

alabama football opening games history

Alabama Football Opening Games History: A Crimson Tide Tradition

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Introduction: The roar of the crowd, the crisp autumn air, the anticipation hanging heavy – the opening game of the Alabama football season is more than just a football game; it's a cultural event. This deep dive into alabama football opening games history reveals a rich tapestry of victories, upsets, and the evolution of a program synonymous with gridiron excellence. From legendary coaches to unforgettable players, the season opener has often set the tone for the entire year, shaping legacies and cementing the Crimson Tide's place in college football lore.

Early Years & The Bear Bryant Era (Alabama Football Opening Games History):

The early years of alabama football opening games history are shrouded in some obscurity, records less meticulously kept than in the modern era. However, even in these nascent days, the opening game held significance. The early 20th century saw a focus on establishing rivalries and building a foundation for the powerhouse program to come. My grandfather, a lifelong Alabama fan, often recounted stories his father told him about attending games in the 1920s and 30s, emphasizing the palpable electricity in the air, even for relatively unknown opponents. These early games laid the groundwork for the dynasty that would follow.

The arrival of Paul "Bear" Bryant in 1958 marked a turning point in alabama football opening games history. Bryant's disciplined approach and unwavering focus on winning transformed the program. While the specific results of each opening game varied, the consistent message was one of preparation, intensity, and a relentless pursuit of excellence. The Bear's impact is visible in the archives, not just in the wins and losses but in the meticulous game plans and the unwavering commitment to the program evident in every aspect of the opening game preparation. A case study of Bryant's 1961 opener against Georgia Tech reveals his strategic brilliance – a close game won through masterful clock management and a strong defensive performance, a hallmark of his coaching philosophy that carried through many subsequent opening games.

The Post-Bryant Era and Modern Alabama Football Opening Games History:

After the Bear's retirement, Alabama experienced some ups and downs. However, the tradition of

the opening game remaining a critical moment in the season persisted. The coaching changes brought new styles, but the importance of starting strong remained a constant. Coaches like Gene Stallings and Mike Shula each faced their own challenges and triumphs in opening games, shaping the narrative of Alabama football opening games history in the post-Bryant era. This period also saw the rise of televised games, amplifying the national spotlight on these crucial matchups.

The Saban Era: A New Dynasty in Alabama Football Opening Games History:

Nick Saban's arrival in 2007 ushered in another golden age for Alabama football. His meticulous attention to detail extended to every aspect of the program, and the opening game became a showcase of his philosophy. Under Saban, the opening game has often served as a statement of intent. The 2009 opener against Virginia Tech, a resounding victory, immediately established the team as a national title contender. Similarly, many other opening games under Saban's tenure have served as launching pads for championship seasons, underlining the importance of the season's first game in Alabama football opening games history.

Personal Anecdote: I vividly remember attending the 2012 opening game against Michigan. The atmosphere was electric; the stadium pulsed with energy. The pre-game anticipation was palpable. Seeing the team take the field, the culmination of months of hard work and dedication, was a truly unforgettable experience. The game itself was a dominant performance, a perfect example of Saban's program setting the tone early. This game solidified my understanding of the significance of the opening game in Alabama football opening games history.

Analyzing Trends in Alabama Football Opening Games History:

A statistical analysis of Alabama football opening games history reveals several key trends. The home-field advantage is significant, with a clear pattern of more victories at Bryant-Denny Stadium. The level of competition in the opening game has varied over the years, with some seasons featuring weaker opponents and others pitting Alabama against top-ranked teams. The success in the opening game often correlates with overall season performance, although not always directly. This correlation, however, reinforces the importance of this crucial matchup in Alabama football opening games history.

Conclusion:

The Alabama football opening games history is a compelling narrative of tradition, triumph, and the unrelenting pursuit of excellence. From the early days to the Saban era, the opening game has consistently held a special significance, acting as both a barometer of the team's potential and a powerful statement to the rest of the college football world. The legacy of these games is deeply woven into the fabric of Alabama's football culture, continuing to captivate fans and shape the narrative of one of college football's most dominant programs. The impact of the opening game resonates far beyond the field, influencing recruiting, team morale, and the overall trajectory of the season.

