Stadium was officially dedicated during Alabama's homecoming game against the Ole Miss Rebels.

The Tide won its homecoming game against Ole Miss, 22-7, under coach Wallace Wade. Wade was Alabama's first football coach in its first stadium. He only coached for one year, but had an overall record of 6-0. This brought a new chapter for the university.

Slide 2

In 1945, Denny Stadium reached a high point in its history as the Tide claimed a perfect season and a Rose Bowl win against USC. Designers soon drew up plans for an expansion of bleacher rows on the sideline lower decks.

Slide 3 Construction began in 1946 to commemorate a high note in the football team's career. Denny Stadium soon reached its capacity as 31,000 fans filled the stands for a home game against Southwestern Louisiana. The stadium was dedicated once again and Alabama walked away with a 54-0 win.

Slide 4

The year 1958 brought about a turning point in Alabama's already-decorated history as a collegiate football team. When head coach Paul Bryant first set foot on the field, he had visions of how Denny Stadium should attract more of a fan base.

That year, Coach Bryant started mapping out plans for an expansion of the Crimson Tide's home. The new additions included 12,000 new seats, a press box for the media, and a working elevator.

The Tide opened the doors to its new stadium in 1961 against North Carolina State. With an attendance record of 41,000, Alabama won, 28-7.

While renovations occurred, home games were held at Legion Field in Birmingham, including the Iron Bowl between Alabama and Auburn.

Slide 5

In 1965, after winning the national championship the following year, coach Paul Bryant called for 17,000 more seats to be put into the stadium on both sidelines. Denny Stadium would soon hold a record 60,000 dedicated Crimson Tide fans.

With Frank Howard as coach for the game, the Crimson Tide opened their new field with a win against Clemson in 1966.

The game was a shut-out with the seats packed.

Slide 6

Denny Stadium made history as Paul "Bear" Bryant was recognized for his unwavering service as head coach of the Crimson Tide football team. State Senator Berk Bank called for a dedication ceremony for coach Bryant which would put his name in the title of Denny Stadium.

During the 1976 A-Day spring game, head coach Paul Bryant was dedicated. Everyone would soon refer to the Tide's home field as "Bryant-Denny Stadium."

Slide 7

In 1986, the Alabama Crimson Tide resorted to playing most of its home games at Legion Field in Birmingham once again. Legion Field became a historic chapter in the Tide's extensive legacy.

Bryant-Denny Stadium underwent drastic changes as new locker rooms were built, as well as new sideline upper decks. The historic Ivory Club was also constructed along with more press boxes. In all, the stadium would house a maximum 70,160 fans.

Now, Legion Field houses the University of Alabama at Birmingham Dragons, a fledgling Conference USA team which has large shoes to fill since the Crimson Tide took the field in the late 1980s.

Slide 8

From 1998-99, the Crimson Tide's home turf experienced huge changes to the architecture of the field. Heading the new expansion project was athletic director Hootie Ingram, who endorsed the modernization of the stadium.

In 1998, spiral walkways were added to the East side of the stadium which gave spectators an easy access point to the upper and lower decks of the bleachers. Another expansion were more bleachers on the upper East side which created an additional 11,000 seats.

The year 1999 kick-started the modernization of Bryant-Denny Stadium with the installation of a Jumbotron with a digital scoreboard. Along with this addition were the construction of two East side reception areas, and places where A-Club and Scholarship-level fans could watch the games.

Slide 9

After the Tide's 2004 season, designers began putting new plans into place for their North end zone renovation. This included 8,000 new bleachers, and premium seating arrangements along with new video screens.

The historic "Walk of Champions" was also added, which connects Bryant-Denny Stadium to University Boulevard. This soon became Alabama's centerpiece for the stadium, which displays 13 national championship titles [more on the way with the prolific record of Nick Saban and recognition of all the past Crimson Tide coaches.

After the "Walk of Champions" was added, 38 new skyboxes were built for club level seating, as well as a walkway leading to upper deck seating arrangements. The locker room was also reconstructed and a new sound system was added.

Slide 10

Under head coach Nick Saban and his 2010 BCS national championship team, upper deck end zone seating was designed and put under construction to add another 10,000 fans to the attendance record.

In 2009, plans were released for expansion in both end zones and progress of construction was showcased during the 2010 A-Day traditional spring game which was a packed house. The estimated attendance record with the new additions added will be around 101,800 fans.

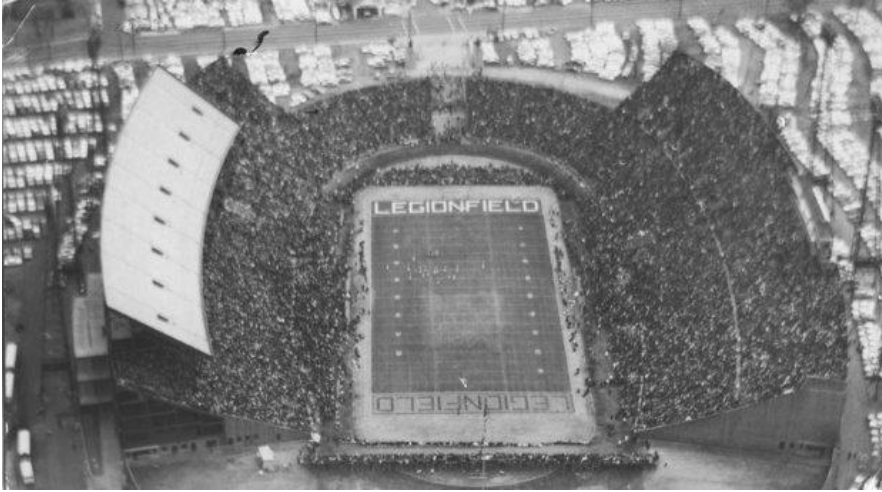
The project was finished and opened to the general public by the time Alabama played its 2010 season opener against San Jose State.

With a 101,800 fan attendance record, Alabama's Bryant-Denny Stadium rolled into the fourth-ranked spot on the list of the largest collegiate stadiums in the country.

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 41years, 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 7 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, AU 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.

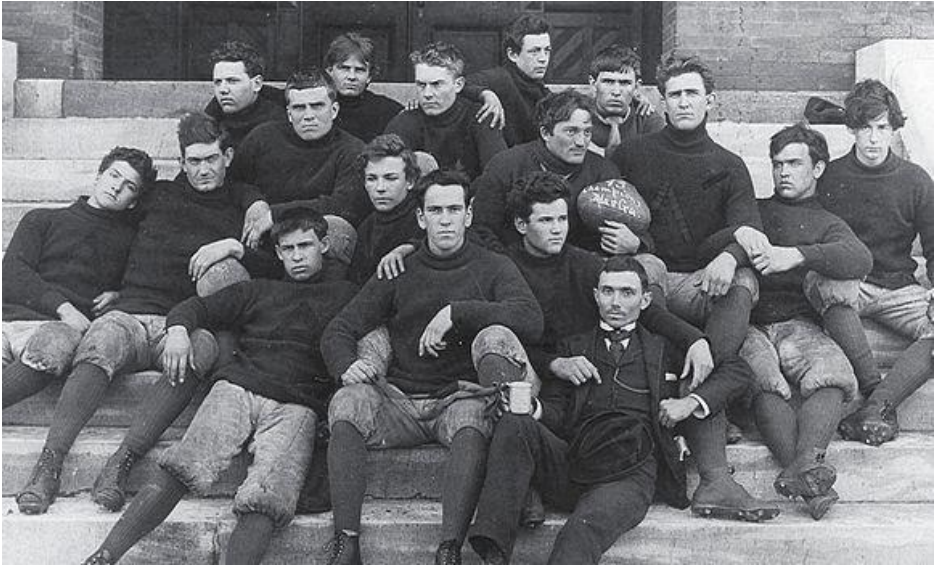
1893 Alabama Football Season Eli Abbot Coach # 2

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 in their 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 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. AU 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. AU 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 AU 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, AU 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 8 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.

In 1902, the UA season opened on October 10 at home against a tough but undermanned Birmingham High School team at The QUAD in Tuscaloosa, AL. UA prevailed W (57–0). Teams would do whatever they had to get games—some played up and some played down. The huge victory margin brought Alabama's all-time record against Birmingham High School to 2–0.

On October 13, the Marion Military Institute came into the QUAD • in Tuscaloosa, AL. UA had no problem putting them away W (81–0) but nobody ever gave up. On October 18 Auburn, always a tough contest in the Iron Bowl arrived at West End Park •

Birmingham, AL (Iron Bowl), and they prevailed L 0–23. On November 1, Georgia's Bulldogs were ready for a match and they slipped by with a slight win v Alabama L (0–5).

On November 8, Mississippi A&M visited the QUAD and were pushed way back throughout the game in a rivalry match. W (27–0). On November 11, Texas then played at the QUAD and the Crimson White lost L (0–10). It was the first all-time meeting against the University of Texas. It was a game dominated by both defenses early, Texas scored their first touchdown with only 0:13 remaining in the first half on a ten-yard John A. Jackson. He then scored the only other touchdown in the second half for the 10–0 Longhorn victory.

With two more games left, Abbot was toughening up his team. On November 27, Georgia Tech were well beaten at West End Park • Birmingham, AL W 26–0. The one-game win streak ended on November 29 against LSU at the QUAD in Tuscaloosa L (0-11)

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.

On October 10, 1903, UA played Vanderbilt at Dudley Field in Nashville, TN. The game went into the wrong column L 0–30. This was Alabama's 1903 season opener with a 0-30 against Vanderbilt University right out of the chute. It was the first all-time meeting between the schools at Dudley Field.

Vanderbilt took a 12–0 halftime lead after first half touchdowns were scored first by Ed Hamilton and followed by John J. Tigert. The Commodores then closed the game with three touchdowns in the second half scored by Hamilton, Dan Blake and Bob Blake for the 30–0 victory. Tigers converted all five PAT's in their victory. Frank Kyle starred for the Commodores in the contest with runs of 30, 35, 48 and 50-yards against the Crimson White.

On October 16 at Mississippi A&M at the Columbus Fairgrounds in Columbus, MS, a soon-to-be rivalry, the Crimson White suffered another loss L 0–11. Shaking off the loser dust, UA proudly went to the Iron Bowl on October 23 vs. Auburn at Riverside Park in Montgomery, and the White brought home a W (18–6). It was a welcome win after being shut out for their first two games.

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.

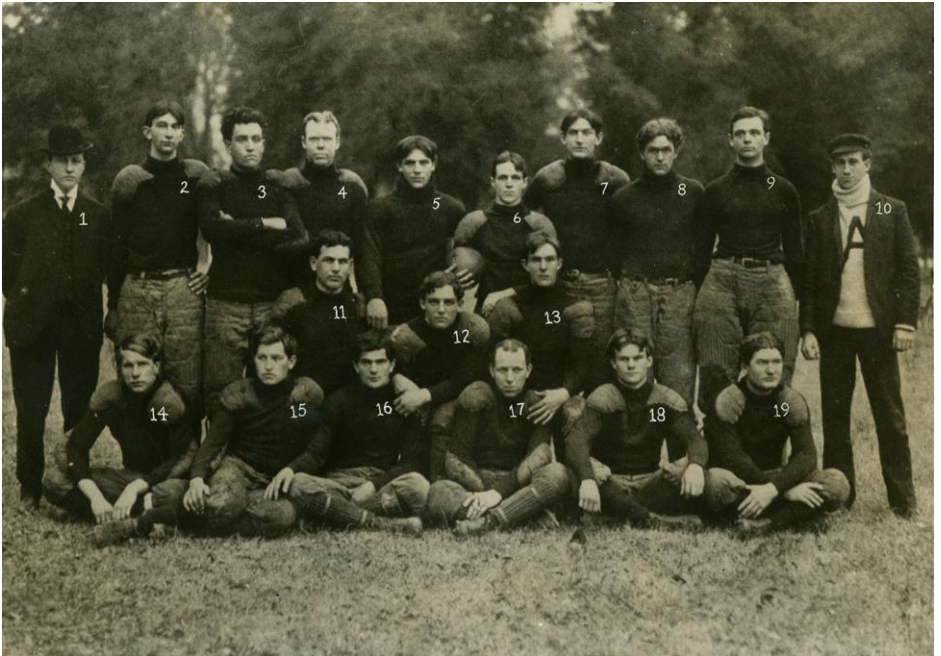
Sewanee was always tough and they were again tough again on November 2 as UA went down L 0–23. LSU came to The QUAD in Tuscaloosao on November 9 and UA prevailed W 18–0.

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.

On November 14 v Cumberland at the The QUAD , UA bit the dust L (0–44). Then, on November 26 v Tennessee at West End Park UA prevailed W (24-0)

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).

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 an conversion (PAT) was worth one point.

On October 3, UA took on the University of Florida at The QUAD W 29-0 . On October 8 in West End Park, Clemson beat the Crimson White L 0-18. On October 15, it was Mississippi A&M at Columbus Fairgrounds, Columbus, MS (Rivalry) W (10-5). On October 24, Nashville came to the The QUAD W (17-0).

On November 5, Georgia came to the QUAD and were defeated W (16-5). You can see four touchdowns scored and just one extra point. On November 12, the Iron Bowl was played at West End Park in Birmingham, AL. UA were beaten by Auburn L (5-29). Auburn used a delayed buck effectively. On this play, blockers swept around end, faking the ball. The ball carrier then drove through the line for substantial gains. Teams were quickly learning tricks to gain the advantage in college football games.

On November 24, November 24 UA played Tennessee at West End Park L (0-5) On December 2. The Crimson White traveled to State Field in Baton Rouge to play LSU W (11-0).

Three games were played on successive days in Louisiana and Pensacola. On December 3 at Tulane in New Orleans, LA, UA won again, W (6-0). Then on December 4 at Pensacola Athletic Club in Pensacola, FL, The Crimson White won again W (10-6).

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.



1905 Alabama v Georgia

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).

On October 3, Alabama kicked off the season with a W (17-0) at the QUAD against Maryville. Four days later, on October 7, Vanderbilt defeated the Crimson White (0-34) at Dudley Field in Nashville. The following week on October 14, Mississippi A&M played at the QUAD and were defeated W (34-0).



In a close game on October 21 at Georgia Tech in Brisbane Park • Atlanta, GA, UA almost pulled it through but were defeated in a close match L (5–12). Clemson was next on October 25 at the South Carolina State Fairgrounds. The Tigers won L (0-25)

<<<Coach Leavenworth -- left

On November 4, UA beat the Georgia Bulldogs at the Birmingham Fairgrounds W (36-0). On November 9, Centre

Came into own at The QUAD and were defeated by US W (21-0). UA was at peak form against a scrappy Auburn team at Birmingham Fairgrounds on November 18 for the Iron Bowl W (30-0). A tough Sewanee team beat UA on November 23 at the Birmingham Fairgrounds L (6-42). In the season ender, Tennessee played at the Birmingham Fairgrounds and were defeated W (29-0).

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).

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.

On October 6, Alabama beat Maryville at The QUAD in Tuscaloosa, AL, W (6-0). On October 13 Howard played UA at The QUAD and were defeated W (14-0). On October 20, it was Vanderbilt playing at their home of Dudley Field in Nashville. (L (0-78). After a two-week healing, UA was back on November 3 at Mississippi A&M at Hardy Field in Starkville, MS. W (16-4).

Then, on November 17, at the Birmingham Fairgrounds • Birmingham, AL in the Iron Bowl, UA beat Auburn W (10-0). In the season finale at home in Birmingham, UA beat Tennessee W (51-0).

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).

This team Alabama played several games of note during the season. Their 54–4 loss to an always tough Sewanee is the last time Alabama allowed an opponent to score 50 points in a regulation game. Admittedly, the 2003 team lost 51–43 to Tennessee in a game that went five overtimes). The victory over LSU at Monroe Park marked the first ever Alabama home game played in Mobile.

On October 5, UA opened with Maryville at The QUAD in Tuscaloosa, AL. W (17–0). On October 12 UA traveled to rival Ole Miss at the Columbus Fairgrounds W (20–0). Then, on October 21, Sewanee came to town at The QUAD L (4–54). On October 25, UA rebounded with a zero to zero tie v Georgia at Highland Park in Montgomery, AL T (0–0).

Centre came to the Birmingham Fairgrounds for a UA home game on November 2 and were defeated W (12-0). The Iron Bowl was again exciting on November 16 at the Fairgrounds T (6-6).

This year's 6–6 tie with Auburn was both the only tie in the history of the Iron Bowl and the last meeting between the two teams for forty years. Auburn was a 3 to 1 favorite going into the game, due to their earlier victory over Georgia and the fact that they had lost to Sewanee by only 6 points while Alabama lost to Sewanee by 50. Alabama missed a chance to win when a 15-yard field goal attempt failed.

Speculation as to why the Alabama–Auburn series was discontinued was originally thought to have been done as a safety precaution due violence both on the field and amongst the fans in the 1907 game. Instead, the game was canceled due to a disagreement between the schools on how much per diem to allow players for the trip to Birmingham, how many players each school should bring and where to find officials, and by the time all these matters were resolved, it was too late to play in 1908.

For forty years, the two teams failed to play each other, even though they were in the same state and members of the same conferences. Finally, pressure from the state legislature resulted in the renewal of the rivalry in 1948. Sometimes government does have a positive role.

On November 23, AU traveled to Monroe Park in Mobile, AL to play a home game v LSU W (6–4). AU ended the season on

November 28 against Tennessee at the Birmingham Fairgrounds W (5–0).

This game is often referred to as The Third Saturday in October. It is an American college football rivalry game played annually by the University of Alabama Crimson Tide and the University of Tennessee Volunteers. The respective campuses are located approximately 310 miles (500 km) apart. It is known as the Third Saturday in October because the game was traditionally played then. Even when it is not played then the rivalry still carries the name.

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.

On Oct. 2, Alabama won from Union College of Jackson, Tennessee on the campus by the score of W (16-0). On Oct. 9, UA defeated Howard at The QUAD on campus by the score of W (14-0). On Oct. 16, UA met Clemson in Birmingham and completely upset a heavier and well-favored Clemson team by winning on Pratt's field goal by the score of 3 to 0 W (3-0). On Oct 23, Alabama and Mississippi played to a scoreless tie in Jackson, Mississippi before 2,000 Fans T (0-0).

At the end of the month, October 30, Alabama successfully used the "military formation," and proved superior to Georgia in the game played in Atlanta and won by the score of W (14-0). End runs, forward passes and trick plays gained most of the yardage. The feature of the game was a place kick by Pratt from the 50-yard line.

As the dirt was being piled for the kick, the spectators chuckled, some predicting another one of Coach Pollard's "fakes." The laughter, however, gave way to tremendous applause when Pratt's toe sent the ball straight through the center of the uprights and over the horizontal bar.

It was said that Pratt established a new record two weeks previously with a 49-yard kick in the Clemson game. If that were true, he broke his own record.

On November 13, Alabama scored ten points in the last half to defeat Tennessee in Knoxville in a hard-fought game, the game ending: Alabama 10, Tennessee 0, Tennessee playing its best game of the season, and had the edge during the first half.

On Nov. 20, Alabama played Tulane to a tie T (5-5). in New Orleans. Bumgardner returned the kickoff 20 yards. Alabama, by running a series of plays from the "military formation," moved the ball to Tulane's 20-yard line before losing the ball on downs. A few plays later, Alabama took over on downs and drove about 35 yards for a touchdown with VandeGraaff scoring. Arant's attempted goal was wide.

In the second half, Captain Moore of Tulane returned the kickoff deep in Alabama territory but the Crimson Tide held. Punts were exchanged and UA drove to Tulane's 20 where the ball was lost

on downs. A few minutes before the end of the game, Moore completed a pass to George for touchdown but goal was missed.

On Nov. 25, UA needed Captain Pratt's magic toe more than ever during his football career. Pratt was out on faculty suspension. The Tigers of Louisiana State defeated Alabama in Birmingham by the score of 6 to 12 L 6-12).

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).

After the team opened the season with shutouts over both Birmingham College and the Marion Military Institute, the Crimson were feeling pretty good. But, then they lost four consecutive games to SIAA opponents by a margin of 104-0. That made it a tough season. The squad did rebound with non-conference victories over Tulane at New Orleans L (5-3) and Washington & Lee W (9-0) to finish the season with an overall record of 4-4.

In March 1910, J. W. H. Pollard announced his resignation as head football coach and athletic director. He was offered and accepted the

same positions at Washington and Lee University. After several months of searching for a replacement, in August the University's Committee on Athletics hired Guy Lowman from the University of Missouri to serve as both head football coach and athletic director.

With his hiring, many expected him to successfully guide the football team through what was viewed as its toughest schedule in school history. The team reported for its first practice on September 10, and at that time six players returned with at least one season of experience with the Crimson and White. At the start of practice, coach Lowman identified as the team's weakest positions being the linemen and backs. Things did not look too great.

On October 1 at the QUAD , Alabama opened the season with a 25–0 victory over Birmingham College W (25-0) On October 8, again at home, the Crimson Tide won its second straight game W (26-0) —this one against the Marion Military Institute at Tuscaloosa. In the game, Robert Bumgardner scored three touchdowns with Adrian Van de Graff scoring the fourth on a 70-yard run in the victory.

On October 15, at the Birmingham Fairgrounds against the Georgia Bulldogs, Alabama lost its first game of the season L (0-22) before 12,000 fans at Birmingham. On October 22, at the QUAD, it was more punishment against the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets L (0-36). On November 5, in Greenville, Mississippi, the Ole Miss Rebels added to the UA losing streak L (0-16). Finally, on November 12 at the Birmingham Fairgrounds • Birmingham, Alabama, UA lost to the always-tough Sewanee Tigers L (0-30). This was the fourth consecutive loss and all shutouts. The loss brought Alabama's all-time record against Sewanee to 1–6.

On November 19 at "First" Tulane Stadium in New Orleans, UA ended its losing streak with a W (5-3) victory over the Tulane Green Wave. The Crimson Tide led 2–0 at halftime with their only points coming on a first quarter safety, which occurred after a Tulane player tried to return a missed Alabama field goal. After Tulane took a 3–2 lead in the third, Farley Moody kicked a 20-yard, game-winning field goal for Alabama. The victory brought Alabama's all-time record against Tulane to 3–2–1 On November 24, at Birmingham Fairgrounds, UA defeated the Washington and Lee Generals W (9-0).

The victory also marked the return of former Alabama head coach J. W. H. Pollard, who resigned his position with the Crimson Tide to take the head coaching position with the Generals in the spring of 1910. The victory is Alabama's only all-time matchup against Washington and Lee.

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).

The Crimson Tide opened the season well, with a shutout victory W (24-0) over Howard (now Samford University) followed with another win v Birmingham W (47-5). Both games were at the QUAD. Then, UA lost at the Fairgrounds to Georgia L (3-11)

. The Crimson Tide dug out from the Georgia loss with two ties on the road. One was against Mississippi A&M T (6-6) (now Mississippi State University) and the other against Georgia Tech T (0-0). The Georgia Tech game ended in a scoreless tie after time expired as Alabama drove to the Tech three-yard line.

Alabama then finished the season with victories over the Marion Military Institute Nov. 4 away-- W (35-0), Tulane (Nov 11) @ The QUAD, W (22-0). Against the tough Sewanee team (Nov 14) , the opponents kicked a field goal with two minutes left to defeat the

Tide L (3-0). UA finished Nov. 30 against Davidson @ Birmingham Fairgrounds (W (16-0).

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).

Alabama opened the season with victories over the Marion Military Sept 28--W (QUAD 52-0), and Oct 5 Birmingham College --now Birmingham--Southern College--(QUAD W 62-0). They followed this with three consecutive SIAA losses to Oct 12 Georgia Tech L(3-20), Oct 18 Mississippi A&M (now Mississippi State University) L (0-7) , and Oct 26 Georgia.

In the Georgia game, the Bulldogs ran a trick play in which they threw the ball to a receiver who was dressed as a waterboy, on the field, carrying a bucket. The play did not prove decisive, as Georgia fumbled the ball away soon after, but the Bulldogs won the game after they recovered a botched Alabama field goal and scored in the final minutes.

Alabama then finished the season with victories v Tulane Nov. 2 W 7-0), Ole Miss Nov. 9. (Bama beat Ole Miss 10–9 after the Rebels missed an extra point and two late field goals,) and Tennessee Nov. 28 W (6-0) Before the Tennessee game, UA tied Sewanee on Nov. 9 in what was the first Alabama football game played at Rickwood Field.

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).

Alabama began the season exceptionally strong, with three consecutive shutout victories over Howard (Sept 27) (now Samford University) W (27-0); on Oct 4, Birmingham College (now Birmingham–Southern College) W(81-0) and Oct 11 Clemson W(20-0). All three games were at the QUAD. The 81 points against Birmingham set a new school record.

Bama lost its first game of the season Oct 18, against Georgia L(0-20). After a pair of road victories against Oct 25 Tulane W (26-0) and Nov 1 Mississippi College W (21-3), Alabama finished its season with a win on Nov 14 at The QUAD against Tennessee W (6-0) and losses against Nov 9 Sewanee (L 7-10). and Nov. 27 Mississippi A&M (now Mississippi State University) L (0-7)

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 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).

Game Highlights

Just like its prior season. Alabama opened the 1914 season with three consecutive, shutout victories over Oct 3 Howard (now Samford University) W (13-0), Oct 10, Birmingham College (now Birmingham–Southern College) W (54-0) and Oct 17 Georgia Tech W (13-0)

Things happen in football. Before the Tennessee game, Alabama quarterback Charlie Joplin was ruled ineligible after he refused to

sign an affidavit that he had never played professional baseball. Alabama went 3–0 with Joplin and 2–4 after he left the team.

The close loss on Oct 24 to Tennessee at Knoxville L (7-17) would be the last time the two teams met until 1928. The Crimson Tide then spent their final four SIAA games with great victories Oct 31- the QUAD v Tulane W(58-0) and Nov 13 @ The QUAD v Chattanooga W (21-3). They suffered losses Nov 7, against powerhouse Sewanee L (0-18) and Nov 26 Mississippi A&M—now Mississippi State University, L (0-9) .

They then closed the season on Dec. 2 with a loss against the Carlisle Indian Industrial School Indians led by future College Football Hall of Fame head coach Pop Warner. They were a fierce and formidable foe in all games L (3-20).

Chapter 9 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

1915 Alabama Football Season Thomas Kelley Coach # 14



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 AU. 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.

The defeat of Ole Miss was thanks to a late rally. However, the Crimson Tide were shut out in the final three games with losses on November 30 at Georgia Tech L 0-13), Nov 18 at Tulane L(0-33), and home in Rickwood Nov. 30 against Georgia L (0-3) to finish with an overall record of 6–3. Georgia Tech held Alabama to just two first downs and 60 yards of offense.

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).

Alabama opened its season with an Oct. 3 opener against the "Second Ambulance Company of Ohio." It was played at Soldiers Field in Montgomery and was the only game the Crimson Tide ever played at that location. The 2nd Amb. Co., part of the 37th Division training in Montgomery, only got two first downs in the whole game.

Alabama had another great season start with four consecutive, shutout victories over the Second Ambulance Company W (7-0), Oct 12 at home -- Marion Military Institute W (13-0), Oct 20, at home, Mississippi College W 46-0), and Oct. 26 Ole Miss W (64-0). In those four games, Alabama outscored their opponents by a margin of 130 to 0.

After a Nov 3 tie against Sewanee T (3-3), and a loss on Nov 10 to Vanderbilt L (2-7) at Rickwood Field, Alabama won their only road game on Nov. 17 at Kentucky W (27-0).

In the season finale, Camp Gordon, the second military opponent Alabama faced as the country mobilized for World War I, beat the

Tide L (19–6). Camp Gordon had several players with college experience, including Adrian Van de Graaff, formerly of Alabama.

Joe Sewell, who went on to a Hall of Fame baseball career with the Cleveland Indians and New York Yankees, lettered in football for Alabama in 1917, 1918 and 1919.

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.

Alabama also did not field a team in 1898 due to campus rules prohibiting athletic teams from traveling off campus to compete and in 1943 due to the effects of World War II.

In December 1917, Alabama had already released its tentative schedule for the 1918 season. At that time, the Crimson Tide were scheduled to open the season against Kentucky in Tuscaloosa and play Vanderbilt at Dudley Field. In the February that followed, the official schedule was released that featured four games in Tuscaloosa, two in Birmingham and one on the road.

Date	Opponent	Site
October 5	Birmingham	University Field
October 11	Marion Military	University Field
October 26	Howard	University Field
November 2	Sewanee	Rickwood Field
November 9	Vanderbilt	Rickwood Field
November 16	LSU	State Field • Baton Rouge, LA
November 28	Mississippi A&M	University Field

1919 Alabama Football Season—Xen C. Scott; Head Coach #16



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.

Scott had also previously served as head coach for both Western Reserve University (1910) and the Case Institute of Technology

(1911–1913) in Cleveland. He opened his first fall practice on September 1. Ten players from previous Alabama squads returned including stalwarts T. L. Brown, Jack Hovater, Walter E. Hovater, Ralph Lee Jones, E. B. Lenoir, Emmet Noland, J. T. O'Connor, Isaac Rogers, Tram Sessions and Riggs Stephenson.

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.

Alabama opened the season tough with six consecutive shutout victories. On Sept 25, it was the Southern Military Academy W (59-0), On Oct. 2, Marion Military W (49-0), On Oct. 9, Birmingham–Southern W (45-0), On Oct 16, Mississippi College W (57-0), On

Oct. 23, Howard W (33-0), and Oct 30, Sewanee W (21-0). All six games were played at home.

In their seventh game against Vanderbilt on November 6, Alabama allowed its first touchdown of the season, but still won 14–7 after the Commodores threw an interception on a fourth and goal from the three-yard line in the fourth quarter.

After their shutout victory on Nov. 11, over LSU on what was the first homecoming game played at Alabama, the Crimson Tide lost their only game of the season on November 20 at Atlanta against Georgia L (14-21) in a nail biter. The Bulldogs did not score on offense but won 21–14 after touchdowns were scored on a fumble return, a blocked punt return and a blocked field goal return.

The loss snapped Alabama's then school-record 11-game winning streak. Alabama won its final two games Nov. 25 against Mississippi A&M (24-7) and November 27 in Cleveland at Case W (40-0). AU finished a great season 10–1.

After a well-done 8–1 campaign in Scott's first season as head coach at Alabama, the Crimson Tide were viewed as a potential championship team by the media as they entered the 1920 season. During the week of September 12, Alabama held its first scrimmages of the season. Scott thought his team was much "heavier" than in the previous year. As he did the first year, he again divided the squad into initial first and second teams.

His "A" squad was coached by Scott and the "B" squad was coached by athletic director Charles A. Bernier. Prior to their opening game against the Southern Military Academy on September 23, Scott announced his starting lineup for the 1920 season. Additionally, at that time, right guard Sidney Johnston was selected as season captain by his teammates.

Southern Military

The opening game with a 59–0 shutout over the Southern Military Academy (SMA) was the only all-time game between the schools at Tuscaloosa. After a slow start that saw Alabama only up by a touchdown after the first quarter, the Crimson Tide scored an additional eight touchdowns and won the game going away.

Mullie Lenoir scored five and both Luke Sewell and Riggs Stephenson scored a pair of touchdowns in the victory. Defensively, the Crimson Tide did not allow SMA a single first down in the game.

Sewanee

In what was the most anticipated game of the season to that point, Alabama defeated the Sewanee Tigers 21–0 at Rickwood Field. In the first quarter, Alabama stopped a Sewanee scoring opportunity when J. T. O'Connor intercepted a Tigers' pass in the endzone. With the game scoreless, the Crimson Tide then took a 7–0 lead in the second quarter after Riggs Stephenson scored on a 12-yard run.

In the third, Luke Sewell threw a long touchdown pass of 45-yards to Mullie Lenoir that extended their lead to 14–0 In the final period, Stephenson had a 60-yard interception return for a touchdown called back on a penalty, but then made the final score 21–0 with a long touchdown run on the drive that ensued.

In the game, Stephenson gained 286 and Lenoir gained 212 total yards. Alabama was also heavily penalized throughout the game that resulted in touchdown runs of 65 and 35-yards by Lenoir being nullified. The victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Sewanee to 4–9–2.

Vanderbilt:

As they entered their game against Alabama, Vanderbilt had played seven consecutive, undefeated teams. The game was played at Birmingham. The University called a holiday and the entire school made the trip to Rickwood and saw Alabama defeat the Commodores 14–7 for their first victory over Vanderbilt in school history.

After a scoreless first, Alabama took a 14–0 second quarter lead on touchdown runs of four-yards by Riggs Stephenson and one-yard by Mullie Lenoir. Vanderbilt then responded with a short Oliver Kuhn touchdown pass to Jess Neely that made the final score 14–7. The

victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Vanderbilt to 1–5.

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).

In the opener on Sept. 24, Alabama spotted Howard a 14–0 first-quarter lead before they rallied and won, W (34–14). After a victory over Spring Hill on Oct. 1 in their second game W (27-7), the Crimson Tide outscored Marion Military Institute on Oct. 8, W (55-0) and Bryson College on Oct. 12 W (95-0) by a combined 150–0.

It was another great start 4–0 to open the season. The fast start did not translate to winning much more for the remainder of the season as AU lost four of its next five games.

In their first Rickwood Field game of the season on Oct 22, the Crimson Tide was shut out by Sewanee L (0-17) and they followed this loss with a tie-on Oct. 29 against LSU T (7-7) in their first road game of the season at New Orleans. Alabama returned to Rickwood on Nov. 5 for its next game, in which they were shut out by Vanderbilt L (0-14), followed by a loss on November 11 to Florida L (2-9) at Denny Field in Tuscaloosa and then on Nov 19 to Georgia L (0-22) at Atlanta.

After this team finally came close to another win on Nov. 24 but it was not to be. Instead, they tied Mississippi A&M T (7-7) in their final home game of the year. The Crimson Tied did all it could on December 3 at Tulane claiming an upset W (14-7). This prevented their first losing season since 1903.

As they had lost several starters from the previous season, Alabama had the normal season-startup concerns but they got off nonetheless to a spectacular start but could not sustain it for the season.

After their October loss to Sewanee, Alabama scrimmaged both Cullman High School and Tuscaloosa High School as part of their preparation for their first road game of the season. At Heinemann Park in New Orleans, the best they could do was tied LSU T (7-7), when the Tigers scored a late touchdown in the fourth quarter.

On homecoming in Tuscaloosa, the Florida Gators upset the Crimson Tide 9-2 at Denny Field. Florida took a 6-0 lead on a 12-yard Ark Newton run in the first quarter. After a scoreless second, Alabama scored their only points in the third after L. O. Wesley blocked a Newton punt that was recovered by Newton for a safety. The Gators then made the final score 9-2 on a 20-yard Newton field goal in the fourth quarter. The loss brought Alabama's all-time record against Florida to 1-1.

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.

On September 30, Alabama opened the season with a whopping W (110-0) victory over an out-classed Marion Military Institute. This still stands as the school record for largest margin of victory and as the Crimson Tide's only 100 point game. After a victory over Oglethorpe on Oct 7 W (41-0), Alabama went winless for the next three games. The team lost on October 14 to Georgia Tech L (7-33)

and on Oct. 28 at Texas L (10-9). These two games were interspersed with an Oct. 21 tie against Sewanee T (7-7) .

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.

AU V The Penn Quakers – A Great Game!

OK Let’s look a bit deeper into one of the greatest AU 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 as previously noted 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. AU 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 10 Alabama Football – The Wallace Wade Era 1923-1930

Wallace Wade was a highly competitive Rockne Era coach

<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 considered to be 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).



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

Alabama opened conference play against Ole Miss on Oct 6, and defeated the Rebels 56–0 at Denny Field. The Crimson Tide scored eight touchdowns in the contest.

1923 marked the first season for new head coach Wallace Wade, a former assistant at Vanderbilt. One year after Alabama's triumphant

trip to Penn, the Tide went on another northeast road trip with a different outcome, losing to Syracuse on Oct 13 L (0-13).

The Sewanee game played on Oct 20, was scoreless until the last two minutes, when Johnny Mack Brown intercepted a pass, giving the ball to Alabama at the Tiger 48. Pooley Hubert scored with seconds left and Sewanee had time to run only two plays before the game ended W (7-0). On October 27, UA beat Spring Hill at Monroe Park in Mobile, AL W (59-0). Against Georgia Tech on Nov 3, Alabama was very lucky to escape with a T (0-0) tie. Tech had 18 first downs to none for Alabama, and the Tide never advanced the ball beyond its own 27-yard line. A driving rain and sixteen punts from Grant Gillis helped Bama to hold Tech scoreless. Tech drives stalled on the Alabama 2, 8, and 11-yard lines.

On Nov. 10 UA defeated Kentucky in a close match at Denny Field W (16-8). On November 16, in the Cramton Bowl at hhome, UA defeated LSU W (30-3). Then, on November 24 against Georgia, UA prevailed W 36-0.

A season-ending l (6-16) upset loss on Nov. 29 to coach James Van Fleet's Florida Gators cost coach Wade and the Tide the Southern Conference championship.

1924 Alabama Football Season Wallace Wade Head Coach #17

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 season opener was on September 27 against Union (TN), played at Denny Field in Tuscaloosa, AL. AU gained a nice win W (55-0). On October 4 at Furman played in Manly Field, Greenville, SC. AU again prevailed W (20-0). Already having a great season, on October 11, Mississippi College came to Denny Field and were soundly defeated W (51-0). Sewanee, always tough from the first game played against them, were tough again on October 18 at

Rickwood Field in Birmingham, AL. AU played a fine game for a victory W (14-0).



The 1924 Alabama Crimson Tide football team

On October 25, AU traveled to Grant Field in Atlanta to win a nice game against Georgia Tech W(14-0). It appeared Wade Wallace's team was unstoppable. At the Crampton Bowl in Montgomery, AU defeated Ole Miss on Nov.1 W 61-0. On Nov. 8, Kentucky took a licking from the Crimson Tide at Denny Field in Tuscaloosa W(42-7). A tough Centre team played Alabama on November 15 at Rickwood Field in Birmingham and defeated the Crimson Tide L (0-17). It was the Tide's only loss of the season.

In the Season Finale on November 27, Georgia's Bulldogs were no match for AU as the Crimson tied gained its eight victory of the year W (33-0).

Some 1924 Game Highlights

The Crimson Tide started its with 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 AU.

1925 Alabama Football Season Wallace Wade Head Coach #17

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 16 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 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 ehavy favorites.

As the game progressed it did not look good for the Crimson Tide bu 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 Head Coach #17

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.

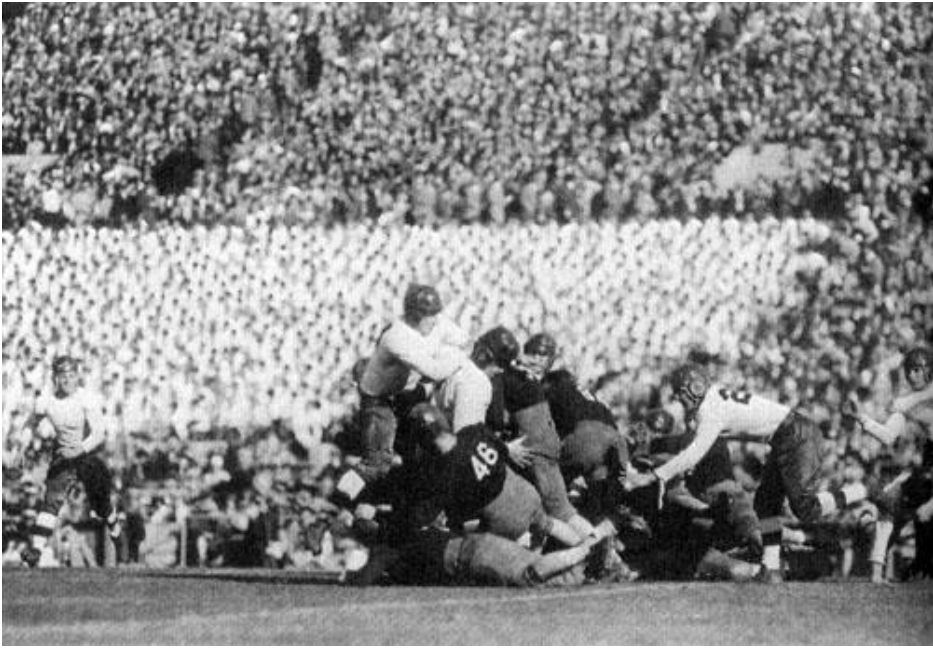
In the later 1920s the Tigers were left behind by the growing football powers of the Southern Conference. The Alabama-Sewanee series continued as a series of blowouts periodically through 1938 until eventually Sewanee began to play NCAA Division III football, which they do today.

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, Holm, 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, Dobbs, Hagler, Dismukes, Griffin, Sailor, McClintock, Brown, (Red Hammer). Bottom Row: Fowler, Newton, Hicks, B. Brown, Wallace Wade, Jr., Ellis, Holder, Tuck, Bowman.

1927 Alabama Football Team

Alabama fired up its season on Sept 24 at Denny Field v Millsaps W (46-0). On Sept. 30, the team then beat Southwestern Presbyterian at

Denny Field W (31-0). LSU then came into town on October 8 at Rickwood Field and they played AU to a tie T (0-0). On October 15, Georgia Tech broke the unbeaten streak at Grant Field, Atlanta L (0-13). Sewanee was defeated on October 15 W (24-0 at Rickwood Field.

On October 29, Mississippi played tough at Denny Field and lost nonetheless W (13–7) before 7,000 fans. Kentucky played at Rickwood Field on November 5 W 21–6. At the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, AL, November 12 Florida beat Alabama L (6–13). The Crimson Tide was in a losing funk and lost the next game after a week bye. November 24 v Georgia at Legion Field L (6–20) before 25,000. On Dec. 3, again at Legion Field before 20,000, Vanderbilt beat UA L (7-14). This year the season was not extended.

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.

It was the first-time Georgia Tech had scored points on Alabama since 1922. Alabama came back later in the season in the fourth to beat Mississippi State 13–7 but hobbled home with three straight losses to end the year at 5–4–1. Four losses was one more loss than Bama had suffered in the previous four seasons combined.

The loss to Georgia was the first football game Alabama ever played in Legion Field, which had been constructed the previous year, and which replaced Rickwood Field as Alabama's "home" stadium in Birmingham. Alabama would continue to schedule home dates at Legion Field for another 76 years, with the last being a 40–17 victory over South Florida in 2003.

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).

On October 6 UA played Ole Miss at Denny Field in Tuscaloosa, AL. W (27–0). On Oct 13, at Mississippi A&M's Scott Field in Starkville, MS, AU prevailed in this rivalry game W (46–0). The once traditional "Third Saturday in October" rivalry v Tennessee was played on Oct. 20 and Tennessee won the game L (13-15) in a nail biter. On October 27 Sewanee played at Legion Field but could not keep up with the Crimson Tide W (42–12).

On November 3, AU traveled to Wisconsin's Camp Randall Stadium in Madison, and were shut out L (0-15). On Nov 10, at the Cramton Bowl in Montgomery. Kentucky was defeated by the Tide W (14-0) before 7500. On Nov. 17, at Grant Field in Atlanta, AU was defeated by Georgia Tech. L (13-33). At Legion Field on November 29, Georgia was beaten by AU W (19-0). AU made it two in a row at Legion Field on December 8, in the LSU rivalry W (13-0).

Additional Game Notes

When Alabama met Tennessee on October 20, it was the first game between the two schools in 14 years. While the game had been played on irregular dates up until 1914, when the series was renewed in 1928 the game was scheduled for its traditional week, "Third Saturday in October."

Alabama and Tennessee have played yearly ever since, except when interrupted by World War II in 1943, although the game has more frequently been scheduled for the fourth Saturday in October since the SEC expanded to 12 teams in 1992. Alabama lost this first game in the renewal of the series 15-13.

The Crimson Tide were their own worst enemy in the game, victimized by poor special teams play. For example, a 98-yard kickoff return for Tennessee opened the game. Plus, there was a fumbled punt, a missed extra point, and lots of mistakes such as an offside penalty that kept a Tennessee drive alive, leading to its second touchdown). This could very easily have been a win, but the winner is always the winner in football.

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).

The Crimson Tide opened the season with a W (55–0) victory over Mississippi College on Sept 28 at Denny Stadium. The game also marked the first for Alabama at Denny Stadium, as it had replaced Denny Field as the home field for the Crimson Tide. They followed the win with consecutive victories over Ole Miss on Oct. 5 W (22-7) and Chattanooga on Oct. 12 W (46-0) before they traveled to Knoxville at Shields-Watkins Field on Oct 19 for their first road game of the season. It was the Third Saturday in October rivalry and it resulted in a loss for UA by the same score as the year before. Against Tennessee, the Crimson Tide lost for a second year in a row, L (13-15). A blocked punt set-up Tennessee's winning touchdown and Alabama turned the ball over on downs twice inside the Volunteer ten-yard line.

