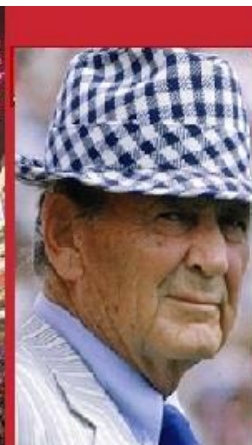


Dear Reader: Thank you for downloading this free book from Brian W. Kelly's finished book catalog. I finished the book titled **Great Moments in College Football** at <https://letsGOPublish.com/collegefootball/collegemoments.pdf> in April 2021. This is a classic book about the great moments in all of college football-- which I consider our nation's past-time. Try it; you'll like this book for sure.

**Most of my books had previously been published on Amazon.**

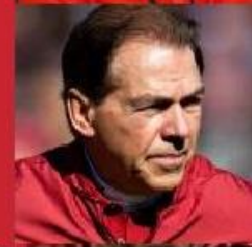
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*Great Moments*  
*in*  
**College**  
**Football**

by  
**Brian Kelly**



# Great Moments

in

# College Football

Great Football Moments from the beginning of football to the 2020 post season.

This book is written for those of us who love College Football played by the greatest teams in the history of the sport. This book covers all the Championship teams from Yale to Harvard to Alabama, Florida, Army, Navy, Air Force, Notre Dame, Penn State, LSU, Clemson, Syracuse, and others. Those of you who like one team or another better than another team or another will find stories you will definitely enjoy. This book is a fun read, but it will also help you get a leg up on many of the great facts about college football that you wish you had when the “*football-know-it-all*” is in the room.

The book first tells the story about your favorite team’s founding in the 1800’s and it quickly gets to the first football game in America in 1869. From there, the progression leads, to your favorite team’s or your brother or sister’s favorite team’s first football game at some time after 1867. The book discusses the games college’s played without a coach and moves to the games with the first coaches and how their first teams did so well in the early days. Yes, we look at the immortals from the beginning of football today.

Whether the coach is Bear Bryant, Ben Schwartzwalder, Ara Parseghian, Lou Holtz, Steve Spurrier, Les Miles, Rip Engle, Bob Higgins, Knute Rockne, Jesse Harper, Joe Paterno, Bobby Bowden, Nick Saban, Dabo Swinney, Paul Pasqualoni, Red Blaik, Wayne Hardin, Eddy Erdelatz, Tom Osborne, Frank Broyles, Fisher DeBerry, Lou Holtz, Dan Devine, Ed Orgeron, Paul Dietzel, or another immortal legendary figure, this books tells you about them.

This book captures the great moments in all of college football from its beginning through great players and coaches from 1869 to 2021. It takes the reader through stories about the nation’s best football coaches and others to great stories about all the great seasons worth of great games by all the recognized great teams. The book often stops in time and talks about a particular player such as Johnny Lujack, Joe Bellino, Glenn Davis, Roger Staubach, Doc Blanchard, Bob Mischak, Paul Hornung, Jim Brown, Floyd Little, Tony Rice, Johnny Lattner, Kerry Collins, Pete Dawkins, Joe Burrow, Joe Montana, or Joe Theismann. You cannot get enough of college football players’ greatness, but we try in this book. You will not be able to put this book down

by

## Brian Kelly



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**Great Moments in College Football**

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

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# Dedication



Dr. Patrick Kerrigan is the doctor who takes care of my family and I. He is the greatest. Because he is such a great person and a caring, dedicated physician, who keeps us well, I dedicate this book to Dr. Patrick Kerrigan. We appreciate his efforts keeping us all well.

We are not the only ones. Dr. Kerrigan keeps many families well and he has been honored numerous times for his outstanding work and caring ways. In addition to receiving the Key to the City of Wilkes-Barre, his hometown, just a few years ago, for example, he was also named "Man of the Year" by the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of

Greater Wilkes-Barre. Well-deserved for sure!

Dr. Kerrigan's contribution to the field of medicine in northeastern Pennsylvania has been truly impressive. Since 1986, he has been engaged in the private practice of family medicine in Wilkes-Barre. He is also a major provider of geriatric medical care at several nursing homes in the greater Wilkes-Barre area. He is also active in sports medicine, having served as team physician at the little league, high school and college levels. He is a fine man and a wonderful physician.

In addition to his accomplishments, Dr. Kerrigan is the most avid Notre Dame Fan that I know. He loves all college sports teams but especially the Fighting Irish. He and his best friend, Dr. Chris Alexander have a magical toast to the Holy Spirit that they have shared with me. Sometimes in close games, even we the faithful need the help of all Three Persons in the Trinity to get that oval ball past the goal line.



# Acknowledgments:

I appreciate all the help that I received in putting this book together, along with the 274 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.letsrepubliish.com](http://www.letsrepubliish.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.letsrepubliish.com](http://www.letsrepubliish.com) to read the latest version of my heartfelt acknowledgments updated for this book. Thank you all!

In this book, I received some extra special help from many avid college football supporters including Jack Lammers, Bruce Ikeda, Dennis Grimes, Gerry Rodski, Charles and Marilyn Gallagher, Angel Joseph F. McKeown, Melvin Manhart, Angel Red Jones, Michael McKeown, Wily Ky Eyely, Angel Irene McKeown Kelly, Angel Edward Joseph Kelly Sr., Angel Edward Joseph Kelly Jr., Ann Flannery, Angel James Flannery Sr., Mary Daniels, Bill Daniels, Angel Robert Garry Daniels, Angel Sarah Janice Daniels, Angel Punkie Daniels, Joe Kelly, Diane Kelly, Brian P. Kelly, Mike P. Kelly, Katie P. Kelly, Angel Breezy Kelly, Angel Brady Kelly, angel Benjamin Kelly, and angel Budmund (Buddy) Arthur Kelly. Thanks you all.





# References

I learned how to write creatively in Grade School at St. Boniface. Eventually, I even began to enjoy reading some of my own stuff.

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 have all citations written down in the proper sequence. Having to pay attention to details takes my desire to write creatively and diminishes 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 274 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, so that 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 college 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 the greatest college football programs of all time.

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 who enjoy reading about college football. It is for people that want to have a fun read, who like smiling when college football teams such as ND or PSU or Michigan or Alabama are the topic of choice. It is for people who love the Syracuse

Orange, and Florida's Gators in addition to Army and Navy and Airforce, and Clemson—arguably the best football teams in college football.

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 college football because it is not pro football and who enjoy football because it is football. It is that simple.

When Clemson, for example 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 Clemson negatively. Even Clemson does not own well-known facts that are readily available about legacies such as John Heisman, Dabo Swinney and championship seasons.

The championships and the coaches are well known and well defined, even though many, who may never have cared, think that Pat O'Brien and Knute Rockne are one and the same. Sometimes these same folks might even get Ronald Reagan mixed up with the real "Gipper," *George Gipp*. Some might even think the Gipper is Rockne himself if nobody took the time to tell them otherwise. So what? As the author of this book, I care but it is a sports book. I used a judicious approach to assure that I was not throwing the bull when I was presenting facts.

Nonetheless, 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, 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. 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.

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. Just let me know. This book is built for fun, not to create anybody angst. I believe that what I wrote is correct and if you find I am wrong, I will change it.

## Preface:

My first college book was written less than ten years ago, and it was about Notre Dame. This is a book about a number of different college football teams that are not all named Notre Dame, but they often give Notre Dame a licking that it is not expecting.

Since 1869, the year of the first football game (between Princeton & Rutgers) college teams have been playing football every Saturday year after year by now almost every one of the 893 football teams have their own stadiums. Once the House that Rock Built was constructed and opened in 1931, every Notre Dame Football Team has walked down the same tunnel right before every home game. College teams had their own stadiums long before Rockne.

For example Franklin Field in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania has been around since 1895. It has been used mostly for great football games since then, but it is not owned by a college or university. So, it has a diverse history. Franklin Field has been a host even for baseball, the opera, military training, soccer and a U2 concert, but admittedly it is a football venue, first and foremost. It is the oldest college football stadium in the U.S., the site of the first game to be broadcast on radio in 1922. In addition to hosting countless Penn Quakers games, it was the site of 18 Army-Navy games. It was built to last and it has been doing its thing for more than 125 years.

The second oldest stadium is owned by a prestigious University—Harvard. Harvard Stadium in Boston, Massachusetts came into being in 1903. Initially, it was a gift from Harvard's 1879 class, but it took a while for the stadium hosted its first football game--Nov. 14, 1903 against Dartmouth. Since then, rugby, lacrosse, soccer and ice hockey have been played in the stadium. It was at one time the home of the New England Patriots who were once named the Boston Patriots and they played in the AFL and not the NFL.

You will see in this book in the chapters about the most recent seasons, the team coach shown in a photo with his football team either behind him or surrounding him. . He and the team are ready to come out of their special tunnel to take the field. At the time I wrote this preface originally, no women had ever coached in the college or pro football ranks, so I was correct in using the pronoun his. That is no longer the case.

Heather Marini, who is originally from Australia, joined the Brown U Bears as the offensive quality control coach, working alongside head coach James Perry. In her role for Brown, since 2019, she is the only woman who is a full-time assistant coach in all of Division I college football. She is the second woman to work full-time as a coach in Division I college football, following Callie Brownson who was an assistant for Dartmouth in a prior season.

This new book by Brian Kelly, which highlights the Great Moments in College Football is one football item that is available all 52 weeks and in fact all 365 days each year. It is available to add to your college 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 pep rallies and home games on any campus or not, this 600-page book brings the glory of many of your favorite college teams 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 though you will admit most are great. There are a few moments that are not so great that are shown to get the proper perspective for those great moments. Not all college coaches, for example, are named Rockne or Paterno or Bryant or Spurrier. However, their teams were all Notre Dame tough, Penn State Tough, Alabama tough or Florida, nonetheless. That means they all fought hard for wins as your favorite team. I hope you enjoy the contrast.

Opening with its first story at the very beginning of Football as a sport in America, this book goes all the way to your favorite coach's last win.

It is written for those of us who love college football. The book first tells the story about the founding of the various universities. In story-telling mode, it recounts the events leading to the nation's first football game in 1867, and it continues to the first football Game for one of the great teams highlighted. It then advances to the first coaches in college football as games were played in the early days with great players serving as coaches.

This book is all about the great moments in college football from the finest universities that ever played the game. It touches every aspect of the historical and mythical teams of the past. It tells exhilarating stories about many coaches and many seasons worth of great 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 Glenn Davis, Steve Spurrier, and Tim Tebow, & Brady Quinn, or Trevor Lawrence or Deshaun Watson or Jim Brown, or Floyd Little, or Derrick Thomas, Julio Jones, Kerry Collins or Saquon Barkley. You might even find a great story about Vince Lombardi in this book. Can you imagine if he ever coached for your college team in the rough times? Well, believe it or not, he may have tried!

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 college football played at a high level and wants to know more about the most revered athletic program of all time.

Few sports books are a must-read but Brian Kelly's Great Moments in College Football will quickly appear at the top of Americas 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 275<sup>th</sup> 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 interest to Americans.

Most of his early works involved high technology. Later, Brian 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. His books are always well received.

Brian's books are highlighted at [www.letsGOPublish.com](http://www.letsGOPublish.com). They are for sale at [amazon.com/author/brianwkelly](http://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 274 other 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 hometown in 2015. He loves college football and has been a fan ever since the family purchased a 21 inch B/W Admiral TV way back in 1956.



# Chapter 1 Introduction to the Book

In my first book about college football, a little less than ten years ago, as a King's College alumnus (founded by Notre Dame in 1946), I wrote about Notre Dame. So, I will begin this book with Notre Dame a few years after it celebrated its 125<sup>h</sup> year.

**Notre Dame celebrates its 125<sup>th</sup> year.**



Brian Kelly, ND Coach Leading the Fighting Irish

In 2012, Notre Dame celebrated its 125<sup>th</sup> year. As part of the celebration, the University built a web site that fans of Notre Dame should find quite enjoyable— <http://125.nd.edu>. The site has many enjoyable items to tickle the imagination and it provides a very real look at Notre Dame over its 125 year history (as of 2012). The very first item that I viewed on this site was at the following web address:

<http://125.nd.edu/moments/first-game-in-notre-dame-football-history/>

Enjoy the Sept 22, 2012 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary game panorama picture at <http://125.nd.edu/pano/>

This book celebrates the greatest of college football as played at Clemson University, Alabama University, Notre Dame University, Penn State University, Syracuse University, The University of Florida and the college football played by the Service Academies— Army, Navy & Air Force. After this general introduction, we look at their founding; their struggles; their greatness; and their long-lasting impact on American life. People like me, who love college football will love this book. Those who are not fond of the college teams in this representative football book will want their own copy just for additional ammo when their favorite college team is playing. Yet, it won't help them! Hah!

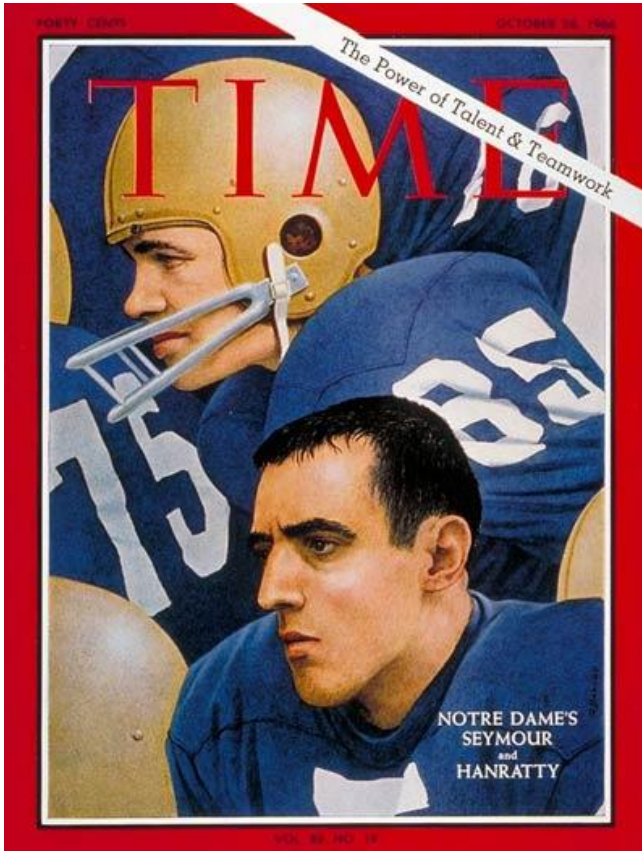


We begin the rest of the college football story in Chapter 2 with the founding of a number of colleges and universities and we continue in subsequent chapters right into the founding of their football programs from the late 1880's through the early 1900's.

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 college 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.

Terry Hanratty, a great ND QB, recruited by Ara Parseghian in 1965, once said that ND jerseys could not be retired because with all of the history of ND, there would be no numbers left. I use Hanratty's idea to help promulgate the notion that nobody can write a book about Notre Dame History let alone the full history of college football,

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 when you can. It will be a fun experience.



I capture many of the great moments in this book. OK, I get most of them! If I missed any and you tell me, then we'll do another edition. The great moments naturally include a lot of great people, including great players and the 31 great coaches that over time would make or break Universities such as Army, Clemson, Alabama, Notre Dame, et al.

If Navy or Air Force, or Florida or Syracuse were ever

to break because of a coach, as some believe they have at times, simply because it is one of these great American institutions of football, who also educate seventeen to 22 year-olds in the ways of the world, these university not only would continue, they will always continue.

All of these institutions have been able to survive a number of coaches who could not survive themselves, while the universities and their football programs have both grown in acceptance and popularity.

We all as individuals and as honest academic / football institutions, 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! College football once it came was here to stay.

Let me please assure you that I have done my best to portray an accurate depiction of all the schools referenced in this college football compendium, 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 so many great football institutions to a single book. I can't! Nobody can! And, nobody ever has. But we have done something close to satisfying what needs to be said about the football program. In fact, I can, and I have done so in this book. We can deliver an understanding of college football and some of its major academic institutions and all of their 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.

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. Paterno, Mr. Bryant, Mr. Spurrier, Mr. Rockne, Mr. Schembeckler, or Mr. Leahy, or Mr. Harper, or even Mr. Kelly to get the truth about what was happening in their lives or the football time period in which they excelled. They had no idea I would be writing about them and their fine institutions. They just did their jobs and now, look how successful college football is today even though it was not this way forever.

Those of us in the stands every Saturday and select other days in the fall or extended fall football seasons know what to expect. It is the best and I am proud to write about it. We all know that college football is a sport driven by major emotion. There are almost 800 colleges and universities with NCAA football programs in America. Depending on the size of the institution, there can be as many as



twenty or more coaches at one institution. They carry titles such as Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Offensive Coordinator, Defensive Coordinator, Special Teams Coach, etc. etc. etc. There are a lot of coaches in college football bringing America the finest in football from August through January every year.

You need players to play football. Without coaches, players have and would again play football, but it would not feature the fine tuned programs that treat the fans every Saturday. It goes without saying and is well understood that coaches are vital to American football and its continuance at the college and university level.

Every football coach in America is a special person even though sometimes—very few times—we can argue against that statement. Bleacherreport.com explains it this way:

“These coaches know that if a player isn't emotionally motivated, he won't be physically motivated. It is these emotions, these blotches of stand still time, which causes players and coaches to deliver a speech, shout expletives at the ref, or say something during a press conference that usually wouldn't have been said.

These emotions have brought about the greatest player, greatest coaches, and these great people have issued some of the greatest quotes in college football history.

Football in America began in the late 1800s and one after another, colleges adopted this fun sport. It was fun for students, players. And fans. It took off quickly but was slowed down in America's two great wars when young men were asked to serve, and some colleges and universities had to drop the sport because there were not enough players to form teams. Some such as Gonzaga have concentrated in other sports such as basketball. Many of us saw an undefeated Gonzaga Bulldogs B-Ball team play the Baylor Bears in the NCAA Championship at the beginning of April 2021. Gonzaga has yet to decide to come back to football in a big way. They are finally back at a low level, but they are not really back.

Let me use Gonzaga to talk about football before I continue with this chapter. Just like great football coaches. Gonzaga recruits, develops

and plays like a blue blood. Mark Few deserves a ton of credit for that whether his basketball team cuts down the nets in Indianapolis or not. This year, they just missed it. But, they were almost undefeated champions.

Could we ever see a rise quite like this for Gonzaga or a Gonzaga-like school in college football? What am I talking about. We might posture that the college football equivalent to where Gonzaga came from in basketball would be if a football program like Cincinnati, UCF or Boise State went from being a yearly New Year's 6 contender to becoming national title favorites. Yes, that would mean real national titles that are actually acknowledged by the current system. Not so easy or they would be there already. But, it could happen as college football after the war years is back big time. s

In 1978, about thirty years after World War II ended—(September 1, 1939 – September 2, 1945), the NCAA changed its method for tracking attendance figures at College Football Games. High School football, and pro football had also become very, very popular. Well, the number of college level schools playing NCAA football in various divisions (FBS, FCS, DII and DIII) has steadily increased.

Even my alma mater, King's College in Wilkes-Barre PA after dropping football in the 1960's because of expense, and after a number of years—(one in which they were National Champions) in Club football (arm's length relationship with the sponsoring school, picked up the sport again. Ironically as I have been told, consultants advised the school that with a football program they would increase enrollments by 20 and that would be enough to make the program worthwhile. In 1993, King's fired up it's new NCAA Div III program and they have done quite well.

FYI, in 1946, the Congregation of Holy Cross accepted the invitation of Bishop William J. Hafey of Scranton to begin an independent four year college for men in Wilkes-Barre. So, King's was founded by priests who came from the University of Notre Dame.

Football began to take off as a varsity sport. For example the number of schools playing NCAA football increased by 182 schools from 484 in 1978 and it was up to 666 in 2017, or an average increase of 4.7 schools per year. Adding NAIA and independent schools playing football and schools launching programs in the coming years, the

number of colleges and universities offering students an opportunity to play college football has been increased to the all-time high of 778. So, this book is very timely.



**The Four Horsemen Were a Tough 4-member Notre Dame Backfield**

I have taken the well-known Notre Dame Football History of our times as it is also the history stretching it a bit of my college alma mater, King's College. My first college book was about Notre Dame football and I think I 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 felt that if my first Sports book about Notre Dame were written to be 75,000 pages, I could 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 show enough to the reader to make the journey through the beginning of football through Coach Kelly's last win much easier to make than otherwise could have ever been.

What reader wants to do the research in order to be fulfilled about a school's history other than me? This book makes the history of the football programs—with their great moments in football history is great to have. It is exciting and real and much easier than if the reader had to look up all this great stuff by himself. It brings each school, whether it be Notre Dame or Alabama or LSU or another great football program to life for the reader.

After Notre Dame, I wrote books about the following university's football programs. I would bet that I have written about more college football programs than any other non-fiction author. Here they are in alphabetical sequence:.

- Air Force
- Army
- Alabama
- Clemson
- Florida
- LSU
- Navy
- Notre Dame
- Penn State
- Syracuse

For each university, besides writing a great moments book, I also wrote a Great Coach's book and a Great Players book. Then I got the idea of creating a book of College Championships for each school. This gives me a total of forty football books across ten universities. And, I am only 73 years of age as of January 30, 2021.

It took a while but eventually I began to write books about Professional Football. I finished my last great moments book just a few weeks ago. It was titled

### **Great Moments in Tampa Bay Buccaneers football**

I wrote it in honor of their great Super Bowl Season. And, of course, I used that book to create a Great Players Book, A Great Coaches Book, and a Championship Seasons Book. Here are the teams about which I have written

Kansas City Chiefs  
 New York Giants  
 New England Patriots  
 Philadelphia Eagles  
 Pittsburgh Steelers  
 Tampa Bay Buccaneers

So, I wrote three additional books (four in total) about six pro teams giving me a total of 24 pro football books not counting this one::

**1. How the Philadelphia Eagles Lost Its Karma?**: *The karma-deprived Super Bowl Eagles can't even find a park pigeon today to share some birdseed*

I also wrote two books about the Paterno days after the Joe Paterno era had ended:

**1. PATERNO: The Dark Days After Win # 409.** *The sky began to fall within days of win # 409*

**2. JoePa 409 Victories: Say No More!**: *The winningest Division I-A college football coach ever.*

If you are adding these up at home folks, that is an awful lot of books. That means that I have written sixty-seven sports books in total, not counting these two:

**1. American College Football: The Beginning.** *The Evolution from "Mob" Football to American Football*

**2. The Birth of American Football.** *From the first college game in 1869 to the last Super Bowl*

So, folks, Brian Kelly, your author is now writing his 70<sup>th</sup> sports book. Not too shabby.

**Relax and read a Kelly Sports Book!**

Instead of lots of work, we can now 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 Rockne, Paterno, Orgeron, Sabin, Leahy, Parseghian, Engle, Spurrier, Meyer, Blaik, Hardin, DeBerry, Martin, Devine, Holtz, Kelly, Swinney, Bryant, Engle, Higgins, Pasqualoni, Schwartwalder, or some new whippersnapper in a future book. .

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 I began to write about things as they were happening back then. I moved the book chapter by chapter through the beginnings of football and then the various universities, keeping mind to only discuss the important details. I made sure that I got the essence and that the tales were not boring.

I examined the time periods in which there was no coach at all for a college football team. I took it to eras in which coaches did not last more than a year. Then, before I knew it I was sneaking up on the decade before the 1920's and I took the flow to the era of the importance of college coaches such as Jesse Harper, a relative unknown today who happened to be the coach who hired Coach Knute Rockne.

Then I moved to other great schools and found Notre Dame had 31 head coaches and Alabama had 27. Most of the coaches were very notable. I made sure that we captured their best stories.

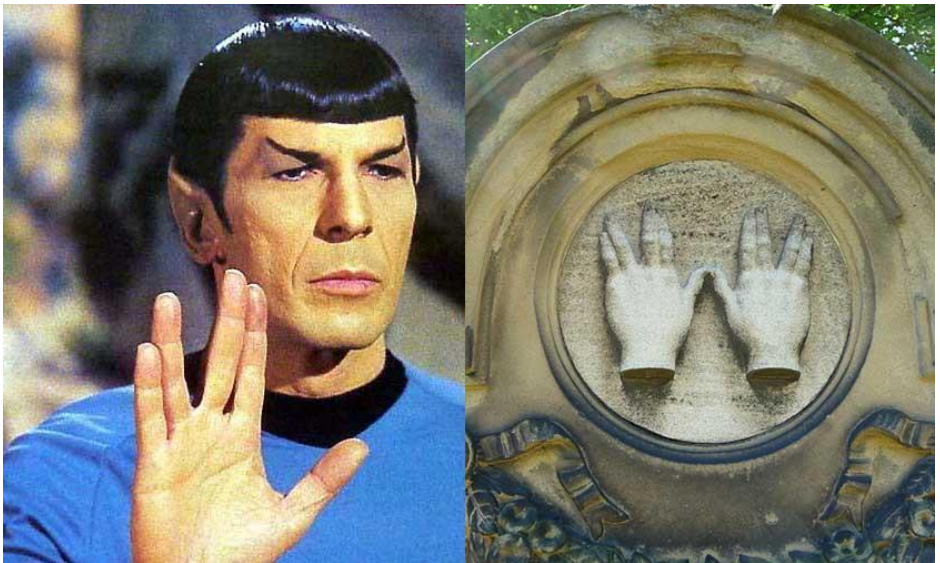
Eventually, I completed the great moments in College Football Story so you can now fill your leisure time with smiles and wonderment. Don't you dare put this book down!





Lou Holtz, Brian Kelly, Ara Parseghian, Notre Dame's Greatest in Modern Era

Even if you choose never to take a break, I get the whole teaching job done in something just less than 600 pages of the most enjoyable content you will ever read about college football. To all the coaches referenced in this book—May they live long in this life and the afterlife 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 1887 to the last, which as of today is the 2020 season as we approach 2021.

Within each season, the book highlights its great moments, but we also do one thing that makes this book useful as a reference document about these teams of the past. We chronicle many of the game in quick summary form. Some games are portrayed with great detail after the summation because of their historical significance or to tell a great story.

Nonetheless, a number of games are listed and chronicled from 1887. 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.

All colleges and universities are proud of their history. I may use Notre Dame as a linchpin since I wrote about the Fighting Irish as my first college football book.

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

# Chapter 2 The Founding of the Several Universities

## Notre Dame



Notre Dame: Main Building and Golden Dome

<<Very Rev. Edward Frederick Sorin



Notre Dame University is naturally proud of its history; its founding; and its founder, The Very Rev. Edward Frederick Sorin, C.S.C. (1814–1893). Father Sorin was a priest of the Congregation of Holy Cross.

This happens to be the same religious order that founded my alma mater, King's College in Wilkes-Barre, PA in 1946. Father Sorin has the great historical distinction of being the founder of the University

of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. He also founded St. Edward's University in [Austin, Texas](#).

The Congregation of Holy Cross Web Site has the best write-up of the founder of Notre Dame, Rev. Edward F. Sorin, C.S.C. For the proper perspective, including the founding of Notre Dame, the story from the C.S.C. site is the best. <https://www.holycrossusa.org/>

## **Penn State**



Beautiful PSU Main Building and Flowers

As Pennsylvania's only land-grant university, Penn State has a broad mission of teaching, research, and public service. But that mission was not so grandly conceived in 1855, when the Commonwealth chartered it as one of the nation's first colleges of agricultural science, with a goal to apply scientific principles to farming.

Please note that a land-grant university (also called land-grant college or land-grant institution) is an institution of higher education in the United States designated by a state to receive the benefits of the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890. The purpose of the acts was to educate citizens in the fields of Agriculture, Home Economics, the Mechanic Arts, and other useful professions. Thus, Penn State's humble beginning was for very practical reasons.

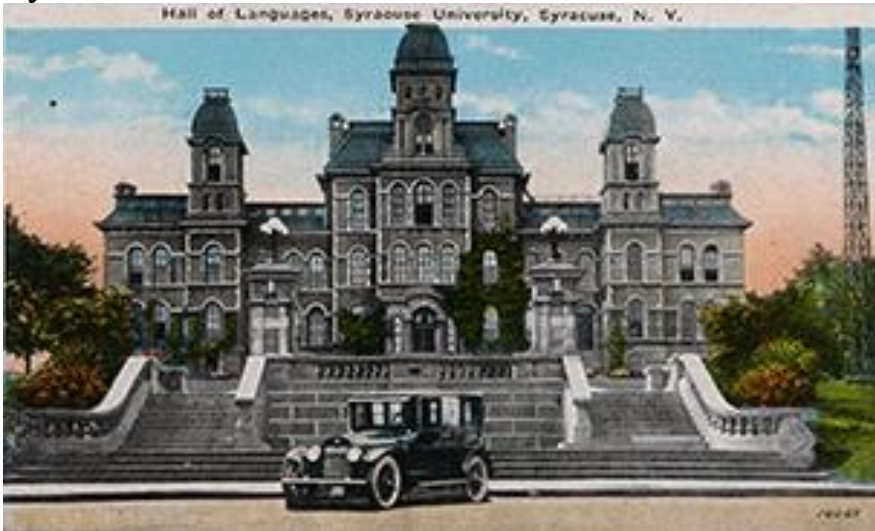


Centre County became the site of the new college in response to a gift of 200 acres from gentleman farmer and ironmaster James Irvin of Bellefonte. Founding President Evan Pugh drew on the scientific education he had received in Europe to plan a curriculum that combined theoretical studies with practical applications.

Pugh and similar visionaries in other states championed Congressional passage of the Morrill Land-Grant Act in 1862. The act enabled states to sell federal land, invest the proceeds, and use the income to support colleges "where the leading object shall be, without excluding scientific and classical studies ... to teach agriculture and the mechanic arts [engineering] ... in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in all the pursuits and professions of life." The state legislature designated Penn State the land-grant institution of Pennsylvania.

But not until the 1880s, shortly before the introduction of football to the institution, under the leadership of President George W. Atherton, did the college expand its curriculum to match the Land-Grant Act's broad mandate. From that time onward, curriculums in engineering, the sciences, the liberal arts, and more began to flourish. In the early 1900s, Penn State introduced cooperative extension and additional outreach programming, extending the reach of its academic mission.

## Syracuse



Syracuse University Famous Hall of Languages

Then. Now. Always.

The history of Syracuse University may date back to 1870, but that doesn't mean we're caught in the past.

In fact, we've always been ahead of our time and original in our outlook. We were the first to adopt one official color—a proud orange. We were the first in the nation to offer a bachelor of the fine arts degree and were founders of the nation's first iSchool.

We opened doors for women as far back as 1870, from pioneers that include Karen DeCrow (women's rights activist) to Eileen Collins (the first female commander of a Space Shuttle). Building on the leading role we played in the first G.I. Bill, we're recognized as the #1 private school for military service members, veterans, and their families—a commitment that will soon expand with the construction of the National Veterans Resource Complex (NVRC). And that's just where we are today.

Today, as in our past, the University's commitment to access honors every individual's potential—and that enriches us all. From the development of an oral insulin to the discovery of gravitational waves, Syracuse's future is bright—and our students, even brighter.

We have been an inclusive and welcoming place since our beginning. At the 1870 inauguration of Syracuse University, Dr. Jesse Truesdell Peck (a founder and first chair of the Board of Trustees) charged the faculty to remember that the University was to be impartial and general. "The conditions of admission shall be equal to all persons... there shall be no invidious discrimination here against woman.... brains and heart shall have a fair chance..."

## **Alabama**

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.



University of the State of Alabama

## Origins from 1818 before Alabama was a state

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.

UA 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 welcome and you are welcome.

## Louisiana State University



The State University of Louisiana (LSU)

### Origins from 1860

### History of LSU

*Courtesy of the Louisiana State University Archives*

Louisiana State University began as a small all-male military school near Pineville, Louisiana. Originally called the *Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy* (or variations thereof), classes began on January 2, 1860. The first superintendent, William Tecumseh Sherman, and five faculty members, taught the first students. The Seminary offered classes in engineering, chemistry, Latin, Greek, English, and mathematics. Cadets, as the students

were called, submitted to military-style discipline and were required to stand inspections, drill, stand guard, and attend classes. They were awakened by a bugler sounding reveille and went to bed at taps.

The school's administrative structure consisted of a Board of Supervisors appointed by the governor, who was (and still is) also an ex officio member; the superintendent; the faculty; surgeon; and secretary. The most prominent member of the Board of Supervisors at this time was Gen. George Mason Graham, a planter who owned Tyrone Plantation in Rapides Parish, and was brigadier general in the state militia. He was called the "father of LSU" because of his strong commitment to the school and for his long service on the board. He was responsible for most of the major decisions regarding the Seminary including supervising construction of the building, creating its first curriculum, and insisting upon a military character.

William Tecumseh Sherman was chosen as the Seminary's first superintendent (equivalent to today's president) in 1859. An 1840 graduate of West Point, he served in the army until 1853 and subsequently became a lawyer and banker before applying for the superintendent's position. When he arrived at the Seminary, Sherman had a building but little else. He had to secure books, uniforms, furniture, and other materials so that classes could begin. The senior professor was Anthony Vallas, a Hungarian émigré who taught mathematics and natural philosophy. Francis W. Smith became professor of chemistry and commandant of cadets.

The Seminary grounds, located near Pineville in Rapides Parish, was purchased in 1853 from Mrs. E.R. Williams for \$3,190 and comprised 438 acres. An additional eighty acres were purchased in 1855. This location was chosen because of its centrality, access to water transportation on the Red River, and the area's perceived healthfulness. The fact that George Mason Graham lived in Rapides Parish also played a role.

There were a few buildings on the property, but they were deemed unsuitable for use as a school, and \$15,000 was allocated for construction of a new building which began in 1856. The building itself, one of the largest public buildings in the state upon completion, was an imposing three-story 72-room U-shaped structure with a central quadrangle. The building combined classrooms, dining hall,

library, and quarters for the students as well as faculty until homes could be built for them.



LSU Seminary and its grounds

In 1861, Louisiana joined other Southern states in seceding from the Union and Sherman resigned to join the United States Army. He would remain a friend and benefactor of the school for the rest of his life. When the Civil War began, most of the students and faculty members left the Seminary to fight for the Confederacy causing the school to close. After a few attempts to reopen, the Seminary closed for the duration of the war in April of 1863. The Seminary reopened in September of 1865 with David F. Boyd, one of the original faculty members, as superintendent.

In June of 1869, the Seminary held a commencement ceremony for its first graduating class. This would be the first and only commencement held at the Seminary. On October 15, 1869, fire destroyed the seminary building. The rest of course is history.

## The Founding of Clemson University



One of the Beautiful Sites on CU Campus

### The Clemson short story: Courtesy of Clemson University

Clemson was founded in 1889 through a bequest from Thomas Green Clemson, a Philadelphia-born, European-educated engineer, musician and artist who married John C. Calhoun's daughter, Anna Maria, and eventually settled at her family plantation in South Carolina. A longtime advocate for an agricultural college in the Upstate, Clemson left his home and fortune to the state of South Carolina to create the institution that bears his name.

In November 1889, Gov. John Peter Richardson signed a bill accepting Clemson's gift, which established the Clemson Agricultural College and made its trustees custodians of Morrill Act and Hatch Act funds, federally provided for agricultural education and research purposes by federal legislative acts.

Initially an all-male, all-white military school, Clemson Agricultural College opened in July 1893 with 446 students. Clemson became a coeducational, civilian institution in 1955 and was the first



traditionally white institution in South Carolina to desegregate since Reconstruction. With academic offerings and research pursuits, the institution became Clemson University in 1964.

## Air Force Academy

Our deep thanks to the military for providing this great piece of history available publicly for your edification and enjoyment.

The United States Army was flying planes and providing tactical air service for a long time before the “Air Force” came into being.



US Air Force Academy Campus

## Air Force News *Early Years*

On Aug. 1, 1907, the U.S. Army Signal Corps established a small Aeronautical Division to take "charge of all matters pertaining to military ballooning, air machines and all kindred subjects." The Signal Corps began testing its first airplane at Fort Myer, Va., on Aug. 20, 1908, and on Sept. 9, Lt. Thomas E. Selfridge, flying with Orville Wright, was killed when the plane crashed. He was the first military aviation casualty. After more testing with an improved

Wright Flyer, the Army formally accepted this airplane, identified as "Airplane No. 1," on Aug. 2, 1909.

## **The Naval Academy Short Story: Courtesy of USAFA.af.mil**

Taken from a work published January 18, 2012

The U.S Air Force Academy was established April 1, 1954, the culmination of an idea years in the making. Airpower leaders, long before the Air Force was a separate service, argued that they needed a school dedicated to war in the air, to train Airmen. After September 1947, when the Air Force was established as a separate service, this idea finally had the legitimacy of the new service behind it.

In 1948, seventy years ago, the Air Force appointed a board, later named the Stearns-Eisenhower Board for its chairmen, to study existing military academies and the options for an Air Force academy. Their conclusions were strongly put: The Air Force needed its own school; they additionally recommended at least 40 percent of future officers be service academy graduates.

After Congress passed a bill establishing the Air Force Academy, the secretary of the Air Force appointed a commission to recommend a location. After traveling 21,000 miles and considering hundreds of sites, the commission recommended Colorado Springs as its first choice. The secretary agreed, and the purchasing of the thousands of acres began. The state of Colorado contributed \$1 million to the purchase of the land.

On July 11, 1955, the same year construction on the Academy began in Colorado Springs, the first class of 306 men was sworn-in at a temporary site, Lowry Air Force Base in Denver. Lieutenant Gen. Hubert R. Harmon, a key figure in the development of early plans for an Academy, was recalled from retirement by President Dwight D. Eisenhower to become the first Academy superintendent.

Two years later, Maj. Gen. James Briggs took over as the Academy's second superintendent. On Aug. 29, 1958, 1,145 cadets moved to the Academy's permanent site from Denver. Less than a year later, the

Academy received academic accreditation and graduated its first class of 207 June 3, 1959. In 1964, the authorized strength of the Cadet Wing increased to 4,417. The present authorized strength is approximately 4,000.

Perhaps the most controversial event in the Academy's history was the admission of women. President Gerald R. Ford signed legislation Oct. 7, 1975, permitting women to enter the military academies. Women first entered the Air Force Academy June 28, 1976. The first-class including women graduated in 1980 and included the Academy's first woman to be superintendent, retired Lt. Gen. Michelle Johnson.

The Academy celebrated the 50th anniversary of its inception April 1, 2004. Three noteworthy events occurred in connection with the celebration: a 37-cent commemorative stamp was issued honoring the Academy with the Cadet Chapel strikingly portrayed; the Academy was declared a national historic landmark with a plaque installed on the Honor Court to mark the occasion; and Harmon was officially named as the "Father of the Air Force Academy," honoring the pivotal role he played in its planning and establishment. Further anniversaries were marked during the next four years, culminating with the 50th anniversary of the first commencement at the Academy in 2009.

The Academy provides the Air Force with a corps of officers dedicated to upholding the high standards of their profession. The Air Force in turn provides a proving ground for these officers and sent back to its Academy dedicated staff members to educate and train future leaders. Fifty years after the first class entered, the Academy has graduated more than 50,000 officers intent on serving their country.

## **United States Military Academy (Army)**

Founded in 1802, West Point is our nation’s oldest service academy. Graduates of West Point “serve this nation honorably, sharing a strong sense of purpose, pride, and satisfaction that comes from meaningful service to others.”



West Point: One of the Beautiful Sites on USMA Campus

## The West Point short story: Courtesy of USMA

Attending the United States Military Academy is a wonderfully unique and challenging experience. West Point is a four-year college with a mission to develop leaders of character for our army—leaders who are inspired to careers as commissioned officers and lifetime service to the nation.

The students of West Point (called Cadets) are selected from the most talented, energetic, and well-rounded young people in the country. Located on 16,000 acres in the scenic Hudson Valley region of New York State, West Point is conveniently situated just fifty miles north of New York City. The year-round pageantry and tradition make the Military Academy a national treasure and a popular tourist spot.



People come from all over the world to see Cadets in action, and there is so much to see.

Choosing West Point opens the door to countless opportunities. Cadets receive a topnotch education, training in leader development, and numerous professional opportunities. They learn first how to be a follower, and then to be a leader—skills that will carry them in all of their life endeavors. Not to mention the fact that they are guaranteed a five-year job in the military.

So, what makes West Point such a special place? West Point is more than a school; it is a tight knit community. The officers and noncommissioned officers who serve as instructors at West Point share a special bond with the Cadets. The students and their instructors at West Point are members of the same profession and are dedicated to the same principles of “duty, honor, and country.”

## US Naval Academy



Entrance to the Beautiful USNA Campus

## The Naval Academy Short Story: Courtesy of USNA

Don't enlist just because I say you should. But, you should! Unless you are an old fart like me who already put in his time—like me!

When the founders of the United States Naval Academy were looking for a suitable location, it was reported that then Secretary of the Navy George Bancroft decided to move the naval school to "the healthy and secluded" location of Annapolis in order to rescue midshipmen from "the temptations and distractions that necessarily connect with a large and populous city." The Philadelphia Naval Asylum School was its predecessor. Four of the original seven faculty members came from Philadelphia. Other small naval schools in New York City, Norfolk, Va., and Boston, Mass. also existed in the early days of the United States.

The United States Navy was born during the American Revolution when the need for a naval force to match the Royal Navy became clear. But during the period immediately following the Revolution, the Continental Navy was demobilized in 1785 by an economy-minded Congress.

The dormancy of American sea power lasted barely a decade when, in 1794, President George Washington persuaded the Congress to authorize a new naval force to combat the growing menace of piracy on the high seas.

Through the efforts of the Secretary of the Navy George Bancroft, the Naval School was established without Congressional funding, at a 10-acre Army post named Fort Severn in Annapolis, Maryland, on October 10, 1845, with a class of 50 midshipmen and seven professors. The curriculum included mathematics and navigation, gunnery and steam, chemistry, English, natural philosophy, and French.

In 1850 the Naval School became the United States Naval Academy. A new curriculum went into effect requiring midshipmen to study at the Academy for four years and to train aboard ships each summer. That format is the basis of a far more advanced and sophisticated curriculum at the Naval Academy today. As the U.S. Navy grew

over the years, the Academy expanded. The campus of 10 acres increased to 338. The original student body of 50 midshipmen grew to a brigade size of 4,000. Modern granite buildings replaced the old wooden structures of Fort Severn.

## The University of Florida

The University of Florida, a great institution, which the people of Florida affectionately and simply call Florida of US, is a public research university that awards associate, bachelor's, master's, doctoral, and professional degrees such as the MD. The university also offers continuing education programs.

UF is an American public land-grant, sea-grant, and space-grant research university on a beautiful 2,000-acre (8.1 km<sup>2</sup>) campus in Gainesville, Florida.



One of the Beautiful Sites on UF campus

UF traces its origins to 1853, when the East Florida Seminary, the oldest of the University of Florida's four predecessor institutions, was founded in Ocala, Florida. On January 6, 1853, Governor Thomas

Brown signed a bill that provided public support for higher education in Florida.

The University has a history of excellence from its founding over 160 years ago. UF never took anything for granted that did not come from hard work. And, so, the School, which has several iterations, continually pushed the boundaries of knowledge forward.

Learning always is a forward project. With its finger on the pulse and a big eye on the bigger than life horizon, the UF founders and on to today have always pursued the greatest heights of research and innovation to differentiate “Just OK” from “excellence.” The aim and objective was always for the betterment of Florida, one of the USA’s most desired states in which to live... and the world.

It is not rumor but reality that in 1858, James Henry Roper, an educator from North Carolina, who was also a state senator from Alachua County, opened a school in Gainesville: the Gainesville Academy. In 1866, Roper offered his land and school to the State of Florida in exchange for the relocation of the East Florida Seminary to Gainesville.

In 1906, after recognizing the significance of the growing research collections and teaching exhibits, the Florida Museum of Natural History became part of UF. It is dedicated to understanding, preserving and interpreting biological diversity and cultural heritage.

Nothing of importance stands still. In 2000, the McGuire Center for Lepidoptera and Biodiversity opened, becoming one of the largest collections of Lepidoptera in the world with more than 6 million butterfly and moth specimens. Lepidoptera is an order of insects that includes moths and butterflies

In 1909, university president Albert Murphree organized the university colleges under a single mission. In doing so, enrollment increased from 200 to over 2,000. Wanting to instill service and leadership in this larger student body, Murphree also helped found the Florida Blue Key leadership society.

## Chapter 3 Determining the National Championship Team



### It took a while to almost get it right

In all of my sixteen great moments in football books written about college football and professional football teams, I include a chapter on the origins of the game of football. So, as you will read later in this book, Rutgers and New Jersey, which was later known as Princeton, engaged in what most consider to be the first American football game ever played on Nov. 6, 1869. This game took place in New Brunswick, New Jersey, with an audience of about 100 on hand, according to Rutgers, an institution very proud of its role in making football a ubiquitous college sport.

The idea of a national champion for the college sport of football goes back a long way but not as long as most think. Eventually the NCAA got in the act to formalize how championships are determined. Before that, some would say it was a free-for-all with many claiming



to have the magic formulae to crown a national champion. Eventually, the NCAA went back and honored some of these groups called “selectors” who painstakingly over the years when there was no official champion, did their best to determine and declare a champion. This gave some credence to the notion of what has been called a mythical national championship or MNC.

Of course since there are many such groups that formed over the years, in some years, there are a lot more than just one champion listed. When this is the case, the selectors for each candidate team are also shown.

Here are some of the recent big names to which the NCAA has added legitimacy

## **College football national championships in NCAA Division I FBS**

### **National championship trophies**

AP (since 1936)

Grantland Rice (1954–2013)

MacArthur (since 1959)

AFCA (since 1986)

College Football Playoff (since 2014)

FYI: The longest continuous selector in recent times is the Associated Press (1936–present)

## **Champions needed for large & small schools**

Most football fans know that the national championship in whatever division level in college football from the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) for large universities, to the lower levels for smaller schools such as Division III, is a designation awarded annually. Who awards this prestigious declaration? The various organizations authorized to select the best college football team have gotten the honor year after year. Division I FBS football is the only National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) sport for which the NCAA does not sanction a yearly championship event. As such, it is sometimes unofficially referred to as a "mythical national championship."

Those carrying a little age on our frames know that there has always been a bit of controversy in the awarding of a national championship at any level of football. We have witnessed it. As you will see, Penn State is the most snubbed of all colleges by selectors with at least five undefeated and untied teams for which no declaration of supremacy in college football was awarded.

Of course the NCAA which has become a little too powerful for its “britches” would have us all believe that due to the lack of an official NCAA title, determining the nation's top college football team is the reason for all the controversy. Whether the NCAA is right or wrong, if an official body were respected enough to add clarity to the end of season melee that has often taken place with various teams claiming national championships, it would be better, and the NCAA has made great strides in this regard in recent years.

Football is a tough sport to have a huge end of season tournament such as March madness though we may see such a tournament one of these years. Most football teams play just once a week, theoretically because it takes so long to recuperate after a bruising game. Few would want football to be played all year long just to determine a champion. There ought to be a better way and such ways are being considered at this very moment by the “powers that be.”

## Who declares a champion?

For years, a championship team has been independently declared by multiple individuals and organizations. These are referred to as “selectors”. Unfortunately, their choices are not always unanimous. Penn State mentioned above, like Rodney Dangerfield believes it has never gotten the respect it deserves. By the way a check of the record proves them right.

The Nittany Lions in 1969 under Joe Paterno in his third year as coach for example, were undefeated and untied for the second year in a row. They were not declared national champion in either year. To add insult to injury, in 1969 the President of the United States Richard Milhouse Nixon decided it as his turn to do the honor.

Nixon declared a national champion by announcing, ahead of the season-ending game between No. 1 Texas and No. 2 Arkansas, that the winner of that game would receive a plaque from the President himself, commemorating that team as the year's national champion. Texas went on to win that game, 15–14. You guessed it, the selectors were influenced, and they picked Texas as the National Champion though Penn State had an undefeated and untied record and many pundits thought they were the true National Champions. Being a selector at best has always been an inexact “science.”

To maintain its lucrative money making positive image, the NCAA itself has never officially endorsed a championship team, it has documented the choices of some selectors in what it calls its official NCAA Football Bowl Subdivision Records publication. Besides, various pundits and analysts have independently published their own choices for each season. These opinions can often differ with others who examine the same facts and they differ also with individual schools' claims to national titles.

These may or may not correlate to the selections published elsewhere. Currently, two of the most widely recognized national champion selectors are the Associated Press, which conducts a poll of sportswriters, and the Coaches Poll, a survey of active members of the American Football Coaches Association. Of course since there are two sources noted by the NCAA, that means that when they differ, each of the schools cited, will almost definitely claim the national title. In those years, however, the schools have no authority to say that their school is the consensus national champion.

Fans and football aficionados across the US (Football is an American Sport) believe that with all of the bright people in the country, a better system should be able to be developed. And, so for almost as many years, various groups including the NCAA have participated in sessions to help add order to the season ending annual chaos.

Since 1992, for example various consortia of major bowl games (those that have a stake in the outcome) have aimed to invite the top two teams at the end of the regular season (as determined by internal rankings, or aggregates of the major polls and other statistics) to compete in what is intended to be the de facto national championship game. The problem of course is who gets to determine “de facto.”



The current iteration of this practice, the College Football Playoff, selects four teams to participate in national semi-finals hosted by two of six partner bowl games, with their winners advancing to the College Football Playoff National Championship. This is better than before but there has been a lot of squabbling as to who the top four should be.

Consider if your team is undefeated and untied and is designated out of the top four by the vote of these partisans, how would you feel. It would be better for this to be a “Elite Eight” or a “Sweet Sixteen” tournament, and perhaps even a “Top Thirty-2” as participants could be more fairly determined. One day, I predict that the tournament will grow. Seasons can be reduced if the playing impact needs to be considered.

Championships in sports are a natural. The demand for a national championship methodology that is fair will continue. Of course, the concept of a national championship in college football dates back to the early years of the sport in the late 19th century, and the earliest contemporaneous polls can be traced back to the experts of the day. For example, if you were well over 120 years old, you might remember Caspar Whitney, Charles Patterson, and *The Sun* in 1901. Having polls and champions are not a modern phenomenon. Yes, folks even our great-great-grandparents used them.

The prognostication method of polls and national champions predated what are called mathematical ranking systems. However, it was Dickinson's math system, named after Frank Dickinson, that was one of the first to be widely popularized. His system was named 10–0.

Since it bears his name, we can see it was his brainchild. Dickinson was an Illinois economics professor. His 10-0 Dickinson System was a primitive mathematical formula created to select a "national champion," which it did for each season from 1926 through 1940. At Knute Rockne's request, Dickinson also retroactively rated teams for the 1924 and 1925 seasons so as to crown Rockne's '24 Notre Dame team the system's first "national champion." The system thus gained Rockne's endorsement. Yes, for all the favor Rockne gave the system,

you can bet another school would find a different math system more favorable for their own team. So, even using math, the results were imperfect at best.

Dickinson's system named Stanford as the national champion of 1926, prior to their tie with Alabama in the Rose Bowl. As noted, a curious Knute Rockne, then coach of Notre Dame, had Dickinson backdate two seasons, which produced Notre Dame as the 1924 national champion and Dartmouth in 1925. There is no doubt about why Rockne liked the system.

A number of other mathematical selector systems, not associated with Dickinson were prevalent in the 1920s and 1930s and at the time, they were the only organized methods used for selecting national champions. This was too lucrative a notion to go unnoticed. Being the official selector became a goal of everybody wanting to sell information. For example, soon the Associated Press began polling sportswriters in 1936 to obtain rankings.

## **AP & UP important polls**

Alan J. Gould, the creator of the AP Poll, named Minnesota, Princeton, and SMU co-champions in 1935, and polled writers the following year, which resulted in a national championship for Minnesota. The AP's main competition, United Press, created the first Coaches Poll back in 1950. For that year and the next three, the AP and UP agreed on the national champion.

Their peaceful coexistence could not last. The first "split" championship occurred in 1954, when the writers selected Ohio State and the coaches chose UCLA. The two polls also disagreed at least ten more times in 1957, 1965, 1970, 1973, 1974, 1978, 1990, 1991, 1997, and 2003. Polling was a lucrative notion. For example, the Coaches Poll would stay with United Press (UP) when they merged with International News Service (INS) to form United Press International (UPI).

This was acquired by USA Today and CNN in 1991. The poll was in the hands of USA Today and ESPN from 1997 to 2005 before moving to sole ownership by USA Today.

Others were jealous and wanted in. Beginning in 2014, Amway became a joint sponsor with USA Today. Though some of the math systems selected champions after the bowl games, both of the major polls released their rankings after the end of the regular season until the AP polled writers after the bowls in 1965, resulting in what was perceived at the time as a better championship selection (Alabama) than UPI's (Michigan State).

After 1965, the year I graduated from Meyers High School, the AP again voted before the bowls for two years, before permanently returning to a post-bowl vote in 1968. The coaches did not conduct a vote after the bowls until 1974, in the wake of awarding their 1973 championship to Alabama, who lost to the AP champion, undefeated Notre Dame, in the Sugar Bowl.

Today, the AP and Coaches polls have survived the test of time and remain the major rankings to this day. It is still a business that creates a lot of grumbles but maybe that is how the pollsters get higher ratings.

From way back in the 1930s, about ninety years ago, to the advent of the College Football Playoff, each top team played a single postseason bowl game per season. The process of selecting a national champion during this period was complicated by the fact that the champions of major conferences were tied to specific bowls (for example, the Big 8 champion was tied to the Orange Bowl), and the top two teams in the nation often played in different bowls. A few bowls over the years featured a #1 vs. #2 matchup; one example was the 1987 Fiesta Bowl, played January 2 following the 1986 season. This was a rarity.

## **BCS & FBS**

There were other attempts to create conformity. For example, two attempts to annually crown a champion on the field were the Bowl Coalition (1992–1994) and the Bowl Alliance (1995–1997). However, their effort to host a national championship was hampered by the lack of participation of the Pac-10 and Big Ten groups and their

champions, who instead opted to play in the traditional Rose Bowl. Today's system includes the Rose Bowl opportunity.

The Bowl Championship Series, famous for its use of math, was the successor of the Coalition and Alliance. Both groups put their thinking caps on. Besides the many adjustments it underwent during its tenure, including a large overhaul following the 2004 season that included the replacement of the AP Poll with the Harris poll, the BCS remained a mixture of math and human polls from its incarnation in 1998.

Besides notoriety and profit, the goal of all the systems was always the matching of the best two teams in the nation in a national championship bowl game which would rotate yearly between the bowl games. I still remember their names as they have not yet gone away. We have the Sugar, Fiesta, Rose, and Orange Bowls from 1998 to 2005, and later a standalone game was added that the experts titled the BCS National Championship Game (2006 to 2013). Of course, the winner of the BCS Championship Game was awarded the national championship of the Coaches Poll thus winning the AFCA National Championship Trophy.

There were more prizes to protect the past prestigious awards. For example, the BCS winner also received the MacArthur Bowl from the National Football Foundation. Neither the AP Poll, nor other current selectors, had contractual obligations to select the BCS champion as their national champion. Thus, even the theoretically non-confrontational BCS resulted in a number of controversies.

Perhaps you may recall that after the 2003 season, when the BCS championship game did not include eventual AP champion USC, it was the only time the two championships have diverged since the advent of the BCS. After many seasons of controversy, the BCS was replaced with the College Football Playoff, a *Plus-One system* aimed at reducing the controversy involved in which teams get to play in a championship game through use of a tournament.

The plus-one-system is also known as a 4-team playoff. It is the new method of determining the National Champion in the Football Bowl Subdivision which formerly was called Division I-A of NCAA football. Of course the system only works in the United States where the participants' National Championship Game is dependent on the

results of two bowl games. After the 4-team playoff, where two bowl games act as semi-final games, the winners of these games participate in the National Championship Game. So, now there are four, then eight, then sixteen, then thirty-two?

## The NCAA role

National championships in the official NCAA Football Bowl Subdivision records

The NCAA has taken the time to put together and maintain an official records book of historical statistics and records for football. In the records book, with consultation from various college football historians, it has created and maintains a list of "major selectors" of national championships throughout the history of college football along with their championship picks for each season.

We now know that a variety of "selectors" have named national champions throughout the years. They generally can be divided, based on how their selections are determined, into four categories:

- Mathematical formula
- Human polls
- Historical research
- Playoffs

The selectors are listed below from the official NCAA Football Bowl Subdivision Records. They have been deemed to be "major selectors" for which the criteria is that the poll or selector be "national in scope either through distribution in newspaper, television, radio and/or computer online." The former selectors, deemed instrumental in the sport of college football, and selectors that were included for the calculation of the BCS standing, are listed together

### Math Systems

The mathematical system is the oldest systematic selector of college football national champions. Many of the math selectors were created during the "championship rush" of the 1920s and 1930s, beginning with Frank Dickinson's system, or during the dawn of the computer age in the 1990s.

<u>Selector</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Seasons</u>
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## 40 Great Moments in Notre Dame Football

A&H	Anderson & Hester	1997–present
AS	Alderson System	1994–1998
B(QPRS)	Berryman (QPRS) I	1920–1989, 1990–2011
BR	Billingsley Report	1869–1870, 1872–1969, 1970–present
BS	Boand System	1919–1929, 1930–1960
CCR	Congrove Comp Rankings	1993–present
CM	Colley Matrix	1992–present
CW	Caspar Whitney	1905–1907
DeS	DeVold System	1939–1944, 1945–2006
DiS	Dickinson System	1924–1925, 1926–1940
DuS	Dunkel System	1929–present
ERS	Eck Ratings System	1987–2005
HS	Houlgate System	1885, 1887–1905, 1907–1926, 1927–1949
L	Litkenhous	1934–1972, 1974, 1978, 1981–1984
MCFR	Massey College Ratings	1995–present
MGR	Matthews Grid Ratings	1966–1972, 1974–2006
NYT	The New York Times	1979–2004
PS	Poling System	1924–1934, 1935–1955, 1957–1984
R(FACT)	Rothman (FACT)	1968–2006
SR	Sagarin Ratings	1919–1977, 1978–present
W	Wolfe	2001–present
WS	Williamson System	1931, 1932–1963

The Billingsley Report also provides an alternate selection that uses margin-of-victory in its calculation. The NCAA Football Bowl Subdivision Records book notes both selections in years where they disagree.

Wolfe did not provide rankings for the 2020 season due to the COVID-19 pandemic. ( not enough games played to allow meaningful analysis).

## Poll Systems

The poll has been the dominant national champion selector since the inception of the AP Poll in 1936. It is notable that the NFF merged its poll with UPI from 1991 to 1992, with USA Today from 1993 to 1996, and with the FWAAs from 2014 forward. Selectors are listed below with years selected retroactively in italics. As previously noted, for many years, the national champion of various polls were selected prior to the bowl games. The national champion was selected before bowl games as follows: AP (1936–1964 and 1966–1967), Coaches Poll (1950–1973), FWAAs (1954), and NFF (1959–1970). In all other latter-day polls, champions were selected after bowl games. During the BCS era, the winner of the BCS Championship Game was automatically awarded the national championship of the Coaches Poll and the National Football Foundation.

<u>Selector</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Seasons</u>
AP	Associated Press	1936- present
Coaches	American FBI Coaches Ass.	1922–1949
BRC	AFCA Blue Ribbon Com.	1950–1957
UP	United Press	1958–1990b
UPI	United Press International	1991–1996

USAT/CNN	USA Today/CNN	1950–1957
USAT/ESPN	USA Today/ESPN	1997–2004
USAT	USA Today	2005–2013
USAT/AMWAY	USA Today/Amway	2014–present
CFRA	College F-ball Res Assoc.	1919–1935, 1936–1981, 1982–1992, 2010–
FN	Football News	1958–2002
FWAA	Football Writers Assoc	1954–2013c
FWAA/NFF	FWAA-NFF Grantland Rice	2014–present
HAF	Helms Athletic Foundation	1883–1935, 1936–1940, 1941–1982
INS	International News Service	1952–1957
NCF	National Champ/ship Fnd.	1869–1870, 1872–1935, 1936–1979, 1980–2000
NFF	National Football Foun.	1959–1990, 1997–2013c d e
SN	Sporting News	1975–2006
UPI	United Press International	1993–1995f
UPI/NFF	United Press I /NFball Fnd.	1991–1992e
USAT	USA Today	1982
USAT/CNN	USA Today/CNN	1983–1990
USAT/NFF	USA Today/NFball Fnd	1993–1996d

So that's it for math and polls methodologies. But that is not all there is. Research is the last of the three major categories. The NCAA considers college football historian Parke H. Davis to be the only selector to have primarily used research in his selections. Davis basically performed his backtrack work in 1933 by naming retroactive national champions for most of the years from 1869 to 1932. Of course nobody is beyond bias accusations. For example, while naming Michigan and Princeton (his alma mater) co-champions at the end of the 1933 season, Davis could have had another rationale for the decision. So, here is what he looks like in this last category

<u>Selector</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Seasons</u>
PD	Parke H. Davis	1869–1870, 1872–1909, 1911–1916, 1919–1932, 1933

The NCAA considers the selector methodology created during the recent years as a hybrid

### The Bowl Championship Series

<u>Selector</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Seasons</u>
CFP	College Football Playoff	2014–present

The Bowl Championship Series BCS used a mathematical system that combined polls (Coaches and AP/Harris) and multiple computer rankings (including some individual selectors listed above) to determine a season ending matchup between its top two ranked teams in the BCS Championship Game. The champion of that game was contractually awarded the Coaches Poll and National Football Foundation championships.

## Great Championship Seasons from the past

So, football has been played since 1869 and there were no championships when there were just two teams playing in 1869. That's why all the selectors were needed to go back into those years to help determine the champions of years past.

Before we go there, let's talk about one of the first groups of teams that operated in those years. Today, collectively we call them the Ivy league for unknown reasons. But, if you need a reason, the best one I heard is that their old prestigious campus buildings were all covered in beautiful ivy. That does it for me. And so we have the Ivy League

In 1869, there was no Ivy League or any other league. But, some of the first teams to adopt American football were teams that today we would recognize as being in the Ivy League—even though there was no Ivy League at the time.

Though formally established in 1954, the schools that make it up began to discuss its formation. In **October 1933**, **Stanley Woodward** of the New York Herald Tribune first used the phrase "Ivy colleges" in print. He used it to describe the eight current Ivy schools (plus Army). On February 8, 1935, AP Sports editor **Alan Gould** first coined the exact term "Ivy League."

These facts were gleaned from **Mark Bernstein's**, [*Football: The Ivy League Origins of an American Obsession, University of Pennsylvania, 2001*].

My point in all this is that before Alabama, Air Force, Army, Clemson, Florida, Navy, Notre Dame, Penn State, Alabama, Florida, Syracuse were big enough in football to be champions, schools that later formed the Ivy league were playing football and declaring champions.

The Ivy League today is an athletic conference composed of sports teams from eight private institutions of higher education in the Northeastern United States. The conference name is also commonly used to refer to those eight schools as a group. The eight institutions are as follows:



- Brown University,
- Columbia University,
- Cornell University,
- Dartmouth College,
- Harvard University,
- Princeton University,
- University of Pennsylvania (Penn),
- Yale University.

The term Ivy League also has connotations of academic excellence, selectivity in admissions, and social elitism.

Though formally organized only in 1956, competition between the colleges dates back to football meetings in the 1870s. The Ivy League was dominant in the early years of football in the United States until 1913, as attested by the All-America teams, but it faded in the 1920s.

There are eight total colleges that are considered to be Ivy League. These schools are Brown, Harvard, Cornell, Princeton, Dartmouth, Yale, and Columbia universities and the University of Pennsylvania.

Ivy League schools are considered to be the most prestigious of all colleges in the United States. These schools are primarily located in the Northeastern part of the country. There are eight total colleges that are considered to be Ivy League. These schools are Brown, Harvard, Cornell, Princeton, Dartmouth, Yale, and Columbia universities and the University of Pennsylvania. Of all institutions of higher learning, these elite schools are considered to be the most outstanding and the most sought-after in terms of acceptance and graduation.

Until 1919 the year before the NFL was formed, the Ivy League not only played football, they were often the champions. Here is a list of Ivy league champions to 1919. Army to some was considered an Ivy League School for a time.

1919	Harvard shared ND Texas	CFRA, HAF, NCF, CFRA, NCF, NCF
1915	Cornell	HAF, NCF
1914	Army	HAF, NCF
1913	Harvard	HAF, NCF

**44 Great Moments in Notre Dame Football**

1912	Harvard, Penn St.	HAF, NCF, NCF
1911	Penn St., Princeton	NCF, HAF, NCF
1910	Harvard, Pittsburgh	HAF, NCF, NCF
1909	Yale	HAF, NCF
1908	LSU, U of Pennsylvania	NCF, HAF, NCF
1907	Yale	HAF, NCF
1906	Princeton	HAF, NCF
1904	Michigan, U of Penn	NCF, HAF, NCF
1903	Michigan, Princeton	NCF, HAF, NCF
1900	Yale	HAF, NCF
1899	Harvard	HAF, NCF
1898	Harvard	HAF, NCF
1897	U of Pennsylvania	HAF, NCF
1896	Lafayette, Princeton	NCF, HAF, NCF
1895	U of Pennsylvania	HAF, NCF
1894	Yale	HAF, NCF
1893	Princeton	HAF, NCF
1892	Yale	HAF, NCF
1891	Yale	HAF, NCF
1890	Harvard	HAF, NCF
1889	Princeton	HAF, NCF
1888	Yale	HAF, NCF
1887	Yale	HAF, NCF
1886	Yale	HAF, NCF
1885	Princeton	HAF, NCF
1884	Yale	HAF, NCF
1883	Yale	HAF, NCF
1882	Yale	NCF
1881	Yale	NCF
1880	Princeton, Yale	NCF, NCF
1879	Princeton	NCF
1878	Princeton	NCF
1877	Yale	NCF
1876	Yale	NCF
1875	Harvard	NCF
1874	Yale	NCF
1873	Princeton	NCF
1872	Princeton	NCF
1871	None selected	NCF
1870	Princeton	NCF
1869	Princeton, Rutgers	NCF

*Let's continue after showing the complete list of all the championships from whatever source they may come from the beginning of football 1969 to the current season in reverse sequence*

<u>SEASON</u>	<u>CHAMPION</u>	<u>SELECTOR ORGANIZATION</u>
2020	Alabama	CFP
2019	LSU	CFP
2018	Clemson	CFP
2017	Alabama	CFP
2016	Clemson	CFP
2015	Alabama	CFP
2014	Ohio State	CFP
2013	Florida State	BCS
2012	Alabama	BCS
2011	Alabama	BCS
2010	Auburn	BCS
2009	Alabama	BCS
2008	Florida	BCS

2007	LSU	BCS
2006	Florida	BCS
2005	Texas	BCS
2004	Southern Cal	BCS
2003	LSU, S Cal	BCS, AP, FWAA
2002	Ohio State	BCS
2001	Miami (Fla.)	BCS
2000	Oklahoma	BCS
1999	Florida State	BCS
1998	Tennessee	BCS
1997	Michigan, Nebraska	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/ESPN
1996	Florida	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN
1995	Nebraska	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, UPI
1994	Nebraska	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, UPI
1993	Florida St.	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, UPI
1992	Alabama	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, UPI
1991	Washington, Miami (Fla.)	FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, UPI, AP
1990	Colorado, Georgia Tech	FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, AP, UPI
1989	Miami (Fla.)	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, UPI
1988	Notre Dame	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, UPI
1987	Miami (Fla.)	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, UPI
1986	Penn St.	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, UPI
1985	Oklahoma	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, UPI
1984	Brigham Young	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, UPI
1983	Miami (Fla.)	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, UPI
1982	Penn St.	AP, FWAA, NFF, USA/CNN, UPI
1981	Clemson	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1980	Georgia AP,	FWAA, NFF, UPI
1979	Alabama AP,	FWAA, NFF, UPI
1978	Alabama, S. California	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1977	Notre Dame	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1976	Pittsburgh	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1975	Oklahoma	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1974	Southern Cal., Oklahoma	FWAA, NFF, UPI, AP
1973	Notre Dame, Alabama	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1972	Southern California	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1971	Nebraska	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1970	Nebraska, Texas, Ohio St.	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI, NFF
1969	Texas	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1968	Ohio St.	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1967	Southern California	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1966	Notre Dame, Michigan St.	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI, NFF
1965	Michigan St., Alabama	FWAA, NFF, UPI, AP
1964	Alabama, Arkansas, ND	AP, UPI, FWAA, NFF
1963	Texas	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1962	Southern California	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1961	Alabama, Ohio St.	AP, NFF, UPI, FWAA
1960	Minnesota, Mississippi	AP, NFF, UPI, FWAA
1959	Syracuse	AP, FWAA, NFF, UPI
1958	LSU, Iowa	AP, UPI, FWAA
1957	Ohio St., Auburn	FWAA, UPI, AP
1956	Oklahoma	AP, FWAA, UPI
1955	Oklahoma	AP, FWAA, UPI
1954	UCLA, Ohio St.	FWAA, UPI, AP
1953	Maryland	AP, UPI
1952	Michigan St.	AP, UPI
1951	Tennessee	AP, UPI
1950	Oklahoma	AP, UPI
1949	Notre Dame	AP
1948	Michigan	AP
1947	Notre Dame	AP
1946	Notre Dame	AP
1945	Army	AP

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1944	Army	AP
1943	Notre Dame	AP
1942	Ohio St.	AP
1941	Minnesota	AP
1940	Minnesota	AP
1939	Texas A&M	AP
1938	Texas Christian	AP
1937	Pittsburgh	AP
1936	Minnesota	AP
1935	Minnesota	CFRA, HAF, NCF
1934	Minnesota	CFRA, HAF, NCF
1933	Michigan	CFRA, HAF, NCF
1932	Southern California	CFRA, HAF, NCF
1931	Southern California	CFRA, HAF, NCF
1930	Alabama, Notre Dame	CFRA, HAF, NCF
1929	Notre Dame	CFRA, HAF, NCF
1928	Georgia Tech.	CFRA, HAF, NCF
1927	Illinois, Yale	HAF, NCF, CFRA
1926	Alabama, Stanford	CFRA, HAF, NCF, HAF
1925	Alabama	CFRA, HAF, NCF
1924	Notre Dame	CFRA, HAF, NCF
1923	Illinois, Michigan	CFRA, HAF, NCF, NCF
1922	Cal., Cornell, Princeton	NCF, HAF, CFRA, NCF
1921	Cal., Cornell	CFRA, NCF, HAF
1920	Cal.	CFRA, HAF, NCF
1919	Harvrd, Ill, ND, Tex A&M	CFRA, HAF, NCF, CFRA, NCF, NCF
1918	Michigan, Pittsburgh	NCF, HAF, NCF
1917	Georgia Tech.	HAF, NCF
1916	Pittsburgh	HAF, NCF
1915	Cornell	HAF, NCF
1914	Army	HAF, NCF
1913	Harvard	HAF, NCF
1912	Harvard, Penn St.	HAF, NCF, NCF
1911	Penn St., Princeton	NCF, HAF, NCF
1910	Harvard, Pittsburgh	HAF, NCF, NCF
1909	Yale	HAF, NCF
1908	LSU, Pennsylvania	NCF, HAF, NCF
1907	Yale	HAF, NCF
1906	Princeton	HAF, NCF
1905	Chicago	HAF, NCF
1904	Michigan, Pennsylvania	NCF, HAF, NCF
1903	Michigan, Princeton	NCF, HAF, NCF
1902	Michigan	HAF, NCF
1901	Michigan	HAF, NCF
1900	Yale	HAF, NCF
1899	Harvard	HAF, NCF
1898	Harvard	HAF, NCF
1897	Pennsylvania	HAF, NCF
1896	Lafayette, Princeton	NCF, HAF, NCF
1895	Pennsylvania	HAF, NCF
1894	Yale	HAF, NCF
1893	Princeton	HAF, NCF
1892	Yale	HAF, NCF
1891	Yale	HAF, NCF
1890	Harvard	HAF, NCF
1889	Princeton	HAF, NCF
1888	Yale	HAF, NCF
1887	Yale	HAF, NCF
1886	Yale	HAF, NCF
1885	Princeton	HAF, NCF
1884	Yale	HAF, NCF
1883	Yale	HAF, NCF
1882	Yale	NCF
1881	Yale	NCF
1880	Princeton, Yale	NCF, NCF
1879	Princeton	NCF

1878	Princeton	NCF
1877	Yale	NCF
1876	Yale	NCF
1875	Harvard	NCF
1874	Yale	NCF
1873	Princeton	NCF
1872	Princeton	NCF
1871	None selected	NCF
1870	Princeton	NCF
1869	Princeton, Rutgers	NCF



## Chapter 4 The National Championship Teams

We spend a lot of time in this book discussing ten of the top college teams in the country, namely Clemson University, Alabama University, Notre Dame University, Penn State University, Syracuse University, The University of Florida and the college football played by the Service Academies—Army, Navy & Air Force. In this chapter we glance on these and we look at other teams who have had national championships and great coaches along the way. We then go back and study the above teams in more detail.

As a first cut in this chapter, we look at the top 10 teams who have gained more than five national championship titles. After these ten we show other teams who have claimed legitimate national titles over the years. First we begin with #10 and then move to #1 before we list the other teams and add some comments on each. Enjoy

### Minnesota has 6 Championships



Minnesota believe it or not was once a powerful college force with six championships: from 1934 to 1960 in these years-- 1934, 1935, 1936, 1940, 1941, 1960. They were a major force with which to be



reckoned. They say that football was slightly different when Minnesota won its first national title in 1934. The Golden Gophers averaged 325 yards per game that year— 295 of which came on the ground. In 1960, in the last championship year, their seventh season under head coach Murray Warmath, the Golden Gophers compiled an 8–2 record and outscored their opponents by a combined total of 228 to 88.

The team was named the national champion by four official NCAA-designated major selectors – the Associated Press, Football News, National Football Foundation, and UPI/coaches. Some of the selections made prior to the Gophers' loss to Washington in the 1961 Rose Bowl. So, this year, both Minnesota and Ole Miss were designated as consensus national champions.

## Oklahoma has seven championships



The Sooners championships came in 1950, 1955, 1956, 1974, 1975, 1985, 2000. They have recently again become a force with which to be reckoned. The Sooners won a trio of titles each under Bud

Wilkinson and Barry Switzer. Oklahoma leads all FBS programs with four different 100-win coaches in school history.

In addition to these seven acknowledged national championships there are also ten additional years in which the NCAA's official record book lists other selections (mostly by math rating systems) of the Sooners as national champions, with the first four years in retrospect: 1915, 1949, 1953, 1957, 1967, 1973, 1978, 1980, 1986, 2003. In general, math formula rankings are not recognized as national championships. The University of Oklahoma does not acknowledge these additional "championships", as they were not awarded by the Associated Press, United Press International (UPI), USA Today Coaches Poll, or the Bowl Championship Series (BCS).

## Ohio State has eight Championships

### Great Coach Woody Hayes has Five Championships

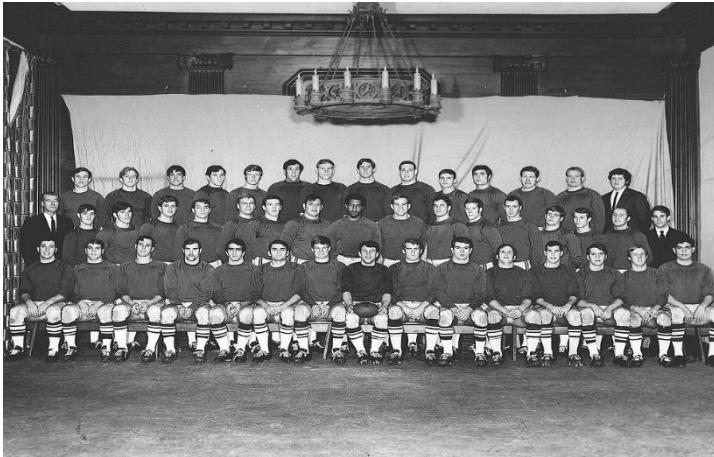


OSU's championships came in 1942, 1954, 1957, 1961, 1968, 1970, 2002, 2014. The University officially formed a football team in 1890, but the Buckeyes wouldn't win a national championship until 1942. That year, after losing dozens of players who left to fight in World War II, Ohio State went 9-1, its only loss coming against No. 6 Wisconsin. In addition to the five the Buckeyes won with Woody Hayes (1954, 1957, 1961, 1968, and 1970), head coach Paul Brown led them to a national title in 1942, and they then won the two titles in the 2000s (2002 and 2014) with Tressel and Meyer. The Ohio State Buckeyes have proven to be one of the top college football programs in the country. They probably aren't done winning titles yet, either.

Woody Hayes is not discussed much as his last day coaching was not positive. But, he was the greatest coach in Ohio University Football history without a doubt. One day college football will learn how to forgive immortals such as Woody Hayes. During his 28 seasons as the head coach of the Ohio State Buckeyes football program, Hayes's teams won five national championships (1954, 1957, 1961, 1968, 1970). More importantly to Woody, he captured 13 Big Ten Conference titles, and amassed a record of 205–61–10. "The Ten Year War" was a Big Ten Title war between Woody Hayes and Michigan's Bo Schembechler. Their teams won or shared the Big Ten Conference crown every season and usually each placed in the national rankings.

Despite his great achievements at Ohio State, Hayes's coaching career ended ignominiously as noted. I saw the "attack" on TV/ It could have been forgiven. He was fired from his position as head coach after punching Clemson nose guard Charlie Bauman in the throat for intercepting an Ohio State pass with two minutes left on the clock in the 1978 Gator Bowl. What a shame.

## Harvard has eight championships.



The Crimson's championships started before the world was born it seems in 1875 and continued through 1919 in 1875, 1890, 1898, 1899, 1910, 1912, 1913, 1919. Harvard recently celebrated the 100th anniversary of its most recent championship, giving it the longest title drought of any team on this list.

The record keepers say Harvard has 17 titles—8 solo and 9 shared. Others see it differently. For example, the latest source I used says that Harvard has won 12 national championships (1874, 1875, 1890, 1898, 1899, 1901, 1908, 1910, 1912, 1913, 1919, 1920) from NCAA-designated major selectors. Harvard claims seven of these college football national championships.

## Southern Cal has nine championships



### **Coach John McKay has four National Championships**

The Trojans have had championship seasons in 1931, 1932, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1974, 1978, 2003, and 2004. No USC coach was more successful than John McKay, who in 16 years at the helm, led the Trojans to four national championships between 1960 and 1975.

McKay was one of the greatest College Coaches. His teams gave Notre Dame their toughest battles of any college team. After USC, McKay moved to the NFL as the first coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. He made the Bucs into a winner after giving a scare in his first two years.

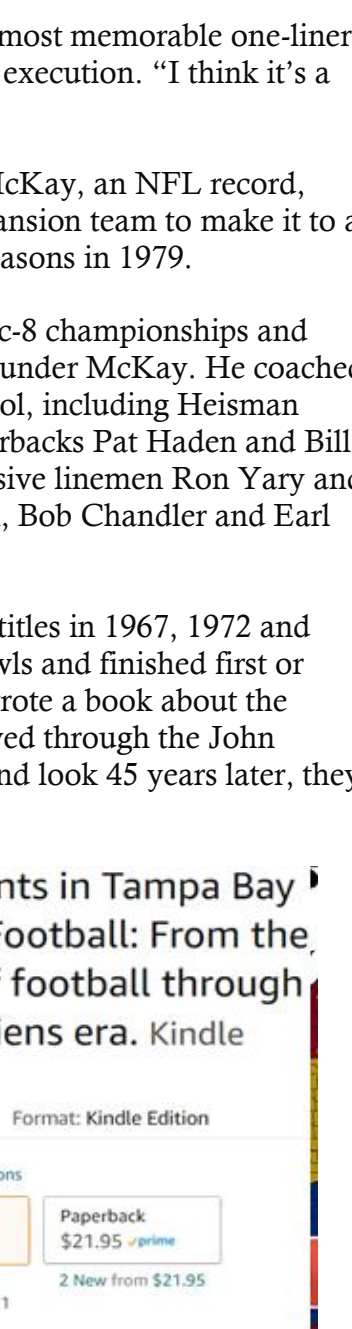
Once asked about the pressure of coaching at USC, McKay responded: “I’ll never be hung in effigy. Before every season I send my men out to buy up all the rope in Los Angeles.” He had a quick wit. Following one of his many losses during Tampa Bay’s

formulative years, he delivered one of his most memorable one-liners when a reporter inquired about his team's execution. "I think it's a good idea," he said.

The Bucs lost their first 26 games under McKay, an NFL record, before rebounding to become the first expansion team to make it to a conference title game within its first four seasons in 1979.

Southern Cal went 127-40-8, won nine Pac-8 championships and only lost 17 conference games in 16 years under McKay. He coached 40 All-Americans at the Los Angeles school, including Heisman winners Garrett and O.J. Simpson, quarterbacks Pat Haden and Bill Nelson, fullback Sam Cunningham, offensive linemen Ron Yary and Marvin Powell and receivers Lynn Swann, Bob Chandler and Earl McCullough.

Besides 1962, Southern Cal won national titles in 1967, 1972 and 1974. The Trojans also won five Rose Bowls and finished first or second in the Pac-8 13 times. I recently wrote a book about the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and I feel like I lived through the John McKay years. He helped mold the team and look 45 years later, they are the Super Bowl Champions.



Look inside ↓

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**Michigan has nine championships**





## Bo Schembechler & Lloyd Carr Football legends

The Wolverines gained national championships in 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1918, 1923, 1933, 1948, and 1997

Michigan famously holds the record for the most wins in college football history, so it naturally follows that the Wolverines have a few titles to their name. Surprisingly, they only have two in the poll era (since 1936).

**Bo Schembechler's** 194 victories from 1969 to 1989 represent the most by any coach in the history of Michigan football, and his loyalty to the program over the years made him an even more revered figure. After a six-year stint at Miami (Ohio), Schembechler arrived at Michigan and led the Wolverines to a Rose Bowl appearance in his first season. In 1975, Michigan played in the Orange Bowl, marking the first of 15 consecutive bowl game appearances (including eight Rose Bowls during that span). Schembechler won 13 Big Ten championships and was named the league's coach of the year on six occasions.

**Lloyd Carr** spent 15 years as an assistant coach at Michigan before finally earning his opportunity to become head coach in 1995. During his tenure, the Wolverines made a bowl appearance every season, and his crowning achievement was winning a share of the 1997 national championship, beating Washington State in the Rose Bowl to cap a perfect 12-0 season. Carr won five Big ten titles and his

teams finished in the top three in league play 12 out of 13 years. Carr became the first Michigan coach to win four consecutive bowl games, capturing the 1998 Rose Bowl, the 1999 Citrus Bowl, the 2000 Orange Bowl and the 2001 Citrus Bowl.

## Notre Dame has 13 Championships

The Fighting Irish won championships in 1919, 1924, 1929, 1930, 1943, 1946, 1947, 1949, 1964, 1966, 1973, 1977, and 1988.

Notre Dame's nine championships in the poll era are the second-most out of all teams. You can thank coach Frank Leahy for four of those, but Leahy also won two titles as a player for the Fighting Irish under another famous coach — Knute Rockne.

Notre Dame has technically won 22 and some say 23 national championships. Notre Dame recognizes 11 titles, but also lists 10 co-national championships.

## Princeton has 15 Championships



The Tigers earned early Championships in 1869, 1870, 1872, 1873, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1885, 1889, 1893, 1896, 1903, 1906, 1911, 1922

Princeton claims 28 national championships, though only 15 are recognized by the NCAA. None of them came in the poll era, but there's no denying the Tigers' ridiculous run in the late 19th century, when they won championships in 11 of 28 years, including four in five years from 1869 to 1873.

## Alabama has 18 championships





The Crimson Tide is collecting its national titles rapidly . Its Championships came in 1925, 1926, 1930, 1961, 1964, 1965, 1978, 1979, 1992, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2017, and 2020

Alabama can claim the most NCAA titles in the poll era, with only three of its 16 coming prior. With the 16th title — a win in the College Football Playoff in 2020, coach Nick Saban surpassed the legendary Bear Bryant of Alabama with seven championships

## **Yale has eighteen championships**

Yale has won more championships than any other college team. The championships include 1874, 1876, 1877, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1891, 1892, 1894, 1900, 1907, 1909, 1927

Yale football has one of the most impressive resumes in the sport, with two of the first three Heisman winners, 100 All-Americans, 28 Hall of Fame inductees, and 18 national championships recognized by the NCAA — the most all time. You have not heard of Yale in football because they won all their impressive titles before 1927.

## **Nebraska has five championships**

Nebraska claims 46 conference championships and five national championships (1970, 1971, 1994, 1995, and 1997), and has won nine other national championships that the school does not claim. NU's 1971 and 1995 title-winning teams are considered to be among the best in college football history.

## **Miami has five championships**

The program began in 1926 and has won five AP national championships (1983, 1987, 1989, 1991, 2001). The Miami Hurricanes are among the most storied and decorated football programs in NCAA history. Coach Dennis Erickson who left Miami under fear of NCAA sanctions, won two national titles and dominated the Big East Conference.

In his five years at Miami, coach Jimmy Johnson compiled a 52–9 record, appeared in five New Year's Day bowl games, winning one national championship (1987) and losing one to the Penn State Nittany Lions (1986).

## Tennessee has six championships

The Vols have played football for 128 seasons, starting in 1891; their combined record of 857–409–56 ranks them twelfth on the list of all-time win-loss percentage records .669 and by-victories list for college football programs as well as second on the all-time win/loss list of SEC programs 390–253–33 .601.

Their all-time ranking in bowl appearances is third (52) and sixth in all-time bowl victories (28), most notably four Sugar Bowls, three Cotton Bowls, an Orange Bowl, a Peach Bowl, and a Fiesta Bowl. They have won 16 conference championships and six national titles in their history and their last national championship was in the 1998 college football season.

The #1 season that Tennesseans claim as their best is 1938 when the team went 11-0 and won both the SEC Championship and the National Champions. General Robert Neyland had many great seasons as the head coach of the Tennessee Volunteers, including five undefeated seasons from 1927-32, but the 1938 squad may have been his best. The General holds the record for most wins in Tennessee Volunteers history with 173 wins in 216 games, six undefeated seasons, nine undefeated regular seasons, seven conference championships, and four national championships.

He coached the second unbeaten and untied team in school history. The 1938 Vols were one of the most dominant teams in the country and have a special place in history as one of the greatest college football teams of all-time. They were led by All-Americans Bob Suffridge and Bowden Wyatt, and running back George Cafego, who finished No. 7 in the voting for the Heisman Trophy, Tennessee scored 26.6 points per game, which ranked No. 3 in the nation. They were also power on defense, allowing an average of just 1.5 points per contest, second best in the country. Only Sewanee (3), Clemson (7) and LSU (6) scored against the Vols.

## **Florida State has three championships**

### **Two from Bobby Bowden**

Florida State has won three national championships, 18 conference titles and six division titles along with a playoff appearance. The Seminoles have achieved three undefeated seasons, finished ranked in the top four of the AP Poll for 14 straight years from 1987 through 2000 and completed 41 straight winning seasons from 1977 through 2017; from 2012 through 2014, the team won 29 consecutive games, tied for the twelfth-longest winning streak in college football and tied for the longest winning streak in ACC history; from 1992 through 1995, the team also won 29 consecutive conference games, the longest winning streak in ACC history. The 1999 team received votes from ESPN as one of the top teams in college football history.

The great coach Bobby Bowden is best known for coaching the Florida State Seminoles football team from 1976 to 2009 and is considered one of the greatest college football coaches of all time for his accomplishments with the Seminoles. During his time at Florida State, Bowden led FSU to an Associated Press and Coaches Poll National Title in 1993 and a BCS National Championship in 1999, as well as twelve Atlantic Coast Conference championships once FSU joined the conference in 1991. Bowden's Seminoles finished as an AP top-5 team for 14 consecutive seasons, setting a record that doubled the closest program. Bowden has a total of 411 wins as head coach. However his 22 wins from South Georgia State College are not counted by the NCAA. FYI Joe Paterno has 409 NCAA sanctioned wins.

## **Arkansas has one championship**

Frank Broyles had been the Missouri coach when he was brought in to be the Razorbacks head football coach in 1957. He proudly served in that position for 19 years. During that time, Arkansas would grow into a national power with Broyles at the helm, including several conference championships and a prestigious national championship title. Additionally Arkansas would earn a share of the 1959 SWC Championship, splitting with Texas. They lost only to # 3 Texas and #6 Ole Miss during the season. For the 1960 Gator Bowl, the Hogs went to Jacksonville and defeated Georgia Tech in the 1960 game

14–7, avenging an earlier Cotton Bowl Classic defeat. Barry Switzer was a co-captain on that team. He later won three national championships as the head coach at Oklahoma

## **Colorado has five championships**

The Buffaloes all-time record is 714–517–36 (.578 winning percentage) as of the end of the 2020 season. Colorado won its last National Championship in 1990. The football program is 26th on the all-time win list and 37th in all-time winning percentage.

## **Texas has six championships**

Texas claims four titles but has five other unclaimed titles from 1914, 1941, 1968, 1977, and 1981. Additionally, the Longhorns have shown their greatness by winning 32 conference titles.

## **Auburn has three championships**

The team also has 3 unclaimed national titles from 1913, 1983, and 1993. Additionally, the Tigers secured 16 conference championships (8 SEC, 7 SIAA, 1 Southern)

## **Michigan State has six championships**

The Spartans are members of the Big Ten Conference. Michigan State has a total of six national championships. The Spartans have also won eleven conference championships, with two in Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association and nine in the Big Ten. The Spartans compete with in-state rival Michigan for the Paul Bunyan Trophy.

The great legendary Duffy Daugherty (September 8, 1915 – September 25, 1987) replaced Clarence Munn (known as "Biggie" Munn) in December 1953, following Munn's retirement to become Michigan State's athletic director. Daugherty would serve as the head coach at Michigan State from 1954 to 1972, where he compiled a career record of 109–69–5. Duffy's 1965 and 1966 teams won national championships. Duffy's tenure of 19 seasons at the helm of

the Michigan State Spartans football team is the longest of any head coach in the program's history. He was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1984.

## **Pittsburgh Claims nine championships**

The Pittsburgh Panthers have a **Bowl record** of 14–21–0 (.400). They played in 35 bowl games. The Panthers claim 9 national titles in 1915, 1916, 1918, 1929, 1931, 1934, 1936, 1937, and 1976, and 8 unclaimed national titles in 1910, 1917, 1925, 1927, 1933, 1938, 1980, and 1981.

## **Brigham Young has one championship**

The Brigham Young Cougars began collegiate football competition in 1922 and have won 23 conference championships and one national championship in 1984. The team has competed in several different athletic conferences during its history, but since July 1, 2011, they have competed as an Independent. With 257 career victories, Lavelle Edwards ranks as BYU's best and one of the most successful college football coaches of all time. Among his many notable accomplishments, Edwards guided BYU to a national championship in 1984 and coached Heisman Trophy winner Ty Detmer in 1990.

## **Georgia Tech claims four championships**

Georgia Tech won national championships in 1917, 1928, 1952, and 1990. They also have three unclaimed national titles from 1916, 1951, and 1956. The Yellow Jackets also have won 15 championships in four different conferences, including three in the old Southern Conference, five in the Southeastern Conference, and two as part of their current membership in the Atlantic Coast Conference. They are also proud to have won five Division titles (2006, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2014).

The Yellow Jacket faithful named their stadium after their best coach ever—Bobby Dodd. The pundits, including me, say, if they name the stadium after you, then it's hard not to be at the top of any "best of" lists. From 1904 through Coach Dodd's retirement from coaching in 1966, Georgia Tech had only three head football coaches, each winning a national title.

Coach Dodd still holds the all-time wins record for Tech coaches at 165 and once had a 31-game win streak from the beginning of the 1951 season until the middle of the 1953 campaign, with a national championship sandwiched in between.

With a national coaching award named in his honor, there is no question that Coach Bobby Dodd is the greatest coach in Georgia Tech Football history. Don't even waste your time arguing about it. The best is the best.

## **Maryland has two championships**

In 1945, Maryland gave Alabama's most revered coach, Paul "Bear" Bryant the start for his long and distinguished career when they brought him in as the head football coach at the University of Maryland. After a year, Jim Tatum replaced the "Bear." Tatum became a pioneer of the split T and he helped Maryland football achieved its greatest success with a 73–15–4 record without a single losing season. To date, he remains the winningest Maryland coach of the modern era. Tatum led the Terrapins to two national championships (1951 & 1953). These are recognized by the NCAA's official selectors.

In 1951 and 1953, the National Champs also grabbed one Southern Conference championship and two Atlantic Coast Conference championships. Overall, besides being national champions twice, Maryland gained nine ACC championships, two Southern Conference championships, eleven consensus All-America honors, and twenty-four bowl game appearances. Maryland possesses the third-most ACC championships with nine, which places them right behind Clemson and Florida State. The Terrapins are especially proud of their bowl legacy with many Bowl appearances: (1947, 1949, 1951, 1953, 1955, 1973 - 1978, 1980, 1982 - 1985, 1990, 2001 - 2003, 2006 - 2008, 2010, 2013, 2014, and 2016)



## **Texas A & M has three championships**

Texas A&M claims three national championships, and though the Aggies haven't won it all since 1939, they have been a consistent winner. A&M won 18 conference championships (17 as a member of the Southwest Conference) including at least one in every decade from the 1910s to the 1990s.

Homer H. Norton who coached the Aggies from 1934 -1947 won 82 games, lost 53, and tied 9 and along the way he won 3 Conference Championships. He may not have the best winning percentage of all the coaches, but Norton has one thing that puts him above almost all the rest: In 1939, he brought the Aggies their one and only official National Championship. Bravo!

## **Texas Christian University TCU has two championships**

TCU began playing football way back in in 1896 and they claim national championships in 1935 and 1938. Davey O'Brien is the school's one Heisman Trophy winner. TCU is pleased to have had eight former players inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame. The University is not a football lightweight. They rank as the 4th best private college football school of all time, behind Notre Dame, USC, and Miami-FL. The Horned Frogs are also one of only four FBS teams to have played in all six College Football Playoff Bowls, winning all but the Fiesta and Orange. Good things are happening at TCY in football. Consider that in 2017, the head coach Gary Patterson reached their 10th 11-win season since Patterson has been coaching for the program. That is the 4th most 11-win seasons since 2001 in all of college football. Not too shabby!

## **Stanford has two championships**

Stanford claimed national championships in 1926 and 1940. In 1926, led by legendary coach Glenn "Pop" Warner, the team was undefeated in the regular season and tied Alabama in the 1927 Rose Bowl. The 1940 team went unbeaten and untied after defeating Nebraska 21-13 in the 1941 Rose Bowl, but the team ranked No. 2 in the final AP poll released before the game was played.

## Chapter 5 Universities Launch First Football Teams

### NOTRE DAME



### FIGHTING IRISH FOOTBALL TEAM 1887

#### 1887: Nearly 45 years from the founding

On Nov. 23, 1887, nearly 45 years to the day after Rev. Edward Sorin, C.S.C., arrived in northern Indiana, the University of Notre Dame fielded a collegiate football team. There is nobody who can tell the History of Notre Dame Football better than Notre Dame itself. The following brief article was originally published in Scholastic, Notre Dame's internal student magazine.

The quoted narrative from Scholastic describes the scene of the inaugural contest between Michigan and Notre Dame. Following a quick depiction of the game, I have included several additional pictures for your enjoyment and edification. All of these photos are free for the viewing on the Internet.

" For some days previous to Wednesday great interest had been manifested by our students in the football game which had been arranged between the teams of the Universities of Michigan and Notre Dame. It was not considered a match contest, as the home team had been organized only a few weeks, and the Michigan boys, the champions of the West, came more to instruct them in the points of the Rugby game than to win fresh laurels.



1887 West National Champion Michigan Wolverine football team

"The visitors [Michigan] arrived over the Michigan Central RR., Wednesday morning, and were at once taken in charge by a committee of students. After spending a few hours in "taking in" the surroundings, they donned their uniforms of spotless white and appeared upon the seniors' campus. Owing to the recent thaw, the field was damp and muddy; but nothing daunted, the boys "went in," and soon Harless' new suit appeared as though it had imbibed some of its wearer's affinity for the soil of Notre Dame.

