

1985 In Review

Commodores Claim Season Opener

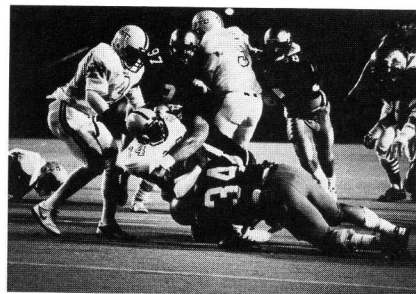
VANDERBILT 7, UT-CHATTANOOGA 0

An 11-yard scoring pass from Mark Wracher to Everett Crawford with 2:05 left in the game, followed by a spirited goal line stand, gave the Vanderbilt Commodores a 7-0 season opening win over scrappy UT-Chattanooga.

The game was a defensive struggle all the way. UTC missed four field goal attempts and Vanderbilt's Alan Herline was barely short on a 57-yard try at the end of the first half.

Wracher heated up late in the fourth quarter, directing an 84-yard scoring drive capped by the pass to Crawford. Other key plays were a 17-yard catch by Al Rogers on a third-and-12 situation, plus a great sideline grab by Carl Parker for a 32-yard pickup.

Vanderbilt's defenders had to work hard to preserve their shutout. UTC worked to first-and-goal at the five yard line, but a sack by Steve Wade and pass break-ups by Thanh Anderson and Armando Fitz kept the Mocs out of the end zone.



TENN.-CHATT.	0	0	0	0-0
VANDERBILT	0	0	0	7-7

VU—Crawford 11 pass from Wracher (Herline kick).

Norseth Passes Kansas to Win

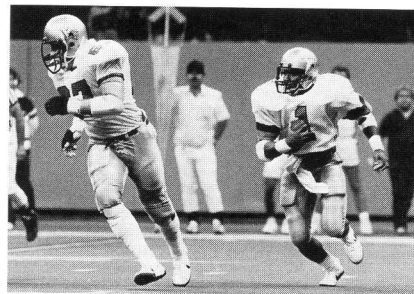
KANSAS 42, VANDERBILT 16

Brilliant Kansas quarterback Mike Norseth enjoyed a game he'll never forget as the Jayhawks flew past Vanderbilt, 42-16, before 39,000 fans in Lawrence, Kansas.

Norseth completed 24 of 38 passes for 480 yards and four touchdowns. He opened the scoring late in the first quarter on a 65-yard pass to Willie Vaughn. Norseth threw two more TD aerials before halftime as Kansas built a 28-7 lead.

Vanderbilt's quarterbacks also threw the ball well, totaling 336 yards. But the key play in this game came when Mark Wracher suffered a dislocated hip on a quarterback sack and was lost for the season. Talented but inexperienced freshmen John Gromos and Tim Richardson ran the club the remainder of the campaign.

The brightest spot for Vanderbilt came in the emergence of redshirt freshman wide receiver Gerald "Boo" Mitchell. Boo caught eight passes for 184 yards, the highest yardage total for an SEC receiver in 1985.



VANDERBILT	0	7	3	6-16
KANSAS	7	21	7	7-42

KU—Vaughn 65 pass from Norseth (Johnson kick). KU—Vaughn 10 pass from Norseth (Johnson kick). KU—H. Fields 7 run (Johnson kick). VU—Crawford 3 run (Herline kick). KU—Caldwell 29 pass from Norseth (Johnson kick). VU—Herline 51 FG. KU—Estell 15 pass from Norseth (Johnson kick). KU—A. Fields 1 run (Johnson kick). VU—Weatherspoon 5 run (pass fails).

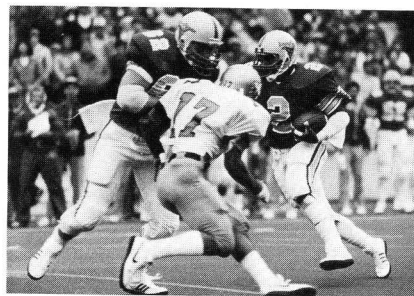
Late Field Goal Wins for Iowa State

IOWA STATE 20, VANDERBILT 17

A 34-yard field goal by Richard Frank with three seconds to play lifted Iowa State to a 20-17 victory over Vanderbilt before 44,025 cold fans in Cyclone Stadium.

