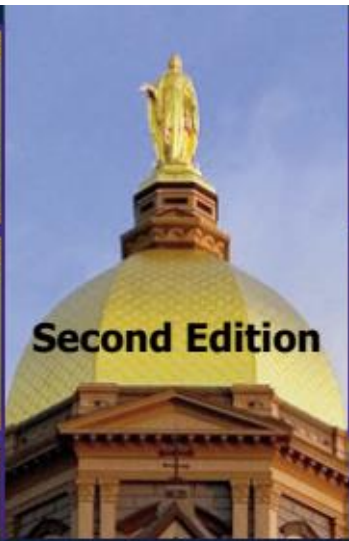


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Dame Fighting Irish College Football Team -- **Great Moments in
Notre Dame Football**, which I finished in March 2017.

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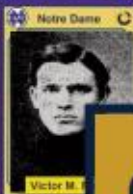
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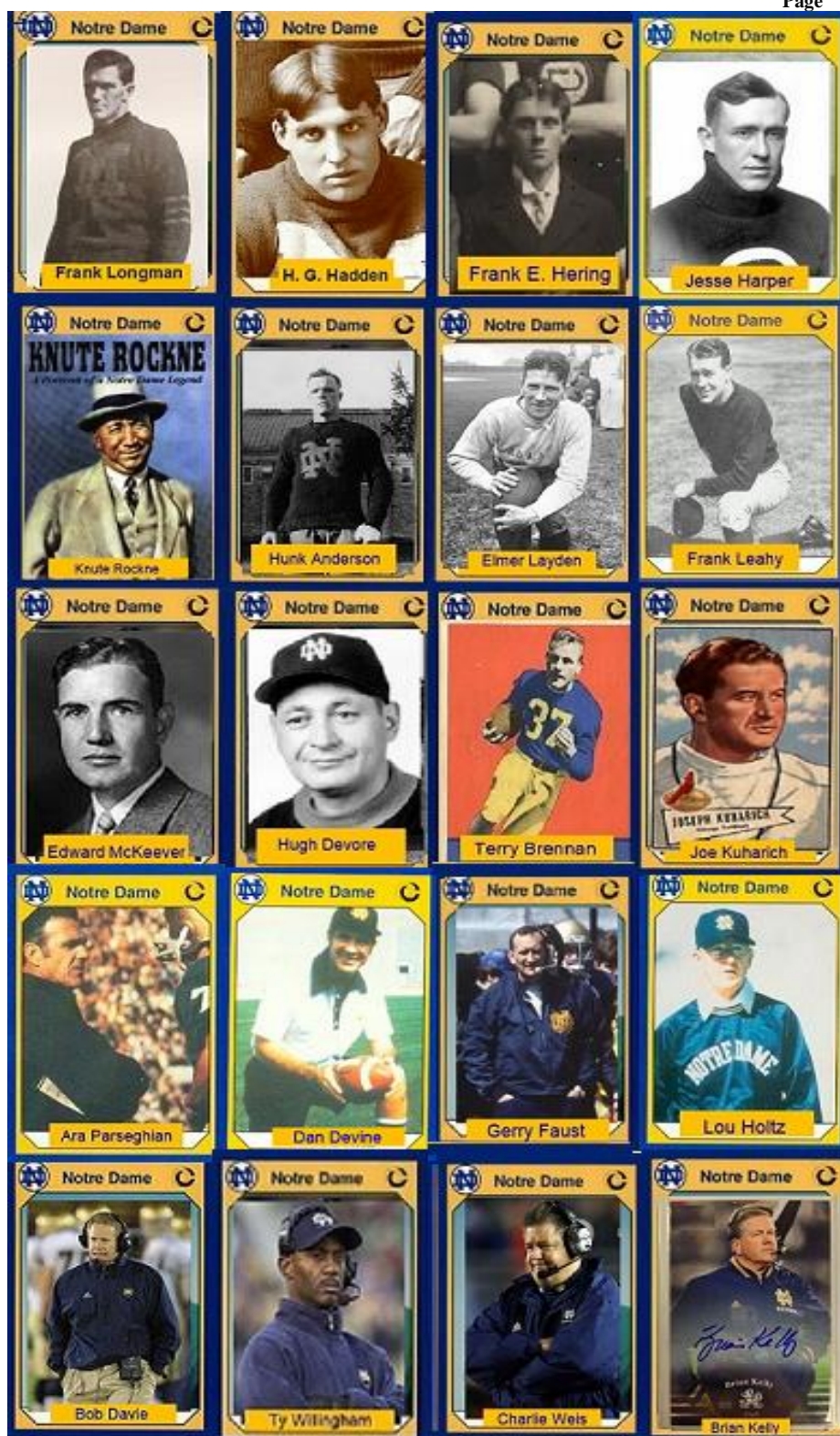


Second Edition

Great Moments
in
**NOTRE
DAME
Football**

by
BRIAN KELLY





ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL



ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL * ND FOOTBALL

Great Moments

in

Notre Dame Football

Second Edition

This updated book begins at the beginning of Football and goes to the Brian Kelly era.

The demand for a current edition of this book, first printed in 2016, is so great, that we have decided to make this **Second Edition** available four years earlier than planned. This book includes the 2016 season and an outlook for a positive future for ND Football.

This book 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 facts missing from the bookshelves of those ND fans who do not have this book.

The book first tells the story 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.

This book captures the great moments in Notre Dame Football. It takes the reader through stories about Notre Dame's 31 coaches to great stories about 127 seasons worth of great games (1247 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, or Joe Theismann. You cannot get enough of ND greatness but we try in this book.

You will not be able to put this book down

Brian Kelly



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Great Moments in Notre Dame Football Author: Brian W. Kelly

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Release Date: **May, July 2016, March 2017**

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					

Total Wins 892

Total Losses 314

Total Ties 42 * Prior to Overtime Rules

Stats from 1887 * Through August 2016



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.

Acknowledgments:

I appreciate all the help that I received in putting this book together, along with the 62 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 62 books before this book and several hundred articles published by many magazines and newspapers and I only cite when an idea is not mine or when I am quoting, and again, I choose to cite in place, and the reader does not have to trace strange numbers through strange footnotes and back to bibliography elements that may not be readily accessible or available.

Yet, I would be kidding you, if in a book about the great moments in 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 moments in Notre Dame Football.

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

want to have a fun read, who like smiling when 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. It is for everyday people like you and I who enjoy Notre Dame because it is Notre Dame and who 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>

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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.

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 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 are 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 to 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 moments. There are some moments that are not so great that are shown to get the proper perspective for those great moments. 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.

It 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.

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.

This book is all about the great moments in Notre Dame Football. 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 127 seasons worth of great games (1247 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, or Deshone Kizer 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.

Few sports books are a must-read but Brian Kelly's Great Moments in 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 W. Kelly is one of the leading authors in America with this, his 63rd published book. Brian is an outspoken and eloquent expert on a variety of topics and he has also written several hundred articles on topics of interest to Americans.

Most of his early works involved high technology. Later, Brian wrote a number of patriotic books and most recently he has been writing human interest books such as The Wine Diet and Thank you, IBM. His books are always well received.

Brian's books are highlighted at www.letsGOPublish.com. They are for sale at www.bookhawkers.com, Amazon, Kindle, and www.notredamebooks.com,

The best!

Sincerely,

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

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About the Author



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

Kelly is a former IBM Senior Systems Engineer. His specialty was problem solving for customers as well as implementing advanced operating systems and software on his client's machines. Brian is the author of 111 books and hundreds of magazine articles. He has been a frequent speaker at technical conferences throughout the United States.

Brian was a candidate for the US Congress from Pennsylvania in 2010 and he ran for Mayor in his home town in 2015. He loves 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 celebrates its 125th year.



Kelly, ND Coach Leading the Fighting Irish

Brian

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/>

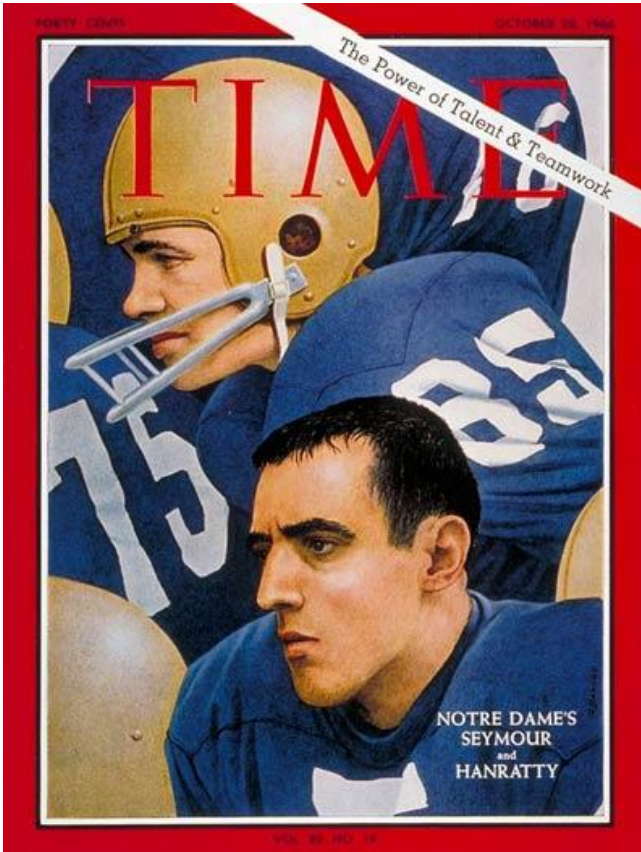
This book celebrates Notre Dame Football; its founding; its struggles; its greatness; and its long-lasting impact on American life. People like me, who love Notre Dame, will love this book. Notre Dame Haters will want their own copy just for additional ammo. Yet, it won't help them! Hah!



We begin the rest of the Notre Dame Story in Chapter 2 with the founding of the ND institution and we continue in subsequent chapters right into the founding of the football program in 1887.

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

Terry Hanratty, a great ND QB, recruited by Ara Parseghian in 1965, once said that ND jerseys could not be retired because with all of the history of ND, there would be no numbers left. I use Hanratty's idea to help promulgate the notion that nobody can write a book about Notre Dame History that is all inclusive, because even if it can be written, it would be too big to ever be read. I hoped this book would come in at a little over 200 pages, but if it had, you would not have liked it. Read what you can when you can. It will be a fun experience.



I capture all the great moments in this book. OK, I get most of them! If I missed any and you tell me, then we'll do a second edition. The great moments naturally include a lot of great people, including players and the 31 great coaches that over time would make or break the University of Notre Dame.

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.

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, displayed in a properly summarized format so that none of us are reading this book

forever. There are a ton of great stories for sure. More importantly, none of us should need to search further than this book for the truth about many of the depictions in this book.

I worried from the inception of this project about how I could reduce 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. 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.

The secret in writing this book has been to know that there is always more. My job has been to show things that are known already in encyclopedias, and the vast resources of the Internet. I did not have to personally speak with Mr. 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).



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

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?

My job was, and since right now I am still bringing this work about ND Great Moments 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 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, exciting and real and 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.

Instead of lots of work, we can just sit in our easy chairs or lounges at the pool or beach and can learn and enjoy and enjoy and learn about a football team and a university that we have come to love. Along the way, every now and then, we'll probably fall asleep with a smile on our face, and we'll dream about a fine story starring Rockne, Leahy, Parseghian, Devine, Holtz, or Kelly.

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 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

Even if you choose never to take a break, I get the whole teaching job done in something just less than 600 pages of the most enjoyable content you will ever read. It's all about Notre Dame!

Coach Kelly extended the great ND coaching era right to today. I took it further as I present some recent facts such as the 2016 schedule and the new recruiting class which looks pretty darn good.

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 2015 season as we approach 2016.

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 each and every game 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, all games are listed and chronicled from 1887. You will absolutely love this book from page 1 to the end. Each time I read it now that it is built, I enjoy it even more.

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

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 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."

End of CSC tribute to Fr. Sorin.

As noted above, along with six brothers, four of whom were of Irish descent, Fr. Sorin arrived in New York in the autumn of 1841. He immediately set out for Indiana. When he was just 28 years old, he began in earnest, the foundation of Notre Dame. The Bishop of Vincennes gave them 524 acres which, when Fr. Sorin arrived, were fully snow-covered. Fr. Sorin had a deep devotion to the Blessed Mother of Jesus and so he named his new school, in honor of Our Lady. He used his native tongue of French. And, so, Notre Dame was christened "L'Université de Notre Dame du Lac" (The University of Our Lady of the Lake).

Just a few years later, on Jan. 15, 1844, the Indiana legislature officially chartered the University of Notre Dame, though at the time it would not have fit today's U.S. definition of a university, Fr. Sorin used his experience within the French seminary system and he chose to run Notre Dame on the model of a French boarding school. This included elementary students, known as the "minims", as well as preparatory, and collegiate students. Notre Dame also had a school for manual training. In time, as Notre Dame's President, Fr. Sorin with the help of other CSC priests, strengthened Notre Dame's academic curriculum.



Eight years before Notre Dame's first football game, the University suffered a major misfortune. On April 23, 1879, the main building was completely destroyed by fire. At the time, the main building was in fact, the sum total of the entire University.

Fr. Sorin would not show his pain. He would not give up. He had the spirit of the university, the spirit of the Fighting Irish, in his heart even before football emerged on the ND campus. No Wonder Notre Dame, even after setbacks, always comes back.

His inspiration gave hope to all. At the commemoration of the University's 100th anniversary in 1942, this paragraph was used to describe Fr. Sorin's attitude right after the devastating fire:

"The sixty-five year old man walked around the ruins, and those who followed him were confounded by his attitude. Instead of bending, he stiffened. There was on his face a look of grim determination. He signaled all of them to go into the church with him."

Fr. Sorin encouraged all of the long-faces to hold fast and true as Notre Dame would be gloriously rebuilt. A Professor summarized the attitude after Fr. Sorin's sermon that day: "There was never more a shadow of a doubt as to the future of Notre Dame."

Fr. Sorin wanted the new Notre Dame to be lots more than a mere mimic of the old main building. When it was constructed over the summer of 1879, his goal was for it to be nothing less than a grand "monument to Catholicism." That was almost 140 years ago.

The Administration Building with its distinctive and beautiful Golden Dome has served for all these years as the monument that Fr. Sorin wanted to be built but it is lots more. This tribute to Catholicism is also a tribute to the millions of working-class, first and second generation American Catholics, who aspired to see their sons (and eventually daughters) pursue a degree in higher education, such as that offered on the Campus of Notre Dame. Clearly this was a means for all, especially the poor, to gain entry into the mainstream of American social, economic, and political life.



Rev. Sorin in his later years

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's Mission Statement



Context

This statement speaks of the University of Notre Dame as a place of teaching and research, of scholarship and publication, of service and community. These components flow from three characteristics of Roman Catholicism that image Jesus Christ, his Gospel, and his Spirit. A sacramental vision encounters God in the whole of creation. In and through the visible world in which we live, we come to know and experience the invisible God.

In meditation the Catholic vision perceives God not only present in but working through persons, events, and material things. There is an intelligibility and a coherence to all reality, discoverable through spirit, mind, and imagination. God's grace prompts human activity to assist the world in creating justice grounded in love. God's way to us comes as communion, through the communities in which men and women live.

This community includes the many theological traditions, liturgies, and spiritualities that fashion the life of the Church. The emphasis on community in Catholicism explains why Notre Dame historically has fostered familial bonds in its institutional life.

A Catholic university draws its basic inspiration from Jesus Christ as the source of wisdom and from the conviction that in him all things

can be brought to their completion. As a Catholic university, Notre Dame wishes to contribute to this educational mission.

Mission

The University of Notre Dame is a Catholic academic community of higher learning, animated from its origins by the Congregation of Holy Cross. The University is dedicated to the pursuit and sharing of truth for its own sake. As a Catholic university, one of its distinctive goals is to provide a forum where, through free inquiry and open discussion, the various lines of Catholic thought may intersect with all the forms of knowledge found in the arts, sciences, professions, and every other area of human scholarship and creativity.

The intellectual interchange essential to a university requires, and is enriched by, the presence and voices of diverse scholars and students. The Catholic identity of the University depends upon, and is nurtured by, the continuing presence of a predominant number of Catholic intellectuals. This ideal has been consistently maintained by the University leadership throughout its history. What the University asks of all its scholars and students, however, is not a particular creedal affiliation, but a respect for the objectives of Notre Dame and a willingness to enter into the conversation that gives it life and character. Therefore, the University insists upon academic freedom that makes open discussion and inquiry possible.

The University prides itself on being an environment of teaching and learning that fosters the development in its students of those disciplined habits of mind, body, and spirit that characterize educated, skilled, and free human beings. In addition, the University seeks to cultivate in its students not only an appreciation for the great achievements of human beings but also a disciplined sensibility to the poverty, injustice and oppression that burden the lives of so many. The aim is to create a sense of human solidarity and concern for the common good that will bear fruit as learning becomes service to justice.

Notre Dame also has a responsibility to advance knowledge in a search for truth through original inquiry and publication. This responsibility engages the faculty and students in all areas of the University, but particularly in graduate and professional education

and research. The University is committed to constructive and critical engagement with the whole of human culture.

The University encourages a way of living consonant with a Christian community and manifest in prayer, liturgy and service. Residential life endeavors to develop that sense of community and of responsibility that prepares students for subsequent leadership in building a society that is at once more human and more divine.

Notre Dame's character as a Catholic academic community presupposes that no genuine search for the truth in the human or the cosmic order is alien to the life of faith. The University welcomes all areas of scholarly activity as consonant with its mission, subject to appropriate critical refinement. There is, however, a special obligation and opportunity, specifically as a Catholic university, to pursue the religious dimensions of all human learning. Only thus can Catholic intellectual life in all disciplines be animated and fostered and a proper community of scholarly religious discourse be established.

In all dimensions of the University, Notre Dame pursues its objectives through the formation of an authentic human community graced by the Spirit of Christ.

Notre Dame's Statement of Principles for Intercollegiate Athletics

Throughout its long and proud history, the University of Notre Dame has embraced the philosophy that a well-rounded athletics program—including club, intramural and intercollegiate competition—comprises an integral part of Notre Dame's educational mission. This philosophy reflects the importance of operating an intercollegiate athletics program that fully comports with the University's aspirations as a Catholic institution. Notre Dame therefore dedicates itself to the pursuit of excellence in intercollegiate athletics within the framework of an academic community committed to the University's educational and religious objectives. Notre Dame also commits itself to the unquestioned integrity of its athletics programs. All individuals involved, directly or indirectly, in

the athletics enterprise must maintain and foster the values and goals associated with the University's mission as a Catholic institution of higher education.

As a Catholic university, Notre Dame espouses Christian values and principles. These include the development of the human person-spirit as well as body-the pursuit of excellence in all endeavors, the nurturing of Christian character, and the call to personal integrity and responsibility. By providing a general description of the structures that support these endeavors, this document articulates the central values and expectations that guide Notre Dame's participation in intercollegiate athletics.

Notre Dame adheres to the principle of presidential control over intercollegiate athletics. The Director of Athletics reports to the President, who exercises ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the University's intercollegiate athletics program. The Faculty Board on Athletics serves as the principal advisory group to the President on educational issues related to intercollegiate athletics. The chair of the Faculty Board on Athletics also serves as the NCAA- mandated Faculty Athletics Representative.

<http://www.und.com/school-bio/nd-ath-principles.html>

On its web site referenced above, Notre Dame details its principles for Intercollegiate Athletics under the following headings: Feel free to examine these as you see fit.

- ✓ PRESIDENTIAL CONTROL
- ✓ ACADEMICS
- ✓ STUDENT LIFE
- ✓ COACHING STAFFS
- ✓ ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS
- ✓ CONCLUSION

Notre Dame endeavors to maintain a highly competitive athletics program consistent with its tradition, heritage, and overall mission as a Catholic university. It will attempt to excel in intercollegiate athletics, but always in conformity with its primary role as an educator and moral guide. Notre Dame will conduct its intercollegiate athletics program so as to support the University's commitment to education, as well as the letter and spirit of the policies and procedures of the University, its conferences, and the NCAA.

Chapter 4 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.

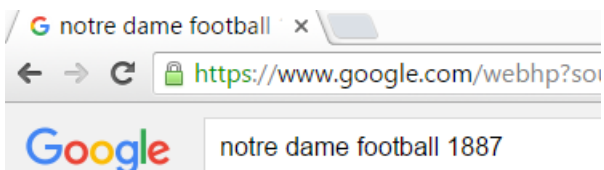
"**Univ. of N.D.** – Full Back: H. Jewett; Half Backs: J. Cusack, H. Luhn; Quarter Back: G. Cartier; Centre Rush: G.A. Houck; Rush Line: F. Fehr, P. Nelson, B. Sawkins, W. Springer, T. O'Regan, P.P. Maloney.

"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

Before we finish this chapter after showing pictures of Notre Dame's 1st football team, let me tell you how to see more pictures of Notre Dame from 1887, before, and after. Right now, we are interested in *Notre Dame Football 1887*. Just plug these four words into your favorite search engine, such as Google or Yahoo. Here is how you do it and then on the next page, I show you the kind of great stuff that you will get back. For now, just plug in *Notre Dame Football 1887* as follows:



Depending on your search engine things will look a bit differently, perhaps. Using Google, you will get back choices that look very similar to those shown below:

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About 198,000 results (0.39 seconds)

1887 Notre Dame football team - Wikipedia, the free ... 
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1887_Notre_Dame_football_team ▾ Wikipedia ▾
The first game in Notre Dame football football occurred in November 1887. Michigan had been playing football since 1879. Two players on Michigan's 1887 ...
[Schedule](#) • [Season overview](#) • [Notre Dame's first rugby ...](#) • [References](#)

First game in Notre Dame Football history // Moments // 125 ... 
125.nd.edu/moments/first-game-in-notre-dame-football-history/ ▾
The first Notre Dame football team. On Nov. 23, 1887, nearly 45 years to the day after Rev. Edward Sorin, C.S.C., arrived in northern Indiana, the University of ...

Images for notre dame football 1887 [Report images](#)



[More images for notre dame football 1887](#)

Notre Dame Football :: UND.COM :: The Official Site of Notre ... 
www.und.com/sports/.../nd-m-fb-a-ros-09.htm... ▾ Notre Dame Fighting Irish ▾
1887 (fall game with Michigan) LE - *Frank Fehr RE - *James Maloney LT - *Patrick Nelson QB - *George Cartier LG - *Edward Sawkins LH - *Joe Cusack C ...

Use this technique to search for information about ND football all the way up to 2016. Just change the year. Of course, I have done most of this for you and as you will see, it is all arranged nicely in this book. But whenever you want to see some additional pictures give this technique a try. If you do not get enough pictures, add the word *pictures* to your search and many more will be shown.

We have already seen the Notre Dame student write-up (Scholastic) of the first great get-together of the two football teams—Michigan and Notre Dame. Without helmets, it actually mattered that the players combed their hair. Now, let's see what Michigan has written about the

first football game between the schools. The Wolverines sure love the fact that they taught Notre Dame how to play football.



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 South Bend they did have an IM sport which was something like football...but not really. Kryk described it this way: "A hundred boys to a side, all scrambling to get a round ball over the opponent's fence by any means. Kick it, toss it; slap it – whatever. If you want to get technical it was part soccer and part rugby, but mostly it was pure pandemonium."

Michigan didn't play many actual games against opponents back in those days, but they had an appointment for a Thanksgiving Day trip to Chicago to face against Northwestern (FWIW before the game NW would cancel; U-M ended up playing a Chicago-area prep school). 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. Kryk explains what happened next:

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.

"If matters can be properly adjusted," the student newspaper, The Scholastic, announced on Oct. 29, "a match game of football will take place on the

senior campus about the 27th of next month... The Ann Arbor boys hold the championship of the West, and are such fine players that they will probably contend with the leading Eastern teams next spring for the college championship of the United States. However, there is good material here for a fine team, and the boys will undoubtedly give the Michigan players a hard 'tussle.'"

*Eventually a date was set for a meeting and a game. Brother Paul snagged a copy of a football rule book and shared it with a group of seniors who tried, for the most part unsuccessfully, to get a handle on the new sport. Making a stop on their way to Chicago, Michigan arrived at Notre Dame on Wednesday November 23rd at around 9am. After a 2-hour campus tour the Michigan men tossed on their lily-white uniforms and readied for battle. Here's what happened next, as described in *Natural Enemies*:*

At about 11 o'clock the elevens trotted onto the slop, which we can only assume was somehow marked to proper proportions. Before the players were set to have at it, Brother Paul informed DeHaven that the Notre Dame boys – several of them former classmates of DeHaven's and Harless's – had had trouble playing by the book. Brother Paul then suggested the teams at first be mixed for a brief period of hands-on instruction. The Wolverines agreed.

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

When the Notre Dame players learned just how physical this brand was, they took to it with reckless abandon. Too reckless, actually. One student in attendance recalled DeHaven and company having to caution their eager pupils against playing too violently.

After this brief tutorial, the players segregated into their proper squads and played a 30-minute game. When both sides finished slipping, rolling, and tumbling in the mud, Michigan tallied two touchdowns (worth four points each) to win 8-0. It was said the Notre Dame players, as well as the students in attendance, appreciated the fact the Wolverines did not try to run it up on their disadvantaged hosts.

*So there you have it. Want this and more? Put *Natural Enemies* on your shelf.*

Now, go impress your friends at your respective tailgates / viewing parties on Saturday night.

Chapter 5 The Evolution of Modern Football



Lots of playing before playing became official

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

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

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

Two members of each team remained more or less stationary near the opponent's goal in the hopes of being able to slip over and score

from unguarded positions. Thus, the present day "sleeper" was conceived. The remaining 23 players were divided into groups of 11 and 12. While the 11 "fielders" lined up in their own territory as defenders, the 12 "bulldogs" carried the battle.

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

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

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

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

"Next period Rutgers bucked, or received the ball, hoping to repeat the flying wedge," Herbert's account continues. "But the first time we formed it Big Mike came charging full upon us. It was our turn for surprise. The Princeton battering ram made no attempt to reach the ball but, forerunner of the interference-breaking ends of today, threw himself into our mass play, bursting us apart, and bowing us over. Time and again Rutgers formed the wedge and charged; as often Big Mike broke it up. And finally, on one of these incredible break-ups a

Princeton bulldog with a long accurate, perhaps lucky kick, sent the ball between the posts for the second score.

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

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

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

The University of Notre Dame did not get into the football act until the late 1880's. At this time, the rules of rugby kept changing to accommodate the infatuation for the Americanized style of "football" play that would ultimately become the American game of football.

Walter Camp: the father of American football?



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

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

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

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

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

For those who would like to read more about American College Football and Walter Camp & Knute Rockne's role in helping form the rules, I am pleased to say that less than a month ago, I created a solution. There is a new book available titled: American College Football: The Beginning. If you think you'd like to tracing the roots of American College Football, I think you'll love this book.

This book, however is about Notre Dame and this chapter is the one and only chapter about the origins of football. This book has little to do with pro-football or any other sport.

However, there is no denying that the greatest college football players more often than not eventually found their fortunes in professional football. Pro football can be traced back to the season that Notre Dame brought forth a real football team after a two-year lapse from its last half-Rugby season in 1889. It was 1892 when William "Pudge" Heffelfinger signed a \$500 contract to play for the Allegheny Athletic Association against the Pittsburgh Athletic Club.

Twenty-eight years later, the American Professional Football Association was formed. This league changed its name to the National Football League (NFL) just two years later. Eventually, the NFL became the major league of American football. Originally, just a sport played in Midwestern industrial towns in the United States, professional football eventually became a national phenomenon. We all know this because from August to February, in America, many of us are glued to our TV sets or chained to our seats in some of the most intriguing pro-football stadiums in America.

Rules and Penalties

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

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

Early rugby rules were the default. The field size was rugby style at 140 yards by 70 yards v 120 X 53 1/3 (including end zones) in today's football game. There was plenty of room to huff and puff and

almost get lost. There were no breaks per se for long periods. Instead of fifteen minute quarters, the game was more like Rugby and Soccer with 45 minute halves played continuously.

In 1873 to put some order to the game, Columbia, Princeton, Rutgers, and Yale got together in a hotel in New York City and wrote down the first set of intercollegiate football rules. They changed a few things along the way; but the end product was a much more standard way of playing football games. Rather than use the home team's rules, all teams then were able to play by the same rules

Harvard did not to comply with rules

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

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

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

The first game was played with a round ball using what were known as the "Boston" rules (Harvard). The next day, the teams played using the McGill rules, which included McGill's oval ball which was much like an American football, and it featured the ability to pick up the ball and run with it. Harvard enjoyed this experience especially the idea of "the try" which had not been used in American football.

Eventually, the try evolved into the American idea of a touchdown and points were given when a try was successful.

Not all the rules lasted the duration and some were very strange by today's standards. One of the most perplexing rules was that a man could run with the ball only while an opponent chose to pursue him. When a tackler abandoned the ball-carrier, the latter had to stop, and was forced to kick, pass or even throw away what was called "his burden."

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

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

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

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

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

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

game and the following year he played in the game as a Yale Bulldog.

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

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

Having eleven players instead of fifteen aided in opening the game and it emphasized speed over strength. When Camp attended in 1878, this motion was rejected but it passed in the 1880 meeting. The line of scrimmage and the snap from center to the quarterback also passed in 1880. Originally the snap occurred by a kick from the center, but this was later modified so the ball would be snapped with the hands either as a pass back (long snap) or a direct snap from the center.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Though *offsides* is a penalty infraction today, *offsides* in the 1880's in rugby was very much the same as *offsides* in soccer. The prohibition of blocking in a rugby game is in fact because of the game's strict enforcement of its *offsides* rule. Similar to soccer, this rule prohibits any player on the team with possession of the ball to loiter between the ball and the goal. Blocking continues as a basic element of modern American football, with many complex schemes having been developed and implemented over the years, including zone blocking and pass blocking.

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

With many rule changes as noted, as American style rugby became more defined as American football, more and more colleges adopted

football as part of their sports programs. Most of the schools were from the Eastern US. It was not until 1879 that the University of Michigan became the first school west of Pennsylvania to establish a bona-fide American-style college football team.

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

The first night time game

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

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

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

Mansfield and Wyoming Seminary are thus enshrined in football history as having played in the first night game ever in "college football." History and football buffs get together once a year to

celebrate the game in what they call "Fabulous 1890's Weekend." This historic game is reenacted exactly as it occurred play by play just as the actual game is recorded in history. Fans who watch the game are sometimes known to correct players (actually actors) when they deviate from the original scripted plays. Now, that shows both a love of the game and a love of history.

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

More football history was recorded when Army played Navy in 1893. In this game, we have the first documented use of a football helmet by a player in a game. Joseph M. Reeves had been kicked in the head in a prior football game. He was warned by his doctor that he risked death if he continued to play football. We all know how tough the Midshipmen and Black Nights (Cadets) are regardless of who they may be playing. Rather than end his football playing days prematurely, Reeves discussed his need with a shoemaker in Annapolis who crafted a leather helmet for the player to wear for the rest of the season.

Football conferences

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

The forward pass

None of Camp's rules for American Football included the most innovative notion of them all – the forward pass. Many believe that the first forward pass in football occurred on October 26, 1895 in a game between Georgia and North Carolina. Out of desperation, the

ball was thrown by the North Carolina back Joel Whitaker instead of having been punted. George Stephens, a teammate caught the ball.

Despite what most may think or surmise, it was Camp again when he was a player at Yale, who executed the first game-time forward pass for a touchdown. During the Yale-Princeton game, while Camp was being tackled, he threw a football forward to Yale's Oliver Thompson, who sprinted to a touchdown. The Princeton Tigers naturally protested and there appeared to be no precedent for a referee decision. Like many things in football including a game-beginning coin-toss, the referee in this instance tossed a coin, and then he made his decision to allow the touchdown.

Hidden ball trick

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

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

The end of college football?

Football was never a game for the light of heart. You had to be tough physically and tough mentally to compete. Way back in 1906, for example complaints were many about the violence in American Football. It got so bad that universities on the West Coast, led by California and Stanford, replaced the sport with rugby union. At the time, the future of American college football, a very popular sport enjoyed by fans nationwide was in doubt. The schools that eliminated football and replaced it with rugby union believed

football would be gone and rugby union would eventually be adopted nationwide.

Soon other schools followed this travesty and made the switch. Eventually, due to the perception that West Coast football was an inferior game played by inferior men when compared to the rough and tumble East Coast, manhood prevailed in the West over the inclination to make the game mild. The many tough East Coast and Midwest teams had shrugged off the loss of the few teams out West and they had continued to play American style football.

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

The famous Stanford and California game continued as rugby. To make it seem important. The winner was invited by the British Columbia Rugby Union to a tournament in Vancouver over the Christmas holidays. The winner of that tournament was rewarded with the Cooper Keith Trophy. Nobody in America cared. Eventually the West Coast came back to football.

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

What is certified, however, is that on October 9, 1905, the President held a meeting of football representatives from Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. The topic was eliminating and reducing injuries and the President according to the record, never threatened to ban football. The fact is that Roosevelt lacked the authority to abolish football but more importantly, he was a big fan and wanted the game to continue. The little Roosevelts also loved the sport and were playing football at the college and secondary levels at the time.

Meanwhile, there were more rule changes such as the notion of reducing the number of scrimmage plays to earn a first down from

four to three in an attempt to reduce injuries. The LA Times reported an increase in punts in an experimental game and thus considered the game much safer than regular play. Football lovers did not accept the new rule because it was not "conducive to the sport."

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

The forward pass is legalized

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

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

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

As noted previously, great coaches emerged in the ranks who took advantage of these sweeping changes. Amos Alonzo Stagg, for example, introduced such innovations as the huddle, the tackling dummy, and the pre-snap shift. Other coaches, such as Pop Warner

and Notre Dame's Knute Rockne, introduced new strategies that still remain part of the game.

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

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

Scoring rules also changed which brought the scoring into the modern era. For example, field goals were lowered from five to three

points in 1909 and touchdowns were raised from four to six points in 1912.



Jim Thorpe, Circa 1915

Star Players

Star players emerged in both the collegiate and professional ranks including Jim Thorpe, Red Grange, and Bronko Nagurski and other stars. These three in particular were able to move from college to the fledgling NFL and they helped turn it

into a successful league. Notable sportswriter Grantland Rice helped popularize the sport of football with his poetic descriptions of games and colorful nicknames for the game's biggest players, including Notre Dame's "Four Horsemen" backfield and Fordham University's linemen, known as the "Seven Blocks of Granite".



The Heisman

Jay Berwanger (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 6 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.

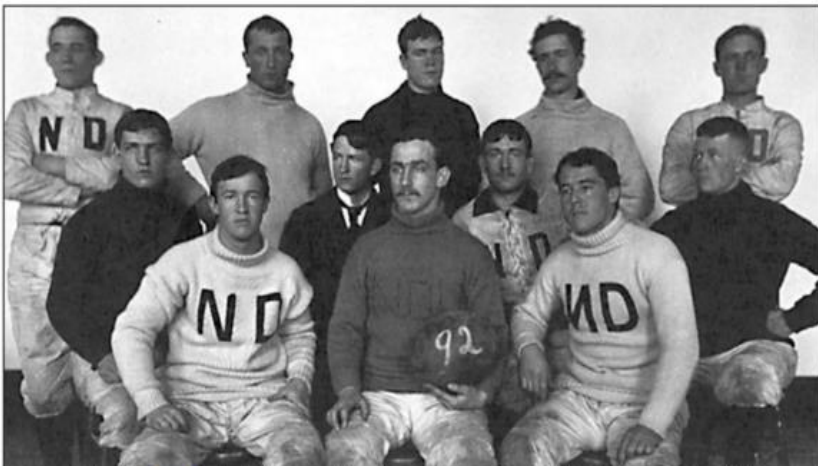
Lars K. Rockne had a new baby named Knute. We Notre Dame fans well know that Notre Dame Stadium of today is the "House that Rockne Built." Well, the house building actually began in Norway.

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.



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 7 Notre Dame Football – The Second Seven Years

Finally, both 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

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.

H.G. Hadden ND Coach # 2

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.

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).

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

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.

Chapter 8 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

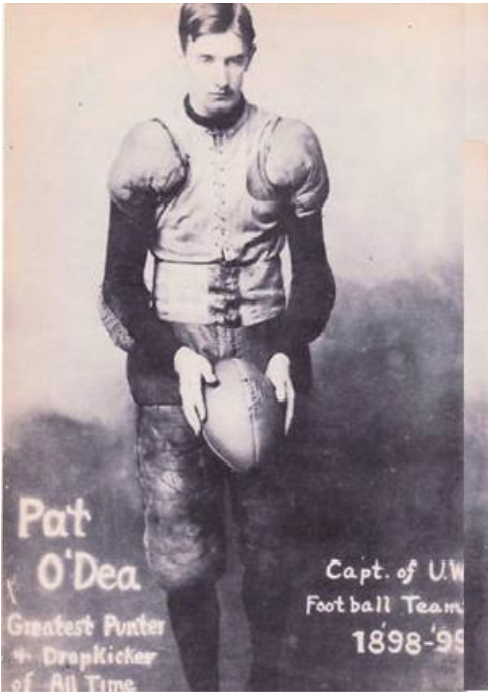


1903 Notre Dame football team- The Shutout Season

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).



ND Coach Pat O'Dea 1900 & 1901

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

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

1906-07 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.

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.

There was already concern that every man was not good enough to start every football game for Notre Dame. And so, in the December 2006 Scholastic, this tribute was written:

T h e S c r u b s .

T H E crowd cheers loud for the regulars,
 Who have made the Varsity team,
 For the men who have swept the football field
 And stood in the limelight's gleam,

But little it knows of the silent men,
Of the lads who take the rubs,
Who work their best to advance the team—
Hurrah! for the Varsity scrubs!

The regular man feels well repaid,
When he hears the voices true
Of a thousand lusty college lads,
Who cheer for the Gold and Blue
But they show a love that is deep at heart,
The men who fight like cubs,
When there's no return. And it's ours to shout,
"Hurrah! for the Varsity scrubs."

T. E. B.

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).

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 claims 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. Nobody had taken the time to capture the full story of how football not only got its beginning with the kindness of the Michigan "lads," but also to how the sport had grown in prestige to the 1908 season. Joseph T. Lantry made up for that oversight in this wonderful short piece.

Football History of Notre Dame

From the ND Scholastic Student Newspaper, December 1908 by Joseph T. Lantry

On a November day in 1887, when the husky pigskin warriors of Notre Dame were still in swaddlings, the Michigan University Football Team came to play the local Varsity. This was the first contest in which Notre Dame ever engaged. At that time, the oval was just being introduced into the University. It was necessary for the men from Ann Arbor to play a preliminary game in order to show the local men the style of game. In this preliminary game, the players formed two teams irrespective- of their colleges. This taste of real action which the home men received, seemed to round them into shape, for they held Michigan to an 8-0 score. That same year two games were played between these same colleges. Michigan won both battles, though it is related that the referee won the second contest for the Ann Arbor men.

The following year but one game was played. The Harvard school of Chicago was the opponent of our Varsity in a mediocre contest. In 1889 Notre Dame played its first football game on a foreign field against Northwestern University at Evanston. Our boys came home with a victory and many battered heads. Cartier, Coady and Prudhomme were the stars for the Hoosiers. In 1892 only one game was played, a tie with Hillsdale on Thanksgiving day. The punting of Quinlan averted a defeat for the Varsity. In 1893 football received a new impetus by the scheduling of more games. Notre Dame succeeded in winning" every contest. Every season since then the Varsity has had a heavy schedule.

The real founder of football at Notre Dame was Frank E. Hering. The team that he built up in 1895 was the one that placed Notre Dame among the leaders in Western athletics. Our noted fighting spirit was born under his captaincy. Acting both as captain and coach he developed such players as Mullen, Farley, Eggeman and Harley. Upon his retirement, he was succeeded as coach by McWeeney in 1899. This same true-blue McWeeney still helps to trim up winning teams to battle for the Gold and Blue.

In 1900, a red-headed candidate reported to Coach O'Dea on Cartier Field. Not many days passed before the local critics began to take notice of his work on the scrubs. He was a demon at ploughing through the line, a fierce tackier and a consistent punter. In addition, he had the one essential of a great player, brains. The Ann Arbor game as well as the Beloit game elicited high comment upon his work. The following fall the reputation of Red Salmon

spread throughout the football world. Every opponent feared and respected him. Against Yost's crack team at Toledo he carried the ball consistently and persistently by short line-bucks from Notre Dame's five-yard line to Michigan's three-yard line. The account of every contest from that time to the end of his career is studded with the name of "the mighty Salmon."

When Salmon's term was finished the glory of Notre Dame somewhat declined, due no doubt to the fact that the previous teams were built so closely around that column of strength. After two seasons during which the teams representing the college played fair football, Tom Barry was selected as coach. His achievement needs no comment. Under his skillful direction, Notre Dame soon reasserted herself in the list of Western rivals. This year's work under Place [Victor M.] seems only to indicate the victories the future has in store for Alma Mater.

But in the years to come when the bonfires will light up the Brownson campus and the echoes of triumph make the old place tremble, and the men who are to come will celebrate their championship victories over Michigan, Wisconsin and Chicago, we trust that some of the old-timers at least may recall the memory of the earlier heroes, of a Hering, a Farley, a McWeeney and a Salmon, the men who first set the example of N. D.; prowess, and whose interest is still vested in the perpetuation of the honor and success of the Gold and Blue, A Pleasant Race.

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.

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).

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 *plac'd 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.

1911-12 John L Marks Coach # 12

The 1911 Notre Dame coach was John L. Marks 6-0-2, who 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.

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.

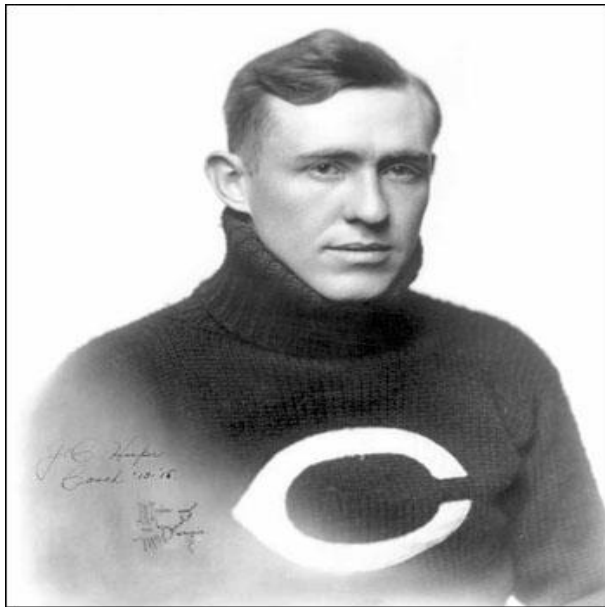
The Short Story of a Successful Season.

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 9 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.

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

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

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

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

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

Jesse Harper was the right man at the right time for Notre Dame. He was never heralded like the great coaches of the more modern era but he was as responsible for Notre Dame being on the map as much as anybody else in history. He preceded Knute Rockne but in fact, he was the guy who hired Rockne. He stood in the shadows of many

but he was responsible for much. He brought a lot of God's sunshine to Notre Dame. He brightened the campus with his positive attitude and can-do demeanor.

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

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

Stagg knew how good of a person and how great an athlete Harper was. When Jesse graduated in 1906, Stagg helped make sure he got the head coaching position for Harper, then 22 years old at Alma College in Michigan. He brought the Alma Scots to a winning season in his second year (5-1-1).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

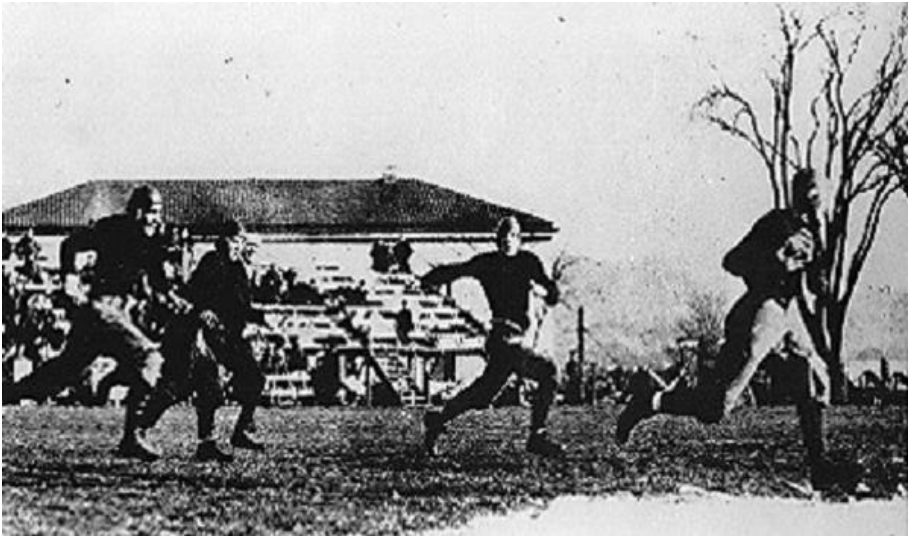
This period also marked the beginning of the rivalry with Army and the continuation of a rivalry with Michigan State. The objective for Harper of course was to gain respect for a regionally successful but small-time Midwestern football program.

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 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

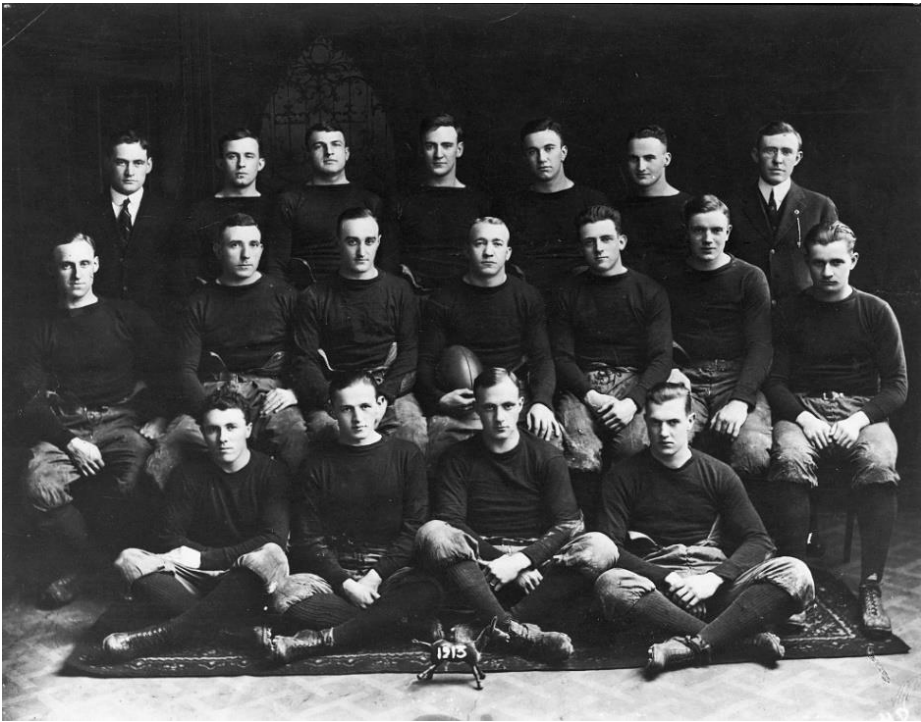
Harper was a diplomat. Through his intelligence and persistence, he eventually broke the Big Ten ice. He added Wisconsin to the 1917 schedule, followed by Purdue in 1918. Indiana and Northwestern were added to the slate by 1920. While Notre Dame's cache of great teams to play was growing under Harper, 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 Penns3dvania this 3^ear, and b}' larger scores than the Varsity beat them, but all three of Penn's previous losses were sustained in the enemy's territory and to teams unwearied by weary travel. Besides this, Penn had determined to make good for its previous poor record in its first big game a t home. Furthermore, it was Penn Day—the big day - for their college. But notwithstanding all Penn's incentive to fight, the Varsity went in to win, and succeeded in doing so, the final count being 14 to 0.

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

BILLY MORICE AT LEAST SEES OVER THE ALLEGHENIES

Billy Morice says that the best quarterback in America is Dorais, the Notre Dame pilot. Morice was a visitor at Franklin Field the other afternoon, and he boosted the little Notre Dame lad to the skies. 'He's the best quarterback in the country,' said Morice. 'I go all over the country officiating, and I will say that he is the king of them all this season. He can toss that pass like a baseball. He throws it, he flings it right at the man; he does not lob it so that while a fellow is waiting to get it, someone else comes along and nails him. He runs with the ball in front of him like Fred Geig, the

Swarthmore coach did when he played. That enables him to shift it to either arm, and-use the other arm to straight-arm off a 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.

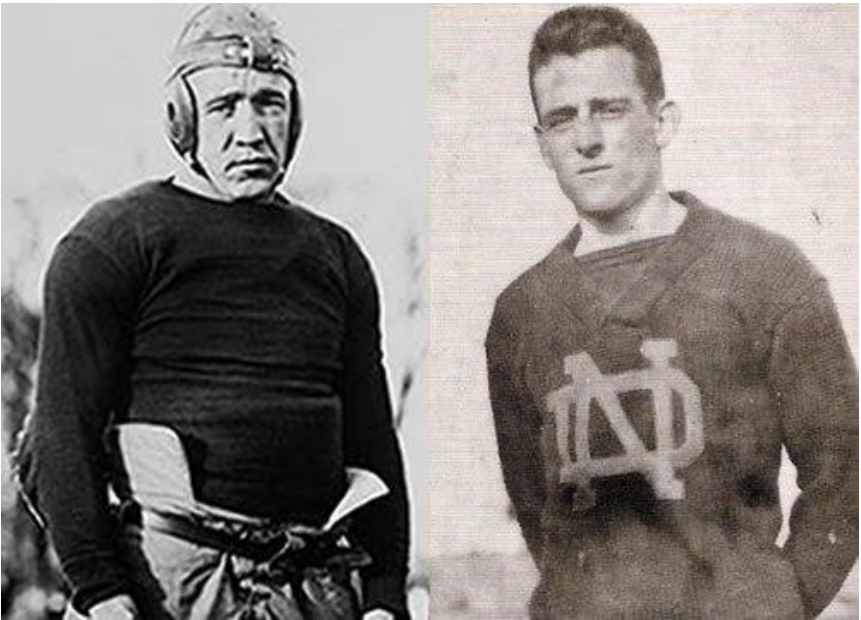
Dorais was particularly brilliant in his open field running in the Penn game, returning punts from twenty to thirty-five yards regularly, and once he caught the ball on the thirty-yard line and carried it the length of the field—dodging practically every member of the Penn team—for a touchdown, only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



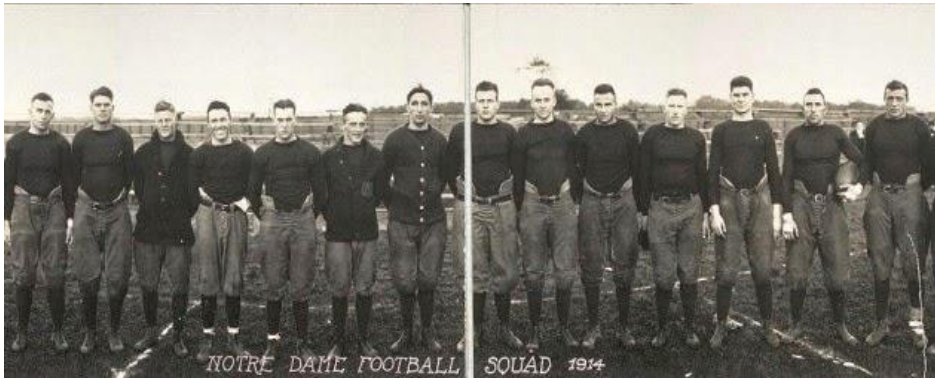
Knute Rockne, End & Gus Dorais, QB for Jesse Harper 1913

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.



Harper saw his job as improving the team schedule even if the games were played away, and even if by luck, the opposition would prevail. In his five seasons at Notre Dame from 1913-17, his teams played only 16 games at home and 24 on the road.

What a great coach! Despite the major disadvantage of so many away games, his teams compiled a 34-5-1 (.863) record. Nobody would ask their team to travel all the time if it were not necessary. Harper saved Notre Dame's football program so that coaches such as Knute Rockne, who he hired, had a foundation upon which to build a winning tradition. I like what Jesse Claire Harper did for Notre Dame.

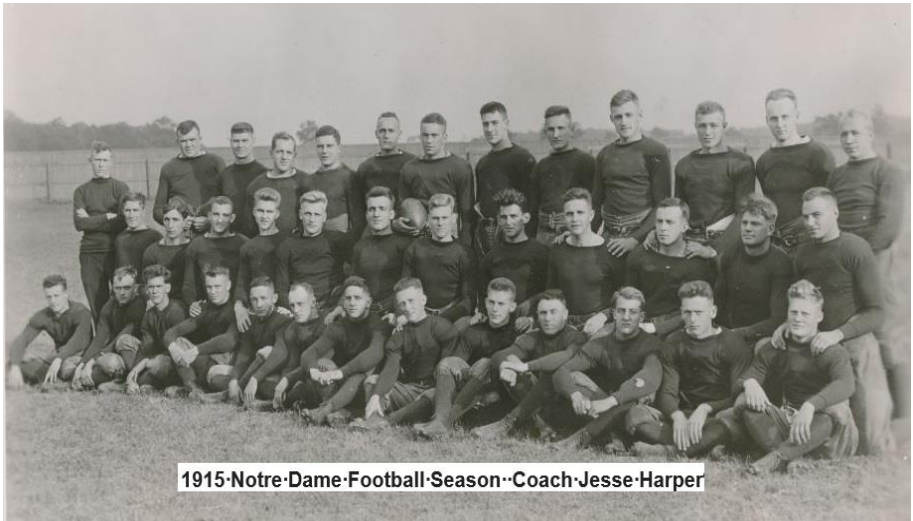
As many noted at the time, if Notre Dame were to improve its scheduling lot, it had to adopt the Islamic tenet of "If the mountain will not come to Muhammad, then Muhammad must go to the mountain." Notre Dame was in the proverbial no-man's land when Harper arrived. "Going to the mountain," was how Notre Dame found its national identity under Jesse Harper.

