



HISTORY

2008 SAMFORD FOOTBALL



HISTORY OF SAMFORD FOOTBALL

Since Samford University began playing football as Howard College in 1902, there have been numerous successful eras and memorable games. Houston Gwin, an ex-Auburn man, was the first coach, although just part time. Howard College's first intercollegiate opponent was Marion Military Institute. The game ended in a 6-0 Bulldog win and was played before "several thousand" (*Birmingham Daily News*) at the Alabama State Fair Oct. 25, 1902. Ten days before that contest, Howard College had a tune-up game "in the nature of a tryout for both teams" (*Birmingham Age Herald*) on a Wednesday afternoon at West End Park, the "Slag Pile," with Birmingham's University High School. The Bulldogs prevailed, 10-0.

Howard College's first officially organized football season was 1906, with its first full slate of scheduled games and first full-time head coach, John Counselman, a former Michigan football player. The Bulldogs finished 6-2-1, losing only to Mississippi State and Alabama.

The Bulldogs have been a force in both Alabama and Southern small-college football for years. They have played most of the major state schools, and have played neutral-site games in Andalusia, Anniston, Athens, Decatur, Dothan, Huntsville, Montgomery, Russellville and Talladega. Besides Seibert Stadium, the Bulldogs have played home games at the old East Lake campus practice field, Legion Field, Rickwood Field, West End

Park, the old Shades Valley High School, Woodlawn High School, Fairfield High School, Hewitt-Trussville High School, Tarrant High School and the Alabama State Fairgrounds.

Chet Dillon had two stints as Howard College's football coach, first in 1919 following World War I, and then from 1927 to 1928. His teams had a .578 winning percentage (fifth all-time). He coached the Bulldogs to a 9-0 win over Birmingham-Southern in historic Legion Field's first game Nov. 19, 1927. He also coached the Bulldogs in Birmingham's first-ever night football game the following year, a 12-7 loss to Spring Hill of Mobile under the powerful Legion Field floodlights.

Head Coach Eddie McLane's 1931 Bulldogs finished 8-2-2 in the newly formed Dixie Conference's first year. The year featured a unique doubleheader: two victories in one night at Legion Field against Georgia State College (now known as Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College) and Bowdon College of Georgia. McLane's eight wins that season ranked as the most ever by a Samford coach until Bobby Bowden's 9-1 mark in 1959.

The Bulldogs' first Dixie Conference championship was 1933, when McLane led them to a 7-1-2 mark and their first post-season game, against the University of Tampa, held in Florida. The 1933 Bulldogs were also the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association [SIAA] champions. McLane was Samford/Howard's most successful coach before the Bowdens' arrival, with 28 wins and a .585 career winning percentage from 1929 to 1933.

McLane also scheduled Howard's first long-distance, inter-sectional football games. He took the Bulldogs on extended train trips over several days to play Duquesne University at Pittsburgh in 1930 and the University of North Dakota in 1932. The Bulldogs lost by only five points, 14-9, to Duquesne, then a national collegiate power, at Forbes Field. (Forbes Field was the former home of major league baseball's Pittsburgh Pirates.) On the North Dakota trip, McLane and the Bulldogs got off the train for a day of practice at



Samford tied Alabama, 7-7, in 1935.

Chicago's Soldier Field before continuing to Grand Forks, N.D.

The most famous single result in Bulldog history was a 7-7 tie in 1935 with defending Rose Bowl champion, Alabama, a team that featured an end named Paul "Bear" Bryant. Coached by Billy Bancroft, the 1935 Bulldogs finished 7-1-2 and were Dixie Conference champions. Bancroft's teams (1935-39) won 22 games, placing him sixth of 34 coaches on Samford's all-time list, despite the handicap of an annual schedule that always included road games at Alabama and Mississippi State. His 1936 team also won the Dixie Conference championship.

Howard's biggest rival in the early years was Birmingham-Southern, before BSC discontinued football after 1939. Their annual contest was a major city event, held many times on Thanksgiving Day, and served as Homecoming for both schools. The games often attracted crowds of more than 10,000 to Rickwood Field and Legion Field, where the games were played throughout the years.

The football program was suspended in 1942 for the duration of World War II. The Navy V-12 program that trained officers on campus fielded a team, known as the Howard Seadogs, with a limited schedule during 1943-45.

Following World War II, football was not reinstated until a group of students formed the Howard College Sportsmen's Club in 1948. This student-financed and -led club represented Howard in contests mainly against state school "B" teams. It finished 4-4 and was coached by student Ted McCrary.

Howard College officially reinstated football without scholarship support in 1949.

THE BOWDEN YEARS

The most prominent of 89 football seasons were the tenures of father and son, Bobby and Terry Bowden. Both went on to successful



The big bronze figure pictured above, emblematic of the city college football championships, was awarded to Howard College Bulldogs Monday morning at the pep exercises. It was the first time the hardware trophy was awarded and it was received for Howard by Coach Bill Bancroft, a three-time national champion. The figure, a gift of the city, was presented to the college by Mayor W. H. Harris, publisher of *The News*, made the presentation speech.

head coaching positions at major college football institutions (Bobby at Florida State and Terry at Auburn). Their Samford records are even more impressive, considering that they both built scholarship programs from scratch.