It was a frustrating day for the Commodores. Vanderbilt held the Cyclones to 190 yards total offense, a mere 11 first downs, and forced three turnovers, usually more than enough to win most games. But Vanderbilt turned the ball over five times, directly leading to Iowa State's first 17 points.

The offense, under the direction of new quarterback John Gromos, moved the ball well at times but was unable to take advantage of all scoring opportunities. Gromos completed 12 of 28 passes for 154 yards, including a 45-yard scoring toss to Jim Popp. Carl Woods ran for 90 yards on this cold, muddy, windswept day and Everett Crawford rushed for 45 yards and a touchdown.



VANDERBILT	0	7	3	7-17
IOWA STATE	7	0	3	10-20

ISU—Watson 1 run (Frank kick). VU—Crawford 3 run (Herline kick). VU—Herline 24 FG. ISU—Frank 43 FG. ISU—Anthony 29 interception return (Frank kick). VU—Popp 45 pass from Gromos (Herline kick). ISU—Frank 34 FG.

Shula Guides Alabama to TV Victory

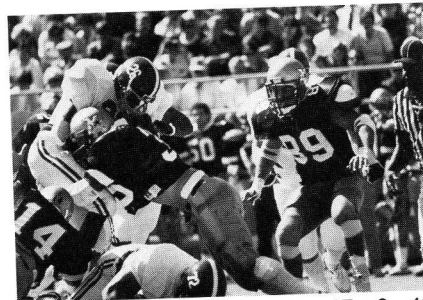
ALABAMA 40, VANDERBILT 20

The cool hand of Mike Shula led Alabama to a 40-20 win over Vanderbilt before a capacity-plus throng of 41,186 fans and a nationwide cable audience on WTBS.

Shula did a masterful job in taking the Tide to seven scoring marches. He completed 9 of 12 passes for 147 yards and one touchdown and ran for another. Just as important, he converted eight of 13 third down conversions and every time Alabama needed a big play he did it.

Freshman Bobby Humphrey was the workhorse, running for 127 yards. Craig Turner added 72 yards on the ground. Four different Alabama backs scored touchdowns.

Meanwhile, Vanderbilt made some offensive noise of its own. Tim Richardson came off the bench to direct two TD drives in the fourth quarter, narrowing the gap to 34-20. Vanderbilt had a chance to cut the margin further, but a controversial decision on an on-side kick gave the ball to Alabama. Shula directed a final touchdown drive with Turner leaping for a two-yard touchdown as time expired.



ALABAMA	0	17	17	6—40
VANDERBILT	0	6	0	14—20

ALA—Tiffin 40 FG. VU—Herline 19 FG. ALA—Humphrey 5 run (Tiffin kick). ALA—Shula 6 run (Tiffin kick). VU—Herline 26 FG. ALA—Bell 14 pass from Shula (Tiffin kick). ALA—Jelks 10 run (Tiffin kick). ALA—Tiffin 21 FG. VU—Woods 7 run (Herline kick). VU—Woods 5 run (Herline kick). ALA—Turner 2 run (no PAT attempted).

Vanderbilt Stops Green Wave

VANDERBILT 24, TULANE 17

Playing perhaps its best first half of the season, Vanderbilt raced to a 17-0 lead at intermission and held on to a 24-17 verdict over Tulane as 25,979 watched in the New Orleans SuperDome.

Freshman quarterback John Gromos played an outstanding first half, leading the Commodores on drives of 73 and 71 yards, each of which he capped on a one-yard touchdown run. Sandwiched between the scores was a 35-yard Alan Herline field goal which was set up by a Mark Woehler interception.

Tulane picked up a field goal late in third quarter but Gromos rose to the occasion by directing a 70-yard march. Carl Woods plunged in from one yard out. Woods ended the game with 62 yards on 18 carries and running mate Everett Crawford added 72 on 19 tries. All told, the sharp Gromos connected on 10 of 17 passes for 142 yards.