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)



1915-Notre-Dame-Football-Season-Coach-Jesse-Harper

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.

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

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

The Army Series against Notre Dame would itself make a great book and probably a better movie. We share some of the facts in this chapter.



Coach Jesse Harper & ND Player Knute Rockne

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. Sometimes, since the Black Knights had such a small stadium, their home field was often a larger "neutral" east coast venue such as Yankee Stadium, the Polo Grounds and even Shea Stadium when it was built.

Ironically, the first ND home game in South Bend against Army was in 1947. After delivering two major "home thumpings" in a row at Yankee Stadium L (0-59) and L (0-48) to Notre Dame in 1944 and

1945 right near the end of the war when Army had its best teams, The Black Knights tied the Irish in 1946 T (0-0).

Army went to Notre Dame for the first time ever, after 33 years of "home" play. The teams played every year during this period except for 1918. As we know, World War I ended November 11, 1918. When Army came to Notre Dame in 1947, they were defeated W (27-7).

After the ND home win, following the 1947 season, the teams did not play during what has been called a ten-year hiatus. It has been reported that Army made the decision to end the annual series after 1947 because they felt it was becoming too one-sided in favor of the Fighting Irish. The last game of the series was played in South Bend for the first time and the Fighting Irish prevailed, W (27-7).

This is out of sequence for the book, but I think you will enjoy this 1947 story from Scholastic, Notre Dame's Student Magazine. If you like this one paragraph, you may take the link to this issue of Scholastic <http://archives.nd.edu/Football/Football-1947s.pdf> for it is without a doubt, a fine book, and a free book for those who want to read more about the fantastic Fighting Irish in their 1947 Championship Season. You may even like it more than this book—well, maybe equally. Here is one paragraph written by Jim Butz, more than likely a 1947 Notre Dame Student, about one game – Army from 1947:

"The death knell for Army hopes was sounded in the opening 18 seconds by Terence Patrick Brannan who gathered in Mackmull's kickoff on his five-yard line with a fine over-the-shoulder catch and threaded his way 95 yards down the west sidelines to score. Brennan was aided by some fine blocks thrown by Jim Martin, George Connor, Bill Fischer, and Bill Walsh, but he used each block skillfully and picked his way through until he reached his 25 from where he simply out-ran everyone. Earley added the seventh point as the crowd went delirious with joy at the prospect of an Irish scoring orgy."

The Army / ND series was picked up again in 1957 and has been off and on ever since with both teams taking turns for home game games. Notre Dame is playing Army again this fall (2016) on November 12, in San Antonio Texas.

Now, let us move on with the Jesse Harper Notre Dame / Army Saga continuing from 1913. Historians and Notre Dame fans admire Harper for helping Knute Rockne make Notre Dame Stadium the House that Rockne built. The hard facts suggest that without a sharp guy like Harper coming to Notre Dame when he did, Rockne would have had few materials to build the House.

Harper was relentless and there was no email or text messaging back then. So, he did what he could to communicate with the fine teams that he hoped would play the Fighting Irish – home or away. He went on a letter-writing campaign. For 1913, he received positive responses from Army, Penn State, Texas, South Dakota, Ohio Northern, Christian Brothers of St. Louis and Alma, where he had formerly coached. From the eyes of many, Harper had already succeeded.

Let's go back again to Army as this 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. 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.

Notre Dame played baseball games at West Virginia, Penn State, Mount St. Mary's, Catholic University, Seton Hall, Brown, Deerfield Academy, Tufts and Vermont before returning home. Harper would reach these schools after he took over as baseball coach while on the road to book some football games. He was the Notre Dame Head Coach in football, basketball and baseball from 1913-17. He was the baseball coach and he used his baseball contacts to help Notre Dame in all ways.

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.

"My letter to West Point," Harper recalled later, according to author Frank Maggio, "arrived at a time when the Army-Yale series ended somewhat abruptly. And the Cadets had an open date." Army agreed to a Nov. 1, 1913 game, and offered Harper the \$600 revenue guarantee but as noted upped the ante to \$1000.00



Article as it looked in the Chicago Tribune – High on Jesse Harper

By the way, Frank Maggio in 2007 wrote a great book about Jesse Harper. Like me, Maggio is impressed with the historical Jesse Claire Harper. His book has a long title: Notre Dame and the Game that Changed Football: How Jesse Harper Made the Forward Pass a Weapon and Knute Rockne a Legend.

Though desperately wanting to close the deal for the game, Harper could not afford to lose money on the travel arrangements. The coach knew that one thing that gave him an edge in getting the \$1000.00. A number of Eastern college teams had already refused to play Army in light of its admissions policy.

West Point used its own set of rules for recruiting and did not pay attention to the NCAA. After all they were the US Army and the US was in a long war that was just ending. Army recruited football

players who had exhausted their eligibility at another college, and to help soldier morale, West Point gave them three more years of varsity play.

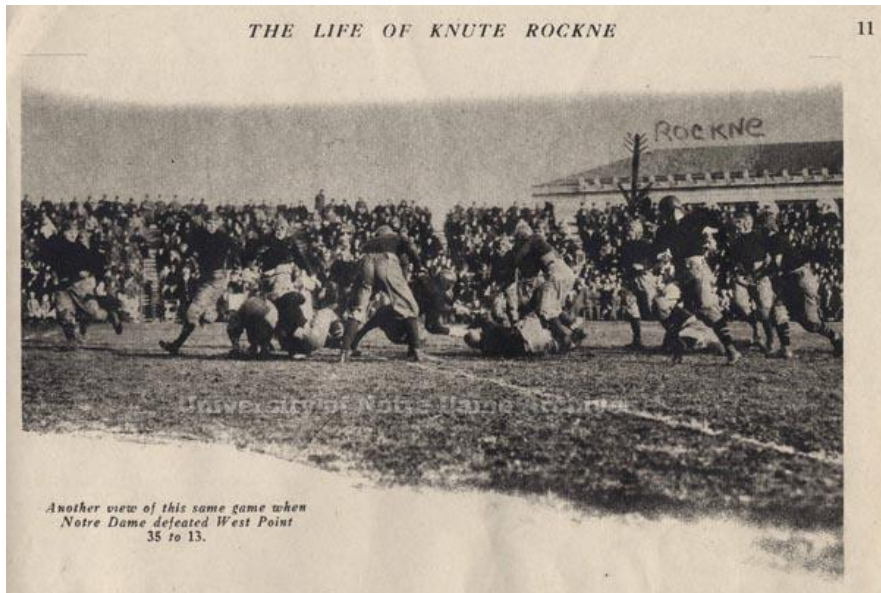
Academy officials said they needed the extra time to train officers to fight in wars. Here is an outrageous example: Army halfback Elmer Oliphant played three years at Purdue before graduating in 1914. He was a two-time, first-team All-American at West Point in 1916-1917, and entered the College Football 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!

Harper had a lot of jobs at ND as discussed. As the Athletic Director, the budget was very close to his heart. ND was so strapped for cash that the team had to cover its own "food expenses" when it traveled to Army. They ate sandwiches that were prepared in the Notre Dame campus dining hall.

Additionally, the boys had to carry their own equipment. Things were tough? How tough? It is reported that only fourteen pair of football shoes were made available to 18 Notre Dame players. Many of the substitutes in the two-way (Defense & Offense) player "rotation," had to use the shoes that were on the feet of the players coming out of the game. There was no guarantee that the shoes would fit.

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.

News from the June 1918 Issue of Scholastic

—The Faculty Board of Athletic Control recently gave a dinner to Coach Jesse C. Harper, who has resigned and intends to retire to his stock farm in Kansas. Coach Harper was presented with a monogram shield, and the board voted to give him the right to wear the Notre Dame-Monogram and elected him a member of the Notre Dame Monogram Club. Father Cavanaugh made the only farewell address at the dinner, presenting the monogram and lauding the famous coach, whose work may be judged by the splendid results he has obtained for Notre Dame teams during his five years as coach. Mr. Harper responded with a short talk in which he expressed his gratitude to Notre Dame, and stated that there was no honor in the country which he would appreciate more than the right to wear the N. D. Those present at the dinner, which was held in the Infirmary dining room, were the Faculty Board of Athletic control—Fathers Quinlan, T. Burke, Maguire, Crumley, Professors Farrell, Benitz, and Coach Rockne, Harper's old running-mate, and Fathers Cavanaugh, Schumacher and J. Burke, representing the administrative body of the University.

Just after their return from the Michigan [baseball] games, the baseball team presented Harper with a suitcase, as a testimonial of their gratitude to "the coach that-produced one of the best teams that Notre Dame had "seen in years."

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. You may recall that Mr. Harper was not only the football coach; but also, the head basketball coach, and the head baseball coach of the University. Not only that but he was 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 10 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?

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

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

By Dan Scofield, Analyst
Oct 2, 2009

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

"The 'Swede'

This story begins in a municipality of Voors, Norway, a quiet village surrounded by snow-cap mountains, cedar forests, and rivers flowing through valleys.

It is here where a young boy, Knute Rockne, was brought into the world on the evening of March 4th, 1888.

A mere five months later, the Rockne family made their way across seas to begin a new life in the bustling city of Chicago. Here, young Knute was introduced to the game of American Football on the neighborhood streets.

Growing up, Knute had a variety of interests—chemistry being a large one.

With his chemistry books and labs in hand, the Norwegian hopped on a train heading to South Bend, Ind. He would spend the next four years of his life at the University of Notre Dame.

He found his way around campus and soon walked into the office of polymer chemist Julis Arthur Nieuwland. Trying to make his name in the world of chemistry, Rockne took the position of laboratory assistant to the famous chemist himself.

At the time Rockne attended the university, students were required to participate in a sport. With experience in the game from his high school days at North West Division High, where he played end, it was an easy choice for the underclassman.

1910 marked one of the few times of failure during his life. He was cut from the team for being undersized.

It was one of the turning points in his life, as the man never gave up. He used this rejection as a form of motivation, and from 1911 to 1914, he played left-end for the Fighting Irish.

Rockne left the university w/ an undefeated playing record, 22-0-2.

The Legend Begins

A year after graduation marked the beginning of the greatest coaching career in the history of college football.

Jesse Harper, whom Rockne played for the previous season, hired him onto the staff as an assistant coach.

The two coaches were seemingly opposite of each other—Harper was more mild-mannered while Rockne had a different attitude than anyone before his time.

Warnings were not a word in his vocabulary book. He believed players would begin to think warnings did not mean much.

Instead, full punishment was given out on the first offense.

Off the field, Rockne became a favorite around campus. Players were soon coming to Rockne's office instead of Harper's with personal problems because of the close relationships the players had developed so quickly with their new "peer" coach.

After a 28-0 defeat, the first Irish loss in four seasons, Harper decided to make a change. He knew Rockne had a football mind like no other, and he used that to the team's advantage.

Before a 1916 game against Wabash, Rockne was asked to fill in for the ill coach. This marked the first time one of Rockne's famous, fiery pep talks echoed throughout the campus. He ended the emotional talk with, "Now go out there and crucify them!"

Notre Dame beat Wabash that day, 60-0.

1918-1930—The Legend Himself

At the end of 1917, Harper called "The Swede" into his office. He gave him the news that he wasn't going to be able to coach the team the next year, and named Knute as his successor.

At 30 years old, Knute Rockne stood on the sidelines of Notre Dame Stadium, clipboard in hand and dressed in full uniform, as the head football coach of the Fighting Irish.

On his first day on the job, he made his mindset known—and loud:

"Win or lose, I'm running this team. Nobody else has anything to say about its make-up, it's plans, it's type of play. It's my show. If I flop, let 'em pan me. If we're a hit, let 'em say anything they want. I worked hard around here as an assistant for many years, and seldom saw my name in print. Well, all I want now is the truth".

From day one, the legend began his quest for truth and never looked back.

During his 13-year career, Rockne posted a record of 105 wins, 12 losses, and five ties. He led the Irish to five seasons of undefeated football with zero ties.

Six of those victories won Notre Dame national championships.

His career record gives him the title as college football's all-time winning percentage leader at 88.1 percent.

The Coached Legends

Throughout his career, he coached players and turned some into legends themselves.

Despite no previous football experience, Rockne recruited George "The Gipper" Gipp to play for his team in 1916.

He finished his career with 83 touchdowns and never let a single pass be completed in his protective zone defense. During his four-year career for the Irish, he lifted the program to fame and notoriety.

Unfortunately, Gipp's career was cut short after contracting a serious strep infection in a game against Illinois. He died a few weeks later on December 19th, 1920.

In a game that seemed almost un-winnable for his injury-decimated team, Rockne delivered one of the most famous speeches in all of sports, "Win One for the Gipper."

Rockne told his team: "The day before he died George Gipp asked me to wait until the situation seemed hopeless—then ask a Notre Dame team to go out and beat Army for him. This is the day, and you are the team."

"One-Play-O'Brien's" scored the winning touchdown as the Irish defeated Army, W (12-6).

Other legends followed in the footsteps of The Gipper.

Don Miller, Jim Crowley, Elmer Layden, and Harry Stuhldreher possibly made the greatest mark during Rockne's time at Notre Dame.

After the "Four Horsemen" led a 13-7 upset win over an elite Army team, Grantland Rice put pen to paper and published some of the most famous journalism lines in college football history:

"Outlined against a blue-gray October sky, the Four Horsemen rode again. In dramatic lore their names are Death, Destruction, Pestilence, and Famine. But those are aliases. Their real names are: Stuhldreher, Crowley, Miller and Layden. They formed the crest of the South Bend cyclone before which another fighting Army team was swept over the precipice at the Polo Grounds this afternoon as 55,000 spectators peered down upon the bewildering panorama spread out upon the green plain below."

1918 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne

Jesse Harper scheduled the 1918 games after he had hired Notre Dame's new coach Knute Rockne. Rockne's first team won its first game against Case in Cleveland Ohio W (26-6). It won its second game against Wabash in Crafordsville, Indiana W (67-7). In the third game against Great Lakes Navy, ND managed a tie T 7-7). Following this game Rockne suffered his first loss as coach of Notre Dame, L (7-13) against Michigan Agricultural. The team bounced back for its third win against Purdue in West Lafayette, IN W (26-6), Coach Rockne's first team finished the 1918 season with a tie against Nebraska in Nebraska Field, Lincoln, Nebraska. The 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

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.

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

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

1920 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne

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

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

The Fighting Irish then played Valparaiso at home W (28-3) and followed this up with a road trip to West Point to play Army W (27-

17) Purdue was next at home W (28-0) followed by Indiana in Indianapolis W (13-10) From this, Irish went to Evanston, Illinois to play Northwestern W (33-7). Notre Dame then travelled to East Lansing Michigan to play rival Michigan Agricultural W (25-0 to finish another season undefeated and untied.

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

The Kelly's always celebrate February 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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Notre Dame's Four Horsemen Hamming it UP!

Notre Dame played six road games in 1924. The first was against Army on October 18 at the Polo Grounds before 55,000 people. The next away game was a week later at Princeton. With 40,000 fans watching, Notre Dame defeated the Tigers 12-0. On November 8, with 28,425 fans on hand, ND defeated Wisconsin at Madison (38-3). On November 22, Notre Dame traveled to Northwestern and before 45,000 fans, the Fighting Irish defeated the Wildcats (13-6).



Autographed Picture of the Four Horsemen of ND

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

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).

After this two-loss season in 1925, Rockne quietly agreed to take the head coaching job at Columbia for \$25,000 - \$15,000 more than his Notre Dame salary. When the agreement went public, much to his embarrassment, he decided to stay at South Bend.

1926 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne

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

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

Knute Rockne's 1927 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team finished at 7-1-1. Based on the difficult caliber of play, it was looked upon as a fine season. Though at the time right after the season, either Illinois or Georgia was most often selected as the 1927 national champion by the selecting bodies despite the fine year had by Notre Dame. The Fighting Irish do have the distinction of retroactively being named as the national champion by one selector, the Houlgate System.

The one loss came against Army L (0-12). The game was played in Yankee Stadium in the Bronx before 65,678 fans. The tie was a home game against Minnesota, T (7-7). There were two wins at Cartier Field, the ND home stadium. They included Coe W (28-7) and Georgia Tech W (26-7). The rest of the winning games were away. At Detroit W (20-0). At Navy in Baltimore W (19-6). At Indiana W (19-6); At Drake Stadium in Des Moines, IA, Drake W (32-0). ND finished its season with a home game played at Soldier Field in Chicago against USC W (7-6)

1928 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne

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. At (5-4) 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 Tech 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.

The five Fighting Irish wins in 1928 came from a mix of home games and away games. At home, Notre Dame prevailed over Loyola W (12-6), and Drake W (32-6). ND won three away games with the first at Soldier Field against Navy W (7-0) with 120,000 in attendance. Following this, there was Penn State W (9-0), and Army W (12-6).

This 5-4 record in 1928 was clearly Coach Rockne's worst record ever. Nonetheless some history was made when Coach Rockne delivered his famous "Gipper Speech" at halftime. Rockne was trying to salvage something from his worst season as a coach at Notre Dame. To inspire the players, he told them the story of the tragic death of the greatest player ever at ND, George Gipp. Rockne could really motivate the troops. After this speech, Notre Dame looked like a different team.

Here's how that one went down in history: On November 10, 1928, when Rockne's Notre Dame team was tied with Army 0-0 at the end of the half, Coach Rockne entered the locker room and he recounted the words that he heard from George Gipp's lips while on his deathbed in 1920:

"I've got to go, Rock. It's all right. I'm not afraid. Some time, Rock, when the team is up against it, when things are going wrong and the breaks are beating the boys, tell them to go in there with all they've got and win just one for the Gipper. I don't know where I'll be then, Rock. But I'll know about it, and I'll be happy."

Rockne delivered this short speech as only he could. It fully inspired the team, which then went out and outscored Army in the second half and won the game 12-6. The phrase "Win one for the Gipper" was infused into the lexicon of American society and was later used as a political slogan by Ronald Reagan, who in 1940 portrayed Gipp in *Knute Rockne, All American*.

Rockne's Irish stormed onto the field in this famous game after the inspirational talk. However, it was Army that scored first in the

second half. But, ND came right back. Jack Chevigny, who got Rockne's halftime message loud and clear then answered with a 1-yard plunge on fourth down, announcing "That's one for the Gipper!" he yelled out as he plowed into the end zone. Or so legend has it.

Notre Dame is a school blessed with many legends and the 1929 Gipper story is just one of them. But, that did not get the game won. After Chevigny's plunge for a TD, ND was still tied 6-6 with Army.

The second legend from this game came when a real speedster from Los Angeles named Johnny O'Brien who had become a track star and held the world record for the 60 yard hurdles got his first chance to play football for Notre Dame. O'Brien was on the football team, but seldom played. He was on the bench for the whole game, until, in an inspired moment, Rockne turned to the fleet Johnny, and with the score 6-6 sent his speedster onto the field. Nice call, there, Rock.

The ball was snapped, the quarterback retreated and threw it in the general vicinity of Johnny O'Brien. Johnny got under the ball caught it and then quite literally, he sprinted as only he could into the end zone for the final 12-6 margin of victory.

Therefore, on this one day that the Irish won one for the Gipper, Johnny O'Brien made that ONE PLAY that ever after labeled him Johnny "One Play" O'Brien.

Notre Dame rebounded the next season (1929) when Rockne was diagnosed with life-threatening phlebitis in his leg, missed some games and at times directed the team from a wheelchair or a cot. The team went 9-0, punctuated by a 13-12 victory over powerful USC, and won the national title. Notre Dame followed up with a 10-0 record and another national championship in 1930 as Rockne regained his health.



Picture to the left: Former Notre Dame Star Jack Chevigny, who scored the winning touchdown in the Irish's famous 1928 "Win one for the Gipper" game against Army, later became Texas' head football coach.

The Story of Cartier Field, Rockne, & Notre Dame Stadium

Every football team needs a place to play. Cartier Field was a stadium in Notre Dame, Indiana. When it was apparent that Notre Dame was keeping football, as played the American way, on its agenda, it adopted Cartier Field as its football spot.

This tradition-rich field hosted the University of Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team from 1900 to 1928. It held just about 30,000 people at its peak. Considering that there were games before 1930 played at Soldier Field, that had actual attendance of 120,000, it was clear that a stadium that could just about hold 30,000 was appropriate for a team that was reaching for the stars if not the heavens.

Notre Dame always had a problem with finances and Jesse Clair Harper's five years helped Notre Dame's sports programs become self-sufficient. However, even Jesse's financial acumen could not squeeze one more person into Cartier Field even when it was clear that twice to four times that number of tickets could be sold per home game.

Moreover, when Coach Rockne was hired by Harper and took over the team, he knew that for the ND program to grow, its stadium needed to grow. This became known as Rockne's dream. The coach worked very hard to achieve his dream. He loved and appreciated

Cartier stadium and would not let it disappear while he was at Notre Dame.

The Cartier stands had to be torn down after the 1928 season to make room for Notre Dame Stadium, which opened in 1930. Notre Dame, while building its new stadium had to play its entire 1929 schedule away from campus. Chicago, ninety miles north of South Bend, promised to help.

And, so, all Notre Dame home games were played at Chicago's huge Soldier Field. Nonetheless the Rockne led team went 9-0 and won the National Championship. At Coach Knute Rockne's insistence, Cartier Field's grass was transplanted into Notre Dame Stadium. Think about that.

For more than 30 years after the football team moved out, Cartier Field remained the home of Notre Dame's baseball and track and field teams. In 1962, as the University was growing and growing and it needed space, the original Cartier Field was replaced by a quadrangle adjoining the Memorial Library, which opened in 1963. Showing the sentimentality for the field, a new facility named Cartier Field was opened east of Notre Dame Stadium.

Since 2008, the Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team has held outdoor practices at the LaBar Football Practice Fields, and indoor practices at Meyo Field in the Loftus Center. Things change, mostly for the good.

By the way, one of the most integral athletic buildings on campus today is the Loftus Center, which serves as an indoor practice facility for several Irish varsity sports (football, track and field, rowing, women's soccer, men's soccer, women's lacrosse, men's lacrosse, baseball and softball). It also hosts competition for the track and field teams and lacrosse teams. The Center also features Meyo Field, a 100-yard FieldTurf field with end zones surrounded by a six-lane track one fifth of a mile long - making it as large as any indoor track in the nation

Cartier Field had originally been named after Warren A. Cartier, an 1887 civil engineering graduate and former member of the football team. He had purchased 10 acres (40,000 m²) and donated it to the University for Establishment of the Field. He also paid for furnishing the lumber required to enclose the Field with fencing and furnished

the lumber required for a grandstand. These human interest stories that get to the heart abound in the Notre Dame archives.

The 1929 Football Review, a publication by Notre Dame officials, included a dedication by Reverend Charles L. O'Donnell, C.S.C., Ph.D., President of The University of Notre Dame. This Dedication commemorates the generosity and the appreciation of the dream of Coach Knute Rockne that ultimately resulted in what the world now refers to as the "House that Rockne Built." Here is the President's dedication:

Thousands of generous donors combined their efforts over the years prior to 1929 to make possible the new Notre Dame stadium, begun in 1929 and scheduled to be opened for the 1930 season.

"Every man who ever wore the Blue and Gold of Notre Dame, every member of the faculty, every member of the coaching staff, every loyal Notre Dame student, every faithful Notre Dame follower has done his share since the founding of the school to make this dream of Coach Rockne's a reality. To the known and unknown heroes who have contributed their bit in bringing about this new house for the warriors of Our Lady we offer our heartfelt thanks, and to these do we dedicate this account of the 1929 team, worthy successors to Notre Dame teams of the past."



Cartier Field in the 1920's

As previously noted, Notre Dame struggled to a 5-4 record in 1928. It was the team's worst mark ever in Knute Rockne's tenure as head coach. In 1929, Notre Dame came roaring back with more fight than ever. During the 1929 season, the Fighting Irish did not lose a single

game and finished up at a perfect 9-0 record. The team could not play at Cartier Stadium because the construction of Notre Dame Stadium was set to begin.

Despite playing all nine games away from South Bend. Notre Dame outscored its opponents, 132-38. The Fighting Irish closed the season with a W (7-0) over Army at Yankee Stadium. In 1929, the Irish were one of four teams to end the season undefeated. Notre Dame finished before Dickinson in the rankings to earn its second national championship. This was the first of two consecutive titles.

1929 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne

Knute Rockne's 1929 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team therefore made up for any losses from the prior year (5-4) and then some. During the season, Coach Knute Rockne fell ill, Tom Lieb, assistant coach in 1929, became in some respects the de facto head coach at times. Lieb helped Rockne's boys throughout the season to achieve their high success.

The team at 9-0, was undefeated and untied and it was selected as the 1929 national champion by Billingsley Report, Board System, Dickinson System, Dunkel System, College Football Researchers Association, Helms Athletic Foundation, National Championship Foundation, Poling System, and Jeff Sagarin's ELO-Chess system. It was not an undisputed all-consensus championship but it was just about as good as it gets. It should have been consensus but various organizations had their favorites.

The season began against Indiana at Indiana W (14-0). The Irish then traveled to Navy at Baltimore Stadium and played before 64,681 in defeating the Midshipmen W (14-7). Notre Dame played all of its home games in 1929 at Soldier Field in Chicago while its stadium was being built.

On October 19, the Fighting Irish prevailed over Wisconsin before 90,000 at Soldier Field W (19-0). Next it was Carnegie tech at Pittsburgh W (7-0) followed by Georgia Tech at Georgia W (26-60). Then, again for a home game, it was off to Soldier Field against Drake before 50,000 fans W (19-7). One week after this dogfight with Drake, the Irish were pushed to the brink again in Chicago.

On November 16, Notre Dame defeated USC in a very close match. As a point of note, in their first three victories against USC from 1926-29, the Trojans had missed all five of their extra points in one-point setbacks. Extra points would again play a role in this game which was played in Chicago's Soldier Field while the stadium was being built.

There was a huge crowd of 112,912 fans who turned out to watch Notre Dame (6-0-0) v USC (6-1-1). Knute Rockne, who had been hospitalized with an infected leg, guided his team from a cot set behind the Notre Dame bench. The score was knotted 6-6 at halftime from both teams having missed their chances at PATs. In the first series of the second half for the Irish, Savoldi took it in from the one-yard line and this time Frank Carideo got the one point extra point after the TD.

This third quarter lead from Savoldi's plunge and Frank Carideo's extra point was all the scoring the Irish would do for the afternoon. The seven-point lead did not last long. On the very next kickoff to the Trojans, USC's Russell Saunders ran the ball back 95 yards for a touchdown. Again, the saga of the extra point trouble overtook the USC kicker and the point after attempt failed. USC had missed again and it would cost them the game as Notre Dame held on to win W (13-1).

In every USC game, there seems to be a last minute threat. The Trojans drove 60 yards to the Notre Dame 29 late in the game, but the Irish held fast and claimed the victory to improve to 7-0, just two games away from clinching No. 1. The official attendance of 112,912 was the most fans to watch an Irish game until 2011, when the Michigan Wolverines first home night game attracted 114,804.

Northwestern was next for the Rockne's Irish in Evanston IL W (26-6). The season closed with a Notre Dame victory over Army at Yankee Stadium, W (7-0).

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:

The 1929 Post Season

Everybody loves to celebrate when things are going good. Instead of a season recap of 1929, let's instead peak into the ND Football post-season victory banquet to find out what the folks in 1929 thought of the 1929 season. The banquet scene captured in this Scholastic article may not be the equivalent of the first Star-Wars cantina bar scene (Movie released on May 25, 1977); but from this great write-up in Scholastic, everybody seemed to be having as good a time as all the misshapen large critters in the Star Wars bar guzzling grog scene in the famous movie.

The 1929 Rockne team was simply phenomenal. ND was a consensus national championship team with 9 wins and zero losses and zero ties. USC, always a tough team kept the margin of victory to one point for a real scare. Rockne's ND won three games by just seven points. There were no blowouts. The Fighting Irish fought for every point and fought for every victory.



The "cantina scene" from Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope (1977).

There were no gimmes on the schedule. Who knows how many close games would have gone the other way if the Rock were not on the sidelines coaching—or coaching from a cot set behind the Notre Dame bench—, offering encouragement to his players and delivering his positive counsel?

From Scholastic, December 1929

This banquet was so good it could have been from Star-Wars!

~~Starwars Cantina Banquet Big Success~~ FOOTBALL BANQUET BIG SUCCESS

Exactly 1,338 customers pushed their way through the portals of the Notre Dame dining halls last Wednesday evening in a fitting testimonial to the "Fighting Irish of 1929.

It was a gala occasion, celebrating the victories of our great National Champs. Speeches were made by Pat Page, Bill Ingram, "Biff" Jones, Judge Walter Steffen, Harvey T. Woodruff, our own Jimmy Phelan, the Very Reverend Charles L. O'Donnell, C. S. C, Governor Harry C. Leslie, of Indiana, Jack Chevigny, Paul Castner and Toastmaster Warren Brown.

Mr. Warren Brown, a gentleman addicted to influenza, and who among other things is Sports Editor of the Chicago Herald and Examiner, acted in the capacity of Toastmaster for the affair.

Perhaps the best liked and most applauded speech of the evening was that presented by Coach Jimmy Phelan, of the undefeated championship Purdue squad. "We take our hats off to the greatest team in America," shouted and growled Phelan, in the meantime doing everything but a handspring from the speaker's table. "And we do not claim any more honors than the Big Ten championship."

It was "Biff" Jones, or sometimes called Captain Lawrence M. Jones, of the U. S. Military Academy, who touched off the sentiment of everyone present. "The record of no team in the country can compare with Notre Dame," said Jones, "in regard to teams defeated in different sections of the country. I, of the Army, salute you."

"Navy Bill" Ingram, of Annapolis, was decisive and sincere in his talk, mentioning, amid a great applause, that "We think more of our relationship with Notre Dame than possibly any other that we have." "Carnegie Tech," said Head Coach Wally Steffen, so-called while sitting on the football bench, but His Honor Judge Walter P. Steffen, while sitting on another bench in Chicago, "is proud of the fact that our scare was not worse than 7 to 0.

"Nowadays a coach can get more reputation by losing to Notre Dame than winning all their games." About this time in the proceedings. Jack Chevigny, in the absence of Tom Lieb, introduced all of the players to the assemblage. Following this procedure, Carideo, Moynihan, Colrick, Cannon, Elder, and Law were awarded a trophy presented by the-Indianapolis Star- for making the mythical "All-Indiana team."

Another award was presented to Jack Elder in the form of a Hollywood autographed football. Harvey T. Woodruff, introduced by Mr. Brown as a member of another good newspaper, was next in line on the speakers' table.

Mr. Woodruff, self-styled a young reporter merely trying to get ahead, told the audience of some of his questions which were unanswerable. Help I Help!

Governor Leslie, a great follower of football, said in the course of his talk that Notre Dame was National Champion as far as Indiana was concerned

1930 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Knute Rockne

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. 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:

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The Notre Dame Scholastic

KAYDETS SINK IN MUDDY GRID UNDER FIGHTING IRISH ATTACK

NOTRE DAME 7, Army 6. And Notre Dame still holds the trail of unbeaten football teams. For the third successive year Notre Dame has taken the measure of the Cadets in this annual grid classic. Playing on the rain-soaked sod of Soldier field, Chicago, the Fighting Irish annexed their eighteenth straight victory.

It was Notre Dame's game from start to finish but not until the last four minutes were the Rockets able to score. On the same play that gave Notre Dame a victory over Northwestern a week before, Marchmont Schwartz galloped 55 yards behind perfect interference for a touchdown. Frank Carideo place-kicked the extra point that won the game.

Army scored on a blocked punt just six plays later. King, left end for the Cadets, leaped in the way of Carideo's punt and fell on the ball behind the Notre Dame goal line. Army sent in Broshous, their drop-kick specialist, to try for the extra point but he was smothered by five Notre Dame linemen before he could get the ball away.

The heavy going made anything but straight football impossible and both teams resorted to punting and watching for fumbles. Carideo gave the Rockets a big advantage with his kicks, averaging 42 yards for 14 punts, and on two occasions kicking more than 65 yards.

Notre Dame's shock troops started the game and outplayed the Cadets during the first quarter. They penetrated to the Army 10-yard line but lacked the launch to score.

In the second quarter the Notre Dame varsity entered the game, and Army substituted a new backfield. All the playing during this quarter was done on the Army half of the field and Notre Dame had the ball on the 12-yard line when the half ended.

Twice during the third quarter the Fighting Irish threatened, but they lost the ball once on a fumble and again on downs. Notre Dame recovered Stecker's fumble on the Army 11-yard line as the quarter ended. Schwartz tossed a lateral to Brill which put the ball on the six, Brill hit guard for two yards, and then Schwartz was stopped on the line of scrimmage. Carideo dropped back to try for a field goal but his kick barely left the ground.

The ball was brought out to the 20-yard line, and after two exchanges of punts the fireworks started. A clever sequence of plays drew the left side of the Army line out of position. A simple off-tackle smash executed to perfection and Schwartz was off for 55 yards and a touchdown. The sloppy grid prevented any side-stepping, Schwartz depending on speed alone, but that was enough. This run of Schwartz's was only a sample of what might have occurred quite frequently had the footing been good.

Army's touchdown was the result of relaxation on the part of the Notre Dame linemen. The Fighting Irish forwards crashed through on the next play so decisively that they atoned in full for their one mistake of the game.

The Cadets' heavy line had a distinct advantage because of the condition of the field but they were outplayed during all four quarters. The West Pointers failed to make a first down in the second half, and two of the three that they made during the first half were the results of penalties against Notre Dame. Carlmark and Messinger, the Army ends, caused many Notre Dame plays to go awry, but they were out of the picture completely when Schwartz was galloping towards their goal line. Stecker was the outstanding Army player and is undoubtedly one of the best defensive backs of the year.

This was the seventeenth game between Notre Dame and West Point and became Notre Dame's twelfth victory. Army has won only four of the contests and one game ended in a scoreless tie. Army's defeat was the first of the season for them and also the first that they have suffered under the regime of their new coach, Major Sasse.

Early the next year in March, Knute Rockne received a lucrative offer to help in the production of a Hollywood movie, "The Spirit of Notre Dame." It would not take him away from coaching per se, and it would more than likely be good for the school. Traveling to Los Angeles on March 31, Rockne was killed when his plane crashed in a pasture near Bazaar, Kansas. Knute Rockne was 43.

Rockne plane crash March 1931

With all the research I accomplished about Jesse Harper and then Knute Rockne, I was actually brought back to this past era as Notre Dame first struggled for its identity in football and then it mastered the game and became champions of the United States, which by the way was the only country playing American style football.

I studied each of Coach Rockne's seasons and I first noticed that the 1929 season had no home games before I realized that Rockne's dream of a Notre Dame Stadium instead of the rag-tag Cartier Stadium was about to happen. All the while, I knew that the beloved coach had passed away for real in a plane crash in 1931 after the 1930 National Championship season—the one season played at Notre Dame Stadium. The one which we are now presenting.

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."

A Review of Knute Rockne's life:

In 1918, that little guy born in Vonn Germany that we discussed earlier in this book, had now grown to be a man. He was living in South Bend, Indiana. His name of course is Knute Rockne, and he came to town to make sure Notre Dame kept playing great football.

Knute Rockne was one of Jesse Harper's players on the Notre Dame team in the famous 1913 season. Rockne signed up for a Notre Dame education almost four years earlier. He had taken a four-year hiatus after dropping out of high school and like many in those times, he worked to survive.

Though he did not graduate from high school because he had a habit of cutting class to practice his track skills, four years later, he was able to enroll at Notre Dame. During those four years, Rockne worked in the Chicago post office as a mail handler and dispatcher. Two of his friends were about to enroll at Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana, and they encouraged him to join them at the Catholic school.

An intelligent and talented student, and much more mature four-years out of high school, Rockne was accepted and worked as a janitor in the chemistry department to help pay his expenses. Soon, he began to play for the football team in 1911 as a fullback and left end. After four years of chemistry and football, he would graduate from the University of Notre Dame magna cum laude in chemistry, one of the toughest majors.

Though Rockne was mortified as a freshman when he was deemed not good enough to make even the scrubs and he was cut from the football team, the Rock kept at it. Along the way, in spring 1914, he broke a few records on the Track Team. The following autumn, he tried football again and made the team. After that, he excelled as a player in football and track at Notre Dame. He was an end but played other positions also. Rockne was an athlete.

In his senior year in 1913, he won All-American honors under Coach Jesse Harper. Rockne spent a lot of time as an older player on the team, working with quarterback Charlie Gus Dorais on various innovative forward pass techniques. The two practiced all the time. During the summer of 1913, both were preparing for their senior year. They practiced the forward pass while working as lifeguards on a beach in Ohio. Rockne had a mission that came directly from coach Harper. He had to learn how to catch the ball with his fingers.

Receivers in football are taught that the ball should not bounce against the arms and chest when a pass is received. They learn quickly that there are too many opportunities for fumbles that way. Moreover, such a catching technique forces a cut in stride and it limits the opportunity to advance during / after the catch. Jesse Harper watched Rockne catch the ball and he knew that "Rock [naturally caught] the ball in his stomach, and I told him he had to learn to catch it with his hands"

Jesse Harper took some issue with those telling the story of the dedication of QB Dorais and End Rockne practicing their passing on the beach. He countered that it was not really passing on the beach. Yes, Harper admitted the two would practice on the beach for hours at a time, running the ball mostly in the sand. This toughened their leg muscles. Though they did toss the ball around a bit on the beach, overall, they perfected their passing act on a turf field nearby. Practicing on the turf helped them not only learn how to pass and catch as a cohesive unit, it also helped to get their timing down pat—just like it would have to be in a game.

With Harper's instruction, Rockne thus patterned himself after a baseball player. Through hard work, he learned how to catch the ball with his fingers. Rockne often repeated the phrase like a litany:

"Mobility, Mobility and change of pace. That's what we need. They're not going to know where we're going or when we get there". Ask the 1913 Army team.

In other words, unlike an outfielder in a baseball game camping out for a fly ball, receivers had to be moving and shaking around the field so the ball could be caught in full stride with open relaxed hands. Willie Mays' breadbasket catch would not do nor would "medicine ball stuff."

Dorais and Rockne worked hard all the time to be the best they could be. They established timing patterns in their pass routes so they knew where the other and the ball would be. They knew if there would be a curl back or a dead stop. Practice makes perfect. Nothing worth having or doing is easy. With the forward pass, itself in such an infancy in football, more than likely, nobody ever saw as many possibilities for passing options as much as Dorais and Rockne. Eventually, the duo believed that there were infinite possibilities. Army in 1913 simply did not see it coming

On Nov. 1, Notre Dame met Army for the first time in West Point, N.Y. Led by head coach Jesse Harper, the Irish debuted the forward pass. Their offensive scheme surprised the Cadets and shocked the sporting world. It helped counteract Army's size advantage. Dorais was almost perfect, completing 14 of 17 attempts to Rockne for 243 yards

Notre Dame literally stunned the much bigger and more experienced Army Cadets with an offense that featured both the expected Notre Dame powerful running game but also their new and innovative long and accurate downfield forward passes from Dorais to Rockne. Dorais was a smaller player but he had a powerful, accurate arm, and Rockne had taught himself how to catch the ball with perfection. This game was the first major contest in which a team used the recently legal forward pass throughout the game so frequently that it secured their victory.

Rockne as a student and student lab technician, and lab mop-up guy, at Notre Dame was educated as a chemist. He graduated in 1914 with an advanced degree in pharmacy, without ever getting a high school diploma. After graduating he was the laboratory assistant to famous polymer chemist Julius Arthur Nieuwland at Notre Dame.

While making a buck in this profession. Rockne helped out with the football team.

Rockne loved football and rejected further work as a chemist after receiving an offer to coach football. Coach Rockne used his chemistry background to come up with the formula to create a great football strategy. Each year, with a new class of recruits and lots of solid veteran players, the coach got to perfect his formula.

Rockne's coach, Jesse Harper stepped down as head football coach after the 1917 season, announcing in 1918 after baseball season was completed. Harper returned to ranching in his home state of Kansas. Jesse also found oil on his ranch. His land was not far from where Knute Rockne's plane crashed in 1931.

Harper was so close and such a friend of Knute's that he accompanied Rockne's body on the train from Kansas back to South Bend, Indiana, for the funeral and burial. The University of Notre Dame immediately asked Harper to fill Rockne's role as athletic director. Harper agreed to help out Notre Dame. He held the position until 1934, when Elmer Layden, one of Rockne's "Four Horsemen" became ready to become head football coach and athletic director.

Rockne was assistant coach; played professional football after graduation

When Rockne finished his college football playing days and graduated magna cum laude in chemistry at Notre Dame in 1914, Jesse Harper hired him as assistant coach, a position he held until he became head coach in 1918. Since the pros played on Sunday, Rockne was able to play professional football.

It will make more sense reading the next few paragraphs if I tell you first about *Peggy Parratt*, admittedly a strange name for a male football legend. George Watson "Peggy" Parratt, was born March 21, 1883; and died January 3, 1959. He was a professional football player and coach when Rockne was a college player. Parratt played

in the "Ohio League" prior to it becoming a part of the National Football League.

Over the years, Parratt played quarterback for the Shelby Blues, Lorain Pros, Massillon Tigers, Massillon All-Stars, Franklin Athletic Club of Cleveland, Akron Indians and the Cleveland Tigers between 1905 and 1916. He was a player, coach, owner, and promoter. Perhaps he was best as a promoter.

His interest in Knute Rockne came in 1914 when Rockne could no longer play college ball. At this time, Parratt changed the name of the Akron Indians to "Parratt's" Indians. With Peggy as player, coach, and owner-manager, the name change was natural. Parratt employed a number of ND players on his team. They got paid and that is why it is called professional compensation. By the end of the 1914 season, the whole left side of Parratt's line were former ND players.

In 1914, while working at Notre Dame, Knute Rockne, as noted, could have been a chemist or full-time pharmacist. He permitted himself to be recruited by Peggy Parrat to play professional football for the Akron "Parrott" Indians. While playing for the Indians, Parratt moved Rockne around and had him playing both end and halfback.

Rockne helped Akron learn to love the forward pass and it worked on several successful plays during their title drive. Rockne eventually wound up in Massillion Ohio, and he was able to team up with his Notre Dame team-mate Dorais.

Rockne's career as a pro player in Massillion Ohio was enhanced with his former team-mate Dorais pitching the pigskin for the professional Massillon Tigers. The two brought the forward pass to professional football from 1915 to 1917 when they led their team, "the Tigers" to the championship in 1915. Rockne "toyed around" with continuing to play professional football during these years before coming back to Notre Dame as a serious head coach. In trivia at the time of "the Rock," the rumor mill noted that Rockne got his worst loss ever as a pro coach. They say he led the "South Bend Jolly Fellows Club" when they lost 40-0 to the Toledo Maroons.

After Rockne took over the head coaching job at Notre Dame that was it for pro-ball, and that was it for big losses.

Knute Rockne is Dead! Long Live Knute Rockne!

As with all of the great coaches with a number of years' credit at Notre Dame, I have chosen to find an article of the times to display as both a reminder of what they were when they arrived and what they were when they left Notre Dame. This was the first time that I have selected an obituary as a closing article in this book as of course it is the first time, and hopefully the only time that a Notre Dame coach's career is interrupted by death. This piece is from the New York Times as written by columnist Robert F. Kelley.

OBITUARY

April 1, 1931

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/bday/0304.html>

Knute Rockne Dies with Seven Others in Mail Plane Dive

Date of Death: March 31, 1931

By ROBERT F. KELLEY

From his days as a player Knute Rockne made his influence felt on the trend of football. As captain of the 1913 Notre Dame team, he figured at end in the most successful exhibition of forward passing the game had seen up to that time; and from that date on the forward pass grew steadily to its present importance in the game.

As a coach, he brought the shift play to its highest state of perfection and made it such an important factor in offensive football that the rules committee finally passed legislation designed to take some of its power away.

That shift development, the back-field hop, was the most important of his contributions to the coaching of the game, but he added others, notably the reshaping of the line. Prior to Rockne, linemen were big men inevitably. Rockne brought the idea of using linemen, particularly guards, in interference [blocking], and demonstrated that the small, fast lineman could

hold his own with the big man and outplay him where the big man was not as fast.

Changed Strategy of Touchdown

He worked for the perfection of a team as a whole and his last two teams won game after game through the successful application of what came to be called "the perfect plays." In these, every individual carried out a part of the blocking, and when no man failed to carry out his job the play often went for a touchdown.

This perfect play did a great deal to wipe away the idea of aiming first for scoring territory and then the score. Rockne always said that every play, if perfectly carried out, would go for a touchdown from wherever it was started. His last two teams usually started their scoring with long runs from scrimmage.

In coaching he tried always for perfection and spent hours in teaching the art of blocking. Simple plays, well executed, were his idea of the way to win football games. He had small use for any so-called trick plays. There were only seven places in a line to send a man with a ball, he said, and there ought not to be many more than seven plays.

Hard work was another of his slogans. "The best thing I ever learned in life," he said last June during a visit to Poughkeepsie for the intercollegiate boat race there, "was that things have to be worked for. A lot of people seem to think there is some sort of magic in making a winning football team. There isn't, but there's plenty of work."

Suddenly Developed the Pass

As a player and captain of the 1913 Notre Dame team, the first to ever beat the Army, Rockne began his shaping of football's destinies by bringing the forward pass suddenly and dramatically into the front of the game. Army that season had scheduled Notre Dame as a "breather" game on its schedule. Only a small crowd turned out, and they stood amazed as Notre Dame defeated Army, 35 to 13. Gus Dorais, now coach at Detroit, threw seventeen passes in that game and thirteen were completed, and a great majority of these went to the short, chunky end, Knute Rockne.

The forward pass had been more or less of a haphazard thing until that time. The success of this Western team with it amazed the football world. Dorais and Rockne remained behind at West Point for a few days after that game to show the Army how it was done. One of the results of that was the famous Pritchard to Merrilat combination of Army teams.

In that first success was an indication of the capacity for taking pains which Rockne owned. That game was the direct result of the Summer before. Dorais and Rockne had obtained vacation jobs together at a mid-West beach and included a football in their baggage. All that Summer they got out on the beach and threw passes. The success against Army was no accident. It had been carefully planned.

Remarkable Record as Coach

As a coach, of course, Rockne's record is one of the most remarkable that any coach of any sport has ever piled up. Nearly all of his teams have been in the front rank of the game, despite the fact that they always played hard schedules. Five of them were undefeated. Taking over the head coach job, after helping instruct in the chemistry department of Notre Dame, in 1918, Rockne had almost immediate success. His 1919 team was undefeated and his 1920 team was one of the greatest that he had.

To the game in general Rockne brought the high development of the backfield shift and a new conception of line play. He never claimed the invention of the shift play. But there can be small argument with the idea that under him Notre Dame's players brought it to its highest perfection.

So, successful were his teams with the shift that three years ago the football rules committee, fearing the offense of the game would overbalance the defense, began ruling against it and this last year finally insisted that a full second, in which an official might count five, must come between the close of the shift and the start of the ball.

Rockne never was reconciled to this and never lost an opportunity to defend his favorite style of play. Legislating against the shift, he said, was like taking the feinting out of boxing and leaving in only the slugging.

Rockne organized coaching schools in which coaches might gather during the off seasons and study the methods of others. He assisted with Summer schools all over the country and in 1928 even conducted one at sea when he chartered a ship and took a party of coaches and athletes to the Olympic Games of that year.

Developed Famous Players

Perhaps his greatest teams came in 1920, 1924, 1929 and 1930. On the first was George Gipp, who was named by Rockne as the greatest player he ever had. The coach told the story of seeing Gipp, who was not trying for the team, throwing a ball and kicking on the campus and of inducing him to join

the squad. Gipp died a few weeks after the close of the 1920 season of a throat infection, with Rockne at his bedside.

The 1924 team was the one of the famous Four Horsemen, Harry Stuhldreher, Jimmy Crowley, Don Miller and Elmer Layden. As a combination, they have not been excelled in modern back fields and they had a great line in front of them, led by the famous Adam Walsh at center, who is now assisting with the coaching at Yale. That team of the Four Horsemen won all over the country, beating Princeton at Princeton with a temperature of 10 above zero, and several weeks later journeying to the Coast to defeat Stanford in a temperature of 70 degrees.

The records and names of the members of the two recent teams are still fresh in memory, Frank Carideo, Marchmont Schwartz, Marty Brill, Joe Savoldi, Bucky O'Connor, Moon Mullins. And the 1930 team came very near to being the best. Northwestern, Army and Southern California were played on successive Saturdays. One Saturday, in Chicago, Army was turned back in ice and cold rain and the following week the highly regarded Southern California team was badly beaten on the Coast.

Provided Coaches for Nation

If there were any doubt of the influence of Rockne on football, the list of head coaches for the past year might remove it. There were, throughout the country, North, South, East and West, twenty-three head coaches of football from Notre Dame without naming the assistants here and there. Notable among them are Walsh and Rip Miller, who has this year been elevated to head coach at Navy.

The mere record of his work fails to bring out for those who did not know him the biting, incisive, clear-cut character and personality of the man. Dramatic in everything he did, even to his death, Rockne became a sort of god to the boys who played for him. A great talker, a keen wit, he had a balanced, sane philosophy of life and a keen knowledge of psychology.

There are numerous instances in the near legends which have sprung up about him of his use of the latter element in dealing with his boys. The year that Army and Navy played in Chicago, in 1926, he went to Chicago to watch the game, confident his strong team would beat Carnegie Tech without too much trouble in his absence. They did not.

Used the Delayed Criticism

The coach returned to South Bend. The next week the team was to play on the Pacific Coast. All week, Rockne coached without mentioning the defeat. The players kept waiting for him to say something. He did not. But when

they boarded the train and opened their baggage, each player found a carefully clipped account of the lost game in his baggage. They won on the Coast.

This year, before the Army game, Rockne sat in the dressing room with his players, waiting for the time to go out on the field. The players sat silently, waiting for him to say something. The minutes ticked off in the quiet room, and finally an official came to tell them to come out. Rockne nodded, stood up and said, "Come on, boys." That was all.

He has given words to the vocabulary of the sport as well, some of which fit exactly the army of people who criticize the players and coaches after a defeat, waiting until the day after to display their wisdom. "Sunday morning coaches" was Rockne's name for this class.

A polished story-teller and a constantly interesting companion, Rockne made friends wherever he went, and was almost as much at home at the colleges he played against on his numerous visits as he was at his own. At these places, he will be greatly missed as a friend.

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 vert 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.

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The Notre Dame Scholastic

ROCKNE FUNERAL IMPRESSIVE

Father O'Donnell In Inspiring Eulogy
Describes Rockne's Character, Ideals

Sad Throings Visit Campus to
Attend Final Services in
Sacred Heart Church.

Sad Throings Visit Campus to Attend Final Services in Sacred Heart Church.

On Wednesday morning, April 1, after the reports of the death of Knute Rockne the day before had been verified, a solemn and grave student body filed into Sacred Heart church to kneel at Mass for the repose of his soul. The Reverend Charles L. O'Donnell, C.S.C, president of the University, sang the Mass that day', and the Reverend John O'Hara, C.S.C, prefect of religion, began the distribution of Communion with the entrance of the celebrant. To a man, the students at the Mass received the sacrament as their spiritual tribute to the man they had last seen the Saturday before.

Students and friends of Knute Rockne packed Sacred Heart church again on Saturday morning, April 4, the day of the funeral, to assist at a Mass sung by the Reverend Francis Wenninger, C.S.C, assisted by Father Thomas Kelly and Father Joseph McAllister. The brothers and priests of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, and nuns of the order from St. Mary's college all received Communion at this Mass, paying a last tribute to Rockne.

Noon found the crowd beginning to assemble for the funeral services. Students who had left on vacations returned; sorrowing admirers of Rockne lined the walks and spread over the quadrangle. Rockne's closest friends, his associates, filed into the church to be with him for the last time, while the great bell in the steeple tolled at short intervals. The balcony of the Administration building was packed with clergymen, faculty members, and newspaper men, and students strained eyes from the roof of the Sorin hall porch.

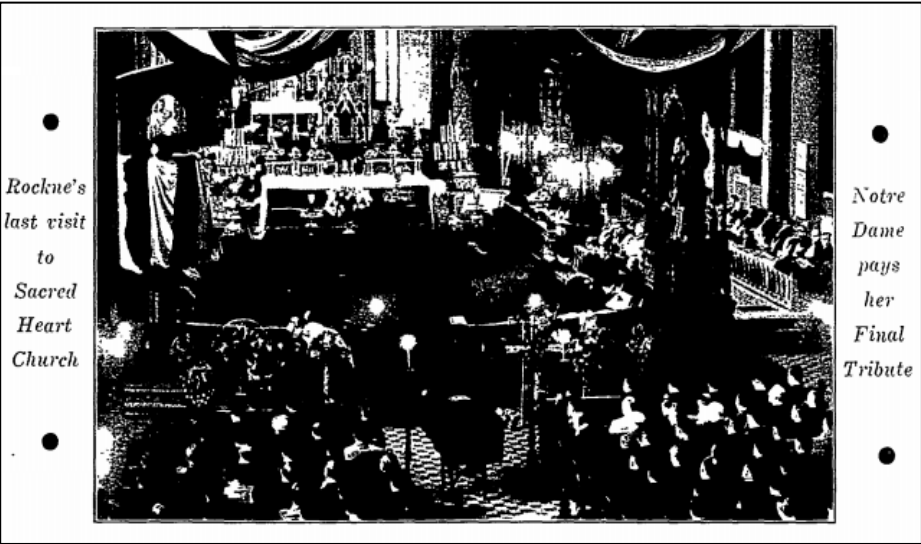
Just before three o'clock, the long funeral cortege appeared past the statue of Father Sorin, and made its way over a hushed campus to the church, while the crowd on the quadrangle edged closer to the ropes that formed the roadway. The long cortege came to a stop at the church door, and the casket was lifted out and borne into the church by six of Rockne's 1930 football stars, bowed now in grief at the death of their leader. These were Larry Mullins, Marty Brill, Marchmont Schwartz, Tom Yarr, Frank Carideo, and Tom Conley, captain last season. They were weeping grimly as they consigned the casket to Father O'Hara.

