

1915 SEASON

THOMAS KELLY Coach
B. L. NOOJIN, FARLEY MOODY Assistant Coaches
WILLIAM L. HARSH Manager
E. E. VERNER Manager

PLAYERS

Ends: Lovick Stephenson, Lowndes Morton, A. M. Boone . . . **Tackles:** Ike Rogers, W. T. VandeGraaff . . . **Guards:** Connor Samford, Basil Burks, Sheldon Whittlesy . . . **Center:** E. W. Maynor . . . **Backs:** W. L. Harsh, G. R. Harsh, J. K. Taylor, J. H. Hagan, Goree Johnston, Walter Hovater, Troy Brannan.

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OCTOBER 2: Alabama defeated Howard by the score of 44 to 0 on the campus.

Two touchdowns were scored by Captain Harsh while Maynor, Stephenson, Morton and Irvine scored single markers. Bully VandeGraaff kicked five goals after touchdowns and one field goal from the 43 yard line.

Adams, tackle, and Gibson, guard, were Howard's stars.

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OCTOBER 9: Alabama rolled over Owenton on the campus by the score of 67 to 0.

Troy Brannan led the scoring with four touchdowns. Bully VandeGraaff scored twice, made two runs for more than 50 yards and kicked six goals after touchdowns. The remainder of the scoring was by Captain Harsh, Griff Harsh, Ike Rogers, Dan Boone and Goree Johnson. Alabama did not punt a single time during the game.

For Owenton, the offensive and defensive play of Tink Gillam was a feature of the game.

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OCTOBER 16: Alabama proved superior to Mississippi College on the campus by the score of 40 to 0, scoring 34 points in the first half and using substitutes freely.

Brannan scored three touchdowns. VandeGraaff kicked four field goals, one from the 40, another from the 45 and two from the 30 yard line. Another attempt from the 54 yard line struck the goal post and prevented a Southern record being broken.

Captain Bill Harsh starred on offense and defense while Captain Anderson and Tait were outstanding for Mississippi College.

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OCTOBER 23: Just two days prior to this game with Tulane, Coach Kelly, beginning his initial year with the Thin Red Line, was carried to the hospital with a high fever, which later turned out to be typhoid, and was lost to the team for the rest of the season. Coach Kelly was a man of powerful physical proportions, weighing about 250 pounds and his illness resulted in a loss of more than 100 pounds. However, in his few weeks with the squad before his illness, he had laid the foundation for a line especially well drilled in the fundamentals of defensive play.

Alabama won by the score of 16 to 0 but their play was very disappointing. The offense lacked the drive of earlier games and at times the defense was very ragged and the tackling poor.

VandeGraaff kicked a field goal in each of the first three periods and Alabama's lone touchdown came in the last few seconds of the final quarter, Captain Harsh passing to Boone for the score from a fake place kick formation. VandeGraaff kicked goal.

George and Faust, halfback and quarterback, were the stars for Tulane.

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OCTOBER 30: With Coach Kelly in the hospital with typhoid fever, Athletic Director Lonnie Noojin took charge of the squad assisted by Farley Moody, Captain of the 1912 team, as the assistant coach in the annual Alabama-Sewanee game in Birmingham.

Alabama had not beaten Sewanee since 1894 and the Montain Tiger was a power in Southern football in those days. Bully VandeGraaff, the last of three brothers who had tried for seven years to defeat Sewanee without success, was playing his last year for Alabama and the prospects for a victory were slim indeed.

In the first quarter, Alabama recovered a fumble on her 35 yard line. Captain Harsh broke through the center of the line and, without much interference, ran 65 yards for a touchdown and VandeGraaff kicked goal. Later, Bully made a place kick and the score was 10 to 0. Just before the half ended, Alabama held Sewanee for downs on her own 5 yard line and Bully kicked out of danger.

Alabama supporters certainly enjoyed the novelty of being ahead of Sewanee at the half. They felt that the team would make an even better showing in the second half in view of their play in the first half. But they were soon to find out that Sewanee was still to be in that ball game. And find it out they did, in one of the most sensational halves that can be imagined. The next 30 minutes witnessed a series of fumbles, drop kicks, place kicks, forward passes completed and intercepted and blocked punts.

In the third quarter, Sewanee marched inside of Alabama's 20 yard line no less than four times but Alabama held and Bully kicked out of danger. But the relief was only temporary and in a few moments Sewanee was knocking at the door again. Once Bully stood five yards behind his goal and kicked to Sewanee's 15 yard line.