Tulane stirred itself in the fourth quarter, rising up with a pair of touchdowns to cut the margin to 24-17. Boo Mitchell recovered a desperation on-sides kick and the Commodores ran out the clock.



VANDERBILT	7	10	0	7—24
TULANE	0	0	3	14—17

VU—Gromos 1 run (Herline kick). VU—Herline 35 FG. VU—Gromos 1 run (Herline kick). TUL—Clements 45 FG. VU—Woods 1 run (Herline kick). TUL—Spann 3 run (Clements kick). TUL—Jones 2 pass from Karcher (Clements kick).

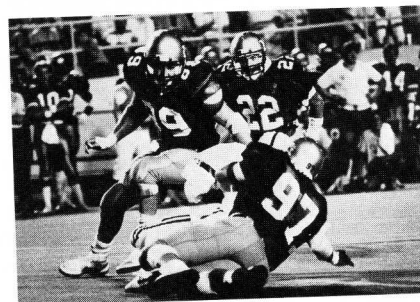
Talented Tigers Claw Commodores

LSU 49, VANDERBILT 7

The high-powered LSU Tigers, running on all cylinders, exploded for a 49-7 victory before a near-capacity crowd of 40,962 in Vanderbilt Stadium.

The talented Tigers rolled up 593 yards of offense, split nearly evenly with 295 rushing and 298 passing. Senior quarterback Jeff Wickersham was marvelous, completing 22 of 37 passes for 262 yards. Garry James showed off his all-purpose talents, rushing for 63 yards and three touchdowns in addition to six pass receptions good for 77 yards.

The LSU defense also played well, forcing five turnovers while limiting the Commodores to 298 yards of offense. The lone bright spot for Vanderbilt came on an 84-yard touchdown drive, capped by a six-yard run by Everett Crawford.



LSU	21	7	14	7—49
VANDERBILT	0	0	0	7—7

LSU—Jefferson 26 interception return (Lewis kick). LSU—Hilliard 8 run (Lewis kick). LSU—James 2 run (Lewis kick). LSU—James 1 run (Lewis kick). LSU—Martin 37 run (Lewis kick). LSU—James 1 run (Lewis kick). LSU—Martin 10 pass from Powell (Lewis kick). VU—Crawford 6 run (Herline kick).

Vanderbilt and Georgia Battle to Tie

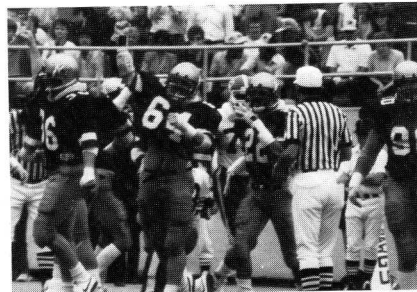
VANDERBILT 13, GEORGIA 13

In a result which satisfied neither team, Vanderbilt and Georgia fought to a 13-13 deadlock before a Vanderbilt Stadium Homecoming crowd of 41,137.

Under ordinary circumstances, the Commodores might have been happy to salvage a tie against the heavily favored Bulldogs. But a tremendous effort by Vanderbilt came up just short as a 44-yard Alan Herline field goal attempt was barely wide right on the game's final play.

Georgia had forged a 13-10 halftime lead on the strength of a James Jackson seven-yard run and a pair of Steve Crumley field goals, offsetting a 12-yard TD run by Carl Woods and a Herline field goal.

Herline tallied the game's final points with a 46-yard boot in the third quarter, setting the stage for the game's remaining defensive struggle. Vanderbilt's last gasp, near winning effort was set up by a Kermit Sykes interception on the Commodore 24. Tim Richardson, saddled with no times out remaining, skillfully maneuvered his team to the Georgia 27 yard line in the game's final 1:19.



GEORGIA	3	10	0	0—13
VANDERBILT	3	7	3	0—13

VU—Herline 18 FG. UG—Crumley 45 FG. UG—Crumley 43 FG. VU—Woods 12 run (Herline kick). UG—Jackson 7 run (Crumley kick). VU—Herline 46 FG.

Rebels Ramble to Homecoming Quest

OLE MISS 35, VANDERBILT 7

Ole Miss, led by senior field general Kent Austin, rallied around the Homecoming flag for a 35-7 triumph before 35,500 fans in Oxford's Vaught-Hemingway Stadium.