UA rebounded the next week Oct 26, with a victory W (35-7) over Sewanee in their first Legion Field game of the season, but the Tide lost to Vanderbilt in Nashville on Nov 2 L (0-13). Alabama then closed the season with victories over Kentucky on Nov 9 W (24-13; Georgia Tech on Nov. 16 W (13-0) and then a loss against Georgia on Nov 28 in the season finale L (0-12).

1930 Alabama Football Season Wallace Wade Head Coach #17

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).



National Champion 1930 Alabama Crimson Tide Coach Wallace Wade

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 AU played LSU inside the Cramton Bowl, Montgomery. The Crimson Tide beat LSU W (33-0).

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 we 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 11 Alabama Football – The Frank Thomas Era 1931-1945

Frank Thomas was one of the best college football coaches of all time.

<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 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 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.

On September 26 at Denny Stadium, UA defeated Howard W (42-6). The team followed this up the next week at Denny with another win on October 3 against Ole Miss W (55-6). The Tide traveled to Greer Memorial Field in Meridian, MS for a rivalry match on October 10 at Mississippi A&M W (53-0). Following this, on Oct 17, at Tennessee's Shields-Watkins Field in Knoxville, in the (Third Saturday in October) game, UA suffered its only loss of the season, L 0-25 with 23,000 in attendance.

Sewanee never came back to peak form like the olden days and were beaten by UA on October 24 at Legion Field in Birmingham W (33-0). Kentucky was beaten by UA on Oct 31 in a very close game at Denny Stadium W (9-7). UA then had its way with Florida on Oct 31 at Legion Field W (41-0). On November 14, Clemson had not yet to begin to play UA caliber ball and were defeated in a blowout W (74-7). On November 26, at Dudley Field in Nashville v Vanderbilt, UA prevailed W (14-6). In its last game of the season at Chattanooga's Chamberlain Field, The Crimson Tide won its season finale W (39-0)

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).

After opening the season with consecutive home victories over Southwestern Presbyterian on Sept 24 W (45-0) and Mississippi State Oct 1 W (53-0), Alabama traveled on Oct 8 to George Washington at Griffith Stadium to defeat the Colonials W (28-6) before the largest crowd to ever witness a football game in Washington, D. C. to that point.

After a loss to Tennessee at Legion Field on Oct 15, L (3-7), Alabama rebounded with victories on Oct 22 over Ole Miss at Denny W (24-13), at Kentucky on Oct 29 W (12-7), and VPI (Virginia Tech) on homecoming – Nov. 5 at Denny W (9-6).

Following their second loss against Georgia Tech on Nov 12, L (0-6), the Crimson Tide completed their season with an upset victory over Vanderbilt at Legion Field on November 24, W (20-0) and an intersectional win on December 3, over St. Mary's at San Francisco W (6-0)

1933 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

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.

After opening the season on Sept 30, with a nice victory over Oglethorpe at Denny Stadium W (34-0), Alabama played Ole Miss at Legion Field to a scoreless tie T (0-0) on Oct 7, in their first ever SEC matchup—before 12,000. One week later, Oct 14, the Crimson Tide defeated Mississippi State for their first ever SEC victory and UA followed that with their first ever SEC road victory with their

big win on Oct 21 over Tennessee at Shields-Watkins Field W (12-6). Over 25,000 watched this game.

From Knoxville, Alabama traveled to New York City on Oct. 28, where they lost their only game of the season at the infamous Polo Grounds L (0-2) against Fordham in an intersectional matchup. Alabama rebounded immediately with four consecutive victories to close the season as conference champions with wins on Nov 4 over Kentucky W (20-0), Nov 11--VPI (Virginia Tech) on homecoming W(27-0), Nov 18 at Georgia Tech W (12-9) and Nov 30 at Vanderbilt in Nashville W (7-0)

Before the season began in In December 1932, right after the 1932 season ended, a number of southern teams, including Alabama withdrew from the Southern Conference to become charter members of the SEC.

The Crimson Tide was joined by Auburn, Florida, Georgia, Georgia Tech, Kentucky, LSU, Mississippi, Mississippi State, Sewanee, Tennessee, Tulane and Vanderbilt. The big switch was effective at the start of the 1933 season. The SEC was a survival move by SoCon teams that felt they had lost control of their conference. The SEC was formed to create a smaller, geographically closer conference of friendly teams playing friendly teams.

In the season finale at Vanderbilt, Alabama defeated the Commodores 7–0 to capture the first SEC championship ever. The only points of the game came on a short Dixie Howell touchdown run in the second quarter. The victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Vanderbilt to 6–8. All teams that joined, including Alabama, expected great things from the SEC.

1934 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

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 won 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).

After Alabama opened the 1935 season on Sept 28 with an "upset" tie T (7-7) against Howard, Alabama came back on Oct 5 to shutout George Washington at Griffith Stadium W (39-0). One week later on Oct 12, the Crimson Tide suffered their first defeat L (7-20) since 1933 against Mississippi State at Denny Stadium. This was both their first SEC and Denny Stadium loss.

Following this defeat, Alabama responded with five consecutive victories at Tennessee on Oct 19 W (25-0, at Georgia on Oct 26 W (17-7), home at Legion Field on Nov 2 v Kentucky W (13-0), Clemson at Denny Stadium for homecoming on November 9 W (33-0), and Georgia at Legion Field on Nov 16 W (38-7). This ton of wins came before Tech before an unexpected season finale on Nov 28, in which they lost at Vanderbilt L (6-14).

Riley Smith was outstanding at quarterback for Alabama. For his performance during the season, he was a consensus selection to the 1935 College Football All-America Team. In February 1936 Smith, Bear Bryant and Kavanaugh Francis became the first Crimson Tide players selected in the NFL Draft. Yes, Bear Bryant played End for Alabama during the Frank Thomas years.

Some game highlights from 1935

To open the 1935 season Alabama was almost upset by Howard College (now Samford University), but escaped with a 7–7 tie at Denny Stadium. After a scoreless first, Alabama took a 7–0 halftime lead after James Angelich scored on an eight-yard touchdown run. The Bulldogs' defense continued to hold Alabama's offense in check for the remainder of the game, and in the fourth quarter, Howard

tied the game. The touchdown was made on a 32-yard Ewing Harbin pass to Dan Snell late in the game

The tie marked the first-time Alabama had not won since their loss at Fordham in 1933 and their first in an opening game since their loss at Vanderbilt to open the 1903 season. The tie brought Alabama's all-time record against Howard to 13–0–1.

1936 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

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 at Loyola on Oct 23 W (13-6); at Kentucky on Oct 31 W (14-0); At Legion Field on Nov 7 v Tulane W (34-7); at Georgia Tech on Nov 14 W (20-16), and at Legion Field v Vanderbilt on Nov. 26 W (14-6). Although UA finished undefeated and ranked No. 4 in the final AP Poll, Alabama did not receive an invitation to participate in a postseason bowl game.

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.

1937 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

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.

The 1937 expansion included the construction of a 6,000-seat eastern addition that was utilized primarily by students. Its

construction was financed with a combination of funding from both the university (\$140,000) and a grant from the Public Works Administration (\$90,000).

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. AU 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. AU 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.

The Crimson Tide opened the season on Sept 24 with a W (19–7) victory in an intersectional contest against USC at Los Angeles. They then followed up the win with consecutive shutouts, all home victories over non-conference opponents Howard Oct 1 W (34-0); NC State Oct 8 W (14-0) on homecoming.

However, Alabama on Oct 15 was shut out L (0-13) by Tennessee. It was the Bama's first loss against the Volunteers since 1932. The Crimson Tide then rebounded with a victory on Oct 22 against Sewanee W (32-0) at Denny; Oct 29 at Kentucky W (26-6) and Tulane at Legion Field on Nov 5 W (3-0). After a T (14–14) tie at Georgia Tech on November 12, Alabama defeated Vanderbilt W (7-0) at Legion Field on November 24 in their season finale.

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

report on the field in each year because Alabama has always used a number of different fields in its 46 years. Sometimes they keep using them. Sometimes they start using others. See Chapter 6 about Alabama's Fields and Stadiums for more insights.

The 1939 team y 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 Coach Thomas's

The Crimson Tide opened the season on Sept 30 with a victory over Howard W (21-0) before they upset Fordham W (7–6) on Oct 7 in an intersectional contest at the Polo Grounds in week two. After their victory over Mercer on Oct 14 W (20-0), on Oct 21, Alabama was shut out L (0-21) by Tennessee, their second consecutive shutout loss against the Volunteers. The Crimson Tide then rebounded with a homecoming victory on Oct 28 over Mississippi State W (7-0)

Things got worse as Alabama would then go winless over their next three conference games with a tie on Nov 4 against Kentucky T (7-7), followed by shutout losses to both Tulane L(0-13) on Nov 11, and Georgia Tech L (0-6) on Nov 18. The Crimson Tide rebounded in its final game of the season on Nov 30 to defeat Vanderbilt. It was coach Thomas's worst year to date and the worst showing in the SEC for UA.

Vanderbilt Game Notes

The season highlight was the season finale against the Vanderbilt Commodores. Alabama won W (39–0 on Nov. 30 at Dudley Field on Thanksgiving Day to end a two-game losing streak. In the first half touchdowns were scored on a Jimmy Nelson TD reception in the first and by a 77-yard Herschel Mosley run and a 67-yard Paul Spencer run in the second. Up by three touchdowns at halftime, the Crimson Tide scored three second half touchdowns in the 39–0 victory. Second half touchdowns were scored on a 20-yard Jimmy Nelson reception and by Spencer on an eight-yard run and by Hal

Newman on an 18-yard reception from Billy Harrell as time expired. The victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Vanderbilt to 12–9.

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. AU finished the season with a record of seven wins and two losses (7–2 overall, 4–2 in the SEC).

The Crimson Tide opened the 1940 season with three consecutive, non-conference home victories. The first was on Sept 27 over Spring Hill W (26-0) played at Murphy High School. The next was on Oct 5 at Denny v Mercer W (20-0). The next was on Oct 12 v Howard at Denny Stadium W (31-0). In its fourth game on Oct 19, Tennessee defeated the Crimson Tide in the Third Saturday in October rivalry L (12-27) in the SEC Conference opener.

UA rebounded with four consecutive conference victories at Kentucky on Nov 2 W 25-0); Tulane at Legion Field on Nov 9 W (13-6); Georgia Tech in Atlanta on Nov 16 W (14-13) and then on Nov 13, it was Vanderbilt at legion Field W (25-21). Alabama then closed its season with a loss against Mississippi State L (0-13) on homecoming day Nov 30 at Denny Stadium.

1941 Alabama Football Season Frank Thomas Head Coach #18

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. AU lost on Oct 4 in its second contest of the season to Mississippi State L (0-14). AU 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?

AU 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 AU 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 opened the 1942 season like gangbusters with five consecutive victories, four of the five were shutouts. They quickly rose to the No. 3 spot in the nation per the AP Poll. They had outscored their opponents 124 to 6 and during this winning spree, on Sept 25, at the Cramton Bowl, they first defeated Southwestern Louisiana W (54-0); then at Denny Stadium, on Oct 3 they beat Mississippi State W (21-6).

In the war days, the college playbook rules were stretched to permit the service academy folks and regular Army and Navy patriots to play for the colleges where they were also training for the war.

And, so, on Oct 10, Alabama played and defeated a team of former college all-stars playing for the Pensacola NAS at Murphy High School in Alabama W (27-0); AU on Oct 17 defeated Tennessee W (8-0) and then at Kentucky, they won W (14-0). Against No. 2 ranked Georgia on Oct 31 in Atlanta, Alabama surrendered a 10–0 fourth quarter lead and lost L (10-21) to a Bulldogs squad that went on to capture a share of the 1942 national championship.

The Crimson Tide went on to alternate wins and losses over their final four regular season games with victories over both South Carolina W (29-) on Nov 7, and Vanderbilt W (27-7) on Nov 21. In between on Nov 14, they lost at Georgia Tech L (0-7) and on Nov 28, they lost to Georgia Pre-Flight L (19-35), a military school with lots of stars. After being pushed around by a lot of older guys on just a few games. 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.

AU 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 AU 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.

In February 1943, the Army instituted a policy that prohibited their cadets from participation in intercollegiate athletics. Unsure if a season would occur, head coach Frank Thomas proceeded through spring practice as if it would be played. By summer, only two Alabama players were available to compete on the squad as a direct result of the Army prohibition on its trainees competing in intercollegiate athletics.

On August 23, 1943, the University announced its decision to cancel the 1943 season. The cancellation marked only the third time since the inaugural 1892 season that Alabama did not field a football team.

Although not officially sanctioned by the University, AU fans got to see some football that year. An independent team called the Alabama Informals was organized in October 1943. Coached by former Crimson Tide player Mitchell Olenski, the Informals were composed of 17-year-old and draft deferred students ineligible for military service.

The Informals were permitted to play their games at Denny Stadium and utilize the equipment of the Crimson Tide football team. The squad lost to Howard, defeated the Marion Military Institute twice and finished the season with an overall record of two wins and one loss (2–1). What a nice gesture to help the people's morale from the University of Alabama.

At the conclusion of the season, SEC officials met in an effort to bring a full football schedule back for the 1944 season. By May 1944, all SEC schools, with the exception of Vanderbilt, indicated they would field teams for the 1944 season. Football officially returned on September 30, 1944, when the Crimson Tide played LSU to a tie in their season opener. Frank Thomas was still the coach of the Crimson Tide.

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.

After a hard-fought tie, T (27-27) against LSU on Sept 30 to open the season, Alabama then defeated both Howard and Millsaps. On Oct 7, Howard went down w (63-7) and on Oct 14, Milsaps went down even easier W (55-0) .

The Crimson Tide dueled Tennessee on Oct 21 to a scoreless tie in the fourth week in their traditional "Third Saturday in October"

rivalry T 0-0). Then, on Oct 27, the Crimson Tide defeated Kentucky at the Crampton Bowl W (41-0) before they suffered their only regular season loss against Georgia L 9 7-14 on Nov 4.

Alabama then closed the season with wins over both Ole Miss on Nov 11 W (34-6) and Mississippi State W (19-0) on Nov 18.

All of this great football playing secured AU a position in the Sugar Bowl where despite continued great play it was not enough to beat Duke L (26-29)

The 1944 squad was an unusual group in that its football career had to take a full year hiatus because of the war in 1943. And, so this return of football at Alabama after a one-year lay-off was a really big thing.

However, as the war effort was ongoing at that time, the 1944 team was composed of players who were either too young and / or were physically unable to enlist in the military.

As the squad was generally smaller than both previous Alabama squads and many they competed against, coach Thomas called this and his 1945 team the "War Babies." God bless their efforts while the US efforts were underway.

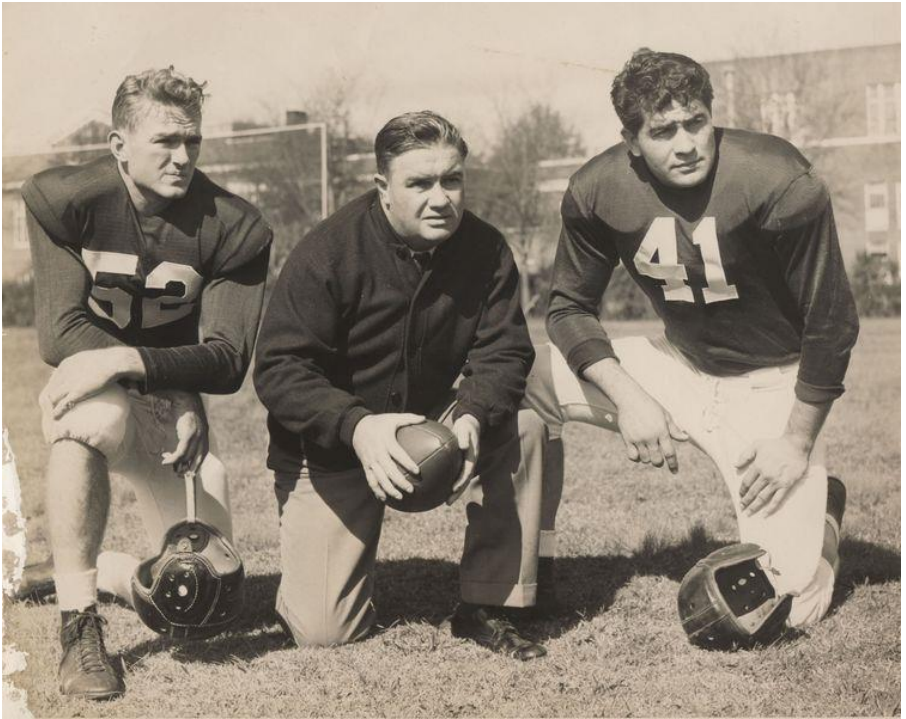
The Sugar Bowl – A Fitting Tribute

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 29–26 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

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 Crimson Tide opened the season on the road on Sept 29 with a victory over Keesler AAF W (21-0) at Flier Field in Beloxi, MS. Military teams were always loaded and for its first game of the year, the War Babies et al were outstanding in this game and for the season.

Jackson Army Air Base, where I had my own Basic Training prior to MP School at Fort Gordon GA, in the Vietnam Era, for its own reasons had to cancel this game at Denny Stadium. Keesler were fine opponents in place of the Jacksons.

Alabama then defeated LSU W (26-0) in Baton Rouge before their first home win of the season at the Cramton Bowl on Oct 13 over South Carolina W (55-0). To beat the military teams with over-age players looking for patriotic relief, a team had to be pretty darn good and well inspired. No military team was looking for a cake walk. Alabama gave them all a game and sometimes more than expected.

After victories over both Tennessee W (25-7) on Oct 20, and Georgia W (28-14) at Legion Field on Oct 27, the Crimson Tide routed both Kentucky on Nov 3 W (60-19) and on Nov 17 at Vanderbilt on the road W (71-0) to extend their record to 7–0.

Au was on a roll for having played hardball football with underclassmen for years. Bama then closed the season with a pair of games at Denny Stadium, which by the way kept growing over the years, where they defeated the Pensacola NAS W (55-6) on Nov 24. and then on Dec 1 -- Mississippi State W (55-13) to complete an undefeated regular season.

One month later, Alabama, having been invited and having agreed to participate in the game, won the Rose Bowl over USC to finish

the season undefeated. A great team had shown its consistency and greatness.

No football season is easy. Football is not an easy game. It is not for wimps. Participants must be willing to give it up at all times for the greater good of the team. Those teams that understand that win National Championships. Alabama seems to make seasons easy because at an institutional level in the classroom and on the field UA is dedicated to excellence and winning as opposed to the alternative. You have to want to win to win! If nobody else claims that exhortation as their own, I would be pleased to accept the honors. Viva Alabama!

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 AU!

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).

After the Crimson Tide opened the season with four consecutive victories over Furman at Legion Field on Sept 20 W (26-7) , at Tulane on Sept 28 W (7-6), at South Carolina Oct 5 W (14-6), and Southwestern Louisiana on Oct 12 at Denny Stadium W 54-0) , Alabama's 14-game winning streak was snapped when they lost at Tennessee L (0-12) on the "Third Saturday in October on Oct 19.

One week later, on Oct 26, the Crimson Tide faced off against Kentucky and their new young coach, Bear Bryant. The Crimson Tide won by a score of W (21-7), before they lost consecutive games at #5 Georgia L (0-14) on Nov 2, and at #19 LSU L (21-31) on Nov 9. Alabama then closed the season on with a victory over Vanderbilt

W (12-7) on Nov 16, a loss at Boston College L (7-13) on Nov 13 (in their first game ever played in New England, and an upset victory over #19 Mississippi State W (24-7) on homecoming Nov 30 in the season finale.

Over the course of the 1946 season, Frank Thomas was riddled with health issues that ultimately led to his resignation as head coach. In January 1947, Harold Drew was named as the 17th head coach of the Crimson Tide.

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.

More on the Coach Thomas resignation

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.

I would like to thank Tidefans.com for the opportunity to reprint an article on their site that best captures the essence of Frank Thomas – the same essence that I gained in researching this great man and his great football legacy.

<http://www.tidefans.com/forums/showthread.php?t=109961>.

Please enjoy this and remember that there are a lot of good guys out there. There just are not a lot of great guys in the tradition of Frank Thomas. I am honored to have learned about him and to have written about him. Bill Brown captures his essence perfectly throughout his essay and especially in his closing remarks. Alabama people are especially loyal to their favorite team. And, as the essay portrays, the loyalty is well deserved.

*A Look Back: Alabama Football Coach Frank Thomas
by Bill Brown (selmaborntidefan)
August 8, 2010*

Imagine for just a moment that your life was over at 55 years old. When you looked back over the course of that all-too-brief life you could count up memories of those whose life you'd come in contact with. Perhaps you had played quarterback for the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame and their legendary coach, Knute Rockne. You were a roommate with the most famous collegiate football player in history, a guy whose mythical story would resonate down through the years off the lips of a President. Or maybe you yourself had been privileged enough to coach the greatest college football coach who ever lived, Bear Bryant. Or maybe you had won a couple of Rose Bowls and a national championship.

Any one of those accomplishments would be a legacy of the highest order. But what if you – all by yourself – did all of those things in a brief life? If so then your name is Frank Thomas, perhaps the greatest obscure coach in collegiate football history.

WHO?

Frank Thomas may be the most anonymous great coach in the history of college football. When any list of the ten greatest football coaches comes up there are seven who always – without fail – make that list: Bryant, Woody Hayes, Schembechler, Eddie Robinson, Bobby Bowden, Joe Paterno, and Knute Rockne. The other three spots rotate among such slightly lesser mortals as Lou Holtz, Barry Switzer, Darrell Royal, Tom Osborne, Bud Wilkinson and a host of others. But how does Thomas compare to the seven coaches cited among the greatest?

His winning percentage is higher than six, trailing only Rockne. And Rockne can credit Thomas in part, whom Knute called the smartest player he had ever coached, with the fact he's higher.

Thomas had an 8-1-1 record as the 1922 starting QB for the Fighting Irish. Thomas, as coach, won an astounding 79.5% of his games.

He won two Rose Bowls, the same number as Hayes or Schembechler, two men whose teams mostly took turns going to the game for some 20 years – one longer than Thomas’s entire coaching career. Paterno won one and the others combined have won zero. Thomas also won a national championship, something that Schembechler never accomplished. Thomas also never had a losing season, and his only .500 season was his first as head coach at Chattanooga. In fact, except for that first year and a miserable 1939, Thomas’s teams always won at least three more games than they lost every year. When it comes to considering the greatest college coaches ever perhaps the writers need to do a little more homework.

THE EARLY LIFE

Frank Thomas was born in Muncie, Indiana in 1898, the same year America went to war with Spain over Cuba. His father was a steelworker in Chicago. Upon graduation from high school he attended Notre Dame University and earned a law degree in 1923. Knute Rockne recommended Thomas to the University of Georgia to serve as an assistant coach to George Woodruff. It was Frank Thomas who brought the then popular “Notre Dame system” to Southern football. Thomas held that position for two years until he was hired at the University of Chattanooga (now UTC) as head football coach.

PRE-ALABAMA HEAD COACHING CAREER

After a mid-level first-year record of 4-4, Thomas roared through the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association by going 22-5-2 over the next three years. In his last year at UTC, Thomas was coerced by Harry Mehre (another Rockne disciple) to come back to Georgia as an assistant coach. The promise was that this would lead to a major coaching job well above that of Chattanooga. And it didn’t take long.

Although he was the most successful coach at Alabama up to that time, Wallace Wade had had a number of disagreements

with Alabama President George Denny. Prior to his 1930 swan song at Alabama, Wade had made up his mind to get out of town when the year was over. Before the season even began Wade had signed a contract to coach Duke University in 1931. Wade recommended Thomas to President Denny as his successor. Wade then proceeded to make matters as difficult as humanly possible by putting a team that NFL Hall of Famer Mel Hein, whose Washington State Cougars lost the 1931 Rose Bowl to Wade, said was the best college team he ever saw.

That Tide team revolutionized the forward pass. Wade waltzed off to Duke, where he was so successful they only named the stadium after him, with a 9-0 record and a victory in the Rose Bowl. Wade had set some impossible standards for Thomas to keep. Wade stepped down at a football awards dinner after a brief statement that he couldn't say what was on his mind. To emphasize his unhappiness, Wade left the silver tray he had just been presented on the dais.

On July 15, 1930, Frank Thomas signed his contract to become the new football coach at the University of Alabama. Denny then gave Thomas the basic speech that has been the standard for all Tide coaches even before Thomas: football is 90 percent material and 10 percent coaching; you will be given the 90 percent and held strictly accountable for the 10 percent. The problem facing Thomas, however, was huge: how in the world do you function knowing you are being compared every single day to a legend? Thomas answered that question better than any coach in the history of college football.

Starting from his meeting with George Denny, Thomas reeled off a record of 115-24-7. That astounding accomplishment included three undefeated seasons and another one marred only by a tie. It also included three Rose Bowl appearances that ended with two wins. To make it all the more glorious, Thomas only returned one starter for his 1931 team (Johnny Cain who was primarily a punter).

Thomas did almost everything right in 1931. He went 9-1 with the sole blemish coming at the hands of Bob Neyland's

Tennessee Volunteer juggernaut that topped him, 25-0. Building off his success, Thomas hit the recruiting trail and over the next 2 years went 15-3-1. Unfortunately, one of the losses was to Tennessee. Thomas also oversaw the beginning of Alabama's play in the Southeastern Conference in 1933, the same year the Tide shut out five opponents. This set up Thomas's best team (perhaps) at Alabama, the 1934 national championship team.

1934

John MacCallum, author of "Southeastern Conference Football," states that the 1934 Alabama team was the greatest single-platoon team to ever come out of the South. It featured a future major league baseball player named Dixie Howell, a future NFL Hall of Fame tight end named Don Hutson, and a lesser talented "Other End" who would one day wear the same hat as Thomas (the coaching one, not the Houndstooth), Arkansas-born Paul W. "Bear" Bryant. Many old-timers consider Hutson the greatest receiver in the history of football at any level because he could catch a pass anywhere at any time. Hutson was so talented that he played on the Bama baseball and track teams.

On one memorable occasion a track meet was scheduled adjacent to the baseball game so Hutson wore his track gear under his baseball uniform. Between innings he darted over to the track, took off his baseball uniform, and ran the 100-yard dash in 9.8 seconds. Hutson was part of the Arkansas pipeline that Thomas built that included among others Bear Bryant, Ears Whitworth, and Charlie Marr.

After roaring through the season undefeated, Alabama was chosen – somewhat controversially for the time over Minnesota – to face Stanford in the 1935 Rose Bowl. Stanford's team was known as the Vow Boys, a team that as freshmen vowed they would never lose to USC. They didn't. Unfortunately for Stanford, Alabama was not USC. After giving up an early touchdown, Alabama stormed back to win, 29-13. In the interest of historical accuracy it should be noted that according to MacCallum (whose book was published in 1980), Alabama was recognized AT THAT TIME as co-champions with Minnesota. (This should put to rest the myth that Alabama never claimed

more than 6 national titles until the late 1980s; it isn't true, and I have the book to prove it).

Thomas's system was the old Notre Dame system and was the same basic running pattern every team has used since. Thomas never felt the need to run fancy gadget plays when a power running game would accomplish the same thing. Thomas's greatest legacy is probably the coaching career of Bear Bryant. But it almost didn't happen. Bryant got angry one time and vented his anger by suggesting he was going to leave Alabama and go play for LSU. Assistant Coach Hank Crisp, who did not know Bryant was just blowing off steam, told Bryant to pack his trunk and get out. Bear wound up doing some heavy persuading so he could keep his scholarship and never again did he mention quitting. Bryant himself would later use such psychology as a master motivator.

Bryant also stated that Thomas was actually the opposite of most successful coaches. Bear noted that Thomas yelled so infrequently that when he did yell it certainly got your attention.

THE "LEAN" YEARS

As hard as it may be to believe now, Thomas's teams only made it to one bowl game between 1935 and 1941, the 1938 Rose Bowl, where they were shut out, 13-0. Thomas made the mistake of believing what he heard. Rumor had it that nobody could run on the Cal Golden Bears, so Thomas tried the passing game. He would later say that he found out far too late that he **COULD** run but his team could **NOT** pass. Thomas also did something unheard of today – he smoked cigars on the sidelines during the game. His greatest asset is said to have been his ability to adjust to unique situations. And Thomas believed that he could prevail no matter how much or how little material he had. The best example came in 1944. His record was only 5-1-2, but that was good enough for the Sugar Bowl, played that year. An unusual set of circumstances surrounded the end of Thomas's career.

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor drew the United States into World War 2, football took a back seat most places. There were a couple of places, however, that thrived on the suddenly altered playing field – intellectual schools (Duke, Georgia Tech, Vandy) and the service academies (Army, Navy; Air Force did not yet exist) suddenly found the playing field slanted in their favor. The situation was so bad that football crazy Alabama did not even field a team in 1943. Thus, Thomas getting his team to the Sugar Bowl with mostly inexperienced players against a Duke team at normal strength by virtue of its Navy V-12 personnel was nothing short of a miracle. And Thomas nearly pulled off a bigger one in the actual game, losing only by a score of 29-26. But the game paid rich dividends for the future.

Thomas built his game plan around new QB Harry Gilmer, whose leaping delivery was both astounding and confusing. Gilmer only threw 8 times against Duke, but he completed every one of them. His last pass would have been a game-winning TD but the receiver, Ralph Jones, was brought down by the last man who had a chance at him. The game, however, set up Thomas and the Tide for a great 1945.

THE END OF THE CAREER

Talent returned to the Tide as the war wound down in 1945. And Harry Gilmer was still flinging passes while leaping into the air. Gilmer led the Tide to a perfect 9-0 record capped by a scintillating 34-14 win over the USC Trojans – a team that up until that day had never lost a Rose Bowl.

It might be noted that Thomas and Bear Bryant probably disagreed about nearly everything involved in the preparation for a game. Bryant had practices that extracted the manhood from everyone on the field while Thomas's practices were short and to the point. Thomas believed 'slave driving' was wrong while that very thing is a hallmark of what made Bryant great. Thomas and Bryant did agree, however, that ability was not everything and a little luck was necessary to win national championships.

Frank Thomas may have been the unluckiest successful coach that has ever walked the field in Tuscaloosa. After the Rose Bowl win his health began to deteriorate. He suffered from high blood pressure and an un-named (in those days) heart condition (probably congestive heart failure). Under physician orders he coached the 1946 team from the back of a trailer while sitting down. Unsurprisingly, they went 7-4. And Thomas knew his days as an Alabama coach were over. He resigned the coaching position in 1946 but stayed on as the Alabama Athletic Director until 1951. That same year Thomas was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame but his health was so far gone that he received his plaque from the confines of a wheelchair.

THE END OF HIS LIFE

Thomas died, probably due to lung cancer, on May 10, 1954 at Druid City Hospital in Tuscaloosa. He was 55 years old. His coaching record was 141-33-9 for a winning percentage of .795, 12th highest among all coaches, and higher than any coach in Alabama history. He was succeeded as head coach by the same man who took over for him at Chattanooga, Harold “Red” Drew.

THE OBSCURE LEGACY

Thomas built a career that is among the greatest of any coach in any sport and yet most people outside of the state of Alabama do not even know who he is. Mention the name Frank Thomas even within the state of Alabama and every person under 40 is probably going to name a former baseball player who won a pair of MVPs with the Chicago White Sox in the early 1990s. Why isn't Frank Thomas better known given his record of accomplishment? He coached during the same era as Red Blaik and Bob Neyland and with the exception of Neyland was the cream of the crop in Southeastern football. What made such a fate befall Thomas?

There are several reasons we could pursue. The first one is the fact that almost nothing of Thomas's coaching career exists on videotape. In this era of 16-hour Saturday coverage – and that's

just the games – very little video exists of Thomas' time at the Capstone. This should not be underestimated when making an evaluation. But another main reason is that Thomas is simply a great coach in a long line of great coaches. His accomplishments are undercut because they occurred between two phenomenally great eras in Alabama football, Wallace Wade and – only 11 years after Thomas quit – Bear Bryant.

In a bizarre sense, the success of Bear Bryant at Alabama makes every other coach's accomplishments pale in comparison. Add the fact that Bryant coached as both television was coming of age and social change was rampant (some of which he was at the center of) and he casts a long shadow that swallows everything else that has ever occurred in Tuscaloosa. Bear Bryant won six national championships to Thomas's one. But we should note that Thomas had the higher winning percentage (.795 to .780) and had just as many undefeated seasons (3) as Bryant did. The insane success enjoyed by Wade and Bryant overshadow Thomas's career.

Another problem, of course, is that Thomas died at a relatively young age. His coaching career ended when he was only 48 years old. Many college coaches don't even get their dream job by that age. Bryant was 48 when he won his first national championship by which point he had been coaching 18 years; Thomas only coached 19 total. Thomas also lost a year – and who knows how many wins? – to a human tragedy known as World War II. He also coached mostly during the Great Depression at a time when football attendance (and interest) paled in comparison to what followed the 1950s.

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. Thank you Bill Brown

Chapter 12 Alabama Football – Harold Drew & J. B. Whitworth Eras 1947-1957

Harold Drew & Jennings Whitworth were post Frank Thomas and pre Bear Bryant

<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.

Alabama opened its season on Sept 20 with a victory over Mississippi Southern at Legion Field W (34-7). UA then lost consecutive games at Tulane on Sept 27 L (20-21) and at Vanderbilt on Oct 4 L (7-14). After three games, the Tide was 1–2. However, the Crimson Tide rebounded to win their final seven games against Duquesne at Denny on Oct 11 W (26-0), Tennessee at Legion Field on Oct 18 W (10-0), at Georgia on Oct 25 W 17-7, at #13 Kentucky on Nov 1 W (13-0), Georgia Tech at Legion Field on Nov 15 W (14-7), LSU at Denny on Nov 2 (41-12) and at #6 Miami on Nov 29, W(21-6). Alabama then lost to Texas in the Sugar Bowl to finish the season 8–3 for the season.

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).

Alabama opened the season on Sept 25 with a loss to Tulane L(14-21), the first for Alabama to open a season since 1903. The next week, Oct 2, the Crimson Tide had to score a touchdown with ten seconds left to salvage a tie with Vanderbilt T (14-14) in the first game ever played at Ladd Stadium. Alabama then on Oct 8 defeated

Duquesne at home W (48-6), lost at Tennessee on Oct 16 L (6-21) and won at Mississippi State on Oct 23--W (10-7) before their L (0-35) loss to eventual SEC Champion Georgia on Oct 30. .

The Crimson Tide then rebounded with victories over Mississippi Southern W (27-0) on Nov 6 and Georgia Tech on Nov 13 W (14-12), before they lost at LSU L (6-20) on Nov 20. Alabama then closed their season with a homecoming victory over Florida on Nov 27 and a W (55-0) win over Auburn at Legion Field on Sec 4 in the renewal of their Iron Bowl rivalry.

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

The Iron Bowl Tradition being brought back was big for both schools. This meeting against Auburn marked the resumption of their rivalry with the Tigers after a 41-year hiatus. The two schools had met regularly from 1892 through 1895 and then regularly from 1900 through 1907.

However, trivial disputes led to the series being discontinued in 1908. Their disputes centered on disagreements on how much per diem to allow players for the trip to Birmingham, how many players each school should bring and where to find officials.

By the time all these matters were resolved, it was too late to play in 1908, and the series ended by default and was simply not scheduled again. By 1947 pressure to renew the Iron Bowl had grown to the point that the state legislature threatened to withhold funding from the two schools unless they scheduled a game. In 1948 Alabama and Auburn finally agreed to meet on a football field.

Prior to the game, Alabama had not played Auburn since their 6-6 tie in 1907. In the renewal of the dormant series, Alabama defeated Auburn 55-0 at Legion Field, in what remains the most lopsided win by either team in the history of the series.

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 all-time record against Auburn to 5–7–1.

1948 Iron Bowl – More information

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 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.

The Iron Bowl was being played, and Alabama was winning it big, once again all was right in the world.

1949 Alabama Football Season Harold Drew Head Coach #19

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).



<<<< Coach Harold Drew

Alabama opened the season on September 24 with losses against Tulane L (14-28), and on Oct 1 at Vanderbilt L (7-14) before they notched their first win of the season on Oct 7 against Duquesne at Denny Stadium W (48-0). A week later, on Oct 15, at Legion Field, the Crimson Tide played Tennessee to a tie T (7-7).

Following this tie, their luck changed and UA was 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, AU 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).

Alabama opened the season on Sept 23 with victories over Chattanooga W (27-0) and on Sept 30 Tulane W (26-14) before they lost their first game of the season on Oct 7 against Vanderbilt at Ladd Stadium L (22-27). The Crimson Tide rebounded the next week Oct 13 with a win over Furman W (34-6) at Denny Stadium,

UA lost at Tennessee on Oct 21 in week five L (9-14). Alabama then went on to win their final six games over Mississippi State on Oct 28 W(14-7), Georgia on Nov 4 W (14-7), Mississippi Southern at Denny on Nov 11 W (53-0), at Georgia Tech on Nov 18 W (54-19), Florida on Nov 25 W 41-13) and Auburn on Dec 2 in the Iron Bowl W (34-0)

Although they finished ranked in the top 20 of both major polls, the Crimson Tide did not receive a bid to play in a bowl game after the season.

The Iron Bowl

One year earlier AU was upset by Auburn 14–13. So, this was sweet. Alabama scored touchdowns in all four quarters and shutout the Tigers 34–0 at Legion Field. Bobby Marlow scored the first three touchdowns for the Crimson Tide on a 26-yard reception from Ed Salem in the first, and on runs of seven and two yards in the second and third quarters. A 31-yard Larry Chiodetti run in the third and one-yard Jim Burkett run in the fourth quarter provided the final 34–0 margin. The victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Auburn to 6–8–1.

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).

The Crimson Tide opened the season on Sept 21 with an 89–0 victory over Delta State, and the 89 points were the most scored by an Alabama team since the 1922 squad defeated Marion Military Institute 110–0. However, the Tide followed the victory up with a four-game losing streak that included losses against LSU on Sept 29 (L7-13) Vanderbilt on Oct 6 (20-22) , Villanova on Oct 12 (18-41) and Tennessee on Oct 20 L (13-20)

Alabama then evened its record at 4–4 with victories over Mississippi State on Oct 27 W (7-0), Georgia on Nov 3 (16-14), and Mississippi Southern at Denny on Nov 10 W (40-7).

Following this victory streak, UA then on Nov 17 lost to #7 Georgia Tech at legion Field L (7-27) and Florida on Nov. 24 L (21-30) to secure their first losing season since 1903.

The Crimson Tide then closed the season on December 1 with a W (25–7) victory over Auburn in the Auburn Bowl.

The game against Delta State at Cramton Bowl in Montgomery marked the first year of a four-year period in which Alabama, which was already regularly playing games in Mobile and Birmingham as well as Tuscaloosa, began playing "home" games in four different cities. That's really getting around.

Iron Bowl Notes:

For the third time in four years since the teams renewed the Iron Bowl series, Alabama defeated the Auburn Tigers W (25–7) at

Legion Field. The Crimson Tide took a 13–0 halftime lead on touchdown runs of seven-yards by Bobby Marlow in the first and of three-yards by James Melton in the second. Third quarter Marlow touchdown runs of 39 and 22-yards gave Alabama a 25–0 lead before Auburn scored their only points on an eight-yard Homer Williams run in the fourth to make the final score W (25–7). The victory improved Alabama's all-time record against Auburn to 7–8–1.

1952 Alabama Football Season Harold Drew Head Coach #19

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.

After a 5–6 campaign for the 1951 season, Alabama bounced back in 1952 to have its best season of the decade and finished 10–2. However, losses to Tennessee, for the fifth consecutive year without a victory, and Georgia Tech cost Alabama the SEC title. The Crimson Tide ended the season in its first bowl game in five years, against Syracuse in the Orange Bowl. The 61–6 Alabama victory set a school record for most points scored in a bowl game and an Orange Bowl record for points scored until the 2012 Orange Bowl.

The 55-point margin of victory stood as the all-time record for margin of victory in a bowl game through the 2008 GMAC Bowl. Freshman quarterback Bart Starr, playing with the varsity, appeared in seven games as the backup to Clell Hobson. Starr went on to have a legendary Hall of Fame career as quarterback of the Green Bay Packers.

Bart Starr, football legend, begins football career with Alabama

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.

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.

AU began the 1952 season on September 19 v Mississippi Southern at the Cramton Bowl W (20–6). 12,000 were on hand. On Sept 27, at LSU Tiger Stadium, the Tide won its second straight game of the season in a rally close game W (21–20). At Burdine Stadium in Miami on Oct 3, the Tide beat Miami W (21-7) before 59, 916. On Oct 11, VPI played AU at Denny Stadium W (33–0). Then, on Oct 18, on the third Saturday in October beat AU for the fifth straight time L (0-20)

On October 25, The Tide ripped Mississippi State at Denny Stadium W (42–19) before 25,000. On Nov 1 at Legion Field, AU defeated Georgia W (34–19). On November 8, Bama beat #16 Chattanooga at Denny Stadium W (42–28) before 18,000. On November 15 at No. 2 Georgia Tech, AU played a tough game but were defeated in Atlanta L (3–7). Attendance was 40,000 and the game was seen on live ABC TV.

On November 22 AU took on No. 8 AU took on No. 14 Maryland at Ladd Stadium W (27–7). Then, in the Iron Bowl on Nov 29, The Crimson Tide beat Auburn again at Legion Field W (21-0). This ended the regular season.

On January 1, 1953 Alabama was invited to the Orange Bowl in Miami FL, to play Syracuse. The Crimson Tide manhandled the Orangemen in a 61-6 bloodbath shown on CBS TV.

About the 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

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.

1953 was one of the more unusual seasons in Alabama history. After they opened the season as the preseason No. 5 team, the Crimson Tide lost to Mississippi Southern on Sept 18 L (19-25) and tied LSU on Sept 26 T (7-7) before they had their first win W (21-12) of the season on October 3 against Vanderbilt in week three.

On Oct 10, AU beat Tulsa at Denny Stadium W (41-13). On Oct 17, on the “Third Saturday in October,” Tennessee tied the Crimson Tide T (0-0) at legion Field. On Oct 24, at Denny Stadium, Mississippi tied Alabama T (7-7). On Oct 31 at Georgia, AU got a solid win W (33-12) Then at Denny Stadium on Nov 7, AU defeated Chattanooga W (21-14).

On Nov 14, the game at Legion Field featured Georgia Tech W (13-6). On Nov 21, #2 Maryland defeated the Crimson Tide L (0-21) at Byrd Stadium MD. The Iron Bowl was won by Alabama v Auburn on Nov 28 W (10-7) to finish a somewhat miserable season.

Alabama won only six games all year, and only four of seven conference games. However, the other three conference games were ties, and a 4–0–3 record was good enough to win Alabama the SEC title. It was Bama's first conference championship since 1945 and last until 1961. For their championship, Alabama accepted an invitation to play in the Cotton Bowl Classic.

In their matchup against Rice in the Cotton Bowl on January 1, 1954, one of the strangest plays in the history of college football occurred. In the second quarter, the Owls had the ball on its own five-yard line up 7–6 after they recovered an Alabama fumble.

On their first play of the drive, Rice running back Dicky Moegle swept around the right side, broke free, and appeared to be on his way to a 95-yard touchdown run—until Tommy Lewis of Alabama, who was on the sideline, ran into the field of play and tackled Moegle at the Alabama 40. Officials awarded Moegle a 95-yard touchdown run, and 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).

After a second consecutive season-opening loss to Mississippi Southern on Sept 17 L (2-7), Alabama went on a four-game winning streak that included shutout victories over LSU on Sept 25 W (12-0); Vanderbilt on Oct 2 W (28-14); Tulsa on Oct 9 W (40-0), and Tennessee on Oct 16 W (27-0). However, the Crimson Tide followed this nice win streak by scoring only 14 points over the final six games of the 1954 season. It was a bust.

Alabama lost on Oct 23 to Mississippi State at Denny Stadium L (7-12). With this loss, they began a streak of 16 consecutive scoreless

quarters that tied the all-time school record. Consecutive scoreless ties against Georgia on Oct 30 T (0-0) and at Tulane on Nov 6 T (0-0) followed, despite quarterback Bart Starr's attempted comeback from a brutal pre-season hazing injury. The season ended with losses at Georgia Tech on Nov 13 L (0-20), at #16 Miami on Nov 19 L (7-23) and # 15 Auburn in the Iron Bowl at Legion Field L (0-2). These last losses were by a combined score of 71-7. Their record of 4-5-2 was only Alabama's second losing season in 50 years.