Inside the church, Rockne's friends listened to Father O'Donnell's splendid eulogy of his beloved friend, while out on the campus the crowd pressed around the loud speakers which carried to them the message and the solemn chanting of the funeral dirges by the Moreau choir. Heads were bared and some knelt on the grass in prayer.

The service over, the funeral cortege wound slowly out of the grounds and through the city towards Highland cemetery, on the western outskirts of the city, where Rockne was to be interred. Streets along the route of the procession were packed and all traffic was suspended while the crowds stood silent to honor Notre Dame's coach.

At the cemetery police fought the crowds which attempted to get a last glimpse of the casket. Men and women pressed about the grave where relatives and close friends of the great man stood in mourning. Father O'Donnell conducted the simple and touching burial services, and the casket, with its monogram blanket for mantle, was lowered into the grave by those

six teammates who had played their best for their coach. Rockne was buried as he had lived, simply and earnestly, with his men and his friends gathered around him.



Above Picture from Scholastic



A better 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&crd=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."

Some other appropriate Rockne headlines

This is not a book about Knute Rockne but clearly, he is the most well-known hero of Notre Dame football, and his legacy has made many happy just to know Notre Dame and that the "Rock" once stood tall in South Bend.

The students of Notre Dame had seen "Rock" for every year they were there. His last two years were their last two years and they meant national championships. Why would an ND student or any ND anything from janitor to president ever think it should be any other way? The campus was in disarray and reading the US headlines at the time, things were not right.

The country itself was in disarray as the finest coach who had ever lived had died. It was like a President dying. The nation mourned and Notre Dame mourned the most. Please let me capture some of the headlines from the period as written in the Scholastic. There is no need to look for headlines outside of the University as theirs in this edition of the Scholastic reflected the pain of all.

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**NATION MOURNS ROCKNE'S DEATH
IN CONDOLENCES TO UNIVERSITY**

Telegrams And Letters Pour Into Notre Dame
As Thousands Express Grief

**MASSES, COMMUNIONS
FOLLOW ROCKNE DEATH**

Students and Alumni All Join
in Tribute to Dead Coach.

The news of Knute Rockne's tragic death found the campus silent in tribute to the man. One of the first

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**NOTABLES IN THROG
AT ROCKNE FUNERAL**

Many Prominent Figures at
Burial Rites.

**ROCKNE GRAVE DRAWS
THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE**

Burial Ground Jammed With
Sorrowful Crowds.

PLAN ROCKNE MEMORIAL

Committee Considers Project
For Commemoration.

The Notre Dame Scholastic 733

COLLEGE PARADE

NOT ONLY NOTRE DAME . . .

A COACH WHO BELONGS TO THE AGES
Knute Rockne possessed natural leadership and a magnetic personality which undoubtedly would have made him an outstanding figure in any field of work that he might have chosen . . . His death robs the nation of a dynamic figure. His influence in sports will be felt for years to come.
—*Daily Illini*

A MAN HAS GONE
The Greatest Coach of them all saw fit to beckon Knute K. Rockne to the sidelines for all times . . . and the nation mourns one of its most colorful and outstanding figures—a man whose football wizardry was legend, a man to whom full grown men and callow youths alike looked upon with respectful awe.—*Stanford Daily Cardinal*

THE MASTER MENTOR
Football and Knute Rockne—always in the same breath and always allied in the minds of football hungry fans and players. Now a sudden tragedy sweeps the master mind of the gridiron from the coaching fields and leaves the realm of the pigskin and sport-loving, sport-respecting Young and Old America desolate.—*Daily Texan*

AMERICA'S COACH IS DEAD

THE GAME IS OVER
In a highly publicized game such as football myths are apt to overshadow the actual personality of the best known leaders of the sport. In the case of Knute Rockne, whose untimely death takes away one of the greatest coaches in the history of the game, such was not true. This glamorous figure in the ever shifting gridiron spotlight was a man revered as much for his ability and character as for the success of his athletic teams that he coached . . . His name will go down in the annals of gridiron history as the finest coach, football's greatest exponent, and a man whose sterling character honored his game, his university, and his country.—*Minnesota Daily*

KNUTE ROCKNE
The news of Knute Rockne's death has been received here, as everywhere, with considerable surprise and sorrow . . . To those who had the privilege of being personally acquainted with Rockne, he was a fine man and a good friend. To the thousands of others who knew him as football coach of Notre Dame, he was the greatest figure in present-day sport.
—*Daily Princetonian*

ROCKNE WILL REMAIN AN INSPIRATION

And, of course there were more headlines about Knute Rockne here, there, and across the globe. Knute Rockne was the "man" before the notion of "the man" ever existed. He still is "THE MAN."

His thirteen years of greatness at Notre Dame gave the University the idea that a guy like Rockne would always be available to the University of our Lady of the Lake. I like to call Rockne one of the first immortals because his first coaching boss, Jesse Harper would also be on that list along with Frank Leahy, Terry Brennan, Ara Parseghian, Lou Holtz, and now, the real Coach Brian Kelly, not the writer of the great 2016 book about Notre Dame.

Every now and then God had to send a regular good or OK coach to Notre Dame so that the leaders of the University would understand the gift from God when one of the real immortals or one of the immortals to-be began to show up for work on the campus fields every day.

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 11 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.

The Fighting Irish claimed home wins at Notre Dame Stadium against Haskell W (73-0), Drake W (62-0), Carnegie Tech W (42-0),

and Northwestern W (21-0). Away victories included Kansas W (24-6), Navy W (12-0), and Army W (21-0). Notre Dame, not accustomed to any losses at the time was beaten at Pittsburgh L (0-12, and at Los Angeles against USC L (0-13) with 93,924 in attendance in L.A.

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.

The ND victories included wins at Indiana W (12-2), at Northwestern W (7-0), and at Army played in Yankee Stadium in the Bronx W (13-12). The losses included Home Games against Pittsburgh L (0-14), Purdue L (0-19), USC L (0-19). Away losses included Navy L (0-7), and Carnegie Tech L (0-7). The Fighting Irish played Kansas to a tie at Notre Dame Stadium T (0-0) to begin the season. It was a dismal year for Coach Anderson. Few fans and few alumni, and few administrators at Notre Dame expected Coach Anderson to be given another opportunity.

Scholastic Magazine, run by ND Students always had something insightful to say about what is / was happening at Notre Dame when it is / was happening. They do not like writing anything negative. Hunk Anderson as all ND coaches was not a bad guy at all. He may even have been a good coach if there were somebody to help him out just a bit. But, he did not measure up to his promises. He had one really bad season. As we will see as we move forward in time. Ara Parseghian will define the whole rationale of being a successful coach at ND. He will reduce it to one word: *WIN!* I added the exclamation mark.

Scholastic Magazine, a student-run, administration controlled positive influence on ND faculty, students, alums, and friends did not have much to say about Hunk Anderson. Here it is:

Elmer Layden, '25, last Saturday morning signed a contract to become head football coach and Athletic Director at Notre Dame. At the same time,

announcement was made by the Reverend John F. O'Hara, C.S.C, vice-president of the University, who completed negotiations with Layden, of the official acceptance of the resignations of Heartly W. Anderson and Jesse C. Harper, head grid coach and Director of Athletics respectively. Layden will take over his new duties here on February 1st. The new Notre Dame athletic head has just completed his seventh season as head football coach at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, where his teams, especially the 1933 eleven, compiled excellent records.

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.

'HUNK' ANDERSON IS OUT AT NOTRE DAME

SOUTH BEND, Ind., Dec. 8
—(P)— Elmer Layden, one of the famous "Four Horsemen," will replace Heartly "Hunk" Anderson as head football coach at Notre Dame next fall as a result of a drastic shake-up of the University's athletic staff.

Jess Harper will also retire as athletic director. Harper's successor will probably be named within the next two weeks.

The most persistent rumor, however, was that Layden would hold both the director's and coaching jobs. He is now coach at Duquesne University.

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.

As discussed, there was nobody who was unaware that following Rockne as coach would be a nearly impossible task. Almost immediately after the coach's death, university president Father Hugh O'Donnell put the squeeze on Jesse Harper to return to South Bend to help out. Harper loved Notre Dame but agreed only to take on the role of Athletics Director. He had no interest in being the predecessor and successor to Rockne. He knew of the major pressures and there were many. Despite the risks being well known, there were several candidates who nonetheless were confident enough to be interested in the job.

Heartley "Hunk" Anderson, Rockne's assistant was offered and accepted the job. He played and coached for Rockne and besides that, he was a five-sport letterman. Anderson was extremely athletic and very talented. While an assistant at Notre Dame, he was still playing pro ball for the Chicago Bears.

Anderson had no limit to his athletic aptitude and he could spot talent in others. He added the right amount of passion, commitment, love of football, and a drive to win to his overall package. He was without a doubt, a great paper choice to be head coach of Notre Dame. What he did not have, unfortunately for him, and it mattered

in the end was Rockne's affable charm, but few do. Few could. The Rock was the whole deal.

Anderson had a knack of getting the most from his young players, but he did not have a style that helped him be successful when dealing with adults in high places. Rockne had a way of being able to control his inferiors and his superiors. The Rock was a great schmoozer.

Nobody can put a top US college team on the field without free tuition for many players. Rockne figured out how to get them what they wanted outside the bounds of the university's limited scholarship program. He would find various grants in aid and his relationships with wealthy boosters prompted financial help for student players.

When Anderson became coach, ND VP Father Michael Muclair made clear that the new era would be different. The priests would subject the program to more oversight. Though Anderson had the same basic amount of scholarship packages from the school that Rockne had been given, that was it. Because Anderson was not Rockne, lots less students could get free rides to Notre Dame.

The "Hunk," failed to maintain the network of unofficial booster relationships to provide things such as off-campus jobs for ND players. That system had enabled Rockne to continually bring on more and better players. Additionally, Jesse Harper was the AD after Rockne. It was not Coach Anderson.

Rockne did everything and basically controlled everything, including the administration. He served as Notre Dame's athletic director, business manager, ticket distributor, track coach and equipment manager while concurrently being the Head Football Coach. Anderson did not have the connections or the chutzpah to be like Rockne where interpersonal activity mattered and so the gravy-train dried up and nobody can field a great team without a shot at the best players.

"Hunk" was an aggressive task master as assistant and motivated players with his grit, not his charm. The ND head coaching job required both skills. Despite not having the structure to bring in more and more talent, there are analysts who have concluded that

his teams did not lack talent. Rockne had recruited them and the Rockne deals were not taken away from students. There were three Rockne classes coming back the first year, then two, and then one, Anderson also had his own recruits but his seniors were Rockne's. The conclusion was that even in the early years when the team had few defeats, Notre Dame was too often out-coached in times that the team lost.

For example, in the 1931 USC game in which the Irish were ahead 14-0, Hunk pulled the starters and USC began a comeback and overtook the Irish for a 16-14 Trojan win. Substitution rules back then were like intramural Soccer. A player pulled from the game could not be returned within the same quarter. In the USC game, ND starters were sitting on the bench watching USC win the game against the scrubs. Rockne's teams lost games, sometimes. But they were never out coached—ever.

The 1931 season finished with a 12-0 road loss at Army. Losing the last game in a season is a "no-no" for coaches wanting to keep their jobs. Onlookers with football knowledge believed that somehow Army had been "listening" and understanding Notre Dame's play calling as the ND team performed so poorly.

So many people cared and watched closely every time Notre Dame took the field that the murmurs and rumors and whispers of Hunk's inadequacy began, even after season one with what ND fans and alumni considered a not unrespectable 6-2-1 finish. The Student Newspaper, Scholastic reported that Hunk would be retained because he "was a Notre Dame man."

Hunk's second season was another pressure cooker after the team had won three straight against small poor performing schools. When better schools came to play, ND did not do so well under Anderson. After the Pitt game, a 0-12 loss, a reporter openly criticized the game effort: "A Notre Dame team, its assurance and cohesion absolutely destroyed, passing wildly like a bunch of high school kids in a demoralized effort..."

It got so bad that Jesse Harper, serving as Athletic Director had to explicitly address the situation. He told reporters that Anderson

would be coaching at ND the following year: “The fact that he lost one game is no reason to fire him. We at Notre Dame feel he has done a fine job.”

Hunk Anderson did not handle the press well and the press began their own private war against the coach. Priests always were treated special when visiting Notre Dame. Anderson just did not get the importance of being nice to people who have the ears of the administration.

The Coach actually banned visiting priests from watching pre-season practices unless they came with letters of clearance from their bishops. The reaction was expected and bitter. When ND opened the season with a miserable 0-0 tie against Kansas, jaws dropped, wondering what all the secrecy was about. The Irish had won its season opening games forever from 1901.

The South Bend Tribune had become fully annoyed with Coach Anderson from many angles. They wrote: “This fellow Anderson may be a coach, but if he is, I’m ready to accept my post as ambassador to China.” Audacious and irreverent attacks from the press and from ordinary fans became par for the course. Like Jimmy Johnson from his days as Miami U and Dallas, head coach, Heartly "Hunk" Anderson became persona non grata. He became the ND coach everyone loved to hate.

In year three, the roof Anderson had seemly built to protect himself from criticism was crumbling down. His 1933 team began losing games to poor opponents. Notre Dame would not accept excuses even when a victorious opponent was worthwhile. Games played against good teams were crucial to success and needed to be won. Nobody even conceived of losing to mediocre and poor teams.

Anderson's team mantra seemed to become that it's OK to lose to anybody, good and bad alike. That was too much to handle for any university. Everybody wanted the 1933 season to end quickly.

End it did and ND had finished 3-5-1. It was the school's first losing season since it had played Michigan three times and lost all three in 1887—its very first year of football. A bad team that is purged takes with it a lot of lumber that is no longer needed. Just one week after the season had ended, Notre Dame announced that both Jesse Harper and "Hunk" Anderson had ‘resigned’

Chapter 12 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 Scaled 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 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. But, he brought the team back the next week when nemesis Purdue, came into Notre Dame Stadium ready to take advantage of the "Irish Slowdown." Despite Purdue's plans to continue the ND losing streak, the Irish defeated the Boilermakers W (18-7) and the Layden success era had begun.

The next week Carnegie Tech, a long-time foe that enjoyed spoiling Notre Dame seasons as they had the prior year, came into South Bend and left without scoring one point as the Irish controlled the game and won W (13-0).

The fourth Notre Dame home game in a row found Wisconsin trying to get a piece of Notre Dame. But, the Badgers were rebuffed and Notre Dame prevailed W (19-0). Next was a trip to rival Pittsburgh at Pittsburgh and the Irish could not pull out a victory L (0-19). The next trip was to Cleveland against Navy, who were at their best. The Irish lost to the midshipmen in a close one L (6-10) before over 54,000 fans. The following week the Irish traveled to Northwestern and succeeded W (20-7).

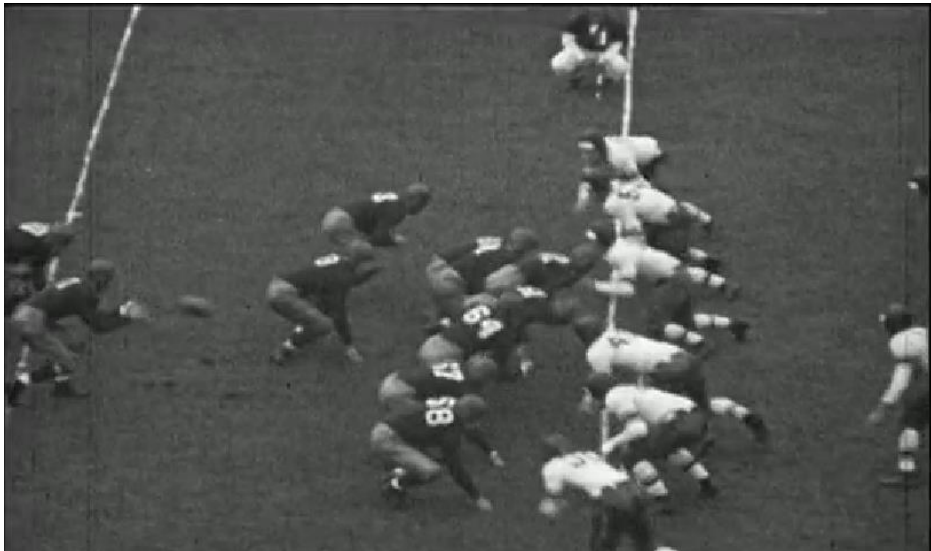
Notre Dame then went on the road again and traveled to play the tough US Army team the following week. Though they met heavy resistance from the Black Knights, Notre Dame won the game W (12-6) at Yankee Stadium before 78,757 onlookers. The tough season ending away battle against Southern California was next at California. The Layden-led Notre Dame Fighting Irish were up to the task and they downed the USC Trojans W (14-0) to finish the

season at 6-3. Elmer Layden and the Fighting Irish were back on track.

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. Things started really nice for Elmer Layden's boys as the Irish won their first six games starting at home with Kansas W (28-7) at Carnegie Tech W (14-3) at Wisconsin W (27-0) at home v Pittsburgh W (9-6), At Navy W (14-0), At Ohio State W (18-13).

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).



ND V Northwestern Upset 14-7

The Fighting Irish then went to the Bronx and played Army to a T (0-0) tie before 78,114 at Yankee Stadium. Arch rival USC came to Notre Dame Stadium on November 23 for the season finale in which the Fighting Irish took the victory W (20-13).



The recount of the epic game against Ohio State is taken from:
<http://www.und.com/sports/m-footbl/spec-rel/100715aak.html>

The original "Game of the Century" continues to live up to its title exactly 80 years later.

From great plays, to last-minute heroics, these two college heavyweights provided the 81,018 fans packed inside Ohio Stadium more than their share of thrills. The game created such a buzz that the FBI got involved when 2,000 counterfeit tickets began circulating the grounds.

The Buckeyes controlled the game and built a 13-0 lead through three quarters before the momentum started to turn the way of Notre Dame after it scored back-to-back fourth-quarter touchdowns. Unfortunately, both extra points were missed, staking Ohio State to a thin 13-12 lead.

The Irish onside kick failed after their second touchdown, leaving running out the clock as the Buckeyes' only remaining task. Ah, but the fun was only beginning.

Ohio State fumbled near midfield, setting up one last chance for the Irish offense with just more than a minute remaining.

On first down, halfback Andy Pilney became the stuff of Irish legend when he took a short pass and scampered 30 yards to the Buckeyes' 19-yard line, suffering a leg injury on the play that ended his college career.

Following a first-down drop in the end zone by the Buckeyes on a sure interception, Notre Dame's William Shakespeare [not kidding about the name] connected on a second-down touchdown

pass to Wayne Milner with 32 seconds left in the game for an 18-13 lead that was never threatened.



Scholastic: Wayne Miller, All American, One of Layden's Power Men in 1935

CBS Radio broadcaster Ted Husing best summed up the afternoon, saying, "I have never been so weak after a game."

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. The Fighting Irish first knocked off a tough Carnegie Tech Team W (21-

7), then Washington from Missouri W (14-7), followed on October 17 by Wisconsin W (27-0). The Irish then traveled to Pittsburgh where they were upset by the Panthers L (0-27).

ND won again at home against Ohio State (7-2) before 50,017 fans. The Service Academies came next. Navy defeated Notre Dame in Baltimore L (3-0) and Notre Dame then traveled to Army at Yankee Stadium to defeat the Black Knights W (20-6). Northwestern arrived at South Bend for its pre-Thanksgiving Day game on November 21, and were defeated by Elmer Layden's Fighting Irish W (26-6).

After this, it was off for the season ending encounter with the University of Southern California in the Los Angeles Coliseum. The teams tied T (13-13). Notre Dame finished the 1936 season at 6-2-1 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.

The Irish played four home games at Notre Dame Stadium beginning with a W (21-0) win against Drake, followed by a W (9-7) win against Navy (9-7), a loss L (6-21) against #3 Pittsburgh, and a season ending win against USC W (13-6).

ND was on the road five times starting with a T (0-0) tie against Illinois, a loss L (7-9) against Carnegie Tech, a win W (7-6) at Minnesota, a win W (7-0) against Army at Yankee Stadium before 76,359 fans, followed by another win W (7-0) at Northwestern in Illinois. With the same record as in 1936, the AP selected Notre Dame in the same # 9 spot in the national rankings.

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 season, ND was ranked # 5 by the Associated Press (AP) when all was said and done.

Home wins for the Irish came against Kansas W (52-0), Illinois W (14-6), Carnegie Tech W (7-0), and Minnesota W (19-0) The fighting Irish traveled to Georgia Tech W (14-6), Army W (19-7), Navy W (15-0), and Northwestern W (9-7), then, of course came the only loss to Southern Cal.

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).

Notre Dame home game victories were all nail-biters and they came against Purdue W (3-0), Georgia Tech W (17-14), SMU W (20-19) and Northwestern W (7-0. Away victories included Carnegie tech W (7-6), Army W (14-0), Navy W (14-7) at Cleveland. The AP ranked the Notre Dame Fighting Irish # 13 for 1939.



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.

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.

Notre Dame chalked up seven wins including home victories against Pacific W (25-7), Georgia Tech W (26-20), Carnegie Tech W (61-0). The Irish lost at home on November 16 against Iowa L (0-7)

Notre Dame took to the road for victories at Illinois W (26-0), Army W (7-0), Navy W (13-7), and USC W (10-6) On November 23, in its second last game, after ND had lost at home to Iowa the prior week, Northwestern beat ND at Dyche Stadium Evanston, Illinois quite handily (0-20).

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 13 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!

So, maybe I do know him but I have spoken to people who have known him or knew those who knew him, and I have read a lot about him. So, I say I know Frank Leahy, kinda! I would not want to cross him for all his goodness. As I finished this book and was just tidying up some wording, I found a great Sports Illustrated article from 1955. Just because you are nice enough to be reading this book, I am providing the link below. It is worth a nice look.

<http://www.si.com/vault/1955/10/31/596398/subject-frank-leahy>

In this book, I have borrowed the public words of others in print or on the Internet and have given them attribution as I cannot superimpose myself onto the 1887 Notre Dame campus, nor can I sit down with the ten Leahy's and have dinner followed by the Rosary. So, I use the words of others from the past to help me.

The words immediately below are excerpts from Bill Dwyre a great columnist for the LA Times

<http://articles.latimes.com/2012/oct/19/sports/la-sp-dwyre-notre-dame-20121020>.

Bill Dwyre's piece was titled: "Frank Leahy always had Notre Dame standing tall and up straight."

Dwyre was interviewing Fred Leahy, the coach's # 6 child of 8. In this part of the piece, Leahy's son, Fred creates a quick snapshot of the coach and his family in this excerpt:

"Fred's summary of life in the Leahy family is a classic of all-encompassing brevity.

"Dad belonged to the world, and mom had eight kids," he says.

Fred says Frank Leahy never turned down an autograph request and drilled into his family the need to treat people equally and well.

"He wore the famous bow tie all the time," Fred says, "and that wasn't for any image reason. He knew, when he was out eating dinner, somebody would come over to the table, he'd get up and reach across to shake their hand and his tie would fall into the soup.

"When we went out to dinner, he'd eat ahead of time. People wouldn't leave him alone to eat, and he'd never turn anybody down. When dinner ended, he'd disappear into the kitchen and shake the hands of all the helpers."

A writer, seeking to characterize the presumed terror of failure with which Leahy's players existed, once asked star quarterback Johnny Lujack what Leahy was like after a loss. Lujack pondered the question and said, "I don't remember ever losing."

The sweet and soft side of Frank Leahy

This little essay shown immediately below as published by the Chicago Tribune on October 7, 1956 will melt your heart. It melted mine. It is another proper introduction to the Frank Leahy Era in a book about Notre Dame. There is nothing like seeing the love and respect of a daughter for a father and a family.

Having a wonderful daughter of my own, one day maybe somebody would be reading something so nice about me if I am worthy. It surely makes every man want to be a better man. Here it is in its

entirety as printed in the Tribune. It is another fitting introduction to the Frank Leahy Era at Notre Dame. My thanks to the Chicago Tribune for printing it and for permitting me, by default to print it in this book.

MY FATHER IS STILL COACHING

The author of this article is the 18-year-old daughter of Frank Leahy, head football coach at Notre Dame University from 1943 to 1954 and now a construction company executive.

The Leahys live in Long Beach, Indiana when Sue Leahy won the 1956 teen contest sponsored by Extension Magazine (submitting some of her own essays). The Chicago Sunday Tribune Magazine asked her to write a piece about her family. This is it.



Sue was employed at a drive-in restaurant near home during the summer

October 7, 1956

By Sue Leahy

PUBLIC LIMELIGHT reflects now only the shadow of Frank Leahy, former Notre Dame football coach. However, as I write this, I would like to focus a little light upon him once more in the

job he never left, the job of coaching "his team" to play the game of life and to be victorious-win, lose, or draw.

We eight Leahys are his team. My mother is his champion quarter back, and together we feel we can conquer any opponent.

We have not yet reached the "cheaper by the dozen" stage. (Daddy says we never will, that is the " heaper " part!) But to put it in my own words, "God blessed our home beyond compare, God sent eight angels unaware! "

The best time to take a p-e-e-k at Daddy's team in action is to open the door of our lives on an ordinary evening but always between 5 and 9 p. m. I choose these hours because all hands are called together at 5 to help prepare dinner, and by 9 p. m. all hands (of age) have departed for evening activities and all baby hands are tucked away for another night.

As the clock chimes 5, each Leahy, wherever he may be, beats a steady path homeward.

My younger sister, Flossie, who is 15, and I usually arrive first (from park or beach, depending on the season), with the baby Leahys, Mary, 5, and Chris, 4, trudging behind us. They have become our shadows, and we can't get away without them. As fast as Flossie and I set the table, Mary and Chris unset it.

Jerry and Jimmy, our 13 and 9-year-old redheaded, freckle-faced Tom Sawyers, appear simultaneously, just in the nick of time. They have learned well the penalty for lateness-shagging golf balls for daddy the next time he goes out for a little practice.

Frank, the eldest, follows shortly, coming from his construction job in nearby Michigan City. The first day he returned from his job, Mary and Chris screamed frantically, thinking him to be some creature from outer space (too much TV) as he was completely covered from head to foot with paint and soot.

Midway in the meal, 7-year-old Freddy M appears. His bad timing began at birth when, with no doctor near, he appeared unexpectedly in a terrible, raging beach storm. Without even the aid of electricity, Frank Leahy Sr. did a terrific coaching job, as in the darkness of the night he ushered into the world a masterpiece-Freddy! I shall always remember how my brothers and sisters and I sat in one room holding candles that night, praying that we would win over this particular and unexpected

opponent. Victory was ours, and we are now used to Freddy's odd hours. He stays small. Perhaps it is those half meals.

Blessed with a prayer, our evening meal is the one time when all 10 Leahys are together. Here in scrimmage we learn much of the give and take of life. Here we stay in condition. Here we take the penalties for unnecessary roughness or clipping.

Then our quarter back, mother, calls positions for "operation dishes." Jerry clears; Sue (that's me) washes; Frank and Floss dry; Jimmy sweeps; Freddy is the garbage man; Mary and Chris get in everybody's way.



Frank Leahy Jr., right, leads family rosary. Back row, left to right: Mrs. Florence Leahy, Frank Sr., Flossie, Jerry. Front: Jimmy, Freddy, Mary, Chris. Sue was absent at work when picture was taken.

Next in line is the family rosary. Jerry and Jimmy are always half a block away en route to other activities in a fake play behind the lines. My father's coaching glare from the sidelines returns them quickly. Mary arrives down the bannister; Chris swings in on his make-believe grapevine, thinking he is Tarzan. Freddy (Davy Crockett, no less) shoots his way into the room and each person takes position at a chair. We kneel, each taking his turn giving out the prayer (which takes but 10 minutes, unless Jerry and Jimmy



In the course of his evening rounds, Frank Sr. says good-night to Mary.

end it in a 7-minute photo finish). I close the doors on daddy's present team. The sun has already descended into the lake, taking with it the restlessness of the day. In the quiet of the evening that remains, daddy and mother may re lax and read or converse in the den. Flossie and I will bathe Mary and Chris and then prepare for our evening activities. Frank will take the family car to pick up his date, and I often double with my favorite brother.

The sun will rise again, bringing tomorrow with all its opportunities, disappointments, and tasks. We, Frank Leahy's team, will rise with it ready to play and win another day in the game of life.

In the course of his evening rounds, Frank Sr. says good-night to Mary.

Good night Frank. Thank you for being you!

1941 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

In 1941, Frank Leahy coached the Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team for the first time. Like Elmer Layden and Knute Rockne, and Jesse Harper, Frank Leahy was a natural coach on strategy and on motivation. He made everybody around him want to do their best.

Whereas Knute Rockne had the Four Horsemen, even before Frank Leahy got to BC or Notre Dame he 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.

Let's get the tie scores over first. Nobody likes a tie. Notre Dame played eleven games this season. It was a first—the most ever 'til then. The first of two ties came during the inaugural game of the season at Wisconsin, T (7-7). The second tie came on December 5, when ND played the Naval Station Great Lakes to a hard-fought tie T (13-13).

Looking at these two games and the quality of the ND team under Leahy in 1942, these had to be really tough games. During the war years, many tough military personnel were playing football in the armed forces against college teams. The Naval Station Great Lakes was not the typical Navy team. It was separate and stood by itself. Nobody is happy with a tie but it is always a better deal than a loss.

The Fighting Irish under Leahy's second coaching year also suffered two losses. The first was a home game against Georgia Tech L (6-13). The last blemish on Leahy's 1942 record was Michigan L (20-32). The Wolverines had decided to play ND after many years of choosing not to play the Irish. The good news was that Michigan would continue to play Notre Dame over the years.

Notre Dame loves to win and Leahy's teams were getting accustomed to winning big—even though in 1942 there were a few ties and losses. Notre Dame collected home wins against Stanford W (27-0), Iowa Pre-Flight W (28-0), and Northwestern W (27-20). To get to its 7-2-2 record, ND also recorded wins against Illinois W (21-14), Navy W (9-0), Army W (13-0), and USC W (13-0)

The SS Knute Rockne

The end of the 1942 season came almost one year after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. After the 1942 season, Knute Rockne, the memorable patriotic coach who had been killed in a 1931 plane crash got a great tribute from the Armed Services.

During World War II, the United States had a major effort going on building armaments as quickly as possible to defend the homeland

and to prevail in the war effort. In one of the many US victory programs, the US began mass producing what were called "Liberty ships." In eighteen shipyards along both coasts, 2,751 ships were constructed between 1941 and 1945.

This was a major feat for the United States and gave the world an idea about the industrial might of our country. Honoring Knute Rockne highlighted the great men of the US and their great mettle to win the day.

2751 ships made the Liberty ship the most produced ship of any single design ever. The Liberty ship was a cargo ship designed to move naval supplies and soldiers during the war. These ships were put together to have a useful life of just five years. Yet, more than 2,400 ships survived the war. Many of the ships survived for as many as thirty years. Even today, over seventy years later, there still are two operational Liberty ships remaining.

The ships were named for eminent Americans that had made notable contributions to the history and culture of the United States. The only guideline was the person needed to be deceased. To help finance the war effort, any group that raised \$2 Million in War Bonds could suggest a name for a ship.

At Permanente Metals Corporation Yard No. 2 in Richmond, California, the keel was laid for hull number 1111 on April 9, 1943. On May 6, 1943, the SS Knute Rockne was launched to sea and was delivered twelve days later. The SS Knute Rockne would remain afloat until it was scrapped in 1972

1943 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

Coach Frank Leahy's 1943 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team represented the University of Notre Dame in Leahy's third year of being the head coach. The team ended its season with 9 wins and 1 loss, winning the national championship. This was the fourth Irish team to win the national title and the first for Frank Leahy.

Led by Notre Dame's first **Heisman Trophy** winner, Angelo Bertelli, Notre Dame played and beat seven teams ranked in the top 13 and played seven of its ten games on the road. Despite a devastating season ending loss to Great Lakes, a recent powerhouse comprised

mostly of military men, Notre Dame was awarded its first national title by the Associated Press.

The war years were special years. The service academies and the semi-pro teams from the military were at their best. Because of Notre Dame and Navy's cooperation to educate midshipmen, the 1943 Irish team included 14 Navy apprentice seamen.

Sophomore quarterback John Lujack was one of those players. Lujack would win the 1947 **Heisman Trophy** after helping steer the Irish to a third national title under coach Leahy. Other seamen on the Irish roster included powerful lineman / left tackle Jim White -- who finished 9th in the 1943 Heisman balloting, and other starters including left end Paul Limont, center Herb Coleman and his backup Frank Szymanski, plus fullback Jim Mello.

Having just noted Johnny Lujack, this is the best time to add this personal interest story about Lujack, the great quarterback; Frank Leahy, Notre Dame coach; and a great Notre Dame-loving former Villanova quarterback named Jack Lammers.

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

I was looking for some Villanova stuff on the Internet that talked about toughness and conditioning and perhaps included some pictures of one-time quarterback Jack Lammers, who will have to read all this in the book to know it is here. But instead, I hit the jackpot. I found this piece about Jack. It is precious. Jack Lammers never had told me about his Notre Dame Football "Fantasy Camp," before I had added this piece. In another email conversation, weeks after these emails, however, Jack told me that he enjoyed attending the camp and staying at the Morris Inn. I did not tell him that I already knew.

Lauren Searson wrote this article about my buddy Jack Lammers for *Retirement Living*. <http://www.retirement-living.com/fantasy-camp-offers-a-glimpse-into-life-as-a-football-star/>. It is not big so I will put it here for all of my IBM buddies and Notre Dame fans to read about a very serious guy who up until an hour ago when I found this article, I thought had no fantasies... Hah! Enjoy!

Fantasy Camp Offers a Glimpse Into Life as a Football Star: Active Adults

Author: Lauren Searson

2005 Notre Dame Football Fantasy Camp

"It all falls back into place when you get out on the field," says Jack Lammers of his recent experience on the gridiron at Notre Dame. Jack's experience was not the result of successful recruiting efforts or a handsome scholarship. He was one of 50 participants in the 2005 Notre Dame Football Fantasy Camp.

For the participants, all former athletes or lifelong fans, the fantasy camp offered a rare glimpse into the reality of life as a Notre Dame player. Camp included "two-a-days," the twice daily practices and drills that are so familiar to the Notre Dame Varsity Team. After two days of practice, the fantasy team was ready for game day in Notre Dame Stadium.

Before running through the tunnel and out onto the turf, the



players followed the pre-game routine of Notre Dame Athletes: a large breakfast, followed by Mass at the Grotto before suiting up in the Varsity locker room. The campers then played an hour-long game of flag football in front of a crowd of family and friends.

Jack, who had not been on the football field since his days as the Quarterback for Villanova, proudly stated, "I wasn't sore." His skills as a

player and a coach came back easily. Jack started his career as a high school football coach. He gave up the position to pursue a career with IBM because, he says, "We had our sixth child, and I knew I had to give up the toys and get a real job." Most of his long career with IBM was spent in the sales and service department. He enjoyed his work and his co-workers immensely, but football remained a passion.

Despite his long hiatus, Jack quickly adjusted to the thrill of being back on the field and in the pocket. Much of the excitement was generated by the atmosphere of the school and the stadium.

"Notre Dame is really a special place. It has such a long and respected football tradition," notes Jack.

The thrill of experiencing one of the greatest football programs in the country firsthand could not have come at a better time. One of Jack's friends from his coaching days invited him to attend the camp merely two weeks after his wife passed away. His initial response was a resounding no. Finally, with a lot of

encouragement from his children, he decided to give the camp a shot. He now says, "I loved it. It was truly amazing."

Jack was impressed by the management of the camp and the quality of the coaches, which helped to provide a distinctive experience to dedicated fans. "I grew up Catholic, so I've always been a fan, but some of these guys were really dyed-in-the-wool. A few had tattoos, and one had collected everything Notre Dame you can imagine-including a doorbell for his house," Jack says. Jack's doorbell may not yell "Go Irish!" but he nonetheless relished his time on the historic field at Notre Dame.

Posted in: Active Adult/55+ Communities, Activities for Seniors, Healthy Living, Senior Housing, Uncategorized

Thanks Jack! You are one of the good guys in life!

Back to Notre Dame in the WWII Years

Notre Dame was a major participant in the Navy's V-12 program. The V was for victory. The 12 mean that it was not the first try. During World War II. The "V" designation was often used to mean that the program was to help insure an Allies victory. The V-12 Navy College Training Program was put together to supplement the force of commissioned officers in the United States Navy during World War II.

Between July 1, 1943, and June 30, 1946, more than 125,000 participants were enrolled in 131 colleges and universities in the United States. The program was mutually beneficial to the Navy and to the colleges and universities. Academia willingly participated to assure an American victory. In many ways, it was mutually beneficial as it saved College Football from extinction. Ask Gonzaga!

There was a major V-12 military program on Notre Dame's campus that lifted attendance at the University from 3000 to about 4500. Among them were 12 transfers who were part of the Marine branch of the V-12. There were some already famous football players among them. For example, there was starting right halfback Julius Rykovich. After the

war, he would transfer and star at the University of Illinois before going on to an eight-year NFL career.

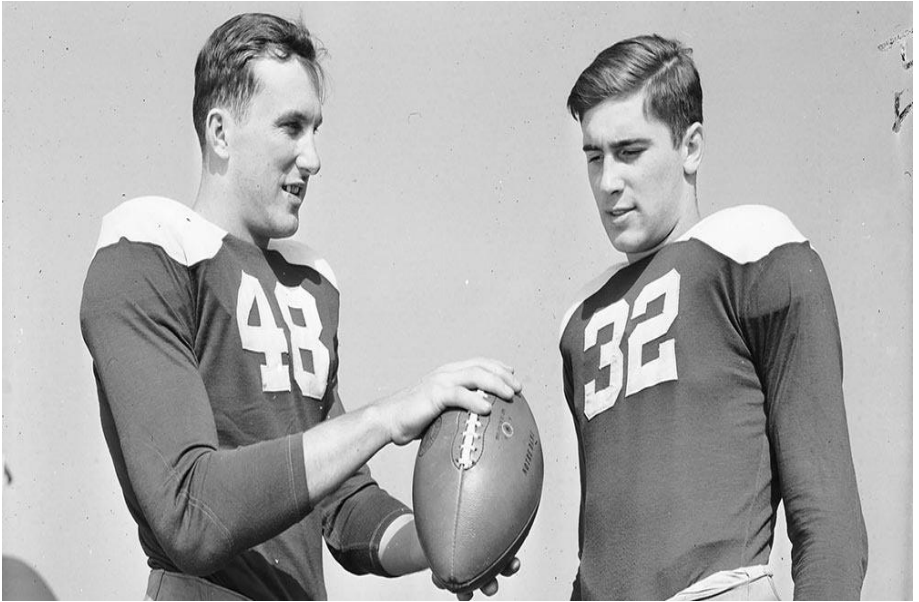


Navy units use the Notre Dame Football field
To train during World War II.

Notre Dame was proud to have 17 Marine privates, among them were future College Football Hall of Fame inductees Ziggy Czarobski at right tackle, All-American right end John Yonakor, starting left guard Pat Filley and, of course, 1943 **Heisman Trophy** winner Angelo Bertelli at quarterback.

The football game was very serious in 1943 as was the war effort. Notre Dame had players involved in both.

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.

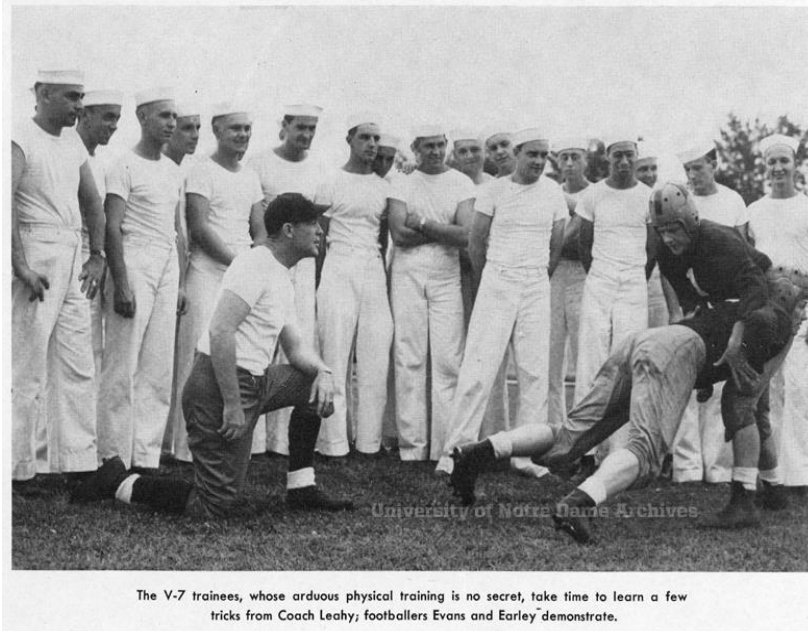
This 9-1 season ended with a defeat L (14-19) by the Great Lakes Bluejackets, on a "Hail Mary" touchdown pass. Notre Dame pundits like to ask if this were "the one way any school named after Our Lady should never lose -- with 33 seconds remaining." --A Hail Mary Pass--

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

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.

He was hired by Frank Leahy while Leahy was at Boston College from 1939-1940. He joined Notre Dame with Leahy in 1941 even though he had been offered head coaching job at BC.

He coached for Leahy through the 1943 season and agreed to be head coach in '44 when Leahy went into the Navy. Coach McKeever got a great offer from Cornell and he became their head coach after his one year stint with Notre Dame. Eventually, he moved to the front office and became general manager of the Boston Patriots in 1960.



Coach Edward McKeever ND 1944

McKeever guided the Irish to a very nice 8-2 season and a ninth-place finish in the AP final poll. The 1944 team won its first five games as follows: At Pittsburgh W (58-0), At home Tulane W (26-0), At Dartmouth in Fenway Park W (64-0), At home Wisconsin W (28-13), At Illinois (13-7). The Irish had moved to the top of the rankings by week 3.

After the first five wins, the Irish suffered a loss L (13-32) to Navy in Baltimore in the sixth game. This was the first loss to Navy in the last eight tries. This turn of

events quickly dropped the Irish out of first place. Army then laid a huge defeat on Notre Dame. In fact, Army embarrassed the Irish just

a week later with a trouncing L (59-0) before a capacity crowd at Yankee Stadium.

Notre Dame came back and beat Northwestern W (21-0) at home; then travelled to Georgia Tech and beat the Yellow Jackets W (21-0). On December 2, Notre Dame came back home and beat the Naval Station-Great Lakes W (28-7). Seems like fans are still talking about that 59-0 blow-out delivered by Army.

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.

As interim head coach at Notre Dame in 1945 and again in 1963, Devore had a record of 9-9-1. He filled in for Leahy in '45 and he filled the gap in '63 between the Kuharich and Ara Parseghian eras.

The 1945 team's home game wins were against Illinois W (7-0), Dartmouth W (34-0), Iowa W (56-0). The away victories included Georgia Tech W (40-7), Pitt W (39-9), Northwestern W (12-7), and

Tulane W (32-6). Losses were at Army before about 74,000 in Yankee Stadium L (0-48), and the Naval Station Great Lakes W (7-39). The Irish also fought to a tie T (6-6) against Navy at Cleveland's Municipal Stadium in front of over 82,000 fans. The service academies were at their best during the war years.

1946 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

Returning Navy Lieutenant Frank Leahy's 1946 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team ended the football season with 8 wins and 1 tie, winning the national championship for the second time in Leahy's tenure as coach.

This was the fifth Irish team to win the national title and the second title for Leahy. The 1946 Irish 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).

1947 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

The 1947 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was another leg of the Notre Dame dynasty coached in the second year of Frank Leahy's second stint since the War. The 1947 team ended the season with 9 wins and no losses. They were unbeaten and untied and for the second time in a row for Leahy and the sixth time in history, Notre Dame won the national championship.

Let me repeat as it sounds so good, and ND fans do not get to say good things so often 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

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 63rd book.

949 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

The 1949 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team, coached by Frank Leahy for the seventh time, won the national championship for the third time in four years. The Irish, ended the season with 10 wins, and no losses. ND was undefeated and untied. This 1949 squad became the seventh Irish team to win the national title and to repeat, the third in four years.



Hart and Martin Lead '49 Team

Leon Hart and James Martin, l to r... Hart was known as a 21-year-old "Monster" who had established himself as one of the great ends in Notre Dame history. This 245-pound stripling, moved swiftly on offense, blocks and tackles sharply to earn fully his All-America rating. Martin moved to the tackle post from his old end position this season, Jungle Jim has carved a name for himself in the Irish forward wall. A senior, Jim at 27 years old was heavyweight boxing champ at Notre Dame in 1947.

The Fighting Irish were led by **Heisman winner** Leon Hart throughout this championship season. Hart was a 6' 5" 260-pound end at time when they did not grow them that big. ND outscored its opponents 360-86.

This was the last Irish team to be considered part of the Notre Dame Football dynasty, a stretch of games in which Notre Dame 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.

For Notre Dame, 1950 would be described as a rebuilding year. In terms of its natural rivalries, Notre Dame left the field unhappy each time. They lost to Michigan State at home, L (33-36) in the battle for the Megaphone Trophy. Notre Dame also lost to Purdue at home L (14-28) and to that nemesis from California, USC L (7-9). The Irish also lost for one of the few times to Indiana at Indiana L (7-20). The one tie was against Iowa at Iowa T (14-14).

Let's walk through the few wins now. It is a short story—the shortest in the Leahy years for sure. At home, North Carolina W (14-7). At Tulane W (13-9), At Navy in Cleveland before 71074 W (19-10), and at home v Pittsburgh W (18-7).

ND Scholastic Magazine Archives re: close MSU Game:

South Bend, Ind., Oct. 28, 1950. —Striving as it has never done before to live up to the accolade "Fighting Irish," a heroic but undermanned Notre Dame team succumbed before an overpowering Michigan State eleven. The final score showed a 36-33 Spartan victory, but this difference would have been as meaningless as previous advantages proved to be, had the length of the game either been abbreviated or extended.

A bipartisan crowd of 57,886 saw as close and as hard fought a game as has ever graced the local gridiron.

Brought to fever pitch by three days of incessant cheering, begging, and pleading from the student body the Irish opened the scoring with a 19-yard pass from John Mazur to Jim Mutscheller. The Gridiron Goliath from Michigan refused to be pestered by this impudent tally, and immediately threatened to turn the game into a rout with three touchdowns of its own. Runs of 15 and seven yards by Vince Pisano and Sonny Grandelius and two extra points by Bob Carey put the Spartans ahead, 14-6

...

In every other respect, morally, statistically, and courageously, it was a Notre Dame victory. State's 341 yards' total offense was dwarfed by the Irish count of 526. John Petitbon stole individual honors from Grandelius and Pisano as he scooted 171 yards in 10 tries before being carried off the field in a state of complete exhaustion.

ND Scholastic Magazine Archives re close USC Game:

Los Angeles, Calif., Dec. 2, 1950. — Notre Dame's 1950 football squad closed out a disastrous season here today by falling before the battling Trojans of Southern California, 7-9. The loss was the fourth of the campaign for the Irish,

making them the fourth team in 62 years of Irish football to lose that many games in a single season.

Head Coach Frank Leahy was confined to his bed with the flu in his Long Beach, Ind., home and Assistant Coach Bernie Crimmins took charge of the team in his absence. But it's doubtful if the presence of the great Notre Dame mentor, could have helped his team today. Notre Dame's thin line was hit hard by injuries as the game progressed.

Halfback John Petitbon was carried unconscious from the field early in the second period after catching a pass from Williams to set up the lone Irish touchdown. Before the game was over, he was followed to the sidelines by Dave Flood, Bill Barrett, Bill Whiteside, Murray Johnson, Fred Wallner, Bill Flynn, Jerry Groom and Bob Williams. With their attack shot to pieces, the Irish were unable to muster any appreciable show of offensive strength in the second half.

In the statistics battle, the visitors led all the way. Southern Cal managed to register one first down against the Irish's 13. Notre Dame led in rushing, 145 to 70, and in passing, 104 to 4. Even in penalties the Irish were ahead, losing 110 yards for rules infractions to SC's 51. But today, as in most of the games this season, the luck of the Irish deserted Notre Dame.

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. In the battle for the Megaphone Trophy, Notre Dame lost to Michigan State (0-35). The other loss was to SMU L (20-27) at home on October 13 before a Notre Dame Stadium packed house of 58,240. The Irish also played to a tie T (20-20) against Iowa at home. This was the second year in a row for the Iowa game to end in a tie.

In terms of its rivals, Notre Dame fared better this year with a victory W (30-9) over Purdue at home, and a victory W (19-12) over USC at California. Other wins included Indiana at home W (48-6), at Detroit W (40-6), at Pittsburgh W (33-0), and at Navy W (19-0), and at North Carolina W (12-7).

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. Notre Dame lost to Michigan State at East Lansing in the battle for the Megaphone Trophy L (3-21). Notre Dame also beat

rivals Purdue in West Lafayette Indiana W (26-14), and USC W (9-0) to claim the Jeweled Shillelagh.

Other victories included a game at Texas W (14-3), as well as North Carolina at home W (34-14), Navy at Cleveland W (17-6), and a home game against Oklahoma W (27-21). On November 22, the Fighting Irish played Iowa at Iowa Stadium and prevailed W (27-0). The Irish also played Penn to a tie T (7-7) at Franklin Field, Philadelphia before 74,518.

1953 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Frank Leahy

Let's begin our look at the 1953 season with a great introduction from the December 1953 edition of ND's Scholastic Magazine:

December 11, 1953 Notre Dame, Ind. To OUR READERS: When eleven members of Notre Dame's 1953 pigskin squad lined up for the first whistle down in Norman, Oklahoma, earlier this Fall, they were opening up the sixty-fifth season of Irish competition in intercollegiate football.

And they were conscious of the fact too, that their predecessors—in the 64 seasons before them—had built a reputation for Notre Dame as one of the oldest and most consistently hard-to-beat football powers—in the nation. They carried quite a number of impressive laurels into that first game with them:

Notre Dame teams had brought the National Championship back to South Bend seven different times—a feat no other school had equaled in the long history of collegiate football. Notre Dame teams had also won six Western Championship titles, and they had amassed a total of 17 undefeated seasons—ten of them, untied. They had established a record with modern college football's longest string of unbeaten games at 39.

The Fighting Irish had also turned out more Ail-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.

Frank Leahy's Post Script

**BELONGED UNDER GOLDEN DOME AS FRESHMAN TO
GRIDIRON COACH**

Chicago Daily Tribune February 1, 1954

Our sincere thanks to the Chicago Tribune for permission to print this well-written, tremendous tribute to Frank Leahy

BY EDWARD PRELL

From the time that he was elected president of his freshman class. Frank Leahy belonged at Notre Dame. And he will continue to belong under the golden dome despite his retirement.

In 1927 he was a big, rugged youngster from the plains of South Dakota and Nebraska, who, after a mental tug-o'-war, had decided to enter college against seeking his fortune in the professional prize ring.

No fame that might have come his way as a boxer could have matched that which he gained in his brilliant career as football coach of the Fighting Irish. He was the modern Knute Rockne whose teams had the scoring magic in the clutch which had distinguished Notre Dame under the Norwegian from Chicago.

A Picture Coach

Leahy is a picture coach in physique and mannerisms. Six feet tall and weighing 190 pounds, he is a striking figure. A firm jaw, topped off with blue eyes and brown hair help make his face strong and handsome.

He became the dominant coach of his time. His success was built upon a zealous devotion to Notre Dame and his job. Four times his teams were rated national champions. Six times in his 11 year term the Irish were undefeated. Countless of his lads—that's what Leahy called his athletes—won All-America acclaim.

A Family Man

Leahy, the coach, also is a family man. He was a member of Fordham's coaching staff when, on-July 4, 1935, he married Florence Reilly of Brooklyn. The ceremony was performed in St. Patrick's church in the Bronx.

The first of eight children, Frank Jr., was born on April 28, 1936. Others born to the union are Susan Marie, 15; Florence, 13; Jerry, 10; James, 6; Frederick John, 4; Mary Patricia, 2, & Christopher, 1.

Leahy was born on Aug. 21, 1908, in O'Neill, Nebraska, the son of Frank and Mary Leahy. He is one of eight children-four boys and four girls.

At Winner [S.D.] High school he won football, basketball, and baseball letters for three years under Coach Earl Walsh, who had been a mono gram winner at Notre Dame in 1920 and 1921. An after dinner speech by Rockne

and by Coach Walsh convinced the youngster that Notre Dame was the place for him.

In his senior high school year, Leahy captained three sports teams at Central High school in Omaha, after his parents had moved to the Nebraska metropolis.

Played Center in 1928

In the fall of 1927, when he reported for freshman football at Notre Dame, Leahy's coach was Tommy Mills. As a sophomore in 1928, Leahy played in two games as a center. The following season he was regular tackle on Rockne's national champions, but a knee injury in pre-season practice kept him out of action in 1930, his senior year.