In 1959, Bobby Bowden brought scholarship football back to Samford after an 18-year lapse. He produced a 9-1 record in his first year as head coach. His four years at Samford (1959–62) produced the highest career winning percentage of any Samford coach (.838, 31-6) and two small-college bowl appearances. He also made his mark as a player, receiving 1952 Little All-America honors at quarterback for the team, then known as the Howard College Bulldogs.

Terry Bowden equaled his father's 9-1 mark during his first season at Samford (1987) and, like his father, brought back scholarship football to Samford the following year for the first time since 1973. His overall record (45-23-1) represents the most career wins by any Bulldog coach. His career at Samford (1987–92) climaxed with two straight berths in the NCAA Division I-AA Playoffs. The 12-2 run to the semifinals of the 1991 playoffs ranks as the most productive season in Samford history. It resulted in the most wins in a Samford season, and by far, the greatest national exposure.

THE BULLDOGS IN MODERN TIMES

John Lee Armstrong's teams (1966–68) were outstanding. His winning percentage (.677, 20-9-2) ranks second all-time. Armstrong's 1967 team finished 8-2-1 with a postseason win in Huntsville's Space City Classic.

Wayne Grubb's 1971 team won eight regular season games and participated in the

Amos Alonzo Stagg Bowl (NCAA Division II West Regional Championship) in Phenix City, Ala.

Samford did not field a football team from 1974–83. President Thomas E. Corts brought football back at the Division III non-scholarship level in 1984. In 1988, the school



Samford President Thomas Corts presents the game ball prior to the first game of Samford's renewal of football in 1984.

moved to the Division I-AA scholarship level.

Samford played scholarship football during 1920–41, 1959–73 and 1988–present. Samford has displayed clear and sustained excellence throughout the years as a nonmajor college scholarship football program.

Samford's biggest current football rival is Jacksonville State, a school Samford has played 43 times since 1905. Seibert Stadium's first crowd of 10,136, an overflow throng, saw the opener of the 1989 season between Samford and Jacksonville State. It was the first night football game at Samford in 16 years, and the first game in which the Bashinsky Press Tower was occupied and functioning.

Interest, attendance and growth in Samford football has continued to show an enduring upward trend ever since the Bulldogs' move to Homewood from the East Lake campus in 1957. With two NCAA playoff appearances in the 1990s, several recent overflow capacity crowds, a full allotment of scholarships as allowed by the NCAA, and unprecedented internal and external support personnel and resources, the "good ole days" of Samford football are upon us now.



Head Coach Billy Bancroft (1935–39), an All-Conference player, led Samford to two Dixie Conference titles in 1935 and 1936, and to the famous 7-7 tie with Alabama.

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Samford 6, Tampa 6
 Dec. 9, 1933, Tampa, Fla.

Howard College was invited to its first-ever postseason game after completing a 7-1-1 regular season record and winning the Dixie Conference championship, though the game did not have a name. The heavily favored Bulldogs struggled to a 6-6 tie against the home-standing Tampa Spartans.

The game was played before 5,000 fans in a strong wind, which prevented any punt from traveling longer than 25 yards.

The Bulldogs got on the board first with Tom Everett's 35-yard run, capping a 60-yard drive. A 25-yard pass set up the score.

The Spartans tied the score in the third quarter after the Bulldogs fumbled on their own 17. After a 14-yard run from scrimmage on the first play, Tampa running back Chaney scored on a 3-yard run. Both teams missed their extra-point attempts.

The Bulldogs had their chances to win in the fourth quarter but came up short on two field-goal attempts. Harbin set up one of the field-goal attempts with a 40-yard run in the fourth quarter. The Bulldogs had eight first downs to Tampa's four.

1959 TEXTILE BOWL

Samford 52, Gordon Military 20
 Dec. 5, 1959, Fairfax, Ala.

Joe Milazzo, George Versprille and Buddy Bozeman led the Howard Bulldogs to a rout of Gordon Military College of Barnesville, Ga., in the first Textile Bowl.

Milazzo threw four touchdown passes in the game. He started the scoring with a 73-yard pass to Bozeman. He then threw a 17-yarder to Versprille near the end of the first half. Versprille also scored on a 9-yard run in the first quarter.

The Bulldogs continued to pile things on in the second half. Milazzo hit Versprille with a 36-yard toss that capped a 94-yard, eight-play drive. He finished off the scoring with a 59-yard pass to Bobby Jackson.

Gordon's defense provided most of its scoring. Vic Baga returned a blocked punt 34 yards for one score, and GMC's Jimmy Ballard returned a fumble for its final score.



Buddy Bozeman runs the ball against Gordon Military in the Textile Bowl win.

1962 GOLDEN ISLES BOWL

Samford 14, McNeese State 21
 Dec. 1, 1962, Brunswick, Ga.