After the conclusion of the season, on December 2, Harold Drew resigned as head coach of the Crimson Tide. During his tenure as head coach, Drew had a respectable winning record going 54-28-7 in seven years. Drew's teams won one conference title and played in three bowl games in eight years. On the day of Drew's resignation, Jennings B. Whitworth was introduced as his successor as head coach after he served in the same capacity at Oklahoma A&M.

Notes on Iron Bowl

It had not been since the 1949 season that Alabama was defeated by the rival Auburn Tigers 28-0 at Legion Field. Auburn led 7-0 at halftime with the only first half touchdown scored on a one-yard Bobby Freeman run in the first quarter. After a 41-yard Freeman run gave the Tigers a 14-0 lead in the third, a pair of fourth-quarter touchdowns gave Auburn the 28-0 victory. The final points came on a one-yard Joe Childress run and a three-yard Freeman run. The loss brought Alabama's all-time record against Auburn to 9-9-1.

Post script on Coach Harold Drew

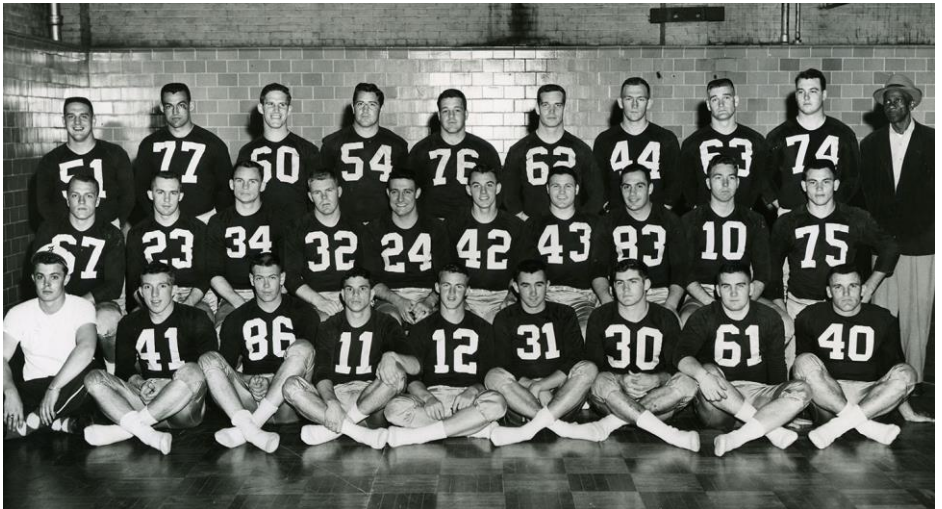
Harold D. Drew was not Wallace Wade or Frank Thomas or Bear Bryant but he was not a bad coach. His successor on the other hand was a bad coach. As we discussed, Drew coached the University of Alabama football program from 1947-54, leading the Crimson Tide to 54 wins, 28 losses, and 7 ties. His tenure 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.

For the season, Alabama only averaged 4.8 points per game and the opposition averaged 25.6. The Tide was shut out four times, the

opposition never scored fewer than 20 points, and the smallest margin of defeat was 15 points in a 21–6 loss to Vanderbilt. Those of us looking on from the stands wonder how this coach got two more years.

Since all scores are losses, I will dispense with the big L in front of the score and I will show the games in a columnar fashion

0-20 September 24 at No. 13 Houston Texas
 6-21 October 1 at Vanderbilt
 0-21 October 8 v TCU @ Denny Stadium
 0-20 October 15 v Tennessee @ Legion Field
 7-26 October 22 v Mississippi State @ Denny Stadium
 14- 35 October 29 at Georgia
 7-27 November 5 v Tulane @ Ladd Stadium
 2-26 November 12 v #11 Georgia Tech @ Legion Field •
 12-34 November 18 at Miami Burdine Stadium
 0-26 November 26 v #10 Auburn Legion Field (Iron Bowl)

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. AU 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).

In 1956 the Crimson Tide improved somewhat from the year before—but not much. Alabama opened the season with four straight losses by a combined score of 99–26. They played at Rice on Sept 22 L (13-20); then, Vanderbilt at Ladd Stadium on Oct 6—L (7-32) TCU was next on Oct 13—L (6-23) and the last of the four losses came at # 7 Tennessee on Oct 20—L (0-24).

At this point, the all-time school record losing streak ran to 17 consecutive games, and the winless streak reached 20 games back to the 1954 season. Then against Mississippi State on Oct 27, Alabama won a game for the first time since October 16, 1954—W (13-12).

The Tide scored with 2½ minutes to go and kicked the extra point to beat Maroons 13–12. After a loss to Georgia L (13-16) on Nov 3, Alabama managed a 13–7 victory over Tulane on Nov 10. They then closed the season on Nov 24 with a T (13–13) tie with Mississippi Southern which was stuck between losses to Georgia Tech L (0-27) on Nov 17 and the Iron Bowl at Legion Field v Auburn on Dec 1 L (7-34 The loss brought Alabama's all-time record against Auburn to 9–11–1.

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).

Alabama opened the season by going winless over their first five games.

After a loss at LSU, the Crimson Tide played Vanderbilt to a tie at Nashville. They then lost to TCU, Tennessee and Mississippi State before they won their first game at Georgia.

L 0-28 September 28 at No. 13 LSU

T 6-6 October 5 at Vanderbilt

L 0-28 October 12 v TCU @ Denny Stadium

L 0-14 Oct 19 Tennessee

L 13-25 October 26 v Mississippi State @ Denny Stadium

W 14-13 Nov 2 at Georgia

The Crimson Tide then lost consecutive home games to Tulane and Georgia Tech before they won their second game of the season against Mississippi Southern. Alabama then closed the season with a 40–0 loss in the Iron Bowl against eventual national champion, Auburn.

L 0-7 Nov 9 Tulane @ Ladd Stadium

L 7-10 Nov 16 Georgia Tech

W 29-2 November 23 Mississippi Southern at Denny Stadium

L 0-40 November 30 v #1 Auburn at Legion Field Iron Bowl

On October 24, University officials announced the contract of head coach Whitworth would not be renewed when it expired December 1 after the season. On December 3, former Maryland, Kentucky and then Texas A&M head coach and former Alabama player Paul Bear Bryant was hired as both the head coach of the football team and athletic director at Alabama.

On December 3, the University formally introduced then Texas A&M head coach and former Crimson Tide player Paul William "Bear" Bryant as the new head coach of the Crimson Tide. At the time of the announcement, Bryant also became athletic director as the replacement for Hank Crisp. He signed a ten-year contract to serve as Alabama's head coach. With a ten-year contract, there was no doubt that Bear Bryant would turn around the AU program and place it on the road to success.

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 13 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

<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

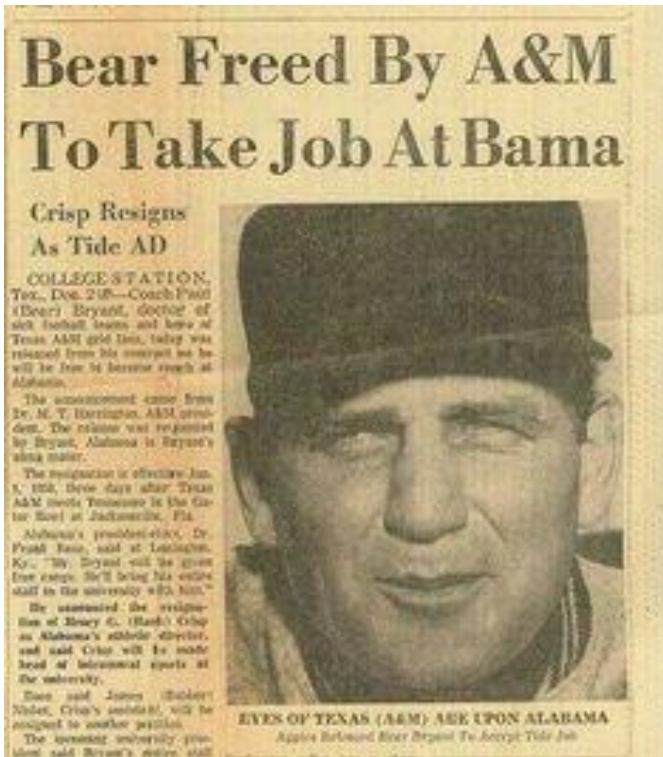
* National Championships (6 in total for the Bear)



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. At the end of the prior season, On December 3, 1957, University Officials formally introduced then Texas A&M head coach and former Crimson Tide player Bear Bryant as the new head coach of the Alabama Crimson Tide.



In the season opener on Sept 27, Bama led future national champion LSU 3–0 at the half before they lost L (13–3). The next week on Oct 4, UA played a ranked #20 Vanderbilt team to a scoreless tie T (0-0) Already Bryant had the team moving much better than the prior three years.

In their third game on Oct 11, the Crimson Tide defeated Furman W 29-6) for the first victory of the Bryant era. After a loss at Tennessee on Oct 18—L (7-14), which was the “Third Saturday in October,” Alabama played another ranked team No. 19 Mississippi State for their first victory W (9-7) over a ranked team since 1953. Mama had already learned how to win the close ones.

The following week on Nov 1, UA grabbed another win W (12-0) from Georgia on homecoming. The Crimson Tide held its own but were upset on Nov 7 at Tulane L (7-13) in a close game on a Friday evening. The Tide bounced right back reinvigorated with back to back wins over Georgia Tech W (17-8 on Nov 15, and Memphis State on Nov 22. This gave the Alabama Crimson Tide its first winning season since 1953. It was well-deserved.

After UA closed the season on Nov 29 with a loss against Auburn at Legion Field in the Iron Bowl, Alabama declined an invitation to compete in the Bluegrass Bowl to end Bryant's first season. This team was the only Bryant coached team at Alabama to not have participated in a bowl game.

About the Tulane Game

On a Friday evening at New Orleans, the Crimson Tide were defeated 13–7 by the Tulane Green Wave after they turned the ball over on downs late in the fourth quarter. Richie Petitbon gave Tulane an early 6–0 lead with a two-yard touchdown run in the first quarter. This same Tulane back then extended the Green Wave lead to 13–0 late in the third on a one-yard run before Alabama scored its lone touchdown of the game.

The only Crimson Tide points came on a one-yard Bobby Jackson touchdown run. UA had advanced from the Tulane 27 for a well-executed 73-yard drive in the fourth quarter. The loss brought Alabama's all-time record against Tulane to 17–10–2.

After its victory over Memphis State, Alabama players voted to accept any potential bowl bid if one was extended to the team. As they entered their final game of the season against Auburn, officials

from the Bluegrass Bowl announced that the Crimson Tide was their top choice to participate in the inaugural event regardless of the outcome against the Tigers. Although the Crimson Tide were their top choice, on December 1, bowl officials announced that Florida State and Oklahoma State would participate in the game. It's not nice to fool a "Bear."

It was reported that prior to the announcement, the game was to have been seen a rematch of Alabama against Vanderbilt, but that no deal had been reached. After the Crimson Tide declined the invitation, Florida State accepted it.

Even great men make mistakes. Greater men admit them. Years later, Bryant stated he regretted he did not accept the bid as it would have allowed for additional practice time at the conclusion of the season.

1958 Freshmen squad

Prior to the 1972 college football season, NCAA rules had prohibited freshmen from participating on the varsity team, and as such, many schools fielded freshmen teams to give their new recruits valuable practice time. For the 1958 season, the Alabama's freshmen squad was coached by Sam Bailey. The frosh finished their season with a record of two wins, zero losses and one tie (2–0–1).

In its first game against the Mississippi State Baby Maroons, a 27-yard Jimmy Spencer field goal fell short with under a minute left, and the game ended in a scoreless tie at Starkville. In their second game, the Crimson Tide defeated Tulane 25–6 before 3,000 fans at Denny Stadium. After the game was tied 6–6 at halftime, Alabama scored 19 unanswered points in the second half to win.

Touchdowns were scored by Mal Moore on a one-yard run, a 37-yard Moore pass to Tommy Brooker and on a 22-yard Ronnie Davis pass to Steve Anderson. The Baby Tide then closed the season with a 14–6 win over Auburn in a game that saw touchdowns scored of runs of 10-yards by Jerry Rich and one-yard by Pat Trammell. The future for Alabama teams based on its freshman team results looked pretty good.

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.

The Crimson Tide opened the 1959 season with three consecutive games on the road. After they dropped the opener on Sept 19 at Georgia L (3-17) , they rebounded with a close as nails victory on Sept 26 at Houston W (3-0) and then UA played Vanderbilt on Oct 3 to a 7–7 tie at Dudley Field in Nashville. Alabama then defeated Chattanooga W (13-0) in the first Denny Stadium game of the season on Oct 19 and then tied Tennessee T (7–7) at Legion Field.

On homecoming weekend the home team likes to win. On Oct 31, The Crimson Tide defeated Mississippi State W (10-0) and then one week later on Nov 7, defeated Tulane W (19-7) at Ladd Stadium. The win over Tulane was both the 100th Southeastern Conference victory in the history of the Alabama program and the 100th all-time victory for Bryant as a head coach. The “Bear had already been a great coach before coming to Alabama.

Alabama on Nov 14 then went on to upset Georgia Tech W (9-7) and as a result UA got into the football polls the following week for the first time since the 1954 season. The Crimson Tide then closed the regular season with a home win over Memphis State on Nov 21 W (14-7) and a nice win over Auburn W (10-0) in the Iron Bowl on Nov 28. The Iron Bowl win snapped what was then a school record five-game Iron Bowl losing streak. Alabama then was pleased to accept an invitation to compete in the inaugural Liberty Bowl in Philadelphia where on December 19, they were upset by a young Joe Paterno's Penn State L (0-7) in the final game of the UA season.

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.

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. AU 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 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.

After victories over Houston (Oct 22) W (14-0) on homecoming and on the road Oct 29 at Mississippi State W (7-0), Alabama scored their most points in a game since the 1952 season when they defeated Furman Nov 5 at Denny Stadium W 51-0.

After an unsuccessful bid to allow for a "sudden death" overtime period in the event of a tie in their Nov 12 game against Georgia Tech, Alabama defeated both the Yellow Jackets W (16-15) in Atlanta and they whopped #18 Tampa at home on Nov 19 at Denny prior to their victory on Nov 26 over Auburn in the Iron Bow W (3-0

The Crimson Tide then closed the season with a well-fought tie T (3-3) against Texas in the Bluebonnet Bowl. It was not a perfect season but it was the best of the “Bear” so far.

Head coaches, especially great Head Coaches are given a lot of “power” by their universities for the good of the university and the football program. The Provost knows little about football and wants to know less in most cases.

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

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 Tec—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!



1962 Sugar Bowl – Nine Heart Attacks

This 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.

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 Trammel at quarterback. Additionally, Alabama had four players selected to the All-SEC First Team: Mike Fracchia at back, Jordan, Neighbors and Trammel. Trammel 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

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 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

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.

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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*, 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.

Continuing the description of the regular season, on Sept 28, at Tulane Bama defeated the Green Waves W (44-6) in their first road game at New Orleans in week two. Alabama then defeated Vanderbilt on October 6 at Legion Field W (17-7) and Houston on Oct 13 W (14-3) back at Denny Stadium before they defeated Tennessee on the “Third Saturday in October “at Neyland Stadium in Knoxville.

The Crimson Tide then on Oct 27 defeated Tulsa W (35-6), Mississippi State on Nov 3 W (20-0) and then Miami on Nov 10 -- homecoming W (36-3) at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa that extended their winning streak to 19-games and their unbeaten streak to 26-games. The next week Nov 17, Alabama lost its first game since the 1960 season when it was upset L (6-7) by Georgia Tech at Atlanta. They rebounded with wins over Auburn W (38-0) in the Iron Bowl on Dec 1 that closed the regular season and against Oklahoma W (17-0) on January 1, 1963 in the Orange Bowl. Just one point kept Alabama from an undefeated season.

After their loss against Georgia Tech, Alabama dropped to No. 6 in the AP Poll, but in the week prior to their game against Auburn, they moved into the No. 5 position.

After their victory over Auburn, the Crimson Tide formally accepted an invitation to play Big Eight Conference champion Oklahoma in the 1963 edition of the Orange Bowl. In what was the first all-time meeting between the schools, Alabama shutout the Sooners 17-0 behind a dominant performance by linebacker Lee Roy Jordan who set a school bowl record with his 31 tackles.

Alabama took a 14-0 halftime lead after touchdowns were scored on a 25-yard Joe Namath pass to Richard Williamson in the first and on a 15-yard Cotton Clark run in the second quarter. A 19-yard Tim Davis field goal in the third quarter provided for the final 17-0 margin of victory.

Update on new Freshman Squad

For the 1962 season, the Alabama freshmen squad was coached by Sam Bailey and finished their season with a record of two wins and one loss (2–1). In their first game of the season, Alabama defeated Mississippi State 20–2 at Denny Stadium. Alabama extended their lead to 13–0 later in the first quarter when Steve Sloan scored on a 28-yard touchdown run. State then scored their only points in the second quarter when Mike Childs sacked Sloan in the end zone for a safety that made the halftime score 13–2. After a scoreless third, Alabama made the final score 20–2 after Jimmy Mitchell scored on a seven-yard touchdown run.

In their second game, the Baby Tide defeated Tulane 27–16 at Tulane Stadium, but then lost to Auburn in their season finale at Denny Stadium 14–13.

1963 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

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.

The Crimson Tide opened the season with a win on Sept 21 at Georgia W (32-7) and another win on Sept 28 against Tulane in Mobile W (28-0) and then again on Oct 5 at Vanderbilt W (21-6) on the way to a 3–0 start. However, in their fourth game on Oct 12, Alabama was upset by Florida L (6-10) in what was coach Bryant's first loss at Denny Stadium as head coach. AU rebounded the week that followed on Oct 19 with a shutout victory over Tennessee W (35-0) and then won their next three games against Houston on Oct 26, W (21-13), Mississippi State on Nov 2 in a nail biter—W (20-19) and then on Nov 16, Georgia Tech W (27-11)

In the annual Iron Bowl on Nov 30 against Auburn, the Crimson Tide were narrowly defeated L (8-10) for the first time by the Tigers since the 1958 season. Although they had lost, immediately after the game Alabama accepted an invitation to play Ole Miss in the Sugar Bowl. Before the bowl, on Dec 14, the Crimson Tide defeated Miami W (17-12) in their final game of the regular season. They then closed the season with a victory on January 1 1964 over Ole Miss in the Sugar Bowl W (12-7) This game was seen live by 80,785 and on National TV's NBC.

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

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, AU

defeated Georgia Tech W (24-7) in what was the final game of their annual series.

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.



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

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

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 AU 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

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.

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 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.



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.

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 that made the final score 34–7.

For his stellar performance, Ken Stabler, 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.

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.

1967 Sugar Bowl – 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 1967 Sugar Bowl.

1967 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

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.

Alabama opened the season on Sept 23 ranked #2, but tied unranked Florida State T (37-37) at Birmingham in a game that snapped a 17-game winning streak and surprised many pundits. They rebounded from the tie with victories over Southern Miss Sept 30 W (25-3) and in their annual Ladd Stadium Mobile game on Sept 30, Ole Miss W (21-7) in their first conference game and also Vanderbilt Oct 14 W (35-21) in their first road game of the season.

In their fifth game on Oct 21 against Tennessee, Alabama was defeated 24–13 at Legion Field in the “Third Saturday in October” series. The defeat ended a 25-game unbeaten streak for the Crimson Tide that dated back to the 1965 season and was the first for the Volunteers over Alabama since their 1960 season.

After their loss to Tennessee, Alabama again rebounded and won their final five regular season games. After they defeated Clemson on Oct 28 W (13-10) at Memorial Stadium, they returned to Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa on Nov 4 where they defeated Mississippi State W (13-0) on homecoming.

The Crimson Tide next defeated LSU on Nov 11 at LSU's Tiger Stadium in a squeaker W (7-6) at Tiger Stadium, South Carolina on Nov 18 W (17-0) at Denny.

Auburn on Dec 2 W 7-3) in the Iron Bowl was the next team to be beaten after Ken Stabler had his famous, 47-yard "run in the mud" touchdown to win the game. In the January that followed, Alabama lost to Texas A&M on January 1 in the Cotton Bowl Classic L (16-20)

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 AU 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 Stegent that tied the game 7–7 at the end of the first quarter.

In the second quarter, AU 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.

Alabama opened the season ranked #7 and won its first two games against Virginia Tech on Sept 21 at Legion Field W (14-7) and on Sept 28 at Ladd Stadium W (17-14) Southern Miss in their annual Mobile game, which proved to be the last game Alabama would play at Ladd Stadium in Mobile. In their third game on Oct 5, the Crimson Tide were upset by Ole Miss at Jackson L (8-10), their first loss to the Rebels since the 1910 season.

They rebounded the next week on Oct 12 with a victory at Denny over Vanderbilt W (31-7) but lost the next week Oct 19 to Tennessee L (9-10) after coach Bryant elected to go for the victory instead of a tie and missed a two-point conversion and lost 9-10 at Knoxville.

After their loss to Tennessee, Alabama rebounded and won their final five regular season games. After they defeated Clemson on Oct 26, W (21-14), they returned to Denny on Nov 2 where they defeated Mississippi State W (20-13) on homecoming.

The Crimson Tide next upset LSU on Nov 9 in Legion Field W (16-7) then on Nov 16, they defeated Miami W (14-6) at the Miami Orange Bowl, and Auburn on Nov 30 in the Iron Bowl W (24-16). Later, December 28 during the Bowl Season, Alabama lost L (10-35) to Missouri in the Gator Bowl.

On November 20, Alabama had accepted an invitation to play Missouri of the Big Eight Conference in the Gator Bowl for their 10th consecutive bowl game appearance.

Against the Tigers, Bryant suffered his worst loss to date as head coach of the Crimson Tide 35–1. This was in the first all-time meeting between the schools. After Terry McMillan gave Missouri a 7–0 lead with his four-yard touchdown run in the first, Alabama responded in the second with their only touchdown of the game on a 38-yard Donnie Sutton interception return.

McMillan then responded with his second touchdown of the game on a five-yard run that made the halftime score 14–7. It was still close. The score remained the same through the fourth quarter when Alabama converted a 28-yard Mike Dean field goal before the Tigers closed the game with three unanswered touchdowns and won handily in the end W (35–10). These touchdowns were scored on a two-yard McMillan run, a 35-yard Greg Cook run and on a 47-yard Dennis Poppe interception return.

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). AU also suffered a loss against Colorado in the Liberty Bowl.

Alabama opened on Sept 20 with ranked opponent # 13 and defeated Virginia Tech W (17-13) at Blacksburg VA. On Sept 27, it was Southern Miss Sept 27 in the first regular season game played at Denny Stadium on AstroTurf. W (63-14) In their third game, on Oct 4, the Crimson Tide defeated an Archie Manning led Ole Miss squad W (33–32) in a record-breaking game before a nationally televised audience.

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

1969, Alabama vs. 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.

The regular season was not yet completed.

Alabama then lost consecutive games for the first time during Bryant's tenure as head coach on Oct 11 at Vanderbilt L (10-14) and in Legion Field against Tennessee L(14-41).

After their loss to Tennessee, Alabama rebounded with victories on Oct 25 at Clemson W (38-13) and on Nov 2 at Mississippi State (23-19) before they lost their third game of the season on Nov 8 at LSU L (15-20) They came back again the next week on Nov 15 with a homecoming victory over Miami W (42-0) but then lost the Iron Bowl on Nov 29 to Auburn L (26-49).

The Crimson Tide were invited and accepted the opportunity to play in the December 13 Liberty Bowl and lost 47–33 to Colorado in the Liberty Bowl in a shootout at Memphis Memorial Stadium L (33-47)

It was way back on November 17 that Alabama accepted an invitation to play in the Liberty Bowl against an unnamed opponent

at the time of its announcement. The next week, Colorado of the Big Eight Conference defeated Kansas State in their regular season finale and accepted an invitation to play the Crimson Tide at the Liberty Bowl.

As noted, against the Buffaloes, Alabama lost 47–33 and completed the first five loss season during Bryant's tenure as head coach in the first all-time meeting between the schools.

The Buffaloes took a 10–0 first quarter lead on a 13-yard Ward Walsh touchdown run and 30-yard Dave Haney field goal. After they extended their lead further to 17–0 on a three-yard Bobby Anderson touchdown run early in the second, Alabama responded with a pair of touchdown runs that cut the Colorado lead to 17–13.

The first was on a 31-yard Scott Hunter run and the second on a six-yard George Ranager run. The teams then traded two more touchdowns on runs of 15-yards by Walsh for Colorado and two-yards by the great Johnny Musso before Steve Engel returned a kickoff 91 yards to make the halftime score 31–19.

The Crimson Tide then rallied and took a 33–31 lead in the third quarter on a pair of Neb Hayden touchdown throws. The first was to Griff Langston from 51-yards and the second to Musso from ten-yards. Colorado came right back with a pair of unanswered touchdowns and a safety in the fourth quarter and won the game 47–33. Touchdowns were scored on Anderson runs of two and three-yards with a combined quarterback sack of Hayden for a safety by Bill Brundige and Herb Orvis providing the final margin.

1970 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

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.

Then It was Florida on Sept 20 W (46-15). This set up a top-twenty match-up against Ole Miss on Oct 3. Led by QB Archie Manning Peyton and Eli's dad), the Rebels defeated the Crimson Tide L (23-48) After a 22-point fourth quarter at Jackson. Alabama defeated Vanderbilt W (35-11) on Oct 10 but then were shut out for the first time since their 1959 season with a L (0-24) at Tennessee on Oct 17.

They again rebounded with a pair of consecutive victories. The first was on Oct 24 at Houston W (30-21), in what was also the first game Alabama played indoors, and the second on homecoming Oct 31 against Mississippi State at Denny. After a Nov 7 loss to LSU L (9-14) , the Crimson Tide defeated Miami W (32-8) on Nov 14 in their final road game of the season.

The win also made Alabama bowl-eligible, and as such an invitation to play Oklahoma in the Astro-Bluebonnet Bowl was accepted in the week leading to the Iron Bowl. Against Auburn on Nov 28, the Crimson tide gave up a 17-point lead and closed the regular season with a L (28-38) to their rival. A month later, on Dec 31, in the Blue Bonnet Bowl, Alabama ended one of its worst Bear Bryant seasons with a T (24-24) tie against the Sooners.

The 1970 season is also notable for being the first fully integrated team at Alabama. Although several African American students competed during spring practice in 1967, Wilbur Jackson became the first African American awarded a scholarship to play for Alabama, and he competed as a member of the freshman squad in

A closer look at the USC game.

After the NCAA enacted a rule that allowed its member institutions to schedule an eleventh regular season game, in January 1970 as previously noted, the Crimson Tide agreed to a home-and-home series with the University of Southern California (USC). At Legion

Field, the Trojans outgained Alabama on the ground 485 to 32 yards en route to a 42–21 victory that opened the 1970 season.

USC took a 12–0 first quarter lead behind a pair of Sam Cunningham touchdowns as they outgained the Crimson Tide 102 to 10 in total yards in the quarter. After a 32-yard, Ron Ayala field goal extended the Trojans' lead to 15–0, a one-yard Johnny Musso touchdown run cut the USC lead to 15–7 early in the second quarter. However, the Trojans responded on the drive that ensued with a seven-yard Charlie Evans touchdown run that made the halftime score 22–7.

The Trojans continued their dominance of the game into the second half as they extended their lead to 32–7 in the third quarter. Jimmy Jones first threw a 23-yard touchdown pass to Clarence Davis and Ayala next connected on a 25-yard field goal. Alabama then responded with a six-yard Neb Hayden touchdown pass to David Bailey that made the score 32–13 at the end of the third quarter. The Trojans closed the game with a 27-yard Ayala field goal and a six-yard Mike Rae touchdown pass to Bill Holland. Alabama then made the final score 42–21 on a second, one-yard Musso touchdown run.

The game became referred to as the "Cunningham game" by many Alabama fans and is often cited as being the turning point towards the full integration of the Crimson Tide football team beginning with the 1971 season. This game was also the first-time Alabama played on Poly-Turf at Legion Field as it was installed during the previous summer. The loss brought Alabama's all-time record against Southern Cal to 2–1.

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 AU 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.

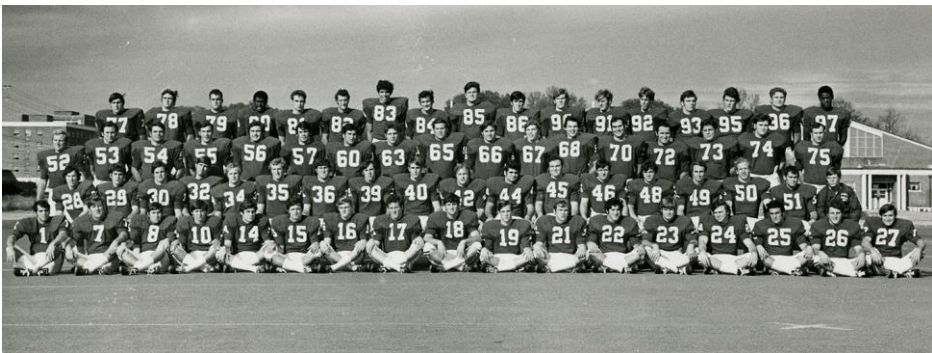
After a 20-yard Richard Ciemny field goal in the third brought the Crimson Tide within four points of the Sooners, AU took a 24–21 lead on a 25-yard Hunter touchdown pass to Johnny Musso in the fourth quarter. Oklahoma tied the game T (24–24) late in the fourth on a 42-yard Bruce Derr field goal.

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

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 Alabama football firsts to their credit. This was the first team that African Americans contributed as members of the Alabama varsity squad, with John Mitchell being the first to actually see playing time.

1971 also marked the first season the Crimson Tide utilized the wishbone offense that Alabama became noted for throughout the remainder of Bryant's tenure as head coach at Alabama.

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 opened the season on Sept 10 with an upset victory at USC W (17-10). This was the first game that the wishbone was utilized by the Crimson Tide offense, and their victory was attributed in part to surprising the Trojans with its introduction.

They then won their next four games over Southern Miss on Sept 18 W (42-6), Florida on Sept 25 W (38-0), Ole Miss on Oct 2 (W (40-6) and Vanderbilt on Oct 9 W 42-0). Alabama was winning against fine teams and by some big margins. Looks like they had recovered from those few sluggish years.

Their record set up a top 20 match-up against Tennessee on October 16 in the "Third Saturday In October Series." In their rival game, the Crimson Tide ended a four-game losing streak to the Vols with their W (32-15) victory.

1971 Tennessee – The Start of a Streak

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

It had been 3,347 days since Tennessee last beat Alabama in football, but Alabama's longest win streak vs. the Volunteers was logged in another time at 4,015 days long.

The 1971 matchup between Alabama and Tennessee would start an eleven-year winning streak for the Crimson Tide of Alabama over their rivals from the north.

In October of 1971 Alabama faced Tennessee in Legion Field in Birmingham, one of the Tide's favorite places to beat a rival. The Crimson Tide would end up on top that day too, defeating Tennessee W (32-15).

Maybe the win was due to Alabama's moving to the run focused wishbone, or maybe it was all about motivation...



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.

The Alabama and Tennessee rivalry comes from Tennessee not having a significant in state rival to speak of, and their being low down dirty snitches. It must be considered one of the most intense out of state rivalries in college football.

After a hard-fought win over Houston on October 23 W (34-20) and their victory on Oct 30 over Mississippi State at Jackson W (41-20), on Nov 6, Alabama defeated a powerful # 18 LSU W (14-7) for their third win over a ranked team on the season.

The Crimson Tide on Nov 13 defeated Miami W (31-3) on homecoming and set up a match-up between undefeated teams for the first time in the history of the Iron Bowl on Nov 27 to close the regular season. With both teams ranked in the top five, Alabama defeated Auburn W (31-7) and captured the outright SEC football championship. 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

Some notes on the “wishbone” from Wikipedia

In 1968, Texas head coach Darrell Royal and his offensive coordinator Emory Bellard introduced what would become known as the wishbone offense. The wishbone was derived from the Split-T offense run at Oklahoma under Bud Wilkinson. In the formation, the quarterback lines up with a fullback and two tailbacks behind him, and on any play, may keep the ball, hand off to the fullback, or pitch to a tailback.

From the time Bryant arrived at Alabama through the 1970 season, the Crimson Tide ran a pro-style offense. By 1969, Bryant began to recruit larger linemen and tailbacks, and after a pair of six win seasons in 1969 and 1970, Bryant saw the success of the wishbone for the Longhorns and decided to implement the offense for the 1971 season.

In spring 1971, Alabama assistants Mal Moore and Jimmy Sharpe traveled to Austin where they saw first-hand how the wishbone operated during Texas' final week of spring practice. During the second summer session at the University, both Moore and Sharpe began to work with players on the offensive change, and in August Royal and Bellard traveled to Tuscaloosa and led a coaching clinic for the Alabama staff on the wishbone.

In order to keep the change a secret, Bryant kept all of the Crimson Tide's practices closed from the public, screened the practice field from view with a canvas and hired security to keep people away.

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.

Alabama opened the season on Sept 9 with a non-conference victory over Duke W (35-12). They then shut out Kentucky W (35-0 in their conference opener on Sept 23. UA then easily won their next three games, over Vanderbilt on Sept 30, W (48-21), Georgia on Oct 7 W (25-7) and Florida on Oct 14.

In a top-ten match-up at rival Tennessee on Oct 21, they scored a pair of fourth-quarter touchdowns and gained a W (17–10) victory. Next, on Oct 28, the Crimson Tide defeated Southern Miss W (48-11), and on Nov 4 Mississippi State (58-14) to set up a top-ten match-up against LSU.

With a W (35–21) victory on Nov 11 over the Tigers, Alabama captured the SEC championship for the 1972 season. The Crimson Tide next defeated Virginia Tech W (52-13) Nov 18 on homecoming. This set up another top ten match-up with Auburn on Dec 2 in the Iron Bowl to close the regular season. Auburn defeated Alabama behind a pair of fourth-quarter blocked-punt returns W

(16-17) in a game referred to as simply "Punt Bama Punt". 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.

With matching second quarter field goals of 24-yards by Billy Schott of Texas and 30-yards by Bill Davis of Alabama the halftime score was 13–3.

In the third, the Longhorns scored their first touchdown on a three-yard Alan Lowry run. Lowry then scored the game-winning points with a 34-yard touchdown run in the fourth. The loss brought Alabama's all-time record against Texas to 0–6–1. There is sure a lot of room in the future to make up that difference. Every team has a nemesis and it seems the Longhorns have become a consistent Tide nemesis.

Chapter 14 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

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

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. In their first game of the season on Sept 14, Alabama narrowly escaped with a win W (21-16) at Maryland in what was Bryant's first visit to College Park since he resigned as the Terrapins' head coach after their 1945 season.

UA followed this with victories over Southern Miss on Sept 21 W (52-0), Vanderbilt on Sept 28 W (23-10), and at Ole Miss on Oct 5 W (35-21), before the Crimson Tide played in their closest game of the season against Florida State on Oct 12.

Although Bama entered their contest against the Seminoles as a heavy favorite, they trailed for nearly the entire game until Bucky Berrey connected on the game-winning field goal from 36-yards out with only 0:33 left in the game W (8-7).

In their next game on the Third Saturday in October—the 19th, Alabama defeated rival Tennessee. W (28-6). After the Vols scored on a second quarter touchdown run, the Bama defense did not surrender another for 17 consecutive quarters against TCU on Oct 26 W (41-3), Mississippi State on Nov 2 W (35-0), LSU on Nov 9 W (30-0) and Miami on Nov 16 W (28-7).

Alabama then closed the season on Nov 29 at Legion Field with an Iron Bowl victory W (17-13) over Auburn. In a repeat performance, UA failed to capture the national championship after they lost to Notre Dame in the Orange Bowl L (11-13)

Some Season 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

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.

The 1975 squad entered the season with the No. 2 ranking in the AP Poll and as one of the favorites to compete for the national championship. Their championship hopes were dashed after they were upset by an unranked Missouri team in their season opener at Legion Field 7-20 on Sept 8.

. Although Alabama dropped into the No. 14 position prior to their second game against Clemson, they would not lose another game during the season as they climbed up the polls back into a top five position by season's end. After its shutout on Sept 30 over Clemson, Alabama traveled to Nashville on Sept 27 in the first road game of the season where they defeated Vanderbilt W (40-7).

The Crimson Tide then returned to Birmingham's Legion Field on Oct 4 and defeated Ole Miss W (32-6) the week before their convincing victory over Washington W (52-0) on Oct 11 in the first meeting between the schools since the 1926 Rose Bowl. They followed this with wins over Tennessee on Oct 18 W (30-7), TCU Oct 25 W (45-0), at Mississippi State on Nov 1 W (21-10), at LSU on Nov 9 W (23-10) and Southern Miss on homecoming Nov 15 W (27-6) in Tuscaloosa's Denny Stadium.

The Crimson Tide then closed the season with great wins first on Nov 29 against Iron Bowl Auburn in what was Ralph Jordan's final game as the Tigers' head coach and then against Joe Paterno's Penn State Nittany Lions in the Dec 31 Sugar Bowl W (13-6). The Sugar Bowl victory ended a seven-game drought in bowl games for Bear Brant. Finally Bear carved himself out a great win. Alabama football had another great year.

In the 1975 NCAA Division I football season, the University of Oklahoma was as they say today, H-O-T, and had been for some time. They repeated as national champion in the Associated Press (AP) writers' poll, and were ranked #1 in the United Press International (UPI) coaches' poll, just ahead of runner up Arizona State University who finished number two in both of the final polls despite having an undefeated season and a win over Nebraska in the Fiesta Bowl.

Under Bear Bryant, Alabama teams were always competitive and up there for the championships, but sometimes a few other teams had better records. Bryant was consistent. He did well with what he had and whenever he reloaded, Alabama dominated.

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.

The Crimson Tide opened the season with an upset loss on Sept 11 at Ole Miss L (7-10). The loss ended a 20-game conference winning streak that dated back to the 1972 season. UA rebounded from the loss with wins over both SMU W (56-3) on Sept 18, and Vanderbilt on Sept 25 W (42-13). But then, Bama was shutout on Oct 2 by Georgia in their fourth game L (0-21). The shutout was the first for the Crimson Tide since their 1970 season. With this loss, Alabama also dropped out of the polls for the first time since 1970.

The Crimson Tide as usual rebounded and won their next five games. These wins included victories over Southern Miss on Oct 9 W (24-8), Tennessee on Oct 16 W (20-13), Louisville on Oct 23 W (24-3), Mississippi State on Oct 30 W (34-17), and LSU on Nov 6 W (28-17). After this great rebound Alabama lost its third game of the

season in a much-anticipated match-up at Notre Dame on Nov 13 in South Bend L (18-21). The Bear & Company then closed the season with a victory on Nov 27 over rival Auburn W (38-7) and UCLA on Dec 20 in the Liberty Bowl W (36-0).

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!”

Bear Bryant had so much chutzpah as a coach and so much good teaching skills that with his style and teaching and the luck of the AP and the UPI, as heralded as he has been, he would have been even more heralded. God bless the Bear!

We're not yet done on reporting about the greatest -- Bear Bryant in this book about Great Moments in Alabama Football!

Alabama and the people of Alabama understand football.

Bear Bryant defined Alabama football!

“Recognize a great man with major life achievements while he knows he is being recognized—why wait until he dies!”

You can quote me on that – Brian W. Kelly

Alabama did exactly that for their greatest coach, the “BEAR,” Bear Bryant.

In September 1975, a bill sponsored by Alabama State Senator Bert Bank was passed by a margin of 88–0 to rename Denny Stadium to Bryant–Denny Stadium in honor of then head coach Bear Bryant.

The continually expanding Denny Stadium had received the go ahead for another great expansion from the Bear himself. It was expanded and was almost as big as it is now after the Bear Bryant recommended expansion.

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.

Some Game Notes

As they entered the 1976 season, the Crimson Tide were in the No. 6 position in the AP Poll prior to their game against Ole Miss at Jackson. Against the Rebels, the Crimson Tide were upset by a final score of 10–7 that ended an overall eleven game winning streak and a 20-game conference winning streak that dated back to their 1972.

Was this luck in reverse?

Ole Miss scored their first points early in the game when George Stuart intercepted a Jeff Rutledge pass that was tipped by Gary Turner and returned it 24-yards for a 7–0 lead. The Rebels held their lead through the third quarter when Alabama tied the game 7–7 on a three-yard Calvin Culliver touchdown run.

Ole Miss then responded early in the fourth with what was a 34-yard, game-winning field goal from Carl Langley that made the final

score 10–7. For leading his team to the upset, Ole Miss head coach Ken Cooper was recognized by United Press International as the UPI National Coach of the Week. The loss brought Alabama's all-time record against Ole Miss to 24–6–2.

Date: December 20 Liberty Bowl

Game attendance: 52,736

Television network: ABC

Playing before the then-largest crowd to ever attend the Liberty Bowl, Alabama performed its own magic. It stunned the once-beaten UCLA Bruins 36–6 at Memphis in the first all-time meeting between the schools.

Alabama was ready to win and nobody would deny them. The coach said more than it was OK!

They took a 17–0 first quarter lead on a 37-yard Bucky Berrey field goal, a 44-yard Barry Krauss interception return and a two-yard Johnny Davis touchdown run. They then extended their lead to 24–0 at halftime on a second quarter halfback option play of 20-yards from Tony Nathan to Jack O'Rear.

After a pair of Berrey field goals extended the Crimson Tide lead to 30–0, UCLA scored their only points of the game with a 61-yard Jim Brown run in the fourth. Rick Watson then scored the final points of the game for Alabama with his one-yard touchdown run that made the final score 36–6. Amen!

1977 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

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 Bryant–Denny 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 with a victory over Ohio State in the Sugar Bowl to make them national champions.

On September 10 to begin the season, Ole Miss lost to UA at Legion Field W (34–13) before 74,324. Then, on Sept 17 at Nebraska with

ABC watching, UA lost a close one L 24–31 before 75,899. On Sept 24 at Vanderbilt in Nashville, TN UA prevailed W (24–12). Then on Oct 1 UA defeated Georgia when they came to the newly expanded Bryant–Denny Stadium W (18–10) before 60,210. On Oct at #1 USC playing in the vaunted Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum in Los Angeles, CA, Bear’s men won a tough match on ABC TV—W (21–20) before 63,140.

On Oct 15 Tennessee came to Legion Field on (Third Saturday in October) and they lost despite a fine effort W (24–10) before 71,000. Then, on Oct 22 an always tough Louisville team came to Bryant–Denny Stadium and got whooped W 55–6 before 60,210, As the season moved on, next was the Oct 29 game at Mississippi State which resulted in a Bama win W (37–7) before 47,500.

On Nov 5 playing # 18 LSU at Tiger Stadium in Baton Rouge, LA on ABC TV the Crimson Tide gained another victory W 24–3 before 65,377. On Nov 12 Miami (FL) came to Bryant–Denny Stadium and were beaten by the Tide W (36–0) before 57,422. Then, on Nov 26 vs. Auburn at Legion Field UA won the Iron Bowl W (48–21) before 69,721

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

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:



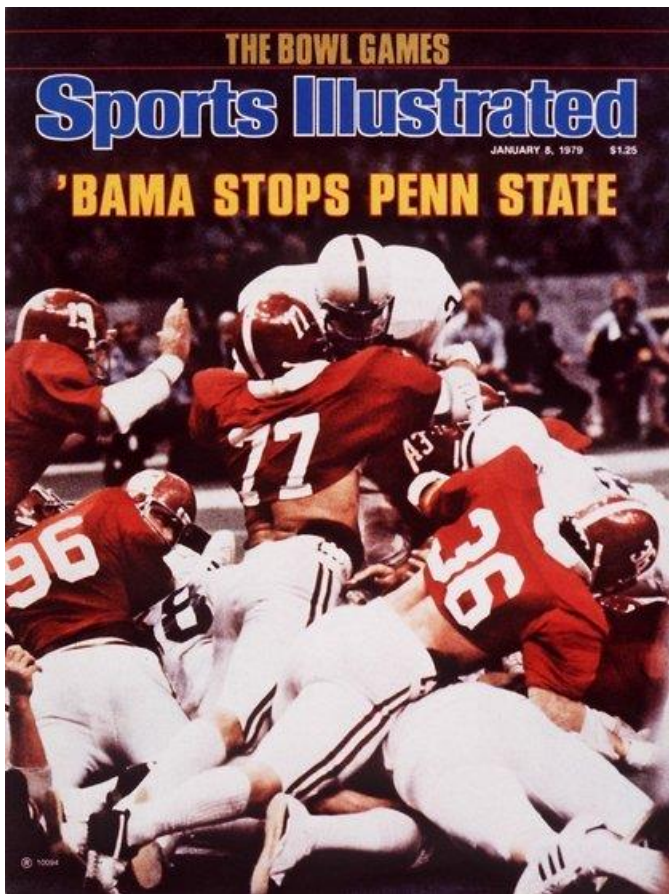
This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

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.