Rockne was so attracted to the earnest, soft spoken youngster that after the 1930 season he invited him along to the Mayo Clinic for repairs. Rockne underwent treatment for a leg ailment, which had almost cost his life in 1929. Leahy submitted to a knee operation and a two-week course in inside football as hospital roommate of Rockne.

Aid at Georgetown

In 1931, after receiving his bachelor of science degree in physical education, Leahy immediately moved into the college coaching ranks as assistant to Mills at Georgetown university. Against Jimmy Crowley's [one of the Four Horsemen] Michigan State eleven that season, Georgetown was beaten by only 6 to 0. The Georgetown line, coached by Leahy, made such an impression on Crowley that he persuaded the youngster to join him the following season at Michigan State.

Wins in Sugar Bowl

When Crowley moved to Fordham in 1933, he took along Leahy, who promptly began his most monumental job as a line coach-that of fashioning the famous "Seven Blocks of Granite." This line kept Fordham from defeat on all but two occasions in 1935, 1936, and 1937. His coaching apprenticeship-ended after the 1938 season when he was appointed head coach at Boston College.

Leahy's 1939 Boston eleven won nine, losing to Florida, 6 to 0, and to Clemson, 6 to 3. The next season brought a clean sweep, climaxed by a 19 to 13 upset of Tennessee in the Sugar bowl.

In the 11 games, Boston scored 339 points to 55 and six of the victories were shutouts.

Since Rockne's death in an airplane accident over Kansas early in 1931, Notre Dame's head coaching succession had passed to Heartly [Hunk] Anderson and Elmer Layden. Layden, one of the fabled Four Horsemen, had taken over in 1934. At the end of the 1940 season he resigned as athletic director and head coach to become National Football league commissioner.

Return of Leahy

Once again Notre Dame was looking for a coach. But it was a short search. Two weeks after Layden's resignation, Leahy, then 32, was announced as the new athletic director and head coach. The date was Feb. 15, 1941.

He took charge in spring football practice on March 12. On the same day, he was given a tremendous ovation by several thousands of students in the-Notre Dame Gymnasium.

"This is a trip back home," he responded. "We [he often used the editorial 'we' instead of 'I'] hope, with the guidance of the faculty, good material, hard work, and with the support of the student body, to produce a team comparable to those that have preceded."

Accepts the Challenge

"The student body is the 12th man on our team and it will be the best 12th man in the United States. We accept the challenge of this appointment. Perhaps we can make in a small way a return on the tremendous debt we owe our alma mater."

Leahy brought along his three Boston assistants - Ed McKeever, John Druze, and Joe McArdle. None had played football at Notre Dame except McKeever, who transferred to Texas Tech after his freshman year.

Of the three assistants he brought to Notre Dame from Boston, all stayed except McKeever. It was McArdle who took command during the 1953 season when Leahy's attack of Pancreatitis Between halves of the game against Georgia Tech on Oct. 24 forced him to the sidelines.

Coached Over TV

Before returning to the practice field on Nov. 4 for the match against Penn, Leahy directed the squad from his bed in St. Joseph's hospital when a closed television circuit was rigged up at Cartier field, more than a mile away.

Leahy started repaying his "debt" to his alma mater in the 1941 season when the Irish won eight and tied one. The deadlock was a scoreless tie with the Army. Leahy was named the Coach of the Year in the annual poll of the New York World-Telegram. His team had beaten three rivals from the Big Ten-Northwestern, Indiana, and Illinois.

The strain of Leahy's terrific coaching pace first developed in the 1942 season when he left on Oct. 9 for a checkup at the Mayo clinic. It was not uncommon for Leahy to summon his aids to staff meetings as early as 5 a. m. He worked far into the night.

Passes Team to McKeever

"I have reached the point physically where I am of no value to the Notre Dame he said. "For this reason, I have decided to leave the squad in Ed McKeever's hands."

Leahy, after treatment for what was diagnosed as spinal arthritis, returned three weeks later for the game against Navy which Notre Dame won, 9 to 0.

In discussing his condition, Leahy recalled he had suffered a back injury as a youngster in diving and that in his freshman season at Notre Dame several vertebrae were injured in a head-on tackle of Marty Brill.

Lost to Great Lakes

The Irish won seven, lost two, and tied two in this hectic 1942 campaign. Losses were to Georgia Tech, 13 to 6, and to Michigan, 32 to 20. In 1943, Leahy's stature increased with a 9 to 1 tabulation. The defeat was inflicted by Great Lakes in the final game and in the final minute of the season by a desperation pass from Steve Lach to Paul Anderson, making the score 19 to 13.

On May 19, 1944, Leahy was sworn into the Navy in Chicago as a lieutenant. After eight weeks of indoctrination at Princeton, he was assigned to Admiral Charles Lockwood, Pacific submarine commander. Leahy's duties were to organize and supervise athletic activities and recreation for submarine crews returning from combat patrols.

Long Term Contract

When he left the Navy service late in 1945, Leahy was a Lieutenant-Commander. He came back to the Notre Dame campus in November of that year. Months before, the Rev. Hugh O'Donnell, C. S. C., president of Notre Dame, had announced the signing of Leahy to a long term post-war contract.

Leahy punctuated the resumption of his coaching in 1946 with his second unbeaten season at Notre Dame—eight victories and the inevitable scoreless tie with Army.

Johnny Lujack was his quarterback that season, as he had been in 1943 and was to be in 1947. Lujack was the first-string quarter back in 22 of the games in those three seasons.

Wins All-Star Game

Leahy began the 1947 season as head coach of the College All-Stars, who won a smashing 16 to 0 triumph over the Chicago Bears—their first defeat in the colorful spectacle. The Notre Dame coach went on to an undefeated, untied season which included nine victories. Most spectacular, perhaps, was the 59 to 6 shellacking of a Tulane team which came to South Bend with all Dixie predicting a victory.

After 1947, Leahy's Irish elevens had won 41 games, lost three, and tied four. The phenomenal record brought him rich offers, including one to join the Detroit Lions.

Leads All-Stars Again

Leahy, again the College All-Stars' head coach in 1948, saw his forces beaten by the Chicago Cardinals, 28 to 0. Players from Notre Dame and Michigan predominated. The Irish played the T formation, the Wolverines the single wing. Leahy felt it only fair to divide his squad into units playing the two different systems. In so doing, he might have sacrificed his chances for victory or for a closer game.

The Irish rolled on in '48, winning nine straight until held to a 14 to 14 tie by Southern California in the final game.

On March 22, 1949, Leahy relinquished the athletic directorship to Ed [Moose] Krause, basketball coach, who had been a great all-athlete at Notre Dame. The action was taken at Leahy's request.

A Two Man Job

"With increased enrolment and increases in all athletic problems it would be prudent for the university to have these two-important positions handled by separate individuals," he told the Rev. John J. Cavanaugh, C. S. C., president of Notre Dame.

"We have now come to the realization that too much has been demanded of Frank Leahy," said Fr. Cavanaugh. "As a result of performing the duties associated with both positions, he has more often than not had to put in working days lasting from 16 to 18 hours."

Always the pessimist in public statements on Notre Dame's victory chances, Leahy said in the spring of 1949: "We'll have the worst team Notre Dame ever had. We'll lose seven games."

Won 10 Out of 10

It developed into Leahy's most whopping season with the Irish winning 10 out of 10- the first a 49 to 6 rout of Indiana, the last the spectacular 27 to 20 triumph over Southern Methodist.

Leahy's reward was his selection by the Football Writers of America as football's Man of the Year. The Washington Touchdown club gave him a similar honor. Emil Sitko was rated the nation's outstanding back. Leon Hart won the Rockne Memorial trophy as the nation's best lineman, an honor which had been won by Bill Fischer in 1948 and Bob Dove in 1942.

A Big Strain

Commenting on the strain of coaching during the 1949 season, Leahy said:

"When you are a coach at Notre Dame you don't control your personal life. You belong to the people, to the priests, to the radio. I notice now that I become fatigued a little earlier each day. My family would be happy if I decided to discontinue coaching. During the fall, I get home twice a week. The other nights I stay at the university. In 1947, during the winter months, there was one stretch when I was home only six nights in 90. The rest of the time I was out, speaking."

Only once did Leahy publicly blast officiating at a game in which his team competed. This was in 1949 after a 27 to 7 victory over Washington in Seattle.

"How could it be a good game when we had to play four extra men?" he asked. "They tried to even up the game. They wouldn't even explain to our captain the penalties they called."

The Irish had an unbeaten string of 38 games when the 1950 season started. They defeated North Carolina in the opener, 14 to 7, but this was the end. The next Saturday they were walloped by Purdue, 28 to 14. This was to be the only dismal season in Leahy's career. Notre Dame lost three more times and wound up with a 4-4-1 record.

At Best In 1951

Leahy's greatest coaching challenge came in 1951. He had perhaps the youngest squad in Notre Dame History and even the staunchest supporters of the Irish were not prepared for a spectacular comeback. He perhaps showed his greatest genius as a coach in directing the team to a 7-2-1 season.

The defeats were inflicted by Southern Methodist, 27 to 20, and by Michigan State, 35 to 0. But after this latter loss the Irish rebounded to trounce North Carolina, Iowa, and Southern California.

In the 1952 season, Notre Dame was the underdog in at least five of its games. These five opponents either won or tied in their conference races. One of them, Michigan State, was national champion in '52.

Sixth Unbeaten Season

Again, the Irish posted a 7-2-1 record. They lost to Pittsburgh in the third game, 22 to 19, and to Michigan State, 21 to 3, in the eighth contest of the year. Then they walloped Iowa, 27 to 0, and Southern California fell, 9 to 0.

Then came Notre Dame's sixth unbeaten season in 1953, climaxed with a 48 to 14' crushing of Southern California. Only a 14 to 14 dramatic tie with Iowa prevented another all-victorious campaign.

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 14 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 30miles 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 to take 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 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.

There are many stories about talented players not coming to Notre Dame because of its de-emphasis of football and reemphasis of academics. People across the universe make decisions that benefit them, not somebody else. Therefore, many great players from across the nation, who would have come and played for Notre Dame, were forced to look for other opportunities for a free education. Why pay tuition at Notre Dame in a football program that no longer cares about winning, when a college education and a brighter football career someplace else was free?

On top of not having the proper cadre of replacement players for normal duty. Brennan's team were injury prone in 1956 and the coach was forced to play mostly sophomores. There were numerous player injuries and the lack of players resulted in a (2 – 8) record. This was the first losing season for Notre Dame since 1933 and it was the worst football season in the history of the school. Nobody said that it was not Terry Brennan's fault. Even students blamed Brennan. The ND community, not tuned into the impact of scholarship reductions felt that Brennan was being paid to win... period.

Despite Brennan's poor record there was a lone bright spot—Paul Hornung. The great Paul Hornung, the bad boy everybody seemed to love, who would go on to be a phenomenon for the Green Bay Packers, won the Heisman Trophy for Brennan and Notre Dame. To this day, Hornung remains the only player ever to win the coveted Heisman award while playing for a team with a losing record.

Unfortunately, many fans and alumni were not prepared to look into why the personnel on the team could not play as well as the opposing teams. They were not into giving Brennan a second chance and they steadfastly called for his resignation, but the young coach, after this miserable 2-8 season, was unexpectedly retained.

It was tough not being able to replace able players who had been injured, but the movement by school administrators to put more emphasis on academics and less on athletics naturally led to the popular notion that Notre Dame had deemphasized football.

In addition to less scholarships, players with talent who could have gotten an available Notre Dame scholarship had to deal with coaches from other teams using a recruitment message that Notre Dame was doing away with football to be a better academic school. Why compromise your football career on a wish? —was the message.

Brennan therefore was forced to do his best with players who were not as talented as most scholarship athletes. His total was reduced to 20 football scholarships per class, while Notre Dame was not willing to drop to Division II. The Irish continued to play tough schedules. Brennan worked hard and did surprisingly well.

Academics had always come first at Notre Dame, but for a few years after Leahy went 4-4-1, the prior coach had carte blanche to do what he wished until the Rev. Theodore Martin Hesburgh became president of the university. One of Hesburgh's first priorities as president was to reaffirm Notre Dame's position on academics.

Brennan's 1957 squad showed improvement and were nicknamed "Comeback Comets" after finishing (7-3). This team had some great moments such as a win W (23-21) comeback over Army and a monumental W (7-0) shutout of Oklahoma, snapping the Sooners' NCAA record 47-game winning streak. After ND loosened up on the scholarships, there was not enough time to rebuild. Seniors with experience are typically not in any coach's recruiting class. Nobody was out there lobbying for Terry Brennan, the kid who took a chance on Notre Dame.

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 look at each of Brennan's seasons. See what you think. Nobody's perfect, even the most well-intentioned officials.

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.

Other home victories for Notre Dame included September 25 against Texas W (21-0) and November 13 against North Carolina W (42-13), Away wins for the Irish began with Pitt W (33-0), and continued with Navy W (6-0), Penn W (42-7), Iowa W (34-18), and SMU W (26-14).

Let's take a look at the one loss that Brennan's team suffered in his first year as coach in the 1954 season. This is taken from the December 1954 edition of ND's Scholastic Magazine:

Notre Dame, Ind., Oct. 2—An upset-minded group of Purdue Boilermakers cut short a Notre Dame winning streak this afternoon at 13 games, 27-14. Len Dawson, six feet of sophomore quarterback, passed and kicked the Irish right out of their own stadium before some 58,000 open-mouthed spectators. Purdue couldn't seem to make many costly mistakes this afternoon and as a result, young Irish mentor Terry Brennan, suffered his first collegiate defeat.

The Fighting Irish battled right up to the final gun, but a stubborn Purdue line filled most of the holes of the Irish T attack with more defenders than the backs could cope with. Notre Dame came back strongly in the third quarter to tie the score at 14-14. But it was Dawson again who found his receivers dashing through the Irish secondary ready and willing for anything he could toss. Perhaps the heart-breaker came when big Lamar Lundy, a 6' 7" sophomore end, hauled in a Dawson pass and out-ran two ND defenders for 73 yards and the third Purdue touchdown

...

Again Dawson's toe was true and Purdue had jumped into the lead, 21-14, never to go behind again. Purdue used six running plays and a ten-yard pass to put the ball on the Notre Dame 38-yard line. With Dawson at the reins, he threw a five-yard screen pass to Murakowski on the 33 and he scampered

the remaining distance to score. Dawson missed the point for the first time, but Purdue didn't really need it. Final score: Purdue, 27; Notre Dame, 14.

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. Home games included a season opening win against SMU W (17-0), followed by a home victory against Indiana W (19-0. Navy came to Notre Dame on October 29 W (21-7).

Then on November 19, Iowa came to town for an ND win W (17-14). The Irish traveled to Miami to play the Hurricanes W (14-0). This was followed by the rivalry loss at Michigan L (7-21) and a win at Purdue W (22-7). ND won at Penn W (46-14) and at North Carolina W (27-7) and in the season ending game in California, USC toppled the Fighting Irish for the Jeweled Shillelagh L (14-20).

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.

September 22 season opening loss

Notre Dame began its 1956 season September 22 with a loss at Texas in Cotton Bowl Stadium against SMU L (13-19). Indiana came to Notre Dame the next week and Notre Dame picked up its first of two season wins W (20-6). The win streak ended as Purdue came into town to finish off the Irish L (14-28). Michigan State then won the Megaphone Trophy on October 20 at Notre Dame L (14-47). Oklahoma was ready for Notre Dame on October 27 and won handily L (0-40).

Notre Dame then lost to Navy at Navy L (7-33), Pitt at Pittsburgh L (13-26), Iowa at Iowa L (8-48), and USC at USC L (20-28). USC retained the Jeweled Shillelagh. On November 17, North Carolina came into South Bend and the Irish got their second win of this very long season W (21-14). Terry Brennan was not the hero of ND fans across the country in 1956.

After always having the players he needed to play the game demanded by Notre Dame. He felt that he was denied the ability to consistently win. He recovered his composure in the 1957 season, and the team performed substantially better.

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.



Irish QB Bob Williams # 9 on ND's winning drive

The historical highlight of the season was on November 16. Terry Brennan's Fighting Irish marched into Oklahoma Memorial Stadium to play the proud Sooners, who were sporting a 47-game winning streak. At the time, this win streak was the record. Notre Dame's W (7-0) victory over Oklahoma snapped the Sooners' NCAA record 47-game winning streak. A lot of forgiveness was given by Notre Dame Fans for the 1956 season after this great triumph. The win against Oklahoma was monumental. Victory was denied the Sooners that day by QB Bob Williams, Terry Brennan, and all of the Fighting Irish that afternoon at Owen Field.

"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!



The 1957 season began away at rival Purdue in which Notre Dame claimed the Shillelagh Trophy from its victory W (12-0). Indiana then came to South Bend and were defeated W (26-0). Army was back on the ND schedule before 95,000 at Municipal Stadium in Philadelphia where the Irish won W (23-21).

On October 26, Notre Dame went to Pittsburgh and defeated the Panthers W (13-7). A strong Navy team pulled into Notre Dame Stadium the next week and defeated the Irish L (6-20). On November 9, the Irish lost at Michigan State L (6-34). The Spartans got to keep the Megaphone Trophy for another year.

The 7-0 Irish victory at Oklahoma was the following week. A tough Iowa team then came to Notre Dame Stadium on November 23 and defeated the Fighting Irish L (13-21). Back at home on November 30, Notre Dame won back the Jeweled Shillelagh against USC (40-12). The Irish finished off the season with a win against SMU at the Cotton Bowl in Texas (54-21)



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.

Notre Dame's home victories were against Indiana W (18-0), Duke W (9-7) and North Carolina W (34-24). Away victories came from games at the Cotton Bowl v SMU W (14-6), Memorial Stadium in Baltimore against Navy W (40-20), and USC in California W (20-13). The Irish suffered home losses to Army L (2-14) and Purdue L (22-29 in which the Irish gave up the Shillelagh Trophy.

The Irish were defeated on the road by Pittsburgh L (26-29) and Iowa L (21-31).

Regardless of Joe Kuharich's prowess as a pro-football coach, I think with scholarships restored, Terry Brennan had learned how to field and coach college football players. I was only ten years old at the time so nobody asked me for advice and at the time, I could not have given it. I wanted ND to win... that was it!

After the end of this season, Terry Brennan and his whole coaching staff were fired and Joe Kuharich was appointed the new Notre Dame Head Coach. Coach Hugh Devore was eventually retained for Coach Kuharich as an assistant.

Let me end the Terry Brennan Era with two well-written, poignant articles that give different perspectives on Brannan's time at Notre Dame. This first article on Terry Brennan is from Notre Dame's Scholastic Magazine's January 1959 edition. The students saw Brennan's firing as a just outcome of not performing as promised:

It is certainly probable that sometime in the future Notre Dame will not be financially dependent on "big-time" college football, but it still is today. The income from Notre Dame's intercollegiate football program finances all the other sports at the University as far as I can ascertain. It is obvious then that a serious reduction in the income from football would result in the forced abandonment of the rest of Notre Dame's intercollegiate sports program.

There are many idealists both here at the University and outside it who feel that football, as well as all other sports, should be not the business it is now but purely an athletic outlet for the students. This column will not try to decide the merit or lack of it in this statement. It rather merely

assumes as a basis the fact that Notre Dame at present needs "big business" football.

Since football here is a business and necessarily so from a financial standpoint (whether this is the way it should be or not), those who have concerned themselves with the recent firing of Head Football Coach Terry Brennan must remember that Brennan had a job to do. Whether or not he should be retained by the University depends on how well it feels he is accomplishing his job.

Obviously, the five-man faculty board which recommended Brennan's release looked at his record and concluded that he had not done as well as he should have. What I mean by "as well" is this: He had not performed his job as a FOOTBALL COACH as well as he should have.

WRONG BASIS

This is one of the two points on which the newspapers around the country, in their practically unanimous denouncement of Brennan's release have been carried away by their own emotionalism. The newspapers have argued against Brennan's dismissal on the grounds of his character, personality, and integrity. I doubt that any of the backers of the dismissal base their arguments on the lack of these attributes in Brennan. The release was based on an evaluation of his ability' as a football coach, not on an evaluation of his character.

Just as the University would tend to release the head of any academic department if he were not measuring up to the University's high academic standards, it reserves the right to release the football coach for the same reason if the faculty board feels the situation warrants such action. While the football coach is more publicized than any head of an academic department here, he still must perform up to the expectations of his employer.

ACADEMIC EMPHASIS

The second and more poignant point on which the newspapers and magazines, although not as many, have taken what is in my mind an unreasonable stand is the diminution of emphasis on the academic. Some publications have concluded that the release of one football coach and the replacement of him by another leads inexorably to a drop in the academic emphasis and ideals at Notre Dame. Academic standards at the University need not drop because of the change in coaches.

Academic standards do not depend on how many games a football team wins but rather on the emphasis on the academic life of the students and

the faculty. A desire to win football games is not incompatible with this emphasis.

Most of the newspapers and magazines that have expressed an opinion on this matter have brought up the fact that Brennan compiled a 32-18 record in his five years here. It is also true that he had a 6-4 record against major opposition in his last season.

Last year it was different. Newspapers have claimed that a 6-4 record against major opposition is creditable enough for any school; many schools would be more than satisfied with this record. It is significant that Notre Dame was satisfied apparently with Brennan's 2-8 record two years ago. Father Hesburgh endorsed him enthusiastically at that time.

Brennan was not released because he compiled a 6 & 4 record in itself. He was released because he compiled a 6-4 record when the faculty board felt he should have done better with the material he had. I feel the same way. —T.T.

***** End of Scholastic article *****

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.

I would like to thank Sports Illustrated for permitting me to reprint the second closing article from the Brennan era. This piece is by Leon Jaroff and is presented from 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

It was only last month that Moose Krause, athletic director of Notre Dame University, assured a gathering of Chicago sportswriters that "Terry Brennan was a better coach this season than he was last year, and he will be at Notre Dame for many, many years to come."

Although there were rumbles of discontent from Notre Dame alumni over the fair-to-middling 6-4 season just completed, the writers had no reason to doubt Krause's statement. The 1958 Irish, while not measuring up to the formidable standards of Rockne- and Leahy-coached teams, still played exciting football, drew near-record crowds and always stayed within striking distance of victory even in the four games they lost. More important, the team and its coach seemed to fit well into a university whose president, the Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, has been striving mightily to raise academic standards, gain prestige and place football in its proper status in university affairs: an important but not domineering force.

On December 11, at a football team banquet, the university's executive vice-president, the Rev. Edmund P. Joyce, indicated that the administration was taking the team's four losses philosophically. Father Joyce, who is also chairman of the Faculty Board for Athletic Control, admitted that the season "was disappointing" but firmly said that "Notre Dame will continue to field teams in the proper educational atmosphere."

On the evening of December 16, 30-year-old Terry Brennan was entertaining a few friends in his modest white frame house in South Bend when the telephone rang. It was Father Joyce. The message: the faculty board had recommended Brennan's release. Stunned, Brennan agreed to keep the firing secret until the following Sunday but flatly turned down an offer to resign:

"That might look as if I were quitting and running out, and that isn't the way it was at all."

On Sunday, four days before Christmas, Notre Dame announced Brennan's dismissal. It also released a letter from Father Hesburgh. "It is with great reluctance that I accept this recommendation," he wrote to Brennan. "In the five years that you have been head football coach...you have impressed all of us as the kind of young man Notre Dame aspires to produce." But what young Terry Brennan had obviously failed to produce was enough victories.

In the days before Brennan, South Bend wags will tell you, there were only three rules a coach had to obey to keep his job: 1) Win every game. 2) Win by more than the betting point spread. 3) Gain the No. 1 rating in the nation. And the wags will wink and tell you that one reason why Frank Leahy left is that a fourth rule was written in when Father Hesburgh became president in 1952. The fourth: Obey the other three if you can but do it with A students. In fairness to Father Hesburgh it must be reported that he would have liked to erase Rules 1 to 3, but even the president of Notre Dame is only partially in control of its football fortunes. As for Rule 4, under Hesburgh's administration an athlete has been obliged to maintain, not an A average, of course, but a respectable 77%.

Young Terry Brennan was aware of the Rules when he took over for the 1954 season, but he believed he could field winning teams even within the Hesburgh framework. For the first two years he did just that, won nine games and lost one in 1954, won eight and lost but two in '55. But when the class of '56 was graduated, with it went the last of the players who had come to South Bend under the old Notre Dame recruiting tradition, and the next fall the Irish had the worst football season in their history, losing eight games and winning only two. Alumni screams arose calling for Brennan's dismissal. For two months, the university's administration was silent, then tersely announced: "Terry Brennan has been re-engaged for another one-year period."

In the best of all possible worlds, a university ignores alumni when it thinks they are wrong. Compounding the sensitivity of Notre Dame's position, however, is the fact that the university is engaged in a \$66 million fund drive, and the fund raisers have been running into an old fact: it is easier to raise money when you have a winning football team. The man in charge of the Notre Dame drive is the Rev. John J. Cavanaugh, Father Hesburgh's predecessor as president of the university. As early as September 1957 the Detroit Times, in a story by Sports Editor Ed Hayes, identified Father Cavanaugh as one of the men most anxious to see football changes. Prophetically the Times added: "The man they'd like to install as head coach is the veteran professional coach, Joe Kuharich, a former Notre Damer now head man for the Washington Redskins."

After the 1957 season cries came again for Brennan's removal. This time the university issued not a sentence on Brennan's status, and without even a written contract Brennan began to build a promising team including 25 veterans from the '57 squad which, after all, lost only three games and won seven, including a stirring victory over Army and an upset of Oklahoma, which had been unbeaten for 47 games. In 1957 Brennan had been lucky in the vital moments but in 1958 his luck invariably failed. Injuries to his key linemen kept the defense shaky, and 23 fumbles blunted the potentially great Irish attack.

There is little doubt that Terry Brennan considers his dismissal unfair, that he is disappointed, hurt and a little angry. He is also, like any reasonable man who has done his best, puzzled by the furor and the firing. "I think that Notre Dame will always have good football teams," said Brennan slowly and thoughtfully last week, "but I think that those who hope for a return of the good old days are being very unrealistic. Our overall policy here has been to aim in a certain direction educationally, and to get a winning team, too. I don't understand how I failed in that respect. Strange, strange business."

No one can say for certain what reasoning the Notre Dame athletic board followed in determining to fire Terry Brennan. So, secret were the deliberations that Athletic Director Krause did not learn of Brennan's dismissal until Terry did. But what is certain is that the pressure for championship teams became so strong, both among the alumni and a faction of the faculty, that the administration was worried into doing something about it.

The problem actually could have been solved by an announcement that Notre Dame would immediately increase its recruiting and the number of football scholarships and lower the academic requirements for players. But such a candid solution would have been bad for public relations and might have destroyed the university's academic status so carefully raised by Father Hesburgh.

Another solution, more politic but dangerously ephemeral, would have been simply to fire Brennan and hire a high-powered coach, without changing the athletic scholarships, recruiting policy or academic standards. For a while the wolves would have been appeased, only to return in full pursuit in a year or so when the new coach failed to produce a championship team—a feat considered impossible with the material Notre Dame has been receiving for the past several years.

As it turned out, Notre Dame did indeed fire Brennan and hire Joe Kuharich of the Washington Redskins. No mention was publicly made about scholarships and recruiting and standards, but football observers thought it entirely unlikely that Kuharich would have left a five-year contract in Washington without assurances that he would have adequate scholarships and enough "academic risk" players to produce the kind of team that the more relentless Notre Dame alumni demand. Kuharich ticked off the players he wants: "Those dedicated to football—those with a deep-rooted love for the game—those who want to sacrifice and suffer for it."

But in trying to placate the Old Boys of Notre Dame probably no one in the university's administration anticipated the resentment that Brennan's firing would set off. All across the nation -- editors, sports columnists, football coaches and even Brennan's players condemned the Notre Dame action. Louisiana State's young Paul Dietzel, the 1958 Coach of the Year, said evenly: "Anyone taking that job now should have his head examined. Firing Brennan will have the effect of setting back football 20 years at Notre Dame."

But setting it back 20 years—or 40 years—is precisely what the Old Boys seem to want. It is something unlikely to come about. What has come about, however, is a rebuff to the progress Father Hesburgh has made in balancing educational excellence with football prowess at Notre Dame. The real tragedy at South Bend goes beyond the unhappy denouement of the Notre Dame career of Terence Brennan, halfback and coach. The real tragedy is the reluctant surrender of the forces that worked for a sane athletic policy.

In this respect, the most biting comment on Brennan's dismissal came, not from the platoons of sports editors and football coaches, but from a Catholic weekly newspaper.

Wrote the Indiana Catholic and Record, official newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis: "The firing of Terry Brennan is a setback for the priests and laymen who are trying to remake the public image of Notre Dame from a football factory to a first-class university.... They are the ones who really lost." Amen!

Chapter 15 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. 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 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.

Notre Dame's season began at home against North Carolina W (28-8), followed by an away loss at Purdue for the Shillelagh Trophy L (7-28). Next was California at California W (28-6). Then a loss at Michigan State for the Megaphone Trophy L (0-19) followed by Northwestern at home L (24-30), Navy at home W (25-22), followed by Georgia Tech at home L (10-14) and then Pitt at Pitt L (13-28) and Iowa at Iowa W (20-19).

On November 28, to close the season at Notre Dame, the Irish beat Southern California, a long-time nemesis W (16-6) assuring the Jeweled Shillelagh Trophy for another year, and just avoiding a losing season.

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.

The Irish started off their 1960 season sandwich with a nice slice of bread against California at home with a W (21-7) victory. Then, something went wrong. No matter how well Notre Dame played

and no matter how close the games were, for eight straight games Notre Dame could not scrounge out one victory for luck or money. There were many close games in these eight and none went the luck of the Irish. The meat of the sandwich was the eight losses in a row.

The "meat loss" began at home on October 1 against Purdue L (19-51). This one was not close and it had an effect on the team. The next was North Carolina away L (7-12). Then, it was Michigan State at home L (0-21), followed by away at Northwestern L (6-7), Navy at Philadelphia L (7-14), Home with Pittsburgh L (13-20), Miami at Miami L (21-28), and finally the last loss--Iowa at home L (0-28).

Somehow, with all that pain behind them, the Fighting Irish (1-8) seemingly with all the fight kicked out of them, proudly went to California to play USC for the Jeweled Shillelagh. More than that, this game gave the Irish a chance to put a nice piece of bread on their poor tasting season sandwich.

Unexpectedly after such a dismal season, with USC always being such a tough major competitor, Kuharich's Fighting Irish found their fight; found their mettle; and owned the game that brought them the Jeweled Shillelagh Trophy W (17-0). This capped off the season with a nice piece of bread on one of the ugliest season sandwiches in ND history.

Nobody can deny that without that last slice of California's finest bread, the sandwich would have been even lots less tasty.

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.

Notre Dame started the year right with a win W (19-6) at home against a tough Oklahoma team. Keeping the momentum,

Kuharich's boys went to Purdue and came home with the Shillelagh Trophy in a close match W (22-20). Southern Cal came early to Notre Dame and again gave up the Jeweled Shillelagh in an overpowered match W (30-0) against the Irish. Michigan State was having a great year and the #1 Spartans took on Notre Dame at Spartan Stadium and sent the Irish home without the Megaphone Trophy L (7-17).



Darryl Lamonica set to pass

Northwestern, always a tough rivalry came to Notre Dame and played the Irish hard and took away a win L (10-12). Navy got word that Notre Dame could be beaten and they came to town and walked out with a win L (10-13) over the Irish. ND then went to Pittsburgh and won a close one W (26-20).

Syracuse which had not played the Irish in quite a while, came in and played close but lost W (17-15). Iowa, a nemesis in many otherwise unbeaten Notre Dame seasons took on the Irish at Iowa and made short work of the Irish L (21-42). On December 2, Notre Dame played Duke in the warmer weather and found the Blue Devils more than their equal in a defeat L (7-13).

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:

"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 takes. 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.

In 1960, as a junior, Nick was second on the Fighting Irish in tackles (behind senior captain Myron Pottios) with 71. As a senior in 1961 he led the team with 74 tackles as the Irish co-captain and was rewarded with 2nd-team All-America selections from UPI, TSN, and the Football Coaches' Association. He was the only All-

American on Notre Dame's 1961 team.



Marc Buoniconti, with NFL Hall of Fame dad Nick. played linebacker for the Citadel

son, Marc, a linebacker at The Citadel who played as tough and as fearless as did his dad, dislocated his neck between the third and

The Irish went 12-18 during the Buoniconti years and not Because of NB. That stretch had very few bright spots. Notre Dame managed to beat rival USC all three years and knocked off a highly-ranked Syracuse team with a dramatic last second field goal in 1961. Buoniconti made 212 tackles in his career, including 74 of them to lead the team in his senior season.

Nick Buoniconti said that playing on a losing team prepared him well to deal with the inevitable disappointments of medical research. On October 6, 1985, his

fourth cervical vertebrae while making a tackle on third-and-short. "He was dying in the hospital in Johnson City," Buoniconti said. "He played East Tennessee State and made a tackle and before his arm hit the ground, he said, 'Dad, I knew I was paralyzed.'"

Here is a great article on Nick and Marc Buoniconti that you may like to read at <http://notredame.247sports.com/Article/Former-Notre-Dame-All-American-fights-for-a-cure-for-paralysis-68056a>.

Nick Buoniconti and his son Marc, have dedicated their lives to find a cure for paralysis. This is a much tougher mission than football. The team of Nick and Marc Buoniconti have helped to raise more than \$350 million for spinal cord research. When many of us think of tough, we think of Notre Dame. Now, when we think of tough, we can think of Notre Dame's Nick Buoniconti and the Citadel's Marc Buoniconti who have played a tougher game than football, the game of life, and they are winning.

Feel free to help this great project that is determined to help those suffering catastrophic sports injuries. Please make a donation. Today, The Miami Project is the world's most comprehensive spinal cord injury (SCI) research center, and a designated Center of Excellence at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. - See more at: <http://www.themiamiproject.org/#sthash.wFrhzP6B.dpuf>:

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.

In 1962, Notre Dame went to Oklahoma for the first game between the two teams on September 29 and the Sooners were denied a

victory W (13-7). Then came Purdue to ND Stadium and they won L (6-24). ND then went to Wisconsin and lost L (8-17). Then a home loss against Michigan State L (7-31). The Irish were 1-3 and things did not look good for Notre Dame or Kuharich as the coach.

The Irish took off for Northwestern on October 27 and lost big L (6-35). Off to Philadelphia Municipal against Navy for a win W (20-12). Then a few home game wins came along starting against Pittsburgh W (43-22) and then North Carolina on November 17 W (21-7), and a tough Iowa team W (35-12).

The ND season finale was in California against Southern Cal and the Irish could not get their mark above 500 as the team lost to the Trojans L (0-25) before 81,676 fans.

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 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.

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. His next job was even more fortuitous.

From how I see things, Coach Kuharich either had bad luck or was a bad coach. If he were a bad coach, he fooled a lot of people. To get the ND job and the other great jobs afterwards, he had to be a great guy and very likable. That's the thought I shall keep.

Nonetheless, as a kid, I can recall my dad, an avid ND fan looking for victory after victory, just like his son, complaining often about Coach Kuharich both at ND and then when we would watch the Philadelphia Eagles who were just 100 miles south of us on Sundays. We gave our snowy Admiral B/W TV a nice workout watching great football games. Everybody who watches football likes their team to win.

In 1964, a wealthy businessman named Jerry Wolman, another nice guy, bought the Philadelphia Eagles and coached Mr. Kuharich out of retirement to become the general manager and coach of the

Eagles. After the first year, Joe Kuharich was rewarded with a 15-year contract by Wolman

During the 1968 campaign, when the Eagles had a tough time, Wolman sold the team, lock, stock, and barrel to Leonard Tose, who decided he would bring in his own head coach. Kuharich went back to his job with the NFL.

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

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.

The Irish looked pretty good. Then ND played two games at home in which they upset a tough Southern California team W (17-14) and then clobbered UCLA W (29-12). They looked so good, it was as if the Irish were back and Devore had the spirit of Rockne and Leahy helping him drive the team to victory.

At (2-2), the prospects of a good season seemed achievable for the remainder of the season. ND had devastated UCLA and beat their big nemesis Southern Cal. After just four games, it did not appear that Notre Dame was about to be pushed around by anybody. Hugh Devore, who had been on campus for a long time and was as familiar as a relic on campus as the Golden Dome itself, would become very hard to demote in favor of a "permanent" coach if he kept directing ND to victories. The plight of an interim coach is that the interim is interim.

The new coach had been mentoring the freshman squad until spring 1962 when he reassumed the head coaching job. As you may recall from this book, Devore was head coach for one year during World War II in 1945 the year before Frank Leahy came back from the Navy. He had a 7-2-1 record that year.

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.

Devore made some position changes to help the team. Fullback Joe Farrell went to halfback. End Jim Kelly, the fine pass receiver, became a defensive halfback for a while. The Coach also instructed his quarterbacks not to throw so much to Kelly, who caught 41 passes in the prior year, because he did not want the team or opponents to become "Kelly conscious." In the end, he said, "the ideas all have to be your own."

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. Their last five games were as follows: at Stanford L (14-24), at home, Navy L (14-35), and then Pittsburgh L (7-27). Then it was a very close loss at Michigan State L (7-12), and another close one at Syracuse L (7-14).

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.

My own conclusion on Brennan—who was shocked and heartsick to be fired, and who had believed in his heart that he was just at the beginning of a great and very successful career with Notre Dame—is that he was right. It took a long time for Notre Dame to find another Terry Brennan. It was not Joe Kuharich. When the University found another Terry Brennan, I am convinced the fathers of the institution realized how special—special coaches are.

After struggling through an ugly period of years with many ND losses, our readers have survived the Joe Kuharich era and we are all

ready to move on to happier times with no artificial restrictions on scholarships.

Kuharich, a professional coach was brought in because Terry Brennan was not cutting the muster according to a mythical job description. Under the same evaluation criteria as Terry Brennan. Kuharich unfortunately for those with great expectations, never once came close in four years to cutting the muster or offering proof of his college coaching abilities.

Vince Lombardi wanted Joe Kuharich's job

In football, great Jerry Kramer's wonderful book, Distant Reply, a follow-on book to Instant Replay, he recounts a story about another great coach, who unfortunately for both parties, never coached at Notre Dame University. Kramer was an 11-year offensive guard with 11 pro-bowls who played for Coach Vince Lombardi at Green Bay. Some people call Jerry Kramer: "The best player not in the hall of fame." Lombardi is Kramer's eternal selection for best coach of all-time.

Here is the Lombardi story: While talking to Willie Davis, his all-pro defensive end about accepting the fact that he had been traded to the Packers several years earlier, Coach Lombardi offered one of his own disappointments in life, hoping to ease Davis' "pain." In the privacy of his office, Lombardi told Willie Davis his own big secret:

'Willie, 'do you know that I applied for the coaching job at Notre Dame twice and never got as much as an acknowledgement to my letter?' Jerry Kramer tells the story that this particular loss at this time in Lombardi's life was so fresh and meaningful to the great coach that tears came to his eyes.

In his story, there are no dates as to when Lombardi may have applied for the job as head coach but the timing was right that it would be between 1953 and 1958. As we know from Brennan and Kuharich, these were times that big changes were going on in Notre Dame coaching. But, the letters may not have even gotten to anybody's in-basket with the hundreds or thousands of others. That's why Lombardi sent two. He was serious.

Lombardi had played football for Frank Leahy when he coached at Fordham. Not only that but he was a member of the famed "Seven

Blocks of Granite,” the nickname given to Fordham University’s famous offensive line—the line built by Frank Leahy before he became head coach of Boston College on his way to Notre Dame.

Lombardi had been assistant coach at Army but soon joined the New York Giants' staff under Jim Lee Howell. In 1958, when Kuharich was hired, Vince Lombardi was part of the Giants' organization but he again was on the move, looking for a head coaching position. It could have been Notre Dame. He would go to Green Bay as general manager and coach.

Because of his success, he became a national symbol of single-minded determination to win. They loved him at Green Bay. Can you imagine if it were Lombardi instead of Kuharich at Notre Dame back when? Talking about legends and legends and legends.

Yet, those two different years when Notre Dame changed its coaches certainly fit in with what Vince Lombardi was doing at the time, and Lombardi was ready! It was something that could have been. There may not have been a Brennan or a Kuharich if there were a Lombardi. Is it not funny the unpredictable turns in our lives?

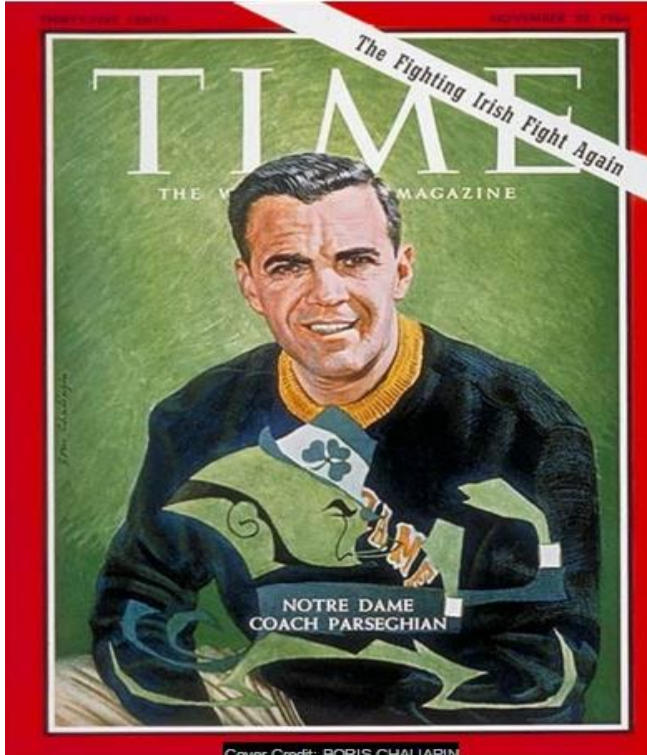
Chapter 16 Ara Parseghian Era: 1964-1974

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



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

After enduring a losing composite record after the Frank Leahy years, Notre Dame Head Coach Ara Parseghian, the new coach, immediately put fight back into the Irish and put the Fighting Irish back on the map. It was the beginning of the Parseghian Era in 1964, the coach's first season at the helm.

This 1964 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was nothing short of remarkable. Many sports pundits suggest that without some questionable officiating in their final game against Southern California, the Irish would have been undefeated and untied, and would have been the consensus National Champions in Ara's first year. All it takes is a will!

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

"The spirit might be willing, but it takes a powerful amount of flesh to make a football winner—and the most optimistic experts did not figure Notre Dame for much this year [1964]. The school hadn't had a winning season in five years; 22 out of 38 lettermen had graduated

from the prior year's squad that lost seven of its nine games. Parseghian rebuilt the team as though he were running a fire sale."

John Huarte

What would have or might have is not the 1964 Notre Dame story. Parseghian would have his time to win championships for Notre Dame. The 1964 Notre Dame story is that Ara Parseghian, fresh from turning in a terrific job at Northwestern, came to Notre Dame and took a team that barely broke 500 and with mostly the same players, including quarterback John Huarte, turned them into a #3 consensus 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, and the second comes 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. California came into ND Stadium on September 18, a week earlier than the college season usually began in those days and were defeated by the Irish W (48-6). Purdue, who had given up the Shillelagh trophy in Parseghian's first year were now home against a Notre Dame team that they knew would be tough. In a very close game, Purdue pulled out the win L (21-25).

Notre Dame fans knew that a high ranking season would be tough. Northwestern, a team that just two years prior was coached by

Notre Dame's second-year head coach arrived in South Bend and settled for a loss W (38-7). Army, always tough, played the Irish again. This time it was at the relatively new Shea Stadium in Flushing, NY. ND won the game W (17-0). The 1964 spoiler, USC came to South Bend on October 23, after ND had a one week rest. The Irish remembered the prior game that denied them the 1964 National Championship and took back the Jeweled Shillelagh in a convincing win against USC W (28-7).

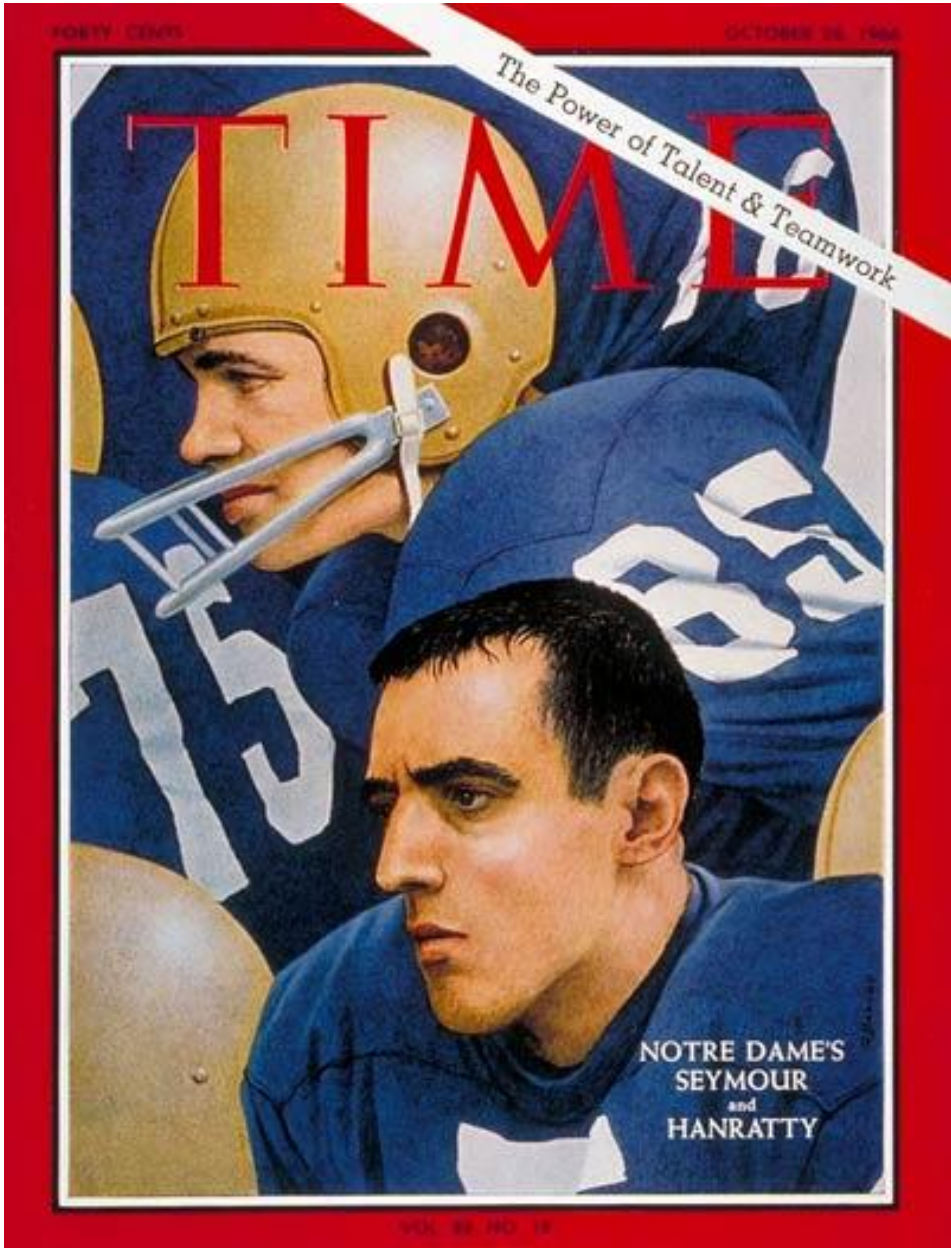
Navy was next on the schedule at home. The Irish soundly defeated the Midshipmen W (29-3). Off to Pittsburgh for a convincing win W (69-13). North Carolina came the next week to South Bend on November 13 W (17-0). The next week Michigan State came loaded for Bear came into Notre Dame Stadium and almost shut-out the Irish L (3-12). It was the second loss of the second season and though played well, the #4 Irish going into the game, fell way down in the polls. Notre Dame traveled south the Saturday after Turkey Day and played Miami to a T (0-0) tie for a season record of (7-2-1.) and a top ten finish in the rankings.

1966 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian

In his third year as head coach of Notre Dame, Ara Parseghian brought a National Championship to Notre Dame for the first time since Frank Leahy's teams in the 1940's. The 1966 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team ended the 1966 season undefeated with nine wins and one tie away at Michigan State.

The Fighting Irish earned a consensus title after beating No. 10 Oklahoma W 38-0 in Norman, tying unbeaten and No. 2 Michigan State T 10-10, and ending the season defeating No. 10 USC, W (51-0), in the LA Coliseum. The 1966 squad became the eighth Irish team to win the national title and the first under Parseghian. The Irish outscored its opponents 362-38.

The 10-10 tie between The Spartans and the Irish remains one of the controversial games of college football, and is considered today to be one of the great "games of the century." Let's look at the other Notre Dame victories before we examine this 10-10 tie in a bit more detail.



On September 24, Purdue came into Notre Dame Stadium carrying the Shillelagh trophy to play #6 ranked Notre Dame. The Irish won back the trophy with a W (26-14) win. Playing the next week at Northwestern, the Irish came home with a victory W (35-7). The following week at home, they met rivalry Army in a rare South Bend appearance. Parseghian's Irish defeated Army W (35-0) and the

following week, October 15, unranked North Carolina came to ND, who at the time were ranked #2 and lost W (32-0).

In all these games, except for the USC game, when Hanratty was injured, Terry Hanratty was the thrower and Jim Seymour was the catcher. Hanratty and Seymour formed a passing / receiving duo all season that led Notre Dame to the national championship. Hanratty, who went on to play for Pittsburgh in the NFL, would also be teammates and friends with halfback Rocky Bleier at Notre Dame before the two were teammates in Pittsburgh. After North Carolina, the next week number one ranked Notre Dame went to Oklahoma to play the # 10 ranked Sooners and the Irish won big W (38-0).

Then, it was off to Navy in Philadelphia for a win W (31-7). The next week on November 5, unranked Pittsburgh came to ND Stadium and were beaten solidly by the Irish W (40-0). After the tie with Michigan State, the Irish went to 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.

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.

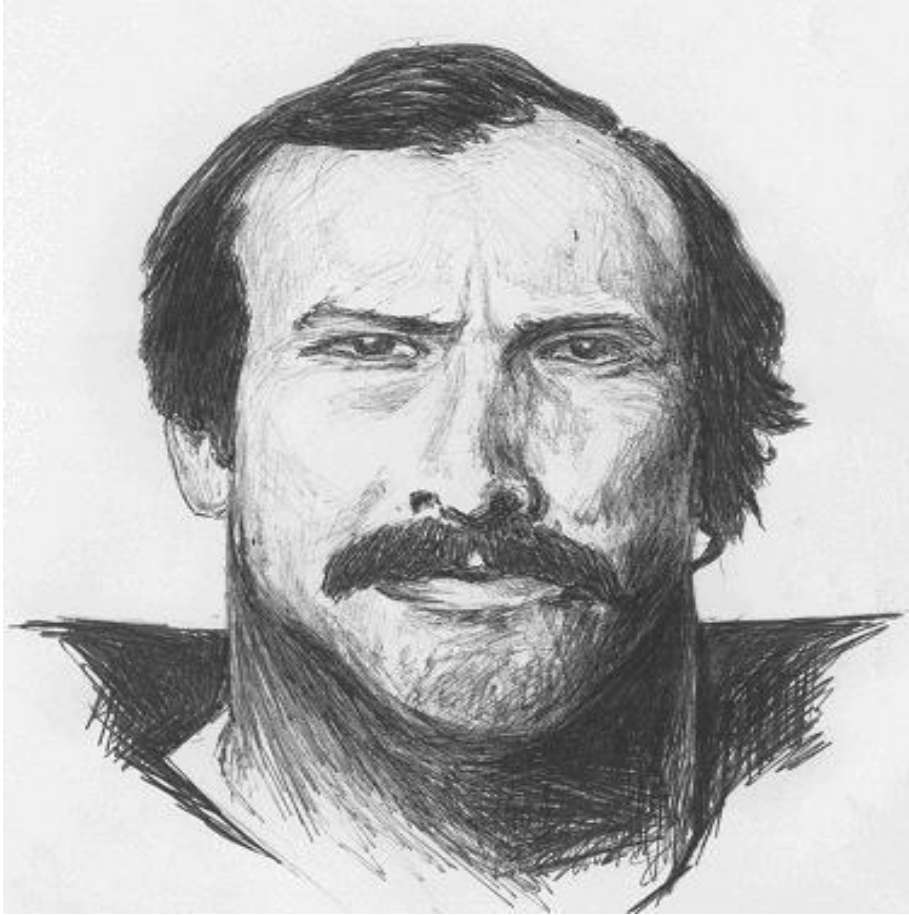
The first game was fine with a win against California at home W (41-8). Then Notre Dame traveled to Ross-Ade Stadium in West Lafayette, IN., to play arch-rival Purdie. The Boilermakers took back the Shillelagh Trophy in a close win against the Irish L (21-28). On October 7, Iowa came to South Bend and were soundly defeated W (56-6).

Then came the Trojans to ND Stadium from California. USC was always a team that meant business. Notre Dame was still ranked # 5 before the Trojan game. However, after the defeat L (7-24) at the hands of USC and losing the Jeweled Shillelagh Trophy, Notre Dame was unranked until the Irish defeated Michigan State on October 28 at home W (24-12). In this game, ND captured the Megaphone Trophy. In between USC and Michigan State, the unranked Irish defeated Illinois W (47-7) at Champagne.