At first, to render our players more familiar with the game, the teams were chosen irrespective of college. After some minutes' play, the game was called, and each took his position as follows:

"**Univ. of M.** – Full Back: J.L. Duffy; Half Backs: J.E. Duffy, E. McPheran; Quarter Back: R.T. Farrand; Centre Rush: W.W. Harless; Rush Line: F. Townsend, E.M. Sprague, F.H. Knapp, W. Fowler, G.W. De Haven, M. Wade.

"**Univ. of N.D.** – Full Back: H. Jewett; Half Backs: J. Cusack, H. Luhn; Quarter Back: G. Cartier; Centre Rush: G.A. Houck; Rush Line: F. Fehr, P. Nelson, B. Sawkins, W. Springer, T. O'Regan, P.P. Maloney.

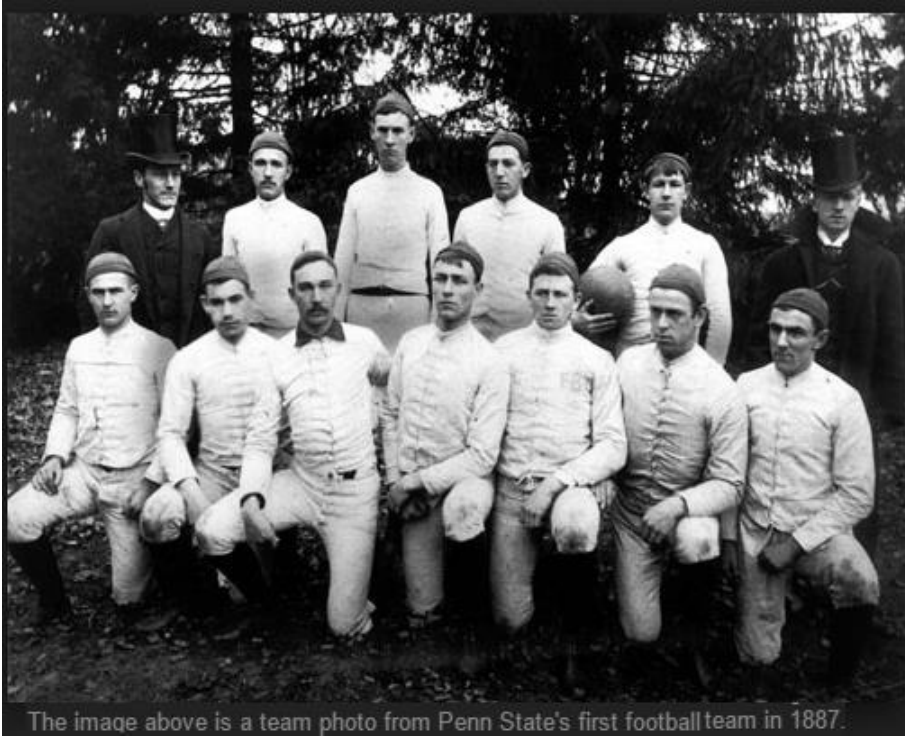
"On account of time, only a part of one inning was played, and resulted in a score of 8 to 0 in favor of the visitors. The game was interesting, and, notwithstanding the slippery condition of the ground, the Ann Arbor boys gave a fine exhibition of skillful [sic] playing. This occasion has started an enthusiastic football boom, and it is hoped that coming years will witness a series of these contests.

"After a hearty dinner, Rev. President Walsh thanked the Ann Arbor team for their visit and assured them of the cordial reception that would always await them at Notre Dame. At 1 o'clock carriages were taken for Niles, and amidst rousing cheers the University of Michigan football team departed, leaving behind them a most favorable impression."

### **End of ND Scholastic Excerpt**

### **PSU football:**

Penn State's intercollegiate football team was established at a time that American Football was just being shaped. The first official PSU football game was played in 1887 but unofficially, the students had managed to slip in an intercollegiate game of their own in 1881. Football became a permanent part of Penn State life in 1887 but the student players had no coaches. They relied on team captains. The desire to play football helped make all the seasons successful.



The image above is a team photo from Penn State's first football team in 1887.

PSU Launches First Official Football Team



Penn State played its first unofficial football game November 12, 1881 against Lewisburg University in Lewisburg, PA. The Nittany Lions were not yet the Nittany Lions yet they played like they were. Penn State won the makeshift game with rules that were part American football, part rugby, and part soccer as the rules were being incrementally formed. The score was W (9-0).

It was six years later in September (1887) that the School administration gave its approval under President George Atherton. With the top brass's OK; a group of Penn State freshmen organized



its first official football team. The architects were freshman George "Lucy" Linsz along with classmate Charles Hildebrand.

Just a month later the storied Penn State tradition began putting notches in its story. Penn State played its first official game November 12, 1887 against Bucknell (formerly Lewisburg) at Lewisburg winning, 54-0. The rules had improved somewhat since 1881 but they were still not the rules of which we are familiar today.

## Syracuse University



Many of these 1890 players also were on the 1889 team.

### 1889: Just 19+ years from the founding

On Nov. 23, 1889, nearly 20 years after the big meeting that formed Syracuse University, the first Syracuse team, a rag tag group put together by captain John Blake Hillyer, played its first football game. It was the one and only game played that season. The Orangemen were defeated 0-36 in a game played against The University Rochester.

There was one problem with the Orangemen that day besides the loss. They were not yet the Orangemen. In fact, for this game, Syracuse wore pink and blue uniforms. Rochester had already played most of its 1889 season, its first and were pretty well accustomed to playing gridiron, rugby-like football as American football was being defined.

There are very few records of this game or how things got going for the football team but more than likely it was because students demanded it after playing hither and yon on the streets of Syracuse for several years in an intramural style.

There are reports that students had been playing the evolving game of American football for some time before this game in November 1889, but this was the first intercollegiate game in Syracuse's long football history. There is also a reported game, though not at an intercollegiate level that was played by a football team from Syracuse University in 1884 against the Medical College of Syracuse.

Syracuse students began playing football long before there were football helmets and protective gear of any kind. In this devastating 0-36 loss to the University of Rochester, the game was painful even without enduring the big loss. There were a few broken bones during the game to match the bruised egos of the Syracuse players who then had to make it home by locomotive, licking their wounds After the lopsided loss. It had to be a tough ride back to Syracuse that night.

## Alabama's First Football Team



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.

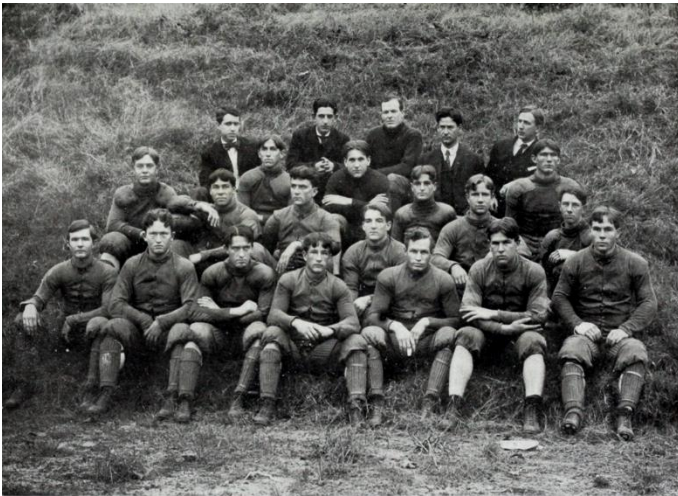
Little became the captain of the fledgling group and E. B. Beaumont was the first official head coach. The Collegiate newspaper remarked that Beaumont was fired at season end because he knew too little about the game.

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.

### Clemson Launches First “Official” Football Team

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Record</u>
1896	Walter M. Riggs	2-1-0	SIAA	0-0-0
1897	Wm. M. Williams	2-2-0	SIAA	0-1-0
1898	John Penton	3-1-0	SIAA	1-1-0
1899	Walter M. Riggs	4-2-0	SIAA	1-2-0

1896 Team Picture below: Clemson’s First Varsity Football Team



Finally, after the college had been operating as an academic institution for seven years, just in time for the fall season in 1906, Clemson threw its hat in the football ring. Actually, CU had its hat gently

placed there by a great man and a great coach, Walter Riggs.

### Louisiana State’s First Football Team



LSU Tigers First Football Team – 1893-1894

## 1893: Over 37 years from the founding

### LSU Lunches its first football team

LSU got its football program going a year after one of its two nemeses, Alabama played its first season. Some 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.

Auburn is LSU's other nemesis. It too got started a year before LSU. Ironically before LSU played its first game, Auburn had stolen something valuable from LSU—its team name -the Tigers. By the way, Tigers is the most popular team name in sports.

With five College teams using the moniker “Tigers” as their team name. Putting together the organization for Auburn's s first football was the handiwork of George Petrie, who some may know led the 1892 Auburn Tigers to a 2-2 record in their inaugural season. Petrie was the bloke who chose burnt orange and navy blue as the official colors for Auburn athletic teams. This color scheme was inspired by his alma mater, the University of Virginia.

## Just a Year later

Coach Charles E. Coates was the 1<sup>st</sup> LSU football coach. Starting a football team was always quite a task for any one person or organization—even for a state such as the state of Louisiana. And, so LSU had a lot more to worry about in year one than anything Alabama or Auburn may have been up to in the prior year. 1993 was their first year playing football and they only were able to schedule one game

Louisiana State University (LSU) got to play in just one football game in its inaugural season of 1993. In fact, LSU played its first football game in school history on November 25, 1893, two days after Thanksgiving. The “team” lost to all sports rival and fellow Louisiana University, Tulane. It was in the first intercollegiate contest ever played in the Pelican State.

## Air Force Launches First Football Team

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Record</u>
1955	Robert V. Whitlow	4-4-0	Indep	



Coach Robert Whitlow

*(Whitlow in P-51 which bears markings from his two aerial kills on November 26, 1944)*

Colonel Robert V. Whitlow (November 7, 1918 – July 11, 1997) was the Air Force Academy's first football coach and their first athletic director. He was first an American military officer, and then a [football](#) coach, university [athletic director](#), and sports club executive.

Officially the Air Force recognize a relatively short but great football history that dates back to 1955 when they played their first game. If you are from Army or Navy, you have to be kind. Such rivals know that Air Force born great and the Academy gets greater as the program prospered under a number of fine coaches.

Coach: Troy Calhoun's record after 2017 was (82-60) in 11 seasons at Air Force. In 2018, the Falcons were 5-7 bringing Calhoun's record to 87-67. In 2017, they tied for 4th in Mountain Division and they lost to both Army and Navy. In 2018, they came back and whipped Navy but lost by three points to Army. We know how important the

service games are. Now in 2019 so far this season, the Falcons are already 2-0 with one of their fastest starts. More to come

## Army Launches First Football Team

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Record</u>
1890	Dennis Michie	0-1-0	Indep	0-1-0



1890 First Army Navy Game (Only game this season) Notice no protective gear

The 1890 season was unique in many ways. First of all, it was Army's first football season. Second, it is the only season that Army played just one game, and Third, it was the season in which the inaugural Army-Navy game was played – the only game.

Army's football program began on November 29, 1890, when Navy challenged the Cadets to a game of the relatively new sport. Navy defeated Army at West Point that year, but Army avenged the loss in Annapolis the following year.

The academies still clash every December in what is traditionally the last regular-season Division I college-football game. The 2016 Army–Navy Game marked Army's overcoming its fourteenth consecutive loss to Navy, defeating the Midshipmen in a great game W (21-17).

From 1944 to 1950, the Cadets had a phenomenal run which included all wins against Navy--57 wins, 3 losses and 4 ties. During this time span, Army won three national championships.

Army's football team reached its pinnacle of success during the Second World War under coach Earl Blaik when Army won three consecutive national championships in 1944, 1945 and 1946, and produced three Heisman trophy winners: Doc Blanchard (1945), Glenn Davis (1946) and Pete Dawkins (1958). Past NFL coaching

greats—Vince Lombardi (Packers) and Bill Parcells (Giants et al) were Army assistant coaches early in their careers.

## Navy Launches First Football Team

1879	No coach	
1880-1981	No team	
1982	Vaulx Carter	Coach #1
1881-1891	No Coaches	



1890 First Army Navy Game (Only game this season) Notice no protective gear

The 1789 season was unique in many ways. First of all, it was Navy's first football season. Second, it was a player who arranged the game to begin Navy's many seasons of football, and Third, it was one of the few seasons in which the Army-Navy game was not played. At the time, Army had no football team and did not get a team to play football until 1890, and in this season, Army played just one game—Navy. Army's football program began on November 29, 1890, when Navy played in the only game of Army's short season.

## University of Florida – The first team 1906

The University of Florida before it was a university fielded its first official varsity football team in the fall of 1906, and has fielded a team every season since then, with the exception of 1943 during World War II. The Gators began their football story about twenty-years later than most teams featured in this book.

And, so Coach Jack Forsythe's 1906 Florida football team was the first official varsity team fielded by the new University of the State of Florida (now known simply as the University of Florida); during the



1906 college football season. The team finished its inaugural season with a winning record of 5–3. In recent years, this record has been contested. In our second edition, depending on what we learn to be the truth, we may go through the recommended corrections after they undergo more scrutiny, and we will correct or affirm the next time we print a new edition of this book.



UF Football Team Coach Pee Wee Forsythe

Each year the Florida football team was above 500 with some very fine years in the mix. It was not until the 1930's that the losing seasons began. So, long before Steve Spurrier brought the Gators their winning ways, it was a natural for the early teams to win.

With the creation of the University of Florida via the Buckman act and the establishment of the campus in Gainesville, the university fielded its first football team in 1906 led by former Clemson star Jack "Pee Wee" Forsythe. Forsythe coached for three seasons compiling a 14–6–2 record with a 0.682 winning percentage. In addition to his coaching duties, Forsythe also played on the team as a fullback and was paid \$500 for coaching and another \$500 for playing. In their first game, the University of Florida football team defeated Gainesville Athletic Club 6-0 on Oct. 5, 1906 in front of a "crowd" of 150 people (the university had 100 students enrolled at the time).



## Chapter 6 College Football—Early Legends.

Before we get into the hot and heavy college football games in a few more chapters let's begin with a few of the early football program years starting with Notre Dame. In major summary form.

### The No Coach Years

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>
1887	No coach	0–1
1888	No coach	1–2
1889	No coach	1–0
1890	No team	
1891	No team	
1892	No coach	1–0–1
1893	No coach	4–1



Circa 1890 Notre Dame Football Team

**1887:** Notre Dame's football program began in 1887 with an unofficial match against Michigan, a reasonably close team by geography. Michigan is credited with coming to Notre Dame for the purpose of teaching Notre Dame how to play football. It was a most gracious act; most appreciated by Notre Dame, and highly enjoyed by Michigan. Not unexpectedly Michigan prevailed in the 30-minute

contest L (0-8). From the moment that Michigan appeared on the field with their spanking new white, almost glistening uniforms, they looked every part the champs that they were that year.

In 1887, football as we know it was not completely defined. Association football, rugby, and even soccer were having a major influence at the time on the college football rules and game play. For its first seven years, the "fighting Irish" football team had no coach. In fact, the whole idea of Notre Dame Football was so tentative that there were two years, 1890, and 1891, which should have been Notre Dame's fourth and fifth seasons, when they did not even field a team.

**1888:** Record 1-2; without a coach, Notre Dame sported its own brand new uniforms of brown and black. In muddy terrain, it was hard to tell the players from the ground. That season, the ND team of young men cheered: "Rah, Rah, Rah, Nostra Domina!" They finished the season with two more losses to Michigan L (6-26); L (4-10). The Michigan weekend was special. Michigan looked forward to coming to Notre Dame from how well they had been treated the year before. Notre Dame was a tough team and had just one year of football in them when Michigan came back.

Michigan had kept all of its opponents scoreless until ND scored a total of ten points in two days. The reports of the day say that it was a badly battered team that landed in the crowded Ann Arbor, Michigan train depot coming back from its weekend with Notre Dame. The team "received a proper razzing for breaking a four-year record" No Michigan football team returned to play at Notre Dame until 1942.

### **First Football Victory Ever for ND**

Notre Dame managed to win its first game ever against a Harvard School located in Chicago. The Harvard line was no match for Notre Dame's players, who outweighed their opponent by an average of 23 pounds. Halfback Harry Jewett and captain fullback E.C. Prudhomme helped Notre Dame to a win W (20-0). It was the first football victory in school history. Little did anyone know at the time, that this was the beginning of a storied football program.

### **The Birth of the Rock**

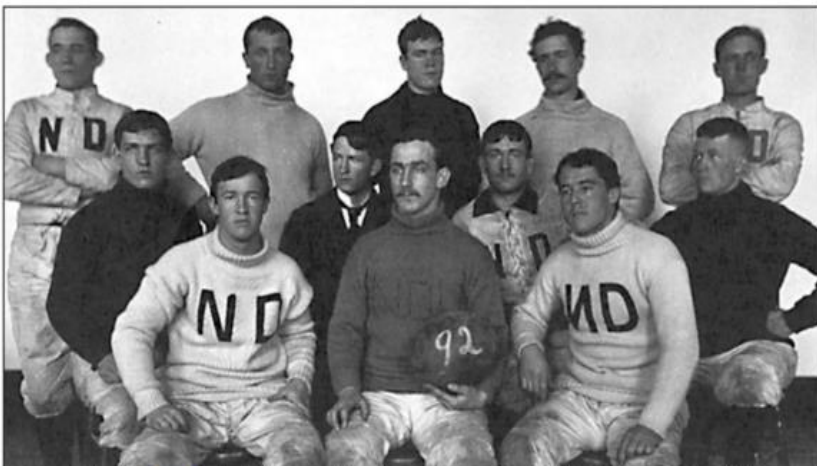
Irishlegends.com says that something else of major proportion was going on far from the football field. In Voss, Norway, Mr. and Mrs. Lars K. Rockne had a new baby named Knute. We Notre Dame fans well know that Notre Dame Stadium of today is the "House that Rockne Built." Well, the house building actually began in Norway.

**1889:** It was tough getting games in those first five years. With tongue in cheek, however, we can proudly state that in its third season of an infancy program, Notre Dame experienced its first undefeated and untied season. It was 1889. Notre Dame managed to schedule one game that year and won it W (9-0) against Northwestern.

**1890, 1891:** During the following two years, 1890, and 1891, no games were scheduled, and none were played. Shorter than even the first season and the third, these two years brought Notre Dame its two shortest seasons of all time.

**1892:** Notre Dame came back in 1892 with one victory, one loss, and no ties. The restarting team again had no coach and played just two games. The scores of its games included a victory W (56-0) over South Bend High School on October 19, 1892, and a loss L (12-14) to Hillsdale College on November 24, 1892.

**1893:** Coach-less again, the 1893 Notre Dame football team played more games than ever. It was a successful season by any standard.



The 1892 team revived the game after a lapse of two years. Captain Pat Coady with the ball.

The team record was four wins and one loss (4-1). Moreover, Notre Dame had outscored its opponents in aggregate by 92 to 24. Its first four home victories were against Kalamazoo College W (34-0), Albion College W (8-6), DE LaSalle Institute W (28-0), and Hillsdale College (22-10). Then, on New Year's Day, 1894, Notre Dame traveled to Chicago. They played coach Amos Alonzo Stagg's Chicago Maroons. The soon to be "Fighting Irish," lost this one to the Maroons, L (8-0). Hey, folks, it was Amos Alonzo Stagg's team!!!! Few teams in those days would come close to victory v Stagg's boys

## PSU Early Football through 1893

### Unofficial and Official Games

[http://grfx.cstv.com/photos/schools/psu/sports/m-footbl/auto\\_pdf/2013-14/misc\\_non\\_event/12-Timeline.pdf](http://grfx.cstv.com/photos/schools/psu/sports/m-footbl/auto_pdf/2013-14/misc_non_event/12-Timeline.pdf)

Information from the Penn State Football Encyclopedia by Lou Prato, a noted Penn State football historian, was used in the original compilation of this chronology by CBS, which is available on the Web. Our thanks to CBS for providing this to our readers, and for Lou Prato, official, unofficial, Penn State Historian, for compiling it.

The material we used was current as of March 11, 2013, and we provided additional research to bring this chronology current to the summer of 2016. This is an extremely impressive compendium of happenings in Penn State Football and thus this book is not about just the greatest moments in Penn State Football. It is about the great moments and even the contributing moments to Penn State's greatness.

Like all Penn State fans, I expect you to thoroughly enjoy whipping through startup on the more than 130 years' worth of Penn State Football in this most efficient way. Enjoy! T

**November 12, 1881** — Penn State College students organize a football team without administration support and play the first game against the University of Lewisburg (renamed Bucknell University in 1896) in Lewisburg. Penn State wins, 9-0, in a cold, sleet-like drizzle.

**September 1887** — George “Lucy” Linsz arrives on campus as a freshman and, with the help of fellow freshman Charles Hildebrand, gets approval from President George Atherton to organize the first official football team for Penn State College

**Fall 1887** — Pink and Black are picked as the team colors.

**November 12, 1887** — The first official game is played against Bucknell at Lewisburg. Penn State wins, 54-0.

**November 19, 1887** — The first home game is played with Old Main lawn used as the field. Captain and quarterback Lucy Linsz scores three second-half touchdowns to lead Penn State to a 24-0 win over Bucknell.

**Fall 1888** — The team colors are changed to Blue and White. A Student Athletic Association is formed to help support athletics with three divisions, including football, baseball and general.

**November 11, 1889** — Penn State is handed its worst all-time defeat, 106-0, by Lehigh at Bethlehem. Penn State plays the first half with only nine players; the referee mercifully stops the game with five minutes left to play.

**March 18, 1890** — Blue and White are formally adopted as the college colors at a meeting of the Athletic Association.

**November 7, 1891** — Penn State plays its biggest game since 1887 against Bucknell for the lead in the Pennsylvania Intercollegiate Foot-Ball Association and loses a mistake-prone game, 12-10.

**January 9, 1892** — Penn State is awarded the first championship of the Pennsylvania Intercollegiate Foot-Ball Association after finishing with a 4-1 league record, edging out “bitter rival” Bucknell (3-1-1).

**January 1892** — George “The General” Hoskins is hired as the first “official” head football coach and first director of physical training for the Athletic Association.

**Spring 1892** — Football players participate in the first spring practice as George Hoskins stresses physical conditioning and teamwork.

**November 6, 1893** — Beaver Field (later to be known as Old Beaver Field) is dedicated with General James Beaver and his wife present, as Penn State plays its first game against Pitt, then known as Western University of Pennsylvania, and wins easily, 32-0. Funding of \$15,000 from the State Legislature helps in the construction of a field, including 500-seat grandstand.

**October 13, 1894** — Charlie Atherton sets four all-time records that still stand in the opening game, a 60-0 win against Gettysburg. Atherton kicks 10-of-10 extra point attempts to set the game extra points record for accuracy, points and attempts, and also adds three touchdowns for the most points in a game by a senior (32).

## Syracuse Football – From 1889 to 1894

Coaches #1 to #4

### Finishing the 1890's—with a coach)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Conf</u>
1889	No coach	0-1	Ind
1890	Robert Winston	7-4-0	Ind
1891	William Galbreath	4-7-0	Ind
1892	Jordon C. Wells	0-8-1	Ind
1893	George H. Bond	4-9-1	Ind
1894	George H. Bond	6-5-0	Ind



Circa 1890 Syracuse Fans Getting Ready to Tailgate



The Oval Field Used until 1907 as SU Home Football Field

## Intro to SU 1890's Football



After the 1889 inauguration year with one game at Rochester the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, it seemed like it would be all downhill. SU got the program going with a great coach in 1890 but Head Coach Winston left right after the season. With a new coach, 1891 was a mediocre season. Then, with another new coach, in 1892, Syracuse had what would become known as the worst season in the school's first 100 years of football. The team was shut out eight times and outscored, 218-4, finishing with a 0-8-1 record. That team poorly executed on both sides of the ball, but its offensive ineptitude contrasted starkly with a much improved 1904 club, which averaged an astounding 45 points per game. Syracuse was back in business.

The phenomenal scoring average in 1894 was bolstered by a 144-0 victory against Manhattan College halfway through the season. The Orangemen scored more points in that contest alone than they did in 32 of their first 100 seasons.

Eleven years later, with Frank "Buck" O'Neill coaching, defense became the trademark of Orange football. The 1915 team recorded nine shutouts and limited the opposition to a meager total of 16 points and 16 first downs in 12 games. That year, the Orangemen finished 9-1-2 but for its own reasons, turned down a bid to play Washington in the Rose Bowl. The rationale given was that they had already traveled more than 10,000 miles by rail in playing their regular season games. It was no pleasure traveling days on a train for a football game.

## **Back to 1890**

An English boxer named Robert Winston became the school's first football coach in 1890. He was a no-nonsense coach and lorded over the team with an iron fist. Under Winston, in its second year on the intercollegiate scene, SU compiled a nice 7-4 record. Uniforms and equipment were not a priority. That season, during a game at Hamilton College, SU players were mocked for their pink-and-blue uniforms.

Worse than that, the team lost 4-6 away in Clinton, NY. When they returned to Syracuse, they urged the student council to change the school colors. Their plea was taken seriously. Orange became the

dominant color from then on, thus sparing subsequent generations from having to chant, "Let's go, Pink!"

Like all football teams that are starting out, the early football years of the new Orangemen were primitive at best. There was no huge alumni pool ready with contributions to buy as much as a pair of socks for a needy player. Players dressed for home games and practices in the basement of the school library and bathed one at a time in an old washtub filled with cold water.

At the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, the pundits wrote: A century from the beginning of SU football, "under the stewardship of peripatetic Coach Dick MacPherson, the football team that had problems getting off the ground is in full flight. SU ranks among the top 20 teams nationally and is rekindling memories of previous successes under legendary coaches such as Ben Schwartzwalder, Buck O'Neill and Chick Meehan."

**1889 No coach:** Syracuse's football program began in 1889 with its first official intercollegiate game against the University of Rochester on November 23. The soon-to-be Orangemen were defeated 0-36. The team wore their pink and blue uniforms without incident.

### **1890 Robert Winston Coach # 10**

Orange was adopted as the school color and Syracuse athletic teams henceforth were known as "Orange" or "Orangemen". SU defeated Rochester 4-0 on Nov 15, to make up for the 36-0 shellacking from Rochester in SU's first and only game in its first season (1889). The season record was very respectable at 7-4. Bobby Winston was the program's first head coach.

### **First football victory ever for SU**

On September 26, 1890, SU managed to win its first game ever against the Syracuse Athletic Club W (14-0). It was only the second game in the second season in the history of the program. They followed this up with another win against the same club W (32-0) on

Oct 2. In the 1890's and for about thirty more years, college teams would play just about any group to get a game.

### **1891 William Galbraith Coach # 2**

After Coach Winston left the University, the 1891 Syracuse Orangemen football team in their third season were managed by head coach William Galbraith, coaching his first season with the Orangemen. William Fanton was the team captain.

Stephen Crane, author of the Civil War classic, "Red Badge of Courage," was a member of the SU squad that finished 4-7.

Winston was replaced by William Galbraith, who became the first SU head coach to get fired- I think. He had played center for Cornell and doubled as the team manager.

### **1892 Jordan C. Wells Coach # 3**

The 1892 Syracuse Orangemen football team was led by head coach Jordan C. Wells, in his first season with the Orangemen. This was the fourth season in school history for football and it would be the worst in Syracuse's history of sporting a football team. Here we are in 2018, and this was the only season that Syracuse was ever winless.

Syracuse began the year again Sept 28, against Cornell in Ithaca, NY, and were subjected to a major blowout L (0-58). On Oct 12, it was the Syracuse Athletic Assoc. L (0-24). Then again on Oct 21, it was the Syracuse Athletic Assoc. L (4-18). These were the only points SU scored all season long.

On Oct 29, it was Union at home L (0-52) On Nov 5, it was Hamilton at home L (0-12). On Nov 9, it was the Syracuse Athletic Assoc. The Orangemen played them to a scoreless tie T (0-0). Next SU traveled to Rochester NY L (0-22). Again, came the Syracuse Athletic Assoc. for another loss L0-4). Then, on Nov 23, St. John's Military Academy at home L (0-28). It was a tough year. A year such as this would thankfully never come again.

### **1893 George H. Bond Coach # 4**

Officially, SU had no coach this year but George H Bond, captain of the team served as captain and coach. “Without a coach,” the Orange finished the season with a 4-9-1 record with wins against Syracuse High School, Hamilton, Onondaga Academy and Cazenovia.

### 1894 George H. Bond Coach # 4

The 1894 Syracuse Orangemen football team competed in their sixth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by George H. Bond in his second as official head coach of the Orangemen. Robert Adams was the team captain. The team record was above five hundred with a record of 6-5. This season was another big improvement over 1892 and there were some who were smiling that the bad days might be over.



<<George Hopkins Bond (August 10, 1873 – May 8, 1954) was an American football player, coach, and lawyer. He served as the head football coach at Syracuse University for one season in 1894, compiling a record of 6–5. He was captain of the team in 1893 and served as its head coach, unofficially.

Bond was born in Syracuse, New York on August 10, 1873. He graduated from Syracuse University with a bachelor's degree in philosophy in 1894 and from Syracuse University College of Law in 1897.

Bond was the fourth coach in SU football history; in 1893, the team played without a formal coach after Jordan C. Wells couldn't muster a win the prior year. The team entrusted Bond and he led it on a school-record winning streak with victories over Cazenovia, St. John's Military Academy, Rochester and Hamilton. The streak began and ended with shutouts while the Orange also set a mark for points scored in a season, with 188.

## Alabama Football 1892 til 1895

<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



1892 Alabama's 1<sup>st</sup> Football Season Coach E.B Beaumont Coach # 1

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

Alabama was led by their head coach E. B. Beaumont and played their home games at Lakeview Park in Birmingham, Alabama. In what was the inaugural season of Alabama football, the team finished with a record of two wins and two losses (2-2).

William Little of Livingston, Alabama has been credited with being responsible for the introduction of football at the university. Little served as captain of the team in 1892.

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

In 1892, football as we know it was not completely defined. Association football, rugby, and even soccer was having a major

influence at the time on the college football rules and game play. Unlike other startup teams its early years, UA was blessed with a coach. There were teams competing at the college level that had no coach other than some players who stepped up to the plate.

### **1893 Alabama Football Season Eli Abbot Coach # 2**

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

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

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

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

### **1894 Alabama Football Season Eli Abbot Coach # 2**

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

After a winless season in 1893, Abbott returned as a player-coach and led the 1894 squad. The Crimson White opened the season with a

loss against Ole Miss in what was their first away game ever played outside the state of Alabama. UA then won their final three games.

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

### 1895 Alabama Football Season Eli Abbot Coach # 2

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

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

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

## LSU Startup Football—First 3 Years

### Independent (1893–1895)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Conference</u>
1893	Charles E. Coates	Independent	0–1	0–1
1894	Albert Simmonds	Independent	2–1	0–1
1895	Albert Simmonds	Independent	3–0	2–0





1894 LSU's 2<sup>nd</sup> Football Season Coach Albert Simmonds

Before the 2019 season at 15-0, LSU had already notched six unblemished seasons in its history. The Tigers first went undefeated and untied in 1895 under head coach A. P. Simmons with a 3-0 record, but the first truly great LSU team is considered to be the 1908 squad led by one of the most legendary players to wear the Purple and Gold--Doc Fenton. That 1908 team, coached by Edgar R. Wingard, soared through a 10-game schedule without a loss or tie as Fenton scored an incredible 125 points on the year. It was 50 years before LSU would post another perfect season, winning the national championship in 1958 with an 11-0 mark. It took over 60 years for the next in 2019. Let's hope we don't have a seventy-year wait for the next.

LSU's football program began in 1893 with a one-game losing season. The loss was against Tulane, a Louisiana University that continued as an LSU rival over the years. The team was coached by Dr. Charles E. Coates who stepped down after the one-game season ended. Albert Simmonds took over the coaching for LSU in 1894.

## 1894 LSU Football Season Albert Simmonds Coach # 2

His full name was Albert Price Simmonds. His duration on earth was similar to the length of his name (October 29, 1875 – November 13, 1953). He is known as an American football coach. He served as the head coach at LSU aka (Louisiana State University) for two seasons from 1894 to 1895. Most coaches at LSU at the time put in a year or a few at most. His second and third seasons in the LSU Tigers football program's existence, saw him compiling a record of 5–1.

Coach Simmonds was a graduate of Yale University. He was born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1875 and later was an insurance agent in New York City. In 1951, at the age of 76, Simmonds was working for the Hygienic Phone Service. He died on November 13, 1953.



His head coaching record is as follows

1894	LSU	2-1 record
1895	LSU	3-0 record
Total	LSU	5-1 record
<< Coach Simmonds		

The 1894 LSU Purple & White football team represented the Louisiana State University in the 1894 college football season. The team was known as the LSU Fighting Tigers but in recent years,

the adjective, *Fighting* is not always used.

Charles Coates, who was the main man in LSU's initial season for its one game, stepped down and the Tigers found a new coach, Albert Simmons, for their three-game 1894 season. This was a winning season, though short. It was the year in which LSU saw its first victory, a shutout over the Natchez Athletic Club.

## Air Force Coach Buck Shaw 1956—1957

Air Force football more than 60 years after every other college team highlighted. Robert V. Whitlow was coach #1. The Falcons were independent and played only freshmen teams of other schools. Air Force finished with a record of 4–4. We could not leave them out of the legends chapter for their first several years. Enjoy

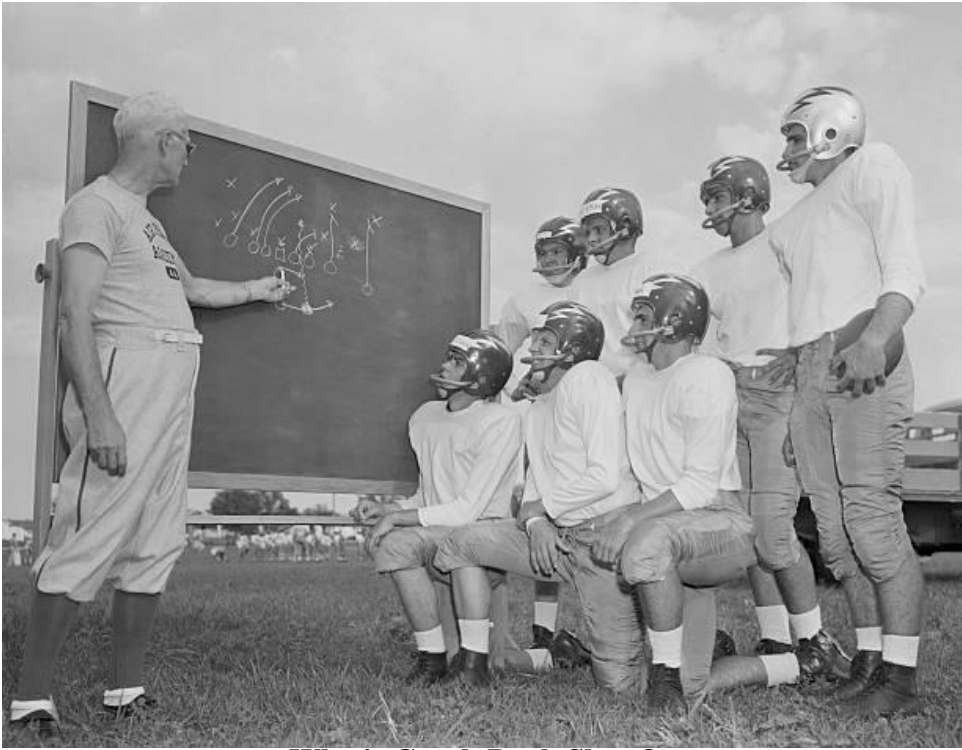
Coach # 2 Buck Shaw

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Record</u>
1956	Buck Shaw	6–2–1	Ind	
1957	Buck Shaw	3–6–1	Ind	



Air Force football circa 1956

Air Force started late compared with all of the other teams we feature in this book. The Air Force Academy needed to be established before Air Force could field a team—naturally.



### **Who is Coach Buck Shaw?**

Buck Shaw was born on a farm in Michelville, Iowa, on March 28, 1899. With exactly four games of high school football behind him, he matriculated at Notre Dame, where he starred as a 6-foot, 175-pound tackle for Knute Rockne.

At the time he came to the Air Force, the 56-year-old Shaw had been a star player under Head Coach Knute Rockne at Notre Dame (where he was a teammate of the legendary George Gipp) and, with Rockne's encouragement, went on to coach at Santa Clara, Nevada, and North Carolina State before moving into the pro ranks as the original head coach of the San Francisco 49ers in the AAFC in 1946.

"The Silver Fox", as he was dubbed due to his full head of gray hair, stayed at the helm for nine years and his record with the 49ers, who became part of the NFL in 1950, was a solid 71-39-4. From there, he became the first head coach at the Air Force Academy, and resigned after going 9-8-2 in two seasons, he resigned his position. From the Academy, he joined the Philadelphia Eagles.

To help you know what kind of coach Shaw was, he was perfect for Air Force. In fact, he was perfect anywhere. After three years with the Eagles, he made it clear prior to the 1960 season that it would be his last. He went out on top. In making his retirement official the day after the Eagles won the championship, he said “I can’t think of a better time to bow out. I can’t soar any higher than being head coach of a world championship professional football team. It was a distinct pleasure coaching the Eagles, and I can’t pay too high a tribute to this 1960 team. It was a team of tremendous desire, a team that just would not accept defeat.”

Shaw returned to California and retirement with a 90-55-5 overall record as a pro head coach (AAFC and NFL) and 2-1 in the postseason. He was remembered long afterward as a quiet but firm gentleman who demanded top performance and molded a championship team.

#### 1956 Air Force Falcons Coach Buck Shaw

The Air Force Falcons football team represented the United States Air Force Academy in the 1956 college football season. It was their second season of intercollegiate football.

The Falcons still did not have an official stadium during the season, and remained without one until the 1962 season when [Falcon Stadium](#) opened. They were led by first year head coach Buck Shaw and played the second season for the Air Force Falcons football program.

### Army’s First Football Teams 1890-1894

Michie,	Coach #1
Williams	Coach #2
Bliss	Coach #3
Graves	Coach #4

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Record</u>
1890	Dennis Michie	0-1-0	Indep	0-1-0
1891	Henry Williams	4-1-1	Indep	4-1-1
1892	Dennis Michie	3-1-1	Indep	3-1-1
1893	Laurie Bliss	4-5-0	Indep	4-5-0
1894	Harmon Graves	3-2-0	Indep	3-2-0
1895	Harmon Graves	5-2-0	Indep	5-2-0



1890 First Army Navy Game (Only game this season) Notice no protective gear

The 1890 season was unique in many ways. First of all, it was Army's first football season. Second, it is the only season that Army played just one game, and Third, it was the season in which the inaugural Army-Navy game was played – the only game.

Army's football program began on November 29, 1890, when Navy challenged the Cadets to a game of the relatively new sport. Navy defeated Army at West Point that year, but Army avenged the loss in Annapolis the following year.

The academies still clash every December in what is traditionally the last regular-season Division I college-football game. From 1944 to 1950, the Cadets had a phenomenal run which included all wins against Navy--57 wins, 3 losses and 4 ties. During this time span, Army won three national championships.

Army's football team reached its pinnacle of success during the Second World War under coach Earl Blaik when Army won three consecutive national championships in 1944, 1945 and 1946, and produced three Heisman trophy winners: Doc Blanchard (1945), Glenn Davis (1946) and Pete Dawkins (1958). Past NFL coaching greats—Vince Lombardi (Packers) and Bill Parcells (Giants et al) were Army assistant coaches early in their careers.

The football team plays its home games at Michie Stadium, where the playing field is named after Earl Blaik. Cadets' attendance is

mandatory at football games and the Corps stands for the duration of the game. At all home games, one of the four regiments marches onto the field in formation before the team takes the field and leads the crowd in traditional Army cheers.

On November 29th, 1890, over 125 years ago, Army hosted Navy at West Point on the Plain in their very first football game. Navy beat Army 24-0 that day. Army did not take too long to learn how to win. The Cadets came back the next year with a 32-to-16 win.

Before it had lived for five years, the classic rivalry almost died an early death in 1894, when, for mostly stupid reasons, both academies were forbidden to play anything but HOME games.

One of the greatest football fans of the ages was Teddy Roosevelt. At the time, TR was Assistant Secretary of the Navy. After an appeal to bring back the games that was made to Theodore Roosevelt, the game was re-instated in 1899. Some bureaucrat in Washington had taken four good years away from the rivalry.

Since 1899, with just a few interruptions that should not have been scheduled, it's been "game on" ever since.

## **The 1890 Army-Navy-Game was the first game and the first Army Navy Game**

This game which, since 1890, comes almost like clockwork in late November or early December, does not have the same national championship implications it once did during some of the 127 seasons of Army football. Some think that the rise of the National Football League has a lot to do with that, as elite young athletes now are choosing major colleges as a path to the professional game rather than one of the service academies as a path to serving their country.

And there is nothing wrong with that.

**1890 West Point Cadets 1st Football Coach & Player Dennis Michie**



In their inaugural season, the Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1890 college football season. In its first season fielding a team in intercollegiate football, the Cadets compiled a 0–1–0 record with just one game played.

A 20-year-old Army player, Dennis Michie, was the coach and the captain of the 1890 Army football team. Michie is often listed as the team's head coach because he served the purpose for the team. He actually put in a year as head coach in 1892. Dennis Michie was the lightest player on the team at 142 pounds. He had a wonderful career at the Academy, but his life ended too soon.

Lieutenant Michie was killed in 1898 during the Spanish–American War. It is a stark reminder of the Army's mission of preserving liberty and democracy. Army's home football stadium, Michie Stadium, was dedicated in his honor when it opened in 1924. With just one game played, no Army Cadets were honored on the 1890 College Football All-America Team.



LIEUTENANT DENNIS M. MICHIE.

Dennis Michie –Army's 1<sup>st</sup> functioning Head Football Coach

**1891 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Henry Williams**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1891 college football season. It was their second season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Henry Williams in his first of just one year. The team played as an independent (no conference) and had a nice record of 4-1-1.

This was technically Army's first season fielding a team in intercollegiate football, the Cadets had compiled a 0–1–0 record with just one game played in 1890. And, so, in this, the first full season of Army football, the Cadets compiled a highly respectable 4–1–1 record.



### <<< Coach Williams

Army outscored its opponents by a combined total of 80 to 73. The Cadets opened the season with a 10–6 victory over [Fordham](#)— the first win in Army football history. In the final game of the season, the Cadets defeated the Navy [Midshipmen](#) by a 32 to 16 score in the second annual [Army–Navy Game](#).

Army's head coach in 1891 was 22-year-old [Henry L. Williams](#), who had played football at [Yale](#). Williams remained at the Academy only one year. He later served as head coach at [Minnesota](#) for 22 years and was inducted into the [College Football Hall of Fame](#).

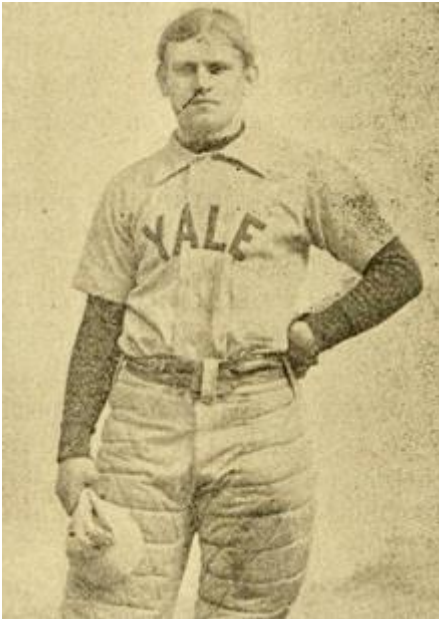
Not having been playing long enough to get noticed, no Army Cadets were honored on the [1891 College Football All-America list](#).

**1892 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Dennis Michie**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1892 college football season. It was their third season of intercollegiate football. They were coached for the second time in their short span of playing intercollegiate football by Coach Dennis Michie. Playing as an independent, the team had another nice record of 3-1-1.

### 1893 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Laurie Bliss

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1893 college football season. It was their fourth season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Laurie Bliss, shown in a picture from his Yale playing days. As an independent football entity, the team had a losing record of 4-5-0



### << Coach Laurie Bliss

In their first and only season under head coach [Laurie Bliss](#), the Cadets compiled a 4–5-0 record and were outscored by their opponents by a combined total of 109 to 84. In the annual [Army–Navy Game](#), the Cadets lost to the Midshipmen by a 6 to 4 score. No Army Cadets were honored on the [1893 College Football All-America Team](#).

### 1894 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Harmon Graves

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1894 college football season. It was their fifth season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Harmon Graves in his first of two seasons as head coach of Army. Harmon Graves is shown in the below picture. As an independent football entity, the team had a winning record of 3-2-0.



## << Coach Harmon Graves

In their first season under head coach Harmon Graves, the Cadets compiled a 3-2 record and outscored their opponents by a combined total of 95 to 22. <sup>1</sup> The Army was not played in 1894 because of the rule about no away games. No Army Cadets were honored on the [1894 College Football All-America Team](#). All 1896 games were played

at home.

The season opened on Oct 6 with a shutout win W (18-0) at the Plain, on the campus of the US Military Academy in West Point NY at home against Amherst W (18-0). In this short five-game season, the Cadets won every other game. On Oct 13, their first loss was a shutout against Brown L (0-10) On Oct 20, the Cadets picked up a shutout win v MIT W (42-0).

On Oct 27, the Cadets were defeated in a close game against Yale L (5-12). On Nov 3, the Army Cadets shut out Union for a nice win W (30-0). No Army-Navy game was held in 1894.

### 1895 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Harmon Graves

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1895 college football season. It was their sixth season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Harmon Graves in his first of two seasons as head coach of Army. As an independent football entity, the team had a winning record of 5-2-0.

In their second season under head coach Harmon Graves, the Cadets compiled a 5-2 record, shut out five of their seven opponents by a combined total of 141 to 32. It was a good year.

Because of away game restrictions, the [Army-Navy Game](#) was not played in 1895.

# Navy's First Football Teams

1879	No coach	
1880-1981	No team	
1982	Vaulx Carter	Coach #1
1881-1891	No Coaches	

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Record</u>
1879	No coach	0-0-1	Indep	
1880	No team	-	-	-
1881	No team	-	-	-
1882	Vaulx Carter	1-0	Indep	1-0
1883	No coach	0-1	Indep	0-1
1884	No coach	1-0	Indep	1-0
1885	No coach	1-2	Indep	1-2
1886	No coach	3-3	Indep	3-3
1887	No coach	3-1	Indep	3-1
1888	No coach	1-4	Indep	1-4
1889	No coach	4-1-1	Indep	4-1-1
1890	No coach	5-1-1	Indep	5-1-1
1891	No coach	5-2	Indep	5-2



1890 First Army Navy Game (Only game this season) Notice no protective gear

The 1789 season was unique in many ways. First of all, it was Navy's first football season. Second, it was a player who arranged the game to begin Navy's many seasons of football, and Third, it was one of the few seasons in which the Army-Navy game was not played.



USNA Navy Midshipmen 1890 Football Team That Beat Army

At the time, Army had no football team and did not get a team to play football until 1890, and in this season, Army played just one game—Navy. Army's football program began on November 29, 1890, when Navy played in the only game of Army's short season.

In their inaugural season, the Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 1890 college football season. Navy's record was 5-1-1 including the win against Army. In its first season fielding a team in intercollegiate football, Army compiled a 0-1-0 record with just one game played.

Navy had been playing organized football in 1879. On an intramural and "fooling around" basis, footballs had been tossed around on Navy's campus for a number of years before the first season (one game) in 1879. After Navy had been playing for a number of years, the Army-Navy match was a natural. In this historical game, the Army team lost to the Navy team, L (0-24). Navy's Midshipmen were the only players to score in the kickoff game to a long-time series of great Army-Navy Games.

Even though it was just a first for Army, there was a lot of pre-game publicity. In fact, a week before the game, the New York Times reported that the planned match "is beginning to assume almost national proportions."

During the game, Army's quarterback Kirby Walker was knocked out of the game four times, the last time being carried off the field and to the hospital in an unconscious state. As you can see in the picture beginning this chapter, in those days there was no protective headgear.

After the victory, Navy Cadets in Annapolis "fired twenty-four great guns, and then paraded the streets with horns." If the score were reversed, Army would have been doing some powerful celebrating also. As it is, the Cadets would have to wait just one more year in order to get back at Navy for the loss.

### **1879 Navy Midshipmen Football No Coach**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1789 college football season. It was their first season of intercollegiate football. There was no coach. The team played as an independent (no conference) and had a one-game record of 0-1-1. First-classman [William John Maxwell](#) and several friends got the team together to play the Baltimore Athletic Club and Maxwell served in the Captain role, which for a coach-less team meant he was the de-facto Coach.

The Naval Academy's football program is one of the nation's oldest, with its history dating back to 1879. Army did not get into football for twelve more years in 1890. The tale of how Navy began its football program is told in many sources across the Internet. All of the sources that I have read basically tell the same story.

There were two separate efforts to establish a Naval Academy football team in 1879. The first was guided by first-classman [J.H. Robinson](#), who developed it as a training regimen to help keep the school's baseball team in shape. Because American Football rules were still being formed at the time, the team played the sport under rules that made it much closer to soccer, where the players were permitted only to kick the ball in order to advance it.

The second effort headed by first-classman William John Maxwell was more successful in its efforts. Maxwell met with two of his friends, Tunstall Smith and Henry Woods, who played for the Baltimore Athletic Club and officially challenged their team to a



game with the Naval Academy. A team was formed from academy first-classmen, which Maxwell led as a manager, trainer, and captain.

The team would wake up and practice before reveille and following drill and meals. The squad received encouragement from some of the faculty, who allowed them to eat a late dinner and skip final drill for additional practicing. This was against the direct orders of the school superintendent, who had banned football and similar activities.

The year's sole contest was played on December 11 against the Baltimore Athletic Club. The opposition's team was reportedly composed of players from Princeton, Yale, Pennsylvania, and Johns Hopkins.

The Naval Academy hosted the Baltimore team on a temporary field drawn on part of the superintendent's cow pasture. Rules decided upon between the teams established that the game was to be played under rugby rules. The Baltimore American and Chronicle, which covered the contest, described it well.

The game, played under rugby rules, was a battle from beginning to end—a regular knock down and drag out fight. Both sides became immediately excited and the audience was aroused to the highest pitch of enthusiasm by the spirited contest. The ball oscillated backward and forward over the ground without any material result.

The scrimmages were something awful to witness—living, kicking, scrambling masses of humanity surging to and from, each individual after the leather oval. If a Baltimorean got the ball and started for a run, he was unfailingly caught by one of the brawny Cadets and dashed to earth with five or six men falling on him.

Unlike Air Force Navy has been around a long time as a football powerhouse and a perennial army & Air Force nemesis.

## Florida Gators First Game & Startup Football— 1906-1908

Forsythe      Coach #1  
Pyle            Coach #2

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Record</u>
1906	Jack “Pee Wee” Forsythe	5–3–1		
1907	Jack “Pee Wee” Forsythe	4–1–1		
1908	Jack “Pee Wee” Forsythe	5–2–1		
1909	George Pyle	6–1–1		
1910	George Pyle	6–1–0		
1911	George Pyle	5–0–1		
1912	George Pyle	5–2–1	SIAA	0-2-1
1913	George Pyle	4–3–0	SIAA	2-2-0

Read more: <http://gatornation.proboards.com/thread/8909/florida-gators-1906-1919#ixzz4dJJdXQg6>

### 1907 Florida Gators Football Coach Jack Forsythe

The UF official football program began in 1906. In 1907, the Florida football team posted a 4–1–1 record. Their fine record was in large part to the play of star Tailback and Quarterback Willie Shands from Gainesville, who later was elected as a state senator and helped found the UF medical school Shands Hospital in 1953.

Only four men from the 1906 team returned. Captain Roy Corbett was also the athletics editor of the Florida Pennant.

The 1907 Florida football team was coached by Jack Forsythe in its 2<sup>nd</sup> season and his second season as head coach of the UF Football team.

The Orange and Blue lost on Oct 12 to the Mercer Bears for the second season in a row in Macon GA L (0-6); beat the Columbia Agricultural College W (6-0 on Oct 26 in Savannah; beat a tough Rollins College Tars W (9-4) on Nov 9 in the Baseball Park on the Gainesville, Florida campus;



The Gators beat the Riverside Athletic Club Nov 28 (picture above) at the Baseball Park W (17-0); and tied the Tars T (0-0) on their home field in Winter Park, Florida. As noted, Coach Forsythe's 1907 Florida football team posted an overall record of 4–1–1 in their second varsity season.

#### **1908 Florida Gators Football Coach Jack Forsythe**

The 1907 Florida football team was coached by Jack Forsythe in its 3rd season and Forsythe's third season and last as head coach of the UF Football team. Forsythe's 1908 Florida football team posted a record of 5–2–1 in their third varsity season. The fine 1908 team (5-1-1) had a lot to do with the play of Willie Shands.

During this season and others following, Earle "Dummy" Taylor (Left) became the only UF player ever to earn five football letters. He played five seasons as a halfback and drop-kicker, beginning with his freshman season in 1908. He was quite a player. He ran for touchdowns of 43, 75 and 60 yards in a 28-3 win over Rollins in 1909. His field-goal records for a game (three), season (eight in 1911) and career (16) stood until the mid-1970s.

The team captain, William Gibbs, came in as a veteran transfer. As noted, it was the first season for the talented Gainesville young man. Dummy Taylor. The backfield had some fine players including

Charlie Bartleson, Jim Vidal, and the already mentioned William A. Shands, future state senator and namesake of Shands Hospital.

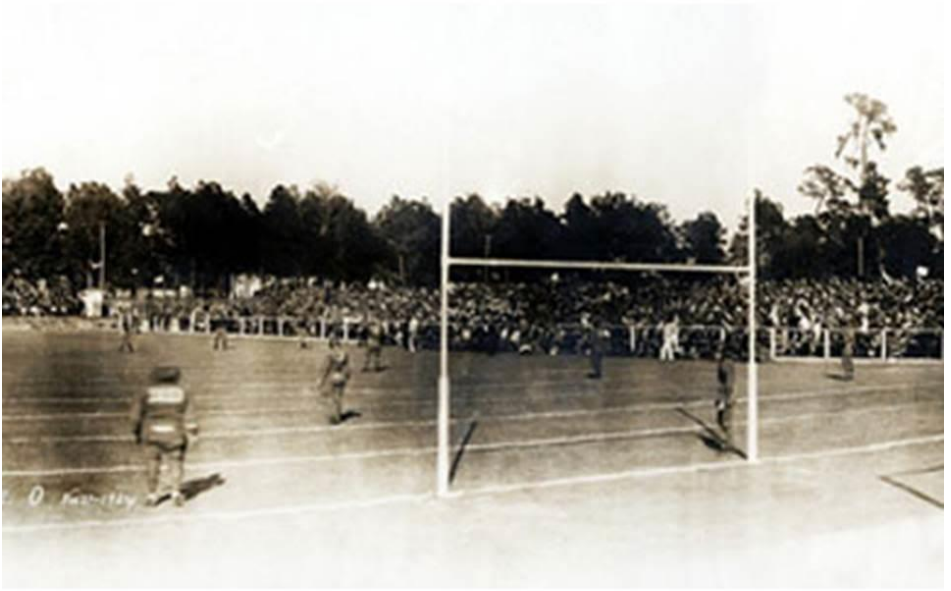


<<< Earl “Dummy” Taylor  
There are always stories in football that are often passed by word of mouth. One such story talks of the University of Florida becoming the "Florida Gators" and suggests it originated in 1908. There was a Gainesville shop owner who ordered orange and blue pennants with a gator emblem from the Michie Company, drawing inspiration from the University of Virginia, and the notion of being the “Gators” came naturally.

Working through the Gators starting lineup from left to right we find Malhorton at left end; Rader at left tackle, Van Fleet at (left guard, Parker at center), Videll at right guard), J. Taylor at right tackle, and Shands at right end). In the backfield, Thompson played QB, Bartleson played left half, E. Taylor played right halfback, and Gibbs was the starting fullback).

On Oct 10, The Florida football team opened the season with a loss to the Mercer Baptists at Macon, GA for the third consecutive season. L (0-24). The Mercer team must have been good eaters as they outweighed Florida by twenty pounds.

In the games at Riverside, Florida beat the Riverside Athletic Club of Jacksonville twice. The first win on Oct 10 at the Baseball Park was 4-0. Former Gator Roy Corbett coached and played right halfback for Riverside. In the second game, later in the season, the Gators thumped the AC 37-0.



Early game at the Swamp (to be Fleming Field)

On Oct 21, Florida then beat the Gainesville Athletic Club W 37–5 and then Columbia College on Oct 24, W (6-0) at Lake City, FL. Then Rollins got the best of the Gators L (0-5) at Winter Park, FL. The tough state champion Rollins Tars beat the Gators in a close match. The game breaker was Rollins' Harman breaking away for a 30-yard touchdown in the second half.

In the next game on Nov. 7, Florida played the Stetson College Hatters for the first time, beating them in a close game 6–5 on the Orange and Blue's home field (Baseball Field) in Gainesville. A great kick by Dummy Taylor's for the extra point decided the win over Stetson, after a Charlie Bartleson touchdown run.

Then, on Nov. 2,1 came the second win over Riverside W (37–0.) played at the Baseball Park.

On Nov. 26, Florida finished the season with a rematch that ended in a tie (0-0) against Stetson at the Hatters' home field in DeLand, Florida!



## Chapter 7 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-19<sup>th</sup> 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. Notre Dame did have a rugby team at the time, but nobody at Notre Dame, from what I could find, was even thinking about the game of football.



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.



**1<sup>st</sup> 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 Notre Dame did not get into the football act until the late 1880'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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 early 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.

For those who would like to read more about American College Football and Walter Camp & Knute Rockne's role in helping form the rules, I am pleased to say that less than a month after I wrote my first sports book, I created a solution. There is a Kelly book available titled: [American College Football: The Beginning](#). If you think you'd like to trace the roots of American College Football, I think you'll love this book.

This book, however, is all about college football without explaining the rules and this chapter is the one and only chapter about the origins of football. 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 that Notre Dame brought forth a real football team after a two-year lapse from its last half-Rugby season in 1889. It was 1892 when William "Pudge" Heffelfinger signed a \$500 contract to play for the Allegheny Athletic Association against the Pittsburgh Athletic Club. Pro football matured quite a bit before the real pros began to play in the 1920's.

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. Like soccer rules, which many of us have learned since our playing days were long gone, 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, which early on was known as a major football power, 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. Back then, there were no “she’s” playing the game.

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 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.

### **The first nighttime 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. 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 forward pass**

None of 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**

Some 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 rules.

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, also 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, 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



**Jim Thorpe, Circa 1915**

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 and 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".

## The Heisman

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

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 today, Michigan, Ohio State, Alabama, Texas, & Notre Dame are ranked first, second, third, fourth & fifth in total wins. Just six years ago when I wrote my first sports book, the rankings were different with Michigan, Texas, & Notre Dame, 1,2 & 3. Alabama and Ohio State have really come of age.

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 8 College Football Pre-1900 to 1920

## Notre Dame had some teams then

1900	Pat O'Dea	6-3-1	
1901	Pat O'Dea	8-1-1	
1902	James Farragher	6-2-1	
1903	James Farragher	8-0-1	
1904	Louis Salmon	5-3	
1905	Henry J. McGlew	5-4	
1906	Thomas Barry	6-1	
1907	Thomas Barry	6-0-1	
1908	Victor M. Place	8-1	
1909	Frank Longman	7-0-1	
1910	Frank Longman	4-1-1	
1911	John L. Marks	6-0-2	
1912	John L. Marks	7-0	
1913	Jesse Harper	7-0	Coach #13
1914	Jesse Harper	6-2	
1915	Jesse Harper	7-1	
1916	Jesse Harper	8-1	
1917	Jesse Harper	6-1-1	
1918	Knute Rockne	3-1-2	
1919	Knute Rockne	9-0	
1920	Knute Rockne	9-0	
1920-1930	Knute Rockne		

In the next chapter we will discuss the great ND great coach Knute Rockne. Coming soon. For now, know that During 13 years as head coach, Rockne led Notre Dame to 105 victories, 12 losses, five ties and three consensus national championships, which included five undefeated and untied seasons. FYI, Only California and Princeton claim national championships for the 1920 season. Andy Smith's Pacific Coast Conference champion California "Wonder Team" was the first national champion from the Pacific Coast.

Now we will be talking a lot about national championships by the great teams in this book but until the NCAA took charge, it was anybody's guess as to who the national title holder would be at the end of the season. So, permit me to introduce this chapter with a

little chatter about how national champions were determined way back when. I will use Notre Dame as an example since that's where we are right now in the book.

With 76 sports books to my credit, four about Notre Dame, I am one of many pundits who believe Notre Dame has technically won 22 national championships. Notre Dame University officially recognizes just 11 titles, but it also lists 10 co-national championships. I absolutely claim 21 and if you asked me, my number would be higher for some other teams also. I believe Notre Dame should claim 22. The 22nd is another clear co-national championship, but ND does not claim that as it should also

Here are a few quotes that will show you why nobody is the defining source about old college championships.

“As far as I'm concerned, I've always felt Notre Dame had the most and it would be a long time until anybody would catch them,” said Wayne Atcheson, a former Alabama sports information director. “I have always admired their tradition and heritage. To tell you the truth, I don't even know how many they claim. I just think about ours.”

Back in the mid-1980s, Atcheson added five pre-Bryant national titles to Alabama's media guide that continue to be claimed: 1925, 1926, 1930, 1934 and 1941. How was he able to do it? He just did it! See what I mean

Notre Dame claims national championships in these years: *1924, 1929, 1930, 1943, 1946, 1947, 1949, 1966, 1973, 1977, 1988.*

Notre Dame has unclaimed national championships in these years: *1919, 1920, 1927, 1938, 1953, 1964, 1967, 1970, 1989, 1993.*

Looking above, in the list of ND seasons from 1900 with Pat O'dea to 1920 with Knute Rockne, take notice that 1919 and 1920 were undefeated and untied seasons for Notre Dame. ND did not claim those two years. But at the time, there were what were called selectors who did pick the national champions in college football and they did not always agree. Some used different methods and others used clear bias. Nonetheless they got to pick who was the national champion. Notre Dame has a plaque that shows that at least

internally the Irish officials give some credence to the work of the selectors. Here is a blurry picture of the plaque:



These did not come from no place. Some selector someplace picked ND as college football national champion in those years. I happen to know which ones. Here is a list of who they are. It mirrors the years in the above plaque.

- 1919: National Championship Foundation, Parke Davis
- 1920: Billingsley, Parke Davis
- 1927: Houlgate
- 1938: Dickinson
- 1953: Billingsley, Boand, DeVold, Dunkel, Helms, Litkenhous, National Championship Foundation, Poling, Sagarin, Sagarin ELO-CHESS, Williamson
- 1964: National Football Foundation, Football News, DeVold
- 1967: Dunkel
- 1970: FACT, Matthews, Sagarin

- 1989: Berryman, Eck, FACT, Sagarin, Sagarin ELO-CHESS
- 1993: Matthews, National Championship Foundation

In 2020, onefootdown.com offered its rationale as to why this is important and then they followed it up with why it is unimportant. I give the full quote on the important and the unimportant below:

## **“Why is this important?”**

“Because it changes everything. Should Notre Dame ever claim all of these championships outright — as is their right to do. Notre Dame’s national championship count per coach would be:

- Knute Rockne 6
- Frank Leahy 5
- Ara Parseghian 5
- Lou Holtz 3
- Dan Devine 1
- Elmer Layden 1

“It also gives Notre Dame enough championships to perhaps outlast the Nick Saban era in Tuscaloosa, so the Irish remain king of titles for quite a time longer.”

## **“Why is this unimportant?”**

“Because none of this makes the Notre Dame football program better on the field in 2020 and beyond. It’s nothing but bragging rights, but bragging rights are what make college football great. Still, any title debated that dates before 1980 feels like a barbershop battle, and no one really wins in those.”

So, now you know what I know and what I choose to prognosticate or promulgate—take your pick.

I thought you would enjoy this take on college football championships because most fans like bragging rights. Now, let’s move on with the rest of the period before 1920. Enjoy!

## Coach Pat O'Dea, 1900

In its first season with Pat O'Dea as coach, the team compiled a 6–3–1 record, shut out seven opponents, and outscored all opponents by a combined total of 261 to 73.

There were no really outstanding ND seasons from 1894 through 1900. Pat O'Dea's 6-3-1 was OK but no cigar for this book. Pat really knocked it out of the park the following year with an 8-1-1 record. James Farragher literally hit it out of the park with his first season at 6-2-1 and his second one in 1903 at 8-0-1. Thomas Barry in two seasons for the Irish in 1906 & 1907 was 12-1 and Victor Place was a star with an 8-1 record in 1908/ The problem seemed to be getting somebody like Knute Rockne to come along and stay for a while for the Irish.

Frank Longman 1909-1910 and John Marks coached with great records 1911-1912 of 11-1-2 and 13-0-2 respectively. Notre Dame had a lot more wins at this time in their infancy than losses. The next coach was very well acclaimed, and he is included in this book because he was a great coach and a great football man. He has the distinction of being the coach who hired Knute Rockne to replace himself at ND. Jesse Harper pulled in a 34-5-1 in his five years at Notre Dame. He had a special player on his team – Knute Rockne

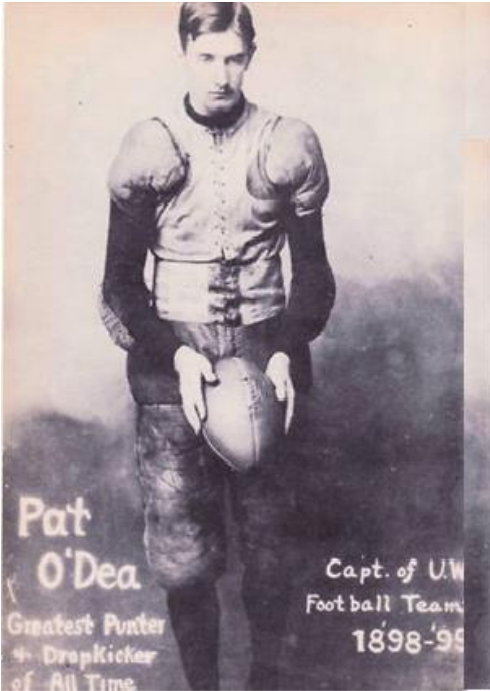


1903 Notre Dame football team- The Shutout Season



## 1901 – ND A Championship Season for Sure

Coach Pat O'Dea's Notre Dame Team was even stronger in his second year as coach. The 1901 Football season was a real championship season for the ND team. Notre Dame compiled an 8–1–1 record while shutting out six opponents. The team outscored all opponents by a total of 145 to 19. Highlights of the season included a victory over Purdue W (12–6), Indiana W (18–5), and College of Physicians & Surgeons W (34–0). The team also tied the South Bend Athletic Club Y (0–0) and lost to Northwestern L (0–2).

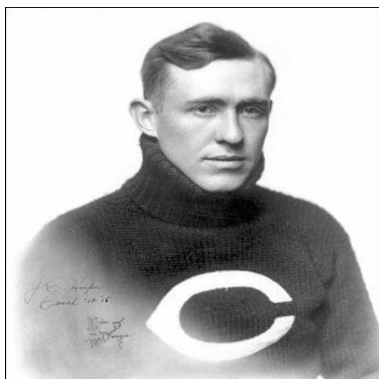


ND Coach Pat O'Dea 1900 & 1901

Though this was not a national championship as this honor would not come until the 1924 season, it was the year (1901) for the most significant Fighting Irish team honor to this point. With an earlier win over Purdue, the Irish clinched the Indiana State Crown with an 18-5 impressive victory against the Hoosiers.

This was a real big deal for the team and the history of Notre Dame Football. I

## Jesse Claire Harper A Big ND Hero



A young Jesse Harper in his University of Chicago letter sweater. He was a star halfback for Stagg's excellent teams in the early part of the century.

### No money; no football

Many of the facts in this section were derived from the following very informative online article. Check it out when you have the opportunity. <http://www.und.com/sports/m-footbl/spec-rel/082913aad.html>

Football had surely become a popular sport among the student body as well as the Holy Cross priests in Notre Dame's community. However, the Notre Dame program was going no place nationally and regionally. This brought the future of the team into question. ND Football was at a crossroads.

It was obvious to those who handled the money, the Holy Cross Fathers, the student body, and the folks in South Bend that Notre Dame had to either get out of football or make a full commitment. Eliminating football had become an unappealing if not unacceptable option so the choice was made by simply defining the choices.

Notre Dame President Rev. John W. Cavanaugh opted for the future of the program. He hired the 29-year-old Wabash head coach Jesse Clair Harper as the school's first athletics director. As a small school, the ND athletic department had previously been operated by student managers. Harper would be the first full-time coach in football, baseball, and basketball. He was a great athlete. He would also be the Athletic Director, which was the toughest of all his jobs. His salary, including bonuses, could rise to as much as \$5,000 per year.

Harper knew sports and he really knew the game of football. He had played for and was a disciple of Amos Alonzo Stagg. Coach Stagg had developed a reputation as college football's grand master in innovation while he coached at the University of Chicago.

Meanwhile, Harper was no slouch. He was a great choice. As head coach, he had been making his own mark at Wabash College, including seeing his out-manned "Little Giants" lose only 6-3 to Notre Dame in 1911.

Harper's secret ingredient for the CSC Fathers was that he had a strong background in business administration. With this background, Harper knew very well that Notre Dame "had to make football pay for itself." He was determined to make the program self-sufficient. Of course, to a bunch of priests with more pocket than wallet, this was music to their ears. They immediately liked Harper's thinking.

Jesse Harper was the right man at the right time for Notre Dame. He was never heralded like the great coaches of the more modern era, but he was as responsible for Notre Dame being on the map as much as anybody else in history. He preceded Knute Rockne but in fact, he was the guy who hired Rockne. He stood in the shadows of many, but he was responsible for much. He brought a lot of God's sunshine to Notre Dame. He brightened the campus with his positive attitude and can-do demeanor.

He was born close to ND's main campus on December 10, 1883 in East Pawpaw, Ill., just 80 miles west of Chicago. He went to school in Chicago at Morgan Park where he starred in football. He graduated from the University of Chicago, where he was coached by the great Amos Alonzo Stagg.

As good as he was, and he was good—Harper always seemed to be overshadowed by somebody. He played halfback and quarterback at the University of Chicago. He played behind three-time Walter Camp All-American, Walter Eckersall (1904-06). During his senior year in 1905, Chicago was declared the "Big Ten" champion after the team snapped Michigan's 56-game unbeaten streak.

Stagg knew how good of a person and how great an athlete Harper was. When Jesse graduated in 1906, Stagg helped make sure he got

the head coaching position for Harper, then 22 years old at Alma College in Michigan. He brought the Alma Scots to a winning season in his second year (5-1-1).

Jesse then coached at Wabash College in Indiana where he eventually encountered Notre Dame in a (3-6) defeat in 1911. Back then Notre Dame was referred to simply as the "Catholics." Though they were always a tough lot and won most of their games, for reasons of the times, the Catholics were not held in high regard by their collegiate "peers."

Notre Dame liked Harper's coaching abilities as they observed in the ND-Wabash game and they also liked the fact that he had a sharp mind and was an astute business-man. ND Administration hired the 29-year old Harper as the school's first athletics director.

As noted, he made just \$5000 with bonuses and as previously noted, nothing was easy. He also had to coach the basketball and baseball teams and go on their away games. Of course for five years, he also coached ND football and did very well from 1913 to 1917.

His football record was (34-5-1). In basketball, it was (44-20) (.686); and baseball (61-28) for an overall 139-53-1 mark (.723). Not too shabby.

Before Brian Kelly, the Irish would have been pleased to have found a Jesse Harper as their head football coach. This Jesse Harper had three other full-time jobs at Notre Dame.

### **1913 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Jesse Harper**

In 1913, with Jesse Clair Harper as the coach, Notre Dame was full of the good kind of pride that continues as its hallmark today. This young coach scheduled some powerhouse games and he directed Notre Dame to an undefeated and untied season (7-0).

Harper had a great player on the team who made All-American that year. The player's name was Knute Rockne. Many would agree that even more important than the great season Harper delivered was the new Notre Dame schedule he had negotiated. Harper worked hard to

assure Notre Dame got to play great teams such as Army, so that its wins meant more.

Jesse Harper enjoyed his time with Notre Dame and he helped the University until he retired in 1917. During his tenure, the Irish stopped playing high schools and trade schools and began playing only intercollegiate games. The Fighting Irish record was admirable with a record of 34 wins, five losses, and one tie.

This period also marked the beginning of the rivalry with Army and the continuation of a rivalry with Michigan State. The objective for Harper of course was to gain respect for a regionally successful but small-time Midwestern football program.

The new AD / coach was able to schedule games in his first season with national powerhouses Texas, Penn State, and Army. How could Harper have pulled this off? He was smart. He had guts. And most of all, he had a lot of Notre Dame spirit. That is basically it. Jesse Harper did not know the word, "No!"

Harper was a diplomat. Through his intelligence and persistence, he eventually broke the Big Ten ice. He added Wisconsin to the 1917 schedule, followed by Purdue in 1918. Indiana and Northwestern were added to the slate by 1920. While Notre Dame's cache of great teams to play was growing under Harper, the great AD and great coach Jesse Harper turned it all over to another great football man, Knute Rockne, in 1918.

Rockne got the reins and the keys in 1918 from his boss, Jesse Harper who was ready to move on in life. Harper's family had a farm and Jesse wanted to go home, which was not too far from the ND campus to enjoy the country living and the occupation he desired.

Though Harper stood tall during his years, nothing is ever perfect. There were numerous and continued rejections and setbacks for Harper during this process of turning around his Big Ten adversaries. Yet, this great man had many negotiation victories that sweetened the experience. For example, Harper gained a \$6,000 gate guarantee to play at Nebraska five years in a row from 1916-20. Having a means to finance the team was as necessary as building a great team to help build up the finances.

Looking again at 1913, Notre Dame had one heck of a team. Harper led them to an undefeated and untied season with seven wins: Ohio Northern W (87-0), South Dakota W (20-7) Alma W (62-0), Army W (35-13) @ West Point, Penn State @ University Park, PA W (14-7), Christian Brothers in St. Louis, MO W (20-7), Texas at Clark Field in Austin W (30-7).



**1913 ND Football Team w/ Coach Harper, Rockne & Dorais**

By design, to get teams to play Notre Dame, Harper's Notre Dame team did a lot of traveling. By agreeing to this, ND was able to book games that otherwise, they would have been refused. Even at 7-0, there was little recognition in 2013 for this powerhouse team other than recognition that ND with Quarterback Dorais and Tight End Rockne had perfected the forward pass.

### **Scholastic Athletic Notes**

This is an excerpt of the athletic notes from the ND Scholastic for November 7, 1913, Jesse Harper's first year as coach. The Penn State Game was ND's closest game played in this year and so here are the game notes:

*Penn State has been beaten by Washington and Jefferson, Harvard, and Penns3dvania this 3^ear, and b}' larger scores than the Varsity beat them, but all three of Penn's previous losses were sustained in the enemy's territory and to teams unwearied by weary travel. Besides this, Penn had determined to make good for its previous poor record in its first big game a t home. Furthermore, it was Penn Day—the big day - for their college. But notwithstanding all Penn's incentive to fight, the Varsity went in to win, and succeeded in doing so, the final count being 14 to 0.*

*The game held particular interest because. Dorais, who is acknowledged to be the best quarterback in the West, was pitted against Miller, the Penn quarterback, who was mentioned by several critics last year for All-American. We would naturally be inclined to consider our own man the better, and although we have no doubt of Dorais' superiority, we choose to bring in a non-partisan critic to state our convictions. The following from the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin is our exact sentiment.*

#### **BILLY MORICE AT LEAST SEES OVER THE ALLEGHENIES**

Billy Morice says that the best quarterback in America is Dorais, the Notre Dame pilot. Morice was a visitor at Franklin Field the other afternoon, and he boosted the little Notre Dame lad to the skies. 'He's the best quarterback in the country,' said Morice. 'I go all over the country officiating, and I will say that he is the king of them all this season. He can toss that pass like a baseball. He throws it, he flings it right at the man; he does not lob it so that while a fellow is waiting to get it, someone else comes along and nails him. He runs with the ball in front of him like Fred Geig, the Swarthmore coach did when he played. That enables him to shift it to either arm, and-use the other arm to straight-arm off a tackier. He is a great open field runner, and, above all other things, he is a great field general. There is nothing in the East as good as Dorais, and while a few of the critics will not see him play, and they may miss him in their selection, I'll take him as my selection.' — Philadelphia Evening, Bulletin.

*Dorais was particularly brilliant in his open field running in the Penn game, returning punts from twenty to thirty-five yards regularly, and once he caught the ball on the thirty-yard line and carried it the length of the field—dodging practically every*

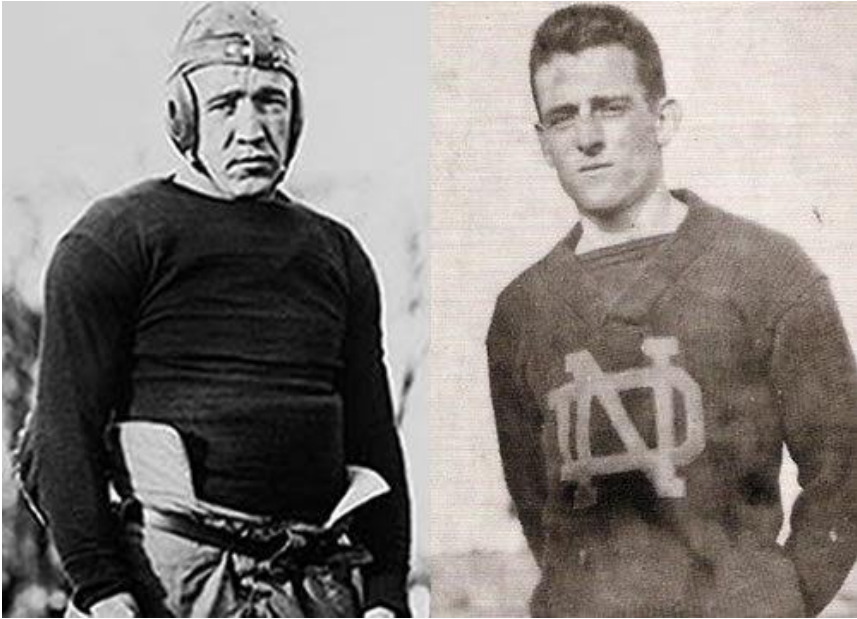
*member of the Penn team—for a touchdown, only to be called back because he stepped out of bounds when catching the ball.*

*Penn State won the toss and kicked to Dorais who returned the ball fifteen yards. The ball see-sawed from one eleven to another, Penn gaining most of its yardage on fake end runs while line-smashing proved our forte. The Varsity grew dangerous toward the end of the quarter but were unable to score.*

*The second quarter proved to be more exciting. Penn State worked the ball down to midfield only to lose it on downs. Miller punted to Dorais, and after a couple of plays Penn recovered a fumble within striking distance of our goal. Lamb dropped back ' for a field goal, but his trial was smeared by Lathrop who blocked his kick. When the Varsity recovered the ball, it uncorked a little of its old life, displaying the form that won victory for them at West Point. A well-executed forward pass from Dorais to Pliska was carried down the field forty yards. Dorais followed immediately with a thirty'-five-yard end run, and another pass, Dorais to Rockne, put the ball the entire length of the field in three plays for a touchdown.*

*Even more exciting times were in store during the third period of play. Displaying their brilliant form, the Gold and Blue warriors received the ball from Penn on the kick-off and never lost possession of it until they had carried it all the way down the field for a second score. Line bucks, principally by Eichenlaub, but also some of very material assistance by Pliska and Finnegan, were responsible for three-fourths of the yardage on this wonderful incursion. Forward passes were almost invariably called back because of oft"-side plays or were smeared by opposing interference. A few were successful, however, and these and end rims account for the rest of the distance. Dorais, whom we are beginning to believe infallible with his toe, kicked goal. The Varsity received the kick again and worked, the ball past the middle of the field, but our backs began to tire, and the ball was punted to Miller who was downed immediately. Then a series of fake end runs by Miller, interspersed by line bucks by Berryman and Tobin, brought the ball within fifteen yards of the Varsity's goal, when the only successful Penn forward pass put the home team across our goal for their only score of the da}'-, making the score 14 to 7, where it remained till the end of the game.*





Knute Rockne, End & Gus Dorais, QB for Jesse Harper 1913

### **Jesse Harper; coach who hired Knute Rockne**

Jesse Harper scheduled the 1918 season's games after he had hired Notre Dame's new Head Coach Knute Rockne, who had been his assistant. Rockne did pretty well in his first year as coach after Jesse moved on.

Years later Harper's son James noted this about his dad: "When he went to Notre Dame he found it difficult to get games with teams in the Midwest because the Fighting Irish had an excellent team and people were afraid to play them." This quote was made long after Jesse Claire Harper had coached at Notre Dame. "He was literally forced to turn to "intersectional games." The son continued:

"Dad was a modest guy. He never wanted to take credit for getting Notre Dame started as a national power. I remember he told me once: 'Well, Lord, I was forced to get a national schedule. No one else would play us around Notre Dame. I had to go someplace where I could get some ballgames.'" Let's take a break about Jesse Harper briefly and talk about the ND Army Series which continued long after Harper.

The Army Series against Notre Dame would itself make a great book and probably a better movie.



Coach Jesse Harper & ND Player Knute Rockne

## Army Football

The “Cadets” were a turn of the century powerhouse

Army was not necessarily the best team right out of the shoot, but they got very good quickly. Compare the record here to that of Notre Dame’s which had not yet gained the prestige of Army at this time:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Record</u>
1890	Dennis Michie	0-1-0	Indep	0-1-0
1891	Henry Williams	4-1-1	Indep	4-1-1
1892	Dennis Michie	3-1-1	Indep	3-1-1

1893	Laurie Bliss	4-5-0	Indep	4-5-0
1894	Harmon Graves	3-2-0	Indep	3-2-0
1895	Harmon Graves	5-2-0	Indep	5-2-0
1896	George Dyer	3-2-1	Indep	3-2-1d
1897	Herman Koehler	6-1-1	Indep	6-1-1)
1898	Herman Koehler	3-2-1	Indep	3-2-1)
1899	Herman Koehler	4-5-0	Indep	4-5-0
1900	Herman Koehler	7-3-1	Indep	7-3-1
1901	Leon Kromer	5-1-2	Indep	5-1-2
1902	Dennis Nolan	6-1-1	Indep	6-1-1
1903	Edward King	6-2-1	Indep	6-2-1
1904	Robert Boyers	7-2-0	Indep	7-2-0
1905	Robert Boyers	4-4-1	Indep	4-4-1
1906	Henry Smither	1-0-0	Indep	1-0-0
1906	Ernest Graves	2-5-1	Indep	2-5-1
1907	Henry Smither	6-2-1	Indep	6-2-1
1908	Harry Nelly	6-1-2	Indep	6-1-2
1909	Harry Nelly	3-2-0	Indep	3-2-0
1910	Harry Nelly	6-2-0	Indep	6-2-0
1911	Joseph Beacham	6-1-1	Indep	6-1-1
1912	Ernest Graves	5-3-0	Indep	5-3-0
1913	Charles Daly	8-1-0	Indep	8-1-0
1914	Charles Daly	9-0-0	Indep	9-0-0
1915	Charles Daly	5-3-1	Indep	5-3-1
1916	Charles Daly	9-0-0	Indep	9-0-0
1917	Geoffrey Keyes	7-1-0	Indep	7-1-0
1918	Hugh Mitchell	1-0-0	Indep	1-0-0
1919	Charles Daly	6-3-0	Indep	6-3-0
1920	Charles Daly	7-2-0	Indep	7-2-0
1921	Charles Daly	6-4-0	Indep	6-4-0
1922	Charles Daly	8-0-2	Indep	8-0-2

The record on the prior page for Army is not bad but it was not championship caliber until Charles Daly took over the reins in the WWI timeframe and Army finally began to dominate. That's when Army got its big cigar. WWII would give a bigger cigar.

## Army from 1900 to 1920

The teams in this period that were hitting on all cylinders were Notre Dame and Army—especially Army. Somehow, on a recruiting trip, Jesse Harper, ND AD, had scheduled Army to play Notre Dame in 1913. There were no national championships back then, but the fans knew which teams were doing well. Army was well respected and so Notre Dame being able to play Army would do wonders for their program—especially if they won.

Two major factors combined to make the 1913 meeting with Army possible. Army had been stiffed by Yale on its football schedule. They were deemed not good enough to compete with Yale by Yale, a

major Eastern superpower football team. Yale broke off its series with Army that had been played for 20 consecutive years from 1893 through 1912. Army therefore had a "hole" in its schedule. Jesse Harper knew it was his job to fill that hole with a team named Notre Dame. He did.

Another reason besides Harper's determination was that Notre Dame was in the midst of its scheduling crisis. Once the ND team had finally upset Michigan in 1909, it made the "Catholics" more shunned by the Big Ten. The Big Ten had formed in 1896 and nobody in the BIG Ten wanted to risk being beat by a little team.

Since Daly was the big hero as a coach for Army in this era, let's recall a bit about this great coach

COL Charles Dudley Daly's vitals are Born on October 31, 1880; Died in 1959. He was Commander of the 29th Field Artillery, Camp Funston, KS, in the World War I Era

He was born in Boston, MA. He passed away in Pacific Grove, California, at the age of 78. He was a Bostonian who attended Boston Latin School. He was also a fine athlete. He competed well in track and football. He was in fact, a star. He entered Harvard at the age of 16 and became a legendary quarterback on the Harvard football team. He was graduated from Harvard among the Class of 1901 with an AB degree.

Many do not know because it was a long time ago that Harvard was once a football power and did a lot to get the game of football started in America. In fact, some at Harvard claim the Harvard was the first to play American football in America. There were no national championships, but their prestigious Ivy League had a "silver trophy," which was each season's only prize.

Since the turn of the millennium, Harvard has won or shared it eight times and posted three perfect records without a losing season. During that time, the Harvard Crimson (not the Crimson Tide) has enjoyed extraordinary success against Dartmouth, Penn, Princeton, and Yale, the four rivals that are the historic benchmarks by which

success is measured, posting an aggregate record of 54-22. So, Day's athletic achievements were substantial while playing for Harvard.

Daly was convinced to enroll at West Point by then President Theodore Roosevelt, an enthusiastic fan. He went on to West Point, from which he graduated in 1905.

By 1906, his family was in need of financial assistance, and he assumed the responsibility by resigning his commission in that year and going to work in Boston as a bond salesman with the firm of F. S. Mosley & Co. With the income earned in that job he helped support his family.

In 1910, John F. "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald was Mayor of Boston and was in need of a clean cut, untarnished figure for Fire Commissioner of the City. He offered the job to Charles, who took it on August 18, 1910, on condition that he would be his own man and not be subject to political pressures or influences. However, it soon became apparent that Honey Fitz had no intention of keeping the bargain.

He demanded that Charles use the Department for personal favors like pumping out flooded basements for cronies, looking the other way on contract kick-backs, etc. The growing estrangement from Honey Fitz came to a head over the latter's insistence upon Charles's ordering John J. Carney (sometimes spelled Kearney), a firefighter who had contracted tuberculosis, to be added to the pension rolls.

On March 4, 1913, by Special Act of Congress and again at President Roosevelt's request, Charles was re-commissioned a 1st Lt. and re-entered the army. Getting back into the Army, however, was not easy. James Michael Curley, then a congressman, fought the Bill intensely and "scored him (Charles) in unmeasured terms" on the House floor, insisting that he had failed at whatever he tried in life and was not the sort of man the Army wanted.

The Bill was passed by a narrow margin in the early morning hours just before the close of 62nd Congress and signed by President Taft the next day.

## **Colonel Daly**

During WWI, Charles was a Temporary Full Colonel and served as Director of the Army School of Fire. In 1920 he returned to the rank of Captain. He also served in various other commands, among which were the 338th Field Artillery; he was Commander of the 29th Field Artillery; he was stationed at Camp Dodge, Ft. Sill, Ft. Sam Houston, Schofield Barracks, Army War College, Ft. Leavenworth, Harvard College (ROTC) and West Point.

While an undergraduate at Harvard he was asked by President Roosevelt to help strengthen the West Point Team. Charles responded by coaching the West Point Team during the summers of his last two years at Harvard. When he went to West Point as a Cadet, he did so with the understanding that he would be expected to play for one year only. He played during the 1901 season when, incidentally, they lost to Harvard 6 to 0.

The Corps of West Point prevailed upon him to play again in 1902, which he did. The remaining two years he coached the team. In 1907 and 1908 after his resignation from the Army he coached the backfield at Harvard under Percy Haughton. When he returned to the Army in 1913, Charles coached the Army team every summer and fall (except during the War) until 1922 when he asked to be relieved to concentrate on his work in the Department of Tactics at the Academy.

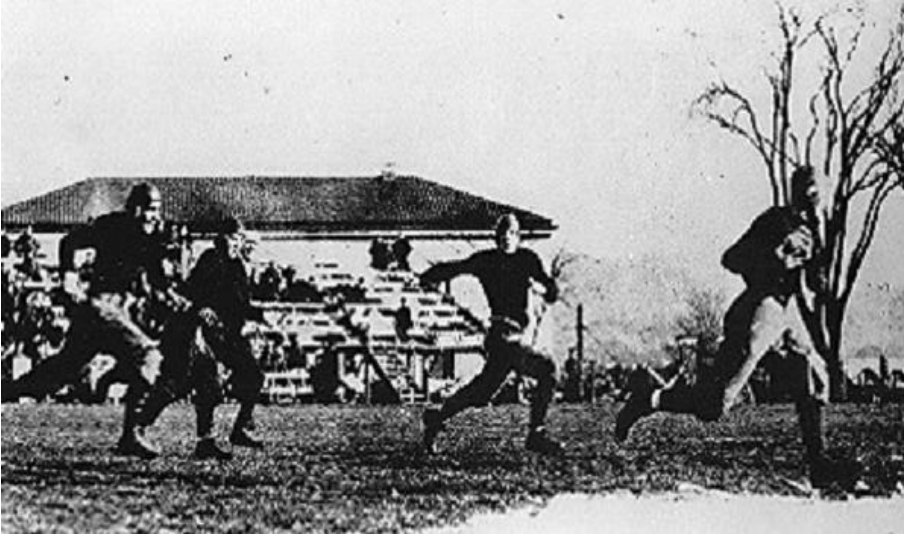
At West Point he coached many of the great men of the 20th Century, Eisenhower, Bradley, Stillwell, Ridgeway, Van Fleet, Patton and others. In 1925 he was again assigned to the Military Department at Harvard and coached the backfield that year for Coach Robert Fisher. He was elected to the National Football Hall of Fame on November 3, 1951, as an All American Back for the years 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901 and 1902, the only football player ever to be thus honored five times.

In 1921 he founded the American College Football Coaches Association which honored his memory in its 1941 Annual Meeting Report in these words

:

"Colonel Charles Dudley Daly, the first and only player ever honored All-American five times, is listed among the all-time football greats of both Harvard and Army."

On November 3, 1963, West Point honored his memory by naming the varsity practice field in his name.



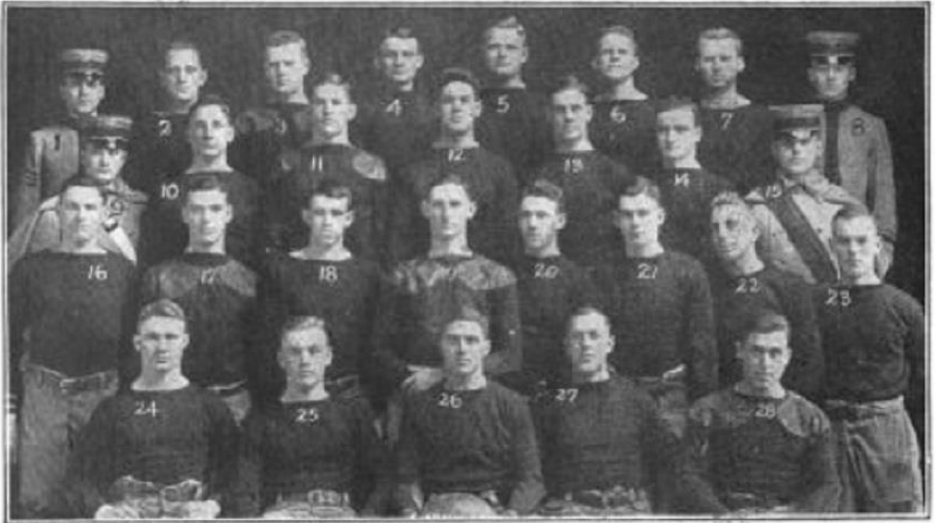
1913 ND v Army

## **An Army perspective coming up**

**1914 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Charles Daly**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1914 college football season. It was their twenty-fifth season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Charles Dudley Daly. Daly was in his second season of stint one of two stints of four seasons each as head coach of the Cadets. As an independent football entity, the team had a record of 9-0-0. It was a phenomenal season. It was Army's best season to date.

The 1914 Army Team is shown on the next page:



1, Pendleton, Mgr.; 2, Hess; 3, O'Hare; 4, Mencham; 5, Herrick; 6, Timberlake; 7, Tolly; 8, Crane, Asst. Mgr.; 9, Merrillat; 10, Larkin; 11, McEwan; 12, Weyand; 13, Butler; 14, Kelly; 15, Woodruff; 16, Britton; 17, Van Fleet; 18, Bradley; 19, Parker; 20, Ford; 21, Neyland; 22, Goodman; 23, Harmon; 24, Hodgson; 25, Coffin; 26, Prichard, Capt.; 27, Benedict; 28, Hobbs.

UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY, WEST POINT, N. Y.

White, Photo.

The Cadets compiled a 9-0-0 record. They were undefeated and untied. They shut out six of their nine opponents and outscored all opponents by a combined total of 219 to 20 – an average of 24.3 points scored and 2.2 points allowed. In the annual Army–Navy Game, the Cadets shut-out the Midshipmen 20 to 0.

The Cadets also defeated Notre Dame by a 20 to 7 score. The 1914 Army team was recognized as the 1914 national champion by the Helms Athletic Foundation, the Houlgate System, and the National Championship Foundation, and a co-national champion by Parke H. Davis.

Three Army players were recognized as first-team players on the 1914 College Football All-America Team: end Louis A. Merrillat; center John McEwan; and quarterback Vernon Prichard. Tackle Alex Weyand was selected as a third-team All-American by Walter Camp. Four players from the 1914 team were later inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame: McEwan; Weyand; Robert Neyland (later coach at Tennessee); and Elmer Oliphant.



Other than the Army-Navy Game, which was played at Franklin Field in Philadelphia, all Army games were played at The Plain on the Campus of the US Military Academy in West Point, NY.

The Cadets opened the season against Stevens Tech at home as usual and came away with a blowout shutout W (49-0) In the second game of the season, on Oct 11, the Cadets shut out Rutgers (State University of NJ) by a score of W (13-0). The next game on Oct 18, against Colgate was a close match in which the Cadets pulled away and won handily W (21-7) On Oct 24, the Cadets played Holy Cross and did not permit a point in a fine shutout W (14-0).

Next up for a smashing was Villanova, on Oct 31—a fine team but not up to the new-found power of Army Football W (41-0). On Nov 7, the Cadets played the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame and this time, Army Was ready for Jesse Harper's Irish. Army dominated a close game and won the final score W (20-7) against what was then one of the finest football programs in the nation. f

Then on Nov 14, Maine came to play in the plain and were pushed back up country by the score of W (28-0). On Nov 21, Springfield (MA) played tough football but lost anyway to the Cadets W (13-6). The Army-Navy Game was back at Franklin Field in 1914 and Army shut-out Navy W (20-0). Army had a phenomenal 9-0-0 season, which brought many honors to the Daly coached Army Cadets. They simply had a great year.

### **1916 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Charles Daly**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1916 college football season. It was their twenty-seventh season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Charles Dudley Daly. Daly was in his fourth season of stint one of two stints of four seasons each as head coach of the Cadets. As an independent football entity, the team had a record of 9-0-0. Army had a great season.