In a game that was postponed a day because of rain, Samford fell to McNeese State, 21-14, when LSU transfer Tommy Thompson returned a punt 85 yards in the fourth quarter.

McNeese scored first after recovering a Bulldog fumble at the Samford 23. Samford followed up McNeese's score with a 90-yard drive. Reggie Allen gained 65 yards on the drive. The two teams were tied at seven at halftime.

McNeese again went ahead in the third quarter, but the Bulldogs struck back quickly, thanks to their defense. Ray Collins threw to Allen for the score after James Hallman intercepted a McNeese pass.

That was all the scoring in the game until Thompson fielded Collins' 50-yard punt and was off to the races. Collins averaged 44 yards per kick on the night.

It was the final game at Samford for Coach Bobby Bowden, who left at the end of the season to become an assistant coach at Florida State.



The Samford defense stops McNeese State in the Golden Isles Bowl.

1967 SPACE CITY CLASSIC

Samford 20, Arkansas A&M 7
 Dec. 9, 1967, Huntsville, Ala.

Samford climaxed its second campaign under Coach John Lee Armstrong in a big way, taking a 20-7 win over Arkansas A&M in the second annual Space City Classic in Huntsville.

Junior quarterback Jim Lovette engineered the win, passing for 331 yards and all three Bulldog touchdowns. His passing yardage, 21 completions and 358 yards total offense were all Samford game records at the time. The performance won him the game's Most Outstanding Back Award.

Junior split end John Easley caught a game-record-tying nine passes for 178 yards and two scores. His 18-yard touchdown reception early in the third period gave Samford a 12-7 lead after the 'Dogs trailed at halftime, 7-6. His 39-yard score late in the same quarter iced the verdict.

Lovette hit senior tight end Jim Jackson on a 16-yard score late in the first half after A&M scored in the first period on quarterback Phil Clem's 48-yard toss to end Larry Stanley.



Jim Lovette points the way against Arkansas A&M in the Space City Classic.

**NCAA I-AA PLAYOFFS
1991 FIRST ROUND**

Samford 29, New Hampshire 13
Nov. 30, 1991, Cowell Stadium, Durham,
N.H.

Making its first ever NCAA playoff appearance, Samford put on a strong second-half performance in rolling over New Hampshire, 29-13, in the first round.



The Bulldogs went to the locker room at halftime trailing, 13-7, after scoring on their first possession. Samford came out and scored on the first possession of the second half, and the defense allowed the Wildcats no more points as the Bulldogs ran up 22 second-half points.

Tank Edwards ran for 114 yards and scored two touchdowns, leading the Bulldogs' attack on a cold, wet field. New Hampshire tailback Barry Bourassa, who was leading the nation in all-purpose yardage, was held to 98 all-purpose yards. He had been averaging over 200 yards per game.

The Bulldogs drove 75 yards in eight plays on a drive that culminated in Edwards' 10-yard touchdown run for their first score. After that, it was all New Hampshire for the remainder of the half.

The Wildcats put a couple of Lance Hjelte field goals on the board, the second coming with 5:10 left in the half, to cut the score to 7-6. The Wildcats drove 98 yards in the 1:05 left and scored on a 3-yard Matt Griffin-to-John Perry pass with 20 seconds left in the half.

Samford drove 58 yards in 14 plays on their first second-half drive. Tank Edwards again did the scoring from one yard out.

Brian Moore blocked a punt for a safety early in the fourth quarter to give Samford a 16-13 lead. Michael O'Neal then made a pair of clutch field goals. The second one was a 44-yarder with 3:37 left, which made the score 22-13. After New Hampshire turned the ball over on downs, Donnie Rory scored on a 5-yard run for the final margin.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

Samford	7	0	7	15	29
New Hampshire	3	10	0	0	13

SCORING SUMMARY

- SU 10:13 1st Edwards 10-yard run (O'Neal kick)
- NH 8:46 1st Hjelte 23-yard field goal
- NH 5:10 2nd Hjelte 22-yard field goal
- NH :20 2nd Perry 3-yard pass from Griffin (Hjelte kick)
- SU 7:27 3rd Edwards 1-yard run (O'Neal kick)
- SU 13:42 4th B. Moore blocks punt for safety
- SU 11:15 4th O'Neal 27-yard field goal
- SU 3:37 4th O'Neal 44-yard field goal
- SU 1:51 4th Murray 5-yard run (O'Neal kick)

TEAM STATISTICS	NH	SU
First Downs	16	22
Rushes-Yards	30-90	44-128
Passing Yards	265	177
Att-Comp-Int	41-20-1	34-17-1
Total Yards	355	305
Return Yards	18	39
Punts-Avg	6-32	6-37.6
Fumbles-Lost	3-0	2-1
Penalties-Yards	8-80	4-46
Time of Possession	26:25	33:35

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing
NH Bourassa 23-55; Gamble 1-22; Griffin 5-10; Cripps 1-3
SU Edwards 27-114; James 1-16; Owens 5-11; Rory 4-5; Wiggins 7-(-18)

Passing
NH Griffin 41-20-1, 265
SU Wiggins 33-17-1, 177; Edwards 1-0-0, 0

Receiving
NH Gamble 4-82; Perry 5-75; Bourassa 5-63; Gallagher 4-29; Chmura 1-11
SU James 5-52; Fisher 5-47; Roper 3-32; Edwards 2-29; Rory 2-17

1991 SECOND ROUND

Samford 24, James Madison 21
Dec. 7, 1991, Bridgeforth Stadium,
Harrisonburg, Va.

