

Dear Reader: Thank you for downloading this free book from Brian W. Kelly's finished book catalog. I finished the book titled Notre Dame's Championship Seasons at <https://letsGOPublish.com/collegefootball/ndchamps.pdf> in July 2016. This is a college football classic book about the great championships of the Notre Dame Fighting Irish Football Team.

Most of my books had previously been published on Amazon.

Click below if you would like to donate to help the free book cause:
<https://www.letsGOPublish.com/books/donate.pdf>

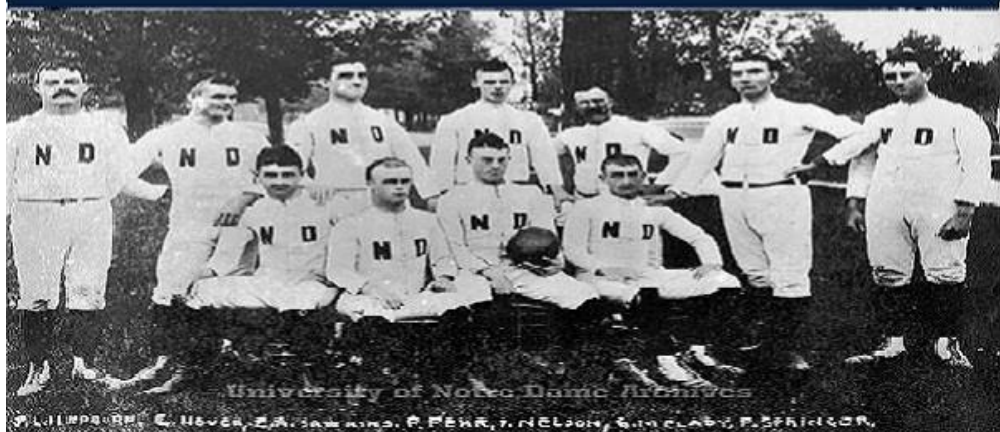
Enjoy!

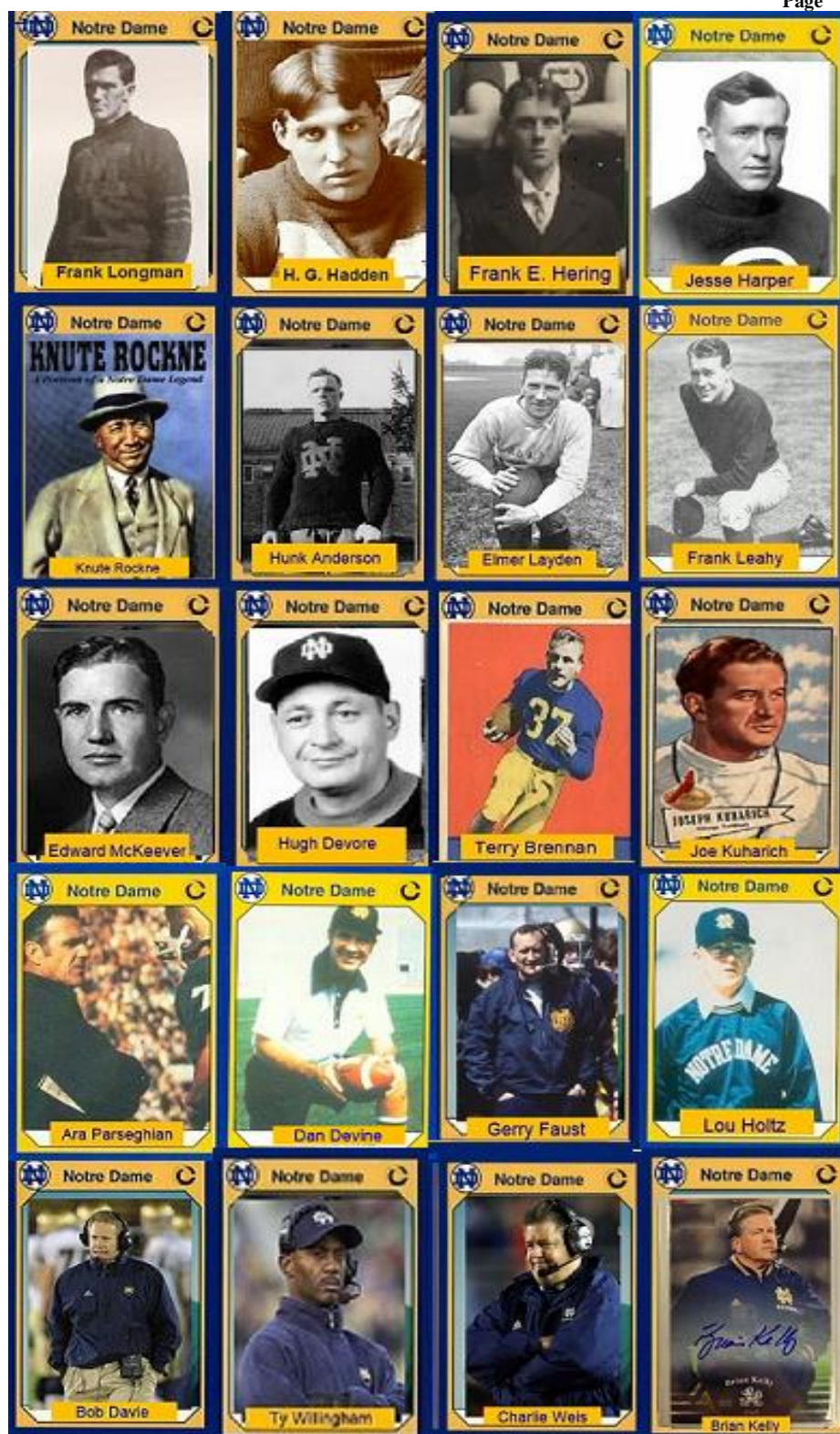


Notre Dame's Championship Seasons

By Brian Kelly

This book of championships and "almosts" begins before Knute Rockne and goes well beyond Lou Holtz's 1988 undisputed title.





ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL



ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL

ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL

Notre Dame's Championship Seasons

This book of championships and “almosts” begins before Knute Rockne and goes well beyond Lou Holtz’s 1988 undisputed title.

This book of ND championships and “almosts” is written for those of us who love Notre Dame Football. Those who hate ND football will also want this book so they can get a leg up on the missing facts from the bookshelves of ND fans who do not have this book.

The book first tells some short but interesting stories about Notre Dame's founding in 1842 and quickly gets to the first football game in 1867. From there, the progression leads, to the Notre Dame's first football game in 1887, then to the first Notre Dame coach in 1894, and of course to the great immortal Notre Dame coaches-- Rockne, Leahy, Parseghian, Devine, and Holtz, to the current season with Coach Brian Kelly. Along the way of course, the Irish picked up their share of championships including as many as thirteen US National Championships.

The Irish rightfully claim more national championships than some pundits admit. Notre Dame for example claims an additional three seasons for a total of 11 consensus national championships. The Fighting Irish, however are often credited with thirteen national championships in total. The 1938 and the 1953 seasons are the reason for the discrepancy but for ND fans, it is that good ole lucky Irish number 13 in terms of winning the big ones that the true Irish fans stick by.

This book captures all the championships, contested championships, consensus championships, and almost championships. We've got it all. It takes the reader through stories about Notre Dame's 31 coaches to great stories about 130 seasons worth of great games (1285 games). The book often stops in time and talks about a particular player such as Johnny Lujack, Paul Hornung, Tony Rice, Tim Brown, Leon Hart, Johnny Lattner, Brady Quinn, Jerome Bettis, Joe Montana, Joe Theismann, or Ian Book. You cannot get enough of ND greatness but we try in this book because there are a ton of championships, and almost championships and lots of great moments. You will not be able to put this book down.

Brian Kelly



Copyright © May, July 2016, 2017 Brian W. Kelly
Notre Dame's National Championships

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

All rights reserved: No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form, or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, scanning, faxing, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission from the publisher, LETS GO PUBLISH, in writing.

Disclaimer: Though judicious care was taken throughout the writing and the publication of this work that the information contained herein is accurate, there is no expressed or implied warranty that all information in this book is 100% correct. Therefore, neither LETS GO PUBLISH, nor the author accepts liability for any use of this work.

Trademarks: A number of products and names referenced in this book are trade names and trademarks of their respective companies.

Referenced Material: *Standard Disclaimer:* The information in this book has been obtained through personal and third party observations, interviews, and copious research. Where unique information has been provided or extracted from other sources, those sources are acknowledged within the text of the book itself or in the References area in the front matter. Thus, there are no formal footnotes nor is there a bibliography section. Any picture that does not have a source was taken from various sites on the Internet with no credit attached. If resource owners would like credit in the next printing, please email publisher.

Published by: LETS GO PUBLISH!
Editor in Chief Brian P. Kelly
Email: info@letsgopublish.com
Web site www.letsgopublish.com

Library of Congress Copyright Information Pending

Book Cover Design by **Brian W. Kelly**

Editor—Brian P. Kelly

ISBN Information: The International Standard Book Number (ISBN) is a unique machine-readable identification number, which marks any book unmistakably. The ISBN is the clear standard in the book industry. 159 countries and territories are officially ISBN members. The Official ISBN For this book is

978-1-947402-92-8

The price for this work is: **\$ 13.95 USD**

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Release Date: **September, 2019**

Notre Dame Season Records from 1887 through 2017

Year	Coach	Record	Champs	Year	Coach	Record	Champs	Bowl col 2
1887	No coach	0-1		1952	Frank Leahy	7-2-1		
1888	No coach	1-2		1953	Frank Leahy	9-0-1		
1889	No coach	1-0		1954	Terry Brennan	9-1		
1890	No games	0-0		1955	Terry Brennan	8-2		
1891	No games	0-0		1956	Terry Brennan	2-8		
1892	No coach	1-0-1		1957	Terry Brennan	7-3		
1893	No coach	4-1		1958	Terry Brennan	6-4		
1894	J.L. Morison	3-1-1		1959	Joe Kuharich	5-5		
1895	H.G. Hadden	3-1		1960	Joe Kuharich	2-8		
1896	Frank E. Hering	4-3		1961	Joe Kuharich	5-5		
1897	Frank E. Hering	4-1-1		1962	Joe Kuharich	5-5		
1898	Frank E. Hering	4-2		1963	Hugh Devore	2-7		
1899	James McWeeney	6-3-1		1964	Ara Parseghian	9-1		
1900	Pat O'Dea	6-3-1		1965	Ara Parseghian	7-2-1		
1901	Pat O'Dea	8-1-1		1966	Ara Parseghian	9-0-1	Champs	
1902	James Farragher	6-2-1		1967	Ara Parseghian	8-2		
1903	James Farragher	8-0-1		1968	Ara Parseghian	7-2-1		
1904	Louis Salmon	5-3		1969	Ara Parseghian	8-2-1		Lost Cotton
1905	Henry J. McGlew	5-4		1970	Ara Parseghian	10-1		Won Cotton
1906	Thomas Barry	6-1		1971	Ara Parseghian	8-2		
1907	Thomas Barry	6-0-1		1972	Ara Parseghian	8-3		Lost Orange
1908	Victor M. Place	8-1		1973	Ara Parseghian	11-0	Champs	Won Sugar
1909	Frank Longman	7-0-1		1974	Ara Parseghian	10-2		Won Orange
1910	Frank Longman	4-1-1		1975	Dan Devine	8-3		
1911	John L. Marks	6-0-2		1976	Dan Devine	9-3		Won Gator
1912	John L. Marks	7-0		1977	Dan Devine	11-1	Champs	Won Cotton
1913	Jesse Harper	7-0		1978	Dan Devine	9-3		Won Cotton
1914	Jesse Harper	6-2		1979	Dan Devine	7-4		
1915	Jesse Harper	7-1		1980	Dan Devine	9-2-1		Lost Sugar
1916	Jesse Harper	8-1		1981	Gerry Faust	5-6		
1917	Jesse Harper	6-1-1		1982	Gerry Faust	6-4-1		
1918	Knute Rockne	3-1-2		1983	Gerry Faust	7-5		Won Liberty
1919	Knute Rockne	9-0		1984	Gerry Faust	7-5		Lost Aloha
1920	Knute Rockne	9-0		1985	Gerry Faust	5-6		
1921	Knute Rockne	10-1		1986	Lou Holtz	5-6		
1922	Knute Rockne	8-1-1		1987	Lou Holtz	8-4		Lost Cotton
1923	Knute Rockne	9-1		1988	Lou Holtz	12-0	Champs	Won Fiesta
1924	Knute Rockne	10-0 Won Rose	Champs	1989	Lou Holtz	12-1		Won Orange
1925	Knute Rockne	7-2-1		1990	Lou Holtz	9-3		Lost Orange
1926	Knute Rockne	9-1		1991	Lou Holtz	10-3		Won Sugar
1927	Knute Rockne	7-1-1		1992	Lou Holtz	10-1-1		Won Cotton
1928	Knute Rockne	5-4		1993	Lou Holtz	11-1		Won Cotton
1929	Knute Rockne	9-0	Champs	1994	Lou Holtz	6-5-1		Lost Fiesta
1930	Knute Rockne	10-0	Champs	1995	Lou Holtz	9-3		Lost Orange
1931	Hunk Anderson	6-2-1		1996	Lou Holtz	8-3		
1932	Hunk Anderson	6-2-1		1997	Bob Davie	7-6		Lost indep.
1933	Hunk Anderson	3-5-1		1998	Bob Davie	9-3		Lost Gator
1934	Elmer Layden	6-3		1999	Bob Davie	5-7		

1935	Elmer Layden	7-1-1		2000	Bob Davie	9-3		Lost Fiesta
1936	Elmer Layden	6-2-1		2001	Bob Davie	5-6		
1937	Elmer Layden	6-2-1		2002	Tyr Willingham	10-3		Lost Gator
1938	Elmer Layden	8-1		2003	Ty Willingham	5-7		
1939	Elmer Layden	7-2		2004	Ty Willingham	6-5		
1940	Elmer Layden	7-2		2004	Kent Baer	0-1		Lost Insight
1941	Frank Leahy	8-0-1		2005	Charlie Weis	9-3		Lost Fiesta
1942	Frank Leahy	7-2-2		2006	Charlie Weis	10-3		Lost Sugar
1943	Frank Leahy	9-1	Champs	2007	Charlie Weis	3-9		
1944	Ed McKeever	8-2		2008	Charlie Weis	7-6		Won Hawaii
1945	Hugh Devore	7-2-1		2009	Charlie Weis	6-6		
1946	Frank Leahy	8-0-1	Champs	2010	Brian Kelly	8-5		Won Sun
1947	Frank Leahy	9-0	Champs	2011	Brian Kelly	8-5		Lost Sports
1948	Frank Leahy	9-0-1		2012	Brian Kelly	12-1		Lost BCS
1949	Frank Leahy	10-0	Champs	2013	Brian Kelly	9-4		Won Pinstripe
1950	Frank Leahy	4-4-1		2014	Brian Kelly	8-5		Won Music
1951	Frank Leahy	7-2-1		2015	Brian Kelly	10-3		Lost Fiesta
				2016	Brian Kelly	4-8		
Total: 892 Wins		314 L	42 Ties					

ND season records in 2017 and 2018 is 10-3 and 12-1 respectively

Total Games 1285

Total Wins 919

Total Losses 324

Total Ties 42 * Prior to Overtime Rules

Stats from 1887 * Through December 2018

We don't buy the NCAA having a right to take any Irish wins away.



Dedication



Because he is such a great person and a caring, dedicated physician, who keeps us well, I dedicate this book to Dr. Patrick Kerrigan, our family's doctor. 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 home town, just a few years ago, for example, he was named "Man of the Year" by the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of Greater Wilkes-Barre.

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 a 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 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 as Notre Dame Faithful, even we need the help of all Three Persons to get that oval ball past the goal line. This is the third ND book dedicated to Dr. Kerrigan. Phonetically my friends Kerrigan cares. I rest my case.

Acknowledgments:

I appreciate all the help that I received in putting this book together, along with my 206 other books from the past.

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

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

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

In this book, I received some extra special help from many avid Notre Dame supporters including Jack Lammers, Bruce Ikeda, Dennis Grimes, Gerry Rodski, Charles and Marilyn Gallagher, Joseph F. McKeown, Melvin Manhart, 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, Robert Gary Daniels, Angel Sarah Janice Daniels, Angel Punkie Daniels, Joe Kelly, Diane Kelly, Brian P. Kelly, Mike P. Kelly, Katie P. Kelly, Angel Benjamin Kelly, and Budmund (Buddy) Arthur Kelly.

References

I learned how to write creatively in Grade School at St. Boniface. I even enjoyed 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 had all citations written down in the proper sequence. Having to pay attention to details took my desire to write creatively and diminished it with busy work.

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

I wrote 206 books before this book and several hundred articles published by many magazines and newspapers and I only cite when an idea is not mine or when I am quoting, and again, I choose to cite in place, and the reader does not have to trace strange numbers through strange footnotes and back to bibliography elements that may not be readily accessible or available.

Yet, I would be kidding you, if in a book about the great championships and “almosts” in Notre Dame 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 championships in Notre Dame Football.

This book is not intended for historians but it does teach a lot of ND history. It is for regular people of all levels of intelligence. It is for

people that want to have a fun read, who like smiling when Notre Dame Football is the topic. It is for people who love Notre Dame and perhaps for some ND haters who want some more facts.

There are lots and lots of facts in this book. This book is not for sticklers about the mundane aspects of writing that often cause creative writers to lay bricks or paint houses instead of creatively write from their hearts. It's for everyday people-- you and I-- who enjoy Notre Dame. It is ND and those enjoy football because it is football. It is that simple.

When Notre Dame 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 Notre Dame negatively. Even Notre Dame does not own well-known facts that are readily available about legacies such as Knute Rockne, Frank Leahy 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.

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

I used ND Season summaries from whatever source I could to get the scores of all the games. I verified facts when possible. There are many web sites that have great information and facts. Ironically most internet stories are the same exact stories. While I was writing the book, I wrote down a bunch of Internet references that I show you below and when you finish reading this book, you may click and enjoy them.

My favorite source has been the Notre Dame Student Magazine called Scholastic which has been published almost from day one at the university. It stopped publishing football issues under its name for some reason at some point and began different publications that highlight football in the same fashion as Scholastic.

Yearly season football summaries were not included in Scholastic until 1901, so it won't help to look for 1887 articles in this magazine. Articles about football are in many of the many of the older issues of Scholastic that were published each year. As an example, in the April edition of 1931, there is major coverage of Knute Rockne's Tragic Death.

<http://scholastic.nd.edu/about/>

About

Scholastic is the student news magazine of the University of Notre Dame. Founded in 1867, Scholastic is the United States' oldest continuously running collegiate publication. In its history, Scholastic has served first as Notre Dame's weekly student newspaper and now as a monthly news magazine. Scholastic publishes an annual Football Review, printed every February. This issue recaps the Notre Dame Football season with game summaries and in-depth commentary.

Scholastic is a multiple winner of the "News Magazine of the Year" award from the Indiana Collegiate Press Association (ICPA) and the Pacemaker, a national journalism award given by the Associated Collegiate Press.

The offices of Scholastic are located in the basement of the South Dining Hall at Notre Dame, and the mailing address is 315 LaFortune Student Center, Notre Dame, IN 46556.

While I was writing this book, because I was not sure that my citations within the text would be enough, and I was not producing a bibliography, I copied URLs of areas on the Internet in which I had read articles or had downloaded material and had brought articles or pieces of articles into this book. Hopefully, this will satisfy any request for additional information. Here are the URLs used as references or used for information that I have read that helped me write the book. These are not in any particular sequence.

Notre Alumnus Magazine is a great source of information. Just pick the year and month-<http://www.archives.nd.edu/Alumnus/>

Jesse Clair Harper, The coach who hired Rockne <http://www.und.com/sports/m-footbl/spec-rel/082913aad.html>

The media guide is great for Notre Dame fans
http://grfx.cstv.com/photos/schools/nd/sports/m-footbl/auto_pdf/07fbguidehistory.pdf

Leahy papers
<http://archives.nd.edu/findaids/ead/xml/lea.xml>

Great Scholastic book from 1947
<http://archives.nd.edu/Football/Football-1947s.pdf>

Rockne
<http://www.und.com/trads/rockne.html>

Rockne Quit Job in Chemistry
https://books.google.com/books?id=1srhBwAAQBAJ&pg=PT38&lpg=PT38&dq=rockne+quit+job+in+chemistry+lab+notre+dame&source=bl&ots=eeeU6qFqJj&sig=AQoLZljPl6G2gMvuOL1UGZr6_X0&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjH3KzvsZHLAhUCPRoKHd-jCtEQ6AEIHDAA#v=onepage&q=rockne%20quit%20job%20in%20chemistry%20lab%20notre%20dame&f=false

Ara Parseghian
<http://ndnation.com/archives/3930>

Great Sports Illustrated Article on Parseghian
<http://bluegraysky.blogspot.com/2005/05/call-him-hardnose.html>

Highlights of 1964 ND v USC game---
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_1AQySWRHU

Lou Holtz introduction:
http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1985-11-28/sports/8503220538_1_football-coach-arkansas-and-minnesota-minnesota-coach-lou-holtz

National Titles:
<http://www.und.com/sports/m-footbl/archive/nd-m-fb-a-nattit.html>

Bob Davie Fired
<http://articles.latimes.com/2001/dec/03/sports/sp-10906>

All epic games in all chapters are taken from: <http://www.und.com/sports/m-footbl/spec-rel/100715aak.html>

Epitaph on Charlie Weis
<http://chicago.suntimes.com/news/7/71/805420/charlie-weis-fired-at-notre-dame-in-shortest-coaching-death-watch-ever>

1949 Scholastic
http://www.archives.nd.edu/Scholastic/VOL_0091/VOL_0091_ISSUE_0011.pdf

Archives for Scholastic Magazine
<http://www.archives.nd.edu/Scholastic/>

Preface:

"We shall always want Notre Dame men 'to-play-to win' so long as there is a Notre Dame to win cleanly according to the rules ... because Notre Dame men are reared here on the campus in this spirit and because they exemplify this spirit all over the world, they are the envy of the nation."

- Rev. John J Cavanaugh C.S.C; 14th president of the University of Notre Dame.

Indeed Father!

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. You will see how in this book in the chapters about the most recent seasons, the coach shown in a photo with his football team right behind him. He and the team have always been ready to come out of this hallowed tunnel to take the field.

Notre Dame provides this same exciting experience for its fans on what it calls Football Fridays. Every Irish fan is invited to take the opportunity for this same fabled walk that every one of the Fighting Irish players has taken for the past 80+ years.

Under its charter, the school is officially the University of Notre Dame du Lac, which means University of Our Lady of the Lake. This is a French name.

Yet, four of the priests who founded Notre Dame were of Irish descent. The school itself is in the Midwestern United States and because of its founding, it attracted mostly Catholics, and many poor Irish. The Irish were not *of means* but needed a quality education. Notre Dame represented an opportunity for poor people to gain upward mobility and the ability for anyone to make it in America.

The football program itself from day one competed under the nickname "Catholics" and for a time it was widely known as the "Ramblers." Coach Harper's and Coach Rockne's teams were often called the Rovers or the Ramblers and there were no compliments intended. ND would travel anywhere to get a game. They roamed and rambled far and wide, an uncommon practice before the advent of commercial airplanes.

These names were a brickbat on the school, which could not attract the richer schools to come on campus. It was thus an insult to the school, meaning to suggest that Notre Dame was more focused on football

than academics. Coach Rockne, who was coached by Coach Harper, had a lot of prejudice to get past while leading the "Fighting Irish."

After the 1909 game v Michigan, Sportswriter E.A. Batchelor, who had overheard ND teammates encouraging each other to fight hard because they were Irish and the team needed to fight hard to win the game, is credited with first using the moniker in the written word. University president Rev. Matthew Walsh, C.S.C., officially adopted "Fighting Irish" as the Notre Dame nickname in 1927. So, now, it is official.

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

The otherwise happy pugilistic Leprechaun is always available as the symbol for the Fighting Irish. Fans are swept in by the stories, and the tradition, and the winning ways of Notre Dame. This book reenacts many of the same emotions game and will remind all the ND faithful about why they are ND faithful.

Friday pep rallies on campus are announced a week in advance. They begin at 6:00 PM. You really should not make a trip to Notre Dame to see a game from anywhere in the country without taking in a pep rally. Meanwhile on campus, as what some may think are other pre-game vents, ND's other athletic teams--soccer, baseball, basketball, etc., and other sporting teams are playing out their seasons and often have a few seats available. This is all for you once to take in, once you hit the magnificent Notre Dame campus.

Would it not be nice if you did not always have to come to the campus to enjoy the game feeling? Since there are only six or seven pep rallies for each football season each year, many Notre Dame fans, who often attend the rallies realize there are 45 weeks in which there are no pep rallies or tunnel tours or games at Notre Dame Stadium. So, how can one get a great feeling like that of being on campus while not actually being there?

The University Bookstore is outstanding for on campus shopping and it is also as good as it gets online at <http://shop.und.com/>. You can acquire a host of relics and memorabilia and some nice ND-wear from the bookstore, plus you can buy books that are all about Notre Dame Football. I bet the store will also be pleased to sell you some great textbooks about your favorite subjects.

This new book by Brian Kelly, which highlights the Great Moments in Notre Dame Football is one of the items that is available all 52 weeks and in fact all 365 days each year. It is available in the Notre Dame

Book Store and I am hoping this new book is also. It will surely add to your Notre Dame 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 campus or not, this 500-page book brings the glory of Notre Dame football right to your bookshelf, your pocket, or right to your hands. Reading this book is like reliving the last game, the last football season, and / or all the seasons before last season without ever having to get on or off a plane.

The book examines more than just great championships. There are some times that are not so great that are shown to get the proper perspective for those great championships. Not all Notre Dame coaches, for example, are named Rockne. However, their teams were Notre Dame tough, nonetheless. That means they all fought hard for wins as the Fighting Irish. 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 Coach Brian Kelly's last win. But, unlike the Great Moments book which was updated in 2017, this book focuses on the great championships and there are many more than just thirteen. The Irish have been Irish Tough for a lot longer than they were nicknamed "The Irish!"

Yes, like all ND books, this one is written for those of us who love Notre Dame Football. The book first tells the story about Notre Dame's founding in 1842. In story-telling mode, it recounts the events leading to the first football game in 1867, and it continues to the first Notre Dame Football Game in 1887. It then advances to the first Notre Dame Football Coach in 1894, and onward to the great immortal Notre Dame Coaches of historical fame—Rockne, Leahy, Parseghian, Devine, and Holtz. What a list of great Irish championship coaches.

Predicting that another future immortal great is in our midst, the book takes us up to the current season with Coach Brian Kelly. Finally, to sum it all up, Brian Kelly, your author, caps off the experience with a unique perspective on Notre Dame that he calls Chapter 24: "Notre Dame Gives More Life to Life." You will really like Chapter 24. Brian included this chapter in this book though it has been in others because it is so "Notre Dame."

This book is all about the championships in Notre Dame Football. Yet in one way or another, it touches every aspect of the historical and mythical Notre Dame Football Teams. It tells exhilarating stories about Notre Dame's 31 coaches and its 130 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 Elmer Layden, Johnny Lujack, Paul Hornung, Bob Williams, Joe Theisman, Joe Montana, Nick Buonaconti, Joe Theisman, Jerome Bettis, Rocket Ismael, Tony Rice, Brady Quinn, Deshone Kizer, and Ian Book, and more. There's even a great story about Vince Lombardi in this book. Can you imagine if he ever coached Notre Dame in the rough times? Well, believe it or not, he 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 Notre Dame and Notre Dame Football and wants to know more about the most revered athletic program of all time. Learning about the great championships and “almosts” in a single volume is a treat that many will choose to accompany with a fine Guinness or a nice Harp. I sure shall unless of course it might be a Jameson.

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

Who is Brian “W.” Kelly?

Brian Kelly is one of the leading authors in America with this, his 207th 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. He has a vested interest in a local toxic school that you can read about from his Amazon author page.

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. They are for sale at Amazon, Kindle, and www.notredamebooks.com,

The best!

Sincerely,

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

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction to the Book.....	1
Chapter 2 The Founding of Notre Dame University.....	9
Chapter 3 Notre Dame Launches its First Football Team.....	13
Chapter 4 The Evolution of Modern Football	17
Chapter 5 Notre Dame Football – The First Seven Years	23
Chapter 6 Notre Dame Football – The Second Seven Years.....	27
Chapter 7 First 12 Notre Dame Football Seasons of the 20 th Century	31
Chapter 8 Jesse Claire Harper Notre Dame Historical Hero	43
Chapter 9 Knute Rockne Era 1918-1930	57
Chapter 10 Post Rockne: Hunk Anderson Era 1931-1933.....	83
Chapter 11 Post Rockne: Elmer Layden Era 1934-1940.....	87
Chapter 12 Frank Leahy Era—1941-1953	97
Chapter 13 Terry Brennan Era: 1954-1958	131
Chapter 14 Joe Kuharich Era: 1959-1963	141
Chapter 15 Ara Parseghian Era: 1964-1974.....	149
Chapter 16 Dan Devine Era: 1975-1980.....	183
Chapter 17 Gerry Faust Era: 1981 - 1985	203
Chapter 18 Lou Holtz Era: 1986 - 1996.....	209
Chapter 19 Bob Davie Era: 1997 – 2001.....	249
Chapter 20 Tyrone Willingham Era: 2002 – 2004.....	259
Chapter 21 Charlie Weis Era: 2005 – 2009.....	265
Chapter 22 Brian Kelly Era: 2010—.....	277
Other Books by Brian W. Kelly: (amazon.com, and Kindle)	307

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 207 books and hundreds of magazine articles. He has been a frequent speaker at technical conferences throughout the United States.

Brian was a candidate for the US Congress from Pennsylvania in 2010 and he ran for Mayor in his home town Of Wilkes-Barre in 2015. He loves Notre Dame and was an Irish fan long before some other guy with the same name came to South Bend, Indiana.

Chapter 1 Introduction to the Book

Notre Dame celebrated its 125th year.



Kelly, ND Coach Leading the Fighting Irish

In 2012, Notre Dame celebrated its 125th 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 125th anniversary game panorama picture at <http://125.nd.edu/pano/>

This book celebrates Notre Dame Football; its founding; its struggles; its greatness; and its long-lasting impact on American life. People like you and me, who love Notre Dame, will love this book.

Notre Dame haters will want their own copy just for additional ammo. Yet, it won't help them! Hah!

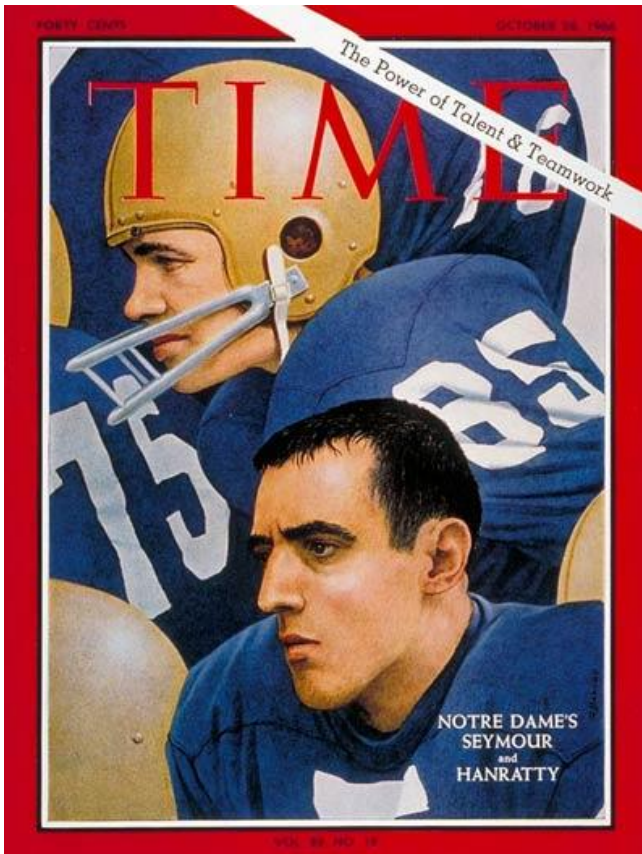


We begin the rest of the Notre Dame Story in Chapter 2 with a brief story of the founding of the ND institution and we continue in short introductory more into subsequent sections and chapters right into the founding of the football program in 1887. As hard as it is to believe, there were no ND Football Championships prior to the year the university began to play football.

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 games and the championships in Notre Dame Football History, and there are many. 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 football history that is all inclusive, because even if it can be written, it would be too big to ever be read.

I hoped this championship book would come in at a little over 2000 pages, but if it had, I could not have found a printer to print it nor would any of you have liked it. So, this is a readable book about a great football team and its championships and its almost championships. Read what you can when you can. It will be a fun experience. Honest Injun!



I capture all the great and not so great championships moments in this book.

OK, I get most of them! If I missed any and you, tell me, then we'll do a second edition.

If Notre Dame were ever to break because of a coach, as some believe it has at times, simply because it is Notre Dame, the University not only would continue, it will always continue.

Notre Dame has been able to survive a number of coaches who could not survive themselves, while the university and the football program have both grown in acceptance and popularity. The championship seasons and the “almosts” continue and they will continue even as other universities are emulating the ND tradition by investing much more in their football teams and delivering a Rockne “win” tradition to their respective institutes.

We all as individuals and as honest institutions, such as Notre Dame 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!

Let me please assure you that I have done my best to portray an accurate depiction of Notre Dame Football History, in terms of its “almosts” and its championships displayed in a properly

summarized format. In this way, none of us, fans and non-fans are reading this book forever. There are a ton of great stories for sure. More importantly, none of us should need to search much further than this book for the truth about many of the depictions displayed.

I worried from the inception of the original book project about how anybody could reduce Notre Dame to a book. I can't! Nobody can! But we can do 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 of championship seasons.

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

A big secret about writing this book has been to know that there is always more. The job has been to show things that are known already in encyclopedias, and to include facts from the vast resources of the Internet. Nobody on this project had to personally speak with Mr. Rockne 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. It was obvious and to some of us, every other word written about these times was "championship." Yes-sir-ree Bob!

I have taken the well-known Notre Dame Football History of our times and I have made it both readable and exciting, even without including every phrase, paraphrase, paragraph, sentence, conjunctive verb, or otherwise forgotten notion that may have been included in somebody else's description of events. If this book were written to be 75,000 pages, I 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?



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

My job was, and since right now I am still bringing this work about ND Great Championships together. It is 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 it otherwise could have ever been.

What reader wants to do the research in order to be fulfilled about Notre Dame history other than me? This book makes ND history, and its great moments in football history, and its exceptionally great seasons and championships exciting and real. It makes them all much easier than if the reader had to look up all this great stuff by himself. It brings Notre Dame and Notre Dame football to life for the reader. I am betting that most of these readers love Notre Dame as I do.

Instead of lots of work, we can now just sit in our easy chairs or lounges at the pool or beach and can learn and enjoy and enjoy (repetition intended) 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 face, and we'll dream about a fine story starring Rockne, Leahy, Parseghian,

Devine, Holtz, or Kelly. Of course Kelly himself like this Kelly himself will be fretting each potential play to come while we, the non Brian Kellys as coaches have the luxury of hoping Brian the coach does us well.

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 the University of Notre Dame; the beginning of football; and then the beginning of Notre Dame Football. I made sure that I got the essence and that the tales were not boring.

I took the flow of the book through periods in which there was no coach at all for the ND 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 Jesse Harper, the coach who hired Coach Knute Rockne.

Then I moved to Knute Rockne, Frank Leahy, Dan Devine, Ara Parseghian, Lou Holtz, and each and every one of the thirty-one Notre Dame Coaches in just enough measure so that we all would know their mission and their results. I made sure that we captured their best championship stories.

Eventually, as the flow took us through thirty coaches, we wound up examining a thirty-first from the year 2010. That's when Coach Brian Kelly was hired by the university. Then, I examined and wrote all about the Brian Kelly era, including next season. As I am back into Chapter 1 again, making sure I did all I said I would. I have completed the Notre Dame and the Notre Dame 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
 (On August 2, 2017 Ara Parseghian returned to the Lord. He was 94 years of age.)

Even if you choose never to take a break, I get the whole teaching job done in about 300 pages of the most enjoyable content you will ever read. It's all about Notre Dame championships and almost championships!

Coach Kelly extended the great ND coaching era right to today. I took it further as I present some recent facts such as the 2019 schedule and the recent recruiting class which looks pretty darn good for fall 2019.

Coach Brian Kelly, not the least of the greats for sure, is also not the last. I see the current coach as he directs this team, to continue to become the best of the best. And the hallowed immortals will not be able to deny Coach Kelly his claim. Let him live long and prosper!

Using this format of *enough told* to get the story told, in the rest of the chapters in this book, we examine every football season from the first in 1887 to the last, which as of today is the Brian Kelly Era's 2018 season as we approach 2019.

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 all of the Notre Dame Football Teams of the past. We chronicle the games in the seasons with championships and "almost" championships and selected other seasons. We capture the games in summary form. Some games are portrayed with great

detail after the summation because of their historical significance or to tell a great story.

Nonetheless, these 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.

Notre Dame University is proud of its history; its founding; and its founder The Very Rev. Edward Frederick Sorin, C.S.C. (1814–1893). And, of course Notre Dame is very proud of its football program, and its legacy. Notre Dame was, is and will continue to be a great university first, and a great home for the greatest football teams that God has ever created and will create.

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

Chapter 2 The Founding of Notre Dame University



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 shown in its entirety below:

"Rev. Edward Frederick Sorin, C.S.C., was a zealous missionary, pastor and true educator in the faith. He was born on Feb. 6, 1814, to Julian Sorin de la Gaulterie and Marie Anne Louise Gresland de la Margalerie in Ahuillé, France.

"Edward Sorin met Rev. Basil Moreau while he was a seminarian at the Major Seminary in Le Mans, France. Sorin was inspired by his young professor's zeal for faith

and evangelization. After he was ordained to the priesthood on May 27, 1838, Fr. Sorin joined the Auxiliary Priests that Fr. Moreau formed to preach parish missions in the fledgling Congregation of Holy Cross.

"Frs. Moreau and Sorin both possessed a missionary zeal to spread the word of God beyond France. In 1841, Fr. Sorin accepted Fr. Moreau's call to lead a group of Holy Cross religious to the United States to start a school on the frontier in Indiana. From the beginning of his mission, Fr. Sorin relied on hope, perseverance and trust in Divine Providence to light the way – and he needed to repeatedly, as the missionaries suffered from illness, a lack of funds and the general difficulties that came with serving in a fledgling community on the frontier.

"In November 1842, Fr. Sorin and six of the brothers who came to America with him from France arrived in South Bend and founded a new school, L'Universite de Notre Dame du Lac—The University of Our Lady of the Lake—honoring his devotion to the Blessed Virgin

Mary. Notre Dame educated “minims” (grammar school students), laborers, seminarians and eventually, college students. Fr. Sorin was unwavering and quite ingenious in his efforts to build up and support this new institution amidst many of the challenges that surfaced along the way.



Engraving envisioning Rev. Edward Sorin, CSC, and the founding of Notre Dame in November 1842 [the exact date is left up to interpretation, but is generally acknowledged as November 26th]. The artist is Francis Xavier Ackermann, who was a faculty member from 1890-1937.

"Notre Dame suffered several devastating fires in its early years, including one that consumed the Main Building in 1879, but Fr. Sorin, one of the original members of the “Great Band of Men,” relied on Divine Providence to find the resources necessary to rebuild each time. He faced opposition formulating the curriculum for Our Lady’s University, but remained steadfast in his belief that it was the right direction. Today Notre Dame is one of the premier Catholic universities in the world.

"As provincial superior of the Holy Cross Province in the United States and while he was still president of Notre Dame, Fr. Sorin also oversaw the mission of Holy Cross in the rest of the country during most of the latter half of the 19th century, including in New Orleans and later what would become St. Edward’s University (then St. Edward’s Academy) in Austin, Texas.

"Under his leadership, the new province grew into Ohio and Kentucky, Philadelphia, Chicago, Wisconsin, the Dakota territory, Utah, Baltimore and Washington. Ministries included parishes, orphanages and schools. While some of the ventures failed, vocations to the priesthood and religious life – both brothers and sisters – continued to expand in the United States.

"During the Civil War, Fr. Sorin answered the call to supply chaplains to the Union Army and sent a large number of sisters to work as nurses on the front. In 1864, he founded Ave Maria, a weekly journal that published for more than 100 years. Today that legacy lives on as Ave Maria Press, one of the leaders in Catholic publishing. Fr. Sorin was elected the Congregation's third superior general in July 1868 at the age of 55 and he served Holy Cross in that capacity until his death on Oct. 31, 1893, at Notre Dame."



Statue of Father Sorin on Notre Dame campus

Father Sorin was elected the superior-general of the CSC in 1868, an office which he held during the rest of his life. He was recognized within the Catholic Church and in the USA, for his work in education. The French Government conferred upon him the insignia of an Officer of Public Instruction in 1888. Five years, later Fr. Sorin closed out his life of service to God after a period of illness. He passed away on the eve of All Saints', October 31, 1893. He was Notre Dame's first champion. His personal grit and determination and grand insights are a lesson for us all. He gave us Notre Dame!

Chapter 3 Notre Dame Launches its First Football Team

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 skilful [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 Scholastic Excerpt

Teaching Notre Dame Modern Football (1887)

Originally posted Sep 4, 2013. <http://mvictors.com/teaching-them-modern-football-1887/>

Thank you to the Michigan Athletic Association for making this piece, shown in its entirety below, publicly available:

"With all the talk on the historical significance of the Michigan-Notre Dame rivalry, I'd thought I'd share a little bit on the original meeting in 1887. Women, prepare to swoon."

DeHaven and Harless

*So, you've heard that Michigan taught Notre Dame how to play this game. This is true of course, and the details of that meeting are chronicled up front in John Kryk outstanding book *Natural Enemies*.*

Kryk explains that the origins of the fateful meeting in South Bend over 125 years ago can be attributed to three men: students George DeHaven, Billy Harless and Notre Dame's prefect Patrick 'Brother Paul' Connors.



DeHaven and Harless (via the U-M Bentley Library)

In a nutshell, DeHaven and Harless were former Notre Dame students in the mid-1880s who, in 1886, enrolled at Michigan. Both were exceptional athletes and suited up for the U-M 1887 varsity football squad...aka Team 8. While at ND DeHaven had become friendly with Brother Paul, who was a popular administrator on campus and helped run the intramural athletics program. Team 8

In mid-October DeHaven wrote to Connors, shared a few details about this awesome new game and let him know they'd be heading his direction in late November. The missive caught the attention of the sports-loving Brother Paul. Brother Paul wrote back to his friend at Michigan and asked if DeHaven and Harless could convince the Wolverines to make a stop at Notre Dame, on their way to Chicago, and teach some seniors this rugby brand of football. DeHaven said he'd try, and this morsel of hope thrilled the Notre Dame campus. Eventually a date was set for meeting and a game. Michigan arrived. The next day at 11, the game commenced ND's first game.