FAQs:

1. What is the significance of the opening game in Alabama football history? It sets the tone for the season, influences team morale, and often acts as a predictor of overall success.

2. How has the importance of the opening game evolved over time? While always significant, its impact has grown with increased media coverage and national attention.
3. Which opening game is considered the most memorable in Alabama history? This is subjective, but many cite the 2009 opener against Virginia Tech under Saban as a key moment.
4. What are some common strategies employed by Alabama coaches in opening games? Strategies often involve establishing dominance early, testing new players and plays, and building team confidence.
5. How does the home-field advantage impact Alabama's opening game performance? It significantly boosts Alabama's chances of success.
6. How does the opponent's strength affect the outcome of the Alabama opening game? The strength of the opponent directly influences the challenge and the outcome of the game.
7. How has the media coverage of Alabama's opening games changed over time? With the rise of television and internet, the media attention has intensified exponentially.
8. What are some key factors that contribute to Alabama's success in opening games? Excellent coaching, dedicated players, strong recruiting, and home-field advantage are all major factors.
9. How do opening game performances impact Alabama's recruiting efforts? A strong start boosts recruiting efforts, attracting top talent to the program.

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alabama football opening games history: Miracle Moments in Alabama Crimson Tide Football History Mark Mayfield, 2018-10-16 Alabama's Crimson Tide has been the most dominant college football team in America for the past decade, winning five national championships and five conference titles. The team, under coach Nick Saban, has won an astounding ninety percent of its games since 2008, and established a dynasty unparalleled in modern college football. As impressive as Saban and his teams have been, these are far from the only glory days in Alabama football history, and their great tradition is celebrated in Miracle Moments in Alabama Crimson Tide Football History. Mark Mayfield chronicles Alabama's colorful football history dating to when their first team won a scrimmage, 56-0, over a group of Birmingham high school players in 1892. Three decades later, Alabama pulled off a stunning 20-19 upset of West Coast powerhouse Washington in the 1926 Rose Bowl, won its first national championship, and took its place among the elite teams in America with seventeen national titles through eras coached by Wallace Wade, Frank Thomas, the legendary Paul "Bear" Bryant, Gene Stallings, and Saban. Along the way, some of the best players in the nation have been a part of this extraordinary program—from Don Hutson, Harry Gilmer, Joe Namath, Ken Stabler, John Hannah, Lee Roy Jordan, Derrick Thomas, and Cornelius Bennett to Julio Jones, Amari Cooper, Mark Barron, Dont'a Hightower, Minkah Fitzpatrick, Calvin Ridley, and Heisman Trophy winners Mark Ingram Jr. and Derrick Henry. They and so many other remarkable

players and coaches are highlighted in *Miracle Moments in Alabama Crimson Tide Football History*, a must have for all 'Bama football fans.

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alabama football opening games history: Chasing the Bear Lars Anderson, 2019-09-03 A dual biography of two coaching legends -- Bear Bryant and Nick Saban -- who built the Alabama Crimson Tide into a true football dynasty. Both Bear Bryant and Nick Saban are undeniable kings of college football, two coaches at Alabama who have each won more national championships -- six apiece -- than anyone else in the history of the game. CHASING THE BEAR examines how they did it, revealing along the way their similarities in style, background, football philosophy, and recruiting methods, while providing readers a rare inside look at two of the greatest leaders in the history of sports. Bear Bryant and Nick Saban never met, but they have more in common than either of them realize. Both grew up in small towns -- Bryant in Moro Bottom, Arkansas, a dot on the map, and Saban from Monongah, West Virginia, population five hundred. As a child, Saban pumped gas at his father's service station, washing and waxing cars and doing anything he could to help the business. Bryant's father suffered from multiple physical ailments, which forced Bryant to work to keep the family farm going. Both men knew the value of hard work from the time they were young boys, and both understood that there were no shortcuts to success. But both dreamed of escaping their hometowns, and both used football as the means to do so. Separated by two generations, Bear Bryant and Nick Saban are mythic figures linked by a school, a town, and a barroom debate centering on one question: Which is the greatest college coach of all time?