1979 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

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.

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:

How Alabama and Arkansas Met in the 1980 Sugar Bowl

From the AllState Sugar Bowl Archives

<https://www.allstatesugarbowl.org/site351.php>

There was a new look to Alabama in the Sugar Bowl - a look Arkansas Coach Lou Holtz didn't like. He liked it less after the game.

In the time since the end of the regular season, Bear Bryant installed a double wing with motion off the wishbone formation. The Crimson Tide could run its basic plays off the set - and give something else to concern Arkansas coaches.

After the Razorbacks got a 34-yard field goal, courtesy of a lost Alabama fumble on the opening kickoff, the Tide showed its new look.

Holtz watched a seven-play, 82-yard drive featuring a fullback in motion and a lot of counter-action to slow the Hogs' defensive charge. Major Ogilvie scored from 22 yards out after quarterback Steadman Shealy pitched out at precisely the last instant. It was the third straight year in which Ogilvie scored a Sugar Bowl touchdown.

"We weren't expecting as much double wing," Holtz admitted. "We weren't expecting an unbalanced line. We knew they'd run at least two wide-outs and two tight ends ... but with five freshmen (in his defensive alignment) we made some mistakes. We got in wrong calls, shifted the wrong way, and did a lot of wrong things."

There would be more.

Four plays after receiving the ensuing kickoff, another Razorback fumble was recovered by linebacker Thomas Boyd on the Hog 22. Ogilvie scored his second touchdown from the 1

to put the Tide ahead 14-3 with 3:46 left in the first period, forcing Arkansas into an accelerated passing game.

Alan McElroy kicked a 25-yard field goal, and with a 17-3 score at intermission, Alabama seemed content with the way the game was going.

Hogs' quarterback Kevin Scanlon, hurried and hit on virtually every play in the first half by the relentless 'Bama defense, got hot, though, sweeping the Razorbacks downfield 80 yards after the second-half kickoff. Robert Ferrell made an over-the-shoulder three-yard catch for a touchdown, though the two-point conversion fell short.

The score was now 17-9 and the game was taking on the look of a real dogfight.

When Mike Burchfield downed a punt on the Crimson Tide 2 in the fourth quarter, the nine-point underdog Hogs seemed to have a real chance. At that point Holtz got more of a look at Bryant's new wrinkle than he ever wanted to see. In three plays the Crimson Tide were near midfield - 35 yards coming after Shealy times a perfect pitchout by Billy Jackson. When the Crimson Tide reached the 12 - on a third-and-11, offensive coordinator Mal Moore suggested a play - "43 Read" - to Shealy.

"I would not have called it," Shealy said. The quarterback glided down the line, "read" the right defensive end, and then stuck the ball into the 230-pound frame of fullback Steve Whitman, who shot through the middle for the touchdown. He muscled his way over defensive back Kevin Evans at the goal. "I read the end on the play, and Steve just went pssst," Shealy recalled.

The 98-yard drive, Alabama's longest of the season, broke the back of the Razorbacks.



Alabama's Steve Whitman (14) scores a touchdown against Arkansas in the Sugar Bowl at the Superdome in New Orleans Jan. 1, 1980 (Birmingham News file)

The two teams gained 696 yards between them. The double wing took the Hogs out of planned defensive schemes. Holtz addressed the change succinctly: "Alabama's defense is fourth best in the nation, and it's their major weakness. How could we know the nation's best team would play a perfect game?"

Amidst all the clamor and reasons why Alabama should be ranked No. 1, Bear Bryant was saying injuries may have kept his team from being one of the greatest of all time. "We hit some peaks," Bryant said, "against Baylor, and later against Tennessee, when we came back from being down 17-0. No team has ever done that against Tennessee. It was a team that did what it had to do. When Auburn went ahead of us, we marched 82 yards (actually 88). When the Sugar Bowl was hanging in the balance, we went 98 yards. Things like that say something about a football team."

That football team said something about Bear, too, who had coached in nine Sugar Bowls, most of anyone, and where he showcased four of the six national championships Alabama claimed under him. The victory, in Bryant's last Sugar Bowl appearance, was not only his 296th, bringing him within 20 of Amos Alonzo Stagg's record 314, but this was the 17th of Bryant's 22 teams at Alabama to finish in the Top Ten, an unmatched feat for a coach since the Associated Press began voting in 1936. Also, Southern Cal defeated Ohio State (17-16) that day, rectifying the AP voting and moving Bryant past Frank Leahy, who had won four AP national championships at Notre Dame in 1943-46-47-49.

Recap 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. <https://www.allstatesugarbowl.org/site115.php>

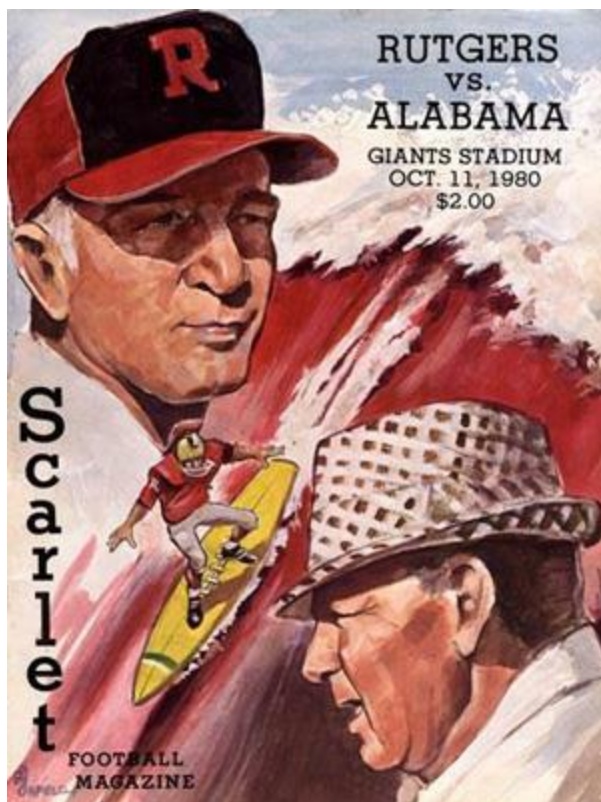
1980 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

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 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.

The Crimson Tide opened up the season on September 6 at 1:30 PM at Legion Field against Georgia Tech W (26-3). After a breather week, on September 20 Bama defeated Ole Miss at Mississippi Veterans Memorial Stadium in Jackson, MS W (59–35). Then, on September 27, the Crimson Tide shut out Vanderbilt at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (W 41–0). On Oct 4, Kentucky came to Legion Field and were defeated in a shutout W (45-0).



In a rare game at Rutgers on October 11 at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, NJ, UA defeated the Scarlet Knight W 17–13.

On October 18 at 2:30 p.m. at Tennessee in Neyland Stadium in Knoxville for (Third Saturday in October rivalry) Bama won the great rivalry game W 27–0 in front of 96,748 and on ABC TV.

Then, on October 25 against Southern Miss at Bryant–Denny Stadium in

Tuscaloosa, AL, right on the UA campus, the Tide won another—W 42–7 making it seven in a row for the season and twenty-eight in a row for the streak.

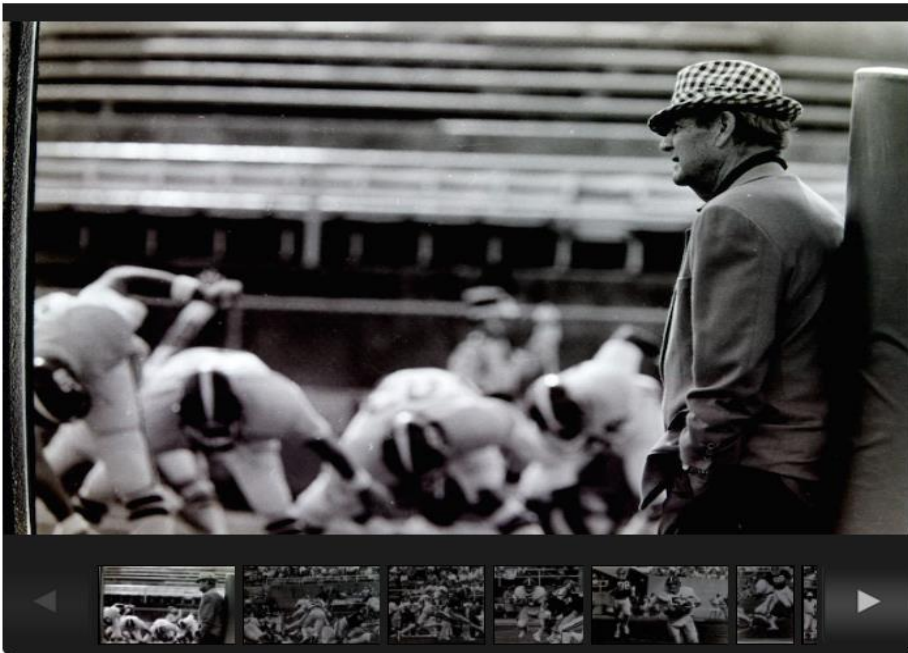
Every opponent plays their best game against the holders of great winning streaks. Rather than play a season full of winning games. They get their fun by mustering enough chutzpah to play well for just one game and sometimes they knock off a much bigger player than they in a game.

On November 1, one week later, both Alabama streaks would end. In a hard-fought low-scoring game, at unranked Mississippi State, who played as hard as they could, Alabama finally lost a game in 1980. The game was played at Mississippi Veterans Memorial Stadium in Jackson. In this long-term rivalry, The Crimson Tide had a tough time scoring and lost L (3-6)

Mississippi State Game – the Skinny according to the Birmingham News

(Birmingham News archive photo by Tom Self and Steve Barnette)

This was big-time bad news for UA but for Mississippi State the ending of Alabama's 28-game winning streak ended in what is still widely regarded as the most significant victory in Mississippi State football history.



Alabama head coach Paul "Bear" Bryant is shown prior to a game vs. Mississippi State at Mississippi Veterans Memorial Stadium in Jackson, Mississippi, on November, 1, 1980. Mississippi State won the game 6-3. (Birmingham News file photo)

The Bulldogs knocked off the two-time defending national champion Crimson Tide 6-3 on Nov. 1, 1980, at Mississippi Veterans Memorial Stadium in Jackson, Mississippi. The Alabama loss was MSU's first win over Alabama in 23 years and dealt the Crimson Tide its first loss since early in the 1978 season.

Paul "Bear" Bryant's Alabama team came into that game 7-0 and ranked #1 nationally. Few questioned that they were well on the way to an unprecedented third straight national title. Led by All-America linebacker E.J. Junior and star halfback Major Ogilvie, the Crimson Tide had blown out perennial powerhouse Tennessee 27-0 two weeks earlier and had routed a fine Southern Miss team 42-7 in its most previous outing.

Mississippi State was doing well but not that well. They were 6-2, having lost to Florida and Southern Miss and having edged an average Auburn team 24-21 the previous Saturday. Head coach Emory Bellard -- who had invented the wishbone offense while an assistant coach at Texas in the late 1960s -- had a brash redshirt freshman named John Bond under center as the QB for his Bulldogs.

On an overcast day in Jackson, Alabama soon had a 3-0 lead on a 49-yard Peter Kim field goal. They took the lead into the h half. But Mississippi State would not heel. They grabbed a 6-3 lead on a pair of field goals by Dana Moore. One was a 37-yarder early in the third quarter and the other one, the killer was a 22-yarder with 13:35 remaining in the game.

The Mississippi crowd of 50,891 was loving the show by their Bulldogs. It did its part to urge-on its team as well. Alabama quarterback Don Jacobs complained many times about the intensity of the crowd noise, which NCAA rules at the time stated he had the right to do. Maybe nobody could hear him.

Mississippi State outrushed Alabama 216-116 in the game, with Bond picking up 94 yards on 20 carries. The Crimson Tide also turned the ball over four times on fumbles.

Nevertheless, Alabama had a chance to win right up until the end of the game. It took over at its 47 with 2:13 to play. Jacobs completed three long passes -- a 25-yarder to Major Ogilvie on third down a 14-yarder to Jesse Bendross and a 16-yarder to Bart Krout -- to move the ball to the MSU 3 with 25 seconds left.

However, Jacobs fumbled on the next play after a major hit by MSU defensive end Tyrone Keys. The Bulldogs' Billy Jackson recovered with six seconds left and State was poised to run out the clock.

The Bulldogs almost gave it away again, however, when Bond fumbled on the final play of the game. MSU's Donald Ray King recovered inside the five and the Bulldogs were finally able to celebrate what remains one of the SEC's most stunning upsets.

Alabama still had a fine season. It beat LSU the next week on Nov 8 W (28-6) but on November 15, Notre Dame squeaked a win against AU W (7-0) at Legion Field. The Tide then convincingly defeated Auburn in its regular-season finale on Nov. 29 (34-18) to finish 6-1 in the SEC, but it lost out on a fourth straight conference title because Georgia had gone undefeated.

Ready to play again for sure in the Cotton Bowl on January 1, 1981, The Crimson Tide pummeled Baylor W (30-2) to end up with a 10-2 record.

Mississippi State then beat LSU and Ole Miss to close out the regular season before dropping a 31-17 decision to Nebraska in the Sun Bowl to finish 9-3. The Bulldogs wouldn't win that many games again until 1999, when they went 10-2.

But the Bulldogs will always have that day in Jackson and Alabama, rich in Championships for sure, will remember the one they let get away.

(Birmingham News archive photos by Tom Self and Steve Barnette).

In the articles that were published about this game, a number of great Bama fans offered their commentaries. This is just one of them:

[davestwin](#)

I've been to a lot of Bama games in my life and of course have necessarily witnessed the Tide lose a few. However, I can't remember being more shocked at a loss than that game. We traveled to Starkville thinking and talking about the about the upcoming game with Notre Dame in two weeks even though we had LSU coming to town next week ... perhaps the team made the same mistake. At any rate ... as the game progressed we kept thinking the Tide offense will wake up soon and roll over these guys ... right? I mean I never even thought it possible we would lose the game ... then we fumbled at the goal line with 6 seconds remaining and the game ended. We all sat there in as much shock as anything else. It had been a while since we had last lost a game and this loss definitely hurt ... but again the shock value was off the charts.

1981 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21

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.

Alabama began the season at LSU at Tiger Stadium on Sept 5 and beat the Tigers W (24-&0 to start the season the right way. On September 12, Alabama suffered a major upset loss L (21-24) to a 1–10 Georgia Tech team. The Crimson Tide was able to rebound from this loss and come back to win its ninth SEC title in eleven years (shared with Georgia). It was Bama's 18th SEC championship, and the 13th and last conference title for Paul "Bear" Bryant at Alabama.

On Sept 19, at Kentucky, AU won (19-10). On Sept 1t 7:00 p.m.at Dudley Field in Nashville, Alabama defeated Vanderbilt W (28–7) On October 3, Ole Miss went down at Bryant-Denny Stadium W

(38-7). Then, on October 10, Southern Miss played a tough game to a tie T (13–13) before 76,400. On Oct 17. UA played a tough Tennessee team and prevailed by 2 to 1 at Legion Field in the (Third Saturday in October) W (38–19) before 78,550.

On Oct 24 Rutgers came to Bryant–Denny Stadium and were beaten by AU W 31–7. On October 3, the Bulldogs of Mississippi State came to Bryant–Denny Stadium and played another tough game but barely lost W (13–10). Alabama remembered that the Bulldogs had ruined their 1980 championship season. Yet, it was still a very tough game to win.

On November 14 at 11:30 a.m., an always tough and aggressive Joe Paterno coached Penn State team hosted an early morning game against Alabama. Penn State was ranked #5 at the time. Beaver Stadium is a tough venue for visiting teams yet Alabama was up to the task and the Crimson Tide manhandled Penn State for the W (31-16) victory before an attendance of 85,133.

Every year, like clockwork, there is an Iron Bowl. This year was no different. On Nov 28 at 2:45 p.m, at Legion Field, AU defeated Auburn in Birmingham, W (28–17) before a nice crowd of 78,170

This Alabama “28–17” win over Auburn was Coach Bryant's 315th career victory, breaking the then all-time record held by Amos Alonzo Stagg.

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 game narrative from bamahammer:

1981 Iron Bowl – 315 for the Bear

Bear Bryant wouldn't win any more national championships, but that doesn't mean he was done getting wins. The 1981 Iron Bowl would make 315 wins for Bear Bryant, which was at the time the record for most wins ever for a coach in college football.

It's fitting that Bear Bryant got to 315 wins in an Iron Bowl, and it's also fitting that the Bear did it in a game that was dominated by defense.

Alabama's offense struggled in the 1981 Iron Bowl, losing three fumbles and only passing for 81 yards. The Alabama Crimson Tide defense was in fine form though with three interceptions.

Alabama's offense finally started to click in the fourth quarter and with two eventual touchdowns Alabama beat Auburn 28-17 in Legion field to give Bear Bryant his 315th win.

315 wins may not be the record anymore, but it's just an amazing achievement. Add on top of that that the 315 came against some of the greatest teams in history like 1969's Ole Miss Rebels and 1979's Penn State Nittany Lions.



Alabama v Auburn action in 1981 Iron Bowl

Bear Bryant won six national championships and did it while running a passing attack, then a wishbone, then a double wing.

You can say a lot of things about Bear Bryant, but he wasn't ever anything but a winner.

Alabama had agreed to play in the Cotton Bowl against Texas on January 1, 1982. Alabama had never beaten Texas and there was a

lot of hope that this would be the first win against this Bowl Nemesis for the Crimson Tide.

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.



Coach Bryant at the 1982 Cotton Bowl.

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.

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.

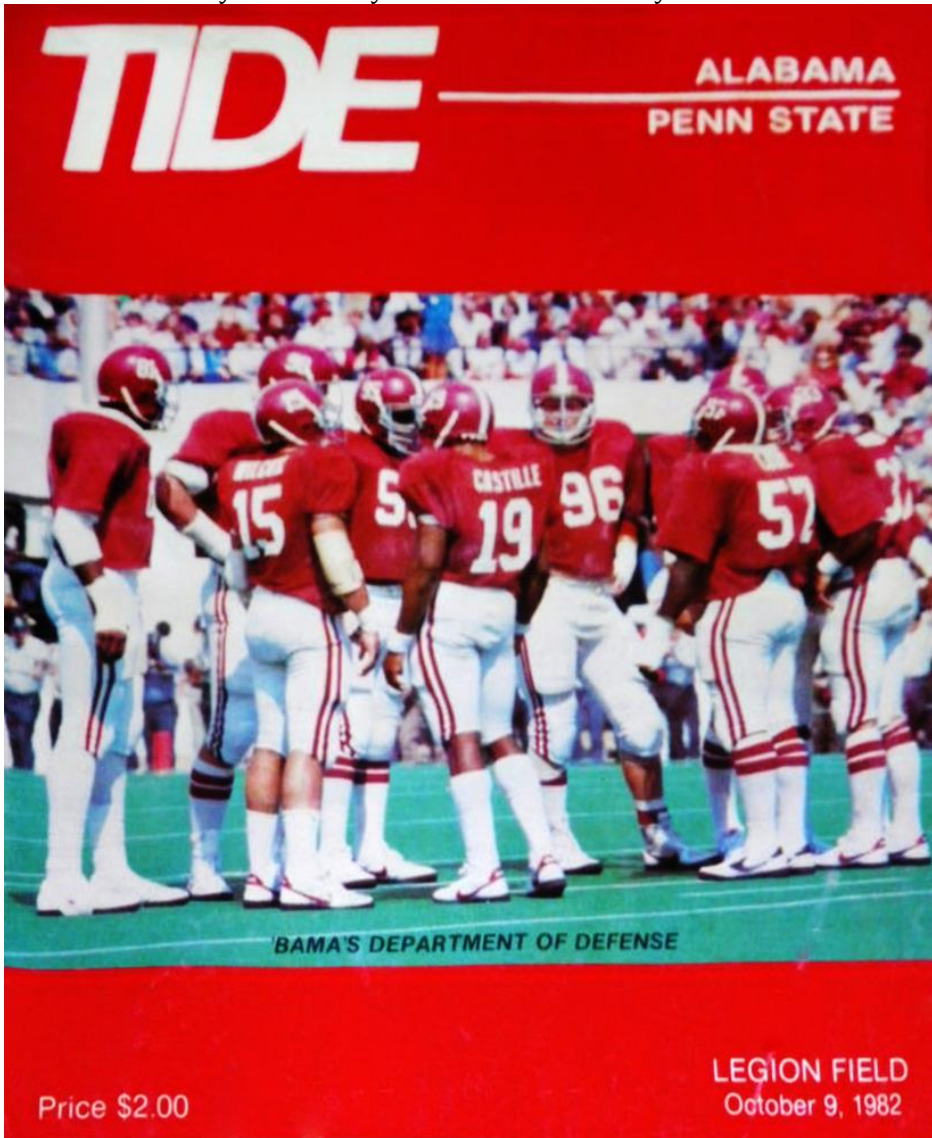
Less than a month later the "Bear" passed away of a heart attack at the age of 69. He was a heck of a man. He was a heck of a coach!

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.

Alabama was 5–0 after they defeated Penn State 42–21, with the decisive play coming when a Penn State player blocked his own team's punt. But after that it was all downhill. Paul Bryant's last season as Alabama football coach saw a nine-game winning streak against Auburn and eleven-game winning streaks against Tennessee and LSU all come to an end. The loss to Southern Miss was Alabama's first loss in Tuscaloosa since 1963, breaking a 57-game

win streak in Bryant–Denny Stadium. Coach Bryant retired after



Alabama's bowl victory against Illinois and he died less than one month later, on January 26, 1983. He was a “Bear” for sure and a great and admirable man.

The season was a great season but the fact is great coaches bring about great expectations. No coach can create excellence every single year. Whether the Coach is Bear Bryant, Knute Rockne, Joe Paterno, Lou Holtz, or Nick Saban, it cannot be done. Yet, fans always expect the best every year. And, we should!

Well, that's just what I think but Nick Saban seems to be making me think that maybe he is not made from the same mold as other great coaches. Every week that Alabama faces a great opponent, I pity the opponent. Alabama has always been great. In the Saban years, I've seen some of the best football ever from any college football team.

Teams may line up to play the Crimson Tide, but almost without exception, they fall down and take the loss. Alabama, even when it gets handed a loss does not take it lightly.

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."

I am writing these lines right before Christmas 2016. I am expecting to see two more wins in the Alabama column after January... unless something goes wrong. And, I sure hope it does not. I enjoy writing about successful Alabama coaches lots more than the alternative.

In the Bear's last season, On Sept 11 at Georgia Tech. Alabama won W (45-7). Then, on Sept 18, at Ole Miss at the Mississippi Veterans Memorial Stadium in Jackson, MS, Alabama beat Mississippi W 42-14 before 62,385. Then, on September 25 at Bryant-Denny, UA defeated Vanderbilt in a close game W 24-21 before 60,210. On October 2 in a 7:30 p.m. game at Legion Field, AU defeated Arkansas State at Legion Field W 34-7. On October 9.

A top ten Penn State team came in hoping to ruin the Bear's last season but even Joe Paterno could not take anything away from Bear Bryant on this early game on a Saturday afternoon as UA dominated against the Nittany Lions at Legion Field under the cameras of CBS and 76,821 W (42-21).

Then, for Bear Bryant's 25th (Third Saturday in October) on October 16 at 1:00 p.m. at Tennessee's Neyland Stadium in Knoxville, a simple TD kept UA from winning the final meeting of the Bear and the Third Week people. The game went into the Crimson Tide Loss column L (28-35) before a whopping sell-out crowd of 95,342.

On October 23, Alabama invited Cincinnati to Bryant–Denny Stadium and beat the Bearcats W (21–3). On October 30, at Mississippi State’s Veterans Memorial Stadium in Jackson, MS, the Crimson Tide defeated the Bulldogs W (20–12). Then, on Nov 6, #11 LSU defeated AU at Legion Field L (10-20) in front of 77,230.

On Nov. 13, Southern Miss played at Bryant–Denny Stadium and were just good enough to defeat the Crimson Tide L (29–38) before 60,210. On Nov 27 at 11:00 a.m., Alabama played Auburn at Legion Field for the Bear’s last Iron Bowl. It was very close L (22–23) before 76,300

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 15 Bear Bryant is Dead; Long Live the Memory of Bear Bryant!

Legend still missed by loyal fans

On Sep 11, 2013 - Paul W. "Bear" Bryant would have turned 100 years old. He had died about thirty years too soon to make this birthday. But, whether Bear liked it or not, even thirty years later, there would have been a grand celebration as his legacy at Alabama was so great, it has not been forgotten.

He is revered as all legacies are revered. Just as Knute Rockne and Frank Leahy, Nick Saban, Amos Alonzo Stagg, Woody Hayes, Pop Warner, and Tom Osborne are held in high esteem, so is Paul W. "Bear" Bryant. There is one difference. All of the coaches mentioned and those in the top 100 including the inimitable Bo Schembechler, are also rans to the winner. Yes, the consistent #1 voted football coach for years was and still is Alabama's own Bear Bryant. Even though the Bear would be well over 100-years old today.

Some say that the emotions that connect player to coach, or fan to hero, are not easily handed down from one generation to another and to another. Yet, those who knew the Bear are still heard saying " We'll do anything just to hear Coach Bryant say, 'You did a good job. They also share a love for the University of Alabama.

Bear Bryant was a great coach wherever he coached – Maryland in 1945; Kentucky from 1946 to 1953; Texas A & M from 1954 1954 to 1957 and of course the Bear's favorite—Alabama, his home, from 1958 to 1982. His record of 323-85-17 in 38 seasons has been equaled and passed just once by Penn State's own immortal Coach Joe Paterno. History shows that Joe Paterno coached many more seasons to achieve his great record.

They say that if one coach has come to represent college football, to be associated with it more than anyone else, through success on the field and sheer force of personality, it is the man who needs to be known by only one name: Bear. Paul Bryant, legend has it, got the name Bear by literally wrestling a bear as a teenager at a carnival. The furry bear had no chance.

As an end at Alabama, he once played a game against Tennessee dragging a broken leg. After a stellar career as a player for the Crimson Tide, Bryant assisted at Alabama, then made his mark at various stops as a head coach to become one of the biggest personalities in American sports history, and the #1 football coach on the planet--ever.

Success came quickly, despite the fact that the man he replaced, Jennings Whitworth, had the worst record in Alabama football history—just 4-24-2 in three seasons. After such a dismal three years, Bryant could do nothing but succeed. He did a lot more than that. He excelled. Bear Bryant needed just one season to build his team -- just like Nick Saban -- and then Alabama took off to become a dominant force in American.

For most of the next quarter century, the Crimson Tide dominated college football everywhere, especially in the tough SEC. Bear did not wait long to bring home all the marbles. In 1961, Bryant led Alabama to an 11-0 season, a Sugar Bowl win and a split national title with Ohio State. The Crimson Tide would go on to share titles in three of five seasons, before going undefeated in 1965. Ironically, in this, one of the greatest years for any coach in any sport, undefeated and untied, Bear Bryant was denied a championship by pollsters for their own reasons.

Like many football dynasties, no college can win every game. And, so Alabama had a few dry spells, some more enduring than others, but the tea always came back with the Bear at the helm. Bryant's first big recovery was in the 1970s. There are two big reasons given for the comeback: 1) He switched to the wishbone, and most importantly, 2) Alabama football integrated its program and got from underneath at time when they had been kept down by administrative policies on recruiting. Wilbur Jackson became the first African-American scholarship player in the early 1970s.

From 1971-81, Alabama never finished worse than 11th in the AP poll. It shared a national title with Notre Dame in 1973, despite losing to the Irish in the Sugar Bowl. In this year, the champion was declared before the bowl games. This particular year was the last year the UPI crowned its champion before the bowls. After that UA it won back-to-back titles in 1978-79 thanks to Sugar Bowl wins over Penn State and Arkansas.

The Bear stepped down after the 1982 season, and he did not get to enjoy his retirement for too long. He died one month after his final game. By the end of his Alabama career, he had won 82.4 percent of his games, gained six national championships and 13 SEC titles. And for some his crowning achievement was to dominate Alabama's rivals. He went 35-13-2 against rivals Auburn and Tennessee.

Bear Bryant was larger than life. He lived more years in his 69 years than just 69. He was a busy man in terms of the business of football and the business of life. He enjoyed to drink and he smoked heavily. He enjoyed life and he enjoyed his family. Besides family, he loved football and his teams the best.

Wright Thompson, Senior Writer for ESPN The Magazine notes that "Bryant surrounded himself with people he could trust, and he trusted nobody more than Billy Varner, a tough, barrel-chested African-American. Billy was always just around, in the office, on the road, on the sidelines. Over the years, various accounts have given him different titles, but essentially, he was a fixer. He took care of business, and he kept everything to himself, even after Bryant died."



Bear Bryant and his great friend Billy Varner
 <<< left courtesy of Paul W. Bryant Museum.

"... Billy saw him weak and insecure. He drove him to Birmingham one year before Christmas

because Bryant got a letter from a sick girl and he wanted to surprise her. He saw him cry. “

When Bear Bryant died unexpectedly and the local paper interviewed him Billy, and Billy cried. "He could eat pheasant under glass with the president," he said, "or he could eat cheese and crackers with the boys out by the caddie shack, and he'd enjoy it all just the same. That's the man I'll always remember."

Nick Saban is from the Bear Bryant mold, and like Bear, and all Alabama fans, Saban does not take kindly to losing football games. Many are currently making a strong argument that Nick Saban may surpass Bryant's accomplishments.

Even if Nick Saban passes Bear in championships over the next several years, and he probably will, nobody can surpass the almost mythical status that Bear Bryant holds between on-field success and the charismatic persona that made him the quintessential college football coach, and the greatest of all time.

When Bear Bryant went on to spend eternity with his maker, Mary Harmon Bryant didn't want to host an elaborate funeral for her husband, certainly nothing at the football stadium. She felt that her husband already had enough attention, she figured. She didn't want music or a long list of speakers giving eulogies.

Yet, there were so many people who wanted to pay their respects that despite her deep wishes, the service and telecasts filled three churches in downtown Tuscaloosa. Hundreds of thousands lined the streets there and in Birmingham and along the path of Interstate 59 along which Paul "Bear" Bryant was taken to his final resting place at Elmwood Cemetery. The people simply loved Bear Bryant and he meant a lot to them all so they just came out. They did not seek permission. Can you imagine the raucous in Alabama if the Bryant family had actually asked people to participate? We'd still be clearing the streets.

Nobody can say it all about a legend, especially a well-loved figure such as Bear Bryant. And, so, after I show the ten of Bear Bryant's favorite quotes for how to lead life, coach and play football, I have selected two articles to tell the as much of the rest of the Bear Bryant story as we can fit in this book. First, here are a number of the great

Bear Bryant quotes that were compiled by Ben George and posted on January 26, 2015. <http://tide1029.com/the-best-bear-bryant-quotes/>

“Bryant was known as a master motivator when he coached and many of his quotes continue to be used today. To help remember many of them, we’ve put together a list of the best Bear Bryant quotes:” Thanks Ben.

- “If you want to walk the heavenly streets of gold, you gotta know the password, ‘Roll, Tide, Roll.’”
- “If you believe in yourself and have dedication and pride – and never quit – you’ll be a winner. The price of victory is high but so are the rewards.”
- “Have you called your mama today? I wish I could call mine.”
- “I ain’t never been nothin but a winner.”
- “A good, quick, small team can beat a big, slow team any time.”
- “If a man is a quitter, I’d rather find out in practice than in a game. I ask for all a player has so I’ll know later what I can expect.”
- “It’s awfully important to win with humility. It’s also important to lose. I hate to lose worse than anyone, but if you never lose you won’t know how to act. If you lose with humility, then you can come back.”
- “The first time you quit, it’s hard. The second time, it gets easier. The third time, you don’t even have to think about it.”
- “If they don’t have a winning attitude, I don’t want them.”
- “It’s not the will to win that matters – everyone has that. It’s the will to prepare to win that matters.”
- “I don’t guess anybody would think much of what Joe (Namath) did nowadays, including myself. But he was supposed to be a leader, so he had to live by the rules. It was the hardest thing I ever had to do, and it was to the greatest athlete I ever coached.”
- “I don’t have to apologize for who I play. I’m trying to win the game.”
- “At Alabama our players do not win Heisman Trophies, our teams win national championships.”

- “You boys were eight and ten years old last time Alabama was on top. That was before any of you were paying much attention to it. What are you doing here? Tell me why you are here. If you are not here to win a national championship, you’re in the wrong place. You boys are special. I don’t want my players to be like other students. I want special people. You can learn a lot on the football field that isn’t taught in the home, the church, or the classroom. There are going to be days when you think you’ve got no more to give and then you’re going to give plenty more. You are going to have pride and class. You are going to be very special. You are going to win the national championship for Alabama.”
- “In life, you’ll have your back up against the wall many times. You might as well get used to it.”
- “Don’t give up at halftime. Concentrate on winning the second half.”
- “Set goals – high goals for you and your organization. When your organization has a goal to shoot for, you create teamwork, people working for a common good.”
- “In a crisis, don’t hide behind anything or anybody. They’re going to find you anyway.”
- “I’ve had many a player tell me all through high school and right up until signing day that they were coming to Alabama, then they signed with somebody else.”
- “Winning isn’t everything, but it beats anything that comes in second.”
- “There’s no substitute for guts.”

The first article below was written near the time of Bear Bryant’s death and his funeral so there is little guesswork. It is from the New York Times, written the day after his death January 27, 1983, by Joseph Durso. The second is a commemorative article written just about 25 years after the funeral by Tommy Dies of the Tuscaloosa News. Together they tell a great part of the Bear Bryant story but one thing we know for sure: There are lots more Bear Bryant stories than these, and all of them are worthy of a gentle read.

New York Times

Here is a great Bear Bryant tribute article courtesy of the New York Times

BEAR BRYANT IS DEAD AT 69; WON A RECORD 323 GAMES

By JOSEPH DURSO

Published: January 27, 1983

Bear Bryant died of a heart attack yesterday in Tuscaloosa, Ala., only 37 days after he had retired as head football coach at the University of Alabama with the most victories in college football history.

Mr. Bryant, who was 69 years old, entered the Druid City Hospital in Tuscaloosa on Tuesday night, complaining of chest pains. Dr. William Hill, the attending physician, said that Mr. Bryant had suffered a massive heart attack at 1:24 P.M. while undergoing X-rays.

"We did put a pacemaker through his chest and were able to restore a weak heartbeat," for about an hour, Dr. Hill said. Mr. Bryant was declared dead at 2:30 P.M.

Dr. Hill said Mr. Bryant had been in "very good spirits," early yesterday. "In the morning, he even joked about going to Las Vegas," the doctor said. "And he said one thing he wanted to do was go back home to Arkansas and do some duck hunting."

Mr. Bryant created national headlines only a month ago when he ended his 38-year career as the most successful football coach on any American campus, and one of the most colorful. He quit with a record of 323 victories, 85 losses and 17 ties at four schools: Maryland, Kentucky, Texas A&M and, for the last 25

years, at his alma mater, Alabama. Six of his teams at Alabama were rated No.1 nationally by the wire-service polls. And, when Alabama defeated Auburn, 28-17, on Nov. 28, 1981, for his 315th victory, he surpassed the record that had been set early in the century by Amos Alonzo Stagg.

Impact on Sport Assured

But, despite his decision to retire, his impact on the university was expected to continue because of two other decisions: He remained as athletic director, and his job as coach was assigned to one of his former players, Ray Perkins, who resigned as coach of the Giants to return to Alabama.

Mr. Bryant's impact on football everywhere was assured through the scores of men who had played or coached under "the Bear." In his time, he developed star quarterbacks such as Joe Namath, George Blanda, Babe Parilli, Ken Stabler, Steve Sloan and Richard Todd, now the quarterback of the New York Jets. More than 40 of his former players became head college coaches, including Jerry Claiborne at Kentucky, Howard Schnellenberger at Miami, Jackie Sherrill at Texas A&M, Pat Dye at Auburn and Sloan at Duke.

He also became instrumental in recruiting black athletes for Alabama. His first black player was Wilbur Jackson, a running back, in 1971. In his final season, 54 of the 128 football players at Alabama were black. Later, he remembered that he had wanted to recruit black football players at Kentucky, and said:

"They wouldn't let me. Then, at Alabama all those years, my hands were tied. To tell you the truth, Sam Cunningham did more for integration at Alabama than anybody else. He was a black running back for Southern Cal. Came down here in 1970 and ran all over my skinny little white boys. Scored three touchdowns."

Last Game in Liberty Bowl

Two weeks after he announced his retirement as coach, the Bryant era ended on Dec. 29 when Alabama defeated Illinois in the Liberty Bowl, 21-15. It was the eighth victory of the season

for Alabama after four defeats, the first time in 13 years the team had lost as many as four games. It was also his 29th bowl game, a record for a coach that included 24 straight at Alabama, and the last appearance in a stadium for the craggy-faced figure roaming the sidelines in the houndstooth hat.

Paul William Bryant was born Sept. 11, 1913, in Moro Bottom, Ark., which he described as "a little piece of bottom land on the Moro Creek, about seven miles fourth of Fordyce." He was one of 11 children in a poor family, and he remembered that he had an inferiority complex and "wasn't very smart in school, and lazy to boot."

But he was big, eventually growing to 6 feet 4 inches. And he recalled that he acquired his nickname as a teen-ager in high school when he accepted a dare to wrestle a bear. How He Won His Nickname

"It was outside the Lyric Theater," he said. "There was a poster out front with a picture of a bear, and a guy was offering a dollar a minute to anyone who would wrestle the bear. The guy who was supposed to wrestle the bear didn't show up, so they egged me on. They let me and my friends into the picture show free, and I wrestled this scrawny bear to the floor. I went around later to get my money, but the guy with the bear had flown the coop. All I got out of the whole thing was a nickname."

As a strapping and aggressive tackle on the Fordyce High School football team, Mr. Bryant lived up to his nickname by winning allstate honors. Then he was recruited for the University of Alabama by Hank Crisp, an assistant to Frank Thomas, and played right end. His principal assignment, he remembered, was doing the blocking while Don Hutson, the left end, was the star pass receiver who later was elected to the college football hall of fame. But they thrived, winning 23 games and losing only 3, and they defeated Stanford in the 1935 Rose Bowl game, 29-13.

After his class had graduated, Mr. Bryant stayed at Alabama as an assistant coach. Four years later, he switched to Vanderbilt as an assistant to Red Sanders. But two years after that, in 1941, he

joined the Navy and served in World War II, part of the time as a football coach at the preflight school in North Carolina. He was discharged in 1945, in time to become head coach at Maryland, where he opened his long and sometimes stormy career.

An Instant Success

He was an instant success, partly because he had taken the precaution of bringing along several good players from the Navy preflight team. In his first game, Maryland whipped Guilford College, 60-6. That first season, Maryland won six games, lost two and tied one.

But he also was an instant center of controversy. He suspended a player for breaking training rules, was overruled by the school's president and promptly quit and took over as coach at Kentucky.

He stayed eight seasons, and his teams won 60 games and lost 23, appeared in four postseason games and won the school's only Southeastern Conference championship. The highlight was a 13-7 victory over Oklahoma in the Sugar Bowl in 1950 that broke a 31-game winning streak for Oklahoma.

After he left in 1954, he conceded that one problem had been a conflict of personalities with Adolph Rupp, the highly successful basketball coach. **Conflict With Rupp**

"The trouble," he said, "was that we were too much alike. He wanted basketball to be No.1, and I wanted football No.1. In an environment like that, one or the other has to go."

The next stop was Texas A&M, where Mr. Bryant stayed four seasons with a record of 25 victories and 14 defeats, and a Southwestern Conference title in 1956. He also developed John David Crow, a running back who won the Heisman Trophy as the nation's best player. But more controversy arose when the school was placed on probation for violating the rules on recruiting players, and Mr. Bryant acknowledged later that some of his players had been paid, though not by him.

Finally, he went "home" in 1958 to his alma mater, Alabama. "It was like when you were out in the field, and you heard your mama calling you to dinner," he said, explaining his joy at returning. "Mama called."

Team Ranked No.1 in '61

Alabama had won only four football games in three years. But in his first season, the Crimson Tide won five games and lost four. And in 1961, he received his first No.1 ranking nationally. For the rest of his career, his teams averaged 8.5 victories a year and did not suffer a losing season.

Controversy followed him home, however. An article in The Saturday Evening Post said that he and Wally Butts, the coach at Georgia, had arranged to fix the result of a game in 1962. Alabama won the game, 35-0. Mr. Butts won a libel suit against the publisher, and Mr. Bryant won a substantial out-of-court settlement.

Although he acknowledged an obsession for winning, he was a forbidding figure when it came to training rules. Not even Namath escaped his discipline. In 1964, he removed Namath as quarterback for breaking training and kept him on the sidelines during the Sugar Bowl game. At other times, he also disciplined Lee Roy Jordan, Scott Hunter, John Hannah, Stabler, Sloan and even Perkins, the man who succeeded him as head coach.

The View from the Tower

Mr. Bryant was a tireless worker who customarily rose at 5 A.M. and did not stop until late in the evening. He often supervised practice sessions from a tower overlooking two fields, one covered with grass, the other with artificial turf. One of his quarterbacks, Steadman Shealy, once said: "There's something about him up in that tower that makes you want to run through a wall."

He was married to his college sweetheart, Mary Harmon Black, who had been a campus beauty queen when he played football

at Alabama. They had two children, Paul William Jr. and May Martin Tyson, and four grandchildren.

Mr. Bryant's stature at Alabama was so great that his salary became something of a protocol problem. Eventually, it reached \$120,000. But, for years, the university made an effort to keep the football coach's salary below that of the school's president. The president made \$100,000 a year; Mr. Bryant was paid \$99,999.99.

Mr. Bryant's funeral will be Friday, with members of his 1982 team serving as honorary pallbearers. He will be buried at Elmwood Cemetery in Birmingham, Ala., following a 10 A.M. memorial ceremony at First Methodist Church in Tuscaloosa.

The world of football reacted with shock and sadness to the news of Bear Bryant's death.

End of NYT Article

The picture on the next page shows the Hearse carrying the last remains of Alabama coach Paul 'Bear' Bryant as it arrives at Elmwood Cemetery in Birmingham, Ala. Friday Jan. 28, 1983. (File Photo/ The Huntsville Times)



Alabama's Greatest Icon

The Tuscaloosa News

Wednesday Posted Jan 19, 2011 at 12:01 AM

From a 2011 perspective, we all know that “the death of Paul W. "Bear" Bryant nearly 25 years ago drew reaction from dignitaries far and wide.” Tommy Dies of Tuscaloosa does a great job capturing the spirit of the tragedy.

By Tommy Deas Sports Writer

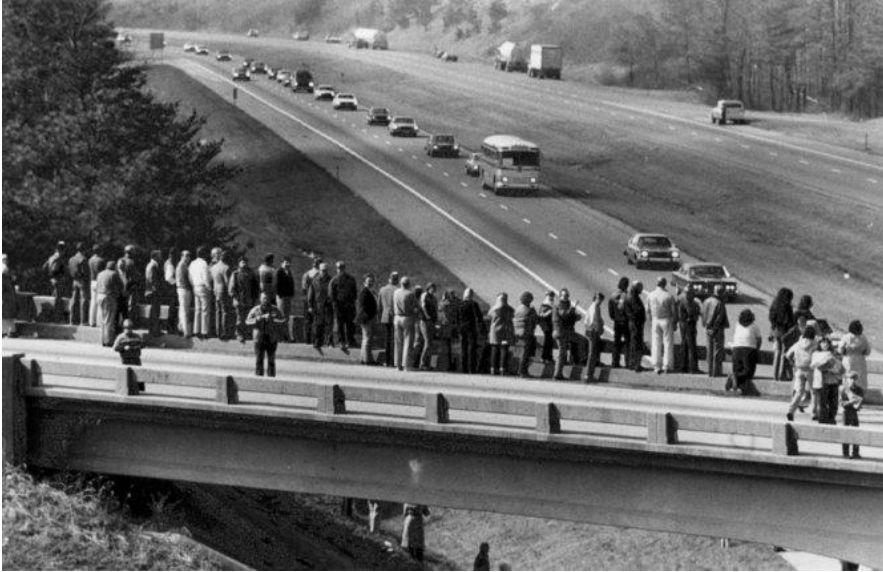
TUSCALOOSA | The death of Paul W. "Bear" Bryant nearly 25 years ago, drew reaction from dignitaries far and wide.