"So, we played gently with them that day," DeHaven recalled, "...and carefully taught Notre Dame how to play modern football."

Chapter 4 The Evolution of Modern Football



Lots of playing before playing became official

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

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

On November 6, 1869, the first football game in America featured Rutgers and Princeton. Before the teams were even on the field it was being plugged as the first college football game of all time. 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.



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

At 3 p.m. the 50 combatants as well as 100 spectators gathered on the field. Most sat on a low wooden fence and watched the athletes discard their hats, coats and vests. The players used their suspenders as belts. To give a unique look, Rutgers wore scarlet-colored scarfs, which they converted into turbans. This contrasted them with the bareheaded boys from Princeton. Rutgers account of 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). It was not until the 1920's when the forward pass was legalized.

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



The Heisman

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

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

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

New formations and play sets continued to be developed by innovative coaches and their staffs. Emory Bellard from the University of Texas, developed a three-back option style offense known as the wishbone. Bear Bryant of Alabama became a preacher of the wishbone.

The strategic opposite of the wishbone is called the spread offense. Some teams have managed to adapt with the times to keep winning consistently. In the rankings of the most victorious programs, Michigan, Texas, and Notre Dame are ranked first, second, and third in total wins.

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 5 Notre Dame Football – The First Seven Years

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

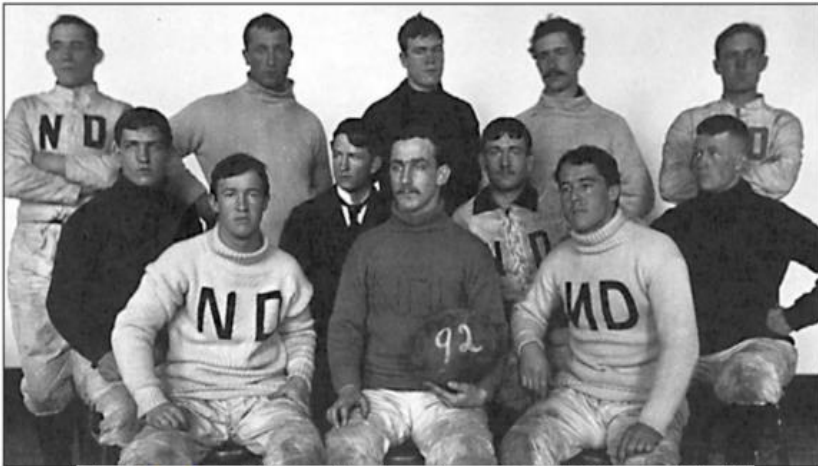
that Rockne Built." Well, the house building actually began in Norway.

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. If there were a league, 1893 may have ND's first championship season



The 1893 Fighting Irish, with almost double the number of players from 1892.
1893 Notre Dame Football Team Record 4-1

Its first four home victories were against Kalamazoo College W (34-0), Albion College W (8-6), DeLaSalle Institute W (28-0), and Hillsdale College (22-10). Then, on New Years 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!

Chapter 6 Notre Dame Football – The Second Seven Years

Finally, ND had coaches and scheduled games

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>
1894	J.L. Morison	3–1–1
1895	H.G. Hadden	3–1
1896	Frank E. Hering	4–3
1897	Frank E. Hering	4–1–1
1898	Frank E. Hering	4–2
1899	James McWeeney	6–3–1
1900	Pat O'Dea	6–3–1



1894 American Football Game

J. L. Morison ND Coach #1

If anybody finds a picture, please notify Lets Go Publish! publisher.

Notre Dame was now established both within the institution and outside with other universities as an independent football school, ready to play a full season and ready to be successful.

The University upped the ante in 1894 by reaching into its finances to hire its first football coach. J. L. T. Morrison was hired in 1894 as the University of Notre Dame's first head football coach. He resigned at the end of the season to become coach of the Hillsdale

College "Dales." More than likely, he was asked to donate more than his salary for the good of the institution. Just supposing!

Nonetheless, Notre Dame's 1894 football season was its first with a formal head coach. With Coach James L. Morison at the helm, the team record was a very respectable 3–1–1. Notre Dame had outscored its opponents by a total of 80 to 31. The team celebrated victories over Hillsdale College W (14-0), Wabash College W (30-0) and Rush Medical College W (18-6). The team also played two games against Albion College T (6-6). L (12-19) ending in one tie and one loss. Another championship caliber year.

H.G. Hadden ND Coach # 2

If anybody finds a picture, please notify Lets Go Publish! publisher.

In 1895, Coach H.G. Hadden took over from Coach Morison and handled the Notre Dame Football squad. Like Morison, Hadden lasted just one year. His team compiled a 3–1 record and overall did quite well, considering all the changes it was experiencing. ND outscored its opponents by 70 to 20. All games were at home in South Bend. The team played Northwestern Law School W (20-0); the Illinois Cycling Club W (18-2); and the Indianapolis Light Artillery L (0-18), and the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Chicago W (32-0). The only loss was in the third game to the Indianapolis Light Artillery. ND was closing in on an undefeated team.

1896 Frank E. Hering ND Coach # 3



Finally, with the 1896 team, Notre Dame had found a coach who would stay more than just one year. To do this, the university promised the coaching job to Frank E. Hering, who was also a player on the team. But, he was a bona fide coach—even paid for coaching. In 1896, he became the team's captain and coach. ND compiled a 4–3 record. In the process, it shut out four opponents, and outscored its opponents by a total of 182 to 50. All of its

games were played on the campus of Notre Dame.

On the way to its successful season, the team beat South Bend Athletic Club W (46–0), Albion College W (24–0), W Highland Views (82–0), and Beloit College W (8–0). It also lost three games to the College of Physicians & Surgeons W (0–4), Chicago L (0–18), and Purdue L (22–28). This was not a championship caliber team.

1897 Frank Hering

With former captain and Coach Frank E Hering again at the helm, the 1897 Notre Dame football team enjoyed its second season with Frank E. Hering as coach. The ND squad compiled a 4–1–1 record by shutting out four opponents, tying another and getting a real dousing from Chicago. The team did well in scoring. In fact, ND outscored all opponents by a combined total of 165 to 40.

ND defeated DePauw University W (4–0), Chicago Dental Infirmary W (62–0), St. Viator College W (60–0), and Michigan Agricultural College W (34–6). Notre Dame also tied Rush Medical College T (0-0), and lost handily to the University of Chicago L (5–34).

Every year it seemed at least one team would appear on the schedule that made it difficult for ND to finish the season undefeated.

1898 Frank Hering

In 1898, for the third year in a row, Coach Frank E Hering took the Notre Dame team to a successful season. His team compiled a 4–2 record. In so doing the squad shut out four opponents, and outscored all opponents by a whopping total of 155 to 34.

The teams defeated included Illinois W (5–0), DePauw W (32–0), Michigan Agricultural W (53–0), and Albion W (60–0). Notre Dame was again playing Michigan and did not fare too bad in a 0–23 loss. ND also was defeated by Indiana L (5–11). In many ways, we see the beginning of the Big Ten teams playing Notre Dame. It had been some time since Notre Dame had played Michigan but things were about to change.

1899 James McWeeney ND Coach # 4

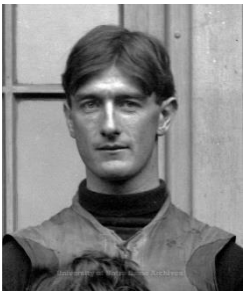
If anybody finds a picture, please notify Lets Go Publish! publisher.

Frank Hering coached ND for the first five games of **1899** when the Notre Dame Football team turned over to Coach James McWeeney for the rest of the season. McWeeney was known as being abrasive and it may have had its effect on the morale of the team.

He did fine but stayed just half of one year as coach. His team along with the games coached by Hering compiled a 6–3–1 record. This was the most wins ever for Notre Dame and the most games played by a Notre Dame squad to that point. Football surely had become for real at Notre Dame.

In 1899, Notre Dame shut out five opponents, and outscored all opponents by a combined total of 169 to 55. They defeated Englewood High School, W (29-5), Lake Forest, W (38-0), Michigan Agricultural W (40–0), Indiana W (17–0), Rush W (17-0) and Northwestern W (12–0). They tied Purdue T (10–10), and lost to Amos Alonzo Stag's Chicago team L (6-23), Michigan L (0–12), and also the Chicago Physicians and Surgeons by L (0-5). The Michigan losses were by fewer and fewer scores. Soon Notre Dame was due to win a game from Michigan.

1900 Pat O'Dea ND Coach # 5



The 1900 Notre Dame football team was coached by first-year coach Pat O'Dea. McWeeney had signed up as assistant but his abrasive nature did not sit well with O'Dea and he did not last the full 1900 season. In its first season with Pat O'Dea as coach, ND compiled a 6–3–1 record. The squad shut out six opponents, and it outscored all opponents by a total of 261 to 73. The victories included Cincinnati W (58–0), Rush Medical College W (5–0), College of Physicians & Surgeons W (5–0). Additionally, the Fighting Irish tied Beloit T (6–6), and lost to Indiana L (0–6), Wisconsin L (0–54), and Michigan L (0–7). The Michigan victories were closer and closer to becoming wins for Notre Dame. Soon there would be championships.

Chapter 7 First Twelve Notre Dame Football Seasons of the 20th Century

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



1903 Notre Dame football team- The Shutout Season

1901 – 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).

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. In 1901, the Scholastic a great publication of and by Students at Notre Dame began to take a deep interest in football and their reporting over time has been excellent. Please enjoy the following excerpt, written by J. Patrick O'Reilly. It was originally published in the Nov. 23, 1901 issue of Scholastic, the Notre Dame University student magazine.

"Nine rahs for Coach O'Dea, Captain Fortin, and the moleskin heroes who struggled so nobly for the Gold and Blue; and on last Saturday won for us the championship of Indiana. For the first time in years, the much-mooted question of supremacy among the Indiana colleges has been satisfactorily settled, Notre Dame winning a clear title by defeating both Purdue and Indiana. The "Big Three" fight aroused great enthusiasm, and the race for the title was closely followed by every football enthusiast in the State.

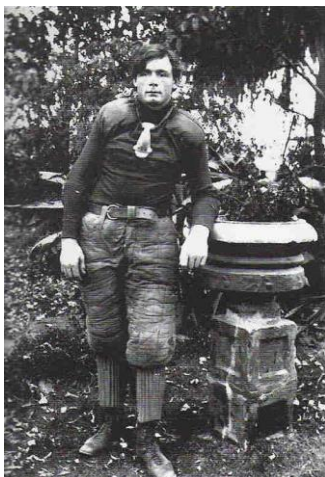
"Despite the drizzling rain which had fallen all morning, the field was in the best of shape. The two elevens were in splendid condition; about equally matched in weight, and both determined to win. The crowd was one of the largest and most enthusiastic of the year, and the rooting was of a high order. All in all, every requisite for a good game was present.

"The game was one of the fiercest and cleanest ever seen on Cartier Field. There was no unnecessary roughness, and although every inch of ground was desperately contested, the officials were obliged to inflict penalties but twice. On the defensive, the State representatives displayed a stubborn resistance, but they were unable to impede the progress of our speedy backs, and their offensive tactics availed nothing against our impregnable line and alert ends, never retaining the ball longer than two or three downs. Their only touchdown was in the nature of a fluke, Foster securing the ball on a fumble during a scrimmage, and sprinting thirty yards to Notre Dame's goal while our men were extricating themselves from the heap. In marked contrast to

Indiana's poor work was the brilliant defense and offense of our men. The linemen charged well and several times broke through and stopped plays behind the line. Sammon, Doran, Kirby and McGlew were irresistible on the offensive.

"Sammon won new laurels by his sensational fifty-five yard run through a crowded field. His line-bucking and punting were very much in evidence all through the game, and he established himself as a hero with the rooters, but he was not the only one. Pick's fearless tackling and work at center; McGlew's clever interfering and accurate passing, and the superb defense of the linemen. Gillen, Farragher, Winter and Capt. Fortin made the hearts of the rooters dance with joy. Doran and Kirby crashed and plunged through and round Indiana's line, making five and ten yards on every attempt, while their work on interference was the best of the season. Lins, Lonergan and Nyere, at the ends, were down the field on every punt and generally nailed the main in his tracks. Foster, Clevenger and Elfers were Indiana's stars. Clevenger and Foster tackled well and were in every play and under every rush."

1902 & 1903 James Farragher Coach # 6

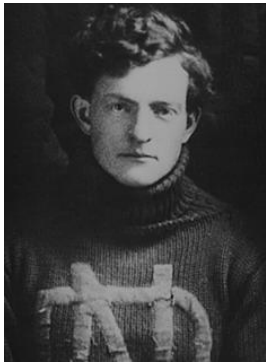


First year Coach James Farragher took over the coaching duties for the 1902 Notre Dame football season. In his first season, Farragher's team went 6–2–1 and outscored all opponents by a total of 203 to 51. In compiling its 6-2-1 record, the team defeated Michigan Agricultural W (33–0), Indiana W (11–5), and DePauw W (22–0), and it enjoyed three other victories. Notre Dame tied Purdue (6–6), and lost to Michigan L (0–23) and Knox L (5–12).

In his second year as coach, Farragher's 1903 Notre Dame Football team had a great year with an 8–0–1 record. The Fighting Irish were at their best and they shut out every opponent, and outscored all opponents by a combined total of 291 to 0. Along the way, the team defeated Michigan State W (12-0), Lake Forest W (28-0), DePauw W (56-0), American Medical W (52-0), Chicago Physicians & Surgeons, W (46-0), Missouri Osteopaths W (28-0) Ohio Medical University W (35-0), and Wabash W (34-0). Notre Dame also played Northwestern to a scoreless tie T (0-0). The

defense was obviously at its best the whole season. The offense was led by Louis "Red" Salmon and Frank Shaughnessy with a massive 291 points scored. The following year "Red" Salmon would take over as coach for just one year

1904 Louis "Red" Salmon Coach # 7



In his first and only year as Notre Dame coach, Louis "Red" Salmon took the 1904 Notre Dame football team to a 5–3 record. It was not one of the best seasons for Notre Dame and their new coach. They were outscored by opponents by a combined total of 127 to 94. They had some good moments during the season when the team defeated Wabash W (12–4), Ohio Medical W (17–5), and DePauw W (10–0). However, they lost to Wisconsin (0–58), Kansas (5–24), and Purdue (0–36).

1905 Henry J. McGlew Coach # 8

The 1905 Notre Dame Football team was coached by Henry J. McGlew. The team compiled a 5–4 record and despite its mediocre record, Notre Dame outscored its opponents by a combined total of 312 to 80. The Fighting Irish defeated Michigan Agricultural W (28–0), American Medical W (142–0), and DePauw W (71–0), but lost to Wisconsin L (0–21), Indiana L (5–22), and Purdue L (0–32).

The American Medical game was on Oct. 28, 1905. Notre Dame turned in its greatest offensive performance of all-time, defeating American College of Medicine and Surgery of Chicago, 142-0. The Fighting Irish scored 27 touchdowns, and the game was called after 33 minutes of play, meaning the offense averaged 4.3 points per minute.

1906 Thomas Barry Coach # 9

The 1906 Notre Dame football team was coached by another first-year coach, Thomas Barry. Barry coached the team to a 6-1 record with wins against Franklin W (26–0), Hillsdale W (17-0), Chicago Physicians & Surgeons W (28–0), Michigan Agricultural W (5–0),

Purdue W (2-0), and Beloit W (29-0). Additionally, ND was defeated by Indiana L (0-12)



This season was the first played under the authority of the IAAUS (now known as the NCAA) and the first in which the forward pass was permitted. There were no national champions declared. Though two teams that had won all nine of their games -- the Princeton Tigers and the Yale Bulldogs were looked upon as the best. The Tigers and Bulldogs played to a T (0-0) tie to end the season. This was a great ND season.

1907 Thomas Barry Coach # 9

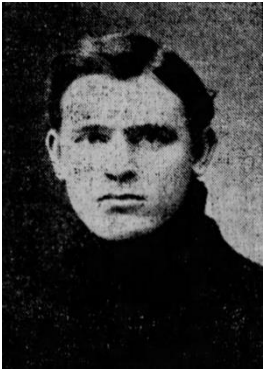
Thomas Barry again coached Notre Dame in the 1907 Notre Dame College football season. The team won six games again; had no losses and one tie. The wins were against Chicago Physicians & Surgeons W (32-0), Franklin W (23-0), Olivet, W (22-4), Knox W (22-4), Purdue W (17-0), St. Vincent's, W (21-12). The team also played a tie game against Indiana, T (0-0).

Deadly Injuries was of deep concern to the IAAUS. In 1907, the forward pass was used more extensively after being legalized the year before. Despite what some called "debrutalization" reforms, an unprecedented eleven players were killed (9 high school and 2 college). Ninety-Eight others were seriously injured. Yale had the best record that year (10-0-1). Again, no clear national champion was named but this was as good a season as it gets..

1908 Victor M. Place Coach # 10

Victor M. Place became coach of ND in 1908 and directed the team to an 8-1 highly successful football season. Notre dame secured victories against Hillsdale W (39-0), Franklin W (64-0), Chicago Physicians & Surgeons W (88-0), Ohio Northern W (58-4), Indiana W (11-0), Wabash W (8-4), St. Viator W (46-0), and Marquette W (6-0). Always having trouble with rival Michigan, Notre Dame lost

the game L (6-12). It was the only loss of an otherwise great championship caliber season.



<<< Victor M. Place The Penn Quakers and the Harvard Crimson both finished the season unbeaten, each with a tie. The LSU Tigers went unbeaten and untied against weaker opposition. Nonetheless all three teams were declared national champions retroactively by various organizations. Only Pennsylvania's Quakers officially claimed a true national championship for the 1908 season.

In December 1908, Notre Dame had been playing football for twenty-two years. The first mention of football in the Scholastic was in 1901, eight years prior.

Note from President Theodore Roosevelt in ND Scholastic:

Athletic sports, if followed properly, and not elevated into a fetish, are admirable for developing character, besides bestowing upon the participants an invaluable fund of health and strength.

Theodore Roosevelt. North American Review, August 1890.

1909 Frank Longman Coach # 11



In 1909 Frank Longman took the coaching reins and directed Notre Dame to a 7–0–1 season. The Fighting Irish football team's wins were against the following teams: Olivet W (58-0), Rose Poly W (60-11), Michigan Agricultural W (17-0), Pittsburgh W (6-0), Michigan W (11-3), Miami of Ohio W (46-0) and Wabash, W (38-0). Notre dame also played Marquette at

the end of the season to a 0-0 tie, spoiling the opportunity for a perfect untied, unbeaten season.

During this 1909 IAAUS football season, the first 3-point field goal was kicked. They had previously been worth four points. Football deaths continued despite attempts to make the game safer. 1909 was one of the most dangerous seasons in the history of college football. Ten players were killed and 38 seriously injured in 1909. This was up from six fatalities and 14 "maimings," in 1909. Schools in the Midwest competed in the Western Conference became known as the Big Ten. Notre Dame did not join. The teams at the time included Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Northwestern, Purdue, Wisconsin and Chicago.

1909 Frank Longman Coach # 11

In 1910, Frank Longman continued as Notre Dame coach as the fighting Irish played a somewhat reduced schedule. Their record was 4-1-1 which included home victories at Olivet W (48-0), Buchtel W (51-0), and Ohio Northern W (47-0). The Irish also defeated Rose Poly W (41-3) in Terre Haute, IN, lost to Michigan Agricultural at East Lansing, MI L (0-17), and tied Marquette in Milwaukee W (5-5). ND had a championship-like season.

In 1910, the association became known as the NCAA and again, there was no clear-cut champion in Division I football.

From the Notre Dame Scholastic Magazine, December 1910

The [1910] Season and the Men.

By ARTHUR HUGHES, II. {Athletic Editor, Scholastic}.

The football season for the year 1910 was not as propitious as was the season of 1909. Last year Notre Dame closed the season Champions of the West. This year she failed in this respect. There were six games played. Out of this number were four victories, one tie game and one defeat. The defeat was suffered at the hands of the Michigan Aggies. Marquette played us to a 5-5 tie on Thanksgiving Day and we vanquished Olivet, Buchtell, Rose Poly and Ohio Northern. Not a great amount of honor was won through our victories, for the teams defeated were vastly our inferiors in every way as the large scores indicate. In the Michigan Aggies' game at Lansing the team for some reason failed to play up to its standard, and as a result the M. A. C. men played havoc with ever}- department of the Notre Dame representation. Michigan's cancellation of the Notre Dame game made it impossible for the team to show its strength and ability when playing in its usual form, for there

is no doubt whatever but our men would have put forth a far better struggle than they did the week previous at Lansing. The men felt the sting which was administered by the Aggies, and they put in the following week working like demons in order to show their real strength at Ann Arbor. The game with Marquette brought out the ability and power of the team, for in that game ever)'- man in the line-up gave an exhibition which astonished the local fans and spectators at Milwaukee.

Last year the material for a championship team was a great deal more in evidence than was the case this season. While the men got out and fought hard for positions there were not the number of heavy, experienced men in the squad; and it is this that makes teams which get into the first page with their accomplishments. In addition to this, the absence of Billy Ryan and Don Hamilton proved a big factor in weakening the team. Had not Ryan's bad knee and Hamilton's being declared ineligible kept these men out of the game there might have been a different story to relate after the Michigan Aggies' contest. With the end came the close of the football careers of six men on the team: Joe Collins, Ralph Dimmick, George Philbrook, Lee Matthews, Luke Kelley, and John Duffy. The first five of these men were players on last year's team, and they have bade farewell to a branch of athletic sports in which they stood among the best.

1911 John L Marks Coach # 12

The 1911 Notre Dame coach was John L. Marks. 1911 was an undefeated season with two ties—6–0–2. Marks would last just two years. The eight-game 1911 schedule featured little glamor but the Fighting Irish were happy to play. In 1911, the games were against Ohio Northern at home, W (32-6), At St. Viator W (43-0), At Butler W (27-0), Loyola (Chicago) W (80-0), at Pittsburgh T (0-0) and St. Bonaventure at home W (34-0), at Wabash, 6-3, at Marquette T (0-0). Notre Dame out-scored them 216-6. The Big Ten biggies decided to stay away from Notre Dame as they did not want to get beat by such an "inferior team."

According to Murray Sperber, author of the 1993 book, "Shake Down the Thunder: The Creation of Notre Dame Football," the football program netted a loss of \$2,367 dollars, and the total deficit in the athletic department that academic year was \$6,472. Notre Dame had little money but an awful lot of heart. Would athletics last at Notre Dame was the question of the day.

1912 John L Marks Coach # 12

In 2012, Notre Dame's John L. Marks in his second season delivering an undefeated and untied 7-0 season... the first. But, there was little room for a major celebration. With the apparent boycott from Big Ten teams that did not want to get beaten by teeny Notre Dame, this 2012 season was less appealing than 2011. The best that ND could do with such a low budget and the disdain of the Midwestern Universities was to add a few local schools such as Adrian and Morris Harvey. But, the ND team played well and won anyway.

The games included St. Viator at Cartier Field W (116-7), at Adrian W (74-7), at Morris Harvey W (39-0), Wabash at home W (41-6), at Pittsburgh W (3-0), at St. Louis W (47-7), at Marquette W 69-0).



1912 Notre Dame Football Team John L. Marks, Coach

Fitting tribute to the team of 1912 as written in the Scholastic:

The Season Just Closed. by

William E. Cotter 'Class of 12, (Manager of Athletics).

Success is intoxicating. And to one intimately associated with those responsible for the successes of the past football season, a review is apt to contain indications of intoxicating influences. Success of the highest grade came to the Notre Dame team of 1912. If the following record of the team's work appears to abound in superlatives, the excusing cause is that nothing less than superlatives can adequately express the conquests of the season.
Hailed

Hailed as one of the two or three teams possessing any logical claim to the Western Championship in football; with a record of seven games and seven victories. during the season; • with a total of 389 points scored on opposing elevens against 27 points tallied by opponents; with the championship of Indiana conceded even by prejudiced observers; with our captain recognized as one of the best since the days of Eckersall, Coy, Heston, and Steffen, and our fullback the almost unanimous choice of football experts of the West for the All-Western team; with five Notre Dame men nominated for the All-Indiana team and almost as many picked for second All-Western elevens by a number of different authorities—with all this as the result of the 1912 season, is there any reason why we should not feel triumphant over the work of our football warriors?

With the- exception of the- championship year of 1909, Notre Dame has never had reason to feel so proud over the gridiron efforts of her sons, as during the past season. In many respects, the 1912 season has been more successful than that of 1909. Recognition, long withheld, has been granted in a manner that stamps Notre Dame as one of the football leaders of the West. A foundation has been established in public opinion upon which future teams may build high and strong, secure in the knowledge that 1912 affords the basis for the highest efforts.

In seeking the secret of the season's returns one is confronted by a variety of causes, all of which are deserving of a share of praise. The personal influence of Coach Marks and the willing aid rendered by his assistants, Philbrook and Dunbar; the example afforded by Captain Dorais and the other veterans who labored indefatigably to perfect the 1912 machine; the loyal strivings of the "scrubs" who bore up under daily scrimmages that meant daily punishments in order that the Varsity might gain strength by their offerings; and the spirit of the students which manifested itself this year in a manner never before beheld at Notre Dame—all of these elements were potent factors in bringing about our success. Not alone to "good football" in the technical sense must our success be credited—loyalty, good sportsmanship, perfect harmony in the squad, willingness to sacrifice personal advancement for the welfare of the team combined to bring to the players of this season the honor that is theirs and to reflect upon their Alma Mater the glory that is hers.

Coach Marks is deserving of more than passing, mention. A Dartmouth player of the present generation, and hailed as one of the best backs in the country during his three years in the eastern school, Marks brought to Notre Dame all the football knowledge the East afforded. Interested solely in the welfare of the team, and sincerely earnest in his desire to develop an eleven worthy of the material at hand, the coach brought out all the strength of all the candidates. His unassuming earnestness won the good will of the players, and his confidence in their ability inspired performances worthy of any team in the land.

Assistant coaches Dunbar and Philbrook rendered splendid service in the drilling of the line, and their work in connection with the second team merits no small credit, because of the important part played by the "scrubs " in strengthening the Varsity.

...

The Marquette game at Chicago, Thanksgiving Day, provided a fitting end for the football year. Victories over the University of Pittsburg, St. Louis University, and Wabash College heralded a conquest in the closing contest, but not even the most sanguine Gold and Blue follower hoped for the decisive result that ended the three-year tie existing between Marquette and Notre Dame. In Chicago, St. Louis, and Pittsburg our alumni showed their loyalty to Notre Dame in a manner that will be long remembered by the members of the team. Not until • we leave the University can we truly appreciate the love borne by her sons for all associated with her advancement in any field.

Only two members of the 1912 team will be graduated-this year, and the nucleus of experienced players that promises to be here on the field in 1913 insures an eleven that is certain to repeat this year's successes. Crowley and-Rockne are: the men who will go from us in June. • Both have given their best to the "teams of the past three years, and both have -won high honors on the gridiron. All-Indiana nominations -were won by them last season, and this same honor this year, with the additional honor of selection for several All-Western second teams; brings recognition which will give life to the memory of two of the best ends ever developed at Notre Dame.

All said, the year of 1912 will go down in Notre Dame football history as among the most successful ever recorded. We have been fighting against misinterpretation for the past four or five seasons, and so were denied an opportunity to meet our logical opponents. The brighter day that we have been looking for is about to dawn, we feel sure, and Notre Dame will soon come into her own.

The Short Story of a Successful Season.

ND 116	St. Viator College,	7
ND 74	Adrian • College,	7
ND 39	Morris -Harvey Col,	0
ND 41	Wabash College	6
ND 3	Pittsburg University,	7
ND 47	St. Louis University,	7
ND 69	Marquette Univ.,	0

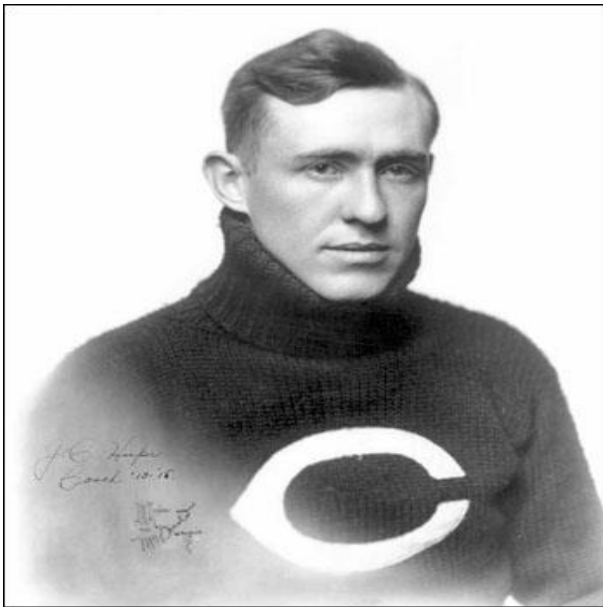
Total 389

27

Chapter 8 Jesse Claire Harper A Big Time Notre Dame Historical Hero

Coach # 13

1913	Jesse Harper	7-0
1914	Jesse Harper	6-2
1915	Jesse Harper	7-1
1916	Jesse Harper	8-1
1917	Jesse Harper	6-1-1



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.

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. Stagg thought Harper was tops.

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.

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). That is a championship season even without a conference.

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 so that its wins meant more.

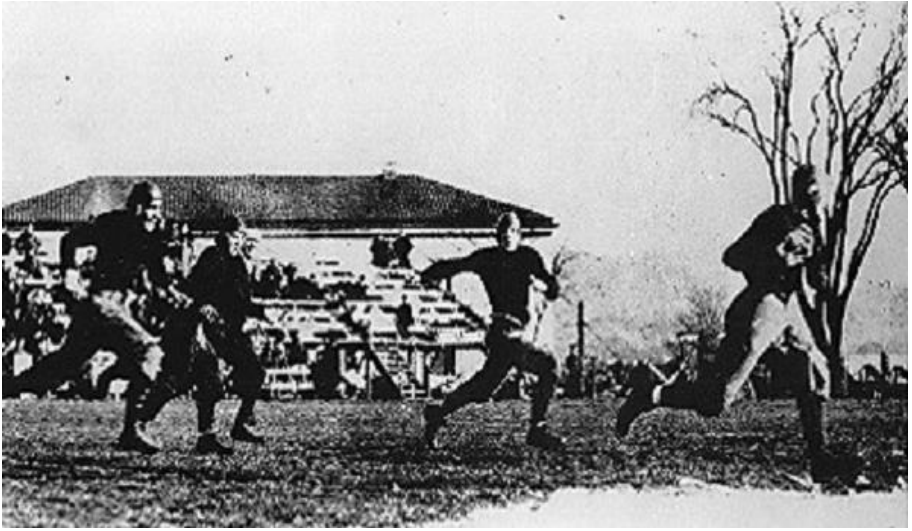
Jesse Harper enjoyed his time with Notre Dame and he helped the University until he retired in 1917. During his tenure, the Irish stopped playing high schools and trade schools and began playing only intercollegiate games. The Fighting Irish record was admirable with a record of 34 wins, five losses,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

Two major factors combined to make the 1913 meeting with Army possible. Army had been stiffed by Yale. 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 even more shunned by the Big Ten. The Big Ten had formed in 1896 and nobody in the BIG Ten wanted to be beat by a little team.



1913 ND v Army

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.

1913 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Jesse Harper

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 Pennsylvania this year, and by 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 at 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 tackler. 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.

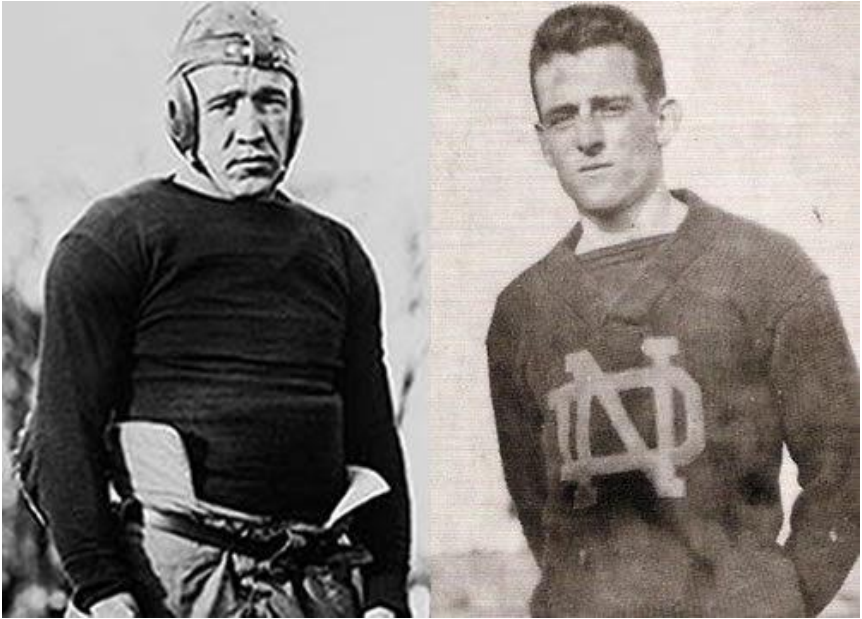
Dorais was particularly brilliant in his open field running in the Penn game, returning punts from twenty to thirty-five yards regularly, and once he caught the ball on the thirty-yard line and carried it the length of the field—dodging practically every member of the Penn team—for a touchdown, only 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 day, making the score 14 to 7, where it remained till the end of the game.

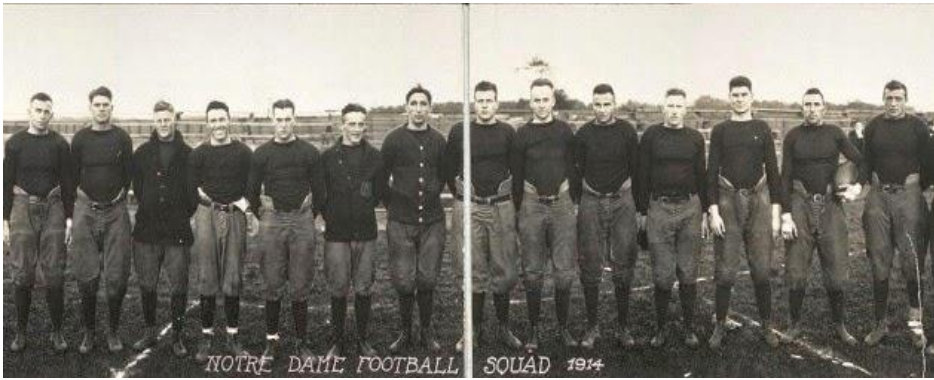


Knute Rockne, End & Gus Dorais, QB for Jesse Harper 1913

1914 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Jesse Harper

By 1914, Harper had signed even more great teams to road games. Yale was # 1 in the national rankings at the time. ND played Yale at Yale in 1914 but lost L (28-0). Yale had a much better passing scheme than the Fighting Irish, a fact that did not go unnoticed by Harper, an astute coach like Rockne.

ND also played Syracuse on Turkey day at Syracuse and won that game W (20-0). The Fighting Irish have recently renewed their series with Syracuse and are scheduled to play on October 10, 2016 at Met Life Stadium in NJ to accommodate a better crowd.



Knute Rockne graduated in Chemistry from Notre Dame. We will discuss him in detail in the next chapter. Rockne considered going to medical school in St. Louis but he loved football so much that he stayed at Notre Dame to teach chemistry and serve as Harper's assistant. You and I know that even without testimony, Knute Rockne was influenced very positively by Jesse Harper.

The Harper 1914 team record was 6-2 with home wins over Alma W (56-0), Rose Poly, W (103-0), and Haskel W (21-7), The Irish won three away games at South Dakota W (33-0), Carlisle, @ Comiskey Park in Chicago W (48-6), and Syracuse in Archbald Stadium at Syracuse W (20-0). The Irish also suffered two big losses -- Yale at the Yale Bowl in New Haven L (0-28), and Army at West Point, NY L (7-20).

1915 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Jesse Harper

The 1915 team record was 7-2 with home wins over Alma W (32-0), Haskel W (134-0), and South Dakota W (6-0), The Irish won four away games at Army W (7-0), Creighton in Omaha W (41-0) Texas at Austin W (36-7) and Rice at Houston TX W (55-2)

The Irish also suffered one very close loss the first time the Irish met the Nebraska Cornhuskers at Nebraska Field in Lincoln, NE L (19-20).

1916 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Jesse Harper

The 1916 team record was 8-1 with home wins over Case W (48-0), Haskel W (25-0), Wabash W (60-0) and Alma South Dakota W (6-0), The Irish won four away games at Army W (7-0), Creighton in

Omaha W (46-0). Away victories were Western Reserve at Cleveland W (48-0) South Dakota in Sioux Falls W (21-0), Michigan Agricultural in East Lansing W (14-0) Additionally ND picked up its first win on the road ever against the Nebraska Cornhuskers at Nebraska Field in Lincoln, NE W (20-0) Unfortunately the one loss in this 8-1 season came against the Black Knights of Army right in the middle of the season, game 5. On November 4, Notre Dame traveled to West Point and lost L (10-30) against Army.

1917 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Jesse Harper

The 1917 team record represented Jesse Clair Harper's last season with Notre Dame. The Fighting Irish were 6-1-1 with home wins against Kalamazoo W 55-0), South Dakota W (40-0), and Michigan Agricultural W (23-0) The three away wins included Army W (7-2), Morningdale in Sioux City, IA W (13-0) and Washington & Jefferson in Washington, PA W (3-0). They had one loss, which was against the Nebraska Cornhuskers at Nebraska Field in Lincoln, NE L (0-7). The Irish also tied Wisconsin at Camp Randall Stadium in Madison Wisconsin on October 13 T (0-0).

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.

As noted previously, Army needed a game and Notre Dame was willing to travel. Harper was not the only ND coach that had to travel to play Army. In fact, until the 1947 game, Notre Dame's long list of great coaches after Harper agreed to travel every year from 1913 to 1946. Army was home every game.

Playing Army was a real coup and it is fun to recount. The meeting arrangements against powerhouse Army had begun during the spring of 1912. Jesse Harper was the varsity baseball coach. The Notre Dame baseball team had made a successful excursion along the East Coast. From May 9-22, 1912.



Coach Jesse Harper & ND Player Knute Rockne

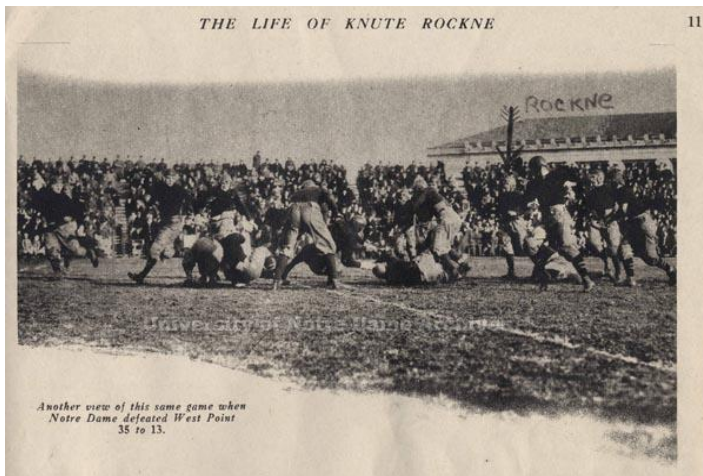
Harper was finishing up at Wabash until the end of the 2012-2013 Academic year but it did not stop him from writing and writing and writing to schools looking for games. As Harper would go out on baseball game trips where he met a lot of football managers and athletic directors and he put the squeeze on them to play ND in football. It was not easy back then.

The Army Cadet (Black Knights) football manager at the time was Harold Loomis. He got his letter from Harper to schedule a contest as soon as possible. Loomis was ready. He offered Harper \$600 to come to West Point. Unfortunately, the train ride would cost about \$1000 for the Train tickets to transport all 18 members of the traveling squad the 875 miles to West Point. Harper asked for full expenses from Loomis. Loomis reluctantly agreed to pay the \$1000 for the 24-hour train ride from South Bend. Army agreed to a Nov. 1, 1913 game, and offered Harper the \$600 revenue guarantee but as noted upped the ante to \$1000.00

was a two-time, first-team All-American at West Point in 1916-1917, and entered the College Football Hall of Fame in 1955.

Army's recruiting practices finally grated on the Naval Academy so badly that in the late 1920s, Navy refused to play Army. How about that for some great half-time trivia at the next ND game? Navy would not play Army!

The trip to West Point cost \$917, and so ND had in fact made an \$83 profit. Using the Alan Shepard quote as a basis to describe this phenomenon, we would characterize ND playing Army as "one small step for Notre Dame ... one giant leap toward helping brand its name, especially with the stunning W (35-13) victory."



As noted above, even later in November, Notre Dame would add a great cap to its season with victories at Penn State W (14-7), at Christian Brothers in St. Louis W (20-7) and at Texas W (30-7) to finish 7-0. Because of the great work of Jesse Harper, Notre Dame's football program was literally and figuratively ahead of schedule.

Jesse Harper waited until June 2018 to turn in his resignation. It was not like today. ND was not worried about coaches / recruit signing days and such. Why did Harper wait so long to turn in his resignation as the ND head Football Coach? The answer is simple. His job for the year was not finished. He was not only the football coach; the basketball coach, baseball coach and the Athletic Director. Today each of these positions has one or several people operating within the positions. Harper was heading back to the family farm in Kansas. Can it be said that after five years of holding four jobs, Harper was worn out and needed a break?

Chapter 9 Knute Rockne Era 1918-1930

Coach # 14

Three Consensus National Championships 1924, 1929, 1930; Five undefeated and untied seasons!

A Great Record

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?

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. The team played just six games with a record of 3-1-2.

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 Knute Rockne legacy was only beginning to begin.



Coach Rockne and ND Players

Here is a perspective from the December 1918 edition of the ND Student Newspaper, Scholastic. This was Rockne's inaugural season and things were not so good but he had the abilities of a great coach,

trained by Jesse Harper with his own God-given talents, and he persevered and made it all OK:

From Scholastic, December 1918

Notre Dame Football, 1918. A thing is considered a success if the results are commensurate with the time and energy expended. This fall the Notre Dame football team had but little time for practice, but used up myriads of units of energy. What have the men of the team to show for this? First of all, they have played a man's game well. In addition, they have learned to think; they have forged friendships which will last throughout their lives; and they have developed loyalty, a loyalty to a mother University which can come only from fighting for her. To the football squad for their successful work of the season the University gives homage. •

After spending the summer at Fort Sheridan Coach Rockne returned for the opening practice in the middle of September. The prospect was only fair. Vohs, Powers, Bader, Hoar, Kennedy, Dooley, and Brandy, men-on whom he had been depending, were all commissioned at Fort Sheridan [WW I]. The loss of these experienced players was a severe one, but the coach went ahead cheerfully to build a team from almost entirely new timber. Gipp, Bahan, Stine, and Smith were the old men back, and their work, was later the salvation of the team. The rescinding of the freshman rule made every college student in the University eligible, and with this as an impetus the squad began to grow by leaps and bounds. Before the inauguration of the S. A. T. C. there were more than eighty men out in uniform. Most of these were boys just out of high school.