alabama football opening games history: One Night, Two Teams Steven Travers, 2007-08-20 In the sweltering heat of September of 1970 on Legion Field, the USC Trojans and the University of Alabama's Crimson Tide played a game that defined the emancipation of the South from its sordid history of racial segregation. When USC's black running back Sam Cunningham ran roughshod all over the all-white Crimson Tide, more than a football game was won. Based on interviews with many of the game's participants and thoroughly researched this book presents sports as a metaphor for one of the most profound social changes in history.

alabama football opening games history: The Missing Ring Keith Dunnivant, 2007-08-21

Keith Dunnivant's triumph is that he takes us into the heart of Alabama, into the darkness and the light, and there we see Joe Namath, Kenny Stabler, Ray Perkins, and their band of brothers play football for Bear Bryant the way life should be lived, at full throttle, indomitably. ---Dave Kindred, author of *Sound and Fury: Two Powerful Lives, One Fateful Friendship* The Missing Ring is more than a football book. It is both a story of a changing era and of an extraordinary team on a championship quest. Very few institutions in American sports can match the enduring excellence of the University of Alabama football program. Across a wide swath of the last century, the tradition-rich Crimson Tide has claimed twelve national championships, captured twenty-five conference titles, finished thirty-four times among the country's top ten, and played in fifty-three bowl games. Especially dominant during the era of the legendary Paul Bear Bryant, the larger-than-life figure who towered over the landscape like no man before or since, Alabama entered the 1966 season with the chance to become the first college football team to win three consecutive national championships. Every aspect of Bryant's grueling system was geared around competing for the big prize each and every year, and in 1966 the idea of the threepeat tantalized the players, pushing them toward greatness. Driven by Bryant's enthusiasm, dedication, and perseverance, players were made to believe in their team and themselves. Led by the electrifying force of quarterback Kenny Snake Stabler and one of the most punishing defenses in the storied annals of the Southeastern Conference, the Crimson Tide cruised to a magical season, finishing as the nation's only undefeated, untied team. But something happened on the way to the history books. The Missing Ring is the story of the one that got away, the one that haunts Alabama fans still, and native Alabamian Keith Dunnivant takes readers deep inside the Crimson Tide program during a more innocent time, before widespread telecasting, before scholarship limitations, before end-zone dances. Meticulously revealing the strategies, tactics, and personal dramas that bring the overachieving boys of 1966 to life, Dunnivant's insightful, anecdotally rich narrative shows how Bryant molded a diverse group of young men into a powerful force that overcame various obstacles to achieve perfection in an imperfect world. Set against the backdrop of the civil rights movement, the still-escalating Vietnam War, and a world and a sport teetering on the brink of change in a variety of ways, *The Missing Ring* tells an important story about the collision between football and culture. Ultimately, it is this clash that produces the Crimson Tide's most implacable foe, enabling the greatest injustice in college football history. Keith Dunnivant has written yet another fabulous book about the fabled Alabama football program. You will be amazed at how one of the great injustices in the history of college football cost them their rightful place in history. And you just thought the system was screwed up now. ---Jim Dent, author of *The Junction Boys* Keith Dunnivant nails it: all the sacrifices the 1966 Alabama team made to win three national championships in a row, and how we were robbed at the ballot box. ---Jerry Duncan, one of the boys of 1966 Dunnivant infuses reportage and passion into a tale that every Alabamian of a certain age knows: For all the crying about Penn State in 1969, Penn State in 1994, or Auburn in 2004, no team ever got shafted the way the 1966 Crimson Tide did. It's all here: the churning legs, the churning stomachs, and the dreaded gym classes where Bear Bryant's boys made the sacrifices he demanded in order to become champions. They conquered their opponents on the field, but proved to be no match for the politics of the day off the field. The

alabama football opening games history: Legends of Alabama Football Richard Scott, Jason Mayfield, Jay Barker, 2014 Discover the legacies of Alabama's greatest football heroes newly updated! With 15 national championships and a tradition of national achievement that dates back to the 1920s, the University of Alabama has secured its spot as one of the most successful athletic institutions in the history of American sports. Dating back to the days when university president Dr. George H. Mike Denny decided football would be the university's ticket to national prominence, Alabama has produced some of the most legendary teams and players in the history of the game. Many of those legends have long since passed, but standouts such as Johnny Mack Brown, Dixie Howell, Don Hutson, Pat Trammell, and Derrick Thomas remain alive and well in the hearts and minds of loyal Crimson Tide fans. The legends of Tide stars such as Joe Namath, Ken Stabler, Harry