On November 4, a proud and always tough Navy team came to South Bend. Notre Dame won this game W 43-14). The Irish then traveled to Pittsburgh for a November 11 encounter with the Panthers and a nice win W (38-0). Continuing on the Road 'til the end of the season, on November 18 Notre Dame traveled to Georgia Tech W (36-3) and then on November 24 to Miami W (24-22) for a rare Friday night game to finish the season.

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.



Rocky Bleier 1967 ND Captain -- Super Bowl Star with Steelers

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!

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).

On September 28, when Purdue, ranked # 1 at the time while ND was ranked #2, came to Notre Dame Stadium, they intended to keep the Shillelagh Trophy, and in fact, they brought it back to Purdue with them after a win L 22-37 against the Irish. Notre Dame also surrendered the Megaphone Trophy after a loss L (17-21) to Michigan State October 26, at Spartan Stadium. When the Irish traveled to California to capture the Jeweled Shillelagh Trophy from the grip of # 2 ranked USC, the Trojans played hard and so did the Irish. The game ended in a tie T (10-10). The trophy stayed at USC for another year.

Other than those two losses and one tie in the trophy games, Notre Dame picked up seven wins – five at home and two on the road. The home wins were the season opener September 21 against Oklahoma W (45-21). The Sooners came to South Bend with a preseason ranking of #5. The Irish were ranked # 3 at the time.

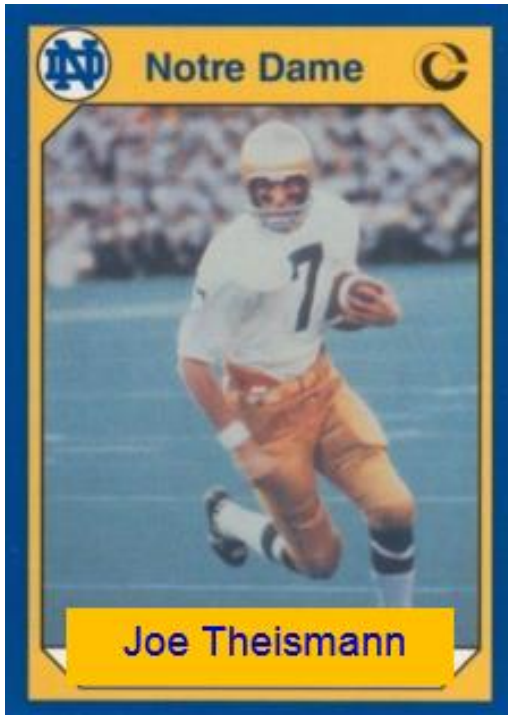
The Irish defeated Northwestern on October 12, W (27-7), Illinois W (58-8), Pittsburgh W (56-7) and the last home game was against Georgia Tech W (34-6). Away game wins included Iowa on October 5 W (51-28), and Navy at JFK Stadium in Philadelphia W (45-14),

1969 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Ara Parseghian

The 1969 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Ara Parseghian. The Fighting Irish finished the regular season with eight wins, one loss, and one tie.

Joe Theismann

Joe Theismann was not known for being the biggest QB on the field. In fact, at 5'10 and less than 150 lbs., ND coaches upon meeting Theismann the first time were amazed at his small stature for a star



football player. One of the assistant coaches remarked that he was looking at the team's new water boy rather than a quarterback.

Theismann was on the bench until his sophomore year when Terry Hanratty was lost to an injury. It took Joe Theismann no time to make a difference. He led the Irish to two wins and a tie in his first three games.

In 1969, as a junior, Theismann was unquestionably the starter. He led the Irish to a number five ranking, their first bowl appearance, and a near upset of national champion Texas.

In 1970, the Irish had a 10-1 record, a number two ranking and gained their revenge win over top-ranked Texas.

Theismann was the runner-up in the Heisman voting and was recognized as a first-team All-America and as an Academic All-American. As a starting quarterback, he compiled a 20-3-2 record while throwing for 4,411 yards and 31 touchdowns. Theismann set school records for passing yards in a game (526), yards in a season (2,429), and touchdowns in a season (16).

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.

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).

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.

Again in 1970, the only blemish on the Fighting Irish record was a season finale against unranked USC at USC in which the Irish lost L (28-38). Not having an especially good year with a 5-4 record, John McCay's 1970 Trojans were ready for the Fighting Irish and they played their hearts out to gain the victory.

The game started out with a Theismann completion for a touchdown followed by three straight first quarter scores which set

the Irish back for sure. ND fought its way back to cut the lead but then, the Blue and Gold suffered two major miscues in a row in the end zone and USC scored touchdowns both times.



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.

This was enough to secure the margin of victory. Even with two late game Theismann passes for touchdowns, Notre Dame could not muster up enough points to overcome these major mistakes.

The Irish did get a second Cotton Bowl opportunity against the Texas Longhorns. This time the Irish would disappoint none of its fans as it conquered the Longhorns at Dallas, W (24-11) before 73,000 fans. The game was telecast on CBS TV.

The ND Alumnus Magazine offered its thoughts on the Cotton Bowl Victory:

This was a long-awaited rematch! ND vs Texas in the Cotton Bowl on the AstroTurf on a warm afternoon in Big "D." The pundits have had their say—The Irish came up with a magnificent team effort that dominated the talented Longhorns for most of the afternoon and earned a decisive 24-11 victory, and eventually a No. 2 National ranking.

It was a great collective effort and superb coaching which severed Texas' 30-game win streak and it undoubtedly brought back into the

fold most of ND's fair-weather advocates of the "can't win the big one" theory. No matter!

1970 regular season's games

On September 19, in the season opener, the Irish beat Northwestern W (35-14) at Dyche Stadium, Evanston Illinois. The following week in a rare thumping, Notre Dame soundly defeated long-term nemesis Purdue W (48-0) at home. Then it was off to Michigan State at Spartan Stadium and the Irish, ranked # 4 at the time, and defeated the Spar-tans W (29-0). Army then came to South Bend W (51-10).

The #3 Irish then traveled to # 18 Missouri for a win W (24-7). Then it was off to Philadelphia against Navy W (56-7). On November 2, the Pittsburgh Panthers came to town and ND prevailed W (46-14). The following week, the #1 ranked Irish hosted Georgia Tech in a close win W (10-7). LSU came to Notre Dame for a rare appearance and played the Irish tough for an ND victory W (3-0). Following this was the unfortunate trip to USC L (28-38) and then of course the terrific rematch Cotton Bowl game v Texas W (24-11)

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 season opener at home was Northwestern W (50-7) followed by a very close away game victory at Purdue. The Purdue game is one of the all-time great games for both Purdue and the Fighting Irish. Here is how it went down:

The famous "genuflect play"

Notre Dame was the preseason #1 in 1971 even without Joe Theismann, who led the Irish to No. 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:

From 1971 December Scholastic

Some years ago, 1966 to be exact, Notre Dame humiliated the Trojans of Southern California, 51-0, on their way to a National Championship. To make things worse, they performed this feat on SC's home turf. The Irish have been paying interest on that shellacking ever since. Once again the "ghost of '66" returned to haunt the Irish and smash their dreams of an undefeated season.

John McKay's Trojans made it look easy — all too easy. All they did was wreck the pride and joy of the '71 Irish — the defense. A defense that had seemed impregnable for the first five games crumbled like dust at the hands of SC's duo of quarterbacks, Jimmy Jones and Mike Hae. As in '70, Jones could do no wrong. Only this year he had an able assistant in Mike Rae who also played to perfection. Both riddled the highly respected Irish defense with ease. Without the help of the defense, Notre Dame's offense was lost. It simply wasn't ready yet to assume the burden of winning a football game on its own.

After SC's Bruce Dyer picked off a Brown pass at the Irish 49, Jones proceeded to do what he knows best — fling that football. And fling it he did, for a 31-yard scoring strike to Edesel Garrison, who simply out raced Clarence Ellis to the ball and the end zone.

The Irish looked as if they were going to make a game of it on the next series. Gary Diminick brought the crowd to its feet with a 66-yard kickoff return to the SC 34. Seven running plays later Andy Huff had tied the score on a 1-yard plunge over left tackle.

But then SC retaliated with a long return of its own. Charley Hinton gathered Scott Smith's kickoff at his own goal line and raced 65 yards to the Irish 35 where Clarence Ellis stopped him. Once again it was Edesel Garrison outracing the Irish secondary as Mike Rae, with all the time in the world, lofted a 24-yard scoring strike to him to put the Trojans in front for good.

Things looked bad, but they got worse in the second quarter. Taking over possession at the ND 46 after a Brian Doherty punt, good ol' Edesel went to work again. Jones found him on a 42-yard pass play that moved the ball to the Irish 4. Notre Dame's defense stiffened, but only momentarily, as Sam "The Bam" Cunningham hurdled for 1 yard and the score three plays later.

The Irish began to panic prematurely. They abandoned their game plan and went to the air. It didn't quite work. On second and ten from the Irish 49 Brown tried to hit Dewan in the middle of what looked like a sea of Trojans. It never quite got to Darryl. Bruce Dyer picked off Brown's pass and raced 53 yards, unmolested, to seal Notre Dame's doom. At 2:20 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, the Trojans had done it again.

The Irish desperately tried to get back in the game in the second half, but could only muster a third quarter touchdown by John Cieszkowski for their efforts. They had some excellent scoring opportunities handed to them by Trojan miscues, but they were just too tight to get the offense to click. Their spirit was broken; they were a defeated team before the game was over.

Just what happened to an Irish defense that had been so stingy giving up points for the first five games? John McKay had the answer. "We were hoping they would play Garrison with single coverage. All week long we had practiced throwing the bomb to him. We weren't sure we could run against them, so we wanted to be able to pass. Garrison runs the 440 in something like 45 seconds, so we didn't think any of their defenders could stay with him deep. Our blockers did an excellent job of shutting off their pass rush and all our quarterbacks had to do was just wait back there for him to get open."

Edesel Garrison, the speedy end who gave the Irish nightmares all afternoon, gave his account of what happened. "On the first touchdown pass I simply beat Ellis to the corner. The second time I beat Ellis deep he tried to beat me to the corner, but I caught the pass underneath him. On that second touchdown, I gave their defender (Crotty) an inside move and he slipped."

And that's all there was to it. Three big offensive plays and one big defensive play. All led to USC touchdowns. The Irish simply couldn't come up with the big plays that USC did. A dejected Ara Parseghian echoed this feeling in a hushed locker room after the game. "All I can say," summed Ara, "is that we needed the big play several times and did not get it; whereas, Southern Cal got it when they needed it." L (14-28)

So once again the cry of "wait till next year" can be heard resounding around the campus. Maybe our dues to USC will be all paid up by then and we can take out another big loan like in 1966. Or maybe John McKay can start paying back part of the debt he's run up. But it better be soon. The debt's getting bigger and bigger every year.

Navy came the next week W (21-0). Following this, Notre Dame flew out to Pittsburgh to meet the Panthers at Pitt Stadium and came home with a blowout win W 56-7. Tulane came into South Bend the following week and were defeated W (21-7). On November 20, Notre Dame then went to Baton Rouge Louisiana to play the # 13 Tigers and were beaten L (8-28) to end the season.

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)

The Season began away at Northwestern W (37-0) followed by Purdue at South Bend W (35-14). Michigan State at East Lansing was next W (16-0). On October 14, Pittsburgh was the first of three straight home games W (42-16),

The Irish then lost to Missouri L (26-30) followed by a win W (21-0) against TCU. ND travelled to Philadelphia to face Navy W (42-23) and on November 11, the #12 ranked Irish played Air Force in Colorado W (21-7).

On November 28, Miami came to Notre Dame Stadium and were beaten W 20-17. Following this, Notre Dame went to California against arch rival and nemesis USC, and the Trojans defeated the Irish again L (23-45). 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.

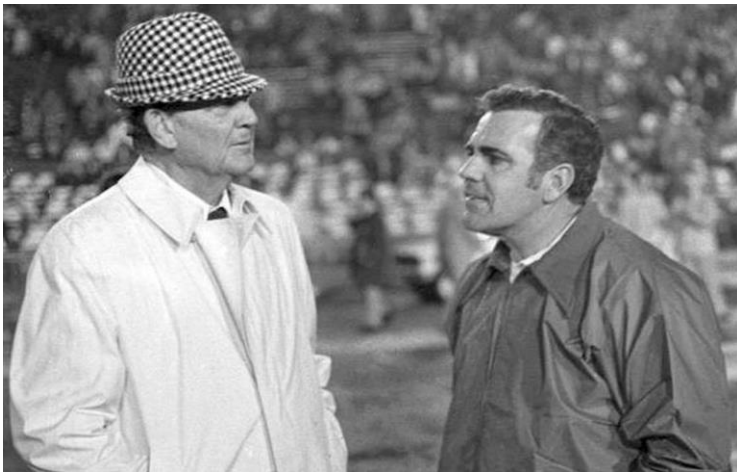
The Irish started the season strong, amassing large margins of victory over Northwestern W (44-0), Rice W (28-0) and Army W (62-3) to set up a highly-anticipated contest with No. 6 and unbeaten USC. USC always gave the Irish a tough time and were a perennial season spoiler during Parseghian's years. 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.

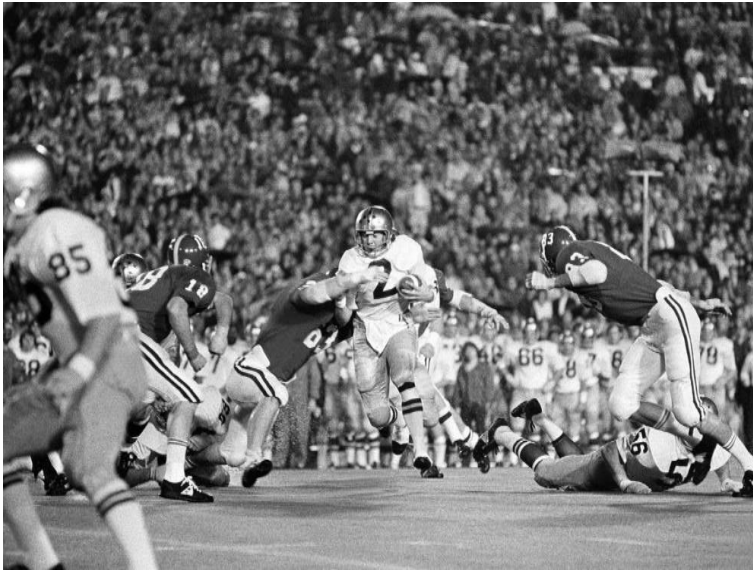
The other 1973 Notre Dame victories on the way to the National Championship included: Purdue away W (20-7), Michigan State at home W (14-10), Navy at home W (44-7), Pittsburgh away W (31-10), Airforce at home W (48-15), and Miami away W (44-0).

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 1974 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was the 11th season coached by Ara Parseghian. It would be Coach Parseghian's final season as Notre Dame Head Coach. As all Parseghian seasons, this 1974 season was also a great one. I recall in my mid-twenties in 1974 missing Ara as soon as his departure was announced.

There is a lot of good fortune in winning a championship. There is a lot of skill and good fortune to win two great championships, especially in the Parseghian era as all football teams were toughening up and the competition was nothing to sneeze at.

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 beat 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, they played harder than Notre Dame. I don't think so; but they were always highly motivated to beat the Notre Dame Fighting Irish.

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). The season began earlier than normal on a Monday night, September 9 in a game against the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets at Grant Field in Georgia. The Irish won W (31-7).

Then it was off to Northwestern for a great game for the Irish W (49-3). Purdue's L (20-31) victory temporarily took the air out of the sails but as usual ND came back. The Irish beat Michigan State at Spartan Stadium W (19-14) and then played Rice at home W (10-3), and then Army at home W (48-0).

Miami, always a tough foe came to South Bend and went home with a loss W (38-7) and ND went to Philadelphia on November 2 for a very close match against Navy W (14-6). Pittsburgh was next for a close home game W (14-10), followed by Air Force W (38-0), and then came the L (24-55) shellacking by USC. 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!

Thankfully, Mr. Parseghian is still around and still attending Notre Dame games. It is reported that he and Coach Brian Kelly have a great relationship. Long live Ara Parseghian, one of the great ones in life.

Chapter 17 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.

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. 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 at Notre Dame whenever a legend, one of the immortals' time ends and a mere mortal such as Dan Devine must take over. I reached to Notre Dame's Student magazine, the Scholastic to find an article that showed the new attitude on campus. See piece on prior page.

Though Parseghian had not died like Rockne did ever so tragically, the Notre Dame faithful and the scribes at the Student Newspaper seem to have identified at the time, a major disturbance in the "FORCE." I don't know how else to say it. The predestination of an immortal taking Notre Dame to an undefeated season again seems to be in the front of this thinking, but, additionally, something morose seems to have overtaken the campus at this time.

One notable change after Parseghian is that the Football issue of Scholastic came out in January instead of December. Maybe it is because of bowl games.

1975 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Dan Devine

The 1975 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Dan Devine in his first year. Devine had taken over for the retired Ara Parseghian, and he had mostly a Parseghian selected team to work with in 1975.

Devine led the Irish into its first "Holy War." The Holy War is an American rivalry between the Boston College Eagles and University of Notre Dame Fighting Irish. In 1975, it became a new nonconference rivalry in college football. Unfortunately, for the Irish, in years to come, BC would add itself to the list which includes USC and Purdue as major ND championship spoilers, I regret to say.

Why Holy War?

Its name comes from the fact that both teams are run by orders of priests. The Eagles are directed by the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) and the Fighting Irish are directed by the Congregation of Holy Cross (CSC). They represent the only two Catholic universities in the United States which still compete in the Football Bowl Subdivision of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. As we know, this is the highest level of competition in American college football.

On September 15, 1915, in a rare Monday night college football game, Notre Dame squared off against Boston College at Schaefer Stadium in Foxboro Massachusetts in the first of the Holy Wars. Notre Dame won the game W (17-3) before 61,501. The next week the Irish were at Purdue for another win W (17-3) followed by

Northwestern at home W (31-7). Then the Irish played Michigan State to a loss L (3-10) at home. ND losses, though disappointing, are rarely blowouts.

The next away game was North Carolina W (21-14) and then an always rugged Air Force team played the Irish in Colorado. The game was a nail-biter W (31-30). Long-time nemesis USC ranked # 3 came into South Bend on October 25 and defeated the # 14 ranked Fighting Irish L (14-17). Navy then played the Irish at home W (31-10) followed the next week, November 8, by Georgia Tech W (24-3).

The following week ND took off to play a tough team at Pittsburg, ranked # 9 at the time. The game was in Pitt Stadium and Pitt brought down the Irish L (20-34) for the first time since the beginning of the Ara Parseghian Era. Pitt had lost every game to Notre Dame during Ara's years. This fact was not lost on the ND faithful.

For its final game of the regular season, Notre Dame played Miami on November 22 before an attendance of just 24,944 in Orange Bowl Stadium. It was not a bowl game. The Irish team voted not to attend a bowl game in 1975.

1976 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Dan Devine

Dan Devine was the University of Notre Dame Head Football Coach in 1976. From Irish standards, his first year had not gone well, though when compared to regular mortal men, it was not too bad at all. His squad lost three games in 1975 and did not go to a bowl game. Bowl games are a dime a dozen today but in 1975, there were only 11 bowl games.

Dan Devine's mission to painlessly replace the legendary Ara Parseghian had gotten off to a fine start but the naysayers were calling it a slow start and they believed something needed to change. When ND faithful cannot find a reason to cheer for the team, they have sometimes in the past taken out their misery by cheering for the removal of the coach. Often, I have been among those fans calling for the ouster of somebody. Not this time with Dan Devine. The 1976 Notre Dame Football team won one additional game over

1975 and it looked like there would be even better things ahead. But, there were still three losses!

Things that end well do not always begin well and so it went for Notre Dame in 1976. The team was ranked #11 and played ninth ranked Pitt in the home opener during the Tony Dorsett years. Dorsett was on his way to a Heisman Trophy season. It was expected that the Pitt Offense would be formidable but worse than that, the Pitt Defense was stubborn and it dominated the game. Dorsett ran all over the Irish defense in the second half and Pitt won the game L (10-31). Pitt eventually won the National Championship. Pitt was not the same old Pitt as in the Ara era.

Notre Dame was able to readily take care of three Big Ten opponents, Purdue W (23-0), Northwestern W (48-0) and Michigan State W (24-6). All were decisive, but these Big Ten teams were not ranked well in 1976. In fact, none of them would finish the year with a winning record. ND also beat a floundering Oregon team W (41-0) which brought Notre Dame to 4-1 and at the time, they were ranked #14 in the polls.

The Irish had lots to prove but it was good they were winning and had spirit. South Carolina was not having a good year but when Notre Dame traveled to Columbia on October 23, the Gamecocks were ranked #19. Notre Dame played well. Its defensive end Ross Browner, led the way to a win W (13-6). Browner had an excellent season and captured the Outland Trophy. The Irish moved back up to # 11 in the polls.

The Irish then beat Navy in a neutral-site game at Cleveland W (27-21). Navy would win only four games in 1976 so ND did not move in the polls after the victory. Georgia Tech, the next opponent at Georgia won only four games in 1976 but one of them to the Irish fans chagrin was against Notre Dame L (14-23). Notre Dame moved to a #18 rank in the polls.

Notre Dame Quarterback Rick Slager was inexperienced. Joe Montana was sitting on the bench. The following year of course, Joe Montana took over the duties. For the world as seen by Dan Devine in 1976 though, the Coach had to make do with what he had while his fledgling team's talent grew in experience.

On November 13, a # 10 ranked Alabama team came to South Bend to take on the Irish. Notre Dame proved the team was ready for big things with a big step forward in a win W (21-18) over the Crimson Tide. The verdict on Alabama was not all in, however, as the Crimson Tide season ended at 9-3, which for this storied program under the "Bear," was not respectable.

This was not one of best years for head coach Bear Bryant. Both ND and the Tide were on the verge of great things but it seemed 1976 would not be the year for either team. Nonetheless Notre Dame's win moved them back up to #13 and they again knocked on the door of the Top 10.

Notre Dame's home win over Miami (40-27) set up the season-ending battle with major nemesis USC. Notre Dame was well aware that a Top 10 spot was on the line. Notre Dame played competitively in California against the # 3 ranked Trojan team that still had a shot at all the marbles. However, the Irish lost the close game L (13-17). That was the end of the regular season. It was an 8-3 finish with some promising play along the way.

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.

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.

1977 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Dan Devine

The 1977 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Dan Devine in his third year as head coach This Notre Dame football team was ranked third in the country to start the season. Its veteran defense was again expected to do well with returning Outland Trophy winner Ross Browner at defensive end.

Willie Fry was on the other end and Luther Bradley was the Irish key defensive back. The position coach in the secondary was the late

Jim Johnson, a great defensive coach. Johnson was at the beginning of a career that would see him become the renowned defensive coordinator for the Philadelphia Eagles' best teams in the early 2000s.



Ole Miss Rebels player L.Q. Smith scores a touchdown v ND in 1977

This was a great season but it did have a major burp in the second game against Ole Miss. Devine brought the Irish to 10-1 regular season and a win in the Cotton Bowl Classic against Texas W (38-10). The 1977 squad became the tenth Irish team to win the national title and were led by All-Americans Ken McAfee, Ross Browner, Luther Bradley, and Bob Golic. Junior Joe Montana, a future Pro Football Hall of Fame member, was the starting quarterback on this team.

Third year coach Dan Devine expected great things from his talent-rich Notre Dame team after a well-played 9-3 season and 20-9 Gator Bowl win over Penn State the previous year. The team needed experience and they got it and in 1977 they were ready for big things.

Starting the year off in a firestorm, Notre Dame, with a preseason ranking of #3, had no choice but to play its best. The first opponent

was the Pitt Panthers, who were the defending national champions. The Panthers had won in South Bend while moving towards their national championship in 1976.

Things were brighter for the Irish in 1977 for the Irish because Heisman winner Tony Dorsett was gone. Dorsett was starring as an NFL rookie in Dallas. Notre Dame won the opener W (19-9), but immediately gave it back with a very surprising loss at home to Ole Miss L (13-20). The masses were asking: Was it the end of championship hopes in the Devine Era?

Notre Dame fans do not like things to go wrong and they were grumbling all over the country after the Ole Miss loss. After two-three-loss campaigns, another three-loss season would be clearly unacceptable. Even today, that is not acceptable at Notre Dame, where the pleasant scent of a National Title has been lost for some time now. It certainly was not OK in 1977.

The offense was playing poorly as junior quarterback Rusty Lisch, who started the first three games for Devine was struggling, and then he got hurt. Second-stringer Gary Forsythe got the chance against Purdue and Notre Dame fell behind 24-14. Devine was not pleased and looked to the bench and found another junior waiting to play. The new QB was their third-stringer—a kid named Joe Montana.

Montana had played well in some relief work as a freshman in 1975, then he missed the 1976 season with a shoulder injury. Montana proved his mettle at Notre Dame and in pro-football. Before immediately was up, he had led the Irish back to a win away over the Boilermakers W (31-24). He then led consecutive wins over Michigan State at home W (16-6) and Army away W (24-0). Those wins set the stage for a mid-October date with fifth-ranked USC, a team with the gift of having the Irish's number. Doing well against USC would bring relevance back to the ND program.

The 1977 Notre Dame-USC game has a special place in Fighting Irish lore. The Blue and Gold team was not going to wear blue and gold. When Notre Dame returned to their lockers after the pre-game warmups, to get their "Devine" pep talk, there was something different there. It was in their lockers already. The Irish saw

something—Kelly green jerseys. On this day, Kelly green would replace the traditional dark navy customarily worn. It electrified the team and when they came running out of the tunnel again, the crowd went berserk.

As simple as the change to green jerseys may have been, it gave the Fighting Irish a huge emotional lift and there was no question about the outcome of the game from the moment the Irish took the field. They pummeled USC (49-19).

Led by Montana and tight end Ken McAfee, a third-place Heisman candidate, Notre Dame would finish its season with five straight wins to finish. Their 10-1 record was amazing considering the slow start. There was still one more challenge. On November 12, at Clemson a tough Tigers team took a lead and had Notre Dame down by double-digits. Montana put his helmet back on and began to lead the Irish back to victory. Joe Montana was able to add another early chapter to his comeback legend. He got it done when it counted and led the Irish back to a win W (21-17) against Clemson.



A Buried Montana Sneaks Ball in for Game Winner at Clemson

Notre Dame concluded the season ranked #5 in the country and got an invitation to play #1 Texas in the Cotton Bowl.

On the way to the Cotton Bowl after USC, ND stopped Navy at home W (43-10), and then the next week crushed Georgia Tech W (69-14). After Clemson, it was Air Force at home W (49-0), and Miami at Miami W (48-10).

The Cotton Bowl was played on Sunday January 2 since New Year's Day was Saturday on the "long" football weekend. Few thought that a Notre Dame New Year's Day run to a national title was likely, but it was theoretically possible. ND had a fine season with the one burp being Ole Miss.

At the time, four teams were ahead of Notre Dame in the rankings—in addition to Texas, there was Oklahoma, Michigan and Alabama—all were in separate bowl games, so the Irish could hope to pull off a miraculous turnaround. It would be as easy to bring about as a completed "Hail Mary" pass for a touchdown. But then again, Notre Dame was named after Mary, the mother of Jesus, so all things were possible.

In 1977, there were no BCS champions and the bowl games were the end of the season. The AP and the UPI determined the champions and there were times that they did not even wait until the bowl games to make their decrees. So, without a BCS, in 1977, it was possible for the national championship to be determined on New Year's Day or even January 2 if it was a Sunday game.

On this January 2, a Sunday, playing against Texas, it was well known that the Cowboys from Texas had won the NFC championship the day before so the Texans were hoping for a two-for weekend. It sure would be nice for them if UT added a nice national championship to the Texas picture.

The Longhorns had an exceptional runner who had just won the Heisman Trophy, notably Earl Campbell. He was a powerful runner with some of the biggest muscular thighs ever seen on a back. Campbell had a great big NFL career ahead of him.

The good news for Notre Dame in the game was that its defense was able to prevent Earl Campbell from getting it going. Texas helped things by turning the ball over time and again. The Longhorns got

the fans going by scoring first for a 3-0 lead, Notre Dame had stopped their advance for a touchdown. Joe Montana, along with running backs Jerome Heavens, Vagas Ferguson and Ken McAfee kept scoring after that. The final score was W 38-10, well worthy of a national championship, but it was not assured as other teams were also in the hunt.

Other than Alabama, who handily had beaten a 9-2 Ohio State team in the Sugar Bowl, all other teams seemed to eventually lose their place in the championship line. Michigan was upset by four-loss Washington and quarterback Warren Moon in the Rose Bowl. The heavily favored Sooners were an almost sure bid for the national championship title if they were able to defeat Arkansas.

Oklahoma found Arkansas weakened when Razorbacks coach Lou Holtz suspended three players for disciplinary reasons prior to the game. Yet, somehow, the Razorbacks were not going to lie down.

Despite not having his key players, who had scored more than 75% of the season's points playing in the game, Hogs coach Lou Holtz made his first mark on South Bend history even before he arrived to coach the 1986 season. Holtz's Arkansas smoked OU 31-6 and it was then down to Notre Dame or Alabama for the national championship. The pundits would have to decide.

The pundits were chatting that it would have been an ideal time for a plus-one format after the bowls, because the Irish and Tide both appeared to be deserving of championship status. Alabama had played a consistently tougher schedule and their September loss to Nebraska was infinitely more defensible than Notre Dame's defeat at Ole Miss.

But the Tide had mostly close games that were nothing like the ND blowouts. Alabama had no great runaways like the wins—shall I say the catastrophes—Notre Dame had hung on USC and Texas, beating two highly regarded opponents by a combined 58 points.

The Voters do like “trophy wins” over a consistently steady long haul. In the end, 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.

After the 1977 Championship season, Notre Dame was on a continual high, which lasted into the fall of 1978. The ND basketball team had also made it to the Final Four. The high would end abruptly as the football season began. Notre Dame suffered two quick home losses to open the season, L (0-3) September 9 against Missouri, and L (14-28) September 23 against Michigan.

Joe Montana was at quarterback for his senior year and the Irish were ranked #5 to begin the season. Losing two at home was a less than stellar start to the season.

In the Missouri game, Montana had trouble with the ball and committed three red-zone turnovers. The Irish were stopped on fourth down in another scoring opportunity. On another, the Irish were very close and on another fourth-down attempt, they shanked an easy field goal.

One mistake after another with nothing positive in between gave Missouri a L (0-3) shutout of the Irish. ND quickly fell to #14 in the polls.

Michigan came in and took advantage of ND not having its act together. The Wolverines walked out of Notre Dame Stadium with a win L (14-28). Then came Purdue and Michigan State back to back. These Big Ten stalwarts would each win eight games and finish second and third in the league. The Irish came back at home against Purdue to win W (10-6) and in another four-point game, they squeaked out a win against the Spartans at Spartan Stadium W (29-25).

Pitt came to South Bend on October 14. The Panthers were at an “in-between” spot in their program history. Tony Dorsett was no longer there to assure their attack and Dan Marino had yet to arrive

on campus. The 1978 Panthers still had a lot of spark and were ranked when they came to Notre Dame Stadium to play the Irish. Pitt took a 17-7 lead into the fourth quarter.

Comeback Kid Joe Montana strikes again!

It was time for the "comeback kid," a nickname owned by Joe Montana for being able to bring the Irish victory from the open jaws of defeat. This would be the start of a number of 1978 comebacks for Montana. He fired seven straight fourth quarter completions, including two touchdowns that gave Notre Dame a win W (26-17). The Irish had been unranked since the Michigan loss. The victory over # 9 Pitt brought ND back to the national rankings at # 20.

Feeling pretty good about themselves, the Irish defeated Air Force away, W (38-15) and the victory over Miami W (20-0) nudged Notre Dame up to the #15 rank.

Navy was enjoying a big year in 1978 and was 7-0, ranked 11th in the country, when they met Notre Dame in a neutral-site game in Cleveland. The Irish showed how far they had progressed, rolling to a win W (27-7). The Irish then had another decisive victory W (31-7) over a struggling Tennessee team at home. Following this, the Irish went south to Atlanta and disposed of bowl-bound Georgia Tech by W (38-21).

The string of wins, well played, brought Notre Dame back into the Top 10. Running backs Vagas Ferguson and Jerome Heavens both were each having good years. Ferguson accumulated over 1,100 yards and Heavens chipping in over 700. Offensive center Dave Huffman made All-American as did Bob Golic on defense.

Montana did not make All-American. Chuck Fusina, QB for Penn State got those honors, and Fusina also was # 2 in Heisman voting. Fusina had led Penn State to an undefeated regular season in 1978. Nonetheless, Montana remained the foremost author of comebacks.

In the season finale at USC, the Irish fell behind 24-6. Montana put himself into comeback gear and led a fourth-quarter rally that put ND ahead 25-24. The win appeared to be in the books when USC quarterback Paul McDonald was sacked and fumbled on the final

possession. But a Pac-10 official ruled that McDonald had his arm going forward and the pass was ruled as incomplete. Soon, USC was in field goal range and a perfect kick brought them the game L (25-27). This was the first of two straight games that USC would win with help from officiating that was—at best—shaky.

As for Notre Dame, they were still #10 in the country and were preparing for the Cotton Bowl against Houston to be played in Dallas.

Cotton Bowl in Houston

Forever known as the "Chicken Soup Game" because of frigid temperatures, heavy winds and a frozen Irish quarterback, Notre Dame trailed 34-12 in the fourth quarter at Austin, Texas.

With quarterback Joe Montana battling the flu and back in the locker room trying to fight off hypothermia, hopes looked bleak for the # 10 Irish to come back against the No. 9 Cougars.

It was so cold and wet at game time that Montana suffered from a hypothermia attack and could not function. Notre Dame's star quarterback was kept in the locker room for safety purposes, eating hot chicken soup while covered with blankets. He was not expected to play at all.

The rescue efforts to make Montana OK were more than successful as he actually recovered before the end of the game. But, by this time, the Irish were well behind 34-12. Montana emerged from the locker room and excited the ND crowd by being back in the game with just 7:37 to play. The comeback kid was on the field. The adrenalin overcame the cold.

Tony Belden started the comeback for Notre Dame by blocking a punt that Steve Cichy returned for a touchdown. Montana converted the two-point play. The score was then 34-20. Notre Dame got the ball back and Montana led a 61-yard touchdown drive and gained another two-point conversion and suddenly it was 34-28 and there was still 4:15 to play. The comeback kid was at it again.

Notre Dame got the ball back, but Montana fumbled on the Houston 20 with 1:50 left. It looked like fate had caught up with the Irish and even chicken soup could not pull this game from the nether world.

The Cougars, however, with great ND defense soon were faced with 4th-and-1, and decided to go for it on their own 29-yard line. Facing a heavy wind, this was a defensible decision—they weren't going to get more than 10-15 net yards on a punt in these conditions. The Irish defense did not give an inch.



Notre Dame's quarterback Joe Montana shown during the 1979 Cotton Bowl. Montana led Irish to a final second win. The team was coached by Dan Devine.

A still-warm Joe Montana led the team to the eight-yard line with six seconds to play. His first pass to Kris Haines in the left corner of the end zone was incomplete. Because he released so quickly, there was at least another second on the clock.

Devine and Montana went back to the same play, and this time Montana hit Haines. The final score was W 35-34. The comeback kid had brought Notre Dame back again for a victory. If it were

today, somebody would have figured out how to take Montana's injury season and give the senior a fifth year. But, then again, Joe Montana's big opportunities were about to present themselves in the NFL.

This great player, who had been on the bench his first two seasons at Notre Dame under Joe Kuharich, would go on to win four Super Bowl rings with the San Francisco 49ers. Pundits at the time who wrote about the Irish after Montana noted that Notre Dame didn't have quite that many great moments in its future after Montana moved on.

However, all of the future ND moments would add to the lore. Together, a storied school and a legendary quarterback made the 1978 Notre Dame football season one to remember. Lou Holtz, the great one would be called on in a few years to add zip once again to Notre Dame. Dan Devine was already putting on a good show for the Irish.

1979 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Dan Devine

The 1979 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Dan Devine in his fifth season. Notre Dame finished with a regular season record of 6-4 and with its Bowl victory in Japan against Miami (40-15), overall the Irish finished the season at 7-4.

Even in what for Notre Dame is a lousy season, there are some up moments. The first of those was when Notre Dame traveled to Ann Arbor in the season opener to play Michigan.

This is the game description from Notre Dame's Epics:

1979 MICHIGAN

In a classic game simply defined by "The Block," Crable made one of the greatest special teams plays in program history when he spoiled a game-winning field-goal attempt to help preserve a 12-10 Notre Dame season-opening win at Michigan Stadium in a battle between two top-10 teams.

Crable eavesdropped on a pre-kick conversation that tipped him off the Michigan center was going to stay low after the snap and on the kick attempt. If the center was staying low, Crable was going high.

On the snap, Crable rushed forward from middle linebacker, lunged up, and used the center's back as a springboard to lift high in the air and block the 42-yard attempt.

"You run off the field and life is great," Crable said. "It certainly became a special moment in my life."

One second remained on the clock after the block, but the game was over.

Michigan led 10-6 at halftime, but the Irish defense held the Wolverines scoreless and to only 94 total yards in the second half. Notre Dame's scoring came from four field goals by walk-on placekicker Chuck Male.

Interestingly, Crable's game-winning and creative idea led to the NCAA disallowing the following season the practice of players launching themselves to gain an advantage.

The # 9 ranked Irish defeated the # 6 ranked Wolverines to begin Devine's second-last season at Notre Dame. Good luck does not always hold as Devine's Irish went to Purdue the following week and were defeated in a close match L (22-28).

Michigan State, another Big 10 tough team, ranked # 7 at the time then came to play the # 15 ranked Irish at Notre Dame Stadium and ND prevailed W (27-3). This brought ND to # 10 in the top 10 and the next week Georgia Tech came to town and went home with a W (21-13) loss.

Notre Dame then went to play Air Force away and won W (38-13). The next game was against long-time rival and nemesis USC at Notre Dame Stadium. USC played especially well and defeated the Irish L (23-42). South Carolina came to ND the next week and the Irish won a close one W (18-17).

An inspired Navy was next in South Bend and the Irish defeated the Midshipmen W (14-0). The Irish traveled to Tennessee and met a stubborn Volunteers team and lost L (18-40). A tough Clemson team were visitors at Notre Dame on November 17, and they defeated the Irish in a close one, L (10-16).

Notre Dame was invited to the Mirage Bowl played in Tokyo Japan to play against unranked Miami. The Irish won W (40-15) and enjoyed the nice trip to Tokyo.

1980 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Dan Devine

The 1980 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Dan Devine in his sixth and last season. As was customary, all home games were played at Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend, Indiana. The 1980 season would be Dan Devine's last as Notre Dame's head coach.

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. This year, the offense scored 248, while the defense gave up 128 points. Dan Devine goes down in ND History as one of the Fighting Irish's finest coaches. He is the least known of the "immortals," who have brought the Fighting Irish national championship seasons.

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.

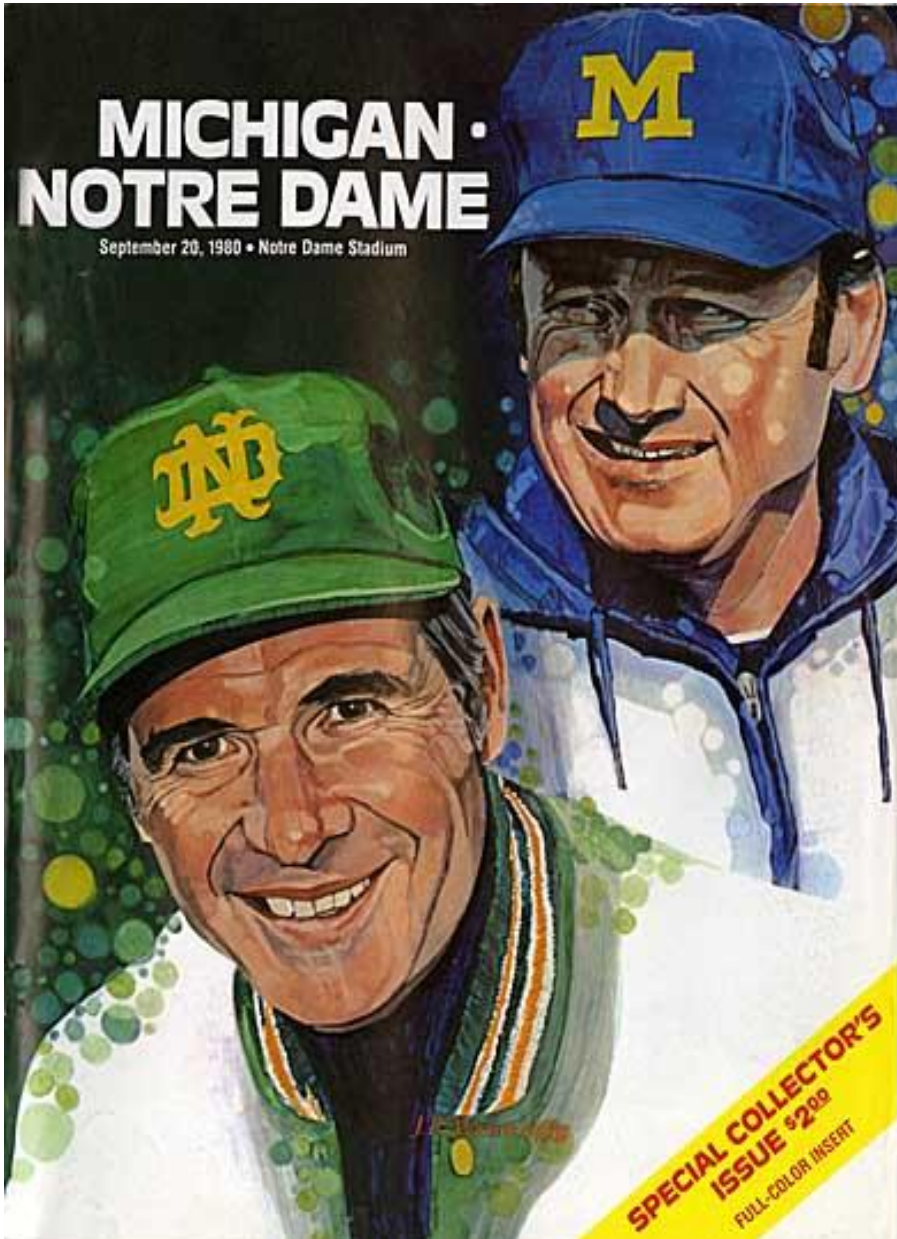
This would not be the last test that the Irish defense would have before the year was out, but their showing against the Wolverines was one that would appear in the W column. ND had a new gutsy quarterback John Wangler, who was hurt yet who played on what appeared to be one leg because of a prior injury.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

It was the first day of November for this Navy game. ND, once referred to as the Catholics in the late 1800's, celebrate All Saint's Day that day. So, November 1 turned out to be a big day for the 1980 Notre Dame Football Team for more than normal reasons.

As noted, the Irish had traveled to East Rutherford to play Navy, another fine 1980 team that was on its way to eight wins like many other ND opponents that year. The Irish hung a 33-0 shutout on the Middies. Alabama and UCLA each lost making Notre Dame the #1 team in the country as the college season rolled into its final month.

Then, on November 8, it was off to Georgia Tech for a tie T (3-3) against the tough and agile Yellow Jackets. Coming from # 1, this was viewed as a loss as it propelled once ranked #1 Notre Dame into sixth place. Proving that nothing comes easy, the next big game was the very next week. Number 6 ranked Notre Dame faced # 5 Alabama at Alabama. The Irish won 7-0, and the rankings changed. Notre Dame was back up to #2.

This road trip to Alabama was well hyped. It was a battle of the titans once again even though the rankings of both teams were lower. The Tide was still #5, and both teams were still in the national title hunt. This 1980 ND v Alabama game would live up to the hype and expectations.

ND v Alabama

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.

On November 22, a feisty Air Force team came to Notre Dame and the Irish won W (24-10). Notre Dame was still ranked # 2 in the

nation. The next game was USC at USC. I don't know how many times I had seen this scenario in the past. I had come to hate the idea of ND playing either Purdue or USC.

The Trojans were not in the top ten but were well respected at #17 in the country. This was not a Trojan team on the same par as the 1978 team that shared the national title with Alabama, or the 1979 team that finished 11-0-1 and ended up #2. Nonetheless, they were a great team, and their record was 7-2-1 coming in to the Notre Dame game.

For those that remember college and pro greats, it helps to recall that USC still had future NFL Hall of Famers Ronnie Lott and Marcus Allen on the team. Allen of course was just one year away at the time from a Heisman campaign.

So, the Irish had traveled to California for the climax game of the regular season against a team that had spoiled many a Notre Dame National Championship. It had happened many times before. Would it happen again?

Yes, I regret to say. Before 82,663 fans, USC pulled its nemesis card one last time against Dan Devine and literally spoiled the Irish season L (3-20). Notre Dame fell to #7 and had no shot at a national title. Needless to say, Dan Devine had himself another National Championship with this victory and a bowl victory. It was not to be; but it was a great Notre Dame year nonetheless, and a great year for Dan Devine and Notre Dame.

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 Article on Dan Devine

This is the closing of the Dan Devine era. This Washington Post article 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 in my book. This is the link. I have provided excerpts below so that we can see the conundrum of Dan Devine & Notre Dame. He was a successful coach with a fine record.

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

Article Title: Dan Devine &

by John Feinstein, Washington Post

Consider the record: Four bowl bids in six years, one national championship achieved, a second being worked on. A record of 7-0-1 this year and a six-season mark of 51-14-1. A winning percentage of almost .800. In return, the coach is being run out of town.

The coach is Dan Devine and the school is Notre Dame, and that should at least partly explain the situation. Since the day he arrived in 1974 to succeed Ara Parseghian, Devine has not been able to escape the shadow.

Parseghian was emotional and easy to identify with; Devine is low key and distant. Parseghian was colorful and glib; Devine is colorless and often fumbles for words. Parseghian took a 2-7 loser and won immediately; Devine took a winner and won slightly less.

The alumni have never accepted him, many of the players have made fun of him and the press, at times, has ravaged him.

This is a story about the second-winningest active college football coach in America. It is also a story about a man whose superb record has not been enough

to quiet his critics. Finally, it is a story about a man whose consistent ability to win baffles many of his closest associates.

...

It is the fifth week of the 1975 season. The record is 3-1. The Irish are being whipped by North Carolina, 14-0, when quarterback Rick Slager is hurt. Devine looks around and sees Joe Montana. Last-string quarterback under Parseghian, elevated to fourth string by Devine. Ignoring quarterbacks two and three, Devine sends in Montana.

To this day, Devine cannot explain why. "Just a feeling," he says. Led by Montana, the Irish come back in the fourth quarter and win, 21-14.

...

This is a man with a 171-54-9 record. In 22 years as a college coach he has had one losing season. He has had two perfect seasons and won a national championship with an 11-1 team three years ago. His teams have always had a flair for the dramatic comeback, the most memorable in the 1979 Cotton Bowl when the Irish trailed Houston, 34-12, with 7:30 to play and won, 35-34, on the game's final play.

"You would have to have been stupid to think we were going to win that one," Devine says today. "I knew we were going to win."

He has won almost every coaching award in collegiate football. From a distance, this is clearly a major success story. Move in closer and the vision blurs.

"If Coach Devine wanted to please all the people who complain about him he could do it," defensive end Scott Zettek said. "But he's a coach, not a used car salesman. He doesn't have to sell himself. I'd rather play for him than someone like Digger (Phelps, the Irish basketball coach) who is always being all things to all people."

Joyce acknowledges Devine's non-acceptance but says he can't understand it.

...

"I don't have any regrets," Devine says. "No reason to. If some people say I haven't received the credit I'm due, that's nice, but I've always been taught you don't receive your just rewards in this life anyway."

He is asked two last questions. Why is his image so mixed? Why is he an enigma to so many?

"I could explain it to you," he replied, the brown eyes dancing. "But I won't."

Dan Devine, a fine man and a fine coach, **R.I.P.**

Chapter 18 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

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."

Faust, whose team had a 33-game winning streak, explained why he decided to leave Moeller to take the Notre Dame job.

"I am a strong believer in tradition and discipline in educating your people," said the Dayton University graduate. "I don't believe there is a university in the country that combines those two items along with academic and athletic excellence better than Notre Dame does."

Devine announced his resignation before the start of the season, citing personal reasons, including the health of his wife.

The Irish, currently ranked No. 2 in the nation, are 9-0-1 on the season, giving Devine a 53-14-1 mark entering the regular-season finale at Southern California Dec. 6.

Notre Dame also has a shot at the national championship with a date against top-ranked Georgia Jan. 1 at the Sugar Bowl.

"We felt that whoever took over at Notre Dame," Devine explained, "they would be inheriting a veteran squad. This is a great bunch of young men and we know that the transition will be that much easier."

Faust will become the 24th head coach in the history of the tradition-rich Midwest independent dating back to 1894.

At Moeller, Faust has been turning out college-looking teams for years at Cincinnati Moeller High.

Faust's high school team never looked more collegiate than on Sunday. Some of Faust's players suspected then that their coach was Notre Dame-bound.

"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.

In many ways, only strong tutelage and perhaps a few years as an assistant under an immortal coach could have made the Division I football encounters understandable and winnable. Division I coaches are lots different than the best of the best in HS football. Faust had a tough road to hoe.

The Irish played six home games in 1981 under coach Faust beginning September 12 against LSU W (27-9). Michigan State W (20-7), Florida State L (13-19) and USC L (7-14), Navy W (38-0) and Georgia Tech W (35-3).

ND played Michigan at Ann Arbor L (7-25). Purdue at West Lafayette in a real close match L (14-15), Air Force at Falcon Stadium W (35-7), and Penn State at Beaver Stadium L (21-24), Miami at the Orange Bowl Stadium L (15-37). Notre Dame's record was 5-6. The team was unranked and were not invited to a bowl game.

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.

The fans and alum were picking on Faust and they were nailing players as well. Junior quarterback Blair Kiel, a starter since his freshman year with Devine was criticized by fans and alumni for an unproductive, conservative and predictable Irish offense. It was tough for any kid to survive such attacks.

Even though the Irish were beating teams, this QB was taking it on the chin simply because he was no Joe Montana. But, how many Joe Montana's are there. Ask Joe M. With 13 field goals in 13 attempts, kicker Mike Johnson was personally responsible for two of the three victories and the tie. The fans and alumni should have been buying him big dinners every night.

On the other side of the ball, Notre Dame sported a really tough defense. The Irish ranked fifth in total defense, permitting 232.9 yards per game, second against the rush at 56.4 yards per game and allowing less than two yards per carry, and hadn't permitted two touchdowns to any team. That takes coaching. There are two sides to the game of football.

The 1982 season began on September 18 for the first of five home games. The first home win was against #10 Michigan. Notre Dame's preseason ranking was #20, which, considering the team's slow start in 1981, was quite optimistic. Notre Dame defeated Michigan W (23-17) and played four additional home games: Purdue W (28-14), Miami W (16-14), Arizona L (13-16), and Penn State L (14-24).

Notre Dame began its away-season on October 2 against #11 Michigan State W (11-3), followed by # 15 Oregon T (13-13), and then Navy W (27-10).

On November 6, when # 13 Notre Dame traveled to Pittsburgh to play the # 1 Panthers, nobody thought Notre Dame had much of a chance. Yet, Notre Dame won this game W (31-16). Before we look at 1983, we will recap this game as it is the best that Faust teams played while at Notre Dame.

The two final ND games in 1982 were losses—#18 Air Force L (17-30), and USC L (13-17).

The Notre Dame losses this season all were close. There were no blow-outs. Coach Faust could have used a little guidance from Rockne, Leahy, or Dan Devine. He was just a little green from making the transition from HS to college. The season could have been much different. It appeared that the team was ready and they were inspired by the coaching but in close calls, a little more experience would have helped.

1982 Pittsburgh Game ... Nice

Faust's crowning achievement of the season was against Pittsburgh. How did unranked Notre Dame defeat Pittsburgh with Dan Marino at the Pitt QB slot?

On Nov. 6, 1982, ND made its way to the Steel City to take on # 1 Pittsburgh with Dan Marino in control of the offense. The 76-yard touchdown run by freshman Allen Pinkett ('86) was the spark that brought forth this major upset. Notre Dame had been struggling but once Pinkett scored, the adrenalin began to flow and Notre Dame could have beaten anybody that day.

After Pinkett scored, the Panthers were once again on the prowl. From the Notre Dame 33, Marino found Dawkins open over the middle. However, with Mike Larkin in pursuit, Dawkins lost the ball, and John Mosley recovered for the Irish at the 24. With the fumble, the momentum belonged to Notre Dame.

Pitt had not seen anything like Allen Pinkett since Tony Dorsett but Pinkett was playing for Notre Dame. After an incomplete pass, Pinkett showed Pitt his Tony Dorsett moves by dodging five defenders and scooting 76 yards for the score. He tried the left side of the Panther line before cutting back into the center of the field for daylight to up Notre Dame's lead to 24-16 with 8:09 remaining.

The Irish defense forced Pitt to punt on the next series. Notre Dame then put together one of its most impressive drives of the 1982 campaign to seal the Panthers' fate. Joe Howard raced around end for 18 yards on first down from the Irish 35.

After Pinkett picked up four more yards, Moriarty exploded into the secondary on a quick opener for 29 yards to the Pitt 14. Pinkett, who registered his second consecutive 100-yard game, capped off the six-play, 65-yard drive with a seven-yard scoring romp. Johnston's conversion finished the scoring with 4:06 left.

This was the best game of the 1982 season for Notre Dame.