Practicing twice a day until the formation of the Army units, the squad improved rapidly. Daily scrimmages began to bring out good men, and left the team for the Case game at Cleveland in good condition. •. Case was defeated 26 to 6. This game showed the coach just where the defects in team play were and also who was who in the personnel. Gipp and Bahan were the stars in the backfield; but what was most pleasing to the coach was the stonewall defense of the line. "While the play, as a whole, was more or less crude, it was a team of—possibilities. Their "come-back" in the second half [of the CASE game] showed that they had the make-up of a typical Notre Dame eleven.

With the mobilization of the S. A. T. C. practice was greatly restricted, but the boys worked with a will and showed steady improvement. Then began that series of disappointments which for a while threatened to overwhelm athletics in general. The Educational Committee of the War Department forbade long trips and the dreaded influenza began to make its presence felt. The West Point and the Washington and Jefferson games were cancelled and

the Nebraska game moved back to the 2nd of November. With the scheduling of the great Pier game of Chicago and Camp Custer things began to readjust themselves. On Saturday, October 19, the Pier team made their appearance in South Bend, but there was no game. The influenza epidemic was at its height, and as the medical authorities thought it best to prohibit gatherings of any sort, the game was cancelled. The game with Camp Custer was also called off. Football practice itself was even prohibited for a few days. Some days later the situation was so much better that the epidemic ban was lifted.

1919 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne Championship

Championships at the time were determined by various groups independently. Some championships were awarded retroactively when the bodies went back to non-covered years and made logical determinations of who was the best etc.

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 for years after college football got its start.

As noted, when the various 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 Championship

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 18th'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 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 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?

1921 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne Almost Championship

The 1921 Notre Dame Fighting 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 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

Illionois won the hypothetical National Championship in 1923. The 1923 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team under Coach Knute Rockne had another great season with a 9-1 record. 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 last several 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 **Championship**

The 1924 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Knute Rockne. ND was undefeated and intied and the won the national championship uncontested with a 10-0 record. 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 and a great championship.

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. University officials put a moratorium on bowl appearances. 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 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).



Notre Dame's Four Horsemen Hamming it UP!



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.

1925 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne

The 1925 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team, coached by Knute Rockne felt the loss of key players (the Four Horsemen). Though showing a respectable record of 7 wins, two losses, and one tie, the team was rebuilding from their consensus national championship of 1924. The Tie was played T (0-0) against Penn State in its new Beaver Field in University Park. The first loss L (0-27) was against Army at Yankee Stadium in the Bronx while 65,000 watched on. The second loss was delivered by Rockne's nemesis Nebraska at Lincoln. The Irish were shut out by a score of L (0-17).

In the Win column at home, Notre Dame collected Baylor W (41-0); Lombard W (69-0); Beloit W (19-3), Carnegie Tech W (26-0), W (19-7), and Georgia Tech W (13-0).

1926 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne "Almost" Championship

The 1926 Notre Dame Football Season under Coach Knute Rockne was fought hard and done very well. Their record was 9-1. 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.

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 for 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.

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)

1927 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne Championship

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 did 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

The 1928 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was Knute Rockne's 11th season. It was the toughest, and least productive season since Rockne had become coach in 1918. With a 5-4 record, the team was barely above 500 percent for the first time ever. The losses this season came both in home games and in away. The one home loss was against Carnegie Teach L (7-27). The three away losses began on October 6, in the second game. It was against Wisconsin L (6-22), followed by October 20 at Georgia Tech (L 0-13) and December 1 at rival USC L (14-27) before 72,632 screaming fans at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum.

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.

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.

1929 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne Championship

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 record was 9-0. They were undefeated and untied and 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).

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 Championship

The 1930 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached for the 13th year by Knute Rockne. No coach prior to this had ever coached so many consecutive years at Notre Dame. 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 **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!*

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:

310

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.

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 MEMORIAM



Tribute Picture from the April Edition of ND Scholastic Student Magazine

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."

Here are some more thoughts about the feelings at Notre Dame just several weeks after Rockne's death. They are taken from the same April issue of Scholastic. They surely touch the heart:

The April edition of The Scholastic put together this edition as usual but it was far from usual. Even the writers were affected, and the writers not specifically assigned to the Rockne story had an even more difficult task in writing their every week articles about life at ND. Many of the Student Paper's pages were dedicated to paying tribute to a man that many, if not all of the people in this college community truly loved and admired:

From Scholastic

It has often been said that Time is the great healer of all wounds. Perhaps, but the wound that Notre Dame has suffered by the death of her most loved man will never be healed completely. Even now, after the nation has partially recovered from the passing of one of its greatest citizens, it is hard to realize what the loss of "Rock" means to us all.

Notre Dame without Rockne ... the United States without Rockne. What does it mean? We hardly know, yet. The thousands of telegrams and letters received by the University are only partially indicative of the grief felt by the entire nation. It "mattered not whether the newsboys in San Francisco or New York or Florida knew "Rock" personally; he was a friend to everyone and they loved him.

We at Notre Dame were closer to Rockne than anyone else; his very appearance on the campus made the world look brighter; his kind face, his soft smile, his cheery hello gave a thrill to all who spoke to "Rock." And no

one was ever intentionally snubbed. Rockne was that kind of a man—"a man's man."

Father O'Hara received a letter from the father of a crippled boy, who last year asked for a photograph of Rockne and got it, personally autographed. The little fellow heard the announcement of the air crash over the radio. He turned the radio off. When his father came home, his small son—with tears in his eyes, asked: "Daddy, will there be a Notre Dame now?" That is typical of the question asked by millions, young and old. And the only answer to the question is: "There will be a Notre Dame, a greater Notre Dame, because the spirit of the man-who made Notre Dame famous will inspire her sons to greater heights, will drive them on to preserve the high ideals which their leader always advocated, because "'Rock" will be watching, guiding, and praying for them to "carry on" where he left off—at the pinnacle of success."

We shall remember Rockne because he wanted us to do the right things in the right way. Always clean, always fair, always fighting for the highest things in life. That was Rockne.



A picture of Rockne's funeral at the Basilica

Catholics are very lucky people. We believe in an afterlife and we believe that our lives are guided by Jesus Christ, our savior and by his mother Mary. So, we have a cushion to lie on at death and that is the understanding of a rewarding afterlife. When I knew of Father

O'Donnell's words regarding Knute Rockne, I did not find them in this article or this particular edition of the marvelously well-done Scholastic, the Student newspaper.

I used the most powerful search engines and eventually I found the words, very reverent and very poignant, and very tough to hear for those who loved the "Rock." Yet, the words were soothing and good as we all know that in God's plan some bad things come to good people, and the rest of us must gain, not lose, when this happens. Father O'Donnell's message in this holy recount of the Rockne funeral is presented here to help us all who feel for the loss of Notre Dame family and the Rockne family in 1931.

Father O'Donnell's Comments:

This piece is from <http://faith.nd.edu/>

The specific link which I found is:

<http://faith.nd.edu/s/1210/faith/interior.aspx?sid=1210&gid=609&calcid=32056&calpgid=15918&pgid=15920&crid=0I>

Each year, the Basilica holds funerals for deceased alumni and for members of the Holy Cross community of priests and brothers. The most famous funeral in the Basilica happened in 1931.

When famed football coach Knute Rockne died in a plane crash on March 31 of that year, the Notre Dame community was crushed. The students had lost a pillar of their community, and were overwhelmed with sorrow and grief. They packed hall chapels and organized campus-wide prayer.

News of his plane crash captivated the country. The funeral was broadcasted on radio nationwide and loudspeakers were attached to the exterior of Sacred Heart Church for the thousands who gathered outside. The entire city of South Bend came to a standstill.

Rockne was buried on April 3, Holy Saturday, with a rosary in his hands. In his eulogy, University President Father Charles O'Donnell, C.S.C., said that Rockne loved his neighbor with "genuine, deep love":

"He was quite elementarily human and Christian, giving himself, spending himself like water, not for himself, but for others... he cast away to the deep, he has lost his life to find it.

"He might have gone to any university in the land and been gladly received and forever cherished there, but he chose Our

Lady's school, Notre Dame. He honored her in his life as a student, he honored her in the monogram he earned and wore. He honored the ideals he set up in the lives of the young men under his care. He was her own true son.

"To her we turn in this hour of anguish and of broken hopes and hearts laid waste. She is the Mother of God, and Mother of God's men, we give him into thy keeping. Mary, Gate of Heaven, we come to thee, open to receive him. Mary, Morning Star, shine upon his sea. Mary of Notre Dame, take him into thy house of gold. Our life, our sweetness— (and here, Father O'Donnell's voice broke with a hoarse, choking sob so that it was difficult for him to finish the sentence) our hope, we lay him in thy bosom."

REQUIESCAT IN PACEM: That is how the coach who survived the 1925 conversion to Catholicism would have heard our final tribute to him: RIP Rest in Peace.

Please Lord, give Coach Rockne a fine place with the stars as he has helped many of your people be stars on earth. And, so it ends!

Chapter 10 Post Rockne: Hunk Anderson Era 1931-1933

Coach # 15

Not too bad after 2 championships in a row

1931	Hunk Anderson	6-2-1
1932	Hunk Anderson	6-2-1
1933	Hunk Anderson	3-5-1

Hunk Anderson started off OK as ND coach.



Heartley "Hunk" Anderson Coach 1931-1933

1931 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Hunk Anderson

The 1931 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team, coached by Hunk Anderson in his first year 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.

So, let's talk about the tie first. In its second game of the 1931 season, the Fighting Irish endured its first blemish. Northwestern came into a game at Soldier Field with all the emotion that playing before an attendance of 65,000 could bring. They were playing the two-time National Champions. Their guts were churning. They wanted this victory against Notre Dame but they were denied. Nobody could mount an offense and the game ended in a T (0-0) tie.

Still Notre Dame had no losses. After its three home wins against Indiana W (25-0), Drake W (63-0), and Pittsburgh W (25-12, in game # 6 ND claimed a nice home victory against Penn W (49-0). After the Northwestern tie, the away game successes began and ND felt that they would continue. In game 5, October 31, Notre Dame defeated Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh W (19-0), and then Navy Nov. 14th in Baltimore W (20-0). ND had six wins, one tie and no losses going into the end of the season. Things quickly changed.

USC came into South Bend and they were never looking for anything but a victory against rival ND. They got their victory in a close game L (14-16) in Notre Dame's first loss in the House that Rockne Built. It was devastating. But the bad news was not over.

On November 28, archrival Army, always one of the finest competitors the Irish would meet, a team that had never played Notre Dame as an away game, went into Yankee Stadium ready to win. Army beat Notre Dame L (12-0) at Yankee Stadium before a crowd of 78,559. It was a good season but not a great Rockne Season. Rockne was gone.

1932 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Hunk Anderson

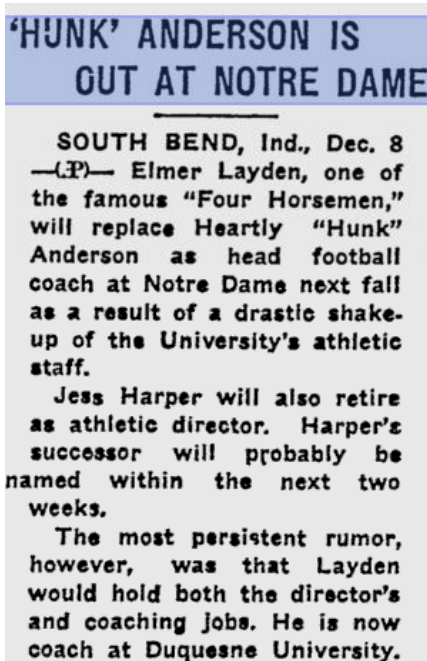
The 1932 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team with second-year coach Hunk Anderson finished the season with seven wins and two losses (7-2). This was the second football season since the passing of Knute Rockne in a shocking accident and it brought Hunk's team the pride of being ranked # 4 in the Country.

1933 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Hunk Anderson

The 1933 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team with third year coach Hunk Anderson, finished the season with three wins, five losses, and one tie. It was Notre Dame's worst season ever and the fans were expecting a new coach for 1934. It goes without saying that this year's Fighting Irish were unranked.

Summary of the "Hunk" Anderson Years:

There is a notion that when a person is looking for a top job, such as CEO, they can leverage their opportunity for success by coming after (meaning after in time) somebody who has done a poor job; was incompetent, miserable, could not get along with people, and that most people in the company would be tickled if the old guy had left lots sooner.



The worst scenario for success is when the old guy is terrific; has great business acumen, great results, a great personality, and everybody loves the guy and are sorry to see him gone. Though everybody from new coaching prospects, alumni, the CSC Fathers,

and the Notre Dame faithful knew that nobody would be able to replace Rockne and succeed, somebody still had to gain the appointment for the job.

In the 13 Rockne years, Notre Dame had been taken from a school in which most of its coaches lasted no more than three years to a university in which the last coach not only lasted thirteen years, he was at the top of his game for almost every one of those years. Not only that but he had three recognized national championships and five unbeaten and untied seasons including one in his last time out.

The notion that "Success breeds success" may not be the proper analogy but a derivative of that does apply: "Success breeds the demand for success." At Notre Dame, post Rockne, there was little room for failure and there was no apparent hesitation to oust unsuccessful Rockne successors. It can be called the downside of a winning culture.

Chapter 11 Post Rockne: Elmer Layden Era 1934-1940

Coach # 16

Elmer Layden, New ND Coach

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



Head coach Elmer Layden (left) had a sterling .770 winning percentage but left after seven seasons when no national title was produced.

Look at Elmer Layden's record. Remember, he was one of Rockne's Four Horsemen. What a fine record!

Here is an intro article noting Layden's signing at Notre Dame

Thanks again to the Chicago Tribune

<http://archives.chicagotribune.com/1933/12/10/page/29/article/1ayden-signs-contract-as-notre-dame-coach-director#text>

Layden Signs Contract as ND Coach & Athletic Director

The University of Notre Dame broke its silence on the football coaching situation and from this came the appointment of Elmer Layden, coach of Duquesne university at Pittsburgh, as director of athletics and head football coach. Layden will take up his duties on Feb. 1, 1934

As director, Layden, one of the famous Four Horsemen of Notre Dame's In 1924, succeeds Jesse Harper, one time coach of all four major sports at Notre Dame, who took over the post of director for the second time upon the death of his former pupil. Knute Rockne, in 1931.

As football coach, Layden succeeds Heartly (Hunk] Anderson, who has directed the destinies of the Irish football team since the season of 1931.

Signs in Indianapolis.

Confirmation of Layden's appointment and the resignation of Anderson and Harper came from the Rev. Charles L. O'Donnell, president of the university, during a brief visit in Chicago; from an announcement released at the office of the Rev. John F. O'Hara, vice president, in South Bend; and from a conference between Father O'Hara and Layden in Indianapolis, where Layden formally signed a two year contract which placed him at the head of what is generally recognized as the greatest collegiate athletic activity in the country.

At the same time, Father O'Hara announced that Joe Boland, reserve tackle on the 1924 Notre Dame team on which Layden starred and until recently coach at St. Thomas college in Minnesota, had been appointed as assistant to the new coach. -No other assistants have been named.

Neither Father O'Hara nor Layden would discuss the salary terms under which Layden returns to his alma mater.

"That part is sacred to the persons concerned," Father O Hara said.

It is understood, however, that the consideration is in the neighborhood of \$10,000 for his first year in both positions.

Release Sealed Statement.

The official statement announcing the changes in the athletic administration at the university was left with his secretary by Father O'Hara before his departure from South Bend on Friday to meet Layden at Indianapolis. It had been held in a sealed envelope and was to have been released late yesterday afternoon, but after the conference between the vice president and the new coach, it was made public. It follows:

" The University of Notre Dame has accepted the resignations of Jesse Harper and Heartly Anderson as athletic director and head football coach and has signed Elmer Layden for a contract that covers both positions. The university also has approved the selection of Joseph Boland as assistant football coach.

"In accepting these resignations, the university wishes to pay high tribute to the men who, three years ago, on the tragic death of Knute Rockne, assumed the very difficult task of carrying on his work.

Rockne's Methods Unique.

For Mr. Harper, it meant perfecting a new organization. Knute Rockne was a keen business man, but his methods were unique. Mr. Harper installed a new and very efficient system for the direction of athletics at Notre Dame. This is deeply appreciated by the university, and will be by Mr. Harper's successor.

Mr., Anderson threw his whole soul into the work he inherited from his old teacher, and he brought to it not only a great knowledge of football but a remarkable devotion and loyalty as well, No alumnus of the university was ever more honest and sincere.

"It is with great regret that Notre Dame bids farewell to these two men whose service has carried her over a critical period in

an extra-curricular activity which commands much public attention."

Father O'Hara vigorously denied "reports that negotiations had been opened with Joe Bach, Layden's present assistant at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, or with Mal Elward, assistant to Noble Kizer at Purdue."

The status of the present Notre Dame Freshman coaches has not been taken under consideration as yet, Father O'Hara said.

"We have no need for freshmen coaches until next fall, since the present freshmen will work under the varsity coaches in spring practice," he said. "There is still plenty of time to take care of these positions."

...

Layden Good Leader.

Layden is taking over the biggest, if not the hardest, coaching job in the country. Notre Dame football teams have been making history since 1913 when Harper brought the name of the Irish into the headlines throughout the country by placing on the field, an eleven which upset a powerful Army largely through the use of a marvelous passing combination of Gus Dorais and Knute Rockne, which pioneered the pass in the east. Since then, under first Harper, then Rockne, and lastly Anderson, Irish teams have been the most consistently successful of any teams in the United States.

Layden was one of the brightest of the Notre Dame stars of a decade ago. As a fullback who weighed only 160 pounds he was considered the greatest offensive threat in the four horsemen back field and its greatest defensive player. After graduation in 1921, he played one year of professional football in the south and then coached for one season at Columbia college in Dubuque, IA. He went to Duquesne in 1927 and has had better than average success with the football teams there, where his qualities of leadership were even more highly appreciated than his coaching abilities. ...

1934 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Elmer Layden

With Elmer Layden, the fullback in the famous 1924 Four Horsemen ND backfield, as the head coach of the 1934 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team, Notre Dame was able to pick itself up, dust itself off and come back roaring and fighting for excellence. Having gone through a miserable 3-5-1 season, the Irish were ready to win some football games. But, the good feelings would not be back after the first game. The team finished at 6-3.

The Irish started the season with a disappointing loss to Texas at home L (6-7), spoiling Layden's first crack at Notre Dame coaching fame.

1935 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Elmer Layden

The 1935 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Elmer Layden. The Irish finished the season at 7-1-1. No Championship. Notre Dame's only loss of the season came on November 9 at Notre Dame Stadium against Northwestern. The score was close but the Irish lost L (7-14).

1936 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Elmer Layden

The 1936 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Elmer Layden in his third season. Notre Dame began the season very strong with three home wins at Notre Dame Stadium and finished with a 6-2-1 record and earned a national rank in the AP of # 8.

1937 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Elmer Layden

The 1937 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team, coached by Elmer Layden with Joe Zwiers as captain compiled a record of 6-2-1 and for this effort, they were selected as the AP's #9 ranked team.

1938 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Elmer Layden

In 1938 with Jim McGoldrick as its Captain and Elmer Layden at the Helm, the Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team looked like it was going to have an undefeated and untied season until the final

game at the University of Southern California. The game was played in Los Angeles at the huge Coliseum.

The Irish were undefeated and untied going into the game. USC, always a spoiler did it again. The Irish lost in this last game of the 1938 college football season L (0-13). For its great 8-1 season, ND was ranked # 5 by the Associated Press (AP) when all was said and done.

1939 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Elmer Layden

The 1939 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team finished (7-2) but started off undefeated for its first six games. Captain Johnny Kelly led Elmer Layden's team and it looked for a while that this would be another championship season for ND before the Irish traveled to Iowa on November 16. Iowa's Hawkeyes beat the Irish in a close match L (6-7). Notre Dame played its season finale at home against rival nemesis USC, and the Trojans again defeated Notre Dame L (12-20).



1939 Notre Dame v Navy in Cleveland's Municipal Stadium

Navy team captain Alan Bergner leads the way for Navy's all-out effort against Notre Dame. The game ended in a close win for ND and a disappointing 14-7 loss for the Middies.

1940 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Elmer Layden

1940 ND captain Milt Piepul was the player charged with leading Elmer Layden's seventh and last Notre Dame Fighting Irish team in the 1940 season. The team had another great season finishing 7 wins, 2 losses with no ties. There was no championship.

The Fighting Irish were ranked # 2 at mid-season but after a close game at Navy and losses in two games in a row, the 10-6 victory in Los Angeles against USC did not help in bringing Notre Dame into the national rankings.

Notes about Elmer Layden

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 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.

He would not have been fired because he succeeded an OK coach, Hunk Anderson. He did not immediately succeed Knute Rockne, an outstanding coach. Either way, Layden was a fine coach.

Elmer Layden Steps Down.

This piece is taken from:

Notre Dame Alumnus Magazine March 1941.

This section reflects the words as printed in the *Alumnus Magazine* with very light editing.

On February 4, 1941, Elmer Layden, LL.B. '25, Notre Dame Director of Athletics and Head Football Coach since 1934, resigned his post to accept the newly created post of Commissioner for Professional Football, at an announced salary of \$20,000 per year. Layden signed a five-year contract. Frank Leahy, B.S. in Phy. Ed. in 1931, for the past two years, head coach of the Boston College football team, was announced on February 15 as the successor to the post vacated by Layden.

Alumni hardly require details of the latest Notre Dame shift. Papers, magazines, moving pictures hastened through their various channels to elaborate the succinct and startling scoops that rolled from the national radios during this historic eleven days. Significant to alumni are several points. First, Elmer Layden leaves a remarkably fine record written in words as well as in figures. His seven seasons produced 47 victories, 13 defeats, and three ties, against a schedule that grew in intensity under his guiding hand. [47-13-3]

Attendance steadily reflected a continued national admiration for Notre Dame football. These are figures, and vital ones at Notre Dame. But even deeper, and more vital, was the widespread good will, the genuine admiration which Layden won personally and which Notre Dame shared. Old rivalries were preserved in a spirit of healthy competition, tempered with manifest sportsmanship and mutual respect and admiration.

New competitors appeared on the schedules over the seven seasons, and in the several seasons ahead, opening new vistas of interest and influence for Notre Dame and Notre Dame followers. Nor should the work done in his capacity as director of athletics, in the promotion of a balanced program of major and minor sports, varsity and intra-mural schedules, and the general welfare and interests of the students in all forms of athletics, be omitted in this brief summary of Elmer's crowded Notre Dame career. Second in significance, Notre Dame retains its conviction that the Notre Dame system of football, so integral a part of the Rockne Tradition, is still self-sustaining.

In all the speculation of the short interim between resignation and appointment, it was simply a question of which one of the many outstanding Notre Dame coaches would be selected. As usual, the Board in Control of Athletics weighed the arguments carefully, if rapidly. The result has been followed by nation-wide acclaim.

Frank Leahy was the type of student and athlete in which the campus has always taken particular pride. Success, and he had that in a great era — the '29 and '30 undefeated teams — made him no more known or liked than the period when injuries kept him out of the game. He was a combination of serious student, rugged player, and pleasant companion. Off the field and on the field, his influence was good, and consistent.

Frank is immediately limelighted by his spectacular success at Boston College, which was climaxed by his team's victory over Tennessee in the 1940 Sugar Bowl. But the two years of his ascendancy in the Boston school were, characteristically, prefaced by years of hard work on the fundamentals of his profession, first as line coach for Tommy Mills (now director of the Rockne Memorial) at Georgetown, and then as line coach with Jimmy Crowley, first at Michigan State, and then at Fordham. His success at Boston College, for those who had followed his work, was merely the added revelation of a great personality in this young man whose coaching ability had long been outstanding in the major leagues of the sport.

A five-year contract with Boston College, signed the day before Elmer's resignation was announced, was, by mutual action, set aside in favor of the obvious logic of Leahy's succession to the Layden post at Notre Dame.

Third in alumni interest is perhaps the disposition of the assistants involved in the shift. The splendid staff of Notre Dame men, with whom Elmer Layden had worked at Notre Dame was, in the nature of Layden's move, automatically disbanded in one sense. Their ability makes the nature of this state temporary at most. Joe Boland, '27, for example, has already been signed with Mal Elward as assistant coach at Purdue University, and the next ALUNUS Magazine expects to announce new connections for the remaining members of the staff, Chet Grant, Bill Cemey, and Joe Benda.

Leahy's loyalty to his own assistants has been a growing tradition in the two short years at Boston, as has their loyalty to him. And the record speaks for itself as to the efficacy of the foursome. Ed McKeever, assistant to Leahy, is himself a Notre Dame man, 1929-32, who left N.D. to finish his college work and to play football at Texas Tech. Line coaches Johnny Druze and Joe McArdle are Fordham graduates, products of Leahy's own line-coaching of the Blocks of-Granite era. McKeever reported at Notre Dame on March 1, and Leahy was expected March 7, as this issue of the ALUMNUS goes to press.

Elmer Layden will continue to occupy his home, under present plans, on Ironwood Drive, South Bend, until the children finish school in June. He

will open an office in Chicago in April, and Mrs. Layden and the family expect to move to Chicago during the summer.

Alumni regard the record of Elmer Layden as a personal tribute to his ability and a definite contribution to the athletic and general welfare of Notre Dame. By the same token, alumni welcome his successor not as a stranger, but as a fellow-alumnus who, like Elmer, will without question, win new personal laurels, and at the same time continue to preserve and to promote the phase of Notre Dame which, more than any other, has won the University a loyal nation-wide and uncounted following.

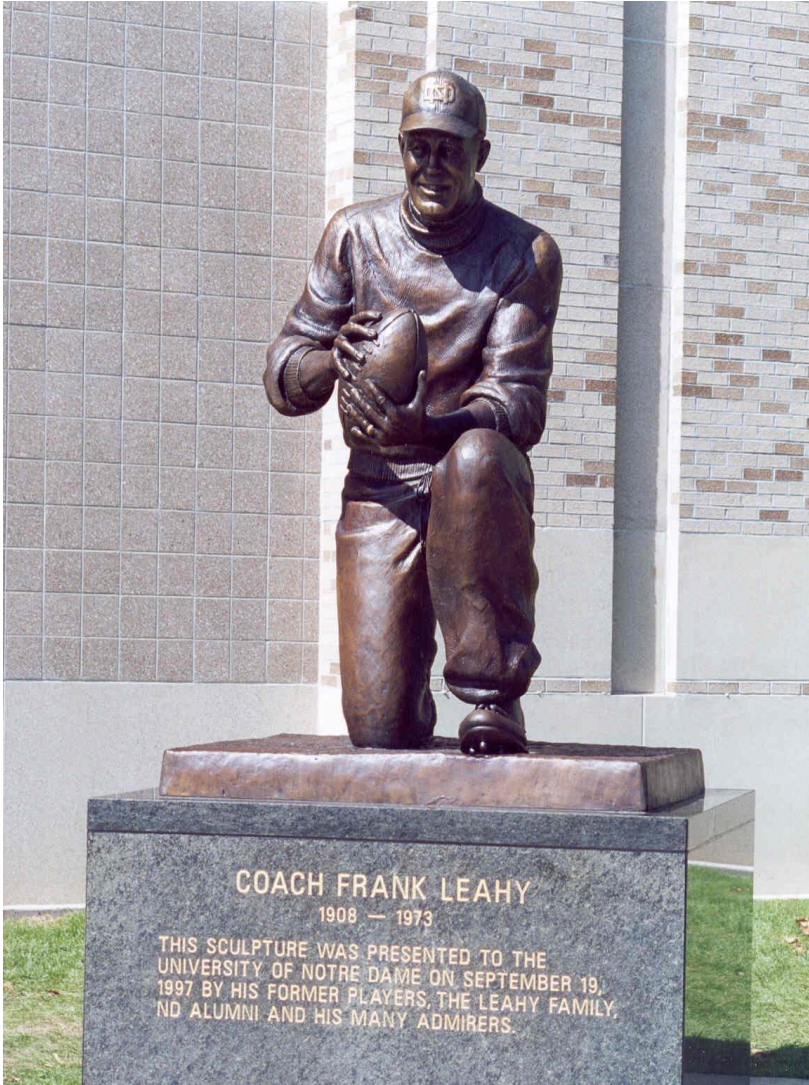
The Notre Dame tradition definitely wins.

Elmer leaves for new worlds to conquer, but remains a part of it. Frank Leahy comes to it, not a stranger, but himself already a part of it.

Chapter 12 Frank Leahy Era—1941-1953

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**

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.

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 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 a loving family and the many friends who loved him, even though for most of his life, he was a workaholic.

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. They 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 it 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 him as an iron-man coach!

I did not know him personally but I would have liked to have met him. 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 Frank Leahy's today for sure. !

1941 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy “Almost” Championship

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 was 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 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 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.

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.

1942 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

The 1942 Fighting Irish football team was coached by Frank Leahy in his second season with the Irish. Leahy was already a successful Notre Dame coach with his 1941 team. At # 6 in the AP rankings at the end of the season, the (7-2-2) 1942 team also received much acclaim. Leahy was a natural coach in the order of other Notre Dame greats. The 1942 Notre Dame football and those Leahy coached until 1953 responded well to his great coaching talents.

1943 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy Championship

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.

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 ago when I told him about this 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:

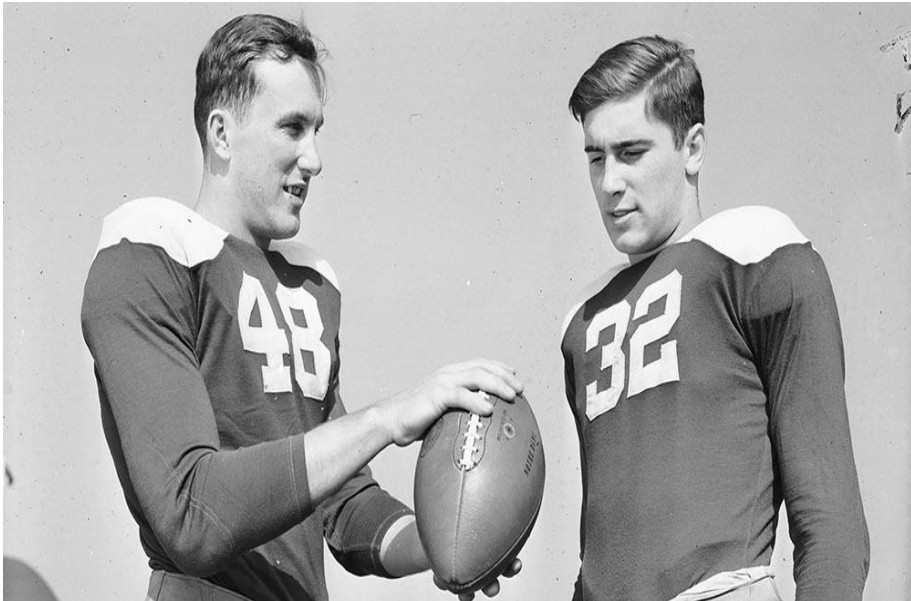
"My HS coach was Tom Potter who played guard behind two All-Americans, Marty Wendell and Jim Martin. He was a HS fullback from NJ who was switched to guard when he got there. Colleges rarely recruit HS guards but rather big fullbacks (Mike Munchak) and quick tackles. He played on the 46 and 47 teams 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

On Nov. 1 during the 1943 season, after leading Notre Dame to a 6-0 record, QB Bertelli got his military orders and he departed for officer's training school in Parris Island, S.C. Johnny Lujack filled in more than capably to finish the national title run.



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 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 had a great team.

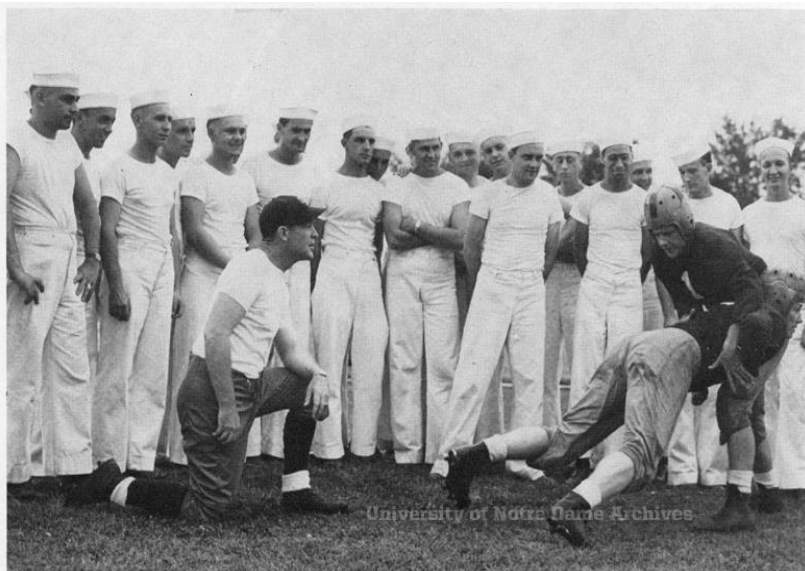
This 9-1 season ended with a defeat L (14-19) by the Great Lakes Bluejackets, on a "Hail Mary" touchdown pass. Notre Dame pundits like to ask if this were "the one way any school named after Our Lady should never lose -- with 33 seconds remaining." --A Hail Mary Pass--

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

1944 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Edward McKeever



Coach Edward McKeever ND 1944

Without Frank Leahy, Notre Dame fell to an 8-2 record which was still pretty good but not championship caliber. Since Frank Leahy and a number of the coaching staff joined the Navy after the 1943 Championship Season, Notre Dame asked Edward McKeever to coach the 1944 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team. McKeever had attended Notre Dame from 1930-1931 and transferred to Texas Tech, where he played football from 1932-1934. McKeever had been a very successful backfield coach in 1935 through 1938.

McKeever guided the Irish to a very nice 8-2 season and a ninth-place finish in the AP final poll.

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 the armed services. 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 No. 5, coming off the 32-13 loss to Navy. The Army squad was being led by Glenn Davis and Doc Blanchard. 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 ranked No. 9 in the nation.

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."

1945 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Hugh Devore

Hugh Devore coached the 1945 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team to a **7-2-1 record**. It was his one season as interim coach while the Irish were awaiting the return of Lieutenant Frank Leahy from



active duty. Devore had graduated from Notre Dame in 1934. He had played end and was Irish co-captain as a senior. He stayed at Notre Dame as freshman coach under Elmer Layden for one year before he moved on and held various coaching positions.

Devore, shown on left with his best buddy, came back to Notre Dame in 1943 as Frank Leahy's end coach and left after his interim head coaching assignment in 1946. He held numerous head coaching

positions at highly rated schools and was assistant coach for the Green Bay Packers in 1953 and head coach for the Philadelphia Eagles. In 1958 he returned to Notre Dame as Terry Brennan's freshman coach and assistant athletic director and he remained on the staff when Joe Kuharich took over the following year.

1946 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy Championship

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 is 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 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. That's a lame basis for the claim, but Georgia won all their games by more than a TD, and they were a worthy contender for the MNC, let's look within this article.



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.

10-0 Delaware and 11-0 Hardin-Simmons, however, were not MNC contenders. UCLA "coulda beena contenda, "finishing the regular season 10-0, but they were embarrassed by 8-2 Illinois 45-14 in the Rose Bowl. This was the first year the Big 10 (actually Big 9 at this time) started sending its champion to the Rose Bowl annually, and the first bowl game for any Big 10 team since the 1920 season.

...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.

Army Trivia

The Army football team had been called the Black Knights of the Hudson by some sportswriters as far back as the 1920's or 1930's. The team has also been known as the Cadets. Early on, they were mostly called the Black Knights but I noticed in the research for this famous Army-Notre Dame game, that many sports writers in 1946 were using the term Cadets. For years, it was up to the sportswriter to choose whichever name they felt better with – Cadets or Black Knights.

In early 2000, Army announced that it was dropping the Cadets moniker and were moving solely to Black Knights. They also changed the mule and "A" logo to something that better matched a Knight. In 2015, because of renewed branding concerns, the Black Knights name was almost abandoned and the Cadets name was about to be back in—but things changed. Additionally, Army or West Point is no longer supposed to be referred to as Army. It's Army West Point now. We'll see how all this works out. Branding only sticks if it works.

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). Notre Dame chose not to play in Bowl games at the time.

1947 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy Championship

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 standard uncontested 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 any more—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.

Home victories included Nebraska W (31-0), Iowa W (21-0), Army W (27-7), and Tulane W (59-6). The Army home game was the first ever against Army at Notre Dame. From 1913, for 33 games, almost every season, all games were played at an Army-designated field such as Yankee Stadium. Army finally agreed to play Notre Dame at Notre Dame.

The Fighting Irish were on the road for two games before their Nebraska home game W (31-0). The Irish defeated Pittsburgh (40-6) and Purdue (22-7) and after these home games the team played Navy in Cleveland before 84,070 fans W (27-0), and then Army at home W (27-7). Then came Northwestern W (26-19). After the Tulane game at home W (59-6), the Irish were off to Southern California against USC before 104,953. The Irish won against USC W (38-7) and picked up its third National Championship in a row. Frank Leahy was quite a coach. Johnny Lujack was quite a quarterback

Lujack, 90, in the picture below, 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.

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.

Lujack, who battled health issues last year 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.

My good friend, former Villanova QB Jack Lammers longed as a young man to be QB at Notre Dame. 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 **"Almost" Championship**

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 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 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. This is his 207th book.

1949 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy Championship

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 were 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 season in a row.

I could not root for Notre Dame for much of the 1949 season 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. Keep reading please about the bowl game. Notre Dame's home victories were as follows: Indiana W (49-6), Tulane W (46-7), Iowa W (28-7), and USC W (32-0).

Its away victories came against Washington W (27-7), Purdue W (35-12), Navy W (40-0), Michigan State W (34-21), North Carolina at Yankee Stadium neutral stadium W (42-6). The Irish the defeated SMU in a regular season game played on December 3, 1949 in Texas. The stadium for the game was the Cotton Bowl. ND did not play in the Cotton Bowl Game that year. It played against SMU in the Cotton Bowl Stadium.



1949 All American ND QB Bob Williams #14 tackled in end zone

The summary in the ND Scholastic Magazine on this game reads as follows:

Dallas, Texas, Dec. 3. —Mighty Notre Dame battled against Southern Methodist for its championship life today, and, like a champion, it won. Powering 56 yards on the ground to break a 20-all fourth period tie and then

stand off a furious Mustang drive on their own four-yard line, the Irish defeated SMU, 27-20, in the biggest thriller of the 1949 season.

The 75,428 who sat in the drizzling rain at the Cotton Bowl here expected Coach Frank Leahy's team to roll to an easy win. Instead, they saw Matty Bell's aroused Texans give Notre Dame its toughest contest in an unbeaten string that now stands at 38 games.

Notre Dame has gone four consecutive seasons without losing and Coach Leahy's record stands at 60 wins, three losses and five ties.

1950 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

The 1950 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team, coached by Frank Leahy during his eighth year at Notre Dame, ended the season with 4 wins, 4 losses, and one tie. There were some sportswriters who blamed this season on a cutback by over ½ of player scholarships. Because Notre Dame as most colleges lives well from the munificence and beneficence of its alumni, the problem of the football team being short on scholarships would be self-correcting, regardless of the academic standards of the institution.

Besides a lack of scholarships to replace the greats who had moved on. The gravy train of servicemen who had come and who played football at Notre Dame after had stopped. Coach Leahy had met with many while he was in the service and had gained commitments for ND football. Now it was 1950, four years later and they were all gone. They had either finished with football or had graduated. These were new days for Notre Dame.

Though ranked #1 in the preseason AP Poll, while serving as defending National Champions, the 1950 team—without Heisman Trophy-winner Leon Hart and other standouts, who had graduated in the spring, the Irish barely achieved a .500 record for the season. Hart had been drafted by the NFL's Detroit Lions with the first overall pick. It was a significant loss for ND in 1950.

1951 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

Coach Leahy and Captain Jim Mutschwller brought the Notre Dame Fighting Irish back from 4-4-1 to a respectable # 13 ranking and a 7-2-1 record in 1951.

1952 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

The 1952 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team, coached by Frank Leahy fought to a 7-2-1 season record. In the AP and the coaches poll Notre Dame was recognized as the #3 top team in the USA.

1953 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy “Almost” Championship

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.

Lattner claimed the Heisman Trophy during his senior year. It was the second-closest Heisman balloting in history. It bears repeating that Lattner did not lead the Irish in rushing, passing, receiving or scoring. He was a jack of all trades who barely nosed out

Minnesota's Paul Giel for the award, Lattner clearly benefitted from helping Leahy's final Notre Dame team to a 9-0-1 record and having the Irish win the national title recognition helped the balloting. Johnny received the Maxwell Award as the top collegiate player as both a junior and senior and finished fifth in the Heisman voting as a junior behind Oklahoma's Billy Vessels.

In terms of special rivalries, Notre Dame beat Purdue in an away game W (37-7) and Notre Dame beat USC W (48-14) before 97,952 in California to claim the Jeweled Shillelagh. Other ND victories came at Oklahoma W (28-21), at home against Pittsburgh W (23-14), home again v Georgia Tech's Yellow Jackets W (27-14), and another home game against Navy W (38-7). Notre Dame then traveled to Franklin Field before 74,711 to defeat Penn W (28-20), then at North Carolina W (34-14).

The Irish then came back home to play SMU W (40-14). On November 21, Iowa spoiled Notre Dame's undefeated and untied record by playing to a tie T (14-14). It was the third tie out of the last four years in the Iowa game.

Since the tie destroyed the hope for a national championship, let's take a look at the game as printed in Notre Dame's Scholastic December 1953 edition:

Notre Dame, Ind., Nov. 21—Notre Dame's Fighting Irish, previously unbeaten in seven games, came from behind on two occasions today to gain a 14-14 tie with a rugged Iowa eleven. The capacity crowd of 56,478 fans saw the Irish knot the count at seven all in the last two seconds of the first half, and again in the last six seconds of the final stanza to overcome a 14-7 deficit.

Iowa opened the scoring in the first period after nine minutes, 30 seconds had elapsed, as the Hawkeyes marched 71 yards in eight plays. George (Dusty) Rice intercepted a Guglielmi pass in Hawkeye territory and returned it to the 44, but a clipping penalty set the Iowan's back to their 29... Vincent lugged the pigskin into the end zone untouched. Jim Freeman's boot was good, and the Hawkeyes led, 7-0.

Notre Dame threatened early in the second period, but failed to score...

With seconds remaining [in the 1st half], Irish tackle Frank Varrichione let out a squeal, held his back, and fell to the ground. The officials ruled an "injured player" time out, and the clock was stopped with two seconds left in

the half. The Irish had previously exhausted their allotted time-outs. That was all the time the Irish needed, however, for on the next play Guglielmi passed to end Dan Shannon for the score. Don Schaefer's placement was good, and the half ended with the score tied, 7-7.