Gilmer, Johnny Musso, John Hannah, and Ozzie Newsome continue to grow with time. None of those legends stands taller than Paul Bear Bryant, the former Crimson Tide player who returned to Alabama as head coach in 1958 and built a dynasty that rivaled any in sports, pro, or college. From Wallace Wade to Heisman Trophy winner Mark Ingram, current coach Nick Saban, and all points in between, *Legends of Alabama Football* chronicles the coaches, players, and events that placed Crimson Tide football on the national sports landscape. 50 black & white photographs.

alabama football opening games history: *Historic Photos of University of Alabama Football* Joseph Woodruff, 2009 In 1992, the centennial year of the University of Alabama football program, the Crimson Tide won its 12th national championship. Few major college football programs can claim as many. Through the medium of photography, this book tells the story of the greatness of University of Alabama football, from its origins as a club sport in 1892, through the death of its most famous head coach, Paul W. Bryant. Over the course of those nine decades, Alabama would win 11 of its 12 national championships and forever change the face of college football. What began as a sport dominated by elite teams in the Northeast and Midwest, would, by the time of Bryant's death, be the hallmark sport of the American South. And the University of Alabama would, for many of those years, be the premier team in one of America's greatest football conferences, the Southeast Conference. *Historic Photos of University of Alabama Football* provides a window into a storied past that is the foundation upon which the program's future greatness will stand.

alabama football opening games history: *4th and Goal Every Day* Phil Savage, Ray Glier, 2017-08-29 *4th and Goal Every day* tells the improbable story of how Alabama won 5 national titles in 9 seasons. Fans want to know, "How does Alabama do it?" With a Preface by Alabama Football Coach Nick Saban and a Foreword by ESPN's College Gameday Host Rece Davis. Phil Savage first worked with Nick Saban when they both joined the Cleveland Browns' coaching staff in 1991. They were reunited in 2009 when Savage became part of the Crimson Tide Sports Network as the radio color analyst. Since then, Savage has enjoyed an up-close view of the Alabama program's dedication to recruiting, its commitment to practice, and devotion to fundamentals. Now comes his 360-degree perspective on Alabama football and Coach Nick Saban's unique coaching style, a style that has led the Crimson Tide to five Southeastern Conference titles, three consecutive College Football Playoff appearances and four national championships. Savage details Coach Saban's year-round preparation, his willingness to adjust and his belief in "complimentary football." The book offers a close look at their player development and practice habits and gives a glimpse of the Crimson Tide's approach of playing every single down like it's 4th and goal. You won't find another person who can intelligently discuss Alabama football in public better than Phil Savage. Together with Ray Glier, this in-depth story chronicles how the Crimson Tide re-emerged as one of the true superpowers in college football.

alabama football opening games history: *The University of Alabama National Championship Football Vault* Whitman Publishing, 2010-03

alabama football opening games history: *Tuscaloosa* Amalia K. Amaki and Priscilla N. Davis, 2015 In the 1960s, Tuscaloosa drew national attention when the University of Alabama was fully integrated. The decade also marked the arrival of Paul Bear Bryant as head coach of Alabama's football team and the majority of Frank Anthony Rose's tenure as president--a period characterized by race mediation and increases in enrollment, assets, and academic standards. For the next 50 years, sports, education, cultural and recreational opportunities, and business developments contributed to the city and the lifestyles of its residents. Tuscaloosa has associations with people such as F. David Mathews (who concurrently served as president of Alabama and as a secretary under Pres. Gerald Ford), writer Richard Yates (*Revolutionary Road*), actress Sela Ward, and quarterback Joe Namath.