They shut out three of their nine opponents and outscored all opponents by a combined total of 235 to 36. In the annual Army–Navy Game, the Cadets defeated the Midshipmen 15 to 7. The Cadets also defeated Notre Dame by a score of 30 to 10 and Villanova by a 69 to 7 score. The 1916 Army team was selected

retroactively as the 1916 national champion by Parke H. Davis. Army itself has chosen not to claim this as a National Championship but it sure in fact was

## The Army Navy Game 1916 Championship

Fullback Elmer Oliphant from the 1916 Army team was a consensus first-team All-American and was later inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1955. Center John McEwan received second-team honors from Walter Camp, the United Press, the International News Service, and Walter Eckersall.

Other than the Army-Navy Game, which was played at the Polo Grounds in New York, all Army games were played at The Plain on the Campus of the US Military Academy in West Point, NY.

The Cadets opened the season on Sept 30, with a low scoring shutout W (3-0) against Lebanon Valley at home on the Campus of West Point in NY. In the second game of the season, on Oct 7, the Cadets shut defeated Washington & Lee W (14-7). The next game on Oct 14, against Holy Cross was shutout W (17-0).



Army Navy National Championship Game 1916

Army got its moxie back and began to wallop teams on the way to its undefeated and untied 1916 season. On Oct 21, the Cadets thumped

Trinity in a shutout W (53-0). The following week on Oct 28, the Cadets routed Villanova W (69-7). The following week on Nov 4, the Cadets overpowered Notre Dame W 30-10). On Nov 11, the Cadets defeated Maine W (17-3).

**From the archives: ARMY CONQUERS NAVY, 15-7, AMID CHEERS OF 45,000;**

**Oliphant the Chief Figure in West Point's Victory at the Polo Grounds**, makes a run of 83 yards. Then, Goodstein scores for the losers by turning a blocked kick into a touchdown. There were quite a few notables in the gay throng. But, President Wilson was Absent. Yet, the crowd included men Prominent in All Walks of Life.

– New York Times – Nov 26, 1916

More than 45,000 cheering spectators saw the Army football team defeat the Navy by a score of 15 to 7 at the Polo Grounds yesterday. Famous for its gala crowds, the annual contest never attracted a more brilliant assemblage, while spectacular playing, especially by Oliphant and Vidal, the Army stars, transformed the banks of the huge eclipse of the Brush stadium into a mass of shouting, flag-waving humanity. **Here is a great link to the original NY Times article:** <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9D04E1DA1F3FE233A25755C2A9679D946796D6CF>



## 1916 Player Highlights Elmer Oliphant, B



Elmer Quillen "Catchy" or "Ollie" Oliphant was born on July 9, 1892. He was a multi-talented athlete, starring in football, basketball, [track](#) player. He also served as a coach. He is one of the great scorers in [college football](#) history, credited with a total of 435 points in his college career – 135 at Purdue and 300 at Army. Oliphant also went on to play in the [National Football League](#) (NFL). The Elmer Oliphant story – the whole story – is fascinating to read. There was one heck of an athlete. I'd love to have the room to print it all.

Born in Bloomfield, Indiana to Marion Elsworth Oliphant and Alice V. Quillen Oliphant in 1892, he finished High School after three years at Washington, Indiana at the Linton High School after a transfer in his junior year.

He was nicknamed Catchy because he excelled as a catcher, outfielder and power hitter in baseball. It could also be because the dictionary has one meaning of catchy as “having the power to catch the attention.” Supposedly one time he was playing center field for the Linton team, called a time-out, hurried to the nearby cinder track and won the 100-yard dash. Then, he returned to his position in center field and the game continued. The Indiana Football Hall of Fame states that he was All-State End while at Linton High School. He scored a school record of 60 points as Linton defeated rival Sullivan by a whopping 128–0 score.

He worked at Purdue University-- waiting tables, carrying laundry, stoking furnaces, and selling shoes to earn his way as a student. He earned 7 official varsity letters in football, basketball, baseball and track. He also swam and wrestled.

An end on the football team as a freshman, he was a starting halfback for his final three seasons at the school and distinguished himself as a runner and kicker. In one game, he single-handedly beat Wisconsin by kicking a game winning field goal with a broken ankle to give the Boilermakers a 3–0 victory and then fainted in pain.

Only 5'7" and 174 pounds, he belied his build with outstanding speed and power. In football, he helped turn Purdue's football into a winning program. He graduated with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. Perhaps to extend his time in football, he later accepted

an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point upon his Purdue graduation.

At West Point, he was the first cadet athlete to letter in four major sports and it required a special act of the Athletic Council to design a suitable varsity letter containing a gold star and three stripes for him. Back at the turn of the 20th century, the criteria to receive a letter was very strict. He also monogrammed in hockey, boxing, and swimming which meant that he wasn't able to participate fully in those sports but was recognized. At that, he is listed as a Champion Boxer in the Corps of Cadets.

He still holds records that have never been broken. During his college career, he scored 135 points at Purdue and 289 points at West Point and is identified as one of the greatest scorers in collegiate history. He established the World Record in 220-yard low hurdles on grass.

While at West Point he won the Army Athletic Association Trophy. (He won in 1918. 2004 was the 100th year the trophy was given.)

He has been inducted into several Halls of Fame. The most recent induction occurred on October 6, 2004. He was in the inaugural group of sixteen inducted into the Army Sports Hall of Fame at West Point.

On graduation day, June 12, 1918, he married Barbara "Bobbie" Benedict. World War I changed priorities at West Point, and they reverted to purely military instruction during wartime. Among his duties, he served in the U.S. Cavalry for one year at Fort Sill in Oklahoma. While in military service at West Point in 1919, he invented the intramural sports system as we know it today. The idea was copied by the Naval Academy and was soon used in colleges and universities across the country. He was appointed track instructor at West Point by Douglas MacArthur, who was the superintendent after returning from World War I.

Although he is virtually forgotten today, he was known to every sports fan in the first quarter of the 20th century. There is a 1955 Topps All-American collectible sports card with his picture, and a Street and Smith comic book featured him in 1943 with a section

“The Thrilling Story of West Point’s Most Famous Athlete Four Letter Man, Ollie Oliphant.”

Oliphant played for the Rochester Jeffersons in 1920 and the Buffalo All-Americans in 1921. They were some of the first members of what is now the NFL (National Football League). In 1921, Oliphant led the league in points (47), FGs (5) and PATs (26) and threw 7 touchdowns for the Buffalo All-Americans. After the 1921 season, Oliphant retired from active participation in sports.

## Syracuse 1900-1920

Checking out other teams on our list, we see that Syracuse after 1900 was not kicking butt but they were doing OK.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Conf</u>
1900			
1900	Edwin Swetland	7-2-1	Ind
1901	Edwin Swetland	7-1-0	Ind
1902	Edwin Swetland	6-2-1	Ind
1903	Ancil D. Brown	5-4-0	Ind
1904	Charles P. Hutchins	6-3-0	Ind
1905	Charles P. Hutchins	8-3-0	Ind
1906	Frank "Buck" O'Neill	6-3-0	Ind
1907	Frank "Buck" O'Neill	5-3-1	Ind
1908	Howard Jones	6-3-1	Ind
1909	Tad Jones	4-5-1	Ind
1910	Tad Jones	5-4-1	Ind
1911	C. Def. Cummings	5-3-2	Ind
1912	C. Def. Cummings	4-5-0	Ind
1913	Frank "Buck" O'Neill	6-4-0	Ind
1914	Frank "Buck" O'Neill	5-3-2	Ind
1915	Frank "Buck" O'Neill	9-1-2	Ind
1916	William Hollenback	5-4-0	Ind
1917	Frank "Buck" O'Neill	8-1-1	Ind
1918	Frank "Buck" O'Neill	5-1-1	Ind
1919	Frank "Buck" O'Neill	8-3-3	Ind

In 1900, for example, Edwin Sweetland, a Cornell grad, was hired as head football coach and to start the crew program. He later coached against SU as the head coach at Colgate. He led the team to a 7-2-1 record. Still successful in 1901, the Orange finished the season with a 7-1 record, losing one game to Lafayette, 5-0. In 1902, the Orangemen shutout rival Colgate 23-0 for a 6-2-1 season with other

big wins against the Onondaga Indians, Amherst and Williams.

Frank “Buck O’Neill was the best coach of this era for the Orangemen and he got two grabs at the Syracuse coaching apple during from 1913 to 1915 and from 1917 to 1919. His teams did well and in 1915 he had a 9-1-2 record. Not too shabby.

## Clemson 1900-1920

Heisman Coach #4

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Record</u>
1896	Walter M. Riggs	2-1-0	SIAA	0-0-0
1897	Wm. M. Williams	2-2-0	SIAA	0-1-0
1898	John Penton	3-1-0	SIAA	1-1-0
1899	Walter M. Riggs	4-2-0	SIAA	1-2-0
1900	John Heisman	6-0-0	SIAA	3-0-0
1901	John Heisman	3-1-1	SIAA	1-0-1
1902	John Heisman	5-2-1	SIAA	5-0-0
1903	John Heisman	6-1-1	SIAA	2-0-1
1904	Shack Shealy	3-3-1	SIAA	3-2-1
1905	Eddie Cochems	3-2-1	SIAA	3-2-1
1906	Bob Williams	3-3-1	SIAA	4-0-1
1907	Frank Shaughnessy	4-4-0	SIAA	1-3-0
1908	Stein Stone	1-6-0	SIAA	0-4-0
1909	Bob Williams	6-3-0	SIAA	1-2-0
1910	Frank Dobson	4-3-1	SIAA	2-3-1
1911	Frank Dobson	3-5-0	SIAA	3-5-0
1912	Frank Dobson	4-4-0	SIAA	3-3-0
1913	Bob Williams	4-4-0	SIAA	2-4-0
1914	Bob Williams	5-3-1	SIAA	2-2-0
1915	Bob Williams	2-4-2	SIAA	2-2-0
1916	Wayne Hart	3-6-0	SIAA	2-4-0
1917	Edward Donahue	6-2-0	SIAA	4-1-0
1918	Edward Donahue	5-2-0	SIAA	3-1-0
1919	Edward Donahue	6-2-2	SIAA	2-2-2
1920	Edward Donahue	4-6-1	SIAA	2-6-0





1900 Clemson Football Team Picture Coach John Heisman

John Heisman is one of the most well-known football figures of all time. There would be no reason for me to research his life in full in order to provide you what is already written about this great man and great coach.

Some team records show that it took a while to get established. When Clemson was able to hire the best coach in the nation in 1900, it meant good seasons ahead. Of course, Clemson had not fared out too poorly in its first four years with just six losses to go along with their eleven wins in four years. Too bad John Heisman could not give Clemson more time. He had twenty wins in four years, an undefeated season and just four losses. He showed the Tigers how to win.

### Alabama coaches shown below were doing OK

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
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

Always a team to fear, Alabama after the turn of the century was not engendering fear into the hearts of their opponents. See above—no undefeated seasons. Xen Scott had great years in 1919 and 1920 but did not win the national championship/

## Louisiana State University (LSU)

LSU's 9 coaches shown below were doing OK in W/L 1900-1917

<u>Years</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>T</u>		<u>%</u>
1904–1906	7	Dan A. Killian	16	8	6	2	0.563
1907–1908	8	Edgar Wingard	20	17	3	0	0.85
1909	9	Joe Pritchard	5	4	4	0	0.8
1909–1910	10	John W Mayhew	9	3	6	0	0.333
1911–1913	11	James Dwyer	25	16	7	2	0.68
1914–1916	12	E. MacDonnell	22	14	7	1	0.659
1916, 1919, 1922	13	Irving Pray	20	11	9	0	0.55
1916	14	Dana X. Bible	3	1	0	2	0.667
1917	15	Wayne Sutton	8	3	5	0	0.375

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Recd</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Results</u>
1900	Edmond Chavanne	2–2	0–1	T–12 <sup>th</sup>
1901	W. S. Borland	5–1	2–1	T–4 <sup>th</sup>
1902	W. S. Boreland	6–1	4–1	T–1 <sup>st</sup>

## 162 Great Moments in Notre Dame Football

1903	W. S. Boreland	4-5	0-4	18 <sup>th</sup>	
1904	Dan A. Killian	3-4	1-2	11 <sup>th</sup>	
1905	Dan A. Killian	3-0	2-0	3 <sup>rd</sup>	
1906	Dan A. Killian	2-2-2	0-2-1	12 <sup>th</sup>	
1907	Edgar Wingard	7-3	2-1	7 <sup>th</sup>	W Bacardi
1908	Edgar Wingard	10-0	2-0	T-1 <sup>st</sup>	
1909	J Pritchard/J Mayhew	6-2	3-1	T-2 <sup>nd</sup>	
1910	John W. Mayhew 1-5	0-3	10 <sup>th</sup>		
1911	James Dwyer	6-3	1-1	5 <sup>th</sup>	
1912	James Dwyer	4-3	1-3	13 <sup>th</sup>	
1913	James Dwyer	6-1-2	1-1-1	8 <sup>th</sup>	
1914	E. T. MacDonnell	4-4-1	1-2-1	12 <sup>th</sup>	
1915	E. T. MacDonnell	6-2	3-1	3 <sup>rd</sup>	
1916	E. T. MacDonnell/ 13 Irving Pray/ 14 Dana X. Bible	7-1-2	2-1-1	7 <sup>th</sup>	
1917	Wayne Sutton	3-5	1-3	9 <sup>th</sup>	
1918	No team (World War I)				
1919	Irving Pray	6-2	2-2	T-12 <sup>th</sup>	
1920	Branch Bocock	5-3-1	0-3	T-15 <sup>th</sup>	
1921	Branch Bocock	6-1-1	2-1-1	9 <sup>th</sup>	

**In 1908 under coach Edgar Wingard, LSU was 10-0 and the team won the SIAA Championship.**

It was the first great team in LSU football history, the Tigers posted a perfect 10-0 record in 1908 and beat their opponents by an average score of 44.3-1.1 with eight shutouts. The numbers themselves are impressive, and LSU beat current rivals Texas A&M, Auburn, Mississippi State (then known as Mississippi A&M) and Arkansas, as well as Louisiana Tech and Baylor. But the Tigers also feasted on the New Orleans Gym Club, Jackson-Barracks New Orleans and Southwestern Tennessee (now known as Union University). The National Championship Foundation has retroactively awarded the 1908 LSU squad with a co-national championship, but the school does not officially recognize it. I think they should. How about you?

## **The Naval Academy Football team How about Navy from 1900?**

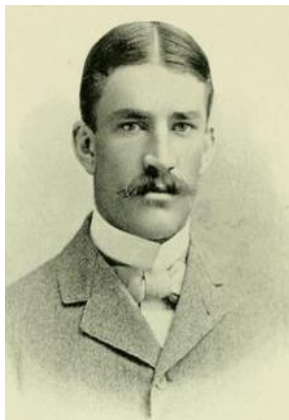
1900	Garrett Cochran	6-3	
1901	Doc Hillebrand	6-4-1	
1902	Doc Hillebrand	2-7-1	
1903	Burr Chamberlain	4-7-1	
1904	Paul Dashiell	7-2-1	
1905	Paul Dashiell	10-1-1	
1906	Paul Dashiell	8-2-2	
1907	Joe Reeves	9-2-1	

1908	Frank Berrien	9–2–1
1909	Frank Berrien	4–3–1
1910	Frank Berrien	8–0–1
1911	Doug Howard	6–0–3
1912	Doug Howard	6–3
1913	Doug Howard	7–1–1
1914	Doug Howard	6–3
1915	Jonas Ingram	3–5–1
1916	Jonas Ingram	6–3–1
1917	Gil Dobie	7–1
1918	Gil Dobie	4–1
1919	Gil Dobie	6–1

#### 1904 Navy Midshipmen Coach Paul Dashiell

Paul Dashiell deserves to be on every Navy football fan’s list of “the great ones.” Of course he had to be hired first. Paul Dashiell became that man.

#### 1910 Navy Midshipmen Coach Frank Berrien



Navy had a great team in 1910 with Frank Berrien as coach. The team also undefeated and unscored upon (the lone tie was a 0–0 game).

<<< As you know, from 1897 through 1899, Bill Armstrong guided the Mids to 20 wins against only five losses. However, over the next four seasons under three different coaches, the Midshipmen did not do as well, slipping to a collective record of 18-21-3. As the 1904 season began, someone needed to reset – and firmly establish – expectations for the program.

With Dashiell at the helm from 1904 on, Navy rebounded with a 7-2-1 record. The Midshipmen allowed only 3.8 points per game, recording six shutouts along the way. Navy allowed nine points in three games, and its “worst” defensive performance of the whole season came in the finale against Army. Still the Middies conceded just 11 whole points... but since Navy got shut out, that was more than enough that year for Army to prevail and of course, gloat. Nevertheless, it did not take much time for Dashiell to have restored

something, which was missing the previous four seasons. Heading into 1905, Navy had a right to think it could do even better. Dashiell made sure of that.

That's exactly what Navy did. They improved and reached a milestone that seemed impossible at the end of 1903.

Reading along and knowing how poorly the teams executed the prior four years, and then reading about 2004, if you thought Navy's defense was outstanding in 1904 with that 3.8-points-allowed-per-game average, the Midshipmen were legitimately (and more to the point, precisely) twice as good in 1905. Dashiell's defense conceded only 1.9 points per game, never allowing more than six points in a game and recording eight shutouts.

There was just one little issue or shall we say, one wonder of the 1905 season, in that Navy did not turn in a 12-0 record. Nevertheless, the double-digit-win season that Michigan and Yost turned into an ordinary event in the first decade of the 20th century became Navy's proud possession in 1905. The Midshipmen stormed to a 10-1-1 record. The Midshipmen had just one defeat – that being a 6-5 loss to Swarthmore on October 28.

Though the Mids found that game and its outcome hard to accept, they dusted off their cleats and came right back. The team and Dashiell need to take credit for their demeanor. Everyone in the locker room turned the page. Navy fought past Penn State, 11-5, the next week after the setback, and by getting through that game, the team's confidence was fully restored.

The Midshipmen won their next three games by a composite score of 68-6 to reach the 10-win mark. The team could not beat Army in the finale, but the Midshipmen did not lose, either. It was a 6-6 tie. No, it was not everything the Navy wanted, but Army was forced to acknowledge the considerable improvements its opponent had made in the intervening year between meetings. That's for sure.

With 10 wins in a season, Navy as expected, became a target in the 1906 season. Dashiell came back for what would be his final season – both in Annapolis and as a college head coach. Bearing that bulls-eye was not supposed to be easy, and it wasn't.

Yet, again, all things considered, Navy handled the season with great resilience and determination. The Midshipmen did lose twice, but even then, their defense could not have been better, allowing only three points in each defeat. (The scores of both losses were 5-0, so obviously, the defense did not allow either safety against Princeton or Penn State.)

Shall we say, improbably but genuinely, Navy's defense managed to become still better in 1906. The offense – which had averaged over 20 points in 1905 – regressed and averaged under 13 points per game. The Middies endured two scoreless ties in 1906, and the offense labored through six games in which it did not score a touchdown. The Mids scored fewer than six points in each of those six contests.

Given that record of offensive futility, a rational person would have expected a crash-and-burn season, a “come down to earth” narrative after the soaring successes of 1905. Yet, Navy went 8-2-2 in 1906. The defense, as mentioned above, improved upon an already remarkable standard of excellence.

Yes, the Navy defense did not allow a single touchdown in that entire 1906 season. Two field goals were all the defense allowed, since the rest of the scoring done by opponents consisted of four safeties given up by the offense unit. Six points—only six points were allowed by the defense. Eight were permitted by the offense or special teams. That's how six games with virtually no offensive production can be overcome.

The lasting point of satisfaction for Dashiell and Midshipmen everywhere is that when the time came to face Army for a third time, Navy got it right. The stadium was almost not large enough to contain all of the Navy smiles. After losing in 1904 and tying in 1905, Dashiell wanted a win. Navy fans wanted a win and both Dashiell and the fans deserved a win.

## **Penn State**

Penn State had teams with great records during this period but there were no undisputed championships during this period as shown below but they were close and credited with some. For example. There is something about PSU over the years as you will see as the team was often snubbed by national champion selectors.

1900	Pop Golden	4-6-1
1901	Pop Golden	5-3
1902	Pop Golden	7-3
1903	Daniel A. Reed	5-3
1904	Tom Fennell	6-4
1905	Tom Fennell	5-3
1906	Tom Fennell	8-1-1
1907	Tom Fennell	6-4
1908	Tom Fennell	5-5
1909	Bill Hollenback	5-0-2
1910	Jack Hollenback	5-2-1
1911	Bill Hollenback	8-0-1
1912	Bill Hollenback	8-0
1913	Bill Hollenback	2-6
1914	Bill Hollenback	5-3-1
1915	Dick Harlow	7-2
1916	Dick Harlow	8-2
1917	Dick Harlow	5-4
1918	Hugo Bezdek	1-2-1
1919	Hugo Bezdek	7-1
1920	Hugo Bezdek	7-0-2

**PSU had unclaimed titles in the years 1911, and 1912.**

## Chapter 9 ND Coach Knute Rockne 1918-1930

### Knute Rockne Coach # 14

Knute Rockne is a legendary coach at Notre Dame. His time at South Bend Indiana coincides with the time period that we are studying. During Rockne's tenure, the Rock brought in three Consensus National Championships 1924, 1929, 1930; and five undefeated and untied seasons. His worst season was in 1928 when the Irish finished at 5-4—still a positive record. He followed up the 1918 season with two undefeated and untied seasons and two national championships in 1929 & 1930.

1918	Knute Rockne	3-1-2
1919	Knute Rockne	9-0
1920	Knute Rockne	9-0
1921	Knute Rockne	10-1
1922	Knute Rockne	8-1-1
1923	Knute Rockne	9-1
1924	Knute Rockne	10-0
1925	Knute Rockne	7-2-1
1926	Knute Rockne	9-1
1927	Knute Rockne	7-1-1
1928	Knute Rockne	5-4
1929	Knute Rockne	9-0
1930	Knute Rockne	10-0



Knute "Rock" Rockne Famed Notre Dame Coach



Who could ever achieve such a record, anywhere—even High School?

This inserted piece introduces Knute Rockne to the reader. It was written by Dan Schofield, an analyst for Bleacher Report and the whole article can be found at [Http://bleacherreport.com/articles](http://bleacherreport.com/articles)

## **The True Story of Knute Rockne, College Football's Most Renowned Coach**

By Dan Scofield, Analyst  
Oct 2, 2009

This piece is a dedication to one of the founding fathers of college football, Knute Rockne. The University dedicated a handsome bronze statue to their legendary coach on Friday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 at Notre Dame Stadium.

### **1918 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne**

Jesse Harper scheduled the 1918 games after he had hired Notre Dame's new coach Knute Rockne. Rockne's first team won its first game against Case in Cleveland Ohio W (26-6). It won its second game against Wabash in Crafordsville, Indiana W (67-7). In the third game against Great Lakes Navy, ND managed a tie T 7-7).

Following this game Rockne suffered his first loss as coach of Notre Dame, L (7-13) against Michigan Agricultural. The team bounced back for its third win against Purdue in West Lafayette, IN W (26-6), Coach Rockne's first team finished the 1918 season with a tie against Nebraska in Nebraska Field, Lincoln, Nebraska. The 1918 record was 3-1-2. The Knute Rockne legacy was only beginning to begin.



Coach Rockne and ND Players

### 1919 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne

The 1919 Notre Dame Fighting was coached by Knute Rockne. It was his second year at the helm of Notre Dame. The team was recognized retroactively as a co-national champion by the National Championship Foundation and Parke H. Davis. It helps to know that there were no championships awarded at the time of the seasons for years after college football got its start.

When the associations decided that it was time to pick national champions, they also decided to go back and pick some based on their past records. Parke Hill Davis (July 16, 1871 – June 5, 1934) was the person selected to determine who the champions were, post facto. Davis had been an American football player; a coach and he was the historian who got the job to retroactively name the national championship teams in American college football from the 1869 through the 1932 seasons. In his role, also named co-national champions at the conclusion of the 1933 season. Davis' selections are included in the NCAA's official football record books, as the only

championship teams chosen on the basis of research and so they are as official as there is.

Rockne's (9 wins, 0 losses) first undefeated and untied team won its first 1919 game W (14-0) against Kalamazoo at home followed by another home win against Mount Union (60-7). The team then went off to Nebraska and came back with a W (14-9) win. The Fighting Irish then played Western State at home W (53-0) and followed this up with a road trip to Indiana W (16-3). Army was next at West Point W (12-9) followed by Michigan Agricultural at home W (13-0). From there, the Irish went to Indiana to play Purdue W (33-13) and then to Sioux City IA to play Morningside W (14-6) to finish the season undefeated and untied.

### **1920 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne**

The 1920 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team with Knute Rockne at the helm brought Notre Dame its second undefeated and untied season (9 wins, 0 losses) in a row. The team again was selected retroactively as the 1920 national champion by the Billingsley Report and as a co-national champion by Parke H. Davis. Knute Rockne sure knew how to coach a football team.

Rockne's (9 wins, 0 losses) second undefeated and untied team won its first 1920 game W (39-0) against Kalamazoo at home followed by another home win against Western State W (42-0). The team then went off to Nebraska and came back with a hard-fought W (16-7) win.

The Fighting Irish then played Valparaiso at home W (28-3) and followed this up with a road trip to West Point to play Army W (27-17) Purdue was next at home W (28-0) followed by Indiana in Indianapolis W (13-10) From this, Irish went to Evanston, Illinois to play Northwestern W (33-7). Notre Dame then travelled to East Lansing Michigan to play rival Michigan Agricultural W (25-0) to finish another season undefeated and untied.

The George Gipp story in Notre Dame history goes hand in hand with the Knute Rockne story. Therefore, the Gipp / Rockne story deserves its own spot as we plow through Knute Rockne's thirteen seasons as ND coach. Gipp was born on my wife's birthday, which is also my dad's birthday and my niece Mary Delucia's birthday.

The Kelly's always celebrate February 18<sup>th</sup>'s birthdays. George Gipp was born February 18, 1895. He died tragically on December 14, 1920 after his last season with Notre Dame's 1920 championship football team. Since this was the last season that Gipp played before his death, we tell his story right here.



George Gipp

Gipp was as good as it gets, and he was the first Notre Dame player ever to be declared a Walter Camp All-American. He is just Notre Dame's second consensus All-American (of 79). Gus Dorais, class of '14 the QB on the throwing end of Rockne's receptions, was the first. Gipp could play many different positions, but he was used most notably a halfback, quarterback, and punter.

Today, he is considered one of the most versatile athletes to play the game of football. For Notre Dame fans that do not know all of Notre Dame's storied history, who have not seen the movie, Knute Rockne

is thought of as the Gipper. Gipp in fact was the subject of Rockne's famous "Win just one for the Gipper" speech. He died at the young age of 25 of a streptococcal throat infection, days after leading Notre Dame to a win over Northwestern in his senior season. May he rest in peace.

Gipp was simply a good athlete, entering Notre Dame to play baseball for the Fighting Irish. He was literally spotted by Coach Rockne during an Irish practice session and the Coach recruited him for the football team. Gipp had never played organized football. The story goes a punt landed out of bounds and a passer-by (Gipp) kicked the ball back onto the field so hard, so high, and so long that Rockne inquired "who was that that did that?"

In his three years of play with Notre Dame under Knute Rockne, Gipp was the leading Irish rusher and passer (1918, 1919 and 1920). His career mark of 2,341 rushing yards lasted for more than 50 years until Jerome Heavens broke it in 1978. Gipp's baseball style athleticism made him an ideal receiver for the forward pass.

He not only could he catch, he could throw. He threw for 1,789 yards and he scored 21 career touchdowns. He averaged 38 yards a punt. He snagged five interceptions. And he even returned punts with an average of 14 yards per punt return and 22 yards per kick return. Gipp still holds the ND record for average yards per rush for a season (8.1), career average yards per play of total offense (9.37), and career average yards per game of total offense (128.4). What a guy!

In 2002, looking back at the best of the best in football, the NCAA published "NCAA Football's Finest," Gipp was a top entry on the list.

Two weeks after being elected Notre Dame's first All-American by Walter Camp and second consensus All-American overall, George Gipp died of a disease that is totally curable today. As medicine was not as perfected in the US as it is today for diseases such as Staph, the speculation is that after the season Gipp contracted strep throat and pneumonia while giving punting lessons. Since antibiotics were not available in the 1920s, treatment options for such infections were limited and they could be fatal even to young, healthy individuals. What a shame.

Thank God that this will never happen again. I am sure that George Gipp would offer his thanks, and I bet Ronald Reagan, who played George Gipp in the memorable Rockne movie would offer his thanks to God for giving the human race the ability to combat so many one-time fatal diseases.

Next time any of us are in the right place at the right time, let's remember we can always ask anybody to "Win one for the Gipper!" Who could ask for anything more?

## **PSU & SU**

Penn State's coach was Hugo Bezdek who did everything from 1918 to 1929 except go undefeated and untied. 1920 (7-0-2) and 1921 (8-0-2) were his best years.

Syracuse also played great football during this time period but brought in no undefeated and untied games. Their best season was 8-1-0.

## **Alabama 1919**

UA won eight games in a season for the very first time in 1919 and won 9 games in 1920. They were awarded a share of the SIAA title by a number of groups.

### **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).

### **1921 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne**

The 1921 Notre Dame Fighting Irish with fourth year football coach Knute Rockne at the helm, compiled an impressive 10-1 record with the only loss coming by a score of L (7-10) at Iowa. The Irish football team represented the University of Notre Dame during the 1921 college football season. John Mohardt was the team's leading offensive player with 781 rushing yards, 995 passing yards, 12 rushing touchdowns, and nine passing touchdowns.

At the time, Grantland Rice wrote that "Mohardt could throw the ball to within a foot or two of any given space." Rice noted that the 1921 Notre Dame team "was the first team we know of to build its attack around a forward passing game, rather than use a forward passing game as a mere aid to the running game."

Obviously, Coach Rockne's strategy created some fine victories such as home games with Kalamazoo W (56-0), DePauw W (57-10), Nebraska W (7-0), Haskell W (42-7), Michigan Agricultural W (48-0). Notre Dame was victorious in the following away games: Purdue in West Lafayette, IN W (33-0), Indiana in Indianapolis W (28-7), Army at West Point (28-0), Rutgers at the Polo Grounds W (48-0), and Marquette in Milwaukee W (21-7). As you can see, by 1921, Notre Dame was more and more accepted by big name college teams, many of whom would break tradition and come to Notre Dame to play their football games.

#### **1922 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne**

The 1922 Notre Dame Fighting with fifth year football coach Knute Rockne at the helm, compiled another impressive 8-1-1 record with a T (0-0) tie coming on November 11, 1922 at West Point against Army.

The team's only loss came by a score of (6-14) in the final game of the season at Nebraska. Home games were again scarce with wins against Kalamazoo W (56-0), St. Louis W (26-0), DePauw W (34-7), and Indiana W (27-0). Away game wins were at Purdue W (20-0), Georgia Tech W (13-3), at Indiana, Butler W (31-3), in Pittsburgh against Carnegie tech W (19-0).

#### **1923 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne**

The 1923 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team under Coach Knute Rockne had another great season. For the third year in a row, the team suffered just one loss. This time there were no ties. The loss came to Nebraska, a real nemesis to Notre Dame in the Rockne early seasons.

The Cornhuskers won the game L (7-14) at memorial Stadium in Lincoln Nebraska on November 10. Home wins came against Kalamazoo W (74-0), Lombard W (14-0), Georgia Tech W (35-7), Purdue W (34-7), and Butler W (34-7). The Irish away victories included Army W (13-0) at Ebbets Field in Brooklyn, Princeton W (25-2), Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh W (26-0), and St. Louis W (13-0) played in St. Louis Missouri. Rockne's team finished (9-1) for another great year.

#### **1924 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne National Champs**

The 1924 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Knute Rockne. Few Notre Dame fans can claim a lack of knowledge of many of the great moments in Notre Dame history as well as the special people involved in creating those moments.

Among others, the 1924 Notre Dame team had four special people on the team. They were Harry Stuhldreher, Don Miller, Jim Crowley, and Elmer Layden. If their names sound familiar, it is because they played in the backfield on the 1924 Notre Dame undefeated and untied (10-0) season. Together these four great football players are known as the "Four Horsemen." The season topper was the victory over Stanford in the Rose Bowl.

The team was recognized as the consensus 1924 national champion, receiving retroactive national championship honors from the Berryman QPRS system, Billingsley Report, Boand System, Dickinson System, College Football Researchers Association, Helms Athletic Foundation, Houlgate System, National Championship Foundation, Polling System, and Jeff Sagarin.



The 1925 Rose Bowl was Notre Dame's last bowl appearance until the 1969 season. I think it is safe to say that anybody who was anybody in college football slotted the Notre Dame Fighting Irish as the number one football team of 1924 in all of the United States of America.

The season started on October 4, 1924 at home against Lombard at Cartier Field, The Fighting Irish played their home games at Cartier Field, which was the Irish's home venue. Notre Dame prevailed by W (40-0) before 8000 fans. The next home win was Wabash, W (34-0) with 10,000 onlookers.

On November 1, Georgia Tech came to Notre Dame and were beaten W (34-3) in front of 22,000 fans. Nebraska was the next visitor to Cartier Field. The Irish won this match with Nebraska W (34-0), after having struggled with the Cornhuskers year after year in the Rockne era. Over twenty-two enthusiastic fans crowded Cartier field for this home encounter.



Notre Dame's Four Horsemen Hamming it UP!

Notre Dame played six road games in 1924. The first was against Army on October 18 at the Polo Grounds before 55,000 people. The next away game was a week later at Princeton. With 40,000 fans

watching, Notre Dame defeated the Tigers 12-0. On November 8, with 28,425 fans on hand, ND defeated Wisconsin at Madison (38-3). On November 22, Notre Dame traveled to Northwestern and before 45,000 fans, the Fighting Irish defeated the Wildcats (13-6).



Autographed Picture of the Four Horsemen of ND

A week later at Forbes Field in Pittsburgh before 35,000 fans, Notre Dame defeated Carnegie Tech W (40-19). The Fighting Irish topped off its 1924 season in Pasadena California in the 1925 Rose Bowl before 53,000 fans. Notre Dame emerged victorious W (27-10) and finished its season undefeated and untied.

#### 1926 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne

The 1926 (9-1) Notre Dame Football Season under Coach Knute Rockne was fought hard and done very well. There was an unexpected loss to Carnegie Tech in a game played at Pittsburgh. The Irish were held scoreless and Carnegie Tech prevailed (0-19). Let me tell you the whole story about that loss.

There were a number of claimants to the national championship this year. Knute Rockne was not only the greatest coach of all time, he made what was known as, "The greatest coaching blunders in history". Instead of coaching his team against Carnegie Tech, as he thought it was in the bag, he put an assistant in charge. Rockne traveled to Chicago while the Carnegie Tech game was being played.

Rockne went to the Army-Navy game to "write newspaper articles about it, as well as select an All-American football team. Carnegie Tech used this toward their advantage and won the game 19-0. The loss likely cost the Irish a chance for the national title. They would have been undefeated.

Notre Dame Home victories in 1926 included Beloit W (77-0), Penn State W (28-0) Georgia tech W (12-0) Indiana W (26-0), and Drake W (21-0). When Notre Dame was the visiting team, the scores were as follows: Minnesota W (20-7), Northwestern W (6-0), Army W (7-0), and USC in Los Angeles W (13-12)

## 1926 College Football National Championship



### Army-Navy Game (Championship)

It finally was here--November 27th, the Army-Navy game. Navy was would face Army in Chicago for the dedication game of Soldier Field. It was the most highly anticipated game of the year, and of any year, attracting 600,000 ticket requests and an unprecedented 110,000 attendees.

Here is how Navy's teams were doing around the mid 1920's:

1926	Bill Ingram	9-0-1
1927	Bill Ingram	6-3
1928	Bill Ingram	5-3-1
1929	Bill Ingram	6-2-2
1930	Bill Ingram	6-5

Note that Navy also had a banner year along with ND and Army in 1926.

It was the buzz of the pundits and football fans because so many teams seemed to have a shot at the title. Stories about the game's planning, logistics, and ticket dispersal ran non-stop in newspapers across the nation throughout the Fall. Navy had a great season at game 9-0. Army already had a loss to Notre Dame. Which had an 8-0 record at the time. ND was universally considered the nation's mythical national champion to be. But it would not happen.

Rockne was confident the team would win its game without him coaching in the stands. So, while Notre Dame coach Knute Rockne was in Chicago for what the New York Times called football's "greatest pageant," his team was playing in Pittsburgh. They lost a shocking 19-0 upset at Carnegie. Their loss left the door open for Navy to be the National Champion. though as doors go, Army was not the most accessible door for Navy to go through but though the stakes were high, there was a good chance for success.

The pundits called this the greatest game played prior to World War 2, Navy jumped out to a 14-0 start, Army came roaring back to lead 21-14 in the 3rd quarter, Navy tied it up in the 4th, and then Army drove to an easy, short field goal attempt, which they missed. That tie left Navy 9-0-1, but with Notre Dame finishing 9-1, many writers proclaimed Navy to be the mythical national champion (MNC).

As usual, however, retroactive selectors don't see things quite the same way. Here is how the "major selectors" listed in the NCAA Records Book, all selecting long after the fact, see the 1926 college football national championship:

9-0-1 Alabama: Helms (tie),  
National Championship Foundation (tie),  
CFB Researchers 10-0-1 Stanford:Helms (tie),  
National Championship Foundation (tie)  
9-0 Lafayette: Parke Davis

Alabama was 9-0-1. They had gone 10-0 and got a share of the mythical title MNC in 1925, tied 10-0-1 Stanford in the Rose Bowl. It

took a miracle for Alabama to salvage that much, as Stanford outgained them 311 yards to 92, so the College Football Researchers Association's selection of Alabama as a stand-alone champion made little sense here.

Selecting Stanford and Alabama to share the MNC made more sense, since outside of that tie, neither team suffered an upset. Parke Davis, as usual, had his hometown team's back. He's the only one that crowned them, but although 9-0 Lafayette mostly played minor teams, they did defeat 2 powerful opponents, and they are a legitimate contender for the 1926 MNC.

Like Michigan and Pittsburgh in 1925, 9-0-1 Navy and 9-1 Notre Dame may have been upset, but both played much tougher schedules than did the other 3 contenders for the 1926 MNC, and in fact both look much stronger as MNC candidates than Michigan and Pittsburgh did in 1925.

This 1926 MNC race looked very similar to the 1921 race. Lafayette was 9-0 and a contender that year too, and a pair of 1921 contenders also tied each other in the Rose Bowl, and that gave once again 5 contenders to look at. And like 1921, 1926 became a very difficult season for which to select a mythical national champion.

But select they did.

BTW, a great source for the rationale for the 1926 Mythical National Championship is available for your perusal at [https://tiptop25.com/top25\\_1926.html](https://tiptop25.com/top25_1926.html)

### **1927 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne**

Knute Rockne's 1927 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team finished at 7-1-1. Based on the difficult caliber of play, it was looked upon as a fine season. Though at the time right after the season, either Illinois or Georgia was most often selected as the 1927 national champion by the selecting bodies despite the fine year had by Notre Dame. The Fighting Irish do have the distinction of retroactively being named as the national champion by one selector, the Houlgate System.

The one loss came against Army L (0-12). The game was played in Yankee Stadium in the Bronx before 65,678 fans. The tie was a home game against Minnesota, T (7-7). There were two wins at Cartier Field, the ND home stadium. They included Coe W (28-7) and Georgia Tech W (26-7). The rest of the winning games were away. At Detroit W (20-0). At Navy in Baltimore W (19-6). At Indiana W (19-6); At Drake Stadium in Des Moines, IA, Drake W (32-0). ND finished its season with a home game played at Soldier Field in Chicago against USC W (7-6)

### 1928 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne

This 5-4 record in 1928 was clearly Coach Rockne's worst record ever. Nonetheless some history was made when Coach Rockne delivered his famous "Gipper Speech" at halftime. Rockne was trying to salvage something from his worst season as a coach at Notre Dame. To inspire the players, he told them the story of the tragic death of the greatest player ever at ND, George Gipp. Rockne could really motivate the troops. After this speech, Notre Dame looked like a different team.

Here's how that one went down in history: On November 10, 1928, when Rockne's Notre Dame team was tied with Army 0-0 at the end of the half, Coach Rockne entered the locker room and he recounted the words that he heard from George Gipp's lips while on his deathbed in 1920:

"I've got to go, Rock. It's all right. I'm not afraid. Some time, Rock, when the team is up against it, when things are going wrong and the breaks are beating the boys, tell them to go in there with all they've got and win just one for the Gipper. I don't know where I'll be then, Rock. But I'll know about it, and I'll be happy."

Rockne delivered this short speech as only he could. It fully inspired the team, which then went out and outscored Army in the second half and won the game 12-6. The phrase "Win one for the Gipper" was infused into the lexicon of American society and was later used as a political slogan by Ronald Reagan, who in 1940 portrayed Gipp in *Knute Rockne, All American*.

Rockne's Irish stormed onto the field in this famous game after the inspirational talk. However, it was Army that scored first in the second half. But, ND came right back. Jack Chevigny, who got Rockne's halftime message loud and clear then answered with a 1-yard plunge on fourth down, announcing "That's one for the Gipper!" he yelled out as he plowed into the end zone. Or so legend has it.

Notre Dame is a school blessed with many legends and the 1929 Gipper story is just one of them. But, that did not get the game won. After Chevigny's plunge for a TD, ND was still tied 6-6 with Army.

The second legend from this game came when a real speedster from Los Angeles named Johnny O'Brien who had become a track star and held the world record for the 60 yard hurdles got his first chance to play football for Notre Dame. O'Brien was on the football team, but seldom played. He was on the bench for the whole game, until, in an inspired moment, Rockne turned to the fleet Johnny, and with the score 6-6 sent his speedster onto the field. Nice call, there, Rock.

The ball was snapped, the quarterback retreated and threw it in the general vicinity of Johnny O'Brien. Johnny got under the ball caught it and then quite literally, he sprinted as only he could into the end zone for the final 12-6 margin of victory.

Therefore, on this one day that the Irish won one for the Gipper, Johnny O'Brien made that ONE PLAY that ever after labeled him Johnny "One Play" O'Brien.

Notre Dame rebounded the next season (1929) when Rockne was diagnosed with life-threatening phlebitis in his leg, missed some games and at times directed the team from a wheelchair or a cot. The team went 9-0, punctuated by a 13-12 victory over powerful USC, and won the national title. Notre Dame followed up with a 10-0 record and another national championship in 1930 as Rockne regained his health.



Picture to the left: Former Notre Dame Star Jack Chevigny, who scored the winning touchdown in the Irish's famous 1928 "Win one for the Gipper" game against Army, later became Texas' head football coach.

Thousands of generous donors combined their efforts over the years prior to 1929 to make possible the new Notre Dame stadium, begun in 1929 and scheduled to be opened for the 1930 season.

*"Every man who ever wore the Blue and Gold of Notre Dame, every member of the faculty, every member of the coaching staff, every loyal Notre Dame student, every faithful Notre Dame follower has done his share since*

*the founding of the school to make this dream of Coach Rockne's a reality. To the known and unknown heroes who have contributed their bit in bringing about this new house for the warriors of Our Lady we offer our heartfelt thanks, and to these do we dedicate this account of the 1929 team, worthy successors to Notre Dame teams of the past."*



**Cartier Field in the 1920's**

As previously noted, Notre Dame struggled to a 5-4 record in 1928. It was the team's worst mark ever in Knute Rockne's tenure as head



coach. In 1929, Notre Dame came roaring back with more fight than ever. During the 1929 season, the Fighting Irish did not lose a single game and finished up at a perfect 9-0 record. They were uncontested National Champions. The team could not play at Cartier Stadium because the construction of Notre Dame Stadium was set to begin.

Despite playing all nine games away from South Bend. Notre Dame outscored its opponents, 132-38. The Fighting Irish closed the season with a W (7-0) over Army at Yankee Stadium. In 1929, the Irish were one of four teams to end the season undefeated. Notre Dame finished before Dickinson in the rankings to earn its second national championship. This was the first of two consecutive titles.

### **1929 Penn State Football Season Coach Hugo Bezdek National Champs**

During the time Rockne was breaking records, Penn State was getting itself ready for its long illustrious time as a college football champion. The 1929 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Hugo Bezdek in his 12<sup>th</sup> season. His career paralleled Knute Rockne's but he got another position at Penn State as Director of Athletics in 1930 and did not put in a 13<sup>th</sup> year as Rockne had.

Moreover, neither Bezdek nor his successor Bob Higgins had the *schmooze factor* as Rockne had to help his players get free rides to PSU. This would be Bezdek's finest season since the slide and it would be the best that PSU could muster for the next nine years. The PSU scholarship plan for athletes had kicked in and it was surprising to many that this year's 6-3 season was as positive as it was for the Nittany Lions.

### **1929 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne**

Knute Rockne's 1929 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team therefore made up for any losses from the prior year (5-4) and then some. During the season, Coach Knute Rockne fell ill, Tom Lieb, assistant coach in 1929, became in some respects the de facto head coach at times. Lieb helped Rockne's boys throughout the season to achieve their high success.

The team at 9-0, was undefeated and untied and it was selected as the 1929 national champion by Billingsley Report, Board System,

Dickinson System, Dunkel System, College Football Researchers Association, Helms Athletic Foundation, National Championship Foundation, Poling System, and Jeff Sagarin's ELO-Chess system. It was not an undisputed all-consensus championship, but it was just about as good as it gets. It should have been consensus, but various organizations had their favorites.

The season began against Indiana at Indiana W (14-0). The Irish then traveled to Navy at Baltimore Stadium and played before 64,681 in defeating the Midshipmen W (14-7). Notre Dame played all of its home games in 1929 at Soldier Field in Chicago while its stadium was being built.

On October 19, the Fighting Irish prevailed over Wisconsin before 90,000 at Soldier Field W (19-0). Next it was Carnegie tech at Pittsburgh W (7-0) followed by Georgia Tech at Georgia W (26-60). Then, again for a home game, it was off to Soldier Field against Drake before 50,000 fans W (19-7). One week after this dogfight with Drake, the Irish were pushed to the brink again in Chicago.

On November 16, Notre Dame defeated USC in a very close match. As a point of note, in their first three victories against USC from 1926-29, the Trojans had missed all five of their extra points in one-point setbacks. Extra points would again play a role in this game which was played in Chicago's Soldier Field while the stadium was being built.

There was a huge crowd of 112,912 fans who turned out to watch Notre Dame (6-0-0) v USC (6-1-1). Knute Rockne, who had been hospitalized with an infected leg, guided his team from a cot set behind the Notre Dame bench. The score was knotted 6-6 at halftime from both teams having missed their chances at PATs. In the first series of the second half for the Irish, Savoldi took it in from the one-yard line and this time Frank Carideo got the one point extra point after the TD.

This third quarter lead from Savoldi's plunge and Frank Carideo's extra point was all the scoring the Irish would do for the afternoon. The seven-point lead did not last long. On the very next kickoff to the Trojans, USC's Russell Saunders ran the ball back 95 yards for a

touchdown. Again, the saga of the extra point trouble overtook the USC kicker and the point after attempt failed. USC had missed again, and it would cost them the game as Notre Dame held on to win W (13-1).

In every USC game, there seems to be a last minute threat. The Trojans drove 60 yards to the Notre Dame 29 late in the game, but the Irish held fast and claimed the victory to improve to 7-0, just two games away from clinching No. 1. The official attendance of 112,912 was the most fans to watch an Irish game until 2011, when the Michigan Wolverines first home night game attracted 114,804.

Northwestern was next for the Rockne's Irish in Evanston IL W (26-6). The season closed with a Notre Dame victory over Army at Yankee Stadium, W (7-0).

Notre Dame with Rockne at the helm were again the uncontested, undefeated and untied college football champions.

## Respect your Elder

On the und.com web site, Notre Dame posits a question for its readers: "What is the most overshadowed, underrated or overlooked play in Notre Dame Football history?" The writers answer their own question by suggesting that a good answer would be Jack Elder's school-record 100-yard pass interception return for a touchdown in the Nov. 30, 1929, Notre Dame-Army game. It is available to watch on You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svDz5fxyKk>.

In the clip, Notre Dame's Jack Elder intercepts a pass from Army's Chris Cagle and returns it 100 yards for the touchdown and the 7-0 win against Army.

Notre Dame lists a number of factors that make this game special. Without the interception for example, ND may have tied Army and 1929 may not have been a championship season. Ironically this obvious fact is not the most unique factor noted.

Here is what ND had to say:

"Think about all the factors in that contest where so much was at stake:

1. Last game of the season in front of a capacity crowd of 79,408 fans in New York City's esteemed Yankee Stadium.
2. The opponent was the archrival, the Army Cadets, whose coach, Biff Jones, had announced his departure after the 1929 season. Army was determined to send him out with a victory.
3. For the 8-0 Fighting Irish, who had played every game away from campus while Notre Dame Stadium was under construction, it needed to defeat Army to clinch a consensus national title.

The play by Elder tends to be overshadowed because too many other games in Notre Dame-Army lore seem to supersede it:

### **1930 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne National Champs**

The 1930 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached for the 13<sup>th</sup> year by Knute Rockne. No coach prior to this had ever coached so many consecutive years. This would-be Rockne's last season. Everybody loved Knute Rockne and he could have coached at Notre Dame forever. This was another championship season as the Fighting Irish again were undefeated and untied and hailed a championship style 10-0 record. The Irish were again consensus national champions.

Notre Dame was very excited and ecstatic about playing in the 1930 season because the team now had a stadium that looked as good as the revered stadiums of its most staunch foes. This was the first year that the Fighting Irish played its home games in Notre Dame Stadium, which quickly became nicknamed as *The House That Rockne Built!*



**The House That Rock Built**

Notre Dame's championship 1930 season included home wins in its new stadium (The House that Rockne Built!) against SMU W (20-14), Navy W (26-2), Carnegie Tech W (21-6), Indiana W (27-0), and Drake W (19-7).

The Fighting Irish away record was just as impressive with wins against Pittsburgh W (35-19), Penn (Not Penn State) at Franklin Field, Philadelphia W (60-20) before an attendance of 75,657, Northwestern W (14-0), Army at Soldier Field in Chicago before 110,000, W (7-6).

The season ended in a rivalry game at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum v USC W (27-0) before 73,967 fans. The Navy game brought more fans to South Bend than any other game in the stadium's inaugural season (40,593).

Let's look at the very close Army game as again without the victory over Army, Notre Dame could not have won the national championship. We have picked the summary as noted in the Scholastic to portray this game:

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The Notre Dame Scholastic

## KAYDETS SINK IN MUDDY GRID UNDER FIGHTING IRISH ATTACK

*NOTRE DAME 7, Army 6. And Notre Dame still holds the trail of unbeaten football teams. For the third successive year Notre Dame has taken the measure of the Cadets in this annual grid classic. Playing on the rain-soaked sod of Soldier field, Chicago, the Fighting Irish annexed their eighteenth straight victory.*

*It was Notre Dame's game from start to finish but not until the last four minutes were the Rockets able to score. On the same play that gave Notre Dame a victory over Northwestern a week before, Marchmont Schwartz galloped 55 yards behind perfect interference for a touchdown. Frank Carideo place-kicked the extra point that won the game.*

*Army scored on a blocked punt just six plays later. King, left end for the Cadets, leaped in the way of Carideo's punt and fell on the ball behind the Notre Dame goal line. Army sent in Broshous, their drop-kick specialist, to try for the extra point but he was smothered by five Notre Dame linemen before he could get the ball away.*

*The heavy going made anything but straight football impossible and both teams resorted to punting and watching for fumbles. Carideo gave the Rockets a big advantage with his kicks, averaging 42 yards for 14 punts, and on two occasions kicking more than 65 yards.*

*Notre Dame's shock troops started the game and outplayed the Cadets during the first quarter. They penetrated to the Army 10-yard line but lacked the launch to score.*

*In the second quarter the Notre Dame varsity entered the game, and Army substituted a new backfield. All the playing during this quarter was done on the Army half of the field and Notre Dame had the ball on the 12-yard line when the half ended.*

*Twice during the third quarter the Fighting Irish threatened, but they lost the ball once on a fumble and again on downs. Notre Dame recovered Stecker's fumble on the Army 11-yard line as the quarter ended. Schwartz tossed a*

*lateral to Brill which put the ball on the six, Brill hit guard for two yards, and then Schwartz was stopped on the line of scrimmage. Carideo dropped back to try for a field goal but his kick barely left the ground.*

*The ball was brought out to the 20-yard line, and after two exchanges of punts the fireworks started. A clever sequence of plays drew the left side of the Army line out of position. A simple off-tackle smash executed to perfection and Schwartz was off for 55 yards and a touchdown. The sloppy grid prevented any side-stepping, Schwartz depending on speed alone, but that was enough. This run of Schwartz's was only a sample of what might have occurred quite frequently had the footing been good.*

*Army's touchdown was the result of relaxation on the part of the Notre Dame linemen. The Fighting Irish forwards crashed through on the next play so decisively that they atoned in full for their one mistake of the game.*

*The Cadets' heavy line had a distinct advantage because of the condition of the field but they were outplayed during all four quarters. The West Pointers failed to make a first down in the second half, and two of the three that they made during the first half were the results of penalties against Notre Dame. Carlmark and Messinger, the Army ends, caused many Notre Dame plays to go awry, but they were out of the picture completely when Schwartz was galloping towards their goal line. Stecker was the outstanding Army player and is undoubtedly one of the best defensive backs of the year.*

*This was the seventeenth game between Notre Dame and West Point and became Notre Dame's twelfth victory. Army has won only four of the contests and one game ended in a scoreless tie. Army's defeat was the first of the season for them and also the first that they have suffered under the regime of their new coach, Major Sasse.*

Early the next year in March, Knute Rockne received a lucrative offer to help in the production of a Hollywood movie, "The Spirit of Notre Dame." It would not take him away from coaching per se, and it would more than likely be good for the school. Traveling to Los Angeles on March 31, Rockne was killed when his plane crashed in a pasture near Bazaar, Kansas. Knute Rockne was 43.

## Rockne plane crash March 1931

With all the research I accomplished about Jesse Harper and then Knute Rockne, I was actually brought back to this past era as Notre Dame first struggled for its identity in football and then it mastered

the game and became champions of the United States, which by the way was the only country playing American style football.

I studied each of Coach Rockne's seasons and I first noticed that the 1929 season had no home games before I realized that Rockne's dream of a Notre Dame Stadium instead of the rag-tag Cartier Stadium was about to happen. All the while, I knew that the beloved coach had passed away for real in a plane crash in 1931 after the 1930 National Championship season—the one season played at Notre Dame Stadium. The one which we are now presenting. It was the “House that Rock Built!”

## **Brian Kelly's personal note on Rockne tragedy**

"Like watching the Titanic when we all know the plot and how it ends, I knew the plot when I first began this part of my research. I knew that at the end of one of these great Notre Dame Football Seasons, though I enjoyed the research about each one, the great coach—the star of all these seasons—would meet his fate.

"I knew from the start that Knute Rockne, a great man, whom I had begun to know well from the history that I was learning, would one day go down in a field in Kansas. I knew that his era at Notre Dame would end while his legacy continued. It made me sad and weepy just thinking about it. And, finally, the moment I dreaded most so far in writing this book is here. I now have to write about it. Knute Rockne is dead! Long live Knute Rockne!

Knute Rockne had been a very celebrated and highly successful coach at Notre Dame. Many to this day say he was one of a kind, and they are right. After being hired by Jesse Clair Harper, whose expertise clearly was in being able to schedule big games when ND was reasonably unknown, Rockne was able to shine his own light and the light of Notre Dame.

The "Rock" continued Harper's tradition of playing the best teams in the nation and he brought home a number of undefeated and untied seasons as well as more national championships than anybody ever if we can claim all the disputed titles for US, the ND faithful. There was nobody like Knute Rockne and though great ND coaches have

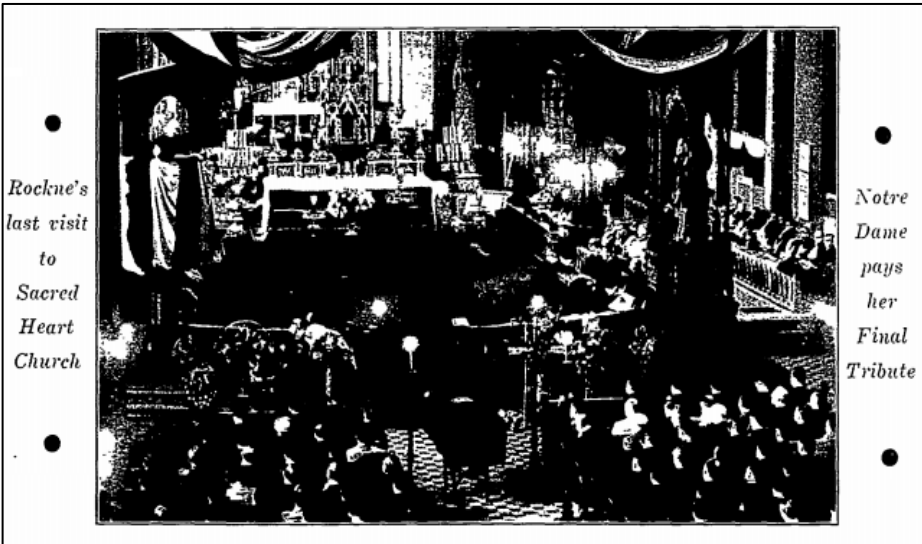


come and gone over the years since Rockne, there were none who were as consistently great.

In March 1931, head coach Knute Rockne (ND class of 1914) boarded Transcontinental and Western Air Flight 599. It was headed to Los Angeles so that the coach would be able to participate in the production of a new movie titled, "The Spirit of Notre Dame." Tragically, the plane went down a few miles west of Bazaar, Kansas, killing Rockne and the other seven on board.

After leading Notre Dame to back-to-back national championships, Rockne's death, every citizen in the United States knew him. The news devastated the university community and shook the United States. President Herbert Hoover declared it "a national loss."

Irish head coach Ara Parseghian when interviewed about Rockne's death recalled that in his own childhood, at the time he found out about the Irish coach's passing, was distraught. Like everybody else in the nation, the young Parseghian was devastated. One of the finest coaches ever, Parseghian's days at Notre Dame were yet to begin."



Above Picture from Scholastic



A better picture of Rockne's funeral at the Basilica

## Some other appropriate Rockne headlines

724	<b>The Notre Dame Scholastic</b>	
<b>NATION MOURNS ROCKNE'S DEATH IN CONDOLENCES TO UNIVERSITY</b>		<b>MASSES, COMMUNIONS FOLLOW ROCKNE DEATH</b>
Telegrams And Letters Pour Into Notre Dame As Thousands Express Grief		Students and Alumni All Join in Tribute to Dead Coach.
		<small>The news of Knute Rockne's tragic death found the campus silent in tribute to the man. One of the first</small>

726	<b>The Notre Dame Scholastic</b>	
<b>NOTABLES IN THRONG AT ROCKNE FUNERAL</b>		<b>ROCKNE GRAVE DRAWS THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE</b>
Many Prominent Figures at Burial Rites.		Burial Ground Jammed With Sorrowful Crowds.

**PLAN ROCKNE MEMORIAL**

**Committee Considers Project  
For Commemoration.**

## 1926 Navy was at peak

Navy had one great year during this period in 1926. The championship was contested as explained earlier. It is complicated because of all those claiming they won.

## Chapter 10 Post Rockne Football 1931-1940

### Not quite good enough

Though for any other team, after 2 championships in a row, this would be a fine record but for Notre Dame, it was not sufficient. Things would not get back to “normal” until Frank Leahy took over the team in 1941 and led the Irish to four more National Championships 1943, 1946-47, and 1949 while Army was at its best.

1931	Hunk Anderson	6-2-1
1932	Hunk Anderson	6-2-1
1933	Hunk Anderson	3-5-1
1934	Elmer Layden	6-3
1935	Elmer Layden	7-1-1
1936	Elmer Layden	6-2-1
1937	Elmer Layden	6-2-1
1938	Elmer Layden	8-1
1939	Elmer Layden	7-2
1940	Elmer Layden	7-2

Great Record for Hunk & Elmer but no championships. Notre Dame had gotten accustomed to the results brought in by Knute Rockne. In 1941, Frank Leahy would surely begin to change things back to “Irish normalcy.”

#### 1931 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Hunk Anderson

The 1931 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team, coached by Hunk Anderson in his first year and the first year without Knute Rockne, did reasonably well, but with a record of 6-2-1. It was clear that Anderson's team was either readjusting or rebuilding after two consecutive national championship seasons under Knute Rockne. Yet, Notre Dame finished with a rank of #11 in the country. Rockne had helped Notre Dame not only gain respect but gain the benefit of the doubt.

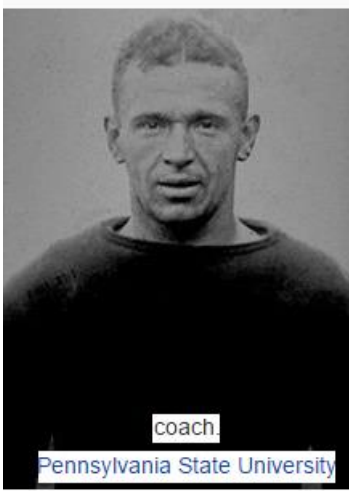
### Notes about Elmer Layden

Elmer Layden also did a great job for a normal coach. Rockne's memory was still fresh. Nobody was asking for Elmer Layden to resign. He looked pretty good even next to the immortal Rockne and those immortals to come, but his record was not 100% wins and he had no undefeated seasons. He was a great coach and he was a great person and that is why the NFL snatched him away from Notre Dame.

Because he did not succeed in the way Rockne succeeded, he was perceived at the time as a "not-so-great" coach. Nonetheless, it was Layden himself who got to decide when he would leave Notre Dame. I think he would have kept getting better; would have brought in a championship or two but like most, he too would have tired out from all the pressure. Maybe he thought so too.

# Chapter 11 Penn State Coach Bob Higgins 1930-1949

Bob Higgins



Higgins was one of only five players in the history of Nittany Lion football to earn five letters. He served as captain of the team as a senior when he was named to the 1919 Walter Camp All-American team.

Higgins was a multi-faceted athlete who also lettered in baseball, boxing and wrestling. After College, he played two years of professional football with the Canton Bulldogs.

His coaching career before Penn State included stays at West Virginia Wesleyan and Washington University in St. Louis, before he returned to Penn State in 1928 as an assistant. In 1930, he succeeded Hugh Bezdek as head coach. Higgins began to turn the corner in 1937 as you can see, and he finished his career with PSU with ten straight winning seasons.

He served as head coach at PSU for the next 19 seasons, after being named head coach in 1930. He led the Nittany Lions to only the second unbeaten season in the school's history, culminating in a tie versus Southern Methodist University in the 1948 Cotton Bowl Classic. It marked only the second time that Penn State had played in a bowl game.

Poor health forced his retirement after the 1948 season, but he was a forever Penn Stater and he remained at the school as a special assistant in the Physical Education Department until his retirement in November 1951. His overall coaching record was 123–83–16. He was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1954. He is a revered coach among other great coaches in PSU history

1930	Bob Higgins	3-4-2	Coach # 11
1931	Bob Higgins	2-8	
1932	Bob Higgins	2-5	
1933	Bob Higgins	3-3-1	
1934	Bob Higgins	4-4	
1935	Bob Higgins	4-4	
1936	Bob Higgins	3-5	
1937	Bob Higgins	5-3	
1938	Bob Higgins	3-4-1	
1939	Bob Higgins	5-1-2	
1940	Bob Higgins	6-1-1	
1941	Bob Higgins	7-2	
1942	Bob Higgins	6-1-1	
1943	Bob Higgins	5-3-1	
1944	Bob Higgins	6-3	
1945	Bob Higgins	5-3	
1946	Bob Higgins	6-2	
1947	Bob Higgins	9-0-1	
1948	Bob Higgins	7-1-1	

**1947 Penn State Football Season Coach Bob Higgins**



*Guard Steve Suhey earned first-team All-America honors in 1947 and was a member of arguably the most prominent family in Penn State football history. Suhey married a daughter, Ginger, of Penn State All-American and future head coach, Bob Higgins, and three of their sons — Paul, Larry and Matt Suhey — played for Penn State in the 1970s. Kevin and Joe Suhey became fourth-generation members of the Higgins-Suhey family to play for the Nittany Lions during the 2000s.*

The 1947 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Bob Higgins in his eighteenth season. The team was 9-0 in the regular season, which might have been good enough for national championship but in the bowl game, the best they could do was tie. PSU had its best season under Higgins, undefeated in regular season with a tie in the bowl game. Bravo PSU and Bravo Bob Higgins for a # 4 consensus finish in 1947.

Nobody beat Penn State throughout the whole season so let me just repeat the scores. They are all wins for PSU. We all knew Higgins had it in him from watching him from 1928 and finally in 1947, he produced a

superior team. This time, however, his boys made national news.

On September 20, in a game played at Hershey Park Stadium in Hershey, PA PSU defeated Washington State W (27-40) Then, on Oct. 4, at home, PSU played Bucknell W (54-0).

In a runaway game at Fordham on Oct 12, in New York, PSU won in a blowout W (75-0). The Lions were ripping this year and they played tough Syracuse at home and creamed them W (40-0).

A tough West Virginia team played PSU at home on Oct. 25 W (21-14). Then, on November 1, Colgate came in W (46-0). PSU then traveled to Temple on Nov. 8 for a close but sure W (7-0). Post war Navy was not as tough as usual on November 15 at Municipal Stadium in Baltimore Md. W (20-7).

Still undefeated and having to face season spoiler Pittsburgh on November 22, the PSU Lions ranked # 5 at the time whipped Pitt at their home stadium W (29-0).

PSU won a Cotton Bowl Berth in 1947 because they were one of the top teams in the nation.

On January 1, 1948, just a few days from my birthday (I mean my birth-date when I first began to breathe) PSU and SMU battled hard to come up with the best they could, a tie T (13-13). The Cotton Bowl Classic, before the days of the tie breakers, ended in 1947 in a tie game. Bravo to both teams. Higgins coached PSU finished # 4 in the final season rankings.

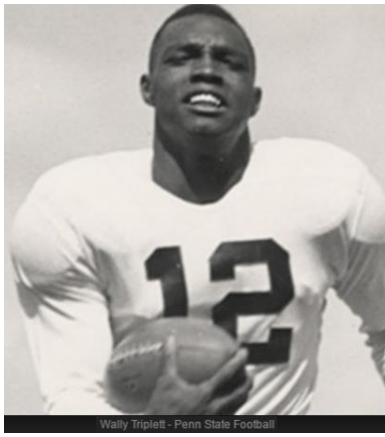




## Wallace Triplett, Maurice Hoogard Cotton Bowl

The January 1, 1948 was the last bowl game Penn State played before Joe Paterno was on its coaching staff. It was a historic moment in college football for another reason. It was amid the backdrop of segregation in Texas that two Nittany Lions became the first black players to compete in the Cotton Bowl at Dallas Stadium.

Wallace Triplett and Dennie Hoggard helped Penn State gain a comeback 13-13 tie against Southern Methodist that marked the first time a team with African-American players competed in Texas against a team from a segregated university.



The story of Mr. Triplett for sure is truly inspiring. For Triplett, now 90, (April 21) the 1948 Cotton Bowl was among the first benchmarks of his historic career. He became the first African-American to start a football game for Penn State. He also became the first black player to be drafted by, and play for, a National Football League team in 1949.

Wallace Triplett played four seasons in the NFL, two with the Detroit Lions. There he was a teammate of Doak Walker, SMU's all-America tailback against whom Triplett competed in Dallas. The 1948 Cotton Bowl ended in a tie after the late Hoggard nearly caught the game-winning pass on the final play.

"Doak used to tell me, 'Wally, the best thing about that game was that there was no winner,'" Triplett said. "And I agreed with him." The 1947 # 4 team was one of Penn State's best, finishing the regular season 9-0, and outscoring opponents 319-27. The high-scoring

offense featured Triplett at wingback and Pen Argyl's Elwood Petchel at tailback.

Penn State's postseason plans stalled, however, because head coach Bob Higgins would not accept an invitation from a bowl that wouldn't allow Triplett and Hoggard to attend. In 1946, Penn State players voted not to play a scheduled game at the University of Miami, which had the same policy. A year later the players decided there would be no vote.

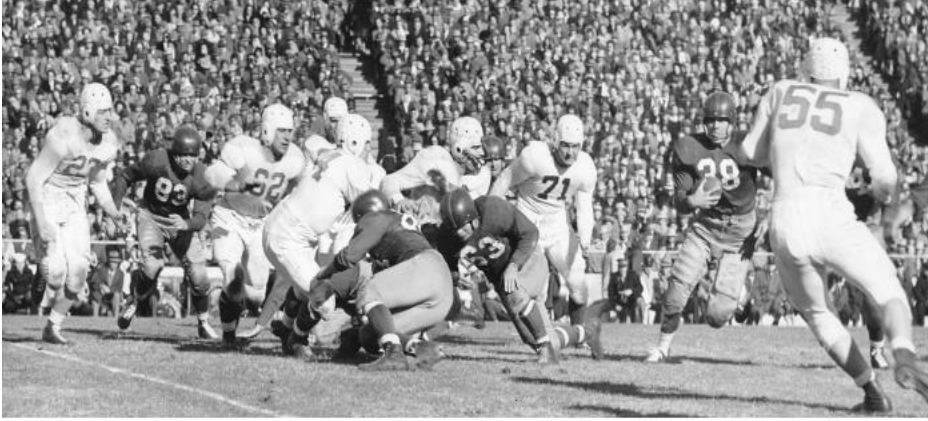
"[All-America lineman] Steve Suhey said, 'We're Penn State, there will be no meetings,'" Triplett said. "And that was it."

(Suhey's comment is said to have precipitated the "We are Penn State" chant, but Penn State football historian Lou Prato has traced the cheer's origin to the 1970s).



1948. Penn State, with running back Wally Triplett (pictured, right) and end Dennie Hoggard, plays SMU in the Cotton

Southern Methodist, meanwhile, was 9-0-1 and ranked No. 3 after winning the Southwest Conference and wanted to face the best opponent possible in the Cotton Bowl. To coach Matty Bell, that was No. 4 Penn State.



*Penn State's appearance in the 1948 Cotton Bowl was significant on several fronts. Wally Triplett and end Dennie Hoggard became the first African-Americans to play in the Cotton Bowl game and helped Penn State to a 9-0-1 record in 1947, with the only blemish a 13-13 tie with Southern Methodist in the Cotton Bowl. Behind a defense that posted six shutouts, Penn State won its first Lambert Trophy and its No. 4 final ranking was its highest in program history to date.*

The game itself was a classic in Cotton Bowl history. Petchel rallied Penn State from a 13-0 deficit by throwing two touchdown passes, one to Triplett in the third quarter.

On the final play, Petchel threw a pass in the end zone intended for Hoggard, though Triplett was nearby as well. An SMU player deflected the pass, which floated toward Hoggard

### **1948 Penn State Football Season Coach Bob Higgins**

The 1948 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Bob Higgins in his 19<sup>th</sup> and last season. After an undefeated regular season in 1947, it was tough to equal such a performance, but Higgins came close with a 7-1-1 record. He was a great coach and in many ways put PSU back on the map. He never had the benefit of a scholarship team.

## Chapter 12 Syracuse Coaches 1930-1948

Vic Hanson did a fine job for Syracuse but as you can see in their below record, the Orangemen struggled through their next three coaches over 11 years until Ben Schwartzwalder came in and made things good again.

Vic Hanson did a much better job than his predecessor Pete Reynolds, going 7-1-1 in 1931 and 6-1-1 in 1935. But he couldn't beat Colgate and when the 1936 team fell to 1-7, the old hero was fired. Syracuse was the only head football coaching job Andreas or Hanson ever held. Both were alums of the school.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>
1930	Vic Hanson	5 2 2
1931	Vic Hanson	7 1 1
1932	Vic Hanson	4 4 1
1933	Vic Hanson	4 4 0
1934	Vic Hanson	6 2 0
1935	Vic Hanson	6 1 1
1936	Vic Hanson	1 7 0
1937	Ossie Solem	5 2 1
1938	Ossie Solem	5 3 0
1939	Ossie Solem	3 3 2
1940	Ossie Solem	3 4 1
1941	Ossie Solem	5 2 1
1942	Ossie Solem	6 3 0
1944	Ossie Solem	2 4 1
1945	Ossie Solem	1 6 0
1946	Clarence Biggie Munn	4 5 0
1947	Reaves Baysinger	3 6 0
1948	Reaves Baysinger	1 8 0
1949	Ben Schwartzwalder	4 5 0
1950	Ben Schwartzwalder	5 5 0



Head Football Coach Victor Hanson and Fiancée Dorothy Burns Circa 1931

**Vic Hanson** did somewhat better than his predecessor Pete Reynolds, going 7-1-1 in 1931 and 6-1-1 in 1935. But he couldn't beat Colgate and when the 1936 team fell to 1-7, the old hero was fired. Syracuse was the only head football coaching job Andreas or Hanson ever held. Both were alums of the school.

### **1930 Victor Hanson Coach # 18**

The 1930 Syracuse Orangemen football team competed in their forty-second season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Victor Hanson in his first of seven seasons as head coach of the Syracuse Orangemen. This SU squad finished with nice record of 5-2-2.

Syracuse played its season home opener on Sept 27 at Archbold Stadium on the campus of Syracuse University and defeated Rensselaer (RPI) in a blowout W (55-0). On Oct 5, SU handed Hobart a shutout defeat at Archbold Stadium W (49-0). The next week on Oct 12 Syracuse shut out Rutgers at home W (27-0). On Oct

18, at home in Archbold Stadium, SU lost to Pitt in a shutout L (0-14). On Oct 25, at Archbold Field, SU beat St. Lawrence W (34-6).

Then, on Nov 1, at home, SU tied the game against Brown University from Providence RI T (16-16). On Nov 8, at Penn State in State College PA, the Nittany Lions and the Orangemen finished in a scoreless tie T (0-0). On Nov 15, SU lost big to Colgate at home L (7-36). SU then traveled to Columbia in NYC on Thanksgiving, Nov 27, again, and beat the Lions W (19-7)

### **1931 Victor Hanson Coach # 18**

The 1931 Syracuse Orangemen football team competed in their forty-third season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Victor Hanson in his second of seven seasons as head coach of the Syracuse Orangemen. This SU squad finished with nice record of 7-1-1.

Syracuse played its season home opener on Sept 26, 1931 at Archbold Stadium on the campus of Syracuse University and defeated St. Lawrence in a blowout W (46-6). On Oct 3, SU handed Hobart a shutout defeat at Archbold Stadium W (49-0). The next week on Oct 10 Syracuse blew out Ohio Wesleyan at home W (48-7). On Oct 17, at home in Archbold Stadium, SU beat the Florida Gators W (33-12) Then, on Oct 24, the Orangemen defeated Penn State in a one-TD shutout L (7-0).

On Oct 31, at Spartan Stadium, SU beat Michigan State, W (15-10). On Nov 7, SU shut out Western Reserve W (33-0) at home. Undefeated in seven games, the next team up was the typical spoiler. Still having trouble with Colgate who looked at Archbold Stadium as their own field, SU could not get past Colgate on Nov 14, and were defeated by two touchdowns L (7-21). On Nov 21 SU traveled again to Columbia in NYC and this time the teams played to a scoreless tie T (0-0).

### **1935 Victor Hanson Coach # 18**

The 1935 Syracuse Orangemen football team competed in their forty-seventh season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Victor Hanson in his sixth of seven seasons as head coach of the Syracuse

Orangemen. This SU squad finished with a very nice record this year of 6-1-1.

This was a nice year ...the next year was a disaster as if Syracuse had pulled the plug on scholarships. I will investigate this and if I find something, I will show it in the 1936 season. With one less loss in 1935, SU's ranking was almost top 10 nationally but # 14 was not so shabby.

Syracuse played its season home opener on Oct 5, 1935 at Archbold Stadium on the campus of Syracuse University and defeated Clarkson in a shutout W (33-0) On Oct 12, SU handed Cornell a tough defeat at Archbold Stadium W (21-14). The next week on Oct 19, in a tough match, SU prevailed over Ohio Wesleyan W (18-10) On Oct 26, at Brown, SU beat the Bears in Providence RI in a shutout W (19-0).

On Nov 2, at home SU again beat an eager, tough Penn State Team W (7-3) in a nail-biter. Then, on Nov 9, The Orange got the best of Columbia at NYC W (14-12). Colgate was next up, and they were like rocks preventing Syracuse from championships. As much as I hate to say it, they walloped the Orangemen in an easy match for Colgate. L (2-27). Instead of the last game being at Columbia, SU finished the season at Baltimore Maryland on Nov 28, the teams played tough and finished in a scoreless tie L (0-0).



Crowd in downtown Syracuse, World War II victory parade, September 1945.



Hanson was replaced by possibly the most prominent coach at the time of hiring we've ever had, (Bill Hollenbeck might be the exception, but he only lasted that one year and then retired). Ossie Solem has played for Dr. Henry Williams at Minnesota when they were a major national power. Then he went into pro football, coaching a team called the Minneapolis Marines that went on to join the NFL.

By that time, Solem had switched to college coach as well as being an athletic director at Luther College in Iowa, (1920), Drake, (1921-31) and Iowa, (1932-36). Drake was a fairly prominent program at that time and his teams went 7-0-0 in 1922 and 7-1-0 in 1928. Wikipedia, in its article on the Drake Bulldogs, says that they "shared the national championship in some national polls. They were invited to the White House for their accomplishments."

Drake was a founding member of the Missouri Valley Conference in 1928 and won its first four championships. .

### **1937 Ossie Solem Coach # 19**

The 1937 Syracuse Orangemen football team competed in their forty-ninth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Ossie Solem in his first of eight seasons as head coach of the Syracuse Orangemen. This SU squad finished with a fine record of 5-2-1.

### **1941 Ossie Solem Coach # 19**



The 1941 Syracuse Orangemen football team competed in their fifty-third season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Ossie Solem in his fifth of eight seasons as head coach of the Syracuse Orangemen. This SU squad finished with a fine record of 5-2-1.

### **1942 Ossie Solem Coach # 19**

The 1942 Syracuse Orangemen football team competed in their fifty-fourth season of intercollegiate football. They



were led by Ossie Solem in his sixth of eight seasons as head coach of the Syracuse Orangemen. This SU squad finished with a fine record of 6-3-0. This was the most wins that SU would get in its eight seasons under Coach Solem.

### **1943 Season cancelled due to World War II**

Biggie Munn took over as head coach in 1946 after Solem had a 1-6 season the previous year. [Syracuse could not stomach losing seasons.] Munn had been assisting Fritz Crisler at Michigan. He improved the team's record to 4-5 but left for Michigan State with most of his staff, an offer "that comes once in a lifetime".

This wraps up the pre-Ben Schwartzwalder portion of the book in which, despite some recent (in this book) poor years such as 1944 to 1948, the team record from day one was still a very impressive 305-194-41. This early record is actually better than the later record from 1949 on of 458-379-8. You see what I see.

## Chapter 13 Alabama's Wallace Wade & Frank Thomas 1923-1946

In 1926 Alabama had a fine year

Alabama had some great years during the Rockne years but did not play Notre Dame. Alabama claims it has won national titles in 1925, 1926, 1930, 1934, 1941, 1961, 1964, 1965, 1973, 1978, 1979, 1992, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2017 and the last was in 2020. Alabama beat Ohio State 52-24 for the 2021 CFP national championship. For the third time in six years, Alabama is the reigning College Football Playoff's national champion following a 52-24 win over Ohio State. Alabama was a great team from its inception. See the great 1930-1950 record below.

Notice there is no asterisk on the 1945 season though the team went 10-0. Was it fair? It helps to remember the country was at war. Army got the championship. Alabama was not awarded the national championship in 1945; 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. They were a great team for sure.

Year	Coach	Conference	Record	Conf Recd
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	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

**1925 Alabama Football Season Wallace Wade Head Coach #17  
National Champs**

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



1925 National Champions—Alabama Crimson Tide

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."

### **January 1, 1926 Rose Bowl**

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

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

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

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

Hubert found Brown for another touchdown pass on the very next play. The extra point failed, but Alabama still led 20–12. The Tide

scored three touchdowns in seven minutes of clock time. Wilson was able to return to the Huskies lineup in the fourth quarter and he threw a late touchdown pass, but the two missed extra points in the first half proved decisive, and Alabama won this exciting match 20–19.

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

### **1926 Alabama Football Season Wallace Wade Head Coach #17 National Champs**

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.

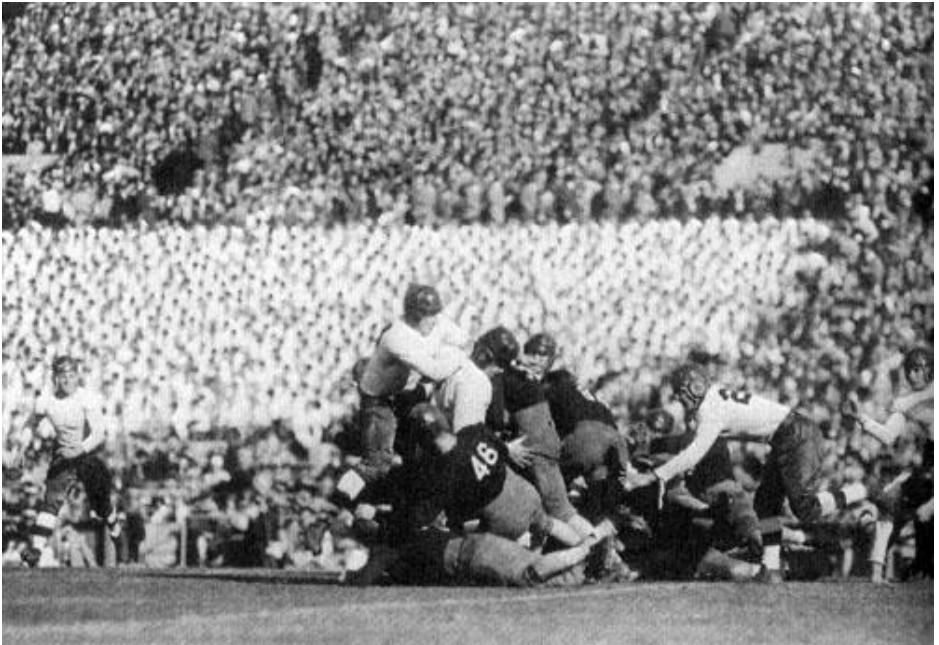
In 1925, the team lost many fine starters from graduation. They had just ten lettermen to start the season. Key players such as Pooley Hubert, Johnny Mack Brown, Bill Buckler and other stars from the 1925 team were not part of the 1926 squad. Yet, with Alabama Pride, and Coach Wallace Ward's expert coaching,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

The 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.



### 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



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 UA 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.

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.

### **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.

### **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.

About the “consensus” National championships

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 online for those interested from bamahammer:

#### **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.

### 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.



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

### **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.

### **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! Nonetheless they were denied the national championship because of Army's great year in 1945.

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

However, despite its clear dominance of opponents, Alabama did not win the national championship in 1945. In a world swept up with

patriotism and a military team that had run roughshod over all of the best in US Universities from across the country, that honor went to the Army Cadets team that went 9–0 and outscored its opponents by a 412–46 margin. The Crimson Tide finished second in the AP poll behind the Cadets. Nobody complained. We were winning the war. The Crimson Tide may have beaten Army in its finest year but who is going to ask that question? There was no UA – Army game.

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.



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

## Chapter 14 LSU Coaches Cohen, Moore & Tinsley 1930 to 1950

Russ Cohen Coach #18

Biff Jones Coach #19

Bernie Moore Coach #20

Russ Cohen was LSU's football coach for four seasons from 1928-1931, posting four consecutive winning seasons and a 23-13-1 record as coach of the Tigers. Cohen's best season was in 1928, leading his team to a 6-2-1 record and a 3-1-1 record against Southern Conference opponents. LSU finished just sixth in the conference that season, its best finish during Cohen's tenure. He began his coaching career as an assistant coach at Alabama from 1923-1926.

1930	Russ Cohen	6-4	2-3	16 <sup>th</sup>	
1931	Russ Cohen	5-4	2-2	7 <sup>th</sup>	
1932	Biff Jones	6-3-1	3-0	T-1 <sup>st</sup>	
<b>Southeastern Conference (1933-present)</b>					
19 1933	Biff Jones	7-0-3	3-2	2 <sup>nd</sup>	
1934	Biff Jones	7-2-2	4-2	4 <sup>th</sup>	
20 1935	Bernie Moore	9-2	5-0	1st	L Sugar
1936	Bernie Moore	9-1-1	6-0	1st	L Sugar 2
1937	Bernie Moore	9-2	5-1	2nd	L Sugar 8
1938	Bernie Moore	6-4	2-4	10	
1939	Bernie Moore	4-5	1-5	10 <sup>th</sup>	
1940	Bernie Moore	6-4	3-3	6 <sup>th</sup>	
1941	Bernie Moore	4-4-2	2-2-2	7 <sup>th</sup>	
1942	Bernie Moore	7-3	3-2	6 <sup>th</sup>	
1943	Bernie Moore	6-3	2-2	2nd	W Orange
1944	Bernie Moore	2-5-1	2-3-1	6 <sup>th</sup>	
1945	Bernie Moore	7-2	5-2	3 <sup>rd</sup>	
1946	Bernie Moore	9-1-1	5-1	3rd	T Cotton
1947	Bernie Moore	5-3-1	2-3-1	8 <sup>th</sup>	
21 1948	Gaynell Tinsley	3-7	1-5	T-10 <sup>th</sup>	
1949	Gaynell Tinsley	8-3	4-2	5th	L Sugar 9
1950	Gaynell Tinsley	4-5-2	2-3-2	9 <sup>th</sup>	

Before Russ Cohen, coach Mike Donahue stepped down after the 1927 season less than two months after signing a six-year contract extension with the team. Who knows why? LSU had 23 wins, 19 losses, and 3 ties while with Donahue, The Vanderbilt coach is said to have recommended Russ Cohen for the LSU job. He was offered the job and he took it.

## Russ Cohen

Cohen's best year at LSU was his first, in 1928. His team was led by All-Southern captain Jess Tinsley, and the Tigers garnered a respectable 6–2–1 record. They suffered losses to Arkansas and to a hot Wallace Wade's Alabama Crimson Tide.

Star halfback Percy Brown broke his shoulder against this tough Alabama team. The tie this year was to Bill Banker and rival Tulane, which was as good as it's ever been from 1929 to 1931. In 1931 LSU played its first night game in Tiger Stadium, a 31–0 victory over. LSU was catching on to be a winner. Biff Jones kept it going

## Biff Jones

Under former West Point coach Biff Jones, the 1932 team tied for the Southern Conference championship in its last season as a member of that conference. Biff's 1933 team lost no games and was led by track and field athlete Jack Torrance. Jones hung up his spikes and resigned after the 1934 season after a heated exchange with noted LSU supporter, Louisiana senator Huey P. Long. Politicians should stay out of sports.

In the last game of the season, Long was displeased after the team had lost two straight games and were trailing at halftime to Oregon. Long decided to give a motivational speech to the team at halftime but was turned away by Jones at the locker room door. The argument ended with Jones declaring to resign, effective at the end of the game. That was that.

## Bernie Moore

Bernie Moore coached in the era of the First All Americans. He was a fine coach. Under his tutelage, LSU won their first Southeastern Conference (SEC) Championship finishing with a 5–0 conference record and 9–2–0 overall in 1935. LSU also qualified to play in their first Sugar Bowl game, losing the game to #4 TCU 3–2 at Tulane Stadium.

The Tigers and the Horned Frogs both took home the Williamson Poll national championship, which is not claimed by LSU. Gaynell

Tinsley was named a consensus All-American in 1935 and 1936, becoming the first All-America selection for LSU. Coach Moore once said, "Tinsley could have made All-American at any position. He was so tough, he made blockers quit. He's the greatest lineman I ever saw." LSU was on the move.

### **1933 Football Season Biff Jones Coach # 19**

The LSU Fighting Tigers football team represented the LSU Tigers of Louisiana State University during the 1933 Southern Conference football season. This was LSU's fortieth season overall and its first season playing as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). This was coach Jones' second season of three with LSU.

Led by coach Jones, the Tigers had a fine season at 7-0-3. Their SoCon record was undefeated at 3-0-2. The team finished SEC play in 2nd place. This season was LSU's first season of football play in the Southeastern Conference (SEC). This year, Halfback Abe Mickal led the team in scoring.

In Moore's first season as football coach in 1935, All-American Gaynell Tinsley and the Tigers posted a 9-2 record and LSU's first Sugar Bowl appearance. It was the first time in SEC history a coach won SEC titles in two major sports in the same year.

If that weren't enough, Moore did it again in 1936 when he led the football team to its second SEC championship and the track team to its fourth straight SEC title.

Moore led the Tigers to three-straight Sugar Bowl appearances in his first three years as head coach. Unfortunately, all three Sugar Bowl appearances resulted in LSU losses. Moore was able to overcome the postseason losing streak in 1943 when the great Steve Van Buren led the Tigers to a 19-14 victory over Texas A&M in the Orange Bowl, giving LSU its first bowl game win.

One of Moore's most memorable games came in what would later be known as the "Ice Bowl." January 1, 1947, in the Cotton Bowl, LSU dueled Arkansas to a 0-0 final score, despite out-gaining the Hogs 271-54 in total yardage on the legs of Y.A. Tittle. The Tigers finished



that season 9-1-1, one of Moore's better seasons, though no title was won.

Moore stepped down as head football coach after the 1947 season, with a career record of 83-29-6 in 13 seasons. He is second, only to Charles McClendon, in most career wins all-time at LSU.

In 1948, Moore became the commissioner of the SEC and would hold that office for the next 18 years. He was the longest-tenured SEC commissioner in history.

### **1936: 9-1-1 (6-0), SEC Champions, No. 2 Final Ranking**

LSU were SEC Champs in 1936 as well as #2 in the National rankings. It was just Bernie Moore's second team at LSU was his best and came as close as possible to being the first team ever to be crowned national champions by the Associated Press. However, a 6-6 tie with Texas was deemed to be a bigger blemish than Minnesota's 6-0 loss to No. 3 Northwestern. The Tigers won the SEC and beat their league opponents by a combined score of 143-20 but lost to No. 5 Santa Clara in the Sugar Bowl to spoil an undefeated season. 1

### **1946: 9-1-1 (5-1), No. 8 Final Ranking**

Bernie Moore, who also served as the head track and field coach at LSU (and won the first national championship with any SEC athletic program and the first for LSU in any sport in 1933). He was eventually made the commissioner of the SEC. His best Tiger team of 1946 was the best to that point in LSU history. LSU's only loss came against a solid Georgia Tech squad, and the Tigers fought No. 10 Arkansas to a scoreless tie in the Cotton Bowl. Great LSU season

## Chapter 15 Navy's Best Seasons in the 1940's

Hardwick	Coach # 22
Larson	Coach # 23
Whelchel	Coach # 24
Hagberg	Coach # 25
Hamilton	Coach # 21 (2nd stint)

Year	Coach	Record	Conf	Record
1937	Hank Hardwick	4-4-1	Indep	4-4-1
1938	Hank Hardwick	4-3-2	Indep	4-3-2
1939	Swede Larson	3-5-1	Indep	3-5-1
1940	Swede Larson	6-2-1	Indep	6-2-1
1941	Swede Larson	7-1-1	Indep	7-1-1
1942	Billick Whelchel	5-4	Indep	5-4
1943	Billick Whelchel	8-1	Indep	8-1
1944	Oscar Hagberg	6-3	Indep	8-1
1945	Oscar Hagberg	7-1-1	Indep	7-1-1
1946	Tom Hamilton	1-8	Indep	1-8
1947	Tom Hamilton	1-7-1	Indep	1-7-1

**AS PLAYER, COACH AND LEADER, HE WAS MARINES' GIFT TO NAVY 3 December 2000 ---From Arlington Cemetery:**

History reserved an extraordinary niche for Emery "Swede" Larson, who enlisted in the Marines, graduated from the Naval Academy, but remained loyal to the cause of the corps ... on the battlefield and football field. Semper Fi.



He was the only Marine to both play and coach at Navy. And he came away a winner every time. Six-for-six in games won against Army. Turn the pages of the dusty history books. No coach in more than a century of Naval Academy football ever achieved such success.

Larson had been an enlisted man who received an appointment to the Naval Academy because of his academic and athletic achievements. Every graduate who came out of the academy, via the Marine Corps, holds him in special regard. Larson

made it on his own.

Eight days after the Japanese tried to eradicate Pearl Harbor, he coached his last game. Football, fun and frivolity were shelved. In the Navy locker room in Philadelphia, with only a few brief words, he put the outbreak of World War II in personal focus when he said, "This will be the last football game for me for a while. There's a bigger game coming up and I'm going to be in it."

Then it was off to the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, and preparation for a life-or-death scrimmage in war zones that could only be measured by the sacrifices he witnessed, the valor and resolve displayed by the men he was leading.

### **Navy in 1941**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 1941 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's sixty-first season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Swede Larson in his third of three seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. Bob Froude was the team captain. As an independent football entity, the Midshipmen compiled a 7-1-1 record, shut out five opponents and outscored all opponents by a combined score of 192 to 34.

## 1943 Navy Midshipmen Coach Billick Whelchel

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 1943 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's sixty-third season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Billick Whelchel in his second of two seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. Albert Channel was the team captain. As an independent football entity, the Midshipmen compiled an 8–1 record, shut out three opponents and outscored all opponents by a combined score of 237 to 80. Navy was ranked #4 in the final AP Poll.

## Great Navy Player



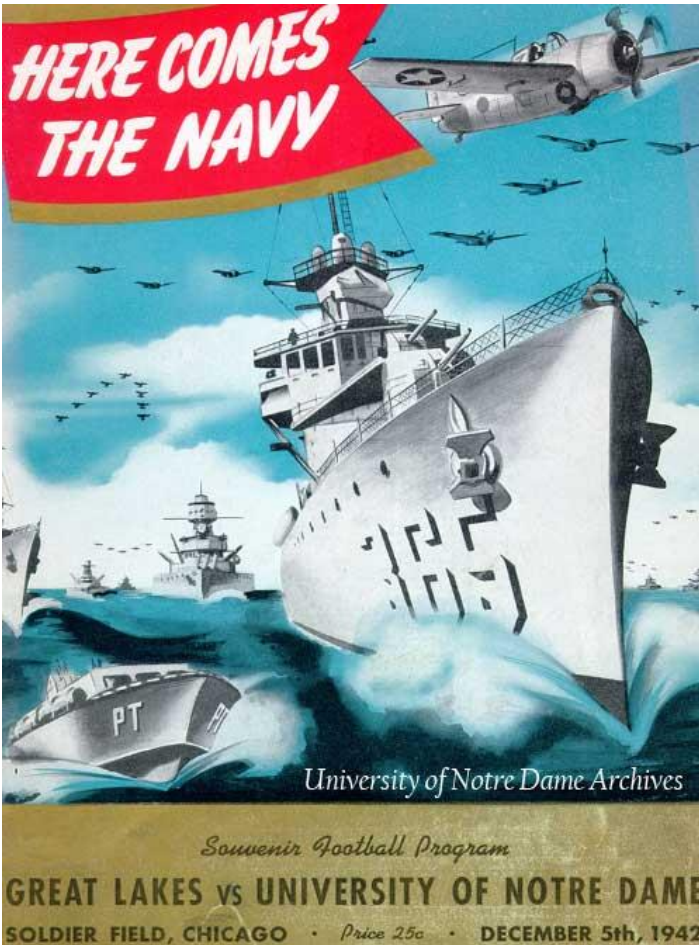
Ed Sprinkle was a great defensive end for the Naval academy who after graduation signed up with the professional Chicago Bears where he played great football from 1944-1955.

As a pro, the four-time Pro Bowler was known as the "meanest man in football," Sprinkle terrorized quarterbacks for 12 seasons with the Bears. According to a New York Times obituary, in the 1946 NFL Championship Game, he sidelined three New York Giants -- a quarterback and two running backs -- with two broken noses and a shoulder separation. Bears owner and coach George Halas honored

Sprinkle with the jersey No. 7, which Halas had worn as a player.