Iowa began their second touchdown march early in the fourth period when Broeder intercepted a Guglielmi pass to Lattner on the Iowa 48...Broeder then crashed through the Irish line for eight more yards, and, in three more drives, reached the six for a first down. Broeder picked up another yard, and Rice moved the ball to the four. From there Bob Steames, who had just come off the bench, took a pitchout from Reichow and passed into the end zone to Frank Gilliam... Iowa led 14-7 with two minutes and six seconds of playing time remaining.

Then, with possible defeat threatening them, the Irish juggernaut started its goalward march in a race against the clock. Fullback Neil "Worden took the kickoff and returned it 21 yards to his own 42. Heap's pass was deflected by Vincent, but he tried again. and hit Lattner on the Hawkeye 46.

Lattner advanced a Guglielmi pass to the Iowa 28, and Heap gathered in another for eight yards. Lattner again sneaked a Guglielmi aerial to put the ball within nine yards of pay-dirt, with but 32 seconds remaining. Two passes by "Gug" to Heap were broken up, but with six seconds left in the game, Guglielmi faded back to his left, seemingly to throw to the receiver on that side, but instead pitched to Shannon on the opposite side in the end zone. Shannon made the catch, and Schaefer's second conversion was good to knot the count and the game at 14-14.

Here is the wrap-up to Frank Leahy from the Chicago Daily Tribune:

<http://archives.chicagotribune.com/1954/02/01/page/1/article/leahy-resigns-at-notre-dame>

Feel free to take this link and many more in this edition of the Chicago Tribune from 1954. There are many Leahy articles in this edition from the day after Coach's resignation from the University of Notre Dame

Leahy Resigns at Notre Dame

Ill Health Ends Coach's 11 Year Reign

Will Rest, Then Enter Business

By Arch Ward The **Chicago Daily Tribune** February 1, 1954

Frank Leahy, the most successful college football coach of his time, yesterday resigned from the University of Notre Dame.

Leahy's decision to abandon his position was necessitated by ill health. He never has recovered fully from the acute pancreatic attack he suffered during the Notre Dame – Georgia Tech game Oct. 24.

Plans Business Career

University Authorities concurred in the recommendation of Leahy's physician that he withdraw from an activity involving the emotional and physical strain of football coaching. Leahy, 45, who had two more years remaining on a ten-year contract, plans a business career after a long rest.

Notre Dame Executives have given no hint as to Leahy's successor, but it is expected he will come from the present staff. Joe McArdle, who had had charge of Notre Dame's defense, Robert McBride, who has set up the offensive patterns, Johnny Lujack, Bill Early, John Druse, Wally Ziemba, and Terry Brennan all are qualified for the assignment.

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 13 Terry Brennan Era: 1954-1958

Coach # 20

Coach Terry Brennan Was Just a Kid

1954	Terry Brennan	9-1
1955	Terry Brennan	8-2
1956	Terry Brennan	2-8
1957	Terry Brennan	7-3
1958	Terry Brennan	6-4



Head coach Terry Brennan, and Heisman Winner Paul Hornung in his monogram sweater, with the Enterprise Football Medal.

Intro from Chicago Tribune

Brennan, who at 25 [was] the youngest of the Notre Dame corps, was the only one with extensive experience as a head coach. His Mount Carmel High School teams won the Chicago Championship three straight years – 1950, 1951, and 1952.

Coach Terence Patrick Brennan, who was born June 11, 1928, and was just 26 years old when appointed Notre Dame Head Football Coach in 1954, took over after Frank Leahy retired.

Notre Dame was beginning to believe in its own magic. Leahy had worked sixteen hour plus days and (living 30 miles away) never went home in order to bring winning seasons to Notre Dame. There was no magic in his results—just hard work. At 45 years of age, Frank Leahy had gotten old too, too quickly and he was feeling old when he retired.

Terry Brennan was a good man and always a good coach but Leahy, almost like Rockne before him, was so extra good that even today many expert analysts looking back consider him as a souped up coaching version of Knute Rockne. Notre Dame always has the highest expectations for all of its coaches. Rockne for thirteen and then Leahy for eleven spoiled Notre Dame into thinking wins came simply by being Notre Dame. Who, after Leahy could make anybody think that a loss or a tie was acceptable? Nobody!

When Leahy moved on, Notre Dame was so accustomed to winning that it had begun to take winning for granted in the appointment of Terry Brennan, a good man and a good coach but with just high school experience. Brennan took on the most major leadership collegiate football coaching role in the US at age 26. He did fine.

Some say Parseghian pulled a Leahy later on in ND history with all of his success. He helped the University again into taking winning for granted. University officials again blindly trusted another great HS coach, Gerry Faust, a championship HS coach of the highest caliber, to bring in the bacon. Said differently, the University repeated the Terry Brennan mistake by bringing on a high school coach after Parseghian and Devine, even though they had been forced to fire Brennan, whose record was actually not bad at all.

So, we ask the question: "Was Brennan the best coach available in the nation in 1954?" Was Brennan, IMHO, a great young man and a fine coach, the right choice? What about Vince Lombardi?

Expectations of any coach after Leahy seemed to be that the institution was so blessed that it might even be able to return to the

seven years from 1887 to 1893 when there was no need to even pay for a coach. The student athletes coached themselves and the teams were always tough and they did quite well. Well, not exactly, but it makes one think. Just as in academics, if there is no work by the talented, there is no success.

Brennan at 26 was already a success!

Terry Brennan is an original native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he was an outstanding multi-sport athlete at Marquette University High School. He went on to play halfback at Notre Dame from 1945 to 1948 for Frank Leahy, graduating in 1949.

After receiving his degree from Notre Dame, Brennan took a coaching slot at Mount Carmel High School in Chicago, where his team won three successive city championships. He came back to Notre Dame in 1953 as freshman football coach, and rumor has it to become the next head coach at Notre Dame. He did indeed succeed Frank Leahy as head coach the following year in 1954. His college coaching incubation period was way too short.

Every article about Brennan's hiring has this one question and Brennan's answer as a key part of the piece. When asked if he thought he was too young to be named head coach at the age of 25, Brennan replied, "Oh, I don't know. I'll be 26 in a few months."

As we will see in this chapter, Brennan got off to a fine start with a (9-1) campaign in 1954 with players that had been recruited and coached by Leahy. In 1955, the Irish lost just one more game than in 1954 and slipped to (8-2). Just as had occurred in Leahy's worst year ever when athletic scholarships were reduced, with Brennan in 1956, results suffered. However, Notre Dame officials did not have to argue with the personal power of Frank Leahy and so the young coach was forced to take whatever they gave.

The ND administration was always interested in highlighting academics above athletics but it had always supported maintaining Notre Dame's football legacy. Until this year, other than one time in Leahy's time, when his record went to hades, there was never so broad a cut as in Brennan's scholarships. The 26-year old responded

as an obedient employee. It was the hand he was dealt. He figured the Catholics would be fair.

Maybe Terry Brennan and Joe Kuharich after him were not such bad coaches? Just maybe???

NDNation's Rock report <http://ndnation.com/archives/3722> offers a perspective on the scholarship issue dating back to Frank Leahy.

ND Nation's reports so far surely appear to be spot-on:

"In 1947 Notre Dame cut scholarships from 32 to 18 (Michigan and Ohio State had 45-50 scholarships to give) hobbling Leahy's great run and hastening his exit. [After Leahy's 4-4-1 1950 season, he got more scholarships and the team made a comeback]. That move was followed by questionable hires and rising academic standards. During Terry Brennan's era, Hunk Anderson said, "You can't run this program with these numbers and I'll tell you what else, when the shit comes down, you guys will be the fall guys." Anderson actually organized a group of monogram winners to plead for more scholarships (Hesburgh turned him down.) To sum up quotes from "Talking Irish", and "Resurrection," Notre Dame's mediocrity seemed to come from a combination of poor coaching, low scholarships and a general lack of support.

When Ara came to Notre Dame, the Irish were far behind in the scholarship arms race. It started with the neutering of Leahy and Notre Dame didn't wake up until Ara. When Parseghian came in he convinced Hesburgh to increase scholarships from 24 to 34. Still far behind the land grant schools, but that move gave Notre Dame a chance to build a program and, importantly, signaled that Notre Dame was serious about competing again. Parseghian continued to push the administration along, earning concessions where Brennan and Kuharich failed."

What this meant was that Notre Dame had determined that either it could do well without scholarships or that it was OK if it did not do well so it could be recognized as more elite in academia.

The result for a fine coach such as Terry Brennan, was that he got stuck with an intolerable situation as without Leahy, nobody was fighting effectively for the continued health of the football program. As a respectful young man, Brennan did what his elders and superiors told him to do and did not take them on as Leahy and as Parseghian after him would do.

Brennan's Irish posted a (6-4) record in 1958. This did not make the Notre Dame faithful happy and again the call came out to dismiss Brennan and it gained momentum. The administration fired the coach along with his entire staff in mid-December; Hugh Devore, who was a mainstay, was eventually retained.

There was another group of fans and alumni that saw firing Brennan as a big mistake by the Notre Dame administration, and they criticized Brennan's ouster. The coach's record was not really bad at (32-18), when the pundits examined the caliber of Notre Dame's opponents. Moving forward to 1958, Brennan was succeeded as Notre Dame's head coach by professional coach Joe Kuharich. Let's now take a very brief look at each of Brennan's seasons. See what you think. Nobody's perfect, even the most well-intentioned officials. FYI, these will be quick peaks so don't expect any championships.

1954 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Terry Brennan

First year coach Terry Brennan guided the 1954 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team to a well-played 9-1 season and a #4 national ranking. Their one loss was against rival Purdue L (14-27) in the battle for the Shillelagh Trophy. The Irish beat Michigan State at home W (20-19) to claim the Megaphone trophy and they beat USC at home W (23-17) to snag the Jeweled Shillelagh.

1955 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Terry Brennan

The 1955 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Terry Brennan. The 27-year old Brennan brought the Irish to an 8-2 season which gave them a # 9 ranking with AP and a #10 ranking in the Coaches poll.

1956 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Terry Brennan

Terry Brennan coached the 1956 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team to its worst record of all time (2-8) as Notre Dame remained unranked for the season.

Paul Hornung

Hornung, who later had a great career with the Green Bay Packers was in his senior year in 1956. He carried the ball 94 times for 420 yards for an average of 4.5 yards per try. The versatile Hornung also completed 59 of 111 passes for a total offensive figure of 1,337 yards.

Hornung is the only Heisman winner to have ever played on a losing team. Hornung's path to the Heisman was filled with intrigue, surprise and adventure. Many pundits would suggest that his was the most controversial **Heisman Trophy Award** ever given, but nobody could deny his phenomenal athletic abilities.



Paul Hornung Being Paul Hornung a great ND Heisman Winner --

Leahy had recruited Hurnung and beat Bear Bryant for his services. He took Hornung aside when he came to visit Notre Dame and calmly looked Hornung in the eye and told the young recruiting prospect that he thought "he could become the best football player in America if he came to Notre Dame." Hurnung signed up.

Hornung was the ideal football player. He was what they called "A triple threat." He could run, pass and KICK. When I was a kid I remember Hurnung also got a KICK out of life. "The lad" was a free spirit, very handsome, making it perfect for him to double as a playboy type with many off field escapades well noted in what some

call the sleepy hamlets of South Bend and Green Bay. Hornung had it all. He was personable and in fact dashing. He earned the nickname, the "Golden Boy!" Later in life he had some neck issues which limited his mobility.

Notre Dame's Press Agent, well-liked Charlie Callahan was continually lobbying for Hornung to be awarded the Heisman in his senior year. He was very convincing and very successful. The Golden Boy beat Johnny Majors by just 72 votes and he beat the great pass-catcher, Tommy McDonald, who came in a strong third.

Terry Brennan was Hornung's coach in his senior year, and surely Brennan claims Hornung as a product of his personal mentoring. However, for those who count things further back, Hornung counts as the fifth ND player to have been coached by Frank Leahy (freshman) to take away the Heisman. Leahy, I am convinced would have given this stat to Brennan but surely was not asked while in retirement.

1957 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Terry Brennan

The 1957 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team coached by Terry Brennan had a much better year than in 1956. The team finished ranked # 9 in the coaches' poll and #10 in the AP with a 7-3 overall win/loss record.

"Quarterback Bobby Williams, [my cousin from Wilkes-Barre PA] played superbly. "You could have quarterback meetings forever," Brennan said. "But the kid's gotta go out there and do it. And he did it." The Irish reached first-and-goal at the OU 8-yard line, then finally faced fourth-and-goal at the three. Williams called the play, a sweep for Lynch. A field goal never entered Brennan's mind. "We wanted a touchdown," he said. Lynch gave them one, with an easy trot around right end, and with 3:50 left in the game, OU trailed." They lost!



In This Nov. 16, 1957 photo, Notre Dame head coach Terry Brennan is carried off Owen Field by Jim Just (44) and other players following their 7-0 win over Oklahoma in an NCAA college football game in Norman, Okla. Notre Dame's Ron Toth (43) and Jim Colosimo (41) also celebrate the final. That victory ended the Sooners' NCAA-record winning streak at 47 games and came just a season after the Sooners beat the Irish 40-0 in South Bend, still the most lopsided home loss in Notre Dame history.

1958 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Terry Brennan

For a Notre Dame fan, there is only one thing that is just a little worse than a (7-3) season. That of course is a (6-4) season. It's just a little worse. The 1958 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team, coached by fifth-year coach Terry Brennan could not find that seventh win, and the Irish thus finished the season at 6-4. Notre Dame had just increased the number of scholarships but not in time

for its 1958 season. Notre dame finished the season ranked # 18. Brennan had to take the fall. There would be no forgiveness.

Before I release you all to read the second transition article that takes us past Brennan, through Kuharich, and ultimately to Parseghian, permit me to add another postscript on the Terry Brennan Era? Here we go:

I was expecting, at about a 100% level, to find that Mr. Brennan had either become a successful head coach in another college football program or perhaps he had become a great pro football coach. In many ways, he was before my time so he was not a household name.

I did not know which to expect; but figured one or the other. I expected success for Brennan in football. Since he was before my time, I looked him up and I kept looking as what I expected to find in my research just was not showing up. I eventually tried the Notre Dame web site.

In his biography on http://www.und.com/sports/m-footbl/mtt/brennan_terry00.html, Notre Dame captured the fact that in 1959, Brennan ended his football coaching career and

"... became the player conditioning coach for the Cincinnati Reds in spring training. Eventually, he joined a Chicago investment banking firm."

That's all she wrote. Coaching at Notre Dame is like nothing else in the world. Terry Brennan stopped coaching for good after being fired by Notre Dame. It took me by surprise.

Sports Illustrated wrote a great piece about the firing of Terry Brennan. For those who want to learn more take the link The piece is by Leon Jaroff and is in the SI vast sports vault. It is a great read.

SURRENDER AT NOTRE DAME

<http://www.si.com/vault/1959/01/05/668468/surrender-at-notre-dame>
By Leon Jaroff

!

Chapter 14 Joe Kuharich Era: 1959-1963

Coach Kuharich # 21

Coach Devore # 19 (second time)

1959	Joe Kuharich	5-5
1960	Joe Kuharich	2-8
1961	Joe Kuharich	5-5
1962	Joe Kuharich	5-5
1963	Hugh Devore	2-7



Coach Kuharich made his mark at Notre Dame with the addition of the green shamrock to the gold helmet. The Irish opened the '59 season with the standard all gold shell, facing off against North Carolina and Purdue in their first two games. When they took the field against Cal on October 10th, they unveiled the green shamrock design. However, the decal was placed upon each side of the helmet from a perspective that made it appear as if an airplane propeller was facing the observer, a most unique design! Some thought that the decal was placed upside down but it was merely an attempt by the Kuharich's staff to help jolt the program into a new era.

The Desert Sun Newspaper reported the following on Dec. 22, 1958

Joe Kuharich New Coach at Notre Dame Succeeds Brennan, Fired by Irish, as Gridiron Mentor December 22, 1958; SOUTH BEND. Ind. (UPI)

"Joe Kuharich, head coach of the Washington Redskins of the National Football League and former Notre Dame guard, today was named football coach at Notre Dame, succeeding Terry Brennan. Kuharich's appointment was announced by the Rev. Edmund P. Joyce, Notre Dame executive vice president, and chairman of the faculty Board in Control of Athletics. Release

of Brennan, Notre Dame's coach for the past five years, was announced Sunday by university officials. Father Joyce said that Kuharich has been given a four-year contract. Since 1954, Kuharich has been coach of the Washington Redskins. The new Notre Dame mentor, who is a native of South Bend, actually began his coaching career at Notre Dame in 1938, the year of his graduation, when he served as an assistant freshman coach while taking graduate studies."

1959 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Joe Kuharich

Joe Kuharich took over the Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team in 1959 from Terry Brennan when Brennan was able to achieve just six wins in his last. It is always difficult for a new coach to come to a program and start with great results.

In his first year Kuharich's Fighting Irish finished with their best Kuharich record of 5-5. With a four-year contract in his possession. Coach Kuharich knew he would be able to eventually prove himself to Notre Dame fans. He was wrong. This was his best season and there would be no championships.

1960 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Joe Kuharich

The 1960 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team, coached by Joe Kuharich equaled the season and post-season misery index of Terry Brennan's 2-8 1956 team that many fans think set the stage for Kuharich to be replaced.

1961 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Joe Kuharich

The 1961 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team were coached by Joe Kuharich in his third year as head coach. Coach Kuharich's team struggled in 1960 at 2-8 but came back this year to a 5-5 record and like all ND coaches more would be expected in the future.

Kuharich had two fine co-captains, Norb Roy, and Nick Buoniconti, who had a major claim to fame for years in the NFL.

Kuharich had matched his first 5-5 season when all was said and done. Many fans were talking about Terry Brennan having been ousted after a 6-4 season. How long would Joe Kuharich last if he did not turn around the team in his fourth year as coach? South

Bend Tribune sports editor Joe Doyle in 1961, wrote of Kuharich's third year:



Darryl Lamonica set to pass

“It is hard to believe the same football team played the various parts of the schedule. One moment the Notre Dame team of 1961 seemed to be an eager, hustling squad that believed it could lick any opponent. At other times, it was indifferent, lethargic and unable to cope with anything out of the ordinary on offense or defense.”

Nick Buoniconti

Nick Buoniconti of the Notre Dame Fighting Irish was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio on Saturday August 4, 2001.

At just 5-foot-10, the 190-pound Buoniconti received a football scholarship to Notre Dame in 1958. He tells a story about feeling out of place everywhere in South Bend except when on the football field. He earned a starting spot at Notre Dame as a freshman when one of his teammates got injured. Buoniconti needed just one chance.

He dominated play at the collegiate level for Notre Dame. He then spent seven seasons in the AFL for the Boston Patriots and made six All-Star games. The Dolphins wanted him and he came to Miami in 1969. He was at the top of his game. He was quick and strong. He was a running back's nightmare. His speed would get him right to

the hole and when the ball carrier got there, Buoniconti would be waiting for him.

At Notre Dame, it took a little time for Buoniconti to establish himself but the head coach when he was a freshman, Terry Brennan knew he had what it took to be great. Coach Brennan was the first to see the innate toughness and perseverance that would make Buoniconti special when Nick was a star at Cathedral High School in Springfield, Mass.

Brennan recruited him to come to Notre Dame as a lineman and linebacker, even though he was less than six feet tall and weighed barely 200 pounds. Terry Brennan left Notre Dame after Buoniconti's freshman year, and the pundits say Brennan's departure ushered in one of the worst eras in Irish football history under new leader Joe Kuharich.

Every team, good or bad, has a few bright lights. Nick Buoniconti was a huge bright light for three years for Joe Kuharich's Irish. Buoniconti admits they were his toughest football years.

1962 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Joe Kuharich

The 1962 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team again was coached by four-time head coach Joe Kuharich. Darryl Lamonica was Notre Dame's star quarterback but even with Lamonica, the record was another 5-5. Other eventual pro players such as Ed Hoerster and John Slafkosky also played their hearts out on the University of Notre Dame's 1962 college football team.

Nobody thought Notre Dame was laying down and everybody thought Coach Kuharich, who had been a professional coach with the Washington Redskins was doing his best. Yet, the team could not get more than five wins for the fourth time.

Those who think that talent was the problem in the Kuharich era are looking in the wrong place. It was not academics, or any other non-reason including the perception that the university had de-emphasized football under University President Rev. Theodore Hesburgh C.S.C. That too was not the issue this year.

Notre Dame still had lots and lots of interest from great players, and great players were already on the ND roster. Roger Staubach, like my good friend Jack Lammers of whom I have written in this book, has let it be known that he dreamed of going to Notre Dame to become the next Johnny Lujack.

Somehow a lot of the greats with such dreams were not selected as they were deemed not talented enough to play football at ND. Of course, we all know that in the Kuharich years, an “untalented” quarterback named Roger Staubach, won the Heisman at Navy instead of at Notre Dame in 1963. He then went on to become one of the biggest star pro football players of all time.

Kuharich’s Notre Dame players included some future NFL greats such as linemen Paul Costa and Jim Snowden. Kuharich liked big mooses playing in his “Elephant Backfield.” Besides Staubach who never got to play for Kuharich, he had several great future NFL stars on his team and a few other big names. You all have heard of quarterback Daryle Lamonica, linebackers Nick Buoniconti and Myron Pottios and of course tackle, Joe Carollo... and there were others.

Ara Parseghian eventually took over the reins after Hugh Devore. Parseghian knew how to beat Notre Dame by watching Kuharich as a coach. Northwestern enjoyed playing ND as their coach always did his homework.

Ara Parseghian, from playing against ND, knew how Notre Dame played. This is not a negative aspersion on the ND players or the coach. But, somehow Notre Dame was a gimme win for Northwestern even though they were limited in talent.

When Coach Parseghian and his staff from Northwestern arrived in 1964, they came with some first impressions of the players and their attitudes about playing top level football. They recall the impressions in words such as: “Geez, we never had personnel as talented as this at Northwestern” – even though the Wildcats were 4-0 against the Irish during the Kuharich years (1959-62).

The problem according to flies on the wall in the ND locker room was that during the period of Northwestern's dominance, the Irish

talent was either out of position and / or lacking direction. Ara Parseghian as ND coach gave the Irish troops a pep talk early in his tenure before the 1964 season. He told the team that they were not a disciplined team – that when he was at Northwestern he could count on a lot of Notre Dame Penalties, and that those penalties would help shape the outcome of the game.

Notre Dame players concluded that they did not have to wait for spring practice to begin learning how to play for this coach because just listening to coach Parseghian in his once over, they realized that things were about to change.

Joe Kuharich, a good guy for sure but not necessarily a good college football coach, knew he had not done the job for the University and he voluntarily stepped down after his third 5-5 season. He was succeeded with interim coach Hugh Devore in his second stint as an interim coach. (Leahy 1945).

The irony is that Joe Kuharich never achieved any of the fine season marks as Terry Brennan, including Brennan's last season at 6-4 record, which was "so bad," the young Brennan, barely thirty years of age with five years' head coaching experience at Notre Dame was fired. That was a Notre Dame travesty. It was a big mistake.

Notre Dame had finally learned that it was not predestination but fine, determined talented coaching that brings victories, despite how good the players may be. Unfortunately, after extended victory seasons by immortal coaches, the Irish Brass would be forced to learn the lesson several more times before future immortal, Brian Kelly came to town.

1963 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Hugh Devore (#2)

The Press was not as kind to Joe Kuharich as the administration of Notre Dame: From 1959 to 1962, Kuharich had become the first and only coach at Notre Dame to compile a losing career record. His 17 victories against 23 defeats are still a record. Kent Baer who filled in for Ty Willingham in 2004 for one game and lost it may technically have the worst record of 0-1, but if I made the rules, as a fill-in for one game after the season, he would not be included.

When Kuharich resigned, he was able to get a nice job as a supervisor of officials in the N.F.L. with a 15-Year Contract.

Many of the facts in this story about Hugh Devore come from an October 28, 1963 article in the Sports Illustrated Vault. Hugh Devore took over as "interim" coach of Notre Dame's Fighting Irish for the 1963 Season after Joe Kuharich's contract expired. ND was looking for a new head coach and Hugh was there to keep it all together in the interim.

Games with Hugh Devore

Hugh Devore could not get the engine started after Joe Kuharich left. His 2-7 record would be his complete legacy. Devore had put a lot of heart back into the Irish team during his season at the helm. Although Notre Dame began the season by losing two games-- they played very tough teams bravely and with spirit and the scores were very close. For example, a powerful Wisconsin team beat Notre Dame in the home season opener, L (9-14), and then Purdue scored a victory L (6-7) at Purdue when an Irish two-point conversion try for the win, failed.

When Joe Kuharich resigned at the end of his contract, Father Theodore M. Hesburgh, Notre Dame's president, announced Devore's appointment. He liked Devore. The interim nature of the appointment, however, displeased ND alumni. They wanted Devore to either be appointed the coach or not appointed but they were not happy about the iffy-ness. Some were concerned that Devore would not invest in the job as an interim coach.

Devore took to the head coaching job, however, like he was permanent party. They say he stood a little straighter, walked a little more briskly and his already gravel voice grew even huskier. "We've got too many French poodles around here," he said to the squad at a workout one day. "What we need are some mad dogs." That's a coach who means business.

Unfortunately for Hugh Devore, things got really tough. First of all, there was the assassination of President John F. Kennedy which caused a national lament and among other things, the cancellation of the Iowa game. The Irish won no more games that season.

Despite the 2–7 record for the year, Hugh Devore was still loved by all members of the Fighting Irish Community. He was their beloved, personable Devore, affectionately known as "Hughie."

He had boosted the morale of the squad as only he could after the departure of Joe Kuharich. He was well aware that his roll was merely a stopgap measure while the administration was actively searching for a permanent replacement. He commented: "I'll do whatever Notre Dame feels is best for me."

The following year, after the permanent coach was hired, Hugh Devore was presented with a game ball after Notre Dame's victory over Stanford. The 1964 new head coach, Ara Parseghian praised Devore for making his job that much easier. Hugh Devore was 9-9-1 as a head coach. His not-too shabby football record was well exceeded by his record as a human being.

Wrap-Up of the Kuharich Era

My earlier observation as a football layman and great fan of Notre Dame and Notre Dame Football still stands. To remind the reader briefly, that observation is that Rockne and Leahy are exceptions to all endeavors and all achievements in all areas of life.

They were both unique and special and great people. Rockne and Leahy in fact spoiled the Notre Dame faithful into believing that it was Notre Dame itself as the guiding force rather than the brute will of these two fine coaches that made the difference at the University of Our Lady. Dismissing a great coach such as Terry Brennan, who was a consistent winner, gives us all a clue about how predestined Notre Dame believed its hallowed program had become.

Chapter 15 Ara Parseghian Era: 1964-1974

Coach # 22

Two National Championships 1966 & 1973

Rockne, Leahy, Parseghian, All Time Greats— National Championships

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



Notre Dame did not have a player shakeup. They did not have a move to an easier conference or begin selecting bums of the week to play. Yet, somehow, the number on the left side of the score kept growing and the number on the right side kept getting smaller. The first season with Ara told the whole story. It was 9-1 after a 2-7 season by Hugh Devore and breakeven and losing seasons before him. Thank you, Mr. Parseghian for coming by to coach a Catholic team. We learned quickly that God loves you for sure.

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 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. Here is the first, which is from the Daily Illini, a student newspaper from the University of Illinois. They capture the essence of the negotiations to bring him on-board and the results

THE DAILY ILLINI

The independent student newspaper at the University of Illinois since 1871

These pieces capture the essence of what happened in the negotiations between Notre Dame and Ara Parseghian, then coach of Northwestern. The Illini paper also got in some stuff about Alex Agase, Parseghian's replacement at Northwestern

From Daily Illini, 18 December 1963

Ara Named Irish Mentor

Ex-Illini Agase New NU Pilot

SOUTH BEND, Ind.

After nearly 36 hours of confusion and speculation, Ara Parseghian was named head football coach at the University of Notre Dame Tuesday and minutes later Alex Agase was appointed his successor at Northwestern University.

Parseghian's appointment was announced here by the Rev. Edmund P. Joyce, executive vice president of Notre Dame. Agase's appointment was announced in Evanston by Northwestern Athletic Director Stu Holcomb. Agase had been head line coach of the Wildcats under Parseghian.

The rapid-fire sequence began with a statement by Father Joyce that Parseghian was in as mentor of the Irish. Only Monday, the fiery, 40-year-old Parseghian had walked out of a meeting with Father Joyce concerning a four-year contract with the Irish. Since Parseghian's walkout, speculation ran rife as to the real reason for the apparent break between the Wildcat head coach and Notre Dame. There still is no immediate answer to the question.

There still was no immediate answer except that Notre Dame did see fit in the face of what could amount to national embarrassment, to keep the door open for Parseghian.

The following statement was released by Father Joyce:

The slight difficulty which arose Monday morning has been resolved. Ara Parseghian will immediately assume the position of head football coach at the University of Notre Dame and will be resident at the university following the East-West Shrine game in San Francisco.

As we said before, we are delighted to have Mr. Parseghian as our head football coach and we look forward to a successful football program under his direction. Simultaneously at his home in Wilmette, Ill., Parseghian made the same announcement given to the press by Father Joyce and said:

"I regret the embarrassment caused Notre Dame by the brief delay. I'm looking forward eagerly to directing football fortune of the Irish. He said: I will

immediately assume the position of head football coach at Notre Dame and will be a resident of Notre Dame after the East-West Shrine game.

A native of Evanston, Agase began his athletic career as a guard at Evanston Junior High School. He slipped away from Northwestern and went on to All America fame at Illinois and also at Purdue, where he was a Marine trainee, in 1943, after serving as a lieutenant in the Pacific, where he was wounded in the Okinawa campaign and earned the Purple Heart and Bronze Star, Agase returned to Illinois to lead the Illini to the 1946 Big Ten championship and a 1947 Rose Bowl victory over UCLA.

Agase is one of five children. Two of his brothers also earned letters at Illinois, Lou Agase played football at Illinois and was on the 1946 Big Ten championship team.

Another brother, Herb Agase was a star left-handed pitcher for Illinois in the late 1940's. Alex Agase played with the Chicago Rockets in the defunct All-America Professional Conference, and with the Cleveland Browns for four years before ending his professional career with the Baltimore Colts in 1953. He entered the college coaching ranks as line coach at Iowa State in 1954. Two years later he came to Northwestern as line coach and No. 1 assistant under Parseghian.

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.

And Ara returned the favor. Upon learning that Nick Rassas didn’t have a scholarship, Ara called father Joyce and got him one. When he learned, Carey might be eligible for a medical-year, he picked up the phone and called father Joyce again, securing an extra year.

Ara could relate to the players, because he had it in his blood. One of his great disappointments was an injury that kept him on the sidelines in the pros for much of his “career.”

His playing career over, he channeled that passion into Miami of Ohio, where he became head coach, and compiled a 39-6-1 record. Ara was in the crucible period at the cradle of coaches.

Then, on to Northwestern where after one magical season and many other “good for Northwestern seasons,” Northwestern grew tired of Ara constantly pushing for more and told him his contract wouldn’t be renewed. Tired of fighting a battle with scholarships tied behind his back, Ara was determined to move on.

When he arrived at Notre Dame he brought order quickly to a program that had fallen into disorder.

Parseghian immediately started fixing what was broken, bringing process and precision where previously there was dysfunction and indecision. He kicked players off the team for rules violations and enforced discipline while motivating players in a way they’d never seen before. In summing up his impact, Jim Dent noted that “more than anything, he was a master organizer” and that Notre Dame’s staff operated like a “finely tuned military unit.”

Ara brought that same precision to the roster. When Ara evaluated the team, he found players in the wrong positions all over the field. When at Northwestern, Ara befuddled Kuharich, whose “elephant

backfield," made Notre Dame easy to defend. Parseghian, who'd had small and fast teams that passed all over the field (for the day) with Tommy Myers at Northwestern, promptly moved the entire elephant backfield to the defensive line at Notre Dame.

Perhaps his biggest position move was really a position elevation. John Huarte, 4th or 5th on the depth chart, threw gorgeous spirals all over the practice field and Ara was intrigued. But after years of what Huarte viewed as unfair treatment by prior coaches, he was stricken with confidence problems. Ara would mold him into a Heisman winner. [He brought back Huarte's confidence in himself.]

Huarte had gone through some rough times, but Ara shared his own experiences at Northwestern and noted how he battled through them. He turned to Huarte and said, "I think your time has come."

The same was true for Notre Dame.

Happy Birthday, Hardnose.

I'd love to hear other stories from Ara's Era if you have them

Here are a few comments from this great article that are human interest. Not only was Parseghian a great coach, but a nice guy:

Comment # 1 May 21, 2013 at 12:46 pm Garr Isacco says:

I was standing at the Circle one day in early 1964 right after Ara was hired. ND students commonly hitched a ride into South Bend in those days. (We weren't allowed to have cars on campus.) A blue Ford Mustang pulled up and the driver offered me a ride. I jumped in and much to my surprise it was Coach Parseghian. I thought he was one of the nicest, most personable men I'd ever met. The students loved him from day 1. Much of that was reflected by the feedback we received from the football players, all of which was positive. Personally, I never had one worry that ND had hired the right coach. The fact that he was a heck of a nice person was just "icing on the cake." The Era of Ara was one of the greatest in our history and I was proud to witness it first-hand.

Comment # 2 May 21, 2013 at 1:56 pm Tom Gabriel '65 says:

I was at the student rally for Ara in front of Walsh in February 1964. The crowd was large and very animated, although we didn't really know much about Ara except that he had kicked our butts at Northwestern for several years. Once he spoke, we were ecstatic, and now we knew what all the fuss was about. He was electric, and we left the rally with a buzz that I have never forgotten.

In September, playing basketball at the Rock, we listened to the Wisconsin game on the speaker. Huarte and Snow led us to a big victory, and now we knew for sure that ND was back. We had no idea that Ara would take us to within 30 minutes of a National Championship, but we knew the long drought was over.

Comment # 3 May 23, 2013 at 12:42 am RocketShark says:

Ara is an inspiring success story and utterly beloved by ND Nation. That he had not graduated from Notre Dame (and wasn't even Catholic) apparently grated on older alumni at the time of his hiring. It's interesting to note that none of the three supposed candidates for the job were alumni (the other two being Devine and Lombardi). The administration had struggled with the hires after forcing Frank Leahy out. But this time they got the perfect man at the perfect time.

That it came dangerously close to not happening on the day the announcement was to be made to the press is a bit scary to consider (the story was there was a sticking point in the last-minute negotiations and Ara angrily left. Neither he nor Fr. Joyce publicly commented on the issue, but Ara later joked Fr. Joyce wanted shamrocks on the helmets and Ara wanted camels). A lot of coaches with big egos would have never returned. But it's plain to see that Ara really wanted to come to Notre Dame, and it happened. God bless him.

1964 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian "Almost" Championship

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, and he turned them into a #3 consensus ranking 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 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 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 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.

Two games stand out in this season and we shall use some great write-ups of the day to convey the spirit of the games. The first game is Michigan State brought to us by bluegraysky and the next is the USC game, from uhnd.com. The full references are shown above each article

1964 ND v Michigan State at ND Stadium

Time Magazine Ara Parseghian

<http://bluegraysky.blogspot.com/2005/05/call-him-hardnose.html>

From Sports Illustrated. Author Unknown

Nov. 20, 1964

Toilet-paper streamers festooned the trees. Strings of firecrackers chattered like machine guns. Signs were everywhere. SONS OF ERIN, UNITE! They said. RUB THEIR NOSES IN THE IRISH SOD! Sturdy young men stopped strangers, flashed their "Hate State!" buttons and inquired politely: "You wouldn't be a State man, now, would you?" South Bend, Ind., was no place for the faint of heart last week. Notre Dame, the No. 1 college football team in the nation, was taking on Archrival Michigan State—and the Fighting Irish were in a fighting mood.

The Irish had not beaten State in ten years; inside the Notre Dame stadium, Athletic Director Edward ("Moose") Krause surveyed the sellout crowd of 59,265 and sighed: "We could have sold 250,000 tickets to this game." He could have sold a million—to all the Americans, the vast Subway Alumni, to whom Notre Dame is and always has been the one and only college football team. To the Bronx taxi driver who has never seen the inside of a college but lights a candle to Our Lady every Friday night. To the San Francisco dock walloper who hasn't the foggiest notion where South Bend is but knows every player on the Irish

squad. To the nuns in convents, whose radio-side prayers on Saturday go something like this: "God's will be done . . . but please let Notre Dame win." And what about the two Indiana priests who walked into a polling booth last Nov. 3 and wrote in the name of Ara Parseghian for President?

On His Knees. Down beneath the stands, wearing his lucky brown trousers and a blue sweater with NOTRE DAME lettered across the front, the Subway Alumni's candidate stood in the middle of the noisy locker room. "Everybody stay where you are!" he yelled. Then, pounding his fist into his palm, Ara Raoul Parseghian, 41, began to talk. "Boys (bang), you read the newspapers (bang). The predictors (bang, bang) say Michigan State is going to beat us. But we (bang) are a better team than they are. We're going out there (bang) and prove it (BANG)!" Then, along with the rest of the Fighting Irish, Coach Parseghian, a French-Armenian Protestant, sank to his knees and bowed his head. "Hail Mary, full of grace . . ."

Sportswriters had billed it "the game of the year." It was that—for Notre Dame and for the 35 million fans watching on nationwide TV, the millions more clustered around radios in bars and stores and barbershops. A good game might have been enough; a narrow victory would have sent them into ecstasy. What they got was beyond their wildest dreams.

In the next two hours, a great team systematically took a good team apart. Michigan State did not get a first down until it was two touchdowns behind. Only twice in the whole first half did a Notre Dame running play fail to gain. First it was Halfback Nick Eddy, spinning off tackle on the second play from scrimmage, racing 61 yds. For a TD—while Coach Parseghian matched him step for step, shouting "Go! Go! Go!" Then it was Fullback Joe Farrell, cracking the Spartan line on three straight plays for 15 yds. On the fourth play, he faked a line buck and zigzagged downfield to take a pass from Quarterback John Huarte. That put the ball on the Michigan State eight. Another Farrell fake, another Huarte pass—touchdown.

Ara Parseghian prowled the sideline, lips peeled back over his teeth. "Pursuit! Pursuit!" he screamed at the Notre Dame defense, and again Michigan State had to give up the ball. "More! More!" he yelled at the offense, and again the relentless Irish began to march. The massive (219 lbs. per man) Notre Dame line ripped gaping holes in the Spartan forward wall, gave Quarterback Huarte so much protection that he could have tied his shoe laces and still had time to pass. A screen to End Jack Snow gained 19 yds. A flare to Fullback Bob Merkle picked up 26. Then he turned Nick Eddy loose. In five carries, the 195-lb. halfback racked up 40 yds. And his second TD of the day. A pass to Snow was good for two extra points, and Notre Dame led at half time 20-0.

Anything & Everything. Back came the two teams, and the excitement leaped a notch. Desperate now, the Spartans tried anything—and for a while everything worked. They shifted from the T into a short punt formation and drew the Notre Dame line off side. They caught the Irish secondary napping, with a 51-yd. pass that cut the gap to 20-7. Luck helped a lot: two Notre Dame touchdowns were nullified. But now the aroused State defense was starting to harry Huarte. Somehow, he still managed to get the ball away—sidearm, underhand, any way at all. And when he couldn't pass, he ran like a halfback—ripping out of the grasp of three tacklers for 21 yds. And a touchdown that made it 28-7. After that, the spectators stole the show. Twice, play was stopped while the sheriff's deputies chased fans around the field. That was enough to frighten even Parseghian. Off came the first team; in went the subs. Another Irish touchdown. Final score: Notre Dame 34, Michigan State 7.

The victory was doubly sweet because it was the sort of thing that wasn't supposed to happen in 1964—and did anyway. It was the season of surprises, the year the experts all guessed wrong. This was the year a Penn State squad that lost four out of its first five clobbered unbeaten Ohio State 27-0, the year Texas did not win the Southwest Conference championship, the year mighty Mississippi had to settle for a tie with weak little Vanderbilt. It was the year free substitution and the platoon system came back to college football—if the coaches were willing to take penalties to get their subs into the game. It was the year collegians outdrew the pros—when attendance in the Big Ten averaged 59,000 a game to 49,000 in the National Football League. And, most of all, this was Ara Parseghian's year, the year a restless vagabond from Ohio took over a demoralized Notre Dame team that had spent five years forgetting how to win—and taught them how again.

Notre Dame v USC – the only loss

<http://www.uhnd.com/football/Irish-history/documentary-profiles-infamous-chapter-scnd-history/>

Notre Dame was having a season of seasons. The wins kept coming after Michigan. The Irish posted three shutouts, outscored its opponents by a combined 239-50 and climbed from unranked and unmentioned to the top of the AP poll. And all they had to do was beat a 6-3 Southern Cal team that they had beaten the year before when ND won just two games.

In 1964, the Trojans had been ranked as high as second in the AP poll. When ND came by, USC needed the win to remain in consideration for a Rose Bowl berth. They were motivated to win.

The first was all Notre Dame's. The undefeated season seemed assured. After Ken Ivan opened the scoring with a 25-yard field goal in the first quarter, quarterback John Huarte threw a 21-yarder for a TD to Jack Snow early in the second period. Irish were winning. With 1:12 to play in the half, fullback Bill Wolski puts the icing on a nice 11-play drive and scored a five-yard touchdown for a 17-0 ND halftime lead.

The second half was nothing like the first. USC was a different team. They took the second half kickoff and marched 66 yards to its first score of the game. Mike Garrett plowed through from the 1 to cut the lead to 17-7.

The Notre Dame offense was still clicking. They drove inside the Trojans 10-yard line. But Huarte had the ball knocked out of his hands looking to make an option pitch. USC recovered. USC was forced to punt after not advancing

The Irish rapid-fired a 12-play drive that sucked up all of the third quarter. The Irish were now inside the USC five. Soon they were on the one and ready to get back the three-score lead. On second and goal, fullback Joe Kantor plunged for what appeared to be an Irish touchdown. After the play was over, an official threw his penalty flag high into the air and called holding on Notre Dame's left tackle Bob Meeker. The officials had removed six Irish points from the scoreboard.

Reviews of the game show Meeker was nowhere close to a defender to have held. He had missed his blocking assignment on the play and was on the ground for the play. This flag stunned Parseghian and his players and it changed the momentum of the game. Penalized fifteen yards from the one, the Irish not only had a score wiped out, they were no longer on the one. Two missed pass plays to the end zone and a recharged USC took over.

QB Fertig took the Trojans on an 88-yard scoring drive, ending the drive with a scoring pass to wide receiver Freddie Hill from 23

yards. Hill caught the ball in the right corner of the end zone. This brought the lead to 17-13 as the game had 5:09 left to play.

The fired-up USC defense then stopped the Irish on its next possession and forced a punt. As Jack Snow's punt was in the air, an official reached for his flag to call holding on offensive guard John Atamian. USC had rushed just players so there was clearly no need to hold anybody. Instead of pinning USC at its own 22, Notre Dame had to punt again. Garrett fielded a short punt and returned it to the Notre Dame 40. ND had lost 38 yards of field position. Southern Cal was just about into scoring position with 2:12 to play.