President Ronald Reagan issued a statement lauding the University of Alabama's late football coach as "a coach who made legends out of ordinary people." The Rev. Billy Graham sent his sympathies to the family. Football coaches including Ohio State's Woody Hayes, Oklahoma's Bud Wilkinson and

Southern Cal's John McKay came from around the country to pay their respects.

Bryant's former players gathered to say goodbye to their mentor. The state legislature suspended deliberations on crucial budget bail-out measures to allow its members to attend the funeral.



The impact of Bryant's passing was felt at a funeral that spilled over into three downtown Tuscaloosa churches and later at a memorial service that drew thousands to UA's basketball arena. But none of it made as big an impression on the coach's family as did the throngs who lined the streets and highway overpasses while a funeral procession of more than 300 vehicles made its way along Interstate 20/59 to the burial service in Birmingham.



Bear Bryant Funeral Procession



"It was overwhelming, really just overwhelming," said Paul Bryant Jr., who was 37 years old at the time. "I'm still emotional about it. That was kind of an overwhelming thing for all of us."

A day to forget

The sky was overcast gray in Tuscaloosa on Wednesday, Jan. 26, 1983. People were bundled up, with light rain falling and temperatures in the mid-40s. News reports from the previous evening that Bryant, then the winningest all-time coach in college football with 323 victories, had been admitted to Druid City Hospital with chest pains had raised mild concern. But no one, not even his doctors, could expect that the legendary coach would be gone before that day ended.

Bryant had been joking with nurses before going into cardiac arrest at 12:24 p.m. Less than an hour later, he was pronounced dead from a massive heart attack.

Not even a month after coaching his last game, a Liberty Bowl victory over Illinois, Bryant was dead at age 69.

Linda Knowles, Bryant's secretary, fielded a call from the hospital.

"They said it was urgent," she said. "I had a good idea what the call was concerning. That was the first indication that something was terribly wrong.

"Following that, we started getting phone calls from various people in Tuscaloosa. The word had already gotten around."

Dr. Phillip Bobo, a local physician who had been one of Bryant's doctors, was out of town when the coach was admitted to DCH. He returned to the hospital shortly after Bryant was pronounced dead.

"Everybody was just in complete shock," Bobo said. "Word spread around the hospital very quickly. Everybody knew it. It was all anybody could talk about, and then it was just quiet.

"Everybody was just in complete shock. It was like everybody had lost somebody close to them. It was very somber."

Murray Legg, who had played for Bryant and served on the UA coaching staff for Bryant's last two seasons, had dropped his brother off at a fraternity house when he heard Bryant had died.

"I turned the radio on and I heard, and then my brother came running back outside to tell me," Legg said. "It was just incredible sadness, like the wind had been knocked out of you. That's what I felt like.

"It was a day I'll never forget, but a day I'd like to forget."

The news spreads

Randy Edwards, a UA defensive tackle who would be a team captain the next season as a senior, was on his way to lift weights when someone told him Bryant had passed away.

"I didn't believe it," Edwards said. "I said, 'I'm going to go upstairs and see what I can find out.' I took the elevator upstairs and when the door opened all the secretaries were crying. I knew it was true."

Mal Moore, who was one of Bryant's assistant coaches for 19 years, was in Mobile on a business trip. He was sitting in a restaurant having a cup of coffee.

"I was by myself and I could just barely overhear a couple of the waitresses talking," he said. "They were looking out a window, and I could hear one say, 'I'm sure going to miss the old man.'"

"I didn't know what they were talking about. I thought nothing of it."

A little while later, Moore called his friend and business associate Billy Neighbors, like Moore, a former Alabama player under Bryant.



Bear Bryant's Home

"I was kind of joking around with him about a couple of deals I had invested in with him," Moore said. "He said, 'Where are you? Have you heard about Coach Bryant? He's dead.'"

"I drove straight to Coach Bryant's house -- just went by to see everybody and offer my condolences. It was hard to do."

UA President Joab Thomas was half a world away in Australia, presiding over an agricultural conference the day of Bryant's death.

"I got a phone call from one of my executive assistants," he said. "I was very, very sorry to hear the news. It was just so sad."

"There wasn't any way I could get back for the funeral. I even investigated chartering a private jet to get back, but it would have cost me more than I made in a year. It just was not possible."

Sarah Patterson, Alabama's gymnastics coach and the last head coach that Bryant ever hired, also was away from campus.

"I vividly remember where I was," she said. "We were in station wagons driving between Pittsburgh and Penn State en route the

day before a competition. I heard it on the radio. We pulled over to a rest area.

"There were no cell phones back then, so I got on [a pay] phone and called back. I was in shock."

Patterson asked for guidance, whether to proceed with the meet or return to UA.

"They told me to go to the hotel and go ahead with the competition," she said. "I remember going out to a fabric store and buying black ribbon, and we wore it on our uniforms."

Funeral arrangements

As reaction poured in from across the nation, arrangements were made for what would amount to a state funeral. First United Methodist Church, where the service was held two days after Bryant's death, seated about 400. Two other downtown churches had special audio hookups to accommodate the overflow.

The event drew national media attention, with ABC, CBS, NBC and the fledgling Cable News Network joined by The New York Times and other major papers from around the country.

Bryant's coaching rivals scrambled to get to Tuscaloosa. "Darrell Royal [the Texas coach] and I were vacationing together in Palm Springs [Calif.]," said Frank Broyles, the longtime Arkansas coach. "I just remember we had come in off the golf course and heard it and immediately started making plans to get to his celebration, his funeral, because we wanted to be there.

"We wanted to be there because he was a friend and a person we admired and respected so very, very much. Every coach in the fraternity had great respect for him. He was an icon among all the coaches."

Local law enforcement officers were called away from normal duties to help with the event.

"I was in charge of robbery and auto theft then," said Tuscaloosa Police Chief Ken Swindle. "We were all helping out, making sure parking lots were cleared. We went uptown making sure everything was safe, people were moving and getting around trying to get to the funeral.

"I rode motorcycles in the '70s. I've been involved in a lot of funerals since that time. That was the most people I've ever seen in a funeral escort, the longest funeral procession I've ever seen." Lining the streets

Untold thousands of fans took to the streets to send their beloved coach to his final resting place. The procession started downtown, traveled up 10th Street (later renamed Bryant Drive in the coach's honor) past the football stadium and UA athletic complex, turned onto McFarland Boulevard and onto the ramp leading to Interstate 20/59. Along the way, roads were lined with those assembled to bid Bryant farewell.

Edwards rode one of three charter buses that took UA football players to Birmingham's Elmwood Cemetery for the burial.

Nobody expected the Bear to be gone. He was expected to live forever and he was expected to attend all of UA's next season games. I guess in many ways, he was there as he will always be.

Rest in Peace Dear Coach Paul W. Bear Bryant. You are a real man among men and God made you so that you could build your legacy of goodness and greatness so that all can know it is good to be good; it is great to be great; it is the greatest notion to be the best. Better than best, perhaps it is as good as it gets to know that you are the best and you are continued to humbly just keep on winning. Just keep winning! We all know that Bear Bryant hated losses but he understood and respected the dignity of showing true humility in the face of defeat. God also hates losses especially lost souls. With all due respect, Lord, you and Bear Bryant have a lot in common!



"I recall very distinctly seeing all the people on the side of the road in Tuscaloosa," he said. "The people were lined up three, four, five deep along the roads all the way from the church to the interstate -- little kids, old men, everything."



Nancy Jordan was employed at the UA School of Social Work at the time and had joined the swelling crowd along the sidewalks.

"Several of us walked over," she said. "I remember asking myself why I was doing this, and thinking, 'I can't not be here.' You needed to do something to say goodbye to somebody who meant so much to all of us personally.

"Most people didn't talk or whispered as we waited. I remember the hearse going by. I whispered, 'Goodbye coach. Thank you.'"

Jordan's husband, William, was a driver for a beer distributorship and couldn't get off work, so he paid tribute in his own way.

"I saw the procession coming out, and I just stopped the beer truck along the road and got out and, truth be known, I went into parade rest from an old military habit," the Army veteran said. "The hair was kind of standing up on my neck.

"It was a real sense of loss. He was a long, long legend in my life. I just gave him a military salute. I didn't know if it was right or wrong, but it was what I felt."

The interstate's eastbound lanes were closed to clear the way for the long line of vehicles. The westbound lanes shut down voluntarily.

"I assumed everybody in the state knew it was Coach Bryant's funeral," Legg said. "It was the one and only time I've ever driven to Birmingham and not seen one single car coming from the other direction. They were all pulled over."

A musical eulogy

Buddy Buie, who had written numerous hit songs as one of the driving forces behind the Atlanta Rhythm Section, watched the funeral procession on television with the band's singer, Ronnie Hammond. They had rented a cottage on a Georgia lake to compose songs for an upcoming album but instead produced a

tribute to Bryant, a song titled "The Day Bear Bryant Died."
<http://www.daybeardied.com/>

"Ronnie was playing a hymn-like melody on the guitar, and we started writing the song," said Buie, a Dothan native.

"We forgot all about writing another hit. We spent all weekend fine-tuning that song."

The lyrics conveyed the feelings of Bryant's legion of fans:

*"I'll never forget
The day that I heard the news
Bear Bryant has died
Funny, I thought he'd refuse
I watched as they laid him to rest
In old Alabama
Oh how I cried
The day Bear Bryant died"*



Buddie Buie – Heartfelr Bear Bryant Lyrics

Buie had written such chart-topping songs as "Spooky," "So Into You" and "Imaginary Lover," but this wasn't a commercial venture.

"I don't care if it ever sold a record," he said. "I've written a lot of hits, but I've never written a song that I felt more about."

Elmwood overflow

Elmwood Cemetery was closed to those not in the official funeral procession, but fans lined the streets of Birmingham leading up to its gates.

"It was like a parade outside," said Dennis Davis, at the time a 22-year-old superintendent at the cemetery. "I can remember the police force, horseback police, the helicopters flying over. I never saw anything like it."



The public was admitted during the weekend, drawing a larger crowd than the funeral itself.

"The most people were there on Sunday," Davis said. "We knew it was going to be a big event, but we didn't know it was going to be that big. We opened the gates at 7 o'clock, and they were already waiting. They just wanted to see Coach Bryant's grave."

"We have 7.6 miles of road, and they were covered from the back of the cemetery to the front -- every inch."

The memorial service

After the burial, a service was held for the public at Memorial Coliseum (now Coleman Coliseum) on the UA campus. Steadman Shealy, a former Tide quarterback who had grown closer to Bryant after his playing days, was asked by the coach's late wife to deliver the eulogy.



"It was probably one of the biggest things I've ever done," he said. "I played in basically three national championship games, but that was a big deal.

"It was just an honor and a privilege to be able to share what I knew personally about Coach Bryant and his walk with the Lord."

Shealy, an active Fellowship of Christian Athletes participant during his playing days, told the crowd of more than 6,000 about an intimate spiritual moment he and Bryant had shared.

"He told me, 'Steadman, you may not believe this, but I bet you I pray more than you do. I never see someone that's less fortunate than I am that I don't pray for them.' Coach Bryant was private about it, but for the seven years I was with him I could see him drawing closer to God with a lot of things he would say to me personally. A lot of our talks were almost as if we were praying," Shealy said.

Bryant's fans remember

Even 25 years later, Alabama fans pay constant tribute to Bryant. His association with a certain brand of soft drink and snack (the sponsors of his weekly television show) and his milestone 315th victory live on at his grave site.

"I've been here since 2000," said Joe Mull, Elmwood Cemetery's general manager. "There's not a single day that this office is open that somebody doesn't come in and ask where he is buried. Not one day.

"Just recently people have left flowers, Coca-Cola bottles, houndstooth-type hats, Golden Flake potato chips. You see a lot of football shakers out there and some notes every now and again. They actually leave money that adds up to \$3.15. They get real creative about it."

Reach Tommy Deas at tommy.deas@tuscaloosaneews.com or at 205-722-0224. We all thank you Tommy!

Chapter 16 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.

Pete Rozelle, the National Football League's commissioner, acted as intermediary and helped bring in Young, the personnel director of the Miami Dolphins, as the Giants' general manager. Young then selected Perkins, the offensive coordinator of the San Diego Chargers, as the head coach to succeed John McVay.

Giants Gained 1981 Playoffs

In 1979, as Perkins pruned players he believed were losers, the Giants' record was 6-10. In 1980, it fell to 4-12. But last year the

Giants won four of their last five regular-season games for a 9-7 record, their first winning season since 1972. They gained the playoffs for the first time since 1963 and defeated Philadelphia before losing in the divisional round to the San Francisco 49ers. Three weeks later the 49ers won the Super Bowl.

In this year's strike-shortened season, the Giants have won their last three games after having lost their first three. The most recent victory was last Saturday's 23-7 rout of the Eagles, an all-round performance that Perkins considered the Giants' best since he became coach. Invited to Interview

Last Thursday, while Perkins was preparing the Giants for that game, he received a telephone call from Dr. Thomas in which the Alabama president invited him to an interview for Bryant's job. Perkins sought permission from Young, who granted it after conferring with the Maras.

Perkins was interviewed Sunday in Tuscaloosa. Dr. Thomas telephoned him Monday and offered him the job. Perkins accepted. He told Young and his assistant coaches that day, and the players this morning.

Perkins said today that he had not asked any of his Giant assistants to go with him to Alabama but that he probably would. He also said he would abandon Alabama's wishbone offense, oriented to running, in favor of a pro-type offense featuring more passing.

Rare Move for Pro Coach

Through the years, many college head coaches have become head coaches in the N.F.L. The move from pros to college is rare. "It's kind of ridiculous to say I'm using the No.1 team in the N.F.L. as a stepping stone to becoming the coach at Alabama," said Perkins. "It's home. And I have the greatest respect for Coach Bryant as a man, not just a coach."

Bryant played end at Alabama when the other end was the famed Don Hutson. His record as a head coach is 322 victories,

85 defeats and 17 ties, and in his 25 years at Alabama the Crimson Tide has won three undisputed national championships as determined by both wireservice polls, and three additional titles as determined by one of the polls or the other. Alabama Slumped to 7-4

But this year, after winning its first five games, Alabama slumped to 7-4. The Tide lost its last three regular-season games, including the final one, to Auburn, its state rival. In the eyes of Jeff Rutledge, the Giants' backup quarterback, who played at Alabama under Bryant, that defeat was significant.

"Kids were questioning when Coach Bryant was leaving," said Rutledge. "Alabama people were thinking, 'Let's get a coach in there now.' "

Bryant said in Tuscaloosa today that the decision to retire had come in a meeting with Dr. Thomas soon after the Auburn game. The coach also said that he had not handpicked Perkins as his successor, and Dr. Thomas said at a news conference in Tuscaloosa where the change was announced that Perkins had been the choice of a five-man search committee.

Mandatory Retirement Age

The state of Alabama, of which Bryant will continue to be an employee in his role as athletic director, has a mandatory retirement age for everyone on its payroll. That age is 70, and Bryant will reach it next September. But he said today that he had no plans to leave the athletic director's post, and Dr. Thomas suggested two alternatives that would allow Bryant to remain past 70: either he could be unpaid, or his pay could come from some source other than the university.

As for the timing of the coaching changes, Perkins said he hoped the Giants' players would not be distracted from preparations for the game against the Redskins this Sunday. But officials at Alabama had thought that their football recruiting would suffer if the announcements were delayed, and at one point today Young said he would have selected Parcels in January anyway. Learned Discipline From Bryant

After his collegiate career at Alabama, Perkins played five years with the Baltimore Colts until a knee injury prompted his retirement in 1972. He became a coach who lived by discipline. This, he said, has been Bryant's greatest gift to him.

"With Coach Bryant," he said, "you either developed it, or you went home. I'll tell you what discipline is: You're tired. You think you are going to die. But somehow you suck up your guts and still perform."

Here is a whole litany of information about Ray Perkins and his great career at Alabama. Let's begin in Chapter 1, his first season:

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.

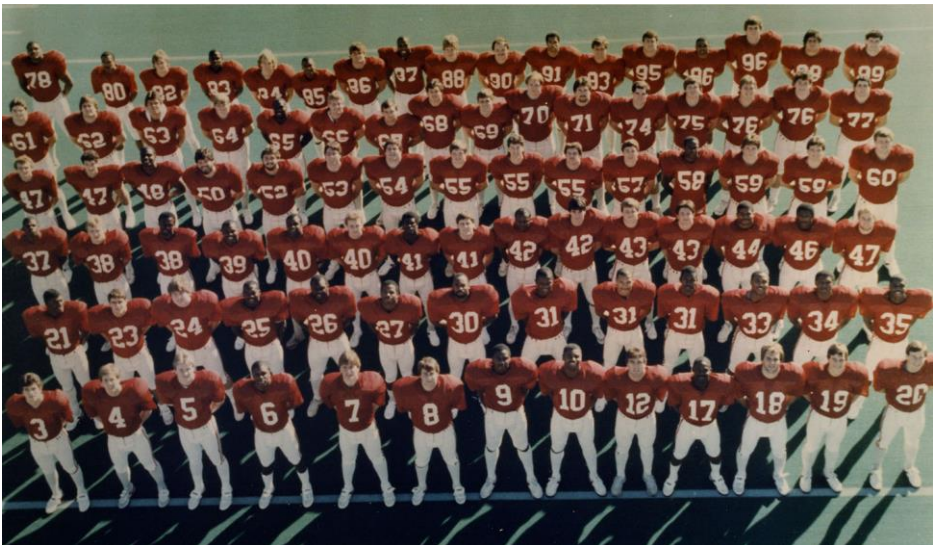
Out of nowhere, on Oct 8, the Tide suffered a controversial L (28-34) loss to Penn State at University Park PA. Trailing 34-7 entering the 4th quarter, Alabama rallied and seemed to be an extra point away from victory after tight end Preston Gothard appeared to catch a game-tying touchdown pass with 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 Crimon Tode supporters, all of this matters.



1984 Alabama Crimson Tide Coach Ray Perkins

Some of the more notable contests of the season included a season-opening loss to Boston College (and their quarterback, Doug Flutie, who went on to win the 1984 Heisman Trophy), a third consecutive loss to Tennessee in which the Tide gave up a 14-point fourth quarter lead, and Alabama's first loss to Vanderbilt since 1969. However, Alabama did upset Auburn 17–15 in the 1984 edition of the Iron Bowl, denying the Tigers a berth in the Sugar Bowl. Football is for keeps.

On September 8, AU was beaten in a nail-biter by a brash Boston College team at Legion Field L (31-38). On Sept. 15, at Georgia Tech at 11:00 Am at Grant Field Atlanta, GA, Alabama lost to the Yellow Jackets L (6–16). On Sept 22, in a rare appearance over the years, Southwestern Louisiana played Au at Bryant–Denny Stadium. The home team won W 37–14. Then, moving ahead one week on the schedule to Sept 29 at 11:00 AM at Bryant Denny Stadium, Vanderbilt overpowered the Crimson Tide L (21–30).

On Oct 6 # 20 Georgi put another loss on Alabama at Legion Field Birmingham, AL L 14–24 before 75,608. On October 13, in a new rivalry against Joe Paterno's # 11 PSU Nittany Lions at Bryant–Denny Stadium, the Crimson Tide would not be beat W 6–0. On Oct 20 at Tennessee on the (Third Saturday in October), AU lost to tough Tennessee team 27–28 before 95,422. On Nov 3 at Mississippi State's Veterans Memorial Stadium in Jackson, MS, AU pulled out a victory W (24–20).

On Nov 10, a ready to win #12 LSU team pulled into Legion Field ready for “bea,r” not Bear. The Crimson Tide lost another close game L 14–16. On Nov 17, AU travelled away and beat Cincinnati W (29-7) at Riverfront Stadium • Cincinnati, OH. On Dec 1, in the Iron Bowl, #11 Auburn took it on the chin after a great season. The Tide prevailed at Legion Field in the (Iron Bowl) on ABC W (17–15) before 76,853. There was no bowl bid in 1984 due to achieving only five wins in the season in a rare 5-6 losing season.

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.

It was an exciting season for sure beginning with the last-second, 20–16 comeback victory on Labor Day over Georgia to open the playing season for the Crimson Tide.

Additionally, the 1985 edition of the Iron Bowl against Auburn is regarded as one of Alabama's most dramatic victories in the history of the series. In the game, Alabama led 16–10 after three quarters, but saw four lead changes in the fourth quarter, including two in the final minute. It ended with Van Tiffin's 52-yard field goal as time expired to give Alabama a 25–23 victory. Tiffin's field goal is remembered simply as "The Kick" in Alabama folklore. See picture on next page.



Classic SEC Football: Alabama Tops Auburn in 1985

This Iron Bowl 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:

1985 Iron Bowl – The Kick

If you're into nail bitingly competitive Iron Bowls (or parachute pants, I guess), the 1980s were a great decade for you. Alabama won 4 times to Auburn's six, and after a 16-point win by the Tide in 1980, no game was won by more than two possessions.

Of all the tough games against Auburn in the '80's, the 1985 game is known simply by it's final play. The kick.

Alabama entered the game 7-2-1 and Auburn was 8-2. Auburn running back Bo Jackson was on his way to a Heisman Trophy winning season, the second in Auburn's history. But as always with the Iron Bowl, the only thing that matters in this game is the score at the end of the day and who gets bragging rights for the next year.

Van Tiffin kicked three field goals in the first half, helping Bama to a 16-10 halftime lead. As the fourth quarter ran out, Auburn led 23-22. Van Tiffin booted a 52-yard field goal to lift the Tide to a 25-22 win.

Van Tiffin's record for most extra points converted (135) stood until 2009, when it was broken by his son Leigh Tiffin. In 1985, he kicked a 57-yard field goal which remains the longest successful field goal in school history.

Unfortunately, Bama's win the 1985 Iron Bowl was the last for the Tide until 1990. Auburn's 4 wins from 1986-1989 are the second longest streak the Tigers have managed in series history.

Due to NCAA sanctions that led to the forfeit of Alabama's 1993 17-17 tie with Tennessee, and college football's adoption of an

overtime that does not allow ties, the 14–14 tie with LSU remains the last official tie in school history.

The season began early this year on Sept 2 at 7:00 PM in Sanford Stadium in Athens Georgia before 81,277. It was broadcast by ABC TV. Alabama squeaked by on a last-second comeback W (20-16). On Sept 14, AU defeated Texas A & M at Legion Field W (23-10). Bryant–Denny Stadium was the venue for the September 21 game v Cincinnati won handily by the Crimson Tide W (45–10) before 58,714. On September 28 at Vanderbilt Stadium in Nashville, TN Bama beat the Commodores W (40–20) before 41,186.

Alabama had more or less been winning against Penn State in close games over the years. The Nittany Lions were ready to give those days up on October 12 at Beaver Stadium in University Park, PA. Paterno's Penn State had a determination that may have been missing in other games. Alabama was defeated this time in another close one L 17–19 before 85,444.

On Oct 19 at 11:30 AM No. 20 Tennessee showed up again for the annual (Third Saturday in October) game and they beat the Crimson Tide in a very close contest L (14–16) before 75,808. On Oct 26 at Memphis State in Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium, Alabama rebounded W 28–9). Next was Mississippi State at Brant-Denny on Nov 2 W (44-280. On Nov 9 AU traveled to LSU's Tiger Stadium in Baton Rouge, LA and tied the Tigers T (14–14)

On Nov 16 AU beat Southern Miss at Bryant–Denny Stadium W W (24–13) before 58,714. Then, on Nov. 30, in the Iron Bowl at Legion Field v #7 Auburn, The Crimson Tide came back and came back again to beat the Tigers W (25–23) before 75,808

On December 28 at 7:00 p.m. AU played # 13 USC at Aloha Stadium in Honolulu, HI in the Aloha Bowl against the Rainbow Warriors and won the game handily W (24–3) before 35,183.



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.

After opening the season with a victory over Ohio State in the Kickoff Classic at Giant’s Stadium in NJ before 68, 296 W (16-10) on August 27, the Crimson Tide would win their first 7 games and eventually rise to as high as #2 in the rankings but lost to eventual National Champion Penn State and lost out on an SEC championship after losses to LSU and Auburn.

The season opened on Sept 6 v Vanderbilt at Bryant–Denny W (42–10); Then on Sept 13 v Southern Miss at Legion Field AU won W (31–17) before 73,687. On Sept 20 12:30 p.m. at Florida, AU won

W (21–7) before 74,685; On Oct 4 v Notre Dame @ Legion Field AU 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 gameplan. 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.

Continuing through the rest of the season.

On Oct 11 AU beat Memphis State @ Bryant-Denny W (37-0); Then on Oct 18 at 2:30 p.m. at Tennessee for the (Third Saturday in October) Alabama picked up a great victory W 56-28 before 95,116; Then on October 25 No. 6 Penn State came in to Bryant-Denny while AU was held the #2 national ranking. The Nittany Lions beat the Crimson Tide for the second time in two years this time at Bryant-Denny L (3-23) before 60,210

On Nov 1 at Mississippi State at Scott Field in • Starkville, MS W (38–3); Then on Nov 8 v #18 LSU at Legion Field AU suffered its second loss of the season L (10–14) before 75,808. On Nov 15 Temple came to Bryant–Denny and were beaten W (24–14). In another nail biter Iron Bowl game, on Nov 29 in which #14 Auburn, playing at Legion Field prevailed against Alabama L (17–21) before an attendance of 75,808.

December 25. No. 12 Washington played Alabama in Sun Bowl Stadium in the Sun Bowl. Alabama won the game W (28–6) before 48,722 fans.

To recap, highlights of the season included Alabama’s first ever victory over Notre Dame and a 56–28 victory over Tennessee that snapped a four-game losing streak to the Vols. After the season, Ray Perkins resigned on December 31, to become head coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers of the National Football League.

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.

The season began as usual on the first Saturday in September (Sept 5) v Southern Miss at Legion Field in Birmingham, AL W 38–6. Alabama then beat the National Champion Penn State Nittany Lions at Beaver Stadium on September 12 W (24-13. Florida delivered a loss to UA at Legion Field to Bama on Sept 19 L (14-23) before 85,619. Then, on Sept 26 at Vanderbilt W (30-23). This was followed by another win on Oct 3 against Southwestern Louisiana at Legion Field • Birmingham, AL W (38–10).

On Oct October 10 at Memphis State--Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium, UA suffered another loss L (10–13). On Oct 17, Bama beat

8 Tennessee at Legion Field on the (Third Saturday in October) W (41–22) 75,808. On Oct 31, the Crimson Tide beat Mississippi State at Legion Field W (21–18) before 73,877. On Nov 7, Alabama beat the LSU Tigers at Tiger Stadium in Baton Rouge, LA on ESPN W (22–10) before 79,379.

On Nov. 14 Alabama traveled to #7 Notre Dame in Notre Dame Indiana and were defeated by the Irish L (6–37) for their third loss of the season. On November 27 UA took loss # 4 in the Iron Bowl v Auburn at Legion Field L (0–10) before 75,808.

Alabama was invited to the Hall of Fame Bowl in Tampa Florida on January 2, 1988 and were beaten by Michigan L (24-28). It was the fifth loss of the 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.

Alabama suffered close losses to rivals LSU and Auburn in November but the low point of the season was a 22–12 loss on homecoming to Ole Miss, Alabama's first ever loss against Ole Miss in the state of Alabama. Alabama had zero yards passing in the game.

Highlights of the season included a victory over Penn State, Alabama's third consecutive victory over Tennessee, and a come-from-behind 29–28 victory in the Sun Bowl over Army in which quarterback David Smith threw for 412 yards, an all-time bowl record for an Alabama quarterback.

Alabama's road game against Texas A&M, originally scheduled for September 17, was postponed to December 1 when Coach Curry

declined to make the trip, worried about oncoming Hurricane Gilbert. When Gilbert made landfall in Mexico and the weather in College Station was clear on gameday, A&M fans called Alabama's coach "Chicken Curry". Alabama won the rescheduled game on December 1 by a final score of 30–10.

The season opened on September 10 at Veterans Stadium • in Philadelphia, PA against Temple. Bama prevailed W (37–0) before 28,680 in the Eagles Home Stadium. On Sept Alabama played Vanderbilt at the newly remodeled Bryant-Denny Stadium W 44-10 before 70,123. The next game was on Oct 1 at Kentucky in Commonwealth Stadium • Lexington, KY W (31–27). On Oct 8, Alabama was upset by Ole Miss at Bryant–Denny Stadium L (12–22) before 70,123

On Oct 15 at Tennessee's Neyland Stadium, Knoxville, TN in the traditional (Third Saturday in October). AU defeated the Volunteers W 28–20 before 93,025. Penn State came to Legion Field on Oct 22 and Alabama won in very tight match W 8–3 before 75,962. On Oct 29 at Mississippi State's Scott Field in Starkville, MS, Bama beat the Bulldogs W 53–34 before 41,088. On Nov 5 #13 LSU barely defeated Alabama at Bryant–Denny Stadium (L (18-19) before 70,123.

On Nov 12, Southwestern Louisiana played AU at Legion Field and were beaten by the Crimson Tide W 17–0 before 66,537. On Nov 25, the Iron Bowl came a little early but by the end of the game it was too late for a win against Auburn at Legion Field. L (10-13) Nov 25 1:30 p.m. v No. 7 Auburn @ Legion Field L 10–15 as 75,962 looked on.

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 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

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.

The season began on Sept 16 v Memphis State at Legion Field--W 35–7 before 75,962. On Sept 23 Kentucky came to Bryant–Denny Stadium W (15–3). Next it was a game at Vanderbilt in Nashville, TN W (20–14). One of the highlights of this season included a 62–27 victory at Ole Miss on Oct 7 after falling behind 21–0, On October 14 it was Southwestern Louisiana who fell victim to this tough Alabama team at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (24–17) before 70,123. This was followed on Oct 11, (Third Saturday in October) in the traditional rivalry. It was a W (47–30) victory over Tennessee in a match of unbeatens,

Another season highlight was Alabama's tough-fought 17–16 victory on Oct 28 over Penn State. In this game, the Crimson Tide blocked an 18-yard field goal try with 13 seconds left in the game for the win.



After a win W (23-10) over Mississippi State on Nov. 4, the November 11 win at LSU featured a first for the Crimson Tide. Alabama safety Lee Ozmint scored the first ever defensive two-point conversion in school history on a 100-yard interception return of an LSU failed two-point conversion attempt.

As good as the season was, it did not end as well. In the season finale on Dec 2 against #11 Auburn—the first Iron Bowl ever played in Auburn, Alabama—the Tigers beat Alabama 30–20. As a result, Alabama, Auburn and Tennessee finished in a three-way tie for the conference championship. Alabama would however receive the conference's Sugar Bowl berth.

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.

Sugar Bowl Recap

56th Annual Sugar Bowl Classic ~ January 1, 1990

#2 Miami 33 (Final: 11-1-0, #1)

#7 Alabama 25 (Final: 10-2-0, #9)

How Miami and Alabama Met in the 1990 Sugar Bowl

Whew! That was close.

Miami entered the 1990 Sugar Bowl as a nine-point favorite, the biggest spread of that New Year's Day, but in the final minutes of the game, Alabama was suddenly within reach of tie - just as damaging as a loss for a team angling for the national championship.

With 2:53 to go, Alabama's Gary Hollingsworth found Prince Wimply for a nine-yard touchdown, then connected with Lamonde Russell for the two-point conversion and all of a sudden 'Bama could foil the dreams of the Hurricanes.

With no timeouts remaining, the Crimson Tide had to go for an on-sides kick - and the Hurricanes saved their title hopes when fullback Alex Johnson pounced on the bounding ball to retain possession. Then it was just a matter of running out the clock.

In the end, everything fell precisely into place for Miami's third No. 1 trophy in eight years, but it wasn't easy. Not only did the Hurricanes, ranked No. 2 in the country entering the game, need to hold off a determined Tide, but results around the country had to fall Miami's way. After Notre Dame, which had already been defeated by the 'Canes, defeated No. 1 Colorado 21-6, and Southern Cal beat No. 3 Michigan 17-10 starting early celebrations by the cadre of Miami fans in the Superdome. But Alabama's persistence dampened the revelry. It could have repercussions with voters.

"To have the opportunity to possibly win the national championship is a credit to our players and coaches," said Miami coach Dennis Erickson, but he cautioned, "people still have to vote."

Alabama gave the voters plenty to think about in the first half, after which the Hurricanes led only 20-17. Those opening 30 minutes produced a flood of yards (412) in what was expected to be a defensive battle. 'Bama's 17 points were the most allowed in a half by Miami all season, although there was a general feeling in the Superdome that the Crimson Tide was an outmanned team that just kept dodging the knockout blow.

One early play that would loom large at the end was a simple offside penalty against 'Bama. With a 4th-and-two at the seven-yard line 10 minutes into a scoreless game, Erickson opted for Carlos Huerta and the chip-shot field-goal attempt. However, when 'Bama jumped off-sides, the Hurricanes had another chance at the end zone. Stephen McGuire scored on the next play, going over left guard with 4:55 to go in the opening period.

Two possessions later, the Crimson Tide pinned Miami back at its seven with an excellent punt. After a three-and-out by the Hurricanes, Gene Jelks returned a short punt to the Alabama 36. The Tide mounted a methodical nine-play drive, capped by Hollingsworth spearing flanker Marco Battle with a four-yard TD pass at 14:07 of the second.

"I saw the pressure coming," Hollingsworth said. "It was to pick up the blitz. What they did all day was to put man-on-man single coverage on our receivers and try to get pressure on me. I didn't see Marco catch the ball, but I was happy that he did."

Recap 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.

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.

Kentucky's Athletics Association scheduled a board meeting for Monday night to discuss the Curry situation. Efforts to reach Newton this afternoon were unsuccessful. Alabama finished the season with a 10-2 record and a share of the Southeastern Conference title, but lost the Sugar Bowl game to Miami.

Curry was voted the conference's coach of the year. Shortly after the Crimson Tide's 30-20 loss to Auburn on Dec. 2, Curry, who was 26-10 in his three seasons at Alabama, was offered a three-year contract extension. But the coach, who has two years left on his current contract, delayed accepting the offer.

Curry met Friday with Alabama's athletic director, Cecil Ingram, and its president, Roger Sayers, who gave him more time to consider an offer from Kentucky. Ingram and Sayers met with Curry after his return from a two-day trip to Lexington, where Newton offered him the Wildcats' coaching job.

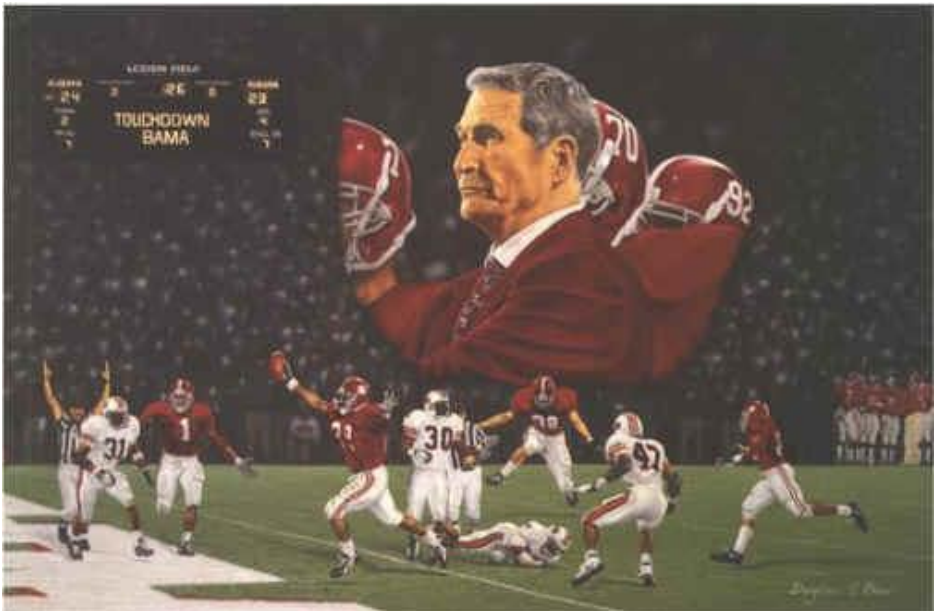
The Louisville coach, Howard Schnellenberger, who had been mentioned in reports along with others as a possible successor to Curry, said tonight he wouldn't be interested in the job.

Chapter 17 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.”

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 1990 season got off to a really tough start for the Crimson Tide. The Tide and new coach Gene Stallings lost three games by a combined total of eight points. In the opener on September 8, against Southern Miss, star tailback Siran Stacy tore ligaments in his knee and missed the rest of the season L (24-27)

Then on Sept 15 against Florida, quarterback Gary Hollingsworth threw three interceptions to Florida safety Will White, and the Gators scored the winning touchdown on a blocked punt L (13-17). The third loss in a row was on September 22 at Georgia L (16-17) before 82,122.

After wins over lightly regarded Vanderbilt on Sept 29 at Bryant Denny W (59-28), and SW Louisiana (now Louisiana-Lafayette) on Oct 6 W (25-6) , Bama traveled to Knoxville to face undefeated, third-ranked Tennessee on Oct 20. The result was a shocking W (9-6) upset victory, Alabama's fifth in a row in the Third Saturday in October rivalry. The game was a defensive struggle and a field goal duel.

UT's kicker Greg Harris, who hit a 51-yard field goal try to tie the game with ten minutes left, attempted a 50-yarder for the win with 1:35 to go, but Alabama's Stacy Harrison blocked the kick and the ball bounced to the Tennessee 37-yard line. The Crimson Tide advanced the ball seven yards on three running plays, setting up Philip Doyle's third field goal, a game-winning 48-yarder as time expired.

The next game on Oct 27 was an ugly L (9-0) loss to Penn State in which Hollingsworth threw five interceptions and Bama rushed for only six yards. However, Alabama bounced back to win four in a row and salvage a winning season after the 0-3 start. Most importantly, Alabama won its first Iron Bowl in five years on Dec 1, dominating Auburn defensively and winning W (16-7).

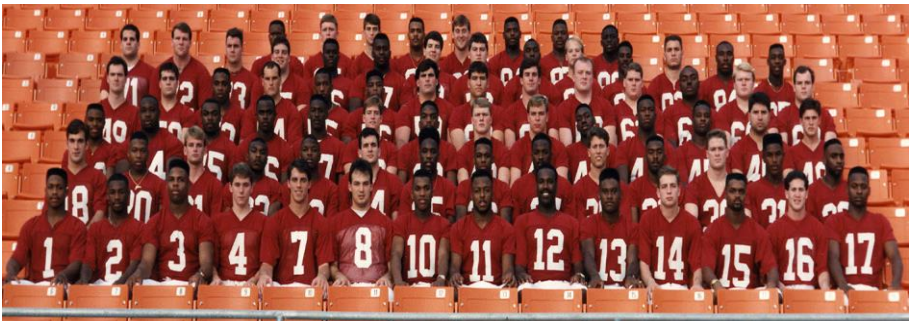
It was the seventh game in a row in which the Alabama defense held the opposition to single digits. Before the Auburn game on Nov 3 at Mississippi State AU had beaten the Bulldogs W (22-0); at Bryant-Denny. Nov 10, LSU W (24-3); Nov 17—Cincinnati W (45-7)

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

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

In Sept 7 season opener against Temple, Chris Anderson had a 96-yard touchdown run from scrimmage, setting an all-time team record that still stands. Alabama won handily W (41-3). One week makes a big difference. On Sept 14, Alabama traveled to Florida and got blown out, L (0-35) by a mighty Gators team W (35-0).

This Florida loss was the worst for the Tide in 34 years. It brought back bad memories of the 40-0 loss in 1957 to Auburn that ended the disastrous coaching tenure of J.B. Whitworth. It also cost

Alabama an SEC title as the Gators went undefeated in conference play. However, it would be the last game Alabama lost until November 1993, as the next week's 10–0 victory over Georgia on September 21 began a 28-game winning streak.

After three lopsided victories at Vanderbilt Sept 28 W (48-17); Chattanooga Oct 5 at Legion W (53-7), and Tulane at Bryant-Denny on Oct 12 W (62-0), the Crimson Tide started winning a series of squeakers. All the squeakers were wins as Gene Stallings knew how to win. Against Tennessee on Oct 19 at Legion Field, for example, the Tide trailed 6–3 in the fourth quarter when starting QB Danny Woodson left the game with a strained hamstring. Behind its backup QB Jay Barker, Alabama rallied for three touchdowns in the fourth quarter and won W (24–19). It was the Crimson Tide's sixth victory in a row in the Third Saturday in October rivalry.

Barker assumed the starting job when Woodson was suspended for violating team rules before the LSU game. It sure helps to have talent to spare and a great coach that can make it happen

Late in the fourth quarter of the Mississippi State game on Nov 2, at Bryant-Denny, the Bulldogs drove down to the Alabama 1. It was a case of close, but no cigar. Stacy Harrison's end-zone interception preserved the 13–7 Alabama victory. Now, that sure is close. Against LSU on Nov 9, David Palmer ran a punt back 90 yards for a touchdown and Antonio London blocked a field goal with 2:39 to go to preserve a W (20–17) Alabama victory. Great teams are there when you need them and they play like a team.

On Nov 16, Bama eked out a W 10–7 victory over lowly Memphis State after the Memphis kicker missed two second-half field goals and Alabama end John Copeland forced a fumble by the Memphis QB at the Tide 27 with 3:51 to go. The season ended on Nov 30 with Alabama's fifth straight victory by six points or less, as the Crimson Tide was pleased to defeat Auburn in the Iron Bowl 13–6.

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.

Author's Note: Any coach can win games by large margins as there is an inertia shift when the opponents realize they cannot win or it is highly unlikely. It takes special coaches with huge hearts and great minds to win the close ones consistently.

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

While I write this great moments' 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.

When all the players are top level as is the nature of college football today, attitude and desire are far more important for winning. And, of course good coaching tops the list of ingredients. Gene Stallings and many of the well-known Alabama coaches provided that ingredient over the years.

As an IBM Senior Systems Engineer in my day job for years, I had the benefit of being at great motivational seminars from IBM in which they brought in the best sports figures such as the late Richie Ashburn for baseball and the late Merlin Olson for football to motivate its knowledge workers. Merlin Olsen told a compelling story about motivation in football that I have never forgotten.

He confessed that he had his own job of motivating some of his fellow linemen to simply do their job. Merlin acknowledged that it was sometimes easy enough to go through the motions on the line than to use all your muscle and strength to do your job.

He would have none of that. He talked about Roosevelt Greer who he felt had the most talent of all the linemen on the RAMS, but was often unmotivated when playing. He was so good most fans would not notice.

Olson told a story about how he knew that if 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!

Games of the Season

On Sept 5 v Vanderbilt at Bryant–Denny Stadium, Alabama won W (25–8) before 70,123 fans. In this game, freshman Michael Proctor kicked four field goals for Alabama and the Tide defeated Vanderbilt W(25–8) despite the absence of star WR/KR David Palmer, then serving a suspension for a drunk driving arrest. One Alabama touchdown came after Tide pressure caused the Vanderbilt punter to fumble the ball at his team's 6-yard line and the other came on an interception return in the fourth quarter. On Sept 12 at Sothern Mississippi, Alabama held the Golden Eagles to only 54 yards of total offense and three first downs. UA won the game W 17-10)

On Sept 19, Alabama played the new SEC member Arkansas (the Razorbacks) for the first time and they were no match for the Crimson Tide W (38-11). On October 3, UA played another new SEC entrant, the South Carolina Gamecocks who also were no match for the Tide. For example, Derrick Lassic scored on a 33-yard TD run on Alabama's first play from scrimmage, the Tide was up 28–0 halfway through the second quarter, and from there Alabama cruised to a W (38–11)

On September 26 Alabama beat Louisiana Tech at Legion Field W (13–0). In this game, Alabama had its worst offensive showing of the season. The Tide mustered only 167 yards of offense in the game. Yet, they won. On October 10, Tulane could not keep up with Alabama at the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans, LA W (37–0).

On Oct 17, Alabama dominated the Third Saturday in October matchup with Tennessee, outgaining the Vols 355 yards (301 on the ground) to 194, but nearly blew the game late after taking a 17–0 second quarter lead. Game score AU win W (17–10)

On October 24 at Bryant–Denny Stadium • Tuscaloosa, AL AU beat this rival W 31–10) before 70,123 fans. Then, on Nov 7 at an always tough LSU in a game played at Tiger Stadium in Baton Rouge, the Crimson Tide prevailed W (31–11) before 76,813 fans. Mississippi State then tried to upset the applecart on Nov 14 at Scott Field in Starkville but failed W (30–21).

On Nov 26, the Iron Bowl had to be played at 12:00 p.m. at Legion Field. An always tough Auburn team gave it up in the end W (17-0) before 83,091. The element of iron this year was held mostly by Alabama.