Sprinkle, and a number of other pros of the era were often accused of "dirty play" and un-sportsman-like conduct. Sprinkle had a readymade excuse. He claimed that his aggressive play was similar to that found all over the NFL throughout the 1950s. He said: "We

were meaner in the 1950s because there were fewer positions and we fought harder for them. It was a different era." The former Navy great, prior to his NFL career, won three letters in football and two in basketball and earned All-Border Conference while at Hardin-Simmons University in the early 1940s. He also earned all-Eastern honors in 1943 while attending the United States Naval Academy. Following his pro career, Sprinkle entered business in the Chicago area. He died on July 28, 2014. The Professional Football Researchers Association named Sprinkle to the PRFA Hall of Very Good Class of 2007.



All home games except the Army-Navy game and those so marked below were played at Thompson Field on the campus of the Naval Academy.

During WWII, the 1943 Navy Football Season began at home with a win against North Carolina Pre-Flight W (31-0) on Sept 25, 1943. The opener was played at Thompson

Stadium on the campus of the Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD. On October 2, Navy beat Cornell at Municipal Stadium Baltimore, MD W (46-7). On Oct 9 #4 ranked Navy beat #5 Duke at Municipal Stadium Baltimore, MD W (14-13). Then, on Oct 16, #3 Navy beat

Penn State at home W(14–6). Then, on Oct 24, #3 Navy beat Georgia Tech at Municipal Stadium in Baltimore, MD W 28–14. On Oct 30 vs. No. 1 Notre Dame, #3 Navy lost its only game of the year to the National Champion Frank Leahy-led Irish L (6-33) at Municipal Stadium • Cleveland, OH (Rivalry) before 77,900

On Nov 6, #7 ranked Navy beat # 5 ranked Penn at Franklin Field in Philadelphia, PA W (24–7). On Nov 13, at Columbia, #3 ranked Navy won at Baker Field New York, NY W (61–0). Then, on Nov 27 at #7 Army, the #6 Navy team beat Army at the Army's home field Michie Stadium in West Point, NY (Army–Navy Game) W (13–0). During this phase of WW II, the service academies played football in their own home fields.

## **This Army Navy Game**

### **Army Navy Game #1 Best Game**

Army came into this contest 8-0, having outscored opponents by a combined score of 481-28. But, the Cadets also came in with something to prove, having lost to Navy, 13-0, a year earlier.

Making that 1943 result even worse for Army was that the game took place in West Point.

The top-ranked Cadets got their revenge, dominating the No. 2 Midshipmen, 23-7, despite throwing five interceptions and fumbling three times.

Competing two weeks before the Battle of the Bulge and featuring a backfield that included future Heisman Trophy winners Glenn Davis and Doc Blanchard, Army outrushed its rivals, 181-71.

And after the contest, the team received a telegram from Gen. Douglas MacArthur, halfway around the world and full of pride.

"The greatest of all Army teams—STOP—We have stopped the war to celebrate your magnificent success. MacArthur."





# Chapter 16 Frank Leahy 1941-1953

Irish Coach # 17

Four National Championships 1943, 1946-47, 1949

## Welcome Frank Leahy

1941	Frank Leahy	8-0-1	
1942	Frank Leahy	7-2-2	
1943	Frank Leahy	9-1*	
1944	Edward McKeever	8-2	Coach # 18
1945	Hugh Devore	7-2-1	Coach # 19
1946	Frank Leahy	8-0-1*	
1947	Frank Leahy	9-0*	
1948	Frank Leahy	9-0-1	
1949	Frank Leahy	10-0*	
1950	Frank Leahy	4-4-1	
1951	Frank Leahy	7-2-1	
1952	Frank Leahy	7-2-1	
1953	Frank Leahy	9-0-1	

\* National Championships

**In 1944 & 1945 Frank Leahy was a commissioned officer with the United States Navy during World WarII**

## The only thing you can do alone in life is fail

Before Coach Leahy coached at Notre Dame, he graduated from Notre Dame. He attended the University of Notre Dame, where he played football as a tackle on Knute Rockne's last three teams (1928-1930). He always looked like a QB sized player to me. He graduated from the university in 1931. He learned the notion of success from both Notre Dame and Coach Rockne. He learned the notion of love from Notre Dame and mostly from a loving family and the many friends who loved him, even though for most of his life, he was a workaholic, and did not notice all the love he got back.





From the Website which hosts the tribute sculpture from 1997

### **Coach Frank Leahy**

Frank Leahy came to Notre Dame to play football for Knute Rockne. After suffering an injury his senior year, he became a student of Rockne's and entered the coaching profession himself.

Coach of the Fighting Irish from 1941-43 and 1946-53, he led the Irish to six undefeated seasons, five National Championships, and an unbeaten streak of 39 games in the late 1940's.

Selected for the College Football Hall of Fame in 1970, this sculpture commemorates Coach Leahy, and was unveiled next to Notre Dame Stadium in 1997.

Like Rockne, whose coach was Jesse Harper, and Frank Leahy, whose coach was Knute Rockne, successful people need lots of help and lots of love in their lives. Very often, these otherwise tough people are too busy to notice or to understand their own need. Harper, Rockne, and Leahy were great family men and they benefitted immensely from a lot of love. I like to say the only thing we can do alone in life is fail. Why fail?

These immortal legends were self-inspired and encouraged to do well in life by their life experiences for sure, but it was not all them! Yes, even self-made men can fail when they are alone and when there is no loving support system.

Frank Leahy was a great coach and a great man. He loved his family deeply and kept increasing his family members in numbers until—well, let's just end it at until! He was tough but fair. He was also kind and good, and though not sloppy or gushy, he was very loving. Men do not want to think of Frank Leahy as *the family man*, but it was his family that gave him his strength.

Most men wanted to look up to Frank Leahy as an iron-man coach! No man is made of iron just like no covid-19 mask can be made of iron, regardless of how effective it would be. Though the iron mask, properly fit to not permit miniature contaminants, would be impregnable by any virus, it would also prevent the wearer from breathing and would finally kill the wearer from asphyxiation.

So, the mask technically would be reusable often after a wash, but the wearer would need to make funeral arrangements. It would be a price not worth paying to avoid the virus.

I did not know Frank Leahy personally, but I would have liked to have met him. He seems to have the strong temperament of my own father—another good man. The research I have done showed me Leahy the man, Leahy the husband, Leahy the dad, and Leahy the coach. All aspects of Frank Leahy are worthy of admiration. We could use a few more like Frank Leahy, especially today!

So, maybe I do know him, but I have spoken to people who have known him or knew those who knew him, and I have read a lot about him. So, I say I know Frank Leahy, kinda! I would not want to cross him for all his goodness.

As I finished the book I wrote about ND, and was just tidying up some wording, I found a great Sports Illustrated article from 1955. Just because you are nice enough to be reading this book, I am providing the link below. It is worth a nice look.

<http://www.si.com/vault/1955/10/31/596398/subject-frank-leahy>

In this book, I have borrowed the public words of others in print or on the Internet and have given them attribution as I cannot superimpose myself onto the 1887 Notre Dame campus, nor can I sit down with the ten Leahy's and have dinner followed by the Rosary. So, I use the words of others from the past to help me.

The words immediately below are excerpts from Bill Dwyre a great columnist for the LA Times

<http://articles.latimes.com/2012/oct/19/sports/la-sp-dwyre-notre-dame-20121020>.

Bill Dwyre's piece was titled: "Frank Leahy always had Notre Dame standing tall and up straight."

Dwyre was interviewing Fred Leahy, the coach's # 6 child of 8. In this part of the piece, Leahy's son, Fred creates a quick snapshot of the coach and his family in this excerpt:

*"Fred's summary of life in the Leahy family is a classic of all-encompassing brevity.*

*"Dad belonged to the world, and mom had eight kids," he says.*

*Fred says Frank Leahy never turned down an autograph request and drilled into his family the need to treat people equally and well.*

*"He wore the famous bow tie all the time," Fred says, "and that wasn't for any image reason. He knew, when he was out eating dinner, somebody would come over to the table, he'd get up and reach across to shake their hand and his tie would fall into the soup.*

*"When we went out to dinner, he'd eat ahead of time. People wouldn't leave him alone to eat, and he'd never turn anybody down. When dinner ended, he'd disappear into the kitchen and shake the hands of all the helpers."*

*A writer, seeking to characterize the presumed terror of failure with which Leahy's players existed, once asked star quarterback Johnny Lujack what Leahy was like after a loss. Lujack pondered the question and said, "I don't remember ever losing."*

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### 1941 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

In 1941, Frank Leahy coached the Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team for the first time. Like Elmer Layden and Knute Rockne, and Jesse Harper, Frank Leahy was a natural coach on strategy and on motivation. He made everybody around him want to do their best.

Whereas Knute Rockne had the Four Horsemen, even before Frank Leahy got to BC or Notre Dame, he had become a famous coach. As a lineman himself, he was a line coach at Fordham. While at Fordham for five years, Leahy was an excellent line coach. His job was to develop the Fordham line.

He did, and then some. He developed a solid Fordham line that were so tough, they became known as the "**Seven Blocks of Granite.**" One of those "Blocks of Granite" was an intense, studious, blocky, raven haired young man named Vince Lombardi. That's right, great coaches teach great coaches. Rockne taught Leahy; Leahy taught Vince Lombardi.

In Leahy's first season, Notre Dame was at its best. Its record was (8-0-1). It could have been a National Championship but for the tie against Army. Notre Dame was proud to clock in with four home wins out of four tries. Home wins came from Arizona W (38-7), Indiana W (19-6), Illinois W (49-14), and USC W (20-18).

Leahy's Irish also did well in the "away" victories category with a big win against Georgia Tech W (20-0) to begin the away game

triumphs. Then there was Carnegie Tech W (16-0), Navy W (20-13) and Northwestern W (7-6).

The only blemish on # 3 AP Notre Dame's record was Army, which had to that point had never played an away game at Notre Dame. Army and ND tied T (0-0) at Yankee Stadium. Paul Lillis was captain of Notre Dame's fine team in 1941.

The Irish were ranked # 3 after the season because of the tie with Army. Otherwise, Notre Dame would have had its first national championship in the Frank Leahy era. At 8-0-1, Notre Dame blew a share of the 1941 MNC (mythical national championship) when they tied 5-3-1 Army (#22 fixed AP poll) at Yankee Stadium. They were #2 in 1941 in the fixed AP poll.

## Army 0; ND 0; writeup—Scholastic Magazine

*With student spirit on the upsurge as a result of the Illinois rout, the Fighting Irish scrambled through the cheering students at the Circle to make their way to a special train to New York. Speeding eastward, they carried the appeal for revenge on a Cadet eleven that in 1940, with the exception of Steve Juzwik's brilliant touchdown run from a pass interception, had drubbed all the fight out of a high-riding Irish eleven.*

*A hard rain that began falling in New York on Friday night virtually washed out all these appeals and dampened the spirits of both Cadet and Irish elevens. Saturday afternoon the rain was still falling as seventy-six thousand onlookers huddled under umbrellas and newspapers, and watched the two teams wade up and down the field for two hours. It was a fierce, hard-hitting" game in which both teams were forced to the monotonous procedure of two or three attempts for muddy gains on the line and then a punt.*

*It was Army's Mazur who kept the Irish sliding in the mud with his seemingly-impossible end runs and amazing cutbacks over the line and his booming punts. Early in the first quarter, Mazur slid around left end behind an army of blockers to the Irish 25. From there Maupin and Hatch moved the ball to the Notre Dame 10 where, despite the mud, the Irish line braced and threw the Cadets back, Harry Wright tried to shake Evans or Juzwik loose around the ends, but Army's ends could not be taken out of play. Evans' kicks were long but Mazur's were longer, and the Irish were forced to do most of their mudding in their own back yard. Late in the second quarter the slimy pigskin rolled off the side of Mazur's foot on the Army 45. Notre Dame took it up there and with Juzwik sweeping the ends and Evans ploughing for short*

*gains at center, moved to the Cadet 17 where the Army line closed in and the Cadets took the ball on downs.*

*With Evans and Mazur dueling with third down punts the two teams fought through the third quarter. The Irish went down to the Army 28 on the strength of Creighton Miller's smashing gains at tackle and Bill Earley's slashes inside the right end. There the Notre Dame backs lost their footing and Army took over the ball. The Cadets sent Ralph Hill inside the Irish right end and Hatch over guard to bring the ball down to the Irish 25; there the holes at end and guard closed and the Cadets made big ripples as the Irish forwards cut them down.*

*With less than two minutes left in the fourth quarter the Irish machine churned over the Army line but the ticking seconds sped by while the Army line gave ground slowly. On the Cadet 20-yard line with seven seconds of play remaining, Harry Wright, moved out on the right wing along with Steve Juzwik and Angelo Bertelli for another try at the Boston College famous triple-flanker, the last chance for the Irish to come out of the Cadet clutch untied and undefeated. The muddy ball came up from center with a wobbling spin, and sailed through Evans' arms. He chased it, picked it up, evaded two tacklers only to be tackled and splashed out of bounds as the game ended.*

### 1943 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

Coach Frank Leahy's 1943 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team represented the University of Notre Dame in Leahy's third year of being the head coach. The team ended its season with 9 wins and 1 loss, winning the national championship. This was the fourth Irish team to win the national title and the first for Frank Leahy.

Led by Notre Dame's first **Heisman Trophy** winner, Angelo Bertelli, Notre Dame played and beat seven teams ranked in the top 13 and played seven of its ten games on the road. Despite a devastating season ending loss to Great Lakes, a recent powerhouse comprised mostly of military men, Notre Dame was awarded its first national title by the Associated Press.

The war years were special years. The service academies and the semi-pro teams from the military were at their best. Because of Notre Dame and Navy's cooperation to educate midshipmen, the 1943 Irish team included 14 Navy apprentice seamen.

Sophomore quarterback John Lujack was one of those players. Lujack would win the 1947 **Heisman Trophy** after helping steer the Irish to a third national title under coach Leahy. Other seamen on the Irish roster included powerful lineman / left tackle Jim White -- who finished 9th in the 1943 Heisman balloting, and other starters including left end Paul Limont, center Herb Coleman and his backup Frank Szymanski, plus fullback Jim Mello.

Having just noted Johnny Lujack, this is the best time to add this personal interest story about Lujack, the great quarterback; Frank Leahy, Notre Dame coach; and a great Notre Dame-loving former Villanova quarterback named Jack Lammers. In the interest of print space, I thought about taking Jack out of the story but my heart said "no." I hope you enjoy this as much as I like recounting it.

I reported to Jack Lammers, who was the Systems Engineering Manager at IBM in Scranton, PA for a number of years in the 1980's. He is a former starting quarterback at Villanova. It goes without saying that he has always been a great athlete. He is also an intense man, and a good man, I attribute both characteristics to his college football training and the need for strict discipline as well as growing up in a fine Catholic family.

His high school coach played for Frank Leahy. Jack understands the 100% intensity that Frank Leahy brought to his team and his family. He has a perspective that I think you will all enjoy. He wrote this to me in an email just a few weeks before I originally wrote this paragraph in a different ND book a while ago after I had told him about my first ND book project. For a guy who goes to a Fantasy Football Camp, nothing can ever again be private:

*Brian,*

*When I was a boy, Johnny Lujack's picture hung on my bedroom wall and my fondest dream was to follow him as a QB at Notre Dame. My mother told me that I would have to add a 'ski' to the end of my name. The closest I got was through my HS coach who was his teammate and a veteran airborne trooper.*

*Leon Hart was one of the few who was not a vet. He was a 17-year-old freshman who Leahy recruited from western PA. Among*

*the Marines who played was Jim Martin who was wounded and a prisoner of war.*

*Coach said that they paid little attention to Leahy when he tried to discipline and control them.*

*When you have faced death at the hands of an angry enemy, even the great Frank Leahy will not be able to intimidate you. You may also look for George Connor in your research; he was a great lineman who later played for the Bears.*

*By the way, my coach was hired at St. Cecilia HS to replace Vince Lombardi who had ... for a college job.*

*God Bless, Jack*

I asked Jack if Leon Hart was his coach and he responded with some more interesting Notre Dame stuff:

*"My HS coach was Tom Potter who played guard behind two All-Americans, Marty Wendell and Jim Martin. He was a HS fullback from NJ who was switched to guard when he got there. Colleges rarely recruit HS guards but rather big fullbacks (Mike Munchak) and quick tackles. He played on the 46 and 47 teams after he returned from combat duty with airborne troops. Those were national championship teams and their most famous game was a 0-0 against Army and Blanchard and Davis. Lujack made a game saving tackle of Blanchard to save the game. Some say he was better on defense than on offense.*

*ND has a 'Monogram Room' where all the memorabilia are kept, Heisman Trophies for example. The pictures of their great teams are also kept there and when I was out there it was a great pleasure to see my coach pictured with all those great players.*

*Your labor of love is bringing back many fond memories for me.*

*Thanks, Jack*

Lauren Searson wrote this article about my buddy Jack Lammers for *Retirement Living*. <http://www.retirement-living.com/fantasy-camp-offers-a-glimpse-into-life-as-a-football-star/>. It is not big so I will put it here for all of my IBM buddies and Notre Dame fans to read about



a very serious guy who up until an hour ago (when I wrote this originally) when I found this article, I thought had no fantasies... Hah! Enjoy!



## Fantasy Camp Offers a Glimpse into Life as a Football Star: Active Adults

Author: Lauren Searson

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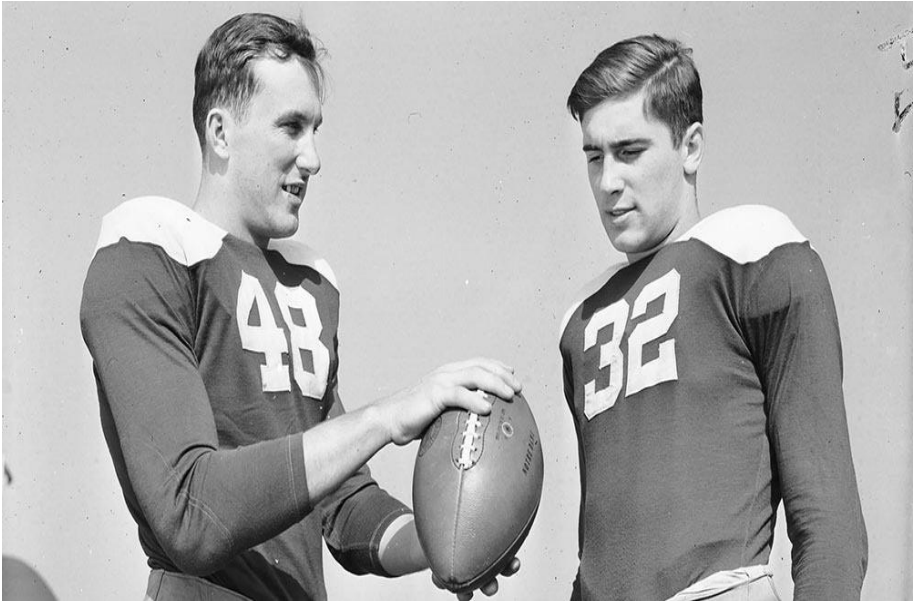
*Jack, who had not been on the football field since his days as the Quarterback for Villanova, proudly stated, "I wasn't sore." His skills as a player and a coach came back easily. Jack started his career as a high school football coach. He gave up*

*the position to pursue a career with IBM because, he says, "We had our sixth child, and I knew I had to give up the toys and get a real job." Most of his long career with IBM was spent in the sales and service department. He enjoyed his work and his co-workers immensely, but football remained a passion.*

*Despite his long hiatus, Jack quickly adjusted to the thrill of being back on the field and in the pocket. Much of the excitement was generated by the atmosphere of the school and the stadium. "Notre Dame is really a special place. It has such a long and respected football tradition," notes Jack.*

*Posted in: Active Adult/55+ Communities, Activities for Seniors, Healthy Living, Senior Housing, Uncategorized*

Thanks Jack! You are one of the good guys in life!



**Angelo Bertelli Heisman 1943 & Johnny Lujack Heisman 1947**

There also was one NROTC man, Jack Zilly, who would later serve as an Irish assistant coach from 1956-58.

The 1943 “Leahy” National Championship Notre Dame team was like no other. It defeated the teams that finished No. 2 (Iowa Pre-Flight, a semi-pro World War II outfit), No. 3 (Michigan) and No. 4—none other than the Naval Academy located in Annapolis, Md.

There are only two college football teams in history to defeat the teams that were the final #s 2-3-4 in one season. They are the 1943 Notre Dame Fighting Irish and the 1971 Nebraska Cornhuskers.

Furthermore, the 1943 Irish overpowered the teams that finished #9 (Northwestern), #11 (Army) and #13 (Georgia Tech). Beating six teams that placed in the final AP Top 13 might never again be achieved in college football again.

It is difficult to believe that such a team could ever be beaten. Going into the game with a 9-0 record against the Great Lakes Blue Jackets, a great team loaded with outstanding military personnel who knew how to play the game of football.

The home of this great Navy team was different from what we know. Its home is the Blue Lakes Naval Station and that should say it all. In addition to the 1943 football team, it is still the home of the United States Navy's only boot camp, located near North Chicago, in Lake County, Illinois. Important tenant commands include the Recruit Training Command, Training Support Center and Navy Recruiting District Chicago.

Naval Station Great Lakes is the second largest military installation in Illinois and the largest training station in the Navy. Nobody thought this game would be easy, but Notre Dame did have a great team.

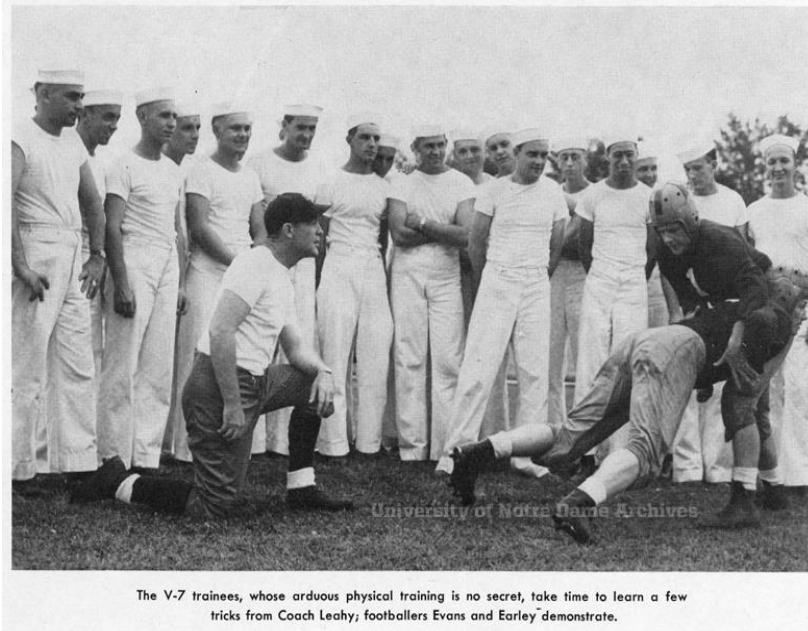
This 9-1 season ended with a defeat L (14-19) by the Great Lakes Bluejackets, on a "Hail Mary" touchdown pass. Notre Dame pundits like to ask if this were "the one way any school named after Our Lady should never lose -- with 33 seconds remaining." --A Hail Mary Pass--

To emphasize the Bluejackets talent and skill, note that Notre Dame neither required nor gave any excuses for the defeat. It helps to recall that Great Lakes, which finished #6 in 1943, was a semi-pro operation during the war years comprised of seamen (hence Bluejackets) that included future 1946-49 Notre Dame leading rusher Emil "Six Yard" Sitko—another member of the College Football Hall of Fame.

### **The Coach, staff, & the team go to War**

After the 1943 season, Notre Dame head coach Frank Leahy and his entire staff volunteered for active duty in World War II. They joined—what else? —the Navy. That is why Leahy was not the coach in 1944 or 1945. He was fighting in World War II.

The 1943 season began on September 25 at Pittsburgh with a W (41-0) victory. The next week, ND was home and beat Georgia Tech W (55-13). On October 9, Michigan came to town for the second time ever and Notre Dame beat the Wolverines W (35-12) The next week the Irish were at Wisconsin for a win W (51-0).



The V-7 trainees, whose arduous physical training is no secret, take time to learn a few tricks from Coach Leahy; footballers Evans and Earley demonstrate.

Back to ND Stadium on October 23, the Irish met and defeated Illinois W (47-0). Notre Dame was not just winning; they were winning big time. On October 30, ND went to play Navy at Cleveland before 77,900 fans and won W (33-6) Next was Army where Yankee Stadium hosted an attendance of 75,121 and Notre Dame scored another big one W (26-0). The next week the Irish went to rival Northwestern and beat them W (25-6)

Iowa Pre-Flight was next and the Irish prevailed at home in a real tight match W (14-13). On November 27, ND took a trip to Great Lakes, a game played at Comiskey Park in Chicago. As discussed, the Irish were defeated in the last thirty seconds on a Hail-Mary pass to destroy their unbeaten, untied season. Despite this loss, the Irish were named National Champions. No excuses folks, but ND was playing a professional football team.

Purdue fans may have a valid gripe about this ranking since the Boiler-makers were the only team that were undefeated and untied at 9-0. Moreover, Purdue had beaten Great Lakes Navy, who of course beat Notre Dame in the last seconds.

Purdue historians recall the 1929 season when Purdue had managed its last perfect record. Notre Dame won the championship that year because it was considered the consensus mythical national champion (MNC). Purdue in 1943 were not even # 2. They finished ranked #5 in the final 1943 AP poll due to strength of overall schedule. They had played nobody who Notre Dame had played.

Notre Dame was thus the unanimous choice for #1 in 1943 among both human and math-based systems. They are listed in the NCAA Records Book as the first unanimous selection since Georgia Tech in 1917. Notre Dame played seven top 13 ranked teams as noted and Notre Dame handily defeated Army and Navy, Army struggled to beat Navy, and so this also helped ND.

Is that fair to Purdue? The bottom line is that Notre Dame played a far, far tougher schedule-- Great Lakes Navy was the only rated team Purdue beat-- and Notre Dame performed much better. So I would say it is fair. *Yes!*



**Picture Courtesy Notre Dame Archives Leahy, Right, takes Oath**

## The 1944 Army ND Game

It had been thirteen years since Army had beaten Notre Dame. In fact, the last time Army had scored against the Irish was in 1938. The Irish were the defending national champions but lost many key players to graduation and a number to the armed services as there was a need for great men in WWII. The Irish even lost head coach Frank Leahy to military service and were now being led by Ed McKeever.

Notre Dame went into the game 5-1 and ranked #5, coming off the 32-13 loss to Navy. The Army squad was being led by Glenn Davis and Doc Blanchard. I suspect you have already heard of them. The Cadets also had a quarterback named Doug Kenna, and a transfer from the University of Texas, sprinter Max Minor.

Army overwhelmed the Irish. Kenna opened the scoring with a run for touchdown. He wasn't done, as he played defense as well, intercepting an Irish pass, which led to a scoring run by Minor. Kenna then pulled a trifecta of sorts when he passed for a third score. Davis, a late scratch as a starter, also intercepted a pass, and had two offensive runs for scores. By halftime, Army had a commanding 33-0 lead.

Kenna added another scoring pass, and Davis another run for a score. Even Army's back-ups got into the act. Harold Tavzel, a second-string tackle, intercepted a poorly thrown pass from the Irish quarterback Frank Dancewicz, and jogged a few yards for a score. When the game was over, Army had beaten Notre Dame 59-0, handing the Irish the worst loss in the program's history. The Irish would recover, winning their last three games to finish 8-2 and they ranked No. 9 in the nation. That is how good Army was and the pundits knew it well.

When asked by a reporter about the score, Army halfback Doc Blanchard said, "If there was anyone to blame for the size of the margin, it was Notre Dame, which fired our desire to win with its long humiliation of Army teams."

## 1946 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

Returning Navy Lieutenant Frank Leahy's 1946 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team ended the football season with 8 wins and 1 tie, winning the national championship for the second time in Leahy's tenure as coach.

This was the fifth Irish team to win the national title and the second title for Leahy. The 1946 Irish was the first team/season in what is considered to be the Notre Dame Football dynasty, a stretch of games in which Notre Dame went 36-0-2 and won three national championships and two Heisman Trophies from 1946-1949.

The 1946 team was literally as good as it gets. It was cited by Sports Illustrated as the part of the second-best sports dynasty (professional or collegiate) of the 20th century as well as the second greatest college football dynasty. The season also produced one of college football's "games of the century," the famous 0-0 tie with Army at Yankee Stadium.

## 1946 Army ND Game

Considering that the last two Army encounters at Yankee Stadium in 1944 and 1945 resulted in Army wins of (0-59) and (0-48), one might have expected drama in the Army game, and there was exactly that. Both the Irish and the battle-hardened Army team came to win; yet the defenses were so good that neither could score.

The 1946 Army / Notre Dame game goes down as one of the best games of all time. The stakes were the highest. Army began the season favored to win its third straight national title. They were not even counting Notre Dame as they had trounced the Irish when the two interim coaches took over for Leahy the two prior years. The Cadets were riding an 18-game winning streak and they still had Doc Blanchard and Glenn Davis. Clearly. Nobody could beat Army or so it seemed and Army Coach Red Blaik's squad would have to be beaten to lose its status as the No.1 team in the nation.

Well, not exactly!

Frank Leahy had coached Notre Dame to a national championship in 1943, then left South Bend for the Navy and spent his duty time in the South Pacific. He returned to Notre Dame in '46 and he had a great bunch of lettermen-turned soldiers who still had playing eligibility remaining. The Irish were loaded and determined to win. Leahy's Irish not only wanted to get back their No.1 ranking, but they were none too happy about the trouncing the team received in the prior two years. They were ready to avenge the 0-59 and 0-48 losses to Army in 1944 and '45.

For years of matchups from 1913 to 1946, no games had ever been played at Notre Dame Stadium. So, it was a given that the game would be at Army, which played its home games against Notre Dame at Yankee Stadium.

The wartime gravy train of talent was over for Army, and no significant new players contributed in 1946. After two national championships, the Army team was still great at 7-0 and Notre Dame was 5-0 when the two met on November 9. The #1 Cadets came in averaging 30 points a game while the No.2 Irish averaged 35. Final score: T (0-0).

**By the way:** The 1941 ND / Army game in Frank Leahy's first year at ND, was also a 0-0 tie. The Irish finished 1941 at 8-0-1. It was the only blemish on the record and it prevented Notre Dame from winning a mythical national championship (MNC).

Army's 25-game winning streak was over but the Cadets were still unbeaten. They won their last two games but had to struggle past Navy. Meanwhile, Notre Dame shut out Northwestern and Tulane and beat Southern Cal by 20.

A week later, the final AP poll gave the championship to the Irish. Nonetheless the end-of-season polling was not always 100% accepted and there was no BCS. Army still claims what is called an MNC for 1946, giving them a trifecta. The MNC stands for Mythical National Championship.

As several other games over the years, the Army-ND game of 1946 was labeled "Game of the Century." Never before was the hype so



pervasive as much as this meeting of #1 Army and #2 Notre Dame. Before the ND players and coaches went to fight the war, Notre Dame had won the 1943 mythical national championship (MNC). Army won in 1945 and 1946 when Notre Dame was absent with leave. This 1946 special game featured some outstanding statistics:

*3 Heisman Trophy winners, 3 Outland Trophy winners, and 10 Hall of Famers, not counting the Hall of Fame coaches on each side. Notre Dame claims MNCs for 1943, 1946, 1947, and 1949, and Army claims MNCs for 1944, 1945, and 1946. This was a true clash of the titans, an intersection of 2 of the greatest runs in college football history: Army going 27-0-1 1944-1946 and Notre Dame going 36-0-2 1946-1949.*

Let's talk a bit about this great game. The information is from <http://tiptop25.com/champ1946.html>.

Army remained #1 after the scoreless tie, but when they struggled to beat 1-8 Navy 21-18 in their finale, Notre Dame passed them up for #1 in the final AP poll. To make matters murkier in 1946, (11-0) Georgia also claims an MNC for 1946, based on finishing #1 in the Williamson math formula rating.



**Pictured above is the defining play of 1946's "Game of the Century:" Notre Dame's Bill Gompers turning the corner on 4th down and heading for Army's goal line. But alas, he didn't make it. He didn't even reach the 2-yard line for a first down, and this game saw no other serious scoring threats, ending in a 0-0 stalemate. I do not have the link for the required cite below.**

...Fullback Doc Blanchard and halfback Glenn Davis were still consensus AA, for the third year in a row, and Davis also took home the Heisman Trophy this year, Blanchard having won it in 1945. End Hank Foldberg joined them as a consensus AA, and quarterback Arnold Tucker was a non-consensus AA.

### Back to the games of the ND 1946 Season

The football seasons were again able to begin on time as World War II ended the prior September (1945). And, so on September 28, the Irish played at Illinois W (26-6) before coming back to Notre Dame against Pittsburgh W (33-0) and Purdue W (49-6). From here, on October 26, the Irish traveled to Iowa W (41-6) and then on to Memorial Stadium in Baltimore to play Navy W (28-0) before 63,909 fans.

Continuing to play the service academies in consecutive weeks, Notre Dame took off for Yankee Stadium before 74,121 for its November 9 game against Army for a tie T (0-0) as discussed.



Jim Martin (38), Larry Coutre (24), Leon Hart (82) and Emil Sitko (14) arrived with the 1946 class. Up front is quarterback Bob Williams. Notre Dame.

When the Irish came back home the next week against Northwestern, they won again W (27-0). For the week before Thanksgiving, Notre Dame hit the road again and on November 23

played Tulane W (41-0) before 56,481 at Tulane Stadium in New Orleans. On November 30, USC was back on the ND schedule for a home win W (26-6).

### 1947 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

The 1947 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was another leg of the Notre Dame dynasty coached in the second year of Frank Leahy's second stint since the War. The 1947 team ended the season with 9 wins and no losses. They were unbeaten and untied and for the second time in a row for Leahy and the sixth time in history, Notre Dame won the national championship.

Let me repeat as it sounds so good, and ND fans do not get to say good things so often anymore—this ND squad was the second team in what is considered to be the Notre Dame Football dynasty. This is a stretch of games in which Notre Dame's record was a whopping 36-0-2 and the university football team won three national championships and two Heisman Trophies from 1946-1949. This team was cited by Sports Illustrated as the part of the second-best sports dynasty (professional or collegiate) of the 20th century and the second greatest college football dynasty.

The idea of the second greatest college football dynasty as of 1946 puzzled me. Was it Minnesota or Army? The 1944-49 Army team was simply outstanding and they whooped Notre Dame two times by large scores during this period. Notre Dame did not often play Minnesota

In 1933, the Minnesota Gophers won their first conference title since 1927 with a 4-0-4 record, but 1934 was the real beginning of the dynasty. During the 1934 season, Minnesota really took off, winning its first-ever national title, obviously along with its second straight conference title, with an 8-0 record.

Minnesota then won two more consecutive national championships and finished 23-1 over that three-year span. The Golden Gophers went 54-9-1 and won six conference titles while adding five national championships as well—two came before the modern AP voting era. From 1925 to 1938, Notre Dame and Minnesota played five games. One was a tie and Notre Dame won the other four games. So, I

remain puzzled for in this time period, Rockne was in the middle of a mini Notre Dame dynasty.

Right after the Minnesota dynasty happened, Army and head coach Red Blaik took over college football's elite status, winning at an unbelievable clip. From 1944-46, the Black Knights were 27-0-1 and had three national titles under their belt — which happened to be the only three “official” claimed national titles in school history.

It is hard for many of us to think of national titles for West Point with the current state of the program not being Army's best. During this time period, however, the Black Knights finished 57-3-4 as one of the most dominant runs in college football history. Army finished as one of the top two teams in the final AP poll four times as an Independent.

## 1947 games

The 1947 Notre Dame Fighting Irish season under Frank Leahy was perfect—both figuratively and literally. ND was (9-0-0) undefeated and untied. The Irish had the same outstanding qualities that brought them two consecutive national titles leading up to the 1947 season.

Lujack, 90, waving to fans in the picture on the next page, is considered one of the greatest players in Notre Dame history, leading the Fighting Irish to national championships in 1943, 1946 and 1947 in posting a 20-1-1 record as starting quarterback. He was named athlete of the year by The Associated Press in 1947, when he was a first-round draft pick of the Chicago Bears.

Lujack, who battled health issues last year when I was tuning up this write-up, in 2015, appeared in great spirits giving a wave to the crowd after his name was announced and he received a big ovation from the Irish faithful.

## Legendary Johnny Lujack returns to Notre Dame Stadium



John Lujack, the 1947 **Heisman Trophy** winning quarterback who led Notre Dame to three national championships despite missing two seasons while serving in the Navy during World War II, went out with the Fighting Irish captains for the coin toss before the 2015 game against the Midshipmen.

My good friend, former Villanova QB Jack Lammers longed as a young man to be the QB at Notre Dame. He probably would have done as well as JL due to his personal commitment to excellence and his intensity. Hanging on his bedroom wall was a picture of Johnny Lujack. Jack and I have been sharing notes through the writing of this book. He recently sent me this note which says something about Johnny Lujack. It was a story that was related to him by his wonderful late wife Eileen:

*Brian, When I was playing at Villanova Eileen was already working in a surgical unit at St. Vincent's Hosp. in NYC. A man came in for minor surgery and Eileen struck up a conversation with him. In the course of the conversation she mentioned that I was a quarterback at Villanova and asked him if he played any football. He replied, "A little". Johnny Lujack was a modest man.*  
Jack

Lujack played on both sides of the ball at ND but he is best known as a quarterback. In the most famous game of the century, you may recall that it was Johnny Lujack whose shoestring tackle on Doc Blanchard prevented a touchdown and saved the day for the Irish. Well, quarterbacks are not typically on the field when the other team has the ball.

Johnny Lujack starred at defensive back for the Bears in 1948. His 11 interceptions were third in the NFL that season, and he was named to the Chicago Herald-American's All-NFL team. The irony is that he was not supposed to be playing defense. He was drafted as a quarterback. The Bears had not drafted Lujack to play defense. So, how'd that happen?

“That first year up, Bobby Layne was the quarterback,” Lujack recalled in an interview. “They got rid of Layne, thinking I was going to take over, which I did.” Bobby Layne went on to have tremendous success and become a Pro Football Hall of Famer, Lujack's accomplishments also stand out. After all, the Bears kept him.



**Johnny Lujack Running the Football for the Chicago Bears**

Lujack was simply great and a great man besides. He was drafted in the first round by the Chicago Bears in 1948 after winning the Heisman for ND. What his pro career will not tell you is that he had previously been drafted by Chicago as a ND Junior in 1946 after the war but the young man decided to finish his degree at Notre Dame and play football for the Irish. That was the year he won the Heisman.

In the final game of the 1949 Pro season, the 9–3 Bears defeated their hometown rivals, the Chicago Cardinal (6–5–1), by a score of 52–21 on December 11. In that game Lujack threw six touchdown passes and set an NFL record with 468 passing yards. The record was broken later by Norm Van Brocklin. In the same 1949 season, he was better than Bobby Layne and the rest of the league in passing yardage (2,658) and passing touchdowns (23).

This all-around Notre Dame graduate wasn't just a threat on defense or with his arm. The following year he set a league single-season record for rushing touchdowns with 11, and he averaged over 6 yards per carry. He played just four years as a pro until his contract was up. He never made more than \$20,000 a season. He could have been the greatest pro football player ever but he had a sense of duty.

It was duty first when he joined the Navy after his standout football year of 1943. It was duty again when he was asked to return to Notre Dame to help Frank Leahy, his former coach. "I had the chance to become the quarterback coach at Notre Dame under [Head Coach Frank] Leahy's last two years, 1952 and 1953. I felt that was a good way to repay Notre Dame and Leahy for giving me a scholarship," Lujack states in the book: The Game before the Money: Voices of the Men Who Built the NFL.

#### **1948 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy**

The 1948 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Frank Leahy. Notre Dame won its first nine games and then at the end of the season, the Irish visited Southern California, a long-time rival, a nemesis, and always a very good football team. Southern Cal tied the Irish T (14-14).

But for this one faux pas, Notre Dame may have had its fourth or fifth National Championship in a row. Instead the AP selected the Fighting Irish as the #2 team in the country. The Michigan Wolverines were #1 based on strength of schedule.

The 1948 NCAA football season finished with two unbeaten teams. The Michigan Wolverines and the Clemson Tigers were both unbeaten and untied. Ultimately, Michigan was the first-place choice for the majority (192 of the 333) voters in the AP Poll. Michigan



could not play in the postseason because of a no-repeat rule for Big Nine schools.

Notre Dame, which finished 2nd in the AP Poll and tied USC 14-14 at the end of the regular season, did not participate in any bowl per university policy at the time. The Northwestern Wildcats went to the Rose Bowl and handed California a 20-14 loss. Clemson would defeat Missouri in the Gator Bowl but it did not seem to affect the Gators final ranking. Clemson came in #11.

Notre Dame played ten games in 1948 beginning the season at home with a nail-biter against Purdue W (28-27). Then off to Pitt at Pitt Stadium W (40-0). Michigan State came to South Bend on October 9 W (26-7). Notre Dame then went to Nebraska in Lincoln W (44-13).

Then it was off to Iowa W (27-12), and then at Navy W (41-7), followed by a game at Indiana (42-6). Northwestern then came to Notre Dame on November 13 and played tough W (12-7). Washington was the next at Notre Dame Stadium W (46-0). Nine ND victories in a row, and then off to Southern California while ranked # 1 and the two teams played to a tie T (14-14) The overall Fighting Irish season record was 9 wins, 1 tie. It was a great year but disappointing for sure as the Irish came in #2 because of the tie.

Some good news did happen for Notre Dame on January 30, 1948 in Wilkes-Barre PA. A future King's College student and avid Notre Dame Fan was released by the Stork at Mercy Hospital in Wilkes-Barre, PA. His name is Brian Kelly. He is not the coach as the coach is a young man. He is, however, the proud author of the book you are reading. When he used some of this research for his first book Great Moments in Notre Dame Football, this was his 63<sup>rd</sup> book. The book you are currently reading (Thank you!) is my 275<sup>th</sup>.

#### **1949 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy**

The 1949 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team, coached by Frank Leahy for the seventh time, won the national championship for the third time in four years, The Irish, ended the season with 10 wins, and no losses. ND was undefeated and untied. This 1949 squad



became the seventh Irish team to win the national title and to repeat, the third in four years.



## **Hart and Martin Lead '49 Team**

Leon Hart and James Martin, l to r... Hart was known as a 21-year-old "Monster" who had established himself as one of the great ends in Notre Dame history. This 245-pound stripling, moved swiftly on offense, blocks and tackles sharply to earn fully his All-America rating. Martin moved to the tackle post from his old end position this season, Jungle Jim has carved a name for himself in the Irish forward wall. A senior, Jim at 27 years old was heavyweight boxing champ at Notre Dame in 1947.

The Fighting Irish were led by **Heisman winner** Leon Hart throughout this championship season. Hart was a 6' 5" 260-pound end at time when they did not grow them that big. ND outscored its opponents 360-86.

This was the last Irish team to be considered part of the Notre Dame Football dynasty, a stretch of games in which Notre Dame chalked up a record of 36-0-2 and won three national championships and two Heisman Trophies.

This Irish team received many honors including a citation from Sports Illustrated as the second-best sports dynasty (professional or collegiate) of the 20th century and second greatest college football dynasty of all time.

Frank Leahy's teams after the war were the best of the best. But for the tie in USC against the Trojans in 1948, this would have been Notre Dame's fourth undefeated and untied season in a row.

I could not root for Notre Dame for much of the 1949 season due to being too young but maybe I did just a bit. I was born on January 30, 1948 to Ed and Irene Kelly. My dad loved football, and he loved Notre Dame. Over the years, he and I and my two brothers, Ed and Joe watched many a Notre Dame game together.

My father always bragged about my cousin on the Kelly or O'Boyle side, either a blood relative or a cousin by marriage as being the quarterback of Notre Dame. I was less than ten years old when I was inundated by accounts of Notre Dame and Bob Williams in the Times Leader and Sunday Independent local papers as well as the radio. We did not have a black and white TV until 1956.

As I looked up Dr. Robert "Bob" Williams in researching this book, I learned that he is a former quarterback for the University of Notre Dame. As my father never lied to me, Bob Williams is my cousin and he was a great player from the start. He played for Notre Dame and before that Williams won three championships in Wilkes-Barre, PA playing for G.A.R. Memorial High School. From his years playing for Notre Dame, Williams is best remembered for ending the record 47-game winning streak of the Oklahoma Sooners with a 7-0 victory on November 16, 1957.

When I learned this, I became convinced that the Bob Williams who quarterbacked the 1949 Notre Dame squad and I are not cousins. My cousin is Robert Williams from the mid to late 1950's. Earlier in my research, I had convinced myself that I was a two-year old child prodigy sucking up family stories about the 1949 QB Williams and Notre Dame.

It makes a lot more sense that before I was ten years old my dad and I would have watched Notre Dame on our 1956 Admiral TV. Bob Williams, though a different Bob Williams is still my cousin. How about that? Who would think ND would have two Bob Williams' in less than ten years in the starting quarterback position for the Irish.

The 1949 Notre Dame untied and undefeated team won all of its games including what I first believed was its first bowl game since the 1925 Rose Bowl.



**1949 All American ND QB Bob Williams #14 tackled in end zone**

### **1953 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy**

Let's begin our look at the 1953 season with a great introduction from the December 1953 edition of ND's Scholastic Magazine:

*December 11, 1953 Notre Dame, Ind. To OUR READERS: When eleven members of Notre Dame's 1953 pigskin squad lined up for the first whistle down in Norman, Oklahoma, earlier this Fall, they were opening up the sixty-fifth season of Irish competition in intercollegiate football.*

*And they were conscious of the fact too, that their predecessors—in the 64 seasons before them—had built a reputation for Notre Dame as one of the oldest and most consistently hard-to-beat football powers—in the nation. They carried quite a number of impressive laurels into that first game with them:*

*Notre Dame teams had brought the National Championship back to South Bend seven different times—a feat no other school had equaled in the long*

*history of collegiate football. Notre Dame teams had also won six Western Championship titles, and they had amassed a total of 17 undefeated seasons—ten of them, untied. They had established a record with modern college football's longest string of unbeaten games at 39.*

*The Fighting Irish had also turned out more All-Americans than any other college or university in the nation. The prowess of Gipp, Crowley and Brown previewed the performances of the immortal four horsemen and their rampage that set the nation's gridirons afire in the early 1920s. Since then, the roster has grown with the names of men like Carideo, Brill, Connor, Lujack, Fischer and Hart.*

*This year's team has done it again—in performances and personalities.*

*They have plowed through a suicidal schedule with what we consider as a powerful precision that matches any previous team in Notre Dame's history. At times, when the odds were stacked, they produced the stuff that has earned for them the national recognition which they justly deserve. Although not every one of them got All-American honors, every one of them played like it.*

*You've noticed, for example, that Notre Dame seldom shook one of its backs loose for long touchdown sprints this season; but they tore opposing teams to shreds with steady power plays and tricky tosses until they finally hit pay dirt. This is the story of teamwork ... the story that always ends well.*

*Looking back, we can truthfully say that it has been another great season. Most people say that this year's team will go down in the record books as one of our greatest. Only time will tell. One thing we do know, however, is that it was made up of the same stuff 64 teams before it had—the will to win.*

*We're again reminded of the words former Irish captain Jack Alessandrini once said at a pep rally before a game with Pittsburgh: "We can't be beat when we won't be beat." It's the same principle that wins National Championships and molds All Americans. As Knute Rockne put it: "I don't want a man to go in there to die gamely—I want a man to go in there fighting to live!"*

*Not -- Notre Dame plays so hard—not because she hates to lose, but because she loves to win.*

*Patrick Carrico  
Editor, the Scholastic.*

In 1953, The Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team played its last season for Coach Frank Leahy who retired for health reasons. The Irish were undefeated again under Leahy with a record of 9-0-1, which got Notre Dame a #2 finish in the national standings.

## Johnny Lattner

Leahy guided John Lattner to win the **Heisman Trophy**. It was Leahy's fourth player to win the Heisman. Lattner was an all-around great player. He did not lead the Irish in passing, rushing, receiving or scoring. However, Lattner held the Notre Dame record for all-purpose yards for twenty-six years until Vagas Ferguson broke it in 1979.

## Leahy Resigns at Notre Dame

### Only Unbeaten Major Undefeated Team

Leahy last season produced the only major undefeated college football team in the United States. Notre Dame was tied by Iowa, 14-14, but defeated the other nine opponents on its schedule. The Fighting Irish were rated # 2 behind Maryland in the Associated Press poll. But for this tie, Notre Dame would have had a perfect season and another Notional Championship (5) for Frank Leahy!

# Chapter 17 Army Coach Red Blaik 1941 - 1958

Blaik Coach # 23

Year	Coach	Record	Conference	Record
1941	Red Blaik	5-3-1	Indep	5-3-1
1942	Red Blaik	6-3-1	Indep	6-3-1
1943	Red Blaik	7-2-1	Indep	7-2-1
1944	Red Blaik	9-0-0	Indep	9-0-0
1945	Red Blaik	9-0-0	Indep	9-0-0
1946	Red Blaik	9-0-1	Indep	9-0-1
1947	Red Blaik	5-2-2	Indep	5-2-2
1948	Red Blaik	8-0-1	Indep	8-0-1
1949	Red Blaik	9-0-0	Indep	9-0-0
1950	Red Blaik	8-1-0	Indep	8-1-0
1951	Red Blaik	2-7-0	Indep	2-7-0
1952	Red Blaik	4-4-1	Indep	4-4-1
1953	Red Blaik	7-1-1	Indep	7-1-1
1954	Red Blaik	7-2-0	Indep	7-2-0
1955	Red Blaik	6-3-0	Indep	6-3-0
1956	Red Blaik	5-3-1	Indep	5-3-1
1957	Red Blaik	7-2-0	Indep	7-2-0
1958	Red Blaik	8-0-1	Indep	8-0-1



Coach Red Blaik with offensive stars Doc Blanchard and Glenn Davis

## Army's Greatest Coach

Earl "Red" Blaik was everything Americans would expect a graduate of the United States Military Academy to be: an officer, a gentleman, and a winner: as West Point's head football coach from 1941 through 1958, he was one of the best coaches in American College Football ever.

In this chapter, we cover each of Army's finest seasons during Earl "Red" Blaik's mentorship of the great Army football team that occurred during his tenure. He was a great coach so expect a lot of stories.

In his 18 years at West Point, Red Blaik was like a Knute Rockne or Nick Saban or Bear Bryant or Joe Paterno as he competently coached two national champions (most credit Army with three national championships—a tie with ND in 1946) and six unbeaten teams. He was even better than that. Even more important than his 166 wins, though, was the example of leadership he provided at a place where leadership is prized.

In the mid-1940s, coincidental with the arrival of Red Blaik, Army football became one of college football's greatest dynasties. It was a tumultuous time for America, amid World War II, and college football had been shaken up like every other part of life. Some schools such as Gonzaga lost so many players that they stopped playing and never came back. This great basketball powerhouse had a nice football program going into World War II. Today, they seem to be doing quite nicely in basketball.

Like many colleges, their football program went on hiatus during World War II (from April 1942). After the war, the administration decided not to resume it. The program had been in some financial difficulty prior to the war and it seemed like a good idea at the time to forego the sport at Gonzaga.

There were more and more young men heading to combat and other roles to support the war effort. Many top players flocked to military training centers before heading overseas. And, of course, many great players chose to come to West Point. Army football had been strong before and after World War I under great coaches such as Charles Daly and Biff Jones. Army football had a storied rivalry with Notre Dame dating back to 1913 when Rockne and Dorais played for the Irish.

But in the post Rockne era, something happened to Army. From 1932-43, while ND was fielding its worst teams since Rockne, Army failed to beat Notre Dame, managing only two ties. That soon changed under the tutelage of Red Blaik. Football was maturing as an American sport and strategies were ever so much more important to have successful seasons. Earl Blaik was a master planner and very serious about winning football games.



Blaik was already an accomplished football master when he came to Army. It was not an easy decision for him. As a West Point grad, he made a difficult decision to leave Dartmouth, where he had done well



with a record of 45-15-4 in seven seasons. His team had just finished seventh in the AP poll in 1937. After three solid seasons back at West Point, Blaik's Black Knights went 27-0-1 from 1944-46. It was unexpected and wonderful. Army was beating everybody during the war including the Germans and the Japanese. The US as a whole, was rooting for Army's continual football success.

Army became undisputed national champions in Blaik's first two years. Notre Dame tried to make a difference in favor of the Irish but Army was for the most part, too good.

In 1944, Army did not allow more than a TD in a game and beat Notre Dame 59-0 and Navy 23-7. In 1945, Army beat then-No. 2 Notre Dame 48-0 and then the Cadets whooped #2 Navy 32-13. In 1946, Notre Dame had one of its most talented teams ever, with the war over, and the two battled to a 0-0 tie.

The Fighting Irish were voted to be the # 1 college team in the final AP poll when Army barely hung on for a 21-18 win over 1-8 Navy. Navy always played its best v Army and vice versa.

Army had a 9-0-1 record and the Army team was recognized by the CFB Research Group as champions and by the Helms group for a tie with Notre Dame. Notre Dame's record was 8-0-1 and their support by AP gave the Irish the consensus championship but many consider Notre & Army as having a share of the gold that year. ND backers included the National Championship Foundation, AP Poll, and Helms (tie).

The photo on the next page shows some action in what is now referred to as the 1946 championship of ND V Army. Let's examine it briefly

This opportune photo above is considered by the football scholars and pundits as the defining play of 1946's "Game of the Century." In this play as you can see clearly in the photo, Notre Dame's Bill Gompers turned the corner on 4th down and headed for Army's goal line. But alas, he did not make it. In fact, he did not even reach the 2-yard line for a first down. In this game, there were no other serious scoring threats, and so this "Game of the Century," ended in a 0-0 stalemate.



Yes it was 1946 and it had been a little more than a year since the war had ended. Army had two in a row and ND had their best team, perhaps ever... Nonetheless, without cell phones or TV and a 24-hour news cycle, somehow everybody in the country knew this game was coming. Many have said that never before had a game been hyped as much as this meeting of #1 Army and #2 Notre Dame. Other games had been called "Game of the Century" in the past, but this was the first to be widely described as such by the press nationwide before the game.

Army had been kicked around by ND for a number of years before Red Blaik, and now with two in a row under their belts, Army was confident that it could beat ND a third time. Hey, the Army Cadets were the 2-time defending national champion. They came into the game with a 25-game winning streak.

They had whooped Notre Dame 59-0 and 48-0 the previous 2 years. But it was a different ND team this particular year. Frank Leahy, ND's coach, other coaches, and a number of players were now back from the war, and when the last time this particular group were on campus, Notre Dame had beaten Army and had won the 1943 mythical national championship (MNC).

This game had the top greats from the period playing together on the same field. The game featured 3 Heisman Trophy winners, 3 Outland Trophy winners, and 10 Hall of Famers, not counting the Hall of Fame coaches on each side.

Notre Dame claims MNCs for 1943, 1946, 1947, and 1949, and Army claims MNCs for 1944, 1945, and 1946. This was a true clash of the titans, an intersection of 2 of the greatest runs in college football history: Army going 27-0-1 from 1944-1946 and Notre Dame going 36-0-2 from 1946-1949.

Army kept its spot at #1 after the scoreless tie, but when they struggled to beat 1-8 Navy 21-18 in their final game, Notre Dame passed them up for the #1 ranking in the final AP poll. Above the picture, we showed how all of the organizations listed in the NCAA Records Book see the 1946 mythical national championship (omitting math/computer ratings, which are not generally accepted as MNCs).

Both ND and Army have a right to their claims for a national championship. Since there were no official agencies like we have today, most consider that ND and Army shared the 1946 Mythical National Championship.

Army's three-year peak was nearly unmatchable, with Heisman winners Doc Blanchard and Glenn Davis sharing the backfield, but it wasn't the end of Blaik's success. While Notre Dame was getting tougher and tougher with Frank Leahy back in football action, Army was doing well with Red Blaik but ND's 36-0-2 record to 1949 was also unmatched.

With Blaik as the master, and a strict disciplinarian, nobody expected what happened to Army. An academic cheating scandal in 1951 ripped apart Blaik's team. Blaik's son was part of the scandal and he was forced to leave the Academy. Blaik persevered and after just a couple down years, including Blaik's' only losing season of 18 great seasons, Army football bounced back.

Red Blaik ended his career on a high note in 1958, coaching an 8-0-1 team that finished third in the AP poll and featured Heisman winner Pete Dawkins, making it the last national powerhouse West Point football team.

In his career, Earl “Red” Blaik coached three Heisman winners and eight top-10 teams at Army, with two undisputed national championships and claims to share the '46 title as well. To enhance his legacy, Blaik produced an astounding coaching tree, headlined by five-year assistant Vince Lombardi. Now, we get to look at the action in those eighteen years, so hold on folks, we’re just a few text lines away. Enjoy!

#### **1941 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Red Blaik**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1941 college football season. It was their fifty-second season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Earl “Red” Blaik in his first of eighteen seasons as head coach of the Cadets. As an independent football entity, the Army team had a record of 5-3-1.

#### **1942 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Red Blaik**

The Cadets compiled a 6-3-1 record.

#### **1943 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Red Blaik**

As an independent football entity, the Army team had a record of 7-2-11. Army had begun to win the big ones. This year, the Cadets were the #11 ranked team in the country. Not bad so close to being rock bottom. Wait until 1944 for some real National Level fireworks!

#### **1944 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Red Blaik**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1944 college football season. It was their fifty-fifth season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Earl “Red” Blaik in his fourth of eighteen seasons as head coach of the Cadets. As an independent football entity, the Army team had a perfect record of 9-0-0. This year Blaik’s Army team showed that they had learned to win the big ones.

This year, they won everything big to small to all things in-between. This year, the Cadets were the #1 ranked team in the nation Not bad for a team that four years prior was at the bottom. This year, thanks to

the Brass's faith in Red Blaik, the Army celebrated with some live National Level fireworks with a consensus National Championship.

The Cadets compiled a 9-0-0 perfect record. Firing shutouts right and left, the Cadets shut out four of their ten opponents, and outscored their opponents 504 points to 35 points. At the season's end, the team won a national championship. The team captain was Tom Lombardo. Showing the guts of the Army team in all kinds of action, in 1950, Lombardo was killed in action during the Korean War.

Dewitt Tex Coulter was All American as tackle via UP2, Glenn Davis, Halfback, and Doc Blanchard fullback were All American by just about everybody's standards such as AAB, AP, FN, INS, NEA, SN, UP , LK, etc. Army had a great team and great players and a great coach.

Army began its 1944 season on Sept 30 with a whooping shutout of North Carolina W (46-0) All Army home games, were played at Michie Stadium on the Campus of the USMA at West Point. On Oct 7 at home, Army shellacked Brown W (59-7) and then invited Pittsburgh to travel to Michie the following week on Oct 14 to be whacked W (69-7) by the Cadets.

The following week at Michie stadium, the #2 ranked Cadets thumped the Coast Guard W (76-0) Army was not trained to react to the cry of "Uncle" from its opponents. Duke looked like a championship team at the Polo Grounds in NY compared to all others who so far had met the onslaught of the Cadet Offense and the quick closes of the West Point Defense. Army did need to work to dispose of Duke W (27-7)

Army scores were never so high because Army had never been quite this good and this was reflected on Nov 4 at Michie v Villanova in a shutout rout W (83-0). No team at Army had ever shellacked Notre Dame until Red Blaik came to town. Red's Cadets beat the Tar out of ND at Yankee Stadium in the Bronx, NY as big as a win v ND could ever be W (59-0).

As good as Penn was at the time and before, their great team looked like mush-meat at Franklin Field when on the same field with Army in 1944. The vaunted Penn got thumped just like everybody else W (62-7). Ya got to give it to the Navy. Despite all the thumping, shellacking, whooping and outright devastating opponents by large scores, Navy

kept its pride. They lost big-time to Army but by a respectable W (23-7). For Army, the Navy win was the sweetest of the season.

Army was as good as it gets in 1944.

Great day for Army! Bad day for Navy and it was not about to change the next year or the next.

## Army Navy Game #1 Best Game

Army came into this contest 8-0, having outscored opponents by a combined score of 481-28. But, the Cadets also came in with something to prove, having lost to Navy, 13-0, a year earlier.

Making that 1943 result even worse for Army was that the game took place in West Point.

The top-ranked Cadets got their revenge, dominating the No. 2 Midshipmen, 23-7, despite throwing five interceptions and fumbling three times.

Competing two weeks before the six-week war episode known as the *Battle of the Bulge* and featuring a backfield that included future Heisman Trophy winners Glenn Davis and Doc Blanchard, Army outrushed its rivals, 181-71.

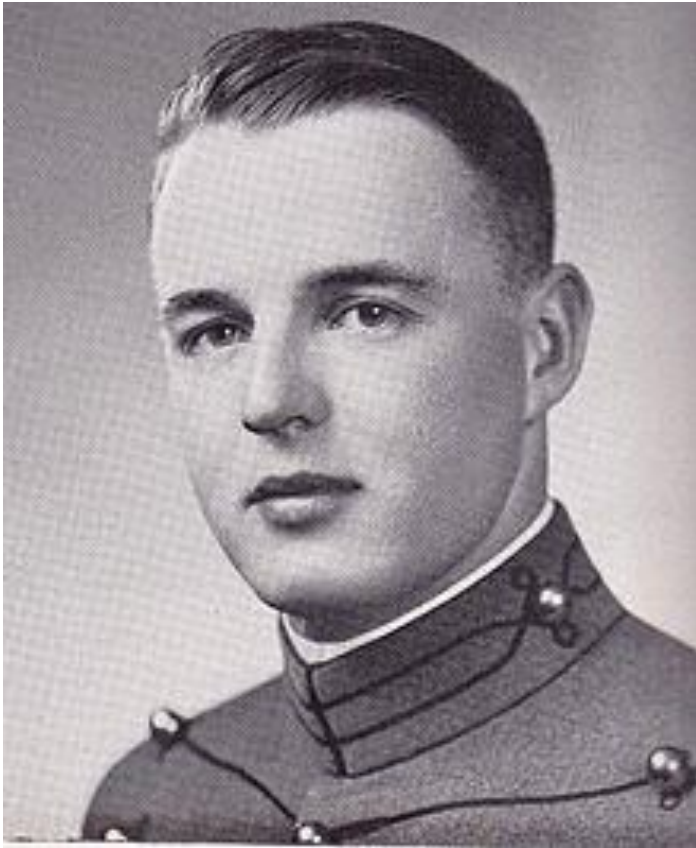
FYI, The Allies won the Battle of the Bulge, resulting in significantly higher casualties on the German side despite their surprise attack on Allied forces. Losing 120,000 people and military supplies, German forces were dealt an irreparable blow, while Allied forces suffered “only” 75,000 casualties.

And after the football contest, the team received a telegram from Gen. Douglas MacArthur, halfway around the world and full of pride.

"The greatest of all Army teams—STOP—We have stopped the war to celebrate your magnificent success. MacArthur."

## 1944 Player Highlights Glenn Davis, B

Glenn Woodward Davis was born on the day after Christmas, on December 26, 1924. The Canadians celebrate Boxer day on December 26. Davis was a college and professional American football player for Army and then for the Los Angeles Rams. He is best known for his college football career for the United States Military Academy at West Point from 1943 to 1946. Davis was known as "Mr. Outside." He was named a consensus All-American three times, and in 1946, he won the Heisman Trophy and was named Sporting News Player of the Year and Associated Press Athlete of the Year. He was one of the best football players of all time on one of the best teams of all time.



Glenn Davis 1947 Yearbook Photo

In 1974, his exploits, and those of the 1944 Army team, are mentioned by Lou Grant while discussing football with another man in a public

bar in season five, episode 16 of The Mary Tyler Moore Show (1970–77), which aired on Saturday, January 4, 1975. In 1996, Davis married Yvonne Ameche, widow of NFL star Alan Ameche. Davis passed away in 2015

### **1945 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Red Blaik**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1945 college football season. It was their fifty-sixth season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Earl “Red” Blaik in his fifth of eighteen seasons as head coach of the Cadets. As an independent football entity, the Army team had a perfect record of 9-0-0 for the second year in a row.

Hard as it is for most humans to believe, this is the same record that Army posted the prior year and it is not a duplicate. That’s how good the Army team had gotten because of Red Blaik and the Army Brass loosening up on items in the agenda that were not football oriented.

Army had already learned to win the big ones. This year, they won everything again. The Cadets were the #1 ranked team in the nation

The Cadets compiled a 9-0-0 perfect record. The Cadets shut out five of their nine opponents, and they outscored their opponents 412 points to 46 points. At the season’s end, the team won a national championship.

Doc Blanchard won the Heisman Trophy in 1945. Army All Americans are listed below with their positions, and sponsoring group to the right

Glenn Davis--Halfback—AAB, AFCA, AP, COL, FWAA, INS, LK, NEA, SN, UP, CNS, CP, NL, NYS, OF, WC, YA

Doc Blanchard—Fullback—AAB, AFCA, AP, COL, FWAA, INS, LK, NEA, SN, UP CNS, CP, NL NYS, OF, WC, YA

Tex Coulter--Tackle—AAB, AFCA, AP, COL FWAA, INS, NEA, SN, UPCNS, CP, NL, NYS, OF, WC



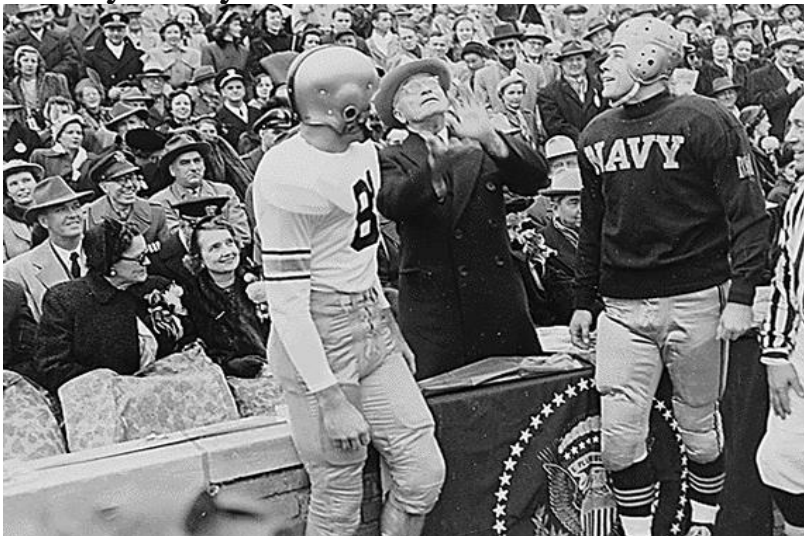
John Green—Guard—AAB, AFCA, COL, FWAA, LK, SN, UP, CNS, CP, WC

Army began its 1945 season on Sept 30 with a shutout of Louisville AAF, W (32-0). This home opener and all Army home games, were played at Michie Stadium on the Campus of the USMA at West Point. On Oct 6 at home, Army shellacked and shut out Wake Forest W (54-0) and then invited Michigan to Yankee Stadium for a neutral game. The Cadets beat the Wolverines W (28-7) On Oct 20, #1 Army played against the Melville PT Boats in a big win W (55-13). On Oct 27, the Cadets beat Duke at the Polo Grounds in NY W (48-13)

On Nov 3, the Cadets defeated Villanova at home at Michie in a blowout W (54-0). The Cadets had blowout fever as they kept it up another week this time blowing Notre Dame out of Yankee Stadium W (48-0). On Nov 17, the Cadets pounced on the Penn Quakers in at Franklin Field a big rout W (61-0). In the Army Navy-Game on Dec 1, Army defeated Navy in a tough game but the score was very convincing as to who the best was in the battle of the service academies. W (32-13). Army, for the second year in a row, 1945, was as good as it gets.

Dec 1 was a great day for Army! It was a bad day for Navy and it was not about to change the next year.

### Best Army Navy Game #3



President Truman Tossing the Coin

This is well before 2011's LSU-Alabama game was designated the first "Game of the Century."

And this one was all Army.

Behind the play of eventual Heisman Trophy winner Felix "Doc" Blanchard, the top-ranked Cadets topped No. 2 Navy, 32-13. Blanchard finished the day with three touchdowns, one of which came on an interception.

His backfield mate, Glenn Davis, who also left West Point with a Heisman, made up for throwing an early interception by running for a 28-yard touchdown late in the game. Army would go on to win the national championship.

## 1944 Player Highlights Doc Blanchard



Doc Blanchard Yearbook Picture

Felix Anthony “Doc” Blanchard was born in 1924. He was a great athlete and especially a great college football player. He led Army to three consecutive National Championships in 1944-1946 and as a junior, became the first college football player to win the James E. Sullivan Award, as the nation’s “outstanding amateur athlete” while also grabbing both the Heisman Trophy and Maxwell Award that same year (1945).

He had led his St. Stanislaus College high school team to an undefeated season as a senior, and thus, he was highly recruited and he chose to play for the University of North Carolina Tar Heels. However, in 1943, during World War II, “Doc” (named for his father’s profession as a boy), enlisted in the United States Army and his father secured him an appointment to West Point where he played three more seasons.

In 1944, as Army faced Notre Dame, Doc Blanchard compiled 56 of the teams 59 points in their 59-0 rout of the Fighting Irish. Following the game, Notre Dame coach Ed McKeever quipped, “I’ve just seen Superman in the flesh. He wears number 35 and goes by the name of Blanchard.” He served as fullback for the Cadets, but also played linebacker, placekicker and punter with Army and in 1944, he earned All-American honors (his first of three selections) as he led them to the first of three straight College Football National Championships – the only three in school history to date, though there are some mythical championships and a lot of undefeated seasons that may count over time.

Blanchard, also known as “Mr. Inside,” to Davis’ “Mr. Outside”, won the Heisman Trophy, Maxwell Award and the first ever James E. Sullivan Award in 1945, becoming the first junior to garner all three awards. Displaying the duo’s absolute dominance of their era, Davis won the Maxwell Award in 1944 and then took home the Heisman in 1946. Playing under Earl “Red” Blaik, Blanchard and his backfield partner in crime Glenn Davis led the Cadets to an undefeated 27-0-1 record, with the only blemish coming in a 0-0 tie with Notre Dame in 1946.

In the 1946 NFL Draft, the Pittsburgh Steelers selected Doc third overall, but he chose a career in the United States Air Force as a fighter pilot. After a 25-year career in the Air Force, receiving multiple

commendations for bravery and service, Doc Blanchard retired in 1971 as a full colonel. He then spent a number of years as the commandant of Cadets at the New Mexico Military Institute. In 1959, Doc Blanchard was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame.

Since 2004, Rotary International has presented the Doc Blanchard Award and the Glenn Davis Award to the top two high school football players participating the U.S. Army All-American Bowl as the players “who best exemplify the U.S. Army’s high standard of excellence in community service, education and athletic distinction.”

### **1946 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Red Blaik**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1946 college football season. It was their fifty-seventh season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Earl “Red” Blaik in his sixth of eighteen seasons as head coach of the Cadets. As an independent football entity, the Army team had an undefeated record of 9-0-1 with a tie to spoil it from being perfect.

The Cadets spent most of the season as the #1 ranked team in the nation. The Cadets compiled a 9-0-1 undefeated record. The Cadets shut out five of their nine opponents, and they outscored their opponents 263 points to 80 points. At the season’s end, the team came in #2 according to AP. The squad was also recognized as national champions for the 1946 season by several selectors. The 1946 Army vs. Notre Dame football game at Yankee Stadium is regarded as one of college football's Games of the Century.

1946 college football season.

The 1946 NCAA football season finished with the Notre Dame Fighting Irish crowned as the national champion in the AP Poll, with the United States Military Academy named as national champion in various other polls and rankings. In history, most observers give both teams credit as National Champions. Their 0-0 head to head battle proved both teams were great.

Glenn Davis won the Heisman Trophy in 1946. Army All Americans are listed below with their positions, and sponsoring group to the right

**Glenn Davis**—Halfback—AAB , AFCA, AP, CO, FWAA, INS, NEA, SN, UP, CP, WC

**Doc Blanchard**—Fullback—AAB, AFCA, AP, CO, FWAA, INS, NEA, SN, UP CP, WC

**Hank Foldberg**—End—CO, INS, NEA, UP

The 1946 Army football season began later in September earlier later than usual on Sept 21 with a shutout of Villanova, W (35-0) This home opener and all Army home games, were played at Michie Stadium on the Campus of the USMA at West Point. On Sept 28, at home, Army defeated Oklahoma W (21-7). On Oct 5. On Oct 12 at Michigan Stadium in Ann Arbor, MI, the #2 Cadets defeated the #4 Wolverines W (20-13). On Oct 19, at home, the Cadets defeated the Columbia Terriers W (48-14)

On Nov 9 at Yankee Stadium in the Bronx, NY. the Cadets and the Fighting Irish played what many call the best college football game in history. If you like high scoring games, you would not like this game but if you like tough, smash-mouth football, this was the best game ever. It was a battle of #1 Army coached by the immortal Red Blaik, v #2 Notre Dame coached by the immortal Frank Leahy. Neither team would give an inch—literally and the game wound up in a scoreless tie T (0-0).

On Nov 16, the Cadets still ranked #1 after the tie, defeated the #5 ranked Penn Quakers W (34-7). At the end of the season, Navy was all that mattered to Army and the Cadets had a real tough game against the Midshipmen but prevailed by the close score of W (21-18). At Philadelphia's Municipal Stadium in PA. This close game hurt Blaik's Army team in its desire to be the undisputed college football champion in America.

#### **1948 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Red Blaik**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1948 college football season. It was their fifty-ninth season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Earl "Red"

Blaik in his eighth of eighteen seasons as head coach of the Cadets. As an independent football entity, the Army team had an undefeated record of 8-0-1.

The Cadets compiled an 8-0-1 record. They shut out two of their nine opponents, and they outscored their opponents 294 points to 89 points. At the season's end, the team came in #6 in the National standings.

During the season, head coach Earl Blaik implemented a two-platoon system, using specialists strictly for offense and defense. Offensive coach Gillman left Army after the season to become the head coach at the University of Cincinnati.

As happens just about every year, after a good or bad season, Army gets to play in the Army-Navy-Game. This year, the game was played on Nov 27 in Philadelphia Municipal Stadium in Phila., PA. Army was undefeated but that did not matter to Navy and they pulled out all the stops and the Midshipmen were able to tie the Cadets in a tough encounter T (21-21).

Going into the game undefeated, one must ask what impact the tie to Navy had on the Red Blaik team's opportunities for another National Championship. Well, we know it did not help one bit, no matter how tough a game it was.

#### **1949 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Red Blaik**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1949 college football season. It was Army's sixtieth season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Earl "Red" Blaik in his ninth of eighteen seasons as head coach of the Cadets. As an independent football entity, the Army team had an undefeated and untied record (perfect) of 9-0-0.

The Cadets compiled a 9-0-0 record. Is that not impressive in its frequency? They shut out two of their nine opponents, and they outscored their opponents 354 points to 68 points. Army was phenomenal and had a perfect record but it was not good enough for

those calling the shots. At the season's end, the team came in #4 in the National standings. You cannot do much better than a perfect record.

Arnold Galiffa was the starting quarterback. Blaik had picked him ahead of his own son, Bob. Johnny Trent was the team captain. The Cadets won the Lambert-Meadowlands Trophy as the best college team in the East. At season's end, Red Blaik confessed that he had thoughts of retiring. Why no National Championship with a perfect record? They are not too easy to come by. Red Blaik was simply a great coach. Even he wondered what was wrong with "perfect." Looking at the schedule, one must conclude that the teams Army played were not slackers.

The 1949 Army football season began with a blowout on Sept 24, over Davidson, W (47-7) This home opener and all Army home games, were played at Michie Stadium on the Campus of the USMA at West Point. On Oct 1, at home, Army won by a blowout over Penn State by the same exact score W (47-7). Feeling good about winning, the Army Cadets took on the #1 ranked Michigan team in Michigan Stadium on Oct 8 and put a hurt on the Wolverines creating a W 21-7) victory for Army. On Oct 15, at Harvard's Harvard Stadium in Boston MA, the Cadets beat the Crimson in a shootout W (54-14).

On Oct 22, #2 ranked Army defeated Columbia at home W (63-6). Then, on Oct 29, at home, #2 Army beat VMI w (40-14). On Nov 5, at home, the Cadets shut out Fordham W (35-)

Next up on Nov 12, in another very good Army year a tough Penn Team showed up and demanded to be played. This game was at Franklin Field, Philadelphia PA. The Cadets beat the Quakers in another tough battle W (14-13).

### **Army/Navy Game**

Regardless of how Army or Navy played through any season, either can have a fan/alumni resurrection with a victory over the other in the Army-Navy-Game. This year, the game was played on Nov 26 in Philadelphia Municipal Stadium in Philadelphia, PA. Army was undefeated but that did not matter to Navy and the Midshipmen tried to do what it could to shape the game's eventuality.

Since Army dominated by a shutout win of W (38-0), I am really not sure what Navy could have done to look better other than to have been able to play better against a phenomenally tough Army team/

Going into this game undefeated, one must ask what impact a great win over Navy had on the Red Blaik team's opportunities for another National Championship. Well, we know it did not happen and many wonder to this day, Why Not? To Army, Red Blaik was like Knute Rockne was to Notre Dame. And, from a guy who studied both; he should have been. Blaik, who retired in 1958, is recognized as is Rockne, as one of college football's true immortals.

Notre Dame and Army had 9-0 records; but the national title was awarded to Notre Dame with Frank Leahy as the coach. Red Blaik's Army team finished at #4.

#### **1950 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Red Blaik**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1950 college football season. It was Army's sixty-first season of intercollegiate football. They were coached by Earl "Red" Blaik in his tenth of eighteen seasons as head coach of the Cadets. As an independent football entity, the Army team had a great, almost perfect record of 8-1-0. Try and do better yourself.

The Cadets compiled an 8-1-0 record. Considering how frequently Earl Blaik brought in a great team, that is another impressive record. They shut out five of their nine opponents, and they outscored their opponents 267 points to 40 points. Bob Blaik, the son of the coach, was the starting quarterback.

Army had a phenomenal one-loss (to Navy) record and the team did quite well finishing #5 in the Coaches' poll and #2 in the AP poll. Nothing including a championship level record mattered in the Army-Navy Game. All Army's great record did was make a poor Navy team ((2-6 going into the game) want to play better and they did. They topped the Cadets L (2-14), finishing their season at 3-6.



**1953 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Red Blaik**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1953 college football season. It was Army's sixty-fourth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Coach Earl "Red" Blaik in his thirteenth of eighteen seasons as head coach of the Cadets. As an independent football entity, the Army team had another fine season under coach Red Blaik 7-1-1,

The Cadets compiled a 7-1-1 record. After his 1952 building year, the building was done, and the Red Blaik Army team was ready to kick butt. Not sure if "Kick Butt" was an appropriate Army slogan but the fans did not care. Army was back. The Cadet fans were cheering for Army while the Cadets were winning most of their games. The Army Cadets finished the season by winning the Lambert-Meadowlands Trophy, awarded to the top college team in the East.

The Cadets had lost six players, including Freddie Myers, to academic ineligibility. The Cadets defeated Furman 41-0, the team's first shutout since the 1951 scandal, and the goings became bright.

After a tough loss to Northwestern, the Cadets were undefeated for the rest of the season. In a scoreless tie against the Tulane Green Wave, future Green Bay Packer Max McGee played exceptionally for Tulane. After too many years in a row of losses to Navy, in the Army-Navy game, Army's 20-7 victory over Navy was embraced and celebrated as it was the first since 1949.

The turning point of the season was an October victory over #7 ranked Duke University. Duke had the great named players such as Red Smith and Worth (A Million) Lutz. Tommy Bell ran up the middle and got his due. Quarterback Pete Vann switched the ball to his left hand and made a southpaw pass. Red Smith was tackled by Bob Mischak in the final minutes of the game. Mischak ran 73 yards to make the tackle catching up eight yards of separation to save a touchdown.

Inspired by Mischak, Army held Duke inside the one-yard line, took over on downs, and eventually won the game. " Army had gotten the sludge behind them and had begun enjoying football again...And, the results wowed in the scores for Red Blaik's team produced throughout this great season.

"When Bob Mischak made that unlikely play, what Blaik called "a marvelous display of heart and pursuit," the Army football team regained its soul." Direct quote from Maraness.

Army restarted its football season program for 1953 on September 26 against Furman at home with a great shutout win W (41-0). All Army home games were played at Michie Stadium in West Point NY as was this season's opener. In the second game, the Cadets rolled out to play at Dyche Stadium in Evanston IL against a very tough Northwestern team and it they got beaten for the only time in 1953 L (20-23).

On Oct 10, v Dartmouth at home, the Cadets shut out the Big Green W (27-0). In a nail-biter on Oct 17 vs. Duke at the Polo Grounds in New York, NY, the Cadets skimmed by the Blue Devils W (14-13). Next was Oct 24 at home vs. Columbia, the Cadets beat the Lions W (40-7).

The following week on Oct 31 at Tulane in a game played at Tulane Stadium in New Orleans, LA, the Cadets managed a tie against the Green Wave. On Nov 7 at home, Army defeated NC State W (27-7). Then, on Nov 14, the Cadets traveled to Franklin Field, Philadelphia, PA to beat the Penn Quakers W (21-14).

The season-making or breaking encounter with the Midshipmen in the Army-Navy Game on Nov 28 at Municipal Stadium, Philadelphia, PA, Army put Navy away W (20-7)

#### **1954 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Red Blaik**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1954 college football season. It was Army's sixty-fifth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Coach Earl "Red" Blaik in his fourteenth of eighteen seasons as head coach of the Cadets. As an independent football entity, the Army team had another fine season under coach Red Blaik 7-2-0.

#### **1958 Army West Point Cadets Football Coach Red Blaik**

The Army Cadets football team represented the United States Military Academy in the 1958 college football season. It was Army's sixty-

ninth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Coach Earl “Red” Blaik in his eighteenth and last of eighteen seasons as head coach of the Cadets. As an independent football entity, the Army team had an undefeated season under coach Red Blaik 8-0-1.

The Cadets compiled an 8-0-1 record; shut out two opponents and outscored all opponents by a combined total of 264 to 49. In the annual Army–Navy Game, the Cadets beat the Midshipmen by a score of 22 to 6. The Cadets also tied Pittsburgh 14 to 14. At season's end, the team was third in the national rankings by both major polling organizations. Red Blaik had a phenomenal record at Army and is the premiere Army immortal coach with an overall record of 121-33-10. Just phenomenal!

Army's Pete Dawkins was honored after this season with the Heisman Trophy.

On Oct 25, At Pittsburgh's Pitt Stadium in Pittsburgh, PA, Army suffered its only blemish of the year as the Panthers tied the Cadets T (14-14). It was enough to drop Army to #3 and the Cadets never got the top spot back.

For whatever reason, perhaps because of the low score against Rice, Army slipped to #5 right before the Army-Navy Game at Municipal Stadium on Philadelphia. The Cadets beat the Midshipmen for a nice win (22-6).

This was a unique Army Navy game with two legends playing – one on each team. The game featured a matchup of two Heisman Trophy winners — Army's Pete Dawkins, the 1958 winner, and Navy's Joe Bellino, the 1960 winner. These two exceptional players were also exceptional men; Dawkins was ultimately a Rhodes Scholar, Brigadier General and candidate for Senate, while Bellino played for the AFL's Boston Patriots and served in the Navy and Naval Reserve for 28 years.

Dawkins' Cadets finished the 1958 season unbeaten with a 22–6 win over the Midshipmen. Army had other fine years but this year would be Army's last unbeaten season and of course it was legendary coach **Red Blaik's** last at the helm.

# Chapter 18 Clemson—Jess Neely & Frank Howard 1931-1969

Coach # 16 Jess Neely

Year	Coach	Record	Conference	Record
1931	Jess Neely	1-6-2	SoCon	1-4-0
1932	Jess Neely	3-5-1	SoCon	0-4-0
1933	Jess Neely	3-6-2	SoCon	0-3-0
1934	Jess Neely	5-4-0	SoCon	2-2-0
1935	Jess Neely	6-3-0	SoCon	2-1-0
1936	Jess Neely	5-5-0	SoCon	3-2-0
1937	Jess Neely	4-4-1	SoCon	2-0-1
1938	Jess Neely	7-1-1	SoCon	3-0-1
1939	Jess Neely	9-1-0	SoCon	4-0-0
1940*	Frank Howard	6-2-1	SoCon	4-0-0
1941	Frank Howard	7-2-0	SoCon	5-1-0
1942	Frank Howard	3-6-1	SoCon	2-3-1
1943	Frank Howard	2-6-0	SoCon	2-3-0
1944	Frank Howard	4-5-0	SoCon	3-1-0
1945	Frank Howard	6-3-1	SoCon	2-1-1
1946	Frank Howard	4-5-0	SoCon	2-3-0
1947	Frank Howard	4-5-0	SoCon	1-3-0
1948*	Frank Howard	11-0-0	SoCon	5-0-0
1949	Frank Howard	4-4-2	SoCon	2-2-0
1950	Frank Howard	9-0-1	SoCon	3-0-1
1951	Frank Howard	7-3-0	SoCon	0-1-0
1953	Frank Howard	3-5-1	ACC	1-2-0
1954	Frank Howard	5-5-0	ACC	1-2-0
1955	Frank Howard	7-3-0	ACC	3-1-0
1956*	Frank Howard	7-2-2	ACC	4-0-1
1957	Frank Howard	7-3-0	ACC	4-3-0
1958	Frank Howard	8-3-0	ACC	5-1-0
1959*	Frank Howard	9-2-0	ACC	6-1-0
1960	Frank Howard	6-4-0	ACC	4-2-0
1961	Frank Howard	5-5-0	ACC	3-3-0
1962	Frank Howard	6-4-0	ACC	5-1-0
1963	Frank Howard	5-4-1	ACC	5-2-0
1964	Frank Howard	3-7-0	ACC	2=4-0
1965*	Frank Howard	5-5-0	ACC	5-2-0
1966**	Frank Howard	6-4-0	ACC	6-1-0
1967*	Frank Howard	6-4-0	ACC	6-0-0
1968	Frank Howard	4-5-1	ACC	4-1-1
1969	Frank Howard	4-6-0	ACC	3-3-0

\* Five conference championships from 1955 to 1969



Coach Jess Neely

## Jess Neely

Jess Neely was the first Clemson head coach to stay more than four consecutive years at Clemson. He added needed stability to a program that was just waiting to break out. Nothing worth having is easy. Jess Neely knew that his team needed to be financed properly in order to survive and be able to win in the Southern Conference. After his 1-6-2 season his first year, at other institutions that were well endowed and had a lot of rich alums, they would be calling for his head.

Neely kept at it and succeeded and he eventually had a great four-year record, capped by one of the finest bowl game victories over a coach who would soon have four national championships to his credit. Who knows if Clemson would have made it through the war years without the boost that the programs created by Jess Neely gave to the Clemson

Tigers. We'll never have to answer that because Jess Neely was there at the right time and Clemson continues as the beneficiary.

### **1938 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Jess Neely**

The 1938 Clemson Tigers football team represented Clemson College during the 1938 college football season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). Jess Neely was the head football coach for his eighth of nine seasons. The Tigers completed their forty third season overall and their seventeenth in the Southern Conference with a record of 7-1-1; 3-0-1 in the SoCon. They were ranked second out of 15 active SoCon teams. Charlie Woods was the captain.

### **1939 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Jess Neely**

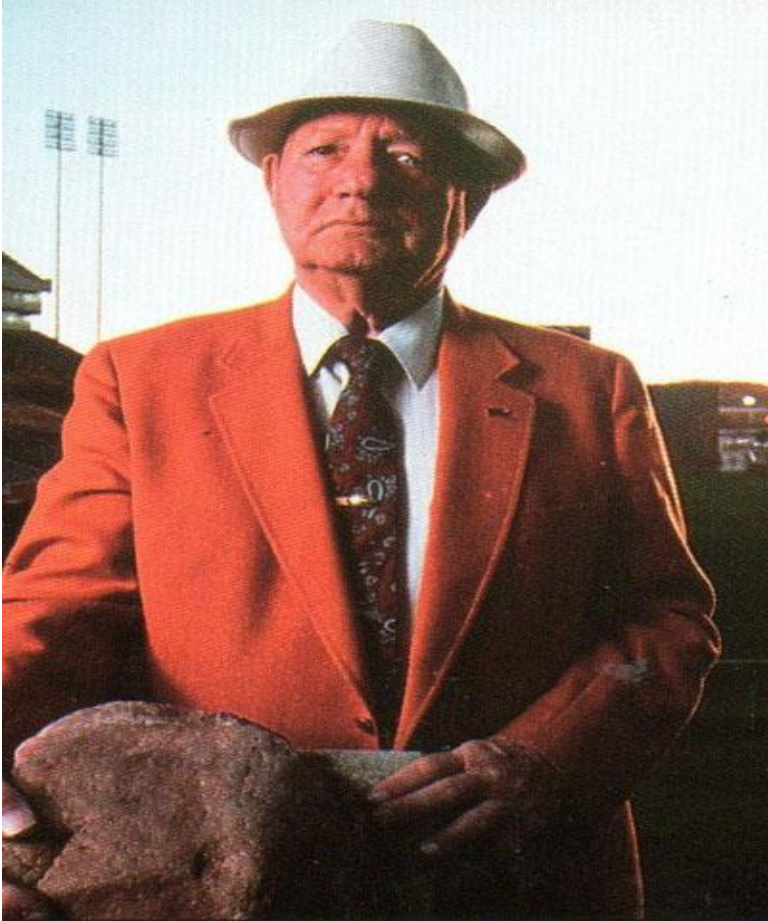
The 1939 Clemson Tigers football team represented Clemson College during the 1939 college football season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). Jess Neely was the head football coach for his ninth (last) of nine seasons. The Tigers completed their forty fourth season overall and their eighteenth in the Southern Conference with a record of 9-1-0; 4-0 in the SoCon.

They were listed along with Duke at the top of the SoCon standings for 1939 out of 15 active SoCon teams. Joe Payne was the captain. Clemson participated in its first bowl game, beating a tough Boston College coached by the immortal Frank Leahy in the 1940 Cotton Bowl Classic. It was a great season changer for the Tigers. The seven lean years were officially over.

### **1940 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Frank Howard**

The 1940 Clemson Tigers football team represented Clemson College during the 1940 college football season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). Frank Howard was the head football coach for his first of thirty seasons. The Tigers completed their forty-fifth season overall and their nineteenth in the Southern Conference with a record of 6-2-1; 4-0-0 in the SoCon. The Tigers came in first in the SoCon out of 15 active SoCon teams. Red Sharpe was the captain. Coach Frank Howard got the Tigers off to a great start in his first year at the helm

## Frank Howard Longtime Coach



Frank Howard 1940-1969 Longest Serving Clemson Coach

### 1948 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Frank Howard

The 1948 Clemson Tigers football team represented Clemson College during the 1948 college football season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). Frank Howard was the head football coach for his ninth of thirty seasons. The Tigers completed their fifty-third season overall and their twenty-seventh in the Southern Conference with a record of 11-0; 5-0 in the SoCon. The Tigers came in a clean first in the SoCon out of 16 active SoCon teams in 1947. Bob Martin & Phil Prince were co-captains for the 1948 Clemson team.

So, I dug into the many archives, many of which are slanted to see what was going on that would preclude Clemson from being National

Champions with an 11-0 record. After an undefeated season and being a unanimous # 1 team in the Southern Conference, why not?

Here is what they say in a nutshell: Lots has been written. Michigan won it all in 1948. Unlike Clemson which went 11-0, the Wolverines went 9-0 and they had enough "press and pundit" clout to claim the #1 spot in the final AP poll over 9-0 Notre Dame. Michigan felt this season made up for the 1947 season when Notre Dame got the crown. It made up for 1947, when Michigan had also gone 9-0, but finished #2 to Frank Leahy's 9-0 Notre Dame.

They used this as an excuse: Michigan had capped the 1947 season with a huge 49-0 rout of Southern Cal in the Rose Bowl, and the AP conducted a post-bowl poll that went with Michigan at #1 over Notre Dame, but the AP had declared that the post-bowl poll was not "official." This season, it was Notre Dame that played a game against Southern Cal after the final AP poll. That's because the AP poll ended before their December 4th trip to Southern Cal, where Notre Dame was tripped up by a 14-14 tie to 6-3-1 USC, finishing the Irish at 9-0-1.

Because of that upset, there were no apparent contenders to Michigan's crown this season, since they did not even look at the Southern Conference. Thus, all the reporters who live around the big colleges declared Michigan as the unanimous choice for 1948 mythical national champion (MNC) amongst organizations listed in the NCAA Records Book, even math-based ratings.

Michigan would be the only team in contention. This meant 2 MNCs in a row for Michigan. Pundits across the country did mention Clemson but pooh poohed the great Southern Team's existence in the standings. They suggested that Clemson went 11-0, but their schedule was weak and they performed rather poorly, so they were not a contender at all.

The skinny was that Clemson had played just one team that was ranked by the original AP poll, #20 Wake Forest, and Clemson finished ranked just #11 themselves. They did better in the other poll for 1948 finishing #8, and their Gator Bowl opponent, 8-3 Missouri, was ranked #10.



Clemson won the Gator Bowl 24-23. But that's the only ranked opponent they played according to the pollsters, and they struggled to win 6-0 over 3-6-1 North Carolina State, 13-7 at 3-5 South Carolina, 26-19 at 5-2-2 Boston College, 21-14 over 6-4 Wake Forest, and 7-6 at 1-8-1 Auburn.

Meanwhile, according to the experts, Michigan played 5 ranked teams and only one of their wins was close (touchdown or less), 13-7 at 6-2-2 Michigan State (#17) in their opener. They beat 8-2 Northwestern (#3) 28-0. All commentaries are biased but in this book at least, we show you why the big shots chose not to give Clemson its proper roll of the dice for the National Championship. Regardless, the Tigers were undefeated and that is pretty darn good when you play eleven games and win them all.

#### **1950 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Frank Howard**

The 1950 Clemson Tigers football team represented Clemson College during the 1950 college football season as a member of the Southern Conference (SoCon). Frank Howard was the head football coach for his eleventh of thirty seasons. The Tigers completed their fifty-fifth season overall and their twenty-ninth in the Southern Conference with a record of 9-0-1; 3-0-1. in the SoCon. The Tigers came in second in the SoCon out of 17 active SoCon teams. Fred Cone was the team captain for the 1950 Clemson team.

Clemson was invited to Miami Burdine Stadium on Jan 1, 1951 for the Orange Bowl and the Tigers beat the Hurricanes in a great victory W (15-14)

#### **1959 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Frank Howard**

The 1959 Clemson Tigers football team represented Clemson College during the 1959 college football season as a member of the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC). Frank Howard was the head football coach for his twentieth of thirty seasons. The Tigers completed their sixty-fourth season overall and their seventh in the Atlantic Coast Conference with a record of 9-2-0; 6-1 in the ACC. The Tigers came in first in the ACC out of 8 active ACC teams. Paul Snyder and Harvey White were team captains in 1959. The annual game against South

Carolina was played on Thursday at the State Fair for the final time. Clemson's 300th win came in the Bluebonnet Bowl against TCU.

Frank Howard loved Clemson and he chose to remain as Athletic Director for several more years. until 1971. In 1974, the playing field at Memorial Stadium, which he helped to build, was named in his honor. He was a great coach for a ton of teams that could play with the best of them. He was the first Clemson Coach to last for many years.

I would suspect that if Clemson were more interested in National Championships than Conference Championships among the great southern teams, Frank Howard would have been the guy to help tweak the recruiting and the game to assure that the institution got what it needed. No opponent ever pushed around a Frank Howard team, even without a zillion dollars in scholarships and endowments. Bravo Frank Howard! Bravo Clemson University!

On Nov 1, at home, the Tigers whooped the Terrapins of Maryland W (40-0). Then, on Nov 8 at Duke's Duke Stadium in Durham, NC, Duke took the win L 27-34. Then, a week later on Nov 15 at North Carolina's Kenan Memorial Stadium in Chapel Hill, NC, the Tigers lost again L (15-32). In an early season finale on Nov 22, at Carolina Stadium • Columbia, SC in the Battle of the Palmetto State), the Gamecocks whooped the Tigers L (13-27).



Picture from Frank Howard's Last Home Game Nov 1, 1969 v Maryland

Frank Howard was on his way out the door and it would have been great if he got a better sendoff but his thirty years at Clemson were absolutely great

From my observations, Clemson did not fund a national championship caliber team during Thomas's tenure. Oh' don't get me wrong Clemson loved winning but the difference in funding from Conference Champion to National Champion is substantial. Frank Thomas brought a lot of fun to his team and to Clemson University by being the guy that could beat all the teams around him in the south.