James Madison's Trey Weiss was wide left on a field goal attempt with 49 seconds remaining as Samford held on for a 24-21 win over the Dukes in the second round of the NCAA playoffs.

The Dukes got the opportunity after tackling punter Russell Nolen on the Samford 29 with 2:28 left. JMU made one first down but was forced to try the field goal on fourth down.



Tank Edwards scores on a 71-yard run against James Madison.

Samford got things started when Tank Edwards ran 71 yards on the second play of scrimmage to give Samford a 7-0 lead. As was the case in the first playoff game, the Bulldogs fell behind at the half, 14-7. Elvin Brown tied the game with a 2-yard run with 40 seconds left in the first quarter. Quarterback Eriq Williams scored on an 11-yard run later in the half.

Like the first round game, Samford took over in the second half. James Madison failed to move the ball to start the second half. On its punt attempt, Brian Moore broke through and forced the JMU punter to run with the ball and be tackled for a 10-yard loss. Samford took the ball and scored on a 10-yard

pass from Ben Wiggins to Brian Fisher on third down.

JMU was again unable to move the ball on its next possession. The punter got the ball away, but David Primus returned it 67 yards for a touchdown, and Samford led, 21-14. On the next possession, Eric Skipwith came up with one of three Samford interceptions, which led to a Michael O'Neal 38-yard field goal.

The Bulldogs looked as if they were about to put the game away in the fourth quarter as they drove deep into JMU territory. Two Ben Wiggins-to-Brian James passes netted 81 yards. The Bulldogs were stopped on a Tank Edwards sweep on fourth down at the three.

Edwards finished the game with 153 yards rushing. Kenny Sims rushed for 107 yards for JMU but missed the second half with a shoulder injury.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

Samford	7	0	17	0	24
James Madison	7	7	0	7	21

SCORING SUMMARY

- SU 14:07 1st Edwards 71-yard run (O'Neal kick)
- JMU :40 1st Brown 2-yard run (Weis kick)
- JMU 7:57 2nd Williams 11-yard run (Weis kick)
- SU 12:16 3rd Fisher 12-yard pass from Wiggins (O'Neal kick)
- SU 10:06 3rd Primus 67-yard punt return (O'Neal kick)
- SU 7:18 3rd O'Neal 38-yard field goal
- JMU 3:50 4th Foxx 9-yard pass from Williams (Weis kick)

TEAM STATISTICS	JMU	SU
First Downs	26	11
Rushes-Yards	59-229	35-138
Passing Yards	156	206
Att-Comp-Int	27-14-3	25-14-1
Total Yards	385	344
Return Yards	10	85
Punts-Avg	7-30.6	6-33.7
Fumbles-Lost	2-0	2-1
Penalties-Yards	2-25	7-50
Time of Possession	33:14	26:46

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing
JMU Sims 17-107; Williams 23-55; Sparkswan 6-34; Brockenborough 8-34; Brown 2-6; Green 1-3
SU Edwards 23-153; Rory 5-31; James 1-(-6); Wiggins 5-(-26)

Passing
JMU Williams 27-14-3, 156
SU Wiggins 25-14-2, 206

Receiving
JMU McLeod 5-45; Hayes 4-55; Foxx 2-28; Archer 1-13; Green 1-11, Brockenborough 1-4
SU James 3-88; Rory 3-71; Fisher 3-30; Edwards 3-9; Roper 1-4; Ellis 1-4

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1991 SEMIFINALS

Samford 0, Youngstown State 10
Dec. 14, 1991, Stambaugh Stadium,
Youngstown, Ohio

Youngstown State's defense shut down the Samford running game, and a cold, swirling wind throttled the passing game as the eventual national champions finished off Samford's season with a 10-0 win in the NCAA semifinals.

The Penguins ran up 394 yards in total offense, but the two scores came on fumbles. Defensive end Chris Vecchione returned a Ben Wiggins fumble six yards for a touchdown in the second quarter. Jeff Wilkins kicked a 28-yard field goal in the third, following a 38-yard drive after a fumble for all the scoring in the game.



Samford's defense held eventual national champion Youngstown State to a season-low 10 points.

The gusting wind contributed to six interceptions in addition to the two fumbles. Ben Wiggins threw 43 times, completing 15 for 148 yards. Brian Fisher was the leading receiver with six catches for 54 yards.

"I think we can play with Youngstown if we've got them on a good day in Alabama when it's 68 degrees, and we've got some good old Southern boys in the stands yelling for us," Terry Bowden said. "Up here on a day like this, I don't know if we've ever got a chance."

Samford's defense kept the Penguins off the scoreboard enough to give Samford hope. It stopped Youngstown on downs on the 3-yard line and forced a fumble on the two. Youngstown missed two field goals.