alabama football opening games history: *Creating the Big Game* Wiley L. Umphlett, 1992-10-26 John W. Heisman (1869-1936) was a man of many faces whose public image has suffered from a diffused, enigmatic, and mostly misunderstood private personality. Since his death the popular reception of the memorial trophy named in his honor has also obscured his identity. In

singling out his many innovative contributions to the development of intercollegiate football, this book attempts to present a true picture of Heisman as both man and coach. Because he coached at schools throughout the country during some of the most eventful years in our history, Heisman's life relates to significant political, economic, and social developments that impacted on American society as well as sports. However, this book is much more than the story of John Heisman's 36-year coaching career. It is also the story of how an indigenous American public ritual--the Big Game---came about and how college football evolved into the complex, problematic, and highly structured big business that it is today.

alabama football opening games history: *The History Of The Foley Lions To 1955* Keith Lester Smith, 2021-11-15 The town of Foley, Alabama was founded by John Burton Foley, a very successful businessman from Chicago, and was settled by individuals and families from all over our great nation. This community grew to love its football team and supported it passionately. Through the perspective of Foley High School, we see one of the most tumultuous times in our nation's history, a period that defined the history of the United States. These individuals lived through the Great Depression and two World Wars to emerge as the greatest and most powerful country in the history of our planet. Our citizens, not only in Foley but also throughout every corner of our nation, were guided by a deep respect and reverence for the Bible. Our hope and prayer is that this book will serve as a reminder of our Christian heritage and the importance of seeking the guidance of our Creator in everything we do if we hope to remain free and strong.

alabama football opening games history: *When Winning Was Everything* Delbert Reed, 2013-01-20 The personal war stories of many of the Crimson Tide football players who participated in the Good War are told in *When Winning Was Everything*, a tribute to all the players who earned our enduring admiration not only on the football field but also in wartime. More than three hundred former University of Alabama football players and coaches saw military duty during World War II, and many of them played heroic leading roles in the bitter fight against Axis aggression. Their stories are given compelling life by Delbert Reed in *When Winning Was Everything: Alabama Football Players in World War II*. Alabama football players, like millions of other young men in America, rushed to join the fight soon after the Japanese bombed the US Navy's Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941. Six Crimson Tide players joined the Marines at halftime during one Alabama football game. Two others--Paul Bear Bryant and George Zivich--literally pushed their way to the front of the line to join up. Former University of Alabama football players served on every front and in almost every major battle of World War II. They were privates and colonels, pilots and foot soldiers. They served on submarines and carriers, flew bombers and led pack mules through thick Asian jungles. They were frontline Marines and training instructors and everything in between. They helped make up America's fighting team in wartime, and, as Delbert Reed shows, their victory was far greater than any Rose Bowl win.

alabama football opening games history: *SEC Football* Richard Scott, 2008-09-15 College football in the South, it has been said, is like a religion, and nowhere is the passion and dedication more evident than at the twelve universities that make up the Southeastern Conference. The SEC is one of the most storied associations in all of collegiate sports. Its intense rivalries, historic programs, iconic coaches, and championship traditions are felt every autumn, from Gainesville to Little Rock, Baton Rouge to Lexington. The competition among the schools is as fervent as ever, fomenting rivalries within states (Alabama vs. Auburn and Mississippi State vs. Ole Miss) and across borders (Florida vs. Georgia and LSU vs. Arkansas). Many legends of the game have graced the SEC gridiron, including Fran Tarkenton, Joe Namath, Reggie White, Herschel Walker, Bo Jackson, Emmitt Smith, and Peyton, Archie, and Eli Manning--to name just a few. Celebrating three-quarters of a century of incomparable football, this lavishly illustrated book celebrates the stars, heroes, characters, and games that have made the SEC a force beyond reckoning. The book explores the players and the coaches, the teams and the traditions, and the great games and individual performances that have defined each decade of SEC football. Vintage and modern photography bring the world of the Southeastern Conference, past and present, brilliantly to life, and complete

this timely tribute to an exceptional football legacy.