It meant more to everybody than coming in 32nd in the national championship race meant – or even a close #8. Meanwhile Frank Howard had about twenty great years after retirement. What old fart would not like that?

Here is the Obit which is a great recap of Mr. Frank Howard:

On January 27, 1996 Frank Howard went to his eternal rest at the age of 86 years old. He had quite a life after he retired as Clemson's head football coach in 1969 from Clemson's head coaching duties.

The NY Times Frank Lisky wrote this tribute upon his death on January 27, 1996. His tribute was titled:

## **Frank Howard, 86, the Coach of Top Clemson Football Teams**

Frank Howard, the colorful coach who in 30 years took Clemson University from football obscurity to the ranks of the national elite, died yesterday at his home in Clemson, S.C. He was 86.

The sports information office at the university said the cause of death was congestive heart failure. Howard was hospitalized in November because of circulatory problems, last month after a fainting spell and this month after a minor heart attack.

After retiring from coaching in 1969, he was athletic director at Clemson until mandatory retirement in 1971. He then kept an office in the athletic department and, until three weeks ago, went there five days a week.

"I'm not sure what he did there," the sports information director, Tim Bourret, said. "Whatever a retired legend does."

Howard liked to say he retired for health reasons.

"The alumni got sick of me," he would say.

He had a quick sense of humor. In the late 1950's, after a loss to Duke, he was asked to define the turning point. "It was three years ago," he said, "when I didn't recruit any half backs."

Frank James Howard was born on March 25, 1909, on a cotton farm in Barlow Bend, Ala., a town that he said was "three wagon greasin's from Mobile." He called himself the Bashful Baron of Barlow Bend.

In high school he played football, baseball and basketball and was president of the junior and senior classes. At the University of Alabama, where he was an honor student on an academic scholarship, he was a 185-pound guard on the football team from 1928 to 1930

Football as an After-thought?

When he could not find work as an accountant, he became an assistant football coach at Clemson under Jess Neely. "I also coached track, was ticket manager, recruited players and had charge of football equipment," Howard said. "In my spare time I cut grass, lined tennis courts and operated the canteen while the regular man was out to lunch."

In 1940, when Neely became coach at Rice, the Clemson athletic council interviewed Howard as a potential successor. As the council discussed what to do, Howard listened from the back of the room. Finally, a council member said, "I nominate Frank Howard."

Long pause.

"I second the nomination," Howard said.

He got the job, lost his copy of the one-year contract and never signed another. From 1940 to 1969 his teams compiled a 165-118-12 record. They won two championships in the Southern Conference and later six in the Atlantic Coast Conference. Between 1949 and 1959 Clemson played in six bowl games.

Shortly after he retired as coach, Clemson named its stadium Frank Howard Field. In 1989, he was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame.

With all his success, his highest salary was \$25,000 a year. The president of the university, Dr. R. F. Poole, feared that professors who earned less would be upset.

"He called me up and said that he didn't want me to tell anybody what I made," Howard once said. "I said: 'Doc, you don't have to worry. I'm as ashamed as you are of what you pay me.' "

Surviving are his wife of 62 years, the former Anna Tribble; a son, Jimmy, of Clemson; a daughter, Alice McClure of Gastonia, N.C., and three grandchildren.

### **Hootie Ingram Replaces Frank Howard as Clemson Head Football Coach**

Hootie Ingram became the next Clemson Football Coach. We highlight his Clemson tenure and his Clemson teams in this book. There are great moments in every season for every football team though in some seasons there are more great moments than others. In the next chapter, we examine the coaching work of Hootie Ingram who took over for the immortal Frank Howard at Clemson in 1970 and left the University after the 1972 season. His record with the Tigers is not very good – 12-21 over the three years in which he was the head coach.



# Chapter 19 PSU Coach Rip Engle Era 1950-1965

Coach # 13

1950	Rip Engle	5-3-1
1951	Rip Engle	5-4
1952	Rip Engle	7-2-1
1953	Rip Engle	6-3
1954	Rip Engle	7-2-
1955	Rip Engle	5-4
1956	Rip Engle	6-2-1
1957	Rip Engle	6-3
1958	Rip Engle	6-3-1
1959	Rip Engle	9-2
1960	Rip Engle	7-3
1961	Rip Engle	8-3
1962	Rip Engle	9-2
1963	Rip Engle	7-3
1964	Rip Engle	6-4
1965	Rip Engle	5-5



Top-row, left to right: Dan Radakovich, Joe McMullen, George Welsh, Joe Paterno, J.T. White Bottom-row, left to right: Frank Patrick, Earl Bruce, Rip Engle, Jim O'Hara taken during the football Field Day in 1963.



On April 22, 1950 Charles A. "Rip" Engle, who had been head coach at Brown University was named the new Penn State head football coach to replace Joe Bedenk.

Engle was the innovator of the famous Wing-T formation. His teams experienced tremendous success leading Engle to a career PSU record of 104-48-4.

In May of 1950 Engle named former Brown University quarterback Joseph V. Paterno to his Penn State staff. He promptly assigned Paterno to coach quarterbacks. Rip Engle coached his last game in 1965 with a win over Maryland, 19-7 ending a 16-year stint as Penn State head football coach.

During his tenure, Penn State did not endure a losing season. Engle officially retired February 18, 1966. A day later Joseph V. Paterno was hired head football coach of Pennsylvania State University. The rest, as they say, is history.

#### **1950 Penn State Football Season Coach Rip Engle**

The 1950 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Rip Engle in his first year. Coach Engle compiled a 5-3-1 record in his first year with the Nittany Lions.

#### **1952 Penn State Football Season Coach Rip Engle**

The 1952 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Rip Engle and played a fine season with a record of 7-2-1. PSU was back to ten games per season. The season began earlier on September 20 at home against Temple W (20-13). Purdue came to New Beaver Field on September 27 and played the Nittany Lions to a tie T (20-20). On October 4, William and Mary lost to the Nittany Lions at New Beaver Field W (35-23).

#### **1954 Penn State Football Season Coach Rip Engle**

The 1954 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Rip Engle in his fifth year. The team finished with a 7-2 record and achieved a #16 ranking in the coaches' poll and a #20 in the AP.

### **1959 Penn State Football Season Coach Rip Engle**

The 1959 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Rip Engle in his tenth season of sixteen with PSU. This was the first eight-win year for an Engle team and it brought them a shot at the Liberty Bowl which they won on December 31, 1959 v Alabama W (7-0). The Lions finished at 9-2.

Penn State was winning very game all year until it ran into some old rivals. By now, by reading this book's review of all the games by coach, you know who they are. PSU was 7-0 when it ran into an always stubborn Syracuse team at home. Syracuse was ranked #4 when they played at New Beaver Field. In a brawl, they barely beat Penn State L (18-20) to put the first blemish on Engle's 1959 team. Think about what would have happened if PSU won that game. Syracuse went on to win their first and only National Championship with the help of future Heisman trophy winner Ernie Davis.

### **1961 Penn State Football Season Coach Rip Engle**

The 1961 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Rip Engle in his twelfth season. The lions pounded out a #19 finish and a #17 in the AP with an overall season ending 8-3 record including a Gator Bowl win v Georgia Tech.

### **1962 Penn State Football Season Coach Rip Engle**

The 1962 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Rip Engle in his thirteenth of sixteen seasons. The team played its second set of home games in the brand-new Beaver Stadium in University Park, Pennsylvania.

Navy was first on the Beaver Stadium list on September 21 for the season opener / home opener combo game. Penn State came in ranked #9 and beat Navy W (41-7). Ranked # 4 when Airforce Came in to Beaver Stadium for the first time and the Nittany Lions managed a victory against the tough Air Force Falcons W (20-6) Still ranked #4, PSU played at Rice Stadium in Houston Texas against Rice University and beat them W (18-7).

Things had been going too well when PSU traveled to West Point and Army beat them in a real close one L (6-9).

After Army, PSU was unranked and hosted Syracuse at Beaver Stadium. The Nittany Lions barely beat the Orangemen in a close match W (20-19).

The Nittany Lions like to plan perfection but sometimes execution does not match the plan. In this game, Penn State blew a 14-point first quarter lead before a record Homecoming crowd of 48,356, but they put their mettle together and decided to win.

The men from Penn State University came from behind with five minutes left in the game on an 8-play, 65-yard drive to take a 20-19 lead. They needed to hold the Orangemen or all would have been for naught. The game was still in doubt until Hatch Rosdahl blocked a 44-yard field goal attempt with 28 seconds remaining.

When we think of football being exciting, we do not often think of any negatives to the excitement. However, in this phenomenally exciting nail-biter, two (not just one) spectators died of heart attacks. To this day, it is not known whether they were Orangemen or Nittany Lions fans.

It was not long before the Lions were back in the hunt in the top 20. PSU then played the California team at California Memorial Stadium in Berkeley and managed a close win W (23-21).

On November 3, Maryland was next on the schedule at Beaver Stadium W (23-7). On November 10, it was West Virginia at home W (34-6). Then the Lions took a trip to Fitton Field in Worcester, MA on November 17 to play Holy Cross and won W 48-20). Big rival Pittsburgh always seemed to hang around until the end of the season and plop a bad one on the Nittany Lions. This time PSU did the damage and while in a # 9 ranking, won at Pitt Stadium W (16-0).

At 9-1 with a fine year with just one blemish v Army, the Nittany Lions were invited to play on December 29 vs. Florida at Gator Bowl Stadium in Jacksonville, FL. Florida won the close match L (7-17). PSU finished at 9-2 for a fine season.

## Chapter 20 Navy Coaches Erdelatz & Hardin 1950 to 1964

1950	Eddie Erdelatz	3-6
1951	Eddie Erdelatz	2-6-1
1952	Eddie Erdelatz	6-2-1
1953	Eddie Erdelatz	4-3-2
1954	Eddie Erdelatz	8-2
1955	Eddie Erdelatz	6-2-1
1956	Eddie Erdelatz	6-1-2
1957	Eddie Erdelatz	9-1-1
1958	Eddie Erdelatz	6-3
1959	Wayne Hardin	5-4-1
1960	Wayne Hardin	9-2
1961	Wayne Hardin	7-3
1962	Wayne Hardin	5-5
1963	Wayne Hardin	9-2
1964	Wayne Hardin	3-6-1

### Erdelatz was a great coach

He was at all levels of football and like most coaches, the pros came last.

Though it seems as though Al Davis ran the Oakland Raiders forever, there were men that came before him. In fact, Davis took over the Raiders head coaching position in 1963, replacing William “Red” Conkright. Conkright in fact, had previously been a Raiders assistant who ended up replacing head coach, Marty Feldman, after he led the Raiders to a 2-15 record over a 17-game period in 1961-62.

But Feldman himself, had also previously been a Raiders assistant. The Raiders first head coach was named Eddie Erdelatz, formerly of the Naval Academy, and the man who led the not-so-mighty Raiders through their inaugural season of 1960.

Eddie Erdelatz was a three-year end at St. Mary’s College, beginning in 1932. After completing his collegiate playing career, he moved into the coaching ranks, taking over the lines for St. Mary’s in 1936. Erdelatz bounced around to different coaching positions in Northern California for several years before joining the Navy during World War II. After the war, and a three-year stint as an assistant at the Naval

Academy, Erdelatz put in three years as defensive coordinator of the San Francisco 49ers of the A.A.F.C.



Eddie Erdelatz got his first shot as a head coach when he traveled back East to take over a miserable Navy team in 1950. Over a period of nine seasons, Erdelatz turned a moribund Naval Academy squad into a respectable, winning program that posted victories in the Sugar Bowl (1955) and Cotton Bowl (1958). Things however were not right for Erdelatz towards the end, and he left the Navy team after the '58 season and took a restful year away from football in 1959.

#### 1954 Navy Midshipmen Coach Eddie Erdelatz

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 1954 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's seventy-fourth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Eddie Erdelatz in his fifth of nine seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. No captain was listed for Navy. As an independent football entity, the Midshipmen compiled an 8-2 record. Navy had no conference affiliation. They finished the season ranked # 5 in the nation. Their losing days were well behind them.

Several home games except the Army-Navy game and those so marked below were played at Thompson Field on the campus of the Naval Academy.

The 1954 unranked Navy Football Team began its season with a shutout win against William and Mary at home W (27-0) on Sept 25, 1954. This opener was played at Thompson Stadium on the campus of

the Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD. Navy then traveled to Dartmouth's Memorial Field Hanover, NH on Oct 2 and they defeated the Big Green W 42-7. In its first match against Stanford, #19 Navy defeated the Cardinal on Oct 9 at Stanford Stadium in Stanford, CA W (25-0) On Oct 9, Pittsburgh defeated the # 9 Midshipmen at Pitt Stadium in Pittsburgh, PA L (19-21)

On Oct 23 at Penn, Navy pounded the Quakers at Franklin Field • Philadelphia, PA W (52-6). On Oct 30, #6 Notre Dame escaped with a close win v #15 Navy at Memorial Stadium in Baltimore, MD L (0-6) before 60,000. Then, on Nov 6, Navy walloped Duke in Foreman Field Norfolk, VA (Oyster Bowl) W (40-7). On Nov 13, #10 Navy shellacked Columbia at home W (51-6). Then, in the season finale, v Army, on Nov 27, #6 Navy got the win at Municipal Stadium • Philadelphia, PA (Army-Navy Game) W (27-20).

Navy played in a bowl game this year on January 1, 1955 vs. #5 Ole Miss at Tulane Stadium New Orleans, LA (Sugar Bowl). The Navy shut out the Green Wave W (21-0) before 82,000

### **1957 Navy Midshipmen Coach Eddie Erdelatz**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 1957 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's seventy-seventh season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Eddie Erdelatz in his eighth of nine seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. No captain was listed for Navy. They began the season ranked in the pre-season AP Poll. As an independent football entity, the Midshipmen compiled a 9-1-1 record. They lost just one game and tied one. The Loss was to North Carolina by one TD. Navy had no conference affiliation. They finished the season ranked # 5 in the nation and #1 of all independent schools.

Home games that were not moved for capacity reasons, were played at Thompson Stadium on the campus of the Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD.

The Navy Football Team began its season with a nice win at Boston College at Alumni Stadium in Chestnut Hill MA W (46-6) on Sept 29, 1954.

On Sept 28, #5 Navy beat William & Mary at home in Thompson W (33–6). At North Carolina on Oct 5, #6 Navy beat the Tar Heels at Kenan Memorial Stadium in Chapel Hill, NC L (7–13) On Oct 12 at California in California Memorial Stadium, Berkeley, CA, Navy prevailed W 21–6. Then, on Oct 19 vs. Georgia, #15 #15 Navy beat the Yellow Jackets at Foreman Field in Norfolk, Virginia (Oyster Bowl) W (27–14). Then, at Penn on Oct in a game played at Franklin Field Philadelphia, PA, #16 Navy beat the Quakers W (35–7)

On Nov 2, #16 Navy defeated #5 Notre Dame at Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend, IN W (20–6) before 58,922. Then, on Nov 9, #16 Duke played the #7 Navy Squad to a tie T (6-6) at Memorial Stadium in Baltimore, MD. On Nov 16, #9 Navy walloped George Washington W (52-0) at Memorial Stadium in Baltimore, MD. Then in the season finale, on Nov 30, # 10 Army was defeated by # 8 Navy in Municipal Stadium • Philadelphia, PA (Army–Navy Game) W (14–0). And that was 1957.

#9 Navy did so well they played in the Cotton Bowl against #8 Rice on January 1, 1958. The game was played at the Cotton Bowl Field in Dallas, TX and Navy won the game W (20–7) before 75,504

### **1959 Navy Midshipmen Coach Wayne Hardin**

Wayne Hardin was very much alive when he was delivering victory after victory for years for Navy fans and supporters. Wayne Hardin, a Hall of Fame football coach who built standout programs at the United States Naval Academy and Temple University, leading Navy to victory over Army five times in a row and Temple to its first bowl-game win, died eventually in Abington, Pa. He was 91. He died after having a stroke on Tuesday, his daughter Sheri Hardin said.

During his more than 20 years as a college coach, Hardin developed consistent winners using a multifaceted approach, even when he had stellar quarterbacks.

“What we want to achieve more than anything else is balance,” he told The New York Times in 1979.



Coach Hardin on the Sidelines Coaching



Bill Belichick, the New England Patriots' head coach, whose father was an assistant coach under Hardin at Navy, said that Hardin had been "very influential in my development as a coach." Belichick said that he had also copied many of Hardin's methods and philosophies.

"I admired his brilliant game plans that he developed for opponents with superior personnel," Belichick, who has won five Super Bowls as a head coach, told [Navy football's website](#) after Hardin's death.

A great coach is simply a great coach and great coaches often can recognize the greatest of coaches long before the general public knows they exist.



## About the Commander-In-Chief's Trophy

Since Air Force would now and forever be involved in the Navy football schedule, it is the right time to acknowledge the existence of the Commander in Chief's Trophy. We pause below to explain it.

The Commander-in-Chief's Trophy is awarded to each season's winner of the American college football triangular series among the teams of the U.S. Military Academy (Army Black Knights), the U.S. Naval Academy (Navy Midshipmen), and U.S. Air Force Academy (Air Force Falcons).

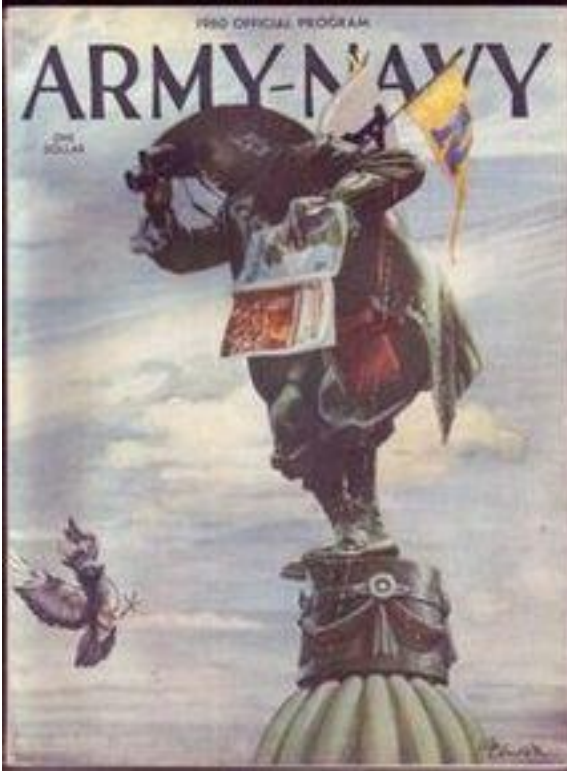
The Navy–Air Force game is traditionally played on the first Saturday in October, the Army–Air Force game on the first Saturday in November, and the Army–Navy Game on the second Saturday in December. In the event of a tie, the award is shared, but the previous winner retains possession of the trophy. Along with the Florida Cup, the Michigan MAC Trophy, and the Beehive Boot, the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy is one of the few three-way rivalries that awards a trophy to the winner.

Through 2017, the Air Force Falcons hold the most trophy victories at 20 and the Navy Midshipmen have won 15. The Army Black Knights trail with only seven; their last came just a year ago in 2017. The trophy has been shared on four occasions, last in 1993.

The first Navy v Air Force game came in 1960.

### **1960 Navy Midshipmen Coach Wayne Hardin**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 1960 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's eightieth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Wayne Hardin in his second of six seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. The offense scored 262 points while the defense allowed 103 points. Led by head coach Wayne Hardin, the Midshipmen finished the season with nine wins (9-2) and an appearance in the Orange Bowl. The Midshipmen were Lambert Trophy co-champions with undefeated Yale, captained by Mike Pyle. Senior halfback Joe Bellino was awarded the Heisman Trophy and the Maxwell Award.



Navy upset third-ranked Washington in Seattle, which vaulted them up eleven places in the rankings, to sixth. They played Air Force for the first time this season, a 35–3 win in mid-October. They finished ranked #4 in AP.

Home games that were not moved for capacity reasons, were played at the Navy–Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. It is an open-air stadium located off the campus of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

The 1960 Navy Football Team began its season with a nice win against Boston College W (22-7) on September 17, 1959. The opener was played at Alumni Stadium in Boston, MA.

On Sept 24, Navy beat Villanova at home W (41-7). Then, on Oct 1 at #3 Washington, the #17 ranked Midshipmen beat the Huskies in Husky Stadium Seattle, Washington W (15–14) before 57,379. On Oct 8, #6 ranked Navy beat SMU at Foreman Field in Norfolk, Virginia (Oyster Bowl) W (26–7). I

in the first game of a long series with Air Force, on Oct 15, Navy beat the Air Force at home W (35–3). On Oct 22 at Penn, # 4 ranked Navy shut out the Quakers at Franklin Field Philadelphia, Pennsylvania W 27–0. On Oct 29 at home vs. Notre Dame, # 4 Navy defeated the Irish W (14-7) at Municipal Stadium in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

On Nov 5 at #15 Duke, the #4 Navy squad lost to the Blue Devils at Duke Stadium Durham, North Carolina L (10–19). Then, on Nov

12 #8 Navy beat Virginia at home W (41–6). In the classic (Army–Navy Game). #7 Navy got the best of Army W (17-12) on November 26 at vs. Army at Municipal Stadium Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

#4 Navy made it to the Orange Bowl and got their first loss in post-season activity against #5 Missouri in their January 2, 1961 contest played in the Orange Bowl Stadium in Miami, Florida L (14-21) before 71,218.

## **#5 Best Army Navy Game Ever**

### **1960, Bellino Clinches the Heisman**

The 1960 game saw Navy senior Joe Bellino clinch the Heisman Trophy by accounting for 192 all-purpose yards (including defense and special teams) in a 17-12 victory by the Midshipmen.

Nicknamed "The Slasher" by legendary sportswriter Red Smith, Bellino carried 20 times for 85 yards, catch a pair of passes for 16 yards and return two kickoffs for 46 yards. He also intercepted a pass and took at 45 yards.

That said, Navy nearly lost a heartbreaker, as the Cadets came back from a 17-0 deficit to cut the Midshipmen's lead to five points after a pair of touchdowns by Al Rushatz.

Army had the ball on the Navy 32 with 1:50 remaining in the contest when Bellino intercepted Tom Blanda's pass in the end zone to seal the win—and the Heisman.

### **1961 Navy Midshipmen Coach Wayne Hardin**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 1961 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's eighty-first season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Wayne Hardin in his third of six seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. Led by head coach Wayne Hardin, the Midshipmen finished the season with seven wins (7-3).

Home games that were not moved for capacity reasons, were played at the Navy–Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. It is an open-air stadium

located off the campus of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

The 1961 Navy Football Team began its season with a L (10-20) loss against Penn State on September 23, 1961. The opener was played at Beaver Stadium in University Park, PA.

On Sept 30, Navy defeated William & Mary at home W 44-6. On Oct 6, Navy beat Miami (FL) at Orange Bowl Stadium in Miami, FL W (17-6). Then, on Oct at Cornell, Navy beat the Big Red at Schoellkopf Field in Ithaca, NY W (31-7). On Oct 20 at Detroit, Navy prevailed at the University of Detroit Stadium • Detroit, MI W (37-19). On Oct 28 at Pittsburgh, the Panthers beat the Midshipmen at Pitt Stadium Pittsburgh, PA L (14-28).

On Nov 4 at Notre Dame in Notre Dame Stadium South Bend, IN, Navy beat the Fighting Irish W (13-10) before 59,075. Then, on Nov 11 vs. Duke, the Blue Devils beat the Midshipmen at Foreman Field Norfolk, VA (Oyster Bowl) L (9-30). On Nov 18, Navy beat Virginia at home W (13-3). Then in the Classic (Army-Navy Game) on Dec 2 vs. Army in Municipal Stadium Philadelphia, PA, Navy won the game W (13-7).

### **1963 Navy Midshipmen Coach Wayne Hardin**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 1963 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's eighty-third season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Wayne Hardin in his fifth of six seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. The Midshipmen finished the season with 9 wins (9-2).

Three years after Joe Bellino got the Heisman under Coach Hardin, Quarterback Roger Staubach won the Heisman Trophy and the Maxwell Award. He led the Midshipmen to a 3-6-1 regular season record. Without Roger Staubach, Navy fell hard after such a great 1963. Coach Hardin resigned after the season ended.

Home games that were not moved for capacity reasons, were played at the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. It is an open-air stadium located off the campus of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

The #9 ranked 1963 Navy Football Team began its season with a W (51-7) win against West Virginia on September 21, 1963. The opener was played at Mountaineer Field in Morgantown, WV.

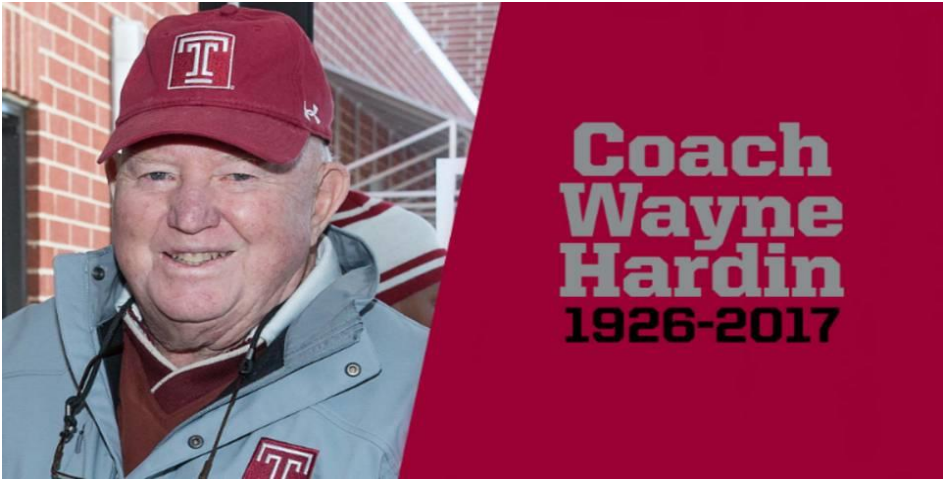
On Sept 28 #5 Navy shutout William & Mary at home W (28-0). On Oct 5, #6 ranked Navy beat the Wolverines at Michigan Stadium Ann Arbor, MI W (26-13) before 55,877. Then on Oct 11 at SMU #4 Navy prevailed at Cotton Bowl Stadium Dallas TX L (28-32) before 37,000. On Oct 19 vs VMI, Navy won the game at Foreman Field Norfolk, VA (Oyster Bowl) W (21-12). Then, on Oct 26, at home, # 10 Navy beat # 3 Pittsburgh W (24-12).

Then, on Nov 2 at Notre Dame #4 Navy beat the Fighting Irish at Notre Dame Stadium South Bend, IN W (35-14) before 59,362. On Nov 9, at home, #4 Navy defeated Maryland W (42-7). Then #2 Navy beat Duke at Wallace Wade Stadium • Durham, NC W (38-25). In the season finale in the Army-Navy Game Classic, on December 7 vs. Army, #2 Navy beat the Army W (21-15) at Municipal Stadium Philadelphia, PA W 21-15.

Being the #2 ranked team in the country, Navy played #1 ranked Texas on January 1, 1964. The Longhorns defeated the Midshipmen at Cotton Bowl Stadium Dallas, TX in the (Cotton Bowl Game) Texas won the game L (6-28) before 75,300

## Wayne Hardin, A Great Navy Coach

Wayne Hardin left Navy after his only bad season perhaps—but he was a winner for sure. Hardin was great at Navy and then he spent 13 seasons as head coach for Temple, leading them to an 80-52-3 record from 1970-82. He became an inductee of the College Football Hall of Fame (2013), and he remains Temple's all-time winningest coach. He was always a fine man and a fine coach.



Before becoming the coach at North Broad, Hardin was an assistant coach at Navy in 1955. He took over as head coach in 1959 and he spent six seasons at the helm, where he had a nice record of 38-22-2. We just finished discussing his Navy Legacy but that is not all he left behind. His Navy teams produced two Heisman Trophy winners while he was at Navy - Joe Bellino in 1960 and Roger Staubach in 1963. What a legacy. There were no other Heisman's at Navy over its well over 100 years.

When Hardin passed away in April 2017, he had many eulogies from many people. There were many who have their own legacy and many who that Wayne Hardin for teaching them how to achieve a legacy. One of those is New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick. Belichick had a close relationship with Hardin, whose father Steve served as an assistant under Hardin.

*"I spent many hours in Coach Hardin's home when he coached at Navy and was extremely close with his family," said Belichick, "I learned so much from watching Coach Hardin coach the Navy teams and I continued to follow his career at Temple and I admired his brilliant game plans that he developed for opponents with superior personnel."*

Hardin coached some great players in addition to Staubach and Bellino. Steve Joachim won the 1974 Maxwell Award, and Joe Klecko, Randy Grossman, Kevin Ross and Bill Singletary all played in the NFL. He also led Navy to the 1963 National Championship game against Texas.

1963 was a great year for Navy. The Navy Midshipmen football team in 1963 represented the United States Naval Academy in the NCAA University Division football season. They were led of course by their great head coach Wayne Hardin in his fifth year. The team finished the regular season at 9-1 but finished the year with an overall record of nine wins and two losses and with a season ending loss against Texas in the Cotton Bowl Classic. They were a hair away from a National Championship.

I sound like a name-dropper mentioning Navy's all-everything Quarterback Roger Staubach, who won the Heisman Trophy and the Maxwell Award while leading the Midshipmen to a 9-1 regular season record and a final ranking of No. #2 in the nation. Staubach went on to win Super Bowls for Tom Landry and the Dallas Cowboys. This year, he led Navy to victory over their annual rivalry with Notre Dame, which would be the Midshipmen's last win over Notre Dame until 2007. It was a great year for Wayne Hardin and the Navy Midshipmen for sure.

# Chapter 21 LSU Dietzel, Saban, Miles, Orgeron 1955-2020

## Southeastern Conference (SEC)

1955	Paul Dietzel	3-5-2	2-3-1	9 <sup>th</sup>	
1956	Paul Dietzel	3-7	1-5	11 <sup>th</sup>	
1957	Paul Dietzel	5-5	4-4	7 <sup>th</sup>	
1958	Paul Dietzel	11-0	6-0	1 <sup>st</sup>	
---W Sugar ** 1958 National Champions; SEC Champs					
1959	Paul Dietzel	9-2	5-1	T-2nd	L Sugar
1960	Paul Dietzel	5-4-1	2-3-1	8 <sup>th</sup>	
1961	Paul Dietzel	10-1	6-0	T-1st	W Orange
---W Sugar ** 1961 National Champions; SEC Champs *****					
2000	Nick Saban	8-4	5-3	2nd Western	W Peach
2001	Nick Saban	10-3	5-3	T-1st Western	W Sugar
2002	Nick Saban	8-5	5-3	T-2nd Western	L Cotton
2003	Nick Saban	13-1	7-1	T-1st Western	W Sugar
** 2003 National Champions					
2004	Nick Saban	9-3	6-2	2nd Western,	L Capital One
2005	Les Miles	11-2	7-1	T-1st Western	W Peach
2006	Les Miles	11-2	6-2	T-2nd Western	W Sugar
2007	Les Miles	12-2	6-2	1st Western	W BCS
National Championship Game--Winner					
2008	Les Miles	8-5	3-5	3rd Western	W Chick-fil-A
2009	Les Miles	9-4	5-3	2nd Western	L Capital One
2010	Les Miles	11-2	6-2	T-2nd Western	W Cotton
2011	Les Miles	13-1	8-0	1st Western	L BCS
National Championship Game--Loser					
2012	Les Miles	10-3	6-2	2nd Western	L Chick-fil-A
2013	Les Miles	10-3	5-3	3rd Western	W Outback
2014	Les Miles	8-5	4-4	T-4th Western	L Music City
2015	Les Miles	9-3	5-3	T-3rd West	W Texas
2016	L. Miles/Ed Orgeron	8-4	5-3	T-2nd West	
2017	Ed Orgeron	9-4	6-2	3rd West	L Citrus
2018	Ed Orgeron	10-3	5-3	T-2nd West	W Fiesta
2019	Ed Orgeron	15-0	8-0	1st West, SEC Win,	W Peach
2020	Ed Orgeron	5-5	Rebuilding year		

\*\*\* CFP National Championship Game--Winner

Miles/Orgeron shared 2016 Orgeron replaced Miles





1

## New Coach in Louisiana Town—Paul Dietzel

After graduating from Miami in 1948, Dietzel began his coaching career as an assistant coach. He served under such legendary coaches as Red Blaik at Army and Bear Bryant at the University of Kentucky. In 1955, Dietzel became the head coach at LSU. ... After 1958, Dietzel continued to have success at LSU.

The following is a brief biography of one of LSU's best coaches ever, Paul Dietzel, from *Saturday Down Under*. Paul Dietzel was a college football coach and administrator for nearly 40 years, including stints as a head coach and athletic director at South Carolina and LSU. After working as an assistant at a handful of schools from 1948-1954 Dietzel accepted his first head coaching job with the LSU Tigers in 1955.

In seven seasons as head coach Dietzel was 46-24-3, including two 10-win seasons. His 1958 squad finished a perfect 11-0, winning the national championship, and his 1961 team won the SEC title with a 10-1 record and a 6-0 run through the conference. Dietzel led LSU to

three bowl games, going 1-1 in two Sugar Bowl appearances in addition to winning the 1961 Orange Bowl. He was the 1958 SEC Coach of the Year. Dietzel returned to LSU as its athletic director from 1978-1982.



Dietzel and Heisman winner Billy Cannon on the LSU sidelines

## 1955 Football Season Paul Dietzel Coach # 22



<<< Paul Dietzel

The LSU Fighting Tigers football team represented the LSU Tigers of Louisiana State University during the 1955 Southeastern Conference football season. This was LSU's sixty-second season overall and its twenty-third playing as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC).

Led by coach Dietzel, in his first season of seven as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a poor season at 3-5-2. Their SEC record was 2-3-1. The team

finished SEC play in 9<sup>th</sup> place. LSU was unranked in the AP poll at the completion of the 1955 season.

After struggling for most of the Tinsley seasons, for LSU fans, when Paul Dietzel took over as coach the LSU record did not improve all of a sudden. Like many coaches, when instituting their own brand of football in a new school, Dietzel struggled to come up with break-even seasons after taking over the program. After breaking even in his third year, however, Dietzel made LSU into one of the best modern era football teams and he provided four solid years of great coaching before he went to Army in 1962 and finished his career with South Carolina. .

## **Top LSU Players Billy Cannon HB 1957-1959**

Billy Cannon sat out his freshman year but after that no coach in his right mind would ever have Cannon sit a game out again. He was a great football player from LSU and was born, William Abb Cannon. He was one of the greatest running backs of all time. He was called an American football running back and he also played tight end professionally in the American Football League and the National Football League.

He was a true tiger, and attended Louisiana State University, where he played college football as a halfback, return specialist, and defensive back for the LSU Tigers. At LSU, Cannon was twice unanimously named an All-American, helped the 1958 LSU team win a national championship, and received the Heisman Trophy as the nation's most outstanding college player in 1959.



His punt return against Ole Miss on Halloween night in 1959 is considered by fans and sportswriters to be one of the most famous plays in LSU sports history. Cannon was selected as the first overall pick in the 1960 NFL Draft and as a first-round territorial pick in the 1960 American Football League draft, resulting in a contract dispute that ended in court.

### **1958 Football Season Paul Dietzel Coach # 22**

LSU was led by coach Dietzel, in his fourth season of seven as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a great championship season at 11-0. Their SEC record was 6-0 for a first place finish. The team was one of the best LSU ever fielded. LSU was ranked #1 in the AP poll and the Coaches poll at the completion of the 1958 season.

With a 10-0 final record the team was named national champion by the Associated Press (AP) and the Coaches Poll (UPI). This was LSU's second national championship recognized by the NCAA and the college football community at large. The Tigers' first championship came when the Tigers were retro-picked as national champions in 1908 by the National Championship Foundation.

However, it is the first national championship claimed by the school. It was also LSU's first undefeated and untied season since 1908 and was the last undefeated season for the school until 2019.

This year, the LSU Tigers were led by a backfield of Louisiana locals Billy Cannon, Warren Rabb, and Johnny Robinson. These three ALL-SEC players gained first-team All-SEC honors after the season. The team is perhaps most remembered for coach Paul Dietzel's unique "three-platoon system", of which the "Chinese Bandits" were a part.



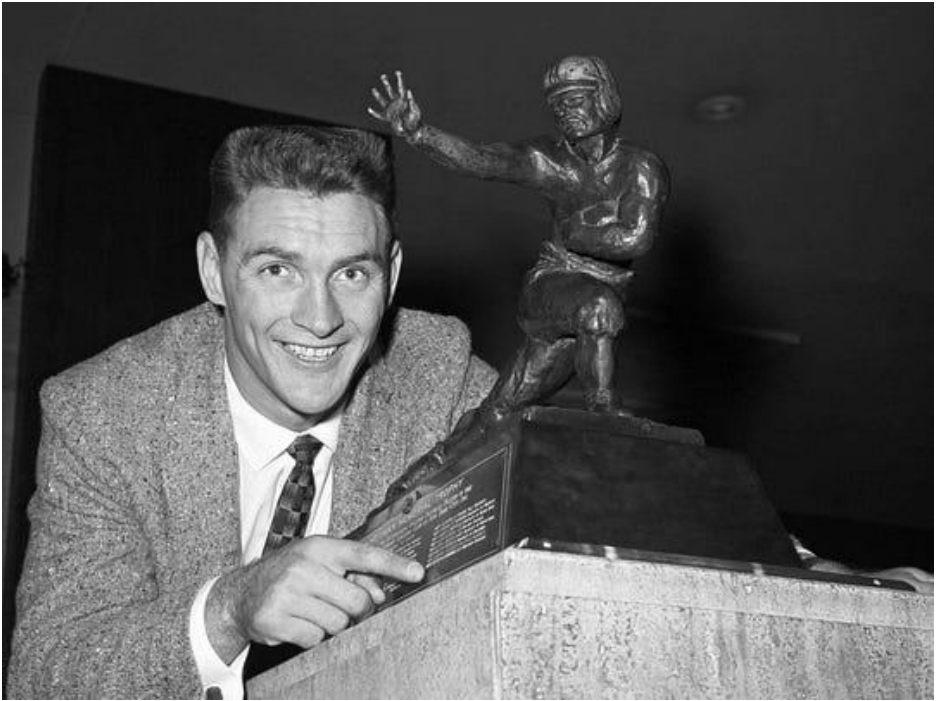
Billy Cannon (left) and Paul Dietzel (coach) LSU football 1958 (Photo: Times file photo)

### **1959 Football Season Paul Dietzel Coach # 22**

LSU Fighting Tigers football team was led by coach Dietzel, in his fifth season of seven as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a great season at 9-2. Their SEC record was 5-1. for a tie for a second place finish. The team was a great one—on e of the best LSU teams. #3 in both the AP poll and the Coaches poll at the completion of the 1959 season.

Having won the national championship and the SEC Championship in 1958. The pundits unanimously expected the Tigers to repeat as national champions in 1959. After all, they had almost their whole team back, including the All-American halfback Billy Cannon.

Cannon had come in third in the 1958 Heisman balloting and he was expected to win the Trophy this year.



Billy Cannon posing with the Heisman Trophy. (Photo: Jacob Harris, AP)

The team was like a big Mack truck rolling over opponents in the first 6 games in 1959, though, even with Cannon, its offense was not as potent as 1958's. However, its defense was even tougher than 1958's squad. LSU made up for its offense by being stingy on "D," allowing only 6 points in 6 games.

At first Paul Dietzel, LSU's coach, was not anxious to replay the Rebels, but he was persuaded to do so by the athletic director, Jim Corbett. By the time January 1 came, three LSU star players were injured, including quarterback Warren Rabb, and halfbacks Wendell Harris and Johnny Robinson. The Tigers were soundly beaten by the Rebels, 21-0, and were outgained 373-74. It was a tough loss to a team that on any other day could have been beaten by the Tigers.

Following the Sugar Bowl, Cannon signed a professional contract with the Houston Oilers of the American Football League, which was scheduled to begin play in September 1960, spurning an offer from the

National Football League's Los Angeles Rams. The AFL would become a force with which to be reckoned in the 1960's and there was a lot of good pro ball in 1960 with great players such as Billy Cannon on the rosters of the AFL team.

After LSU shocked Ole Miss on Halloween Night behind star Billy Cannon's fourth-quarter super-human 89-yard punt return for a touchdown, the Ole Miss faithful had an outstanding opportunity for revenge – the Rebels and the Tigers would rematch in the 1960 Sugar Bowl.

Ole Miss had given up only 21 points the entire season, the lowest for a major college in 20 years – since the 1939 Tennessee Vols went undefeated, untied and unscored upon. LSU gave up only 29 points. The rivals were ranked one-two nationally on defense. LSU allowed an average of 2.5 yards per play to the opposition; Ole Miss gave up an average of 2.8 yards.

Before the rematch, an Ole Miss fan said unsmilingly to a newsman, “We'd rather beat LSU than be president.”

Despite its problems, LSU kept the Rebels even on the scoreboard. Then, with 38 seconds left and Mississippi on its 42, the Tigers were assessed a 15-yard personal foul penalty. Ole Miss' Jake Gibbs, who led the SEC in total offense, received instructions from the bench. He took the snap, started to roll out, and pulled up behind tackle. Delaying for an instant while Ole Miss' other receivers flared to different areas, taking the deep defenders with them, James “Cowboy” Woodruff raced downfield behind end Larry Grantham and cut slightly to the center where Gibbs' pass was arching down.

No Tiger was within 15 yards of the receiver.

“I don't think there is any question that the touchdown pass just before the end of the half broke our backs,” Paul Dietzel said. “It might have been a different game if we had gone into halftime 0-0.”

Ole Miss held an awesome edge in statistics, 363 yards to 74, the lowest offensive total in Sugar Bowl annuals; the Tigers gained 49 yards rushing but lost 64 for a net gain of minus 15 yards. The longest Tiger gain of the day was eight yards by Darryl Jenkins of the Chinese Bandits – the defensive unit. It had taken LSU more than 25 minutes

to get its initial first down – and that was the only one the Tigers were credited with in the first half. Cannon made eight yards in six carries.

In the satisfied Rebel locker room, Woodruff sighed, “I always thought we had a better one (team), and I kind of feel we proved it today.”

### **1960 Football Season Paul Dietzel Coach # 22**

LSU was led by coach Dietzel, in his sixth season of seven as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a respectable season at 5-4-1. Their first three losses were by a total of 11 points. Their SEC record was 2-3-1 brought the Tigers an eighth place finish. The team was a good one but not one of Dietzel’s best LSU teams. After burning up College football for two years, this year’s LSU team was unranked nationally. It was a nice year off but the Tigers would be back in 1961 in Coach Dietzel’s final year with a vengeance. Watch out SEC in 1961!

### **1961 Football Season Paul Dietzel Coach # 22**

Led by coach Dietzel, in his seventh and last season of seven as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a great season at 10-0-1. Their SEC record was 6-0. brought the Tigers a tie with Alabama for First place in the SEC and a #3 finish in the national coach’s poll. The team was a great one. It was a hair away from being as good as Dietzel’s best team from 1959.

After the Tigers' Orange Bowl victory vs. Colorado, Paul Dietzel departed to take the head coaching position at Army.

## **After the season Paul Dietzel left LSU for Army**

Paul Dietzel coached LSU from 1955 until 1961, leaving for Army and then South Carolina. He also broadcast Southern Conference football games and helped create Samford University's athletic department before returning to LSU as its athletic director from 1978 until 1982.

When he passed away at 89 years of age, Dietzel was the last living member of the staff that guided LSU to an undefeated season and national championship in 1958. The Tigers beat Clemson in the 1959 Sugar Bowl.



Dietzel's memoir "Call Me Coach: A Life in College Football" was published in 2008 by Louisiana State University Press.

"Coach Dietzel was a man of great honor and integrity. He was the perfect role model for young people, and I will always cherish the moments that I was able to spend with him," LSU vice chancellor and athletics director Joe Alleva said in a statement from LSU.

### **In 1987 coach Mike Archer had a great LSU year 10-1 coach #27**



<<< Mike Archer

A longtime Division I assistant coach who spent four years as the head coach at LSU from 1987-1990. His Tigers finished 10-1-1 in Archer's first season in 1987, his best record as a head coach. It was LSU's first 10-win season in more than 25 years, and the Tigers finished No. 5 in the final Associated Press poll after a victory in the Gator Bowl. LSU's record dropped to 8-4 in 1988 but the Tigers still won the SEC with a 6-1 record in the conference. LSU ended the season with a loss in the Hall of Fame Bowl and finished No. 19 in the final AP poll.

Led by coach Mike Archer, the LSU head coach in his first of four seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 10-1-1. Their SEC record was 5-1 giving them a second place finish in the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were ranked in the Coach's poll at 5 and in the AP at 5. LSU was invited to the Gator Bowl in 1987. Their bad bowl game luck changed for this game.

### **Nick Saban at LSU Southeastern Conference (SEC)**

## **2000 Football Season Nick Saban Coach # 30 Biography of an American football coach.**

This bio was written by Adam Augustyn, Managing Editor, Reference Content at Encyclopedia Britannica.

It is current as of 2019

**Nick Saban**, byname of **Nicholas Lou Saban, Jr.**, (born October 31, 1951, Fairmont, West Virginia, U.S.), American collegiate and professional gridiron football coach who led his teams to seven National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) top-division football national championships and is considered one of the greatest college football coaches of all time.

Saban played defensive back at Kent State University. Upon his graduation in 1973, he had intended to pursue a career in automotive sales until the Kent State head coach, Don James, hired him as a graduate assistant. Saban worked his way up the coaching ladder through various collegiate and professional assistant roles before landing his first head-coaching job with the University of Toledo. He spent just one season there before moving on in 1991 to become the defensive coordinator of the Cleveland Browns of the National Football League (NFL) under head coach Bill Belichick.

Saban returned to the college game in 1995 as the head coach at Michigan State University, where he rebuilt the team over the course of five seasons. Following the 1999–2000 season, when Michigan State finished with a 9–2 record, he resigned and became the head coach at Louisiana State University (LSU). Saban had even more success during his five years at LSU, with five appearances in bowl games. Following a 13–1 campaign during the 2003–04 season, LSU defeated the University of Oklahoma in the BCS national championship (in the Sugar Bowl) to give Saban his first college national title.

After spending one more year at LSU, he returned to the professional ranks as the head coach of the NFL's Miami Dolphins. The team had two mediocre seasons, however, marked by numerous personality

clashes between Saban and his players, and he left to take over the University of Alabama in 2007.

Saban quickly rebuilt Alabama into a powerhouse with his sharp recruiting and defensive-strategy acumen. In his third season he led the Crimson Tide to a perfect 14–0 record, ending with a victory over the University of Texas in the national championship game. He followed that with consecutive national titles in the 2011–12 and 2012–13 seasons. Alabama was the top seed in the inaugural College Football Playoff (CFP) after the 2014–15 regular season, but the team was upset in the Sugar Bowl semifinal by the Ohio State University. In 2015–16 Saban coached Alabama to a 14–1 record, capping off another successful season with an overwhelming 38–0 victory over his former school Michigan State in the CFP semifinal and a win over Clemson University in the national championship game.

Although his five total top-division college football championships still trailed the six national titles won by his Alabama predecessor Paul (“Bear”) Bryant, (now Saban is the undisputed leader in championships) Saban’s success came after college football was established as a big business with millions of dollars spent at schools, making the sport more competitive (and with higher stakes) than ever before, leading some observers to start referring to Saban as the best college coach ever.

In 2016 he guided Alabama to an undefeated regular season in which the dominant Crimson Tide topped the Associated Press college football poll from the first week of the season until the CFP championship game. There, Alabama lost a thrilling title-game rematch to Clemson.

Despite having suffered a regular-season loss and not appearing in the SEC championship game, Alabama was controversially selected to be one of the four CFP semifinalists following the 2017 season. The team again proved that it was the premier program of the early 21st century by easily defeating Clemson in the national semifinals and then beating the University of Georgia in the first CFP championship game to be decided in overtime.

Saban’s coaching in the title game was especially bold, as he benched his season-long starting quarterback at halftime in favor of true

freshman Tua Tagovailoa, who rallied Alabama from a 13–0 deficit to its overtime victory.

Alabama returned to the CFP final following another undefeated regular season in 2018, but the Crimson Tide lost to Clemson by 28 points, the team’s worst loss of the Saban era. In 2019 Alabama lost two regular-season games and was left out of the CFP field for the first time in that event’s six-year existence.

### **Nick Saban in Year 2000**



Coach Saban at work for LSU

Led by coach Nick Saban, the LSU head coach in his first of five seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a comeback season at 8-4. Their SEC record was 5-3 giving them a second place finish in the Western Division of the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were ranked #22 in the AP. LSU was invited to play in the Peach Bowl, defeating Georgia Tech.

The victory was the third in three chances for the Tigers in the Peach Bowl, having also won the bowl in 1968 and 1996. The game was played before a Peach Bowl record crowd of 73,614 fans.

### **2001 Football Season Nick Saban Coach # 30**

Led by coach Nick Saban, the LSU head coach in his second of five seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a comeback season at 10-3. Their SEC record was 5-3 giving them a first place finish in the Western Division of the SEC. They won the SEC Championship game v Tennessee. At the national level, the Tigers were ranked #8 in the coaches' poll and #7 in the AP. LSU was invited to play in the Sugar Bowl, defeating Illinois.

On Dec 8, #21 LSU beat #2 ranked Tennessee at the Georgia Dome Atlanta, GA in the SEC Championship Game W (31–20) before 74,843.

### **2002 Football Season Nick Saban Coach # 30**

Led by coach Nick Saban, the LSU head coach in his third of five seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 8-5. Their SEC record was 5-3 giving them a first place finish in the Western Division of the SEC. They were Western Division CO-Champions along with Arkansas and Auburn. At the national level, the Tigers were unranked. LSU was invited to play in the Cotton Bowl Classic, losing to Texas.

### **2003 Football Season Nick Saban Coach # 30**

Led by coach Nick Saban, the LSU head coach in his fourth of five seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 11-1. They were national champions. Their SEC record was 7-1 giving them a first place finish in the Western Division of the SEC. They beat Georgia in the SEC Championship. At the national level, the Tigers were #1 in the coaches' poll and #2 in the AP. LSU was invited to play in the Sugar Bowl, defeating Oklahoma for the BCS National Championship..

As noted, The Tigers compiled an 11–1 regular season record and # 1 in the SEC Western Division. They then defeated the #7 Georgia

Bulldogs in the SEC Championship Game, Afterward, LSU was invited to play the Oklahoma Sooners in the Sugar Bowl for the Bowl Championship Series (BCS) national title. LSU won the BCS National Championship Game, the first national football championship for LSU since 1958.

During the bowl games, LSU beat #3 Oklahoma 21–14 in the Sugar Bowl (designated as the BCS National Championship Game for the 2003–04 season), while USC defeated the No. 4 Michigan Wolverines 28–14 in the Rose Bowl. LSU was ranked No. 1 in the final Coaches' Poll, and USC remained No. 1 in the final AP Poll.

It was a great year for LSU as they grabbed these prestigious honors

- BCS national champion
- SEC champion
- SEC Western Division co-champion
- Sugar Bowl champion

In the SEC Championship Game on December 6, 2003 at 8:00 p.m. #3 LSU defeated #5 Georgia at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA (SEC Championship Game) W (34–13). It was also a College GameDay. The fan base at the game was 74,913.

## **Sugar Bowl (BCS Championship) Jan. 4, 2004**

In the Sugar Bowl, aka, the BCS Championship Game, on January 4, 2004 at 7:15 p.m., #2 LSU defeated #3 Oklahoma at the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans, LA (Sugar Bowl). It was the last College GameDay of the season. The score was LSU 21 and Oklahoma 14. The game was played before 79,342

It was Nick Saban's first national championship.

### **2004 Football Season Nick Saban Coach # 30**

Led by coach Nick Saban, the LSU head coach in his fourth of five seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 9-3. Their SEC record was 6-2 giving them a second place finish in the Western Division of the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were

#16 in the coaches' poll and #16 in the AP. LSU was invited to play in the Capital One Citrus Bowl, losing to IOWA by five points.

In the Citrus Bowl on January 1, 2005 at 12:00 p.m., #11 Iowa beat #12 LSU in Nick Saban's last LSU game in Orlando, FL (aka Capital One Bowl) L (25–30) before 70,229

## Les Miles—Another Great LSU Coach 2005-2015

LSU Played in Southeastern Conference, Western Division



Les Miles with the Louisiana State (LSU) Team

**About Les Miles:** The Tigers were better with Les Miles than with Nick Saban. Yes, I am talking about Les Miles with the Louisiana State (LSU) Team. No kidding here, folks. Les was never the Alabama Head coach. The Tigers had multiple 10-win seasons under a guy referred to as the Mad Hatter. While at LSU, Miles led the Tigers to the 2007 BCS National Championship, the program's third in school history.

From 2005-2016, Miles had a record of 114-34 in 148 career games coached as the LSU head man. He finished with a .770 winning percentage and coached the Tigers to two SEC Championship game berths, going 2-0 in those match-ups.



Miles earned the AP Coach of the Year, SEC Coach of the Year and the Home Depot Coach of the Year awards in 2011.

Though he is no longer with the program, Miles will be remembered by Tigers fans for his gutsy play calls in crucial situations.

### **A bit more on Les**

Known as a master motivator with years of continued success in Baton Rouge, Miles put his 'Miles Method' in place shortly after arriving at LSU in 2005 and since then, he won two SEC titles and a BCS National Championship at one of college football's elite programs.

Really nicknamed the Mad Hatter for his bright-white, perfectly curved caps on gamedays, Miles' reputation as a gutsy play-caller in late-game situations demands respect from the opposition and his post-game flair at the mic goes toe-to-toe with South Carolina coach Steve Spurrier's verbal antics as the SEC's top personalities.

Miles is unique, from his open-handed sideline clapping to his battlefield mentality, he is one of the game's most original. Miles' grass snack before a pivotal goal-to-go situation against Alabama in 2010 was one of his proudest moments, the perfect example of being different.

Prior to replacing Nick Saban as head coach at LSU, Miles spent four years at Oklahoma State as the Cowboys' leading man. He helped turn things around and in 2002, was named the Big XII's Coach of the Year.

In his playing days, Miles was an offensive lineman at Michigan under the legendary Bo Schembechler before beginning his coaching career as a grad assistant with the Wolverines in 1980.

Believed to be his dream job, Michigan passed on hiring Miles as coach in 2007 and 2011.

### **2005 Football Season Les Miles Coach # 31**



Led by coach Les Miles, the LSU head coach in his first of eleven seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 11-2. Their SEC record was 7-1 giving them a first place finish in the Western Division of the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were #5 in the coaches' poll and #6 in the AP. LSU was invited to play in the Peach Bowl, shellacking Miami (FL) by more than 35 point.

### **2006 Football Season Les Miles Coach # 31**

Led by coach Les Miles, the LSU head coach in his second of eleven seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 11-2. Their SEC record was 6-2 giving them a tie for second place in the Western Division of the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were #3 in the coaches' poll and #3 in the AP. LSU was invited to play in the Sugar Bowl, shellacking Notre Dame by more than 30 points.

On January 7, 2008, Matt Flynn led LSU to a BCS National Championship, beating Ohio State 38-24. Flynn completed 19 of 27 passes and 4 touchdowns and was named offensive MVP of the game. The Tigers finished the season ranked No. 1 in the polls.

### **2007 Football Season Les Miles Coach # 31**

Led by coach Les Miles, the LSU head coach in his third of eleven seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 12-2. Their SEC record was 6-2 giving them a FIRST PLACE FINISH in the Western Division of the SEC. The Tigers also won the SEC Championship game v Tennessee W(21-14). At the national level, the Tigers were #1 in the coaches' poll and #1 in the AP. LSU won their way into the BCS National Championship Game where they defeated Ohio State (38-24).

## **SEC Championship Game**

On December 1, 2007 at 3:00 p.m.

, #5 LSU beat # 14 Tennessee at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA in the (SEC Championship Game W (21-14) before 73,832

## **BCS Championship Bowl Game January 7, 2008**

On January 7, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. vs. #1 Ohio State, the #2 ranked LSU Tigers beat the #1 ranked Buckeyes at the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans, LA in the last bowl game of the year for all the marbles-- (BCS National Championship Game). It was also a College GameDay Celebration W (38–24) Because of the win in this game, LSU was crowned National College Football Champions. The game was played before 79,651.

### **2008 Football Season Les Miles Coach # 31**

Led by coach Les Miles, the LSU head coach in his fourth of eleven seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 8-5 Their SEC record was 3-5 giving them a fourth place finish in the Western Division of the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were unranked in the coaches' poll and unranked in the AP. LSU was incited to the Chick Fil A Bowl and they defeated Georgia Tech (38-3).

### **2009 Football Season Les Miles Coach # 31**

Led by coach Les Miles, the LSU head coach in his fifth of eleven seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 9-4 Their SEC record was 5-3 giving them a 2nd place finish in the Western Division of the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were ranked 17 in the coaches' poll and ranked 17 in the AP. LSU was invited to the Capital One Bowl and they were defeated by Penn State L (17-19)

### **2010 Football Season Les Miles Coach # 31**

Led by coach Les Miles, the LSU head coach in his sixth of eleven seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 11-2 Their SEC record was 5-3 giving them a tie for second place in the Western Division of the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were ranked 8th in the coaches' poll and ranked 8th in the AP. LSU was invited to the Cotton Bowl Classic there they defeated Texas A&M W (41-24).

### **2011 Football Season Les Miles Coach # 31**

Led by coach Les Miles, the LSU head coach in his seventh of eleven seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 13-1. Their SEC record was 8-0 giving them a first place finish in the Western Division of the SEC and an SEC Championship after beating Georgia 42-10 in the SEC Championship Game. At the national level, the Tigers were ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the coaches' poll and ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the AP. LSU was invited to the Championship series and they were shut out lost in the big game by Atlanta L (0-21).

## **December 3, V Georgia SEC Championship**

On Dec 3 at 3:00 p.m., #1 ranked LSU Tigers played #12 ranked Georgia Bulldogs at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA in the SEC Championship Game. It was also a College GameDay celebration. LSU took no prisoners in dominating the Bulldogs W (42-10) before 74,515

LSU defeated Georgia in the 2011 SEC championship game 42-10. The game's MVP was LSU cornerback Tyrann Mathieu. The game was televised by CBS Sports, for the eleventh straight season. LSU moved to 4-1 in SEC Championship Games and Georgia to 2-2. LSU moved on to the January 9, BCS National Championship Game.

## **January 9, 2012 BCS National Championship**

On January 9, 2012, at 7:30 p.m., #1 ranked LSU, who had beaten Alabama in the regular season played the #2 Alabama Crimson Tide in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome, New Orleans, LA in the BCS National Championship Game. It was also a College GameDay celebration. #1 LSU was defeated in the game by the score of 0-21, before a crowd of 78,237. In the final rankings, Alabama and LSU changed positions. Alabama was #1, and LSU finished #2.

### **2012 Football Season Les Miles Coach # 31**

Led by coach Les Miles, the LSU head coach in his eighth of eleven seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 10-3. Their SEC record was 6-2 giving them a second place finish in the Western Division of the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were ranked 12th in the coaches' poll and ranked 14th in the AP. LSU was invited to the Chick-fil-A Bowl where they were defeated by Clemson.

## **2013 Football Season Les Miles Coach # 31**

Led by coach Les Miles, the LSU head coach in his ninth of eleven seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 10-3. Their SEC record was 5-3 giving them a third place finish in the Western Division of the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were ranked 14th in the coaches' poll and ranked 14th in the AP. LSU was invited to the Outback Bowl where they defeated IOWA by a score of 21-14.

## **January 1, 2014 Outback Bowl LSU v Iowa**

On January 1, 2014 at 12:00 p.m., #14 LSU beat Iowa . vs. unranked Iowa at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, FL and became Outback Bowl Champions with a score of W (21-14) before 51,296.

## **2014 Football Season Les Miles Coach # 31**

Tiger stadium opened with capacity of over 102,000 in the fall 2014.

Led by coach Les Miles, the LSU head coach in his tenth of eleven seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 8-5. Their SEC record was 4-4 giving them a tie for fourth place in the Western Division of the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were ranked 14th in the coaches' poll and ranked 14th in the AP. LSU was invited to the Music City Bowl, where they were defeated by Notre Dame by a score of L (28-31).

## **December 30, 2014, Music City Bowl**

On December 30, 2014, at 2:00 p.m. Notre Dame's Fighting Irish edged out the #22 LSU Tigers at LP Field in Nashville, TN in the Music City Bowl L (28-31 before 60,149

## **LSU TIGERS FOOTBALL**

### **Music City Bowl Recap: Notre Dame Fighting Irish 31, LSU Tigers 28: Miles' Last-Minute Magic Fails**

A bad call by the Pac-12 officials calling the game helped cost the Bayou Bengals what could have been their ninth victory of the season, dropping the SEC to 3-1 on the bowl season



*Christopher Hanewinkel-USA TODAY Sports*

### **2015 Football Season Les Miles Coach # 31**

Led by coach Les Miles, the LSU head coach in his eleventh and last of eleven seasons as head coach of LSU, the Tigers had a fine season at 9-3 Their SEC record was 5-3 giving them a tie for third place in the Western Division of the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were ranked 17th in the coaches' poll and ranked 16th in the AP. LSU was invited to the Texas Bowl they smothered Texas Tech by a score of W (56-27).

### **2016 Football Season Les Miles Coach # 31**

The Tigers were led by head coach Les Miles for the first four games of the year before he was fired on September 25 along with offensive coordinator Cam Cameron. Miles was replaced by interim head coach Ed Orgeron, who was later promoted to head coach on November 26, 2016. They finished the season 8-4, 5-3 in SEC play to finish in a tie for second place in the Western Division.

## **SU Coach Ed Orgeron 2016 to Present**

LSU Played in Southeastern Conference, Western Division

Here is Ed Orgeron's record as a head coach in summary

Year	Coach	Overall	SEC	Notes
2016	Miles, Orgeron	8-4	5-3	T-2nd West W Citrus
2017	Ed Orgeron	9-4	6-2	3rd West L Citrus
2018	Ed Orgeron	10-3	5-3	T-2nd West W Fiesta
2019	Ed Orgeron	15-0	8-0	1st West, SEC Champs W Peach BOWL

**Miles/Orgeron shared coaching for the 2016 season when Les Miles was fired. LSU National Champions**

Following half a season as the Tigers' interim head coach, LSU hired Ed Orgeron to be its full-time coach ahead of the 2017 season. Life got good for LSU when that happened to Ed and LSU.

On January 13, 2020 Orgeron won his first national championship as a head coach with a big win over the unbeaten defending national champion Clemson Tigers, 42-25, finishing the season unbeaten at 15-0. Amazing!

Ed Orgeron had previously taken over the Ole Miss football program beginning in 2005 and led the Rebels through three disappointing seasons while serving as head coach. He was 3-8 in his first season in Oxford, the program's worst record since the 1987 season.

### **Ed Orgeron, LSU Coach Brief Biography**

His offense finished the '05 season 111th out of 117 teams in total offense, and despite a slew of changes to the offensive coaching staff in the offseason his Rebels finished the 2006 season once again ranked 111th in total offense. Ed Orgeron between then and now, really learned how to be a head coach.

Ole Miss was 4-8 in 2006, and fans in Oxford began to grow impatient with Orgeron. His Rebels hit rock-bottom in 2007, finishing the season 3-9 and an even-more disappointing 0-8 in SEC play. It was Ole Miss' first winless season in conference play since 1982, and Orgeron was fired following the season and replaced with Houston Nutt. His final record at Ole Miss was just 10-25, including an abysmal 3-21 record against SEC opponents. Ed Orgeron knows how to come back from adversity and he has recently proven it big time.

Orgeron, 58 at the time, was hired as LSU's defensive line coach in 2015 and had recruiting coordinator added to his duties in 2016. Four games into the 2016 season, Orgeron replaced fired head coach Les Miles as interim head coach. He was always ready for the next big assignment.

So, following the 2016 regular season, Orgeron was named head coach.

The Tigers beat Clemson in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome last Jan. 13 to win the national championship with a 15-0 record after quarterback Joe Burrow won the Heisman Trophy. Orgeron is 40-9 as LSU's head coach.

Less than two weeks after winning the national title, Orgeron agreed to a new contract with a \$3 million raise to \$7 million a year over six years.

Orgeron, who has also served as head coach at Ole Miss and Southern Cal, is 25-9 at LSU. His career mark as a collegiate head coach is 41-36, however he's 31-11 over his last 42 games.

### **Top LSU Players Joe Burrow QB 2018-2019**

LSU QB Joe Burrow sizes up the opposition

In his first year at LSU in 2018, Burrow was named the starting quarterback as a redshirt junior. In an early season road trip to then-#7 Auburn, Burrow threw for 249 yards and a touchdown en-route to a 22–21 win. He was named SEC Offensive Player of the Week following the victory.

He again earned SEC Offensive Player of the Week honors following a 292-yard, three-touchdown performance against Ole Miss two weeks later. Burrow helped lead the Tigers to a 10–3 record, including a win over UCF in the Fiesta Bowl, and a No. 6 ranking in the final AP Poll.

Burrow finished the season with 2,894 yards passing, 16 TD's, and five interceptions. He added 399 rushing yards and seven rushing touchdowns.

Burrow during the 2019 season

Burrow was again named LSU's starting quarterback heading into his redshirt senior season in 2019. In the Tigers' season opener against Georgia Southern, Burrow threw for 278 yards and five touchdowns in a 55–3 win and was later named SEC Co-Offensive Player of the Week (with Tua Tagovailoa). In a week two road trip to then-No. 9 Texas, Burrow threw for 471 yards, four touchdowns, and an interception in the 45–38 win.

His 471 yards were the second most in school history and most since Rohan Davey's 528 against Alabama in 2001. He was named Walter Camp National Offensive Player of the Week and SEC Offensive Player of the Week following the performance. Burrow earned his third SEC Offensive Player of the Week honors on September 21 during LSU's game against Vanderbilt. He threw for 398 yards and a school-record-setting six passing touchdowns in the Tigers' 66–38 win. He became the first LSU quarterback to ever throw for 350 yards in three consecutive games.

In a 42–6 win over Utah State, Burrow threw for 344 yards and five touchdowns, and became the first ever Tiger quarterback to throw for 300-plus yards in four consecutive games. The streak came to an end the next week against then-No. 7 Florida, but Burrow's 293 yards and three touchdown passes helped lead the Tigers to another win, 42–28.

The next week, in LSU's seventh game of the season, Burrow eclipsed the LSU single-season passing touchdowns record of 28 when he added four more in a win against Mississippi State. Burrow led the Tigers to another top-ten win and broke the LSU record for career 300-yard games (eight) with a 321-yard, two-total-touchdown performance against then-No. 9 Auburn.

LSU's November 9 game against Alabama was highly anticipated as the highest ranked showdown between the two schools since the 2012 BCS National Championship Game; LSU was ranked second and Alabama third in the season's inaugural College Football Playoff rankings released the week prior. The game would also feature two leading candidates for the Heisman Trophy in Burrow and Alabama quarterback Tua Tagovailoa.



Burrow and the Tigers came away victorious in a 46–41 shootout. Burrow passed for 393 yards and three touchdowns in the game and was again named Walter Camp National Offensive Player of the Week and SEC Co-Offensive Player of the Week, sharing the latter with teammate Clyde Edwards-Helaire.

The following week against Ole Miss, Burrow threw for 489 yards and five touchdown passes, and passed LSU's single-season passing yards record set by Rohan Davey in 2001. He also set the LSU record of consecutive completed passes with 17 during the game.

On November 30, Burrow helped LSU secure an undefeated regular season with a 50–7 blowout win over Texas A&M, throwing for 352 yards and three touchdowns. During the game, he set the all-time SEC record for single-season passing yards (previously set by Kentucky's Tim Couch) and tied the conference record for single-season touchdowns of Missouri's Drew Lock.

Burrow took sole possession of the SEC single-season touchdown record the following week in the SEC Championship Game, throwing for four TDs in LSU's dominant 37–10 win over Georgia that secured the Tigers' place in the College Football Playoff.

On December 14, 2019, Burrow was awarded the 2019 Heisman Trophy, winning by the largest margin in the history of the award, also earning the highest share of possible points available. Burrow's Heisman acceptance speech, in which he referenced the rampant poverty and food insecurity affecting his hometown, inspired over US \$450,000 in donations towards the local food bank in Athens County from over 13,000 donors.

Other awards he won that year include the Maxwell Award, Walter Camp Award, Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award, Davey O'Brien Award, Lombardi Award and Manning Award.

In the playoff semifinal game at the 2019 Peach Bowl, Burrow recorded 29-of-39 pass attempts for 493 passing yards and seven passing touchdowns (all seven touchdowns in the first half), to go along with five rushes for 22 rushing yards and a rushing touchdown in a 63–28 victory over fourth-ranked Oklahoma.

In the 2020 National Championship Game against Clemson, Burrow threw for 463 yards with six total touchdowns, five passing, which led LSU to a 42–25 victory and him being named the game's offensive MVP.

He finished his 2019 season with 60 passing touchdowns, which broke the single-season FBS record previously held by Colt Brennan in 2006 (58). His 5,671 passing yards ranks third all-time in an FBS season, tied with Case Keenum (2009). His passer rating of 202 for the season was also a record. Several sportswriters deemed the season to be the greatest ever by a college quarterback.

### **2017 Football Season Ed Orgeron Coach # 32**

The LSU Fighting Tigers football team represented the LSU Tigers of Louisiana State University during the 2017 Southeastern Conference football season. This was LSU's one hundred twenty-fourth season overall and its eighty-fifth season playing football as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). In 1992, LSU joined the Western Division of the Southeastern Conference.

Led by coach Ed Orgeron, in his first season of many seasons as head coach of LSU in 2017, the Tigers had a fine season at 9-4 Their SEC record was 6-2 giving them a third place finish in the Western Division of the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were ranked 18th in the coaches' poll and ranked 18th in the AP. LSU was invited to the Citrus Bowl where they were defeated by Notre Dame by a score of L (17-21)

### **2018 Football Season Ed Orgeron Coach # 32**

Led by coach Ed Orgeron, in his second season of many seasons as head coach of LSU in 2018, the Tigers had a fine season at 10-3 Their SEC record was 5-3 giving them a tie for second place finish in Western Division of the SEC. At the national level, the Tigers were ranked 7th in the coaches' poll and ranked 6th in the AP. LSU was invited to the Citrus Bowl where they beat UCF by a score of W (40-32)

The Tigers were coming off a 9–4 season in Ed Orgeron's first full season. They had begun the year ranked 25th in the preseason AP Poll.

## **2019 Football Season Ed Orgeron Coach # 32**

Led by coach Ed Orgeron, in his third season with many seasons to go as head coach of LSU in 2019, the Tigers had their best season ever at 15-0 Their SEC record was 80 giving them an undisputed SEC Western Championship. LSU won the SEC Championship game 37-10 to become SEC Champions.

At the national level, the Tigers were ranked #1 in the coaches' poll and ranked #1 in the AP. LSU was invited to the Peach Bowl (CFP Semifinal), which they won W (63–28) over Oklahoma. In the CFP National Championship game, LSU beat Clemson in the Citrus Bowl W 42–25 vs. LSU won all the marbles there were in 2019 and they are staged for a great season in 2020.

For extra emphasis, consider that the Tiger began the year ranked sixth in the preseason AP Poll, and were projected to finish in second in the SEC West behind Alabama. The Tigers secured an undefeated regular season that included wins over top-ten-ranked teams Texas, Florida, Auburn, and Alabama.

In the SEC Championship Game, LSU defeated Georgia to win their first conference title since 2011. LSU was ranked No. 1 in the final College Football Playoff rankings of the season, earning them a spot in the national semi-final game to be played at the Peach Bowl.

They dominated fourth-ranked Oklahoma in that game, 63–28, to advance to the CFP Championship Game. There, they defeated the defending national champions Clemson, 42–25, to secure LSU's fourth claimed national title in school history, the second undefeated champion in the CFP era, and the second 15–0 season among any team in the modern era.

Because of their dominant season-long performance against a historically difficult schedule, several pundits have called the team the greatest in college football history.

LSU's record-setting offense was led by senior quarterback Joe Burrow. The LSU QB also won the Heisman Trophy by the largest margin in the history of the award. In this his final collegiate season, he broke several NCAA FBS records, including most touchdown passes (60), and highest passer rating (202.0).

Burrow was accompanied on offense by 1,400-yard running back Clyde Edwards-Helaire, and two 1,500-yard receivers Ja'Marr Chase and Justin Jefferson. Chase received the Biletnikoff Award as the best wide receiver in the country.

LSU's defense was as good as it gets. The D was anchored by two All-American defensive backs in Jim Thorpe Award winner Grant Delpit and true freshman Derek Stingley Jr. Linebacker Jacob Phillips led the SEC in tackles. Head coach Ed Orgeron was awarded several national Coach of the Year honors. The coach makes a big difference in football. Go Ed.

### **Games of the 2019 Season**

In the season and home opener on August 3, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. #6 LSU pummeled Georgia Southern at Tiger Stadium in Baton Rouge, LA W (55–3) before 97,420. On Sep 7 at #9 Texas, #6 LSU beat the Longhorns at the Darrell K Royal–Texas Memorial Stadium in Austin, TX in a College GameDay celebration W (45–38) before 98,763. On Sep 14, #4 LSU thumped Northwestern State at home in Tiger Stadium Baton Rouge, LA W (65–14) before 100,334. Then, on Sep 21, at Vanderbilt, the #4 ranked Tigers shellacked the Commodores at Vanderbilt stadium in Nashville, TN W (66–38) before 32,048. On Oct 5, #5 LSU smothered Utah State at home in Tiger Stadium, Baton Rouge, LA W (42–6) before 100,266.

On Oct 12, #5 LSU beat #7 Florida at home in Tiger Stadium, Baton Rouge, LA in another College GameDay celebration W (42–28) before 102,321. On Oct 19 #2 LSU pounded Mississippi State at Davis Wade Stadium Starkville, MS W (36–13) before 59,282. Then, on Oct 26, LSU edged out #9 Auburn at home in Tiger Stadium Baton Rouge, LA in the Tiger Bowl W( 23–20) before 102,160.

On Nov 9 at #3 Alabama, #2 LSU edged out the Crimson Tide at Bryant–Denny Stadium Tuscaloosa, AL in a College GameDay celebration W (46–41) before 101,821. Then, on Nov 16, #1 LSU beat Ole Miss Vaught–Hemingway Stadium, Oxford, MS in the Magnolia Bowl W (58–37) before 53,797. On Nov 23, #1 LSU drubbed Arkansas at home in Tiger Stadium Baton Rouge, LA in the Battle for the Golden Boot, W (56–20) before 101,173. On November 30, LSU walloped Texas A&M at home in Tiger Stadium, Baton Rouge, LA W (50–7) before 102,218

### **December 7, 2019 SEC Championship Game**

On December 7, 2019, at 3:00 p.m., #2 LSU beat #4 Georgia at Mercedes-Benz Stadium Atlanta, GA in the SEC Championship Game, a College GameDay) Celebration. W (37–10) before 74,150.

Burrow turned in another dazzling performance on the big stage, leading No. 1 LSU to a spot in the College Football Playoff with a 37-10 rout of No. 4 Georgia in the Southeastern Conference championship game Saturday.

"Joe is the heartbeat of this team," running back Clyde Edwards-Helaire said.

The Tigers, going for their first national title since 2007 season, will either return to Atlanta or head west to suburban Phoenix for a semifinal game on Dec. 28. They surely made a persuasive case to be the top overall seed when the four-team field. and pairings are announced Sunday.

The Heisman-worthy moment came late in the third quarter. With Georgia (11-2, No 4 CFP) bringing the heat, Burrow spun to his left to get away from lineman Travon Walker, whirled back to his right to send Walker sprawling to the turf, then delivered a pass on the run while sprinting toward the LSU sideline with another defender in hot pursuit.

Burrow wasn't done. Derek Stingley's second pick of Jake Fromm turned the ball back over to the prolific LSU offense at the 13, and Burrow wasted no time finding Jefferson for an 8-yard TD in the waning seconds of the third quarter to send many in the predominantly Georgia crowd heading for the exits.

## UP NEXT

LSU: Makes its first appearance in the College Football Playoff, which began in 2014. The Tigers last played for a national title during the 2011 season, when they won 13 straight games before a dismal 21-0 loss to Alabama in the BCS championship game.

Georgia: Appears likely to make its second straight appearance in the Sugar Bowl against Baylor, loser of the Big 12 championship game.

### **December 28, 2019 Peach Bowl—CFP Semifinal**

On December 28, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.. #1 LSU clobbered #4 Oklahoma at the Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta, GA in the Peach Bowl – CFP Semifinal W (63–28) before 78,347.

Burrow throws 7 TDs,  
#11 LSU routs No. Oklahoma 63-28  
By the Associated Press

LSU: The Tigers will head back to Louisiana for a de facto home game at the Superdome on Jan. 13. That mirrors their last title run during the 2007 season, when they beat Ohio State 38-24 in New Orleans for the BCS championship. "Just getting there is not our final destination," Orgeron said. "We're looking to win it."

### **January 13, 2020. CFP National Championship**

On January 13, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., #1 LSU played and beat #3 Clemson for the National Championship at the Mercedes-Benz Superdome in New Orleans, LA in the CFP National Championship Game. It was also a College GameDay Celebration. W (42–25) before 76,885.

Burrow, LSU caps Heisman season, beat Clemson 42-25

NEW ORLEANS -- From small-town Ohio kid to Louisiana legend, Joe Burrow capped his record-breaking, Heisman-winning season by bringing a national championship to LSU.

Burrow threw five touchdown passes, ran for another score and finished off one of the most accomplished seasons in college football history by leading the top-ranked Tigers to a 42-25 victory against No. 3 Clemson on Monday night in the playoff final.

By the Associated Press

"He's one of the greatest players in LSU history," Tigers coach Ed Orgeron said. "He's done so much for the state of Louisiana and LSU. We are so grateful to Joe Burrow."

The senior quarterback from The Plains, Ohio, delivered the Tigers (15-0) their first national title since 2007 and fourth overall, breaking a few more records along the way in what was already an historic season. His five TD passes and 463 yards passing are the most for a BCS or College Football Playoff title game. So were his six total touchdowns.

"This is what I wanted to do from the time I was 5 years old, was hoist this trophy. And bringing it back to Louisiana," Burrow said, then caught himself. "I guess we're in Louisiana, but staying in Louisiana, we weren't going to let someone come in here and steal this from us in our home state.

"We have a great fan base that came out and supported us. We were going to keep this thing right here."

Under a shower of sparkling white, gold and purple confetti, Burrow raised the CFP championship trophy toward the Superdome roof. The party was on -- no doubt already raging on nearby Bourbon Street.

Burrow became the first major college quarterback to throw 60 touchdown passes in a season and LSU snapped defending national champion Clemson's 29-game winning streak.

On this night, Lawrence (18 for 37 for 234 yards) was no match for Burrow -- the Ohio State transfer who threw all of 16 TD passes last season with LSU.

His ascent has been dizzying and unprecedented. Running a version of the New Orleans Saints' offense brought to LSU by 30-year-old assistant coach Joe Brady, Burrow and an array of talented receivers

transformed these Tigers into one of the most prolific offenses college football has ever seen.

The Saints' Drew Brees, Burrow's idol growing up, could not have done it better.

Orgeron has proved to be the perfect fit for LSU. Just like Burrow.

After tossing his fifth touchdown pass of the night, a perfectly placed jumped ball to Terrace Marshall Jr. from 24 yards out to make it 42-25 with 12:08 left in the fourth, Burrow signaled TD and strolled to the sideline.

The Superdome is LSU's dome away from home, about 80 miles from the Tigers' Baton Rouge campus -- and it was rocking.

The LSU band broke out its unofficial anthem, "Neck," and as the Tigers bounced and waved towels on the sideline, Burrow just sat on the bench, bobbing his head and waving one arm.

Joe Cool. Just doing his thing. Next stop: The NFL draft, where he will likely be the first pick in April.

The final score was lopsided, but it was far from easy for LSU and Burrow.

This season, LSU's newest football hero has done just about whatever he wants.

"I don't know about the whole hero thing," Burrow said, "but I know this national championship will be remembered for a long time in Louisiana."

2020 for Ed Orgeron with a 5-5 record, it will be another tough rebuilding year for LSU. Nice year in 2019 Ed.





# Chapter 22 Alabama Football—Coach Bear Bryant 1958-1978

**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
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
1982	Bear Bryant	SEC	8-4-0	3-3-0

\* National Championships (6 in total for the Bear)

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

Bear Bryant had three winning seasons 1958, 1959, & 1960, before he hit paydirt with a national championship in his fourth year. The 1960 Alabama Crimson Tide football team was also a fine team. It 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.



### 1961 Alabama Football Season Paul "Bear" Bryant Head Coach #21 7

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 it is easy to retell the great 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 Trammell at quarterback. Additionally, Alabama had four players selected to the All-SEC First Team: Mike Fracchia at back, Jordan, Neighbors and

Trammell. Trammell was also selected as the SEC Most Valuable Player for the 1961 season and Neighbors won the Jacobs Blocking Trophy.

In having led his team to both the SEC and national championships, Bear Bryant was recognized as the AP, UPI and coaches' SEC Coach of the Year Who could ask for anything more?

The AFL was rolling along well at the time as was the NFL. A number of varsity lettermen from the 1961 squad were drafted into the National Football League (NFL) and the American Football League (AFL) between the 1962 and 1965 drafts. Alabama had become a major supplier of talent to the NFL. UA of course wanted all players to graduate but could not deny them their right to earn an exceptional living in the NFL. Joe Namath eventually played for the Jets in the AFL beat the NFL in Super Bowl #3.

### **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.

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.

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.



**1964 Joe Namath played for Coach Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21**

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 played at home in Tuscaloosa on Oct 24 at Denny Stadium where they defeated a #9 ranked Steve Spurrier-led Florida team on homecoming before they gained their second road victory on Oct 31 at Mississippi State at Jackson W (23-6)



### *Bear Bryant & Joe*

<<<*Namath* Alabama then on Nov 7 defeated LSU W (17-9) in a newly expanded Legion Field and captured the SEC championship.

The next week on Nov 14, UA defeated Georgia Tech W (24-7) in what was the final game of their annual series.

In the annual Iron Bowl on Nov 26 against Auburn W (21-14), the Crimson Tide completed an undefeated regular season with their victory. Right after Bama accepted a bid to play Texas in the Orange Bowl. Although recognized as national champions at the conclusion of the regular season, Alabama closed the season with a loss to the Texas Longhorns L (17-21) in the Orange Bowl.

After the season, Joe Namath was selected as the first overall pick by the New York Jets in the 1965 AFL Draft. In addition to Namath, eleven other lettermen from the 1964 squad were drafted into the National Football League.

Although officially recognized as national champions at the conclusion of the regular season, Alabama went on to lose against Texas in the Orange Bowl. Due to this and the increasing number of top ranked teams participating in bowl games, 1964 was one of the final years the AP released its final poll before the completion of bowl season. The AP would permanently switch to a final poll conducted after the bowl games starting with the 1968 season. Arkansas (the only major team that finished the season undefeated), Notre Dame, and Michigan were also recognized as national champions by various other selectors for the 1964 season.

### **1965 Alabama Football Season Paul “Bear” Bryant Head Coach #21**

The 1965 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 71st overall and 32nd season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The team was led by head coach Bear Bryant, in his eighth year. It



played home games at Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Legion Field in Birmingham and Ladd Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. They finished this season with nine wins, one loss and one tie (9–1–1 overall, 6–1–1 in the SEC), as SEC champions and with a victory over Nebraska in the Orange Bowl. Alabama was also recognized as national champions by the AP Poll after their Orange Bowl win.

Alabama opened the season on September 18 ranked No. 5 but were upset by Georgia 1 (17-18) in the first game of the season. They rebounded with their first win of the season on Sept 25 at Tulane W (27-0) and followed that with a W (17–16) win over Ole Miss on Oct 2 in a game in which Alabama had to rally from a nine-point fourth quarter deficit for the victory.

The next week, Oct 9, the Crimson Tide defeated Vanderbilt in Nashville W (22-7) before they returned home Oct 16 for their “Third Saturday in October” rivalry game against Tennessee T (7-7) Against the Volunteers, the score was deadlocked 7–7 in the closing seconds, but Alabama had driven to the Tennessee four-yard line. Ken Stabler believing that it was third down, threw the ball out of bounds with six seconds left to stop the clock. However, it was actually fourth down, possession went to Tennessee, and the game ended in a tie.

After the tie, the Crimson Tide won five in a row over Florida State Oct 23 at Denny W (1-0), at Mississippi State Oct 30 W (10-7), at LSU Nov 6 W (31-7), South Carolina Nov 13 at Denny W (35-14) and then the Iron Bowl on Nov 27 v Auburn at Legion Field W (30-0) on the way to Bryant's fourth SEC title at Alabama.

Because the Associated Press was holding its vote until after the bowl games instead of before for the first time, No. 4 Alabama still had a chance to win the national championship when they played No. 3 Nebraska in the Orange Bowl. On New Year's Day, No. 1 Michigan State lost in the Rose Bowl and No. 2 Arkansas lost in the Cotton Bowl Classic, and on New Year's Day 1966, Alabama defeated Nebraska W (39–28) in the Orange Bowl and so UA captured its third AP National Championship in five years.

### **1965-1966 Orange Bowl Notes:**

For the second year in a row, Alabama played in the Orange Bowl. In the 1966 edition of the game, the Crimson Tide defeated the Nebraska

Cornhuskers 39–28 and finished the season 9–1–1 and as AP national champions.



The NCAA recognizes consensus national champions as the teams that have captured a championship by way of one of the major polls since the 1950 college football season. As they entered the Orange Bowl, the Crimson Tide was ranked fourth by the AP behind Michigan State, Arkansas and Nebraska.

After losses by the Spartans and Razorbacks in their bowl games, coupled with an Alabama victory over Nebraska in their contest, the Crimson Tide vaulted into the No. 1 position in the final AP poll of the season and therefore won the national championship. Michigan State was also recognized as national champions by various other selectors for the 1965 season, including the UPI.

### **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.

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.

#### **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)

### **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.

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.

#### **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.

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

Some may recall that Woody Hayes and Bear Bryant were the show at the 1978 Sugar Bowl Rob Oller wrote about it for the Columbus Dispatch, 12/24/14. Check it out some time, as it is good reading.

#### **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.

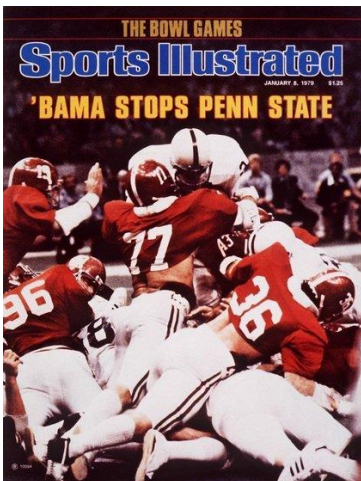
### Sugar Bowl Notes—The Goal Line Stand:



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.

### **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 psssst," 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>*

### **1981 Iron Bowl – Win # 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.

### **The 1982 Cotton Bowl**



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.

This would not be the year for Alabama. The third-ranked Alabama Crimson Tide of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) and the #6 Texas Longhorns of the Southwest Conference (SWC). Down by ten points, slight underdog Texas rallied in the fourth quarter to win, 14-12.<<

Coach Bryant at the 1982 Cotton Bowl.

# Chapter 23 Penn State--Joe Paterno Era 1966 to 2020

## Coach # 14, Joe Paterno

1966	Joe Paterno	5-5	
1967	Joe Paterno	8-2-1	
1968	Joe Paterno	11-0	
1969	Joe Paterno	11-0	
1970	Joe Paterno	7-3	
1971	Joe Paterno	11-1	
1972	Joe Paterno	10-2	
1973	Joe Paterno	12-0	
1974	Joe Paterno	10-2	
1975	Joe Paterno	9-3	
1976	Joe Paterno	7-5	
1977	Joe Paterno	11-1	
1978	Joe Paterno	11-1	
1979	Joe Paterno	8-4	
1980	Joe Paterno	10-2	
1981	Joe Paterno	10-2	
1982	Joe Paterno	11-1	National Champions
1983	Joe Paterno	8-4-1	
1984	Joe Paterno	6-5	
1985	Joe Paterno	11-1	
1986	Joe Paterno	12-0	National Champions
1987	Joe Paterno	8-4	
1988	Joe Paterno	5-6	
1989	Joe Paterno	8-3-1	
1990	Joe Paterno	9-3	
1991	Joe Paterno	11-2	
1992	Joe Paterno	7-5	
1993	Joe Paterno	10-2	(6-2 Big 10)
1994	Joe Paterno	12-0	(8-0 Big 10)
1995	Joe Paterno	9-3	(5-3 Big 10)
1996	Joe Paterno	11-2	(6-2 Big 10)
1997	Joe Paterno	9-3	(6-2 Big 10)
1998	Joe Paterno	9-3	(5-3 Big 10)
1999	Joe Paterno	10-3	(5-3 Big 10)
2000	Joe Paterno	5-7	(4-4 Big 10)
2001	Joe Paterno	5-6	(4-4 Big 10)
2002	Joe Paterno	9-4	(5-3 Big 10)
2003	Joe Paterno	3-9	(1-7 Big 10)
2004	Joe Paterno	4-7	(2-6 Big 10)
2005	Joe Paterno	11-1	(7-1 Big 10)
2006	Joe Paterno	9-4	(5-3 Big 10)
2007	Joe Paterno	9-4	(4-4 Big 10)
2008	Joe Paterno	11-2	(7-1 Big 10)
2009	Joe Paterno	11-2	(6-2 Big 10)
2010	Joe Paterno	7-5	(4-3 Big 10)
2011	Joe Paterno	8-1	(5-0 Big 10) ** JoePa left before season
2011	Tom Bradley	1-3	(1-2 Big 10)
2011	Coaches	9-4	(6-2 Big 10)

**Coached 45 great seasons 1966 to 2010 and part of 2011.**

With 409 victories, Joe Paterno is the winningest coach in NCAA FBS history.



He put together bowl victories, two consensus National Championships—1982, 1986, and five undefeated and untied seasons – 1968, 1969, 1973, 1986, and 1994. Four of Penn State's unbeaten teams (1968, 1969, 1973, and 1994) won major bowl games and yet were not awarded a national championship. You make the call on that one, please! At the end of the 2011 season, Joe Paterno was the winningest coach ever in Division I with a 409-136-3 record. By his record alone, he was the best coach ever

Penn State is credited with seven national championships from NCAA-designated major selectors. Penn State claims the 1982 and 1986 championships under Joe Paterno's tenure, both of which are Consensus National Championships. They claim no others, The University was established in 1887.

Since then, the Nittany Lions have achieved numerous on-field successes, the most notable of which include the previously mentioned two consensus national championships (1982 and 1986), four Big Ten Conference Championships (in 1994, 2005, 2008, and 2016), 13 undefeated seasons (1887, 1894, 1909, 1911, 1912, 1920,

1921, 1947, 1968, 1969, 1973, 1986 and 1994) and 50 appearances in college bowl games. The Lions postseason bowl record is 30-18-2. The team is also #9 in the all-time total wins category. PSU by all measurements is quite a football team.

#### **1966 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

The 1966 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno in his first season as head coach of Penn State. Paterno helped the team achieve a 5-5 record, which coincidentally was the record for PSU in Rip Engle's last season.

#### **1967 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

The 1967 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno and played its home games in the recently built Beaver Stadium in University Park, Pennsylvania. It did not take Joe Paterno long to break out of the regular pack of American coaches. Rip Engle , James Franklin, Joe Bedenk, Bob Higgins and many other PSU coaches over the years were very good coaches.

Joe Paterno at 45 years in the PSU coaching business was a remarkable, unquestionably great coach. In his getting to know you first year, he was 5-5 but those days for the most part were gone other than a very occasional negative sputter. In 1967 Paterno showed his mettle and delivered a great 8-2-1 season to PSU fans. Penn State had been a National power. Joe Paterno made Penn State a "you better notice us" national phenomenon.

#### **1968 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

For whatever reasons, Penn State was not selected as co-national champion by FACT or Sagarin, both NCAA-designated major selectors in 1968. Though they had a perfect season undefeated and untied.

That's why mere mortals such as humans called the system before the BCS playoffs something whose name comes from things that a bull excretes after eating enough that it is time to let it go. Some might politely call the system "hooley." But maybe that is too polite.

Yes, it was hoey that Ohio State the unanimous choice as MNC (Mythical National Champions) of 1968 among human selectors. There was not even a peep expressed on behalf of 11-0 Penn State. Other great programs over the years have had their fate cast to the same wind. It was the same poppycock that befell Alabama in 1966, and Oklahoma in 1967. Looking at Penn State's case for 1968, the excuses are too many.

The other pundits suggest that not even a single math-based ratings system listed in the NCAA Records Book had them #1 for 1968. So if PSU were going to claim a championship in the future for 1968, despite a tough season and undefeated, untied results, there would be many lined up against them. Yes, it is hoey, poppycock, bull, balderdash, and even malarkey.

The 1968 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno in his third season. The 1968 team was Paterno's first perfect season. He had gone from 5-5 to 8-2-1, to 11-0, and still could not get the pundits, the scribes or the coaches to give Penn State the championship it deserved. No matter what you think of the BCS, this is the scenario that it was created to avoid.

Was it fair the Penn State was denied the National Championship with a perfect record and eleven games played? How about going 11-0? Regardless of the fairness factor, the voters ruled. The Nittany Lions finished behind 9-0 Ohio State and 9-0-1 USC in both polls. Not fair for sure. PSU should claim a piece of this championship as many other schools have done when fairness was not achieved. Just a thought. Every game was a win in 1968. Every game, including the big Orange Bowl game on January 11, 1969

On September 21, a # 10 ranked Navy team lost at Beaver Stadium to Penn State in a convincing match W (31-6). After the game, PSU was ranked # 4. Kansas State then played at Beaver Stadium on September 28 and were beaten handily W (25-9). West Virginia then played a #3 ranked PSU at Mountaineer Field and lost the game to a powerful PSU team W (31-20).

PSU then played UCLA in California on October 12 and beat the Bruins for the fourth win of the season W (21-6). Somehow after this victory, Penn State had slipped down one notch to # 4 in the polls. Who knows why? After a week bye, PSU played at Boston College's

Alumni Stadium in Chestnut Hill, MA, and won a shutout W (29-0) against the Eagles.

Army, always tough, were not tough enough in a really tough game to beat Penn State. The Lions won this close match W (28-24) before 49,653, a virtual sellout of the original Beaver Stadium. After these two wins, PSU was still in 4th place.

Regardless of the polls, Penn State could not have won this game against Army without a little intervention. Surely many were praying as it came down to an onside kick.

All-America tight end Ted Kwalick swooped up the football coming out of a pile of players on an onside kick attempt in this game with 2:29 left. Kwalick was not an All-American by acclamation. He had earned it. In this game, the tight end took the ball in addition to all hopes for an Army victory across the goal line 53-yards after he had snagged the kick in the air. This was a very important touchdown for the 1968 season as it avoided an upset that would have ruined Penn State's first undefeated season under Paterno.

Always tough national power Miami played PSU at Beaver Stadium on November 9 and lost W (22-7). The crowd was more than capacity at 50,132. On November 16 at Maryland, a then-ranked #3 PSU won big W (57-13). Still not able to budge the pundits or the coaches who had something else on their mind, PSU smothered a tough Pitt Panther team on November 23 at Pittsburgh W (65-9). Even big scores against college powerhouses could not move the Lions up in the rankings.

The Nittany Lions were still ranked at # 3, though undefeated and untied when a tough Syracuse team came to Beaver Stadium on December 7. It was a respectable game W (30-12) but clearly PSU dominated against the national power Syracuse squad. Played before 41,393 at Beaver Stadium. Penn State, a team accustomed to cold Pennsylvania winters beat a cold-weather team that had yet to gain the comforts of the Carrier Dome. December 7 was a cold day and if I may after the game with the rankings, it appeared that it would have to be an even colder day in Hell for Penn State to get a break, and if not a break, some fairness.