Samford had its chance in the third quarter when it picked up a fumble at the 22-yard line. But Randy Smith came up with one of his three interceptions for YSU, this one in the end zone, to kill the threat. His remarks typified Samford's day: "[Brian James] had me beat, but I made a good recovery, and the wind knocked the ball down."

The Bulldogs had the ball just over 17 minutes compared to almost 43 minutes for Youngstown. Penguin fullback Tameron Smith carried the ball 46 times for 246 yards.

The loss snapped the Bulldogs' second six-game winning streak of the season. It was the first time that Samford had been shut out since the fourth game of the 1984 season—77 games. It was also the first shutout loss of Terry Bowden's coaching career.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

Samford	0	0	0	0	0
Youngstown State	7	0	3	0	10

SCORING SUMMARY

YSU 4:23 1st Vecchione 6-yard fumble return (Wilkins kick)
YSU 9:06 3rd Wilkins 28-yard field goal

TEAM STATISTICS

	YSU	SU
First Downs	19	8
Rushes-Yards	81-341	16-(-4)
Passing Yards	53	148
Att-Comp-Int	5-2-0	43-15-6
Total Yards	394	144
Return Yards	30	14
Punts-Avg	5-31	7-27.7
Fumbles-Lost	4-4	2-2
Penalties-Yards	3-35	3-25
Time of Possession	42:45	17:15

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing

YSU T. Smith 46-246; Hawkins 10-68; Clark 11-48; Wood 1-1; Isaac 12-(-11); L. Buccarelli 1-(-11)
SU Edwards 9-11; Rory 2-1; Wiggins 5-(-16)

Passing

YSU Isaac 5-2-0, 53
SU Wiggins 43-15-6, 148

Receiving

YSU Williams 1-40; Strob 1-13
SU Fisher 6-54; James 4-37; Rory 2-20; Edwards 1-24; Roper 1-7; Ellis 1-6

1992 FIRST ROUND

Samford 21, Delaware 56
Nov. 28, 1992, Delaware Stadium, Newark, Del.

Delaware's Wing-T offense completely baffled the Bulldogs and made Samford's second straight playoff appearance short-lived with a 56-21 win.

The Blue Hens ran to a 21-0 lead in the second quarter. Samford cut the score to 21-7 on a Ben Wiggins quarterback sneak. However, the Blue Hens ran the two-minute drill to perfection and scored with seven seconds remaining in the half.

Samford scored on its first drive of the second half on a Tank Edwards 1-yard run, giving the Bulldogs hope. Delaware again answered, this time with a 73-yard, seven-play drive. It then proceeded to add more. Samford scored again on the final play of the game.

Delaware ran up 586 yards in total offense, including 387 on the ground, the most Samford had allowed in more than three years. Blue Hen quarterback Bill Vergantino passed for 199 yards, completing 10-of-15, and rushed for 86 more. Fullback Daryl Brown rushed for 116 yards on 19 attempts.

"It was the best Division I-AA team we've played since we moved up," Terry Bowden said. "We played Georgia Southern

(24-31) when it won the national championship and lost to Youngstown State (0-10) last year when it won."

Edwards gained 77 yards on 13 carries, and Wiggins completed 15-of-28 passes for 118 yards.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

Samford	0	7	7	7	21
Delaware	7	21	21	7	56

SCORING SUMMARY

UD 12:02 1st Lewis 53-yard pass from Vergantino (Leo kick)
UD 14:56 2nd Organ 1-yard run (Leo kick)
UD 10:52 2nd Vergantino 5-yard run (Leo kick)
SU 6:54 2nd Wiggins 1-yard run (O'Neal kick)
UD :07 2nd Cooper 2-yard pass from Vergantino (Leo kick)
SU 11:22 3rd Edwards 1-yard run (O'Neal kick)
UD 8:12 3rd L. Johnson 3-yard run (Leo kick)
UD 4:28 3rd L. Johnson 31-yard pass from Vergantino (Leo kick)
UD :00 3rd Brown 43-yard run (Leo kick)
UD 10:18 4th Brown 4-yard run (Leo kick)
SU :01 4th McFadden 8-yard pass from Hackbarth (O'Neal kick)

TEAM STATISTICS

	SU	UD
First Downs	13	23
Rushes-Yards	23-118	61-387
Passing Yards	164	199
Att-Comp-Int	34-19-1	16-10-1
Total Yards	282	586
Return Yards	1	37
Punts-Avg	8-38.5	3-34.7
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	4-1
Penalties-Yards	7-45	5-30
Time of Possession	22:45	37:05

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing

SU Edwards 13-82; Ellis 1-18; Hawkins 4-15; Staley 2-11; Wiggins 2-(-1)
UD Brown 19-116; Vergantino 11-89; Lewis 4-75; Johnson 9-39; Ventresca 8-31; Organ 5-24; Hebron 1-9; Hicks 3-4; Williams 1-3