Second Recap of Pitt ND Game 1982

I found another recap of this game that shows more detail. Because it was a game in which Notre Dame really excelled and because Gerry Faust's coaching helped his players make a difference, I present this more detailed version of the 1982 Notre Dame at Pitt game. I think you will like it. www.fanbase.com

When ND had to take on Dan Marino and # 1 Pittsburgh, it was like there was no chance. The Panthers were 7-0 and ranked #1 in both polls, having been elevated to the top in AP poll on October 25 while sweeping the #1 ranking every week in the UPI. It marked the first time in 45 years, since the 1936-37 seasons, that Pitt had occupied the #1 ranking in consecutive seasons. Marino was a major threat to all comers.

Pitt Fans were still not happy. They must have gone to a "Why I can't be happy" class put on by ND fans. As an ND fan, I continue to hate losses and I too always think my disdain for losses has no consequences. It does. Yet, I believe that excellence is always a requirement and achievement that does not come cannot be rewarded.

Despite the Panthers' perfect record and lofty ranking at the time, Dan Marino would hear some boo's in Pitt Stadium and persistent questions from a media blitz that turned critical. Wow!

This is continued below after some personal notes:

Personal note: I saw Marino play several times when, as President of the IBM Club in Scranton. I ran the IBM Club bus trip to Syracuse for what the IBM folks saw as the "Penn State Trip." PSU came just every other year at the time to Syracuse, a quick bus ride from Scranton. When Syracuse went to Beaver Stadium, I brought the IBM club to Syracuse to watch a Pitt game.

Rather than run the trip once every two years, in the off-years, the Penn State game that the IBM Club advertised actually was often a Syracuse-Pitt game. Marino during this time was phenomenal. Nobody booed Marino at the Carrier Dome, even though he was on the opposing team.

By the way, while I was at IBM, even though Penn State had stopped playing Syracuse at the Dome, the IBM folks continued to demand a game from the IBM Club. Since Syracuse was our best bet for a game, we all somehow became Syracuse fans and the annual Penn State game that every other year had become Pitt, morphed into a Syracuse v game.

I can recall putting out a flier that once said that "This year's Penn State football game is at the Carrier Dome. The game will feature Syracuse v the Cadets of Army." IBMers and our families were all patriotic and so the kids on the bus and the teenagers especially loved it when our bus somehow was right next to the Cadet bus for the band and others. It was a thrill.

Thank you for permitting me this diversion. Football, even tailgating is a very exciting sport. IBMers in Scranton saw Dan Marino from Pittsburgh play v Syracuse and it was never a disappointment. I understood first-hand how difficult it would be for Notre Dame to beat a Marino team from Pittsburgh.

None of our folks from Northeastern PA had a major college stadium in town. None of us would ever have considered booing a great ND player or a fine lad from Pittsburgh, Dan Marino. Yet, it

did happen and it happened in Pittsburgh, and it did not help the Panthers in their attempt when they were # 1, to defeat Notre Dame.

At Pittsburgh. when Marino threw a touchdown pass, he was a hero, but when he threw an interception, he was actually being booed and called a bum, and vice-versa, all in a matter of minutes.

So, now, here comes Notre Dame to Pittsburgh, seemingly hapless under Faust but ripping everybody that they played in 1982. Fourth year Pitt senior players had never faced ND because the series had a lapse. Yet, ND and Pitt were two old rivals with a history.

The teams had met 45 times in all, 23 straight seasons from 1956-78, before the small break. Notre Dame owned the edge in the overall series, 31-14-1.

60,162 fans on this particular day jammed into Pitt Stadium to catch this great match-up. Faust was inspirational in the locker room. He told his team that if they beat #1 Pitt it would be a game they would remember for the rest of their lives.

Gerry Faust, knowing it was time for one-on-one then met privately with Kiel, who was 94 of 168, which was not too shabby back then. Faust just wanted to talk about the good times and the bad times of ND. Like a Dentist before you get the drill, or the Urologist – well, let's not go there, Faust tried to calm his starting Junior quarterback with some small talk before the game. Gerry Faust needed Kiel, a kid with a big job, to play well if the Irish had any chance to beat the #1 Panthers.

Eventually the game started after all the hype, and Pitt kicked off right to the goal line. Notre Dame fumbled but Allen Pinkett picked it up and was able to return the ball to the 24. Kiel went to the air and found some success, but it ended quickly. The Irish gave the ball up after just one first down. Kiel was also the punter and his mini-punt this time put the Fighting Irish at a decided disadvantage.

Pitt had the ball close-in. Despite Marino, the Panthers coach wanted to run the ball. The ground game did not work. Marino started passing. Soon he had Pitt down to the Irish 29. Aware of what was at stake, the ND defense held firm. On fourth down, the Panthers tried a 48-yard field goal. Schubert nailed it for a Pitt 3-0 lead.

Pitt continued to stymie Kiel on Offense. Then, the Panthers lost their top player in the secondary, when he left the game with a bruised right foot. Marino got the

ball back and was ready again. He moved Pitt with little resistance to the Irish 14; then flipped a pass to tight end Clint Wilson for 10 yards and a first-and-goal at the four. However, the ND defense held firm. Pitt got another field goal from Schubert after their 55-yard drive did not bring a touchdown. It was 6-0.

A personal foul penalty on the Panthers kickoff gave Notre Dame the ball at its 35. The Irish did not move the ball. Kiel then booted a beautiful 49-yard punt to pin Pitt at its eight. Three plays later Marino's offense had gained just 5 yards and punted short – just 23 yards.

After a fair catch encroachment penalty, Notre Dame had the ball on the Pitt 21. Pinkett whacked Pitt's line but got nothing. Two Kiel passes were incomplete. Johnston, the ND kicker was able to split the uprights with 8:53 showing to get Notre Dame on the board, then down 6-3.

Pitt punted early on the next possession and pinned the Irish at the eight yard line. Notre Dame moved to the 18 but no more advancement. Kiel punted the ball but Pitt got flagged for roughing the kicker. The penalty was refused because Pitt's Casper had fumbled the catch at the Panther 41 and Naylor recovered for Notre Dame at the 45.

Faust called a pass play to the middle that had been an open area most of the day. Kiel fired a perfect strike to Moriarty at the 17, who fell forward for a few more yards and a gain of 30 to the Pitt 15. It was Kiel's longest completion of the season.

Pinkett then skirted to the left on a sweep for a gain of 11 to the four. From there, Moriarty went up the middle and bulled through Panther safety Dan Short at the goal line for an Irish go-ahead touchdown to cap a quick three-play, 45-yard drive. Johnston added the extra point to make it a 10-6 lead at half-time.

The Panthers got the ball after a few exchanges in the 3rd Q at the two-yard line. The offensive line did its job. Fifteen plays and 94 yards later, the Panthers were knocking on the door with a first-and-goal at the 4. Thomas got to the one. He then tried going off right guard and jumped, but Zavagnin led a trio to stop him at the one.

On third down, Marino pitched to Thomas to the right, and he slanted through a hole for a go-ahead Pitt touchdown with 3:42 left. Pitt had executed a magnificent 18-play, 98-yard march ate up eight minutes of clock. With the point, Pitt had a 13-10 lead, and it seemed that the Panthers now owned the game's momentum. Things were not looking good for Notre Dame.

Pitt had begun to play well on both sides of the ball, placing ND at a disadvantage. Despite having been on the field so long, the Irish defense dug in. They applied major pressure to Marino and forced a punt in the opening

moments of the fourth quarter. The defense had gotten the message about how to win. The offense had not yet gotten the message.

The third quarter offensive action was nothing less than terrible. In three periods, they had gained only 113 yards and five first downs. Many times, it appeared that Kiel and his receivers were speaking in different tongues. The 4th quarter would be different. The Irish started at its 46. On the first play, Faust decided to gamble and it would therefore not be business as usual.

Faust made some substitutions to pull off the play including taking Pinkett out of the game, His objective was to run “70-flood-flash special”, the newly installed flea-flicker. In practice during the week, Pinkett kept messing up the pitch part of the play in practice, hence the insertion of Carter, who knew how to pull it off. Faust had called the play two other times in the game prior to this but it was overridden each time by Kiel's audible as the situation was not right.

This time, there was no audible. Carter took the pitch back from Kiel for what appeared to be a sweep to the right, but after taking a few steps as the defense collapsed towards him, Carter stopped and pitched the ball back to the Irish quarterback, and by the time the Panther secondary realized what was happening, receiver Joe Howard was well into his pass route down the right sideline and he slipped behind Dukovich, who bit on the sweep and was a good 10 yards out of position, as the absence of the missing Flynn was glaring.

Kiel unleashed a wobbly pass that was nonetheless on target, as a wide-open Howard caught it in stride on the Pitt 5, a good five yards behind the defense, and he easily ran in for the go-ahead score. Some folk lore about this pass is that if Kiel's pass was a perfect spiral, it probably would have been too long. Johnston's extra point made it a 17-13 Irish lead.

That play put a spark in the ND offense. The encounter with # 1 Pitt, had become a dog fight.

Pitt started at its 27. The Panthers moved the ball with Marino leading and completing pass after pass. On third-and-three from the Irish 34, Marino went for broke with a pass to Dawkins into the middle of the end zone. ND's Chris Brown leaped perfectly to make a great play to tip the ball away. The Panthers settled for a 47-yard Schubert field goal, his third of the game, which capped an eight-play, 43-yard drive and closed the gap to 17-16 with 12:14 to play.

Now, it was ND's turn.

But, Pitt got the ball back. Marino and company seemed ready to go ahead now at the ND 34. Marino passed for ten to Dawkins who dropped the ball right

before a hit from behind by Larkin and Notre Dame cornerback John Mosley recovered the fumble at the 24. There were still nine minutes remaining.

On the comeback while leading, ND eventually executed a Faust play called "Left 37." Taking Kiel's handoff deep in the backfield at the 19, Pinkett went up the middle, broke tackles and made some moves before he cut through two more Panthers and went a total of 65-yards to the House.

Pitt then needed a touchdown and a two-point conversion for a tie, and they knew it. The momentum shift had stagnated them. it was in their heads. Marino got nothing going and ND got the ball back at its 35.

A more confident Irish offense walked onto the field. Kiel flipped a reverse to Howard for 18. Moriarity got 29 to the panther 15 Pinkett then took a pitch and got eight. On third-and-two, Pinkett took a handoff up the middle and found a wall, so he bounced it to the right, and after some moves got it over for a touchdown. It became a six-play, 65-yard march ending in a Pinkett TD. Johnston's extra point made it a 31-16 lead, and Notre Dame was just five minutes from completing a huge upset.

That was it. ND played the last five minutes necessary but the score stayed the same. ND beat the # 1 team in the nation. It was the crowning moment in Gerry Faust's whole career with Notre Dame.

Faust had his first taste of true Irish glory, having added #8 to the list of times that Notre Dame upset the top-ranked teams.

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.

Home games this season included the following; Michigan State L (23-28), Pittsburgh L (16-21), USC W (17-6), Navy W (28-12), Air Force L (22-23). Away games included the Season Opener, a huge thumping of Purdue W (52-6), Miami at the Orange Bowl L (0-20); Colorado at Boulder W (27-6), South Carolina at Columbia W (30-6), and Penn State at Beaver Stadium L (30-34).

It was an ND football season that in many ways was non-descript.

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.

ND started the season away with a close loss at Purdue L (21-23), followed by a close win at Michigan State W (20-17). Notre Dame got its scoring engine started in game 3 at home against Colorado W (55-14). On September 29, the Fighting Irish went back to nail-biting low scoring games at Missouri W (16-13). This game was on ABC TV and seen by 70,915. Miami then came to South Bend and defeated the Irish L (13-31).

Air Force came to town the following week and beat the Irish L (7-21). Where there are two losses, my grand-mom would say there will be three. The third home loss in a row came the next week with #11 South Carolina. The Irish played the game close but the Gamecocks prevailed L (32-36). On October 27, Notre Dame traveled to #6 LSU and beat the Tigers W (30-22). Then came Navy at Giants Stadium for a really close win W (18-17).

Penn State rolled into South Bend on November 17 and rolled out quickly after the Irish handed the Nittany Lions a sound defeat W (44-7). Then, it was off to Southern California for the big rivalry game against USC. The Irish had their way with the Trojans W (19-7). On December 29, ND played SMU in the Aloha Bowl in Honolulu. It had always been a nice experience being in Hawaii, except this year because of the game. Notre Dame lost to SMU in Hawaii L (7-20)

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.

The Season beginning foretold the rest of the season as Notre Dame played at Michigan before 105,523 to a loss (L (12-20). Michigan State was next at home and Notre Dame came back from this defeat to overtake the Spartans W (27-10). Purdue was ready when the Irish showed up at Ross-Ade Stadium and the Boilermakers pounded the Irish L (17-35). Air Force played tough at Falcon Stadium on October 5, and defeated Notre Dame L (15-20).

Army came the following week to South Bend and were not as fortunate as Air Force, falling to the Irish W (24-10). USC always expects to win as they expected in 1985 on their road trip to Notre Dame but the Irish were ready and defeated the Trojans handily W (37-3). Navy followed USC into South Bend and the Irish won W (41-7). Mississippi came the next week and after three home victories in a row, Notre Dame made it four with a sound beating of the Ole Miss Rebels W (37-14).

The Irish would not win another game for the 1985 season. Their next three games were against Penn State, LSU and Miami. Penn State showed Notre Dame it was not safe to tangle with a Nittany Lion as the Pennsylvanians defeated Notre Dame in Beaver Stadium L (6-36). At LSU, Notre Dame was beat in a close match by the Tigers L (7-10). Miami was getting real good again and the

Hurricanes put a licking on the Fighting Irish and ruined Gerry Faust's last game (7-58).

1985: Faust's Last Season

Farewell to Gerry Faust. May God bless you Gerry, as you are a good man. Here 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.html>

EMBATTLED FAUST RESIGNS AS COACH OF NOTRE DAME

From the New York Times

Published: November 27, 1985

SOUTH BEND, Ind., Nov. 26—

Gerry Faust, who resigned earlier today after five troubled years, took the blame tonight for Notre Dame's lackluster football performance and said his decision will allow the university to move quickly to find a new coach.

"If you're going to put the blame somewhere, put it on the coach," Faust said during a news conference. "That's where it ought to be. We got started on the wrong foot five years ago and never did bail out of the thing."

Faust, 50 years old, has a 30-26-1 record at Notre Dame, including a 5-6 [Counts Miami game] mark this season after consecutive defeats by top-ranked Penn State and Louisiana State the last two weeks. Those two defeats made him the Irish coach with the most losses. Joe Kuharich is next, with 23 losses from 1959 to 1962. With only 17 victories, Kuharich is the only Notre Dame coach with a losing record.

"Bottom line is, you've got to win on the field," Faust said. "That's what you play the game for."

Face Miami Saturday

The Fighting Irish have one game left, against powerful Miami Saturday in the Orange Bowl.

Faust's resignation at the beginning of a weekly news conference earlier today came as a shock. "It's best for me to resign now and give the university an

opportunity to get another coach before recruiting starts next week," Faust said. "It's best for the university, best for me, best for my family."

Faust said he would consider a coaching offer from another Division I-A school, but he has received none so far. "I'm going to sit back for a couple of weeks and hope I get some calls, maybe in the business world, the coaching world, and evaluate things and go from there," he said.

Faust said he would hold his Notre Dame years in special regard, whether or not he continues in coaching. "I don't regret any of the years at Notre Dame," he said. "If I knew what the results would be there after that five-year period, the tough times and the good times, I'd do it again."

Speculation on Successor

Faust's decision sparked speculation on a possible successor.

Gene Corrigan, the athletic director, denied a rumor that Coach Lou Holtz of Minnesota had already been offered the job. Holtz, whose son attends Notre Dame, recently said he wouldn't leave Minnesota for any coaching job except that at Notre Dame. Holtz said earlier today he had not been contacted by Notre Dame about the job.

Corrigan said a successor might be chosen by Monday.

In addition to Holtz, coaches whose names have been mentioned as possible successors include George Welsh of Virginia, Bobby Ross of Maryland, Terry Donahue of U.C.L.A. and Dick Vermeil, former coach at U.C.L.A. and of the Philadelphia Eagles.

Donahue, however, issued a statement saying any speculation on his behalf is unfounded. "I have never been in contact with anyone from Notre Dame," he said.

Followed Dan Devine

Faust succeeded Dan Devine as Notre Dame's 24th head coach on Nov. 24, 1980.

Faust stepped into that pressure-packed atmosphere directly from Moeller High School in Cincinnati.

Faust struggled through seasons of 5-6 in 1981, 6-4-1 in 1982, 7-5 in 1983 and 7-5 in 1984. Instead of the Cotton and Sugar bowls, Notre Dame backed into the Liberty and Aloha bowls the last two seasons.

The Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, university president, accepted Faust's resignation "with genuine regret."

Faust said he first thought about resigning after last Saturday's 10-7 loss to Louisiana State. "You're always high when you win and low when you lose," he said, "and I didn't want to make a decision then."

---Report Says Irish in Contact MINNEAPOLIS (AP) - While Lou Holtz, the Minnesota coach, continued to deny that he has been offered a job as head coach at Notre Dame, The Minneapolis Star and Tribune, citing unnamed sources, said the job has been offered to him.

Quoting the Minnesota athletic director, Paul Giel, the newspaper said Holtz had talked within the last two days to Gene Corrigan, Notre Dame's athletic director.

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

The newspaper said Holtz met tonight with Giel, University President Ken Keller and Frank Wilderson, vice president for student affairs. Holtz could not be reached for comment, but Keller said Holtz has not reached a decision on Minnesota's latest contract offer.

"He's going to have to make a decision," Keller said. "If we don't succeed, it's not for wanting of trying."

"I came here two years ago with certain feelings," Holtz told a news conference that had been called to discuss the Gophers' Dec. 21 Independence Bowl trip. "But right now, I don't know what my feelings are."

For several days, Holtz declined to discuss news reports concerning his candidacy for the Notre Dame job.

Holtz disclosed that when he first signed his five-year contract at Minnesota two years ago, he insisted on a clause that would free him from his obligation if he were ever offered the Notre Dame job.

End of New York Times Article

Post Script: November 30, 1985. The Gerry Faust era ends at Miami with a loss L (7-58).

Chapter 19 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.

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.

The Fighting Irish always have a tough schedule. Notre Dame's big games in 1986 began with a one point loss against #3 ranked Michigan in the home opener L (23-24).

Sports

A Breath Of Fresh Air

By Larry Burke

Notre Dame Dropped Its Opener To No. 3 Michigan,
But A Solid Irish Performance Proved
That Lou Holtz Had Put The Fight Back In The Irish



Brown (81) and Green (24) combined for 24 carries and 122 yards on the ground.

Michigan 24; Notre Dame 23

On September 20 in Spartan Stadium, Notre Dame played a spirited game against Michigan State but lost by five points L (15-20). When unranked Purdue, a rival and a long-time nemesis came to town a week later, the question was, "Will it be three losses in a row?" Instead Notre Dame overwhelmed an always tough Purdue team W (41-9). The following write-up is from ND Scholastic:

Twice it had been so close that he almost could have reached out and touched it, only to have it slip through his fingers. But when Coach Lou Holtz finally captured that elusive first victory at Notre Dame, he grabbed it with both hands and held on tight.

The first win, a 41-9 pounding of Purdue, was never really in doubt. "I didn't doubt that we would get it eventually," Holtz said. "It was good to win. It was gratifying and I'm happy for the players."

Heading into last Saturday's game with Purdue, immediate priorities for the Irish were establishing a consistent rushing game, which they had not done the

previous week against Michigan State, and mounting some sort of pass rush, which they had not done all season. Both were accomplished.

Notre Dame churned out 276 yards on the ground and employed 12 different ball carriers. The Irish ran the ball 60 times, the most since their 1984 game with Penn State. Defensively, Notre Dame was able to put pressure on Boiler quarterback Jeff George, making him rush his passes often, sacking him twice and intercepting him once.

Notre Dame's success on the ground meant quarterback Steve Beuerlein only had to pass 14 times. He completed 10 for 174 yards and one touchdown and was not intercepted. Milt Jackson caught four passes for 107 yards.

Undefeated # 2 Alabama was ready to shred Notre Dame as they do many of their opponents. Though Alabama prevailed against the Irish L (10-28) in Birmingham, the Irish played a tough game against this top ranked opponent. It was the most points scored against Notre Dame in any of its losses in 1986.

On October 11, Notre Dame played a tough Pittsburgh squad at home and lost the encounter by one point L (9-10). The following week at Home, ND defeated Air Force W (31-3). Navy was next at Baltimore W (33-14) followed by SMU at home W (61-29). A tough undefeated #3 ranked Joe Paterno-coached Penn State squad came to South Bend on November 22 right before Thanksgiving and squeaked out a win against the Irish L (19-24). Penn State would stay undefeated and they won Joe Paterno's second national championship in 1986.

On November 29 in the second last game of Lou Holtz first season, Notre Dame traveled to Tiger Stadium in Louisiana to play LSU before 78,000 fans. In a nail-biter, LSU beat Notre Dame L (19-21).

A 4-6, unranked Notre Dame, at the end of a dismal season had one more major hurdle before it could call it quits until next year. They traveled to #17 USC in California for the season finale. Regardless of the season or the records of either team, this game is always special. In one of the most exciting games of the series, Notre Dame pulled off a W (38-37) victory over the shell-shocked USC Trojans, setting the plate for Notre Dame's return to the National Stage the next year.

Let's review some of this special game in summary:

This was Lou Holtz's first time coaching in the Notre Dame-USC rivalry. His first foray was both a successful and an exciting one. The Irish rallied back from a 20-9 halftime deficit. Holtz had benched quarterback Steve Beuerlein for an interception, but he was back in the second half.

The Fighting Irish trailed 30-12 in the third quarter Beuerlein finally started hitting his stride. First it was Braxton Banks with a 22-yard TD pass; then Milt Jackson for 43 yards, and Banks for five yards to cut the lead to 37-35. Tim Brown's 56-yard punt return then put John Carney in position to cap off the comeback with a 19-yard field goal with two seconds left. Carney split the uprights for the win W (38-37). What a game! Holtz would be serving up great games for Irish fans for the next decade.

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. The Season began on September 12, as # 9 Michigan was roaring in the Big House as #16 pre-season ranked Notre Dame entered their sphere in Ann Arbor for the season opener.

ND had just begun to gel with Lou Holtz, second year coach, still tuned into the big USC victory from one year prior. There were 106,098 in the stands and ABC was televising the game. Nobody from Notre Dame was looking to have to come up with excuses for why an unhappy Irish team would be heading home. Nobody had to.

The Irish pummeled Michigan on its home space W (26-7) and began a very successful season. Going home, the Irish had to wait for #9 Michigan State to enter South Bend and Notre Dame Stadium to play them for the long-standing Megaphone Trophy. The Irish would not be denied a clean victory against a strong team W (31-8). Traveling to Purdue for the third Big Ten game in three weeks against championship status football machines, nobody could have expected the Irish to win three of three.

The Boilermakers, traditional season spoilers for Notre Dame were not so tough on Holtz's squad and fell W (44-20) to the visiting Irish. After this major victory, Big Ten followers were convinced that 3-0 Notre Dame was once again for real.

Going East for some games, # 4 ranked ND ran into Pittsburgh on October 10, at Pitt Stadium, and after four quarters, the Irish found themselves on the lower part of the score L (22-30). Now, with a loss, the Irish knew things would stay tough. Continuing on the road against Air Force ND won W (35-14). And, then, the big nemesis was on the schedule for October 24. USC was there and ready as always to destroy anything good the Irish had going. This time it would not happen at home as the Irish won W (26-15).



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.

Still at home and holding the #9 position nationally the next week against Navy, the Irish dominated W (56-13).

The continuation of the Holy War of the Jesuits from BC against the CSC of ND took place again at ND Stadium with the Irish toughing it out W (32-25).

Then a real test was on the schedule for Notre Dame Stadium. The # 10 ranked Alabama's Crimson Tide was ready to make its mark in South Bend against the # 7 ranked Notre Dame. Notre Dame won W (37-6).

The Irish then played a really tough Penn State team at Beaver Stadium and lost by one point L (20-21). The next game was against national championship aspirant Miami ranked # 2 at the time in a game played in Florida at the Orange Bowl. The Hurricanes shut out the Irish L (0-24) in the season-ender for the # 10 Irish.

Finally, Notre Dame was back in the top ten but the Irish had one more game left against Texas A&M in the Cotton Bowl L (10-35). It was not close. Notre Dame had come back from obscurity in 1987. However, the team was not fully ready for prime time. The Irish needed a few more Lou Holtz lessons. They would be coming immediately after the Cotton Bowl game loss.

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

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 Sunbowl in Tempe, Arizona by a score of a 34-21. This powerful 1988 squad, one of 11 national title squads for the Irish, and a squad coached by the eternally great Lou Holtz, is considered to be one of the best undefeated teams in the history of college football.

The Irish always had tough schedules and that is why some of us think that they missed out on a few past titles. This time, there was no choice. Notre Dame beat teams which had finished the season ranked #2, #4, #5, and #7 in the AP Poll. How about that?

They also won 10 of 12 games by double digits. This phenomenal 1988 squad may best be remembered for its 31-30 upset of No. 1 ranked Miami, when Miami was at its best in Miami. It was Coach Jimmy Johnson's last year of his dynasty. Johnson had built a

powerhouse that won and won and won and won. Notre Dame ended Johnson's and Miami's 36-game regular season winning streak. According to Irish fans, it was Notre Dame's landmark 31-30 win over top-rated Miami in 1988 in a game that keynoted that Irish national championship season.

The notion of “*Catholics vs. Convicts*” came from an ND student who put it on a t-shirt. The students liked it and he made money printing more and more and more. They sold like hotcakes during the buildup for the Top 5 showdown.

The teams really did not like each other and it seemed there was no love lost between the coaches. There was a pre-game fight between the two teams outside of the entrance tunnel. This lent credence to the slogan on the shirts. Both teams—players and coaches—wanted the victory badly. The fans seemed to want it even more.

The game has gone down as one of the most memorable in all of college football. Other than their loss to Notre Dame in South Bend, Miami would have been undefeated as they literally ripped through all of their other opponents. Miami and Jimmy Johnson, a coach people loved to hate, and many still do, did not have what it took in 1988. Notre Dame beat the Hurricanes and that is that.



This game has gone down in history as Good v. Evil. It was the Midwestern choirboys vs. South Beach renegades. It was the Catholics v. Convicts. It was ND V UM: Football at its best and worst.



Miami was #1 and Notre Dame #4 (5 wins, 0 losses) when they met in South Bend on Oct. 15. Miami was the defending national champion. They came in with a 36-game regular season winning streak. The Irish, led by Tony Rice, held a 31–21 lead in the third quarter, but the Hurricanes rallied to within 31–30 on a

touchdown with 45 seconds left in the game. The Canes went for the two-point conversion and missed. ND won the game W (31-30)

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.



<< Rocket

There is a great high school story about Meyers playing at Dallas in 1987, one of the best teams 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.

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.

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.

I had created a number of final copies of this book and had held them up waiting for the cover to be designed properly. The cover design is one day away today as I concluded that I had not done the 1988 season proper justice. So, I went out again for research about the 1988 season and again, I found the ND students had really done the best job -- a great job.

The 1988 season is Lou Holtz's championship season and he, like the immortals before him (none yet after) would have produced more if he had held the reins longer. I am so glad I added pages to this book to include this great article from Notre Dame's own first-rate student newspaper. They loved Lou Holtz in 1988 and they loved Lou Holtz in 1996, and they probably still love Lou Holtz to this day, as I do. He is one of a kind!

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 turn 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 Raghieb "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, Cory 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

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).

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.

Notre Dame at #6 (9-2), were 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. In 1991, the National

Broadcasting Company (NBC) signed an agreement with Notre Dame to televise all games exclusively.

Please note: Jumping ahead just a bit to 2011. At the time, ratings for NBC's Notre Dame game telecasts had slumped to historic lows, coinciding with average performances of the team on the football field over the prior several years. In 2012, thankfully for ND fans, the recent resurgence of the program under Brian Kelly in 2012 resulted in the network's highest game viewership since 2005.

One more note: Because of the favorable viewership of ND games, on April 9, 2013, NBC Sports renewed its broadcasting contract with Notre Dame through the 2025 season.

In 1991 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.

Notre Dame beat Indiana W (49-27) to begin the season at home. The September 14 trip to the big house resulted in a ND loss to Michigan L (14-24). This brought the Irish to a rank of #11. Playing at Michigan State at home the following week, the Irish claimed the Megaphone Trophy W (49-0). Notre Dame also beat Purdue W (45-20) to claim the Shillelagh Trophy. Notre Dame then traveled to Stanford on October 5 for a win W (42-26).

Pittsburgh then came into South Bend and lost to the Irish W (42-7). Air Force played tough at Falcon Stadium W (28-15). Southern California was next at home in a close brawl W (24-20). Then it was Navy at home W (38-0). Tennessee played the Irish at Notre Dame Stadium the following week in a one point match. The volunteers won this close shoot-out L (34-35). Next came a trip to University Park, Pennsylvania to play unranked Penn State. The Irish were outplayed L (13-35) at Beaver Stadium. Notre Dame took a long flight to Aloha Stadium to play in Hawaii as part of the regular season and won the game in a slugfest (48-42).

Notre Dame finished its regular season at (9-3) and were ranked #18. They 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.

The 58th Annual Sugar Bowl Classic has authored its own write-up of its January 1, 1992 game. I stole all my facts about "the Bus" from their wonderful write-up. This game is classic Bettis.

The game 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. 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 Irish started the season with a game against Northwestern at Soldier Field, which the #3 ranked Irish won W (42-7). Notre Dame had not played Northwestern in 16 years so it was a nice game to have back on the schedule. In the second game of the season, September 12, at Notre Dame Stadium, Notre Dame got its first blemish of the season playing for a tie against Michigan T (17-17).

At Spartan Stadium the following week, Notre Dame defeated Michigan State W 52-31). Purdue played the Irish at home on

September 26 and the Irish dominated W (48-0). To Notre Dame Stadium the next week came the Stanford Cardinal, who were beginning to get as pesky as USC and Miami. The Irish gave up the Legends Trophy L (16-31).

The Irish then traveled to Pittsburgh for a win W (52-21). This was followed by Brigham Young at home W (42-16). Then it was Navy at Giants Stadium W (38-7) The following Saturday, In the Holy War match against # 9 Boston College, #8 Notre Dame beat BC to claim the Frank Leahy Memorial Bowl.

#22 Penn State then came to South Bend and played a really close match W (17-16). Here is a recap of the PSU game:

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.



Snow Bowl – 1992 Encounter between Penn State and Notre Dame

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.

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!

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..."

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.

The Irish started the Season with Northwestern W (42-15) at Soldier Field, Chicago. Michigan came to Notre Dame to play in game 2 and defeated ND in a very close game L (24-26). The Irish traveled to Spartan Stadium for Michigan State and squeaked out a close win W (21-20). On September 24, Purdue came to South Bend and the Irish beat them W (39-21).

Ten Stanford visited the Irish W (33-15) ND traveled to Alumni Stadium in Chestnut Hill to play their modern-day nemesis Boston College in the Holy War. BC was up again for the game and despite having spoiled the 1993 Season, the Irish were again defeated in the Holy War L (11-30). Brigham Young came to South Bend to play #16 Notre Dame and beat the Irish L (14-21). Navy was one of the few bright spots at home W (58-21). The Irish traveled to Florida to play Florida State on November 12, and lost L (16-23). The next week Air Force came in for a ND home game W (42-30). The season finale was a tie at USC T (17-17)

A 6-4-1 Notre Dame qualified for the Fiesta Bowl and played Colorado. The Buffaloes dominated L (24-41). ND finished 6-5-1.

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)

Notre Dame was immediately surprised to begin the season when Northwestern came into South Bend and beat the Irish L (15-17). From here with a 0-1 record, Notre Dame won its next three games starting at Purdue W (35-28), then Vanderbilt at home W (41-0), followed by #10 Texas at home W (55-27). After a sharp loss at Ohio State L (26-45), Notre Dame traveled to Seattle for a game against Washington W (29-21). Army was waiting at Giants Stadium and the Irish just got by W (28-27).

USC at # 5 in the polls came to play ND ranked at # 22 at home, and the Irish played great football winning W (38-10). Boston College was next on the docket at Notre Dame W (20-10). Navy came to play ND at home on November 4, and the Irish won W (35-17). After a one week bye, Notre Dame was ready to play Air Force at Falcon Stadium W (44-14).

The #9 Fighting Irish were invited to the Orange Bowl to play Florida State. The Seminoles won the close game L (26-31).

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. Notre Dame kicked off the 1996 season in Nashville on September 5 winning a close game against Vanderbilt W 14-7). Purdue was next at home W (35-0).

9 Notre Dame then traveled to Austin to play # 9 Texas in 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 Powlus 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).

Washington was ranked # 16 when it came to play the # 12 Irish on October 12 at Notre Dame Stadium. Notre Dame crushed this opponent W (54-20). An always tough Air Force squad played ND at home and won the battle L (17-20) in a close one. Notre Dame defeated Navy October 29 in Croke Park Stadium Dublin, Ireland W (54-27).

After a week off for a jet-lag rest, the Irish traveled to Boston College to play the Eagles and gained the win W (48-21). Pitt then came to South Bend and were battered by the Irish W (60-6). Notre Dame had learned how to score.

The following week; it was Rutgers at home W (62-0). Notre Dame then traveled to the Coliseum and lost to USC in California in overtime, snapping a 13-game unbeaten streak against the Trojans.

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."

In this book, I have tried to find an appropriate article that coincides with the arrival and/or departure of an important Notre Dame historical figure. This November 20, 1996 piece written by Mike Jensen of the Philadelphia Inquirer does a nice job of putting Holtz tenure and his departure in perspective as we sign off from the Lou Holtz coaching era in this book. Enjoy:

http://articles.philly.com/1996-11-20/sports/25649667_1_lou-holtz-emmett-mosley-job-in-college-football

Headline: Lou Holtz Resigns As Coach Of The Irish He Has 99 Victories At Notre Dame, Six Away From Knute Rockne's All-time School Record.

By Mike Jensen, INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

This article contains information from the Associated Press

POSTED: NOVEMBER 20, 1996

To the end, Lou Holtz wanted to show that he was in control. He began yesterday's nationally televised news conference with an injury report about

flanker Emmett Mosley's eye. Then he took 10 minutes' worth of questions about Notre Dame's next opponent, 2-7 Rutgers.

Only then did he get around to announcing his resignation from the most prestigious job in college football.

"I have no desire to be the all-time winningest coach at Notre Dame," said Holtz, who has won 99 games in 11 seasons as coach of the Irish and is six wins away from tying the school record. "That record belongs to Knute Rockne. I didn't come here to become a legend, but merely to coach Notre Dame."

Everybody at Notre Dame has insisted that the decision to leave belonged solely to Holtz, 59, who led the Irish to the 1988 national championship. But there also was a feeling around campus that maybe this was the time for Holtz to go, and he certainly was capable of picking up that vibe. The administrators who had hired Holtz and remain close to him all had left the school, replaced by a group with no ties to him.

"You say, 'Wait a minute, has this thing run its course?' " said John Dockery, an NBC analyst who works as a sideline reporter for Notre Dame games. "I think Lou saw it that way."

While insisting "there is absolutely nothing" to rumors that he may become the next coach of the Minnesota Vikings, Holtz also said: "If I do retire, it will be because I couldn't find a job. If I feel the way I do today, then I will want to coach."

As for his successor, Holtz said, "I hope it is one of my able assistants." Speculation in South Bend continues to center on Northwestern coach Gary Barnett and Irish defensive coordinator Bob Davie.

If Barnett hadn't signed a 12-year contract last year with a buyout that would cost "a fortune," according to Northwestern athletic director Rick Taylor, he would be the clear-cut favorite. At Notre Dame, "they're not used to writing checks, they're used to getting checks," NBC's Dockery said.

Yesterday, Barnett confirmed that he has been contacted by Notre Dame Officials. He issued a statement saying, "Once I have had time to fully consider my options, I will let them know whether I wish to be considered for the job."

The other leading candidate, Davie, has the support of many Irish players, but his lack of head-coaching experience is very much a factor.

Yesterday, Holtz choked up several times during his 75-minute news conference. He had returned a hug from a cameraman on his way into the room.

"I felt this would be the end of my life," Holtz said, referring to his coaching tenure at Notre Dame. "It's hard for me to even think of coaching anywhere else."

Junior cornerback Allen Rossum said there were a lot of bowed heads as Holtz told players on Monday of his plans.

"That makes me sad," Holtz said of the reaction. "I expected indifference. What I got was a strong reaction, an emotional reaction. That's my main concern right now."

There are rumors that Skip Holtz, Lou Holtz's son and the coach at the University of Connecticut, may be up for the vacant job at the University of Minnesota, where Lou Holtz coached before going to Notre Dame. Skip Holtz also is rumored to be a possibility for a coordinator's job with the Vikings if his father ends up there, though Lou Holtz could meet some resistance....

...

Lou Holtz insisted that he wanted to get the announcement of his leaving out of the way now, with two weeks left in the regular season, so Notre Dame could hire a new coach before the crucial December recruiting period.

"The worst thing is to bring players in without having a football coach," Holtz said.

Some people wonder if Holtz isn't already banking on returning to Minneapolis as coach of the Vikings. One of the Vikings' owners, Wheelock Whitney, was quoted in Saturday's St. Paul Pioneer Press as saying he believes that there is "no finer football coach or human being" than Holtz. Another Vikings owner, Jaye Dyer, is a close friend of Holtz's who received a lucky penny from Holtz after the Vikings won their first three games this season. Dyer wore the penny around his neck.

Final Look- Lou Holtz's last season- 1996

The Lou Holtz era at Notre Dame had begun in 1986 and the Master Coach's last team in 1996 would be Holtz's last hurrah on the lovely and sprawling ND campus. Though things looked good preseason, the year 1996 would be up-and-down. The biggest down occurred late season when the rug was ripped out at the very end.

1995 was not a bad football year but it was not a great one for Notre Dame—a team looking to win a championship once again. The Fighting Irish did win nine games and they claimed an Orange Bowl berth. The 1995 season's first disappointment was an upset loss at the hands of Northwestern L (15-17) but the Irish did make the Orange Bowl. They played well in the Orange Bowl but lost to Florida State in a game the Irish should have had tucked away. Unfortunately, with the Fighting Irish holding a 26-14 lead in the Fourth Quarter, Florida State rallied to score 17 late points (just 12 minutes to go), beating Notre Dame 31-26.

In 1996, it had been three years since the Holtz program had produced a truly outstanding team. That was in 1993. It was an all-ND season until the last game at home against Boston College. Ranked #1, 10-0, heading for the National Championship, they were playing a team they had clobbered one year earlier. ND found BC to be quite formidable. The Irish had come back in the game to take a one point lead in the fourth quarter. The Luck of the Irish seemed to be with ND as the Irish soon pinned BC back at their own ten-yard line. The defense's job was to hold the Eagles and win the game.

However, BC QB Glenn Foley had other ideas. He took charge of the game and brought the Eagles to field goal distance. Then, David Gordon, who had failed on two game-winning field-goal attempts in the prior two years, kicked a 41-yarder on the last play of the game and Boston College upset No. 1 Notre Dame, 41-39 to run a perfect 1993 season. This unfortunately put Lou Holtz in some great company. It was the eighth-time Notre Dame had lost a perfect regular season in the final game

So, even though 1996, which when the season began was not expected to be Holtz's last, looked like it would be a great year, nothing in ND football is 100% assured. Quarterback Ron Powlus, a standout Parade Player of the Year from PA's Berwick High School, who had been coached by the immortal George Curry from Larksville, PA was entering his third year as starting quarterback. Again, the team had the usual high expectations and were ranked sixth overall in preseason polls.

Concerns for a great season began immediately with the first game. The Fighting Irish had agreed to a rare Thursday night appearance to open the season against a team the pundits referred to as "lowly Vanderbilt." ND performed so poorly (fumbling 7 times; losing the ball four times) that it quickly became apparent that much less than greatness from this team would be all one could ask. Notre Dame struggled to a 14-7 win and were immediately dropped to #9 in the polls.

The Irish had yet to lose so there was a period of hope after Notre Dame pummeled Purdue W (35-0) and then won a big game on the road at eighth-ranked Texas W (27-24). After trailing 14-3 early and 24-17 late, the Irish rallied with ten points in the final three minutes to defeat this strong Texas team. Autry Denson, who was on his way to a great season with over 1,100 yards rushing, scored with just 2:54 left in the game. The defense held, QB Powlus got the ball back on his own 43-yard line and engineered a drive for a last-play 39-yard field goal by Jim Sanson.

Notre Dame looked better than the score in the game as it had outrushed Texas 292-135. ND was now ranked #5. The sports pundits were beginning to believe that the traditional power ground attack by Holtz could find its rhythm. Such hopes were erased just one week later in a home game against a powerful Ohio State team that came into ND Stadium ranked #4.

The Buckeyes dominated the line on both sides of the ball. Notre Dame could muster just 44 yards on the ground. Ohio State back Pepe Pearson all by himself gained 73. Powlus had a terrible day at 13/30 for 154 yards. The Irish at one point trailed 29-16 and there was a brief moment of hope, when Autry Denson brought a punt back 90 yards for a touchdown. But the return was called back for holding, and the game ended in a 13-point defeat that didn't seem that close.

Notre Dame got bounced down to #11 in the polls but like clockwork, they would come back. First, they blew out # 16 ranked Washington, W (54-20). Such offensive explosiveness would be shown on a regular basis, except for the losses which would continue. Ranked at # 9 again after knocking off Washington, any chances of a title run or even a great season were slashed the very next week at the hands of a struggling unranked Air Force team with

a 2-3 record. Powulus lost four fumbles against Air Force, the final one in overtime thus permitting the Falcons to pull out a 20-17 upset.

The season could have just slipped away right then even though everybody knew that a two-loss Notre Dame team could still make a major bowl game. The Irish got a one week break in its schedule when they went to Ireland to play the Shamrock Classic against Navy. This was a good Navy team, one that would go 9-2 in the regular season. The Irish outplayed the Middies and scored 54-points on the Middies. The Irish had found Croke Park in Ireland to their liking.

The next three games, ND was a recharged team. The Navy win propelled an offensive outburst. Notre Dame scored 170 points in sweeping three games against Boston College, Pitt and Rutgers. While none of these teams had winning records, the huge number of points demonstrated that Notre Dame had learned how to score after sputtering against Vanderbilt.

All that was left was to go to Los Angeles and defeat USC, a major rival and a tough competitor. If the Fighting Irish got the job done, they would likely be chosen for one of the major bowl games. The Trojans were not having a great season at 5-6 coming into the game and the Holtz team was at 8-2-0. The game was a nail-biter as many USC games have been over the years. Notre Dame had a narrow lead 14-12, when the Irish scored an early fourth quarter touchdown. ND was again heading for a very respectable season. But!

If you had gone for a rest break, you would have missed it. The whole thing came undone right after the glory of the fourth quarter touchdown. The normally reliable ND placekicker missed the extra point, and so the score was then 20-12. USC was supercharged and motivated because now they needed just one score and a conversion to tie. They drove 67 yards and got their touchdown, and then they converted the two-point play for the tie. But there would be no tie.

1996 was the first year of overtime in college football. ND had been in OT once in 1996 and had lost to Air Force. USC scored a

touchdown on their possession then stopped Notre Dame and the Irish season. The Lou Holtz era was astonishingly over.

Notre Dame declined to play in a minor bowl game after the loss. Coach Lou Holtz had already resigned earlier in November after eleven great years. There had been rumors that this revered coach was being pressured to exit the program after not delivering a championship season since 1988. Some said that the Coach no longer had a good relationship with the athletic department leaders. Lou Holtz for his part, never uttered a bad word about Notre Dame.

Holtz would later coach South Carolina, rebuild that program from the ashes and hand it over to Steve Spurrier. Coach Holtz then became a great ESPN studio analyst and his affection for Notre Dame has always been very obvious.

Notre Dame students love Lou Holtz!

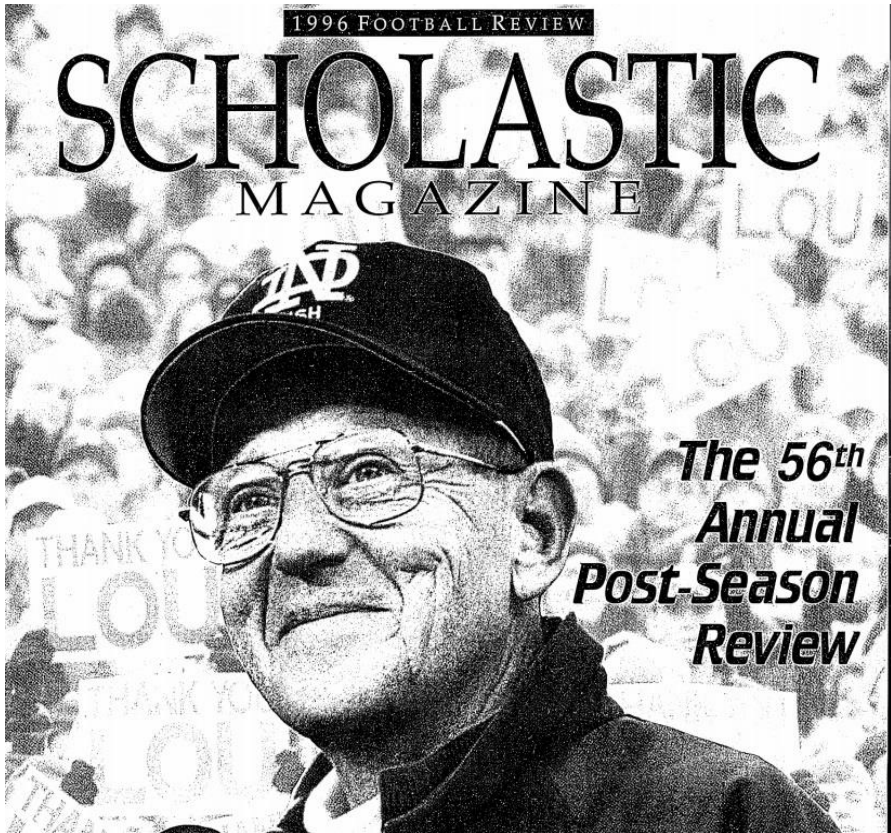
In their Football wrap-up, the Student Magazine, Scholastic had some very nice words for Coach Holtz. They clearly loved him and knew they would miss him. He is one of the great ones. This was not missed on anybody from Notre Dame.

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 20 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:

1997 Notre Dame Football Season Coach Bob Davie

The 1997 Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team was coached by Bob Davie in his first season. Since Davie had been part of Holtz's team as defensive coordinator, despite there being a new coach, the Irish had high expectations. The 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.

The Irish began the Davie era at home, playing Georgia Tech in the newly renovated Notre Dame Stadium. The Irish christened the renovated and much larger stadium with a close win W (17-13) over the Yellow Jackets that was sparked by a renewed running game and key defensive stops late in the game.

The next week, at Purdue, the Irish amassed 457 total yards, but could only score 17 points. They made a number of big mistakes on offense and with a disorganized defense, the Irish lost L (17-28) and slipped out of the rankings.

Next came consecutive losses against Michigan State at home L (7-23), at Michigan L (14-21), and at Stanford L (15-33), Davie's team was 1-4 and struggling to find its way. The offense had seemingly disappeared. Offensive coordinator, Jim Colletto, took most of the flak for the offensive struggles. Many look at this as one of Davie's rookie coaching mistakes. Colletto's team at Purdue had been beaten routinely beaten by Holtz

The Irish collected itself and beat Pittsburgh with an invigorated running game W (45-21), however, the offense soon lost its way again--this time against USC at home L (17-20). The Irish were now 2-5. Davie decided to play both Ron Powlus and backup QB Jarious Jackson against Boston College. Jackson ran 21 downs but Powlus led the Irish with 267 yards passing to rout the Eagles W (52-20).

This put the Irish offense back on track. The next week, with a last-minute win over Navy W (21-17), Notre Dame climbed to 4-5 and would need wins in their last three games to become bowl eligible.

The Irish next went to Louisiana State University (LSU) to face the 11th ranked Tigers. Notre Dame's Fighting Irish under Bob Davie were big underdogs coming into this matchup in Death Valley. This game has been voted one of ND's top games of all time. ND committed zero turnovers or penalties, and the defense held its own. ND got off to a 17-0 lead and sailed to an easy win over the Tigers. The Fighting Irish were back to .500 after upsetting the Tigers W (24-6). The Bayou Bengals would play ND in the Independence Bowl Game and would get their revenge.

At 5-5, The Irish next faced 22nd ranked West Virginia for their final home game. With the game tied late in the fourth quarter, Powlus brought the Irish back and threw his final touchdown pass at Notre Dame Stadium for the game-winning touchdown W (21-14).

Notre Dame had just beaten ranked opponents on consecutive Saturdays for the first time since 1992. There was one more game against Hawaii away. The Irish defeated Hawaii W (23-22) in the last minute to qualify for a bowl game at 7-5.

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. Jackson led the Irish, ranked #22 against the #5 ranked

Wolverines with a win W (36-20) at home to start the season. Michigan was the defending co-national champion. What a game for Bob Davie. The Wolverines were led by future NFL great Tom Brady, but even he could not make up for poor play.

The #5 Wolverines fumbled twice in the third quarter, and the #22 Fighting Irish capitalized with touchdowns on each of the ensuing drives. Thanks, in part to two touchdown passes from Jarious Jackson ('00) and a pair of rushing scores by Autry Denson ('99), Notre Dame pulled off a smart 36-20 upset. Were the Irish on their way?

Unfortunately, the luck of the Irish would not last longer than this one game as the next week at Spartan Stadium, Notre Dame fell to 1-1 in this loss L (23-45) to Michigan State. This Irish then played Purdue at home and got their chance at redemption W (31-30).

The Irish took October very seriously by defeating all four October opponents, including Stanford W (35-17), Arizona State W (28-9), Army, W (20-17), and Baylor W (27-3) led by Denson's career high of 189 yards. October put the Fighting Irish back into the fight at 5-1, and a #13 national ranking.

In the next game, the Boston College Eagles, a recent era ND nemesis and big rival, were always poised to nail the Irish. In this game, they were on their way to an upset when things changed. Down 30-26, the Eagles were preparing to score from the Irish four-yard line with less than a minute remaining. The Irish defense held and held and held and held to keep the win for the Irish W (30-26).

Now, at 6-1, it was looking like the teams of the great immortals had returned. The next week, led by Denson, who was about to become the all-time leading rusher at Notre Dame, the Irish shut-out the Naval Academy away at Jack Kent Cooke Stadium W (30-0).

Now, back to the top ten at #10, LSU played ND in the Irish's last home game for 1998. The Irish avenged their loss in the Independence Bowl by beating the Tigers W (39-13). On the last play of the LSU game, star QB Jackson was injured and would not be able to play in the Irish's final game against rival USC.

ND had a great talent on the bench and Davie elected to use freshman QB Arnaz Battle but the Trojans were too much and the Irish could not mount a sustained attack. ND fell to USC L (0-10).

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.

Ranked 16th when they went to the Big House to play Michigan in the season opener, they faced a tough #7 ranked bunch of Wolverines. The crowd was the biggest ever for any football game ever at the time (111,523). After holding a slim lead, ND lost, L (22-26). They remained ranked at #16 in the national polls.

At Purdue, the Irish kept stumbling and finally lost against the Boilermakers L (23-28). Davie was feeling the heat.

Michigan State came in at home the next week and beat Notre Dame L (13-23). After a one week bye, the Irish then won four games in a row. The Irish came alive in October.

The # 23 Oklahoma Sooners faced off with ND on October 2. Notre Dame won W (34-30). The next win was a blow-out at home v Arizona State W (48-17). The next week, the Irish came from behind by 21 points to defeat USC W (25-24). This game stands as the second biggest comeback in Notre Dame History and is listed as one of the greatest games.

The Irish had been playing sluggishly with a 3-3 record, and the Trojans were also unranked at (3-2). There were no real stakes for the game other than the normal pride factor. ND was being skunked and it looked like the game was over when Jarious Jackson at QB led the Irish back from a 24-3 deficit to sting USC with the loss.



Jackson completes first touchdown pass after ND fell behind 24-3

With ND having such a tough year, there was not a less probable outcome than this great comeback game played by an Irish team that would not quit.

A last-minute touchdown helped the Irish beat Navy at home in a close one W (28-24) to wrap up October's wins and move back into the rankings at #24.

Notre Dame then packed up and traveled to # 4 Tennessee and were beaten L (14-38). The Irish dropped like a bullet from the national rankings. Pittsburgh then won W (27-37) at Pitt Stadium in the final game to be played at Pitt Stadium. On November 20, Boston College then beat ND in a two-point squeaker after a failed two-point ND conversion attempt L (29-31).

There was literally no chance of a bowl game with a 5-6 record but they could save a losing season with a win against Stanford. It did not happen. In this away game, Jackson split time with Arnaz Battle at QB. They needed a last second field goal for a come from behind win. It did not happen. The Irish fell to 5-7.

Fans saw the season as a disappointment but QB Jarious Jackson did have a fine year. He was named the Irish Most Valuable Player as he set the single-season records in passing yards, total yards, pass attempts, and completions. He left Notre Dame with the fourth-most passing yards in Irish history. Jackson was drafted in the seventh round and though he was the only Irish player to win such honors, nine other players were able to sign free agent contracts with NFL teams.

NCAA Problem

Little known bad news was released at the end of the year. In researching this book, I learned about it. Perhaps others were aware. The year ended with the NCAA placing ND on probation for two years after a number of "major secondary violations" by the university and others involved in athletics. This was a shocker.

As a preventative measure to avoid future violations, then-university president Rev. Edward Malloy disbanded all varsity booster clubs.