Yes, the PSU Syracuse encounter was a tough cold game. Somebody, someplace, however was warm enough to be pleading the case for some other teams to advance in the standings while PSU was neutralized. PSU did not move up a nickel in the polls all season long. Everybody knew the PSU schedule when shortly after the season began PSU was ranked # 3.

Moreover, though the PSU record was about as good as it could get in football, at 10-0, PSU's opponent for the Orange Bowl was not either of the # 1 or # 2 ranked teams in America and neither had as good a record as the Nittany Lions.

As an independent, perhaps the conferences dominated the post-season voting for opportunities. Playing # 6 Kansas, a fine team in 1967, would in no way nudge the PSU record up a notch so PSU could play for the championship. Even if the battle between the # 1 and # 2 at the time found both teams losing, the obvious bias of the press and the coaches, I regret to say would still have denied PSU its due.

The university does not complain but perhaps it should. Nothing is over until it is over. The deck was stacked against PSU by a set of biased coaches and biased pundits. Who knows? Maybe they simply did not like Pennsylvania or perhaps it was third year coach Joe Paterno, who nobody knew because he was so new and thus did not deserve a championship. You tell me? Maybe somebody had an issue with Rip Engle or Bib Higgins or perhaps the Hollenback brothers that needed to be atoned. My only excuse is that it sure seems that some set of coaches and pundits with a relationship with a past Penn State coach or team believed they had experienced some animus that now had its chance to be righted. Again, who knows?

Nonetheless, Kansas and Penn State entered the Orange Bowl for this NBC televised game on January 1, 1969, both wanting to win this prestigious game and both hoping for the best. Both were great teams and nobody could deny that. Before 77,719 fans, Penn State played one of its best games ever against a very, very tough and respectable Kansas squad. PSU won the line battle and the scoring battle but just about won the game by one point W (15-14)



*Quarterback Chuck Burkhart directed Penn State to its first two undefeated seasons under Joe Paterno in 1968 and '69. In the 1969 Orange Bowl against Kansas (above), Burkhart ran for a three-yard touchdown with eight seconds left and Bob Campbell's two-point run gave Penn State one of its most thrilling victories in program history, 15-14, to cap an 11-0 season and No. 2 finish in the Associated Press poll.*

### **1969 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

**Penn State was selected co-national champion in 1969 by FACT and Sagarin, both NCAA-designated major selectors.**

The 1969 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno in his fourth season. The 1968 team was Paterno's second perfect season in a row. He had gone from 5-5 to 8-2-1, to 11-0, and now again in 1969, 11-0, and yet the coaches and the pundits denied Penn State a National Championship for the second time in ten years. As I have said before, no matter what you may think of the BCS, this is the scenario for which it was created.

Despite posting its second consecutive undefeated, untied season, the Nittany Lions did not have a fair shot at the national championship. Somehow President Richard Nixon was polled about his thinking on the matter. He said that he would consider the winner of the December 6 matchup between the Texas Longhorns and the Arkansas Razorbacks, then ranked at the top of the polls.

The coaches and the pundits mysteriously agreed with the President and they set up a scenario from which Penn State could again not compete in a championship game on New Year's Day. Sometimes even though a university does not whine, it should. PSU should have received a share of two national titles that it had earned.

Though there are no real excuses for this travesty against fair play, national champions were selected before the bowl games were played in January. Joe Paterno, who was a great speaker and a great teller of great stories—at the 1973 PSU Commencement ceremonies four years later, was quoted: "I've wondered how President Nixon could know so little about Watergate in 1973 and so much about college football in 1969." This was a national sham.

## When Nixon named Texas the national champion over Penn State



President Nixon's decision to name Texas the 1969 national champion over Penn State is explored in ESPN Film.

Pennsylvania Governor Raymond Shafer got into the act and quickly got the White House's attention with Penn State's 2 season undefeated streak. Shafer quickly declared that Pennsylvania State University was the # 1 team in the nation.

A White House assistant called Paterno to invite him and the team to the White House to receive a trophy for their accomplishment. Paterno has stated many times that he responded with, "You can tell

the president to take that trophy and shove it." Penn State and the entire state of Pennsylvania declined an invitation to play the Texas/Arkansas winner in the Cotton Bowl.

As we review the 1969 season, it helps to remember that now, many years later, there will be no drama reading the season's games as each and every game was won by Penn State. Not all games were blow-outs but there were many, but Penn State won all the games –the shutouts, the blow-outs, and the close-calls, one after another.

Every game below that you read about was a victory for Penn State though these wins were not enough for the coaches and pundits who perhaps wanted a different team or coach to win the national prize. It sure was not right. Then again, that's why today we have the BCS

The first 1969 season win came on September 20 at Navy at the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium • Annapolis, MD. PSU was rated # 3 to start. The Nittany Lions won the game handily W (45–22) before 28,796. On September 27, Colorado came to play a now # 2 ranked PSU at Beaver Stadium and lost the game W (7–3) with 51,402 in attendance. On October 4, Kansas State hosted PSU at KSU Stadium for a close Lions win W (17–14).

By Beating Kansas somehow PSU went down 3 notches in the polls to # 5. On October 11, #17 West Virginia tried to move up in the polls by beating now #5 ranked PSU at Beaver Stadium, but the Nittany Lions shut out the Mountaineers W (20-0).

On October 18, Ben Schwartzwalder's tough Syracuse team hosted #5 ranked, unbeaten and untied Penn State and gave the Lions quite a tussle but PSU prevailed W (15-14) After Syracuse, ranked # 8, yet still unbeaten and still untied, PSU played Ohio on October 25, at Beaver Stadium and beat the Buckeyes by a pile W (42-3), bringing back the reward of a return to #5 in the polls. At Boston College on week 7, November 1, PSU defeated the Eagles W (38-16) at Beaver Stadium before 46,652.

On November 15, after a bye week, PSU smothered Maryland at home W 4(8-0). Now #4 ranked PSU played Pitt and beat the Panthers at Pitt Stadium W (27-7). On November 29, Carter Stadium

was the home for a match-up of North Carolina State v # 3 ranked PSU, still unbeaten and untied with a 9-0 record going into game 10 of the season. Penn State convincingly beat the Wolfpack W (33-8).

It looked like Ohio State would automatically be the National Championship as they were ranked # 1 and were precluded from a Bowl game so no matter what, when the Bowl decision had to be made, PSU only had a chance if Ohio State lost its last game. The decision had to be made before the last game, however.

Joe Paterno admitted that he liked the way the team was treated the previous year in Miami for the Orange Bowl, but he always thought you should play the best team you could.

That means that at the time the highest ranked team in the Bowl game which when the game was played would have been either Texas or Arkansas in the Cotton Bowl. Yet, the players decided to go to Miami. When Ohio lost, it made the Cotton Bowl the battle for the National Championship or so it seemed to the coaches and pundits. Penn State and the people of Pennsylvania and Governor Schaeffer felt otherwise.

Ranked #6 Missouri put up a fight but were defeated by the #2 ranked Penn State Nittany Lions in the Cotton Bowl. Texas beat Arkansas and were crowned National Champions. Penn State finished the official balloting at # 2.

#### **1971 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

The 1971 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno in his sixth season. If the man, who would soon be known and loved as JoePa knew anything at all, he knew how to win. With just one loss in an 11-1 season, I was a justified whiner in 1971 when for this stellar record, PSU was ranked at just #11 in the coach's poll and # 5 in the AP. A lot of coaches seemed to be unwilling to reward Penn State in the mid twentieth century for its valid accomplishments.

#### **1973 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

The 1973 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno in his eighth season. Penn State had another undefeated and untied season just four years after having two undefeated and untied

seasons in a row. Despite having a perfect 12-0 season, PSU for the third time in six years was denied a proper ranking by the Coaches and by the AP. They slotted Penn State at # 5 after its third perfect season in six years. No wonder many felt that the system was rigged.

When like me, one walks slowly through the Paterno record—in my case because I am forming words and scribing it; in your case, as you are reading my words, you get the full sense of what an awesome achievement it was for the University, the players involved, and this awesome coach. Looking at the results season by season, nobody was as good as Joe Paterno in his eight seasons. You'd have to look outside of Penn State in 1973 to find a Rockne or a Leahy to match the outstanding record of Joe Paterno.

Penn State's third undefeated season under Joe Paterno was led by John Cappelletti who would become the first Penn State player to win the Heisman Trophy.

In an early season start on September 15, at Stanford #7 PSU defeated the Cardinal W (20-6). At Navy on September 22, PSU shut out the Middies W (39-0). At # 6 on September 29, the Nittany Lions played its home opener and scored a win against Iowa W (27-8). At Falcon Stadium on October 6, PSU beat the Falcons W (19-9).

Ironically after the win, PSU lost a point in the standings. The #7 Lions battered a game Army squad on October 13 at Beaver Stadium on October 20 W (54-3) Off to Archbold Stadium in Syracuse, #5 PSU beat the Orangemen W (49-6) After winning game after game, the 6-0 Nittany Lions would never get above # 5 in the polls for the rest of the season. It was as if other teams had a lock on the top 4 slots.

On October 27, West Virginia was roughed up by a tough Lions Team W 62-14 before an over-crowd of 59,138, an expansion built in in 1972 had brought capacity to 57,538. On November 3 #6 PSU defeated Maryland at Byrd Stadium W (42-22).

This was followed by a close win on November 10 at home against NC State W (35-9).



In this best of Beaver Stadium game, John Cappelletti, #22, solidified his credentials for the Heisman Trophy with his best running day ever in this wild shootout in freezing cold and snow. Cappelletti set a school record of 41 carries that is still unbroken in rushing for 231 yards and three touchdowns.

Ohio University was next at Beaver Stadium on November 17 W (49-10) At 10-0, ranked # 6, PSU played Pittsburgh at home and defeated the Panthers W (35-13).

The powers-that-be saw something that few at Penn State saw. These mysterious powers felt it appropriate to match the powerful

11-0, #5 ranked Nittany Lions against a twice beaten 9-2, #13 LSU in the Orange Bowl on January 1. PSU defeated LSU W (16-9). PSU ended its perfect season 12-0 and LSU finished with three defeats 9-3. It may not have been the Nittany Lions finest game but one thing is for sure. Joe Paterno knew how to win football game.

## Orange Bowl Game Highlights

The Undefeated Penn State Nittany Lions moved its record to 12-0 on the season as it took advantage of consistently poor LSU field position to win 16-9.

LSU had a good game as it out-gained the Nittany Lions 274 yards to 185 and held Heisman Trophy winner John Cappelletti to 50 yards. Cappelletti nonetheless was the difference maker as he scored the Nittany Lions' final touchdown on a one-yard plunge in the second quarter. The game's big play was a spectacular 72-yard touchdown catch by Chuck Herd off a pass from Tom Shuman early in the second quarter.

LSU got a lot of yardage but not of lot scores. The Tigers scored first on a three-yard run by Steve Rogers, and Penn State retaliated with a 44-yard field goal by Chris Bahr to make it 7-3 at the end of the first quarter. Herd's catch and Cappelletti's plunge put PSU ahead 16-7 at the half. That was the game.

Although Penn State finished undefeated, the polls still had the Nittany Lions ranked at #5.

### **1977 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

The 1977 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno in his twelfth season. PSU recovered from a tough 7-5 season and experienced one loss to Kentucky at home on October 1, the fourth game of the season by just four points L (20-24).

### **1978 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

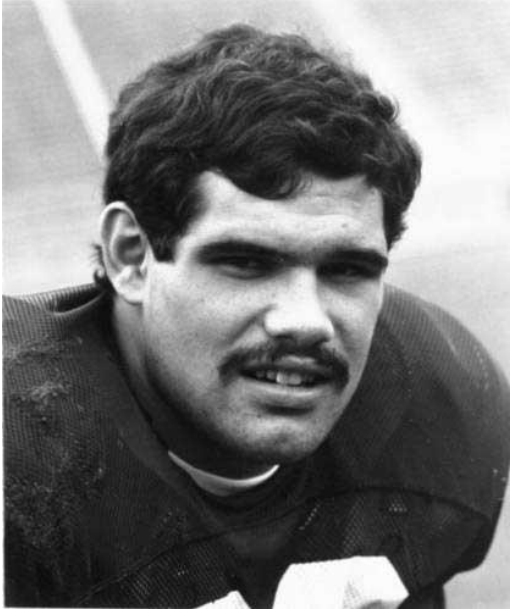
The 1978 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno in his thirteenth year. This Chuck Fusina led-team was phenomenal. In 1977, four points to Kentucky in the fourth game separated PSU from a perfect season. This year, PSU did not lose a game until the Sugar Bowl when it was a seven-point difference against a Bear Bryant coached Alabama team that kept PSU from the National Championships.

PSU was 11-0 and ranked # 2 going into the game. Alabama was 11-0 and ranked #1. Alabama won the game and the National Championship. PSU finished 11-1 and were ranked # 4 in both polls. Joe Paterno was a phenomenon. SO was Bear Bryant. My buddy George Mohanco, a former Pennsylvanian has a saying, whether he invented it, I do not know but it applies to 1978. "Sometimes you eat the bear and sometimes the bear eats you." This time Bear Bryant had the better dinner.

As the regular season came to a close, one 1978 game stands out as a typical PSU nail biter. No. 2 Penn State was holding on to a 12-10 lead with 4:40 left and with the crowd of 59,424 growing restless, Penn State's Matt Suhey (shown on the left next page) returned a punt 43 yards for a touchdown to clinch the victory.



As soon as Suhey scored, it was announced that #1 Oklahoma had lost three days later, and so Penn State was ranked #1 for the first time ever.



Operating with a 10-0 record, ranked #1 in the nation, for the first time ever, playing nemesis cross-state rival Pittsburgh, anything could have happened on November 24.

PSU was steady and steadfast in its resolve to win and the Nittany Lions shut-out Pitt W (17-0) at Beaver Stadium and had just enough offense to keep Pittsburgh from thinking it had a chance. For its 11-0 season PSU was ranked #1 but there was another team with an 11-0

record, looking up at PSU from the # 2 slot.

## The Sugar Bowl 1978

And, so, this year's edition of the New Year's Day Sugar Bowl capped off the 1978 season and was the 45th edition of the Sugar Bowl, it was played in New Orleans, Louisiana on January 1, 1979 at the Louisiana Superdome. A close score of L (7-14) gave Alabama head coach Bear Bryant his fifth National Championship. After such a fine season, Joe Paterno was still looking for his first.



Penn State Football, Todd Blackledge

On this day v Pittsburgh facing the consummate passer of all time, Dan Marino, JoePa had to let Blackledge throw—but would he? He sure did. Not only did Coach OK a vaunted passing attack, it was as

if PSU had been a passing team forever. Blackledge could not do anything wrong. He played one heck of a game

He was so good that Todd Blackledge upstaged the best passer in football Dan Marino at quarterback. Penn State got its biggest upset since Joe Paterno became the head coach in 1966, a huge 48-14 victory over top-ranked Pittsburgh that ended the Panthers' 17-game winning streak and ended their day in the championship sun.

## Warner pressed into duty

Curt Warner, Penn State's best tailback, did not start the game because of recent leg injuries. But when Jon Williams also got hurt early in the game, Warner came in and ran for 104 yards to finish his junior season with 1,044 yards rushing. He had missed two full games and most of two others this season.



The triumph was Penn State's 40th in the series, against 38 defeats and three ties. Paterno would not compare this victory with any previous ones in his 31 years as an assistant and head coach at Penn State but said, "I've never been around a squad with more tough luck. People are disappointed we didn't win every game, but I'm glad for the squad. We played a lot of difficult defenses, and injuries to so

many like Warner have been tough luck."

Sherrill said, "They outplayed us simply and we made too many mistakes.

When it was all over, PSU was # 3 in both post season polls whereas Pitt was # 2 in the Coach's poll and #4 in the AP poll. Texas, which had a loss and a tie played Clemson and lost but yet, was given the #4 slot in the Coach's Poll and were ranked above Pitt at # 2 in the AP poll. The Clemson Tigers, who were unbeaten and untied, claimed the national championship with #1 ranking in both polls

after their victory over Nebraska in the Orange Bowl. No wonder we have the BCS today.

### **1982 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

The 1982 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno in his seventeenth season. After a disappointing loss at Birmingham to #4 Alabama in game 5 L (21-42), a resilient and very tough Penn State squad came back and brought home all the marbles. The Nittany Lions won every game for the rest of the regular season and defeated the #1 Georgia Bulldogs 27-23 in the Sugar Bowl. Added to their 11-1 record Penn State's fine play gave Joe Paterno his first consensus national championship.

Watching the season records grow over the years, I still cannot get over how many games Paterno won and we are only in his seventeenth season. In 1982, JoePa was just in his mid-50. He surely knew how to get the most out of his players. That is the job of a great coach. Another great coach, Frank Leahy, at Notre Dame, a bit before Paterno's time, had a saying that I think was the same type of saying JoePa would use to get the most out of his lads. Leahy said: "Lads, you're not to miss practice unless your parents died or you died." That about says it all!

On September 11, # 7 ranked PSU defeated Maryland at Beaver Stadium in a very close game W (39-31). On September 18 Rutgers played a # 8 ranked Penn State and lost by a mile W (49-14).

# 2 Nebraska, coached by the Great Tom Osborne, with his own share of national championships, always a tough team played #8 PSU at Beaver Stadium on September 25. Osborne's team got its only loss (W (27-24) of the season in a very close game.

There are those that have this game characterized as the greatest game ever at Beaver Stadium. See write-up under picture on next page.

On October 9, came the loss at Alabama L (21-42). Alabama lost four of its next seven games which took them way out of the hunt for the championship.

Always ready to create havoc with a great PSU season, Syracuse played the #8 Nittany Lions at Beaver Stadium and lost W (28-7). West Virginia played #9 PSU in Mountaineer Stadium and gave up a loss W (24-0). Alumni Stadium in Chestnut Hill (Boston) was the scene for #8 PSU to shellack the unranked Eagles W (52-17). On November 7, #7 PSU then shut out and literally pounded NC State at Beaver Stadium W (54-0). #13 Notre Dame hosted # 5 PSU on November 13, as Penn State needed every win to have a shot at a championship. In a close match, #5 PSU (8-1) outplayed Notre Dame and got the W (24-14)



**September 25, 1982--Penn State 27, Nebraska 24:** This was the greatest game ever at Beaver Stadium as quarterback Todd Blackledge led a come-from-behind 65-yard drive in 10 plays with 1:14 left and no timeouts to beat No. 3 Nebraska. His controversial 15-yard sideline pass to Mike McCloskey at the two-yard line with nine seconds remaining and subsequent touchdown pass to Kirk Bowman had the record crowd of 85,304 celebrating inside and outside the lighted stadium for hours. ¶

## PSU v ND 1982

Yogi Berra may not have been a football player but his saying that it ain't over 'til it's over and true in the 1982 matchup between Notre Dame and Penn State. In 1982, the Irish were coming off a 31-16

upset over then-No. 1 Pittsburgh when the No. 5 Lions came to South Bend.



Notre Dame scored first, but a one-yard run by quarterback Todd Blackledge and two field goals by Nick Gancitano put the Lions up 13-7. Freshman sensation Pinkett, who would go on to have his best games of his career against the Lions, took a kickoff 93 yards for a touchdown and a 14-13 ND lead.

Blackledge, however, responded with a 48-yard-scoring strike to Curt Warner and Penn State went on to a 24-14 victory en route to its first national championship.

At 10-1, on November 26 # 2 Penn State played a tough #5 Pittsburgh at Beaver Stadium. The Nittany Lions controlled the game and won W (19-10). Penn State was the #2 team in the nation and they got a chance in the Sugar Bowl to play the #1 ranked team.

This year's Sugar Bowl was the type of game from which they make movies. The game would determine the 1982 national champions unless both teams played like pikers, which was highly unlikely for the recognized two best teams in the nation.

Georgia had a tough schedule and the Bulldogs had not lost a game. At 11-0, they thought they were pretty good. Penn State at 10-1, with a non-sequitur loss to Alabama felt pretty good about themselves. The game itself, for the first time in many trips to the great field for Penn State and Joe Paterno, would determine the national champion. Win, you're in; Lose, you're out and probably not even #2!

The game was played in the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans, LA. It was called the Sugar Bowl but neither team had decided to sweeten anything for their opponent. Penn State at # 2, Georgia at #1—it was a game scheduled by the gods. And so, it happened on January 1, 1983 that the Pennsylvania State Nittany Lions defeated the great Georgia Bulldogs in a phenomenally tough football game W (19-10). 85,522 attendees plus a national ABC TV football audience enjoyed the game. Only half, my half, thankfully, enjoyed the score.

Paterno was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 2007, becoming one of the first three active coaches to gain induction.

Other members of the Penn State program enshrined in the College Football Hall of Fame, located in South Bend, Ind., include ex-coaches Hugo Bezdek, Rip Engle, Dick Harlow and Bob Higgins along with former players John Cappelletti, Keith Dorney, Jack Ham, Glenn Killinger, Ted Kwalick, Rich Lucas, Pete Mauthe, Shorty Miller, Lydell Mitchell, Dennis Onkotz, Mike Reid,

Additional information on the College Football Hall of Fame Class of 2009 can be found at [www.footballfoundation.com](http://www.footballfoundation.com).

### **1985 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

The 1985 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno for the twentieth year and played its home games in Beaver Stadium in University Park, Pennsylvania. With a 6-5 season in 1984, I admitted that the rebuilding needed rebuilding. Along the way, noticing that an Alabama team lost four games after beating Penn State, I realized that nothing is certain in college football. But,

Joe Paterno knew how to win. That was certain and in 1985, he showed it again on his way to 1986. PSU won every regular season game but lost the Orange Bowl to Oklahoma. Tough season. 11-1.

## Bowl Game Destroys Undefeated Season

The game was about five or six weeks after the team was in shape and had their last taste of a real football game. Miami had the same circumstances so there are no excuses but PSU had obviously lost its edge. On January 1, 1986, # 1 PSU played #3 Oklahoma in the Miami Orange Bowl and lost the game to a Miami team that played better than Penn State L (10–25). 74,148 saw the game on the field and NBC showed the game to the willing in the rest of the country. It was a great season, 11-1 with a #3 finish in both the Coach's and the AP polls.

### 1986 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno

The 1986 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno for the twenty-first year. Penn State defeated the Miami Hurricanes 14–10 in the 1987 Fiesta Bowl to win Paterno's second consensus national championship. Joe Paterno knew how to win football games.

On September 6, Penn State opened up this successful season at home against Temple. Temple had been having problems winning against PSU for some years and in fact it still does and this year was no different. #6 ranked Penn State won its home opener W (45-15). Boston College moved its September 20 game from Alumni Stadium to Foxborough to play a tough #5 ranked PSU team.

The Eagles played a close game but lost to the Nittany Lions W (26-14). East Carolina lost at Beaver Stadium on September 27 against a #7 ranked PSU squad W (42-7). PSU had a knack of scheduling its easier games in the beginning to get the team accustomed to the routine before engaging tough game. PSU defeated Rutgers at Beaver Stadium next on October 4, W (31-6).

Cincinnati brought its football team to play #5 ranked PSU at Beaver Stadium on October 11. It was a close game but the Nittany Lions won W (23-17). On October 18, Syracuse played PSU at Beaver

Stadium and were defeated easily by the #6 Nittany Lions W (42-3). A tough Alabama team waited for game seven when PSU was 100% ready for the Crimson Tide.

The PSU squad made quick work of the vaunted Alabama team at Tuscaloosa W (23-3). At 7-0, with the Alabama game behind them PSU moved up in the rankings to #2 in the country. On November 1, PSU traveled to Mountaineer Stadium to play a fine West Virginia team and beat the Mountaineers W (19-0)

On November 8, #2 ranked Penn State played Maryland at Beaver Stadium and won a very, very close match W (17-15). A loss would have virtually ended PSU's championship dreams. Playing the unranked Fighting Irish at Notre Dame Stadium on November 15, it was expected to be close and it was but the #3 ranked 9-0 Nittany Lions prevailed W (24-19).

At 10-0, ranked # 2 on November 22, PSU needed just one more win v Pittsburgh at home to have a perfect regular season. The Nittany Lions got that win W (34-14) before 85,722, and also got a shot at winning the national title in the Fiesta Bowl v #1 ranked Miami.

PSU clinched a spot in the national championship game by beating archrival Pitt. That it was Pitt made this an extremely gratifying moment. The bitterness of the long-time rivalry emerged with five fist fights, a number of late hits and four offsetting penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct. Many who watched every moment of the game, still enjoy the image of Joe Paterno running across the field late in the game to help break up a scuffle in front of the Pitt bench. They say that was a lifetime priceless moment.

## 1986 Fiesta Bowl Game

Taking advantage of the long New Year's weekend, this January 2, 1987 encounter was scheduled for Friday. It was another game of the century with #1 Miami coached by Jimmy Johnson, the coach everybody loved to hate, and Joe Paterno, a great winning coach at the helm for the #2 ranked Penn State. The Fiesta Bowl game was played in Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe, AZ (Fiesta Bowl). It was



televised by NBC and watched on the field by 74,098. PSU won the game W 14–10 and the national championship.

Shane Conlan played a pivotal part in one of the most memorable games in Penn State history, recording eight tackles and two interceptions in a 14-10 win over No. 1 Miami in the 1987 Fiesta Bowl. Conlan and the Nittany Lions also reached the 1985 national championship game, where they lost to Oklahoma.



Penn State linebackers Trey Bauer (35) and Shane Conlan (31) pat each other on the back as Miami's Aotao Polamalu watches following Conlan's fourth quarter interception in the Fiesta Bowl, Friday, Jan. 3, 1987, Tempe, Ariz. Penn State defeated Miami 14-10. (AP Photo/Jim Gerberich)

Conlan was a four-year letter winner who twice led the team in tackles, finishing his career with 274 career stops, seventh-most in school history. He was the No. 8 pick in the 1987 NFL draft and went on to play nine seasons in the NFL, winning NFL Rookie of the Year honors and being named to three Pro Bowls.

## **PSU National Champions for the second time**

### **1994 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

PSU won the National Championship again as everybody knows in 1994. But, because we are kind to our opponents, we just whisper about this triumph.

You see, the vaunted 1994 team was not awarded the big prize after a 12-0, undefeated, untied season. It was because the coach chose not to embarrass Indiana and the Hoosiers made the score closer than the game ever was. It was as if the football establishment was waiting to deny Penn State's possible best team ever, the national championship.

Paterno's teams had recorded great seasons before 1994 with a 37-12 record leading up to the great 1994 season in which nothing went wrong in games but the afterthoughts were mostly sour.

1993, the year in which we now find ourselves examining, was also a great effort and a great result though often overshadowed by the undefeated 1994 team. The pundits say that the final game of that season against Michigan State, the game we have been discussing, set the tone for the run to the top in '94. Penn State showed its mettle and the future looked bright. Nobody could deny a great Penn State Team the Championship in 1994. All PSU had to do was win, win, and win again, and our great University did exactly that. But, we spend enough time on that when we cover 1994 so let's continue with the 1993 season.

In 1993, Penn State was the new guy on the block in the Big Ten. The well talented but less experienced than talented Lions opened a great season with five back-to-back wins. Eventually, the team met Michigan and Ohio State consecutively and these opponents were a measurable cut above the five prior teams. Penn State was not intimidated at all.

The Lions competed with Michigan well for the first three quarters, but the Wolverines kept Ki-Jana Carter from the goal line in the opening play of the fourth quarter. It was hard to take; I regret to say

that it sure seemed to take the oomph out of the PSU attack. Officially, the game ended when Kerry Collins threw a rare interception within the last minute of the game, but it seemed to end with Carter's almost TD.

Ohio State gave the Nittany Lions their second loss at Ohio Stadium just two weeks later. PSU had been 6-2 against Ohio State before this encounter but the last time was when they played the Buckeyes in the 1980 Fiesta Bowl. The Nittany Lions back then crushed OSU but the Buckeyes had improved for sure and they were ready for vindication against the Lions.

They got their day. The Buckeyes held Penn State to just two field goals and Kerry Collins was intercepted multiple times. The cylinders were not firing right on O or D. Ohio State finished the '93 season with just one loss. Tough players in 1993 were ready to play but with one year under their belts, they knew better how to get the job done. Fans such as me often forget that most players are between 17 and 23 years old. Some of us now have kids that are way older than that!

Despite these two consecutive losses, in 1993 Penn State came back strongly and won-out the rest of their season. It was not a cake-walk. The season topping game was their close win in East Lansing, where they squeaked out the win against a stubborn Michigan State to take home the legendary Land Grant Trophy.

The Big Ten was really on to something when they designated Penn State and Michigan State as rivals, meaning they would duel it out annually to prove which land-grant school was bigger and tougher and of course, badder than the other.

This great game is worth discussing. Michigan State was ranked #25, and Penn State was sitting at the number #14 spot. Neither team was a contender. However, as we know, the honor is everything in college football.

On game day, the field of play was a disaster, and the team play on both sides of the colors reflected that. Michigan State nonetheless broke out of the pack with a 13-0 lead early on. Soon, Joe Paterno would send Mike Archie right up the middle (in true Paterno form) to put some points on the board.

Michigan State wasted no time to respond with another seven points, and this is pretty much how this game went for the rest of the second quarter. By halftime Penn State had slimmed that difference to a one-score deficit, 23-17. The Nittany Lions were just down by 6, and they seemed confident in their stride.

The Spartans turned to their strong passing game in the third quarter, and they increased their lead to 37-17. Some were asking, "Is the Nittany Lions' recent winning streak over?."

All of a sudden, or so it seemed, the Lions were alive and roaring again: Collins completed a 40-yard pass to Bobby Engram, and Penn State was ready to control the game. They got even more when the reliable Linebacker U defense recovered a fumble on Michigan State's 38. Collins drove the Nittany Lions down the field again, and with a Brian O'Neal touchdown, he made it a one score game.

The defense took over and forced a three and out and gave the ball back to the PSU offense on its own 48. Collins faked a handoff and lofted a beautiful 52-yard pass to Engram (that's three touchdowns in about four minutes, if like me, you are keeping track).

The Spartan offense was inert for the remaining ten minutes and the PSU D helped the team big time to take that Land-Grant Trophy back to Happy Valley. It was a good year for Happy Valley as The Nittany Lions finished their first Big Ten season at the number three spot in the conference.

After the win in East Lansing in 1993, Penn State didn't lose a game until late September 1995. Yes, folks, that means there were no losses in 1994—not a one. You'll read about it next.

The Nittany Lions put a beating on more than a few of the teams they faced in '94. They pounded #21 Ohio State when the Buckeyes traveled to Happy Valley. After they took a 35-0 lead at halftime, Paterno played guys from all over the depth chart, and still managed to put 63 points on the board. On average, the Nittany Lions' scoring drives lasted less than two minutes each.

This offense was arguably one of the best in the history of college football. With a final score of 63-14 v the vaunted Ohio State Buckeyes, it was a game to treasure and a game future Ohio State teams would not forget.

Joe Paterno had been a hapless coach in convincing the NCAA and other powers that PSU was for real. His 1994 team was Paterno's fifth to go undefeated. Joe Pa had a bit less than half of his career left.

As Penn Staters, it is OK that we took our own horns while the rest of college football tries to turn off our lights. Penn State completed its 1994 season 12-0, number one in the Big Ten, and number two in the nation. But, again, this is not good enough for most who do not understand why 12-0 would not at least bring about a tie for the national championship.

When the university decides to claim some of these championships as other teams in the NCAA choose to do, I would expect that there will be a lot of writing after the asterisk.

Number two? Another all too familiar story for Penn Staters, who can remember '94 (or have heard about it for as long as they can remember). As history would have it, Penn State was crushing Indiana when Paterno pulled his starters. The Hoosiers scored a couple late touchdowns to make the score look a whole lot closer than it actually was.

And then something happened that never ever happens: the voters dropped the ball Sunday morning. Based on the box score, Penn State appeared to have struggled with Indiana (there was no struggle involved). Nebraska, who beat #2 Colorado, was voted up to number one, and Penn State dropped to number two.

I guess we're more than twenty years too late for a college playoff that could bring about the respect and the glory with which the Penn State 1994 team should be acclaimed. So, if not in public, we surely can know it privately.

## **1994 Citrus Bowl**

Penn State had a great 9-2 record going into the Bowl Season. The Lions were invited to the Citrus Bowl in Orlando Florida on January

1, 1994 at 1:00 PM (prime time New Year's Day) to play #6 Tennessee.

Penn State would not be denied the victory over this substantially higher ranked opponent W (31-13) before 72,456 plus the nationwide ABC TV audience. Nobody was more thrilled than I. Despite the outcome, it did not look good at first as the game began.



Tennessee got off to a great start at were ahead 10-0 after a quick 46-yard field goal and a 19-yard TD pass from Shuler to Cory Fleming. There were 72,000 singing Rocky Top and that was not the Nittany Lions favorite tune. At 10-0 but very early, it appeared the Vols might take it to the Lions with a big rout.

But with Kerry Collins calling the signals and Bobby Engram catching the pigskin when thrown to him, the Nittany Lions were about to roar. On second down from their own 36-yard line, Collins hit Engram on a wide receiver screen over the middle. Engram picked up a block and outran the defenders down to the Tennessee 29-yard line.

After the game, Engram had no problem noting: "That play set the tone... They saw we had some speed after all, and you could just see it in their eyes they weren't sure they could stop us." It was not long before PSU scored on a 3-yard TD run by Carter, who had been sitting out with a knee injury since the Illinois game. Carter was ready.

Tennessee came right back with an impressive drive down to the PSU 28-yard line where linebacker Tyoka Jackson got a tip on the ball in the air, and safety Lee Rubin intercepted it for the Lions at the 13-yard line. This was as close as Tennessee would come to the goal

line for the rest of the day. The rout was on but it was not as originally thought. Penn State got hot and The Volunteers were cold.

Before the break-away, Craig Fayak hit a field goal to tie the game and UT responded with a 50-yarder of their own to take a 13-10 lead. With 1:08 to go in the half, Collins moved the ball down the field with a 12-yard draw play to Mike Archi. He then tossed an eighteen yarder to Engram. With 10 seconds to go at the UT 14-yard line, Penn State called their final timeout. Everyone expected Joe Paterno to elect for the field goal, but to their amazement the offense went back out on the field.

Tennessee sat back in pass defense expecting the Lions to take a shot at the end zone, but Paterno called a draw play to Carter instead. Carter broke a tackle at the line and sprinted into the end zone to give the Nittany Lions a 17-13 lead at halftime. The pundits felt that PSU had sent this message to the Volunteers with this play: "We can do anything we want to do, and there is nothing you can do to stop it."

Joe Paterno let it out at half time in the locker room: "Who do they think they are, telling us they need a better opponent,"

Paterno yelled out to a fully-tuned in team of Nittany Lions: "I'm tired of this Orange team! I'm tired of this Orange Stadium! I'm tired of seeing Orange! Let's go out there and kick the Orange out of them!" Coaches inspire teams.

Penn State did exactly that. The Lions took the second half kickoff and marched 60 yards, with Collins hitting Brady wide open in the end zone to make it 24-13. Engram later added a 15-yard TD catch, and the defense shut out the Vols. The tough PSU D sacked Shuler four times. The final score was Penn State 31, Tennessee 13.

This was one game that even the players felt the negative hype and it had irritated them. Perhaps it had even inspired them. When it was all over, Kerry Collins let it be known that the Penn State team was irritated by the lack of respect for Penn State in the pregame media coverage.

"We heard all week about Heath Shuler and everybody was underestimating us," Collins said. "We thought all along that we were the better team. All we had to do was come out and prove it."

Paterno himself felt obliged to add: "We never thought Tennessee was better than us."

### **1994 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

The 1994 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno in his 29<sup>th</sup> year. Hard as it is to believe Penn State had another perfect record at 12-0. But, again, they were not national champions. Instead, they were bequeathed a # 2 ranking, and thus were denied another national championship. Life sometimes is not fair. Some say the reason PSU did not win the championship is that the Big Ten was not a respectable conference.

I don't buy that. I think there are dominating love-fests by the coaches and the AP and they feel a successful program such as Penn State does not need the benefit of the doubt. They were right to a degree but how about fairness? This is not the first time being cheated for Paterno nor for Penn State.

During the season, just two days after beating Ohio State, 63-14, -- yes, 64-13, Penn State University received 28 first-place votes in the Associated Press media poll and 32 first-place votes in the CNN/USA Today coaches' poll. They should have and did and they played flawless perfect ball the rest of the way.

Yet, somehow, two months later, after winning its final five games, Penn State got just 10 1/2 first-place votes in the AP poll and just eight first-place votes from the coaches. Meanwhile Nebraska got 51 1/2 first-place votes from the writers and 54 firsts from the coaches. What happened?

Nebraska was declared #1 and Penn State got the runner up spot at #2. Nobody could tell Joe Paterno his team wasn't the 1994 national champions.

"Who said we didn't win a championship?" Paterno mused. "(A portion of) the media (and the coaches' panel) said we didn't win a championship. We think we won a championship. We did everything we could and we're going to assume we're champions. And that's not to take anything away from Nebraska.



"But I think this team did everything it could, and it's certainly a national-championship-caliber football team. We're going to assume that, that's all. We're going to treat ourselves as champions. I'm going to treat them as champions. And I know Penn State will treat them as champions."

Whatever Penn State Fans or Nebraska fans or anybody who watches a lot of football thought about the ranking situation, it did not matter. What was clear, however, was that the coaches and media members were too lazy to analyze all of the top teams in depth to help them form a proper conclusion. This surely was a reason to get rid of such a system. It had become a popularity contest.

Reality often does not matter when perception is the deciding factor in any difficulty. The perception at this time in 1994 for those with a sentimental affinity for Nebraska was that Nebraska had beaten Miami by one touchdown in the January 1995 Orange Bowl and that made them automatic national champions. It was as if Richard Nixon had made the proclamation again against Penn State.

This time, rather than President Nixon's exuberance with his buddies at a football game, it was a media-driven perception that negated anything Penn State might have done in the Rose Bowl or anything the Nittany Lions accomplished in their record-setting season.

Find me another team that played the likes of Penn State in a year other than 1994 and I will show you a national champion. It did not matter that Miami, ranked # 3 when they played Nebraska had lost to Washington, a team that had four losses.

Miami in 1994 was not what Miami once was. They were ranked #3. Oregon, Penn State's Rose Bowl foe was not what it once was either. But Miami is perceived as a football giant, while Oregon is looked on as a joke. However, Oregon defeated Washington, a team that had defeated Miami 21-7 but none of the pundits cared that Miami was no longer Miami!

There was no way Penn State could overcome that dichotomy of impressions. Facts were not permitted on the table. To this day, I wish the University would put 1994 on the table as a national championship. The players and the coach earned it but the university went with the establishment.

Neither Penn State nor Nebraska played much of a non-conference schedule. Their conferences were supposed to be tough enough. Their best wins were over Southern California and UCLA, respectively. Who wants to make a bid on the better team USC or UCLA? Was the Big ten a tougher conference in which to excel or was the Big 8?

Which conference, the Big Ten or Big Eight, tasked a team more to excel in order to win? Did any of the coaches or the pundits in the AP after the season ended perform a real look-see? Or, perhaps they merely wanted to write their stories or share their opinions without doing real checking? Any rational analysis would suggest that, top to bottom, the Big Ten was much tougher than the Big 8 – hands down. Yet, it did not matter in the voting, but on mattered in the overall notion of a fair system.

Other than Colorado, which got to pound a beleaguered Notre Dame team in the Fiesta Bowl, the Big Eight was comprised of six stiffs. There was no excellence there.

The Conference's only other bowl teams, Kansas State and Oklahoma, lost their postseason games to Boston College and Brigham Young, respectively, by the combined score of 43-13. So, how good was the Big 8 in 1994 and why were they given so much preference over the Big Ten? Why did the Big Ten conference not fight harder to claim a win for PSU, a new member of their prestigious organization?

Conversely, the other Big Ten bowl teams - Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin and Ohio State - were 3-1 in their bowls. Ohio State lost to Alabama, 24-17, in the final minute. The other three won their games by the combined score of 88-34. So, how could PSU, the Big Ten Champion, be shut out in 1994 in their finest season by a bunch of blowhards that seemed to like a great coach such as Tom Osborne more than a clear championship team coached by Joe Paterno? Say it ain't so, Joe!

## 1994 Games of the Season



*All-Americans Bobby Engram (left) and Kerry Collins celebrate Penn State's thrilling 31-24 win at Michigan on October 15, 1994 in Penn State's first game in Ann Arbor. Engram and Collins were among five first-team All-Americans that led the Nittany Lions to Big Ten and Rose Bowl titles, becoming the first Big Ten team to finish 12-0.*

On September 3 to open the season, #9 PSU played Minnesota at 8:00 PM at the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome, Minneapolis. It was not scheduled to be a blowout but it was nonetheless W (56-3).

On September 10 at 3:30 PM, a #8 ranked PSU beat #14 USC, a tough team always, at Beaver Stadium in University Park, PA.

USC was never in the

game. On September 17, Iowa played #6 PSU at Beaver Stadium W (61-21). Then on September 24, at home, #5 ranked PSU shellacked Rutgers W (55-27) before 95,379.

On October 1, #4 PSU traveled to Franklin Field v Temple W (48-21). On October 15, playing #5 Michigan, a #3 ranked Nittany Lions team had its way with the Wolverines in a tough battle against a powerful Big Ten opponent at Michigan Stadium, Ann Arbor, MI. W (31-24). The attendance was 106,382 in the Big House!

On October 29 at 3:30 PM. Penn State played a powerhouse of a team ranked at #21. Ohio State played the #1 ranked Nittany Lions at Beaver Stadium and in the biggest upset of an Ohio State team ever, Penn State could not hold back in its leatherying the Buckeyes on National TV W (63-14). OSU was not a bad team at all but PSU was that good.

It is a sweet enough victory to repeat what happened. Penn State handed Ohio State its worst defeat in 48 years in what remains one of the most satisfying victories ever for Lion fans. The lopsided win by the No. 1 Nittany Lions over the No. 21 Buckeyes was impressive

enough to write home about. However, it was not impressive enough to keep Penn State on top of the next AP poll. Penn State went on to win its first Big Ten Championship, becoming the conference's first 12-0 team, but as noted finished No. 2 in the final polls.



PSU V OSU Oct 29 Right after Game Started

On November 5, somehow PSU was now # 2 in the game v Indiana at Memorial Stadium at Bloomington, IN. It was close but all Penn State W (35–29). Big Ten teams were tough to beat as PSU found out. On November 12 at Memorial Stadium in Champaign, IL, PSU beat the Fighting Illini W (35–31). On November 19, PSU defeated without a doubt the Northwestern Wildcats at home W (45–17)

On November 26, Michigan State came to win at Beaver Stadium v #2 PSU at Beaver Stadium in University Park, PA. The Nittany Lions won decidedly W (59–31) in a high scoring game.

With an 11-0 record, Penn State was ready to win the Rose Bowl on January 2, 1995 to assure itself of a National Championship. The Nittany Lions had beaten every team that it had played and it had one game left, the Rose Bowl

Having won the Big Ten Championship in just its second year and nationally ranked for some reason at # 2 instead of # 1, already

declared the Big Ten champion, PSU accepted the Rose Bowl offer to play Pac 10 leader #12 Oregon. Oregon was no worse or no better than Miami at the time but Oregon had three tough losses heading into the Bowl game. When the Rose Bowl was over in Pasadena California, shown on ABC and seen before 102,247 in attendance, Penn State had its way with Oregon W (38-20). Yet, the pundits were not swayed even a little.

### **1996 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

The 1996 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno in his thirty-first year. Penn State had another great winning season 11-2, with just a few disappointing games.

### **2005 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

This was Paterno's toughest mountain to climb. The Nittany Lions were coming off of back-to-back losing seasons, finishing 3-9 in 2003 and 4-7 in 2004, capping a stretch from late 1999 where Minnesota upset the #2 Nittany Lions with a late field goal until the goal line stand at Indiana. There were four of five seasons being losing seasons and the lone winning season in 2002 featuring many extremely frustrating close losses. You lived through the frustration in this book, and this is one of our chances to smile.

This stretch was called "The Dark Years", sometimes including 2002 as well. The team finished this sketchy 2004 season with wins over Indiana and Michigan State. As always, a strong finish helps springboard momentum into the next season (2005 in our case). So here we are with a great year, (11-1) which we are about to discuss, having closed out 2004 with two nice wins, there was a ton of hope for continuance into the 2005 Nittany Lions season. It happened.

Instead of five starters in 2003, this year's team returned 18 starters from last year's squad. Eight starters returned on offense, led by starting quarterback Michael Robinson who also played at wide receiver, tailback, and punt returner during his first three years at Penn State. Robinson played exclusively under center after the graduation of Zack Mills.

PSU heralded the fact that it had nine defensive starters return from a unit that did not allow more than 21 points in a game in 2004. Also

returning was safety Chris Harrell who suffered a neck injury in 2003 and missed the 2004 season. It was time to play.

Michael Robinson, Alan Zemaitis, and Paul Posluszny were elected tri-captains of the football team in 2005. Posluszny was the first junior captain since 1968.

Penn State had made the pundits wary in their last four out of five tough seasons. So, they started the season unranked in both the AP and the Coaches college football preseason polls. Who can argue with an excellent # 3 finish in both polls and an 11-1 overall record as well as a 7-1 record in and co-championship in the Big Ten, Penn State had recovered and the prognosis for the patient was good.

On September 3, PSU began the season and the home season by beating South Florida at Beaver Stadium W (23–13). On September 10, the next week, a tough Cincinnati team was taken down by the Lions at Beaver Stadium in University Park, PA W (42–24). Finally winning, PSU next engaged Central Michigan at home on September 17 W (40–3). Then, on September 24 at Ryan Field in Evanston, IL, PSU defeated a scrappy Northwestern squad W (34–29).

On October 1, the still down by the press but tough on the field degraded Nittany Lions, unranked after four straight wins, played at home against the #18 Minnesota Gophers and showed the stuff from which they were made before 106,604 at Beaver Stadium and ABC TV. PSU won big W (44-14). Somebody had to notice that Penn State was again playing Nittany Lions Football.





Never giving up in the tough games, on October 8, a finally ranked #16 PSU hosted the Ohio State Buckeyes before 109,839 at home and outlasted the Ohio Squad W (17-10).



The Nittany Lions' win over the No. 6 Buckeyes before another frenzied nighttime "whiteout" crowd of 109,839 was an epic milestone, marking the return of Penn State to the college football elite. The Lions took the lead in the Big Ten Conference and went on to finish No. 3 in the polls with a BCS Orange Bowl win and their best record (11-1) in 11 years.

Ready to play anybody and win, the 2005 Nittany Lions finally met a team that could beat them. Unranked Michigan was a different team

at home than away. The Wolverines hosted the game at Michigan Stadium in Ann Arbor, MI (aka, the Big House) before a huge crowd of 111,249. They barely beat Penn State (two-points) L (25-27) but they won, nonetheless. This tough Michigan team was the single reason why the Nittany Lions were not undefeated and untied in 2005. In his fortieth year Paterno was still outclassing all coaches as they came by. What a record! Michigan somehow survived Paterno in 2005.

On October 22 at Illinois the #12 PSU Lions won big...very big against the Fighting Illini W (63-10). On October 29, on Homecoming, PSU beat Purdue at home W (33-15). On November 5, another Big Ten Tough team, Wisconsin were beaten by #10 Penn State at home W (35-14) before 109,865 electrified PSU fans and maybe a few others. On November 19, PSU took out its Michigan frustration against a guiltless Michigan State at Spartan Stadium in East Lansing, MI with a convincing win W (31-22).

At 11-1, On January 3, 2006 at 8:00 PM, #3 ranked Penn State won a shot at the Orange Bowl against nemesis #22 Florida State at Dolphin Stadium in Miami Gardens, FL (aka the Orange Bowl). After winning the opportunity to play during the season. PSU won the game in three overtime periods W (26-23).

### **2008 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

The 2008 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno in his forty-third year. Ranked #6, PSU had a great record of 11-1 going into the Rose Bowl v #5 USC L (24-38). The team finished with a great winning season of 11-2 and were ranked #8 in both polls.

On January 1, 2009, #6 Penn State had another shot at greatness as it took on #5 USC in the Rose Bowl. USC was always tough and this was a special year for the Nittany Lions. The setting was Pasadena California in the Rose Bowl Stadium. The game was televised by ABC and the attendance was 93,293. It was a great game. PSU lost by 12 points in a real determined battle L (24-38) PSU finished the season 11-2. It was a fine # 43 season for Coach Joe Paterno.



### **2009 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

The 2009 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno in his forty-fourth year. The Nittany Lions continued to play home games in the newly massive Beaver Stadium in University Park, Pennsylvania.

2009 was also another great year for football, though the two losses were heartbreaking, coaches are paid gazillion dollars a year to achieve records such as PSU's 11-2 record this particular year. Though 82 years of age in the 2009 season, Paterno never weakened.

It was a real close match but the Nittany Lions held tough and beat Louisiana State W (19-17). With an 11-2 record with the bowl win and a #8 rank in the Coach's Poll and #9 in the AP, it was a fine year indeed for PSU football and Coach Joe Paterno. It was a fine game to kick off the Master Coach's next to last full season.

### **2011 Penn State Football Season Coach Joe Paterno**

The 2011 Penn State Nittany Lions football team was coached by Joe Paterno in his forty-sixth and final year. Coach Paterno was the head coach for the first nine games of the year(8-1 record) in what looked like it might be another championship season after the rebuilding year. As everybody knows there was a major scandal at Penn State and the Coach was fired in the wake of the devastating allegations involved. Please reserve judgment on Paterno for a

few more years. History is not all yet written,

Defensive coordinator Tom Bradley took over the team for Joe Paterno. Without discussing the merits of the case it is certain that the firing of the head coach mainstream was very disruptive to the team's season. The Nittany Lion players continued to work hard and they were clearly innocent victims of the situation and they continued to play but with heavy hearts.

Penn State finished the season 9–4 (Paterno (8-1) (Bradley 1-3), 6–2 in the Leaders Division of the Big Ten to be co-division champions with Wisconsin. Due to the head-to-head loss to Wisconsin, they did not represent the division in the inaugural Big Ten Championship Game. Tom Bradley's Lions beat Big Ten powerhouse Ohio State. The Lions were invited to the Ticket City Bowl where under Tom Bradley's best efforts as interim coach, they lost to Houston 14–30.

Tom Bradley led the disenchanted PSU Nittany Lions to the Cotton Bowl and PSU lost L (14-30). From the Nebraska game on, nothing seemed real as the whole football program was in disarray.

## **PSU After Joe Paterno**

Penn State has recovered since Joe Paterno left. James Franklin has proven to be an able coach and PSU fans are looking forward to him coaching a few Big 10 Championships and perhaps a few National Championships in the future.

## **Here is the non JoePa PSU record to 2020**

2011	Tom Bradley	1-3	Lost TickC
2012	Bill O'Brien	8-4	Ineligible
2013	Bill O'Brien	7-5	Ineligible
2014	James Franklin	7-6	Lost Pinstripe
2015	James Franklin	7-6	Lost FTaxS
2016	James Franklin	11-3	Big 10 Champ; Lost Rose
2017	James Franklin	11-2 (7-2)	Nat Ranked #8
2018	James Franklin	9-4 (6-3)	Nat Ranked #17
2019	James Franklin	11-2 (7-2)	Nat Renked #9

2020 James Franklin

4-5 (4-5)

COVID-19 Season

## Chapter 24 ND: Ara Parseghian, Dan Devine

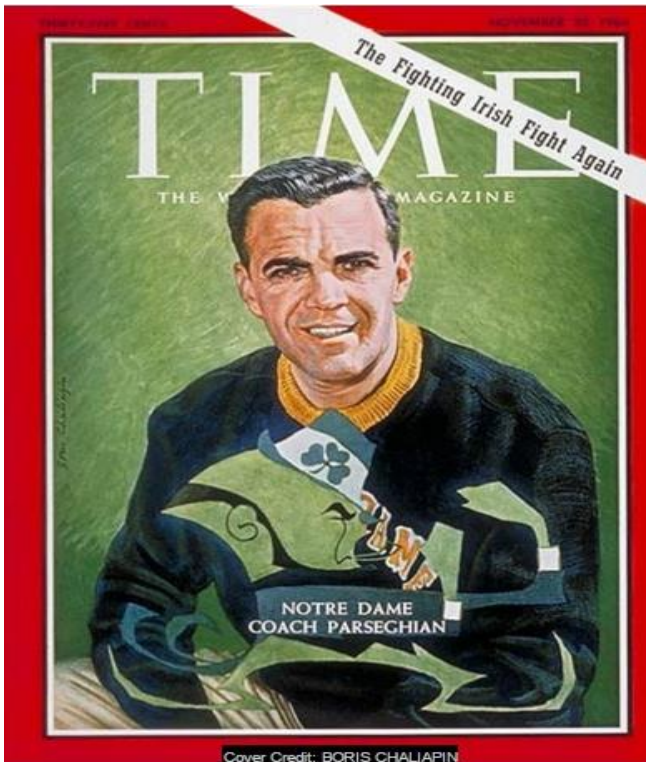
### Coach # 22 Ara Parseghian

Two National Championships 1966 & 1973

### Coach #23 Dan Devine

National Championship 1977

1964	Ara Parseghian	9-1
1965	Ara Parseghian	7-2-1
1966	Ara Parseghian	9-0-1
1967	Ara Parseghian	8-2
1968	Ara Parseghian	7-2-1
1969	Ara Parseghian	8-2-1
1970	Ara Parseghian	10-1
1971	Ara Parseghian	8-2
1972	Ara Parseghian	8-3
1973	Ara Parseghian	11-0
1974	Ara Parseghian	10-2



## Coach Dan Devine

Coach # 23

One National Championship -- 1977

1975	Dan Devine	8-3
1976	Dan Devine	9-3
1977	Dan Devine	11-1*
1978	Dan Devine	9-3
1979	Dan Devine	7-4
1980	Dan Devine	9-2-1

## Introduction to the Ara Parseghian Era

Ara Parseghian, just like Frank Leahy and Knute Rockne before him was an inspirational person. The story goes that like these two "immortals," Parseghian could make it stop snowing or stop raining if he chose to do so. There were times many Irish fans chanted to stop the snow or stop the rain and magically, they got their wish. Ara Parseghian could take what would have been a lousy team if coached by anybody else and turn it into a dynasty. And, for many, he often did stop the rain and the snow. They'll swear to it!

I recall sitting with my dad on Saturdays as a sixteen-year old senior in High School in 1964 and later when I attended King's College, a Notre Dame founded school in Wilkes-Barre PA. We watched many a game together and we loved Ara Parseghian as the coach. As Roman Catholics, we were surprised he got to be the coach, while staying a Protestant; but we were ever thankful for it. After all, he was one of God's creatures just like us. God surely shined his great light on Ara Parseghian and most of the light went right on through to the Notre Dame Football Team.

As we enter the Ara era in this book, I have collected some very nice historical pieces which relate the Ara Parseghian story at Notre Dame.

We thank NDNATION for permission to use this article to help introduce Ara Parseghian. It is posted on their site:

<http://ndnation.com/archives/3930>

## Hardnose

by SEE

*(The Rock Report) – Sports Illustrated described Parseghian thusly, "Ara is an impatient, determined man, convinced he can return Notre Dame to a position of dominance in college football, and this he undoubtedly will do one day – but not in 1964."*

...

*Nicknamed hardnose at Miami by none other than the legendary Paul Brown, Parseghian has lived his life with a passion and conviction that led him to stick his hard nose and square chin into tough situations and create change through force of will and stalwart determination.*



*Ara simply wouldn't accept mediocrity for himself or his teams and never let conventional thought dictate his success. In fact, Ara Parseghian may never have become a legend at all at Notre Dame if he didn't take matters into his own hands.*

*Just to get into the running for the position, Ara had to overcome two hurdles. One, Ara didn't go to Notre Dame and to that point in time, Notre Dame had a history of only hiring Notre Dame Alums for the head coaching role. Two, Notre Dame had an unwritten rule that it did not "poach" coaches and*

*Ara was the coach of Northwestern. [The third rule about having to be a Catholic with eight kids was just a rumor.]*

*Knowing this, Ara made the first move. He called Father Joyce, and inquired first to see if ND was looking for a new coach (that Hugh Devore was just an interim coach.) Father Joyce confirmed that he wasn't stealing another man's job, Ara made it clear to Father Joyce that he was not going back to Northwestern.*

*But the question about a non-alumnus, no less an Armenian-Protestant non-alumnus, coaching at Notre Dame wasn't answered clearly and Ara left the conversation doubting that Notre Dame would break tradition. Parseghian deemed the conversation, "a little chilly" to his wife and made plans to interview at Miami.*

*The Miami down south.*

*While on his way to Florida, at a layover in St. Louis, Ara called home to see if Notre Dame had returned his call.... they had and wanted to meet with him. Ara ditched the Hurricanes and jumped back on a plane, this one was headed to Chicago.*

*Still, the marriage almost didn't happen. Ara was eventually offered the job verbally, but he didn't feel comfortable with a verbal agreement that didn't have dollars attached to it and after flirting with Northwestern again, finally hammered out a deal with Father Joyce.*

*After that, things moved quickly.*

*When Ara spoke to the team, according to Resurrection, he held up his fist "Just look at my fist" he said, "When I make a fist, it's strong and you can't tear it apart. As long as there's unity, there's strength." He went on for over an hour mesmerizing a team that had stumbled through a decade of mediocrity.*

*By the time he was done, Tony Carey said he was ready to run through a brick wall for him.*

...

#### **1964 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian**

After enduring a losing composite record after the Frank Leahy years, Notre Dame Head Coach Ara Parseghian, the new coach, immediately put fight back into the Irish and put the Fighting Irish back on the map. It was the beginning of the Parseghian Era in 1964, the coach's first season at the helm.

This 1964 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was nothing short of remarkable. Many sports pundits suggest that without some questionable officiating in their final game against Southern California, the Irish would have been undefeated and untied, and would have been the consensus National Champions in Ara's first year. All it takes is a will!

<http://bluegraysky.blogspot.com/2005/05/call-him-hardnose.html>

"The spirit might be willing, but it takes a powerful amount of flesh to make a football winner—and the most optimistic experts did not figure Notre Dame for much this year [1964]. The school hadn't had a winning season in five years; 22 out of 38 lettermen had graduated from the prior year's squad that lost seven of its nine games. Parseghian rebuilt the team as though he were running a fire sale."

### **John Huarte**

What would have or might have is not the 1964 Notre Dame story. Parseghian would have his time to win championships for Notre Dame. The 1964 Notre Dame story is that Ara Parseghian, fresh from turning in a terrific job at Northwestern, came to Notre Dame and took a team that barely broke 500 and with mostly the same players, including quarterback John Huarte, turned them into a #3 consensus ranked team and clearly one of the best, if not the best in college football.

Inspirational stories such as these make Notre Dame watchers become Notre Dame lovers and Notre Dame faithful and fans.

During this season, a great player who benefitted from the one-on-one mentoring of a great coach and great person, John Huarte, a quarterback who re-learned the word "can" instead of "can't" from his new coach, became the sixth Notre Dame player to win the Heisman Trophy. Bravo Irish! Bravo John Huarte; Bravo Coach Parseghian. Huarte's talents had gone unrecognized by ND coaches Joe Kuharich and Hugh Devore.

By season end, Huarte had become a household name in sports. He kept throwing touchdown passes to another ND great from California, Jack Snow, who incidentally had also been overlooked by the previous coaching regimes. With Parseghian, Notre Dame had become a football power again.

John Huarte got his Heisman by being a great player. His Heisman Trophy victory, however, went down in history as one of the biggest



upsets for the award. Huarte missed much of his sophomore season due to injury and he had not played enough for Coach Kuharich as a junior to win a monogram (Letter). Yet, he was brilliant as a senior. The passes between Huarte and Snow are legendary. (60 passes for 1,114 yards and a record nine touchdowns). Moreover, Snow was not Huarte's only receiver.

Ara Parseghian threw out the Joe Kuharich (his predecessor coach at ND) book on the team, its procedures and its players and John Huarte was the greatest beneficiary. Parseghian used his own cranium and took ND from a 2-7 team in '63 into a 9-1 squad in '94 with John Huarte, leading the charge. Moreover, Parseghian and Huarte were within minutes of the national title.

Huarte threw for 270 yards in the '64 opening-game upset of Wisconsin -- including TD tosses of 61 and 42 yards to Snow -- and ended up finishing the year ranked third nationally in total offense (2,069 yards). He set 12 Irish records that year, and also earned back of the year and player of the year honors from United Press International. John Huarte capped off his senior year being picked in the second-round of the NFL draft by the New York Jets, He played in the NFL for eight years.

Notre Dame started its season under Parseghian with a nice victory at Wisconsin W (31-7). Notre Dame came home to play Purdue, a long-time nemesis in the Shillelagh Trophy game. The Fighting Irish captured the trophy and soundly defeated the Boilermakers W (34-15). Off to Air Force, always a tough team, and the Irish prevailed in Colorado W (34-7).

UCLA then came to Notre Dame Stadium and could not score. They fell to the newly motivated Irish W (24-0). The following week, October 24, a tough Stanford team came to play ND at home and went home with a W (28-6) loss.

The Irish went to Navy the following week in JFK stadium and defeated the Midshipmen W (40-0). Notre Dame was rolling. Off to Pittsburgh for a close call but an Irish win W (17-15). Back to home turf in a game against Michigan State, who had beaten the Irish ten times in a row. ND prevailed W (34-7) to capture the Megaphone Trophy and a great feeling. We'll come back to this game as a wrap-up to the 1964 season.

Iowa at home was next W (28-0). Finally, with the fighting Irish ranked a consensus # 1, the opponent was the resilient and very tough USC Trojans, a team who enjoyed beating Notre Dame as much as living.

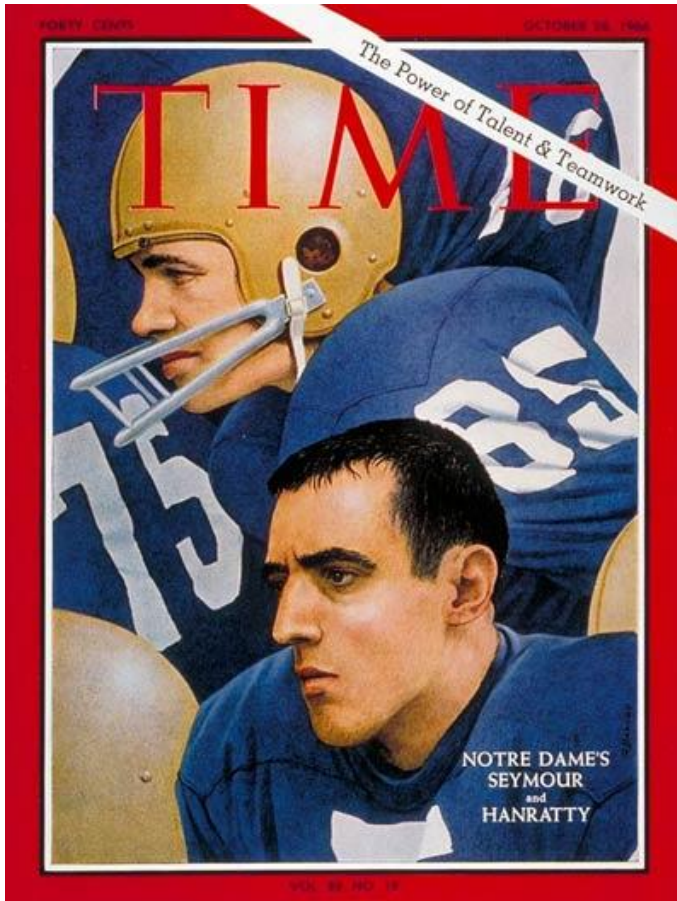
Off to the LA Coliseum, the Irish played a fine game against USC and the officials. After a last-minute field goal, the Irish had to go back to South Bend with a loss L (17-20). It was a great season. It was an unexpectedly great season.

Parseghian took what arguably was Joe Kuharich's 5-5 team and made it work. It would be the first of many great seasons with a brand new fired-up great man and great coach, Ara Parseghian. Watching Notre Dame games with my dad became a lot more fun, when Notre Dame began to excel. Notre Dame all of a sudden believed it could win.



Left to right, tackle Georgie Kunz, quarterback Terry Hanratty and wide receiver Jim Seymour led the 1965 recruiting class

## 1966 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian First National Championship



In his third year as head coach of Notre Dame, Ara Parseghian brought a National Championship to Notre Dame for the first time since Frank Leahy's teams in the 1940's. The 1966 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team ended the 1966 season undefeated with nine wins and one tie away at Michigan State.

The Fighting Irish earned a consensus title after beating No. 10 Oklahoma W 38–0 in Norman, tying unbeaten and No. 2 Michigan State T 10–10, and ending the season defeating No. 10 USC, W (51–0), in the LA Coliseum. The 1966 squad became the eighth Irish team to win the national title and the first under Parseghian. The Irish outscored its opponents 362–38.

The 10–10 tie between The Spartans and the Irish remains one of the controversial games of college football and is considered today to be

one of the great "games of the century." Let's look at the other Notre Dame victories before we examine this 10-10 tie in a bit more detail.

On September 24, Purdue came into Notre Dame Stadium carrying the Shillelagh trophy to play #6 ranked Notre Dame. The Irish won back the trophy with a W (26-14) win. Playing the next week at Northwestern, the Irish came home with a victory W (35-7). The following week at home, they met rivalry Army in a rare South Bend appearance. Parseghian's Irish defeated Army W (35-0) and the following week, October 15, unranked North Carolina came to ND, who at the time were ranked #2 and lost W (32-0).

In all these games, except for the USC game, when Hanratty was injured, Terry Hanratty was the thrower and Jim Seymour was the catcher. Hanratty and Seymour formed a passing / receiving duo all season that led Notre Dame to the national championship. Hanratty, who went on to play for Pittsburgh in the NFL, would also be teammates and friends with halfback Rocky Bleier at Notre Dame before the two were teammates in Pittsburgh. After North Carolina, the next week number one ranked Notre Dame went to Oklahoma to play the # 10 ranked Sooners and the Irish won big W (38-0).

Then, it was off to Navy in Philadelphia for a win W (31-7). The next week on November 5, unranked Pittsburgh came to ND Stadium and were beaten solidly by the Irish W (40-0). After the tie with Michigan State, the Irish went to archrival USC and soundly beat the Trojans W (51-0). Notre Dame was declared the consensus National Champion.

### **Setting up the Michigan State tie game story**

The 1966 Notre Dame vs. Michigan State football game is considered one of the greatest and most controversial games in college football history. The stakes were high and both teams tasted the need for a victory. For ND, it was an away game at Michigan State's Spartan Stadium.

It was late in the season on November 19, 1966. Michigan State was undefeated (9-0) and ranked #2, while Notre Dame was undefeated (8-0), and ranked #1. Notre Dame elected not to try for a score on

the final series; thus, the game ended in a 10–10 tie. Both schools later recorded national titles for the season though both the coaches' poll and the AP poll gave Notre Dame the # 1 ranking.

This year, Notre Dame, which had last won a non-consensus National Championship in Parseghian's first year (1964) but did not claim the championship since it was disputed, ranked #1 in both the AP and Coaches polls going into the Michigan State game. Defending National Champion Michigan State, who had finished the prior season #1 in the UPI Coaches' poll but was upset by UCLA in the Rose Bowl the previous year, entered the game ranked #2 in the polls.

The Fighting Irish, whose bid for a National Championship two years earlier had been snuffed out by USC in a game cluttered with calls that were controversial, were hungry for a win. The Spartans had a history of victories against Notre Dame and they had the home-field advantage. This was the first time in 20 years that the national pundits had given a college football match-up the label, "Game of the Century." ABC was pushing it. The network had the nation's viewers in its grip, with equal parts Notre Dame fans and Michigan State fans.

Ironically, the two teams were not really supposed to play in 1966, but a quirk in scheduling brought these two teams together late in the season, when everything was at stake. Hard as it is to believe, this important game was not shown live on national TV. Each team was allotted one national television appearance and two regional television appearances each season.

Official attendance was 80,011, which by the way is 111% capacity at Spartan Stadium. The game was so important that it was the most attended game in Michigan State football history at the time. Yet, the National Networks were unwilling to air it due to their "fairness" rules.

## **How the decisive part of the game went:**

Irish quarterback Terry Hanratty was knocked out after getting sacked in the first quarter by Spartan defensive lineman Bubba Smith.

Starting Notre Dame running back Nick Eddy was out entirely after hurting his shoulder by slipping on ice while getting off the train in East Lansing. Center George Goeddeke wrenched his ankle on a punt play. The Irish started a bit handicapped.

Michigan State expectedly jumped out to a 7–0 lead behind a 5-yard touchdown run by Regis Cavender, early in the second quarter. Later in the half, MSU added a field goal (by barefooted Hawaiian Dick Kenney). Before halftime, the Irish were ready to play and scored. They in fact came back pretty quickly scoring a touchdown on a 34-yard pass thrown by Coley O'Brien over the outstretched hand of MSU safety Jess Phillips to halfback Bob Gladieux. MSU was winning 10–7 going into half-time.

The Irish tied the game on the first play of the fourth quarter on Joe Azzaro's 28-yard field goal. The best second-half scoring opportunity for MSU was during a pass thrown from Jimmy Raye to Gene Washington.

The Spartan speedy wide receiver had outrun Raye's deep pass and the whole Notre Dame defensive backfield. Washington was forced to double back, and when he did, the ND defense was able to tackle him. ND's Tom Schoen's second interception of the game then put Notre Dame in a position to take the lead

Unfortunately, Azzaro's 41-yard field goal attempt missed by inches to the right. Later in the game with just over a minute (1:10) left, the Irish had the ball on its own 30-yard line. They needed just about 40 yards for a game-winning field goal. With the Irish so keyed up, Coach Ara Parseghian did not want to risk a turnover that would hand the game over to the Spartans, so he chose to run the clock out. This preserved the tie and Notre Dame's Number 1 ranking.

After making a first down with ten seconds left, O'Brien dropped back to pass and was sacked by Bubba Smith. On the last play of the game, O'Brien gained five yards on a quarterback sneak. The game ended in a 10–10 tie.

**This game had its controversies**

For nearly 50 years, Parseghian has defended his end-of-the-game strategy, which left many fans feeling disappointed at the game not having some sort of resolution, Michigan State fans and other Notre Dame detractors called Parseghian a coward, and college football expert Dan Jenkins, leading off his article for Sports Illustrated, said that Parseghian chose to "Tie one for the Gipper."

In that same article, Parseghian was quoted as saying, "We'd fought hard to come back and tie it up. After all that, I didn't want to risk giving it to them cheap. They get reckless and it could cost them the game. I wasn't going to do a jackass thing like that at this point."

The tie resulted in 9–0–1 seasons for both Michigan State and Notre Dame. The final AP and Coaches' polls put the Irish and Spartans at #1 and #2, ranking both teams above the undefeated, and two time defending national champion 11–0–0 Alabama. Both schools shared the MacArthur Bowl.

### **Nothing in football is ever easy**

Notre Dame beat USC handily 51–0 the next week, completing an undefeated (but tied) regular season and solidifying its Number 1 claim. The Irish had not accepted any bowl bids between 1926 and 1969.

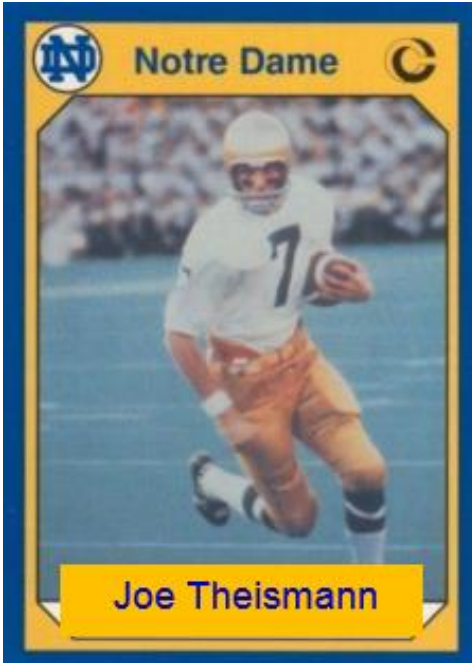
Additionally, Michigan State had been the victim of two Big Ten rules that would be rescinded a few years later: The same school could not represent the league in the Rose Bowl in back-to-back seasons, and no Big Ten school could play in a bowl game other than the Rose Bowl. So, despite being Big Ten Champions and undefeated in the regular season, the Spartans could not play in the Rose Bowl, or indeed any bowl game.

Players from both schools earned tremendous accolades for the season including All American honors. In the 1967 NFL draft, Michigan State had 4 players drafted within the first 8 picks of the first round. After (but not necessarily as a result of) Eddy's injury while debarking from the train in East Lansing, Notre Dame football never traveled to away games by train again. From that point on, both Michigan State, and Notre Dame make the 160-mile trip by bus.

**1969 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian**

The 1969 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Ara Parseghian. The Fighting Irish finished the regular season with eight wins, one loss, and one tie.

## Joe Theismann



Joe Theismann was not known for being the biggest QB on the field. In fact, at 5'10 and less than 150 lbs., ND coaches upon meeting Theismann the first time were amazed at his small stature for a star football player. One of the assistant coaches remarked that he was looking at the team's new water boy rather than a quarterback. Theismann was on the bench until his sophomore year when Terry Hanratty was lost to an injury. It took Joe Theismann no time to make a difference. He led the Irish to two wins and a tie in his first three games.

In 1969, as a junior, Theismann was unquestionably the starter. He led the Irish to a number five ranking, their first bowl appearance, and a near upset of national champion Texas. In 1970, the Irish had a 10-1 record, a number two ranking and gained their revenge win over top-ranked Texas.

Theismann was the runner-up in the Heisman voting and was recognized as a first-team All-America and as an Academic All-American. As a starting quarterback, he compiled a 20-3-2 record while throwing for 4,411 yards and 31 touchdowns. Theismann set school records for passing yards in a game (526), yards in a season (2,429), and touchdowns in a season (16).

**1970 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian**



The 1970 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Ara Parseghian. The squad played to a 10-1 record and finished # 5 in the coach's poll and # 2 in the AP poll. If you could take Purdue and USC off the ND schedule in the Parseghian years, the Irish would have had three or four more national championships.

Again in 1970, the only blemish on the Fighting Irish record was a season finale against unranked USC at USC in which the Irish lost L (28-38). Not having an especially good year with a 5-4 record, John McKay's 1970 Trojans were ready for the Fighting Irish and they played their hearts out to gain the victory.

**1973 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian**

## **Second National Championship**

The 1973 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was the tenth season coached by Ara Parseghian. Parseghian's squad ended the season undefeated with 11 wins and no losses, winning the national championship. The Fighting Irish won the title the hard way. They earned it!

First of all, they defeated the previously unbeaten and No. 1 ranked Alabama Crimson Tide in the Sugar Bowl by a score of W (24–23). The 1973 squad therefore became the ninth Irish team to win the national title and the second team under Parseghian to win this coveted recognition.

Stranger things have happened but despite Notre Dame finishing No. 1 in the AP Poll to claim the AP national title, they were not awarded the Coaches' title. The Coaches voted before the bowl season and selected Alabama as the # 1 team in the country.

Like most of Parseghian's teams in his ten years, the 1973 Fighting Irish were hardened and tough. His second national title team was led by its relentless rushing attack. Fullback Wayne Bullock topped the list with 750 yards; followed by halfback Art Best, who gained 700 yards, halfback Eric Penick with 586 yards and quarterback Tom Clements clocked in with his own 360 yards. This unit made up one of the fastest Irish backfields of all time. Peneck and Best both ran the 100-yard dash in under 10 seconds.

The Irish started the season strong, amassing large margins of victory over Northwestern W (44-0), Rice W (28-0) and Army W (62-3) to set up a highly-anticipated contest with No. 6 and unbeaten USC. USC always gave the Irish a tough time and were a perennial season spoiler during Parseghian's years.

The Trojans came into the contest riding a 23-game unbeaten streak, and their star tailback Anthony Davis ran all over Notre Dame the previous year for 6 touchdowns when USC claimed a 45-23 Trojan victory at home. Adding to the mystique of this Notre Dame home game, despite terrific seasons and near National Championships, Parseghian's teams had not outright beaten USC since 1966.

The Irish defense was ready and would not be denied. They responded to the challenge, limiting Davis to just 55 yards on 19 carries. The star tailback of the day was Notre Dame's Penick, who found the holes and ran for 118 yards, which was 50 yards more than the entire Trojan team. No part of the game was easy but the Irish offense and defense played at its best level. Nothing was easy but the Irish won the contest W 23-14 and Parseghian's squad won its remaining games.

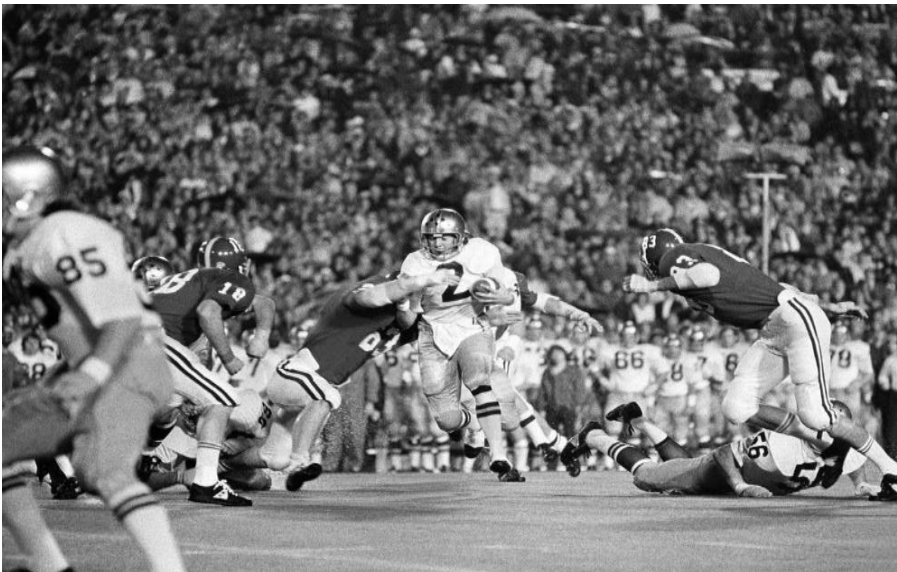
The other 1973 Notre Dame victories on the way to the National Championship included: Purdue away W (20-7), Michigan State at home W (14-10), Navy at home W (44-7), Pittsburgh away W (31-10), Airforce at home W (48-15), and Miami away W (44-0).

### **1973 Sugar Bowl**

Notre Dame accepted the Sugar Bowl bid, which set the stage for a real national championship game. Alabama was awarded the UPI title before the bowl season, but it was Notre Dame that had won the championship head to head against Alabama on the field, (24-23) in a nail-biting thriller that saw six lead changes.



Alabama's Paul W. (Bear) Bryant and Notre Dame's Ara Parseghian meet on the field of Tulane Stadium prior to the Sugar Bowl on Dec. 31, 1973. On Dec. 31, 1973, two of college football's most fabled programs met for the first time on the gridiron with nothing less at stake than the national championship. As the kickoff approached the Alabama Crimson was ranked No. 1 in the country, the Notre Dame Fighting Irish were No. 3 and both were undefeated. Anticipation was at a fever pitch and, as the game unfolded, absolutely warranted.



**The result:** Notre Dame beats Alabama, 24-23, for the 1973 national title. What happened? Both had perfect records, and the Tide came in No. 1 and the Irish No. 3 (No. 2 Oklahoma was on probation); this was the first meeting in history between the teams, and it took place on New Year's Eve. Alabama scored a TD to take a 23-21 lead early in the fourth quarter but missed the extra point. Notre Dame's Bob Thomas kicked a 19-yard field goal with 10:34 left to give the Irish a 24-23 lead. Late in the game, Alabama downed a punt at Notre Dame's 1. On third-and-8 from the 3 and with little more than two minutes left, Irish backup TE Robin Weber basically was left uncovered because of a blown coverage and hailed in a 37-yard reception from Miller-Digby Award recipient: # 2 Tom Clements, Notre Dame quarterback, to seal the win and the No. 1 ranking.

Notre Dame jumped to a 6-0 in front of 85,161 excited fans at Tulane Stadium in New Orleans. However, Alabama quickly answered with a Randy Billingsley 6-yard touchdown run. After Notre Dame's Al Hunter scored on a crowd dazzling 93-yard kick-off return, Alabama

scored 10 straight points. In the fourth quarter, three turnovers occurred in 90 seconds, with Alabama getting the best of the action.

The Crimson Tide capitalized on a halfback pass from Mike Stock to quarterback Richard Todd for a 25-yard touchdown to take a slim 23-21 lead, but they missed the crucial extra point. Notre Dame responded and fought its way down the field with Tom Clements driving the Irish 79 yards in 11 plays. This set up a potential field goal on a clutch 15-yard pass to tight end Dave Casper. Irish kicker Bob Thomas kicked the field goal to give Notre Dame a slim victory W (24-23) and the AP national title.

### **1974 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian**

The 1974 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was the 11<sup>th</sup> season coached by Ara Parseghian. It would be Coach Parseghian's final season as Notre Dame Head Coach. As all Parseghian seasons, this 1974 season was also a great one. I recall in my mid-twenties in 1974 missing Ara as soon as his departure was announced.

There is a lot of good fortune in winning a championship. There is a lot of skill and good fortune to win two great championships, especially in the Parseghian era as all football teams were toughening up and the competition was nothing to sneeze at.

## **The End of the Ara Era**

Ara Parseghian quit coaching all teams after the 1974 season for "health reasons." He began a broadcasting career calling college football games for ABC and CBS.

He also dedicated himself to medical causes later in life after his daughter was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and three of his grandchildren died of a rare genetic disease.

This great coach was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame as a coach in 1980. His career coaching record is 170–58–6. 1974 was his last season as Notre Dame Coach. Like Rockne and Leahy, this great coach made his mark and was missed from his first day of retirement. Thank you for a great job, Coach!

When I wrote my first ND book, thankfully, Mr. Parseghian was still around and still attending Notre Dame games. It is reported that he and Coach Brian Kelly had a great relationship. He will live long in the memory of ND fans and others. He is one of the great ones in life. The great person and great coach Ara Parseghian died on August 2, 2017, at his home in Granger, Indiana, at the age of 94.

## Dan Devine Era: 1975-1980

Coach # 23

One National Championship -- 1977

1975	Dan Devine	8-3
1976	Dan Devine	9-3
1977	Dan Devine	11-1*
1978	Dan Devine	9-3
1979	Dan Devine	7-4
1980	Dan Devine	9-2-1

\* National Championship



## Introduction to the Dan Devine Era

When Ara Parseghian called it quits, after the 1974 season, Notre Dame was forced into what seemed to many to be a common situation for the Irish—having to replace another legend. Like other not-too-shabby coaches before and after him, Dan Devine, a great coach—the only Notre Dame coach who in just six seasons brought home a national championship—stepped into this unenviable situation.

Father Hesburgh and Father Joyce had tasked Dan Devine with taking over the football program. He had been head coach of the Green Bay Packers for three years at the time, but his heart was always in college football.

Before Green Bay, he was head coach at both Arizona State and Missouri. At ASU, he compiled a nice 27-3-1 record, including an undefeated season in 1957. He then moved on to Mizzou where his success continued, including one undefeated season (1960) and four top 10 finishes in the AP Poll (1960). Devine was a great college coach. He was so good that in 1963, he was almost offered the Notre Dame job after the 1963 season and right before Ara Parseghian accepted the position.

Devine was not a popular choice among many ND fans but nobody could have been. Besides Devine himself, the Irish administration had already tried its luck with a pro-football level coach, Joe Kuharich, and fans and alum were still stinging from that experience.

Football itself at Notre Dame seems to change at Notre Dame whenever a legend, one of the immortals' time ends and a mere mortal such as Dan Devine must take over. I reached to Notre Dame's Student magazine, the Scholastic to find an article that showed the new attitude on campus. See piece on prior page.

Though Parseghian had not died like Rockne did ever so tragically, the Notre Dame faithful and the scribes at the Student Newspaper seem to have identified at the time, a major disturbance in the "FORCE." I don't know how else to say it. The predestination of an immortal taking Notre Dame to an undefeated season again seems to

be in the front of this thinking, but, additionally, something morose seems to have overtaken the campus at this time.

One notable change after Parseghian is that the Football issue of Scholastic came out in January instead of December. Maybe it is because of bowl games.

#### **1975 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Dan Devine**

The 1975 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Dan Devine in his first year. Devine had taken over for the retired Ara Parseghian, and he had mostly a Parseghian selected team to work with in 1975.

Devine led the Irish into its first "Holy War." The Holy War is an American rivalry between the Boston College Eagles and University of Notre Dame Fighting Irish. In 1975, it became a new nonconference rivalry in college football. Unfortunately, for the Irish, in years to come, BC would add itself to the list which includes USC and Purdue as major ND championship spoilers, I regret to say.

#### **1976 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Dan Devine**

Dan Devine was the University of Notre Dame Head Football Coach in 1976. From Irish standards, his first year had not gone well, though when compared to regular mortal men, it was not too bad at all. His squad lost three games in 1975 and did not go to a bowl game. Bowl games are a dime a dozen today but in 1975, there were only 11 bowl games.

Dan Devine's mission to painlessly replace the legendary Ara Parseghian had gotten off to a fine start but the naysayers were calling it a slow start and they believed something needed to change. When ND faithful cannot find a reason to cheer for the team, they have sometimes in the past taken out their misery by cheering for the removal of the coach. Often, I have been among those fans calling for the ouster of somebody. Not this time with Dan Devine. The 1976 Notre Dame Football team won one additional game over 1975 and it looked like there would be even better things ahead. But, there were still three losses!

Things that end well do not always begin well and so it went for Notre Dame in 1976. The team was ranked #11 and played ninth ranked Pitt in the home opener during the Tony Dorsett years. Dorsett was on his way to a Heisman Trophy season. It was expected that the Pitt Offense would be formidable but worse than that, the Pitt defense was stubborn and it dominated the game. Dorsett ran all over the Irish defense in the second half and Pitt won the game L (10-31). Pitt eventually won the National Championship. Pitt was not the same old Pitt as in the Ara era.

Notre Dame Quarterback Rick Slager was inexperienced. Joe Montana was sitting on the bench. The following year of course, Joe Montana took over the duties. For the world as seen by Dan Devine in 1976 though, the Coach had to make do with what he had while his fledgling team's talent grew in experience.

On November 13, a # 10 ranked Alabama team came to South Bend to take on the Irish. Notre Dame proved the team was ready for big things with a big step forward in a win W (21-18) over the Crimson Tide. The verdict on Alabama was not all in, however, as the Crimson Tide season ended at 9-3, which for this storied program under the "Bear," was not respectable.

This was not one of best years for head coach Bear Bryant. Both ND and the Tide were on the verge of great things but it seemed 1976 would not be the year for either team.

### **1977 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Dan Devine National Championship**

The 1977 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Dan Devine in his third year as head coach This Notre Dame football team was ranked third in the country to start the season. Its veteran defense was again expected to do well with returning Outland Trophy winner Ross Browner at defensive end.

Willie Fry was on the other end and Luther Bradley was the Irish key defensive back. The position coach in the secondary was the late Jim Johnson, a great defensive coach. Johnson was at the beginning of a career that would see him become the renowned defensive



coordinator for the Philadelphia Eagles' best teams in the early 2000s.



Ole Miss Rebels player L.Q. Smith scores a touchdown v ND in 1977

This was a great season but it did have a major burp in the second game against Ole Miss. Devine brought the Irish to 10-1 regular season and a win in the Cotton Bowl Classic against Texas W (38-10). The 1977 squad became the tenth Irish team to win the national title and were led by All-Americans Ken McAfee, Ross Browner, Luther Bradley, and Bob Golic. Junior Joe Montana, a future Pro Football Hall of Fame member, was the starting quarterback on this team.

Third year coach Dan Devine expected great things from his talent-rich Notre Dame team after a well-played 9-3 season and 20-9 Gator Bowl win over Penn State the previous year. The team needed experience and they got it and in 1977 they were ready for big things.

Starting the year off in a firestorm, Notre Dame, with a preseason ranking of #3, had no choice but to play its best. The first opponent was the Pitt Panthers, who were the defending national champions. The Panthers had won in South Bend while moving towards their national championship in 1976.

Things were brighter for the Irish in 1977 for the Irish because Heisman winner Tony Dorsett was gone. Dorsett was starring as an NFL rookie in Dallas. Notre Dame won the opener W (19-9), but immediately gave it back with a very surprising loss at home to Ole Miss L (13-20). The masses were asking: Was it the end of championship hopes in the Devine Era?

Notre Dame fans do not like things to go wrong and they were grumbling all over the country after the Ole Miss loss. After two-three-loss campaigns, another three-loss season would be clearly unacceptable. Even today, that is not acceptable at Notre Dame, where the pleasant scent of a national title has been lost for some time now. It certainly was not OK in 1977.

The offense was playing poorly as junior quarterback Rusty Lisch, who started the first three games for Devine was struggling, and then he got hurt. Second-stringer Gary Forsythe got the chance against Purdue and Notre Dame fell behind 24-14. Devine was not pleased and looked to the bench and found another junior waiting to play. The new QB was their third-stringer—a kid named Joe Montana.

Montana had played well in some relief work as a freshman in 1975, then he missed the 1976 season with a shoulder injury. Montana proved his mettle at Notre Dame and in pro-football. Before immediately was up, he had led the Irish back to a win away over the Boilermakers W (31-24). He then led consecutive wins over Michigan State at home W (16-6) and Army away W (24-0). Those wins set the stage for a mid-October date with fifth-ranked USC, a team with the gift of having the Irish's number. Doing well against USC would bring relevance back to the ND program.

The 1977 Notre Dame-USC game has a special place in Fighting Irish lore. The Blue and Gold team was not going to wear blue and gold. When Notre Dame returned to their lockers after the pre-game warmups, to get their "Devine" pep talk, there was something different there. It was in their lockers already. The Irish saw something—Kelly green jerseys. On this day, Kelly green would replace the traditional dark navy customarily worn. It electrified the

team and when they came running out of the tunnel again, the crowd went berserk.

As simple as the change to green jerseys may have been, it gave the Fighting Irish a huge emotional lift and there was no question about the outcome of the game from the moment the Irish took the field. They pummeled USC (49-19).

Led by Montana and tight end Ken McAfee, a third-place Heisman candidate, Notre Dame would finish its season with five straight wins to finish. Their 10-1 record was amazing considering the slow start. There was still one more challenge. On November 12, at Clemson a tough Tigers team took a lead and had Notre Dame down by double-digits. Montana put his helmet back on and began to lead the Irish back to victory. Joe Montana was able to add another early chapter to his comeback legend. He got it done when it counted and led the Irish back to a win W (21-17) against Clemson.



A Buried Montana Sneaks Ball in for Game Winner at Clemson

Notre Dame concluded the season ranked #5 in the country and got an invitation to play #1 Texas in the Cotton Bowl.

On the way to the Cotton Bowl after USC, ND stopped Navy at home W (43-10), and then the next week crushed Georgia Tech W

(69-14). After Clemson, it was Air Force at home W (49-0), and Miami at Miami W (48-10).

The Cotton Bowl was played on Sunday January 2 since New Year's Day was Saturday on the "long" football weekend. Few thought that a Notre Dame New Year's Day run to a national title was likely, but it was theoretically possible. ND had a fine season with the one burp being Ole Miss.

At the time, four teams were ahead of Notre Dame in the rankings—in addition to Texas, there was Oklahoma, Michigan and Alabama—all were in separate bowl games, so the Irish could hope to pull off a miraculous turnaround. It would be as easy to bring about as a completed "Hail Mary" pass for a touchdown. But then again. Notre Dame was named after Mary, the mother of Jesus, so all things were possible.

In 1977, there were no BCS champions and the bowl games were the end of the season. The AP and the UPI determined the champions and there were times that they did not even wait until the bowl games to make their decrees. So, without a BCS, in 1977, it was possible for the national championship to be determined on New Year's Day or even January 2 if it was a Sunday game.

On this January 2, a Sunday, playing against Texas, it was well known that the Cowboys from Texas had won the NFC championship the day before; so the Texans were hoping for a two-for weekend. It sure would be nice for them if UT added a nice national championship to the Texas picture.

The Longhorns had an exceptional runner who had just won the Heisman Trophy, notably Earl Campbell. He was a powerful runner with some of the biggest muscular thighs ever seen on a back. Campbell had a great big NFL career ahead of him.

The good news for Notre Dame in the game was that its defense was able to prevent Earl Campbell from getting it going. Texas helped things by turning the ball over time and again. The Longhorns got the fans going by scoring first for a 3-0 lead, Notre Dame had stopped their advance for a touchdown. Joe Montana, along with running

backs Jerome Heavens, Vagas Ferguson and Ken McAfee kept scoring after that. The final score was W 38-10, well worthy of a national championship, but it was not assured as other teams were also in the hunt.

Other than Alabama, who handily had beaten a 9-2 Ohio State team in the Sugar Bowl, all other teams seemed to eventually lose their place in the championship line. Michigan was upset by four-loss Washington and quarterback Warren Moon in the Rose Bowl. The heavily favored Sooners were an almost sure bid for the national championship title if they were able to defeat Arkansas.

Oklahoma found Arkansas weakened when Razorbacks coach Lou Holtz suspended three players for disciplinary reasons prior to the game. Yet, somehow, the Razorbacks were not going to lie down.

Despite not having his key players, who had scored more than 75% of the season's points playing in the game, Hogs coach Lou Holtz made his first mark on South Bend history even before he arrived to coach the 1986 season. Holtz's Arkansas smoked OU 31-6 and it was then down to Notre Dame or Alabama for the national championship. The pundits would have to decide.

The pundits were chatting that it would have been an ideal time for a plus-one format after the bowls, because the Irish and Tide both appeared to be deserving of championship status. Alabama had played a consistently tougher schedule and their September loss to Nebraska was infinitely more defensible than Notre Dame's defeat at Ole Miss.

But the Tide had mostly close games that were nothing like the ND blowouts. Alabama had no great runaways like the wins—shall I say the catastrophes—Notre Dame had hung on USC and Texas, beating two highly regarded opponents by a combined 58 points.

The Voters do like “trophy wins” over a consistently steady long haul. In the end, that Notre Dame had in fact buried the consensus #1 team in a bowl game only heightened the Notre Dame case. And, so the Fighting Irish won the national championship, and just like Parseghian before him and Holtz after him, Devine had done it in his third year. Congratulations Coach Devine.



Notre Dame Quarterback Joe Montana attempts a pass during the January 2, 1978 Cotton Bowl against Texas

### January 2, 1978 Cotton Bowl v Texas from Scholastic, ND's Student Magazine

*The Irish used their most time-consuming drive of the first half (3:19) 'to eat up the rest of the clock giving Texas a last chance at their own 32-yard line 'with 20 seconds left. As inept as McEachern was for 29 1/2 minutes of the first half, he came alive, when Texas had their backs to the wall with a little help from sloppy play in the Irish secondary. With two seconds left, the Texas quarterback threw in desperation to Ronnie Miksch. Although his pass was way off target, Jim Browner interfered, giving the Longhorns one last try from ND's 13- yard line with no time remaining on the clock. The Irish had been too generous as the Longhorns managed to score, on a pass to Mike Lockett. The touch down left a sour taste in the' mouths of, Irish fans as Akers' club got back in a ball game they would have been out of, with the halftime score reading 24-10.*

*The' momentum shifted more toward Texas when the Irish took the ensuing-kickoff and drove 60 yards only to have a field goal attempt go wide, but the Longhorn players must not have been listening well during halftime as McEachern was intercepted by Steve Heimkreiter, a turnover that sealed the Texans' fate. The game was as good as over when Vagas Ferguson crossed the goal line with 6:54 remaining in the third quarter giving Notre Dame an insurmountable 31-10 lead.*

*Dan Devine's squad wrapped-up the scoring when Ferguson made a slashing 26-yard run for his third touchdown of the afternoon leaving the final score 38 --10. The Irish spared Texas another touchdown when Rusty Lisch directed a last second drive to the two-yard line but did not call time out. Devine figured his team had proved; enough on the field this day to be called the number-one team in the nation."*

*"This puts us where Texas was, number one. We earned it on the field. We played number one, and we beat them," the Irish coach later commented. "At this point I do not think, there is anybody that could beat our football team." Hours later, a host of media backed up these words as - Notre Dame took top honors in both the AP and UPI polls and was honored with, the MacArthur Bowl, symbolic of the National Championship.*

*While everyone expected the game to be dominated by the running of Earl Campbell, it was a Notre Dame back that played the best game of his short collegiate career. Sophomore Vagas Ferguson rushed for 100 yards and two touchdowns and hauled in three passes for another TD. His performance this day was good enough to earn him Most Valuable Offensive Player of the game. Jerome Heavens also picked up 100 yards on the day putting him well over the 1000-yard mark for the season.*

*On the other side of the line, Bob Golic played a game that was typical of his weekly performances this season. His 17 tackles earned him the Defensive Player of the Game award ahead of runner-up, Ross Browner. The Notre Dame defense allowed Campbell 118 yards on, 29 carries (only 30 in the second half). The highly-touted senior played a tough game. "Campbell' is the best offensive 'back' in the country," praised Luther Bradley. "But he is no match for Ross Browner, Willie Fry, Bob Golic, and the rest of our defensive squad." Browner and Fry, the Irish bookends, totaled 15 tackles (five for losses) and two fumble recoveries between them.*

*Dan Devine brought his team up before Christmas to prepare for this all-important game, and it proved perfect timing as mental attitude played a large role in the outcome. After the game, Devine was asked a question about himself and how he prepared for this game, and he responded, "Thank you for asking, but Dan Devine is not important." The Texas Longhorns must join Notre' Dame's demanding fans and insist that indeed, Dan Devine is important.*

### **1978 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Dan Devine**

The 1978 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Dan Devine. His squad went 8-3 in the regular season and Notre

Dame Also won the Cotton Bowl against Houston (35-34), ending the season at 9-3.