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 Lassie. 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

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.

Alabama won its first five games of the season, extending its winning streak to 28 games, matching the longest win streak in school history. Win #1 of this season was Sept 4 v Tulane @ Legion Field W 31–17) (Forfeited). Win #2 was Sept 11 at Vanderbilt W (17–6) (Forfeited). Win # 3 was Sept 18 v Arkansas at Bryant–Denny Stadium W(43–3) (Forfeit). Win # 4 was Sept 25 v Louisiana Tech at Legion Field L (56–3) (Forfeited).

Win # 5 came on Oct 2 at South Carolina W (17–6) (Forfeited). The streak ended on Oct 16 with a T 17–17(Forfeited) tie against Tennessee. After this tie, The unbeaten streak continued to 31 games before Alabama fell to LSU in a nail biter, 17–13 (Forfeited).



The next two wins in the unbeaten streak are as follows: Win # 6 Oct 23 at Ole Miss in Oxford, MS W 19–14 (Forfeited). Win #7 was Oct 30 v Southern Miss at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (40–0) (Forfeited). The next game v LSU was their first loss of the season on Nov 6 at Bryant -Denny Stadium L (13–17) before 70,123. On Nov 13, they beat Mississippi State at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (36–25) (Forfeited). On Nov at # 6 Auburn at Jordan–Hare

Stadium , AU lost the Iron Bowl L 14–22 before 85,214. Then, in the season Finale, on Dec 4, they lost to # 9 Florida in the SEC Championship Game L (13-28) before 76,345

Alabama finished second in the SEC West in 1993, but played in the SEC Championship Game as Auburn was prohibited from post-season play because of NCAA violations. In the SEC Championship Game, Alabama lost 28–13 to the Florida Gators at Legion Field. Alabama received an invitation to the Gator Bowl versus North Carolina, winning 24–10 and finishing with a 9–3–1 record.

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

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

On Sept 3, AU opened the season v Chattanooga W (42-13 at Legion Field. On Sept 10 AU beat Vanderbilt at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (17–7) before 70,123. Then, on Sept at Arkansas AU

defeated the Razorbacks W (13–6). Sept 24 at Legion Field, Alabama beat Tulane W (20-10)

On Oct 1 Bama played Georgia at Bryant–Denny Stadium in a nail biter W 29–28. The next week on Oct 8, Southern Miss came to play the Crimson Tide W (14-6). On Oct 15, (Third Saturday in October), Alabama barely beat Tennessee at Neyland Stadium in Knoxville, TN W (17-13) before 96,856 fans. On Oct 22 Ole Miss played Alabama at Bryant–Denny Stadium and were defeated W (21–10). Then on Nov 5 at LSU Tiger Stadium in Baton Rouge, LA, Alabama defeated the Tigers W 35–17.

On Nov 12 at # 20 Mississippi State at Scott Field • Starkville, MS, Alabama got by in a close one W29–25). On Nov 19, in the Iron Bowl, Alabama beat an undefeated Auburn team W (21-14) at Legion Field before 83,091 fans. #3 Alabama was undefeated after this game and ready to take all the marbles.

Then, on December 3 playing # 6 Florida at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA in the (SEC Championship Game), the Crimson Tide hit a glitch and just missed winning L (23–24).

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 seasons as a national championship.

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."



OSU v AU Citrus Bowl 1994 Action Shot

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.

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."

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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. AU 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. The early season victory over Southern Miss on Sept 9 W (24-30) came in dramatic fashion, as Alabama completed a 36-yard pass on 4th down for a go-ahead touchdown with under 30 seconds left in the game. The three games Alabama lost were also particularly noteworthy.

The game against Arkansas on Sept 16 L (19-20) featured a last minute 4th and goal touchdown pass by Arkansas giving them the win, however replays later showed the ball was clearly trapped. This call, along with a missed twelve men on the field penalty on Arkansas' final drive led to the suspension of the officiating crew the following week.

The L (14-41) blowout loss to Tennessee in the (Third Saturday in October) rivalry marked the Vols first win over the Tide since 1985, ending Alabama's 9 game unbeaten streak. The season ending loss at Auburn also featured a questionable last minute call regarding a pass. Alabama QB Freddie Kitchens had apparently hit Curtis Brown for a late go ahead touchdown, but officials ruled Brown out of bounds.

The other games of the season are as follows; On Sept 2at Vanderbilt in Vanderbilt Stadium • Nashville, TN W (33–25) And, on Sept 9, Southern Miss at Legion Field Alabama won a close one W (24–20)

On September 30 at Georgia, AU won W (31–0). Then on October 7 at NC State in Bryant–Denny Stadium, the Crimson Tide won W (27–11). And, on Oct 21 at 2:00 p.m. at Ole Miss at Vaught–Hemingway Stadium on Oxford, MS, Bama won 23–9. Then on Oct 28 at 2:30 p.m., North Texas played in Bryant–Denny Stadium and Alabama won W (38–19) before 70,123 fans. On Nov 4 LSU came to Bryant–Denny Stadium and were beaten W (10–3) before 70,123 fans.

After this on Nov 11 at 11:30 a.m. AU v Mississippi Stat at Bryant–Denny Stadium. The Crimson Tide won W 14–9. On Nov 18 in the Iron Bowl, Alabama lost to Auburn in the Iron Bowl at Jordan–Hare Stadium in Auburn, AL L (27–31)

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.

The Alabama team played their home games at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.

Alabama began its season on August 31 v Bowling Green at Legion Field W (21-7) Following this win, The Crimson Tide defeated Southern Miss W (21-7) on Sept &. Then, on Sept 14, at 5:00 PM Vanderbilt came to Bryant-Denny and were beaten W 36-26). Following this game, it was a nice win at Arkansas on Sept 21, W (17-7). On Oct 5, at Bryant-Denny AU beat Kentucky W (35-7)

On Oct 12, at NC State, the Tide won W (24–19). Then, on Oct 19, against Ole Miss at Bryant-Denny, Bama shut out the Rebels W (37-0). On oct 26, a bit ale for the third week in October, AU lost to the Tennessee Volunteers in their long-standing rivalry L (13-20). On Nov. 9, the Crimson Tide shut out LSU W (26-0).

Alabama's loss to Mississippi State L (16-17) on November 16 broke a 15-game winning streak Alabama had in the series and was their first loss to the Bulldogs since a dramatic upset MSU posted over the #1 ranked Tide in 1980.

Following a W (24-23) victory in the annual Iron Bowl at Legion Field on November 23, head coach Gene Stallings announced his retirement, which would go into effect at the end of the season.

In the SEC Championship game, in Stallings's second-last game, Alabama could not score enough to beat Florida and lost L (30-45). Then, at Houlihan's Stadium in Tampa Florida, on January 1, 1997, Alabama beat # 15 Michigan in the Outback Bowl W (17-14)

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 is from 2011, 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 outsidersidelines Jul 15, 2011, 10:00am CDT

Source: The Crimson White (Student Newspaper – their perspective of the coach from observation)

With Gene Stallings set for induction into the College Football Hall of Fame this weekend and the midsummer doldrums in full effect, perhaps now is as good of a time as any to look back on the Stallings era at Alabama. I've argued in the past that Stallings is largely one of the most misunderstood figures in UA history, but I've never expounded upon that argument until now. With that in mind, let's work through the Stallings era with the benefit of hindsight and try to gain some perspective on his tenure at the Capstone.

Starting from the outset with the circumstances of his hire, Stallings took over the 'Bama football program in January of 1990 after the abrupt departure of Bill Curry following a 33-25 loss at the hands of national champion Miami in the Sugar Bowl. Without getting bogged down in the specifics of the search, the UA Board of Trustees actually voted 14-1 on a resolution to pursue Bobby Bowden of Florida State, but UA President Roger Sayers balked at Bowden's \$565,000 buyout clause (hard to believe in hindsight, I know). Other candidates drew interest, but ultimately they too went the way of Bowden and UA moved on to other candidates. Eventually the process worked its way to Stallings, who immediately accepted the job.

First choice or not, though, when Stallings inherited the Alabama program there was great success in the early years, both on the field and on the recruiting trails. The first three years of his tenure exceeded even the wildest of expectations, and by January 2nd, 1993, Stallings had already forever cemented his place in UA lore.



His debut campaign in 1990 generally brought a high level of play, even though it was bookended by a slow start driven mainly by injuries and an inexplicable thumping in the Fiesta Bowl at the hands mid-major Louisville. Nevertheless, the defense made tremendous strides and 'Bama won seven of its final eight regular season games with the sole loss coming in a hard-fought game against a good Penn State team. The performances weren't always aesthetically pleasing, especially as 'Bama made the transition from Homer Smith's aerial assault to Mal Moore's power rushing attack, but there was a certain physical style of play, particularly on the defensive side of the

ball against better opponents, that was often lacking under Curry.

That following February, on the heels of a stellar in-state crop, Stallings inked the best recruiting class of the post-Bryant era (prior to the arrival of Nick Saban, at least). David Palmer, a star all-purpose athlete from Jackson-Olin High School in Birmingham, headlined the class, and joining him was JUCO defensive end John Copeland, both integral parts of the 1992 national championship team.

The rest of the class was filled out with the likes of Shannon Brown, Sam Shade, Sherman Williams, Tommy Johnson, and a veritable laundry list of other standout players during the Stallings era. Of the post-Bryant era, only the 2008 class that featured Julio Jones, Mark Ingram, and Marcell Dareus can compare to the 1991 crop, and that one class positioned Alabama for an extended period of national prominence.

The 1991 season merely continued the rise of the program that had started the previous February. After being trounced 35-0 by Florida in Gainesville, 'Bama finished the season with ten straight wins to finish 11-1 overall and fifth in the nation, upending defending national champion Colorado in the Blockbuster Bowl.

The 1991 team clearly overachieved, going 6-0 in games decided by one possession, but even so there were positive indicators moving forward. The offense had finally started to show signs of life, the defense continued to improve, and more importantly nearly everyone returned for the 1992 season.

And, of course, 1992 itself needs no introduction. But the problem comes immediately after the trouncing of Miami. Given the national championship and the overall momentum of the program to that point, 'Bama was in the perfect position to solidify its status as a national powerhouse for years to come.

Making matters even better, the newly-formed SEC West was filled with struggling programs. Auburn had fizzled under Pat Dye in the 1990's and was punished with major sanctions for the Eric Ramsey scandal. Arkansas was largely spinning its wheels

making the transition away from the old Southwest Conference. LSU was mired in the darkest hours of program history. Ole Miss was punished with major sanctions in their own right that led to the demise of Billy Brewer, and the player who would prove to be the program's only real hope spurned his father's alma mater to sign with Tennessee. Mississippi State was proving to be a tough program under the leadership of Jackie Sherrill, but at the end of the day they were still Mississippi State, to which little more needs to be said.

Despite the strength of the program and the relative weakness of the competitive landscape, however, Stallings simply could not sustain the success, and in fact the program largely fell apart after the 1993 Sugar Bowl victory.

Recruiting was the first casualty. The 1992 class was quickly revealed as weak, and 1993 was nothing short of a disaster. On the heels of a national championship, Auburn actually snagged many of the state's top prospects, despite having a career Division 1-AA coach and major NCAA sanctions. Included in that recruiting coup were Willie Anderson and Jessie McCovery, both key starters on Auburn's undefeated 1993 team, and both of whom Alabama had recruited heavily.

Anderson, in fact, may still be the single biggest in-state recruiting coup Auburn has pulled in the post-Bryant era. Things got marginally better in 1994, to be sure, but Stallings would never again sign a class at Alabama that could even remotely compare to his 1991 haul.

Individual great players would make their way from Tuscaloosa from time-to-time -- Chris Samuels, Shaun Alexander, Dwayne Rudd, etc. -- but never with the regularity and the quantity necessary to fuel a legitimate national powerhouse.

And if recruiting was the first casualty, the overall integrity of the program came next. The handling of the Antonio Langham agent saga was botched from the start, which Stallings himself had a direct hand in, and despite a previously clean record the NCAA came down hard on Alabama. The letter of inquiry

came in September of 1994, and in August of the following year the NCAA lowered the boom. Finding a lack of institutional control, the NCAA put Alabama on probation for three years, took away 26 scholarships, banned the Tide from postseason play in 1995, and forfeited all wins from the 1993 season (sanctions even more severe than would be doled out six years later in the Albert Means case).

Alabama did win back nine scholarships on appeal, but the fiasco nevertheless led to the resignation of Hootie Ingram, and therefore the disastrous hiring of Bob Bockrath, and severely damaged the program both on and off the field for years to come.

Discipline on the team itself also suffered as time went on. The 1995 offseason, in particular, was filled with arrests, including Dennis Riddle, Patrick Hape, and Matt Parker. Others didn't do time, but obviously didn't otherwise commit themselves accordingly to maximizing the most of their abilities.

Staff in-fighting took its toll too. Bill Oliver, the de facto defensive coordinator who had the official title of secondary coach through the 1993 season due to Stallings' dislike for coordinator titles, was grudgingly given the defensive coordinator title in 1994, in no small part due to Steve Spurrier's wooing of Oliver to join him at Florida.

Offensive coordinator Mal Moore stepped down following the 1993 season after years of complaints over his offensive strategies that critics claimed were far too conservative, and 1994 saw the return of offensive guru Homer Smith. With Stallings, Smith, and Oliver leading the way, the so-called "Dream Team" coaching staff, as dubbed by fans and several in the media, was finally complete, and expectations ran wild.

Unfortunately, all that promise never came to fruition. The offense never had any real success under Smith, and it was clear that he was never given the freedoms of design and play-calling that he was given under Bill Curry. Likewise, the defense continued a slow but steady decline under Oliver. 'Bama narrowly survived defensive struggles in 1994 against Georgia and Mississippi State, but couldn't put away Florida on a game-

winning, last-minute drive by the Gators to preserve an undefeated season. The following year, Peyton Manning and Joey Kent ripped the once-vaunted 'Bama defense to shreds, and it came up lame against both Arkansas and Auburn. As a whole the unit was still highly effective against inferior opponents, but it was routinely exposed when facing top programs.

By the end of 1995, the so-called "Dream Team" officially dissolved. Homer Smith left Tuscaloosa for the final time, and Bill Oliver abruptly resigned after an internal controversy over whether or not he would be named as the successor to Gene Stallings. Providing insult to injury, Oliver accepted the defensive coordinator job at Auburn two days after leaving Alabama.

Even Stallings himself had his hand in the melodrama. He procrastinated on signing a contract extension towards the end of the 1994 season, and there were rumors that he was a candidate for both the Texas and Oklahoma jobs. Obviously he never left for those jobs, but he played it coy the entire way, never expressly refuting their interest in him or his interest in them.

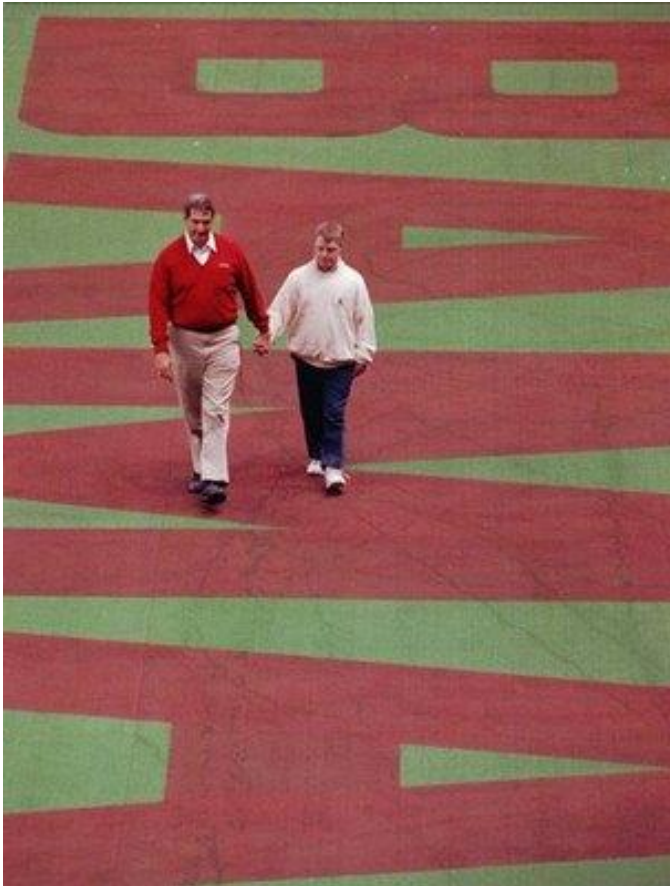
From that point on, while he would ultimately return for two more seasons, his status at UA moving forward was never really certain. In fact Stallings did not even commit to returning for the 1996 season until 'Bama won the appeal with the NCAA in December of 1995.

In hindsight, the successes of 1994 were simply a deceptive mirage. Fans and media alike looked at the 11-0 regular season, combined it with the memories of the 1992 national championship season, and saw it as the definite establishment of Alabama as a powerhouse program that would compete for national championships on a yearly basis.

In reality, the program was mired in a clear decline, and it was only some outstanding play by senior quarterback Jay Barker and some great luck in close games that simply hid that fact from the view of most observers.

The overall talent level and depth of the roster was declining, there was significant turmoil on the staff, and the botched handling of an NCAA scandal meant that severe sanctions and their negative effects were imminent.

From that point forward the Stallings era was a *fait accompli*. The team was still playing at a respectable level, but 'Bama could clearly no longer compete with the top programs on a consistent basis. By then, other top programs simply had more talent, better depth, and better coaching. NCAA sanctions, the full effect of which had not been felt yet, made prospects even more difficult looking ahead to 1997 and 1998.



Furthermore, his last major decision in Tuscaloosa prior to his resignation was arguably the most damning, i.e. the promotion of Mike DuBose to defensive coordinator after the departure of

Bill Oliver. To be sure, to my knowledge Stallings never actively campaigned for DuBose to get the head coaching job, but even so his decision to make DuBose the defensive coordinator gave him the de facto recognition of rising coaching star in the eyes of the UA fanbase, untrue as though that was.

Given the flameout of Bill Curry and the on-field successes of Stallings, the fan base was already convinced that only an insider could truly lead the program, which at the time meant one of "Bear's boys," and with Stallings hovering over the escape hatch his decision to promote DuBose to defensive coordinator all but guaranteed that DuBose would replace Stallings whenever he ultimately resigned.

Had DuBose remained defensive line coach in 1996 it's highly unlikely he would have been hired the following season as head coach, but with the defensive coordinator title in the bag he may as well have been named head coach-in-waiting.

And that, in essence, is the legacy of Gene Stallings, inasmuch as there is one. He had great success at times and will forever be immortalized for the 1992 national championship, but he squandered an opportunity to reap the long-term rewards of that national championship, and in effect he won a national championship that was of passing historic consequence. In the end, despite the early successes, Stallings probably left the program in a worse position than he found it seven years earlier.

Interestingly, though, Stallings has remained highly popular among those who bleed crimson and white. Despite significant evidence to the contrary, the widespread view still balances the dichotomy of the wild successes under Stallings against the torturous nightmare of events that occurred under DuBose with no overlap between the two. Undoubtedly much of that has to do with the fact that Stallings is such an inherently likeable person.

He is widely respected by everyone, friend and foe alike, and it's nothing short of impossible to find someone who will say a negative thing about him personally. I'll gladly concede the

point on Stallings the human being, but I'll stand by the notion that his tenure at UA is still largely misunderstood, and for all of the good he did at the Capstone there remains a darkened aspect to his tenure that many still choose to ignore.

Chapter 18 Alabama – Pre-Saban – Du Bosc, Franchione, & Shula-- 1997-2006

No quotes can describe these 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.

The Crimson Tide began this season like most others – with wins in their first two games. On August 30 at 11:30 a.m. at Legion Field, it was Houston as the visitors—W (42-17). Next UA traveled to Vanderbilt on September 11 at Vanderbilt Stadium in Nashville, TN for a game televised by ESPN. The Crimson Tide prevailed in a shutout W 20-0 before 41,448. The losses began on Sept 20 v Arkansas at Bryant–Denny Stadium. The first against the Razorbacks was very close but not a win. L (16–17).

After a rebound v Southern Miss on Sept 27 at Legion Field before 83,091, Kentucky beat the Tide on Oct 4 at Commonwealth Stadium in Lexington in overtime. The game had been played to a 34-34 tie in regulation play. L (34-40) 20. On October 18, in the Third Saturday in October rivalry. Tennessee was ready for a win. They got it-- L (21-38 and this was the perfect year as Alabama would get just one more win on Oct 25 at Ole Miss and the crimson Tide would lose the rest of its games. There would be no SEC Championship this year and there would be no Bowl game.

The first end of season loss of the four was Louisiana Tech on Nov 1 at Bryant-Denny L (20-26). The next was a shut-out on Nov 8 at Bryant Denny at the hands of the LSU Tigers L (0-27). Then it was a third loss in a row at Bryant-Denny on Nov 15 v Mississippi State L (20-32) . The season ended early – Nov 22 for Alabama as the

Crimson Tide left its oomph at home as it traveled to. It just needed a little more to beat Auburn in the Iron Bowl but it didn't come. This year's Iron Bowl was played at Jordan–Hare Stadium in Auburn, AL. Alabama lost this Iron bowl by a hair L (17–18) before 85,214 fans.

It was a rare losing season for the crimson Tide. The pundits, the fans, and the Crimson White Student Newspaper knew there was something rotten in the state of Denmark. And in this story, Alabama was playing the role of Denmark.

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.

Bama won its first two games of the season beginning on Sept 5th against BYU at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (38-31) The next win on Sept 12 was v Vanderbilt at Legion Field W (32–7) The first loss was a shellacking at Arkansas L (6-42) on Sept 26. This was followed by another loss against Florida at Bryant-Denny W (10-16). Alabama then won two in a row again—the first on Oct 10 at Bryant-Denny W (20-17) and the next on Oct 17 at Legion Field in a nail-biter W (23-22) before 80,729.

On Oct 24, the (Third Saturday in October) Tennessee beat the Crimson Tide in the rivalry game L 18-35) at Neyland Stadium, Knoxville, TN before 107,289 fans. The Crimson Tide rebounded with another two-game win streak—the first on Oct 31 against

Southern Miss at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (30-20). The second was on Nov 7 at LSU in Tiger Stadium Baton Rouge, LA W (22–16)

On Nov 14 11:30 a.m at Mississippi State’s Scott Field in Starkville, MS, AU lost its fourth game L 14–26. Then, on November 21, Bama rebounded with a win against Auburn at Legion Field W (31–17) before 83,091 fans. On Dec 29 at 4:00 PM v Virginia Tech, Alabama lost the Music City Bowl in Vanderbilt Stadium in Nashville, TN (Music City Bowl) ESPN L (7–38) before 41,600

1999 Alabama Football Season Mike DuBose Head Coach #25

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. Games began on September 4 at Vanderbilt in Nashville with a Bama win W 28–17. On September, The Tide defeated Houston at Legion Field in Birmingham, AL W (W 37–10) before 80,110 fans. In Sept 18 came the Louisiana Tech upset by one point by the Bulldogs L (28–29). Then, the Tide rebounded on Sept 25 v Arkansas at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (35–28) before 83,818 fans.

On Oct 2, The Crimson Tide had Lady Luck on its side as they won on a missed extra point at #3 Florida at Ben Hill Griffin Stadium in Gainesville, FL W (40–39) in Overtime. On Oct 16 at old time rival #22 Ole Miss at the Vaught-Hemingway Stadium in Oxford, MS, Alabama won its third straight season game W 30–24. The streak ended on Oct 23 aks (Third Saturday in October) v #5 Tennessee at Bryant–Denny Stadium L (7–21) before 86,869 fans. On Oct. 30, Alabama dusted itself off and beat Southern Miss at Bryant–Denny Stadium 35–14 Then, on Nov 6 v LSU at Bryant–Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, AL, The Tide beat the Tigers W (23–17)

On Nov 13, Mississippi State came to Bryant–Denny Stadium to be defeated by UA W 19–7. Then it was the Iron Bowl on November 20 at Auburn’s Jordan–Hare Stadium W (• Auburn, AL W 28–17 before 85,214 fans.

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.

The 2000 season was filled with several close losses. A 30-28 loss at LSU was the Tide's first loss to LSU in Baton Rouge in 31 years, ending a 14-0-1 streak that Alabama had posted there since 1969. Another tough loss was the Nov 18 L (0-9) defeat at the hands of in-state rival Auburn came on a cold and rainy afternoon at Bryant-Denny. It marked the first Iron Bowl played in Tuscaloosa since 1901. Games had been alternating between Legion Field and Auburn's stadiums.

For the first time since the 1956 season Alabama failed to win any out-of-conference games and became the first team from a BCS conference to lose to Central Florida, falling 38-40 at home on a last-second field goal. It was a dismal season and fans were sorely disappointed. Good coaches win the close games.

The Crimson Tide lost three out of the first four games. On Sept 2 at UCLA, beat #3 ranked Alabama at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, CA L (24-35). On Sept 9 The Tide beat Vanderbilt at Legion Field W (28-10) before 83,091 fans. On Sept 16, the second loss was to #25 Southern Miss at Legion Field L (0-21). This knocked Alabama out of the top 25 for the season.

The third of the first three losses was on Sept 23 to Arkansas at Razorback Stadium in Fayetteville, AR L (21-28). On Sept 30, Alabama rebounded for a two-game win streak, the first of which was against # 23 South Carolina at Bryant-Denny Stadium W (27-17). The second game was on Oct 14 against Ole Miss at Bryant-Denny Stadium. This was the tide's best game of the year W (45-7)

On October 21, (Third Saturday in October), at Tennessee's Neyland Stadium in Knoxville, UA lost its fifth game L 10-20 before a whopping crowd of 107,709. There would be four more losses after this to close the season.

On Oct 28 UA lost to UCF at Bryant-Denny Stadium L (38-40). Then, on Nov 4, Bama lost at LSU in Tiger Stadium, Baton Rouge, LA L (28-30) On Nov 11 Au lost its fourth game in a row at #15 Mississippi State at Scott Field • Starkville, MS (Rivalry) L(7-29). The season ended with the fifth loss in a row for the Tide in The

Iron Bowl, L (0-9) v #18 Auburn at Bryant–Denny Stadium before 85,986 fans.

DuBose Resigns as Alabama Football Coach

by John Zenor, ABC News, Tuscaloosa, Nov 1

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 six victories from the 2006 season (Hawaii, Vanderbilt, Louisiana–Monroe, Duke, Ole Miss and Florida International) were vacated making the official record for the season zero wins and seven losses (0–7). Tough sanctions!

Chapter 19 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 # 29	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

* 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 rip 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 Alabama won the championship on January 9, 2017. Kevin's words will always be out there even if not here depending on what he thinks. This is a classic 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.

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).

More Game Notes

Athletic director Mal Moore made defensive coordinator Joe Kines serve as interim head coach to mark time until the Independence Bowl. In that way, the crimson Tide could take the time to gain a long-term coach, not a four-year max fly-by-night fill-in for the program.

AU under the last coach Mike Shula went on to lose its final regular season game in 2006 v Auburn L (15-22) in the Iron Bowl and then lost to Oklahoma State L (31-34) in the Independence Bowl to finish with a 6–7 overall record. The fans and the administration and the players wanted to be coached by the best coach there could possibly be. The team was languishing. Many are of the opinion and I am one of them that with Nick Saban, coaching the University of Alabama Football Team in 2007 and beyond, they got their wish.

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.

As you 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.

The non-conference schedule included games against Western Carolina of the Southern Conference, Florida State of the Atlantic Coast Conference, Houston of Conference USA and Louisiana–Monroe of the Sun Belt Conference. For the 2007 Independence Bowl, Alabama played Colorado of the Big 12 Conference.

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 receivers 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

Games of the Season

The season began on September 1 at 6:00 p.m at home—Bryant Denny Stadium v Western Carolina. It was a nice UA win, W 52–6.

Review of Saban's First Game

The Nick Saban era commenced before a sold-out, home crowd of 92,138 by defeating the Western Carolina Catamounts 52–6 for both Nick Saban's first regular season game and victory as Alabama's head coach.

Redshirt freshman running back Terry Grant scored the first touchdown of the season, on the first offensive play of the game, with a 47-yard touchdown run. Grant then scored his second touchdown on a one-yard run to give Alabama a 14–0 lead at the end of the first quarter. After a successful, 34-yard Jonathon Parsons field goal by the Catamounts, Grant scored his third touchdown of the evening on a 21-yard run. Leigh Tiffin then hit a 21-yard field goal to give Alabama a 24–3 halftime lead.

Bama continued the scoring in the third quarter with another pair of touchdowns. The first came on a one-yard Glen Coffee run and the second on a one-yard touchdown pass from Greg McElroy to Nick Walker. After a second Parsons field goal for Western Carolina, Alabama scored touchdowns on a one-yard Jimmy Johns run and a 25-yard Roy Upchurch run to make the final score 52–6. For his 134-yard, three touchdown performance, Terry Grant was named the SEC Freshman of the Week.

On Sept 8 at 11:30 a.m. at Vanderbilt, the Sabanites (aka Alabama Crimson Tide) defeated the Commodores at Vanderbilt Stadium in Nashville, TN W (24–10). On Sept. 15 Alabama beat # 16 Arkansas at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (41–38) in a close call.

Then, on Sept 22 v # 22 Georgia at home in Bryant–Denny Stadium, Bama bit the dust in a hard-fought game L (23–2) in OT. On Sept 29, Alabama traveled to Florida State’s Jacksonville Municipal Stadium and lost a very close game L (14–21).

On Oct 6 v Houston at Bryant–Denny Stadium, AU prevailed against the visitors from Houston Texas W (30–24). On Oct 13, Ole Miss planned to win v the Crimson Tide at 11:30 a.m. at Vaught–Hemingway Stadium in Oxford, MS in a rivalry game—but they could not get enough muster to do so. They lost W (27–24) before 59,791. Then on Oct 20, on the Third Saturday in October rivalry, AU played tough against # 20 Tennessee at Bryant–Denny Stadium and won for AU W 41–17 before 92,138 fans.

On November 3, #3 LSU came to Bryant-Denny Stadium and the Tigers lost L (34–41).

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 season still had more games. On Nov 10 at #21 Mississippi State's Davis Wade Stadium in Starkville, MS, Bama lost a tough one—L (12–17) before 56,188 fans, Next game was on Nov 17 v Louisiana–Monroe at Bryant–Denny Stadium L (14–21).

In Nick Saban's first Iron Bowl classic on Nov. 24, 7:00 PM at # 25 Auburn in Jordan–Hare Stadium • Auburn, AL, the new coach gave us all a very close game, but the final score was a loss to Auburn L (10–17) before 87,451. It could have gone the other way but it did not. Alabama supporters hate losing to in-state rival, Auburn.

Having had a six game-win regular season, Saban's Crimson Tide qualified for the Independence Bowl played on December 30, 2007 at 7:00 P.M. vs. Colorado at Independence Stadium in Shreveport, LA (Independence Bowl). The Sabanites would not take NO for an answer and won the game W 30–24 before 47,043

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

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.

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

Games of the season

The Crimson Tide opened the season on August 30 with an upset victory over #9 Clemson at the Georgia Dome in the inaugural Chick-fil-A College Kickoff W (34-10). After the win, Alabama returned home where they defeated non-conference opponents Tulane on Sept 6 W (20-6) and WKU on Sept 13 W (41-7) before they traveled to Fayetteville on Sept 20 W (49-14) and defeated Arkansas for their first conference win of the season.

The next week 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 second and more extensive 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.

Alabama then defeated Kentucky on Oct 4, W (17-14), Ole Miss on Oct 18 W (24-20), at Tennessee W (29-9) and Arkansas State on Nov 1 W (35-0) prior to Saban's return to Baton Rouge v LSU on November 8 as an opposing head coach.

In Week 10 of the season, Alabama became the No. 1 team in both the AP and Coaches' Polls as well as the Bowl Championship Series (BCS) standings. It was the first time the Crimson Tide has been ranked No. 1 in the regular season since November 1, 1980, when the top-ranked Tide fell to Mississippi State. It was also the first time Nick Saban had ever achieved the No. 1 position in the AP Poll and the first time in school history Alabama had reached No. 1 in the BCS standings.

With their W (27–21) overtime win over LSU, Alabama clinched a berth in the SEC Championship Game. The Crimson Tide finished their regular season undefeated on Nov 29 with a W (36–0) shutout victory over Auburn in the Iron Bowl. The Tide moved on to the SEC Championship Game on Dec 6, where they lost to Florida L (20–31). A month later, on January 2, 2009, at 7:00 PM the Tide finished the season at the Louisiana Superdome with a L (17-31) loss in the Sugar Bowl against Utah.



Alabama QB John Parker Williams on the straight-arm

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

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) AU 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.

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 are tentatively planning a national championship celebration for Saturday, Jan. 16.



How Sweet It IS!

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; 5-30 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 over San Jose State on Sept 4 W (48-3), Penn State at Denny-Bryant on Sept 11 W (24-3), at Duke on Sept 18 in Wallace Wade Stadium • Durham, NC W (62-13), #10 Arkansas on Sept 25 at Donald W. Reynolds Razorback Stadium • Fayetteville, AR W (24-20) and #7 Florida at Bryant Denny after the expansion W (31-6 before 101,821

Alabama 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 losses on Oct 9 to South Carolina L (21-35) , and at LSU on Nov 6 L (21-24) and then at Auburn on Nov 26 L (27-28). The team finished fourth in the Western Division.

Along the trail, Alabama also picked up four more regular season wins at Ole Miss on Oct 16 at Bryant-Denny W (23-10); Tennessee on Oct 23 at Neyland Stadium in Knoxville, TN (Third Saturday in October) W (41-10); Mississippi State at Bryant-Denny on Nov 13 W (30-10); and Georgia State at Bryant-Denny W (63-7) on Nov 18

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.



AU v Michigan State

2011 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30

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.

After the completion of the 2010 season, the Crimson Tide signed a highly-rated recruiting class in February 2011 and completed spring practice the following April. With seventeen returning starters from the previous season, Alabama entered their 2011 campaign ranked as the number two team in the nation and as a favorite to win the Western Division and compete for the SEC championship.

However, 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 to qualify 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.

Also, seven players were named to various All-America Teams with Dont'a Hightower being a consensus selection and Mark Barron, Jones and Richardson each being unanimous selections. In April 2012, eight members of the 2011 squad were selected in the NFL Draft, with an additional six signed as undrafted free agents to various teams.

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. AU 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 First LSU Game

Coming off their bye and in what was hyped as the latest "Game of the Century" in college football, the LSU Tigers defeated the Crimson Tide 9–6 in overtime. After a scoreless first quarter that saw the Crimson Tide miss two field goals, and another blocked early in the second quarter, Alabama took a 3–0 lead midway through the second on a 34-yard Jeremy Shelley field goal. LSU responded on their following possession by driving to the Alabama two-yard line and kicking a 19-yard Drew Alleman field goal as time expired to tie the game at 3–3 at halftime.

Just as the first half was dominated by both defenses, the second was no different with both Alabama and LSU only managing a pair of field goals. Alabama's came in the third on a 46-yard Cade Foster

score and LSU's came in the fourth on a 30-yard Alleman score. In the overtime period, Foster missed a 52-yard field goal attempt and Alleman connected on a 25-yard attempt to give the Tigers the 9–6 victory.

Both defenses held each offense to less than 300 yards of total offense with each having a pair of interceptions. With the loss, Alabama dropped to 4–8 all-time in overtime games and brought Alabama's all-time record against the Tigers to 45–25–5.

Now ranked #4, Alabama won its next three regular season games—the first on Nov 12 at Mississippi State at Davis Wade Stadium in Starkville, MS (Rivalry) W (24–7)—the second on Nov 19 at Bryant Denny v Georgia Southern W 45–21, and the last at Jordan–Hare Stadium • Auburn, AL (Iron Bowl) on Nov 26 in the Iron Bowl W (42–14).

On January 9, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. #2 ranked Alabama played a rematch against #1 LSU in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome in New Orleans, LA for the (BCS National Championship Game), before 78,237. Alabama won the game without a doubt W (21–0)

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

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.

After they captured the 2011 national championship, the Crimson Tide signed a highly-rated recruiting class in February 2012 and completed spring practice the following April. With twelve returning starters from the previous season, Alabama entered the 2012 season as the defending national champions, ranked as the number two team in the nation and as a favorite to win the Western Division and compete for both the SEC and national championships.

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 AU 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 ti Bryant-Denny and were defeated by AU W 40–7.

On Sept 29 Bama beat Ole Miss at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (33–14). On Oct 13, AU 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, AU 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, AU 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 a 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 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.



Then 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 also 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

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

After they captured the 2012 national championship, the Crimson Tide signed a highly-rated recruiting class in February 2013 and completed spring practice the following April. With thirteen returning starters from the previous season, Alabama entered the 2013 season as the two-time defending national champions, ranked as the number one team in the nation and as a favorite to win the Western Division, the SEC and national championships again.

The Crimson Tide opened the season with eleven consecutive victories that included one over Virginia Tech on Aug 31 at a neutral site (Chick-fil-A Kickoff Game) W (35-10); against Texas A&M on Sept 14 W (49-42) in a game that saw many team records broken. On Sept 21, UA beat Colorado State W (31-6). On Sept 28, it was #21 Ole Miss W 25-0). Then on Oct 5, it was Georgia State in a runaway W (45-3). AU then traveled to Kentucky on Oct 12 at Commonwealth Stadium in Lexington and clobbered the Wildcats W (48-7). Arkansas was next on Oct 19 in another bashing W (52-0). On Oct 26, (Third Saturday in October), AU walloped Tennessee at W 45-10 before 101,821

On Nov 9, it was an emotional victory over Louisiana State University (LSU) W 38-17 at Bryant-Denny Stadium. On Nov 16, in a reasonably close game, AU beat Mississippi State W (20-7). Then, it was a walloping shutout of Chattanooga on Nov. 23 W (49-0).

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

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.

At the start of fall camp on August 1, coach Saban announced Jarran Reed, Brandon Ivory and Tim Williams were suspended indefinitely for violations of team rules. Reed and Ivory returned from suspension on August 4 and Williams returned on August 20. The camp featured several positional battles with incoming freshmen competing for starting spots.

Of note were true freshmen Cameron Robinson who landed the starting spot at left tackle over Dominick Jackson and both Tony Brown and Marlon Humphrey who secured back-up roles at defensive back.

The most anticipated positional battle of camp was for quarterback. Both Blake Sims and Jacob Coker played themselves into position to be named starter through the end of camp when Sims was selected as the starter for the opening game against West Virginia.

By mid-August, Alabama had a combined 26 players on 12 different preseason award watch lists.

The 2014 Games

On August 30, AU Kicked off its season in the Chick-fil-A Kickoff Game v West Virginia at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA W (33–23). On September 6 Florida Atlantic traveled to Bryant–Denny Stadium W (41–0) before 100,306. Then on Sept 13, AU defeated Southern Miss at Bryant–Denny W (W 52–12) before 101,821. On the last weekend in September Sept 30, AU beat Florida at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (42–21)

On October 4, my wedding anniversary, # 11 Ole Miss invited #3 Alabama to a football game at Vaught–Hemingway Stadium in Oxford, MS and proceeded to upset the Crimson Tide L (17–23) before 61,826 fans. On October 11 at Arkansas AU barely rebounded inside of Donald W. Reynolds Razorback Stadium in Fayetteville, AR barely winning the game W (14–13). Then on Oct 18, AU literally shellacked # 21 Texas A&M in a shootout / shutout W (59-0) at Bryant–Denny Stadium. This well-played game against a ranked team cleared out the cobwebs from the Ole Miss loss. On Oct 25, in the (Third Saturday in October) rivalry game, at Tennessee. AU beat the Volunteers W (34-20).

On Nov 8 at 7:00 p.m. #5 AU faced # 16 LSU in a rivalry match at Tiger Stadium in Baton Rouge, LA. AU prevailed W (20–13) in OT before 102,321 fans. On Nov 15, #1 ranked Mississippi State played a tough game at Bryant–Denny Stadium but were defeated by the Crimson Tide W 25–20.

On Nov 22 AU thumped Western Carolina at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (48–14). Then, in the Iron Bowl on Nov 29 AU defeated Auburn in a shootout W (55-44).

Alabama captured the Western Division and played for the SEC Championship on Dec 6 v # 16 Missouri State. AU won the game W (42-13).

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 a more inclusive narrative by bamahammer:

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, AU lost L (35-42). Ohio State then went on to win the national Championship in a 42-20 win over Oregon.

Sugar Bowl V Ohip 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.



Alabama lost after leading, 21-6, in the second quarter as numerous big plays on third downs by the Buckeyes offense turned the direction of the game in Ohio State's favor. The Buckeyes scored 28 unanswered points in the second and third quarters before the Crimson Tide regained their footing and narrowed the margin within a touchdown on two occasions. But an interception return for a touchdown by OSU in the third period and big plays at crucial times by the OSU offense stifled an Alabama comeback.

Ohio State racked up 537 yards of total offense (281 rushing, 256 passing) while converting 10 of 18 third downs into first downs in the game. Alabama had 407 total yards (237 passing, 170 rushing), but the Buckeyes controlled the tempo of the game from the second quarter on.

Crimson Tide quarterback Blake Sims passed for 237 yards and 2 touchdowns while completing 22 of 36 attempts. But three interceptions, two in the OSU end zone and another that was returned for a touchdown, were crucial to the outcome. Running back Derrick Henry rushed for 95 yards and a touchdown on 13 carries.

Wide receiver Amari Cooper caught 9 passes for 71 yards and 2 touchdowns. Henry also had a catch for 52 yards in the game.

The Alabama defense was led in tackles by safety Landon Collins, who overcame an injury early in the game to garner 12 tackles (9 solos), one tackle for loss and broke up a pass.

Linebacker Reggie Ragland had 7 tackles (2 solos) with 2 tackles for losses, but also was injured during the game. The Tide defense made 11 tackles for losses, broke up 7 passes, forced a fumble, and sacked Jones 3 times in the game.

Punter JK Scott capped an outstanding freshman season by averaging 55.0 yards on 7 punts in the game, including a 73-yarder and 5 punts that were downed inside the Ohio State 20-yard line. Five of Scott's punts went 50 yards or more.

The loss drops Alabama to 8-7 all-time in the Allstate Sugar Bowl.

2015 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30

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.

AU 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 AU 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, AU 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. AU 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. AU 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 AU prevailed W (31–6). On Nov 21 at Bryant-Denny, AU 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 is 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

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.

AU 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 AU 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. AU 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 battle, 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. AU 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 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. 1

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."

Alabama is now 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.

CFP Championship Game January 9, 2017—Pregame fan fare

By the time that you read this article by Mark Inabinett, the 2016 season championship game will be in the books and everybody will be reading about the game recap. For those that like to check out the skinny both before and after a great game, I have included this well-done piece by Mark – He tells you the pregame scoop to you by the numbers below:

CFP national-championship game by the numbers: Alabama vs. Clemson



Clemson quarterback Deshaun Watson tries to get away from Alabama defensive end Jonathan Allen during the CFP championship game on Jan. 11, 2016, in Glendale, Ariz. (AP Photo)



By Mark Inabinett | minabinett@al.com

Written on game day January 09, 2017 at 1:00 PM

CFP National Championship Game No. 2 Clemson (13-1) vs. No. 1 [Alabama](#) (14-0) 7 p.m. CST Monday (ESPN) Raymond James Stadium, Tampa, Fla.

0 Team in the nation has played a tougher schedule than Clemson this season, according to the NCAA's ratings. The Tigers' FBS opponents compiled a cumulative record of 94-51 against FBS teams other than Clemson. That's a winning percentage of .648. Alabama's schedule rates third at .643. Florida State is between Clemson and Alabama.

1 Team has been the consensus national champion with a true freshman QB, which Alabama could do with Jalen Hurts. In 1985, true freshman Jamelle Holieway stepped in as Oklahoma's QB when Troy Aikman suffered a broken leg in the fourth game of the season - a 27-14 loss to Miami (Fla.). With Holieway at QB, the Sooners won their remaining eight games, including a 25-10 victory over No. 1-ranked Penn State in the Orange Bowl to finish in the top spot of the final AP and coach's polls. Holieway completed 27-of-64 passes for 608 yards with six TDs and two interceptions and ran 173 times for 862 yards and nine TDs.

1 Team has scored a TD against Clemson in the first quarter this season. Pittsburgh scored two first-quarter TDs in their 43-42 victory over the Tigers on Nov. 12. Clemson has outscored its opponents 176-27 in the first quarter this season. Alabama has outscored its opponents 114-45 in the first quarter.

1 Team in the nation has allowed fewer than 4.2 yards per play. Alabama's opponents have averaged gaining 3.86 yards per snap against the Crimson Tide defense. Clemson's offense has average a gain of 6.28 yards per play this season.