As I checked deeper into the two violations that caused this, they were not directly related to the sports teams and how they were run. The probationary penalty by the NCAA was from a two-year investigation that discovered a "series of events." The main item was about the actions of a booster, Kimberly Dunbar, who poured lavish gifts on football players with money that she later pleaded guilty of embezzling.

In the second incident, a varsity football player, accused of attempting to sell game tickets he had obtained for free, was also accused of using such tickets for three games as repayment of a loan. The player was also accused of being romantically involved with a woman (not Dunbar), who was employed as a part-time tutor at the university. She apparently wrote a term paper for another player for a small fee and provided players with meals, lodging and gifts. The player was dismissed from the team.

This was the first time any university took such actions. Notre Dame was aghast and was determined that this would be a one-of, never-again, moment in its history. Yet, public opinion and the opinion of

other universities lauded ND's actions. The University put into place a number of other safeguards against violations, pledging that the administration would give a greater effort to stop any future violations.

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. This year, the Irish began the season playing four ranked teams in a row, including the team expected by the pundits to win the national championship—Nebraska. Arnaz Battle was expected to be the QB this year as he had shared the duties somewhat with Jarious Jackson in 1999. Jackson had graduated.

In the first 2000 game, the Irish beat the 25th ranked Texas A&M Aggies at home W (24-10). Battle looked good. He threw two touchdowns and the Irish defense held the Aggies to only a field goal in the second half. The Irish were back in the rankings at #23. In the second week, Nebraska came to South Bend and the forecasted national champion Cornhuskers squeaked out a victory over the Irish in overtime L (24-27). Injuries were hurting the Irish again as Arnaz Battle injured his wrist in the game and was lost indefinitely.

The #13 Purdue Boilermakers, led by Heisman Trophy-hopeful quarterback Drew Brees, completed only 13 passes, while Irish backup quarterback Gary Godsey completed 14. Godsey led the Irish to a last-minute win against Purdue W (23-21). At # 23 Michigan State the next week, Notre Dame fought hard but lost L (21-27).

At 2-2, the Irish faced Stanford at home. Davie tried freshman Matt LoVecchio at QB and things started to click W (20-14). LoVecchio

also won the Navy game in Orlando W (45-14). The Irish then traveled to Morgantown to face the West Virginia Mountaineers. LoVecchio led the Irish again with two touchdown passes W (42-28).

The next week, ND got an OT win over Air Force at home W (34-31). It was the first Irish win ever in overtime. Notre Dame had performed well enough at this point to become bowl eligible.

Ranked 11th, the Irish continued with wins over Boston College at home W (28-16), at Rutgers W (45-17), and then Davie's team claimed its first win at USC since 1992 W (38-21).

With a 9–2 record, the Irish got a BCS Bowl bid for the first time ever, with an invitation to the Fiesta Bowl to play the Oregon State Beavers. Much to the chagrin of the Notre Dame faithful, the game against the Beavers was a blow-out L (9-41). The Irish ended the season ranked 15th with a 9–3 record.

With the end of the season, Davie was named finalist in two coach of the year awards. In addition, four Irish players were named to All-America Teams; seven players were selected to play in post-season All-Star games, and six players were selected in the 2001 NFL Draft.

Another three members of the team signed free agent contracts with NFL teams. The season ended on a very positive note for Coach Bob Davie who signed a five-year contract extension for his fine Y2K season. Compared to where ND teams had been, this was a very good year.

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.

Notre Dame had trouble in its first 2001 game from the first play from scrimmage. The Irish fumbled and Nebraska recovered. LoVecchio was ineffective throughout the first quarter. Davie brought Carlyle Holiday in as QB and he quickly took the Irish to a field goal. Nebraska's defense was on cue and the ND offense was ineffective throughout the rest of the game. ND lost to the Cornhuskers L (10-27)

The following Tuesday was September 11 (9/11). The nation had been attacked. A sorrowful nation, very concerned about game safety canceled all Division I-A college football games for Saturday, September 15. The scheduled September 15 game against Purdue was moved to the end of the season.

With promises of heightened security, prayers, and a stadium-wide fundraiser to help the victims of the attacks, Notre Dame returned to its home field on September 22, to face the Michigan State Spartans. LoVecchio got the start. He had a much better game than his first outing against Nebraska. However, the Irish fell short of the Spartans for the fifth straight year L (10-17).

After the loss, trying desperately to get a winning formula with an 0-2 record, Davie named Holiday as the starting quarterback for the Texas A&M game.

Eventually, the sophomore Lovecchio saw the handwriting and would transfer from Notre Dame to Indiana to expand his personal opportunities. After sitting out one year per regulations, LoVecchio had two very successful years with Indiana, just as he once had a successful year with ND in his first season in 2000. He had some spot action for Notre Dame in various games through the 2001 season.

In the Texas A& M game, the new QB, Holiday was playing in front of the largest crowd ever to watch a football game in Texas. He did his best but he was soon knocked out of the game with a neck injury—even before halftime. The Irish were set back and had no

answer. ND could not move the ball at all and lost L (3–24). The Irish record was 0–3 for the first time in history.

Holiday was feeling good enough to start the next week. The new QB led the Irish to their first victory of the season against the Pittsburgh Panthers W (24-7), and continued to roll with wins over West Virginia W (34-24) and USC W (27-16). The Irish had won three in a row and now were at 3–3.

But, the Holy War did not go Notre Dame's way. The Irish suffered a loss the next week v Boston College L (17-21) at Alumni Stadium, The Irish hopes for a chance at a bowl game dwindled as the team left the playing field the next week at # 7 ranked Tennessee with a loss L (18-28).

Playing with a 3–5 record, it was clearly another bad season for Coach Davie. Notre Dame would need to win all of its remaining games to avoid Davie's second losing season. On November 17, the Irish hoped to start another season turn-around with a win over Navy at home. With the win, W (34-16) over Navy, the 4-5 Irish still had hope.

Despite the stakes, the next week the Fighting Irish fell to Stanford L (13-17) at Stanford Stadium, giving ND a 4-6 record. Holiday and LoVecchio were both used in the last scheduled game, alternating at QB. The QB's completed only one pass each the entire game. It was not pretty.

By December 1, the regular season was to have been completed. Instead, Notre Dame traveled to Purdue to play the game delayed by the 9-11 attack. The Irish won W (24-15). The Irish defense secured the win. With a 5–6 record, nobody asked ND to play in post-season bowls but there were a lot of questions being asked inside Notre Dame.

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>

Davie Fired by Irish

College football: Notre Dame Coach let go after 5-6 season. No timetable set to hire successor.

December 03, 2001

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.

Davie's firing had been long anticipated. In five seasons, he looked, acted and sounded like an Irish coach but finished with a 35-25 record that more closely reflected Gerry Faust's five-year record of 30-26 than the legendary runs of Knute Rockne, Frank Leahy and Ara Parseghian.

When Davie replaced Lou Holtz as Irish coach in 1997, Parseghian offered the new coach some advice.

"There are a lot of things to worry about," Parseghian told Davie, "but worry about one thing, and that's winning."

Davie didn't win enough. He went 7-6 his first year, 9-3 his second, 5-7 his third, 9-3 his fourth and 5-6 in his last.

Under Davie, Notre Dame did not produce a first-round NFL draft choice or win a bowl game, losing in the Independence, Gator and Fiesta bowls. "I am in no way bitter," Davie said. "No way will I have a chip on my shoulder as I leave

Notre Dame. I am not the least bit embarrassed. In fact, I'll walk out of here with my head held high and am really proud of what we have done."

After Notre Dame went 9-2 during last year's regular season, White extended Davie's contract through the 2005 season.

Only days later, however, Oregon State embarrassed Notre Dame in the Fiesta Bowl, 41-9.

Davie then boasted that his 2001 squad would be his most talented, but the Irish opened this season with a listless loss at Nebraska that led to the first 0-3 start in school history.

White said he thought he made the right decision at the time in extending Davie's contract.

"A year ago, at this time, I believed that we had turned the corner under Bob, and that we were prepared to reclaim our traditional standing among the nation's elite college programs," White said.

"Today, I can no longer say that."

White said the contract extension was a "misread on my part."

White also fired Davie's staff, but indicated they could stay on through the upcoming recruiting season.

Davie's fate probably was sealed Sept. 29 after Notre Dame dropped to 1-4 with a 24-3 loss at Texas A&M.

Davie said he and White met after the loss and discussed his future.

"From the Texas A&M game on, obviously, I knew what the hurdle would be for this football team and its coaching staff," Davie said.

White said he has a short list of candidates but no timetable for hiring a successor--although that hasn't stopped the media from rampant speculation.

The most prominent name mentioned has been Oakland Raider Coach Jon Gruden, who grew up mesmerized with Notre Dame during a period when his father was an assistant coach under Dan Devine.

Asked about the opening Sunday after the Raiders' overtime loss to Arizona, Gruden said: "I haven't had any conversations with anyone. I like where I am a lot. We're going to finish the job."

Recently, however, over the objections of the Raiders, Gruden gushed openly of his love for Notre Dame in an interview with South Bend Tribune columnist David Hough.

There are potential hang-ups to any Gruden hiring, though, foremost being that the Raiders' season could run into early February if they reach the Super Bowl.

With national high school signing day looming in early February, can Notre Dame wait for Gruden?

There also is the ever-present specter of Raider Owner Al Davis, not likely to accommodate a coach under contract who wants to bolt his team in the middle of a potential Super Bowl run.

And what about money?

For all its football success, Notre Dame traditionally has not paid market price for coaches, although sources indicated over the weekend the school might be willing to pay the next coach \$2 million a season.

That would put the next Irish coach in line with salaries paid to Florida Coach Steve Spurrier and Florida State Coach Bobby Bowden.

Other potential coaching candidates include Tom Coughlin, the Jacksonville Jaguars' no-nonsense coach, Oregon Coach Mike Bellotti and perhaps San Francisco 49er Coach Steve Mariucci, if his relationship with that organization's front office continues to sour.

"I appreciated the appetite for news about a search of this kind," White said of his coaching search, "but you don't hire good people by negotiating through the media. We all know the rumor mill has been in operation for many weeks now, and we know today's announcement will kick it into overdrive."

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:

"When Bob Davie became New Mexico's coach in 2011, he said bluntly that he would make no promises. The Lobos had lost 35 of their last 38 games, and the previous coach had been fired after a slew of embarrassing off-the-field problems.

Davie said only that he would seek to "stabilize this program."

Four years after taking over the embattled football program, and 14 years since being ousted as Notre Dame's head coach, Davie, 61, has the Lobos playing in their first bowl game in nearly a decade. New Mexico (7-5) will meet Arizona (6-6) in the New Mexico Bowl on Saturday after a surprisingly solid season in which the Lobos shocked Boise State and Air Force, the Mountain West's Mountain Division champion."

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 21 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



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.

It is believed Willingham's deal would make him only the third coach to earn at least \$2 million annually, joining Florida's Steve Spurrier (\$2.1 million) and Oklahoma's Bob Stoops (\$2 million).

Willingham insisted the obstacles of playing for a national championship while meeting Notre Dame's tough academic standards can be overcome.

"I believe that can be accomplished and that is why I am here," he said.

Mon., Dec. 31

Stanford athletics director Ted Leland is always prepared, thinking ahead toward what might happen if he loses a coach. He had a short list of candidates in case Tyrone Willingham was hired elsewhere, as he has now at Notre Dame. The possibility of Willingham leaving has been an issue every year because the NFL, Ohio State and Michigan State have cited interest the last few years.

Personally, the coach who might be the best fit to succeed Willingham would be Ron Turner of Illinois. Not only is he a proven head coach, but he is also a Bay Area native who served as the offensive coordinator at Stanford for three years under Dennis Green and runs a similar style of offense at Illinois.

Athletics director Kevin White said he talked with many coaches who worked with Willingham, including former 49ers coach Bill Walsh, before offering Willingham the Notre Dame job.

"Every one of them regards him as one of the top coaches in college or professional football," White said.

Notre Dame President Rev. Edward Malloy said while some would see Willingham's hiring as a social statement, he was hired because of his reputation as a coach who upheld the highest academic standards.

"He knows what our standards are. He embraces them," Malloy said. "He is excited to be at Notre Dame and we are so excited to have him as our new football coach."

Willingham emerged as a possible successor to Bob Davie shortly after Davie was fired as Notre Dame's football coach on Dec. 2. Willingham replaces former Georgia Tech coach George O'Leary, who was hired on Dec. 9. Five days later, however, O'Leary resigned after it was revealed he had made false claims about his academic and athletic achievements.

It was one of the most embarrassing moments in school history.

The news of Willingham's hiring drew praise from prominent black leaders.

"It's a victory for fairness and equal opportunity to succeed or fail," said the Rev. Jesse Jackson, who previously urged Notre Dame to consider black candidates. "To even the field for athletes, you have to be willing to even the field for coaches."

Floyd Keith, executive director of the Black Coaches Association, said: "This opens up a lot of doors for a lot of people. We have minority candidates out there

that just haven't been considered before. There are other Tyrone Willingham's out there."

Some Stanford players met Willingham's hiring with disappointment. Luke Powell, a redshirt sophomore wide receiver, described the players' reaction to Willingham's departure as both stunned and disappointed, according to a story in the San Francisco Chronicle, because they were confident that the coach who brought them to Stanford intended to return for an eighth season.

In fact, Powell and offensive lineman Paul Weinacht were among the players who met individually with Willingham after the Fighting Irish fired Bob Davie on Dec. 2, according to the Chronicle.

Players told the newspaper that Willingham quashed speculation that he was a candidate at Notre Dame. Weinacht, a fourth-year junior, recalled that Willingham "was almost laughing at" reports linking him to the opening, a stance the coach also took with the media.

Willingham's introduction Tuesday was much more low-key than when O'Leary was hired. That introduction was part news conference, part pep rally, with the public invited to attend, the Irish band playing and cheerleaders performing as university personnel passed out O'Leary T-shirts.

Willingham appears to fit the criteria White listed when he fired Davie. Willingham has been a head coach for seven seasons, he has a winning record (44-36-1), and he knows how to recruit at a school with high academic standards.

Players said they were happy with the hiring.

"With all the things that have gone on the past few weeks, I think they've looked him over pretty close and I think he'll be a good choice," cornerback Vontez Duff said.

While Willingham's winning percentage of 54.9 percent is worse than Davie's 58.3 percent (35-25), Stanford doesn't have the storied history of the Irish. Notre Dame coaches historically have done better than at their previous stops.

Ara Parseghian was 36-35-1 in eight seasons at Northwestern. Dan Devine was 25-28-4 in four seasons with the Green Bay Packers, including 6-8 his last year. Both won national championships at Notre Dame.

Willingham has been a perennial candidate mentioned for other vacancies. Ohio State considered him last year, while North Carolina State and Michigan State - - Willingham's alma mater -- were interested in him after the Cardinal made the Rose Bowl in 1999.

Stanford was 9-3 this season, and Willingham has led the team to one Pac-10 Conference title and to four bowl games.

Willingham, Dennis Green's running backs coach with the Cardinal from 1989-91 before a stint with Green's Minnesota Vikings, succeeded Bill Walsh at Stanford after the 1994 season.

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.

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.

After Bob Davie's 5-6 2001 season, Notre Dame was looking for good news and Tyrone Willingham was delivering that good news for the Irish almost every week all season long. Notre Dame had green t-shirts printed with "Return to Glory." The Kelly family of Wilkes-Barre, PA proudly wore those T-shirts. They were classics.



ND *Return to Glory* T-shirt decal in Willingham's time

The 2002 season became known as a "Return to Glory" for the Irish. You can see the phrase in the T-shirt image above. On November 23, 2002, my two best buddies—Dennis Grimes & Gerry Rodski and I, were in the stands for the Rutgers game and I wore my commemorative t-shirt over protective clothing. I picked it up at the ND Bookstore the prior day.

It was a bit cold, but it was also sunny in the stadium and the T-shirts created a "Sea of Green" in the Irish stands. Notre Dame left no doubt as the Irish soundly defeated Rutgers W (42-0) that particular day. It was a great game for the three of us, as we love Notre Dame to win big. We immediately left for refreshments at the Linebacker Lounge and as I recall we met some Wilkes-Barre, PA neighbors there, who were having dinner with their children after the game.

2002 Notre Dame v Bucknell in Basketball

Like everybody else who travels to Notre Dame, we had gone to the bookstore on Friday Nov.22, 2002, and we picked up a ton of the classic T-shirts. They were selling like hot-cakes. We also went over to the Joyce Center where that night Notre Dame was hosting Bucknell in Basketball. We hoped that after the Pep Rally we would get to go see a nice ND basketball game.

Unfortunately, the game was a sell-out other than some tickets that had been returned by some alumni for some alumni. It seemed like there were these stray tickets available at the ticket office to be sold to VIPs or perhaps to anybody. Gerry Rodski was fearless. He is an executive in his own right, running SSB USA, and he is my favorite VIP.

My buddy Gerry Rodski went to the ticket Window and explained about how we three King's College graduates, a school founded in 1946 by Notre Dame CSC fathers, were a real part of the Notre Dame tradition. You'd think Gerry, of Polish descent but blessed with Irish red hair, had been given the gift of blarney at birth as his mission was successful.

We got box seat tickets center court about ten seats up from the floor. The Lord says "Ask and you shall receive." Gerry asked and we all received the opportunity to view a great game. Notre Dame was fantastic that night and they soundly defeated Bucknell (W) 73-42. Perfect weekend!

The 2002 Season Football Games

It is hard to believe in recollection and now even with the facts in front of me that Notre Dame did not score an offensive touchdown in its first game against Maryland W (22-0) at Giants stadium in the Kickoff Classic. Additionally, the Irish equaled that mark the following week against Purdue W (24-17) at home. After two weeks, still no offensive scores.

The Maryland game gave Willingham the distinction of being the 24th Notre Dame Head Coach to win his opener in his first season. After this, ND won its next five games including Michigan W (25-13) at home, Michigan State W (21-17) at Spartan Stadium, and Stanford (W (31-7), a former Willingham coached team at Notre Dame Stadium. Notre Dame then got past Pittsburgh (14-6) in game 6, and Air Force W (21-14) at Falcon Stadium in Game 7.

The Irish went into the season with a few easily recognizable names. Quarterback Carlyle Holiday led the Irish along with former quarterback and new wide receiver Arnaz Battle. On Defense, back doing his job was Shane Walton. New running back Ryan Grant, who replaced Julius Jones, who was out for academic reasons, played a significant role in the successful season.

ND was rolling. It was a great feeling. The team was at 7-0 and ranked #6 in the country when it traveled to Tallahassee to play #11 Florida State in a huge road test and one of Notre Dame's greatest games.

Notre Dame started the game like champs, forcing a 3 & out and then quickly Holiday connected on a 66-yard touchdown pass on the first offensive play from scrimmage. From there, Florida State came back to tie the game at half but the Irish scored 24 points on 4 out of their last 6 drives to take the game. When Holiday threw the 65-yard bomb on his first play to Battle, the Irish could feel the victory, which they achieved v Florida State W (34-24).

This was the eighth straight win for the Irish and it looked like the magic might continue for the rest of the season. Everybody loved Ty Willingham. Fame and good fortune unfortunately are fleeting.

With the Florida State win, the Fighting Irish achieved a mark that had seldom ever been set in Notre Dame's long history. They were undefeated and untied in eight games. Ty Willingham had taken a shaky Bob Davie team and had made winners out of the players. That is how it seemed. But, *would it continue?* was always the ND question.

There was a lot of celebrating and Willingham was being compared to Rockne, Leahy, Devine, Parseghian, & Holtz. The celebrating ended abruptly in Willingham's first Holy War.

The first Irish loss of the season L (7-14) came against the unranked Boston College Eagles with ND ranked at # 4 in the nation. This looked too much like the 1993 season when Lou Holtz's team narrowly lost a chance to participate in the national championship game due to a loss to Boston College.

All the green in the "Sea of green" this year was not missed by Tyrone Willingham. The coach wanted the team to be a part of the "Sea of Green" in the stands. He decided that the team should wear green for this important Holy War game. In 1985, the last time the Irish had worn green at home, the team came out after halftime against USC and won the game with adrenalin 37-3.

A tough Boston College team was unimpressed with the green and what they saw as a contrivance. The idea did not work this time. Maybe because it was not a new idea.

Holiday got injured as ND was moving the ball and was replaced by Dillingham. The Eagles defense toughened and returned an interception for a touchdown that sealed the loss L (7-14) for the Irish.

The Fighting Irish nonetheless won their next two games, including a close victory over Navy W (30-23) and the blowout W (42-0) victory over struggling Rutgers. The Rutgers game produced some first-time game attendees--Rodski, Grimes, and Kelly (ME). We were all cheering in the stands.

This phenomenal 10-1 record for a first-year ND coach gave the Irish a real shot at a Bowl Championship Series (BCS) game if they could only win their last game against perennial rival and long-time spoiler / nemesis USC.

After the BC loss, the Irish came into this important game ranked # 7 while USC was ranked at a respectable # 11. USC had a great quarterback, Carson Palmer who was a Heisman Trophy candidate and the ultimate Heisman winner in 2002.

When he discusses his Heisman, Palmer still cites his stellar performance in the Notre Dame game in this year as the reason he went on to win the Heisman Trophy. Palmer today continues as a great NFL quarterback today. Palmer has played pro ball since graduating from USC. He now plays for Arizona and in 2015, he led the Cardinals to a 13-3 season, winning the divisional playoffs.

He threw for 425 yards in the Trojans' 31-point win over Notre Dame L (13-44). Willingham's Irish had forgotten what got them there. It was not a close game and not fun to watch. The Irish were unprepared for such an offensive onslaught. Palmer was a one-man wrecking crew.

2003 Gator Bowl

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.



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 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 sterling 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 effort.

Notre Dame Fans simply do not like losses and unless there is a real reason that is understandable, and it is not an eternal notion, there will be grumblings.

ND fans like one thing a lot worse than losses—*losing streaks*. This particular season was punctuated by a pair of three-game losing streaks. Besides losing close games, ND fans hate blowouts. This particular season featured ugly blowout losses against Michigan, USC, and Florida State. Ugh!

Having attended the Syracuse game with Grimes and Rodski at the Carrier Dome on a snowy day in December 2003, I would offer that my close-in view of the Irish performance in this game L (38-12) sure and heck looked like another blowout to me. It was a miserable performance.

Tyrone Willingham's recruits looked good. He had signed what would be called a top-5 class. Twenty recruits agreed to play for Notre Dame. Twelve recruits were four-star caliber. These new recruits included future stars Victor Abiamiri, Chinedum Ndukwe, Brady Quinn, Jeff Samardzija, and Tom Zbikowski. Looking back

as I am now, that seems like a fine crew. But, then again, they would all be freshman.

Ranked # 19 and facing what pundits agreed was the most difficult schedule in the nation, ND opened 2003 against the Washington State Cougars. This was a first-time match between the two programs. Notre Dame was down by 19 points near the end of the game and came back to tie and then win in overtime OT W (29-26). Carlyle Holiday struggled as quarterback, yet ND got the win. It was not too long ago that Washington State was really good.

They came to South Bend unranked but Wazzu was coming off a Rose Bowl appearance. They had been 20-5 over the past two seasons and not a bad team. It was not a pushover team. ND was able to steal just 3 points in the first half and were behind 19-3. In what could be called a wild 4th quarter, the Irish came back to take the lead but State force OT by scoring a late touchdown. Nick Setta's 5th field goal of the game gave Notre Dame the OT victory.

In the next game against arch rival # 5 Michigan at the Big House, the Wolverines avenged their 2002 loss by beating the Irish L (0-38). This game made history as it was the first shutout / blowout in the Michigan series in 100 years and the largest margin of loss ever between the two teams. When the Irish followed this poor showing with a loss to Michigan State L (16-22) the very next week at Notre Dame Stadium, the calls had already begun about the "coaching" decisions.

Notre Dame fans wanted Holiday to be taken out of the game in favor of the new freshman Brady Quinn. Eventually Willingham relented and Quinn saw his first collegiate action as a freshman in the fourth quarter against Michigan State. Holiday did not start in the next game against Purdue.

In Quinn's first start in game # 4, there was good and bad. Quinn threw for 297 passing yards on 59 attempts. However, he was intercepted four times and he was sacked five times. This was game 3 of the first of two 3-game losing streaks in the season. It was going to be a season of night sweats and nightmares. Notre Dame wasted little time in losing to the Boilermakers L (10-23).

Willingham was as frazzled as his freshman QB. He retained Quinn as the starter and the coach, hearing the echoes of the disappointed fans in the stadium, acknowledged that he needed to pay more attention to the running game against Pittsburgh.

ND won game five at # 15 ranked Pittsburgh W (20-14). Things finally looked better for the 1-3 Irish during the game. Quinn got his first win against Pittsburgh bringing ND to 2-3. Julius Jones went wild with a school-record 262 rushing yards. It had the makings of a big turnaround. But, this would simply be a short interregnum between pairs of three-game losing streaks.

After this brief one-game respite, Willingham immediately began losing streak # 2. The Irish lost their next three games, including Willingham's second straight 31-point loss to USC at home L (14-45), a last-minute loss to Boston College at Alumni Field L (25-27), and their first home shutout since 1978 to Florida State L (0-37).

The Irish players saw their plight and were not pleased. They began to call the season disappointing, as the team needed to win its last four games to be invited to a bowl game.

The players and the fans hoped they could put the moxie together to have a chance of becoming bowl eligible. Their next three games were wins beginning with a last minute v over Navy W (27-24), a win on Senior Day over the Brigham Young University's (BYU) Cougars W (33-14), and a nice blowout win W (57-7) over Stanford that saw the Irish offense finally connect for the first time all season. They needed just one more win for a bowl invitation.

My Personal 2003 Experience

I wish this story was not in my personal repertoire; but since it is, it is an experience that must be reported. On Friday, December 6, to witness a rare late season game, a trio of semi-large Wilkes-Barre fans, traveled to the Holiday Inn in Syracuse, NY. It was just a three-hour drive and we did it in my reasonably new conversion van.

Though we enjoyed a few trips to Scotch & Sirloin for *ahem*, dinner, our true mission was sincerely to attend the ND-SYR game on Saturday, which we did.

The hotel appeared on the map to be just a few blocks from the Carrier Dome in Syracuse, but walking to a game in the snow because Cabs would not make the trek, was not originally in the plan. Yes, we were there for the Syracuse v Notre Dame game to be played the next day.

However, until a few hours after the game had started, reinforced at the whistle when the stadium beer stopped flowing, it seemed like it would be a simple and wonderful winning Notre Dame experience.

Rodski, Grimes, and Kelly [Me] were ready to take on Syracuse and the Carrier Dome in Syracuse to make sure that our Irish won the game. Despite our great plans, we found the Syracuse weather was cold and snowy, and the stadium walk was tough and slippery. No cabs or trams or little busses were offering us a nicer way to get to the game than slugging through the slippery snow.

So, we bit the bullet. After all, we were kids who just happened to be in our late fifties. We trudged to the stadium after a good night's sleep at the Holiday Inn. We were supposedly close but the snow made the going challenging. It took quite a while with a lot of slipping and sliding, but no falls.

Our thirsts were at peak when we finally got through the gate. After arriving at the Dome and walking like humans to our seats. it was a balmy 69 degrees everywhere in the stadium. Carrier had created a beautiful venue for winter sporting events. Additionally, for the good, the stands and the artificial turf field were bone dry though it was still snowing outside.

Rodski, Grimes, and Kelly [ME] enjoyed the weather in the stands and the game time, in which the Orange Boosters Club sold great beer. In 4Q there were no more sales but since they did not collect the pints remaining in the plastic cups, we were OK.

The game itself unfortunately, was not enjoyable at all to any of us. Three staunch Irish fans were quite disappointed. It was supposed to

be a rout. It was. But, unexpectedly, it was not the Fighting Irish that were delivering the drubbing.

The Orangemen had somehow gotten infused by some local spirit and Syracuse University was taking it to the Irish. The trio from Wilkes-Barre saw it first-hand. It was not just a drubbing; it was a whipping.

Other than enjoying being with my two best buddies, I wished I were at either of two fine places other than the Dome: 1. *At home with the TV off* or 2. *At Scotch and Sirloin peering at the menu*. All game long, I was waiting for Willingham to send in the magic play to make the game a W. It never came.

Considering that Willingham needed this win to become bowl eligible, I was doubly surprised at how poorly Notre Dame played in this otherwise pleasant stadium.

Unranked Syracuse was motivated as the most recent game in the ND/SU series had been played in 1963. Syracuse had not played Notre Dame in forty years. Notre Dame led the series 2-1 and this win would immediately put a struggling football program on the map and it would tie the series 2-2. Willingham's Notre Dame had a hard time doing anything right against a Syracuse team that was unranked and had already lost six games.

Since I was at this game, I can still remember one guy on the Syracuse team doing all the damage to the Irish that day. I can still visualize his long runs for touchdowns amid blasts of crowd-cheering. Walter Reyes beat Notre Dame single-handedly that day.

The rest of the team were needed but Reyes was the guy who did Notre Dame in. As a Notre Dame fan, it was painful to watch. As a person who wanted Notre Dame to be more than just the other team "In the stadium," it was a big disappointment.

Notre Dame tradition actually motivates our foes into playing better than they have ever played in their lives. Reyes had one of the most productive days ever by any SU player ever. I mean ever! In addition to his five touchdowns, he ran for 189 yards on 19 carries.

In this game, Reyes tied Syracuse icon Floyd Little for second place on the SU single-game rushing touchdown and points scored lists. His touchdown total and 30 points were both Carrier Dome records. Like I said, as ND stalwarts, for the trio from Wilkes-Barre, it was very painful to watch.

Rodski thought that perhaps Notre Dame had forgotten to put its defense on the plane to Syracuse. They simply could not stop this young man. Reyes became Syracuse's single-season and career leader in rushing touchdowns; both records he still owns to this day.

Notre Dame may have had three routs that year against them according to the pundits, but anybody watching the game on December 6 in Syracuse even if they had not trudged a few miles in the snow to get there, would have agreed with the trio from Wilkes-Barre, this was a rout.

My buddy Grimes said that "This is one of the worst beatings I have ever seen a Notre Dame team ever take even if at L (38-12), it was not technically classified as a rout." I had talked my two buddies into spending their allowances to come to this game, and there was very little on the positive side, other than being in each other's company. I had no hope for the season and perhaps for the Willingham period after seeing this game first-hand.

With a 5-7 record, the Irish finished with its twelfth losing season in the history of the Notre Dame Football program. Like me, a number of ND fans were wondering if Tyrone Willingham would make it to his third year. It was that bad a season and it was worse yet for those that had seen some of the games, such as Syracuse, close-up

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.

Let the games begin!

Season openers reveal a lot about a team and how it is going to perform for the year. This 2004 Willingham opener resulted in a loss against BYU in Provo Utah L (17-20). Despite Brady Quinn improving at the quarterback position, completing over 50 percent of his passes for 265 yards, the Irish only managed to gain 11 yards rushing at BYU.

Next came perennial powerhouse Michigan at home. Michigan came into this game with a blowout victory over Miami of Ohio, and were ranked 8th in the country. The unranked Irish were 0-1. Trailing 12-7 late in the 3rd quarter at Notre Dame Stadium, the Irish found a spark when it picked off Chad Henne and scored a few plays later to take the lead.

After forcing a 3 and out, ND blocked Michigan's punt and recovered it at the Wolverine 5-yard line. Freshman running back Darius Walker scored his second straight touchdown on the next play. The Irish later added another score in the 4th quarter and held on for the upset. ND defeated Michigan W (28-20).

With this tough win against a very tough Michigan team, the Irish were re-energized and they made quick work of Michigan State W (31-24) at Spartan Stadium the following week, and Washington W (38-3) at home in week 3. ND was sitting at 3-1 going into their fifth game, still unranked.

The media are influenced by what is in front of teams and how well those behind are still doing. There were pundits who had begun to compare Willingham to some of Notre Dame's legendary coaches and they projected that this team would win seven or eight games in the 2004 season, and then would be back in national championship contention by 2005. Irish fans loved to hear such positive prognostications.

With renewed expectations, the Irish hoped to continue their streak to a win in their 5th game against 5th ranked Purdue, who had not won at Notre Dame in 30 years.

The #15 Boilermakers' quarterback, Kyle Orton did not read any of those naysayer press clippings. He simply torched the Irish defense handing ND a 25-point loss to end the three-game rally L (16-41). It was Purdue's first win at Notre Dame Stadium since Ara Parseghian's last year as Irish coach in 1974, when the Irish were ranked No. 2. Number 2 sounded like a good thing at the time to Willingham's unranked Irish.

The 3-2 Irish got their wind back and beat a fine Stanford team W (23-15) at home the following week, creating a historical event for the university. Notre Dame had become just the second school in college football history to reach 800 wins. Tyrone Willingham had brought in this big record win.

The Irish then defeated Navy W (27-9) at Giants Stadium and moved into the rankings at #24 for the first time since their 2004 loss to Michigan.

They did not stay ranked for too long. Boston College, whose Jesuit leaders seemed to have special insights into winning the Holy Wars between the two institutions, once again beat the Irish unexpectedly at home on a late score. L (23-24).

Notre Dame had three games left, and they had a shot at an OK season. They needed just one win to become bowl eligible, but it looked as if that win would not come in their next game without a miracle as a tough # 9 Tennessee Volunteers team was ready for Notre Dame to come to Knoxville. The Irish defense, however, stepped up, and, after knocking out quarterback Eric Ainge on a sack, returned an interception for a touchdown to upset the Volunteers W (17-13) to become bowl eligible.

Once again ranked at # 24, the Irish returned home for their final home game against unranked Pittsburgh. The game was a shootout. If they were pros, the Irish defense would not have gotten paid for the game. Notre Dame lost on a late score L (38-41). The absent defense permitted five passing touchdowns—by an opponent for the first time ever at home. Notre Dame Alumni did not like the kind of records that were being set by the Irish.

USC had always had a knack of taking a great ND season and turning it into well, you know! Always tough playing the Trojans for the final regular season game, the Irish met expectations this year and lost to the Trojans by 31 again L (10-41). Bob Davie had done well against USC but Willingham could not get a victory in his three years, nor could he lose by any less than thirty-one for any of those three years.

Looking for facts to substantiate my inner feelings about USC as a spoiler team v Notre Dame, I looked it up. Only teams in 100% contention are listed. The University of Southern California Football Team had destroyed legitimate Irish title hopes from long before I was born, and then too many times afterwards. I got to see too much of their handiwork. It happened in potential title years such as 1931, 1938, 1948 (tie), 1964, 1970, 1971, and 1980. I am not including the games in which USC simply ruined what would have been a good season or a bowl-eligible season. Since we are at 2004 in the

Willingham years, there are about 25 unaccountable years in which USC did plenty damage.

Notre Dame Alumni and fans were upset with taking it on the chin at the end of each season after expectations had been raised. Willingham had two more years left on his contract. In his five tough years, Bob Davie had delivered a good season every other year. Willingham in his third year brought two poor seasons to Notre Dame back to back along with a poor recruiting class for the future of the university to boot. The cries for his head were heard across the entire football-loving world.

The Irish, with a dismal 6-5 record were invited and in turn accepted a bowl bid to play in the Insight Bowl, However, the administration had succumbed to great pressure from Fans and Alumni to stop the bleeding.

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

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 W (38–21). Beavers quarterback Derek Anderson threw for 359 yards and four touchdown passes, with no interceptions. Notre Dame was still looking for a coach.

Summary on Tyrone Willingham

One of the things I never mentioned before but, which was very much within the overall discussion when Tyrone Willingham was appointed, is his race. I did offer that at the time of his appointment, he was a great coach from a great football and academic achievement school, Stanford. But I never noted or intimated that Coach Willingham was a black man or a white man. Some may correct me here and say he is African American. I don't know what is proper today. I know that I am American and that is all my father ever asked me to be. I regret if my opinion offends anybody.

I am of 100% Irish heritage. My four grandparents were all Irish. My dad taught me that I was an American. He was annoyed if any of us would say that we were Irish-American and if we wore a shirt that said Ireland on it and not Fighting Irish of Notre Dame, for

example. My father taught me that I was not Irish. I was of Irish descent. He said I was an American. That is my background.

So, I offered no commentary on the American-ness or the black-ness or African American-ness of Tyrone Willingham. To me, he is quite a guy and he had a tough job under the toughest circumstances, regardless of how some view his color-ness.

Like a number of great guys and great coaches before and after Willingham—those who paid his salary after giving a look, right or wrong—decided to give it up and get somebody else. He was not the first and he will not be the last and it had nothing to do with what he looks like.

Nonetheless, I decided that I would take my closing article from a source that could offer a proper close with a slant that is both pro-American and pro-minority. For me and for all of my relatives and friends, whiteness or blackness was not the issue at Notre Dame regarding Tyrone Willingham.

Notre Dame was not conducting a social experiment. Willingham was not a bad coach and would have killed it perhaps in a few more years at Notre Dame. Who knows? I think Notre Dame gives both white and black guys the same opportunity—win or plan to find another job! Parseghian said it to Bob Davie. Win! That idea is not about to change as long as there are Notre Dame fans and alumni.

The university simply tries to hire the best coach possible for a team that many think ought to always be the best team. I thought Willingham was a great choice, just like I liked Bob Davie when he was appointed. In both cases; nobody asked me. Here is a great perspective:

Here is the piece from <http://diverseeducation.com/article/4186/>
It is signed non-descriptively

by *Mostly Black Issues*

ND Football Coach Tyrone Willingham Fired

SOUTH BEND, Ind.

Tyrone Willingham was fired Nov. 30 as coach at Notre Dame for failing to turn the nation's most storied football program back into a national championship contender.

He was fired three days after the Irish lost 41-10 to No. 1 Southern California — their third straight loss by 31 points to the Trojans — to drop to 6-5 for the season.

“We simply have not made the progress on the field that we need to make,” athletic director Kevin White said. “Nor have we been able to create the positive momentum necessary in our efforts to return the Notre Dame program to the elite level of the college football world.”

Players are considering whether to play in the Insight Bowl on Dec. 28, and White said he didn't know who would coach the game. Notre Dame accepted the bowl invitation Nov. 28.

Willingham's firing comes after a season in which the Irish pulled off upsets of Michigan and Tennessee but also were beaten badly by USC and Purdue. They also lost games they were expected to win against Brigham Young University, Boston College and Pittsburgh.

White said he met the morning of Nov. 30 with Willingham to tell him he was fired, then both met later with some players to tell them.

Players were stunned.

“I think it's a shock to everybody,” tight end Jared Clark said.

Other players declined comment, but were clearly surprised and saddened by the announcement. “As a player, you think it's our fault. We didn't get the job done,” Clark said. “I think coach Willingham was a great coach, and I enjoyed playing under him.”

Notre Dame officials said Willingham had decided not to speak publicly about his firing.

White praised Willingham's handling of the team, especially the Irish's strong academic record.

“From Sunday through Friday our football program has exceeded all expectations, in every way,” he said. “But on Saturday, we've struggled. We've been up and down and sideways a little bit.”

Notre Dame hired Willingham, the first Black head coach in any sport for the Irish, from Stanford to replace George O'Leary. The former Georgia Tech coach resigned five days after taking the job because he lied about his academic and athletic achievements on his resume.

Floyd Keith, executive director of the Black Coaches Association, said he was disappointed with Notre Dame's decision.

“In three years, I think he has done everything, short of winning a national championship, and I don't think he inherited national championship talent,” Keith said.

— Associated Press

Chapter 22 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.

After Tyrone Willingham produced two poorly played seasons in a row, his time had passed at Notre Dame, and when Notre Dame started looking, they forgot that their best coaches were former head coaches. Nonetheless, when they hired Charlie Weiss, he was the

brains of the New England Patriots' offense and despite the difference in jobs between being a strategist and a coach, Weiss got the nod at Notre Dame because the Patriots were doing so well, and perhaps because Bill Belichick does not hire anything other than the best.

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.

2005 Games

On September 3, at Pittsburgh, the Irish played its first game of the season against the No. 23 ranked Pittsburgh Panthers, led by first-year head coach Dave Wannstedt. Tyler Palko was the Pitt QB. The game started with a quick Palko TD pass to Greg Lee. Brady Quinn then came in and threw a 51-yard touchdown pass to Darius Walker. The Irish led 35-13 at halftime. There was much less scoring. In the second-half. The Irish won the game W (42-21), and jumped to 23rd in the national rankings.

Next game was at Michigan, who had a new coach, Lloyd Carr. The #3 Wolverines had not lost a home game to anybody since 2002. ND had not won at Michigan since 1993. Quinn quickly led the Irish with a number of successful passes and touchdowns to Rhema McNight and Jeff Samardzija. Darius Walker went through big holes in the defense. ND had a 14-3 halftime lead before Zbikowski returned a punt to the Michigan 33-yard line before the third quarter closed. Then, at the beginning of 4Q, D.J. Fitzpatrick kicked a 43-yard field goal. Score was 17-3.

Chad Henne, Michigan QB then threw a 26-yard touchdown pass to Mario Manningham, bringing the score to 17-10. With two minutes remaining, Michigan failed to score. Charlie Weis became the first Notre Dame Coach since Knute Rockne to win his first two games on the road. The Irish were then ranked #12 in the nation.

At home against Michigan State, the following week, the Irish luck slowed down with a close loss L (41-44). On the road against Washington Huskies, ND won the game W (36-17). This was known as the "Ty Bowl," because the Huskies were led by former

Irish coach Ty Willingham. The Huskies came into the game never having beaten the Irish, and they did not win this time either.

Notre Dame played at Purdue the following week and pummeled the Boilermakers W (49-28). Neither team could score on their opening drives, but ND quickly got going on their second, led by Brady Quinn's passing and Darius Walker's rushes.

USC came to Notre Dame and in a close game beat the Irish L (31-34). BYU looked for a big win after the ND loss to USC. The Irish won their first home game of the season W (49-23) and moved to 9th nationally. The Irish next played the struggling Tennessee Volunteers at home and beat them W (41-21).

Following this, ND got a nice win against Navy W (42-21). Then, the Irish hosted Syracuse at home. The Fighting Irish were well prepared to make up for the major trouncing from Syracuse in Willingham's last game and they beat the Orangemen W (34-10)

Moving on the road to Stanford, for its final test, the Irish won in a close shootout W (38-31). Stanford had previously been coached by Ty Willingham. Brady Quinn helped the Irish drive home this victory with his stellar play.

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)

Their nine-loss season was also a school record. Few expected such a season as for two years with Brady Quinn as a starter, Weis' team played well most of the time if we choose to ignore the bowl losses. How could this happen?

Alumni were not pleased for sure but Weiss had just renewed a ten-year contract. It would cost Notre Dame a ton if there was an abrupt termination of the contract. But, this season was nothing less than terrible and most were blaming Weis for the trouble.

Freshman quarterback Jimmy Clausen was brought off the bench into action as Notre Dame started the season upside down. He played in 10 games for the Irish, starting nine of them, and the young QB finished with 1,254 yards, seven touchdowns and six interceptions. Though Weis noted he expected a fine 2008 from Clausen, other than his word, the win/loss stats were not an indicator of greatness to come.

The 2007 season began on Saturday, September 1 and for Charlie Weis, it had to seem like it went on forever. Georgia Tech had a really tough team when they came into Notre Dame Stadium and the Yellow Jackets showed it by soundly defeating the Irish L (3-33).

Running Back Tashard Choice ran for a career high 196 yards for 2 touchdowns in the worst loss suffered by Notre Dame in a season opener in its history. This is a stat that Coach Weis did not need.

Notre Dame then traveled to Beaver Stadium before 110,078 to be beaten by the Nittany Lions of Penn State L (10-31). It was make-up time for the drubbing Weis's Irish had given the Nittany Lions at Notre Dame Stadium one-year prior.

Then it was Michigan at the Big House L (0-38); and Michigan State at home L (14-31), followed by a game at #25 Purdue L (19-33) and then after five straight losses finally a win at UCLA in the Rose Bowl Stadium W (20-6).

After the one game reprieve from losing, Notre Dame would lose four straight starting with Boston College at home L (14-27), #9 USC at home L (0-38), Navy at home L (44-46), and lastly Air Force at home L (24-41). There appeared to be no real reason for the losses or the wins. Neither wins nor losses were expected. The team was not together.

Somehow Weis's Irish ended their slide against Duke at home W 28-7) and then finished off Stanford at Stanford Stadium W (21-14). The 3-9 team was unranked and were not mentioned in any post-season bowl talk. Notre Dame's fall from pre-eminence was mentioned at a lot of dinner tables, however, including Turkey Day since all nine of the Irish losses had occurred before Thanksgiving. 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. This included an unexpected loss to a struggling Syracuse team. The records being broken by the Irish were not good records. For example, this was the first time that Notre Dame had fallen to an eight-loss team. The combined 15 losses from 2007–08 was the most losses for any two-year span.

Even in this, year four of an extended contract, 2007 had been so tough on fans and alumni they there was rampant speculation that the university might fire Weis. When the Irish finished the season,

the administration announced that Charlie Weiss would remain as head coach in 2009.

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!"

After the dismal 3-9 2007 season, there were few fans with high hopes for 2008. Many were apprehensive about what 2008 would actually bring. Surprisingly, things did not start off too bad.

On September 6, the season began at ND with a win v San Diego State W (21-13) Then Michigan at home in what was anything but a yawning bowl. This game is listed as one of ND's greatest games.

Michigan, Michigan State, Stanford

For the second straight season the Notre Dame-Michigan game featured two unranked teams. ND was coming off its disastrous 2007 (3-9) campaign while Michigan was breaking in new head coach Rich Rodriguez. Despite gaining just 260 total yards, the Fighting Irish helped create 6 turnovers from which they took advantage.

It was a soggy afternoon in South Bend and tough to hold onto the ball. While not a huge win in the large scheme of things, at the time, this was the third biggest win over Michigan by margin of victory and the biggest for such a game played at Notre Dame Stadium W (35-17)

Next was an away game at Spartan Stadium, which Michigan State won L (7-23). Purdue then roared into ND Stadium to play but the Irish silenced them W (38-21). Stanford came to ND Stadium looking for a win but left with a loss W (28-21).

North Carolina, Washington, Pittsburgh

An October 11 trip to Kenan Stadium in Chapel Hill to play # 22 North Carolina brought the second season loss to the Irish (24-29). Notre Dame then traveled to Washington for a win (33-7). On November 1, the Fighting Irish came home to fight in an OT battle against Pittsburgh but lost the contest L (33-36).

Boston College was ready!



For the November 8 Saturday night game, my entire family drove six hours to Wellesley, MA, just outside of Boston for the 2008 version of the BC / ND Holy War game. The girls went to Boston shopping while the guys went to the game in the rain. Now, who's smart? To assure having seats together, I had earlier bought six season tickets for the family. ND tickets are hard to get.

The season tickets seemed more affordable than scalper rates on game night, and we were assured of seats

together. My son Mike and nephews Scott and Merek Piotroski and my brother-in law, Mitch Bornstein and my nephew Matt Bornstein, drove with me in the rain from the Bornstein home where we all were staying. We bravely sought a parking spot.

We were mentally prepared for the chilly, wet, and damp night game that we would experience. We parked after a long search for a spot in the pitch black dark. We had passed the stadium in our search for a spot but were on the main drag. We walked quite a few blocks from our lucky parking spot to our reserved seats at Alumni stadium.

We did this all to watch a sluggish and seemingly exhausted Notre Dame team and a distressed coach give it up to the Boston College Eagles L (0-17). Unranked BC pitched a shutout against unranked (5-3) Notre Dame. As much as I love Notre Dame and Notre Dame Football, I found little enjoyment watching this poorly played game under my small, but functioning umbrella and my extremely cheap game-time poncho.

The Eagle's fans near us were very nice. That was the best part of the experience. The Eagles were not supposed to make a game out of it but like many of the Holy Wars between the Jesuits and the CSC, what is supposed to happen does not happen.

The Stadium was so small, I got a good look at Coach Weis during the game and it actually made me sad. He looked hapless and helpless and his look spilled over onto the ND team. I felt that the team had little choice but to play in a miserable, luckless, sloppy fashion. Something had to change soon in South Bend. It was too late for this particular Holy War.

Notre Dame came back from this unexpected loss to beat the Midshipmen the following week at M & T Stadium in Baltimore in a close one W (27-21). Syracuse was next on the schedule.

In just a few years of playing the Irish, Syracuse had become a nemesis team. For years as President of the IBM Club in Scranton, I ran bus trips from Scranton to Syracuse's Carrier Dome to see the Orangemen play teams like Penn State, Pitt, Army, and other legacy teams, I knew Syracuse's team were always scrappers. I watched them clip off Notre Dame's wings in 2004 at the Dome in Willingham's last year. Yet, in 2008, I did not expect Charley Weis' team to be beaten by a weak Syracuse team at home. Yet, ND could not win this one and were beaten in a close game. L (23-24).

Notre Dame was hurting so bad for victories that I knew in my heart that when the Irish traveled to the Coliseum against USC this year that it was not going to be pretty. Yet, I always hoped things would be good. For this game, USC was ranked # 5 and Notre Dame was unranked. The Trojans never gave Notre Dame a chance in the game and they solidly beat The Fighting Irish L (3-38). 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. I hoped for a victory. Sometimes good hopes materialize into good outcomes. This was one of those years. The Irish won at Hawaii 49-21 and broke a bunch of records along the way. I was happy for the Fighting Irish, and as always, I hoped for more of the same in 2009. Over time, Irish fans have developed a wary eye about these ups and downs.

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. With two bad years behind him, Charlie Weis surely knew there was an "or else," attached to everybody's well wishes for his improvement.

The implied demand to Weis was that after five years and two years of really bad results, the Notre Dame administration expected their team would be in position to compete for a BCS Bowl berth. It was that simple. Ara Parseghian knew that winning was the secret to ND Head Coach Job Retention and so did Charlie Weis.

After all, that's why Mr. Weis had agreed to the deal when the university broke long-time salary records at the time he was hired and again when his contract was extended. This was not Catholic Charities operating at Notre Dame University; it was pay for performance. That was the deal.

When two entities engage in an arrangement in which both have a stake, such as marriage, both must bring something of reasonably equal value to the table. Notre Dame had paid the agreed upon salary for four years and were paying it again for the fifth year while its marriage partner in this case had been failing in his part of the

covenant. 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!

The season

Weis's team began 2009 at 4-2, with close losses to Michigan on September 12 L (34-38), and USC on October 12 L (27-34) but it could not stop the bleeding after its sixth win 40-14 on October 31 in San Antonio against Washington State. Notre Dame's other five wins were well-earned: Nevada at home W (35-0), Michigan State at home, W (33-30), At Purdue W (24-21), At Washington W (37-30), and Boston College W (20-16). Before we move on with the rest of the games of the season, the Notre Dame / Purdue game is considered an epic. So, let's check out some more detail about how the ND 2009 writing staff viewed the 2009 Purdue game, and then we'll come back to the season's games. Here we go:

2009 PURDUE

While not a stellar season for either program -- Notre Dame finished 6-6 and Purdue 5-7 -- the courage and heroics displayed by Irish quarterback Jimmy Clausen at Ross-Ade Stadium in West Lafayette, Ind., make this see-saw battle and dramatic Irish comeback impossible to keep off the [Epic] list.

Trailing 7-0 early, Notre Dame routinely answered with 17 straight points and carried that 10-point lead into the fourth quarter.

Out of nowhere, Purdue answered with two unexpected touchdowns to take a 21-17 lead with less than four minutes to play.

Battling a severe turf-toe injury and splitting time with backup QB Dayne Crist, Clausen was summoned to lead the Irish on its last-hope drive from their own 28-yard line to avoid the upset. Down four points and with the game clock winding down, a field goal wasn't an option.

Clausen responded on the drive, carrying his team 11 plays and 70 yards to the Purdue two-yard line where he faced a 4th-and-goal win-or-lose play.

With everything on the line, Clausen hit tight end Kyle Rudolph with a bullet pass slightly to his left and just across the goal line for the game winner with 23

seconds remaining. The 24-21 Irish win still features one of the greatest last-minute TD drives in the last 20 years at Notre Dame.

"[Clausen] actually wasn't supposed to play in the second half," then Irish head coach Charlie Weis said after the comeback. "We talked at the beginning of the fourth quarter and he said he could go."

The ND season ended miserably after this fun victory with four straight losses, including a second loss in three years to Navy L (21-23). Losses were recorded also at Pittsburgh L (22-27); Connecticut at home L (30-33) in double OT; and a close call at Stanford L (38-45).

Nothing could stop this: "Sorry Charlie!"

Weis took the medicine he knew was coming as he was summarily fired as head coach the Monday after the Stanford loss at the end of the season. Notre Dame was embarrassed that 6-6 was the best it could do with so much talent and so much invested.

Though the Irish team was bowl eligible with 6 wins, nobody felt like playing a consolation bowl game. Rather than play in a loser's version of a winner's bowl, Notre Dame used its energy to move its program forward.

Athletic director Jack Swarbrick hired Cincinnati head coach Brian Kelly after a 10-day coaching search. It just happens that I have the very same first and last name as Coach Kelly. Like most other real Irish fans, I am very pleased that the "the real Brian Kelly" is the head coach at Notre Dame. One day when we get to talk, and after a few gifts of books that I have written, we will know each other; but not now and that is OK!

Weis's last season with the Irish was unremarkable. My personal glimpse of the coach on the field in the Boston College game the year before had told me that it was all over for ND if Weis were retained indefinitely as the coach. If I were a great football analyst, I could deduce what was wrong with Charley Weis as a coach. I have some thoughts that I would prefer not to share. I wish Coach Weis the best and sure hope he has a fruitful life.

After the season, Notre Dame Athletic Director Jack Swarbrick, when asked about what his biggest disappointment had been that season, took a long pause, then said, "The Navy outcome." He was not ready to evaluate the football season until season's end, but he knew that "Up until the Navy game we were in the BCS conversation." The Navy game, however, was the first of the tragic season-ending four-game losing skid.