## **Comeback Kid Joe Montana strikes again!**

It was time for the "comeback kid," a nickname owned by Joe Montana for being able to bring the Irish victory from the open jaws of defeat. This would be the start of a number of 1978 comebacks for Montana. He fired seven straight fourth quarter completions, including two touchdowns that gave Notre Dame a win W (26-17). The Irish had been unranked since the Michigan loss. The victory over # 9 Pitt brought ND back to the national rankings at # 20.

Feeling pretty good about themselves, the Irish defeated Air Force away, W (38-15) and the victory over Miami W (20-0) nudged Notre Dame up to the #15 rank.

Navy was enjoying a big year in 1978 and was 7-0, ranked 11th in the country, when they met Notre Dame in a neutral-site game in Cleveland. The Irish showed how far they had progressed, rolling to a win W (27-7). The Irish then had another decisive victory W (31-7) over a struggling Tennessee team at home. Following this, the Irish went south to Atlanta and disposed of bowl-bound Georgia Tech by W (38-21).

The string of wins, well played, brought Notre Dame back into the Top 10. Running backs Vagas Ferguson and Jerome Heavens both were each having good years. Ferguson accumulated over 1,100 yards and Heavens chipping in over 700. Offensive center Dave Huffman made All-American as did Bob Golic on defense.

Montana did not make All-American. Chuck Fusina, QB for Penn State got those honors, and Fusina also was # 2 in Heisman voting. Fusina had led Penn State to an undefeated regular season in 1978. Nonetheless, Montana remained the foremost author of comebacks.

In the season finale at USC, the Irish fell behind 24-6. Montana put himself into comeback gear and led a fourth-quarter rally that put ND ahead 25-24. The win appeared to be in the books when USC quarterback Paul McDonald was sacked and fumbled on the final possession. But a Pac-10 official ruled that McDonald had his arm



going forward and the pass was ruled as incomplete. Soon, USC was in field goal range and a perfect kick brought them the game L (25-27). This was the first of two straight games that USC would win with help from officiating that was—at best—shaky.

As for Notre Dame, they were still #10 in the country and were preparing for the Cotton Bowl against Houston to be played in Dallas.

## Cotton Bowl in Houston

Forever known as the "Chicken Soup Game" because of frigid temperatures, heavy winds and a frozen Irish quarterback, Notre Dame trailed 34-12 in the fourth quarter at Austin, Texas.

With quarterback Joe Montana battling the flu and back in the locker room trying to fight off hypothermia, hopes looked bleak for the # 10 Irish to come back against the No. 9 Cougars.

It was so cold and wet at game time that Montana suffered from a hypothermia attack and could not function. Notre Dame's star quarterback was kept in the locker room for safety purposes, eating hot chicken soup while covered with blankets. He was not expected to play at all.

The rescue efforts to make Montana OK were more than successful as he actually recovered before the end of the game. But, by this time, the Irish were well behind 34-12. Montana emerged from the locker room and excited the ND crowd by being back in the game with just 7:37 to play. The comeback kid was on the field. The adrenalin overcame the cold.

Tony Belden started the comeback for Notre Dame by blocking a punt that Steve Cichy returned for a touchdown. Montana converted the two-point play. The score was then 34-20. Notre Dame got the ball back and Montana led a 61-yard touchdown drive and gained another two-point conversion and suddenly it was 34-28 and there was still 4:15 to play. The comeback kid was at it again.

Notre Dame got the ball back, but Montana fumbled on the Houston 20 with 1:50 left. It looked like fate had caught up with the Irish and even chicken soup could not pull this game from the nether world.

The Cougars, however, with great ND defense soon were faced with 4th-and-1, and decided to go for it on their own 29-yard line. Facing a heavy wind, this was a defensible decision—they weren't going to get more than 10-15 net yards on a punt in these conditions. The Irish defense did not give an inch.



Notre Dame's quarterback Joe Montana shown during the 1979 Cotton Bowl. Montana led Irish to a final second win. The team was coached by Dan Devine.

A still-warm Joe Montana led the team to the eight-yard line with six seconds to play. His first pass to Kris Haines in the left corner of the end zone was incomplete. Because he released so quickly, there was at least another second on the clock.

Devine and Montana went back to the same play, and this time Montana hit Haines. The final score was W 35-34. The comeback kid had brought Notre Dame back again for a victory. If it were today,

somebody would have figured out how to take Montana's injury season and give the senior a fifth year. But, then again, Joe Montana's big opportunities were about to present themselves in the NFL.

This great player, who had been on the bench his first two seasons at Notre Dame under Joe Kuharich, would go on to win four Super Bowl rings with the San Francisco 49ers. Pundits at the time who wrote about the Irish after Montana noted that Notre Dame didn't have quite that many great moments in its future after Montana moved on.

However, all of the future ND moments would add to the lore. Together, a storied school and a legendary quarterback made the 1978 Notre Dame football season one to remember. Lou Holtz, the great one would be called on in a few years to add zip once again to Notre Dame. Dan Devine was already putting on a good show for the Irish.

#### **1979 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Dan Devine**

The 1979 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Dan Devine in his fifth season. Notre Dame finished with a regular season record of 6-4 and with its Bowl victory in Japan against Miami (40-15), overall the Irish finished the season at 7-4.

#### **1980 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Dan Devine**

The 1980 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Dan Devine in his sixth and last season. As was customary, all home games were played at Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend, Indiana. The 1980 season would be Dan Devine's last as Notre Dame's head coach. He had a great six seasons including a national championship. This year, the offense scored 248, while the defense gave up 128 points. Dan Devine goes down in ND History as one of the Fighting Irish's finest coaches. He is the least known of the "immortals," who have brought the Fighting Irish national championship seasons. Dan Devine, a fine man and a fine coach, **R.I.P.**

## Chapter 25 Danny Ford & Dabo Swinney 1978...2020

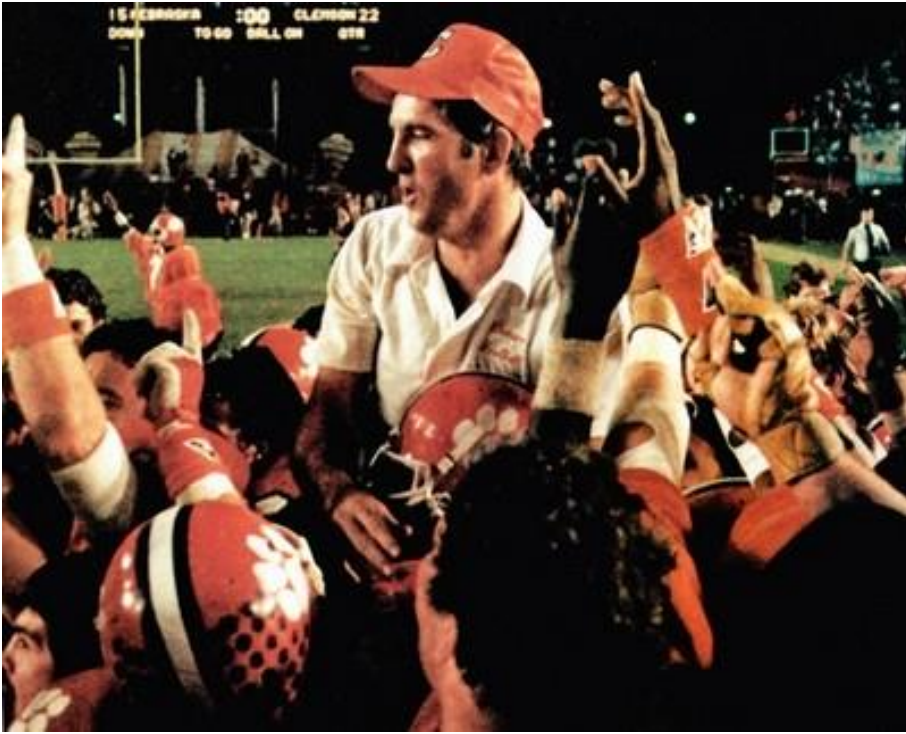
Year	Coach	Record	Conf	Record	Notes
1978	Danny Ford	1-0	ACC	Gator	WIn
1979	Danny Ford	8-4-0	ACC	4-2-0	
1980	Danny Ford	6-5-0	ACC	2-4-0	
1981*	Danny Ford	12-0-0	ACC	6-0-0	
1982*	Danny Ford	9-1-1	ACC	6-0-0	
1983*	Danny Ford	9-1-1	ACC	7-0-0	
1984	Danny Ford	7-4-0	ACC	5-2-0	
1985	Danny Ford	6-6-0	ACC	4-3-0	
1986*	Danny Ford	8-2-2	ACC	5-1-1	
1987*	Danny Ford	10-2-0	ACC	6-1-0	
1988*	Danny Ford	10-2-0	ACC	6-1-0	
1989	Danny Ford	10-2-0	ACC	5-2-0	
2009	Dabo Swinney	9-5	ACC	6-2	
2010	Dabo Swinney	6-7	ACC	4-2	
2011	Dabo Swinney	10-4	ACC	6-2	
2012*	Dabo Swinney	11-2	ACC	7-1	
2013	Dabo Swinney	11-2	ACC	7-1	
2014	Dabo Swinney	10-3	ACC	6-2	
2015*	Dabo Swinney	14-1	ACC	8-0	
2016*	Dabo Swinney	14-1	ACC	7-1	
2017	Dabo Swinney	12-2	ACC	7-1	
2018*	Dabo Swinney	15-0	ACC	8-0	
2019*	Dabo Swinney	14-1	ACC	8-0	
2020	Dabo Swinney	10-2	ACC		8-1

\* ACC Champions

### Three National Championships 1981, 2016, 2018

#### 1978-1979 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Danny Ford

Clemson is a member of the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC). Danny Ford was the head football coach for his second of twelve seasons. Ford's first season in 1978 lasted one game as he was a replacement coach for Charley Pell in the 1978 Gator Bowl. The Tigers completed their eighty-fourth season overall and their twenty-seventh in the Atlantic Coast Conference with a record of 8-4-0; 4-2-0 in the ACC. The Tigers came in second in the ACC out of 7 active ACC teams. They were also ranked # 6 nationally. Steve Fuller, and Randy Scott were the 1978 team captains.



Danny Ford Leads Clemson Team to National Championship

## Game Highlight Clemson 16, Notre Dame 10

*Nov. 17, 1979 at South Bend, IN*

Anytime that any team goes to Notre Dame and beats them it is an accomplishment. Notre Dame had beaten Clemson two years before and then went on to win the National Championship.

They weren't quite as good in 1979, but they still had a good ball club. Notre Dame held a 10-0 lead in the first half and looked like they had taken control of the game. Then, there was a big break for Clemson. An ND player, Tyree Dickerson fumbled a punt that the Tigers recovered. It changed the momentum for the rest of the game.

### 1981 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Danny Ford

The 1981 Clemson Tigers football team represented Clemson University during the 1981 college football season as a member of the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC). Danny Ford was the head football coach for his fourth of twelve seasons. The Tigers completed their eighty-sixth season overall and their twenty-ninth in the Atlantic Coast Conference with a record of 12-0-0; 6-0-0 in the ACC. The

Tigers came in 1st in the ACC out of 7 active ACC teams. Nelson Stokely was the offensive coordinator. Jeff Davis was the team captain. This year a dream came true. The Clemson Tigers won the National Championship. It was a consensus of the coaches and AP polls.

On Sept 5 in the home opener, Clemson defeated Wofford W (45-10) at Memorial Stadium on Sept 12, at Tulane in the Louisiana Superdome, New Orleans, LA, Clemson won W (13-5). Then on Sept 19 at home, #4 Georgia lost to Clemson W (13-3).

### **Game Highlight Clemson 13, Georgia 3**

*Sept. 19, 1981 at Clemson, SC*

Georgia came to Clemson as the defending national champion. It was a season highlight for sure for Clemson to compete well in this game. To win the game was simply remarkable. There is no question that this was Clemson's key regular season win on the way to winning the coveted national championship.

No one had Clemson on their scopes in their preseason top 20. As you all know, the Tigers were just coming off a frustrating 6-5 season. On top of that, Clemson vs. Georgia is a special rivalry and this is one of the games that made it that way. Herschel Walker, a name everybody knows had led Georgia to the National Championship the year before and he was ready to destroy Clemson if given the opportunity. He was a marked man by the Clemson defensive unit this day and it was quite effective.

The Clemson defense was ready as it forced nine turnovers against the Bulldogs. It was the most turnovers forced in a game in history. Clemson took a 10-0 early lead in the first half on an eight-yard touchdown pass from Homer Jordan to Perry Tuttle and a 39-yard field goal by Donald Igwebuike. Thigs were looking good.

Georgia entered this game ranked fourth in the nation. It is still the highest ranked win in Clemson history in Death Valley. Go Tigers!



Clemson's Jeff Davis celebrates after a victory in the magical 1981 season  
Photo courtesy of Clemson Tigers

## Game Highlights Clemson 22, Nebraska 15

*Jan. 1, 1982 at Miami, FL (Orange Bowl)*

This game was definitely for the national championship. Nebraska had future Heisman Trophy Mike Rozier, Dave Rimington, the Outland Trophy Winner and many other talented players. But Clemson had some pretty good players in our own right with Jeff Davis, Perry Tuttle, William "Refrigerator" Perry, and many others.

Nebraska scored and cut the lead to seven points, 22-15 when they converted a two-point play from the eight-yard line in the fourth quarter.

But, Clemson held the ball about the last five minutes. Homer Jordan was the key to running out the clock and not giving Nebraska another chance. He made a great run with about two minutes left that gave the Tigers a first down. What a run that was, he made so many cutbacks. We held the ball to the final seconds. Nebraska had one last play with six seconds left, but Andy Headen knocked down a long pass attempt.

Homer made it to the dressing room, but he passed out once he got there from dehydration. It was a tough game. All the press wanted to talk to Homer after the ballgame, but he was in there for a long time getting IVs. By the time he got out of the training room it was past deadline for the writers. That is why all the accounts of that game don't have any quotes from Homer. He didn't do any interviews until the next day. That was certainly a magic night in Miami. Clemson was happy with the win and so what about the interviews.

Clemson's Fighting Tigers finished the 1981 season undefeated and untied (12-0) and were voted #1 in the AP and UPI polls. When they won the Orange Bowl over Nebraska, the Tigers were selected as Consensus National Champions by the AP, UPI, Football Writers Association of America (FWAA), and National Football Foundation (NFF). In the 1980-s with Danny Ford as the head coach for most of the run, Clemson was the fifth winningest Division I college football team of the decade, with a record of 86-25-4 (.765).

Danny Ford was awarded the 1981 Coach of the Year Award by the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) and the FWAA. At the time, Coach Ford was the youngest ever to receive the award, and the youngest (33 yrs. old) to have won a National Championship.

### **1982 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Danny Ford**

Danny Ford was the head football coach for his fifth of twelve seasons. The Tigers completed their eighty-seventh season overall and their thirtieth in the Atlantic Coast Conference with a record of 9-1-1; 6-0-0 in the ACC. The Tigers came in 1st in the ACC out of 7 active ACC teams. Nelson Stokely was the offensive coordinator. Homer Jordan and Terry Kinard were the team captains. This year,



with a great coach after a Championship Season, the Clemson Tigers played great football

### **1983 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Danny Ford**

Danny Ford was the head football coach for his sixth of twelve seasons. The Tigers completed their eighty-eighth season overall and their thirty-first in the Atlantic Coast Conference with a record of 9-1-1; 7-0-0 in the ACC. The Tigers came in 1st in the ACC out of 8 active ACC teams. Nelson Stokely was the offensive coordinator. James Farr and James Robinson were the team captains. This year, with a great coach again, the Clemson Tigers played great football. Clemson was on probation for recruiting violations and was ineligible for the ACC championship or a bowl bid.

### **1987 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Danny Ford**

The 1987 Clemson Tigers football team represented Clemson University during the 1987 college football season as a member of the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC). Danny Ford was the head football coach for his tenth of twelve seasons. The Tigers completed their ninety-first season overall and their thirty-fourth in the Atlantic Coast Conference with a record of 10-2-0; 6-1-0 in the ACC. The Tigers came in 1<sup>st</sup> in the ACC out of 8 active ACC teams. Michael Dean Perry and John Phillips were the team captains.

## **Citrus Bowl**

On Jan 1, 1988, the #14 Clemson Tigers squared off in the Florida Citrus Bowl Game against the #20 Penn State Nittany Lions in the Citrus Bowl Stadium, Orlando, FL (Florida Citrus Bowl). Clemson beat up Penn State in the game W (35–10) and finished #11 in the AP poll and #12 in the Coach's Poll for the year. The Tigers had previously won the ACC Championship.

### **1988 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Danny Ford**

Danny Ford was the head football coach for his eleventh of twelve seasons. The Tigers completed their ninety-second season overall and their thirty-fifth in the Atlantic Coast Conference with a record of 10-2-0; 6-1-0 in the ACC. The Tigers came in 1st in the ACC out of 8

active ACC teams. Rodney Williams, and [Donnell Woolford](#) were the team captains.

In the season finale v South Carolina—the Battle of the Palmetto State, the Tigers beat the Gamecocks W 29–10. For the second year in a row, Clemson accepted an invitation to play in the Citrus Bowl.

## Citrus Bowl

On Jan 1, 1989, in the Florida Citrus Bowl post-season game, Coach Danny Ford's #9 Clemson Fighting Tigers defeated Coach Barry Switzer's #10 ranked Oklahoma Sooners in the game played at the Citrus Bowl Stadium in Orlando, FL. The Tigers won W (13-6) The game was seen on ABC TV and by the 53,571 in the stadium.

### 1989 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Danny Ford

Danny Ford was the head football coach for his twelfth and last of twelve seasons. The Tigers completed their ninety-third season overall and their thirty-sixth in the Atlantic Coast Conference with a record of 10-2-0; 5-2 in the ACC. The Tigers came in 3rd in the ACC out of 8 active ACC teams. Clemson was invited to the Gator Bowl

## Gator Bowl

On Jan 1, 1989, in the Gator Bowl post-season game, Coach Danny Ford's #14 Clemson Fighting Tigers defeated Coach Don Nehlen's #17 ranked West Virginia Mountaineers in the game played at the Gator Bowl Stadium in Jacksonville, FL. The Tigers won W (27-7) The game was seen on ESPN and by the 82,911 in the stadium.

## Dabo Swinney Era 2008-2020

Coach # 25 Dabo Swinney

### 2009 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Dabo Swinney

The 2009 Clemson Tigers football team represented Clemson University during the 2009 college football season as a member of the

Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC). Dabo Swinney was the head football coach for his second of many seasons.



This was Swinney's first full season after completing seven games of Coach Tommy Bowden's final year in 2008. The Tigers completed their one hundred-fourteenth season overall and their fifty-seventh in the Atlantic Coast Conference with a record of 9-5; 6-2 in the ACC. They finished in first place of 6 ACC Atlantic Division teams. The Offensive Coordinator was Bill Napier and the Defensive Coordinator was Kevin Steele.

The Tigers had an overall good year and won the ACC Atlantic Division, but after securing the title lost to in-state rival South Carolina in the Palmetto Bowl 34-17, before losing for the second time in the season to Georgia Tech in the ACC Championship Game. Clemson closed the season with a win over Kentucky in the Music City Bowl.

The unranked Clemson Fighting Tigers home season opener resulted in a win on Sept 5 at home against Middle Tennessee W (37-14). This home opener was played as always at Memorial Stadium on the campus of Clemson University in Clemson, SC before 78371. After this home win, on Sept 10, the unranked Tigers played at No. 13 Georgia Tech's Bobby Dodd Stadium in Atlanta, GA where they

were defeated by the Yellow Jackets L (27–30) before 52,029. On Sept 19, at home, Boston College took it on the chin big time W (25-7).

On Sept 26, at home, Clemson lost to #14 TCU L (10-14). Then, on Oct 3, at Maryland's Byrd Stadium in College Park, MD, Clemson lost again L (21-24) before 46,243. Two weeks later on Oct 17 at home, the Tigers defeated the Wake Forest Demon Deacons W (38-3). On Oct 24, unranked Clemson played the #10 Hurricanes of Miami University at Land Shark Stadium in Miami Gardens, FL., The game was nip and tuck and finally the Tigers beat the Hurricanes W (40-37) in OT before 43, 778.

## **Game highlights Clemson 40 v Miami 37 (OT)**

*Oct 24, 2009 in Miami Gardens FL.*

This was a huge game for Clemson's 2009 season.

The Tigers were coming off two tough losses to Maryland and TCU. Clemson had hammered Wake Forest the week before. Heading to Miami, Clemson was considered a huge underdog against the #8 Hurricanes.

There were more back-and-forth blows in this game than a heavyweight fight. Nonetheless, Clemson managed to outlast the Canes in overtime 40-37. CJ Spiller had 300-plus all-purpose yards while Kyle Parker threw for 326 yards and three touchdowns, including a 26-yard pass in overtime to cap off an instant classic.

On Oct 31, as Dabo Swinney's team was beginning to know how great they were, Coastal Carolina's Chanticleers came to Clemson's campus for the Clemson Homecoming game. It was a great homecoming as the Tigers got the best of the visitors in a walloping game W (49-3). In the non-Bowden Bowl of 2009, it was Bobby Bowden's last year coaching Florida State. The game was Nov 7 and it was at home in a celebration called Solid Orange Day. The Tigers hit the Seminoles with all they had and the Seminoles fought back but lost the game W (40-24), giving Dabo Swinney a great win and putting a mar in Bobby Bowden's last season (7-6) at FSU with Jimbo Fisher as his offensive coordinator.

On Nov 14 at NC State's Carter-Finley Stadium in Raleigh, NC, the Tigers outplayed the Wolfpack in the Textile Bowl W (43–23) before 57,583. Then, on Nov 21 at home, #19 Clemson beat Virginia's Wahoos W (34-21) before 77,568. Finishing up a better season than was ever delivered by a fine coach Tommy Bowden, on Nov 28, at South Carolina's Williams-Brice Stadium in Columbia, SC, the #16 Tigers lost the game to the unranked Gamecocks L (17–34)). But, there was still one or two games left in the postseason.

At the end of the season, Head Coach Dabo Swinney announced that they would retire the #28 jersey worn by C. J. Spiller at a ceremony when the Tigers play Maryland at home on Oct. 16, 2010.

## **2009 Post Season – Championships and Music City Bowl**

On December 5 at 8:00 p.m. vs. #12 Georgia Tech, at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, FL, Clemson lost the ACC Championship L (34–39).

The Tigers got a bowl bid anyway. On Dec 27 at 7:30 p.m. vs. Kentucky at LP Field in Nashville, TN, the Clemson Tigers with Dabo Swinney found enough muster to defeat Kentucky in the Music City Bowl W (21–13) before 57,280.

### **Game highlights Clemson 21 v Kentucky 13**

*Dec 27, 2009 in Nashville TN.*

Not only was it Dabo Swinney's first bowl win as Clemson's head coach, it was also CJ Spiller's last game as a Clemson Tiger.

Spiller gained 172 all-purpose yards and scored a touchdown in his 14th consecutive game. Kentucky came out and scored quickly on its first drive. Clemson's defense then snapped from its slumber and held UK to just a couple of field goals the rest of the game. This was just Clemson's fourth bowl win of the decade despite being bowl eligible every single season.

## **2011 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Dabo Swinney**

Dabo Swinney was the head football coach for his fourth of many seasons. The Tigers completed their one hundred-sixteenth season overall and their fifty-ninth as a member of the Atlantic Division of the Atlantic Coast Conference. Their overall record was 10-4; 6-2 in the ACC. They finished first of 6 ACC Atlantic Division teams.

#21 Clemson won their division championship in the ACC and got to play #5 Virginia Tech for the full ACC Championship on December 3 at 8:00 p.m. at Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte, NC. The Clemson Tigers won the game and grabbed the championship W (38–10) before 73,675 football fans. Clemson was invited to the Orange Bowl game for winning the championship.

On January 4, 2012 at 8::30 p.m., the #14 Clemson Tigers took on the #23 West Virginia Mountaineers at Sun Life Stadium in Miami Gardens, FL. The Tigers were beaten in a shootout L (33–70) before 67,563. Not everything goes as planned. Clemson's best season in 20 years came to a crashing halt with arguably the worst bowl loss in school history.

#### **2012 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Dabo Swinney**

Dabo Swinney was the head football coach for his fifth of many seasons. The Tigers completed their one hundred-seventeenth season overall and their sixtieth as a member of the Atlantic Division of the Atlantic Coast Conference. Their overall record was 11-2; 7-1 in the ACC. They finished tied for first with Florida State of 6 ACC Atlantic Division teams. Since FSU beat the Tigers in head to head, they got to compete for the ACC title.

#### **2014 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Dabo Swinney**

Dabo Swinney was the head football coach for his seventh of many seasons. The Tigers completed their one hundred-nineteenth season overall and their sixty-second as a member of the Atlantic Division of the Atlantic Coast Conference. Their overall record was 10-3; 6-2 in the ACC. They finished second of 6 ACC Atlantic Division teams.

#### **2015 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Dabo Swinney**

Dabo Swinney was the head football coach for his eighth of many seasons. The Tigers completed their one hundred-twentieth season overall and their sixty-third as a member of the Atlantic Division of the Atlantic Coast Conference. Their overall record was 14-1; 8-0 in the ACC. They finished first of 6 ACC Atlantic Division teams and they won the ACC Championship. Clemson had a great year with just one major disappointment.

The Tigers won the 2015 ACC Championship Game by defeating the North Carolina Tar Heels, 45–37, capping their first undefeated regular season since winning the national title in 1981. Ranked No. 1 throughout the College Football Playoff (CFP) rankings, Clemson defeated the No. 4 Oklahoma Sooners, 37–17, in the 2015 Orange Bowl to advance to the College Football Playoff National Championship. On January 11, 2016, the No. 2 Alabama Crimson Tide (13–1) defeated the No. 1 Clemson Tigers (14–0) in the 2016 national championship, 45–40. Both Clemson and Alabama finished the season 14–1.

On Dec 5 at 8:00 p.m. v #8 ranked North Carolina, Coastal Division Champ, the #1 Clemson Tigers, Atlantic Division Champs engaged at the Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte, NC in the ACC Championship Game. In a tough game, Clemson prevailed W (45-37 before 74,514.

On Dec 31, New Year's Eve, at 4:00 p.m. vs. No. 4 Oklahoma, #1 Clemson defeated the Sooners at Sun Life Stadium in Miami Gardens, FL in the Orange Bowl Game – CFP Semifinal. Clemson won the encounter W (37-17) setting the stage for a game against Alabama for the National Championship.

On January 10, 2016, at 8:30 p.m., #1 Clemson played #2 Alabama at University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale, AZ for the CFP National Championship. In a great game, Alabama held on for the win L (40-45) before 75,765

### **2016 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Dabo Swinney**

Dabo Swinney was the head football coach for his ninth of many seasons. The Tigers completed their one hundred-twenty-first overall and their sixty-fourth as a member of the Atlantic Division of the Atlantic Coast Conference. Their overall record was 14-1; 7-1 in the



ACC. They finished tied for first with Louisville but got to play in the championship because they had beaten Louisville in head to head earlier in the season. They also won the ACC Championship.



Lamar Jackson and Louisville came up just short against Clemson

The No. 2 Tigers hadn't lost to an unranked foe since November 2011, but a combination of mistakes, poor defense and untimely penalties caught up with them against the scrappy Panthers.

Even with quarterback Deshaun Watson throwing for an ACC-record 580 yards, Clemson couldn't put Pitt away, with its biggest lead being eight points. Pitt closed to 42-40 on James Conner's 20-yard touchdown run with 5:17 left, and the Tigers just had to run out the clock. But the Panthers stuffed Wayne Gallman on 4th-and-1 from their 35 with 58 seconds left, giving themselves one more chance.

Pitt quickly got into field-goal position, and the aptly named Chris Blewitt nailed a 48-yard field goal on the game's final play, lifting the



Panthers to a shocking 43-42 upset. Clemson still made the College Football Playoff, but Pitt and head coach Pat Narduzzi had a win they'll never forget.



Clemson 42 Pittsburgh 43

After finishing the regular season 12-1 with a win over Coastal Division champion #23 Virginia Tech in the 2016 ACC Championship game, the #2 Tigers advanced to the 2016 College Football Playoff semifinal and went on to defeat the #3 Ohio State Buckeyes 31-0, in the 2016 Fiesta Bowl on December 31, 2016. Both top ranked Clemson and Alabama met again in college football's first rematch in National Championship game history, the 2017 CFP National Championship game in Tampa, Florida.

On January 9, 2017, the Clemson Tigers would go on to defeat the Alabama Crimson Tide in the rematch by a score of 35 to 31, winning their first consensus National Football Championship since 1981. Clemson subsequently finished with #1 rankings in both the Associated Press Poll and the AFCA Coaches' Poll for the 2016 season. Here are the stories

In the ACC Championship game on Dec 3, against #19 Virginia Tech, played at Camping World Stadium in Orlando, Clemson prevailed in a close match W (42-35) to gain the full ACC Championship before 50,628. Ranked #2, the Tigers would be playing in the Fiesta Bowl in a game known as the CFP Semifinal.

On December 31, New Year's Eve two games were played and the winner would play on January 9 for the National Championship. #2 Clemson shut out #3 Ohio State in the Fiesta Bowl at 7:00 p.m. at University of Phoenix Stadium, Glendale, AZ CFP Semifinal. W (31-0). In a game earlier in the day at 3:00 PM, #1 Alabama beat the #4 Washington Huskies W (24-7) earning them a berth to play Clemson for the championship on January 9, 2017

On Monday, January 9, 2017 at 8:30 p.m., the #1 ranked Alabama Crimson Tide (14-0) were looking for a repeat National Championship against the #2 ranked Clemson Tigers (13-1) at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, FL in the CFP National Championship game. Clemson pulled out the win in a magical fashion.

It took many fans and the entire Crimson Tide by surprise as Clemson executed an onside kick with one second left in this Monday night national championship game. The Tigers had kicked it after scoring a game-winning touchdown so as to avoid letting Alabama run the kick back, recovered it, leaving just a kneel down left for the Tigers to seal their big victory.

Just before that, without his two-yard TD pass with 1-second left after the score, 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, 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.

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 perfect touchdown play that some Alabama fans still claim was illegal. But, in football, the referees have the final word.

Regardless, along with other referee miscues, the officials said it was legal. On the play, Deshaun Watson's rolled right and threw a perfect 2-yard touchdown pass to Hunter Renfrow with just 1 second remaining. Clemson can take that call to the bank.

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 of course were generally heartsick.

Nick Saban's Crimson Tide were clearly denied a fifth national championship in eight seasons under this highly successful coach.

The Tide managed just 131 passing yards, as Hurts had a tough night going 14-of-32.

Nick Saban saw it as it was. "They made the plays and we didn't," Saban said. "We could have done some things better, but I'm proud of the way our guys competed." Dabo Swinney has proven that he is one of the best coaches of all time at any university.

Watch out next year folks! It will be another great Clemson football year. You can take that to the bank.

## 2016/2017 CFP Championship Game-- Full Recap

Uncommitted football fans across the world enjoyed one of the best football games of all-time on Monday evening January 9, 2007, from 8:00 PM to way past bedtime at 12:25 AM. For the committed Clemson fans the victory was sweet after waiting a year for a rematch. For the committed Crimson Tide fans, the loss was simply heartbreaking.

In this game, the song lyrics, *what a difference a day makes* took a back seat to *what a difference a few seconds make*. The Crimson Tide came literally one second away from a repeat title. With Alabama holding a three-point lead after rolling down the field and scoring on a Jalen Hurts' 30-yard touchdown run with just 2:01 remaining, Clemson took the second-last kickoff of the game and refused to be stopped.

Deshaun Watson was the game's super-hero. However, Watson had to perform all night to get the win and he had the ball in his hand as the game ended after a Clemson onside kick was recovered by Clemson with 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."

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From the two-yard line, with about 6 seconds left, Alabama was either going to be playing in OT with a field goal if Clemson's next play did not work; or time would run out by mistake; or of course option 3 was that the play would result in a touchdown.

Much to Alabama's chagrin, option 3 was operative. When Alabama double-teamed 6' 3" Mike Williams on the left side, Clemson decided to go right against man to man coverage. They executed a clearly designed pick play, that even Watson admitted after the game was by design.

It was no accident and Alabama fans are still wondering where the pass-interference call v Clemson when on the prior play, Alabama had gotten flagged for a similar violation.

Regardless, the referees did not call it. On the play, Deshaun Watson's rolled right and threw a perfect 2-yard touchdown pass to Hunter Renfrow with just 1 second remaining.

This gave Clemson their wild 35-31 win over Alabama in the College Football Playoff national championship game. Clemson fans were ecstatic as they felt they should have won the marbles one year earlier. Alabama fans are not whiners or poor sports but came away in fact generally heartsick.

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 defender, 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 for 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 big 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 took a few days to get the shock out of my system.

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 14-of-32.

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. Hope you enjoyed all the great Alabama coaches—both immortals and mortal.

**2017 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Dabo Swinney**

Dabo Swinney is the head football coach for his tenth of many seasons. The Tigers completed in their one hundred-twenty second overall and their sixty-fifth as a member of the Atlantic Division of the Atlantic Coast Conference. Their overall record was very good and in the ACC as they have a fine returning team

Tigers entered the 2017 season as defending national champions, having finished the 2016 season 14–1 with a win over Alabama in the CFP National Championship game. In 2017, Clemson was 12-2 and 7-1 in the ACC. They were a contender for the national championship, but they lost in a semi-final game to Alabama.

### **2018 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Dabo Swinney**

In 2018, coming off a College Football Playoff semi-final loss to Alabama in 2017, began the year ranked second in the preseason AP Poll and the Coaches' Poll. The Tigers won all 12 of their regular season games, securing their first undefeated regular season since 2015. The Tigers won their fourth consecutive ACC title by defeating Pittsburgh in the 2018 ACC Championship Game. Clemson ranked 2nd in the final College Football Playoff rankings of the 2018 season.

This got them their fourth consecutive playoff bid and a spot in the 2018 Cotton Bowl Classic against third-ranked Notre Dame. The Tigers smothered the Irish W (30-3). Notre Dame simply cannot beat a great team. Clemson won that game 30–3, advancing them to the 2019 College Football Playoff National Championship against Alabama. This was Clemson's fourth consecutive year meeting the Crimson Tide in the playoff and third time in four years doing so in the national title game. Clemson won that game in dominant fashion.

This gave them a 44–16 victory and the Tigers got their third national championship in school history and second in three years. They were the first undefeated College Football Playoff champion and the first major college football program to finish with a record of 15–0 since Penn in 1897. The team is considered by some analysts to be one of the greatest in college football history.

Clemson was led offensively by true freshman QB Trevor Lawrence, who won a highly publicized battle for the starting role over 2017

starter Kelly Bryant. Running back Travis Etienne played a significant role, rushing for over 1,600 yards and an FBS-leading 24 rushing touchdowns.

He was the ACC Player of the Year following the regular season. On defense, the team was anchored by a highly touted, veteran defensive line including Clelin Ferrell, Christian Wilkins, Dexter Lawrence, and Austin Bryant—all of whom were subsequently drafted in the 2019 NFL Draft.

### **2019 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Dabo Swinney**

Going into 2019, Clemson again was the defending national champions, Clemson began the year ranked first in the polls. The grabbed another undefeated regular season and a fifth consecutive conference title by defeating Virginia in the ACC Championship Game.

This season, Clemson fell to third in the final College Football Playoff rankings of the season, because it had a “comparatively weak schedule strength.” Nonetheless, Clemson was selected to the Fiesta Bowl to play second-seeded Ohio State, where they won a tough game by a score of 29–23. This led them to advance to the National Championship Game, where they lost to a well-fortified and prepared LSU, 42–25, ending their winning streak at 29 games and finishing the season at 14–1.

Again the Tigers were led by sophomore quarterback Trevor Lawrence, who topped the ACC with 3,665 passing yards and 45 total touchdowns. Junior Running back Travis Etienne took away the ACC Player of the Year title for the second year in a row. He led conference with 19 rushing touchdowns and 7.8 yards per carry, and he finished in second with 1,614 rushing yards.

Offensive lineman John Simpson was named as a consensus All-American, and he was joined on the first-team All-ACC by Lawrence, Etienne, wide receiver Tee Higgins, and offensive lineman Tremayne Anchrum.

On defense, the team was led by All-American and ACC Defensive Player of the Year linebacker Isaiah Simmons. He was joined on the

first-team All-ACC by cornerback A. J. Terrel and safety Tanner Muse. Though there was no cigar this year, Clemson played extremely well.

## **2020 Clemson Tigers Football Coach Dabo Swinney**

Clemson was loaded up and ready for another championship this year but there were a lot of obstacles. The first was that the season was played amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The ACC settled on an eleven-game football schedule, with ten conference games with no divisions and one non-conference game.

Clemson canceled their previously scheduled non-conference games against Akron and South Carolina, and kept their game against The Citadel. Precautions were taken to reduce the spread of the virus, including testing, isolation requirements, and limitations on the number of fans in attendance.

Clemson began the year ranked first in the preseason AP Poll, and handily won their first seven games of the season, including a 42–17 win over then-No. 9 Miami (FL).

Starting quarterback was a COVID-19 victim when he tested positive for COVID-19 on October 29. He was forced to miss the team's next two games against Boston College and temporary ACC member Notre Dame. The team escaped with a close win against Boston College, but lost on the road to then #4 seeded Notre Dame in double overtime, 47–40.

Clemson came back when Lawrence came back and won the remainder of their regular season games, earning their spot in the ACC Championship Game by finishing in second in the division-less format with an 8–1 record, behind Notre Dame. In the rematch against the Fighting Irish, this time with Lawrence at quarterback, the Tigers were victorious by pounding the Irish 34–10, to win their sixth consecutive ACC title.

In the final College Football Playoff rankings of the season, Clemson came in second, earning them a place in the national semi-final to be played at the Sugar Bowl against third-seeded Ohio State, a rematch of the previous season's Fiesta Bowl. Clemson lost the rematch, 49–28, to end the season at 10–2 and ranked third in the final polls.

Trevor Lawrence in his junior year led the team on offense with 3,153 passing yards and 24 passing touchdowns. He was named ACC Player of the Year and finished in second in voting for the Heisman Trophy. The team's leading rusher was senior Travis Etienne, who was named a consensus All-American all-purpose back. Amari Rodgers was the team's top receiver and was named first-team all-conference.

On defense, Clemson featured two first-team all-conference members in lineman Bryan Bresee and cornerback Derion Kendrick. Bresee was named the ACC Defensive Freshman of the Year.

There are two weeks to go as I finish this book before the NFL 2021 draft. Quarterback Trevor Lawrence, the presumptive No. 1 pick in next month's NFL draft, is declining the chance to attend the draft in Cleveland and is instead choosing to watch it at Clemson with a few family members and friends, sources told ESPN's Adam Schefter



# Chapter 26 Florida Gators: Steve Spurrier to Urban Meyer

Coach # 19

Year	Coach Record	Record	Conference	Conference
1990	Steve Spurrier	9-2-0	SEC	6-1-0
1991	Steve Spurrier	10-2-0	SEC	7-0-0
1992	Steve Spurrier	9-4-0	SEC	6-2-0
1993	Steve Spurrier	11-2-0	SEC	7-1-0
1994	Steve Spurrier	10-2-1	SEC	7-1-0
1995	Steve Spurrier	12-1-0	SEC	8-0-0
1996	Steve Spurrier	12-1-0	SEC	8-0-0
1997	Steve Spurrier	10-2-0	SEC	6-2-0
1998	Steve Spurrier	10-2-0	SEC	7-1-0
1999	Steve Spurrier	9-4-0	SEC	7-1-0
2000	Steve Spurrier	10-3-0	SEC	7-1-0
2001	Steve Spurrier	10-2-0	SEC	6-2-0
2005	Urban Meyer	9-3	SEC	5-3
2006	Urban Meyer	13-1	SEC	7-1
2007	Urban Meyer	9-4	SEC	5-3
2008	Urban Meyer	13-1	SEC	7-1
2009	Urban Meyer	13-1	SEC	8-0
2010	Urban Meyer	8-5	SEC	4-4



Steve Spurrier, Leading the Gators as Only He Could !



When I began to watch Steve Spurrier on National TV, I never knew he was a great college player and a Heisman winner. I saw him as a great college coach. He did always seem to have a chip on his shoulder against the other team as I watched him coaching the Gators through many years.

Steve Spurrier never invited me for a cocktail (beer preferably) even though I treated him kindly in my Great Coaches in Florida Gators Football Book but if you know him, please let him know I would accept. I am hoping soon to have my own spot in the Florida Villages which is in Gator Territory. When I visited the Villages in the 2017 football season a few Novembers ago, I saw the Gators, post Spurrier, pound the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) 36-7 at home in Ben Hill Griffin Stadium. What a beautiful campus.

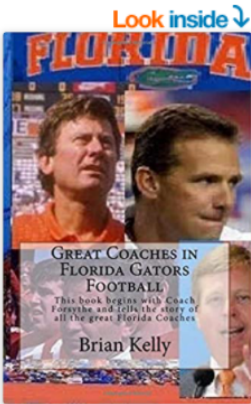
I dropped few books off about the Gators at the FSU library while I was there.

Coach Spurrier’s tell-tale hat (visor) was a give-away that he was on the field. And he made a difference to his team and the fans, I knew the Gators were for real because of Steve Spurrier. IMHO, he was a great man and a great coach. I think they go together. You could see the caring all over his face.

Great Coaches in Florida Gators Football

books › Sports & Outdoors › Football (American)

amazon.com//dp/099881119X



# Great Coaches in Florida Gators Football: This book begins with Coach Forsythe and tells the story of all the great Florida Coaches Paperback – May 19, 2017

by Brian W. Kelly (Author)

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Spurrier inherited a Florida team that was under an NCAA investigation for the second time in five years. He just wanted to

coach the team to greatness. He successfully steered the program away from the previous scandals and led the Gators to the best record in the SEC in his first year. No kidding! His first year!

Though the Gators were declared ineligible for the league title due to NCAA probation handed down during the season, he never faltered. Instead, building on the success of Spurrier's first year, Florida finally captured their first officially recognized SEC title in 1991. Under Steve Spurrier, the Gators represented the SEC East in the first five SEC Championship Games. The SEC is a tough conference and Spurrier's squads won four of those beautiful championships.

It was the 1996 National Championship team that captured the Gators' first-ever "All-the marbles National Championship" with a great 52–20 win over in-state great Bobby Bowden's Florida State team in the Sugar Bowl. For Spurrier and those with long memories, this avenged the Gators' sole regular season loss in which Florida State upset Florida 24–21 in Tallahassee.

Steve Spurrier led his team all the way through that loss to the National Championship. You gotta love Steve Spurrier and admire his admitting the mistake of leaving Florida's Gators for something he felt he had to do.



Steve Spurrier happy on Fan Day, 1999

Pundits who like Spurrier suggest that his finest moment as a coach may have been the Gators' 1997 game against the previously undefeated and national title game-bound Florida State Seminoles.

Spurrier had his own style invented by Spurrier. He used a two-quarterback offense, rotating quarterbacks Doug Johnson and Noah Brindise in and out of the game, confusing the Florida State defense and its veteran coordinator, Mickey Andrews, and giving Spurrier more time to counsel his quarterbacks on the sidelines without having to use time-outs. Clever! Florida upset the heavily favored Seminoles 32–29. Spurrier was an intelligent coach whose teams were always competitive.

### **1990 Florida Gators Football Coach Steve Spurrier**

The 1990 Florida Gators football team was the eighty-fourth season for Florida. It was the first year for Steve Spurrier, Gator's Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback to return to his alma mater to serve twelve seasons as the new Football Gators head coach. The team record this year was the best since Galen Hall's first official year as coach.

It was the Gators fifty-eighth with the South-Eastern Conference (SEC). It was again a fine showing with just two losses. It was just the kind of season for which Florida fans and alums were hoping. Spurrier had a fine record of 9-2-0 and 6-1-0 in the SEC. Florida again finished first in the SEC Conference among ten SEC teams. But, unfortunately, the great win did not count due to circumstances related to the accusations of his predecessors.

Because of Galen Hall's supposedly major infractions, Spurrier's 1990 Florida Gators, were ineligible to win the SEC title or receive a bowl bid because of lingering NCAA probation. Nonetheless, as noted above, the Spurrier-led Gators posted a best-in-the-SEC record of 6–1 to accompany a stellar 9–2 overall record.

This season laid the foundation for the Gators' run of six SEC championships and a national title during the next decade. Florida finished thirteenth in the season's final AP Poll. Steve Spurrier was a difference maker as a player and in this new life, he became a difference maker as a coach.

When fans and alums consider that this was the third time that the Gators had won the SEC Championship on the field and the third time that the NCAA had taken away their earned championship, one must ask if Florida would vote to remove the NCAA from College

Football if given the opportunity. You already know how I feel as I felt compelled to ask the question.

The NCAA is an after-thought that often does not think well. They do not recommend my boos to anybody anyway so I have no axe to grind nor do I feel a compelling need to suck up to such elitists. I know of no real advantage to the existence of the NCAA. Do you think they will place this book on their hallowed bookshelves for sale? Hah! Me too!

Just before Coach Spurrier's Gator coaching debut, the Gainesville campus was stunned by the Danny Rolling murders. You may recall that Rolling was 36 when he showed up in Gainesville shortly before the fall semester began at the University of Florida. He had been a drifter with a criminal past.

He lived in a tent pitched in some woods near campus. He followed two freshman roommates, Sonja Larson, 18, and Christina Powell, 17, to their off-campus apartment, killed both of them with a hunting knife and desecrated their bodies.

On Oct 25, 2006, about six years after their deaths, this savage serial killer who murdered five college students in total here in 1990 was executed by lethal injection. The relatives of his victims said afterward that they could finally feel the beginnings of relief. The world in Florida breathed a collective sigh of relief.

During Steve Spurrier's first season, he was able to build on the strong talent recruited by coach Galen Hall. However, there is no question that Florida also gained the benefits of Spurrier's attitude towards preparing for the game. He had a "there are no excuses for losing" mantra.

Even as Spurrier's new "fun 'n' gun" offensive scheme that was led by quarterback Shane Matthews, and while wide receiver Ernie Mills and tight end Kirk Kirkpatrick were breaking team scoring and yardage records, defensive coordinator Jim Bates was busy coaching one of the best defensive squads in team history. It was a team effort. Among the great defenders were two first-team All-Americans, defensive end Huey Richardson and safety Will White.

## Games of the Season

One of the things you will notice as you look at the season's games is that even in Spurrier's first years, there were few close games because the offense almost always scored a ton of points. So, it was in the season home opener on Sept 8 as the Gators smothered Oklahoma State at Ben Hill Griffin Stadium on the campus at Gainesville, Florida W (50-7).

On Sept 15, Florida beat Alabama at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, AL. W (17-13) before 70,123 fans. In their second game of the short season to date, the Gators came from behind to beat Alabama, in what surely was a confidence-building, 17-13 signature road win. This win set the tone for the remainder of the season and the rest of Spurrier's coaching tenure at Florida. Knowing how tough the Crimson Tide has always been on opponents, Spurrier treasured all of his wins against Alabama.

"Those victories early - '90, '91 - really got us started there at Florida ..." In this game, Alabama quarterback Gary Hollingsworth threw three interceptions to Florida safety Will White, and the Gators scored the winning touchdown on a blocked punt.

Running 3-0 after the first two games, Florida won the next three games, first on Sept 22 at Ben Hill Griffin Stadium W (27-3) against Furman, followed on Sept 29 against Mississippi State W (34-21) and then Louisiana State on Oct 6 W (34-8). The first loss did not come until the sixth game when the # 5 Tennessee Volunteers whipped the Gators L (3-45).

This 3-45 road loss to the fifth-ranked Tennessee Volunteers was very disappointing 3-45 road loss in Knoxville, Tennessee. There was a link between Spurrier and Tennessee. He had been a star quarterback at Science Hill High School in Johnson City, Tennessee during the early 1960s. Although Knoxville is nearby, the coach did not seriously consider attending UT because he was an excellent passer and the Vols ran a single-wing offense at the time which featured a running quarterback. Instead, he chose to come back to Florida, the state of his birth (Miami Beach). Eventually Steve Spurrier became the Gators' first Heisman Trophy winner as a player in 1966.

This first Gator squad of the master coach was 5–0 and ranked # 9 coming into the game with Johnny Majors' 3–0–2 and #5 Vols. This was the first time in their series history that both rivals were ranked in the AP top-10 when they faced off.

The 1990 game began as a defensive struggle, with UT holding a slim 7–3 lead at the half. However, the Vols' Dale Carter returned the second half kickoff 91 yards for a touchdown, igniting the home crowd at Neyland Stadium.

On their next possession, the Gators fumbled for what would be the first of six UF turnovers in the second half. The opportunistic Vols took full advantage, turning Spurrier's homecoming (and, coincidentally, UT's homecoming game) into a dominating 45–3 rout, the largest margin of victory for either team in the series.

Florida came right back the next week against Akron at home in a blowout shutout W (59-0). Florida was ready again the next week against #4 Auburn as the Gators devoured the Tigers on the home field W (48-7). Coach Pat Dye's Auburn Tigers were the defending three-time SEC champions. By game time, they came in with a rank of # 4 in the nation, undefeated with a 6–0–1 record.

Spurrier's fifteenth-ranked Gators were three-point favorites for this game. Opposing coach Dye had been publicly dismissive of Spurrier's pass-oriented offense when interviewed prior to the game. The game started slowly like it was anybody's game. The Gators and Tigers were tied 7–7 after the first quarter, but Spurrier's Gators exploded for twenty-seven points in the second quarter, resulting in a 34–7 halftime lead and a 48–7 victory for the Gators. This was the Gators' biggest margin of victory in the series, and the worst loss of Coach Dye's career.

Georgia had been very successful for years playing the Gators in Jacksonville. Not this season. Florida pounded the Bulldogs W (38-7) on Nov 10. Still ready to roll the #6 ranked Gators kept rolling right over Kentucky at Commonwealth Stadium in Lexington, Kentucky W (47–15).



Shane Matthews—ready throw

On Dec 1, the #6 ranked Florida Gators suffered a bitter bill defeat to #8 ranked in-state rival Florida State in a give and take game L (30-45) played at Doak Campbell Stadium in Tallahassee, Florida. The NCAA sanctions prevented the Gators from engaging in a post-season bowl game so this game was the last of the season.

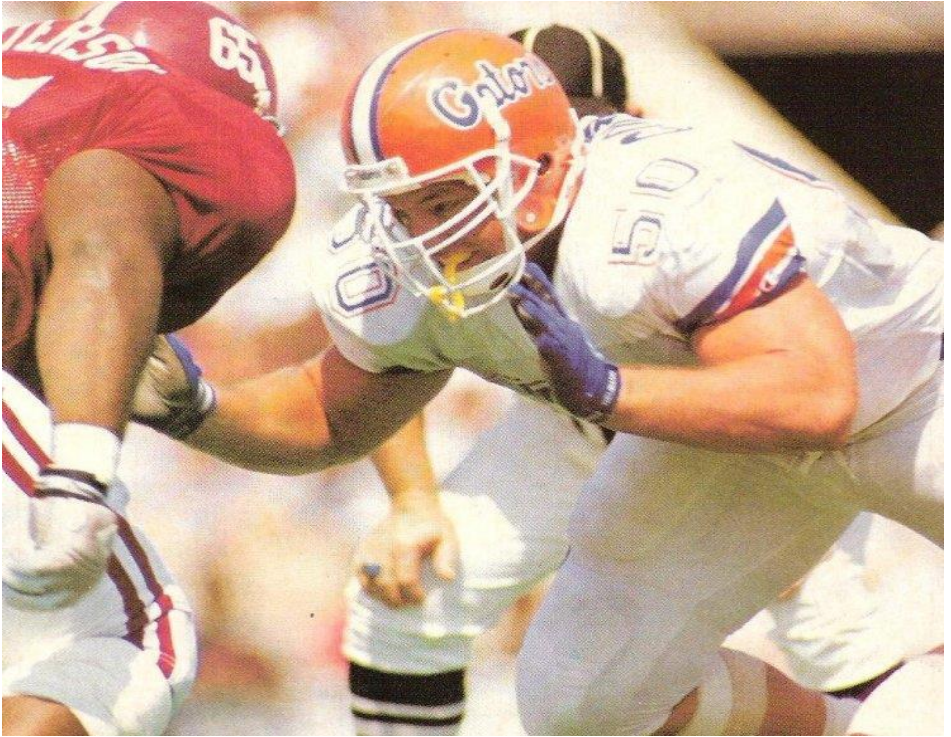
Shane Matthews finished the season with 2,952 passing yards and twenty-three touchdowns—then the most passing yards in Gators history. He was SEC Player of the Year.

Before Coach Spurrier returned to Gainesville, the Gators had never won an officially sanctioned Southeastern Conference (SEC) or national football championship (Florida's first SEC championship was in 1984 but was retroactively vacated by the SEC for infractions incurred by former head coach Charley Pell). Before Spurrier resigned to seek a coaching position in the National Football League in January 2002, the Gators would win six official SEC titles, play for two national championships, and win one in 1996. What a difference a great coach makes.

### **1991 Florida Gators Football Coach Steve Spurrier**

The 1991 Florida Gators football team was the eighty-fifth season for Florida.





Brad Culpepper

It was the second year for Steve Spurrier of twelve seasons as the Football Gators head coach. The team record was better than 1990, the first time the Gators had achieved a ten-game win-season.

Spurrier had a fine record of 10-2-0 and 7-0-0 in the SEC. Florida again finished first in the SEC Conference among ten SEC teams. This time it counted.

The Gators were led by quarterback Shane Matthews and first-team All-American defensive tackle Brad Culpepper. Spurrier's 1991 Florida Gators compiled the first-ever ten-win season in program history, and a perfect SEC record of 7-0. There was reason on campus to celebrate.

#3 ranked Florida was invited to the Sugar Bowl to play #18 Notre Dame at the Superdome in New Orleans, Louisiana. Notre Dame got the best of the Gators L (28-39). This was the Gators first New Year's Day bowl appearance since 1974. The defeat by Notre Dame



brought the team in at a rank of seventh in the final Associated Press Poll. Florida won the team's first official SEC championship, 59 seasons after joining the conference as a charter member. Quarterback Shane Matthews repeated as SEC Player of the Year in 1991.

### **1992 Florida Gators Football Coach Steve Spurrier**

The 1992 Florida Gators football team was the eighty-sixth season for Florida. It was the third year for Steve Spurrier of twelve seasons as the Football Gators head coach. The team record was very good but not as good as 1991.

It was the Gators sixtieth with the South-Eastern Conference (SEC). It was again a fine showing with just two losses in a thirteen-game season. Spurrier led the Gators to another fine record of 11-2-0 and 6-2-0 in the SEC. Florida again finished first in the SEC Conference Eastern Division among six division teams.

### **1993 Florida Gators Football Coach Steve Spurrier**

Spurrier led the Gators to another fine regular season record of 11-2-0 and 7-1-0 in the SEC. Florida again finished first in the SEC Conference Eastern Division among six division teams.

The Gators continued to use coach Spurrier's pass-heavy "fun 'n gun" offense. The 1993 Gators fell short of their hopes for a national championship. The Gators legacy is one of continual improvement. This season, for example, marked the first time that they were ranked in the top ten of the Associated Press Poll during every week of the season, and they were ranked fifth in the final AP Poll, following their 41-7 Sugar Bowl victory over the West Virginia Mountaineers.

### **1994 Florida Gators Football Coach Steve Spurrier**

It was the fifth year for Steve Spurrier of twelve great seasons as the Football Gators head coach. The team record was again very good. It was almost as good as the 1993 season but for a tie.

It was the Gators sixty-second with the South-Eastern Conference (SEC). It was again a fine showing with just two losses and a tie in a thirteen-game season. Spurrier led the Gators to another fine regular

season record of 10-2-1 and 8-1-0 in the SEC. Florida again finished first in the SEC Conference Eastern Division among six division teams and the Gators won the SEC Championship game.

Before the season, with Steve Spurrier as a most capable coach, the Gators were eyeing a national title and more and more they believed it would come from the hands of Steve Spurrier and one of his great Florida teams.

### **1995 Florida Gators Football Coach Steve Spurrier**

It was the sixth year for Steve Spurrier of twelve great seasons as the Football Gators head coach. The team record was the best ever with twelve wins 12-0. It was one of the most successful years in school history. the Gators finished the regular season unbeaten and untied for the first time. Even the 1911 team went 5–0–1.

Spurrier led the Gators to a #1 finish in the SEC Conference Eastern Division among six division teams and the Gators again won the SEC Championship game.

After finishing the regular season 12–0 (8–0 in the SEC), Florida defeated the Arkansas Razorbacks 34–3 in the 1995 SEC Championship Game.

As the No. 2 ranked team, the Gators were invited to play in the 1996 Fiesta Bowl, which was the Bowl Alliance national championship game. In Tempe Az., the Florida Gators lost 24–62 to the No. 1 ranked Nebraska Cornhuskers but remained No. 2 in the final AP poll. So, Spurrier's squad got to the National Championship game but lost—this time! Spurrier was a calculator whose calculations always pointed to how to win.

It is never acceptable to lose a National Championship. However, the 1995 Gators played one of the best teams ever. The 1995 Nebraska squad has been voted as the greatest college football team of all-time in many surveys, including the all-time Sagarin ratings. An ESPN poll put them at #3, just only behind the 1971 Huskers and the 1972 USC Trojans.

### 1996 Florida Gators Football Coach Steve Spurrier

The 1996 Florida Gators football team was the ninetieth season for Florida. It was the seventh year for Steve Spurrier of twelve great seasons as the Football Gators head coach. The team record was tied for the best ever with twelve wins. It was the most successful year in school history. the Gators finished the year as National Champions. I am not kidding.

It was the Gators sixty-fourth with the South-Eastern Conference (SEC). It was again a great showing with just one loss in a thirteen-game season. Spurrier led the Gators to another fine regular season record of 12-1-0 and 8-0-0 in the SEC. Florida finished first in the SEC Conference Eastern Division among six division teams for the fifth consecutive season. Additionally, the Gators again won the SEC Championship game for the fourth straight year. Of course, we must reiterate that this great team was designated consensus National Champions. Bravo Florida!

This was the first national championship for Florida in team history. It came from a 52–20 Sugar Bowl rout of their in-state rivals, the Florida State Seminoles. Bobby Bowden was not at all happy about the game.

All season long, the Gators used coach Spurrier's pass-heavy "fun 'n gun" offense". Quarterback Danny Wuerffel won the Heisman Trophy. Wuerffel as well as his wide receivers Ike Hilliard and Reidel Anthony were consensus All-Americans. It was a very good year for the Florida team, Florida fans, Florida alums, and of course their great coach Steve Spurrier.

The Gators opened up the season on August 31. They were ranked fourth and of course they aimed for a fourth straight SEC title while, of course having a sense that they were good enough to win all the marbles. The first opponent was Southwestern Louisiana at home in Ben Hill Griffin Stadium on the University campus at Gainesville, FL. There were a lot of shootouts in 1996 and this was another as Florida prevailed W (55-21). Bob Stoops' Gator defense held the Cajuns scoreless in the first half, and on its own scored four touchdowns (as much as the offense). Cornerback Fred Weary scored two of the TDs for Florida.

The Gators, coached by Steve Spurrier decided to use the shotgun formation to give Danny Wuerffel more time to throw. Florida defeated Florida State in this historically classic rematch 52–20, for the first national football title for the University of Florida.

Ike Hilliard scored once on a "stop and pop." It was perfect. Hilliard stopped on a dime to avoid Seminole defenders. He then ran into the end zone. A 42-yard, Terry Jackson touchdown run sealed the victory. It was a beautiful day in the neighborhood if you were from Gainesville or rooting for Gainesville.

## Other Honors to the Gators in 1996

The National Championship is simply a big deal. However, along with a national title, quarterback Danny Wuerffel was presented with the coveted Heisman Trophy, annually awarded to college football's top player. Wuerffel was the 1966 winner. He had a phenomenal year and was also awarded the Maxwell Award, Walter Camp Award, Davey O'Brien Award, Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award, as well as the Draddy Trophy, National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame Scholar, and College Football Association Scholar-Athlete Team.

You can bet Danny Wuerffel got a lot of other honors. As a humble man, he probably would not tell you about them.

Lawrence Wright won the Jim Thorpe Award, and was on the College Football Association Scholar-Athlete Team. Jeff Mitchell was an Outland Trophy semi-finalist. It was a great Florida year. There is more. Danny Wuerffel, Ike Hilliard, and Reidel Anthony all were consensus All-Americans. It was a big year for the Pros, Ike Hilliard was selected 7th overall by the New York Giants, and Reidel Anthony was selected 16th by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. What a great Florida year for everybody!

### **1997 Florida Gators Football Coach Steve Spurrier**

The 1997 Florida Gators football team was the ninety-first season for Florida. It was the eighth year for Steve Spurrier of twelve great

seasons as the Football Gators head coach. The team record was super but not championship quality but again, Florida was living close to the top of the SEC.

### **1998 Florida Gators Football Coach Steve Spurrier**

1998 was the ninth year for Steve Spurrier of twelve great seasons as the Football Gators head coach. The team record was super. Florida was continuing its life close to the top of the SEC. Florida finished second among the six SEC Eastern Division teams. The Gators had another great double-digit winning year.

On the day after New Year's, 1999, #7 Florida got itself into a great Bowl game against #18 Syracuse. It was the Orange Bowl played at Orange Bowl Stadium in Miami. The Spurrier team played tricky and tough enough to defeat Syracuse W 31-10.

### **1999 Florida Gators Football Coach Steve Spurrier**

The 1999 Florida Gators football team was the ninety-third season for Florida. It was the tenth year for Coach Steve Spurrier of twelve great seasons as the Football Gators head coach. The team record was super but not national championship quality. Coach Spurrier led the Gators to another fine total season record of 9-4-0 and 7-1-0 in the SEC. Florida finished first among the six SEC Eastern Division teams. The Gators had another great almost double-digit winning year.

### **2000 Florida Gators Football Coach Steve Spurrier**

The 2000 Florida Gators football team was the ninety-fourth season for Florida. It was the eleventh year for Coach Steve Spurrier of twelve great seasons as the Football Gators head coach. The team record was very good and improved from 1999, but not quite national championship quality. Again, Florida was living so close to the top of the SEC, that this year, they claimed another title.

It was the Gators sixty-eighth with the South-Eastern Conference (SEC). It was again a great showing with just two losses in a twelve-game season. Coach Spurrier led the Gators to another fine regular season record of 10-3-0 and 7-1-0 in the SEC. Florida finished first

among the six SEC Eastern Division teams. The Gators had another great double-digit winning year.

As noted, they were coached by Steve Spurrier, who led the Gators to their sixth SEC championship, a Sugar Bowl berth, and an overall win-loss record of 10–3 (.769).

### **2001 Florida Gators Football Coach Steve Spurrier**

When I first began writing chapter summaries back when I had researched the 1906 season and all the way to 1990 when Steve Spurrier took over the reins of UF, I was anticipating writing about the Spurrier years. I knew they were very successful and it is a lot more fun writing about successful seasons than struggling seasons.

There were a lot of high points before reaching the Spurrier era and I relished them but there was little consistency in winning. Florida is a much different team now than in the pre-Spurrier times but right now, as I begin the last year of Coach Spurrier's magical period with the Gators, I miss him already. For me, it's like he is leaving again. I know we will get by. But, just like the Bryant's, the Rockne's, the Paterno's, the Osborne's, the Shembeckler's, the Leahy's great seasons with their teams, I know something will be missing. But, we'll get by. Go Gators!

2001 was the twelfth and last year for Coach Steve Spurrier of twelve great seasons as the Football Gators head coach. The team record was very good again and improved from 2000 with one less loss, but not quite national championship quality. Again, Florida was living close to the top of the SEC. But, not this year.

Steve Spurrier led the Gators to a 56–23 Orange Bowl victory over the Maryland Terrapins in his final game before moving on to the NFL. Sophomore quarterback really came through this year, throwing for more than 4,000 yards. As a sophomore, Grossman was the Heisman Trophy runner-up. Grossman, wide receiver Jabar Gaffney and defensive end Alex Brown were consensus All-Americans. Brown's 33 sacks are still a school record for a career.

In one of the few times in school history, going into the season, the Gators were ranked preseason No. 1. The season got underway on September 1 with the home opener at Ben Hill Griffin Stadium on the University campus at Gainesville, Florida against Marshall going to the Gators W (49–14). This season opened at night in the “Swamp” with a 49–14 triumph over Marshall who used both quarterbacks Byron Leftwich and the Marshall Thundering Herd. Rex Grossman, Florida’s Sophomore QB had a career-high in passing yards by halftime, including a 64-yard touchdown reception by Taylor Jacobs. The defense also played well as Alex Brown and linebacker Andra Davis had two sacks each.

That’s enough

## **Steve Spurrier's resignation**

In early January 2002, Steve Spurrier announced that he was resigning as Florida's head coach after 12 seasons.

## **Great coaches make other greats follow them! The Urban Meyer Era 2005 - 2010**

The list of Urban Meyer’s six seasons with Florida is included on the first page of this chapter. From 2002 through 2004, Coach Ron Zook led the gators through three winning but not championship level teams. Coach Meyer took over for him in 2005.

### **Coach # 22 Urban Meyer**



Coach Meyer leading the Gators onto field for the game

Urban Meyer helped Florida not miss a beat in its quest for championships. They missed Steve Spurrier more for spiritual reasons but Meyer is not a bad person either.

## Urban Meyer was a known entity

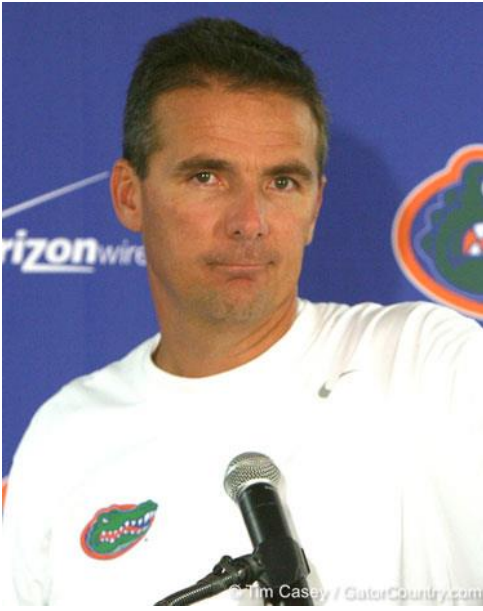
When Florida, a very successful football program sought a head coach after taking a chance for three years with a fine coach with no head coach experience, it had no choice but to pick a great one. They did with Urban Meyer. Like him or not, Meyer is a great coach.

Here is some good stuff about why Florida sought out and hired Urban Meyer

## URBAN MEYER NAMED FLORIDA'S HEAD FOOTBALL COACH From Floridagators.com

Saturday, December 4, 2004





Urban Meyer, a two-time National Coach of the Year and one of the nation's top young coaching talents, has been named the 22<sup>nd</sup> head football coach at the University of Florida, Gator Athletics Director Jeremy Foley announced today.

Meyer, 40, possesses 19 years of college coaching experience, including four as a head coach. Meyer turned around the football program at Bowling Green State University in 2001-02 and engineered a reversal of fortune at the University of

Utah in 2003-04. Meyer, who sports a 10-1 record against Bowl Championship Series teams as a head coach, guided the Utes to a perfect 11-0 campaign this season and an expected berth in the BCS. He has an overall mark of 38-8 (.826) and is 24-6 (.800) in conference play as head coach.

"Urban Meyer represents the qualities that we were looking for in our head coach," Foley said. "He is an innovator of the game with proven success as a head coach. He has shown the ability to attract recruits and is a tremendous teacher. Urban's accomplishments speak for themselves. He is a man of high values and principles and we welcome him and his family to the University of Florida family."

"I am certainly excited about the opportunity to be the head coach at the University of Florida," said Meyer. "There were a lot of factors that went into this decision that our entire family had to consider. The opportunity to compete at the highest level at one of the nation's most-respected academic institutions is something that was attractive for us. The passion of Gator fans is legendary in collegiate athletics and I am eager to be a part of that environment."

"The quality of recruits within the state of Florida and the Southeast Region offers a tremendous recruiting base for us," Meyer continued.

"The support from the University's administration is evident in their commitment to my family and I am looking forward to leading the Gator football program."

"Urban Meyer is an outstanding coach with a strong record, great leadership skills and a very promising future," said UF President J. Bernard Machen. "I am very happy to welcome him along with Shelley and the Meyer family to UF and Gainesville."

For this book, which is not the Meyer Autobiography, the above is sufficient.

Urban Meyer was a great choice for Florida. I could not wait when I wrote about the Gators to wait to get out from the Zook years into something that even if today were July 1, 2005, I know it would be a positive tour of duty for Coach Meyer. Urban Meyer will be some school some place's next legendary coach. Too bad he did not stay at UF.

### **2005 Florida Gators Football Coach Urban Meyer**

The 2005 Florida Gators football team was the ninety-ninth season for Florida. It was the first year for Coach Urban Meyer of six great seasons as the Football Gators head coach. The team record immediately began to match the records of the Spurrier years. Good wins, great players and a great coach were back on the agenda for the Florida Gators.

Nobody worked harder than Urban Meyer. We'll give Meyer and Spurrier a tie in the work ethic category. Florida could not have made a better choice for head coach other than convincing the legendary Steve Spurrier to come back home.

But, that did not happen.

It was the Gators seventy-third with the powerful South-Eastern Conference (SEC). It was again a great SEC showing with just three SEC losses. Coach Meyer led the Gators to a Spurrier-quality regular season record of 9-3 and 5-3 in the SEC Eastern Division. Florida finished tied for second among the six SEC Eastern Division teams and Meyer brought Florida an Outback Bowl berth.

**2006 Florida Gators Football Coach Urban Meyer**

Just like Steve Spurrier, Urban Meyer is not happy when his team is not winning championships, so he changes the teams to perform in winning ways. The 2006 Florida Gators football team was the One hundredth season for Florida. It was the second for Coach Urban Meyer of six great seasons as the Football Gators head coach. The team record immediately improved from the prior year and was on its way to matching and exceeding the great records of the Spurrier years.

This year it was more of good wins, great players and a great coaching that would help the Florida Gators become recognized again as the Nation's Football power. And, of course this year's National Championship cemented that notion.

It was the Gators seventy-third season with the powerful South-Eastern Conference (SEC). It was again a great SEC showing with just one SEC loss. Coach Meyer led the Gators to a Spurrier-quality regular season record of 13-1 and 7-1 in the SEC Eastern Division. Florida finished first among the six SEC Eastern Division teams and won the SEC Championship and the National Championship. Yes, this season was just the second for head coach Urban Meyer. Yet, he took the Gators that had floundered for three years, and he coached the team to an SEC Championship, a BCS National Championship, and an overall win-loss record of 13-1 (.929). Urban Meyer is a fine coach.

Florida had a lot more to overcome than just a second-year coach. The Gators overcame the toughest schedule in the nation by opponent winning percentage and still they pushed forward to become national champions.

The Gators won their seventh SEC title or ninth as Spurrier counts, by defeating the Arkansas Razorbacks 38-28 in the SEC Championship Game on December 2, 2006. They then defeated the Ohio State Buckeyes, a team which Urban Meyer later coached, 41-14 in the BCS National Championship Game on January 8, 2007. This began the SEC's streak of seven consecutive national championships. It is not good to fool with the toughness of the Southeastern Conference. h

During the 2006 season, the Florida Gators also celebrated two milestones in their history. It was the tenth anniversary of their first national football championship in 1996, brought forth by Coach Spurrier and a fantastic team. and 100 years of Florida football dating to their first season in 1906. What an accomplishment! What a program!

In addition, though this is a football book, the fact is that the Gator's men's basketball team won both the 2006 and 2007 NCAA men's basketball national championships, and so, the University of Florida became the first Division I school to ever win the football and men's basketball titles during the same year. How about that?

Coincidentally, the Gators, who beat Ohio State for the Football Championship, again faced and defeated Ohio State in the 2007 NCAA Basketball Tournament. This marked the first time in college sports history that identical matchups and results have occurred in both football and basketball championships. I would like my voice to be heard in praising both the Gators and the Buckeyes. That is incredible.

Pundits were high on Urban Meyer as a coach because he had produced before and it was expected that he would produce again. That is what great coaches do. Before the season if you choose to check, the polls in 2006 had Florida listed as one of the top 10 teams entering the season. The Gators had their best pre-season ranking from College Football News, which listed them at No. 2, behind only defending champion Texas. Nothing is certain in any sport but hard work always gives the team deploying such a strategy the edge.

Urban Meyer is a good man. He has another life than football thank God. He and the Gators celebrated 100 years of Florida football this year.

Most of the starters had returned from his 2005 team that went 9–3. They were bolstered by a top-rated recruiting class from the previous February. The Florida schedule included a four-game stretch against teams likely to be in the top-15 teams, starting with Alabama on September 30. Nothing in life worth having, comes easy.

## 2006 SEC Championship Game

On Dec 2, # 8 Arkansas was beaten by # 4 Florida in the Georgia Dome in Atlanta for the SEC Championship W (38–28). The fourth ranked Gators took on the eighth ranked Arkansas Razorbacks in the 2006 SEC Championship Game. Both teams were ready to leave behind their respective SEC Championship droughts. Florida had not won the title since 2000, and the Razorbacks lost in their previous two title game appearances.

The Gators were favored by three points. Before the game really started, both teams traded three and outs. Then, like a time bomb. Florida exploded in the second quarter. Up 3–0, Chris Leak was called for a rare quarterback draw which he converted by fighting into the end zone. This gave the Gators a 10–0 lead. On the next Florida drive, Leak found game MVP Percy Harvin on a perfectly thrown 37-yard touchdown pass. However, the Razorbacks came back with a single touchdown of their own. QB Casey Dick, who had been struggled in the recent Razorback games threw a perfect pass to Marcus Monk who caught the pass for a 47-yard touchdown. The Gators led 17–7 as the whistle blew for the half.

At half time, the Florida team and fans learned that the third ranked USC Trojans lost in a shocking upset to rival UCLA. With this turn of events, Florida had a great shot at overtaking #2 Michigan to play in the BCS National Championship Game. They therefore needed this win and a strong showing.

But Arkansas came out all fired up and firing on target in the second half. Using the unusual "Wildcat Formation", All American tailback Darren McFadden threw a quick two-yard touchdown to fellow tailback Felix Jones. On the next offensive series, Gators quarterback Chris Leak was intercepted on an attempted shovel pass which was returned by Antwain Robinson for a touchdown, giving the Razorbacks a remarkable 21–17 lead. Florida regained the ball but was stuffed by the Arkansas defense.

Coach Urban Meyer decided he had to do something to break the inertia of the Razorbacks. He ran a fake punt on his own 15-yard line, which proved to be a good call, as receiver Jemalle Cornelius scampered for a 16-yard gain. Even with this swing of momentum, the Gators were still keep moving and opted to punt from midfield.

The momentum then changed yet again, this time in Florida's favor. Punt returner Reggie Fish muffed the punt after trying to field it over his shoulder; the ball was recovered in the end zone by freshman Wondy Pierre-Louis, giving the Gators a 24–21 lead. It could not have been written out any better. The Gators took the three-point lead into the fourth quarter knowing with a win, they would have made their case to play in the BCS.

They got the job done. In the fourth quarter, Percy Harvin scored on a 67-yard run and Chris Hetland got the kick making the score 31 to 21. Then Arkansas' Felix Jones snagged a 29-yard pass from Cedric Washington for a score with the Gators still in the lead. With Jeremy Davis' kick the score was 31-28. With 9:04 left in the game, Tim Tebow came into the game. Tebow appeared to be running yet again but pitched the ball to wide receiver Andre Caldwell who threw the ball five yards to Tate Casey. Chris Hetland made the kick giving Florida the game W (38-28).

## **BCS Championship Game—A Great Game**

The year was so great that the #2 Gators were invited to play on January 8, 2007 v #1 Ohio State at U. of Phoenix Stadium • Glendale, Arizona (BCS Championship). The Gators had their way W (41–14) before a nice crowd of 74,628.

It sounds so good, let me say it again: The Florida Gators ended this phenomenal season with a stunning 41–14 upset of the number one ranked Ohio State Buckeyes, giving them the school's second national championship in ten years. The national championship win also gives the University of Florida the distinction of being the only school to ever hold both the men's basketball national championship and football championship simultaneously.

### **2007 Florida Gators Football Coach Urban Meyer**

The 2007 Florida Gators football team was the One hundred-first season for Florida. It was the third for Coach Urban Meyer of six great seasons as the Football Gators head coach. This was literally a rebuilding year from 2006's National Championship Team but still nine wins is not too shabby.

It was the Gators seventy-fifth with the powerful South-Eastern Conference (SEC). It was again a great SEC showing with just three SEC losses. Coach Meyer led the Gators to a Capital One Bowl berth and a regular season record of 9-4 and 5-3 in the SEC Eastern Division. Florida finished third among the six SEC Eastern Division teams. The team's quarterback was Tim Tebow, the first sophomore ever to win the Heisman Trophy.

#### **2008 Florida Gators Football Coach Urban Meyer**

The 2008 Florida Gators football team was the One hundred-second season for Florida. It was the fourth for Coach Urban Meyer of six great seasons as the Football Gators head coach. This was another great year for the Gators with just one loss.

It was the Gators seventy-sixth with the powerful South-Eastern Conference (SEC). It was again a great SEC showing with just one SEC loss. Coach Meyer led the Gators to a Bowl berth and a regular season record of 13-1 and 7-1 in the SEC Eastern Division. Florida finished first among the six SEC Eastern Division teams and won the SEC Conference Championship and the BCS Championship finishing #1 in the AP and Coach's poll. The team's quarterback was Heisman winner Tim Tebow, playing in his Junior year.



Brandon Spikes and Ryan Stamper stop Graig Cooper from getting 1<sup>st</sup> down during 3Q

## Beating Miami is really a big deal for Florida

On Sept 6, Florida beat cross-state rival Miami at home W (26-3). It was sweet. This was the first match between the two rivals since the 2004 Peach Bowl where the Gators lost to Miami 27-10. This game is also the first regular season meeting between the two teams since 2003 where the then #18 Gators nearly upset the #3 Miami Hurricanes at the Orange Bowl. The last time the Gators defeated the Hurricanes was in 1985 where the Gators defeated Miami in Miami with a score of 35-23.

## SEC Championship Game

Florida played #1 Alabama on Dec 6 for the SEC Championship and won W (31-20). It was fortuitous as it gave the Gators a head to head win v #1 Alabama for the national rankings and with both teams having just one loss—well, you know!



The Florida Gators came back to the Georgia Dome after two years from when they last won the Championship in 2006 to play against #1 Alabama for the SEC title. This was the Gators' second visit to the SEC Championship Game since the 2006 game where they faced the SEC West champion Arkansas. The 2007 season SEC East representative in the title game was the Tennessee Volunteers. Alabama returned to the SEC Championship Game after a nine-year appearance drought.



In the 1999 SEC Championship Game, the Crimson Tide defeated the Gators with a score of 34 to 7. Florida's last win over the Tide in the title game occurred in the 1996 SEC Championship Game where the Gators would end up playing Florida State in the Sugar Bowl and Steve Spurrier's team would go on to win a first national championship for the Gators.

This game was Florida's ninth appearance in the game and they had a great record of 6-2 before kickoff. Alabama was 2-3 entering the game with their two wins over the Florida Gators in 1992—the first year of the championship game—and 1999.

Alabama had a great year and the Crimson Tide entered the game having been ranked #1 in the AP and USA Today Coaches poll for five consecutive weeks while the Gators entered the game ranked #2 in the AP Poll. This was the first time that the AP #1 and #2 teams ever faced each other in the SEC title game.

This was Urban Meyer's first time coaching against Nick Saban as well as the first meeting between the two legendary programs since their regular season meeting in 2006 season where the Gators defeated the Tide and then went on to win the BCS National Championship. This was the fifth game of the season, in which the Gators faced a team coached by a national championship winning head coach. Alabama entered the game with a 21-13 series lead over the Gators.

### **It's nice to win the coin toss**

After winning the coin toss, the Gators elected to defer to the second half and the Alabama offense took the field after the touchback kickoff. With just three plays and one net yard, the Gators defense had forced Alabama to punt early. The Gators were handicapped because leading Gator WR Percy Harvin had sustained an injury during the Florida State game. Despite not having the talented Harvin in the game, the Gators fired off quickly and put together a nine-play drive that finished with a Tim Tebow touchdown pass to first year Gator WR Carl Moore. This was Carl Moore's first career touchdown reception as a Gator.

Though working hard, it was the vaunted Alabama offense on the other side of the ball and so, the Florida defense was not quite as effective on the second Alabama possession. Alabama had a true freshman WR Julio Jones, who would distinguish himself in his college career and his pro career. Jones made a 64-yard reception and took the ball to the Florida 18-yard line. The next play, Glen Coffee took off and scored a TD.

There was concern on the Gator side for the quickness of the comeback but Florida was nobody's pushover. It had taken just two plays and 54 seconds for the Tide to tie the game at 7-7. After the Crimson Tide forced a 3 and out on the Florida offense, Alabama's

offense led by senior QB John Parker Wilson stalled and was unable to score another touchdown. The Tide settled for a field goal after getting into Florida territory with Javier Arenas' punt return. The Gators had enough time to soak it all in and remember Tim Tebow's promise. This had given the Tide its first lead of the game, 10-7, and this was the Gators' first time trailing in the first quarter since their loss at home to Ole Miss earlier in the season. Bad remembrances about past events sometimes conjure up calls to greatness.

After another 3 and out for the Florida offense, the first quarter finally came to a close. The Tide seemed comfortable maintaining their lead on the backs of their defense. Alabama opened the second quarter on offense and were able to move the ball 40 yards to the Florida 32; and elected to go for the first down on 4th and 9. It was not a bad call either way.

Alabama's P.J. Fitzgerald was supposed to get the Crimson Tide a first down. He did not. Fitzgerald was only able to gain one yard and the Gator population were elated.

The Gators gained possession of the ball on downs. On the ensuing drive, Florida tied the game with a 19-yard field goal after getting as close as the 2-yard line. This tied the game at 10-10. Florida's defense dug in and made themselves stop Alabama on the following drive after only three plays and the Gators regained possession with just a bit less than half of 2Q remaining. The Gators were able to regain the lead after a Tim Tebow touchdown pass to junior WR David Nelson. This brought the score at the break to 17-10.

The Gators had deferred and so they got the ball to start the second half. They were unable to move the ball and had to punt after just three plays on offense. If it were the Tide, we would have said, three and out.

The third quarter would turn out to be difficult for the Gator defense and the Tide scored too frequently on their first two possessions on offense in the half. Their first offensive possession totaled 91 yards and consumed nearly 7 minutes off of the game clock. John Parker Wilson was 4 of 6 passing in the drive with 3 of his passes connecting with freshman to-be-great WR Julio Jones. Alabama RB Mark Ingram finished the drive with a 2-yard rushing touchdown tying the game at 17-17.

Florida's offense struggled on its next possession as they were forced to attempt a field goal. Florida kicker Jonathan Phillips had the opportunity to give the lead back to the Gators, but not all definites are definite and so he missed a 42-yard field goal. To close out the third quarter, Alabama was able to get the ball into Florida territory where they attempted, and made, a 27-yard field goal. This gave the Tide a three-point lead—20–17—entering the fourth quarter.

This had to conjure up thoughts of the inevitable Tide overpowering the Gators for the win. But, UF's stalwart squad would have nothing to do with negative thoughts. Tim Tebow had promised that only the best would come from the Gators and it did. The Gators started on offense in the fourth quarter and drove deep into Alabama territory. Florida ran the ball 8 times out of 11 plays, with the final rush being a touchdown from 1 yard out run in by true freshman Jeffery Demps. The Gators would take the lead following the extra point and would not give it back. It wasn't over unless the Gators would continually stop the Crimson Tide, which they did.

Florida's defense dug in for pride and proved to be more effective in the fourth quarter than they were in the third. Florida defensive lineman Jermaine Cunningham sacked Alabama's John Parker Wilson for 11 yards forcing Alabama to punt the ball. With the ball in the hands of the Florida offense, the Gators had the opportunity to take a two-score lead with a touchdown.

It all looked good but... They were able to get to the 1-yard line setting a 2nd and Goal situation, **but** Florida received a 5-yard penalty for sideline interference. Nonetheless, on the second play following the penalty, who else but Tim Tebow stepped in to fulfill his promise to the Gator Nation. Heisman winner Tebow threw a touchdown pass to Riley Cooper to extend the Gators' lead and final score margin by 11–31 to 20. Alabama's response on the following drive was quickly quiesced. On a 1st and 10, senior QB John Parker Wilson was intercepted by sophomore DB Joe Haden. The Gators ran out the clock after regaining possession and defeated the Crimson Tide by a score of 31-20 for the SEC Championship. Bravo Gators!

This was the Gators' seventh victory in the SEC championship game and Urban Meyer's second SEC title since becoming the head coach of the team in 2005. The teams clearly played great. But, Meyer must be acknowledged as a great coach who led these great athletes to victory.

This was the Florida Gator's eighth officially recognized SEC title with the first occurring in 1991 before the formation of the Championship Game. With the win over #1 Alabama, the Gators were selected to play in the BCS National Championship Game, where they would face destiny against the tough Oklahoma Sooners.

Yes, just two years after the last big celebration, the Gators were back for all the marbles, on January 8. It was now #1 ranked Florida playing #2 ranked Oklahoma at Dolphin Stadium in Miami Gardens, Florida for the BCS Championship. The Gators defeated the Crimson Tide in a fine game W (24–14). Alabama was not going to be the National Champions but the Gators at this point were looking to take it all the way.

## **A Look at the BCS Championship Game**

The Gators closed out the 2008 season against the Oklahoma Sooners for the 2008 BCS National Championship in Miami, Florida. Although this was the first time the two teams had played one another, there was already familiarity between the two programs. Oklahoma head coach Bob Stoops had played a critical role as defensive coordinator for the Florida Gators during the first national championship run in 1996. In addition, Florida Gators quarterback Tim Tebow and Oklahoma Sooners quarterback Sam Bradford met the previous month in New York for the Heisman Award ceremony where Sam Bradford took home the honors.



Even though Tim Tebow received the most first-place votes, 309, to Sam Bradford's 300, he finished third in the final balloting, being surpassed by both Sam Bradford and Texas' quarterback Colt McCoy. Florida's staff also suffered an employment change when offensive coordinator Dan Mullen accepted the head coaching position at Mississippi State University replacing Sylvester Croom who resigned. Urban Meyer had a lot more than coaching to worry about. He picked Steve Addazio as the offensive coordinator shortly thereafter, but Dan Mullen would still coach in this championship game.

Ready for a great game, Florida head coach Urban Meyer was 2–0 in BCS bowl games with his win as head coach at Utah in the 2005 Fiesta Bowl and his second win coming two years ago to the day against Ohio State in the 2007 BCS National Championship Game. Meyer knew how to win. Oklahoma head coach Bob Stoops also knew how to win as this was his fourth appearance in the BCS national championship game.

Stoops first visit was to the same stadium where his Sooners defeated the Florida State Seminoles 13–2 in the 2001 Orange Bowl. However, the Sooners' last two appearances in the title game ended in defeat, losing at the hands of LSU in the 2004 Sugar Bowl and USC in the 2005 Orange Bowl. In addition, the Sooners lost two more BCS bowl games following their loss to USC. Those were to the Boise State Broncos in the 2007 Fiesta Bowl and the West

Virginia Mountaineers in the 2008 Fiesta Bowl. Bob Stoops and the Sooners looked to snap a four-game BCS bowl losing streak and Urban Meyer and the Gators aimed to add their third national championship in school history, and their second in three years. There was a lot on the line.

When the game was about to begin. The coin toss favored the Oklahoma Sooners, who elected to receive the ball and put the Gators on defense to start the game. Oklahoma was confident for a win and they began their offense at the Sooner 24-yard line. They were able to scratch out just 31 yards on 8 plays before having to punt the ball to the Gators. The Sooners were not accustomed to punting.

Yes, this was a rare punt by the Sooners, with the team breaking an NCAA record for most points scored in a season with over 700. The Gators' did not do better than the Sooners in their first offensive possession, which ended in just 8 plays, with this possession ending in a miscue as the Sooners intercepted Tim Tebow in this series.

Tebow was not known for interceptions. He had had thrown two interceptions all year. Fortunately for the Gators, the Sooners could not get anywhere with the rare Florida turnover. Florida's second offensive possession was more productive as the Gators got to the Oklahoma 21-yard line before the first quarter ended. The score was 0-0. This was the first time in the Sooners' season where they were unable to score in the first quarter.

The Sooners had scored an average of over 50 points per game and the Gators over 40 points per game, but neither was able to put points on the board as they faced each other on the gridiron. However, the Gators scored a touchdown with a pass from Tim Tebow to senior WR Louis Murphy in just three plays. This gave the Gators the lead, a major psychological advantage at this point in the game.

Not laying down. In response, the Sooners put together a drive initiated with three running plays by RB Chris Brown that got them 45 yards. The next two plays delivered a Sooner touchdown which tied the game at 7-7. It had taken just 2:13 to respond. The time to respond matters psychologically.

The Gators then received the kickoff with 11:49 left in the half and they moved the ball 21 yards to the Florida 36 where Tim Tebow saw something but it resulted in his second interception of the game and this one was to Sooners' defensive standout Gerald McCoy—Big 12 defensive player of the year.

The Sooners' next drive called out four running plays by RB Chris Brown who was able to take the ball one yard shy of the goal line on a 4th and goal. The Sooners elected to go for the touchdown but were stopped at the 3-yard line by Florida DT Torrey Davis. The Gators took over on the three.

Florida's offense stuttered on their next possession and eventually punted the ball back to Oklahoma who had 2:32 left in the first half. Sam Bradford led his team down the field and in scoring position with a 1st and Goal at the Florida 6-yard line. Bradford's following pass was tipped by Florida DB Joe Haden and intercepted by Florida safety Major Wright. This was the third interception of the game; the first for Sam Bradford in the game. The Gators were happy to take a knee to close out the half with a 7-7 tie.

The UF squad opened the second half on offense but struggled to move the ball at all and were forced to punt back to Oklahoma after a quick 3 and out. The Sooners didn't do much better. After just nine plays, Oklahoma punted the ball back to Florida where the Gators would start a drive that worked. It took over 5 minutes to complete. It started at the Florida 25-yard line. The Gators moved the ball effectively. They needed just three plays to get to midfield.

On a 2nd and 4 at the Oklahoma 13, true freshman RB Jeffery Demps took off and ran the ball to the 2-yard line before Oklahoma was called for a facemask while tackling Demps. This infraction put the ball at the 1-yard line and the Gators had a fresh set of downs on which to score.

This was typical Tebow run territory. After failing to run the ball in from one yard, Tim Tebow attempted a pass to TE Aaron Hernandez, which was almost caught for a TD. On third down, the next play called was a direct snap to WR Percy Harvin, who made his first appearance since getting injured against Florida State two



games earlier. Harvin was able to rush from two yards out and score the TD, which put the Gators up 14–7.

Oklahoma's following drive did not move well. On the first play of the drive, Dustin Doe and Carlos Dunlap sacked Sam Bradford, dropping him for a four-yard loss. After getting to the Florida 32-yard line, the Sooners tried a field goal, which was blocked by the Gators.

After a change of possession, the Gators went 3 and out to close the third quarter. Both teams were tiring but both had a lot of fight left. The Gators entered the fourth quarter with a lead of 14-7. Florida's defense had been able to shut out Oklahoma's offense in two of the three quarters played up to that point.

Oklahoma got the ball to open the fourth quarter after forcing a punt by Florida at the end of the third quarter. The Sooners were able to put together another quick scoring drive. This one took just 2:36 off the clock and 8 plays for the 77 yards necessary to go down the field. The Sooners tied the game at 14–14 after a Sam Bradford pass to Jermaine Gresham, who lost his shoe after catching the ball on the play.

With 12:13 left in the game and the score tied at 14-14, the Gators' first play of their next possession was a hand-off to Percy Harvin who ran the ball 52 yards before being pushed out of bounds. Although the Gators were able to get into the red zone—the Oklahoma 10-yard line—they were unable to score a TD and they settled for a 27-yard field goal, putting them back in the lead.

The Sooners mounted a comeback. They began their drive after the kickoff at the Oklahoma 35-yard line with 10:45 remaining. On the fourth play of the drive from midfield, Sam Bradford threw a deep pass intended for teammate Juaquin Iglesias, but just as Iglesias got his hands on the ball, Gator DB Ahmad Black pulled it away for the interception. This was Black's seventh interception of the season; tying him for first in the NCAA with most interceptions. This was a back-breaker for the Sooners.

At this point, both starting quarterbacks had thrown for two interceptions each. The Gators capitalized on this turnover by a drive that took nearly 7 minutes off the game clock. On a 2nd and Goal at the Oklahoma 4-yard line, Tim Tebow threw for his second TD pass

of the game—this time to junior WR David Nelson. The Gators lead was extended 10 as it brought the score to 24–14.

Oklahoma did its best to try to respond on their following drive, but when faced with a 4th and 4, Gator DB Joe Haden broke up a pass that would have been for a first down. After the turnover on downs, the Gators ran out the clock, thus winning the BCS Championship Game, and claiming the BCS Championship.

The statistics said the Gators should have won by more. But having ended the game with 480 yards of offense to Oklahoma's 363. Percy Harvin led the Gators on the ground with 122 rushing yards followed by Tim Tebow with 109. The Gators had used seven wide receivers to complete 18 passes for a total of 231 yards.



Gatorade How sweet it is!

Florida defensive lineman Carlos Dunlap was named defensive player of the game and Florida quarterback Tim Tebow was named offensive player of the game.

During the championship celebration three days after the game, quarterback Tim Tebow announced he would return to the University of Florida for his senior season. What a great man and a

great player for Florida. Even if an early pro career may have helped him, Tim Tebow was Gators first. Loyalty first! It seems from my vantage point that the Gators have always been Tebow first, along with Wuerffel and Spurrier of course



Gator celebration after the BCS win

Bob Stoops and the Sooners extended their BCS bowl losing streak to five games and have lost two national championships at Dolphin Stadium after winning his only championship in the same stadium in 2001.

Urban Meyer's BCS bowl record extended to 3-0 with the first won as head coach of the Utah Utes. He has a bowl game record at Florida of 3-1 with his only bowl loss coming in the previous season. This was the Gators' 3<sup>rd</sup> national championship in school history and their second in the last three seasons.

#### **2009 Florida Gators Football Coach Urban Meyer**

The 2009 Florida Gators football team was the One hundred-third season for Florida. It was the fifth for Coach Urban Meyer of six great seasons as the Football Gators head coach. This was another respectable year for the Gators with just one loss.