On the first play of the last quarter, Sewanee scored on a forward pass to Dobbins, who later coached at Howard. In a few minutes, as the result of a blocked punt and some running plays, the ball was close enough for a field goal which Quarterback Herring made good and the score was tied at 10 and 10.

Everyone present remembers that in the next few minutes, with the Alabama team badly demoralized, Bully VandeGraaff won the game by rushing a Sewanee passer, knocking the ball into the air a few feet from the passer's hand, catching it before it struck the ground and running 65 yards for a touchdown and kicking the goal. Bully made two more field goals in this period, thus accounting for 17 of the 23 points scored by Alabama. The game ended with the score: Alabama 23, Sewanee 10.

The Alabama line-up included Lowndes Morton, Lovick Stephenson and Dan Boone at ends; Bully VandeGraaff and Ike Rogers at tackles; Basil Burks, Sheldon Whittlesy and Conner Samford, who died about 1925, at guards; Dog Maynor, who was killed in France in the first World War, at center; Captain Bill Harsh, Jake Taylor and Walter Hovater at halfbacks; Goree Johnson at fullback and Griff Harsh at quarterback. Just before the end of the game, Griff Harsh was put out of the game because of some cussing that Lovick Stephenson did and Dink Hagan substituted. I cannot understand how anyone could get Griff and Lovick confused but the referee did. They don't look alike and they certainly do not act alike.

The entire Alabama team were stars as were Turner, Dobbins, Perry, Jones, Mclsaac and Edmonds for Sewanee.



NOVEMBER 6: Before a crowd of 5,000 fans in Atlanta, Georgia Tech took their positions for the initial kickoff expecting two things: They anticipated a tough battle and they thought they would win. They were not disappointed. The score was Tech 21, Alabama 7. A good team was defeated by a better one.

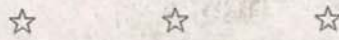
Alabama received and soon VandeGraaff punted a long one deep in Tech territory. Fielder, halfback for Tech, circled end for 20 yards and Mathias gained 12 on an off tackle play. A series of plays advanced the ball to Alabama's 20 yard line where Feilder scored. Spence, one of Tech's great fullbacks who was killed in France during the World War, kicked goal.

In the second period, Tech drove the ball to Alabama's 7 yard line where Strupper scored. On this play, Sheldon Whittlesy suffered a broken arm.

In the third period, Senter, Goree, Beard, Fielder, Hill and Strupper in a series of line plays advanced the ball to the Alabama 5 yard line where Spence scored and Preas kicked goal.

In the last quarter, Alabama provided the feature play of the game. With the ball on Tech's 45 yard line, VandeGraaff dropped back to punt formation, faked an end run, turned around and threw a long pass to Lovick Stephenson, who caught the ball on the run and scored Alabama's only

touchdown. Stephenson, who had previously played on Tech's Freshman team, got a lot of satisfaction out of the play and still likes to talk about it, although it occurred 30 years ago. VandeGraaff kicked goal.



NOVEMBER 13: Playing straight football by cleverly mixing line plays with end runs, Texas defeated Alabama 20 to 0 in Austin, Texas on a heavy field and in a drizzling rain. Only a few passes were attempted and no appreciable gains resulted.

With Turner and Walker leading the attack, Texas scored in the first and second periods on sustained plunges through the line. The third touchdown resulted from end runs with Littlefield, speedy quarterback, dodging seven Alabama players on a 53 yard run.

VandeGraaff's punting, line plunging and defensive play featured for Alabama. He tried for three field goals but all of them failed by narrow margins. One from a difficult angle and 55 yards away struck one of the uprights near the top.



NOVEMBER 25: Alabama gained and scored at will in defeating the University of Mississippi in Birmingham by the score of 53 to 0.

Troy Brannan and Bill Harsh scored twice while Dink Hagan, Stephenson and Hovater made one touchdown each. VandeGraaff kicked one field goal and six goals after touchdowns.

Captain Harsh and VandeGraaff played their last game for Alabama. For three years, they had been mainstays on offense and defense. Bully was picked by several accredited national sports writers as All American and was the first Alabama player to be so honored.

Quarterback Finger of Mississippi, weighing only 124 pounds, starred with his deadly open field tackling when he was the only man between an Alabama player and the goal. His playing won continuous rounds of applause from the spectators.



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