Austin completed 18 of 26 passes for 236 yards and three touchdowns in leading the Rebs to their victory charge. Standout wide receiver J. R. Ambrose caught six of those aeriels, good for 123 yards and two scores.

The Mississippi defense held Vanderbilt to 31 yards rushing. The Rebs also forced three turnovers and sacked the quarterback six times — twice for safeties.

The encouraging point for Vanderbilt was the play of Tim Richardson. Despite constant harrassment, the rookie quarterback completed 17 of 32 passes for 304 yards, including a 65-yard scoring strike to Tony Pearcey.



VANDERBILT	0	0	7	0—7
MISSISSIPPI	14	7	14	0—35

UM—Wonsley 2 run (Owen kick). UM—Holder 15 pass from Austin (Owen kick). UM—Ambrose 16 pass from Austin (Owen kick). UM—Safety, Richardson tackled in end zone by Morris. UM—Ambrose 62 pass from Austin (Owen kick). UM—Owen 50 FG. VU—Pearcey 65 pass from Richardson (Herline kick). UM—Safety, Richardson tackled in end zone by Reed.

Crawford, Gromos Shine in Win

VANDERBILT 31, KENTUCKY 24

Everett Crawford eclipsed the century mark in both rushing and receiving and John Gromos played his best game of the season as Vanderbilt defeated Kentucky, 31-24, before an enthusiastic home crowd of 41,076 fans.

Crawford ran the ball 19 times for 113 yards, caught nine passes for 119 yards, and scored two touchdowns. Crawford earned SEC Player of the Week honors for his stellar performance. Gromos, meanwhile, completed 20 of 28 passes for 246 yards and three scores.

After spotting Kentucky a 7-0 advantage, Vanderbilt roared back to lead 24-13 at halftime on the strength of three Gromos touchdown passes, one each to Tony Pearcey, Boo Mitchell, and Crawford. The exciting Crawford zipped 66 yards on a short pass play in the second quarter and scampered nine yards for a touchdown to put the game out of reach in the third period.

Kentucky battled back in the fourth quarter with 11 unanswered points, but the Commodore defense held on in the game's final possession.



KENTUCKY	7	6	0	11—24
VANDERBILT	10	14	7	0—31

UK—Higgs 2 run (Worley kick). VU—Herline 44 FG. VU—Pearcey 15 pass from Gromos (Herline kick). UK—Worley 32 FG. VU—Mitchell 11 pass from Gromos (Herline kick). VU—Crawford 66 pass from Gromos (Herline kick). UK—Worley 33 FG. VU—Crawford 9 run. UK—Worley 32 FG. UK—Lucas 4 pass from Ransdell (Burbage pass from Ransdell).

Tech Takes Offensive Showdown

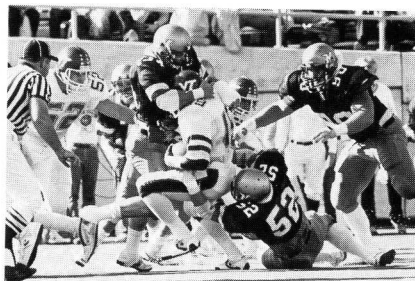
VIRGINIA TECH 38, VANDERBILT 24

In the wildest offensive afternoon of the season, Virginia Tech outscored Vanderbilt 38-24 in front of a crowd of 35,286 Vanderbilt Stadium fans.

A total of 62 points and almost 900 yards of offense were packed into the game and the verdict was not decided until the fourth quarter. Virginia Tech's running game eventually proved to be the difference. The Hokies rushed for 362 yards and controlled the ball for 38 minutes. Quarterback Mark Cox passed for 169 yards and one touchdown while running for two more scores.

For Vanderbilt, John Gromos threw for 316 yards and two touchdowns on the strength of a 23 for 37 afternoon. Carl Parker caught seven of those passes for 133 yards, including an 82-yard play which ranks as the third longest pass play in Vanderbilt history.