Fertig found Hill wide open for a 23-yard gain. Now, with the ball on the 17, another Fertig-to-Hill combination almost resulted in the go-ahead touchdown but Hill was ruled out of bounds. Then, on third and ten, the Irish needed to hold. They pressured Fertig. Alan Page sacked Fertig but the ball squirted out of his hands. The referee, who apparently was not watching the game ruled the play an incomplete pass instead of a fumble or intentional grounding.

There was at most one play left if the Irish held USC on fourth down. USC's coach called a trick play known as "84-Z Delay". Notre Dame defensive coordinator John Ray had called for a blitz. When Fertig rolled to his left to avoid onrushing linebacker Ken Maglic, he spotted wide receiver Rod Sherman coming open over the middle. Sherman made the catch and escaped the reach of defensive back Tony Carey. Sherman marched into the end zone with 1:33 left. USC was now ahead 20-17 lead.

The Irish had little time to score. They were able to take two more shots at tying or going ahead but eventually they simply ran out of time. Their hopes for an undefeated and unblemished "perfect season" and what would have been a real national championship were gone with the L (17-20) to USC.

1965 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian

The 1965 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football in the second year of the Parseghian Era were voted # 8 in the coach's poll and # 9 in the AP poll against every other college team in America. Notre Dame

was clearly back on the map. When ND showed up or a team had to play in South Bend, they did not come ready to lose.

They played to win. They were aware of the Notre Dame tradition and its hall of fame coaches from the past. They had a sense that there was another Hall of Fame coach inspiring new National Championship teams in a new era and they were ready to try their darndest to get a win against Notre Dame.



Left to right, tackle Georgie Kunz, quarterback Terry Hanratty and wide receiver Jim Seymour led the 1965 recruiting class

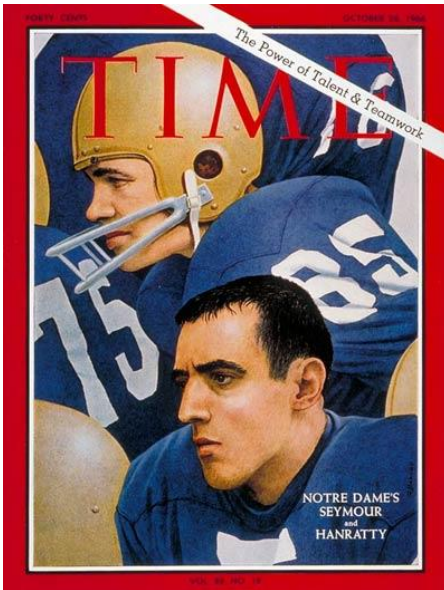
Consequently, the Fighting Irish needed all the fight it had to squeeze out wins against the best teams in America, who wanted more than anything to take a win from Notre Dame.

1966 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian 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. 9-0-1.

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 arch rival 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.

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 then 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

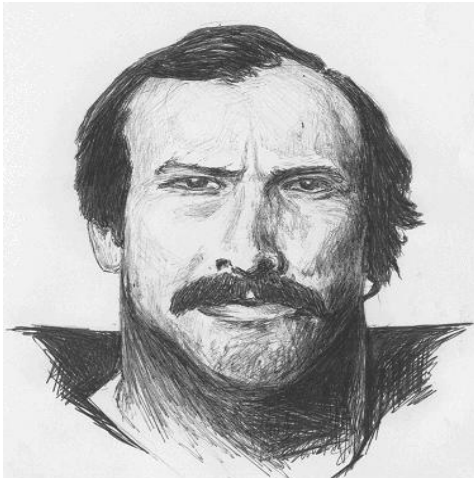
Notre Dame beat USC handily 51–0 the next week, completing an undefeated (but tied) regular season and solidifying its Number 1

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.

Rocky Bleier 1967 ND Captain – Later Super Bowl Star with Steelers



Rocky Bleier, who later played for the Pittsburgh Steelers four-time Super Bowl Champions, was picked by Coach Parseghian to be the 1967 ND team captain. Bleier was tougher than nails and was drafted into the Army for the Vietnam War after his first Pittsburgh season. In Vietnam, he was hit twice in the same battle and was told he would never play again. He lost part of

his foot. Bleier was Notre Dame tough. He rejoined the Steelers in 1971.

Upon his return, he couldn't walk without being in pain, and he weighed only 180 pounds. Bleier never said "never." He spent two

years trying to regain a spot on the Pittsburgh active roster, and was waived on two occasions. But He never gave up. In 1976, it all paid off as both he and Franko Harris rushed for over 1,000 yards.

Bleier played very well in all four Pittsburgh Super Bowl victories. He caught the touchdown pass from ace Terry Bradshaw to give Pittsburgh the lead in Super Bowl XIII. Rocky Bleier retired after the 1980 season with 3,865 rushing yards, 136 receptions for 1,294 yards, and 25 touchdowns. At the time of his retirement, he was the Steelers' fourth all-time leading rusher.

So, why in a book about Notre Dame is the life of Rocky Bleier during his pro career highlighted. Because he was always one of the Fighting Irish. It was built in. Parseghian picked him as his captain and his toughness and unwillingness to give up gives us all the reason he was a leader on the Fighting Irish team that came back to win its last six games in 1976. Bleier had a great season. He had won his starting job as a junior and helped ND in its first Parseghian Championship season.

Rocky Bleier did not have the pounds to play as well as he did. But, he did play well because he was built Notre Dame tough. And that's that!

1967 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian

The 1967 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Ara Parseghian in his fourth year. The Irish finished 8-2 and were # 4 in the coaches' poll and # 5 in the AP poll. The season started a little rocky and after the first four games, the Irish were unranked with a record of 2-2. It was a non-championship season.

1968 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian

The 1968 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team under Coach Ara Parseghian had another fine year. Notre Dame consistently played the best teams in the nation and 1968 was no exception. The Irish record was (7-2-1). There would be no championship this year but there was a great season.

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, 8-1-1. They were ranked # 5 in the nation. No Championship but a great season..

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-American 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).

Following his graduation, he had a 15-year professional career, 12 of which were spent with the Washington Redskins. In 1982, he led the Redskins to a Super Bowl victory. The next year he became the league's MVP. Upon retirement, he became a successful businessman and sports caster and many of us have found him to be a fine actor.

Joe Theismann may have been runner-up for the Heisman Trophy but all ND and Theismann fans know that if we take away the "T" in the beginning and the last "n," Joe always has been a Heisman plus. He sure played like it all the time.

ND 1969 Season

For the first time since a Rose Bowl victory in 1925, after a 40-year self-imposed hiatus in which pundits believe ND would have been invited to at least 20 games, Notre Dame finally accepted a Bowl Game bid.

The January 1, 1970 Cotton Bowl played in Texas featured # 8 ranked Notre Dame v #1 ranked Texas Longhorns. In a great game, Texas outlasted Notre Dame L (17-21).

Notre Dame had begun playing Texas as a team a long time ago in 1913 when Knute Rockne was a player. ND won that first game in Austin 30-7. The teams played four more times between then and '54, with the Irish losing only the 1934 game, (7-6) in South Bend. That game occurred in what many refer to as Notre Dame's "Dark Ages" the interregnum between Rockne and Leahy. The series stood at Notre Dame 4; Texas 1 and it seemed like a historical footnote. It was over.

In 1969, Ara Parseghian saw an opportunity to play for the National Championship. He had become good friends with Moose Krause the ND AD. Moose was a sports guy and he was like by both players and coaches. He was not an MBA type AD, which are prevalent today. It made sense to the competitive Krause to play a bowl game and he put the squeeze on the ND Fathers, Hesburgh and Joyce to once again consider allowing Notre Dame to play in a bowl game. The last time ND had played in a bowl was 1925.

After all the pleadings, the Irish ended its 45-year hiatus from bowl participation and agreed to take on the top-ranked Longhorns, coached by Darrell Royal. During the season, Texas had been challenged only once and they emerged with a nail-biting 15-14 win over Arkansas

Parseghian was at his best at the coaches' press conferences during Cotton Bowl week. He gave his normally intricate and lengthy answers to reporters. When Texas Coach Royal got up, he answered the first question about his wishbone offense with a blunt, "Naw, we'll dance with the one whut brung us." The contrast between the speakers was remarkable.

The weather was a nice and clear when the two eager teams squared off in a neutral Dallas Texas field. The game was almost even as the two teams had the same number of first downs and were different in total yards by only 28. Both teams had over 70 offensive plays.

The Irish used its passing attack and the Longhorns countered with their well-oiled running attack. Notre Dame scored the first 10 points on a Scott Hempel field goal and Joe Theisman to Tom Gatewood 54-yard pass. After the Irish kickoff, Texas went on a 74-yard drive that culminated when Jim Bertelsen ran for a touchdown. At halftime, Notre Dame led 10-7.

There was little meaningful action in the third quarter but things were about to open up. Together, both teams scored 21 points in the fourth quarter. Texas scored first and last. Ted Koy finished off a 77-yard drive with a touchdown run with 10 minutes remaining.

After a touchback, Joe Theismann then led the Fighting Irish on an 80-yard drive and capped it off with a pass to Jim Yoder that gave the Irish the lead with just 6:52 left. Things were looking good.

But after the ND kickoff, the Longhorns could not be stopped. Texas went on a 76-yard drive. James "Slick" Street was the Texas QB. He had been the hero in the comeback win v Arkansas the prior week. He did it again v ND. His late drive pass to Cotton Speyer set it up. The drive was topped off with a Billy Dale touchdown plunge with

1:06 left on the clock. There was not enough time for the Irish to come back and so Texas gained the win 21-17, and thus secured its second consensus national championship in school history.

Nobody at Notre Dame was about to talk about the season that got them to the Cotton Bowl as “dancing with the one whut brung us.” But, nonetheless it was their fine performance with the Theisman forward pass that brought them to the dance.

The Irish started off the season against Northwestern with a win W 35-10 before a packed house at ND Stadium. In the second game at Purdue, the Boilermakers put on their normal great act and they kept the Shillelagh Trophy as the Irish lost L (14-28). In a 42-24 slugfest, Notre Dame won back the Megaphone Trophy at home against Michigan State W (42-28).

On October 11, the Fighting Irish played Army at Yankee Stadium and won the game W (45-0). USC came into South Bend the following week and the teams played to a tie T (14-14). ND then claimed a win W (37-0) at Tulane, and then a win W (47-0) against Navy at Notre Dame Stadium.

On November 7, Pittsburgh was the opponent at Pitt Stadium, and ND won handily W (49-7). Then it was off to Georgia Tech for a victory W (38-20). The next week, November 22, the Fighting Irish played a tough Air Force team at home W (13-6).

Cotton Bowl

On January 1, 1970, as previously discussed, Texas defeated ND in the Cotton Bowl L (17-21) before 77,000 fans. The game was also shown on CBS TV. ND would get the Longhorns back in 1971's game.

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. Close

but no cigar again even with a 10-1 record. No championship and no second place.



In his final Notre Dame game, 1970 Heisman runner-up Joe Theismann, # 7, threw for one touchdown and ran for two in a span of 9:30 to help end No. 1 Texas' 30-game winning streak.

1971 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian

The 1971 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached for the eighth year by Ara Parseghian. Notre Dame finished the season with an 8-2 record and were #15 in the coaches' poll and # 13 in the AP.

The famous "genuflect play"

Notre Dame was the preseason #1 in 1971 even without Joe Theismann, who led the Irish to # 2 the previous year. Theismann was great but even the Sportscasters felt ND could win the championship with just regular talent at QB. In fact, Sports Illustrated wrote "even a cheerleader could quarterback this team" after the Irish's 50-7 opening game trouncing of a Northwestern team that would finish as the Big Ten runner-up.

But, even with Parseghian, ND had lost four straight at Purdue and trailed 7-0 with about four minutes left in the contest while driving down to the PU 5. QB Pat Steenberge then lost the ball on a fumble.

Steenberge said that when the ball was snapped, he could not find it and then found it in between his legs. Purdue recovered. Game over! Many left their TV sets as they felt Purdue had just grabbed its fifth win in a row from the Irish

Not exactly! At the rain-soaked Ross-Ade Stadium, Notre Dame pulled out a miracle win in the final seconds to defeat Purdue. The quarterback of the Irish that day, Pat Steenberge has a YouTube video describing what happened in the last three minutes.

<https://youtu.be/953ezjHy33U>... It is a nice recap of an exciting game.

Here's the skinny. The ND Defense held Purdue after the recovery. The Boilermakers had to punt to protect their win. It was a sea of mud, and all anybody could see from the field was umbrellas in the stands—no eyeballs. A low long snap into the end zone and a bobble by the punter permitted ND cornerback Clarence Ellis to tear in from the left side and force the off-balance Purdue punter to fumble. End Fred Swendsen then pounced on the loose ball past the goal line for the ND Touchdown. ND was still down 6-7.

After all the crap Parseghian had taken for the championship season when he "tied one for the Gipper," the Irish Coach was determined to win the game or lose the game. He had a special play picked put.

In QB Steenberge's video he relates that Parseghian said "go get us two... run the play," rather than kick a tying extra point to knot the score at 7-7. The Irish had been practicing the "genuflect" play all week as a means of scoring 2.

On the two-point conversion, left end Mike Creaney went down on one knee (thus the genuflect). It looked like he was blocked, and so he was uncovered at the line of scrimmage. He then got up and snuck past the goal line. Steenberge was about to be tackled by Gary Hrivnak, who was not fooled by the QB's machinations on the play. "Steeny" just about got the pass away. He lofted the ball just over Hrivnak to Creaney for the score with 2:58 left for the W (8-7). ND was 2-0. Nice job Ara and Steeny and Creaney et al!

Michigan State came to South Bend on October 2 and the Irish won W (14-2). The Irish took off to Miami to play in Orange Bowl Stadium and they beat the Hurricanes W (17-0). On October 16, North Carolina came to Notre Dame to be beaten W (16-0).

Still suffering the Southern Cal Jinx, the unranked Trojans came into Notre Dame Stadium to play # 6 ND at 1:30 PM on October 23. As usual, they pulled their magic and overcame the Irish L (14-28). Scholastic has a fine write-up shown below:

With just two losses, the Irish finished ranked # 15 in the Coaches' Poll and # 13 in the AP. Because ND did not play ranked teams other than LSU, there was no bowl game offer and thus the poor showing in the rankings.

1972 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian

The 1972 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Ara Parseghian. Notre Dame finished the regular season with an 8-2 record and were #12 in the coaches' poll and # 14 in the AP. The Fighting Irish were invited to the Orange Bowl against Nebraska and the Irish had a tough time in defeat L (6-40)

On January 1, as noted above, ND played Nebraska in the Orange Bowl and were soundly defeated L (6-40) before 80,010 fans in a game broadcast nationally on NBC TV.

1973 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian

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.

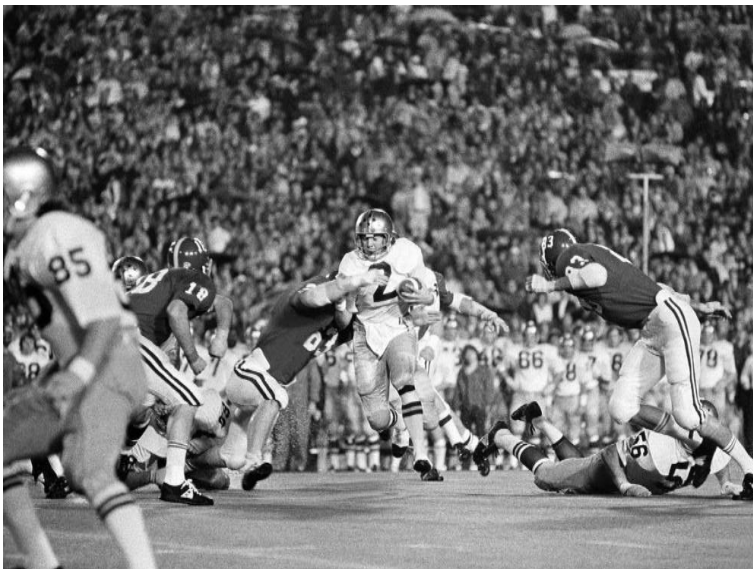
The other 1973 Notre Dame victories on the way to the National Championship included: Purdue away W (20-7), Michigan State at home W (14-10), Navy at home W (44-7), Pittsburgh away W (31-10), Airforce at home W (48-15), and Miami away W (44-0).

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 hauled 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 10-2 1974 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team were the 11th ND team 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. Ten wins, two losses and a #4 coaches poll ranking. Ara never lost the knack. Life changes however as children become more important than careers. 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.

Let's look at this 1974 season and then go back a bit and wrap up the Parseghian era, as much as it pains me. Writing about Ara

Parseghian has been a real treat for me. It was fun the first time living it, and fun again as I relived it in this chapter. I hope reading this chapter has given you the same good feeling.

All my life – at least the part that remembers Notre Dame games, I hated it when ND was playing either Purdue or Southern Cal (USC). No matter how good the Fighting Irish were, there were always blips on the radar whenever ND was having an excellent season and were playing Purdue or USC. The Boilermakers and the Trojans were always better teams when they faced the Irish.

If it were not for these two teams, Notre Dame would have had many more national championship seasons and the mystery and the hard fought battles extend even to today.

This particular year that we are examining, 1974 was typical. The prior year, 1973 was atypical. The Fifth Dimension used to sing about the moon being in the seventh house and Jupiter being aligned with Mars. That always needed to happen along with God's favor for the Irish to have an undefeated season no matter how good the coach or the team might be.

Either God or Lucifer placed USC and Purdue on this earth as more cuss words were yelled at TV screens in my day from Irish fans when these two teams played the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame.

In 1974, there was no alignment and there was no seventh house and as so many times before Purdue L (20-34) and USC L (24-55), both had beaten Notre Dame in the midst of what could have been an undefeated season. Ara Parseghian must have felt the same frustration as all Notre Dame Fans.

Whatever Purdue or USC ate before the games had to be the determining factor. Maybe sometimes, but I really don't think so. Did they play harder than Notre Dame. I don't think so; but they were always highly motivated to beat the Notre Dame Fighting Irish. God gave them their share of victories.

In 1974, the Irish were #4 in the coaches' poll and #6 in the AP. Their regular season record was 9-2 and they won the Orange Bowl

again against Alabama (13-11). Yes, as tough as it is to believe, ND was invited to the Orange Bowl again and they beat Alabama again 13-11.

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!

Until two years ago, Mr. Parseghian was still around and still attending Notre Dame games. It is reported that he and Coach Brian Kelly had a great relationship. Long live Ara Parseghian in heaven for sure. He is one of the great ones in life.

Chapter 16 Dan Devine Era: 1975-1980

Coach # 23

One National Championship -- 1977

Rockne, Leahy, Parseghian, Devine—Four Greats—National Championships

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. He produced six winning seasons including 1977 in which he brought the Irish as National Campionsship.

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.

Maybe, just maybe that would have been OK, but few would ever replace Ara Parseghian with anybody else, ever—under any conditions.

Notre Dame fans were not particularly pleased at the choice of Devine. Then again, many alum questioned the appointment of a protestant non-alum as the head coach when Parseghian, was chosen. Parseghian had it lots easier than Devine, however, as he was not replacing a living legend.

So, to net it out, Devine was not a popular choice among many ND fans but nobody could have been or would 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.

Rumors are always part of football. At the time, a big rumor was that Don Shula was going to leave Miami to coach at Notre Dame. There was another devastating rumor that nobody would be able to withstand. That rumor said that Ara Parseghian was merely taking a one-year leave of absence, and like Hugh Devore, two-time Interim

coach, the Irish were just looking for somebody to fill the bill temporarily.

Moreover, though a great college coach, Dan Devine had some setbacks in the pros and was fresh off an unsuccessful stint as Green Bay head coach. So, most good memories of his past college accomplishments had faded. Nonetheless, he was always a fine college football coach but few could compare him to Ara Parseghian when it came to charisma and presence.

Scholastic January 1976 – re 1975 Football

The game stories themselves reflect the season Notre Dame football went through. Dan Devine inherited a fine team from Parseghian, yet rumors, injuries, NCAA rules and the like gave the Irish an 8-3 season. The point that many fail to realize is that we could have gone 6-5 if the breaks hadn't fallen our way. 8-3 is a very good record for any college team. But at Notre Dame, that record is a very mediocre one. Perhaps we have our standards misplaced or something, but everyone expects a winner at Notre Dame. Everyone wants a perennial championship team. But that doesn't always happen. We all make mistakes. We all ought to be thankful that no one was seriously hurt this season. But many don't care about that—they only want the team to go 11-0. We must reshape our priorities to understand that there is never going to be a perfect Notre Dame football team.

Notre Dame means so much more than a football game: only 11 guys can be on the field at once. What about the other 90 or so that never play in each game? Do they just sit around their rooms each day and bang heads at three o'clock? It is one of the greatest feelings in the world to realize your own capabilities; we all know that. And yet it is just as rewarding to see an athlete realize that he may never play here, and go out and work for a decent education. It takes something special to realize that the free education may mean everything for him, and it is only a few athletes that ever realize that.

Football itself at Notre Dame seems to change 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 short 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. Maybe something else?

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's record was 8-3 and as expected for the Irish alums, it was not good enough. No championship this year means in this championship book, we'll pick you up at the next opportunity.

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. 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.

Pitt, coached by the great Johnny Majors finished its 12-0 season with a victory in the Sugar Bowl. Majors' team overwhelmed Notre Dame. Majors was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame as a player in 1987. Majors was a great player and coach. He finished second to Notre Dame's Paul Hornung in voting for the Heisman Trophy in 1956

After a bad year, Notre Dame was not finished. The administration decided to accept a Gator Bowl bid this time around and the players were ready to play ball. ND signed up to play Joe Paterno's storied Penn State team in the Gator Bowl, hoping to build momentum for what was expected to be another fine ND team in 1977.

Gator Bowl ND v Penn Syate

Devine's team took full advantage of the opportunity, with the Browner-led defense playing a great football game. Notre Dame won the Gator Bowl v the Nittany Lions, W 20-9.

Al Hunter ignited the Notre Dame offense and tallied a pair of first-half touchdowns to spark the Fighting Irish to a 20-9 win over Penn State in the Gator Bowl before a crowd of 67,827. Hunter, who became the first Notre Dame back to rush for more than 1,000 yards in a single season, scored in each of the initial two periods.

After the Nittany Lions jumped out to a short-lived 3-0 lead on Tony Capozzoli's 26-yard field goal, Terry Eurick helped the Irish effort

with a kickoff return of 65 yards. Hunter put together runs of six and nine yards before crossing the goal line on a one-yard dive. Dave Reeve added the extra point and the Irish were ahead for good.

1977 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Dan Devine Championship

The 1977 Notre Dame Fighting Irish (11-1) 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, the fact 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.

A string of wins, well played, brought Notre Dame back into the Top 10 after falling behind. 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.

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. Nobody including ND would log this season in as an "almost" or a championship category but the bowl victory v Miami was priceless.

1980 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Dan Devine

At 9-2-1, the 1980 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was looking good from the beginning of the season. They were 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 was one of the best but not recognized as such during his days at the helm.

In August, Devine had announced that the upcoming season would be his last. Notre Dame had a good six seasons with Dan Devine including a national championship. All were winning seasons. This year, the offense scored 248, while the defense gave up just 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 coveted national championship seasons.

The 1980 Notre Dame Football Team began the season with some built-in motivation. Coach Dan Devine, who had led the school to a national title in 1977, and enjoyed prior success coaching Arizona and Missouri, announced that he was calling it quits at Notre Dame

and would retire at the end of the 1980 season. Notre Dame looked good—good enough when it rolled out its season that it might ride the motivational wave all the way to another national championship. But, the Irish unfortunately came up short in the end.

Dan Devine had never quite replaced Joe Montana as his QB and was looking hard to fill this important spot. Devine found freshman Blair Kiel who become the starter in 1980. Kiel was not known as a crackerjack passer so the 1980 Irish concentrated on building a strong defense. For offense, Devine ran the ball most of the time.

Linebacker Bob Crable and defensive end Scott Zettek led the defense. Sophomore Phil Carter was the top running back, who took the ball for over 800 yards in 1980.

In researching Notre Dame's football seasons since 1887, I cannot recall one time that I found Notre Dame to have a weak schedule to play. It is a redundant comment after examining the "who" in the ND schedules over the years to suggest that the Irish played tough schedule after tough schedule.

Every year there were Big Ten games against the best of the Big Ten, including Michigan State, Michigan, and Northwestern. And, of course there were the marquee games against Purdue and USC, both of which seemed to play their best against Notre Dame. There was little rest in any Notre Dame schedule. Besides the marquee teams, in 1980, the Irish played three other teams who finished the regular season at 8-3.

The first of those 8-3 teams was Michigan State, a consistently good team in this timeframe that ran either equal or just a notch below Michigan and Ohio State in the Big Ten. Notre Dame, ranked #11 to begin the season found nemesis # 9 Purdue at home. This game against the Boilermakers sent an early message to all challengers with a W (31-10) win that moved the Irish up to #7.

If the Purdue game was a message about quality, then the Michigan game in South Bend two weeks later on September 20, was a message about destiny. The Irish were ready for a tough game as always against Michigan.

Classified as an EPIC game, The Notre Dame 1980 writing team wrote this about the game:

1980 MICHIGAN

In one of the greatest late-game see-saw affairs on this list, No. 8 Notre Dame and No. 14 Michigan swapped the lead three times in the second half before the smallest and most unlikely of heroes emerged with the game-winning play under the most difficult circumstances.

Pinned at his own 20-yard line with only 40 seconds remaining -- all while working against a steady 15 mph wind and trailing 27-26 -- Irish head coach Dan Devine benched his starting quarterback and called on confident big-armed freshman, Blair Kiel, to lead the final drive.

A couple of clutch passes -- and the help of a fortuitous 32-yard pass interference call -- helped Kiel move his team to Michigan's 34-yard line with only 0:04 remaining on the clock to set up Irish kicker Harry Oliver's impossible 51-yard field goal attempt for the win.

"I just remember thinking this wind is very strong and half-thinking, 'I don't have a chance at making this thing,'" the late Oliver would recount in a 2004 interview with Irish Sports Report.

Call it luck of the Irish, or a just a well-timed weather break, legend has it the winds calmed just long enough for the 5-11, 185-pound Oliver to boot the kick and clear the crossbar by inches as the clock expired, delivering arguably the most memorable field goal in Notre Dame history for a 29-27 Irish win.

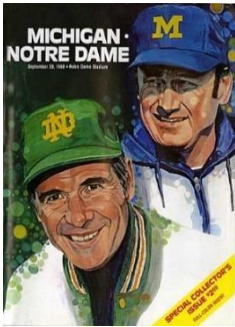
I love these stories. This was a big game. Here is just a bit more about the game:

The home team jumped out to a 14-0 lead, but then fell behind 21-14. After coming back to a 26-21 lead, Notre Dame allowed a late Michigan touchdown and the score was 27-26. The game was not over and the comeback kid had graduated two years before in 1978.

This would not be the last test that the Irish defense would have before the year was out, but their showing against the Wolverines was one that would appear in the W column. ND had a new gutsy quarterback John Wangler, who was hurt yet who played on what appeared to be one leg because of a prior injury. He would help the Irish make the difference.

Notre Dame had a good kicker Harry Oliver waiting to be needed. Wangler moved the ball into Michigan territory and lined up for a last-gasp 51-yard field goal into the wind. Oliver stunned everyone by knocking this difficult field goal through the uprights and it sent the home crowd into a frenzy. Despite the win, W (29-27), Notre Dame remained at # 8 in the polling.

Notre Dame then defeated a struggling Michigan State Team, W (26-21) at Spartan Field. Notre Dame followed this with a win v Miami W (32-14) at home. Miami was a team bound for eight wins and a bowl victory. Notre Dame pulled no punches and beat the Hurricanes and moved to #5. Miami had come to South Bend after an ND bye week and the Irish were rested and ready.



Army was next at South Bend W (30-3). Notre Dame then went to Arizona and won W (20-3). In neither game did the Irish give up a touchdown and the team was ranked at #3. Then, it was off to Giants stadium before 73,000 fans for a big W (33-0) win against Navy.

1980 Cover Michigan V Notre Dame Devine's last Season

ND v Alabama 1980

It started all about defense. In the second quarter, Notre Dame recovered an unforced fumble on the Alabama 12-yard line. After getting to the one-yard line, Kiel fumbled it back. Amazingly, the Crimson Tide fumbled it right back to the Irish and finally, Carter dove over the top for the Irish touchdown. In a defensive battle, it was the game's only score. Crable sealed the win with a 4th-and-1 stop at the Notre Dame 37-yard line in the fourth quarter. Notre Dame was very pleased to move back up to #2 in the polls, behind only SEC-leading Georgia.

1981 Sugar Bowl

Notre Dame had locked in to the Sugar Bowl and had a shot at moving up in the polls by derailing Georgia's Bulldogs and their sensational freshman running back, Herschel Walker. In the Sugar

Bowl game. Notre Dame's defense was almost perfect as it controlled the line of scrimmage and the Irish got an early field goal from Oliver to take a 3-0 lead. Unfortunately, that was the end of the good news for Notre Dame.

The Fighting Irish had a miscommunication on who would field a kickoff return and this gave Georgia the ball on the 1-yard line. Additionally, ND committed four other turnovers. One miscue after another and a win cannot be had. ND also missed field goals. And in spite of Georgia completing just one pass all game long, the Irish lost L (10-17). The final ranking for Notre Dame was #10 in the coaches' poll and # 9 in the AP. Nobody could call that a slouch season but surely it could have been better.

Wrap-Up on Dan Devine

This is the closing of the Dan Devine era. This Washington Post describes the ups and downs of Dan' Devine as a college coach and as the coach of Notre Dame. "God bless Dan Devine RIP", who passed away at the age of 77 on May 9, 2002. He was a great college coach.

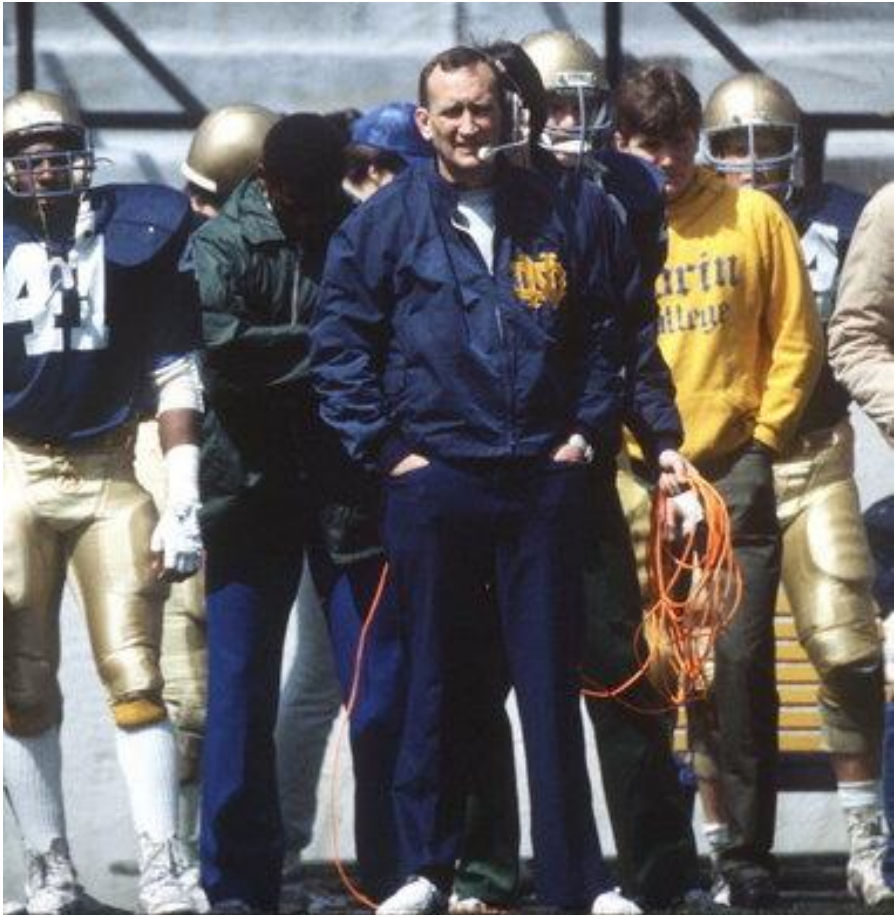
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/sports/1980/11/12/dan-devine-38/aaa07da9-0865-41ca-85e1-4cfa5f0a906e/>

Chapter 17 Gerry Faust Era: 1981 - 1985

Coach # 24

Tough Road for Faust

1981	Gerry Faust	5-6
1982	Gerry Faust	6-4-1
1983	Gerry Faust	7-5
1984	Gerry Faust	7-5
1985	Gerry Faust	5-6



Former Notre Dame Football Coach Gerry Faust stands on the sidelines in South Bend, Ind. during the 1983 season. (AP Photo/Joe Raymond)

Article from the Washington Post on Faust's appointment

I recall all the scuttle but when in my early thirties when Gerry Faust ran the Irish football team. In retrospect looking back, I recall thinking his seasons were all losers and that the team never had a chance. Now, I see that Faust actually had three winning seasons and two at 5-6. If it were not for the ND legacy, Faust would probably still be coaching at some other university. But, as an ND coach, his record was better than few other than Joe Kuharich. There will be no championship celebrations as we quickly cover the Gerry Faust years.

The best introduction to the Gerry Faust years at Notre Dame would be to display the hype as it was in 1980 for Gerry Faust, when he was sought after to be the coach of the University of Notre Dame football team. He was hired to succeed retiring coach Dan Devine. Here it is:

Notre Dame Picks Faust, Ohio High School Coach

November 25, 1980

Reprinted from the Washington Post with thanks.

Gerry Faust, who guided Cincinnati Moeller High School to national prominence during the past 18 years, was named Notre Dame football coach today, succeeding Dan Devine.

Notre Dame President Rev. Theodore Hesburgh made the announcement of the appointment of Faust, whose teams have compiled a 174-17-2 record since 1963. They also have won 70 of their last 71 games.

Edmund P. Joyce, executive vice president, said Faust was chosen because of his record on the high school level.

"We feel quite strongly that Gerry Faust is the perfect individual to carry on the great tradition associated with athletics at the University of Notre Dame," Joyce said. "I don't know of anyone acquainted with Gerry who doesn't have the greatest respect and admiration for him and his accomplishments."

Faust's teams have won five of the last six Ohio Class 3A championships, including the latest one on Sunday when his Crusader team finished a 13-0 season by defeating Massillon, 30-7.

"I'm extremely pleased and tremendously honored to have been chosen to come to Notre Dame," said Faust, 45, whose teams have sent 250 players into the college ranks.

"I said several years ago the only job other than the one at Moeller in which I would be interested in would be at Notre Dame and I meant that sincerely."

...

"We dedicated this game to Coach Faust because it might have been his last game at Moeller," fullback Mark Brooks said immediately after Sunday's game.

Gerry Faust was a great high school coach. It is easy to see with the credentials noted in this introductory article how the Notre Dame Brass would see in Faust both a great coach and a great man. Perhaps he was the perfect coach to take Notre Dame to another championship, but it probably was not this year, and it probably was not without more college experience.

All of us learned a lot through Gerry Faust's experience. High School and College Football players need different coaching styles. Many high school coaches become great college coaches either by mentoring with a great head college coach or by moving to a small college and learning the ropes while advancing through the ranks. Too bad Gerry Faust could not have worked with Dan Devine or Ara Parseghian for a year or five before becoming the big mahoff for the Irish. The spirit is willing...

1981 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Gerry Faust

The 1981 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Gerry Faust in his first year as head football coach. The 1981 offense scored 232 points, while the defense allowed 160 points. Despite Dan Devine's feeling that he had left his successor a solid team, it was Notre Dame's first losing season (5-6) in 18 years. There were no bowl offers and no rankings. b

It was not a good start for Coach Faust who coached his first college football game at Notre Dame on September 12, 1981. Incidentally, Notre Dame won the first game coached by Faust. For his first season, however, combatting against the hellion coaches wanting to deprive him of every victory, Faust had received a Dr. Faustus type baptism of fire. No coach wanted to give the high-school experienced Faust a break.

1982 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Gerry Faust

The 1982 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Gerry Faust in his second year as head football coach. Faust was no longer in awe of Division I coaching and teams, and he did better plotting how to become victorious against them. Notre Dame's record was 6-4-1. The team was unranked throughout the season, and it was not invited to play in a bowl game.

Notre Dame was a much better team in 1982 under Gerry Faust than they were in his first season. They were beating good teams. But, the reality of life is that ND success and history was tough to live up to every season. There were no big stars in Faust's lineup that he had recruited or that had come from Dan Devine.

1983 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Gerry Faust

The 1983 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was the third season for head coach Gerry Faust. Notre Dame's big 1983 moment was that it had made it to the Liberty Bowl where they faced Boston College and the Eagle's prized quarterback Doug Flutie.

In the Liberty Bowl, Boston College scored first on a 13-yard touchdown pass but missed the extra point. Notre Dame came back as Allen Pinkett and Chris Smith each rushed for 100-plus yards. Pinkett scored two touchdowns as Notre Dame beat Boston College, 19-18, to win its first bowl game since the 1979 Cotton Bowl. The ND record in 1983 was (7-5) which included the Liberty Bowl win. Though the season was positive, ND fans and alumni were not looking for just OK seasons.

1983 Liberty Bowl – ND 19, BC 18

It was BC's first bowl game in 40 years. The Eagles were 9-2 on the season, ranked # 13 in the country and had really captured the imagination of the Boston area behind the play of junior QB Doug Flutie. Notre Dame had been struggling. The Irish limped into the game unranked at just 6-5, after opening the season at #5. Gerry Faust and Blair Kiel, the ND leaders were both having tough years.



ND v BC in Liberty Bowl. Head to Head Play

BC got a 6-0 lead quickly on a 63-yd drive. Flutie hit Brennan for the score. The Irish came right back and it was 7-6 after Alan Pinkett took it in from the 1 followed by the game's only successful extra point.

In Q2, Kiel hit Alvin Miller for a 13-yard TD to put the Irish up 13-6. ND scored again on its next possession for a lead of 19-6. Flutie tossed a nice 42-yarder one to Bob Biestek setting up a 28-yard reception by Gerard Phelan 28 for another Flutie TD. After two-point attempt failed, the half ended with ND up 19-12.

Nobody got anywhere in the second half until Flutie mustered up a sustained drive which ended in a 3 yard TD pass to TE Scott Grossman. ND was still up 19-18 after Flutie's pass for the conversion was batted away.

BC had one last chance with 1:08 remaining. They got the ball to the ND 35 but the Irish held on for the one point win W (19-18). The kicking game was clearly critical and it served to be the margin of victory for Notre Dame.

1984 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Gerry Faust

The 1984 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Gerry Faust in his fourth season. The Fighting Irish were 7-5 and finished # 17. No “almosts” this year and no championships but at 7-5, it was a winning season.

1985 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Gerry Faust

The 1985 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Gerry Faust in his fifth and final season with Notre Dame. This was the second losing Season (5-6) with Coach Faust and Irish fans were getting restless with the lack of what seemed to be long-term solid play.

1985: Faust's Last Season

Farewell to Gerry Faust. May God bless you Gerry, as you are a good man. For those who like to explore, there is a closing article to summarize the Faust years as written by the New York Times:

<http://www.nytimes.com/1985/11/27/sports/embattled-faust-resigns-as-coach-of-notre-dame.htm>. It was published on November 27, 1985

Chapter 18 Lou Holtz Era: 1986 - 1996

Coach # 25

National Championship 1988

**Rockne, Leahy, Parseghian, Devine, Holtz—Five Greats—
with National 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

*** National Championship**



As you can see by his record, Lou Holtz is one of the best coaches ever at Notre Dame. He is one of the elite. He fits in well with the Notre Dame immortals as he is one. A quick look at the record and you might conclude that Holtz won about three or maybe even four national championships. Somehow, the pundits did not give Holtz a break and they did not give Notre Dame a break despite Holtz's great 11-year tenure.

The best way to introduce the Lou Holtz era is to see what the pundits were writing about Coach Holtz when he got the job in 1985 for the 1986 season. This Chicago Tribune Article by Reporters Skip Myslenski and Phil Hersh gets us right where we want to be to start off the next eleven years of Great Moments in Notre Dame Football. We have all now arrived in the Lou Holtz era of Notre Dame.

Please enjoy this wonderful piece introducing Lou Holtz. It was published on November 28, 1985 right after Holtz got the ND coaching job. Our thanks to the Chicago Tribune for permission to include this article: Enjoy!

http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1985-11-28/sports/8503220538_1_football-coach-arkansas-and-minnesota-minnesota-coach-lou-holtz

From The Chicago Tribune

Notre Dame Picks Holtz

Minnesota Coach Couldn't Pass Up Opportunity

November 28, 1985

By Skip Myslenski and Phil Hersh.

Minnesota coach Lou Holtz was named the new football coach at Notre Dame Wednesday just 30 hours after the surprise resignation of Gerry Faust.

Holtz, who leaves Minnesota after two years of leading that program back to respectability, was officially unveiled at a late afternoon press conference in Notre Dame, Ind.

"There isn't a job in the country that I'd leave Minnesota for--with the possible exception of Notre Dame," Holtz said last Sunday. "I'd be less than honest if I didn't say that I'd have to seriously consider a chance to coach at Notre Dame if

it was ever offered to me. I've always had a warm spot in my heart for Notre Dame."

Holtz, who rebuilt programs at North Carolina State and Arkansas before he refurbished Minnesota, takes over the Irish with 16 years of head coaching experience in college and a lifetime record of 116-65-5. His 1985 Golden Gophers, who face Clemson in the Independence Bowl on Dec. 21, had a surprising 6-5 record that included narrow losses to national powers Oklahoma and Ohio State.

"What he did in two years at Minnesota was a miracle. I guess that's one reason they call him a magician," said CBS college football commentator Pat Haden. "He's a very good coach, a very good fundamental coach, and I think he's always played well in big games.

I think he's a coach who's always gotten the most out of his players. The last two places he's been, Arkansas and Minnesota, didn't have the best athletes in their conferences by a long shot, but he managed to play very, very well and get into some major bowls. I think it will be interesting to see what he gets out of better players. He's going to have better athletes than he ever had before."

Added Northwestern coach Dennis Green: "He gets the most out of his talent. He's one of those guys who has the ability to maximize the talents of the guys he has."

Concluded Haden: "He has always wanted to go there, he has a son there, so it makes sense. One thing makes it an interesting choice--people say he didn't handle the pressure well in New York (during his one season as head coach of the Jets). But he's glib, and he has a great reputation for integrity. To my knowledge, his programs have never been in trouble. He cares about his kids. He's the perfect guy for Notre Dame."

The same was said of Gerry Faust when Notre Dame plucked him from Cincinnati's Moeller High School and named him as its football coach five years ago. He was glib and honest and caring during his stay at the school, yet his college coaching inexperience often showed and his teams' performances never matched expectations.