Swarbrick fired Weis as head coach the Monday after the Stanford loss. At the same time, he announced that wide receiver coach Rob Lanello would take charge of football operations, including recruiting, *until Brian Kelly was named head coach.*

As I like to do in this book, in order to close out coaching eras, I searched for an appropriate piece to end the Charley Weis era, and this chapter. Most Notre Dame fans could have written an appropriate piece about Charlie as he had represented a lot of hope and then some results and hope; more hope, and then mental anguish. Chicago news outlets normally have a way of getting to the core of the matter so I selected this piece:

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

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.

Weis, who refused to do any interviews after the Irish lost on a gimme touchdown to Stanford this weekend, did say earlier in the week that he figured his days might be numbered. 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 will have 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.

Now the pressure is on Athletic Director Jack Swarbrick to land a solid replacement for an institution of college football that hasn't been a national contender for 15 years – and a string of failed coaching hires.

The next head man will have to clean up the miserable mark against quality schools – zero victories under Weis can't cut it. Of course, Notre Dame couldn't even beat Navy reliably anymore, either.

November 30, 2009

*Weis will not be retained as Notre Dame football coach
University of Notre Dame head football coach Charlie Weis will not be retained,
University director of athletics Jack Swarbrick announced today.*

“We have great expectations for our football program, and we have not been able to meet those expectations,” Swarbrick said. “As an alumnus, Charlie understands those goals and expectations better than most, and he's as disappointed as anyone that we have not achieved the desired results.”

Swarbrick recommended the dismissal Sunday night to Notre Dame's president, Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C.

“We have established an evaluation process for all of our athletic programs that, in the end, results in a recommendation from Jack to me,” Father Jenkins said. “I accepted Jack's decision and look forward to working with him on selecting a new head football coach who is the very best choice possible for the University and especially for our student-athletes.

“I am most appreciative to Coach Weis for his service to Notre Dame and our community. He and his family have my prayers and best wishes.”

Weis spent five seasons as Irish head coach from 2005-09, with his teams achieving consecutive records of 9-3 (Fiesta Bowl appearance) in '05, 10-3 (Sugar Bowl appearance), 3-9, 7-6 (Hawaii Bowl victory) and 6-6 in '09 – for an overall 35-27 mark (.564).

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. Ianello has spent the past five seasons on the Notre Dame staff and previously was part of football staffs at Wisconsin (1990-93, 2003-04), Arizona (1994-2002) and Alabama (1987-89).

Chapter 23 Brian Kelly Era: 2010 – 2016

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	0–0



Assumption writes re: alumnus Brian Kelly

We now all have the opportunity to read about the last coach of the modern era, as I present the Brian Kelly Era of Notre Dame Football. The lead article in this chapter comes from his alma mater.

Until the 2016 season, many of us already had deified Kelly as one of the great immortals, not unlike those greats, who brought national championships to Notre Dame. I am not as confident that his day will come; but after 4-8; he is responding very positively by working hard to get a great team in place and a number of great assistant coaches. I would not count Kelly out, though the prospects were never so good for an immortal than in 2012.

I am ready to wait through the 2017 season. 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 last year 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 2017.



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 lengthy book at the end of 2015, it was my 65th book. Since then, I have written 46 more books and so, if my corrections and updates force this book according to ISBN standards to be declared as a second-edition, then this will be my 112th book. Otherwise, it is a revision and a correction to book # 65 and will remain as book #65.

You would like the other books that I have written also if you like this. [Amazon.com/author/brianwkelly](https://www.amazon.com/author/brianwkelly) has kindly put up a nice author's page, in which a happy picture of my wife and I greet the onlookers.

It normally takes me about a month to write a book that is reasonable sized (250 pages) and it takes at least another month to prepare it for publishing / printing. I set it down for a while and reread it a few times to get out the non-sequiturs and the poor structures and the bad stories.

In 2015, without front matter, as I was writing the book at this point, it was already 482 pages and I was hoping for no more growth so the book could have reasonable price. I cannot yet afford to print 100,000 books at \$2.00 per book so I must pay \$10.00 per book for about 500 pages when I print about 50 at a time. When the book was complete, it sat at 667 pages, and Offset Paperback Printers in Dallas PA had the pleasure of printing the first 50. They also printed the second fifty as the book sold well. The # of pages why the price is so high. I regret that it was not less expensive.

The day when I wrote these particular paragraphs originally was March 16, 2016. There was a major Irish holiday the next day on

March 17. Perhaps you have heard about it. For the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame du Lac, our Lady has priority, but right behind the Mother of God is St. Patrick. I collected facts in 2015 in preparation for the book and I began in earnest to write the original words in this book about Notre Dame on January 30, 2016, which happens to be my birthday.

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%9983-named-head-coach-notre-dame-football-team>

I hope you enjoy it. They surely like their player and coach, 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/121009aaa.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 [Expanded] 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 Phillies' 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 Hurricanes tried to get it going in the 4th quarter with backup quarterback Stephen Morris, but it was too late by then. Rees was at the top of his game. The freshman was able to make some key first downs to effectively run out the clock late in the 4th quarter.

In some interesting trivia, in this the full age of the Internet, the Sun Bowl sold out in 21 hours, the fastest in the 77-year history of the game. The crowd of 54,021 set a bowl attendance record. Michael Floyd's two touchdowns were even more impressive as they pushed him past both Jeff Samardzija and Golden Tate upping his record to 28 career touchdowns, the most in Irish history.

Senior safety Harrison Smith snagged three interceptions in the first half, which tied another Sun Bowl record. Notre Dame was finally setting some good records. 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, but Kelly was 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. 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)

Kyle Rudolph, a stalwart at tight end decided to enter the 2011 NFL Draft rather than finish at Notre Dame as planned. A number of other important seniors moved on, including defensive lineman Ian Williams, linebackers Kerry Neal and Brian Smith, cornerback Darrin Walls, running backs Robert Hughes and Armando Allen, Wide Receiver Duval Kamara, and offensive linemen Matt Romine and Chris Stewart. These were all by graduation.

Joe Montana's son, Nate Montana left the university in February 2011, with a transfer to the University of Montana. I hope Nate does well. Additionally, junior guard Alex Bullard transferred to his hometown state of Tennessee to play for the University of Tennessee.

This year, Brian Kelly did very well in his recruiting efforts. He had a full recruiting class with 23 prospects for the ND football team. The list included the addition of five early-enrollees: defensive end Aaron Lynch, outside linebacker Ishaq Williams, offensive lineman Brad Carrico, quarterback Everett Golson, and kicker Kyle Brindza.

Dayne Crist was healed and again ready for QB duties and the well-experienced sophomore Tommy Rees was also ready for action as needed. New guys. Freshman QB Everett Golson and Sophomore QB Andrew Hendrix were also ready for duty as needed at this critical offensive spot.

The games of the season

South Florida came to Notre Dame for the first time and the Irish literally lost the game L (20-23). Skip Holtz, coach of the South Florida Bulldogs had a personal homecoming with this game. The son of the legendary Lou Holtz, great ND coach of the 1990's, the younger Holtz came back to the place where he was educated and where a good part of his life was shaped.

In Kelly's first years at Notre Dame, I recall being frustrated at some errant play as the team was finding its way. Just when you thought it was about to be a touchdown, something would always happen when ND was close to scoring and the other team would get the ball. There were a lot of fumbles in the red zone. They mostly played well but when they made mistakes, they were big mistakes. They outplayed everybody in total all the time.

That was the flavor of the September 3 USF game. USF's Kayvon Webster started off the negatives by returning a fumble 96 yards for a TD just four minutes into the game. This sucked the air out of the Irish. They never really recovered.

The score came after Notre Dame took the opening kickoff and drove quickly to the USF 1. It was a nightmare first half for Notre Dame with another fumble, a penalty that nullified a touchdown, and an interception of a Dayne Crist pass in the end-zone. The second half made no difference in the quality of ND play. Maybe they were trying too hard but then again, nobody stressed his teams as much as Frank Leahy, and they won.

Notre Dame then traveled to unranked Michigan and were defeated in a close game L (31-35). Denard Robinson was always a one-man wrecking crew against Notre Dame and he kept his reputation in tact on this particular Saturday. Robinson stunned Notre Dame in the final minute again, capping an exciting night under the lights at the Big House.

New Michigan coach Brady Hoke needed just to tie the game with a field goal but for his own reasons, he went for it. Michigan's phenomenally talented quarterback threw a 16-yard touchdown pass

to Roy Roundtree with 2 seconds left to lift the Wolverines to a thrilling 35-31 win over Notre Dame on a Saturday at the Big House.

After these two close losses, so early in the season. Notre Dame got back on track against Michigan State with its first win at home W (31-13). ND then traveled to Heinz Field in Pittsburgh and played a close one against the Panthers, winning this game (15-12).

Pittsburgh had harassed Tommy Rees all night. Yet, the sophomore showed his moxie by shrugging off this miserable start. When Rees got going, he needed less than five minutes to knock the Panthers out of the game.

Rees hit tight end Tyler Eifert on a 6-yard touchdown pass with less than 7 minutes to go. It was more than enough to lift Notre Dame to a 15-12 win against a stubborn Panther team. The six points plus the 2-point conversion (both passes to Eifert) were the highlight reel points of 4:40 of absolute perfection from Tommy Rees as the Irish got to (2-2) by claiming the victory.

Notre Dame was also successful at Purdue on October 1 W (38-10). With just 24 seconds into the game, the Tommy Rees / Michael Floyd combo was doing magic. Floyd's 35-yard touchdown catch from Tommy Rees sparked a rout W (38-10) of Purdue on this particular Saturday night. Notre Dame had another rout the next Saturday, October 8 against Air Force W (59-33).

USC, always a threat, defeated the Fighting Irish by two touchdowns at Notre Dame Stadium the following week L (17-31). USC, raised its win total to nine of the last 10 meetings with Notre Dame. As much as Coach Kelly would like to say it isn't so, all these games were tough. USC had great offensive stats with a 443-267 advantage in total yards. Notre Dame slipped to a marginal 4-3 record. ND simply could not stop the Trojans' rushing attack. The Fighting Irish saw the end of its four-game winning streak. All of these lessons were written down in the cranial matter of Coach Kelly. He, like all of us who love ND Football, hates to lose.

Navy came to Notre Dame the next week and were defeated W (56-14). The following week, the Irish traveled to Winston-Salem to play Wake Forest for a win W (24-17). Then at Maryland the next week, the Irish beat the Terrapins W (45-21).

Notre Dame had some fun having a "home" game in the East at Fed Ex Field in Landover, MD. It might not have been so much fun if Maryland had put up more resistance.

The Irish like to play one "home" game a year at a neutral site. The game at Fed Ex Field was only 12 miles from the Maryland campus, yet both end zones read "Notre Dame." The majority of fans supported the Irish as Shamrock Series games are ND home games. ND wore their green jerseys along with large green shamrocks on the side of their gold helmets. Winning W (45-21) made it even more fun.

Brian Kelly's no-huddle offense kept the Terrapins off-balance and helped produce great stats for the Irish. Jonas Gray had a field day with 136 yards and two touchdowns. QB Tommy Rees was on the mark with 296 passing yards and two scores. Rees played like an all-Pro quarterback by completing 30 of 38 passes, including 14 of 15 after halftime. The Irish rolled up a whopping 508 yards in offense and ran an almost impossible 84 plays.

Boston College came back to Notre Dame Stadium for another edition of the Holy Wars and the Irish were not taking BC for granted this day. ND won W (16-14) despite having poor field position all game long. To save the game, Notre Dame, ranked #24 by AP, playing unranked BC, had to recover an onside kick with about 2 minutes left. Then ND had to put an end to an endless last-gasp flurry of laterals to hold off Boston College in this close match between the two Catholic Schools.

As rough as this victory was to claim, it was the fourth win in a row for the Irish (8-3), who had then matched the last year's victory total. On the good side, the Irish had won eight of its last nine after beginning the year 0-2. Brian Kelly had good words for the team after the close call:

"Winning is hard in college football...I just like the way our guys now understand how to win games. In November, it's hard to win unless you've got a great mental outlook, and our guys do. They have overcome so many injuries late, and they keep battling."

The following week toting a four-game win-streak, Notre Dame



went to Stanford and despite being ready, were beaten L (14-28). The Irish always count on the leprechaun and some luck when playing their sports games. But, how, when God has given a man the name Luck, as in Stanford's Andrew Luck, could even the fighting Irish get God's help in defeating him and his team.

Well, it seemed that Notre Dame had walked in uninvited to Andrew Luck's party as the senior was playing his last game and everybody, fans, coaches, and

fellow players, was excited for him and for the Stanford team. They had to beat Notre Dame. And, to the chagrin of fans such as I; they did.

Luck set the Stanford school record for the most career touchdown passes and eclipsed his own single-season mark, throwing for 233 yards and four scores to lead Stanford (#6 in BCS and #4 AP) past #22 ranked Notre Dame L (28-14) in his home finale that particular Saturday night. And, that is that, period.

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

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 Stepfan 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 Stephan 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 9-4. They were # 21 in the coaches' poll and # 25 in the AP. ND was invited to the Pinstripe Bowl at Yankee Stadium and they defeated Rutgers W (29-16)

The 2013 NFL draft had taken a number of standout Notre Dame players and / or graduates including: Tyler Eifert, Manti Te'o, Jamoris Slaughter, Theo Riddick, Kapron Lewis-Moore, and Zeke Motta. There were no staff changes following the 2012 season. The only "change" was that Brian Kelly turned play calling duties over to offensive coordinator Chuck Martin.

ND had a great recruiting class in 2013 with three five-star recruits: outside linebacker Jaylon Smith, and running back Greg Bryant, and defensive back Max Redfield.

The season began August 31 when the # 11 ranked Irish defeated the Temple Owls at home W (28-6).

A trip to the Big House in Ann Arbor before 115,109 (the most to ever watch any college football game), gave the Irish its first loss against Michigan's #17 Wolverines L (30-41). This game had some press: "Under the Lights II." it was just the second night game in Michigan Stadium's history; the previous game also featured Notre Dame.

Michigan Quarterback Devin Gardner completed 21 of 33 passes for 294 yards and four touchdowns while throwing one interception. Gardner also ran 13 times for 82 yards and a score. He contributed 294 yards passing for a total production of 376 yards and five total touchdowns. Gardner was a one-man wrecking crew much like Denard Robinson had been before him.

Gardner's one interception was costly, and could have made a difference. He tried to avoid a sack in the end zone, and he got rid of the ball by flipping a pass to no one in particular. Irish Defensive end Stephon Tuitt made the interception that gave the Irish some hope. Notre Dame closed the gap to four points in the fourth quarter but Michigan scored again. L (30-41).

The Irish played Purdue at Ross-Ade Stadium and won W (31-24). Michigan State came to #21 Notre Dame and the Irish beat the #24 Spartans W (17-13).

Oklahoma, ranked # 12, played at Notre Dame and beat the Irish L (21-35). The Irish then flew out to Arlington Texas to play #24 Arizona State in the Shamrock Series. The Irish won the close game W (37-34). USC then came to Notre Dame on October 19 and were defeated W (14-10). The Irish then traveled to Falcon Stadium to play Air Force W (45-10).

Navy was up next at Notre Dame Stadium the following week. They were ready to win a big game but they fell short as the Irish beat the Midshipmen in a close battle W (38-34). The Irish have always had

trouble with the quickness and coyness of Navy's triple-option offense. It had the Notre Dame defense bewildered and thwacked for most of the game.

Yet, in the end, the ND defense did its job and secured the victory. But in this game, there was no certainty. The Irish needed one last stop with just 68 seconds left in the fourth quarter. Freshman linebacker Jaylon Smith—with some help from friends—made the play. The Fighting Irish were pleased to gain the win.

Notre Dame then traveled to Heinz Field to play Pittsburgh. The Panthers beat the Irish in a close game L (21-28). Two Tommy Rees passes proved just how narrow Notre Dame's bid for a National Championship in 2013 had become. Rees threw a pair of fourth-quarter interceptions to Pittsburgh's Ray Vinopal. This permitted the Panthers to rally for a 28-21 victory and destroy any idea the Irish (7-3) had of earning a BCS bid for the second straight year. Brian Kelly called it right: "Our mantra is you can't start winning until you stop losing and we did things tonight that caused losing,"

In its next game, the Irish defeated BYU at home W (23-13). Notre Dame, ranked at #25 at the time then traveled to California to play # 8 Stanford for both teams' last game of the season. The always-tough Cardinal defeated the Irish L (20-27). The Cardinal's Wayne Lyons intercepted two passes from Tommy Rees late in the fourth quarter, giving Stanford enough to hold off No. 25 Notre Dame L (20-27) in a game that always means a lot. With an 8-4 record, the # 25 ranked Irish were invited to the Pinstripe Bowl in Yankee Stadium to be played against Rutgers on December 28.

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.

I don't want to make excuses for ND but everybody saw that Kelly lost half the defense or more by the second half of the season. It was so bad that if it were not for the freshman class, ND would have had to forfeit games. I watched this season as every season very closely and it was very painful. Of course, it was even more painful for Coach Kelly to watch one player after another being taken out of action with major injuries. Thankfully all players eventually recovered after the season had ended.

There is no humor in injuries. Yet, to make the point about how devastating the sheer numbers of injuries were to Notre Dame's season, one could have made a case that Buddy Ryan was back running a "Bounty Bowl," as the opposition coach de la semaine (for the week). Buddy's Boys were taking a toll against different players on Notre Dame's defense each and every week. Fewer and fewer players were available to play each time the team suited up. You may recall after the "Bounty Bowl" on Thanksgiving, 1989 that the old Miami U coach--the coach everyone loved to hate—Jimmy Johnson—was steaming at his post-game news conference. He sincerely believed Buddy Ryan had painted a bull's-eye on Luis Zendejas, the 5' 9" kicker for Dallas. But, then again, Johnson is a great actor. Ask Terry Bradshaw! Ryan denies the allegations to this day, but it makes a point.

The facts show that Notre Dame's defense suffered significant injuries and yielded over 41 points per game over those last six games. For the first time in school history, the Irish gave up thirty points or more in seven consecutive contests.

Coach Kelly was not whining ever during the season but the facts show that his defense could not play well due to a very real defensive player shortage. The defense was literally MIA, but not intentionally. The Irish defense had been decimated by injuries. The injuries not only affected key personnel but to fill the holes, it also

affected the limited depth that was being counted on to play important reserve minutes.

Besides losing three stalwarts at the beginning of the season for probation-type reasons, the first and some say the heaviest injury befell middle linebacker Joe Schmidt, a true gift of spirit and strength to the Irish defense. He got hurt and could not play in mid-season. As the season progressed his presence as both a leader and the team's leading tackler were clearly missed, especially in stopping runs.

It got even worse. In the 13 quarters (barely three full games) from Schmidt's injury against Navy in game 9, and his loss for the rest of the season, Notre Dame gave up 31 runs of 10 yards or more. In the seven-plus games when Schmidt was in the lineup, the Irish defense allowed only 25 such runs.

Just when you thought even a rejuvenated Buddy Ryan could not inflict any more harm on the Irish on the injury front, well—things got even worse. Two more key players in the Irish defensive rotation were lost for the rest of the season during the Louisville game—sophomore defensive lineman Jarron Jones and freshman safety Drue Tranquill. Add to that freshman defensive lineman Daniel Cage who had to sit out to heal during the USC game, along with talented defensive tackle Sheldon Day. Even Ghostbusters was not available to help the Fighting Irish. There was nobody left in the reserves to call.

None of this is funny when as a coach, you play teams that want to rip your team apart every week. To help get through the season, the Irish coaches were forced to call little-used fifth-year DT Justin Utupo to fill in. They also had to take the redshirt off true freshman Jay Hayes.

There is more injury data to make the point. From the beginning, injuries chipped away at the foundation of the defensive unit. Middle linebacker Jarrett Grace was unable to play after last season's catastrophic leg injury (broke in four places). Tony Springmann had to retire before the season even started after failing to get past a knee injury.

Austin Collinsworth was missing for most of the year and Nicky Barattigo went down with a season-ending shoulder injury. Additionally, Cody Riggs' foot injury took away this talented cornerback. Considering these major losses, ND did pretty well.

Coach Kelly made no excuses for all of this, nor did he blame Brian VanGorder, his talented defensive coordinator. It was really nobody's fault. Nonetheless, every level of the Irish defense had been crushed.

Notre Dame continued on and played the rest of the season but with a different defensive unit than those that had begun the season 6-0.

Kelly had another good recruiting class with 23 commitments in his fourth full recruiting class and fifth year. He enlisted two five-stars: linebacker Nyles Morgan and offensive tackle Quenton Nelson. This Kelly class included student-athletes from 14 states.

2014 games

The Rice Owls had not played Notre Dame since Lou Holtz and the Irish won the National Championship. They came to Notre Dame Stadium on August 30, 2014 to play against Kelly's Irish. Notre Dame won big W (48-17). Michigan was next to play the #16 Irish to a capacity crowd at Irish Stadium W (31-0). Feeling pretty good, Notre Dame traveled to Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis to play Purdue and defeated the Boilermakers in the ND Shamrock Series W (30-14). As a reminder, the Shamrock Series is Notre Dame's home-away-from-home game series, which began in 2009 in San Antonio.

#8 Notre Dame then played Syracuse at Met Life Stadium East and won W (31-15). On October 4, it was time to play nemesis # 14 Stanford. #9 Notre Dame played the game at home and defeated the Cardinal W 17-14. North Carolina came in the next week to play the Irish in a shootout. The ND Defense was not doing well but the ND Offense was at peak. The Irish defeated the Gamecocks W (43-40).

The ND defense was beginning its struggle with the game against Florida State in Tallahassee Florida, L (27-31). The Seminoles started slowly against the injury-riddled ND defense and in fact, Notre Dame was leading at the half, 17-10. In the second half, however, the # 2 Florida State team was able to bounce back from the 17-10 halftime deficit and they were able to win their 23rd consecutive game. They held off # 5 Notre Dame L (31-27) for the victory. The Fighting Irish were just beginning to feel the major defensive issues on this particular Saturday night.

The next week, a trip to Navy brought the Irish a reasonably close victory but one in which the defense gave up a lot of points W (49-39). Notre Dame then traveled to Sun Devil Stadium to play # 11 Arizona State, a team with a great offense. Notre Dame's defense was mostly in the hospital or on the sidelines and so the Irish gave up a lot of points in this game losing L (31-55). The offense, led by QB Everett Golson, who was back at the helm, continued to score well.

An always tough Northwestern team, back on the schedule, took the opportunity against a depleted ND Defense to defeat the Irish L (40-43). A rugged Louisville team was next playing at Notre Dame Stadium. The Cardinals won the game L (28-31).

There were less defensive players available each and every week in the unit to play the games. How can a team without a full defense take on an offensive powerhouse such as USC? Well, they just do and they do their best.

At the LA Coliseum, the next week. November 29, in the season finale, USC put its finest offense together and the Trojans soundly beat an almost defenseless ND squad, L 14-49. Notre Dame, unranked at the end of the season, with a 7-5 regular season record won a trip to the Music City Bowl to play LSU on the day before New Year's Eve, which happens to be my second son Michael's birthday. I'm sure Mike would have been happy to help out.

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, lets' 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. 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 is the most explosive offense that Brian Kelly has coached at Notre Dame. But for four points in two games, the 2015 season would have been dramatically different.

During the regular season, the Irish were one of twenty-one schools in the country to average 200 or more passing yards and rushing yards per game. The Irish had fourteen plays of over 50 yards during the season. This ranked 13th in the country and was a Notre Dame school record. The Fighting Irish were fun to watch.

During this season, ND also had two touchdowns of over 90 yards. C.J. Prosise 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.

Brian Kelly had another great recruiting class. He received 24 commitments in his fifth full recruiting class including one five-star,

Aliz'e Jones. The class included student-athletes from 13 different states.

The games

A Texas team known for such football greats as Johnny Football came to ND on September 5, for a 7:30 p.m. game. Notre Dame played great football and won the game W (38-3). Malik Zaire was aggressive in the running game and outstanding in the passing game. Texas is always tough. Such a great performance made things look encouraging for Notre Dame's 2015 season.



Kizer's late TD rescues No. 9 Notre Dame at Virginia, 34-27

Nobody knows how tough Virginia can be as much as Coach Kelly, Malik Zaire, and DeShone Kizer. Zaire fractured his ankle late in the game and Kaiser came in off the bench with no warmups. Tommy Rees was back to save another ND game.

Notre Dame was losing. It was not long before backup quarterback DeShone Kizer threw a 40-yard touchdown pass to Will Fuller with 12 seconds left. Notre Dame beat Virginia W (34-27) in a thrilling

finish. The season had rested on the back of Zaire. Kizer did a remarkable job in relief.

I watched Kizer also perform very well against Georgia Tech's Yellow Jackets at Notre Dame Stadium, and score a W (30-22) victory. He did the same at UMass even better at home the following week W (62-27). What a fine player!



Clemson Football Stops Notre Dame 2-Point Conversion to Clinch Win

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.

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.

Navy was next at Notre Dame and the Irish won a good game W (41-24). USC, always expecting to win, came to ND during this great ND season and they put up a good show but lost W (41-31) Temple from Pennsylvania—a team getting tougher every year invited ND to visit Lincoln Financial Field, where the Owls play. Before 69,280, the Irish defeated Temple W (24-20).

High Noon at Heinz Field November 7, the Irish played a tough Pittsburgh Panthers team and won W (42-30). Wake Forest then came to ND Stadium and lost to the Irish W (28-7).

Boston College and Notre Dame agreed to play in the (Holy War / Shamrock Series) again in 2015 on November 21, right before Thanksgiving at Fenway Park, a National Treasure Stadium. BC was unranked and Notre Dame was ranked # 5 and looking for a shot at the BCS National Championship. BC had always been a spoiler and this again was their chance. The game started at 7:30 PM and it stayed close the whole game. The Irish Catholics from the CSC order beat the Catholics from the Jesuit order in the Holy Wars Tradition W (19-16).

Notre Dame loves to win as much and perhaps even more than most teams. When the Irish met Stanford on November 28, with ND ranking in at # 13 and Stanford at # 4, both sets of fans knew nobody from the losing side would be able to find any consolation in a loss.

The Fighting Irish played very well as did Stanford. For the second time in what otherwise would have been an unblemished season, Notre Dame lost by two-points. The Cardinal were tough as usual—tough enough to beat ND L (36-38).

Having 2 two-point losses, and a great season. the # 8 ranked Notre Dame Fighting Irish won a berth to the Fiesta Bowl. The opponent would be Ohio State. The Buckeyes, coached by Urban Myer, had suffered just one loss during the season. Notre Dame entered the game a 6.5-point betting underdog.

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.

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 Notre 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 2017

Coach Kelly in 2016 had have another fine recruiting class which bodes well for the future.

2016 Results

1. at Texas	L 50–47 2OT	2. 1Nevada	W 39–10
3. Mich State	L 36–28	4. Duke	L 38–35
5. at Syracuse	W 50–33	6. at NC State	L 10–3
7. Stanford	L 17–10	8. Miami FL	W 30–27
9. at Navy	L 28–27	10. Army	W 44–6
11. Virg Tech	L 34–31	12. at USC	L 45–27

Notre Dame accepted 23 commitments for 2016, including two 5-stars: Daelin Hayes and Tommy Kraemer. The class included student-athletes from 11 different states, and one Canadian province

Some fine recruits are heading ND's way

The 2017 signing day on February 1 was almost as good. Notre Dame signed 21 players to its 2017 recruiting class. All 18 known commitments prior to today had put pen to paper and on signing day, Kelly added three more, who decided on the Wednesday just ahead of time.

After a tough 4-8 season in 2016, it was nice to see a strong off-season also as Brian Kelly added defensive coordinator Mike Elko and linebackers coach Clark Lea to his staff, along with the hiring of special teams coach and energetic recruiter Brian Polian. These are good signs for the future. Something had to be done and so far, so good.

With Kelly returning his focus to the offensive side of the ball and new offensive coordinator Chip Long brought in to help with the play-calling, he will be guiding a group that has arguably the nation's best offensive tackle in Mike McGlinchey, perhaps America's best offensive guard Quenton Nelson and two more returning starters on the offensive line in Alex Bars and Sam Mustipher up front.

The team should have plenty of speed and playmaking ability in the backfield and at wide receiver to spread the football around too.

Defensively Elko inherits a group that just needs to be put in a position to consistently succeed. Many criticized former defensive coordinator Brian VanGorder for running a too complex scheme. Van Gorder had a tough time getting young players ready to play. Moreover, the system did not permit players such as Jaylon Smith to be in position to be productive behind the line of scrimmage.

Elko comes with a reputation of being a great communicator regarding his system and overall, the Irish should be highlighting a talented group of linebackers and defensive backs by enabling them to play faster.

247Sports has suggested that if guys like Daelin Hayes, Jerry Tillery, Khalid Kareem, Julian Okwara, Elijah Taylor, Jonathan Bonner and Jamir Jones blossom as they should with the new system. Notre Dame will go from a defense that struggled to get any kind of push to making consistent plays in the backfield.

Kelly is very pleased with the recruiting class which wrapped up February 1, as it will supplement a roster that was short on experience in 2016 but now has all those trials and tribulations to grow from. Fans are also hoping the bad stuff is in the past.

The Fighting Irish 2017 class finished No. 11 nationally per the 247Sports Recruiting Rankings, which ties the second-best mark Kelly has had in seven full recruiting calendars in South Bend. That is good. Only the 2013 class that included Smith finished better at No. 5. Combine the 2017 efforts with the 2016 class (#13 in the nation) and it's a group a program should be able to win a lot of games with.

Kelly is up front with everybody about the poor showing and 2016. "There are no bad football teams," Kelly said, when the school introduced seven new assistant coaches. "There's just poorly led football teams. I led this team poorly."

So, during the offseason he looked forward to looking forward. In his search for improvement, Kelly recruited more than players.

Soon again, it will be time to play Notre Dame Football.

Reflecting on 2016. Despite all the hype from 2016 that is similar to this year, Coach Kelly could not make it happen in 2016 and the frustrated coach finished the season with one of the worst records in ND history. There was a clear problem with the defense and we all know that by the end of the year it was not solved. Hopefully by the start of 2017 for the good of the Institution, ND fans and supporters, it will be well solved.

Like most true ND supporters, I want The University of Our Lady to do well in everything. This is a very positive book about the University. I have recently completed two new books—one about great ND Players, and the other about great ND coaches.

Many people who read my books about ND either already are big supporters of ND or are about to be. Others, by reading a Brian Kelly (not the coach) book, may get swayed with the magnificent ND legacy. I write my books to tell the truth and to highlight the

team in College Football that I love the best. ND, the institution has been very gracious to me in hosting this book for sale by Notre Dame.

I received great news about this book when I contacted the Athletic Department about assuring this book was hosted within the Notre Dame Bookstore on Campus. It now is, and so your friends may purchase this book on campus if you choose. Additionally, I have been contacted by the Blue and Gold Club of Notre Dame so that this book is also available through their special channels That is great news for a great book about The Great Moments in Notre Dame Football.

The alumni and others are surely upset with Notre Dame's 2016 record. I would like ND to improve its record for sure and I think that will happen this fall—1917. Good luck Coach Kelly. Coach Kelly has another year to do well by us all. Let's wish him well.

Rather than dig in and fight back, for the good of the University and the Football program, I would recommend that the Administration reach out to the groups who are the most upset. Have a major discussion with them all. This might end the hostilities and it might even produce an action plan to help all parties involved. It might keep the Four Horsemen out of the news for a while and in this instance that would be a good thing. Notre Dame is too precious of an icon and an institution and a football legacy to let mere mortals tarnish its reputation.

Like most Notre Dame supporters; this author hopes that Brian Kelly and Notre Dame make a great comeback from 2016. Amen!

Soon again, the scent of the fall season will be in the air.

Chapter 24 Notre Dame Gives More Life to Life!

There is a "specialness" to Notre Dame

Without getting too mushy and gushy, even as a man's man, I am compelled to use a line from an Elton John song to describe my feelings about living in a world in which Notre Dame is a part. "How wonderful life is while you're in the world."

Lou Holtz is a great coach and a great motivator and he is also a great professional motivational speaker in all settings. Let's continue this chapter with one of his memorable Notre Dame quotes: "To those who know Notre Dame, no explanation is necessary. For those who do not, no explanation will suffice"-- Lou Holtz

Notre Dame is a special school and football is a special sport. It is even more special when played by Notre Dame. Notre Dame game days are different from any other day of the year in any other country but the U. S. of A.

Notre Dame Fans across the nation from Wilkes-Barre, PA to La Jolla CA, come together for an amazing experience to watch and support this great football team named after our Blessed Mother.

Win or lose, there's no denying that the aura of Notre Dame football simply cannot be beat. Even Notre Dame haters picked the greatest team in the land to hate. As a Notre Dame fan, you learn immediately that football is #1. Much of the school spirit emanates from football. But, that is not all there is!

There are two other major aspects to Notre Dame besides its place in history. One is its beautiful campus that is a special treat for all the senses. If you have not ever seen it, I advise a trip. Whether it's

snowing, windy, or sunny with a high of 75; whether you are nine or ninety, Notre Dame's campus is a sight to behold.

The third aspect of course is the University itself. That's where the students go to school to learn.

ND is not too shabby in the learning department. The University is ranked in the top twenty among all US higher education institutions.

And, of course there is the big brag in academic circles that Knute Rockne was once a practicing scientist at Notre Dame before he became a football coach. Upon graduating from ND, Rockne was offered a position at the University as a graduate assistant in chemistry. He accepted on the condition that he be allowed to work as an assistant to football coach Jesse Harper. Rockne was never a professor or an assistant at any other university. Moreover, the Rock was a magna cum laude graduate in Chemistry.

My favorite ND Philosopher, Lou Holtz said it best when he wrote, "You don't go to Notre Dame to learn something; you go to Notre Dame to be somebody"

At ND-- through retreats, mission trips, and countless opportunities to study abroad-- the focus is on building you as a person, not a student or employee. Just by visiting the campus, you get that great feeling that you have been to a great place; you have become part of a great place—a place where some other great people spent time.

For example, some of Notre Dame's impressive alums include Condoleezza Rice, Regis Philbin, Phil Donahue, Joe Montana, Joe Theismann, and astronaut Jim Wetherbee.

To help drive the greatness of Notre Dame home, before we get a little personal in this chapter, please enjoy these other life lessons in the form of top Notre Dame football quotes:

"Four years of football are calculated to breed in the average man more of the ingredients of success in life than almost any academic course he takes." --Knute Rockne

"Russia in the winter and Notre Dame at South Bend."
--Beano Cook, on two things you never bet against

"I can't wait to get back to the restaurant and see the waiter who said, 'Cheerios and Notre Dame are different. Cheerios belong in a bowl.'"
 --Lou Holtz, after Notre Dame upset Florida in the 1992 Sugar Bowl

"Lads, you're not to miss practice unless your parents died or you died."
 --Frank Leahy, Legendary Notre Dame Coach

"I beg your pardon, I thought this was a Notre Dame team."
 --Knut Rockne, commenting to his players at halftime of a game Notre Dame was losing

"Notre Dame is the only team in the country that never plays a road game."
 --Beano Cook, on all the Fighting Irish fans around the country

"If they retired the numbers of all the greats at Notre Dame, there wouldn't be any numbers left." --Terry Hanratty, former NFL quarterback and Notre Dame alumni, asked if he thought his number should be retired

"One man practicing sportsmanship is better than a hundred teaching it."
 --Knut Rockne

I love football the best!

I loved to play sports from the first time that I met a ball. The shape of the ball did not matter. In the schoolyard at St. Boniface, we would use a sock-ball in the fall to play football, and in the spring, we would use the same ball and a wiffle-ball-bat to play baseball. On High Street, we would play stickball and softball, hardball, rubber-ball, and whiffle-baseball.

George Elias and I and many others from the Rolling Mill Hill would play catch in the middle of High Street in both spring and summer for hours at a time. Yes, we broke some windows but we were kids and we learned to run like... Yet, somebody always caught us. In the fall, we would play catch on High Street with an oval shaped ball—a football.

In the fall, we would also play tag football on High Street. When it got a little cooler but before the freeze, we'd find some vacant lots down the Patch or by Julie's Homestead. We'd then get some cheap plastic helmets and a cheap regular sized football, and we'd play tackle football with abandon. Nobody ever got hurt!

When the ground froze, we'd put a hoop up on a telephone pole without the net because the net cost extra money. We'd then play basketball on the street. We played and played and played until the spring thaw when the baseball, then football routine would begin again. Every now and then one of the tougher neighborhood girls would join in play but not often. Well, I think so anyway!

In high school, I played pick-up sports all the time. One year of organized football in HS was enough for me. I played varsity baseball. I wasn't good enough for basketball. I also played tag and tackle football with the football team guys on the weekends at the park—no helmets. We were nuts! I did the same thing in college but no tackle in college.

I loved to watch baseball, basketball, and football games on TV. I saw every high school game and college game at any stadium that I could. When I was 11 years old, I even walked five miles to see the four-man softball team, "*The King and his Court*," featuring the great Eddie Feigner when I was a kid, and they played in our area. Tommy Yuhas, who, by day was the butcher at Peters Economy store, got the only hit for the locals against Mr. Feigner. I loved sports of all kinds, and when I stopped playing, I continued to like to watch others play both live and on TV. Yes, there are still times when watching, that I feel like I am in the game.

High school, college, and professional football games to a sports lover are a great substitute for playing yourself. Eventually, I stopped watching other sports and simply looked forward to football for six months out of every year. As I aged, I filled in the other parts of the year with family vacations and gardening.

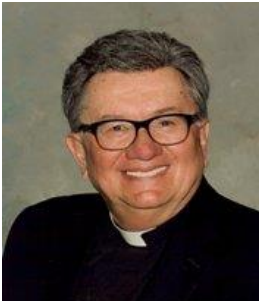
Who knows why we love football so much? It is almost undefinable. I suspect others are a lot like me with similar stories because so many people love to watch football that it could not have happened overnight.

I have learned over the years that the Notre Dame Football experience for me is the best. When our team, such as Notre Dame, wins, it gives a bit of an emotional high that often carries on to the next week for Saturday college football fans like me.

Then comes the reset button and another new Saturday game begins, often just as exciting as the last. Showing they believe that people really love football, throughout the year, even when football season is over, ESPN puts on shows such as NFL Live, which air every single day.

Being a big football fan, to some extent my favorite teams, especially Notre Dame, become an extension of myself. I don't live and die by how my team performs, but it certainly affects my mood for a while after games in which my favorite teams are involved.

Tons of Notre Dame Fans in Wilkes-Barre



As a Pennsylvania sports fan, I have a special spot for the Notre Dame football team. I graduated from King's College, a school founded in 1946 by Notre Dame Priests. There are tons of Notre Dame Fans in Wilkes-Barre PA, my home town. I also love the Milwaukee Braves, Penn State's great football team, the Philadelphia Eagles, and of course, the Philadelphia Phillies.



Yes, I did mean the Milwaukee Braves. I did not make the allegiance trip to Atlanta with the Braves in 1966 like my favorite Priest, Rev. John Terry (left). I picked up the Phillies instead. But, I did ask Father John to baptize my three children which he kindly did at St. Patrick's Church.

The Phillies are right down the turnpike from Wilkes-Barre. My favorite baseball team of all time is the 1957 World Champion Milwaukee

Braves. My favorite player is Hank Aaron. I was an avid Milwaukee Braves fan. Talk to me when we meet, and I can give you the full 1957 Braves starting lineup. I am just a token Phillies fan today in that I rarely watch a game. But, I do like the Phillies to win.

I learned to like Penn State football on my own because I am a Pennsylvanian. It is contagious. After we Kelly's got our 21" 1957 Admiral B / W TV, it quickly got some sports grooves burned in.

In 1957, when my dad got home from working all day in the Bottling Shop at the Stegmaier Brewery, during its 100th year of operation, he would quickly take a shower. When I came home from St. Boniface School, for the mid-week afternoon games that fall, dad and I together watched the Yankees and Braves in the World Series—all seven games. We were both rooting for Milwaukee. The Braves became my team.

The Eagles were on the Admiral B/W TV every Sunday and so, I naturally became an Eagles' fan. My father's love for the Eagles was also contagious.

On Saturdays, of course it was all Notre Dame. I learned that my cousin on my father's side, Bobby Williams was the starting quarterback for Notre Dame When I was a kid. How could a kid not like that?

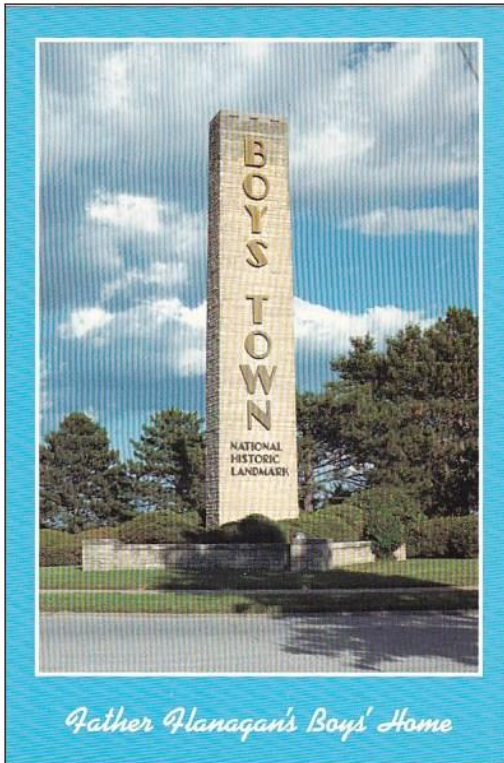
Over time, of all my sports loyalties, Notre Dame topped the list. After I got married, I would often visit Dad on Saturdays in the fall with my two brothers, Ed and Joe, and we would watch Notre Dame football games together. It was wonderful.

When I moved from the old neighborhood when I was 39 years old, my new neighbors were all Penn State fans. I too was a PSU fan but not at the same level of ND. There was no room for Notre Dame in their hearts or discussions so I stopped watching football games with them.

I can recall coming up with the best comeback line when they asked me why I was no longer showing up at game time: "I too would be a Penn State fan if it were not for Penn State fans." That normally was enough to shut them up. By the way, that little saying works for all teams.

In all my life, I never had a Notre Dame jacket. I still don't. The High Street Kelly's had a tough enough time finding meat for our mustard and / or ketchup sandwiches when growing up. A nice ND jacket was out of the question. As soon as we could, my wonderful wife Pat, who grew up poor like me, and I, took our two very young boys Brian and Mike (Irish twins) to Sports Jes in Plymouth PA for a couple of nice warm ND football jackets.

Our boys were four and six years old at the time. The jackets were for eight and ten-year-olds. I knew the boys would grow into them. Pat was not so sure. The sleeves were way below their fingertips. They loved the jackets. The boys wore those jackets all the time. I mean everywhere—to church and to the playground. Before the Notre Dame jackets actually fit, they were worn out.



Sunshinepostcards

www.delcampe.net

In 1992, I left my employment with the IBM Corporation after 23 years. I found a better deal and a nice payout from IBM for leaving. I joined Misericordia University as their chief technology officer. I had two months off after my last day at IBM and before my first day at Misericordia. I took the family cross-country in our late model custom Chevy Van. Life could not be better.

After a week and a half of a great cross-country trip visiting Mount Rushmore, Old Faithful, Yellowstone, Jackson, Wyoming, the

Grand Tetons, and Salt Lake City, Utah, rather than moving on to Las Vegas as planned, Pat said: "Let's turn around. Time to go

back." The boys were quite rambunctious by then after being in the van so much and so, playing dad at the time, I warned the two rascals that we might be able to get some disciplinary help for both of them if we stopped at Boys Town, Nebraska and dropped them off for a while.

When we drove by that huge "Boy's Town" sign in the entrance driveway, our boys' chatter and friskiness completely stopped. You could hear a pin drop. All the while that we were all in the Boy's Town Gift Shop, the boys were well behaved. All of a sudden, the little men were not 100% sure of their future. They just were not sure. We stayed in Nebraska that night and the little men were like little angels. They soon recovered and became savages again as the van took off for home the next day.

While in our hotel in Nebraska, I called a few hotels listed in the Triple AAA book for a place to stay for the next night. The Morris Inn in South Bend, Indiana, a nine-hour drive, appeared to be the closest hotel / motel to the ND campus. According to the AAA Guide book it was also one of the least expensive.

So, I called and they were very nice and they basically talked us into coming to spend a few nights with them. I had no idea what to expect of the Morris Inn and had never heard of it. Those familiar with Notre Dame's beautiful campus know what a treat we were about to experience.

We had to enter the campus to get to the parking lot and the entrance to the Morris Inn. I learned that *The Inn* had been donated by the Morris family and Notre Dame had kept it as an Inn for anybody most of the time, and for special guests such as Regis Philbin, Joe Montana, board members, and other VIPs, during football season and for special events. I had no idea of its significance. My good friend Jack Lammers told me recently that when he attended the Fantasy Football Camp at Notre Dame, they put him up at the Morris Inn.

In their no-fuss, plain and simple decor, the rooms reminded me of the IBM Homestead in Endicott. We had a corner room with two small beds. The kids were little at the time, so it was fine. The Innkeeper said that we had the largest room in the place. It was beautiful.

The bar / restaurant was especially attractive. What an experience! As we walked into the lobby getting ready to explore, I noticed some little gold flickusses (my word) in the kelly-green carpeting. I looked closer to find that they were little *NDs* running throughout the entirety of the carpeting. Custom designed carpeting! Now, you're talking!

We had time in the afternoon to take the kids to the stadium. We did not know that it was normally locked up air-tight. Not this day in summer 1992. In May of 1994, the Notre Dame Board of Trustees would approve a 21,000+ seat expansion and modernization of Notre Dame Stadium. Construction would begin in 1995 and the stadium would be ready for the 1997 season.

The stadium doors were wide open when we arrived and we figured it was just for us—just kidding! There were some signs of engineering or light construction. They may have been preparing to price out the to-be-approved expansion. There was not a soul to be found anywhere in the stadium. It was E-M-P-T-Y, and there were major echoes when we spoke.

We went right down to the field. I was thinking that most people who had been to the stadium never got to touch the field where the great games were played.

We did not have a ball but that did not matter. All three of the kids, Brian, Mike, and Katie knew how to run. That was all they needed. They ran and ran and ran and each of our children scored touchdowns going in each direction. They were thrilled. My wife Pat and I were thrilled. There we were in "the House that Rock Built" and our kids were scoring touchdowns!

When I find those pictures again, I will post them. What a wonderful experience. The stadium was majestic. We were alone in this memorable stadium, the original, before it was expanded. We were among the Notre Dame immortal spirits of the past. We were staying at the Morris Inn! Who of mortal men could ever say that?

When I went to a game a few years later after the expansion, with my buddies—Rodski, Grimes, David Boyle, and Sean Boyle, I saw that the engineers had kept the original outside walls untouched and they simply built a new wall about thirty or forty feet outside the old wall to get the support for the 21000 additional high-level seats. Wow! The sixty years of wear and the many touches of the "great ones," on the old walls were still there.

Who do you think built the stadium? Here is a bonus piece of trivia so you can win next Friday night's contest. The engineers who designed Notre Dame Stadium were the same team that designed Yankee Stadium and Fenway Park—Osborn Engineering of Cleveland. It currently holds 80,795 attendees. When we were there, the original stadium maxed at 59,075.

Eventually our historical two nights were up and it was time to go. In order to get to the Morris Inn entrance with our vehicle from the parking lot on the morning that we were leaving, we actually had to exit the Notre Dame campus and then come back in through the main gate.

There was a guard at the gate and there was some kind of delay this particular morning about 8:00 AM. He was speaking to somebody who was in the process of exiting through the gate. We needed to check out and then get on the road so we were eager to begin our journey.

Pat and I got a slight glimpse of the person holding us up, but we did not put two and two together. The guard knew we were waiting but he clearly was enjoying his conversation with the departing gentleman. Finally, the driver pulled out and the guard looked at us as if to acknowledge our little wait, and he said, "You know Lou!" It was Lou Holtz holding us up. That was another magical experience for us. We think the world of Lou Holtz and apparently so do a lot of people in the Notre Dame' community.

So, why do we still get worked up about Notre Dame Football and Notre Dame? I went to classes at King's College, worked there for years, and taught as an adjunct professor for over thirty years. All the while I felt King's was an extension of Notre Dame. I still get called to do a special tech course such as Database or Health Information Technology every now and then. King's College,

founded by Notre Dame Priests is a wonderful school. It is just like Notre Dame with the same kind of spirit.

As an aside, In December 1968, because of the great relationship between the "sister schools," Notre Dame came to King's College to play the Monarchs in basketball to open the brand-new Scanlon Gymnasium on the extended campus in Wilkes-Barre,

It was a coup. I was an usher for the game. A talented King's squad squared off against the University of Notre Dame and all-American guard Austin Carr, before a standing room only crowd of over 3,200.



The twenty-six foot high King's College Statue of Christ the King adorns the top of King's Original Building on River Street in Wilkes-Barre. The Rev. Leo F. Flood, C.S.C., a King's priest and former president of the college, wanted the college to have a figure to rival the large statue of the Blessed Mother Mary that sits atop a famous Notre Dame Administration Building. He was the key person responsible for this magnificent structure overlooking the King's College Campus. As an aside, Rev. Flood, C.S.C., a Notre Dame Alumnus was the Assistant pastor at St. Patrick's, South Bend.

King's held the Fighting Irish in the first half but the visitors had worn down the Monarchs and ultimately won the contest 84-54. It was a great exhibition and a great experience for all.

King's was not playing varsity football then but, having had infused Notre Dame Spirit from its founding in 1946, the King's College Golden Knights were very well respected in the Club Football Circuit. King's won the National Club Football Championship and had a number of All-Americans.

My son Michael, a great Wilkes-Barre Lawyer today, is a King's graduate. My wife Pat and I are both King's College graduates, and King's is a big part of the Notre Dame magic that we continue to feel.

But, there is more! I worked maintenance as a student at King's and served Presidents and Janitors alike in this capacity.

Rev. Lane D. Kilburn, C.S.C., President from 1964-1974 would greet me and stop and chat with me as I cleaned the steps outside his office on the fifth floor of the main building. He and many other King's Officials, Librarians (Fourth Floor) and Faculty (Sixth Floor)—many of whom were Priests or Brothers, would take the time for conversation with a lowly step-cleaner who had not yet even attended his first class. My "peers" in the maintenance department were also top flight people but they made me work.

As an adjunct faculty member, I still serve on some King's committees and I recently had the pleasure of meeting the current King's President, Rev. John J. Ryan, C.S.C., Ph.D. Fr. Ryan seems like he too is cut from the Fr. Kilburn King's / Notre Dame mold. I bet I would be having conversations with him today by the fifth-floor steps if I had not decided to accept my position at IBM over forty years ago.

A Wilkes-Barre PA native himself, Fr. Ryan was a faculty member in the finance area at Notre Dame University in the 1980's. As President of King's, Fr. Ryan completed the final arrangements for two cooperative Master's Degree program between King's and ND. King's College students now have the opportunity to participate in two master's degree programs with the University of Notre Dame's prestigious Mendoza College of Business. Three years at King's and two at Notre Dame, the program began in the 2014-15 academic year. King's is the only college in the country with this unique arrangement with the University of Notre Dame. King's and Notre Dame are related, and it is a big deal.

Why Notre Dame? My wife and I love King's but we also feel part of Notre Dame and we always have. Some people might say it's the tradition, the legacy, and the rich history. It's that for sure.

It's also dad on the couch with a beer and the game on TV. It's the kids checking things out and smiling while wearing their ND jackets. It's the anticipation of finally getting to see Notre Dame Stadium and Touchdown Jesus. It's the Saturday games in the fall. It is lots of stuff too numerous to enumerate. There is also an overall sense of identity and pride that has become generational. All you have to do is feel part of it and you are part of it!

Everyone has their own personal reason for loving (and obsessing) over Notre Dame and Notre Dame Football. It is so much deeper and bigger than just a sense of pride and an emotional connection.

For me, above all else, Notre Dame football has been a huge part of the strong relationship I always had with my dad and it seems to be a brewing relationship between me and my now-adult sons, my beautiful daughter, and even my beautiful wife. I can't speak for Bennie and Buddie, our dog and cat, but they do cozy up at game time with the rest of us.

It may be silly to make such a big deal out of one college football team that simply happens to have immortals such as Rockne, Leahy, Devine, Parseghian, Holtz, and Kelly in its legacy. To that, I say no, it is not silly! Notre Dame helps make life special.

We can all look past the flair and hoopla of college football and remember why we care so much about Notre Dame in the first place. And we do! We care about Notre Dame because for us, Notre Dame has been, is, and will always be quite an exceptional experience.

Now that we covered all that ground, let's go find our monogrammed ND jackets, our ND sweaters, our fitted ND hats, our Irish ND Mugs, our green ND golf shirts, and a few tickets for next week's game. Then, let's look around and smile at those not quite dressed as well as us in our ND finery. While we are at it, let's go see if we can get a nice nip at the Morris Inn in South Bend, even if vicariously.

As long as the future of Notre Dame is Notre Dame, who could ask for anything more? Ever Onward Irish!

Now that this book is completed for all to read, I have one little personal wish. The wish is very simple. One day, I would like someone, anyone, to report to me that they heard a clerk at the South Bend K-Mart checkout counter ask Coach Brian Kelly, while he was presenting his ID and / or credit card, if he is the Brian Kelly who is the author of that wonderful 2016 book about *Great Moments in Notre Dame Football*. Now, that surely would make my day.

LET'S GO PUBLISH! Books by Brian W. Kelly (Sold at www.bookhawkers.com; Amazon.com, and Kindle.).

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