The fans got into the act at halftime. Vanderbilt established an official *Guinness Book of World Records* entry for "World's Largest Kazoo Band." Shoney's and Captain D's Restaurants sponsored the kazoos, which were given to every person who entered the stadium. Renowned country music stars The Oak Ridge Boys were on hand to help lead the festivities.



VIRGINIA TECH	7	17	7	7—38
VANDERBILT	0	7	10	7—24

VT—Cox 8 run (Kinzer kick). VT—Williams 3 run (Kinzer kick). VU—Woods 10 run (Herline kick). VT—Cox 1 run (Kinzer kick). VT—Kinzer 39 FG. VU—Pearcey 12 pass from Gromos (Herline kick). VT—Jones 27 pass from Cox (Kinzer kick). VU—Herline 47 FG. VU—Parker 82 pass from Gromos (Herline kick). VT—Jones 32 run (Kinzer kick).

Tennessee Blanks VU, Grabs Title

TENNESSEE 30, VANDERBILT 0

Tennessee won its first Southeastern Conference championship since 1969 by defeating Vanderbilt, 30-0, in front of 97,372 Neyland Stadium partisans.

The Volunteers were in control all the way, piling up a 27-0 bulge by halftime. Daryl Dickey completed 22 of 32 passes for 299 yards and three touchdowns. Carlos Reveiz added three field goals to round out the Volunteer scoring.

Tennessee's defense also enjoyed a fine afternoon. Vanderbilt suffered its first shutout since 1980. It was also the first whitewash since Vandy's pass-oriented offense was installed in 1981.

Although Vanderbilt did not score, Carl Woods had his best game of the season. The junior from Gallatin ran for 127 yards on 16 carries, including a 65-yard run in the first quarter which carried to the Vol 15-yard line. The Tennessee defense stiffened, however, and Vanderbilt missed a field goal.



VANDERBILT	0	0	0	0—0
TENNESSEE	10	17	3	0—30

UT—McGee 5 pass from Dickey (Reveiz kick). UT—Reveiz 23 FG. UT—Swanson 43 pass from Dickey (Reveiz kick). UT—Swanson 24 pass from Dickey (Reveiz kick). UT—Reveiz 29 FG. UT—Reveiz 24 FG.

Richardson Leads Black Triumph

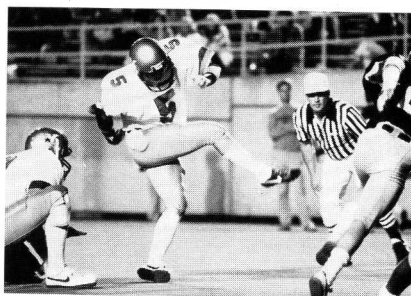
BLACK 27, GOLD 13

Quarterback Tim Richardson completed 14 of 23 passes for 199 yards and two touchdowns as the Black team defeated the Gold, 27-13, in the annual intrasquad game last April.

Richardson connected with Carl Parker and Carl Woods on scoring passes of 7 and 26 yards, respectively. Alan Herline booted field goals of 39 and 49 yards and the Black win was capped with a five-yard touchdown run by guard Daryl Holt on the old "Nebraska play" — the quarterback leaving the ball behind the center for the guard to pick up and run.

Gold quarterback John Gromos led all rushers with 54 yards and tossed a touchdown pass to Everett Crawford. Eric Jones also had his moments for the Gold, connecting on a 20-yard touchdown pass to Tom Fitz and electrifying the crowd with a nifty 35-yard run.

A nice crowd of 16,325 was on hand to greet new coach Watson Brown, who watched the game from the press box and provided color commentary on the Commodore Radio Network. A milestone for the Vanderbilt football program is the return of Nashville radio station WLAC-AM, a 50,000-watt station which reaches most of the eastern United States in addition to parts of Mexico and Canada.



BLACK	0	10	7	10—27
GOLD	0	6	7	0—13

BLACK—Parker 7 pass from Richardson (Herline kick). GOLD—Crawford 1 pass from Gromos (kick failed). BLACK—Herline 39 FG. GOLD—Fitz 20 pass from Jones (Clark kick). BLACK—Woods 26 pass from Richardson (Herline kick). BLACK—Herline 29 FG. BLACK—Holt 5 run (Herline kick).