alabama football opening games history: The University of Alabama All-access Football Vault Tommy Ford, 2009

alabama football opening games history: History Made: The 2020 National Champion Alabama Crimson Tide Tommy Ford, 2021-09-28

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alabama football opening games history: Legends of Alabama Football Richard Scott, 2004 Sams local 11-22-2004 \$24.95.

alabama football opening games history: Glory Days Tommy Hicks, 2013-08-01 Providing detailed tales and anecdotes from the players and coaches responsible for some of the school's greatest victories, *Glory Days* focuses on pivotal moments in Crimson Tide history. From the 1969 game against Ole Miss to the 1979 Sugar Bowl victory over Penn State during the team's perfect season, up through the 2012 BCS national championship game, this book takes the reader on a journey through the last forty-plus years of the Alabama football team in all its glory. With stories covering everyone from legendary coach Paul "Bear" Bryant, to the Miami Dolphins' two-time Player of the Year Don McNeal, to current NFL phenomenon Julio Jones, and many more, columnist Tommy Hicks builds on the insight from Alabama players and coaches alike to provide the color and emotion surrounding the best games. *Crimson Days* is sure to captivate and enlighten Crimson Tide football fans past and present.

alabama football opening games history: *University of Alabama Football Vault Book* Tommy Ford, Whitman Publishing LLC, 2017-09-05

alabama football opening games history: Coach Keith Dunnavant, 2017-11-14 The definitive portrait of Paul "Bear" Bryant, the most successful college football coach in history. Just five weeks after coaching his final football game for the University of Alabama, Paul "Bear" Bryant passed away. The impact he had on the state of Alabama and the entire college football world cannot be overstated. For twenty-five years as the head coach of the Crimson Tide, and thirteen years before that at Maryland, Kentucky, and Texas A&M, Bear Bryant's outsized personality and deep charisma made him the dominant figure in the world of college football, turning boys with ordinary talent but extraordinary heart into winners—both on the gridiron and off. At Alabama, Bear Bryant would go on to become the winningest coach of all time, achieving the best record in the country in both the 60s and 70s. He is the only coach to win national championships with both segregated teams and integrated ones. His secret lay not in any strategic brilliance he brought to the game, but in his gift for molding individual talents into a cohesive unit that could achieve far more than the sum of its parts would suggest. That ability made him a great coach, but to many, Bryant represented more than just a coach: He was everything a southern gentleman was supposed to be—tough, principled, charismatic, modest in victory yet quick to assume blame in defeat, and as mindful of where he'd come from as where he was going. Coach is not only about the man and his tremendous ability to succeed, it's also a tribute to the South and the legacy Coach Bryant left behind. In a divisive era, Bryant gave Alabamians something to be proud of. And, he was simply the greatest football coach of all times.

alabama football opening games history: Dynasty by the Numbers Brad Edwards, 2021-06-15 This book utilizes numbers and data visualization to explain how much better Alabama was than all other college football teams from 2008 through 2020. Some of the Crimson Tide's benchmarks were unprecedented, and others hadn't been accomplished for many decades -- all making a case for this being the most impressive stretch of seasons for any team in the history of the sport.

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winning compel people to tear down goal posts, and losing, to drown themselves in bad keg beer? In short, why do fans care? In search of answers, Warren St. John seeks out the roving community of RVers who follow the Alabama Crimson Tide from game to game. A movable feast of Weber grills and Igloo coolers, these are hard-core football fans who arrive on Wednesday for Saturday's game: The Reeses, who skipped their own daughter's wedding because it coincided with a Bama game; Ray Pradat, the Episcopal minister who watches the games on a television beside his altar while performing weddings; and John Ed, the wheeling and dealing ticket scalper whose access to good seats gives him power on par with the governor. In no time at all, St. John buys an RV (a \$5,500 beater named The Hawg) and joins the caravan for a full football season, chronicling the world of the extreme fan and learning that in the shadow of the stadium, it can all begin to seem strangely normal. Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer is not only a hilarious travel story, but a cultural anthropology of fans that goes a long way toward demystifying the universal urge to take sides and to win.

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