That failing prompted speculation on his future to begin even before the start of the 1984 season, which would be Faust's last under the five-year deal he signed when hired. As his team struggled, rumors that his contract would not be renewed grew rampant, yet his announcement Tuesday surprised even university officials, who did not learn of his decision until that morning.

Athletic director Gene Corrigan, whom Faust informed just moments before entering a press conference and announcing his resignation publicly, responded to the news by saying "unquestioned integrity" would be the paramount quality he would look for in a new coach. He added: "We need someone who is experienced at this level and has been a success at this level."

Corrigan, the first Notre Dame athletic director in 30 years to have a say in the selection of the school's football coach, said he did not begin contacting possible replacement until after he learned of Faust's decision on Tuesday. But he must have had his choice in mind, for later that same day Minnesota athletic director Paul Giel told the Minneapolis Star and Tribune:

"Lou told me that Corrigan had called him and asked if he (Corrigan) has to get permission from me to talk about the Notre Dame job. I said it was fine, that no permission was necessary."

That was true because Holtz's contract with Minnesota contained an escape clause that would release him from the deal if Notre Dame offered him a job. Yet Giel, university president Ken Keller and Frank Wilderson, the school's vice president for school affairs, met with Holtz Tuesday afternoon to try and lure him into staying. "He's going to have to make a decision," Keller said later. "If we don't succeed (in keeping him), it's not for want of trying." "I came to Minnesota two years ago with certain feelings," Holtz himself said at a news conference to discuss the Independence Bowl. "But right now, I don't know what my feelings are."

But by Wednesday morning, his feelings were settled and he was on his way from Minneapolis to Notre Dame for the press conference that would announce his selection. Back at Minnesota, the sign marking his parking space outside his office building was already removed, and his secretary was busy cleaning out his closets and packing his belongings.

1986 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Lou Holtz

The 1986 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Lou Holtz. It was clearly a rebuilding year for Coach Holtz. Notre Dame produced a 5-6 record under first-year coach Holtz. Despite the poor record, the moxie that Notre Dame showed all season long, even in defeat, lifted the spirits of the fans as we all knew that Notre Dame was in for something good. With an average of 5 points as the margin separating the Fighting Irish from victory in its six defeats, Irish fans knew that with just a little tweaking, Notre Dame would soon be back to the Devine, Parseghian, Leahy, and Rockne days.

1987 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Lou Holtz

The 1987 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Lou Holtz in his second year as Notre Dame Head Coach. Tony Rice became the starting quarterback for Notre Dame following an injury to Terry Andrysiak. Rice would become one of the Notre Dame stars that few fans would ever forget. This year, Tim Brown would end ND's 23 year Heisman drought (John Huarte) as he would pick up the sixth **Heisman Trophy** for Notre Dame. The Irish would finish the season 8-4 and they earned a berth to the Cotton Bowl Classic for the first time since the 1978 season.

But, unfortunately, the Irish lost L (10-35) the game against Texas A & M. Nobody denied that it was the best season since Dan Devine had retired.



SOUTH BEND, IN- NOVEMBER 1987: Tim Brown #81 of the Notre Dame Fighting Irish carries the ball during a game against the Navy Midshipmen in November 1987 in South Bend, Indiana.

Tim Brown

One of Lou Holtz major bright spots in his first two years as ND Head Coach was a great player named Tim Brown. Though the first

two years were not as spectacular as year 3, it was not because Tim Brown was not out there every day giving it all for Notre Dame. He was a spectacular player for Lou Holtz.

Brown appeared on the scene in 1986 as a junior with a brilliant season-ending performance in a come-from-behind upset of USC, then used back-to-back punt returns for touchdowns in an early-season 1987 game against Michigan State to cement his Heisman bid. Though he was listed as a flanker, Brown did it all.

He used his ability as a pass receiver, rusher out of a full-house backfield and punt and kickoff returner to rank third nationally in all-purpose yardage as a junior (176.5 per game) and then he was at the top again (sixth) as a senior (167.9). He finished his junior campaign with 254 all-purpose yards in the 38-37 win at USC (including a 56-yard punt return that set up the winning field goal), then returned punts for 66 and 71 yards for a pair of touchdowns in an early romp over eventual Big Ten and Rose Bowl champion Michigan State.

Tim Brown finished his career as Notre Dame's all-time leader in pass reception yards (2493) while also returning six kicks for touchdowns (three punts, three kickoffs). Despite constant double and triple coverage as a senior, Brown earned a reputation as the most dangerous player in college football. Brown was a first-round pick of the Los Angeles Raiders (sixth player chosen overall) in the '88 NFL draft. A great college player and a great pro, Tim Brown was selected to play in the NFL Pro Bowl nine times.

1988 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Lou Holtz Championship

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 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 Sunkist Fiesta Bowl 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)

Raghib "Rocket" Ismael

The Rocket went to my high school and was coached by Mickey Gorham, a 1959 Notre Dame scholarship tackle, and my one-time football coach at Wilkes-Barre Meyers High School.

There is a great high school story about Meyers playing at Dallas (PA) in 1987. Both teams were among the best in the Wyoming Valley Conference.

Coach Ted Jackson of Dallas knew the speed of the Ismael brothers, Raghib (Rocket) and Qadry (Missile)—Qadry went to Syracuse and Raghib went to ND. Jackson knew they would rip his team apart with their blinding speed.



<<< Rocket Both were great high school football players and phenomenally fast track stars. To negate the speed of the Ismaels', Jackson had a trick that in 1987 was perfectly legal.

Some say Coach Ted Jackson refused to permit the grass to be cut at Dallas, PA Stadium before the Meyers game. Consequently, the Ismaels' were in essence "caged in" by the high grass and were easy pickings for Dallas Defenders. The folklore says the grass was knee high. "Maintenance made a mistake," joked Dallas head coach Ted Jackson.

"They cut the grass. Fire that guy. "Jackson was a win at all costs kind of coach and very clever.

Notre Dame's web site: <http://www.und.com/sports/> highlights Ismael's career and it was a great one. He was two-time first-team All-American as sophomore in '89 and junior in '90 and a unanimous pick in '90 when he finished second in Heisman Trophy voting behind BYU's Ty Detmer.

The "Rocket" became a starter on the 1988 National Championship squad with 12 catches for 331 yards and two touchdowns, while returning 12 kickoffs for 433 yards and two TDs. He had 64 rushing carries for 478 yards and two TDs in '89 and caught 27 passes for 535 yards. Always great in the return department, Ismael returned

20 kickoffs for 502 yards and two TDs with seven punt returns for 113 yards and one TD in '89.

Raghib was the Walter Camp Player of the Year in '90 with 67 rushing carries for 537 yards and three TDs; 32 pass receptions for 699 yards and two TDs, 14 kickoff returns for 336 yards, and one TD while returning 13 punts for 151 yards.

His career totals included 273 all-purpose attempts for 4,187 yards and 15 TDs-- a 15.3 yards-per-attempt average. Ismael holds records for pass reception yards per catch in a career with 22.0 (71 for 1565); kickoff returns for touchdowns in a game with two (vs. Michigan in 1989 and again vs. Rice in 1988) and in a career with five; and kick return yards per attempt in a career with 22.6 (17 for 1607). Raghib "Rocket" Ismael is listed as the 75th greatest football player of all-time by collegefootball.com.

For his part in Rocket's career, Ted Jackson was just a great coach from the Wilkes-Barre area of NEPA who loved winning football games.

Tony Rice



Tony Rice was one of the cornerstones on Notre Dame's 1988 national championship team which went 12-0 and defeated West Virginia in the Fiesta Bowl. He holds the school records for rushing yardage by a quarterback in a season (884 in 1989) and a career (1,921), ranking 15th among all Irish players in the latter category. Rice also stands sixth in school history with 4,882 yards of total offense.

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. ND student had already done my 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!

From my first day researching Notre Dame's great moments, I discovered the best sports writers with the most enthusiasm for the ND Fighting Irish were the student editors of the student magazine known as Scholastic. Again, they have outclassed the pros and the pundits who are forced to squeeze their prose into confining boundaries so as to not interfere with ad revenue opportunities.

Once again, Scholastic, through the work of this particular student scribe, Kevin Boughal, has produced a capstone article that takes on the very same Fiesta Bowl game that assured Lou Holtz's 1988 Championship Season but does lots more.

Boughal's piece captures the essence of this phenomenally great season. I know you will enjoy it. Thank you Notre Dame for providing such a phenomenal magazine written by your students and thank you to the supervisors of the Scholastic for having such a worthwhile read in your Football Edition, from which this article emanates.

<http://archives.nd.edu/Football/Football-1988s.pdf>.

Here it is:

The Irish defeated the West Virginia Mountaineers with a Major defensive effort and a heck of a passing attack

BY KEVIN BOUGHAL

TEMPE, Ariz. –

This year's Notre Dame football team was haunted by images of the past. Last year, the Irish had been expected to walk all over the hapless Texas A&M Aggies in the 1988 Cotton Bowl and had been convincingly defeated 35-10. But the Fiesta Bowl was different. Unlike last year's team, the 1989 Irish team was mature and used to winning.

[In the 2016 Basketball NCAA Tournament, I picked Villanova to win it all and they did. The pundits kept saying that the new in vogue saying for the contenders is that "we did not come this far just to come this far." In 1988 at the Fiesta Bowl against an undefeated and tough West Virginia team, Notre Dame's Fighting Irish had not come so far just to come so far. They were ready and they were not going to be denied their win.]

They were not happy to simply be at a major bowl (no pun intended); they expected to win it. The Irish were in Tempe, AZ to get a job done and the star of the game would not be a towel and thief thereof. Ironically, the Mountaineers had contracted the same disease that the Irish had the year before. The Mountaineers were just happy to be in a January bowl and they were in awe that they were playing a traditional football power like Notre Dame for the National Championship.

Even though the Mountaineers were 11- 0, they really had not played against any highly-ranked teams. The Irish were as accustomed to playing in 'big, media-hyped' games as they were to winning them during the 1988 season. At least three of the games the Irish played were labeled "the game of the decade" and one was touted as "the game of the century."

But where had this Irish team come from? Everybody could see greatness on the distant horizon, but almost nobody saw it happening this year. The schedule was too tough. Only a few of the players were experienced at their positions. Hey, this team didn't even have a rap video.

Every critic in the country had reasons why the Irish could no longer be a football powerhouse. The coach played according to the rules established by the NCAA, and to top it off, the school was stupid enough to put academics over football. Some critics took that argument even further and proclaimed that Notre Dame was de-emphasizing football. So much for that argument.

Typical of big games like the Fiesta Bowl, the media took great delight in matching up the quarterbacks, Major Harris versus Tony Rice.

Throughout the season, Rice had been criticized because he did not throw the ball very often. If the choice was there to run or pass, he would run. Yet somehow, Rice had continued to win the games. The wins were a team effort, but the games were being won.

Rice had continued to improve his passing game throughout the entire season. Holtz had given him darts to throw in his room to practice getting the touch on the ball. But even with his improvement, many still questioned his ability to throw the football.

Improved or not, coming into the Fiesta Bowl, many critics still felt there was only one quarterback on the field, and Notre Dame didn't have him. Listening to the media hype that came out of Tempe, one would think that Major Harris could walk on water and then tum it into wine.

But in the end, the savior from West Virginia could not resurrect his offense. It was Tony Rice who walked away with a 34- 21 win, the award for the offensive Most Valuable Player of the Fiesta Bowl, a national championship, and a shot at the Heisman next year. To top it all off, he had done it through the air, breaking his own passing record and finishing the day with eleven attempts, seven completions for 213 yards, one interception, and two touchdown passes.

To be fair to Harris, he led the Mountaineers, at times single-handedly, to their first crack ever at a national championship. His speed and agility, as well as his ability to make a broken play into a big play, made him feared by every opponent that West Virginia faced this year, including Notre Dame.

Despite his talent, Notre Dame's defense managed to sack Harris three times, intercept him once and hold him to only 166 yards passing. Notre Dame's defense also added Harris' name to their list of quarterbacks that they injured. During WVU's first possession, Harris took a hit from Irish linebacker Mike Stonebreaker and dislocated his left shoulder. Major bruised his shoulder on one of the first plays of the game," said West Virginia Head Coach Don Nehlen. "He was tentative after the injury and so we didn't run him like we usually do. Major never lost his confidence though. He's not that kind of guy."

Because of his injury, the West Virginia coaching staff was tentative about letting Harris run the option, and the injury proved costly to the Mountaineers in the end.

Meanwhile it was Rice who ended up impressing everybody with his passing ability.

For a guy who was not supposed to be able to throw, he (Rice) looked like he could pass to me," said Nehlen about Rice's passing ability. Notre Dame Head Coach Lou Holtz was also impressed at the way that Rice passed during the game. "Tony Rice threw the ball better than he has in the past," said Holtz. "I told everyone earlier this week that Tony was throwing the ball better."

Although Rice had a good day passing the ball, he did not get the opportunity to show it in the first quarter. For the most part, Holtz played conservatively and kept the ball on the ground. Notre Dame won the toss and elected to defer. West Virginia's first drive went four downs and then the Irish got the ball back.

On their first possession, Notre Dame could only drive 35 yards and get one first down so they had to settle for a Billy Hackett 45-yard field goal. The score was Notre Dame 3, WVU 0.

After another unsuccessful set of downs for the Mountaineers, Notre Dame got the ball back. It was during this possession that Rice completed his first pass of the game to freshman tight end Derek Brown for 23 yards. Eight plays and three first downs later, junior fullback Anthony Johnson dove into the end zone for six. The extra point was botched so the score at the end of the first quarter was Notre Dame 9, West Virginia 0. WVU finished the first quarter without gaining a single first down.

The second quarter was a good news, bad news quarter for the Mountaineers. The good news was they scored every time they touched the ball, which was twice. The bad news was that Notre Dame did too, and to make the bad news worse, the Irish scored two touchdowns to WVU's two field goals. As an added embarrassment to coach Nehlen, both of the Irish touchdowns were scored by true freshmen.

Freshman Tailback Rodney Culver capped an eleven-play, 84-yard drive when he scampered five yards for a touchdown. Later in the quarter, Rice had his fourth completion of the game, this time to freshman speedster Raghiv "Rocket" Ismail for 29 yards and a touchdown. The score at the half was weighted 23-6 in favor of Notre Dame. This game was certainly not developing into the game that everybody had predicted. It seemed that the game was not being decided by who had the better quarterback as expected, but instead, who had the better defense.

To put it simply, Notre Dame was showing the Mountaineers why some had labeled their defense the best in the country. Holtz had stated time and time again that the key to winning is having a good defense; good team speed and a team effort was proving his hypothesis.

One of the people that Holtz turned into a believer was Nehlen.

"Notre Dame has got big players. Notre Dame has got fast players. Notre Dame has got physical players," said Nehlen. "We weren't surprised about how good their defense was. They're ranked in the top five in the country defensively, but the tape doesn't show how fast they run. They've got great team speed. They run like deer."

Holtz built his defense around a core of fifth-year players. The defensive line was anchored by defensive end Frank Starns, one of the two defensive players picked to be a first team Associated Press All-American. Starns finished the year with 51 total tackles and seven sacks. He earned the defensive MVP of the Fiesta Bowl as he added Harris' head to his wall of Heisman Trophy candidates.

Starns had been in the Miami backfield all day pestering Steve Walsh and he had assaulted USC signal caller Rodney Peete while visiting Los Angeles. He had continued to vent his rage against highly acclaimed opposing quarterbacks, sacking Harris twice for a total loss of 22 yards.

Inside linebacker Wes Pritchett, a fifth year senior, also had a great year and his leadership was a big part of the Irish success. Pritchett finished the year as the team's leading tackler with 112 total tackles. His aggressive style of play helped keep pressure on Harris all afternoon. He made a total of five tackles in the Fiesta Bowl.

The other defensive player chosen to be an A.P. All-American (first team) was junior inside linebacker Michael Stonebreaker. Stonebreaker ended up as the team's leading tackler with 104 total tackles. Although it was Stonebreaker, along with defensive end Jeff Alim, who laid the hit on Harris that dislocated the quarterback's shoulder, the All-American Linebacker missed most of the game because of a virus.

Co-captain Ned Bolcar, a senior linebacker, did not see as much playing time as a Notre Dame captain usually does, but had an important role in the team's success. Bolcar managed to finish fourth in total tackles with 57, but only played half the time that Stonebreaker and Pritchett did. An A.P. All American (second team) last year, Bolcar has another year of eligibility left because he sat out his freshman year. He has applied to play for a fifth year but the university will not

make its final decision until later in the year. Against West Virginia, Bolcar was credited with two tackles.

One of the bigger defensive surprises was sophomore nose tackle Chris Zorich. Zorich finished third in total tackles with 70 and second in sacks with five. Although the sophomore did not play in a single game last year. He started this year and he has used his 6' 1", 260-pound frame and 4.68 speed (in the 40- yard dash) to create a permanent spot for himself in the defensive line. He is also the strongest man on the team with a 410-pound bench press. Technically, Zorich still has three years of eligibility left if he decides to stay for a fifth year.

The rest of the defensive line, including sophomore defensive tackle George Williams, senior defensive end Darrell "Flash" Gordon, junior defensive tackle Jeff Alm and freshman sensation Arnold Ale at defensive end, all had outstanding seasons. The defensive secondary had a very impressive year also. The speed of Pat Terrell, Corny Southall, Todd Lyght, George Streeter and Stan Smagala kept many of the quarterbacks from being able to throw long. Junior Pat Terrell reminded Harris of this danger by intercepting him in the third quarter.

One of the reasons that Rice was so effective passing during the game was that he had some time to look for his receivers. The Irish offensive line, anchored by Notre Dame's third A.P. All-American (first team) Andy Heck, managed to keep the WVU defense, made up of mostly fifth-year seniors, from sacking Rice even once.

Considering that the Notre Dame offensive linemen had to learn their positions as the year went along, they had a fantastic year. All of the Irish offense and defensive linemen combined had only a little over four minutes of playing time at their positions before the year started. The Mountaineers were supposed to dominate the lines because West Virginia had all experienced fifth-year seniors on both the offensive and defensive fronts.

Even though they had a dismal first half, the Mountaineers expected to come out and fight back like the undefeated team they were. After all, during the 1988 season, WVU had never been losing a game starting the third quarter.

Nehlen told his team at the half that they still had a chance to win. Besides the injury to Harris, three starters had been forced to leave the game in the first quarter to injury. "I told the guys at halftime that we still had a chance to win and I told them at the end of the game that we have had a great year," said Nehlen. "We lost three starters to injury early in the game and that affected us."

Although Harris and the Mountaineers did pick up the pace in the second half, it was the classic example of too little, too late. Late in the third quarter, Harris

marched 74-yards in seven plays for a touchdown. The touchdown made the score 26-13 Notre Dame. The drive marked the beginning of a series of uncharacteristic unsportsmanlike conduct penalties against the Irish. There were two on the TD drive and another three in a row at the end of the fourth quarter, one against Holtz for coming on the field to talk to his players.

Besides the fourth-quarter penalties, Rice ended a seven play, 80-yard drive by passing for one more touchdown to sophomore tight end Frank Jacobs in the beginning of the fourth quarter.

Another cosmetic Mountaineer touchdown with 1: 14 left in the game put the final score at Notre Dame 34 West Virginia 21

The Irish victory assured them of the national championship and for the first time all year, Holtz praised his team. "They (the Notre Dame football team) beat the second, third, and fourth-ranked schools this year and finished the season with a 12-0 record," said Holtz. "What else can you ask for?

They deserve the national championship for their continued hard work. I think I have underestimated this team. This is a good football team because nobody has proven otherwise. If it weren't for us, Southern California, Miami and West Virginia would still be undefeated."

Coach Nehlen felt the good national exposure that West Virginia got out of the bowl would be beneficial to the football program despite the loss.

"I'll tell you, though, we had a great year and lots of high school players saw us play today," said Nehlen. "They can tell that we need players more than Notre Dame does. Notre Dame is an' excellent football team, they have great team speed and I'm sure glad we don't play them next year."

Now that the question, "Can the Irish regain their glory?" is answered, a new question is being heard by football fans around the country. "Can the Irish repeat?"

Go IRISH!

1989 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Lou Holtz "Almost" Championship

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 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 arch rival 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.

1990 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Lou Holtz

The 1990 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Lou Holtz in his fifth season with the Irish.

Notre Dame kicked off the season on September 15 as a preseason #1 pick against #4 Michigan at home. It was a very close game but ND hung on and won W (28-24). Notre Dame then beat Michigan State in Spartan Stadium W (20-19) to claim the Megaphone Trophy. On September 29, Notre Dame beat Purdue W (37-11) at home to claim the Shillelagh Trophy. Ranked # 1 and scheduled to play unranked Stanford on October 6, the Irish found Stanford too much and lost the Legends Trophy Match L (31-36), bringing the team ranking down to #7.

Airforce came to town and Notre Dame won W (57-27). Number 2 ranked Miami, the team that had spoiled the ND 1989 Championship came to South bend on October 20 to play #6 ranked Notre Dame. The Irish had a great memory of that defeat and they went on to defeat Miami W (29-20). The Irish were now ranked # 3 and they traveled to Pittsburgh to play the Panthers and won W (31-22).

The Miami Game

The beginning of the end came at the Miami 20 with a full quarter to be played and the Hurricanes ahead, 17-10. It ended almost 11 minutes. However, they were long minutes for Notre Dame, which had no answers this night. Later in the game it was worse with Hurricane wide receiver Dale Dawkins cradling his second touchdown catch of the night from Craig Erickson. It just took 22 plays. However, three of the 22 were enough to have decided the game.

Let's look at them 1: It was fourth-and-one from the Miami 39-yard line, Miami decided to for the first down. Fullback Stephen

McGuire got two yards out of his run. First down. Then, there was a 15-yard dead ball personal foul against Miami, making it first-and-25 from the 26.

2nd Play: With those 25 yards to go, Erickson dropped back to pass. The ball was knocked from his hands, right into defensive end Devon McDonald's waiting arms. But he could not hold on. McDonald fumbled the fumble. Miami got it back 23 more yards behind the Hurricane line of scrimmage.

3rd Play: One failed run after McDonald's costly bobble, Miami was faced with an improbable third-and-44 from its own seven. Erickson settled into the pocket and found wide receiver Randal Hill open for a full 44-yard gain. Unbelievable. The spirits were not on the Irish side.

That was simply that. The Hurricanes converted four more third-down plays on the 10:47 drive. That includes Erickson's touchdown pass to Dawkins. Notre Dame never recovered. It was all over.

"Killed us," Bolcar said. "They go up 14 points and that's history."

ND recovered but not until the next game,.Navy was next at Giants Stadium on November 3. Notre Dame put the game away W (52-31), The next week, the # 1 ranked Irish traveled to Tennessee to play the #9 Volunteers and won a close one W (34-29. On November 17, a tough Joe Paterno-led Penn State team came to South Bend to play some tough football. Notre Dame at #1 was ready for the #22 ranked Nittany Lions, yet Penn State prevailed in a close match L (21-24). The next week in the season finale, a #7 ranked ND squad beat USC W (10-6) to claim the Jeweled Shillelagh.

Orange Bowl

Notre Dame at #6 (9-2), was invited to play (10-1-1) Colorado, the #1 ranked team in the Country at the time in the Orange Bowl. It was a game with little offense. Both defenses were strong but Colorado had just a little bit more in them than the Irish as they beat Notre Dame L (9-10) bringing Notre Dame's season record down to

9-3 and the Irish ranking to #6. Another year with title hopes unmet but a fine year by anybody's standards.

1991 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Lou Holtz

The 1991 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Lou Holtz in his sixth year as head coach. With Lou Holtz at the helm, there was no concern about interest in the Notre Dame program. Notre Dame had another banner year but with a record of 10-3, the Irish came up short again in its attempt for a second Holtz championship. At season end, the Fighting Irish finished #12 in the coaches' poll and #13 in the AP.

The Irish were invited to play #3 Florida in the Superdome in the Sugar Bowl and accepted. The Irish won the game W (39-28).

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.

Bettis holds Notre Dame's bowl game records in rushing yards (150) and rushing TDs (three) after leading the Irish to a 39-28 win over Florida in the 1992 Sugar Bowl. He left for the pros after his Junior Year.

Sugar Bowl

The 58th Annual Sugar Bowl Classic featured a good ND team running in 18th 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.

Florida quarterback Shane Matthews guided the Gators 85 yards on their first series, topped by 15-yard touchdown pass to Willie Jackson. Arden Czyzewski then kicked a field goal to put Florida ahead 10-0 at the end of the first quarter, then another to make the score 13-0 with just under five minutes gone in the second.

The scribes noted that the "only echoes Notre Dame was waking up at this point were those of its ragged regular-season finish."

Still, despite everything, the Irish were winning small battles in the trenches. Florida's first two field goals came after a combined 29 plays that covered 146 yards. The Gators were ahead, but a disturbing pattern was building—big drives, no touchdowns. Florida was moving from the 20 to the 20, but they were leaving points on the goal line. Notre Dame was holding.

The Gators began to sustain injuries. For example, inside linebackers Carlton Miles suffered a back injury in the second quarter and could not return. Florida dipped into its third string to find Kevin Freeman and Greg Diamond. Diamond had done nothing all season long other than play on special teams.

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. Their record was 10-1-1 and they finished at # 4. 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 Snow Bowl

In this 1992 season, ND had just won the Holy War and now Penn State was coming to Notre Dame. The Irish were ranked # 8 and Paterno's PSU was at # 22. The series was going on hiatus after this game and nobody knew when the next game might be. Penn State had won eight of the last eleven games and held a slight edge in the series 8-7-1. The word on campus was that the Irish had this game circled all season long, wanting a big victory on Senior Day. As you can see from the picture it was snowing and to some this is still known as "The Snow Bowl."

Notre Dame took the opening kick and got close enough for a field goal try, which was good. Then the snow began to fall. It was nothing less than a winter squall that had descended onto South Bend. The snow was swirling all around the stadium. The field was soon blanketed white. The lines became indiscernible and players had trouble with their footing.

Nonetheless PSU was able to drive for a touchdown. However, on the extra point attempt, freshman Bobby Taylor would block the kick and this point would be decisive as the game went on.

Snow continued into the second quarter and both teams did not score during this time. Notre Dame made it to the 14-yard line and Lou Holtz decided a try for a TD on fourth down, rather than risk a problem with the kicking. The wind was blowing so hard, the field goal was not an automatic. Rick Mirer tossed a pass to Irv Smith and it fell incomplete but Notre Dame would later get a field goal with 0:09 left on the clock.

The score was knotted at half-time, 6-6. The weather had improved by the second-half kickoff and the Irish D came up with a big stop. Notre Dame took 9-6 lead before Penn State drove to the goal line. The Irish knew they needed a monumental goal-line stand to keep the game on the Irish side.



Snow Bowl – 1992 Encounter between Penn State and Notre Dame

They rallied behind captain Demetrius DeBose, and executed what some have called a picturesque goal line stand. This forced the Nittany Lions to kick a field goal. As the teams prepared to play the fourth quarter, the score was still tied at 9-9.

Penn State scored another touchdown and Notre Dame had some time on the clock but not much. They had to get a TD to tie or go ahead. There was 4:16 left in the game. As the Irish advanced the clock was ticking. Now behind 16-9 with fourth down at the three-yard line, Notre Dame called judiciously called time out with twenty-five seconds remaining.

Coach Holtz called a play normally reserved for two point conversions and that had never been used in a game before. Rick Mirer checked to his last option and told Jerome Bettis to go out. The "Bus" caught the touchdown pass in the middle of the end zone. Notre Dame then trailed 16-15. Under Holtz's leadership, the Irish were already once booed at home after a tie so it was clear that they needed to put the game on the line and go for two.

In what looked like a broken play, Mirer rolled to his right and Brooks mirrored him in the end zone. Brooks caught his third collegiate pass for the two points. The gutsy two-point conversion was successful. Notre Dame led 17-16 and withstood three Penn State passes after the kickoff before time expired. At the end of this game, the seniors had gotten their victory and the series was then tied 8-8-1.

"It was kind of weird because [Holtz] basically came up with a play on the fly," said Brooks, who only had two previous career pass receptions. "And we never even thought twice about going out and executing it."

The teams met again in 2006 at Notre Dame and 2007 in Beaver Stadium. Both teams won their home games and the series remains tied 9-9-1.

Notre Dame at # 5, then played rival USC, then ranked #23 at the Coliseum in a game in which anything could happen. The Irish won W (31-23). Notre Dame finished at 9-1-1 and were ranked #5 before playing in the Cotton Bowl against #3 Texas A&M. Notre Dame dominated the Cotton Bowl and won W (28-3) for a 10-1-1 season and a #4 ranking in the coaches' and the AP polls.

Rick Mirer: a standout at Notre Dame

Right in the middle of Lou Holtz's eleven years at Notre Dame came Rick Mirer.

He was a great QB at ND and his 41 career touchdown passes ranks him third on Notre Dame's all-time list behind Brady Quinn (58) and Ron Powlus (52). Nobody passed as much then and Mirer's 41 are arguably the result of a balanced offense. Lou Holtz was his coach, and so one thing we know. Mirer never once felt sorry for himself. Self-pity was not in Holtz' playbook.

I have written a number of times about the PSU ND Snow bowl. When you are from PA, seeing snow all winter long, you think it is nothing. But, when you are playing football, it is really something.

Rick Mirer was a phenomenon and he was the QB for ND in the Snow Bowl v PSU. The Nittany Lions who play in bad weather all the time were not impressed that Coach Holtz could conjure up some snow to make the game more difficult for them. They were probably not on familiar terms with Ara Parseghian or they could have asked Ara to stop it!

Penn State made its trip to ND on November 16, 1992 in the classic, which immediately became known in Notre Dame lore as "The Snow Bowl." Look at the pictures. The game was played in a swirling snowstorm. The game had not been going well for the high-powered Notre Dame offense. The Irish had been shut-out of touchdowns. When they got the ball near the end of the game with 4:19 to play, they were trailing 16-9.

Mirer led the Irish steadily downfield, but with 25 seconds remaining, it was fourth-and-goal from the Penn State three. The touchdown came relatively easy, as Mirer hit a wide-open Jerome Bettis, pulling the Irish to within one point.

Rather than go for a tie, Notre Dame Head Coach Lou Holtz decided upon a two-point conversion. Working with an empty backfield, Mirer patiently waited. And he waited. He finally scrambled to his right and spotted 5-foot-8 tailback Reggie Brooks -- owner of one of the most spectacular rushing seasons in Notre Dame History—a back with just one pass reception—drifting toward the right corner of the end zone.

Mirer lofted the ball over a rapidly closing Penn State lineman. The ball sailed high toward the shortest player on the field. With fans tightly packed around the perimeter of the field, some in the press box were unable to even see whether Brooks caught the pass.

Mirer didn't have to wait for the crowd to go nuts to learn whether his pass had found its mark.

"I knew he was going to catch it," recalls the former All-American quarterback, who still ranks third on Notre Dame's career total offense list. "Reggie's effort was what that whole drive was all about.

"It wasn't the prettiest game on offense, although our defense played great. Sometimes, you just need to have your back to the wall. We had one shot, and that was it.

"We played some great rivals, but in a lot of ways, Penn State was most like us -- with the plain uniforms, a cold-weather team and very tough," Mirer reflects. "What a great way to end our careers. If it had been a bad throw, it would have been a sick feeling - forever."

Rick Mirer is a standout person and an outstanding football player. He went on to spend over a decade in the NFL. He was a great Notre Dame prospect, a great Notre Dame football player, and he was a great player in the NFL. He was always a pleasure to watch do his magic against ND opponents. I am very pleased that a good guy like Rick Mirer got to be coached by a good guy like Lou Holtz. Go Irish!

January 1, 1993 Cotton Bowl

On New Year's day, 1993, on the first possession of the game, A&M recovered a fumble that from a pitch from Mirer to Brooks but they did not score. Notre Dame threw 15 passes in the first half and scored just before halftime to make the score 7–0. The Irish threw only three passes in the second half and its rushing game took control. It took 34 consecutive running plays at one point in the second half to get the best of Texas. ND netted 290 rushing yards, including 115 yards from Brooks, 75 yards from Bettis and 55 rushing yards from Mirer. Mirer finished with 119 passing yards. Bettis scored three of the team's four touchdowns.

In the second half, Texas A&M recovered a fumble by Brooks at their own 4-yard line. Two plays later, Texas A&M quarterback Corey Pullig fumbled the ball and Notre Dame recovered. The Aggies scored their only points on a 41-yard field goal in the fourth quarter. The Fighting Irish won the game by a score of 28–3.^[9]

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:

1993 FLORIDA STATE V NOTRE DAME

Still the last time Notre Dame was featured in a No. 1 vs. No. 2 matchup, the second-ranked Irish hosted top-ranked Florida State at Notre Dame Stadium for the fourth installment of the "Game of the Century."

This one lived up to the hype, though through most of the game that didn't appear to be the case.

The Irish looked in control with a seemingly comfortable 31-17 lead in the fourth quarter. Florida State responded when quarterback Charlie Ward, the eventual Heisman Trophy winner that season, got a fortuitous bounce off a Notre Dame defender on a 4th-and-20 pass that went for a Seminole touchdown that pulled FSU within 31-24.

After the Irish went three and out, Florida State had one last chance to tie or win. In just three plays, Ward moved the Seminoles to the Notre Dame 14-yard line with three seconds remaining.

On the game's final play, Ward rolled to his left, looked and threw to the end zone where Notre Dame cornerback Shawn Wooden batted the pass down to preserve the win and move the Irish to No. 1 in the polls the following week.

The celebration was so jubilant after the pass break-up, Wooden had his knee severely injured when a teammate jumped on his back.

"It was kind of a great moment at the time," recalled Wooden, who can laugh about the moment now. "But it was also one of those times, I was kind of like, 'Uh, yeah.'"

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.

A quick run-down of the full 1993 season follows: Notre Dame won all of its home games except the BC game L (39-41). Northwestern W (27-12), Michigan State W (36-14), Pittsburgh W (44-0), USC W (31-13), and Florida State (31-24).

The Irish won all of its away games starting with Michigan W (27-23), Purdue W (17-0), Stanford W (48-20), Brigham Young in Provo Utah W (45-20), and Navy at Veterans Stadium W (58-27).

The BC game was very winnable but Notre Dame was not ready for the heightened level of intensity with which Boston College played. They were a good team and they really wanted this victory. They were unintimidated playing at Notre Dame Stadium, and they were sure trying to smack one on the Fighting Irish. They did.

The whole month before the game was wild in terms of what was happening in the rankings. Just the week before the BC game, Notre Dame had knocked off previously undefeated Florida State--convincingly but close nonetheless W (31-24).

Over the four weeks prior to the BC debacle, seven top-10 teams lost, including the No. 1 team twice. Florida State entered the month

as No. 1, fell out of that spot with its loss to Notre Dame and then magically, when ND lost to BC, FSU still ended the month atop the polls.

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. West Virginia fans were also upset that FSU was playing for the national title with one loss, as the Mountaineers finishing the season undefeated. This kind of problem makes the BCS seem like a great solution.

Notre Dame dominated Florida State the whole game. A late FSU rally brought the score to 31-24. Bowden was happy to get out of South Bend with his respect and clearly did not expect a coronation to the national title ahead of Notre Dame.

FSU played so poorly this prompted Bobby Bowden, who was the writers and pundits favorite to win the National Championship (unfair) all year, to say: "At least the score looked respectable." Notre Dame fans saw the FSU game themselves and though it had a tense moment at the end of the game, everybody knew that ND had clearly won the game and had beaten the Seminoles beyond a doubt.

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. You bet we are. So is ND Quarterback Kevin McDougal.

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..."

The Cotton Bowl

Deadlocked in the fourth quarter, Notre Dame found the momentum. After settling for a punt on the first drive of the quarter, Pete Bercich picked off Pullig and took the ball back. Seven plays later, the Irish had to punt again. With under six minutes left, it seemed A&M would have the last chance at victory. Slocum's Aggies started at their own 10-yard line and went backwards.

On fourth and 12 the Aggies punted the ball into the hands of Irish return man Mike Miller. Miller left nothing behind him except Aggies and a blazing trail of smoke. He returned the punt 38 yards before finally being pushed out of bounds to give the Irish the ball on the A&M 22-yard line. Becton picked up eight on the first play, but the Aggie defense stiffened and held the Irish. Placekicker Kevin Pendergast and the Notre Dame field goal unit trotted out to the field, only to head back to the sidelines. The Irish took a timeout with 2:22 left in the game after trying to draw the Aggies offsides. Pendergast and company returned to the field and connected on the 31-yard field goal to give the Irish a 24-21 lead.

1994 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Lou Holtz

The 1994 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Lou Holtz in his ninth year. Ron Powlus was the ND Quarterback.

This year brought the worst record for Coach Holtz since his first season. The Irish were unranked at 6-5-1 and struggled all year.

1995 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Lou Holtz

The Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team with its ten-year coach Lou Holtz played its 1995 home games at Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend, Indiana. The team compiled a 9-3 record and finished # 13 in the coaches' poll and # 11 in the AP.



Northwestern coach Gary Barnett and Notre Dame coach Lou Holtz shake hands after Northwestern's upset win on Sept. 2, 1995 in South Bend. (Phil Greer / Chicago Tribune)

1996 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Lou Holtz

The 1996 Fighting Irish football team was coached by Lou Holtz in his eleventh and final year as Notre Dame Head football coach. Notre Dame began a new tradition of periodically engaging in a football match outside the United States. This year, the Fighting Irish participated in the Emerald Isle Classic. It was played on November 2 in Ireland, and Notre Dame beat Navy by a score of 54-27. Both Notre Dame and the US Navy enjoyed the experience.

The Irish had a fine record at 8-3 and ND was # 21 in the Coaches' Poll and # 19 in the AP. When Notre Dame traveled to Austin to play # 9 Texas, it was a nail-biter. Here is the Notre Dame Epic write-up about this classic game:

1996 TEXAS v Notre Dame

In the last of countless classic finishes and wins of the Lou Holtz era, No. 9 Notre Dame fell behind the No. 6 Longhorns 14-3 early in the game and still trailed 24-17 late before an unlikely hero emerged in a stunning 27-24 Irish win at Austin.

Notre Dame freshman kicker Jim Sanson-- whose erratic performance in practice earned him the dubious moniker of "Foul Ball" from Holtz -- was brought on to break a 24-24 tie and complete a furious Irish comeback on a 39-yard attempt with five seconds left in the game.

Sanson calmly delivered the game-winner in front of a then-record crowd of 83,312 at Texas Memorial Stadium. The Irish scored 10 straight points in the final three minutes of the game.

The biggest play in the rally, outside of Sanson's field goal, was a 4th-and-goal option play that Irish tailback Autry Denson took six yards over right side for the game-tying touchdown with 2:54 remaining.

After a Notre Dame defensive stand and a 22-yard Texas punt, Irish quarterback Ron Powilus drove the ball 32 yards to set up Sanson's field goal in what turned out to be the last game between these two proud programs until this 2015 season.

Denson said afterward the steady demeanor of Holtz on the sideline left no doubt among the players that a comeback was coming.

"The courage [Holtz] had under fire, his poise under pressure, it just matriculated down to everybody else," Denson said. Holtz retired after this season.

Notre Dame prevailed over Texas as noted W (27-24). In fact, Holtz's 1996 Notre Dame Team did not lose until Ohio State arrived on September 28. The Buckeyes defeated Notre Dame L (16-29).

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."

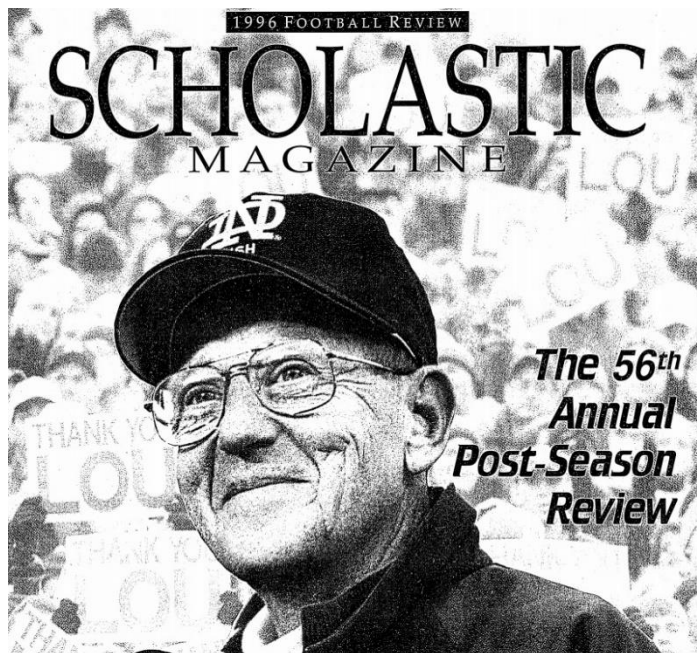
"Whenever Coach Holtz comes in and doesn't look happy, it's not going to be good news," said Bert Berry, a senior linebacker. "We could just tell from the way he came in -- 'Oh, no, Coach is leaving.' What a shame for the University of Notre Dame."

Notre Dame students love Lou Holtz!

In their Football wrap-up, the Student Magazine, Scholastic had some very nice words for Coach Holtz. They clearly loved him and knew they would miss him. He is one of the great ones. This was not missed on anybody from Notre Dame.

FROM THE EDITORS of SCHOLASTIC
Lasting Memories

It wasn't supposed to end this way. It should have been different. It should have been better. Lou Holtz - both the man and the legacy - deserved better.



Where are the classic Hollywood endings when you want them the most? Why couldn't we see Holtz, drenched from icy Gatorade, carried off the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum turf on the shoulders of his players?

Why weren't we entitled to a battle of wits between two giants of the sport - Holtz and Paterno - in the Fiesta Bowl on New Year's Day? Why does the lingering image of the Notre Dame coaching pantheon's newest member have to be one of a man sitting at the USC press conference looking utterly defeated and sounding even worse: "I feel like somebody reached into my stomach and pulled out my guts. I've never felt this low."

It doesn't go away. For every Holtz quote that makes you want to cry, there are 10 that leave you smiling or laughing out loud. Don't remember the beaten-down Holtz after the USC game. Remember the Holtz who spoke from the heart following the romp of Rutgers, the one beaming with so much pride he looked ready to burst. Remember the Holtz who made your emotions well up at every pep rally, the man who got you so juiced you thought you could take on the next day's opponent yourself. Above all, remember the Holtz who gave every ounce of his being to Notre Dame for 11 years. It shouldn't be hard.

**Notre Dame's Student Magazine –
Scholastic pays tribute to Coach Holtz in 1996**

Take the same approach with the departing players. Clearly they didn't accomplish all they hoped for at Notre Dame, all that they expected after the dreamlike 1993 season. But each player had his proverbial 15 minutes of fame. There's Robert Farmer, who battled injuries and frustration for his first three years to emerge as a senior with 660 yards (an eye-catching 8.5 yards per carry) and eight touchdowns, including the game-breaking score against Boston College. There's Lyron Cobbins, who couldn't match his impressive 1995 numbers but made the critical interception against Texas to spur the Irish comeback. There's Kevin Carretta, pegged as a career walk-on, who fought and battled until he earned a scholarship and this year became the team's special teams' ace.