On November 13, Steve Spurrier's well-coached Gamecocks gained the victory at Ben Hill Griffin Stadium L (14-36).



On January 1, somehow Florida, now an institution with a top name in football with a 7-5 record got to play in a major bowl – the Outback Bowl. At Raymond James Stadium. The Gators beat Joe Paterno's Penn State Nittany Lions that day W 37–24 before a crowd of 60,574 and a national TV audience. The Gators finished 8-5.

## Urban Meyer, A Florida Coach made an impact.

When Urban Meyer thought about leaving before this year began, he actually gave his notice but then took it back. He loves being a football coach but his style of coaching demands that he gives it his all. Like a maple tree whose sap can only produce so much syrup in a year, Meyer was tapped out. He needed to address his health and he did.

And, so in a combination of not being able to work as hard and not having his great 2009 team to drive the program, thus needing a rebuilding year like many programs, the Gators win # slipped lower

than nine for the first time in his years with the Gators. Yet, it was still positive and quite respectable. Meyer needed real time off, however, to get his life and his future coaching act together and he could not do that with a university, any university pinning their next season on his ability to bring it all in.



## Chapter 27 Navy Coaches Johnson & Niumatalolo—2002-2021

Johnson Coach # 37

2002	Paul Johnson	2-10	Indep	2-10
2003	Paul Johnson	8-5	Indep	8-5
2004	Paul Johnson	10-2	Indep	10-2
2005	Paul Johnson	8-4	Indep	8-4
2006	Paul Johnson	9-4	Indep	9-4
2007	Paul Johnson	8-5	Indep	8-5
2007	Ken Niumatalolo	bowl game	Indep	8-5
2008	Ken Niumatalolo	8-5	Indep	8-5
2009	Ken Niumatalolo	10-4	Indep	10-4
2010	Ken Niumatalolo	9-4	Indep	9-4
2011	Ken Niumatalolo	5-7	Indep	5-7
2012	Ken Niumatalolo	8-5	Indep	8-5
2013	Ken Niumatalolo	9-4	Indep	9-4
2014	Ken Niumatalolo	8-5	Indep	8-5
2015	Ken Niumatalolo	11-2	AAC	7-1
2016	Ken Niumatalolo	9-5	AAC	7-1
2017	Ken Niumatalolo	7-6	AAC	4-4
2018	Ken Niumatalolo	3-10	AAC	2-6
2019	Ken Niumatalolo	11-2	AAC	7-2
2020	Ken Niumatalolo	3-10	AAC	2-6

2008 Navy Midshipmen Coach [Ken Niumatalolo](#)

\*\* Johnson left before 2007 Bowl game



Paul Johnson takes the helm at Navy

It takes a long time to change the character of a team. Paul Johnson made things better for Navy in his second year. After Rick Lantz'

interim stint, Navy hired Georgia Southern's Coach Paul Johnson, a former Navy assistant, to be its next football coach.

A Navy spokesman said a news conference had not been scheduled as the hiring was not immediately announced so technically there was no news to report. You never know as in other coaching news at the time, Notre Dame was about to hire Georgia Tech Coach George O'Leary. ND did but he lasted just five days. So, careful is the order of the day when picking new coaches.

At the time of his hiring, Johnson was in his fifth season coaching at Georgia Southern, which had just advanced to the NCAA Division I-AA semifinals with a 38-24 victory over Appalachian State.

Prior to his stint at Georgia Southern, where he had a 62-9 record, Johnson was the offensive coordinator at Navy. He had been considered one of the leading candidates to become Navy's coach since former coach Charlie Weatherbie was fired and Rick Lantz came in as interim coach. As you will see, Johnson turned Navy around and unlike Weatherbie's brief turnaround, this one would last.

### **2003 Navy Midshipmen Coach Paul Johnson**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 2003 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's One Hundred twenty-third season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Paul Johnson in his second of six seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. This year's team finished the season with the first winning record in years with 8 wins (8-5).

This would be Johnson's first of five winning seasons. He brought back the prestige of the old Navy program pre-1983. Unlike other coaches after 1983 that had a winning season or two, Johnson got four in a row and Navy was the better for his efforts.

Navy Home games that were not moved for capacity reasons, were played at the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. It is an open-air stadium located off the campus of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

The 2003 Navy Football Team began its season on August 30 with a W (37-10) win at home vs VMI before 30,129. This opener, and all home openers, was played at the Navy–Marine Corps Memorial Stadium Annapolis, Maryland off the campus of the Naval Academy in Annapolis MD

Having made a bowl game for the first time in years. Navy played hard on Dec 30 Texas Tech in Reliant Stadium Houston (Houston Bowl) but they did not have enough to beat Houston L (14–38) before 51,068

#### **2004 Navy Midshipmen Coach Paul Johnson**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 2004 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's One Hundred twenty-fourth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Paul Johnson in his third of six seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. This year's team finished the season with another winning record with 10 wins (10-2).

This was the first time since the 1963 college football season that Navy would win nine or more games in a season. Wins over Army and the Air Force Falcons secured Navy's second consecutive Commander-in-Chief's Trophy. Navy also snagged a berth in the 2004 Emerald Bowl when the Pacific-10 Conference did not have enough teams to fill its bowl obligations.

The other connection this year was that the Mountain West Conference (MWC), and the Midshipmen ended up playing the New Mexico Lobos. Navy won the game with a score of 34–19, finishing with a 14-minute, 26-play drive that set the record for the longest drive in a college football game. That great win gave the Midshipmen a final record of 10–2. This was unbelievable. Paul Johnson was a magician for sure. It was the first time since the 1905 season that the Midshipmen finished with ten or more wins. Go Navy!

Navy Home games that were not moved for capacity reasons, were played at the Navy–Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. It is an open-air stadium located off the campus of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.



On Nov 20 at home, Navy beat Rutgers W 54–21 before 33,615. Then, in the classic Army Navy Game, Navy triumphed on Dec 4 vs. Army at Lincoln Financial Field Philadelphia winning both the Army–Navy Game and the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy (Air Force Victory on Sept 30) W (42–13).

Navy was invited to play in the Emerald Bowl and accepted. The game was played on December 30 vs. New Mexico. #24 Navy played a great game in SBC Park San Francisco (Emerald Bowl), in a game televised across the country on ESPN2 W (34–19) before 30,563

#### **2006 Navy Midshipmen Coach Paul Johnson**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 2006 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's One Hundred twenty-sixth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Paul Johnson in his fifth of six seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. This year's team finished the season with another winning record with 9 wins (9-4).

#### **2007 Navy Midshipmen Coach Paul Johnson**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 2007 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's One Hundred twenty-seventh season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Paul Johnson in his sixth and last of six seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. This year's team finished the season with another winning record with 8 wins (8-5).

Before the season had ended. Paul Johnson, who did a fine job with Navy in his six years, and completely turned around the program, accepted the head coaching position at Georgia Tech. In fact, it was prior to the team's final game of the season. Offensive line coach Ken Niumatalolo was first promoted to interim head coach and then named as the team's permanent head coach. For their own reasons, Navy and Johnson decided he would not coach his last bowl game. I could not find a reason in the accounts of the time.

## **Johnson Leaves Navy for Ga. Tech**

Paul Johnson's outstanding tenure at Navy was marked by the return of the program to major success and national prominence.

## **Navy Coach Ken Niumatalolo 2007-2021**

**2003 Navy Midshipmen Coach Ken Niumatalolo**

Niumatalolo Coach # 38

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 2008 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's One Hundred twenty-eighth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Ken Niumatalolo in his first of twelve seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. He had coached the team in 2007 for the bowl game instead of Paul Johnson. Niumatalolo is the current Navy coach. This year's team finished the season with another winning record with 8 wins (8-5).

Niumatalolo had been promoted from the offensive line coach before the season, after his predecessor, Paul Johnson, accepted the head coaching position at Georgia Tech.

In the Eagle Bank Bowl, the first bowl game earned under Ken Niumatalolo, Navy was defeated on December 20, at 11:00 a.m. by Wake Forest at RFK Stadium Washington, D.C. (EagleBank Bowl) L (19–29) before 28,777.

**2009 Navy Midshipmen Coach [Ken Niumatalolo](#)**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 2009 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's One Hundred twenty-ninth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by [Ken Niumatalolo](#) in his second of twelve seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. [Niumatalolo](#) is the current Navy coach.

This year's team finished the season with another winning record with 10 wins (10-4). Coach Niumatalolo fit in the Paul Johnson scheme perfectly like as if Johnson was not missed. That's because both men are great coaches. But you knew that.

There was more good news in 2009. On November 7, for example, athletic director Chet Gladchuk announced that the Naval Academy

had accepted an invitation to play in the Texas Bowl on Thursday, December 31 at Reliant Stadium in Houston, Texas against the Big 12's Missouri Tigers. This season was the first time that Navy had ever been invited to bowl games in seven straight seasons. Navy won the 2009 Texas Bowl 35–13 and as noted previously, finished with a great record of 10–4. Coach [Niumatalolo](#) appeared to be very comfortable in his role of leading the Midshipmen on to greatness.

Though with just a few great plays in addition to the others, Navy could have won, the tough men from the Naval Academy got a bit of a break from their routine on a familiar Pacific Island. On Dec 12 at 2:30 p.m. vs. Army in Lincoln Financial Field Philadelphia, PA (Army–Navy Game/Commander-in-Chief's Trophy), Navy was pleased to beat Army again and also pleased to take away the Trophy W (17–3) before 69,541

Inching their way towards a New Year's Day game, Navy played in the Texas Bowl on December 31, 3:30 p.m., against an always tough Missouri squad at Reliant Stadium Houston, TX (Texas Bowl). Navy was tough and unrelenting, and the Midshipmen were forced to carry away the victory with pleasure W (35–13) before 69,441.

#### 2010 Navy Midshipmen Coach [Ken Niumatalolo](#)

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 2010 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's One Hundred thirtieth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Ken Niumatalolo in his third of twelve seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. Niumatalolo is the current Navy coach. This year's team finished the season with another winning record with 9 wins (9-4). Coach Niumatalolo was carving out his own great record at Navy after the Paul Johnson years.

Near the end of the season, after a few weeks rest, Army was at Navy's doorstep again on Dec 11 at Lincoln Financial Field Philadelphia (Army–Navy Game/Commander-in-Chief's Trophy).

Navy again found the strength to overcome the Army in this classic inspirational game. W (31–17) before 69,223[12]

Navy got to the Poinsettia Bowl again on December 23 at 8:00 p.m. playing San Diego State at Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego

(Poinsettia Bowl). San Diego State whipped the Midshipmen L (14–35) before 48,049.

### **2013 Navy Midshipmen Coach Ken Niumatalolo**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 2013 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's One Hundred thirty-third season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Ken Niumatalolo in his sixth of twelve seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. Niumatalolo is the current Navy coach. This year's team finished the season with a winning record of 9 wins (9-5).

In the season crescendo, Navy beat Army in the annual Army-Navy Classic played on December at 3:00 p.m. in Lincoln Financial Field Philadelphia (114th Army–Navy Game/Commander-in-Chief's Trophy) W (34–7) before 65,612.

In the Bell Helicopter Armed Services Bowl on December 30 at 11:45 a.m., Navy beat Middle Tennessee at the Amon G. Carter Stadium Fort Worth, Texas W (24–6) 39,246

### **2015 Navy Midshipmen Coach Ken Niumatalolo**

Navy was led by Ken Niumatalolo in his eighth of twelve seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. Niumatalolo is the current Navy coach. This year's team finished the season with a winning record of 11 wins (11-2). They were #18 in the college football rankings.

Navy played this year as a member of the Western Division of the American Athletic Conference and were first year members of the conference. In their entire football history, this was the first season that Navy did not compete as an Independent. This was a great season as noted with the Midshipmen finishing 11–2. They were 7–1 in American Athletic play and they finished in a tie for the Western Division title with Houston.

Unfortunately because they had a head to head loss to Houston, they did not represent the Western Division in the American Championship. They were, however, invited to the Military Bowl where they defeated Pittsburgh.

Navy Home games that were not moved for capacity reasons, were played at the Navy–Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. It is an open-air stadium located off the campus of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

On Dec 12 at 3:00 p.m. vs. Army in Lincoln Financial Field Philadelphia (in the 116th Army–Navy Game/Commander-in-Chief's Trophy) Navy won the big game W (21–17) before 69,722. In the Military Bowl on December 28 2:30 p.m., #21 Navy beat Pittsburgh at the Navy–Marine Corps Memorial Stadium • Annapolis, Maryland W (44–28) before 36,352.

### **2016 Navy Midshipmen Coach Ken Niumatalolo**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 2016 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's One Hundred thirty-sixth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Ken Niumatalolo in his ninth of twelve seasons as head coach of the Midshipmen. Niumatalolo is the current Navy coach. This year's team finished the season with a winning record of 9 wins (9-5).

### **2019 Navy Midshipmen Coach Ken Niumatalolo**

The Navy Midshipmen football team represented the United States Naval Academy in the 2019 college football season. It was the Naval Academy's One Hundred thirty-ninth season of intercollegiate football. They were led by Ken Niumatalolo in his twelfth of twelve seasons (point in time) as head coach of the Midshipmen. Niumatalolo is the current Navy coach. In the third week of the season, Navy's record for the first two games was 2-0 and 1-0 in the ACC. At this point, it looked like a good season on its way.

Navy continued as a member of the West Division of the American Athletic Conference—their third year as a member of the conference. They finished this season poorly in American Athletic play.

Navy Home games that were not moved for capacity reasons, were played at the Navy–Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. It is an open-air stadium located off the campus of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

The Navy accepted a berth on December 31 at 3:45 p.m. vs. Kansas State in the Liberty Bowl in Memorial Stadium, Memphis, TN and achieved a narrow victory W (20-17) ranking the Midshipmen in the Top 20 teams in the country. The game was played before 50,515.

In summary, the 2019 Navy Midshipmen football team represented the US Naval Academy in NCAA Division I FBS football. The Midshipmen were led by 12th-year head coach Ken Niumatalolo and played their home games at Navy–Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. Navy competed as a member of the American Athletic Conference (AAC) in the West Division where they achieved a 7-2 conference record and an 11-2 season record..

### **2020 Navy Midshipmen Coach Ken Niumatalolo**

The 2020 Navy Midshipmen football team represented the US Naval Academy in NCAA Division I FBS football. The Midshipmen were led by 12th-year head coach Ken Niumatalolo and played their home games at Navy–Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. Navy competed as a member of the American Athletic Conference (AAC) in the West Division where they achieved a 3-4 conference record and a 3-7 season record. They will be coming back.

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## Chapter 28 Alabama Football—Coach Nick Saban 2007-2021

“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.” – quote by Nick Saban

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>SEC</u>
2007	Nick Saban # 30	SEC	7-6-0	4-4-0
2008	Nick Saban	SEC	12-2-0	8-0-0
2009*	Nick Saban	SEC	14-0-0	8-0-0
2010	Nick Saban	SEC	10-3-0	5-3-0
2011*	Nick Saban	SEC	12-1-0	7-1-0
2012*	Nick Saban	SEC	13-1-0	7-1-0
2013	Nick Saban	SEC	11-2-0	7-1-0
2014	Nick Saban	SEC	12-2-0	7-1-0
2015*	Nick Saban	SEC	14-1-0	7-1-0
2016	Nick Saban	SEC	15-0-0	8-0-0
2017*	Nick Saban	SEC	13-1-0	7-1-0
2018	Nick Saban	SEC	14-1-0	8-0-0
2019	Nick Saban	SEC	11-2-0	6-2-0
2020*	Nick Saban	SEC	13-0-0	10-0-0

\* Championships



Nick Saban Leads Alabama Football Team onto the Field



Nick Saban took over the reins of what had been a floundering Alabama Football Program. He may not wrestle bears (Bryant-style\_ but he knows how to handle a ton of huge men—brutes for sure—who want to play great football for Alabama.

Nick Saban is not only a great coach. Like the Bear well 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.

### **2007 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30**

The 2007 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 113<sup>th</sup> overall and 74<sup>th</sup> season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 16<sup>th</sup> 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**

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.

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.

### **The Alabama–LSU football rivalry**

In the game dubbed "Saban Bowl I", in which Nick Saban's new Alabama team faced an 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

### **2008 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #29**

The 2007 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 114<sup>th</sup> overall and 75<sup>th</sup> 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 115<sup>th</sup> overall and 76<sup>th</sup> season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 18th season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his third year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. At 14-0; 8-0 SEC, and National Champions, the 2009 squad improved substantially from the prior year's 12-2 record 4-4 in the SEC.

Looking to build on the successes of the 12-2 2008 campaign, Alabama entered the 2009 season as the favorite to win the Western Division and meet the Florida Gators in the 2009 SEC Championship Game. Alabama closed the regular season with a 12–0 record including four wins against Top 25-ranked teams—and met the Gators for the SEC Championship in a rematch of the 2008 contest. Alabama was victorious by a final score of 32–13. The following day, final Bowl Championship Series (BCS) standings were unveiled. No. 1 ranked Alabama would meet No. 2 ranked Texas for the BCS National Championship. In the BCS National Championship Game, the Crimson Tide defeated the Longhorns 37–21 to capture their first-ever BCS Championship.

Alabama earned their third SEC championship since the inception of the SEC Championship Game in 1992, and their 22nd SEC title. The victory over Texas gave Alabama their 13th national championship in football (their eighth wire service title since the AP Poll began in 1936) and their ninth perfect season since 1925. The season included

victories over the previous three national champions: Florida, Louisiana State University (LSU), and Texas.

The season marked the first time a player for Alabama won the Heisman Trophy: Mark Ingram won the award over Stanford running back Toby Gerhart. Other award winners included Rolando McClain, who won the Butkus Award and the Jack Lambert Award, and defensive coordinator Kirby Smart, who won the Broyles Award as the nation's top assistant coach. Also, six players were named to various All-America Teams with Terrence Cody, Mike Johnson, and Javier Arenas being consensus selections and Ingram and McClain each being unanimous selections.

### **Games of the 2009 Season**

On Sept 5 # 7 Virginia Tech played the #5 UA team at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA in the Chick-fil-A Kickoff Game W (34–24). Then on Sept 12, Florida International lost big at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (40–14) before 92,012. On Sept 19, North Texas lost big to UA at home W (53–7). On Sept 26 Arkansas made the trip to Bryant–Denny Stadium to be beaten by #3 Alabama W (35–7).

The recap of the season's games gets a little boring as Alabama brought the bacon home every game. Such as the game on Oct 3 v Kentucky at Commonwealth Stadium • Lexington, KY W (38–20), and the game on Oct 10 at #20 Ole Miss at Vaught–Hemingway Stadium in Oxford, MS W (22–3). On Oct 17, another win at home v #22 South Carolina at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (W 20–6). Then on Oct 24 on the (Third Saturday in October) UA just got by Tennessee at Bryant–Denny Stadium W (12-0).

This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. Here comes the second narrative by bamahammer:

### **2009 Tennessee – Rocky Block**

The Alabama Crimson Tide was supposed to be unchallenged by first year head coach Lane Kiffin's Tennessee Volunteers.

Instead, a sluggish offense set up a defensive struggle and a dramatic finish.

After coming into the season as an unknown at quarterback, Greg McElroy took over the starting job after the graduation of three-year starter John Parker Wilson. McElroy had a great September and went from potential problem to one of the most efficient passers in the SEC.

Then October came, and as the Tide got into the toughest stretch of their schedule, Greg McElroy started to struggle. He came into the Tennessee game not having thrown a touchdown in either of his last two starts. Mark Ingram had entered the national spotlight during McElroy's struggles, but the Volunteers had success containing Ingram.

Bama couldn't move the ball on its first two drives. An interception by Mark Barron gave the offense favorable field position, and instead of a punt Alabama was able to kick a field goal and take a 3-0 lead. Tennessee responded with a field goal, then Leigh Tiffin kicked two more and Tennessee missed one late in the second quarter. Alabama led 9-3 at the half.

Early in the fourth quarter, Tennessee's short field goal attempt to bring the score to 9-6 was blocked by Terrence Cody. Leigh Tiffin hit a long field goal on the next Bama possession to bring the Tide's lead to 12-3.

Then Mark Ingram lost his first career fumble, giving the Volunteers the ball near midfield with 3:29 to play. Tennessee scored on an 11-yard touchdown pass. The Volunteers successfully recovered an onside kick down 12-10. Tennessee set up for a 45-yard field goal as time expired, but Terrence Cody came up with his second block of the quarter to preserve a 12-10 Alabama win.



On the game's last play, Daniel Lincoln's 44 field-goal attempt was blocked, far right, by Alabama's Terrence Cody. Cody blocked two field-goal attempts.

LSU came to Bryant Denny next. They were defeated by a #3 Bama team W (24–15). Next, on Nov 14 at Mississippi State's Davis Wade Stadium in Starkville, MS, #3 Alabama beat the Bulldogs W (31-3). On Nov 21 at Bryant Denny v Chattanooga, Alabama prevailed again in a shutout W (45-0). Finally, on Nov 27, Nick Saban got another chance to win another Iron Bowl, and Alabama brought home the victory over Auburn W (26-21) in another hard-fought battle.

This game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. Here comes a more complete narrative from bamahammer:

## 2009 Iron Bowl – The Drive

With just one win over Auburn since 2002, the Tide traveled to the Plains to try to finish their second straight perfect regular season. First year coach Gene Chizik's Tigers were more than ready to play. After forcing an Alabama punt on their first possession, Auburn scored on a 67-yard reverse to go up 7-0. It was the longest touchdown play Alabama had allowed under Nick Saban.

Auburn kicked off with an onside kick, recovered, and scored another touchdown on that possession to go up 14-0 in the first quarter. The Tide was on their heels, trailing by two possessions for the first time in the 2009 season.

Alabama responded with two second quarter touchdowns, and the teams went into the locker room at the half tied at 14 points each.

Auburn used another long touchdown early in the third quarter to gain another lead. Two drives ending in Leigh Tiffin field goals had Alabama down 21-20 at the end of the third.

With under 9 minutes to go in the game, Alabama got the ball on their own 21. Greg McElroy then led a 15-play drive to march 79 yards into the endzone and eat over 7 minutes of clock. McElroy completed seven straight passes, including the 4-yard touchdown pass to senior Roy Upchurch. Up 26-21, Alabama attempted the two-point conversion but did not convert.



Alabama's Roy Upchurch (5) reacts after scoring on a 4-yard pass from quarterback Greg McElroy late in the fourth quarter of an NCAA college football game against Auburn at Jordan-Hare Stadium in Auburn, Ala., Friday, Nov. 27, 2009. At right is Auburn's Neiko Thorpe (15). Alabama won 26-21. (AP Photo/Dave Martin)

Leigh Tiffin kicked off to Auburn. The Tigers made it to midfield quickly but were unable to get within range. The time ran out on the Tigers comeback and the Tide's dreams of an undefeated matchup with Florida were a reality.

Alabama had won the Western Division SEC and so on Dec 5, the #2 Crimson Tide played a tough #1 ranked Florida team at 3:00 PM before a national audience and they won convincingly over the Gators at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA in the SEC Championship Game W (32–13).

This SEC Championship Game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History. Here comes the narrative from bamahammer:

## **2009 SEC Championship Game, Alabama vs. Florida**

After an embarrassing defeat at the hands of Urban Meyer's Gators in 2008, the Tide had another opportunity to win the SEC and advance to the program's first BCS National Championship Game.

Both teams entered the game undefeated, a first in the 15-year history of the SEC Championship Game. The game was advertised as a play-in game for the title game. Both teams also featured Heisman Trophy candidates on offense.

Alabama scored first, with a 48-yard field goal to end their first drive. The Tide led for the rest of the game.

Florida went into 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.

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.



Alabama Celebrates first BCS Championship under Nick Saban

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 116<sup>th</sup> overall and 77<sup>th</sup> season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 19<sup>th</sup> 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.



UA v Michigan State

### **2011 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30**

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 twelve wins and one loss (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. UA prevailed W 38–10 against the Gators. Before 90,888 fans. On October 8, Vanderbilt played at Bryant-Denny to be defeated W (34–0). On Oct 15, #2 Alabama beat Ole Miss at Vaught–Hemingway Stadium in Oxford, MS W (52–7).

On Oct 22, the (Third Saturday in October) at Bryant-Denny, #2 Bama defeated Tennessee W (37–6). On Nov 5, Alabama faced its biggest challenge of the season in LSU. In a hard-fought battle, LSU won the game in a close call L (6–9) in OT.

### **Highlights of the 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 118<sup>th</sup> overall and 79<sup>th</sup> 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:

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.

The 2012 SEC Championship game has been determined by the pundits to be one of the most significant football games in Crimson Tide History.

## **SEC Championship Game Roll Tide Recap**

# **SEC Championship Game No. 2 Alabama Outlasts No. 3 Georgia, 32-28**

12/1/2012 12:00:00 AM

What a game! Some say it was the best game of 2012. It was certainly one of the most exciting games of all time. Two of the finest football programs put on a classic battle in the Georgia Dome. It was a rip-roaring showcase of national importance that pushed both teams to their limits, but somebody ultimately had to win. Second-ranked Alabama (12-1 overall) had just enough to outlast third-ranked Georgia (11-2 overall). The Crimson Tide beating the Bulldogs, 32-28, to win the 2012 Southeastern Conference Championship before a crowd of 75,624.

After the game, Alabama had over a month of practice drills before it would play in the National Championship Game against undefeated Notre Dame (12-0 overall). The BCS National Championship Game was scheduled for Monday, January 7, at Sun Life Stadium in Miami, Fla. Alabama defeated Notre Dame and won the National Championship but let's first discuss this fine game against Georgia.

Alabama running back Eddie Lacy rushed for 181 yards and two touchdowns on 20 carries to earn Most Outstanding Player honors as the Tide amassed 512 total yards, with Lacy and freshman T.J. Yeldon (153 yards on 25 yards) both eclipsing the century mark on the ground. Wideout Amari Cooper caught seven passes for 127 yards and a touchdown and quarterback AJ McCarron passed for 162 yards and a score while completing 13 of 21 passes with one interception.

Safety Robert Lester led the Tide defense with eight tackles, linebacker C.J. Mosley had seven stops and linebacker Xzavier Dickson had five tackles and two quarterback sacks.

The Tide needed every bit of those offensive heroics to withstand a Georgia team that proved to be explosive and opportunistic, building an 11-point second-half lead before the Alabama running game proved to be the difference. But not by much.

Alabama outgained Georgia, but Bulldogs quarterback Aaron Murray passed for 265 yards and running back Todd Gurley rushed for 122 yards and two scores on 23 carries. Flanker Tavarres King had five catches for 142 yards for the Bulldogs.

Georgia fans would read the games headline as: “Georgia Falls Just Short in SEC Championship to No. 2 Alabama 32-28.” There is no question that the #3 Georgia Bulldogs fought valiantly but they ultimately fell 5-yards short and lost 32-28 to the No. 2 Alabama Crimson Tide in the 2012 SEC Championship.

Georgia used a balanced attack with freshman Todd Gurley picking up 121 yards and a pair of touchdowns. Aaron Murray passed for 267 yards and a touchdown. After a scoreless first quarter, Murray got Georgia on the board first with a 19-yard touchdown pass to tight end Jay Rome. Alabama answered with a 41-yard score by Eddie Lacy and added a field goal as time expired to take a 10-7 lead into halftime.

Georgia came out of the locker room and used 9 plays to go 75 yards as Gurley punched it in from the three to give Georgia the 14-10 lead. Such flip-flops were the story of this great game.

On the ensuing drive Alabama attempted a 49-yard field goal but Cornelius Washington blocked the kick and Alec Ogletree returned it for a 55-yard touchdown to give Georgia a 21-10 lead.

Alabama wasted no time to answer right back with a 4-play 72-yard drive when T.J. Yeldon scored and converted the 2-point conversion cutting the lead to 21-18. Then, as the fourth quarter started, the Crimson Tide took the lead with a 1-yard run from Lacy giving the Alabama a 25-21 lead.

Murray brought Georgia back with a 5-play 75-yard drive with a big pass to Tavarres King for 45 yards that set up a Todd Gurley 10-yard score. It still was not over.

AJ McCarron gave Alabama the lead to stay with a 45-yard touchdown pass to Amari Cooper. Murray led Georgia on an 8-play 80-yard drive but time ran out before Georgia could get into the endzone.

### **BCS Championship Crimson Tide v Fighting Irish**

Neither the NY Times staff nor any other pundits or 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*

The whole article can be read at the site above.

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.



Amari Cooper Scores – chased by ND Defenders





“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 119<sup>th</sup> overall and 80<sup>th</sup> season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 22<sup>nd</sup> 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.

### **2014 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30**

The 2014 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 120<sup>th</sup> overall and 81<sup>st</sup> season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 23<sup>rd</sup> 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.

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, UA lost L (35-42). Ohio State then went on to win the national Championship in a 42-20 win over Oregon.

### **Sugar Bowl V Ohio State from *Roll Tide***

NEW ORLEANS, La - Ohio State running back Ezekiel Elliott rushed for 230 yards and two touchdowns on 20 carries, including an 85-yard touchdown run, and Buckeyes quarterback Cardale Jones threw for 243 yards in only his second career start to lead No. 4 Ohio State (13-1 overall) to a 42-35 victory over No. 1-seeded Alabama (12-2) in the College Football Playoff Semifinal at the Allstate Sugar Bowl before a crowd of 74,682 on Thursday night in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome (capacity: 72,500).

With the victory, Ohio State advanced to the College Football Playoff National Championship Game to take on No. 2 seed Oregon (13-1), which defeated No. 3 seed Florida State, 59-20, in the other CFP Semifinal at the Rose Bowl earlier in the day.



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.

### **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 24<sup>th</sup> season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his ninth year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

UA finished the season with a record of 14 wins and 1 loss (14–1 overall, 7–1 in the SEC), as SEC champions and as consensus national champions after they defeated Clemson in the College Football Playoff (CFP) National Championship Game. Alabama also secured its 10th Associated Press (AP) national title.

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.

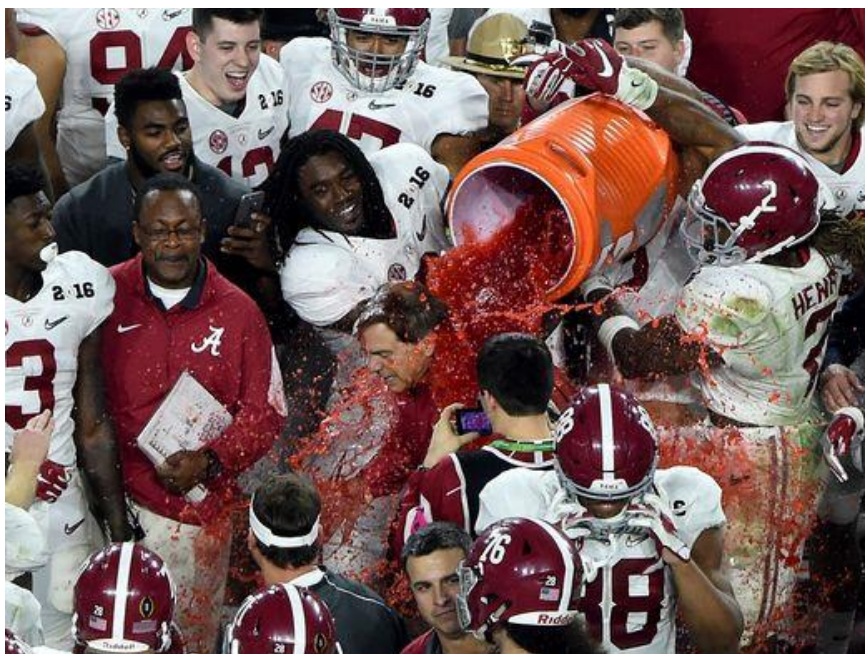
Three things to know

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 25<sup>th</sup> season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his tenth year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

UA finished the season with a record of 14 wins and 1 loss (14-1) overall, 8-0 in the SEC), as SEC champions and as a 2<sup>nd</sup> 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!

## **SEC Championship**

On December 3 @ 3:00 p.m. the opponent from the other division was #15 Florida. The #1 Crimson Tide was playing the Gators in the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA in what is known as the (SEC Championship Game. UA won handily against an always-tough Gators Team W (54-16). Alabama became the SEC Champion.

The SEC Champ was invited to the Peach Bowl. On Dec 31 at 2:00 p.m. vs. No. 4 Washington, #1 Alabama played in the Peach Bowl at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA (Peach Bowl – CFP Semifinal)

Since when I was originally writing this, it was December 12, 2016 Alabama would need two more wins in order to sew up its fifth Championship for Nick Saban. I finished the book on January 10 and added the results of the CFP Bowl game.

The first win came after December 12 came for Alabama in the Peach Bowl on December 31. Then, unexpectedly for me and many fans, the Crimson Tide lost to Clemson in the CFP bowl and finished #2. Nick Saban and Alabama fans must wait another year.

## **The Peach Bowl**

The pundits noted after the Peach Bowl game between the Alabama Crimson Tide and the Washington Huskies went almost exactly according to script. Alabama Crimson Tide's combination of speed and power on both sides of the ball proved too much for the Washington Huskies in a 24-7 UA victory to secure a spot in the College Football Playoff National Championship.

Things did not start out well for Alabama, as Washington struck first when Jake Browning hit Dante Pettis for a 16-yard touchdown in the first quarter. Alabama thus found itself trailing in a game, though there was plenty of time to make things right. It was a first for Alabama as throughout the 2016 season, the Crimson Tide virtually never played from behind.

It wouldn't take long for Alabama to make its comeback by tying the game at seven. The Tide scored on the ensuing possession. Bo Scarbrough, a great running back, capped off the Tide's 78-yard drive by doing what he always does best:

Alabama would later settle for a field goal after an Anthony Averett turnover from Wide Receiver John Ross. This 10-7 lead would not be relinquished for the rest of the game. The game was basically over at that point for Washington. Things would slow down for both teams as the next six drives ended in punts.

One of the big keys to Alabama's success all season long has been creating points off turnovers. The Crimson Tide entered the Peach Bowl with 14 non-offensive touchdowns, so it was hardly a secret they would be aggressive and Washington needed to protect the ball.

Unfortunately for the Huskies, Browning made a critical mistake with less than two minutes remaining in the second quarter by trying to force a throw after getting pressured that Ryan Anderson picked off and returned for a touchdown.

A three-point deficit against Alabama would normally be manageable but Alabama got very stingy. It wound up not making a difference either way because Washington's offense was completely stymied in the second half.

Browning had his worst game of the year with 150 yards on 20-of-38 passing with one touchdown and two interceptions, compounded by the fact the Huskies could only muster 44 rushing yards on 29 carries.

Washington's pass defense did step up to keep Alabama from creating big plays down the field. Crimson Tide quarterback Jalen Hurts threw for a season-low 57 yards on just seven completions, but he did get support from the running game.

Scarbrough 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 Scarbrough in the game plan more often because of his recent success.

"Bo's been playing pretty well for us the last three or four games," Saban said, per the Associated Press (via ESPN.com). "We wanted to play him more. He's hard to tackle. He's big and powerful. He's playing with a lot of confidence."

Until the actual 2017 CFP bowl, Alabama was on the verge of winning its fifth national championship since 2009. If there is a dynasty in any sport, pro or college, at this moment, the Crimson Tide stand tall over everyone else because of their nearly decade-long run of dominance. Of course Clemson had a lot say about denying the fifth championship since 2009.

**2017 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30**  
**SEC Western Division Champions; National Championship**

The 2017 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 123rd overall and 84th season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 26<sup>th</sup> season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his eleventh year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Coming off a national title-game loss v Clemson in January 2017, Alabama began the 2017 fall season ranked #1 in the AP poll. They ended this season as consensus national champions by winning their second College Football Playoff national championship. This was their 17th claimed national title in school history, and fifth under head coach Nick Saban. They finished the season with a record of 13 wins and 1 loss (13-1) overall, 7-1 in the SEC), as Western SEC champions and as 1<sup>st</sup> place finishers in the national champions CFP series where they beat Georgia for the title

The team opened the year with a victory over then-No. 3 Florida State in the Chick-fil-A Kickoff Game. This went down as the highest ranked season-opening match-up in the history of the AP Poll. Alabama won its first 11 games convincingly but fell on the road to major rival Auburn in the regular season finale (The Iron Bowl).

Since both teams were tied atop the SEC West Division at 7–1, Auburn advanced to the 2017 SEC Championship Game on the basis of the head-to-head tiebreaker. This hurt the Crimson Tide rankings as Alabama fell to number six leading up to conference championship weekend. In the final College Football Playoff rankings of the year, an 11–1 Alabama team somehow came in number four after sitting idle in the SEC Championship Game. In their way to #4, they passed 12–1 Wisconsin, 11–2 Big Ten Conference champion Ohio State as well as 12–0 American Athletic Conference champion UCF.

This turn of events won for Alabama a place in the national semi-final to be played at the Sugar Bowl against first-seeded Clemson. This would be the third consecutive playoff meeting between the two schools. Alabama won the rubber match v Clemson 24–6 and this was an auto-entry ticket to the 2018 College Football Playoff National Championship against SEC Champion Georgia.

The Crimson Tide pulled off a dramatic come-from-behind overtime victory to win the championship game 26–23 and take away the national title for the fifth time.

Alabama's offense this season was led by sophomore quarterback Jalen Hurts, who finished with 2,081 passing yards, 17 passing touchdowns and just one interception. He added 855 rushing yards and 8 rushing touchdowns on the ground. Freshman quarterback Tua Tagovailoa served as the backup and was named game MVP of the national championship game when Hurts was benched at the halftime mark.

Alabama running back Damien Harris led the rushing attack with 1,000 rushing yards (exactly) and 11 touchdowns on the year. Wide receiver Calvin Ridley and offensive tackle Jonah Williams were season heroes and were named first-team All-SEC. The Crimson Tide defense, which topped the country in scoring and yards allowed, was led by consensus first-team All-American and Chuck Bednarik Award-winning safety Minkah Fitzpatrick. He was joined on the All-SEC first team by defensive tackles Daron Payne and Raekwon Davis, linebacker Rashaan Evans, and safety Ronnie Harrison. It was a great Alabama year

## Games of the season

In the battle of the greats to begin the season, on Sep 2, #3 Florida State was beaten by #1 Alabama at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta W (24–7) before 76,330. It was a great (Chick-fil-A Kickoff Game and a celebrated College GameDay. On Sep 9, the #1 Crimson Tide whooped Fresno State at home W (41–10) before 101,127 in Tuscaloosa, AL. On Sep 16, Colorado State was defeated by the Tide at home W (41–23) before 101,821. Then, on Sep 23 at Vanderbilt in Vanderbilt Stadium, Alabama thumped the Commodores W (59–0) before 40,350 in Nashville, TN.

At home on Sep 30, #1 Alabama clobbered Ole Miss W 66–3 before 101,821. On Oct 7 at Texas A&M at Kyle Field, Alabama defeated the Aggies W 27–19 in the closest game of the season so far, before 101,058 in College Station, TX. Then, on Oct 14, the Crimson Tide pounded Arkansas at home 41–9 before 101,821 in Tuscaloosa, AL. On Oct 21, #1 Alabama beat Tennessee at home W (45–7) before 101,821 in Tuscaloosa, AL.

At home on Nov 4m #1 Alabama beat # 18 LSU W (24–10) before 101,821 in Tuscaloosa, AL. At #19 Mississippi State, on Nov 11, #1 Alabama prevailed W (31–24) before 61,344 in Starkville, MS. Then, on Nov 18, at home, #1 Alabama beat Mercer W (56–0) before 101,821 in Tuscaloosa, AL. In the Iron Bowl at Auburn, on Nov 25, #1 Alabama was beaten by # 6 Auburn in Jordan–Hare Stadium L (14–26) before 87,451. This was both an Iron Bowl and a College GameDay) celebration.

On January 1, #4 Alabama played v #1 Clemson (Alabama went from #1 to #4 after the Auburn Loss), the Crimson Tide beat the Tigers in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome W (24–6) before 72,360 in the Sugar Bowl, New Orleans, LA, which was also the CFP Semifinal.

The following week came the national championship. #1 Clemson had been eliminated and this week, #3 Georgia, the SEC Champion faced off against #4 Alabama on January 8 in Mercedes-Benz Stadium W (26–23) in OT before 77,430 in Atlanta, GA. This was the CFP National Championship and another College GameDay celebration.

## 84th Allstate Sugar Bowl ~ January 1, 2018

**#4 Alabama 24 (Postgame Record: 12-1)**

**#1 Clemson 6 (Final: 12-2)**

Facts by [allstatesugarbowl.org/classic/2018-game-recap](http://allstatesugarbowl.org/classic/2018-game-recap).

The fourth-seeded Crimson Tide scored 14 points off a pair of third quarter turnovers to key its 24-6 victory against top-seeded Clemson in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome on Monday night before a sellout crowd of 72,360. Bama (12-1) held Clemson (12-2), the defending national champion, to 188 yards of total offense, including just 99 through three quarters when it held the commanding 24-6 lead. Without their star from last year, Sean Watson, it was a different game for sure for Clemson.

It was the third straight season the teams met in the College Football Playoff. Alabama won in the championship game in 2016 against the Tigers with Clemson taking the title game in 2017 over the Tide. This time was in the semifinals and Bama prevailed with defense.

Alabama will face third-seeded Georgia, the SEC champion, next Monday (Jan. 8) in the National Championship game in Atlanta. It will be the first time two teams from the same conference will battle for the national crown since Bama defeated LSU in the BCS Championship game in 2011 in the Superdome.

It will be the Tide's third straight trip to the title contest. Like the previous two trips, defense, the cornerstone of Bama coach Nick Saban's success with the Tide, had a lot to do with it.

But an unlikely hero emerged, Alabama noseguard Da'Ron Payne. He intercepted a pass in Tide territory that set up Bama's first third-quarter score and, in a move that had everyone – red and orange clad included – surprised, caught a touchdown pass on the ensuing drive.

The interception couldn't have come at a better time. Clemson, which trailed 10-3 at the half, had cut Alabama's lead to 10-6 with 12:45 left in the third quarter after a 42-yard field goal by Alex Spence, a score that came off a Bama turnover.

Clemson forced Alabama to a three-and-out on the ensuing series and drove from its 32 to the Tide 35. That's when the Tide forced its first turnover. Clemson quarterback Kelly Bryant dropped to throw on second-and-2 but was hit from behind by Tide linebacker Anfernee Jennings as he threw.

Payne intercepted the errant pass at the Tide 37 and returned it to the Clemson 42. A horse-collar penalty was assessed to Clemson on the play and Alabama set up shop at the Tigers' 27.

Seven plays later, Payne became a Bama hero when, lined up at the tight end spot, he caught a pass from Tide quarterback Jalen Hurts for a 1-yard touchdown that gave Alabama a 17-6 lead with 5:40 left in the third quarter. It was the senior from Birmingham's first reception of the season.

"I had been talking to Coach lots about [the team passing to him in a goal-line situation]," Payne said. "He said, 'Just keep on working, and you might get it.' And I tried my best to go out and practice and work hard, and they finally gave it to me."

"When he made the interception, there was no doubt that we were going to throw him the ball on the goal line," Saban said with a laugh afterwards.

It didn't take long for Bama to make it 24-6.

On the first play from scrimmage on the ensuing possession, Bryant again dropped to pass from the Clemson 13. But his throw was deflected by Bama cornerback Levi Wallace. Tide middle linebacker Mack Wilson grabbed the tipped pass and brought it back 18 yards for a touchdown and the 24-6 lead with 5:27 left in the third quarter.

Clemson, the ACC Champion, was never able to recover.

"This was a great team effort by our entire defense," Saban said. "The front guys did a good job of controlling the line of scrimmage. The linebackers did a great job of adjusting. The secondary guys did a pretty good job of covering all day. So this was really a great team effort. And the guys played about as hard as any of our defensive teams that I can ever remember in this particular game."

The Tide led 10-3 at the half and it was a familiar Bama blueprint that gave it the margin. Alabama held Clemson's offense to 73 yards and four first downs and led in time of possession 18 minutes, 34 seconds to 11:26 for the Tigers. A total of 54 of those yards and three first downs came on Clemson's only drive that yielded points in the first half, a 44-yard field goal by Spence that cut Bama's lead to 10-3 with 10:00 left in the second quarter.

Led by running back Damien Harris, who picked up 55 yards on 12 carries, the Tide had 182 yards on offense with 11 first downs in the first half. Hurts was efficient, completing 10 of 13 passes for 87 yards and a touchdown.

Clemson struggled in the first quarter, as it was held to no first downs and minus-7 yards of offense while Alabama jumped to a 10-0 lead. The Tigers didn't manage their 1st first down until 14:18 remained in the second quarter.

But as lopsided as the first half stats were, the Tigers only trailed by a touchdown at the half. It felt like it should have been worse. On its second possession of the game, aided by superior field position as the drive started at the Tide's 47, Alabama went 47 yards to Clemson 6 when it was forced to settle for a 24-yard field goal by Andy Pappanastos. That gave the Tide a 3-0 lead with 5:23 left in the first half.

After another three-and-out showing by Clemson's offense, Alabama again started with outstanding field position, taking over at the Tigers' 46. The Tide drove 46 yards in eight plays for its first touchdown of the game. Hurts passed 13 yards to Calvin Ridley for the score and a 10-0 lead with 12 second remaining in the first quarter.

Clemson cut the lead to 10-3 on the ensuing possession with a 13-play, 54-yard drive that featured a 20-yard scramble for a first down by Bryant and a 19-yard completion by Bryant to wide receiver. Deon Cain for another first down. But the drive stalled at the Alabama 27 and the Tigers settled for the field goal.



Alabama drove deep into Clemson territory late in the first half, advancing from its 41 to the Tigers 15. But on fourth-and-9 at the Clemson 20, Pappanastos missed a 38-yard field goal with 17 seconds left as the Tide led 10-3 at the half.

“At the end of the day, when you take a deep breath and you step back a little bit, this will be one of the best teams that we have had,” Clemson coach Dabo Swinney said. “I mean, this has been a remarkable team. This has been a fun team to coach. I have thoroughly enjoyed being around this group of guys. They have been easy to coach. They have come to work all year. They have had an unbelievable attitude and work ethic and belief. And it’s been fun. They really have — again, this was a bad night. But that doesn’t change how I feel about the type of season.”

Most of this recap was by Trey Iles.

## College Football National Championship Recap

January 8, 2018 by the Beaver Creek Beacon. Our thanks  
Cory Kunkel, Student Journalist  
January 10, 2018

What. A. Game!

In the final game of the college football season, Georgia and Alabama traveled to Atlanta to face off in the College Football Playoff National Championship. After four exciting quarters and an overtime period, Alabama came out on top.

After opening the game with an interception on the first drive, true freshman Georgia quarterback Jake Fromm bounced back in a major way and made several decisive throws to put the Bulldogs up 13-0 at the half. Meanwhile, Georgia’s defense was shutting down sophomore Alabama quarterback Jalen Hurts in the passing game and had limited the Tide to a mere 21 passing yards in two quarters of play.

With a stagnant offense and little momentum, Alabama head coach Nick Saban made an unexpected change at the half and benched Hurts in favor of true freshman quarterback Tua Tagovailoa.

While it's already uncommon for a quarterback to be benched in a national championship game after starting all season, this move was even more surprising considering that Jalen Hurts had a 25-2 record as a starter and that Tagovailoa was a mere true freshman. This change, however, was the spark that Alabama needed. [Is Nick Saban a genius or the luckiest man on earth?]

Tagovailoa played incredibly well for a freshman with little playing experience and made several big-time throws, and in doing so, he put Alabama in winning position by tying the game at 20-20 and bringing his team within field goal with one second remaining.

Unfortunately, Alabama kicker Andy Pappanastos missed from 36 yards out, sending the game into overtime.

Georgia had the ball first and looked ready to score a touchdown until quarterback Jake Fromm took a huge sack on third down. As a result, Georgia kicker Rodrigo Blankenship was sent out to kick a 51-yard field goal, which he successfully accomplished to put the Bulldogs up with a score of 23-20.

During Alabama's first play on offense in overtime, Tagovailoa was sacked for an enormous 16-yard loss. Only one play later, however, Tagovailoa threw a 41-yard touchdown to a wide-open Devonta Smith in the end zone, effectively winning the game for Alabama with a final score of 26-23.

Beavercreek Senior Liam Dipple had this to say after the game: "It was a good game. Georgia choked. I hate (Nick) Saban."

Alabama head coach Nick Saban has now won six total national championships [five at Alabama], further cementing his legacy as one of college football's greatest all-time coaches.

Overall, this game was a great way to finish another exciting year of football. Fans across the country are already looking forward to what next season has to offer.

### **2018 Alabama Football Season Nick Saban Coach #30**

#### **SEC Champion; Orange Bowl Champion; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place National Ranking**

The 2018 Alabama Crimson Tide football team played its 124<sup>th</sup> overall and 85<sup>th</sup> season as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) of NCAA Division I-A football, and its 27<sup>th</sup> season in the SEC Western Division. The team was led by head coach Nick Saban in his twelfth year. All Alabama home games are played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on the UA campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Coming off a national title championship in January 2018, Alabama began the 2018 fall season ranked #1 in the AP poll for the third consecutive year and fifth time with Nick Saban as coach. They ended this season as #2 after a stinging loss to Clemson in the final championship game.

They finished the season with a record of 14 wins and 1 loss (14-1) overall, 8-0 in the SEC), as SEC champions and as 2<sup>nd</sup> place finishers in the national champions CFP series where they lost to Clemson for the title

The team opened the year with a victory over Louisville in the Camping World Kickoff played in Orlando Florida. The Crimson Tide enjoyed all victories throughout the rest of the season until the last game, the Championship.

In the final College Football Playoff rankings of this year, Alabama was ranked first, which earned them their fifth consecutive playoff berth and a spot in the 2018 Orange Bowl against fourth-ranked Oklahoma. The Crimson Tide won that game 45–34 to advance to the 2019 College Football Playoff National Championship against Clemson. It was their fourth consecutive playoff match-up against Clemson and it was their third to be in a national title game. The Crimson Tide lost something between the Orange Bowl and the CFP Championship and they lost the game in a blowout, 16–44. This turned out to be Alabama's worst loss in the Saban era.

Jalen Hurts was on the bench this year but played a substantial amount of time. He had lost his starting position in the championship game v Georgia the year prior. Thus, the Crimson Tide were led on offense by sophomore quarterback Tua Tagovailoa. Tagovailoa had set the NCAA FBS record for passing efficiency rating (199.4), was a consensus first-team All-American, and finished second in voting for the Heisman Trophy behind Oklahoma's Kyler Murray.

Hurts, despite losing the starting role, received praise for sticking with the team and helping to mount a comeback in the SEC Championship Game when Tagovailoa went down with an ankle injury. Also receiving consensus first-team All-America honors on offense were wide receiver Jerry Jeudy, winner of the Biletnikoff Award, and offensive tackle Jonah Williams. On defense, Alabama featured two consensus All-Americans, defensive lineman Quinnen Williams and defensive back Deionte Thompson. It was a tough way to finish the season.

## Orange Bowl Dec 29, 2018

Alabama coach Nick Saban said he would rather throw oranges than head-sets after their victory over Oklahoma Saturday, Dec. 29, 2018, in the Orange Bowl at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Fla. Article by Miami Herald CHARLES TRAINOR JR. It was a great game for Alabama.

The “Roll Tide” chants began before 10 minutes of football had even been played at Hard Rock Stadium on Saturday.

The top-ranked Alabama Crimson Tide had just scored their second touchdown against No. 4 Oklahoma in their College Football Playoff semifinal against No. 4 Oklahoma — a contested 10-yard pass from Tua Tagovailoa to Henry Ruggs.

It looked like the beginning of a rout.

Tagovailoa threw four touchdown passes, the Alabama defense contained Heisman Trophy winner Kyler Murray enough early to take a commanding lead and the Crimson Tide is once again heading

to the national championship game after defeating Oklahoma 45-34 in the Orange Bowl. Alabama will face No. 2 Clemson, which throttled No. 3 Notre Dame 30-3 in the Cotton Bowl earlier in the day. It will be the third matchup in five years between Alabama and Clemson for the national championship.

“It was no surprise to me that they would come back in the game,” Alabama coach Nick Saban said. “I kept telling our players on the sidelines, we have to keep playing, we have to keep grinding. We’ve got to play for 60 minutes. This team is very capable.” The Crimson Tide did just that.

Alabama’s domination began from the very first play. Tagovailoa dropped back and fired a pass up the middle to receiver DeVonta Smith, who shook past an Oklahoma defender and went downfield for a 50-yard gain. Six plays — and an overturned fumble — later, Damien Harris punched in Alabama’s first touchdown of the night from 1 yard out.

Alabama (14-0) led 21-0 at the end of the first quarter (an Orange Bowl record for most points by one team in the opening period), added another touchdown before Oklahoma could even get on the board and had a 31-10 edge at halftime before Oklahoma made it interesting.

A 14-play, 66-yard drive to open the second half ended with a 26-yard field goal by Austin Seibert to cut the Sonners’ deficit to 31-13. An Alabama punt on the ensuing drive led to a six-play, 75-yard Oklahoma touchdown drive, with Murray hitting Charleston Rambo in stride in the end zone for the 49-yard score.

A 28-point lead had dwindled to 11.

Oklahoma might be capable, but Alabama proved to be just that much better.

Alabama and Oklahoma then exchanged a pair of touchdown drives — Alabama with a 10-yard pass from Tagovailoa to Smith and Oklahoma with a 10-yard pass from Murray to CeeDee Lamb — before the Crimson Tide struck its final blow.

Tagovailoa, calm and collected like he had been all night, found wide receiver and Deerfield Beach High alumnus Jerry Jeudy for a 13-yard touchdown to re-extend Alabama's lead to 18 with 6:08 left to play.

Ballgame.



Alabama coach Nick Saban and quarterback Tau Tagovailoa throw oranges from the trophies after defeating Oklahoma in the College Football Playoff Semifinal at the Orange Bowl game at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Sunday, December 30, 2018. CHARLES TRAINOR JR  
CTRAINOR@MIAMIHERALD.COM

## CFP National Championship Recap

**Orange Crush: Clemson topples No. 1 'Bama for national title**

<https://www.freeplays.com/recap/2019/1/7/ncaaf/clemson-vs-alabama/234619/>

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) Dabo Swinney kissed the championship trophy and proclaimed this Clemson team the greatest of all time.

He's got a case.

With stunning ease - and a freshman quarterback - Clemson toppled college football's greatest dynasty again to become the first perfect playoff champion.

[Surely, Alabama for some reason was discombobulated. I see no other reason for the lopsided victory. Even Clemson is not that good.]

Trevor Lawrence passed for 347 yards and three touchdowns and the second-ranked Tigers beat No. 1 Alabama 44-16 on Monday night in the College Football Playoff national championship game.

In the fourth consecutive playoff meeting between the Tigers and Tide, Clemson evened the series and beat `Bama for the national championship for the second time in three years. Clemson is the first college football team to finish 15-0 since the 1800s, and the first team since the playoff started five seasons ago to get through a season unscathed.

"I mean, our guys had the eye of the tiger, but I'm so proud, and then for our seniors to be able to go out 15-0 and truly be the best ever - there was a lot of talk about best ever all year long," Swinney said, talking about Alabama. "We were never in that conversation. But tonight, there's no doubt. First 15-0 team, to beat Notre Dame and to beat Alabama to do it, this team won 13 games by 20 points or more and led by an unbelievable group of seniors, amazing group. I'm just thankful to be a part of it."

Alabama coach Nick Saban and the Tide (14-1) were looking for a sixth national championship in 10 years, trying to add to an already unprecedented run in the sport. Instead, Clemson crushed Alabama, becoming the first opponent to beat the Tide by more than 14 points since Saban became coach in 2007.

Swinney's Tigers sealed their status as a superpower, no longer just 1A to Alabama's 1.

"We're 15-0, we beat the best team ever, nobody's taking that away from us," Clemson All-American defensive tackle Christian Wilkins said.

## 2020 Alabama National Championship

In 2020, the Alabama Crimson Tide finished the season unblemished with a great record of 13–0 (11–0 in the SEC) and as national champions. They had been looking to get back on top since missing the title the last two years and they hoped to build on the successes of the 2019 season. So, the Tide entered the 2020 season as the favorite to win the Western Division and when they did, they met the always scrappy Florida Gators in the 2020 SEC Championship Game.

Alabama closed out the regular season with a 11–0 record including five wins against Top 25-ranked team. When they met the Gators for the SEC Championship, it was like a rematch of the 2016 contest. It was a shootout as the “D” for both teams seemed to take the night off. Alabama’s win was by a basketball-like final score of 52–46. They captured their 9th SEC championship title.

The following day, in the final College Football Playoff CFP standings, the final game would be #1 ranked Alabama v #4 ranked Notre Dame. They would meet in the Rose Bowl game in what was billed as a rematch of their 2013 contest. Alabama dominated the Irish who have not had a championship since Lou Holtz was coach.

The crimson title finished off the Fighting Irish 31–14 to qualify to meet the #3 ranked Ohio State Buckeyes for all the marbles as in the College Football Playoff National Championship Game. This too smelled like a rematch of the teams’ 2015 contest. I

In the game, Alabama whopped the Buckeyes, 52–24, to capture their third CFP National Championship title in seven years. The victory over Ohio State gave Alabama their 18th national championship in football (their ninth wire service title since the AP Poll began in 1936) and their tenth perfect season since 1925. Alabama is consistently the best team in the nation,

The season was the first time a wide receiver at Alabama won the Heisman Trophy, as DeVonta Smith won the award over several super finalists, a list which included Clemson Tigers QB Trevor



Lawrence. In addition to the Heisman, Smith, an outstanding receiver all year long, won numerous other awards, including the Maxwell Award and the Biletnikoff Award.

Other award winners included quarterback Mac Jones (Davey O'Brien Award and the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award), running back Najee Harris (Doak Walker Award), Alex Leatherwood (Outland Trophy), Landon Dickerson (Rimington Trophy), the offensive line (Joe Moore Award), and offensive coordinator Steve Sarkisian (Broyles Award).

Six players were named to various All-America Teams with Patrick Surtain II, DeVonta Smith, Alex Leatherwood, Landon Dickerson, and Najee Harris as unanimous selections and Mac Jones as a consensus selection.

Alabama finished the 2020 season with a final ranking of No. 1 in both the AP and Coaches' Polls. What a great year for the team and the program.

## Chapter 29 ND: Lou Holtz & Brian Kelly: 1986 thru 2021

Coach # 25 Lou Holtz National Championship 1988

Coach # 31 Brian Kelly – No Championships

1986	Lou Holtz	5–6
1987	Lou Holtz	8–4
1988	Lou Holtz	12–0 *
1989	Lou Holtz	12–1
1990	Lou Holtz	9–3
1991	Lou Holtz	10–3
1992	Lou Holtz	10–1–1
1993	Lou Holtz	11–1
1994	Lou Holtz	6–5–1
1995	Lou Holtz	9–3
1996	Lou Holtz	8–3
2010	Brian Kelly	8–5
2011	Brian Kelly	8–5
2012	Brian Kelly	12–1
2013	Brian Kelly	9–4
2014	Brian Kelly	8–5
2015	Brian Kelly	10–3
2016	Brian Kelly	4–8
2017	Brian Kelly	10–3
2018	Brian Kelly	12–1
2019	Brian Kelly	11–2
2020	Brian Kelly	10–2



As you can see by his record, Lou Holtz is one of the best coaches ever at Notre Dame. He is one of the elites. He fits in well with the Notre Dame immortals / legends as he earned the right to be one.

### **1988 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Lou Holtz National Championship**

After playing at 5-6 in 1986, and 8-4 in 1987, Lou Holtz's Irish were ready. The 1988 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Lou Holtz in his third year. This magical and mythical Holtz-led ND squad ended the season with 12 wins and no losses and no ties, winning the national championship. In other words, the Fighting Irish were unbeaten and untied, and they were good enough to convince all the Notre Dame haters in the world that they were worthy of being voted the # 1 team in the country.

The Fighting Irish had nothing handed to it, nor had it ever. The Irish won the title by defeating the previously unbeaten and No. 3 ranked West Virginia Mountaineers in the Sunbowl in Tempe, Arizona by a score of a 34-21. This powerful 1988 squad, one of 11 national title squads for the Irish, and a squad coached by the eternally great Lou Holtz, is considered to be one of the best undefeated teams in the history of college football.

The Irish always had tough schedules and that is why some of us think that they missed out on a few past titles. This time, there was no choice. Notre Dame beat teams which had finished the season ranked #2, #4, #5, and #7 in the AP Poll. How about that?

They also won 10 of 12 games by double digits. This phenomenal 1988 squad may best be remembered for its 31-30 upset of No. 1 ranked Miami, when Miami was at its best in Miami. It was Coach Jimmy Johnson's last year of his dynasty. Johnson had built a powerhouse that won and won and won and won. Notre Dame ended Johnson's and Miami's 36-game regular season winning streak. According to Irish fans, it was Notre Dame's landmark 31-30 win over top-rated Miami in 1988 in a game that keynoted that Irish national championship season.

The notion of "*Catholics vs. Convicts*" came from an ND student who put it on a t-shirt. The students liked it and he made money printing

more and more and more. They sold like hotcakes during the buildup for the Top 5 showdown.

The teams really did not like each other and it seemed there was no love lost between the coaches. There was a pre-game fight between the two teams outside of the entrance tunnel. This lent credence to the slogan on the shirts. Both teams—players and coaches—wanted the victory badly. The fans seemed to want it even more.

The game has gone down as one of the most memorable in all of college football. Other than their loss to Notre Dame in South Bend, Miami would have been undefeated as they literally ripped through all of their other opponents. Miami and Jimmy Johnson, a coach people loved to hate, and many still do, did not have what it took in 1988. Notre Dame beat the Hurricanes and that is that.



This game has gone down in history as Good v. Evil. It was the Midwestern choirboys vs. South Beach renegades. It was the Catholics v. Convicts. It was ND V UM: Football at its best and worst.



Miami was #1 and Notre Dame #4 (5 wins, 0 losses) when they met in South Bend on Oct. 15. Miami was the defending national champion. They came in with a 36-game regular season winning streak. The Irish, led by Tony Rice, held a 31–21 lead in the third quarter, but the Hurricanes rallied to within 31–30 on a touchdown with 45

seconds left in the game. The Canes went for the two-point conversion and missed. ND won the game W (31-30)

### **Let's check out the 1988 all-win ND record**

The home games were against the following: Michigan W (19-17), Purdue W (52-7), Stanford W (42-14), Miami W (31-30), Air Force W (31-13), Rice W (54-11), Penn State W (21-3).

Regular season away games were at Michigan State W (20-3), at Pitt W (30-20), at Navy W (22-7), and the big one at #2 USC W (27-10)

The Fiesta Bowl was going to either eliminate Notre Dame as the "shoe-in" National Champion or affirm the Irish as the best team in the country. It was an important game. It was played in Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe Arizona against a very powerful # 3 West Virginia Team. Notre Dame won the game 34-21.

When I reread this section about the 1988 championship season, I was upset with myself. I had done a minimal job. I had memorialized this great moment, but in my heart, I knew ND was such a great team in 1988 that I did not have to tell anybody about it more than I had.

I had created a number of final copies of this book and had held them up waiting for the cover to be designed properly. The cover design was one day away the first time I wrote about this day. I concluded that I had not done the 1988 season proper justice. So, I went out again for research about the 1988 season and again, I found the ND students had really done the best job -- a great job.

The 1988 season is Lou Holtz's championship season and he, like the immortals before him (none yet after) would have produced more if he had held the reins longer. I am so glad I added pages to this book to include this great article from Notre Dame's own first-rate student newspaper. They loved Lou Holtz in 1988 and they loved Lou Holtz in 1996, and they probably still love Lou Holtz to this day, as I do. He is one of a kind!

Here is a list of the games in the championship season

Sep10 Home #9 Michigan	Notre Dame Stadium	W 19-17	before 59,075
Sep17 at Michigan State	Spartan Stadium	W 20-3	before 77,472
Sep 24 Home Purdue	Notre Dame Stadium	W 52-7	before 59,075
Oct 1 Home Stanford	Notre Dame Stadium	W 42-14	before 59,075
Oct 8 at Pittsburgh	Pitt Stadium	W 30-20	before 56,500
Oct15 Home Miami (FL)	Notre Dame Stadium (Catholics vs. Convicts)	W (31-30)	before 59,075
Oct 22 Home Air Force	Notre Dame Stadium	W 41-13	before 59,075
Oct 29 at Navy No. 2	Memorial Stadium	W 22-7	before 54,929
Nov 5 Home Rice	Notre Dame Stadium	W 54-11	before 59,075
Nov 19 Home vPenn State	Notre Dame Stadium	W 21-3	before 59,075
Nov 26 at #2 USC	Los Angeles Memorial Col	W 27-10	before 93,829

On January 2, 1989, at 4:30 pm No. 3 West Va lost to #1 Notre Dame in the Fiesta Bowl at Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe, AZ W 34-21 before 74,911

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## Go IRISH!

### 1989 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Lou Holtz

The 1989 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was the fourth ND squad coached by Lou Holtz. The Irish played its home games at Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend, Indiana. This was the perfect follow-up season to a National Championship year, except for one thing—# 7 Miami L (10-27), a team that finished the season 11-1. Jimmy Johnson, the long-time Miami Coach stepped down unnoticed in 1988 to coach Dallas as the new 1989 Hurricanes coach Dennis Erickson did not miss a single beat.

The Hurricanes had lost to Bobby Bowden's #9 ranked Florida State Seminoles (10-24) earlier in the season. After winning the Notre Dame game, Miami beat Alabama in the Sugar Bowl (33-25). They got the nod for #1 national ranking in both polls over Notre Dame because of the head to head win. Notre Dame was 11-1 in the regular season and won the Orange Bowl W (21-6) against Colorado for an overall 12-1 record. ND was #2 in the AP poll for their 12-1 record but the coaches poll picked Bowden's 10-2 Noles as #2 and ND as #3 because Bowden's team had beaten Dennis Erickson's 'Canes during the regular season.

Notre Dame began the season early having been invited as the prior National Champion to play in the kickoff classic against Virginia at Giants Stadium before 77,323 fans. Notre Dame had its championship form and dominated the game W (36-13). #2 ranked Michigan was next in the Big House before 105,912 fans W (24-19).

After a one-week bye, Michigan State came to #1 ranked ND on September 23 W (21-13). Then it was off to Purdue for a big win W (40-7). A tough Stanford team was next at Stanford W (27-7) followed by Air Force at Falcon Stadium W (41-27).

Then archrival USC came to town on October 21 for a close game W (28-24). Pitt came to Notre Dame the following week for another big Irish win W (45-7). ND then beat Navy at home W (41-0). SMU was next at home in a blowout Irish win W (59-6).

The Irish then traveled to Beaver Stadium for a win against a resilient #17 Penn State Team W (34-23). On November 25, an undefeated and untied Notre Dame Squad ranked a solid # 1 played a tough Miami team and were defeated L (10-27).

On January 1, Notre Dame went back to the Orange Bowl venue where they had lost to Miami and beat # 4 ranked Colorado W (21-6) to end the season. If it were not for Miami, a team that also finished 12-1, Holtz's Fighting Irish would have been crowned #1.

## **Jerome Bettis**





Jerome Bettis was one of the best ND Football players ever. Lou Holtz had no doubts. Wherever he played, he was one of the greatest football players ever. Ask Pittsburgh!

A budding journalist at Notre Dame noticed that Jerome Bettis had a tendency to carry would-be tacklers down the field as if they were passengers along for the ride. From this he became "the Bus!"

The "Bus" is one of the most humble and heralded fullbacks in Notre Dame history. He played three seasons in an Irish uniform compiling 2,356 career yards (1,927 rushing, 429 receiving) and 27 TDs during his collegiate career. During the 1991 season, Bettis established program records for most TDs (20) and points (121) in a season. He additionally led the Irish in rushing yards (977) during his sophomore year.

## Sugar Bowl 1990

The game featured a good ND team running in 18<sup>th</sup> place at a 9-3-0 pace against a #3 Florida team that was 10-1. Things would change by the end of the game. ND was # 13 (10-3-0), and Florida, just beaten by Notre Dame were ranked at #7 (10-2-0).

Jerome Bettis enjoys telling the story of how he listened and believed in his coach. Why would he not? The coach was Lou Holtz and he never lied. Some say that a football coach's orders had never been carried out so perfectly. Bettis did not mind telling the real story after the game.



Lou Holtz would have liked nothing more than to turn the clock back on his legs, add some ballast to his body and go play all positions because by half-time, he could not figure out why ND was not winning the game. Bettis offered his version of the coach's halftime speech:

"Coach (Lou) Holtz told us we could move the ball on the ground—and that we WOULD move the ball on the ground in the second half."

That was that. The observation and the command.

At halftime, ND was behind 16-7, and had not done the job rushing. The accountants had the Irish down for a grand total of just 34 yards. Holtz speech must have awakened the echoes of the immortals as the coach tells his story:

"At the half, I came in and I just didn't think we were in sync," said Holtz. "Our defense had been on the field too long so I made the decision to go to more power and control football. We wanted to go back to Notre Dame football."

Jerome Bettis heard every word and every inflection, and he understood the body language. More than that... Bettis took Holtz's orders to heart. In the dying minutes of the game—in an imagination-stretching span of 2:44—Jerome Bettis, one of the great ones, whose echoes will be heard by others over time, broke loose for three touchdown runs of 3, 49 and 39 yards.

He rushed for an even 100 yards, and with the help of some ND friends, he brought Notre Dame back from the jaws of defeat, to a magnificent but deceiving 39-28 victory. It was nothing less than an uphill grind all night for the Irish.

Like a pair of jeans that had been worn one time too many, the thin Gator defense was beginning to tear. Linebacker Ed Robinson was quoted later with his sentiments: "I was trying to do too much." But, if not Ed, then who?

Notre Dame finally found a way to cross the goal and were on the scoreboard after a 40-yard pass from Rick Mirer to Lake Dawson. But like the echoes, Florida too could be awakened and appeared to

be working on ND with full steam. Czyzewski kicked a 36-yard field goal to make the halftime score 16-7. They had covered 51 yards in 10 plays. Clearly the Gators were dominant in the first half. Notre Dame, with just its 34 rushing yards, were playing poorly but somehow, they were still very much in the game.

That's when Jerome Bettis would interject and tell the story about the Holtz halftime ultimatum.

Notre Dame, whose offensive line outweighed the Gator defensive front 35 pounds a man, showed its brute strength on its first second-half possession. Nobody was pushing the Irish around after the Holtz ultimatum. The offense had gotten the word. They drove 64 yards on 11 plays - without throwing one pass.

Kevin Pendergast, subbing for an injured Craig Hentrich, kicked his first career field goal, a 23-yarder. Notre Dame was now within six at 16-10. Soon, the Irish would take the lead as Rick Mirer rolled out and passed four yards to 6-5 tight end Irv Smith. Pendergast's PAT made it 17-16, Notre Dame was the team on top now!

Florida swept down the field two more times and were stopped before pay-dirt. Each time, however, Czyzewski kicked field goals—37 and 24 yards. The first FG came after Florida ground out a 10-play, 50-yard assault. The second came after a fumble recovery at the Notre Dame 12 with little advancement. So, now again, Florida was in the lead 22-17 with 11:21 remaining.

The Holtz-drawn defense had bent a bit but had not broken. The halftime speech was still ringing in Jerome Bettis' ears. The speech was for him. He was the player to get the job done and he knew the speech was meant for him. It was time. Then Bettis and the Irish front line truly came to the foray. They would not be denied.

Notre Dame finished with 279 yards for the night, of which 141 came in the fourth quarter; 100 from Bettis in just several minutes. The Gators were not lying down for ND. They were doing great and yet struggling. For the game, the Gators had gained an eye-popping 511 total yards. Their major flaw was that they could not muster up the

ability to punch in touchdowns when the team got so close to the end zone that they could smell the grass on the other side of the line.

In the highest scoring Sugar Bowl up to that time, the Gators had advanced the ball inside the Notre Dame 20-yard line seven times. They had a great kicker who helped them five times but the FSU offense could manage only two touchdowns. The Notre Dame defense and Jerome Bettis's powerful runs had spoiled their day.

Coach Holtz took a few respectable bows for his resilient team after the game. I bet he was thinking about Jerome Bettis. Some say it was Notre Dame and Holtz who had the last laughs. Bettis was pleased that he had come through for the team. Holtz offered these comments:

"We aren't a bad football team," said Lou Holtz. "People say that we didn't deserve to be here, but I've got to tell you, I'm proud of this team. We beat the No. 3 team in the nation and didn't have a lot of help -- they didn't fumble; they didn't turn the ball over."

The facts in this section honoring the contribution of Jerome Bettis to Notre Dame football were 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.

Bettis did very well as a pro at Pittsburgh, and as a Pennsylvanian, I enjoyed watching him there. He retired in 2006 after the Steelers won Super Bowl XL in his native Detroit, Michigan. Mr. Bettis (the Bus) was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2015.

Few players on any team ever performed as well as Jerome Bettis while at Notre Dame. For Bettis, it was just another day's work. "Can't everybody do this?" God bless the "BUS."

#### **1992 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Lou Holtz**

The 1992 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Lou Holtz in his seventh year as head coach. Notre Dame had a nice-looking squad ready to go; and they were ranked # 3 in the preseason polls. There was always hope for another championship. Rick Mirer was quarterback and he also served as captain of the fighting Irish. The team finished 10-1-1—a great year.

### 1993 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Lou Holtz

The 1993 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Lou Holtz in his eighth year. Paul Failla and Kevin McDougal shared the QB duties. Backup Failla got time when McDougal hurt his shoulder. The season went so well that it surely looked like Lou Holtz was about to get his second national title at Notre Dame. Just two points and a Holy War later and things looked different.

On November 13, Notre Dame played Florida State in a late-season matchup of "unbeatens." The winner of this game, at Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend, Indiana, was certain to play #3 Nebraska (which would then move up to #2) in the Orange Bowl for the National Championship. What could stop that eventuality?

Let's look at the write-up from EPIC ND games to see a nice story about this game and then I may offer my few additional words:

When ND and Florida State met that day, the game had been hyped by many as the "Game of the Century". This much-acclaimed clash between #1 and #2 did not fail to live up to expectations. With Notre Dame, ahead by a touchdown and Florida State driving, hoping for a tie, or two to win. Irish defensive back Shawn Wooden batted down a Charlie Ward pass in the end zone with three seconds left to play. Notre Dame won the battle W (31-24).

### Nothing but a holy war

Boston College was ranked # 12 when the next week, the Eagles came roaring to Notre Dame Stadium for the continuation of the Holy Wars. It was one of the best games of the year. The Notre Dame offense piled up 427 yards of offense, scored 5 touchdowns, including 22 points in the last 11 minutes. Yet, the game would forever be remembered on Boston College's last drive as their kicker David Gordon hit a 41-yard field goal as time expired to win it L (39-41), ending Notre Dame's bid for a national title.

Notre Dame fans were understandably upset that Florida State was playing for the national title with one loss, since that one loss was a whooping given to the squad by none other than the Fighting Irish.

In 1989, Notre Dame lost under similar circumstances that should have caused FSU to lose in 1993. You may recall that the National Champion Miami Hurricanes had lost to Florida State Seminoles (10-24) earlier in the season. After winning the Notre Dame game, Miami then beat Alabama in the Sugar Bowl (33-25).

They got the nod for #1 national ranking in both polls over Notre Dame because they beat ND head to head. Notre Dame was 11-1 in the regular season and won the Orange Bowl W (21-6) against Colorado for an overall 12-1 record.

ND was #2 in the AP poll for their 12-1 record but the coaches poll picked Bowden's '10-2 'Noles as #2 and ND as #3 because Bowden's team had beaten Dennis Erickson's 'Canes during the regular season. Notre Dame fans are probably still upset about being kept out of the 1993 national championship game despite having beaten FSU.

On Nov. 24, 2000, Scott Merkin wrote a special to the Chicago Tribune that captures Notre Dame fans' sentiments on the game and on the voting snow-job. Here is an excerpt:

"One 42-yard field goal by a little-known left-footed kicker from Boston College prevented Kevin McDougal from leading Notre Dame to the 1993 national championship. One kick and some questionable pre-BCS voting that put Florida State ahead of Notre Dame in the final polls. "If we beat Florida State, like we did, and Boston College beat us, it just means Florida State should have been behind both of us in the voting," McDougal explained. "I still think we should have won the..."

## **Lou Holtz Resigns as ND Football Coach**

On Monday, November 18, 1996, Lou Holtz met with his team and gave them the news first of his decision to leave Notre Dame and pursue coaching opportunities elsewhere. In much the same way that he could not explain his feelings about the Golden Gophers two

years after leaving Minnesota, Holtz had a tough time explaining why he was leaving Notre Dame.

He knew it was time to go, and so he made the decision. Lou Holtz coveted the Notre Dame Job for much of his adult life. He got the job, did very well in the job, and simply believed it was time to go. For the rest of us at the time, there were a lot of unanswered questions. For Lou Holtz, he knew it was his time to move on, even though he may not have been able to give anybody else a hint about his future or show relief after such a difficult decision.

At a press conference, he noted that he first contemplated leaving the job nine months earlier. His rationale for the timing on the Monday after the Pitt game before playing 2-7 Rutgers was that he wanted the kids to have a coach, and so his early announcement gave the ND administration more time to find a replacement.

Holtz said: "You have no idea how proud I have been to hear, 'He's the coach at Notre Dame,' " he said. "That's something you just can't buy."

"Whenever Coach Holtz comes in and doesn't look happy, it's not going to be good news," said Bert Berry, a senior linebacker. "We could just tell from the way he came in -- 'Oh, no, Coach is leaving.' What a shame for the University of Notre Dame.

## **Coach Brian Kelly.**

I had the name first

Your author is also Brian Kelly. That's me

Coach # 31

**Kelly is currently ND's Head Football Coach (2016)**

## **Assumption writes re: alumnus Brian Kelly**

We now all have the opportunity to read about the last coach of the modern era, as I present the Brian Kelly Era of Notre Dame Football. The lead article in this chapter comes from his alma mater.



Until the 2016 season, many of us already had deified Kelly as one of the great immortals, not unlike those greats, who brought national championships to Notre Dame. I am not as confident that his day will come; but after 4-8; he is responding very positively by working hard to get a great team in place and a number of great assistant coaches. I would not count Kelly out, though the prospects were never so good for an immortal than in 2012.

My neighbors enjoyed putting this cutout together when the other Brian Kelly (my name also) took over for the Irish:

Ironically, it was easier for me in my research to find archival features about Frank Leahy and Jesse Harper than it was to find a usable piece about the other Brian Kelly's hiring. Even the first page of an article from my local paper that I have had hanging in my Sun Room is inaccessible in the archives. (See newspaper clip on next page). It is from our local Paper, the Times Leader.

It was placed on the wall by my friendly Anstett neighbors—Carol & John A. You cannot really read it well, and that is OK, but you can get the essence of my neighbors' message to my wife and me. It was a joke—well appreciated I might add.

The day when I wrote these particular paragraphs originally was March 16, 2016. There was a major Irish holiday the next day on March 17. Perhaps you have heard about it. For the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame du Lac, our Lady has priority, but right behind the



Mother of God is St. Patrick. I collected facts in 2015 in preparation for the book and I began in earnest to write the original words in the book I wrote about Notre Dame on January 30, 2016, which happens to be my birthday. I was just a kid then. Humph!!



*The article copy I have in my sunroom (prior page) is Part I of II and I do not have Part II. My loving neighbors placed my face in the space in which the coach's face had been. They put my beautiful wife Pat's picture on the top left to make sure I would not mess up the ND team. Of course, this is very funny for those who walk into my sunroom and notice.*

### 2010 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Brian Kelly

The 2010 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Brian Kelly in his first year as head coach. This was Kelly's first season as Notre Dame's head coach, after leading the Cincinnati Bearcats to a 12–0 regular season and a BCS bowl berth.

In 2010, Notre Dame's regular season schedule was ranked the most difficult schedule in the nation with a Team Opposition Record Percentage of .6529. This poll was published by the NCAA and it only included wins against Division I teams. ND was 8-5 in Kelly's first year. They duplicated the 8-5 the next year. Not so good.



Nothing good happens overnight. Yet, after the Weis record the prior three years, Irish fans are very pleased with a coach whose aim is pointing in the same direction as the thought processes of the ND faithful. When Kelly arrived, everybody may not have been singing Cum Bye Ah, but most were chanting: The Times—they are a changing! They had to change, and in fact, they have changed already and the future until the 4-8 season looked even better!

Notre Dame finished the first Kelly season with a very healthy 8–5 record. Better than that, the Irish defeated Miami (FL) 33–17 showing that their resurgence was not a fluke.

Brian Kelly replaced Charley Weis on Dec 10, 2009 in time to work hard to bring in recruits to help the team. Two of the Irish's bright spots, Jimmy Clausen and Golden Tate chose not to play their final years and declared for the 2010 NFL draft. Graduation was another factor that caused a number of players to move-on. Weis had a good team... but... Weis had lost his bearings it so seemed.

Being hired in the off-season, if there is such a thing anymore for a collegiate head coach, Kelly's first mission was recruiting. In his first attempt at recruiting a class for Notre Dame, he was quite successful with 23 signed commitments from high school players across the United States. Five early enrollees included Quarterback Tommy Rees, Wide Receiver Tai-ler Jones, Cornerback Lo Wood, Cornerback Spencer Boyd and Safety Chris Badger. Things were lining up for a successful Irish run.

### **2011 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Brian Kelly**

The 2011 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was led by second year head coach Brian Kelly. Every year Notre Dame's football program competes as an independent. They are not affiliated with any conference. But in 2015, ND agreed to play five ACC games each year as other ND sports teams had become integral parts of the ACC.

Joe Montana's son, Nate Montana left the university in February 2011, with a transfer to the University of Montana. I hope Nate does well. Additionally, junior guard Alex Bullard transferred to his hometown state of Tennessee to play for the University of Tennessee.

ND mostly played well but when they made mistakes, they were big mistakes. They outplayed everybody in total all the time.

### **2012 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Brian Kelly**

The 2012 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team, led by third year head coach Brian Kelly, played home games at Notre Dame Stadium. They competed as an independent. Despite starting the season unranked, the Fighting Irish finished the regular season at 12-0, and #1 in all major polls. Manti Te'o kept the Irish defense in control of most games as the Notre Dame finished the season with the number one defense in the country. I figured this was it.

ND gave up just 10.3 points per game. They played in the BCS National Championship Game with a chance to win their first national title since 1988 but were defeated by the Alabama Crimson Tide. Brian Kelly had gone undefeated and untied 12-0 in his third season prior to the bowl game. This was a tremendous accomplishment. Most of his predecessors, who won national championships in their third years as Head Coach were not expected to play or win a bowl game.

ND stunk out the place when they played Alabama. I was embarrassed watching TV by myself while the game that was sorta going on at Sun Life Stadium in Miami Gardens, FL. The six-week wait to play this game took the edge off the Irish and they were pounded by the Crimson Tide L (14-42). Alabama had become the new USC. Notre Dame had a hard time ever beating USC – even Ara Parseghian.

## **BCS Championship Bowl**

For such a great season, #1 ranked Notre Dame got to play #2 ranked Alabama in the BCS championship. Alabama had no trouble with the Irish.

Before a record, Sun Life Stadium crowd of 80,120 that definitely included more--green than crimson, The Crimson Tide's star running

back, Eddie Lacy, ran right through the Irish on a 20-yard touchdown run before the game was 3 minutes old.

This capped off a punishing 82-yard drive that was the longest of the season given up by the Fighting Irish. That was the complexion of the game until it ended with an embarrassing Alabama victory.

#### **2013 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Brian Kelly**

The 2013 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was led by fourth year head coach Brian Kelly. Notre Dame plays its home games at Notre Dame Stadium in South bend, Indiana. They compete as an independent.

Everett Golson, to the chagrin of his fellow teammates, was out on academic suspension for the year. Senior Tommy Rees stepped in as the starting 2013 quarterback. The Fighting Irish finished the 2013 regular season 9-4. They were # 21 in the coaches' poll and # 25 in the AP. ND was invited to the Pinstripe Bowl at Yankee Stadium and they defeated Rutgers W (29-16)

#### **2014 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Brian Kelly**

The 2014 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was led by fifth-year head coach Brian Kelly. The Irish were two different teams this season. Team 1 played the first six games with all players well and ready to play. Team 2 lost half of its defense mostly through major injuries and yet, they went out each week and did their best. However, in a depleted condition, Team 2 often did not do well enough to bring home the victory.

ND started the season with a 6–0 record, ranked as high as #5 in both the AP Poll and the Coaches' Poll. They suffered a major setback with many player injuries in the second half of the season. They lost five of their last six games. They finished the regular season at 7–5.

#### **2015 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Brian Kelly**

The 2015 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was led by sixth-year head coach Brian Kelly. As always, the team played its home games at Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend (aka Notre Dame)

Indiana. Notre Dame continues to compete as an independent, though there are those that expect that in the future the Irish may complete a transition to be part of the ACC. Perhaps that is in the future. Perhaps it is not.

What a great team ND put together under Brian Kelly for the 2015 season. With a 10-3 record, it can be argued that the 2015 team is the most explosive offense that Brian Kelly has coached at Notre Dame. But for four points in two games, the 2015 season would have been dramatically different.

During the regular season, the Irish were one of twenty-one schools in the country to average 200 or more passing yards and rushing yards per game. The Irish had fourteen plays of over 50 yards during the season. This ranked 13th in the country and was a Notre Dame school record. The Fighting Irish were fun to watch.

During this season, ND also had two touchdowns of over 90 yards. C.J. Prorise contributed a 91 yarder and Josh Adams gave the Irish a 98-yard touchdown. In 126 years of previous Notre Dame Football games, the Fighting Irish had only two such runs before 2015.

The 2015 running game was dominant in its success against opposing defenses. At 5.76 yards per carry, the Irish ranked fifth in the country. Finishing the regular season averaging 34 points per game, including a 62-point effort against UMass, the most points in an ND game since 1996; the point output was phenomenal.

The ND 2015 season ended on a heartbreaking note, as the Irish were defeated by Ohio State University in the Fiesta Bowl by a score of L (28-44). The resident Indiana Irish have a few things to prove to their neighbors in Ohio as ND has not beaten the Buckeyes since 1936. ND has a tough time with tough teams coached by great coaches. For ND to be successful, Kelly has to change something.



Clemson Football Stops Notre Dame 2-Point Conversion to Clinch Win

On October 3, Memorial Stadium in Clemson was getting pelted and whipped badly by the elements and it was a wonder that either team could perform at all. It would have been better if there was better weather but having said that, both teams did remarkably well.

Notre Dame was ranked # 6 and Clemson was ranked # 12. None of that seemed to matter to the players as they knew that with tough play, either team could win the game.

The bottom line on this critical game was that Clemson's talented QB, Deshaun Watson threw for two touchdowns, ran for a third and Clemson's defense stopped Freshman DeShone Kizer on a tying two-point conversion attempt as the 12th-ranked Tigers held on to beat Notre Dame by two points L (22-24). Clemson would not say no. They were tough as nails on both sides of the football. That probably is why Clemson got to play for the BCS National Championship and not ND.

Having 2 two-point losses, and a great season. the # 8 ranked Notre Dame Fighting Irish won a berth to the Fiesta Bowl. The opponent would be Ohio State. The Buckeyes, coached by Urban Myer, had suffered just one loss during the season. Notre Dame entered the game a 6.5-point betting underdog. Ohio won big.

**2016 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Brian Kelly**

The 2016 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was led by seventh-year head coach Brian Kelly. After a regular season in which the Irish lost just two games each by two points, with a number of starters back, it was expected that Notre Dame would compete well during the 2016 season. At 4-8, it was Kelly's toughest season to date and now again, we are looking for much more in 2017

**2017 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Brian Kelly**

The 2017 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was led by eighth-year head coach Brian Kelly. Notre Dame was expected to compete well during the 2017 season. At 10-3, ND came back from its worse season under Kelly (4-8). The team was looking for even better results in 2018.

**2018 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Brian Kelly**

The 2018 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was led by ninth year head coach Brian Kelly. At 12-1, it was one of the Irish's best seasons under Kelly. The team was looking for even better results and perhaps a championship in 2019. Did not happen.

**2019 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Brian Kelly**

The 2019 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was led by tenth-year head coach Brian Kelly. As always, the team played its home games at Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend (aka Notre Dame) Indiana. Notre Dame continues to compete as an independent, though there are those that expect that in the future the Irish may complete a transition to be part of the ACC. Perhaps that is in the future. Perhaps it is not. ND had a fine year but failed to win the big ones and finished at 11-2.

**2020 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Brian Kelly**

The 2020 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team, led by eleventh year head coach Brian Kelly, played home games at Notre Dame Stadium in the 2020 Division I FBS football season. They competed as an independent but because the Power Five conferences enforced

restrictions on non-conference games because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Notre Dame played a full Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) schedule for the 2020 season.

ND finished the season after losing the ACC in fourth place and barely made the CFP Semi-Finals. On January 1, at 5:00 P.M. Alabama rode herd over the Irish as if ND had not shown up for the game. The Crimson Tide pushed the Irish all over the field. Brian Kelly's squad were completely outmatched, and it looked like they would have been better off not making the playoffs. Alabama walked away with an easy L (14-31) victory.

Naturally, the post-game chatter narrative surrounding Notre Dame is its consistent inability to win one of the big New Year's Six bowl games. Surely this storyline dominated the news after the drubbing Alabama gave the Irish so unfortunately, it will continue to haunt Irish fans for at least another year. Whatever Kelly's teams have been missing over the years, he ought to be able to fix it by studying game films or do whatever Dabo Swinney or Nick Saban do when their teams falter. Why not?

## Other Books by Brian Kelly: (amazon.com, and Kindle)

**Great Players in Tampa Bay Buccaneers Football** *Beginning of football through the Bruce Ariens era*  
**Super Bowl & NFL Championship Seasons: The Tampa Bay Buccaneers** *Right to Super Bowl LV*  
**Great Coaches in Tampa Bay Buccaneers Football** *beginning of Football through Bruce Ariens era.*  
**Great Moments in Tampa Bay Buccaneers Football.** *Best Bucs football over the ages*  
**Donald Trump Governor of California** *After the Newsom recall, Trump is the perfect candidate*  
**SCOTUS Eliminatus** *No country needs a Supreme Court that does not take important cases.*  
**Mike V Trump** *Mike Grant takes on Donald Trump. Brian Kelly takes on Mike Grant Pick winner.*  
**Ron DeSantis Best Governor in United States.** *DeSantis is to Governors what Trump is to presidents*  
**The Corruption in the Wilkes-Barre Area School District--about toxic corruption and stinky things**  
**Stolen Election ???** *Democrats say: "fair and just;" Republican cowards surrender to Democrats*  
**The Ten Commandments of Calipered Kinematically Aligned Total Knee Arthroplasty Color Edition**  
**The Ten Commandments of Calipered Kinematically Aligned Total Knee Arthroplasty B/W Edition**  
**About Alexa! Tell me how!**  
**Chronicle of Inept Governance & Corrective Actions from a school board from hell**  
**Hey Alexa! Create me my own personal musical paradise**  
**The Big Toxic School at Little Chernobyl Unpublished with new book (Corruption in WBASD)**  
**FTC Case: LetsGoPublish.com v Amazon Fourth Edition** *big bully censored nine books*  
**FTC Case: LetsGoPublish.com v Amazon Third Edition** *big bully censored nine books*  
**FTC Case: LetsGoPublish.com v Amazon Second Edition** *big bully censored nine books*  
**The President Donald J. Trump Book Catalog Color Version by Brian Kelly & Lets Go Publish!**  
**The President Donald J. Trump Book Catalog B/W Version by Brian Kelly & Lets Go Publish!**  
**FTC Case: LetsGoPublish.com v Amazon Original case** *bully censored nine books*  
**What America Wins if Biden Wins** *Everything!!!!!! The answer is really nothing.*  
**What America Loses if Trump Loses** *None of the 1000s of Trump wins for starters*  
**What America Wins When Trump Wins** *Trump gave the country many benefits and blessings We*  
**Love Trump! Don't you? The President given to the people by God as the answer to our prayers**  
**Amazon: The Biggest Bully in Town** *bully blocked eight books in 2020 by most published author*  
**Trump Assured 2020 Victory** *President needs these two prongs for his platform for landslide*  
**2020 Republican Convention—Speeches Blocked by Amazon** *Includes memento free Link*  
**2020 RNC Convention Full Speech Transcripts** *Blocked by Amazon* *Memento of the 87 best*  
**COVID-19 Mask, Yes? Or No?** *It's Everybody's Recommended Solution!!!*  
**LSU Tigers Championship Seasons** *Starts at beginning of LSU Football to the National Championship*  
**Great Coaches in LSU Football** *Book starts with the first LSU coach; goes to Orgeron Championship*  
**Great Players in LSU Football** *Begins with 1893 QB Ruffin G Pleasant to 2019 QB Burrow*  
**America for Millennials!** *A growing # of disintegrationists want to tear US down*  
**Great Moments in LSU Football** *Book starts at start of Football to the Ed Orgeron Championship.*  
**The Constitution's Role in a Return to Normalcy** *Can the Constitution Survive?*  
**The Constitution vs. The Virus** *Simultaneous attack coronavirus and US governors*  
**One, Two, Three, Pooph!!! Reopen Country Now!** *Return to normalcy is just around the corner.*  
**Reopen America Now** *Return to Normalcy*  
**Enough is Enough! Re Re: Covid, We are not children. We're adults. We'll make the right decisions.**  
**How to Write Your 1st Book & Publish it Using Amazon KDP** *You can do it*  
**REMEDSIVIR** *A Ray of Hope*  
**When Will America Reopen for Business?** *This author's opinion includes voices of experts*  
**HydroxyChloroquine: The Game Changer**  
**Super Bowl & NFL Championship Seasons** *The KC Chiefs From the 1<sup>st</sup> to Super Bowl LIV*  
**Great Coaches in Kansas City Chiefs Football** *First Coach era to Andy Reid Era*  
**Great Players in Kansas City Chiefs Football** *From the AFL to Andy Reid Era*  
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**How the Philadelphia Eagles Lost Its Karma.** *This is the one place that tells the story*  
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**Social Security Screw Job!!!** *Scandal: Seniors Intentionally Screwed by US Government*  
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**Christmas Wings for Brian** *A heartwarming story of a boy whose shoulders kept growing*  
**Merry Christmas to Wilkes-Barre** *50 Ways" for Mayor George Brown to Create a Better City.*  
**Air Force Football Championship Seasons** *From AF Championship to Coach Calhoun's latest team*  
**Syracuse Football Championship Seasons** *beginning of SU championships; goes to Dino Babers Era*  
**Navy Football Championship Seasons** *1<sup>st</sup> Navy Championships to the Ken Niumatalolo Era*  
**Army Football Championship Seasons** *Beginning of Football championships to Jeff Monken Era*  
**Florida Gators Championship Seasons** *Beginning of Football through championships to Dan Mullen era*  
**Alabama's Championship Seasons** *Beginning of Football past the 2017/2018 National Championship*  
**Clemson Tigers Championship Seasons** *Beginning of Football to the Clemson National Championships*  
**Penn State's Championship Seasons** *PSU's first championship to the James Franklin era*



**Notre Dame's Championship Seasons Before Knute Rockne and past Lou Holtz's 1988 undisputed title**

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This book begins at the beginning of Football and goes to the Bill Belichick era.

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**Great Players in Air Force Football** From the beginning to the current season

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**Ghost of Wilkes-Barre Future: Spirit's advice for residents how to pick the next Mayor and Council**

**Great Players in Air Force Football: Air Force's best players of all time**

**Great Coaches in Air Force Football: From Coach 1 to Coach Troy Calhoun**

**Great Moments in Air Force Football: From day 1 to today**

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**God Gave US Donald Trump?** Trump was sent from God as the people's answer

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**It's Time for The John Q. Doe Party...** Don't you think? By Elephants.

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Great Coaches in Florida Gators Football... The best coaches in Gator history.

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**The Constitution Companion.** Will help you learn and understand the Constitution

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**Top Ten Political Books for 2018...** Cliffnotes Version of 10 Political Books

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**Great Moments in Pittsburgh Steelers Football...** Six Super Bowls and more.

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**Great Players in Syracuse Football.** Highlights best players such as Jim Brown & Donovan McNabb  
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 Great Coaches in Army Football Army's coaches are all great.  
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