1 Man has played on a team that finished first in a final Associated Press poll and been the head coach for a team that finished first in a final AP poll - Bud Wilkinson. Clemson coach Dabo Swinney was a wide receiver on Alabama's 1992 AP national championship team. Wilkinson was the quarterback for Minnesota when the Golden Gophers won the first AP national championship in 1936. Wilkinson coached Oklahoma to AP titles in 1950, 1955 and 1956.

2 Rushing and/or passing TDs are needed by Alabama QB Jalen Hurts and by Clemson QB Deshaun Watson to set school single-season records for TD responsibility. The Crimson Tide record is 35, set by QB Blake Sims in the 2014 season. Hurts has thrown 22 TD passes and run for 12 TDs. The Tigers record is 47, set by Watson last season. Watson has thrown 38 TD passes and run for eight TDs this season.

2 Previous postseason games have been played against ACC opponents by Alabama. The Crimson Tide defeated North Carolina 24-10 in the Gator Bowl on Dec. 31, 1993, and Clemson 45-40 in the CFP national-title game on Jan. 11, 2016. Alabama has a 23-3 record against ACC opponents, with a five-game winning streak. The Tide lost to Maryland in 1953, Georgia Tech in 1984 and Florida State in 2007. Clemson has a 4-7 bowl record and a 47-96-5 mark against SEC opponents, including victories over Auburn and South Carolina this season.

2 Linebacker of the Year Award winners will play in the CFP title game. Alabama LB Reuben Foster won the 2016 Butkus Award presented by the Butkus Foundation. Clemson LB Ben Boulware won the 2016 Jack Lambert Award presented by the Touchdown Club of Columbus.

3 Consecutive season-ending games for Alabama have included at least 40 points scored by its opponents. Before the streak, that had happened in only four seasons in Alabama history - a 40-16 loss to Auburn to close the 1893 season, a 48-0 loss to Auburn in 1895, a 40-0 loss to Auburn in 1957 and a 47-33 loss to Colorado in the 1969 Liberty Bowl. Alabama defeated Clemson 45-40 in last year's CFP National Championship Game, lost to Ohio State 42-35 in the Sugar Bowl to end the 2015 season and lost to Oklahoma 45-31 in the Sugar Bowl to end the 2013 season.

6 Victories in seven games decided by seven or fewer points this season for Clemson, tied with the 1948 team for the most such wins in school history. Alabama has played in one game with a margin of seven or fewer points this season - a 48-43 victory over Ole Miss on Sept. 17.

7 Consecutive victories in games involving top-10 teams for Alabama. Since falling to No. 4 Ohio State 42-35 in the Sugar Bowl to end the 2014 season, the Crimson Tide has beaten Texas A&M (twice), LSU, Michigan State, Clemson, Tennessee and Washington in top-10 showdowns

9 Consecutive victories have been posted in championship games by Alabama. Since falling to Florida in the SEC title

game in 2008, the Crimson Tide has beaten Florida for the 2009 SEC title, Texas for the 2009 BCS title, LSU for the 2011 BCS title, Georgia for the 2012 SEC title, Notre Dame for the 2012 BCS title, Missouri for the 2014 SEC title, Florida for the 2015 SEC title, Clemson for the 2015 CFP title and Florida for the 2016 SEC title.



9 1,000-yard receiving yards have been produced by Clemson players, including by WR Mike Williams, who has 1,267 yards this season after having 1,030 receiving yards in 2014. Williams suffered a fractured vertebra in 2015's opening game and missed the rest of the season. Clemson's other 1,000-yard receivers have been Rod Gardner in 1999 and 2000, Derrick Hamilton in 2003, Aaron Kelly in 2007, DeAndre Hopkins in 2012 and Sammy Watkins in 2011 and 2013.

11.4 Points per game have been given up by Alabama this season, the lowest average in the nation. Clemson has averaged scoring 39.5 points per game.

13 Consecutive games against Clemson have been won by Alabama. The Tigers won the first three meetings between the teams in 1900, 1904 and 1905. Alabama then defeated Clemson in 1909, 1913, 1931, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1975 and 2008 before winning last year's CFP title game against the Tigers. Ten of the 16 games have been shutouts, including all three of Clemson's victories. Tampa is the eighth site for an Alabama-Clemson game, joining Birmingham, Montgomery and Tuscaloosa in Alabama, Clemson and Columbia in South Carolina, Atlanta and Glendale, Arizona.

15 Non-offensive TDs have been scored by Alabama this season, more than any other team in the nation. The Crimson Tide has returned six interceptions, five fumble recoveries, three punts and one blocked punt for TDs in 2016. Alabama's defense has outscored the Tide's opponent in six games this season.

16 Consecutive games against ranked opponents have been won by Alabama, tied for the longest winning streak in the history of the AP poll. The Crimson Tide's most recent loss to a ranked opponent came on Sept. 19, 2015, when No. 15 Ole Miss upended Alabama 43-37. Southern Cal won 16 consecutive games against ranked opponents across the 2002 through 2005 seasons. No. 2 Texas defeated No. 1 Southern Cal 41-38 in the Rose Bowl on Jan. 5, 2006 to end the streak.

17 100-yard rushing games have been recorded by Clemson RB Wayne Gallman, the most in school history. The Tigers won all 17 games. Alabama has not allowed an opposing ball-carrier to reach 100 yards in 24 consecutive games, since Georgia RB Nick Chubb rushed for 146 on Oct. 3, 2015.

19 Rushing yards were allowed in the red zone by Alabama this season. With the opponent inside its 20-yard line, the Crimson Tide has allowed 19 yards on 25 rushing attempts with two TDs and three first downs. Clemson's offense has run for 245 yards and 24 touchdowns on 113 red-zone carries this season.

20 1,000-yard rushing seasons have been produced by Alabama players after RB Damien Harris reached 1,013 yards for the

2016 campaign in the Crimson Tide's CFP semifinal victory over Washington and by Clemson players with RB Wayne Gallman at 1,087 in 2016 to produce his second straight 1,000-yard season. Alabama's other 1,000-yard rushers have been Johnny Musso in 1970 and 1971, Bobby Humphrey in 1986 and 1987, Siran Stacy in 1989, Sherman Williams in 1994, Dennis Riddle in 1996, Shaun Alexander in 1998 and 1999, Shaud Williams in 2003, Kenneth Darby in 2004 and 2005, Glen Coffee in 2008, Mark Ingram in 2009, Trent Richardson in 2011, Eddie Lacy in 2012, T.J. Yeldon in 2012 and 2013 and Derrick Henry in 2015. Clemson's other 1,000-yard rushers have been Buddy Gore in 1967, Lester Brown in 1978, Cliff Austin in 1982, Kenny Flowers in 1985, Terrence Flagler in 1986, Terry Allen in 1988, Raymond Priester in 1995 and 1996, Travis Zachery in 2000, Woodrow Dantzler in 2000 and 2001, James Davis in 2006 and 2007, C.J. Spiller in 2009, Andre Ellington in 2011 and 2012, Roderick McDowell in 2013 and Deshaun Watson in 2015.

24 Years since Clemson coach Dabo Swinney caught four passes as a wide receiver for Alabama's 1992 consensus national championship team. Swinney then spent the next eight seasons on the Crimson Tide's coaching staff. With 88 victories, Swinney ranks third among Clemson's coaches. The two men ahead of him - Frank Howard with 165 wins and Danny Ford with 96 - also were Alabama graduates.

26 Consecutive games have been won by Alabama, the longest winning streak in the nation. The Crimson Tide hasn't lost since falling to Ole Miss 43-37 on Sept. 19, 2015. The winning streak is the third-longest in SEC history behind two 28-game streaks by Alabama.

30 Consecutive Clemson games have included a TD pass thrown by QB Deshaun Watson. Watson threw for four TDs and 405 yards against Alabama in last year's CFP title game.

34 Consecutive Alabama games have featured a rushing TD by the Crimson Tide, the longest streak in the nation. Alabama was

most recently kept out of the end zone on the ground during a 20-13 overtime victory against LSU on Nov. 8, 2014.

43 Alabama games have featured Lane Kiffin as the offensive coordinator and play-caller. But Kiffin has left to become the head coach at Florida Atlantic, and the Crimson Tide will have Steve Sarkisian calling the plays against Clemson on Monday night.

50 Sacks by Alabama and 49 sacks by Clemson to rank second and third in the nation. Clemson has had at least one sack in 44 consecutive games. Clemson has allowed 16 sacks and Alabama has allowed 24 this season.

62 Rushing yards per game have been given up by the Alabama defense in 2016, the best average in the nation by 35.21 yards per game. The Crimson Tide also leads the nation by allowing three rushing TDs and an average of 2.0 yards per carry. Clemson has averaged 175.36 rushing yards per game and 4.47 yards per carry and scored 28 TDs on the ground this season.

64 Victories since the start of the 2012 season for Alabama, an NCAA-era record for most wins in a five-season span. The Crimson Tide won 13 games in 2012, 11 in 2013, 12 in 2014 and 14 in 2015 and has won 14 games this season. Alabama's 51 victories in four seasons are the most in a four-year span in NCAA FBS history.

87 Three-and-outs have been forced by the Alabama defense this season, the most in the nation. The Clemson defense is second in the nation with 80 three-and-outs.

105 More punt-return yards have been gained by Alabama in 2016 than by any other team in the nation. The Crimson Tide has 519 yards on 33 punt returns. Only nine punts have been returned against Clemson this season, for 43 yards.

107 Years have passed since the last time a major-college football team won at least 15 games in a season. Coach Amos Alonzo Stagg's Chicago team won 16 games in 1899. The only other major-college program with 16-victory seasons is Yale in

1889 and 1894. Teams with 15 victories in a season are Penn in 1892 and 1897 and Chicago in 1896. Alabama is the 10th NCAA FBS team with 14 victories in a season.

180 Rushing yards were gained by Alabama RB Bo Scarbrough in a 24-7 victory over Washington in the Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl on Dec. 31, the most in a bowl in Crimson Tide history. Scarbrough broke the record of 166 rushing yards by Sherman Williams in a 24-17 victory over Ohio State in the Citrus Bowl on Jan. 2, 1995. Scarbrough's 68-yard TD run against Washington was the longest TD run in the Tide's bowl history, eclipsing a 67-yard run by Dixie Howell in a 29-13 victory over Stanford in the Rose Bowl on Jan. 1, 1935.

208 Receiving yards and two TD receptions for Alabama TE O.J. Howard in the CFP title game against Clemson last year. The output represents 13 percent of Howard's career receiving yardage and one-third of his career TD receptions for his 45-game collegiate career.

242 Career receptions have been made by Clemson WR Artavis Scott, the most in Clemson history. During the Fiesta Bowl, Scott broke the school career record established by Sammy Watkins. Scott has caught a pass in a school-record 37 consecutive games.

936 Rushing yards have been gained in the fourth quarter this season by Alabama. The Crimson Tide's rushing yardage by quarter increased throughout the game, from 787 in the first quarter to 835 in the second quarter to 906 in the third quarter to 936 in the fourth quarter. The rushing yardage given up by the Clemson defense this season increased by quarter, too. The Tigers allowed 182 rushing yards in the first quarter, 398 in the second, 549 in the third and 594 in the fourth.

1,291,325 Spectators have attended Alabama's games this season, more than have seen any other college football team play.

Let's all give a big thank you to [Mark Inabinett \(minabinett@al.com\)](mailto:minabinett@al.com)

Post-Game -- CFP Championship Game – The Full Recap

Uncommitted football fans across the world enjoyed one of the best football games of all-time on Monday evening January 9 from 8:00PM 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 one second still 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.

DeShaun Watson, interviewed after the game told reporters that his message to his teammates on the drive was to stay calm; don't get nervous; and they would prevail. They did.

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.

"Everything was calm, and nobody panicked," Watson said. "I walked up to my offensive line and my receivers, and I said, 'Let's be legendary.' God put us here for a reason."

Coach Swinney offered: "He didn't lose out on the Heisman. The Heisman lost out on him."

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 are in fact generally heartsick.

They know their star back Bo Scarbrough was out of the game after a half due to injury and they know there was the matter of those two picks, perhaps even legal picks but maybe not--that became touchdowns and there was no flag. 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?

It was not once in the fourth quarter, but twice that Clemson took the lead by completing passes at the goal line on what's best known as a pick play (although coaches call it a "rub"). The final pick play was on the winning throw from Deshaun Watson to Hunter Renfrow.

The play, which is clearly borrowed from the basketball court, is simple to execute and simple to spot. One receiver runs a route that might "accidentally" impede a defender from following a second receiver on his route. By "taking out" the defended, the receiver is sprung open for a quarterback to deliver what in most cases can develop into an easy toss to an un-defended receiver.

Often, officials will throw a flag for this is offensive pass interference when it happens and the official is inclined to find the flag. In 2014, Notre Dame lost in a game between top five teams due, in part, to a penalty on a play that was almost identical to the one that gave Clemson its first national title since 1981. The Irish touchdown was taken off the board and they eventually lost the game.

So, where is the consistency? Ironically, on the play before the TD, Alabama was penalized pass interference so we know the rationale for a no-call was not that there were no flags available in any of the officials' pockets.

Studying the rules, we know that it 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!

Sure, Alabama could have played better. Sometimes it grated me that their offensive performance could not have been like the days when AJ McCarron was the Tide field general. Their offense was sluggish and they depended on their defense after Bo Scarbrough was no longer on the field. Derrick Henry made the difference in the 2016 game and he or a healthy Bo Scarbrough would have made a difference on January 9 also.

Of course, when the stripe officials suit up in the same colors as the opponents, that often takes away a lot of great defensive actions, no matter how good the defensive unit may be playing. Making the game something that it was not however, cannot bring Alabama a W no matter their effort. Like all fans, the loss set me back and it will take a few days to get the shock out of our systems. we can

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.

Last year Watson threw for almost 500 yards and this year, the Crimson Tide managed him better; but he still stole 420 yards on 36-of-56 passing and three touchdowns. Renfrow caught ten of his passes for 92 yards and two touchdowns and big 6'3" leaping Mike Williams adding eight receptions for 94 yards and one 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 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.

Alabama did not get much rest as the offense ran just 66 plays. Its defensive depth was not at the same level as the 2015 team. The wear of those extra plays on the Alabama defense was evident in the second half. Clemson visited the red zone four times and they scored four times. Alabama had typically rejected opponents on two of every three red zone attempts. On the field fatigue, surely was a factor though there are no real excuses.

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 3-of-31.

Nick Saban saw it as it was. "They made the plays and we didn't," Saban said. "We could have done some things better, but I'm proud of the way our guys competed."

Without Bo Scarbrough's first down production, Alabama struggled for most of the second half offensively but the Tide did take a 24-14 lead on a 68-yard touchdown pass from Hurts to O.J. Howard with 1:53 remaining in the third quarter. Clemson fans quickly remembered Howard as the MVP of last year's title game with 208 yards on five receptions. Alabama had faked the look of a quick screen before Howard raced behind a confused Clemson secondary for the catch. And the TD.

It is significant that the Crimson Tide played almost the last 20 minutes without tailback Bo Scarbrough, who was injured after he had amassing 93 yards on 16 carries.

"Not to have him was probably a little bit of a disadvantage for us," Saban gave it a positive slant when he said. "I was pleased with our other backs who had an opportunity in this game, Josh Jacobs and Damien Harris, but we always miss a guy who's Bo Scarbrough's size when we want to run the ball and take some time off the clock."

Alabama had to punt after a three-and-out on the night's opening possession. Clemson on its first drive then moved across midfield before they were stuffed by Tony Brown on a fourth down and 1 try on a pitch to Gallman. Alabama then took over on their own 41.

Bama got going on their second possession on a 20-yard scramble by Hurts down the right sideline to the Clemson 39-yard line and grabbed a 7-0 lead at the 9:23 mark of the first quarter on Bo Scarbrough's 25-yard scamper around left end.

Watson was a bit shaky at first but calmed down as the O-line settled down. He fumbled a low shotgun snap late in the first quarter. Alabama outside linebacker Ryan Anderson recovered the fumble at Clemson's 35-yard line, Mistakes stopped an Alabama advance. There was a false start on Cam Robinson and a 2-yard loss by Scarbrough and the Tide was forced to punt.

When they got the ball back, ArDarius Stewart started Alabama's second touchdown drive with a 25-yard run to Clemson's 49-yard line early in the second quarter. From here, Scarbrough broke loose moments later from 37 yards out to make it 14-0.

The Alabama fans and the Clemson fans had a feeling that Alabama was on the verge of breaking things open until Tigers receiver Deon Cain took a short Watson pass and weaved 43 yards to Alabama's 39. It was the juice Clemson needed to convince them they “could.” It was a major momentum shift.

Watson was energized and calm by then. He completed a third-and-10 pass for Leggett for 26 yards to the Alabama 13 and ran in for an 8-yard score to pull the Tigers within 14-7 with 6:09 before halftime. That would be the end of the first-half scoring, with the Tide held the seven-point lead at the break even though they had been somewhat outgained 203-183.

Alabama's Anderson struck again early in the second half, stripping Tigers tailback Gallman of the ball and returning the fumble to the Clemson 16. For whatever reason Alabama, just as it had done after Anderson's first fumble recovery, could not move the ball and had to settle for a 27-yard Adam Griffith field goal for a 17-7 lead.

Clemson was no longer intimidated to say the least. They reduced the lead to 17-14 with 7:10 left in the third quarter on a 24-yard touchdown pass from Watson to Renfrow. After a Tide, TD, The

Tigers then pulled within 24-21 in the first minute of the fourth quarter on a 4-yard touchdown pass from Watson to Williams.

Clemson coach Dabo Swinney is one of Alabama's own. Swinney became just the second person to have won an Associated Press national championship as a player and coach. Swinney was a wide receiver on Gene Stallings' 1992 Alabama team that won the AP national championship and now he has coached Clemson to a national title over his alma mater Crimson Tide. Swinney still has a lot of love for Alabama and its supporters. He is a good guy

Coach Dabo Swinney was all emotion as he described the victory for Clemson: "This has been the most incredible team I've ever been around," Swinney said. "You saw their heart, and it's been there all year."

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.

Speaking for myself and millions of others, it was also a big loss for Alabama fans. There will be no brooding or whining, however, as there is next season and more as Alabama goes for its seventeenth National Championship. The fans, the team, the coach, and the University will all dust ourselves off and play strong again. Watch out next year folks! It will be another great Alabama Crimson Tide football year. You can take that to the bank.

Best of Alabama Football in 2016

Alex Byington of the Decatur Daily wrote a nice short article on December 23, before the Peach Bowl, about the top ten moments of the 2016 season. Alabama has already won the Peach Bowl v the Washington Huskies W (24-7). I am writing this section about some of the season's great moments right after the 2017 CFP Championship Game played last night in Florida. I expected Alabama to win and had some modifications to make to this book before I could submit it for printing.

I am not copying Mr. Byington's piece but it is good enough to copy. I would be pleased to include it as is with the addition of the Peach Bowl and the CFP Championship game, but there is a copyright caveat in the article and I do not have time to get permission. Therefore, I am simply using Alex's piece as a reference point for some facts in my list of great 2016/2017 achievements.

Additionally, I have a lot of other notions that are not in Mr. Byington's piece that I share below:.

Here is my list of twelve great moments in the 2016 / 2017 season.

1. 14 wins – Great achievement for a Div I team
2. One-loss Season. 14-1 is a great season.
3. Played in the 2017 College Football Playoff Championship
4. Peach Bowl Victory
5. Won SEC Championship dominating Florida
6. Won the Ole Miss Closest Game Away W (48-43)
7. Won LSU Game 2nd Closest Game Away W (10-0)
8. Won Arkansas Game 2nd Closest Game Away W (49-30)
9. Won Tennessee Rivalry W (49-10)
10. Won the Iron Bowl v Auburn W (30-12)
11. Won all other regular season games by at least 28 points
12. Fourteen non-offensive touchdowns

Chapter 20 Great Players in Alabama Football

Introduction

There are many leaders of the world who think the gold standard is unusable for currency. Over time, these leaders have had their way in most countries including the US. Today US currency value floats with the value of what it can purchase. There is no gold standard for US currency. The US now has a fiat money system, meaning the dollar's value is not linked to any specific asset. It is thus tricky trying to figure out what a dollar is worth. So, how can we find the relative value of a football player, which is very subjective when we cannot find a standard to measure the value of currency, a very objective notion.

Consequently, we can readily conclude that It tricky trying to name the best players in the history of the University of Alabama football program history as there is no one standard to use – rushing yards, sacks, interceptions, pass completions. And, of course there are the intangibles such as desire, natural ability, etc. I think you see my point.

We learned in this book that the Alabama football program dates from 1892. It boasts of having 120 or more players who were named first-team All-American over 150 times, and 240 or more players who landed all-conference honors over 320 times. The list of Alabama greats is large indeed. Moreover, few of us alive today saw the first game in 1892 and the last game on January 9, 2017 or later. Nobody can know it all for sure?

Alabama has won so many trophies that a couple of years ago the Bryant Museum ran a humorous ad campaign. The idea was that the Crimson Tide could consider using some of the “revered artifacts”

for novel gifts such as paper weights, back scratchers, door jams, etc. The bottom line is how can a mere human define best as it pertains to any player from any position?

Do you base it on statistics? Would a player have had to be named an All-American or to a Hall of Fame to be considered? Can a ratio be created so that so many sacks equal so many receptions? How would we compare players from different eras?

Would being the biggest icon count? If so, quarterback Joe Namath would of course have to be included, and probably Kenny Stabler as well, even though neither is in the College Football Hall of Fame. Yet, they are two of my most favorite Alabama players. I bet there are others with differing opinions.

Why not use most awards? There would have to be a place for offensive lineman Barrett Jones. Should continual success be the criterion? Quarterback AJ McCarron and linebacker Woodrow Lowe would be right there at the top.

I am convinced that Consequently, if 100 different people put a list of Alabama's best 100 players together, there would be 100 different results with different rankings. Surely, you can go to the Internet and find many lists that compare Alabama players and deliver results like as if they are definitely correct. I encourage you to make your own list and compare.

For this chapter, the standard is simple. I like the method but you might not. In some ways, it is like being on a playground picking teams. These are the players that I'd want on my team —the players who have to be considered among the best to ever play for the Crimson Tide. Of course, on your list, which would be different than mine, the players would be different and they would more than likely be picked in a different sequence.

I expect this to be a living book and I suspect I will receive a lot of input about this topic and I can see more names being added as the years go by. And, they may not all be mew players.

I have picked my players over the full research process of writing this book. I have them all written down already. My list is categorized and as complete as it will be until the next edition of the book.

I first created a tentative list of great talent. I then scoured my list of “***Great*** Alabama Football Players.” I did not presume to know the **greatest** of them or the ranking of any of the players, I then picked an extended team and I think you would agree we could beat a most if not all of the other teams out there from all over the football ages.

I then categorized the list by position. In this way, I can present something fun to read to you. This list is now textually formatted with pictures and it is categorized by general position. The sequence of the players within the categories is random with very little of “I like that guy” help when a name is placed in the category.

If it were based on who would be on my mind first, it might have been Kenny “The Snake” Stabler on top of the list and Joe Namath second, and Bart Starr, third, or maybe the same names in a different sequence. But, the list is random by position. I hope you find the list enjoyable and that you enjoy reading about some of the great players in Alabama football. Sure most of them would be in anybody else’s greatest list but I did not do it that way. At a minimum it gives the readers of this book something to chew the fat about when you get together, have a few beers, and compare notes:

Quarterbacks

Harry Gilmer



Harry Gilmer is on everybody's "greatest" list so I would not ever consider leaving him off my "great" list. During World War II, Harry headed up what was called "The War Babies," a group of players who, for the most part, could not serve in the military for one reason or another. Harry went on to have a prestigious career. The renowned sportswriter Grantland Rice [called](#) him, "the greatest college passer I've ever seen."

In his sophomore year, Harry Gilmer led the nation in passing touchdowns (13) and was second in total offense (1,457 yards). In his junior year, Gilmer led the nation in punt returns with a 14.5 average on 37 returns. He was a versatile quarterback who in his spare time played defensive back. .

He was resilient and had the good fortune of being drafted by the Washington Redskins. Before that, Gilmer was the 9146 Rose Bowl MVP, and he was the first overall draft pick in 1948. What a guy!

Harry Gilmer ended his career as Alabama's all-time leader in rushing (1,673 yards), passing (2,894 yards), punt returns (13.5 average), kickoff returns (28.7 yard average.) and interceptions. He also passed for 26 touchdowns and ran for 24 more. If time stood still, Harry would won all those records today. Nobody can deny, however, for his day, Harry was great and at quarterback he was definitely the greatest.

Besides his explosive offensive talents, Gilmer also punted for the Tide with an average of 36.4 yards per punt. He could do anything or so it seemed. He also played defensive back. Harry Gilmer is not a name that every Crimson Tide fan knows, but it's a name every Crimson Tide fan should know.

Harry was born in Birmingham Alabama in 1926 and went to Woodlawn High School. He was a great innovator and was best known for his jumping in the air and then passing the ball. Check out the picture.

Gilmer played football as a child with kids that were much older than him so he learned quickly. To combat the height difference, he would jump in the air as he threw the ball. Harry Gilmer originated the jump pass. It was not Tim Tebow.

Gilmer had an enormous career with the Tide. Some think his biggest success with the Crimson Tide might have been leading the Tide to the 1946 Rose Bowl where he helped to beat USC 34-14. Gilmer was the MVP of the Rose Bowl that year.

Gilmer was the SEC player of the year, all SEC, and an All-American in 1945. In addition to being picked first for the NFL draft, he was invited to the pro bowl twice. He then coached the Detroit Lions for a year after he retired as a player in the NFL.

Harry Gilmer... do you got that... one of the best ever at any position.

Bart Starr



Ole # 15, Bart Starr was born on January 9, 1934 in Montgomery Alabama and he “ain’t never been nothin’ but a winner”. My dad and I loved watching Bart Starr and the Packers win one after another on Sundays on our 1956 Admiral B/W tube style TV.

Some of today’s NFL players might claim that all they do is win, but for Bart Starr that was the reality... but it took him a little time to get there. Starr’s star time at Alabama was an up and down affair plagued by injuries that kept him sidelined for most of his junior year, which is why he isn’t higher on the other folks’ lists of the greats.

Once he got to the NFL though, everything changed. Starr was so poorly used at Alabama by Jennings Whitworth, who occupies the bottom of most folk’s Alabama head coaching list, that his record was not good enough for a pro-tryout. If it were not for a friend Bart Starr would have been a successful businessman someplace.

He got his shot at the NFL only because he was recommended to the Green Bay Packers personnel director by Alabama’s basketball coach Johnny Dee. Great coaches in all sports can recognize talent. Johnny Dee, the great Alabama basketball coach knew Bart Starr had that certain something. Dee coached basketball at Alabama and also at Notre Dame. He knew how to win.

Coach Drew was replaced by Coach Whitworth who changed everything about the Alabama football program but especially its winning tradition. Bart Starr whose injury was severe had played for Drew as an underclassman and did quite well. When it came his time, however, as a senior after being injured, the new coach decided he wanted the team to run the ball and not be so flashy with the passes. Bart Starr was a great passer. Only when it was a last resort did Starr play in his senior year so there was little for the pros to find in his record to make him a good selection.

Thanks to Johnny Dee, Bart Starr had a 9-1 playoff record in the NFL and led the Packers to five championships and Super Bowls I and II. Starr was the MVP of both Super Bowls in which he played. He went to four Pro Bowls and was also the NFL's MVP in 1966. All of this after what some might say was an injury-plagued mediocre college career at Alabama and being drafted 200th overall in the 17th round of the 1956 draft.

Alabama claims Bart Starr, one of the greatest football players of all time as one of its own. Starr is the perfect example of a player who didn't reach his full potential until he got to the NFL. Starr may not be remembered for wild success on the field at Alabama, but he is undoubtably one of the great quarterbacks who played at Alabama. There are none who can always claim that they were always a Starr.

Starr also coached the Green Bay Packers from 1975-1983. How's that for a record.

Pat Trammell



As soon as I realized that Pat Trammell from Scottsboro, AL was Bear Bryant's first quarterback and Bear Bryant's first star, I asked myself how he could be denied his spot on this list of Alabama "greats." He cannot be denied and so he won't be denied.

Before committing to Alabama, Trammell had planned to play for Coach Bobby Dodd at Georgia Tech. But his plans changed when Coach Bear Bryant mentioned to Trammell's family on a visit to his home that if Pat came to Alabama, he'd come too.

During the 1959 season, sophomore Pat Trammell led the Tide in total offense and in 1960 he led the team in scoring. He is an unsung hero who was often an Alabama hero. He is a hero no matter how you might try to cut it.

In 1961 Pat Trammell led the Alabama Crimson Tide to a perfect season as its field general and he led them to a unanimous national championship. It was the program's first championship since the leadership of coach Frank Thomas.

Trammell was the player chosen to accompany Coach Bryant to New York for the presentation of the MacArthur Trophy. Bryant and Trammel accepted the trophy from President John F. Kennedy on national television at a black tie gala hosted by Bob Hope.

Trammell was the 1961 SEC Player of the Year and an NCAA Academic All-American. His hand and foot prints are cemented in front of Denny Chimes as a permanent captain for the 1961 team. He is one of Alabama's greats. He was Bear's first QB.

Trammel was so good that Green Bay Packers coach Vince Lombardi tried to get Alabama coach Bear Bryant to convince Pat to play for the Packers after graduation. Bear Bryant gave Trammel all the credit in the world as a human being as Coach Bryant told Coach Lombardi that Trammell was too smart. Pat Trammel completed an undergraduate degree summa cum laude in physical chemistry and went on to medical school and in his life saved many lives.

They tell me that two Alabama records still belong to Pat Trammell – lowest interception percentage for a single season (1.5%, 1960) and lowest career interception percentage. If the recordsmeisters find that I got this wrong, please let me know and I will fix this but I know you know that we do the best we can in life as there is no better that we can do without help from guys like you and me. When the Bear thinks somebody is a “great,” who could vote against such a nominee.

AJ McCarron



AJ McCarron signed up for a tour of duty at Alabama U in 2009 after a standout career at St. Paul's Episcopal in Mobile, AL. He redshirted in the 2009 season, then he backed up Greg McElroy during the 2010 campaign. McCarron was a team player and came ready when the coach called him.

In 2011 McCarron played well against Kent State and Penn State to secure the starting job over Phillip Sims and spent the next three seasons as the first face of the Alabama offense.

The 2011 Tide offense was run-first on the back of Trent Richardson, giving McCarron time to settle into his role as a starter and ease his way to success. His performance in the National Championship game against LSU (23-34, 234 yds, 0 TD, 0 INT) earned him Offensive MVP honors in a W (21-0) effort..

A 291 pass streak that started in 2011 and ended in the 2012 season is an SEC record for most consecutive pass attempts without an interception.

Amari Cooper's arrival in 2012 gave McCarron his highest yards per attempt for a season in his career. AJ led the country in passer

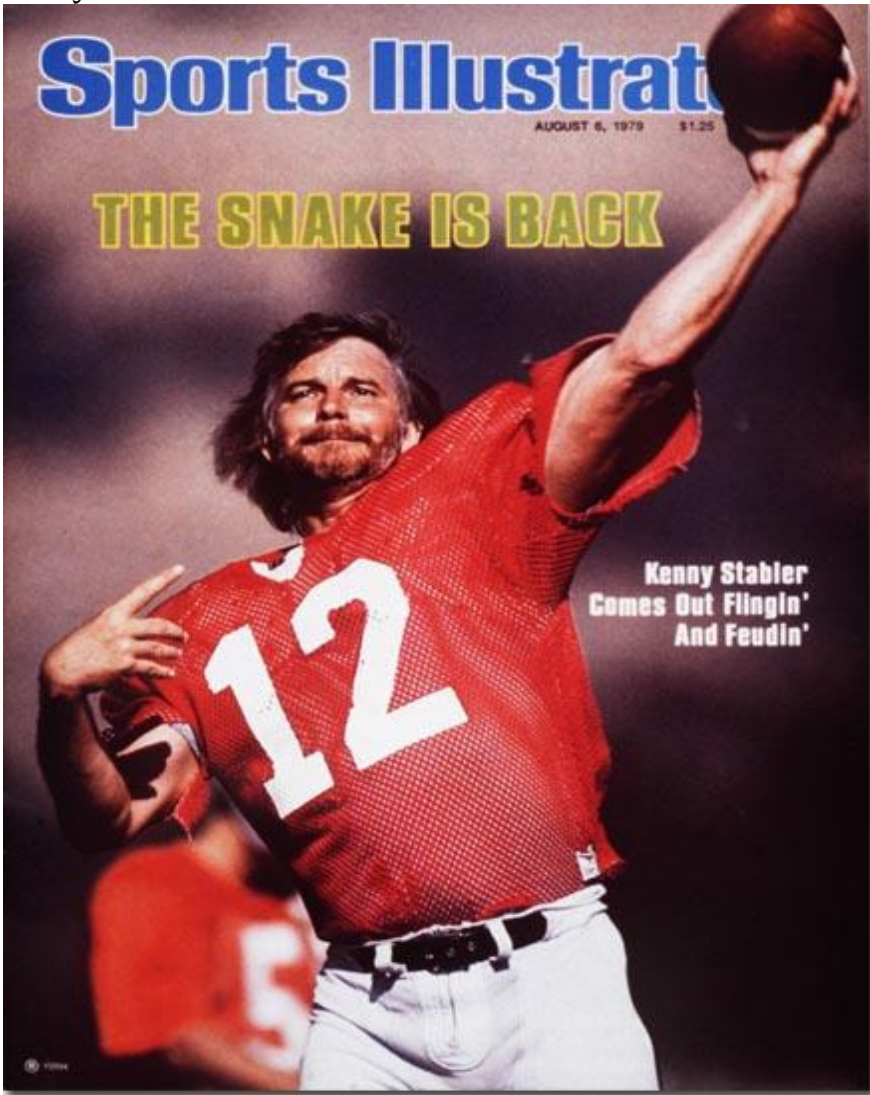
efficiency and set a school record for single-season passing touchdowns.

McCarron threw a 44-yard touchdown to Cooper to take the lead against UGA to clinch a berth in a second national championship game. He was again nearly flawless against Notre Dame in the championship game, throwing for four touchdowns. His only negative in terms of being on the “Great” list is that his legacy has not matured. His reality has overwhelmed his legacy before his time. Amen to AJ McCarron.

In 2013, McCarron was an all-SEC selection. He had broken Greg McElroy’s school record for single-season passing yards, and he became Alabama’s all-time passing yards leader. He won the Maxwell Award and the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award and finished second in voting for the Heisman Trophy. Perhaps he should have been # 1.

McCarron was selected by the Cincinnati Bengals in the fifth round of the 2014 NFL Draft. He took over the starting role at the end of the regular season in his first year to replace an injured Andy Dalton. If you can play for Alabama, you can play anywhere!

Kenny Stabler



My father-in-law wore a Kenny Stabler T-shirt in proper rotation and an Oakland Raiders hat for years as “the snake” at the Raiders was his favorite player on his favorite team. They guys at the “Legion” loved his attire. Stanley Piotroski died too quickly after open heart surgery one weekend that I was at a national college football game. I thought Dad had it made already and would be joining us at the games soon. I was wrong. The best laid plans of mice and men gang oft aglay. He loved Stabler. Dad “played” at Iwo Jimo and spent too much time bagging American bodies to actually have a sense of humor. Yet he had a great sense of humor.

He told me what a non-conformist Mr. Stabler was and he loved the Snake to pieces. So, I have an affinity for the Snake, and I hope this Alabama great is now having one-on-ones with Smokey Piotroski among some of his buddies in the land of football immortals.

Wouldn't you like to be the guy on the cover of Sports Illustrated when their hottest editions had nothing to do with bathing suits? Kenny "The Snake" Stabler was Alabama Crimson Tide royalty. The Snake was the kind of football player that Alabama fans love. He was tough, talented, and cocky.

Kenny Stabler was born in Foley, Alabama on December 25, 1945...so when you open your family presents on Christmas morning, you can always think of the Snake.

Stabler was one of a kind. He was an extremely talented all-around athlete in high school. He loved football the best. Mr. Stabler turned down contract offers from the Houston Astros and the New York Yankees to go to Alabama so he could play top-notch football.

He came to Alabama in 1964, but Kenny Stabler couldn't play on the varsity because at the time the NCAA forbid freshmen from playing. Some see this as proof that in many ways the NCAA has never made much sense. Stabler didn't play much in 1965 either as he was backing up Steve Sloan. If you know your football, you must be saying, "Holy Cow Batman, Bear Bryant had Joe Namath, Steve Sloan, and Kenny Stabler on his roster all at the same time." Now that sure is something.

In his first season as the Crimson Tide's quarterback Ken Stabler helped the Tide finish with an 11-0 record and he contributed mightily to a blowout of Nebraska in the Sugar Bowl.

Kenny Stabler's Senior season didn't go as well for him. He wound up getting kicked off the team for a while for cutting class. That year, however, did contain what would become known as "The Run in the Mud." While trailing Auburn in an Iron Bowl Stabler pleased Alabama fans forever when he ran for 53 yards to win the game. Bear Bryant said he could watch that play forever.

Stabler was well known as a great NFL Quarterback for the Oakland Raiders from 1970-1979. The scrambling lefty was fun to watch. He helped the Raiders win Super Bowl XI. Stabler was called into action in four NFL Pro Bowls as well. He was finally inducted into the Football Hall of Fame.



When he finished playing, Kenny Stabler joined Eli Gold as the color commentator for Alabama football on the radio until 2008. Listening to the Snake became a favorite pastime of many Alabama fans during the 2000s.

Besides being a full-time rascal, Kenny Stabler had a soft side and took the time to write a children's book called "Roll Tide!"

Sadly the Snake passed away on July 8, 2015. He was just 69 years old. He will be missed by many including yours truly. Save a place

for Kenny under your Christmas tree each year and at the family table. Ask him how his new buddy Smokey Piotroski is doing?

Joe Namath



No description necessary

Joe Namath of Beaver Falls, PA played for the Crimson Tide from 1961-1964. By the way, his home town population was just 8,987 at the time of the 2010 census. Beaver Falls swells way past its natural size when Joe Namath comes back to his home town. They sure love Joe Namath in Beaver Falls. That says a lot about the man.

In 1969, the town had a celebration for Mr. Namath as he was celebrating his own great fortune in pro-football after a fine college career with the Crimson Tide. The Mayor presented Joe with the keys to the City. Namath is an overall good guy and has a lot of affection for a lot of people including his family and his football coach. On Joe Namath Day in Beaver Falls, the regulars rode with him in the provided limousine. He has a great sense of humor and he can recall at the time of the presentation of the keys having some other thoughts:

There Are No Coal Mines In Beaver Falls

By Joe Namath with Dick Schaap

“At the big dinner the mayor of Beaver Falls, Howard Marshall, presented me with the keys to the city. It was nice of him to do that, but by then I would have preferred a glass of Scotch.”

I was going home, back to Beaver Falls, on May 23, 1969, to celebrate the first, and possibly last, “Joe Namath Day.” I don’t think it’ll ever be a national holiday. I had just a small group with me—a lawyer, a public-relations man, a television crew, half a dozen photographers and writers, a couple of teammates, a few friends, and two tension-easers, a tall one and a short one. You can’t go home empty-handed.

The short one was wearing a completely transparent blouse. When our plane from New York landed in Pitts-

burgh, who was 9; and Franklin, who was 6—and they’d waited a long time before they’d decided to try once more for a girl. They found out right away I was a boy. I wore my hair shorter then.

My father and my high school football coach, Larry Bruno, who was the chairman of “Joe Namath Day,” shared the limousine I rode in. It was a nice limousine, and the boy who was driving, an end on the high school team in 1968, told me his father owned it. I was a little surprised. Beaver Falls isn’t a very wealthy town, and not too many people

work where my mother works as a saleslady. She works now because she wants to; she used to work because she had to.

When I was growing up, my mother was a maid up in Patterson Heights, the fancy section of Beaver Falls. At night, she’d stay up late, cutting down my brothers’ old baseball and football uniforms to fit me. Now my mother lives up in Patterson Heights.

We crossed a bridge over the Beaver River, separating New Brighton and Beaver Falls. From the limousine, we

Joe Namath was an athlete. In fact, he was a three-sport athlete in high school and he had turned down offers from multiple MLB teams in order to take a scholarship from Coach Bear Bryant.

He played before Kenny Stabler but they got to know each other. Namath led the Tide to a 9-1 record in the 1962 regular season, including the fourth consecutive shutout of Auburn in the Iron Bowl. Namath was responsible for three touchdowns against Auburn. Alabama went on to beat Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl.

Namath started the first ten games of the 1963 season, leading Alabama to an 8-2 record. He was suspended for the last two games of the season and did not play against Miami or in the Sugar Bowl against Ole Miss. He violated a “Bear Rule,” and the Bear was unforgiving about his rules until you did the punishment.

In spite of a nagging knee injury, Namath came back after sitting out the end of 1963 and was the star of the 1964 national championship team. He was an all-SEC and an all-American selection in 1964. He is quite an athlete and quite a great guy.

The New York Jets selected Joe Namath with the first overall pick in the 1964 AFL Draft. In 1969, Joe Namath and the Jets won Super Bowl III, making Namath the first quarterback to start in and win a national championship in college and at the professional level.

Namath's going to the Jets is also how Alabama ended up adopting houndstooth. New York Jets owner Sonny Werblin gave Bear Bryant his first houndstooth hat as a thank you for suggesting that the Jets draft Namath.

Namath, whose flashy style in the 1960's and 1970's led to his nickname, "Broadway Joe," is perhaps best recognized as the quarterback of the New York Jets, who upset the Baltimore Colts in Super Bowl III. He attracted national attention before the game when he guaranteed that his team would win.

Joe Namath was the original celebrity quarterback. He appeared in print advertisements and TV shows. When ABC first broadcasted Monday Night Football in 1970, they deliberately showcased Joe Namath's Jets.

In 1981, Joe Namath was inducted into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame. He is a member of the 1985 NFL Hall of Fame class.

In 1985, Mr. Namath chose his High School Football Coach Lawrence F. Bruno Sr, his friend who he respected deeply, a long-time high school and college football coach, to present him when he was enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio.

In August 2012, Joe Namath again returned to Beaver Falls to celebrate his old coach who had passed away in 2010. The town festivities surrounded the opening of a Hall of Achievement Sports Museum in the Carnegie Free Library of Beaver Falls in a series of events to mark the occasion. The events included six inductees -- including a father and his son, and a team -- into the second class of a Circle of Achievement. Every year the Larry Bruno Foundation will add to displays.



Julia Rendleman/Post-Gazette

Larry Bruno Foundation board members Ken Thomas, left, and Ed Derosé, above, discuss logistics for this big event. They had full confidence Joe Namath would be with them that night and he was. Look at who is peeking over their shoulder as they plan this heartwarming event. Broadway Joe may have a lot of flash but he also has a lot of heart. They sure love him in Beaver Falls, PA.

Receivers

Don Hutson



Long before Jerry Rice, in fact, about 50 years before Jerry, there was Don Hutson of the Alabama Crimson Tide

Yes, after Hutson, it was approximately 50 years before Jerry Rice changed the way the wide receiver position was played, Don Hutson revolutionized it first at both the collegiate and professional levels.

With deceptive speed, Hutson was considered the pioneer of modern pass patterns. He was the first to perfect the technique of catching a pass "in traffic" and made the end-around a potent weapon.

"For every pass I caught in a game, I caught a thousand in practice," Hutson once said.

Hutson played 11 years in the NFL with Green Bay, 1935-45, was All-Pro nine times, led the league in pass receptions eight times and in scoring five times, and was twice named MVP (1941-42). He finished his pro career with 488 pass receptions, more than 200 more than the next-best player in his era.

His 99 career touchdown receptions stood as an NFL record for more than four decades, and his mark of 29 points in a game has yet to be broken. But each week in the fall, we look at Nick Saban's teams and wonder when!

Don Hutson has been characterized as the first modern wide receiver. He is a native of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and he was pleased to play his college football at Alabama from 1932-34. He and Bear Bryant both played the end position on the 1934 national championship team. Bryant had the utmost respect for Hutson.

Bryant was no slouch playing end and there are many who have the "Bear" listed in their best Alabama greatest players list. Bear took no credit in for his place on the team. Instead, he humbly referred to himself as the "other end" on the '34 team. Bear was lots more than that but Hutson was a phenomenon for the ages. They were buddies.

In spite of his success in college, Hutson was not widely sought by NFL teams. He was thought of as a little guy despite his phenomenal Alabama record. The pros thought he was too skinny and more than likely could not take the pounding meted out by the huge NFL linemen.

Coaches questioned whether Hutson could be successful at the next level. But there was one coach, legendary Packers coach Curly Lambeau (Think of Lambeau Field in Green Bay WI), who took a chance on Hutson and signed him in 1935.