In the end, the 1996 season - the past three years, for that matter - will not go down in Irish lore. But certain moments inevitably will. Jim Sanson's kick to beat the Longhorns' will. The three second-quarter punt returns against Pittsburgh will, And Lou Holtz's heartfelt words after the Rutgers game will.

Remember those moments.

God bless Lou Holtz, forever.

Dear Lord, please keep him and his supporting family healthy!

Chapter 19 Bob Davie Era: 1997 – 2001

Bob Davie Coach # 26

George O'Leary Coach # 27

Served as Holtz Defensive Whiz

1997	Bob Davie	7–6
1998	Bob Davie	9–3
1999	Bob Davie	5–7
2000	Bob Davie	9–3
2001	Bob Davie	5–6
2001	George O'Leary	0–0



In 1994, Lou Holtz asked Bob Davie to come to Notre Dame to serve as Defensive Coordinator. Davie did nothing less than a great job. Under Davie, the defense improved so much that in 1996, the team set a school record for number of sacks and allowed the lowest total yardage of any Notre Dame team since 1980.

Holtz liked Davie and when in September 1995, Holtz had surgery and missed one game, he asked Davie to be the interim head coach. Under Davie, Notre Dame beat Vanderbilt, 41–0. Technically, if he had never become head coach, Bob Davie would have been the only undefeated and untied coach who ever won a game as head coach for Notre Dame.

This article by Mike Penner from the LA Times, captures the flurry and the hype about Bob Davie becoming Irish head coach, replacing one of the immortals, Lou Holtz.

The Chosen One

New Coach Bob Davie Is Confident Notre Dame Made the Correct Call

November 28, 1996

MIKE PENNER

TIMES STAFF WRITER

"Among the dozens of letters, phone messages and faxes stacked in a box inside Bob Davie's office at Notre Dame is a note from an old colleague at Texas A&M.

"Congratulations," Bob Toledo wrote Davie. "Your life is about to change."

Davie, anointed last weekend as the 26th football coach at Notre Dame and keeper of everything hallowed, holy and Knute, suspects Toledo might be right, and hopes to get a free minute soon to be able to sit back and see for himself.

"We were talking in the locker room after practice about what's been going on here the past few weeks," Davie says. "We've been to Ireland [to play Navy]. We get back from Ireland and go to Boston College, right when the Boston College scandal is breaking. Then we play Pittsburgh and we start to hear reports about Coach Holtz contemplating retirement.

"Then Coach Holtz resigns and I'm given the job the day before the Rutgers game--I had it then, but I couldn't tell anybody--and now we have to get ready for USC."

The overflowing box in Davie's office is one reminder of the gold-and-navy tsunami cresting over his head in his last days as defensive coordinator.

So too is the green leprechaun's hat worn last Sunday by the preacher at the Pittsburgh church that Davie's parents attend.

"My parents," Davie reports with an amused chuckle, "have kind of become media celebrities back home."

Davie, 42, is the first Notre Dame assistant to be promoted to head coach since, well, the year he was born. In 1954, assistant Terry Brennan was named to succeed the legendary Frank Leahy. Brennan lasted five years, went 32-18, and won no national championships. At Notre Dame, this was regarded as a failed experiment and the notion of promoting from within was shelved.

Now, after Ara Parseghian, Dan Devine, Gerry Faust and Lou Holtz, comes Davie, a collegiate assistant coach for 20 years and a head coach for none. He got the job after Northwestern's Gary Barnett chose to ignore the calling when it came--and after Notre Dame figured out that if it didn't hire Davie, Maryland or Boston College or Purdue most likely would.

Toledo, who worked with Davie on R.C. Slocum's staff at Texas A&M before moving to UCLA, calls Davie's hiring by Notre Dame "an interesting marriage.

"You know, he's never been a head coach before. Like anything else you do for the first time, there's going to be trial and error. When you're an assistant, you think you've got all the answers. Then you become a head coach and find out it's not quite the same. You've got to stumble a little bit before you start running.

"That's not to say he can't do it. But Notre Dame is a very difficult job. You're talking about the Subway Alums and all that. Bob loves to coach. As an assistant, that's all you do--coach. As a head coach, you spend less time coaching and more time talking to alumni."

Of course, many of the Subway Alums are saying much the same thing, when they aren't muttering about how Barnett got away or why the Irish didn't go harder after Bobby Ross.

To them, Davie offers this succinct counterpoint:

"I am totally confident that I am the best person for this job."

Despite the lack of previous head coaching experience?

"I coached at places, high-profile places, where I was delegated a lot of jobs," said Davie, who was assistant head coach at Tulane and Texas A&M.

"You can be head coach at a lot of places, but that doesn't necessarily prepare you for being the head coach at Notre Dame. My three years at Notre Dame

matured me in a lot of ways. You watch Coach Holtz, day in and day out, and you learn about the mental toughness it takes to do this job...

"In a lot of ways, I'm more prepared for this job than anyone they could have brought in from the outside. Notre Dame is different. It's not for everyone. It takes time to understand what Notre Dame's all about."

Davie got a taste last September when Holtz had spinal surgery to remove a bulging neck disk. Holtz appointed Davie interim coach and handed him the game plan for the game against Vanderbilt.

Notre Dame won, 41-0, and afterward Davie left the field on the shoulders of his players.

"It was really unique," Davie said. "I walked in Monday morning to meet with the coaching staff at 5:30 and Lou walks in and announces he has to have back surgery. Right away you're thinking he might be out for the season. That's serious surgery."

"By 10 a.m. I was sitting in a press conference and thinking I might be head coach at Notre Dame the rest of the season. It's something you've never prepared for. But as I did it, I found out I do enjoy being a head coach."

Holtz missed only one game. Davie had taken care of the shop. The dome didn't melt. More than that, Davie tacked together some credentials Rockne couldn't match: unbeaten and unscored upon as Notre Dame head coach.

Average margin of victory: 41 points.

"That's why I wasn't sure at first to take the job," Davie says, laughing. "I wanted to keep that intact--'the only coach with an undefeated record in Notre Dame history.'"

Now, let's take a look at Bob Davie's time as head coach of the University of Notre Dame. For the record, there were no almost championships or championships in Bob Davie's five years as head coach of the Irish.

1997 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Bob Davie

The 1997 Notre Dame team was ranked eleventh in the pre-season polls. Fifth-year senior quarterback Ron Powlus was back at QB and Autry Denson, Tony Driver, and Joey Goodspeed were back at running backs. Besides these mainstays, Joey Getherall, Bobby

Brown, and Malcolm Johnson were back at the wide receiver positions and on defense, cornerback Allen Rossum was back and in good health. The team looked so good that there were a number of pundits who thought that the Irish were good enough to finish in the top-10. In this year, their record was 7-6 with no almosts and no championship games. Notre Dame was invited to the Independence Bowl to celebrate their 7-5 pre-bowl record.

Independence Bowl

The Notre Dame Fighting Irish prepared and were ready to face LSU for the second time—this time in the Independence Bowl. The Tigers had recovered from the ND loss and were sitting at #15 instead of # 11.

Notre Dame was on a three-game win streak. Despite ND being ready, LSU were just as ready to avenge their prior defeat. The Tigers dominated the Bowl Game on offense and beat the Irish L (9-27). Though the Irish finished with a loss, the comeback record was the biggest Irish turnaround in team history.

Ron Powlus, who hails from Berwick, PA, and was coached by the great George Curry of Larksville, PA, came into his own during the season. He set the single season Irish record for pass attempts and completions. He would leave Notre Dame with 20 individual records, including career passing yards, attempts, completions and touchdowns.



1998 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Bob Davie

The 1998 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Bob Davie in his second season. This year's record was 9-2 in the regular season and Notre Dame lost to Georgia Tech in the Gator Bowl. The Irish finished 9-3, and #22 in

the Nation. Notre Dame started the season with some inertia and confidence from the last five regular season games of 1997 going down in the win column. Things looked promising.

Ron Powlus had graduated and Jarious Jackson was the clear starter.

At the end of the season, the unranked Trojans stole another great season from the Irish. With a 9-2 record, ranked # 17, Notre Dame was invited to the Gator Bowl to play Georgia Tech

1998 Gator Bowl

In the Gator Bowl, Notre Dame got behind early to the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets with two long touchdowns. Though making a close game out of it by reducing the gap to a touchdown in the fourth quarter, the Irish were unable to move the ball on their last two drives and they lost their fourth straight bowl game L (28-35). Overall, the season ranking was # 22.

1999 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Bob Davie

The 1999 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Bob Davie in his third season as head coach. This year's record was 5-7 in the regular season and Notre Dame was not invited to a Bowl game and the Irish were unranked in both polls.

2000 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Bob Davie

The 2000 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Bob Davie in his fourth season as head coach. This year's record was a very respectable 9-2 in the regular season and Notre Dame was invited to the BCS Fiesta Bowl to play Oregon State. Notre Dame had a much better year than in 1999. With the Fiesta Bowl loss, the team finished the season at 9-3, ranked # 16 in the coaches' poll and 15 in the AP.

After losing ten players good enough to play in the NFL, Notre Dame had some rebuilding to do. With its 5-7 record from 1999, many were amazed that the team had such talent.

Being invited to the Fiesta Bowl would have been enough reward but Davie's team actually had to play the game. In the game, Oregon State quarterback Jonathan Smith showed no respect for Davie or ND. He threw for 305 yards and 3 touchdowns and led the Beavers to a 41–9 rout. It was a rout indeed.

Chad Johnson had two touchdown receptions; future Cincinnati Bengals teammate T. J. Houshmandzadeh caught the other one. The Beavers scored 29 points in an eight-minute stretch of the third quarter to put the game away. ND did not know what had hit them.

Smith was named the offensive player of the game, and Beavers linebacker Darnell Robinson, who recorded two sacks, forced a fumble, and made an interception, was the defensive player of the game.

2001 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Bob Davie

The 2001 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Bob Davie in his fifth season as head coach. Davie had just signed a five-year extension to his contract and after the 9-3 season in 2000, despite the bowl blowout, Notre Dame had great expectations of the team but they were not realized.

After being 9-3, and slipping to 5-6, there was some obvious inconsistency with the team. At the end of the 2001 season, there were no bowl offers and ND was unranked.

The question was: Would the Notre Dame administration keep the status quo? Davie had just re-upped his contract for five more years. The answer arrived the next day. Bob Davie was fired on December 2, 2001. No coach was named as his successor.

Here is what LA Times writer Chris Dufresne saw when Davie and his whole staff were fired by Notre Dame's AD, Kevin White on December 2, 2001.

<http://articles.latimes.com/2001/dec/03/sports/sp-10906>. The title was simply “**Davie Fired by Irish**”

The subtitle told the story: **College football: Notre Dame Coach let go after 5-6 season. No timetable set to hire successor.**

December 03, 2000

CHRIS DUFRESNE

TIMES STAFF WRITER

"Bob Davie won his first and last game as Notre Dame coach, but not enough in between to keep his job at a school that has always gauged success in football with a different measuring stick.

Less than 24 hours after Notre Dame defeated Purdue to finish the season 5-6, Athletic Director Kevin White fired Davie and his staff Sunday and announced a search for a successor.

"We are a place that's won 11 national championships," White said Sunday. "Can we win a 12th? I believe we can."

The Irish have not won a national title since 1988.

...

We know the rest.

Post Script on Bob Davie

Everybody knew when Lou Holtz recommended Bob Davie for the job of head coach at ND when Holtz stepped down, that Bob Davie was a good man. In his early forties at the time, Davie had not necessarily had the time to get gritty and tough enough to consistently win at Notre Dame. Ara Parseghian had offered 100% accurate advice when Davie took the job: *"Worry about one thing, and that's winning."* Davie did not win consistently at Notre Dame and he lost the job because of that one pesky requirement—*winning*.

Nonetheless in his life, Bob Davie was never a bad coach and never was a bad man. He always had integrity and he still does. I am happy to report that after a number of successful years as an ESPN analyst, Bob Davie is still a fine man and he is doing some fine coaching today at New Mexico.

On December 17, 2015, the New York Times hosted a nice article about Davie. Here is an excerpt to serve as the post script for ND Coach Bob Davie:

Nice Going Bob. We wish you well!

George O'Leary

On December 9, 2001, Notre Dame hired George O'Leary away from Georgia Tech. to replace Bob Davie. However, New Hampshire Union Leader reporter Jim Fennell, while he was researching for a piece about a "local boy done good!" story on O'Leary, uncovered misrepresentations in O'Leary's resume. These were severe enough that they had influenced the administration's decision to hire him.

The resulting media scandal embarrassed Notre Dame officials, and tainted O'Leary. The coach resigned five days later, before coaching a single practice, recruiting a single player, or hiring a single assistant coach. Yet, he is credited as a Notre Dame head coach in this book and others. George O'Leary's tenure is the shortest of any head coach in FBS history. He would go on to become the head football coach at UCF.

Chapter 20 Tyrone Willingham Era: 2002 – 2004

Tyrone Willingham Coach # 28
Kent Baer Coach #29

Willingham had great credentials at Stanford.

2002	Tyrone Willingham	10–3
2003	Tyrone Willingham	5–7
2004	Tyrone Willingham	6–5
2004	Kent Baer	0–1



Tyrone Willingham did well with Bob Davie's team but did not sustain his win with more wins.

ESPN has given us a proper introduction to Tyrone Willingham as the new Notre Dame Coach. We thank ESPN for its permission to use this piece. Willingham had negotiated a six-year contract to

coach the Fighting Irish. This article is written by the Associated Press and presented by ESPN Sports. Our sincere thanks for permitting this reprint:

<http://assets.espn.go.com/ncf/news/2001/1231/1303561.html>

Willingham accepts 6-year deal to coach Irish

Associated Press

Monday, December 31

Updated: January 1, 11:47 PM ET

SOUTH BEND, Ind. —

"Tyrone Willingham pledged to return Notre Dame to the championship levels of its storied past when he was introduced as the new Irish coach on Tuesday.

Tyrone Willingham

Tyrone Willingham left no doubt that he intends to return Notre Dame to national championship contention as new coach of the Irish.

Willingham, 44-36-1 in seven seasons at Stanford, signed a six-year contract with Notre Dame on Monday and said he believed it was a great opportunity for a football coach.

"I am excited, I am eager to begin the work, not just of the football program, but of this university," said Willingham, the first black head coach at Notre Dame in any sport.

Willingham gets a guaranteed contract with a base salary of about \$1.5 million per year with bonuses that could increase the yearly total to \$2 million. Notre Dame associate athletics director John Heisler declined to discuss the financial figures.

...

The day is done.

...

Players said they were happy with the hiring.

Though Stanford had a winning record in just one of four seasons from 1997-00, Willingham maintained his status as one of college football's best organizers and managers. He led the Cardinal to a Pac-10 title and the Rose Bowl in 1999, and never lost a game against rival California in seven seasons. He let a lot of people

down at ND but he gave it the old College try No championships but the College try for sure. c

2002 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Tyrone Willingham

The 2002 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Tyrone Willingham in his first year as head coach. The Fighting Irish were ranked #17 in the coaches' poll and #17 in the AP with a 10-3 record. Not too—too bad! Willingham's Irish were invited to the 2003 Gator Bowl in Alltel Stadium.

2003 Gator Bowl



Quarterback Pat Dillingham #9 of the Notre Dame Fighting Irish prepares to hand-off the ball against the North Carolina State University Wolfpack in the Toyota Gator Bowl at Alltel Stadium on January 1, 2003 in Jacksonville.

The Irish had won 10 games but had messed up late in the season instead of earlier. Consequently, Notre Dame was not invited to a BCS bowl game. Instead, the team accepted a bid to play North Carolina State in the Gator Bowl. Though it was better than Joe

Smith's Happy Bowl at a high school stadium in Wilkes-Barre, PA, it was not something for which ND was hoping.

The Irish played the bowl game tentatively, not as tough as expected, as if they were outmatched both on offense and defense. The Wolfpack won the game solidly L (6-28), giving the Irish its sixth consecutive bowl loss. Despite the three losses at the end of the season, the Irish salvaged a top-20 ranking at # 17 in both the Associated Press (AP) and Coaches' Polls.

Willingham had it made but hanging on to a national championship is not a task for mere mortals. Just a few more perfect games and Willingham's picture would have been among the immortals. Everybody in the world was rooting for Notre Dame to keep winning.

After the season, some Irish players received honors for their fine play. Arnaz Battle was named by one foundation as their sportsman of the year, while Shane Walton was named as a Consensus All-American. Additionally, Tyrone Willingham, who had a successful yet disappointing season, was honored with two Coach of the Year awards—Sporting News as "Sportsman of the Year," and the Irish coach was the only coach listed by Sporting News as one of their "Most Powerful People in Sports."

Congratulations Coach Willingham.

What a difference a year makes!

2003 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Tyrone Willingham

The 2003 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Tyrone Willingham in his second year as ND Head Football Coach. Despite great expectations, Notre Dame had a less than stellar season. For ND faithful; it was startling but not sterling. The Irish finished the season unranked at 5–7 and failed to become bowl eligible. Few actually know what had happened between a successful season and a less than mediocre no-championship effort.

2004 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Tyrone Willingham
2004 Notre Dame Football Bowl Game Coach Kent Baer

The 2004 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Tyrone Willingham in his third season. Notre Dame finished the regular season 6-5 under Willingham. The only good part of the record was that it was above the .500 mark. At 6-5, with all of the new bowl games added to post-season college play, teams in 2004 needed to win just six games to be invited to a post-season game.

Hoping to claim another win for the "Gipper," Willingham's Notre Dame accepted an invitation with its six-win qualification, to the Insight Bowl. Tyrone Willingham would not get to coach this bowl game. He was released at the end of the 2004 season before playing the bowl game. Assistant Coach / Defensive Coordinator Kent Baer, a good guy—never expecting to have to do the University a favor—was asked to coach the Irish in its bowl game appearance. He agreed because he is a good guy.

Many Irish followers and fans and many pundits had their share of doubts after 2003 as to how this season might begin and end. First of all, 2003 had not been a banner year. Secondly, Julius Jones, fourth-leading rusher in ND history had graduated. Coach Willingham hoped to replace Jones with a talented recruiting class. However, Willingham struggled in his second full year of recruiting. His new class was ranked 30th in the nation

Willingham was losing on the field and then again in the recruit locker room. Despite signing highly sought after recruit Darius Walker, the 17 man Willington class included only three four-star recruits and no five stars. The football stars in the nation look first to institutions that can make them stars.

Willingham Fired

In a move highly criticized by those who believe football should be played with flags in back pockets and each team should be granted the opportunity for as many as ten apologies for seemingly aggressive plays, Notre Dame decided that it needed a new head

coach. Tyrone Willingham had proven to be a great man but not as great a football coach.

The Insight Bowl

Just two days after the USC trouncing, ND fired a great guy, Tyrone Willingham, whose major fault was that he did not bring wins into the football program as quickly as he had promised. Defensive coordinator, Kent Baer, led the Irish after the firing to prepare the team for the Insight Bowl. Many at Notre Dame hoped that Baer would "win one for Ty." Even another great guy like Kent Baer could not make this particular 2004 Notre Dame Team work well enough to win its last bowl game

The Oregon State Beavers, like every other team that plays Notre Dame, were highly inspired to win. They picked up a lead brought about by four touchdown passes from Derek Anderson. They beat the Irish to give ND its seventh consecutive bowl loss. Notre Dame ended 2004 with a 6–6 record and when the season was completed, they were coach-less.

Some Insights about the 2004 Insight Bowl

The least important bowl games are played before January 1. The least important teams are typically paired in the least important games. Notre Dame did not have a sterling 2004 record though the Irish fought hard in each game that they played.

The second bowl of the new multi-bowl series was played on December 28, 2004. The Insight Bowl was held at Bank One Ballpark in Phoenix, Arizona. It is the home of the Arizona Diamondbacks. This game was the second of the 2004–05 bowl season to pit two BCS member teams.

The Notre Dame Fighting Irish, the only independent BCS member, took on the Oregon State Beavers from the Pac-10. The Beavers never trailed in the game, and easily defeated the vaunted Irish L (21–38). Beavers quarterback Derek Anderson threw for 359 yards and four touchdown passes, with no interceptions. Notre Dame was still looking for a coach.

Chapter 21 Charlie Weis Era: 2005 – 2009

Coach # 30

Weiss early on was treated like a god

2005	Charlie Weis	9–3
2006	Charlie Weis	10–3
2007	Charlie Weis	3–9
2008	Charlie Weis	7–6
2009	Charlie Weis	6–6



New coach had great credentials from Patriots

Notre Dame is always excited when the University takes a not-so-productive coach and replaces him. The new guy is always going to save the program and every now and then, he actually does.

Weis served as offensive coordinator under head coach Bill Belichick from 2000 through 2004, and he did some commendable work. He installed what is known as the Erhardt-Perkins offensive system, and assisted the Patriots in three Super Bowl victories—(XXXVI, XXXVIII, XXXIX).

Therefore, anybody who hired Charlie Weiss, knew they would not be hiring a *johnny-come-lately*. Yet, other than a one year stint as head

coach at a high school before his pro career, Charlie Weis never had full control of all the marbles for a football team. From his record at Notre Dame, it apparently would have served him better if he had more field coaching experience at a college level. Here is an introductory article I selected from the Washington Post. You and I would more than likely have been pleased to hire Charlie Weiss in 2005 after reading this:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A58013-2004Dec11.html?referrer=email>

Patriots' Weis to Coach Notre Dame

By Mark Schlabach
Washington Post Staff Writer
Sunday, December 12, 2004

"New England Patriots offensive coordinator Charlie Weis agreed to become football coach at Notre Dame and will receive a six-year contract that will pay him nearly \$2 million annually, a source close to the search said last night. Weis becomes the first Notre Dame alumnus to coach the Fighting Irish since Hugh Devore in 1963.

Notre Dame, which fired coach Tyrone Willingham on Nov. 30 after three seasons, is expected to announce Weis's hiring at a Monday news conference in South Bend, Ind. The Patriots play the Cincinnati Bengals today in Foxboro, Mass.

Willingham's controversial dismissal left only two black head coaches -- Karl Dorrell at UCLA and Sylvester Croom at Mississippi State -- among the 117 at the Division I-A level.

Weis, 48, who is white, has worked the past 15 years as an NFL assistant, spending the past five seasons as the Patriots' offensive coordinator. He is credited with the development of quarterback Tom Brady, a sixth-round draft choice who has led the team to two Super Bowl victories. Weis, who hasn't coached in college since 1989, has won three Super Bowl rings -- one with the New York Giants and two with the Patriots.

A Notre Dame committee of trustees and boosters, which voted to fire Willingham over the objections of the Rev. Edward "Monk" Malloy, the school's outgoing president, and Athletics Director Kevin White, met again yesterday. The committee chose to begin negotiations with Weis after selecting him over former Fighting Irish quarterback Tom Clements, now offensive coordinator of

the Buffalo Bills, and Washington Redskins defensive coordinator Greg Blache, a former defensive back at Notre Dame.

Clements was informed yesterday morning that he wouldn't be hired by Notre Dame; associates of Blache said he withdrew his name from the search.

Blache -- who declined to comment through a Redskins spokesman -- was initially considered a long-shot candidate. However, he interviewed extremely well during a meeting with school officials early this past week. Redskins Vice President Vinny Cerrato, Notre Dame's recruiting coordinator from 1986 to 1990, played a role in the interview, according to one source who requested anonymity.

Two days after firing Willingham, White and incoming Notre Dame president John Jenkins flew to Salt Lake City to interview Utah Coach Urban Meyer, who had already begun contract negotiations with Florida. On Dec. 3, Meyer signed a seven-year contract to replace Gators Coach Ron Zook, who was fired in October. The Irish also contacted Detroit Lions Coach Steve Mariucci, Denver Broncos Coach Mike Shanahan and Iowa's Kirk Ferentz about replacing Willingham, but they all indicated they weren't interested.

Weis, who nearly died two years ago from complications of gastro-intestinal surgery, is expected to finish the season with the Patriots, the defending Super Bowl champions, who are 11-1 going into today's game. If the Patriots advance to their third Super Bowl in four years, their season wouldn't end until Feb. 7 -- one day after both Super Bowl XXXIX in Jacksonville and college football's national signing day.

Weis was expected to leave the Patriots after this season even if he didn't accept the Notre Dame job. He is in the final year of his contract with the team and was upset that the Patriots didn't extend his deal before this season. Weis is paid about \$500,000 per year—about half of what other top NFL coordinators are being paid. He also has grown increasingly frustrated about his inability to land an NFL head-coaching job despite the Patriots' success. NFL sources said he would have been hired as coach of the Buffalo Bills after last season, but the Bills were unwilling to wait until after the Super Bowl to interview him.

Staff writers Nunyo Demasio and Mark Maske contributed to this report.

2005 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Charlie Weis

The 2005 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Charlie Weis in his first year as head coach. Weis's Irish, after a dismal (6-6) 2004 season, took Tyrone Willingham's team and

played a fine season in 2005, finishing at 9 wins and 3 losses. They capped off the season with a post-season invitation and acceptance to the Fiesta Bowl and a # 9 ranking in the nation.

At 6-6 in 2004, Notre Dame hired Charlie Weiss from the New England Patriots. Weis, former offensive coordinator with the Patriots is a ND grad. This made Weis the first Notre Dame alumnus to coach the team since 1963.

One of his first tasks was to create a coaching staff. Charlie Weis looked for experienced coaches that would be able to make the team competitive. Notre Dame was thrilled with having Mr. Weis on board at Notre Dame after his hiring.

Always seeming to add the kiss of death to a new coach by extolling his excellence prematurely, when the first Weis season was just half-over, concerned that Weis might jump ship if he did not see a lifetime appointment, and being so tickled to have a new coach doing so well with the team, Notre Dame officials offered Mr. Weis a major extension on his contract. Weis had gotten an offer from Notre Dame that neither he nor any person with a sound mind could refuse.

It took most by surprise. Notre Dame Football Coach Charlie Weis completed just seven games to earn a new contract. Notre Dame was non-apologetic: Athletic director Kevin White offered: "In a very short period of time, Charlie has clearly and impressively demonstrated the ability to take the Notre Dame program where we all want it to go,"

The new 10-year deal was worth \$30 to \$40 million, and made Weis the highest paid coach in college football. Some saw the extension as controversial, as Weis' record was 5-2 at the time while Willingham started his first season with an 8-0 record.

Fiesta Bowl

With 9 wins, 2 losses, and a ranking of #6 in the BCS polls, the Irish were invited to the Fiesta Bowl, held in Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe Arizona. Their opponent was the ever-powerful #4 ranked Ohio State Buckeyes. This was just the second BCS appearance for

the Irish and the first since a 2000 loss to the Oregon State Beavers in the Fiesta Bowl.

Jim Tressel, always a tough coach was at the helm for the Buckeyes. The score was 21-7 for the Buckeyes at the half. Ohio had a 24-13 lead going into the fourth quarter. Huston added another field goal, and Walker ran for a third touchdown, before Antonio Pittman ran for a 60-yard touchdown for the final score of the game. The Buckeyes won L (20-34), giving the Irish their NCAA record-tying 8th straight bowl game loss.

2006 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Charlie Weis

The 2006 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Charlie Weis in his second year as head coach. After a nice 9-3 start in his first season, Weis brought in a #19 finish with ten wins and three losses. The ND regular season record of 10-2 was enough for the Notre Dame Fighting Irish to be invited to the Sugar Bowl.

Five offensive starters, three defensive starters, and placekicker D.J. Fitzpatrick went to the NFL after the 2005 season. Many key Irish returned such as quarterback Brady Quinn, wide receiver Jeff Samardzija, running back Darius Walker, and safety Tom Zbikowski. The Irish were given a lot of pre-season hype about being possible national championship contenders. Weis still had god-like status at Notre Dame.

Charlie Weis had a great recruiting year in 2006 with 28 recruits. It was a top ten ranked recruiting class, included three five star recruits on offense and 14 four star recruits with eight on offense and six on defense. Things were looking good for the future.

Georgia Tech & Penn State

The Irish were ranked # 2 when they pulled into Bobby Dodd Stadium in Atlanta to play Georgia Tech. The Yellow Jackets drew first blood when quarterback Reggie Ball connected on a four-yard touchdown pass with receiver Calvin Johnson at the end of the first quarter. Georgia Tech's defense was up to the challenge as it did the job holding back an experienced Notre Dame offense. Travis Bell's field goal put Tech's lead up to 10-0. This was the ND wake-up call

as Georgia Tech would not score again. Quinn launched a magnificent 14-play, 80-yard drive right before the half, culminating in a five-yard rushing touchdown by the QB.

The major halftime adjustment for the Irish was to get the running game more involved. With the Irish down 10-7, running back Darius Walker hit pay-dirt on Notre Dame's first drive of the second half, scoring on a 13-yard touchdown run to put the Irish ahead 14-10.

Now the running and passing games were working. But, as both defenses tightened, the teams were trading punts until—with a 4th-and-1 on the Tech 47-yard line with 1:10 left to play, Weis gambled and Quinn picked up the yard on a quarterback sneak. The Irish got the first down and then ran out the clock for the victory W (14-10) victory. Quinn had completed 23 of 38 passes for 246 yards.

Penn State came to Notre Dame for the first time since the 1992 Snow Bowl game between the two teams. Until the second quarter, it was a tight defensive battle. Things opened up in the second quarter as Quinn connected on two TD passes and with a second field goal, the Irish were up 20-0 at halftime. Notre Dame scored 21 more and Penn State got 14 in the second half. The Irish won (41-17). This victory would be Charlie Weis' lone 2006 win over a team that finished ranked in the AP Poll.

Michigan, Michigan State & Purdue

All three games were played at home in ND Stadium. The # 13 ranked Michigan Wolverines came to Notre Dame, ranked # 2 at the time, having lost three of the prior four games to the Irish. The Big House Boys had not won at Notre Dame since 1994. Michigan outplayed the Irish this time and won the game with a big score L (21-47).

Ranked at #12 after the Michigan loss, Notre Dame then traveled to Spartan Stadium in East Lansing to play Michigan State in a nail-biter. ND was down 17-0 shortly after the game began and then 31-14 at halftime against the Spartans. Faced with a 16-point deficit in the 4th quarter, Notre Dame stunned Michigan State by scoring 3 touchdowns capped off by a Terrail Lambert pick six to win the

game. This game remains tied for the 7th biggest comeback in ND history. The Irish won W (40-37).

On September 30, Purdue visited #12 Notre Dame undefeated and played their normal tough game against the Irish. Though undefeated, they were the underdogs. The Irish won the game W (35-21)

Stanford, UCLA, Navy, North Carolina

On October 7, winless Stanford came to play #12 Notre Dame. Stanford was a big underdog. Notre Dame finished off the Cardinal W (31-10). UCLA was ranked # 9 when they came into Notre Dame Stadium for the game.

The Bruins had been ranked 113th (I A) just the year before and were playing a much different brand of football. Notre Dame had a tough day. Yet, there was another great finish, which not only helps the ND lore but in 2006, it kept alive the Bowl Championship Series hopes of the 10th-ranked Fighting Irish W (20-17).

Charlie Weis was elated: "Good teams win games like that...Good teams at the end of the game somehow, good teams make a play at the end of the game to win."

While playing Navy at the M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore, Brady Quinn was again at his best. His performance kept him well into the Heisman contention after a fantastic performance against UCLA and this week, Navy. He made 18 of 25 passes and threw for 296 yards making 3 TD passes. He also showed his footwork by running for a TD from 19 yards out. The Irish won the game W (38-14).

North Carolina came to play #11 Notre Dame at Notre Dame Stadium on November 4, 2006. Brady Quinn had been playing at his best and this week, he got another chance at displaying his talents in his Heisman Trophy bid. Quinn was 23 of 35 for 346 yards and 4 TDs. It was all Quinn and all Notre Dame as the Gamecocks never really threatened. Notre Dame won W (45-26)

Air Force, Army, & USC

When Notre Dame traveled to Air Force on November 11, the team was ranked #9. Less than a minute into the game Brady Quinn proved just why he was one of the top QBs in College Football, and he didn't stop there. That's how the rest of the game went and Notre Dame won W (39-17).

Army came into South Bend to play #6 ranked Notre Dame in the Irish's final home game for the team's senior class. The Irish wore their special green jerseys. ND won handily W (41-9)



ND wearing their splashy green jerseys against Army

The season finale for Notre Dame with a trip to the LA Coliseum is often a close call, no matter who wins. This year, USC was ranked #3 and Notre Dame came in at #6. The Irish were suffering from a four-game losing streak to the Trojans. After their epic 2005 game, the Irish were hopeful that they could end this losing streak. The Trojans, however, knew that with a win they would still be in the national title hunt.

After Notre Dame's first drive stalled, QB John David Booty led the Trojans on a 61-yard drive ending with a 9-yard TD pass to Dwayne Jarrett. The Irish punted and the Trojans returned it to the Irish 26, Booty got another touchdown on a pass to Jarrett and the Trojans were ahead 14-0. On the ensuing Irish drive, the Irish scored 3. The half ended with the Trojans leading 21-10.

The Trojans began the fourth quarter moving effectively and settled for a 32-yard field goal by Mario Danelo. The Irish were held and punted. Then, Booty threw a 43-yard touchdown pass to Dwayne Jarrett, giving USC a 37-17 lead. Quinn then took the Irish 78-yards and threw a 2-yard touchdown pass to Jeff Samardzija to lower the Irish deficit to 13 points. The onside kick failed. USC scored again and the Irish lost L (24-44). Notre Dame finished the regular season 10-2.



Marching Band on the field at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum got the crowd going at the start of the 2006 #3 USC vs. #6 ranked Notre Dame football game

Sugar Bowl

Notre Dame took a bid and played LSU in the Sugar Bowl at the Superdome. Things were OK in the first half but fell apart in the second half. LSU won the contest L (14-41). With the loss, Notre Dame lost a record-setting nine bowl games in a row including losing their three BCS bowl games by wide point margins.

Charlie Weis commented about the poor showing in the second half:

"I felt in the locker room at halftime that things were calm and under control...I saw no signs that we would play a completely crummy second half. It was a completely crummy second half. The defense gave up points, the offense was going four-and-out and three-and-out, and the defense got worn out. I'm really disappointed in how the game turned out. I've got to do a better job."

2007 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Charlie Weis

The 2007 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Charlie Weis in his third year as head coach. Notre Dame opened the season with five losses without a win. It was the team's worst opening prior to 2007 (0–3). The Irish would go on to compile the worst record in team history (3-9) Not championships – nothing close.

How could this happen? A lot of Irish folks were wondering what happened?

2008 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Charlie Weis

The 2008 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team's head football coach was Charlie Weis. This was Weis's fourth season as Notre Dame's head coach. He entered the season with a 22–15 record, coming off a 3–9 season after having posted back-to-back BCS level seasons in his first two years. In 2008, the Irish had to show some life after the 3-9 finish. No Irish coach had ever been fired mid-season. The team started 4–1, but hit some tough times and completed the regular season 6-6. No championships. Nothing close to good.

The Irish ended the 2008 season on a positive note. They had lost nine bowl games in a row. This year, they beat Hawaii W (49–21) in the Hawaii Bowl. While doing this, the Irish scored its highest point total of the season, its highest point total ever in a bowl game, and it broke 8 other bowl records.

The bowl win also helped Notre Dame to a 7–6 final record, its 102nd winning season in 120 years of football. Every ND fan hoped the bad days were over. One might have concluded that God wanted

Charlie to have a few more chances. It was premature to start thinking, "Sorry, Charlie!"

The Irish finished the regular season at 6-6 and thus qualified for a minor bowl game—the Hawaii Bowl.

The Hawaii Bowl

I would have loved to have accompanied the Irish to Hawaii to see the game but for the 121st time in ND history, nobody called to make arrangements.

Notre Dame soundly beat Hawaii 49–21 in its first bowl victory since the Irish defeated Texas A&M in the 1994 Cotton Bowl Classic to end the 1993 season.

In 2008, Irish quarterback Jimmy Clausen broke loose and with that breakout, he broke school bowl game records by passing for 401 yards and five touchdowns. Clausen was on the money. His 84.6% completion rate was the second-best completion percentage for any player ever in any bowl game in NCAA history.

Wide receiver Golden Tate was golden as usual. He also set Irish bowl records by catching three touchdowns and passes for 177 yards. Both players were honored as co-MVPs of the game.

For a team that had struggled all year, there was a lot in this game for the players. The Irish broke 9 bowl records. It was not just Clausen and Tate, who had record days, the Fighting Irish were fighting all day and they set bowl records in total offense (481 yards), scoring (49 points), and longest kick return (96 yards by Allen). Clausen had a 69-yard connection to Tate, which also became a new record. All parts of the team were well oiled and functioning. It had become a different team than the one I saw first-hand in Boston.

Perhaps Notre Dame should play home games in Hawaii, and yes, if invited, I would come. The ND defense also did its job, accumulating a whopping 8 sacks and an interception. Notre Dame and ND fans had this game to chew upon in the off-season as it tied

the 1978 Cotton Bowl Classic for Notre Dame's largest margin of victory in a bowl game at 28 points.

2009 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Charlie Weis

The 2009 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Charlie Weis who had entered his fifth season as head coach. This season for Weis had an asterisk in the beginning. The ND Administration knew things were not copacetic but they also knew they could become OK with a great season.

So, they hoped that the coach, Charlie Weis would help the team recover from the last two bad years. Weis had unexpectedly become an underachiever. It was hoped by many ND faithful that he would finally blossom as a college coach. Weis surely knew there was an "or else," attached to everybody's well wishes for his improvement. No Championship. Nothing close. A free ride out of South Bend!

Notre Dame Officials, to begin the 2009 season, did not need help from the alumni or from fans to remind Coach Weis what his part of the deal was. It was clear. Win!

Weis fired at ND; shortest coaching death watch

WRITTEN BY CHICAGO SUN-TIMES WIRE POSTED: 11/30/2009, 01:23PM

The New York Daily News reports that Touchdown Jesus has shown Charlie Weis the door. According to the report, and to approximately no one's surprise, the coach who authored a 6-6 season for the Domers has been fired. ... Turns out the coach who said "6-5 is not good enough" for Notre Dame found out that 6-6 was no better...

...

The team was to decide later today whether that 6 wins is worth a bowl berth as the team votes on playing postseason ball at the end of the 35-27 Weis era.

...

The University announced on December 4 that the Irish had chosen not to play in a bowl game. Irish athletic director Jack Swarbrick hired Cincinnati head coach Brian Kelly after a 10-day coaching search.

...

Swarbrick announced that Rob Ianello, the Irish assistant head coach/offense, wide receivers coach and recruiting coordinator, will assume responsibility for football operations until a new coach is hired.

Chapter 22 Brian Kelly Era: 2010—

Coach # 31

Kelly is ND's Head Football Coach (2016)

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	x-x

Kelly's 9-year record is **81-35 (.698)**,
As fans, we choose to ignore the NCAA 21 game penalty.



What about Brian Kelly the coach?

Let's no take 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.

Before the 4-8-- 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 responded very positively (22-4) 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.

I am ready to wait through the 2019 season and maybe a little more. Right now, with his deep interest in succeeding, I am pleased to wait and hopefully, there will be no need for change. I am very pleased that Coach Kelly is on the job for all the Notre Dame faithful. Brian Kelly is a fine coach. If we take away 2016 and call it an anomaly, Notre Dame has done well and will do even better with the badness out of the system.

To kick off this chapter, I found an independent newspaper article that I will share shortly. My chapter format has been consistent in this book in that at the beginning of each, we discuss the hype about the hiring of each new coach, using words written at the time, and then we close out the era with words about the opinion of the pundits and sportswriters at the end of the era. I expect that there will be no closing article in this chapter of course as Mr. Kelly is the current head coach of Notre Dame Football, and we are all hoping for a great 2019.



The article copy I have in my sunroom (above) 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.

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 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 at bottom of last page). It is from our local Paper, the Times Leader. It was placed on the wall by my friendly Anstett neighbors. You cannot really read it well on the preceding page, and that is OK, but you can get the essence of my neighbors' message to my wife and me.

When I wrote this first book (Great Moments) about ND at the end of 2015, it was my 65th book. Since then, I have written a tone more and I am up to 207. This book is more direct and to the point about ND championships and “almosts.” Not all the great moments are in this book.

I think you would like the other books that I, the other Brian Kelly, have written. When you have time check out amazon.com/author/brianwkelly. Amazon has put up a nice author's page, in which a happy picture of my wife and I greet the onlookers.

I spent several hours at the beginning of this chapter trying to find a Chicago or LA or NY article on Coach Brian Kelly but when I found this online article from Kelly's college alma-mater, I was very pleased and I stopped researching. It is a nicely written piece about Coach Kelly's appointment to Notre Dame's head coaching position.

It was written by the college from which he graduated, Assumption College: <https://www.assumption.edu/news/brian-kelly-%E2%80%99983-named-head-coach-notre-dame-football-team>

I hope you enjoy it. They surely like their player and coach, Brian Kelly... **Assumption writes re: alumnus Brian Kelly**

Brian Kelly '83 Named Head Coach of Notre Dame Football team

Assumption alumnus and former defensive coordinator Brian K. Kelly '83, who recently took the University of Cincinnati Bearcats to two consecutive Bowl Championship Series appearances and a perfect 12-0 regular season in 2009, has been named the 29th head football coach at the University of Notre Dame.

Notre Dame's president, Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C., praised Kelly in an announcement on the school's website. "I am absolutely delighted to welcome Brian and his family to the Notre Dame family. He brings to us a long and successful career as a head coach, and I am confident that he will have even greater success here. I'm also very pleased that he has put considerable emphasis on excellence in the classroom and that his student-athletes graduate at a rate well above the norm."

As an Assumption football player Kelly played at middle linebacker for the Greyhounds and graduated from Assumption College with a B.A. in Political Science. His football career at Assumption included 19 tackles in the final game of the 1981 season and he captained the two of the most successful club football teams in Hounds' history for Hall of Fame Coach Paul Cantiani '73. Kelly earned all-conference honors in the New England Collegiate Football Conference as both a junior and senior and left with a school-record 314 tackles (currently seventh). His record 214 assists stood until 2005 when broken by Chris Grogan '06.

Kelly served as defensive coordinator at Assumption for four seasons under Hall of Famer Bernie Gaughan, raising the team's level of play before leaving to coach for Grand Valley. At same time, he coached women's softball and ushered the Assumption team to 20-plus and entrance into the postseason regional rankings. Kelly's winning ways were recognized when he was named to the Assumption Alumni-Athletics Hall of Fame in 2006.

A native of Chelsea, MA, Kelly graduated from St. John's Prep (Danvers, MA), where he starred in three sports: football, hockey and baseball. Brian and his wife, Paqui, have three children - Patrick Liam, Grace Marie and Kenzel Michael.

*Notre Dame's webpage has the official announcement.
<http://www.und.com/sports/m-footbl/spec-rel/121009aaq.html>*

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.