Passing

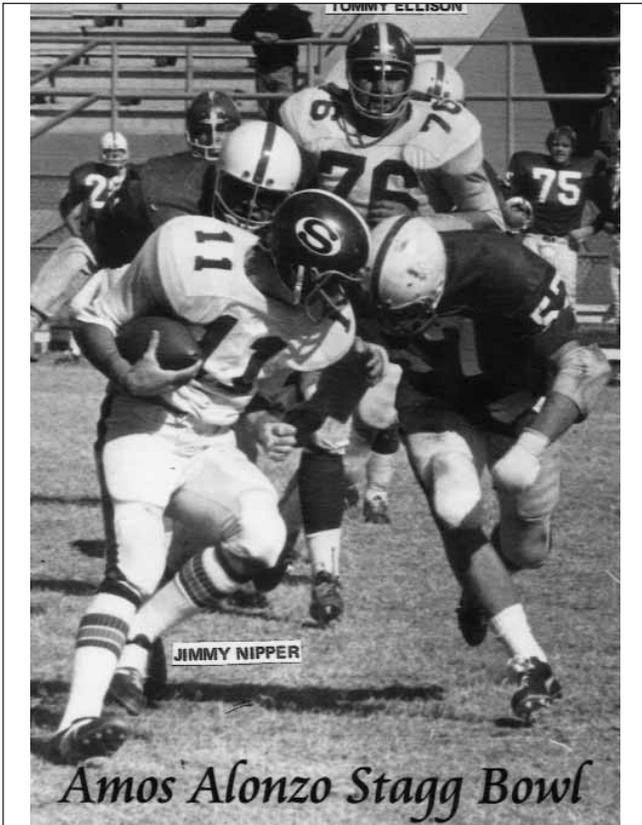
SU Wiggins 28-15-1, 118; Hackbarth 6-4-0, 46
UD Vergantino 15-10-1, 199; Fry 1-0-0, 0

Receiving

SU Fisher 5-47; Hawkins 4-21; Edwards 3-23; Staley 3-20; Marshall 2-16; May 1-15; McFadden 1-8; Hines 1-4

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SAMFORD SALUTES THE 1971 CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM



Quarterback Jimmy Nipper and Tommy Ellison played in the 1971 Amos Alonzo Stagg Bowl.



Samford honored members of the 1971 team during the 2006 season.

SAMFORD RANKED SEVENTH IN FINAL UPI POLL

Samford University's 1971 record of eight victories and a single defeat produced the school's highest finish ever in a national wire service poll. Coach Wayne Grubb's Bulldogs were ranked seventh in United Press International's final College Division ratings. Here's how UPI's Top 20 looked at season's end 1971.

Rank	Team (First Place Votes)	Record
1.	Delaware (20)	9-1
2.	McNeese State (5)	9-0-1
3.	Eastern Michigan (3)	7-0-2
4.	Tennessee State (1)	8-1
5.	C. W. Post	8-1
6.	Arkansas Tech	11-1
7.	SAMFORD	8-1
8.	Northern Colorado (2)	8-1-1
9.	Louisiana Tech	8-2
10.	Howard Payne	9-1-1
11.	Chico State	9-1
12.	Western Kentucky	8-2
13.	Boise State	9-2
14.	Westminster, Pa.	8-0
15.	Southwest Texas State	8-1-1
16.	Alcorn A&M (1)	6-2
17.	Livingston	8-1
18.	St. John's, Minn.	8-1
19.	Long Beach State	8-3
20.	Akron	8-2

The 1971 team was ranked seventh in the UPI poll at the end of the regular season.

The 1971 Samford football team posted a 9-1 record, tying for the second-most wins in school history. The team finished the regular season ranked seventh in the national UPI poll. However, the most impressive achievement of the team was to win the NCAA College Division West Region II Championship with a 20-10 victory over Ohio Wesleyan Nov. 25 at Phenix Municipal Stadium in Phenix City, Ala.

The 1971 Bulldogs scored an average of 22.3 points per game, and the defense allowed just 9.7 points a contest, posting four shutouts in the season.

In the championship game, quarterback Jimmy Nipper led the Bulldogs, completing 21 of 42 passes for 259 yards and two touchdowns. As a team, Samford had 294 yards of total offense; Ohio Wesleyan had only 102 yards.

Samford University thanks the members of the 1971 team for all their accomplishments.

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AMOS ALONZO STAGG BOWL

The 1971 Samford football team defeated Ohio Wesleyan, 20-10, in the Amos Alonzo Stagg Bowl Nov. 25 to win the NCAA College Division West Region II Championship. The team finished the season with a record of 9-1 and ranked seventh in the national UPI poll.

BOWDEN, BOBBY

Bobby Bowden, the current head coach at Florida State University and the winningest head coach in college football history, played football at Samford University (then Howard College) and was its head coach for four years. Bowden played at Samford during 1950-53, and he was the school's head coach from 1959 to 1962. As Samford's head coach, Bowden compiled a record of 31-6, winning 83.8 percent of his games, the highest winning percentage for any coach in the school's history.



Bobby Bowden was Samford's head coach from 1959 to 1962.

