



January 1, 1968

Texas A&M 20, Alabama 16

Attendance - 73,800

Sitting at the edge of their seats, nearly 74,000 chilled fans waited for the "Bear" and his troops to pull off a miracle. Eighth-ranked Alabama was on the verge of upset by unranked Texas A&M, 20-16. Neither the Aggie nor Crimson Tide faithful could believe what they were seeing. Aggie coach Gene Stallings was minutes away from pulling off the biggest upset of his young coaching career, and the victim would be his former mentor at A&M, Paul "Bear" Bryant.

The Aggies played Bryant-like, clutch football the full 60 minutes, turning an Alabama interception and fumble into first half touchdowns to lead 13-10 at halftime. Then, midway through the third quarter, A&M turned a short, 28-yard Alabama punt into its final score of the afternoon. Stallings utilized the element of surprise to its fullest sending his quarterback Edd Hargett into the game with instructions to air out the stadium. In the first half alone, Hargett put the ball up 21 times.

While the Aggies performed flawlessly, the Tide was playing totally out of character. When Hargett threw for 28 yards to split end Barney Harris at the Alabama 15, Bryant's men on the field numbered only ten. The play set up A&M's first score, another Hargett pass completion to Larry Stegent that covered the final 13 yards to tie the game at 7-7.

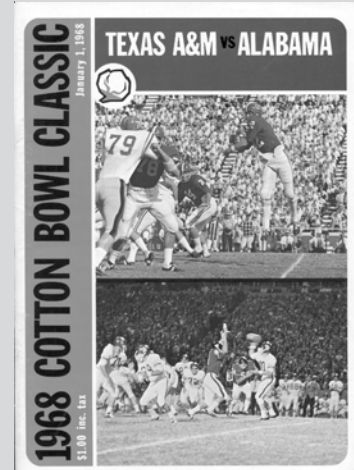
The Tide surged back in front, 10-7, on the first play of the second quarter on the strength of Steve Davis' 36-yard field goal. The score held up until the final minute of the half when Hargett fired a seven-yard shot to Tommy Maxwell. Just 21 seconds were left and the Aggies grabbed the lead for the first time, 13-10.

Then came the third quarter and Wendell Housley added to the A&M lead, bowling over three Bama defenders for 20 yards and boosted the score to 20-10. But, Alabama had been quiet for too long. The Tide took the A&M kickoff and went to work, driving 83 yards in nine plays to get within four and set up a dramatic finish.

Time was at a minimum when Alabama started its final rally. Driving from its own 20, Bama moved the ball with sheer determination. Quarterback Kenny Stabler was at the controls. A holding call accessed to the Aggies soon advanced the ball to the Tide 44. Within seconds, Stabler had his team at the A&M 35 with a first down. Bryant's pacing along the sideline quickened.

However, that's when the Tide began to fall apart. Three straight passes fell incomplete. A fourth down pass gained six to the 29, four yards shy of the needed first down. For Alabama, the miracle never came. The ball went over to A&M and it was just a matter of time before the Aggies claimed their first Cotton Bowl victory in 27 years.

GAME SUMMARY



Alabama	7	3	6	0	-	16
Texas A&M	7	6	7	0	-	20

First Quarter:

Alabama-Kenny Stabler 3 run (Steve Davis kick), 8:22, 80 yards in 10 plays after taking over on downs

Texas A&M-Larry Stegent 13 pass from Edd Hargett (Charlie Riggs kick), 5:22, 43 yards in 4 plays following pass interception by Tommy Maxwell

Second Quarter:

Alabama-Davis 36FG, 14:56, 56 yards in 11 plays following kickoff
Texas A&M-Tommy Maxwell 7 pass from Hargett (Riggs kick fail), 0:16, 56 yards in 8 plays following fumble recovery by Jim Piper

Third Quarter:

Texas A&M-Wendell Housley 20 run (Riggs kick), 8:32, 52 yards in 6 plays following punt
Alabama-Stabler 2 run (David Chatwood run fail), 3:55, 83 yards in 9 plays following kickoff

OUTSTANDING PLAYERS

Grady Allen, Texas A&M
Edd Hargett, Texas A&M
Bill Hobbs, Texas A&M

COACHES

Paul "Bear" Bryant, Alabama
Gene Stallings, Texas A&M

WEATHER

Cold, cloudy

FUN FACT #32

Paul "Bear" Bryant guided the Crimson Tide to four Cotton Bowl appearances during his 25-year coaching career at Alabama. In 1968, Bryant came face-to-face with his old school...Texas A&M, and a former star player who had become the Aggies' head coach...Gene Stallings. However, his first trip to Dallas took place 16 years earlier when Bryant's Kentucky Wildcats defeated TCU, 20-7. Bryant's five coaching appearances is second only to Darrell Royal's 10. His record in the Classic was 2-3-0.

GAME STATISTICS

TEAM STATS	Alabama	A&M
First Downs	14	13
Rushing	5	6
Passing	6	7
Penalty	3	0
Rushes-Net Yards	42-135	44-114
Net Yards Passing	179	143
Passes	16-26-3	11-22-0
Total Plays	68	66
Total Net Yards	314	257
Fumbles-Lost	5-2	3-1
Penalties-Yards	4-37	7-83
Punts-Average	6-37.5	10-41.0

RUSHING

Alabama - Chatwood 12-62, Martin 5-36, Morgan 6-17, Wade 5-16, Raburn 2-3, Stabler 12-1.

Texas A&M - Housley 10-59, Stegent 18-56, Sallee 5-10, Hargett 11-(-11).

PASSING

Alabama - Stabler 16-26-3, 179 yards.
Texas A&M - Hargett 11-22-0, 143 yards.

RECEIVING

Alabama - Homan 6-90, Willis 4-39, Husband 2-19, D. Ford 1-19, Chatwood 1-11, Morgan 1-1, Raburn 1-0.

Texas A&M - Stegent 4-51, Harris 2-38, Long 2-18, Buckman 1-21, Sallee 1-8, Maxwell 1-7.

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

PUNTING

Alabama - Davis 6-37.5.
Texas A&M - O'Neal 10-41.0