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 looks 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.

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.

Kelly liked Junior Dayne Crist as his QB for 2010. Crist executed well in completing 59.2 percent of his passes, for 2,033 yards, 15 touchdowns and 7 interceptions. The QB then suffered a major injury against Tulsa, the ninth game, and this ended his season. Tommy Rees, a resilient, dedicated, hard-working, but young quarterback came in for Crist, finishing the Tulsa game. Rees was very effective but could not deliver victory as the Irish lost L (27-28)

The Games

The first Kelly season began at home on September 4 when Purdue played to a capacity crowd of 80,795 in The House That Rockne Built. Notre Dame beat Purdue W (23-12) and Coach Kelly got his first win in his first game at home. Michigan, ranked # 22 at the time came to South Bend on September 11 and defeated the Irish L (24-28).

I can recall the frustration watching the talented Michigan QB Denard Robinson rip the defense apart. Robinson was great, but only when he was great. Sometimes, but for some reason not against Notre Dame, Robinson did not play perfectly.

This day, Michigan's Denard Robinson was overwhelming but Dane Crist, coming back after a first half minor injury had Notre Dame back in the game with less than four minutes. Once Denard Robinson got the ball, over the course of the game, he upped his total to over 500 yards' offense and brought Michigan the big win.

The Irish then traveled to Spartan Stadium to play Michigan State. The game was close and went into OT, with the Irish falling short L (31-34). Stanford was next to come to Notre Dame Stadium as Coach Kelly was trying to find the magic formula. The Cardinal were always tough but have gotten even tougher in recent years. In this game, they never gave the Irish an opportunity to get their act going. Stanford prevailed L (14-37).

Always a game that cannot be taken for granted, the unexpected often presents itself out of nowhere in the Holy Wars. Kelly's Irish traveled to meet Boston College at Alumni Stadium and as expected beat the Eagles this time W (31-13)

Notre Dame then beat Pittsburgh's Panthers at home W (31-17), followed by Western Michigan W (44-20). A rejuvenated Navy Team played ND before over 75,000 in East Rutherford NJ. This determined Navy Team beat Kelly's Irish (17-35). Navy had again become a tough team to beat.

For the first time in school history Notre Dame played Tulsa. In this home game, Tulsa played tough. Quarterback Dane Crist was

knocked out of the game in the first quarter and freshman Tommy Rees had to finish up. Rees did fine, but could not reel in this nail-biter as ND lost L (27-28).

Tommy Rees was not slotted to start many games for Notre Dame in 2010. He was just a true freshman. But, he got a lot of work in Tulsa and after Tulsa, he mostly performed well, though every now and then, like we all do, he messed up. Starting QB Dayne Crist injured his knee (patella) and would not be back. Rees was placed into the highest profile quarterback position in all of college football. He really came through.

The freshman threw four touchdowns against Tulsa, and had brought Notre Dame one point away from tying the game. However, he threw a costly interception near the end of the game, which gave Tulsa its upset of the Irish. Surely everybody remembers that interception but few remember how well Rees, a freshman coming in cold off the bench, had performed before that.

Four touchdowns by Rees in his first game with extended action. How would anybody with little experience have done? The lingering thought about that game that many fans remember is that Tommy Rees did not throw TD # 5. ND fans are tough. Yes, we are.

Instead, after getting the Irish positioned to win, Rees's pass was off the mark and it was intercepted in the end-zone. That ended the game and the Irish had already been in field goal range and down by just one point.

Undaunted, after the Tulsa game and its disappointment, Rees, just a freshman, then proceeded to guide Notre Dame to three straight wins including a home win over a top 10 ranked Utah team W(28-3)



ND cornerback Robert Blanton (12) celebrates his TD run back on a blocked punt against Utah during the first quarter at ND Stadium.

This Utah game is listed as one of the top Notre Dame games of all time. The pundits identified the essence of this game as: "The punt block that saved a season." Things were bleak for the 4-5 Irish coming off consecutive losses to Navy and Tulsa. Both # 15 Utah and unranked Notre Dame each started out by gaining just 14 yards on their first 3 offensive series. Utah then got a field goal, which would be their only score in the game.

The Irish were down 3-0 late in the 1st quarter when Robert Blanton blocked a punt and returned it for a touchdown. This was the spark that helped the Irish grab momentum. Tommy Rees threw a touchdown in the 2nd quarter and then hit Duval Kamara for another score to open the 3rd quarter after Utah fumbled the second half kickoff. On the next series, Rees found Kamara again and the route was on W (27-3).

After Utah, Notre Dame defeated Army at Yankee Stadium W (27-3). The next game was USC at the LA Coliseum. I always get squeamish when the Irish play USC at home or away because the Trojans always play tough and their *take-no-prisoners* approach to football has created disappointing games for me over the years.

I was hoping that these spoilers did not get to spoil Coach Kelly's inaugural season. Luck and toughness was on the Irish side this time as Notre Dame defeated USC on November 27 before 85,417 W (20-16). It made my day. I saw the game on ABC TV at 8:00 PM Eastern.

This was the Irish's first win over arch rival Southern Cal in nine years. It gave Kelly's Irish a bowl berth after it looked like Notre Dame would probably be home for the holidays in 2010.

Notre Dame had never lost to a team 9 games in a row but that bit of history was on the line in the 2010 regular season finale. USC always spooked Notre Dame and in the years in which the ND coaching was not as good, USC would often have its way with Notre Dame, much to the chagrin of fans and friends of the Irish.

USC had beaten the ND in every season from 2002 to 2009. In a sloppy defensive battle that saw Notre Dame lose 4 turnovers in the game, it was a memorable touchdown drive capped off by Robert Hughes and a late interception by Harrison Smith that sealed what can be called "one of the most therapeutic wins" for the Irish program in modern times.

Let's take a look at the USC game a bit closer. It was an unusual rainy Southern California night. My inner ND fan did not want the Trojans to score one point. When Joe Houston kicked a 45-yard field goal to give USC a first quarter lead, it was distressing to me.

The second quarter, however, belonged to Notre Dame. Tommy Rees somehow was often able to rise to the occasion and come through for Brian Kelly's team. He completed a pair of 1-yard pass touchdowns to Michael Floyd and Duval Kamara. Kamara's TD came just before the half-time break. David Ruffer missed the kick on the second touchdown. ND was ahead 13-3.

In the third quarter, the Trojans kicked a field goal and Mitch Mustain ran in for a 1-yard touchdown, aided by a Notre Dame fumble. Joe Houston kicked a 4Q 37-yard field goal which gave USC the lead. Notre Dame fought back with a 5-yard rushing

touchdown by Robert Hughes to get the lead back for the Irish. This won the game, and the negative streak was over.

I was so caught up in this game watching from my comfortable sofa that I had forgotten that I had left my special Phillie Phanatic's Phinest Pizza Cheese Steak and a nice glass of Dago-Red wine on the kitchen counter. I needed to watch the rest of the game unimpeded by fine dining requirements. After the winning touchdown and the final whistle, I admit that I then filled up on the Phinest's Steve Bollinger delicacies.

What a treat after this game! I hated it when USC had as much as a good play. Though it was a game that could have delivered agita and lots of heartburn, the winning touchdown had an analgesic effect and my excellent stuff-fest went off w/o noticeable internal issues.

Notre Dame finally ended USC's streak of consecutive victories, which dated back to 2001, the last ND victory. USC's attempt to come back was stopped by a Notre Dame interception at the one-yard line... but it was a close game. Brian Kelly's team was for real.

New Year's Eve 2010 Sun Bowl

Tommy Rees and Michael Floyd were the game heroes as Notre Dame beat Miami W (33-17) in the Sun Bowl. Notre Dame claimed the victory after Reese passed for 201 yards and two touchdowns to Michael Floyd.

After a 20-year hiatus in the good-guy / bad-guy series, the Catholics were again playing the Convicts, but the monikers had all gone away. It was just smash-mouth football on an anything but quiet New Year's Eve afternoon in Texas.

The Irish hit pay-dirt three of their first four possessions. Rees was on the mark passing 3 and then 34 yards to Floyd when Cierre Wood broke free on a 34-yard scoring run.

David Ruffer had a good kicking day, pounding three in from 40, 50 and 19 yards. The Irish defense was also on full alert, picking off Miami starting quarterback Jacory Harris 3 times and chalking up 4

total interceptions in the first half to help the team grab a quick 27-0 lead.

The Irish victory also made Brian Kelly the first Fighting Irish coach to win a bowl game in his first season. In all fairness it helps to note here that the Irish had refused to play in bowl-games from the 1925 season through 1968 season due to a self-imposed university ban on post-season play.

Nonetheless Kelly's accomplishment is impressive. Brian Kelly and Notre Dame were beginning to make real moves and make good history. Football had gotten just a bit tougher to dominate since Rockne and Leahy, Parsegian, Devine, and Holtz, but Kelly is a good match for the challenges ahead.

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.

This particular year, 2011, Notre Dame had a better regular season than in 2010 (8-4). However, they finished with the same overall record as the team's venture into the Champs Sports Bowl led to a defeat by a rejuvenated Florida State Team L (14-18)—record=8-5.

The Citrus Bowl

On December 29, 2012, the 8-4 unranked Irish were invited to the Citrus Bowl in Florida against Florida State. They were defeated in a close matchup L (14-18). Notre Dame was ahead by two touchdowns and were pitching a shutout. The Irish looked like they had the game, when all of a sudden in the second half, momentum changed.

The Irish could not stop the negatives. The Seminoles rallied from a 14-point second-half deficit and used a pair of touchdown passes by

EJ Manuel and two field goals from Dustin Hopkins to earn their fourth straight bowl win and their second under Jimbo Fisher.

2012 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Brian Kelly “Almost” Championship

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.

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.

QB controversy at ND?

The multi-talented Everett Golson was Brian Kelly's designated starting quarterback for 2012 and he did a great job most of the time during the season. Pundits who have examined Junior Tommy Rees's performance in 2012 suggest that there would have been no magic, no 12-1 stellar season, if backup Rees were not available to come off the bench to save the Irish against Purdue, Michigan and Stanford. These were major relief roles and Rees was on target in each of them.

Rees survived and pulled the Irish to victory in really tough situations this season. Golson led the Irish for most of their touchdowns and his athleticism helped him squirm out of situations in which the Irish would have otherwise been stymied.

In terms of recruiting, this Kelly class was a bit lighter than others. Coach Kelly received 17 commitments in his second full recruiting class. Those included commitments from three early-enrollees:

defensive tackle Sheldon Day, quarterback Gunner Kiel, and cornerback Tee Shepard.

Ireland and the Irish

Notre Dame won all of its regular season games in 2012. The unranked Irish kicked off its season by traveling over the big pond on September 1 for the Emerald Isle Classic in Dublin, Ireland. The Irish played Navy in the classic game at Arriva Stadium and won the game W (50-0). #22 Notre Dame hustled back to South Bend to play Purdue at home the next week September 8.

Everett Golson, who had started the Purdue game for Notre Dame got a bit shaken up and was having trouble gripping the ball in the game. Coach Kelly looked to Tommy Rees to come in and help bail out his team. Rees produced a last-minute drive that led to a W (20-17) victory over the Boilermakers.

Rees moved the Irish into position for Kyle Brindza's 27-yard field goal with seven seconds to go. To get there, the junior quarterback connected on key third down passes of 10 yards to John Goodman, and 21 yards to Robby Toma to set up Brindza's 27-yard winning kick. Notre Dame improved its record to 2-0 for the first time since 2008. The Irish defeated Purdue W (20-17).

Ranked #20 after the Purdue win, The 2-0 Irish traveled to Spartan Stadium on September 15 and beat #10 Michigan State W (20-3).

Michigan was next game at home. For the second game in a row, Notre Dame's Tommy Rees came off the bench to spark the Notre Dame offense in a 13-6 win over the Wolverines. Rees was drawn into action when Everett Golson was ineffective against the tough Michigan defense. Kelly substituted Rees midway through the second quarter.

Denard Robinson, who had been a one man wrecking crew against the Irish in years past, was also ineffective, but Michigan kept him in the game. Robinson felt his play was so below par that he apologized to the Michigan fans after the game and said it would not happen again. Robinson threw four interceptions against the Irish.



Notre Dame Coach Brian Kelly speaks with quarterback Tommy Rees during the game against Michigan in 2012.

ND turned one of Robinson's errant passes into a field goal. Tommy Rees scored a TD via a 2-yard plunge, and Notre Dame was beating a listless Michigan team by 10-0 at halftime. Rees finished 8 for 11 passing for 115 yards. More importantly, he did not commit a turnover.

Notre Dame ran out the clock after a Michigan field goal with 3:27 left in the game had cut Notre Dame's lead to 13-6. Rees then connected with Tyler Eiffert on a 38-yard pass down the sideline on a critical third down. Then an 8-yard run on a 3rd & 8 play with one minute left by Theo Riddick put the game away.

"It's a great feeling any time you can beat Michigan," Rees said. "It's a great environment ... a lot of fun."

Next Notre Dame played a game in a special environment—The Shamrock Series. This is a game in a neutral field. This year's game was played in Soldier Field in Chicago against Miami (FL). ND put the game away quickly W (41-3).

An always tough Stanford team ranked # 17 came to Notre Dame Stadium. On October 13, they were defeated by Notre Dame in overtime OT W (20-13). ND had been taking it on the chin in the recent prior seasons from Stanford.

So, after three years of getting pushed around by the Cardinal, the Fighting Irish pushed back hard. Notre Dame won its most important shoving match of the season. After the Irish had scored in OT, a wall of determined Notre Dame defenders stopped Stepan Taylor inches from the end zone on fourth down in OT to assure the ND victory.

And so, the seventh-ranked Irish kept its record unblemished with a nice 20-13 OT victory against the Cardinal. It had been a soggy Saturday in South Bend but at the goal line and after the game, the weather did not matter.

Let's take another look at the game as it was the big reason the Irish were undefeated in 2012 in the regular season.

The essence of the game is that Notre Dame was down 13-10 with six minutes left, Everett Golson had driven the Irish near midfield. Then there was a late hit flag on his scramble. So now the ball was in Irish possession in Cardinal territory.

The helmet to helmet collision that drew the penalty left Golson unable to continue in the game. Tommy Rees came in. The Notre Dame Junior had already pulled off two late-game miracles at Purdue and Michigan.

Yet, here he was again right from the bench, ice cold again, and he was about to be in the thick of the action. Rees got a completion and there was another helpful penalty and then, he got the Irish in position so that Brindza could kick a game tying field goal. The game then went into OT.

In the overtime, Rees, now lots warmer from previous action, tossed a 16-yard pass to Theo Riddick to convert a third-and-8 to the 7. On the next play, he threw behind T.J. Jones on a slant and the receiver reached back for a sliding two-handed catch and a 20-13 lead. It was a great catch.

ND put on a huge goal line stand in the rain against one of college football's best power offenses. This sealed the win. Cardinal Stepfan Taylor was stuffed at the line three times. The play was reviewed but stood. He appeared to come extremely close to crossing the line after a third effort, but the call stood after many reviews. ND won W (20-13). It was a season-important win.

Ironically it was Tommy Rees again who did not play for very long. However, he did what he had become expert in doing. He was four-for-four for 44 yards in the game and he threw the game-winning touchdown.

The following week, BYU played the # 5 ranked Irish at home and lost W (17-14). Notre Dame, still ranked # 5 then traveled to Number 8 Oklahoma and beat the Sooners W (30-13).

Pittsburgh played tough against the Irish. All Games are won—one game at a time—no matter how long an individual game may take. This game took three overtimes before it was complete. In its second OT game of the year at home, in the third OT period, the Fighting Irish defeated Pittsburgh W (29-26.). Notre Dame had gotten behind and by the fourth quarter it looked like it might be the end of the perfect record.

Down 20-6 v Pitt, Notre Dame needed big plays from big playmakers and of course a bit of luck to keep its national title hopes alive.

One game at a time and one play at a time. Everett Golson, who was benched earlier in the game came back in and scored on a quarterback sneak in the third overtime. This effort by Golson gave the Fighting Irish the game W (29-26). Notre Dame at (9-0) was off to its best start since 1993, when it finished the season ranked at #2.

Golson had gotten got back into the game when Tommy Rees threw an interception and the Irish fell behind by two touchdowns. Kelly explained it: "Our quarterback needed to be out there mobile, make some plays outside the pocket—asked him if he was ready to go, he said he was and we put him back in."

In this Pitt game, on the road to victory, Golson finally got his touch back and threw an 11-yard TD pass early in the fourth quarter as Notre Dame cut Pitt's lead to 20-12. It still looked like ND's championship hopes were over.

Opportunities for a comeback appeared to be gone when Pitt cornerback K'Waun Williams intercepted a pass by Golson in the end zone. But the Irish held. After the punt, Golson completed a 45-yard pass to DaVaris Daniels at the Pitt 5 and followed it up with a quick 5-yard toss to Theo Riddick. The fleet footed Golson then outran the Pitt Defense for the two-point conversion. In the 3rd OT, Golson won the game for the Fighting Irish.

The following week, ND traveled to Alumni Stadium to play Boston College in the Holy Wars. The #4 Irish beat the unranked Eagles (21-6). On November 17, The Irish played Wake Forest at home and beat the Deamon Deacons W (38-0).

The USC rivalry was next and with Notre Dame undefeated and untied, it was the perfect opportunity for a Trojan upset of the # 1 ranked Irish.

It did not happen that way as Notre Dame beat the Trojans W (22-13) and finished the regular season as the #1 ranked team in the nation. All USC games are close even when the score may not be close.

For four straight plays as the game was close to ending, Southern California got nothing. Notre Dame's defense had been backed up to its 1-yard line. Its perfect season was in peril. Nobody but the Trojans could inflict a beating on Notre Dame like this at the last minute. With 2:33 to play, the Irish got the ball back on the one yard line and ran the clock out for the win.

BCS Championship Bowl

For such a great season, #1 ranked Notre Dame got to play #2 ranked Alabama in the BCS championship Bowl 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 defeated by the Crimson Tide L (14-42).

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 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 8-4. 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). Overall, the Irish were 9-4 for the season. No championship but a nice bowl victory.

Pinstripe Bowl v Rutgers December 28, 2013

Tommy Rees is always a positive guy. There are many who would suggest this final game for Rees as a graduating senior from Notre Dame University is typical of his great play and the perfect descriptor for his four years of leading Notre Dame to victory after victory. It was not all easy. But, Tommy Rees made it seem that way when he ran the game.

Rees threw for 319 yards and no interceptions in his final college game, leading No. 25 Notre Dame to a 29-16 victory against Rutgers. The game was far from pretty but ultimately successful.

Rees finished four years of football for the Fighting Irish packed with both memorable and forgettable moments. His performance was solid, going 27 for 47.

Known as the Closer because he saved or won many games for the Irish with late drives, against Rutgers, Rees was mistake-free and productive. He missed a few throws that could have broken open the game, but, he came through. "I'm a Tommy Rees fan for life," Coach Brian Kelly said. Kelly also said that it was "a good season that could have been a great season." Kelly said.

The Pinstripe Bowl was a field-goal kicking contest. Brindza was 5 for 6 and Kyle Federico made 3 of 3 for the Scarlet Knights. The Irish dominated in yards (494-237) and time of possession (38:49) but like many outings this particular season, they bogged down in the red zone repeatedly. Nonetheless a bowl win is a bowl win and a great accomplishment.

There are no slouch teams playing in bowl games. Notre Dame improved to 17-6-3 at Yankee Stadium. Though this new ballpark in the Bronx is only a few years old, it bears the name of the revered Yankee Stadium of the Babe Ruth era and it is located just across the street from where the original House that Ruth Built sat for decades. Whereas ND has its House that Rock Built, the Yankees have the House that Ruth Built. The original stadium as built in 1923 and Notre Dame began to play Army there in 1925.

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; overall 8-5.

The Music City Bowl Notre Dame v LSU

Notre Dame had a tough end to its season losing four-straight games. What a great feeling as a team that worked hard through adversity to close the 2014 campaign to gain a victory over LSU in the Music City Bowl. Both quarterbacks, Everett Golson and Malik Zaire played and both were at their best as was Kyle Brindza, who contributed the winning field goal.



Music City Bowl —Kyle Brindza hit a 32-yard field goal as time expired to beat LSU.

The Irish had a tough time closing out games this year, especially with a depleted defense. It was an issue and so it had to be particularly satisfying for Golson, Zaire, and Brindza.

Golson and Zaire shared snaps in the game. Brindza struggled during the regular season, making just 3-of-9 field goal attempts in his final five games. It was a great day for all three to play such key roles in the first win by the Fighting Irish, a typically strong November team, since November 1st.

The pundits say that the story of the game is that because Notre Dame was struggling at the QB position, and it addressed the instability by rotating its quarterbacks, it kept both players sharp and wanting to perform at peak. LSU had also been struggling at the position but chose to stick with starter Anthony Jennings.

Regardless of which QB was in the game, both LSU and Notre Dame relied heavily on the ground game for success on offense. LSU as expected relied on Leonard Fournette, who was up to the task and handled a heavy workload.

The big game surprise came when Notre Dame's offensive line decided they were bowl-worthy and were able to push around the Tigers defense as much as needed for ND to move the ball. The Fighting Irish offensive line put together its best performance of the season against one of the SEC's top ranked defenses.

The Irish pounded LSU for a total of 263 team rushing yards at 5.2 yards per carry. Malik Zaire and Tarean Folston did most of the work and C.J. Prosise added a 50-yard touchdown run that tied the game at 28.

Many bowl games have controversies and the teams get over them. Just before halftime, LSU faked a field goal on 4th and Goal. It appeared on the television replays that it was a touchdown.

The officials, who were not nestled like sugarplums as the rest of us at home by our TV sets, ruled that the holder and runner, Brad Kragthrope was down at the one-yard line and had not crossed the goal line before he was down. After lengthy review, Notre Dame got the ball. We all know that the refs make the calls either way, regardless of who benefits.

However, when there is a close game that is decided by say, just three points, supporters of the two teams will often have differing opinions of the plays that brought their teams either victory or defeat. LSU's missed opportunity (for a field goal or the touchdown many LSU fans believe they deserved) will linger in the minds of many LSU faithful.

I would suspect the lingering ended pretty quickly for Notre Dame's devoted right after the referee made the decision on the field.

Malik Zaire played a great game for sure. In his first career start, though unexpected by ND fans, Zaire kicked off on what would have become the quarterback competition for 2015.

But, Everett Golson had other plans for his future, and he transferred to Florida State. He chose not to compete for starter at Notre Dame in 2015. Watching Zaire's 12 completions of 15 passes, carrying the ball 22 times for 96 yards and scoring both through the air and on the ground, v a tough LSU team, ND fans and alumni were duly impressed and encouraged for 2015.

Just because Notre Dame has something to say, let's let ND say it about this well-played bowl game. As a diehard ND fan, I love reading positives about my favorite team. ND has classified this as an EPIC game. Let's enjoy reading the official word from ND:

2015 LSU (MUSIC CITY BOWL) v NOTRE DAME

Under the category of "nobody saw this coming," and in only the second bowl game that makes the list, unranked Notre Dame came into this matchup reeling, disappointed, and left for dead after losing its last four regular-season games. But calling on the pride of a program, a two-quarterback system, and the leg of a struggling kicker, unranked Notre Dame overcame long odds and a 28-21 third-quarter deficit to defeat No. 22 LSU 31-28 to win the 2015 Music City Bowl on the last play of the game.

With 5:41 remaining and the score tied at 28, the Irish took their final possession at their own 15. In relative ease and precision -- only two third-down conversions necessary -- the quarterback tandem of freshman starter Malik Zaire and experienced senior Everett Golson moved 71 yards to set up a 32-yard field goal attempt for senior placekicker Kyle Brindza.

Brindza, who had missed six of his previous nine field goal attempts, calmly capped his career with a last-second game winner and the memory of a lifetime.

"To leave a program so historic like this in this kind of fashion is great," Brindza said immediately afterward. "It's a blessing for me, but also to be able to help win a game for all my teammates is a bigger blessing."

This comeback doesn't stand with some of the classics of yesteryear, but it remains "music" to Irish ears, an important win during the Brian Kelly era, and a start to a fresh list of fantastic photo finishes.

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. They finished the year with a nice 10-3 overall record. 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. It can be argued that the 2015 team was the most explosive offense that Brian Kelly 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.

Ohio State has always been a great team. Urban Myer's team was as great in 2015 as those of the past but they had lost a late season game to Michigan State, which kept them from winning the Big Ten

Championship. Notre Dame had also lost a big game against Clemson earlier in the season and then again late season against Stanford. Add up the Irish loss total in the regular season and you get four points...just four points. How much is two plus two?

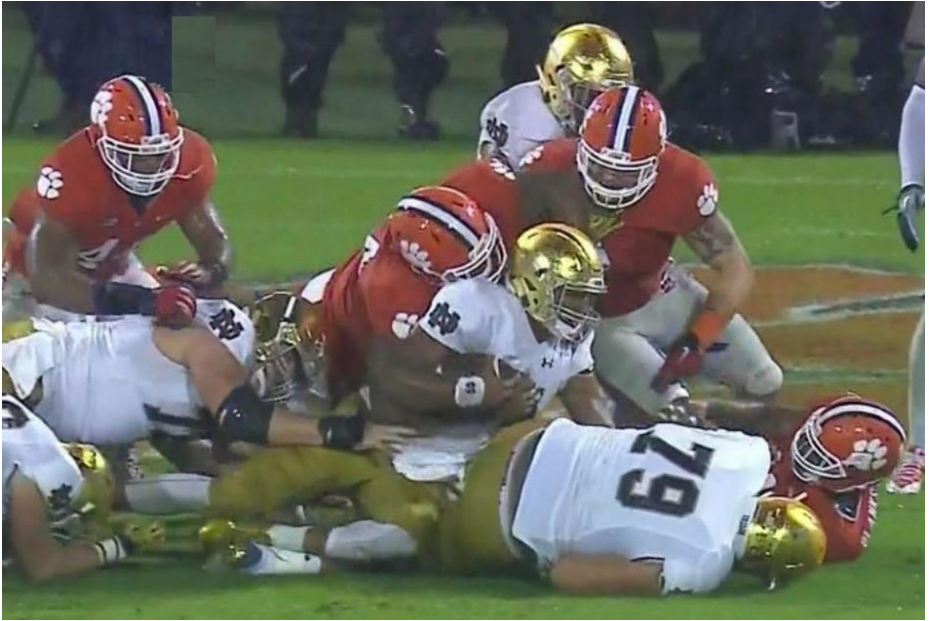
The ND 2015 season ended on a heartbreaking note, as the Irish were defeated by Ohio State University in the Fiesta Bowl by a score of L (28-44). The resident Indiana Irish have a few things to prove to their neighbors in Ohio as ND has not beaten the Buckeyes since 1936.



Kizer's late TD rescues No. 9 Notre Dame at Virginia, 34-27

On October 3, like everybody else, I heard the howling winds and the torrential rain when Notre Dame and Clemson were in the middle of a major tropical storm in South Carolina and we in Pennsylvania were feeling some of the same weather that the coaches and players on the field were experiencing.

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.



Clemson Football Stops Notre Dame 2-Point Conversion to Clinch Win

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 they got to play for the BCS National Championship.

The Fiesta Bowl 2015 ND v Ohio State

Some may say that it was Junior Ezekiel Elliot who single-handedly clobbered Notre Dame at the Fiesta Bowl. Elliot headed to the NFL before graduation. The tough running back, perhaps the best ever in Ohio State history, scored against the Irish on three short runs in the first half and proved he is the real deal. OSU's Elliott pounded the ND "D" to the tune of L (28-44)

He left ND defenders looking for relief again as he raced past them for a 47-yard score to open the second half. Elliott ran for 149 yards during the game and matched a Fiesta Bowl record with four touchdowns to close the curtain on his college career,

J.T. Barrett threw the ball for 211 yards and he also had 96 yards rushing in the highest-scoring game against Notre Dame's defense this season.

The Irish had some good moments behind freshman DeShone Kizer after Buckeyes overly aggressive defensive end Joey Bosa was ejected for targeting in the first quarter. When ND's star linebacker Jaylon Smith, who was keeping things close for the Irish, left the game because of a knee injury. ND had a tough time keeping up with the blistering Buckeyes.

No excuses but even coach Brian Kelly offered: "The guy is so impactful on our defense... You lose a guy like that early on, it significantly affects what you're doing.

Ohio State had its way with Notre Dame's defense without Smith in the lineup, racing down the field for scores like a seven-on-seven drill. Notre Dame took advantage of Ohio State's Bosa-less defense a few times, although not enough to keep pace with the Buckeyes.

Kizer was Note Dame's key player on offense. He kept ND in the game. He connected with Chris Brown on a 4-yard touchdown pass to open the second half, pulling the Irish within a touchdown.

Kizer threw for 284 yards and two touchdowns on 22-of-37 passing but had an interception and lost a fumble. Like a lot of things in life, not everything goes well all the time.

If everything did not happen like it really did, things would have been better. If some of the anomalies could have been dialed back, it could have been a much different game. Nonetheless it was a hard-fought fine matchup. Having said that, like many Irish, I think it is about time for Notre Dame to win one against Ohio State. How about the next time!!

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. It was Kelly's toughest season to date and now again, we are looking for much more in 2019

Notre Dame coaches just don't have 4-8 seasons but Brian Kelly did. It was a lousy season and Kelly corrected his flaws and became a better coach for 2017 and 2019. Amen!

Like most Notre Dame supporters; this author hoped that Brian Kelly and Notre Dame made a great comeback from 2016. Amen!

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. They finished the year with a nice 10-3 overall record. 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. Nice comeback Kelly in 2017 but no "almost" and no championship. Why not?

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. After a regular season in which the Irish lost three games overall, it was expected that Notre Dame would compete well during the 2018 season. They did very well but failed to account for Clemson's new toughness in the BCS Championship game. It was Kelly's toughest season to date and now again, we are looking for much more in 2019

The Fighting Irish competed as an independent. The Irish, coming off a 10-3, Citrus Bowl-winning season in 2017, began the year ranked 12th in the AP Poll. In the first game of the year, they hosted

rival No. 14 Michigan, in the first game played in the series since 2014. Notre Dame won by a score of 24–17. The Irish continued to roll, and after convincing wins against ranked opponents Stanford and Virginia Tech, rose to third in the polls.

Notre Dame finished the regular season with a perfect 12–0 record, and were ranked third in the final College Football Playoff rankings, earning them a spot in the national semifinal to be played at the Cotton Bowl against second-ranked Clemson. The Irish lost to the eventual national champion Tigers by a score of 30–3. Their final record of 12–1 and final ranking of 5th in the nation represented the program's best season since 2012.

Quarterback Brandon Wimbush led the offense for the first three games, after which he was benched in favor of Ian Book. Book ended the year with 2,628 passing yards and 19 touchdowns. The running attack was led by Dexter Williams, who finished with 995 yards and 12 touchdowns.

On defense, cornerback Julian Love was named a consensus first-team All-American, and defensive tackle Jerry Tillery also received All-America honors by several selectors. Head coach Brian Kelly was named AP Coach of the Year.

Because ND played for all the marbles in 2018, in the BCS games in 2019, we show the games of the 2018 season while the Fighting Irish were fighting for the National Championship.

On Sep 1, # 14 Michigan took on #12 ND at Notre Dame Stadium, and lost to the Irish W 24–17 before 77,622. On Sep 8, at home, #8 ND beat Ball State W (24–16) before 77,622. Then on Sep 15, #8 ND defeated Vanderbilt in ND Stadium W (22–17) before 77,622. Moving on, on Sep 22, at Wake Forest, #8 ND whooped them at BB&T Field W (56–27) before 31,092.

On Sep 29, # 8 ND defeated #7 Stanford at Notre Dame Stadium W (38–17) before 77,622. On Oct 6 at #24 Virginia Tech, the #6 ND Fighting Irish defeated the Hokeys at Lane Stadium in Blacksburg, VA. W (45–23) before 65,632. Then, on Oct 13, at ND Stadium, the #5 Fighting Irish beat Pittsburgh W (19–14) before 77,622.

On Oct 27 v Navy which was played at SDCCU Stadium in San Diego, the Irish pounded the Midshipmen W (44–22) before 63,626. Then, on Nov 3, at Northwestern, the #3 ND Fighting Irish beat the Wildcats at Ryan Field W (31–21) before 47,330. Then, on Nov 10, at ND Stadium, the #3 Irish defeated Florida State’s Seminoles W 42–13 before 77,622.

Closing in on the season end, the #12 Syracuse Orange on Nov 17, were whooped by the #3 Fighting Irish W (36-3) .Every good ND year, Southern Cal seems to disrupt the flow but not this year, as on Nov 24, at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, ND beat USC W (24–17) before 59,821. ND wont the Jeweled Shillelagh.

As part of the BCS’ end of season series, #3 ND got another chance at Clemson on Dec 29, 2018 at 4:00 PM v #2 Clemson at AT & T Stadium. However, Clemson was more than ready defeating the #3 Irish L (3-30) before 72,183. So much for 2018.

Who knows?

The shortest description of the fate I heard about this game is a written comment which follows:

Trevor Lawrence throws for 327 yards and 3 touchdowns, while the Clemson Tigers' defense allows only an early field goal en route to their 30-3 domination over the Notre Dame Fighting Irish in the 2018 Goodyear Cotton Bowl Classic.

Notre Dame needs to practice hard enough that Alabama and Clemson come off as regular “can be beaten” teams. If they can beat each other, other teams such as ND can beat them. The power of positive thinking. Maybe its time for Norman Vincent Peale to come in and give the whole ND organization a pep to talk. Only those who think they can’t—are mostly right!

Other Books by Brian W. Kelly: (amazon.com, and Kindle)

[Hope for Wilkes-Barre-John Q. Doe Next Mayor of Wilkes-Barre PA: John Doe Plan, will help create a better city!](#)
[Democrat Secret for Power & Winning Elections: Open borders & amnesty add millions of new Democrat Voters](#)
[The Cowardly Congress: Whatever happened to Congress doing the work of the people?](#)
[Help for Mayor George and Next Mayor of Wilkes-Barre: How to vote for the next Mayor & Council](#)
[Ghost of Wilkes-Barre Future: Spirit's advice for residents about 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](#)
[Great Players in Navy Football: Navy's best including Bellino & Staubach](#)
[Great Coaches in Navy Football: From Coach 1 to Coach #39 Ken Niumatalolo](#)
[Great Moments in Navy Football: From day 1 to coach Ken Niumatalolo I](#)
[No Tree! No Toys! No Toot Toot! Heartwarming story. Christmas gone while 19 month old napped](#)
[How to End DACA, Sanctuary Cities, & Resident Illegal Aliens: best solution to wipe shadows in America.](#)
[Government Must Stop Ripping Off Seniors' Social Security!: Hey buddy, seniors can no longer spare a dime?](#)
[Special Report: Solving America's Student Debt Crisis! The only real solution to the \\$1.52 Trillion debt](#)
[How to End DACA, Sanctuary Cities, & Resident Illegal Aliens: best solution to wipe shadows in America.](#)
[The Winning Political Platform for America: Unique winning approach to solve the big problems in America.](#)
[Lou Barletta v Bob Casey for US Senate: Barletta's unique approach to solving the big problems in America.](#)
[John Chrin v Matt Cartwright for Congress: Chrin has a unique approach to solving big problems in America.](#)
[The Cure for Hate !!! Can the cure be any worse than this disease that is crippling America?](#)
[Andrew Cuomo's Time to Go? "He Was Never that Great!": Cuomo says America never that great](#)
[White People Are Bad! Bad! Bad! Whoever thought a popular slogan in 2018 would be *It's OK to be White!*](#)
[The Fake News Media Is Also Corrupt!!!: Fake press / media today is not worthy to be 4th Estate.](#)
[God Gave US Donald Trump? Trump was sent from God as the people's answer](#)
[Millennials Say America Was "Never That Great": Too many pleased days of political clumps not over!](#)
[White People Are Bad! Bad! Bad! In 2018, too many people find race as a non-equalizer.](#)
[It's Time for The John Doe Party... Don't you think? By By Elephants.](#)
[Great Players in Florida Gators Football... Tim Tebow and a ton of other great players](#)
[Great Coaches in Florida Gators Football... The best coaches in Gator history.](#)
[The Constitution by Hamilton, Jefferson, Madison, et al. The Real Constitution](#)
[The Constitution Companion. Will help you learn and understand the Constitution](#)
[Great Coaches in Clemson Football: The best Clemson Coaches right to Dabo Swinney](#)
[Great Players in Clemson Football: The best Clemson players in history](#)
[Winning Back America, America's been stolen and can be won back completely](#)
[The Founding of America... Great book to pick up a lot of great facts](#)
[Defeating America's Career Politicians. The scoundrels need to go.](#)
[Midnight Mass by Jack Lammers... You remember what it was like Great story](#)
[The Bike by Jack Lammers... Great heartwarming Story by Jack](#)
[Wipe Out All Student Loan Debt--Now! Watch the economy go boom!](#)
[No Free Lunch Pay Back Welfare! Why not pay it back?](#)
[Deport All Millennials Now!!! Why they deserve to be deported and/or saved](#)
[DELETE the EPA, Please! The worst decisions to hurt America](#)
[Taxation Without Representation 4th Edition: Should we throw the TEA overboard again?](#)
[Four Great Political Essays by Thomas Dawson](#)
[Top Ten Political Books for 2018... Cliffnotes Version of 10 Political Books](#)
[Top Six Patriotic Books for 2018... Cliffnotes version of 6 Patriotic Books](#)
[Why Trump Got Elected!.. It's great to hear about a great milestone in America!](#)
[The Day the Free Press Died. Corrupt Press Lives on!](#)
[Solved \(Immigration\) The best solutions for 2018](#)
[Solved II \(Obamacare, Social Security, Student Debt\) Check it out; They're solved.](#)
[Great Moments in Pittsburgh Steelers Football... Six Super Bowls and more.](#)
[Great Players in Pittsburgh Steelers Football ,,Chuck Noll, Bill Cowher, Mike Tomlin, etc.](#)
[Great Coaches in New England Patriots Football,,, Bill Belichick the one and only plus others](#)
[Great Players in New England Patriots Football... Tom Brady, Drew Bledsoe et al.](#)
[Great Coaches in Philadelphia Eagles Football..Andy Reid, Doug Pederson & Lots more](#)
[Great Players in Philadelphia Eagles Football: Great players such as Sonny Jurgenson](#)
[Great Coaches in Syracuse Football: All the greats including Ben Schwartzwalder](#)
[Great Players in Syracuse Football. Highlights best players such as Jim Brown & Donovan McNabb](#)
[Millennials are People Too !!! Give US millennials help to live American Dream](#)
[Brian Kelly for the United States Senate from PA: Fresh Face for US Senate](#)
[The Candidate's Bible. Don't pray for your campaign without this bible](#)
[Rush Limbaugh's Platform for Americans... Rush will love it](#)
[Sean Hannity's Platform for Americans... Sean will love it](#)

[Donald Trump's New Platform for Americans](#), Make Trump unbeatable in 2020
[Tariffs Are Good for America!](#) One of the best tools a president can have
[Great Coaches in Pittsburgh Steelers Football](#) Sixteen of the best coaches ever to coach in pro football.
[Great Moments in New England Patriots Football](#) Great football moments from Boston to New England
[Great Moments in Philadelphia Eagles Football](#). The best from the Eagles from the beginning of football.
[Great Moments in Syracuse Football](#) The great moments, coaches & players in Syracuse Football
[Boost Social Security Now!](#) Hey Buddy Can You Spare a Dime?
[The Birth of American Football](#). From the first college game in 1869 to the last Super Bowl
[Obamacare: A One-Line Repeal](#) Congress must get this done.
[A Wilkes-Barre Christmas Story](#) A wonderful town makes Christmas all the better
[A Boy, A Bike, A Train, and a Christmas Miracle](#) A Christmas story that will melt your heart
[Pay-to-Go](#) America-First Immigration Fix
[Legalizing Illegal Aliens Via Resident Visas](#) Americans-first plan saves \$Trillions. Learn how!
[60 Million Illegal Aliens in America!!!](#) A simple, America-first solution.
[The Bill of Rights By Founder James Madison Refresh](#) *your knowledge of the specific rights for all*
[Great Players in Army Football](#) Great Army Football played by great players..
[Great Coaches in Army Football](#) Army's coaches are all great.
[Great Moments in Army Football](#) Army Football at its best.
[Great Moments in Florida Gators Football](#) Gators Football from the start. This is the book.
[Great Moments in Clemson Football](#) CU Football at its best. This is the book.
[Great Moments in Florida Gators Football](#) Gators Football from the start. This is the book.
[The Constitution Companion](#). A Guide to Reading and Comprehending the Constitution
[The Constitution by Hamilton, Jefferson, & Madison](#) – Big type and in English
[PATERNO: The Dark Days After Win # 409](#). Sky began to fall within days of win # 409.
[JoePa 409 Victories: Say No More!](#) Winningest Division I-A football coach ever
[American College Football: The Beginning](#) From before day one football was played.
[Great Coaches in Alabama Football](#) Challenging the coaches of every other program!
[Great Coaches in Penn State Football](#) the Best Coaches in PSU's football program
[Great Players in Penn State Football](#) The best players in PSU's football program
[Great Players in Notre Dame Football](#) The best players in ND's football program
[Great Coaches in Notre Dame Football](#) The best coaches in any football program
[Great Players in Alabama Football](#) from Quarterbacks to offensive Linemen Greats!
[Great Moments in Alabama Football](#) AU Football from the start. This is the book.
[Great Moments in Penn State Football](#) PSU Football, start--games, coaches, players,
[Great Moments in Notre Dame Football](#) ND Football, start, games, coaches, players
[Cross Country with the Parents](#). A great trip from East Coast to West with the kids
[Seniors, Social Security & the Minimum Wage](#). Things seniors need to know.
[How to Write Your First Book and Publish It with CreateSpace](#). You too can be an author.
[The US Immigration Fix](#)--It's all in here. Finally, an answer.
[I had a Dream](#) IBM Could be #1 Again. The title is self-explanatory
[WineDiets.Com Presents The Wine Diet](#) Learn how to lose weight while having fun.
[Wilkes-Barre, PA; Return to Glory](#) Wilkes-Barre City's return to glory
[Geoffrey Parsons' Epoch... The Land of Fair Play](#) Better than the original.
[The Bill of Rights 4 Dummies!](#) This is the best book to learn about your rights.
[Sol Bloom's Epoch ...Story of the Constitution](#) The best book to learn the Constitution
[America 4 Dummies!](#) All Americans should read to learn about this great country.
[The Electoral College 4 Dummies!](#) How does it really work?
[The All-Everything Machine](#) Story about IBM's finest computer server.
[Thank You IBM!](#) This book explains how IBM was beaten in the computer marketplace by neophytes

[Amazon.com/author/brianwkelly](https://www.amazon.com/author/brianwkelly)

Brian W. Kelly has written 207 books. Thank you for buying this one.

Other Kelly books can be found at [amazon.com/author/brianwkelly](https://www.amazon.com/author/brianwkelly)