BOWDEN, TERRY

Terry Bowden was Samford's head coach from 1987 to 1992 before becoming head coach at Auburn University in 1993. He led Samford to NCAA Division I FCS (then I-AA) playoff appearances in 1991 and 1992, and his 45 wins at the school are the most for any coach in the program's history.



Terry Bowden followed in his father's footsteps and was Samford's head coach from 1987 to 1992.

CHARLES WILLIAMS MEMORIAL JERSEY

The Charles Williams Memorial Jersey is given each year to a senior leader on the team. The No. 5 jersey, is given in memory of former Samford player Charles Williams, who was killed in a car accident May 23, 2003. A full list of past winners of this award is on page 108.

FINNEGAN, CORTLAND

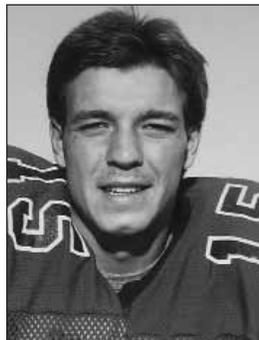
Cortland Finnegan, a current member of the Tennessee Titans, played at Samford from 2002 to 2005. At Samford, Finnegan led the team in tackles for three seasons, and he was named the Ohio Valley Conference's Defensive Player of the Year in 2003. He was named All-OVC in 2003, 2004 and 2005, and he was named All-American in 2003 and 2005.



Cortland Finnegan led Samford in tackles for three years in a row. In 2003, he was named the OVC Defensive Player of the Year.

FISHER, JIMBO

Jimbo Fisher, the current offensive coordinator and future head coach at Florida State University, played quarterback at Samford in 1987 after coming to the school from Salem College with then-head coach Terry Bowden. When he left Samford, Fisher held several single-season and single-game records, and his 34 touchdown passes set a Division III single-season record. He was also an assistant coach at Samford from 1988 to 1992.



Jimbo Fisher was Samford's quarterback in 1987.

GAILEY, CHAN

Chan Gailey served as Samford's head coach in 1993. He later served stints as head coach of the Dallas Cowboys and at Georgia Tech. He is currently the offensive coordinator of the Kansas City Chiefs.



Chan Gailey coached at Samford during the 1993 season.

HAVANA, CUBA

On Nov. 28, 1927, Samford traveled to Havana, Cuba, to play the Havana National University. Samford won the game by a score of 20-6.

HOWARD COLLEGE

Samford was originally called Howard College. The name of the school was changed to Samford University in 1965.

LEGION FIELD

On Nov. 19, 1927, Samford (then Howard College) met Birmingham-Southern in the first game played at historic Legion Field. Samford defeated Birmingham-Southern, 9-0. Over the years, Samford posted a record of 34-17-3 in games played at Legion Field.



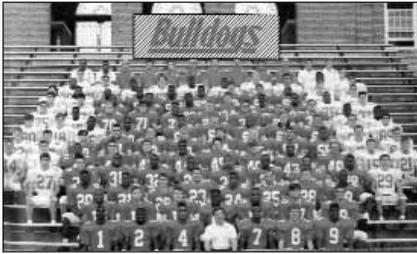
Samford played the first game at historic Legion Field in 1927.

MEXICO CITY

In 1954 and 1963, Samford traveled to Mexico City to take on the National University of Mexico. The teams split the two games, with Mexico winning in 1954, 13-6, and Samford taking the 1963 meeting, 26-14.

NCAA DIVISION I FCS PLAYOFFS

Samford's 1991 and 1992 teams reached the NCAA Division I FCS (then I-AA) Playoffs under head coach Terry Bowden. The 1991 team finished with a 12-2 record and reached the national semifinals. The 1992 team was 9-3 and reached the first round of the playoffs.



The 1991 Samford team became the school's first to reach the Division I FCS playoffs.

NICKNAME

The Howard College team was known originally as the "Baptist Tigers." However, rival Auburn also had "Tigers" as a nickname. Howard's teams went by "Baptist Bears" until Dec. 14, 1916, when the student body voted two-to-one for the "Crimson Bulldog" over the "Baptist Bears." Students decided that a bulldog could eat more Birmingham-Southern Panther meat than a bear could.

OHIO VALLEY CONFERENCE

Samford was a member of the Ohio Valley Conference from 2003 to 2007. In its five years in the league, Samford earned 13 team championships.



RETURN OF FOOTBALL

Football returned to the Samford campus after a 10-year absence in 1984. Prior to the 1984 season, Samford had not fielded a football team since 1973.

SEIBERT STADIUM

Seibert Stadium, the current home of Samford football, opened in 1958. Samford has an all-time record of 125-63-4 in games played at Seibert Stadium. Bashinsky Press Tower was added in 1989, and in 2005, a new LSR Blade Synthetic Surface replaced the original natural grass field. A new scoreboard with a video board was added before the 2006 season.



Seibert Stadium has been the home to Samford football since 1958.