Hutson quickly proved his worth. On his first play in the NFL, he snagged an 83-yard touchdown catch. That first play started him on his way to 98 more career touchdowns—best in Packers franchise history. All records are made to be broken.

Hutson was a great Pro. He was an 8-time all-Pro selection and still holds the highest TDs /quarter for a receiver. He also holds NFL

records for most seasons leading the league in scoring, receiving yards, and receiving touchdowns.



Hutson is easily the greatest receiver of all time—even compared to Jerry Rice, though some may argue that point. I make no judgments here. My objective is to prove the player was *great* and they deserve to be on my list.

Hutson's greatest individual performance might have come on Oct. 7, 1945. During a 57-21 win over the Detroit Lions at State Fair Park stadium in Milwaukee, Hutson scored four touchdowns in the second quarter and added five PATs for a 29-point quarter. Hutson, however, fell short of the single-game scoring record, held by Ernie Nevers, who had 40 points (six touchdowns and four PATs) for the Chicago Cardinals against the Chicago Bears in 1929.

Don Hutson's jersey # 14 was the first retired by the Green Bay Packers. He is in the College Football Hall of Fame, the NFL Hall of Fame, and the Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame.

I love to repeat that the “other end” across the field from Don Hutson, another famous Alabama legend named Bear Bryant, of course would go on to earn most of his fame as Alabama’s most legendary coach. Paul “Bear” Bryant kept defenses busy while Hutson ran wild on them. You can find Bear Bryant on many greatest players from Alabama lists. I think he would be pleased to be known as the best coach that ever lived—in all aspects of the game and life.

Ozzie Newsome



Although some consider Ozzie Newsome the best tight end in NFL history, he first was a wide receiver at Alabama.

As a four-year starter from 1974-77, he set many of the Crimson Tide reception records. Overall, he caught 102 passes for 2,070 yards, with an average gain per pass of 20.3 yards, an SEC record.

Ozzie Newsome might have had just three years on the Alabama varsity. In 1968, the NCAA allowed freshman eligibility in all sports, except football and basketball, and extended the rule to those sports effective with the 1972-73 academic year.

In the NFL, he was known as "The Wizard of Oz." Newsome played in 198 consecutive games with the Cleveland Browns and he was steady and reliable as a receiver. At one point, he caught a pass in 150 consecutive games—the second-longest streak in the NFL at the time.

Ozzie Newsome retired from Pro Football as the NFL's all-time leading tight end in receiving with 662 receptions, 7,980 yards and 47 touchdowns.

He was well decorated for his many achievements on and off the field. But, off the field it was all Ozzie, not the decorations or the fame that made him the man he is.

For example, he won the NFL Players Association's Byron "Whizzer" White award for community service in 1990, four years after being presented the Ed Block Courage Award for continuing to play in spite of injuries.

Newsome is still enjoying the game of football as the general manager of the Baltimore Ravens.



Ozzie has great pro stats but before being the pro that he is, Ozzie Newsome became a legendary SEC figure. In College, he did not necessarily have the biggest numbers, but he was one of the most impressive athletes the conference had ever seen when he arrived at Alabama.

Playing a hybrid receiver-tight end role, Newsome was one of the best big-play ends the college game had ever seen, and he had the expert blocking ability to go along with his receiving skills.

Ozzie Newsome was named the best Crimson Tide player of the 1970s. His 20.3 yards per catch stood as the best mark in SEC history for two decades after he was long gone from the conference.

As noted, Newsome went on to have a Hall of Fame career with the Cleveland Browns and he became the NFL's first black general manager with the Baltimore Ravens. Ozzie still goes to work every day as the Ravens GM. His job today is to create more potential Ozzie Newsomes. That is plural, folk—not possessive!

Julio Jones



Julio Jones (2008 – 2010), a recent “great,” came to the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa from Foley, Alabama (less than 250 miles away). In Foley, he was named a high school all-American by multiple services. Sports Illustrated ranked him the top overall recruit in the class of 2008. ESPN had him ranked #2, behind Da’Quan Bowers.

Julio immediately made his presence known at the wide receiver position. Jones was the first true freshman receiver to start in a season opener for the Crimson Tide. He then earned SEC Freshman of the Year honors. Playing on the varsity as a freshman, Jones broke Alabama freshman records for receptions, receiving yards, and receiving touchdowns. Apparently, Julio Jones was not aware that he was just a kid.

Even while battling injuries as a sophomore, Jones led all Alabama receivers for first-year starting quarterback Greg McElroy. He helped lead the Nick Saban coached team to a 14-0 run and a BCS National Championship Game.

As a junior, Julio set a single-game receiving record with 221 yards against Tennessee. He finished his career 2nd all-time in receptions and yards, and fourth in receiving touchdowns. Wow!

Jones entered the NFL Draft as a junior and was selected by the Atlanta Falcons with their sixth overall pick. After about four great years of Falcon play, Atlanta picked up the fifth-year option on his rookie contract and then signed him to a 5-year extension worth over \$70 million. One might conclude that Julio Jones is one of the great ones just on that alone.

For those who want to select only the best and not just great Alabama players, it is a difficult task to choose between Amari Cooper and Julio Jones. Some say it is a bit like choosing a favorite child.

Both of these men are, without a doubt, the two best Alabama receivers in the modern era. That makes both of them *great*, which is the admissions criteria for this book. Both came to the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa with high expectations and they more than

managed to live up to them. They were both key weapons on a national championship team and / or on another team that nearly won a national championship. Great talents!

Julio Jones therefore will always be respected as a great receiver whether second best, third best, best, or he comes in someplace after Don Hutson. He was known upon arrival as a transformative player. Those who like using terms that are not familiar, might have even called Julio Jones one of Saban's first—"freak" athletes—the great athletic recruits the fabled coach brought early to Alabama. Jones sure was a cut above the competition. Freak? Probably not!

In Saban's run-heavy, pro-style offense, Jones, nonetheless blossomed into one of the most feared downfield threats in college football. Why? It was thanks to his phenomenal athleticism and size and desire to excel. Despite opting to begin his pro-career a year early, thus playing just three seasons, with one of them limited by injuries, Jones still left Alabama as the # 2 record holder in catches and yards and fourth in touchdowns. Jones' massive Pro potential convinced the Atlanta Falcons to trade a ton of existing player assets to move up in the draft so they could select him in 2011. His career stats include 179 catches, 2653 yards, and 15 touchdowns.

Amari Cooper



Amari Cooper (2012-14) is the latest in many of Coach Sabin’s unbelievably talented players on his always championship-caliber teams. He is hard to match even with the benefit of time in all of football.

Cooper was a major component of the most prolific offense in Alabama school history. It set him apart as a player from everyone else on this list according to a number of experts. Of course, my job in this expose on great Alabama players is not to pick the best. That is for you to decide. There is no question Cooper is one of the “greats!”

Regardless of how you see Amari Cooper, there is no question that in his three years, he took a sledgehammer to the Alabama record book—even records recently achieved by Julio Jones just before him. When he left Alabama for the Pros, he was the Crimson Tide’s leader in just about every conceivable category. He was one of just a few Alabama players to make it to be a Heisman finalist. In fact, it was the first nomination for SEC wide receivers.

Cooper also won just the second Biletnikoff Award in conference history and fell just short of Josh Reed’s single-season yardage

record. He was a unanimous pick as All-American with two SEC titles and BCS championships on his resume, Cooper is one of the most decorated players in Crimson Tide history.

He was picked fourth by the Oakland Raiders in the first round of the NFL Draft in 2015. His stats are impressive for sure: 228 catches, 3,463 yards, 31 TDs.

There is so much good about Amari Cooper, we may never hear anything bad. His coach Nick Saban never ran out of good things to say about Amari Cooper during his final season at Alabama in 2014:

"Amari is not worthy of anyone comparing him to anybody else," the head coach said. "He is Amari Cooper. He has his own style. He's a very competitive guy who works really, really hard. Has really good speed getting in and out of breaks. Works hard in the game to get open. Does a good job of executing, has made a lot of really big plays for us this year.

"He's certainly been a dynamic player for our team and has made a great contribution to our season."

With 124 receptions for 1,727 yards and 16 touchdowns, Cooper set numerous single-season Crimson Tide records (many career marks as well) and put up most of his biggest numbers against some of the best pass defenses in college football.

At the end of the regular season, he had faced seven of the top 50, including two in the top 10 and three in the top 20. In those seven games, he caught 69 passes (9.9 per game) for 1,041 yards (148.7 yards) with 10 touchdowns. Cooper had three 200-yard performances.

Against the six opponents ranked in the Associated Press poll, he caught 58 passes for 756 yards and seven touchdowns, averaging 9.7 catches and 126 yards.

Consequently, as previously highlighted, Amari Cooper was the first Crimson Tide player, and just the second player in SEC history, to win the Biletnikoff Award as the nation's top receiver. That is great!

D.J. Hall



DJ Hall is the son of Dianne and Mangano Hall and he has a brother, Magic, and a sister, Monique. He was born 7-18-86. He was engaged in pre-major studies.

He went to high school at Choctawhatchee, where he played wide receiver. He was one of the three most talented Florida wide receivers inked by the Crimson Tide. The Orlando Sentinel had him listed at #44 in the State's Top 100 list. He was also a great basketball player.

In his four years at the University of Alabama, D.J. Hall (2004-2007) set a slew of receiving records. When he left school, he was the top Alabama receiver in all-time catches and receiving yards, and was the first player to record five straight 100-yard games. He was also the school's single-season receptions and yardage leader and held the single-game receptions record.

In 2006, as a junior in his last year at Alabama, pHall led the team in receiving with 57 catches for 1014 yards and five touchdowns. He led the team in catches seven times and in receiving yards eight times out of the 12 games. He scored a touchdown in each of his first three games and in five of his 10 contests. He became the first player in Alabama history to record five straight 100-yard receiving games recording 100+ yards against Arkansas, Florida, Duke, Ole Miss and Tennessee. He shattered the previous record of three straight held by Freddie Millons.

He tallied seven 100-yard games on the season to give him 10 for his career breaking Ozzie Newsome's school record of six. The seven

games with 100 or more yards also broke Newsome's record of four in one season.

He also had seven kickoff returns for 139 yards with a long of 26 yards and three runs for 14 yards. He played 580 total snaps with seven games of 50 or more plays. He was named the Alabama Offensive Player of the Week following the Ole Miss game and was a special teams captain for the Florida game.

Despite his productive college career, Hall went undrafted in 2008, briefly catching an opportunity with the New York Giants and Oakland Raiders. His college career stats are impressive but most of his pro career was spent in short stints and he was plagued by nagging injuries.

David Palmer



David Palmer (1991-93): Palmer was a consensus All-American in 1993. He was a do-it-all receiver for the Crimson Tide. He could line up anywhere on the field and make plays.

He was even one of the first big-time "Wildcat" players, taking direct snaps at this time in his career. Palmer was a Heisman finalist after his monster 1993 season, after which he turned pro and was drafted in the second round.

At Alabama, the spotlight followed Palmer like his

shadow. Yet, his first two seasons in the pros were somewhat quiet for the five foot eight 180-pound taller replica of Darren Sproles. er . Though he got time in different positions at Alabama, he also returned kicks They say that for kick returners, fame comes in fleeting. When he was in his second year in the NFL for example,

Palmer, 23, led the NFL with 13.2 yards per punt return last year, highlight by a 74-yard return against Detroit on Thanksgiving Day for the first touchdown of his pro career.

In his second season he got some receiver time. He caught 12 catches for 100 yards. In '94, his rookie year, the second-round pick averaged 6.4 yards on punt returns and grabbed six receptions for 90 yards. His career Alabama stats: 102 catches, 1,611 yards, 11 TD

As a pro, Palmer was a second-round pick (40th overall) for the Minnesota Vikings in the 1994 NFL Draft. He spent seven seasons (1994-2001) in the NFL, all with the Vikings. His career highlights include leading the league in punt returns during the 1995 season. For his seven year career he returned two punts and one kickoff for touchdowns, as well as one rushing and one receiving.

Defense

Cornelius Bennett



Having played in the (1983-86 era), in 1986, Cornelius Bennett notched what's simply known by Alabama fans as "The Sack" against Notre Dame. This remains one of the most famous plays in Crimson Tide history.

Bennett was a three-time All-Southeastern Conference selection and two-time All-American, and he was named Defensive Player of the Game at both the 1985 Aloha Bowl and the 1986 Sun Bowl.

In his senior year, he compiled 61 tackles, 10 sacks and six forced fumbles and this all contributed to his being named a unanimous All-America. He got these honors in addition to finishing seventh in Heisman Trophy voting and receiving the Lombardi Award given to the nation's top lineman. Cornelius Bennett was a force with which to be reckoned.

For his collegiate career, Bennett tallied 287 tackles, 21.5 sacks and three fumble recoveries. He did not leave football when he left Alabama. He went on to have a great pro career playing in four consecutive Super Bowls with the Buffalo Bills (1990-93) and a fifth with the Atlanta Falcons (1998).

Bennett is the only Alabama linebacker other than Woodrow Lowe to be a three-time All-America selection, also earning SEC Player of the Year and the Lombardi Award in his final season on campus, finishing seventh in Heisman voting in 1986.

Bennett helped form the mold of the pass-rushing linebacker, finishing his career with 15.0 sacks and 19.0 tackles for loss. For his career, Bennett left school fourth on the all-time tackles list. Cornelius Bennett also had a great NFL career after being chosen with the No. 2 overall Draft pick in 1987. He played in five Super Bowls and earning three All-Pro selections.

Lee Roy Jordan



Numerous Crimson Tide players have placed high in voting for the Heisman Trophy.

One of the most impressive of these was Lee Roy Jordan's fourth-place showing in 1962 as a center and linebacker.

Jordan was one of the leaders of Paul "Bear" Bryant's first national championship in 1961, when opponents combined to score just 25 points. For his senior season, 1962,

Lee Roy was a unanimous All-American selection. Alabama went 10-1 this year with a 17-0 victory over Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl, where Jordan made 30 tackles.

Bear Bryant could not say enough about his skills and determination. "He was one of the finest football players the world has ever seen," Bryant once said of Jordan. "If runners stayed

between the sidelines, he tackled them. He never had a bad day; he was 100 percent every day in practice and in the games."

Jordan was great no matter where and when he played. He soon became a key part of the Doomsday Defense with the Dallas Cowboys. He was an iron man. He played 14 seasons in the NFL, became the Cowboy franchise's all-time leader in solo tackles with 743, helped lead Dallas to three Super Bowls and was twice named All-Pro.

As noted Bear Bryant considered Lee Roy Jordan a well-deserving College Football Hall of Fame member. He saw him as one of the greatest players he ever coached. Jordan played both linebacker and center. In both positions, he excelled. He was one of the best two-way players in school history.

While tackles weren't recorded as a stat back in Jordan's day, he did provide anchor for some excellent defenses, including the 11-0 Alabama National Championship team in 1961 while winning two bowl MVP awards in three years.

Derrick Thomas



Derrick Thomas (1985-88) is another one of the best Alabama ever produced. I am happy to report his story is one of greatness but I

regret to say it is also one of profound sadness. In greatness, Thomas registers on the top of Alabama's all-time sacks list. He has more than twice as many as the player in second place (52 to Kindal Moorehead's 25 from 1998-2002). Moreover, he is both first and second in single-season sacks with 27 in 1988 and 18 in 1987.

Unfortunately, Derrick Thomas gets little credit for these statistics—both which would be NCAA records, because the NCAA did not start collecting official defensive statistics until 2000.

He is Alabama's first winner of the Butkus Award for best linebacker in the nation. Additionally, Thomas was a unanimous All-American in 1988.

When the Kansas City Chiefs made him the fourth overall selection in the 1989 NFL draft, team president Carl Peterson called it a new "beginning" for the organization. Thomas recorded 10 sacks that initial season and was named the NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year.

For an encore, he had 20 sacks in 1990, the fifth-best season in NFL history, and set a league single-game record with seven sacks against the Seattle Seahawks.

Even though he died at the young age of 33 after a car accident, he was named an All-Pro three times and went to nine Pro Bowls. He established franchise career records for sacks (126.5), safeties (three), fumble recoveries (18) and forced fumbles (45). His 126.5 sacks is the fourth-highest total ever by a linebacker at the time of his death.

There simply was not a force like Thomas before he came through the college ranks, and there haven't been many like him since. Hard as it is to believe with all the great Alabama defenders over the years, Thomas still owns Alabama's career sacks record (52.0) by a huge margin; in fact, his total is still more than double the next name on the list.

His great numbers and records only begin to put Thomas' dominance into context. He has the two best single-game totals in Alabama history for both sacks and tackles for loss, as well as the

single-season and career records for both. Thomas only became better when he made it to the NFL, dominating the league for 11 years before tragically losing his life in a car accident. Only the good die young!

Dont'a Hightower



Number 30, Dont'a Hightower joined the Crimson Tide out of Lewisburg, Tennessee. He played linebacker for Nick Saban from 2008 to 2011.

Hightower started in 12 games and played in all 14 as a true freshman. He played as the other inside linebacker opposite Rolando McClain. In his freshman year, his 64 tackles that year were good for fourth on a veteran team where he was one of only two true freshmen to see regular playing time.

After a wildly successful freshman year, Hightower was injured in week 4 of the 2009 and he missed the remainder of the year. After a medical redshirt, he came back in 2010 as a sophomore and replaced Rolando McClain at middle linebacker. McClain had gone to the NFL. Hightower earned second-team all-SEC honors and finished second on the team with 69 tackles.

In 2011, Hightower came back again as the middle linebacker and play caller for the defense. His defense would lead the NCAA in every major category – passing yards, rushing yards, pass efficiency, scoring defense, and total defense.

These efforts earned him consensus first-team all-American recognition. He was a finalist for the Lombardi Award, the Butkus Award, the Chuck Bednarik Award, and the Lott Trophy. He had a fine year as did the entire defense.

After winning the 2012 BCS National Championship Game, Hightower announced his intention to enter the NFL Draft. He was quickly snatched up by the New England Patriots with the 25th overall pick of the 2012 NFL Draft.

He was on the Patriots' Super Bowl XLIX Championship team. You may recall that he broke up a third down pass in the end-zone in the game's final minutes that led to the now infamous fourth-down pass (which is mainly notable because it wasn't a Marshawn Lynch run).

The Patriots then picked up the fifth year option on his rookie contract. Hightower is still doing the job as one of the top linebackers in the NFL playing for the Patriots

Bob Baumhower



Bob Baumhower played on Bear Bryant's defensive line from 1974-76. He is a native of Portsmouth, Virginia,

He earned all-conference honors in both 1975 and 1976, and Baumhower was a two-time selection to the all-American second team.

He was taken with the 40th overall pick in the 1977 NFL Draft by the Miami Dolphins, where he played his entire career. He was a great defender and was a five-time Pro Bowl selection.

As part of the 1982 Dolphins defense, which included six starters whose last name started with the letter "B," Baumhower became known as one of the Killer Bees. In 2008, he was inducted into the Dolphins Ring of Honor.

He and fellow Killer Bee, Doug Betters were the first defensive linemen in the Dolphins Ring of Honor. Baumhower was an honorary captain for the 2014 Texas A&M at Alabama game.

I found some nice words about Bob from Alabama folklore but it is real. "All of this might come as a shock to the many Alabama students who best know Bob Baumhower as the owner of

Baumhower’s restaurant near the movie theater off Skyland Blvd. All those cartoon Baumhowers has on the menu represent the real deal, kids. Although the PB& J wings sound fun I advise going with a more traditional Buffalo BBQ.”

C.J. Mosley



C.J. Mosley (2010-13) is one of the best Alabama linebackers during the last three decades. He was a major force in his four years playing at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa.

Mosley was so good, he was a freshman All-American in 2010. He was injured and suffered through his sophomore year. Then, he let loose. He dominated the whole SEC for his final two years. He was Alabama’s team MVP and made it as a consensus All-American in 2012, when he was also a finalist for the Butkus Award.

Mosley was also a finalist for the Lombardi, Bednarik and Butkus Awards a year later as the SEC’s Defensive Player of the Year and again a first-team All-American. He was a member of two national champions and finished his career third on Alabama’s all-time tackles list—however they rank tackles. Mosley was chosen in the

first round of the 2014 NFL draft and earned a Pro Bowl selection as a rookie with the Baltimore Ravens.

Woodrow Lowe



Woodrow Lowe (1972-75) — Lowe was the first Alabama linebacker to be named an All-American three times, achieving the feat from 1973-75.

He set the Alabama single-season tackles record in 1973 with 134, a record that still stands to this day, and left school as the Crimson Tide's all-time leading tackler (he's fourth now).

Lowe was a part of one national champion team and he helped win the SEC title all four years he was in school. He was elected to the College Football Hall of Fame in 2009.

Lowe keeps increasing his legacy. This great linebacker was recently elected as the 2016 Raycom Media Camellia Bowl Alabama Football Legend and spoke during a luncheon at the Renaissance Hotel. Lowe said he doesn't consider himself a legend, but he was honored as such anyway.

Lowe is best known for his work ethic on the field and his humility about all his football accomplishments.

Lowe's brother, Eddie, was also a former Alabama linebacker and is the current mayor of Phenix City.

Eddie said he didn't even find out about his brother's latest accolade from the man himself.

"I found out from some friends first and then I called him," Eddie said for a video displayed on Friday. "When I called him, he just kind of downplayed it. I know he's appreciative of the honor."

Lowe began playing football at the age of 10 in Phoenix City, where he said the team played only a three-game schedule.

Lowe recognized Frank Sadler, who coached him at Central-Phoenix City. He said Sadler was the man that changed his life.

This great linebacker played for the Crimson Tide from 1973-1975 and is one of only two Alabama players to become a three-time All-American.

He spent 11 seasons in the National Football League with the San Diego Chargers, playing in 162 of a possible 163 career games and recording 21 interceptions.

At the big event, he shared some stories about his college coach, Paul "Bear" Bryant. During his speech, he said that he had a "working relationship" with the Hall of Fame coach.

Lowe told the assembled crowd about the time Bryant came to his house on a recruiting visit.

"I am truly honored to receive this award," Lowe said. "I know that Coach Bryant is a legend and now you're considering me one. I pour out appreciation and thanks to everyone for all of the love, support and encouragement you gave me."

“Coach Bryant knew what hard work was and from across the tracks,” Lowe said. “When he came to my house, I realized they were just checking my parents out to see what type of people they were. The first day I got to Alabama, he told me I was special.”

Woodrow Lowe is special.

Running Backs

Mark Ingram Jr.



It was only 74 years in the making, but Mark Ingram Jr. (2008-10) won Alabama's first Heisman Trophy in 2009 after helping the Crimson Tide finish the regular season undefeated on its way to the national championship. The Heisman vote for Ingram as a sophomore was regarded as the closest vote in the award's history.

While leading Alabama to an SEC championship and national title, Mark Ingram gained 1,648 rushing yards to set the Alabama single-season school record. He also tallied 1,992 all-purpose yards while scoring 20 touchdowns. He earned consensus All-American honors and the SEC Offensive Player of the Year award in the process.

He had nine 100-yard games, including a season-high and Bryant-Denny Stadium-record 246 yards against # 22 South Carolina on October 17.

In that game, Ingram handled the ball on every play during the Crimson Tide's game-clinching drive. A big weapon against Florida in the Championship were screen passes. These proved to be his Ingram's signature moments.

In a great career at Alabama, he had only one lost fumble and 1,002 yards after contact (53.7 percent). Moreover, he had 825 rushing yards and six touchdowns in Alabama's five games against Top 25 teams, averaging 165 yards per game against Virginia Tech, Mississippi, South Carolina, LSU and Florida.

In those same games, he averaged 201.1 all-purpose yards.

After an off-season knee surgery, Ingram's numbers took a dip in his junior year, but he still scored 13 rushing touchdowns, his third straight campaign with double-digit scores. In recent years Ingram still holds Alabama's rushing touchdowns record, is fourth in career rushing yards and has the third-highest yards-per-carry average among backs with at least 400 carries in school history.

The New Orleans Saints took Ingram late in the first round in 2011 after he left school a year early, and he still plays for the Saints today.

The Saints found a franchise player. Ingram is still knocking them dead and wooing the fans with his exceptional play. In the year ending game in 2016, for example, on a 38-yard rush in the fourth quarter, Ingram became the first Saint to record 1,000 yards rushing in a single season since Deuce McAllister (1,057) in 2006. He totaled 103 yards and one score on 20 carries (5.2 avg.) and added 29 yards on six catches.

For the 2016 season, Ingram finished with 205 carries for 1,043 yards (5.1 avg.) with five touchdowns, and 46 receptions for 309 yards with five touchdowns, for a career-high 10 total touchdowns. Finishing the season with 4,238 career rushing yards, Ingram surpassed Dalton Hilliard (4,164-1986-93) to move into third place in the club's all-time rushing list.

Mark Ingram is special kind of player—a “great” Alabama football alumnus.

Derrick Henry



All of the players in this chapters are Alabama legends. Derrick Henry's legendary stature will likely only grow with time because it's going to take a while for a lot of fans to grasp what he actually did for the team in 2015. Henry played for Alabama from 2013 to 2015.

In addition to taking home Alabama's second Heisman Trophy, Henry was the first to win all three major "player of the year" awards, the Maxwell and Walter Camp being the others. He also won the Doak Walker Award for best running back. Wow! Nick Sabin sure knows how to mold great teams and great players.

To put that into perspective, consider that Mark Ingram had previously been the only Alabama player to win the Heisman; A.J. McCarron had been the lone Maxwell winner; and no one from Alabama had ever won the Walter Camp. Trent Richardson had been the only Doak Walker winner.

As the Southeastern Conference's first 2,000-yard rusher, Henry topped Bo Jackson's numbers and broke some of Herschel Walker's longstanding single-season records, including his mark of 1,891 rushing yards on 385 carries set in 1981.

With 2,219 rushing yards in 2015, Henry smashed Alabama's single-season rushing record by 540 yards—almost 25 percent of his total—and finished as the program's all-time leading rusher. He had 3,591 career yards to top Shaun Alexander's 3,565 (1996-99).

He had 10 100-yard performances in 2015 alone, to set another school record, and his 28 rushing touchdowns shattered the previous SEC record of 23 (Tim Tebow and Tre Mason).

The last time Henry failed to score a touchdown in a college game was as a sophomore, against LSU in 2014.

Henry was drafted by Tennessee and began his rookie season as the backup running back to veteran DeMarco Murray. He wore #2 throughout training camp and in preseason he became #22 once running back Dexter McCluster was cut on September 2, 2016.

Henry started well as was expected when he got his first taste of NFL action in Tennessee's preseason opener against the San Diego Chargers. Yes, Alabama's own 2015 Heisman Trophy winner didn't disappoint the Titans or their fans at Nissan Stadium. Henry carried the ball 10 times for 74 yards and a touchdown in the second quarter of the Titans' 27-10 victory in Nashville, Tenn.

Henry made his professional regular season debut in 2016 and earned his first career start in the Titan's season opening game against the Minnesota Vikings. For the season, Henry gained 490 yards for the Titans. We'll be hearing an awful lot more about Derrick Henry as time goes by. He's one of the great ones from Alabama

Johnny Musso



Johnny Musso from Birmingham, close to Legion Field, lived less than an hour from Tuscaloosa. when he came to the University of Alabama to play running back for the Crimson Tide from 1969-71. Musso's starring role on the 1971 SEC Championship earned him SEC Player of the Year honors and made him a consensus all-American. He finished fourth in Heisman voting that year, at the time, it was the best finish by an Alabama running back. Musso was ahead of his time.

Johnny helped set the foundation for Alabama becoming the team of the 1970s with a memorable '71 campaign. He had the nickname, "The Italian Stallion." His 38 career touchdowns at the time were super statistics, only recently being surpassed. His 2,741 career rushing yards still look great in Alabama program history.

He led the SEC in yards from scrimmage in two consecutive years, as well as leading in rushing touchdowns.

He was drafted in the third round by the Chicago Bears but chose instead to play in the Canadian Football League. After three years

with the CFL's BC Lions, he signed with the Bears and played for two years.

Musso is in the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame and the College Football Hall of Fame.

Musso's 574 career rushing attempts were most in Alabama history when his college career ended. He held that record for over a decade, then was in second place for another decade. He has since been passed by Shaun Alexander, Kenneth Darby, Derrick Henry and TJ Yeldon.

Before Alabama broke through with its first Heisman winner, Musso's 1971 season was one of the school's best shot at claiming the trophy. Even playing out of a Wishbone formation, Musso had a phenomenal season as a senior.

While his rushing yardage was down from his junior year (from 1,137 yards to 1,088), he doubled his touchdown production from eight to 16. As noted, Musso led the SEC in rushing in both 1970 and 1971, and in '71 took home the conference's Player of the Year award while earning All-American honors and finishing fourth in the Heisman race. He left school as Alabama's all-time rushing leader. He was quite a player. He was a great one.

Trent Richardson



5. Trent Richardson (2009-11) played at Alabama after Mark Ingram. It is always difficult to follow a Heisman winner. It is never an easy task regardless of your talent. Richardson did it however, as well as it could be done. After he backed up Mark Ingram for two years, totaling more than 1,400 yards over his first two seasons on campus, Richardson surpassed that total in his junior year alone.

In an All-American season in 2011, he piled up 1,679 yards, the highest single-season total at the time in Alabama history, and he scored 21 touchdowns, another school record, on the way to winning the Doak Walker Award and SEC Offensive Player of the Year.

Richardson left Alabama on top after Alabama beat LSU for the national title. He went on to be selected No. 3 overall in the 2012 NFL draft. He finished his career fifth all-time in rushing yards at Alabama.

Bobby Humphrey



Bobby Humphrey (1985-88) played four years at Alabama. Tide watchers know that if it were not for a foot injury that cut short Humphrey's senior season, he had a great shot at becoming Alabama's first Heisman winner.

After a strong freshman year, during which he averaged more than 5.0 yards per carry, Humphrey exploded in his sophomore and junior seasons. He went for 1,471 yards and 15 touchdowns in 1986, the third-highest rushing total in the nation, and followed that up with 1,255 yards and 11 scores in 1987, finishing 10th in Heisman voting.

Humphrey left school as Alabama's single-game, single-season and career rushing leader. Humphrey's son, Marlon, was a freshman All-American and was injured last year as a sophomore and missed half of the season. Expectations are high for the next two years for Marlon.

Shaun Alexander



Shaun Alexander (1996-99) never got to win a Heisman trophy like Mark Ingram, but he was a great back regardless. He was quite versatile and he played a stellar four-year career at AU that saw him holding a number of major school records.

He led the SEC in total touchdowns in both his junior and senior years, finishing third and first in the conference in rushing, respectively. He also led Alabama to an SEC title in 1999, finishing seventh in Heisman voting while scoring 23 touchdowns, most in the nation for 1999.

Alexander set Alabama records for touchdowns in a game (five) and season (24), rushing yards in a single game (291 yards), career rushing yards and carries in a season and in a career.

Despite all that mileage on his 5' 11" 228 pound frame, he also had an outstanding pro career spent mostly with the Seattle Seahawks. He won the 2005 MVP award while setting a league record for touchdowns in a season. Alabama sure knows how to recruit.

Offensive Line

John Hannah



In his prime Sports Illustrated labeled John Hannah (Alabama 1970-72) as the "Best Offensive Lineman of All Time" In a world of accolades dominated by running backs and receivers, and even defenders, John Hannah is the only guy that many pundits would say could be rated #1 in overall talent and ability to get the job done. If his pro career could be used as a contributing factor, he might have the lock on being the # 1 player of all-time.

John Hanna was voted All-American in 1971 and a unanimous selection the following year when he also won the SEC's Jacobs Award as its best blocker, along with Lineman of the Year by the Birmingham Quarterback Club, Atlanta Touchdown Club and Miami Touchdown Club.

The Pros were all after him. Again, with quarterbacks, running backs and receivers always being the typical first round drafts for the

NFL, Hannah was the fourth overall pick in the 1973 draft. That is something.

He played his entire professional career with the New England Patriots. He was named All-Pro 10 times (1976-85) and selected for nine Pro Bowls. Other honors included being one of the few players named to an NFL All-Decade Team twice, for the 1970s and 1980s. He was also the top guard listed on the NFL 75th Anniversary All-Time Team in 1994.

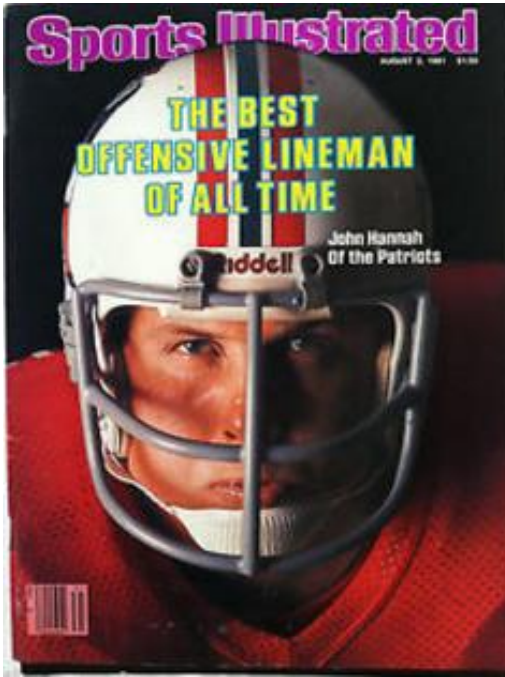
Bear Bryant thought Hannah was tops. He once said of Hannah, "In over 30 years with the game, he's the finest offensive lineman I've ever been around."

You cannot say enough about the great John Hannah from Alabama. It is impossible to argue with John Hannah's merit as a player. On top of all his other honors, Hannah was also Offensive Lineman of the Year in 1978, 1979, 1980, and 1981. He is a member of the Pro-Bowl Hall of Fame, and comes in twentieth on The Sporting News' list of the 100 Greatest Football Players.

Hannah is also a member of the College Football Hall of Fame, and an SEC Champion. Obviously with such a stellar career, we could keep listing awards he received but we have already given proof of John Hannah the Great

In a tough position, Offensive Guard, Hannah was simply the best. He was an incredible and unique talent on the football field. I mean the cover of the August 3, 1981 issue of Sports Illustrated featured John Hannah, calling him the best offensive lineman of all time. In 1991, he became the first representative of the New England Patriots in the NFL Hall of Fame.

Just like Harry Gilmer the great quarterback, John Hannah isn't a slouch who could play only one position. In Hannah's case, he not only could play other spots on the line, he also played other sports. Hannah was a wrestler and competed in the shot put and the discus throw while at Alabama.



John Hannah has shown simply by being John Hannah that he is everything that is Alabama football. No matter the task, Hannah was the best at what he did. He did his job well. Two of his brothers also played as stars at Alabama. Perhaps his biggest tribute is that he played well for Bear Bryant.

Offensive line super star John Hannah is everything that is great and bruising about Alabama Football.

Dwight Stephenson



Dwight Stephenson (1977 to 1979) was recruited out of Murfreesboro, North Carolina by Bear Bryant to play for the Crimson Tide teams in the late 1970s. He anchored the offensive line at Center on the 1978 and 1979 national championship teams.

He has a lot of awards to his credit. For example, he won the Jacobs trophy in 1979, given to the SEC's best blocker. He was an all-American that year as well as the recipient of the Birmingham Quarterback Club's Outstanding Lineman Award.

Stephenson was drafted by the Miami Dolphins, where he played from 1980-1987. He was the anchor for that line also as the Dolphins gave up the fewest sacks in the league for an unprecedented six consecutive seasons. He was a five-time pro-bowl selection.

In 2010, he was named the recipient of the President Gerald R. Ford Leaders Award.

It's so hard to explain how good an offensive lineman is. It's especially hard at Alabama where you have so many outstanding

linemen to choose from. Let's take Bear Bryant's word on this one again. Stephenson was outstanding. Bryant called Stephenson the best center he ever coached, and described him as "a man among children." I guess that means he was a great Alabama player.

There's not really a good way to calculate how many sacks were prevented by having such an outstanding special offensive lineman. You can't explain it but you do know it when you see it. With Dwight Stephenson, there was no doubt that you could see it.

Barrett Jones



Barrett Jones, Offensive Lineman (Guard), Alabama (2008-12) was the recipient of an athletic scholarship to attend the University of Alabama. He played for coach Nick Saban's Alabama Crimson Tide football team from 2008 to 2012. He was redshirted his initial year at Alabama, Jones started all 14 games for Alabama's 2009 national championship team at right guard.

He subsequently earned Freshman All-America honors from College Football News and Phil Steele.

In his junior season, because of team needs, he switched from guard to left tackle where he started all 13 games for another Alabama national championship team.

Following his 2011 junior season, he was a first-team All-Southeastern Conference (SEC) selection, and was recognized as a unanimous first-team All-American.

He was the winner of the 2011 Outland Trophy given to the best lineman in college football. In his senior year, again because of team needs, he switched from tackle to center. He started every game at center for the team that won another National Championship in 2012.

Jones did not receive a second Outland Trophy but won the Rimington Trophy given each year to the outstanding college center becoming only the 2nd person in history to win both an Outland and a Rimington.

He is the only person to win an Outland and a Remington at two different positions or in two different years. Barrett Jones ended his Alabama career winning 3 BCS National Championships—each Championship at a different position—as an All-American guard, an All-American right tackle and an All-American center. That is quite an impressive record. It is a great record.

In the 2013 NFL Draft, Jones was selected by the St. Louis Rams in the fourth round with the 113th overall draft pick.

On September 8, 2015, Jones was signed to the Steelers' practice squad. On October 6, 2015, Jones was signed by the Chicago Bears' practice squad, following a season-ending injury to Will Montgomery. On November 30, 2015, Jones was signed by the Philadelphia Eagles from the Bears' practice squad.

On September 3, 2016, he was released. We still have hope for Barrett in the pros as he is still a young man. There is no denying his excellence(greatness) for helping the Crimson Tide win three National Championships at three different positions.

Chris Samuels



Chris Samuels (1996 -99) played for the Alabama Crimson Tide football team while he attended the University of Alabama on an athletic scholarship. He was a great offensive lineman.

As senior in 1999, for example, he was named to the All-Southeastern Conference (SEC) first team by the conference's coaches, the Associated Press, the Birmingham News and the Mobile Press Register. He was also recognized as a consensus first-team All-American.

Samuels won the prestigious Outland Trophy as the nation's best college interior lineman, and he was a semifinalist for the Lombardi Award. Samuels also won the Jacobs Blocking Trophy as the SEC's most outstanding blocker.

When you play on the offensive line, that is the best accolade you can receive. Samuels was an iron man. He started 42 straight games,

from early in his 1996 freshman season until his last regular-season game as a senior, without ever yielding a sack.

Samuels did not allow a single quarterback pressure in 1999, had 91 knockdown blocks and played nearly every offensive snap during the regular season. He is responsible for opening many holes for Crimson Tide running back Shaun Alexander, who gained 1,383 yards rushing that year.

In 2016, Samuels was selected to represent the University of Alabama as part of the 2016 SEC Football Legends class. This is a collection of former football standouts who were all honored at events surrounding the SEC Football Championship Game in Atlanta in December, 2016.

Samuels was the Crimson Tide's first Outland Trophy winner and was a natural for this fine honor. He is great.

Andre Smith



Andre Smith (2006-08) attended the University of Alabama beginning in 2006. He first played for coach Mike Shula and then coach Nick Saban's Alabama Crimson Tide football teams from 2007 to 2008.

In his initial year for Mike Shula, at Alabama, he started all 13 games at left tackle, becoming only the fourth true freshman offensive lineman to start for the Crimson Tide.

Smith played at least 65 snaps in 10 of 13 games and played more than 70 snaps five times, while leading the Crimson Tide with 62 pancake blocks.

He also scored a touchdown off of a lateral in the 34–31 Independence Bowl loss against Oklahoma State.

Smith earned Freshman All-American honors by the Football Writers Association of America. In 2007, Andre Smith was a first-team All-Southeastern Conference selection, after starting every

game at the left tackle position. He was named Alabama Co-Player of the Week four times during the season.

Smith was recognized as a unanimous All-American in 2008, as well as the 2008 Outland Trophy winner. He was also considered to be one of the best underclassmen for the 2009 NFL Draft. He was a first-team All-SEC selection and shared the league's Jacobs Blocking Trophy with Arkansas center Jonathan Luigs.

He led the team with 103 key knockdowns and added seven blocks downfield. He was penalized just twice and he allowed just one QB sack and six pressures on 334 pass plays.

On December 29, 2008, in an unfortunate situation, Smith was suspended from playing in the 2009 Sugar Bowl, a game Alabama lost 31–17 to the Utah Utes. The reason for the suspension was that he reportedly had dealt with an agent. A few days later, after losing his opportunity to shine and after Alabama lost without his services, Smith declared himself eligible for the 2009 NFL Draft. At the time he was considered a lock to be a Top 5 pick.

Smith was eventually drafted sixth overall by the Cincinnati Bengals. He was the first Alabama offensive lineman selected in the first round of an NFL Draft since Chris Samuels in 2000. He played with the Bengals until 2015. In 2016, he signed a lucrative contract with the Minnesota Vikings.

Best wishes for a continued career to Andre Smith, one of the great ones.

----- end of listed players -----

As we noted in the beginning of the book/chapter, there are many more greats in Alabama football history. Those listed before this comment are certainly worthy of their “great” status at Alabama, and most of these players continued their greatness to the pros and their later lives.

There certainly are many other great Alabama players and one day, I hope to chronicle all that I can in a book just about the more than 100 specially honored members of past Alabama Crimson Tide teams. This abbreviated list that you just enjoyed was compiled by

examining the work of many journalists and pundits who have offered their opinions about Alabama's great ones over the years.

Alabama breeds great football players when its coaches are the best that they can be. Bear Bryant and Nick Sabin certainly fit that criterion.

Some Alabama School Records

More than likely, by the time these early 2016 record statistics hit the press, the records below will already be broken. Nonetheless, if you've been paying attention to many of the stats we have fired off in this chapter, this will help put them all in perspective:

Alabama career rushing record

3,591: Derrick Henry (2013-15)

3,565: Shaun Alexander (1996-99)

3,420: Bobby Humphrey (1985-88)

3,324: Kenneth Darby (2003-06)

3,322: T.J. Yeldon (2012-14)

3,261: Mark Ingram (2008-10)

3,130: Trent Richardson (2009-11)

Other records broken:

- 10 games of 100-plus yards broke Mark Ingram's mark of nine in 2009.
- 16th career 100-yard game broke a record shared by Alexander, Bobby Humphrey, and T.J. Yeldon.
- 20 consecutive games with a touchdown extended his school record.

Just like it would take a huge book to list all of the great players in Alabama history, it would also take a book of huge size to capture all of the school records held by these great players. The list above is minimal (though fun to read) compared to the Alabama record book.

I have good news for Alabama Fans. The Alabama record book is available free on line. You can read it on your PC or your phone. Here is the link.

<http://www.rolltide.com/sports/2016/6/10/sports-m-footbl-spec-rel-record-book-html.aspx>

Thank you so much for taking the time off your busy schedule to read about the greatest football legacy of all time – The Alabama Crimson Tide! I don't think that any team can ever exceed the record of the University of Alabama Crimson Tide Football Team. Amen!

Other books by Brian Kelly: ([amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), and Kindle)

Great Players in Alabama Football From Quarterbacks to offensive Linemen – the Greats!

Great Moments in Alabama Football AU Football from the start. This is the book.

Great Moments in Penn State Football PSU football from the start--games, coaches, players, etc.

Great Moments in Notre Dame Football ND Football from the start--games, coaches, players

Four Dollars & Sixty-Two Cents—A Christmas Story That Will Warm Your Heart!

My Red Hat Keeps Me on The Ground. Darraggh's Red Hat is really Magical

Seniors, Social Security & the Minimum Wage. Things seniors need to know.

How to Write Your First Book and Publish It with CreateSpace

The US Immigration Fix--It's all in here. Finally, an answer.

I had a Dream IBM Could be #1 Again .The title is self-explanatory

WineDiets.Com Presents The Wine Diet Learn how to lose weight while having fun.

Wilkes-Barre, PA; Return to Glory Wilkes-Barre City's return to glory

Geoffrey Parsons' Epoch... The Land of Fair Play Better than the original.

The Bill of Rights 4 Dummies! This is the best book to learn about your rights.

Sol Bloom's Epoch ...Story of the Constitution The best book to learn the Constitution

America 4 Dummies! All Americans should read to learn about this great country.

The Electoral College 4 Dummies! How does it really work?

The All-Everything Machine .Story about IBM's finest computer server.

Brian has written 98 books. Others can be found at [amazon.com/author/brianwkelly](https://www.amazon.com/author/brianwkelly)