SOUTHERN CONFERENCE

Samford will compete in the Southern Conference for the first time in 2008. The conference is the fifth-oldest conference in the country. The league was created in 1921, and its charter members included Alabama, Auburn, Clemson, Georgia, Georgia Tech, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi State, North Carolina, North Carolina State, Tennessee, Virginia, Virginia Tech and Washington & Lee. This season, Samford joins current football playing members Appalachian State, Chattanooga, The Citadel, Elon, Furman, Georgia Southern, Western Carolina and Wofford.



SULLIVAN, JERRY

Jerry Sullivan, the late father of current head coach Pat Sullivan, played at Samford (then Howard College) in 1949 and 1950.

SULLIVAN, PAT

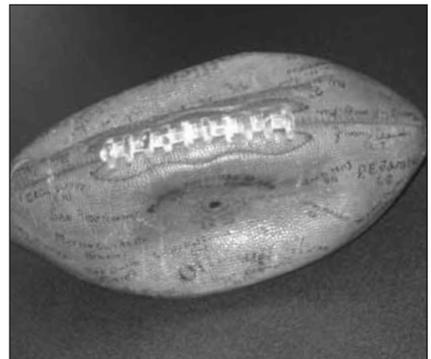
Pat Sullivan was named Samford's 35th head football coach on Dec. 1, 2006. The 1971 Heisman Trophy winner served as head coach at Texas Christian University from 1992 to 1997 and was named Southwest Conference Coach of the Year in 1994. He also served as an assistant coach at UAB (1999-2005) and his alma mater, Auburn (1986-91).



Pat Sullivan earned the Heisman Trophy during his playing career at Auburn University.

TIED TIDE

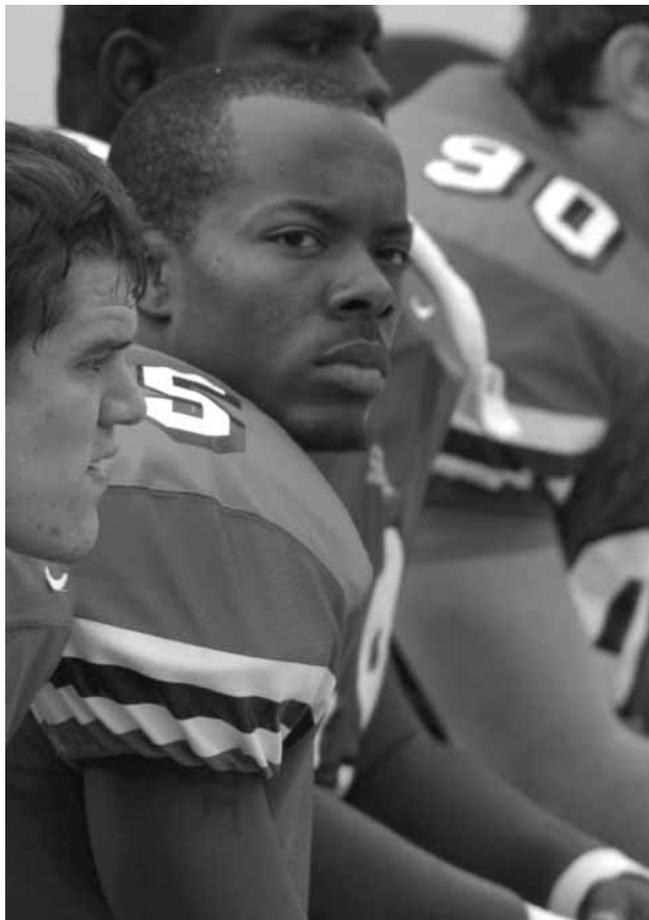
On Sept. 18, 1935, the Howard College football team traveled to Tuscaloosa to take on the University of Alabama Crimson Tide. The Bulldogs came away with a 7-7 tie with the mighty Tide. A member of the Alabama team that day was a young Paul "Bear" Bryant. Samford's president, T. V. Neal, sent a telegram after the game to his wife that simply read "Tied Tide!"



In 1935, Samford played to a 7-7 tie with the University of Alabama Crimson Tide. The autographed game-winning ball is part of Samford's Special Collection in the University Libraries.

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THE CHARLES WILLIAMS MEMORIAL JERSEY



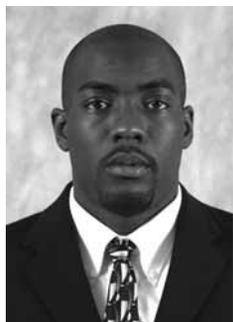
Charles Williams

On May 23, 2003, Samford junior cornerback Charles Williams died in a car accident. In only two seasons on the team, Williams emerged as a starter in the secondary in 2002. In addition to his success on the field, Williams also maintained one of the highest GPA's on the team.

For the 2003 and 2004 seasons (what would have been Williams' junior and senior seasons) no one wore jersey No. 5, the number that Williams wore. Every year since then, a senior has been selected to wear the No. 5, the Charles Williams Memorial Jersey.

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CHARLES WILLIAMS MEMORIAL JERSEY WINNERS



Ossie Buchannon
2005



T. C. Myers
2006



Jay McCurty
2007



Rodney Shepherd
2008

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