

1988 In Review

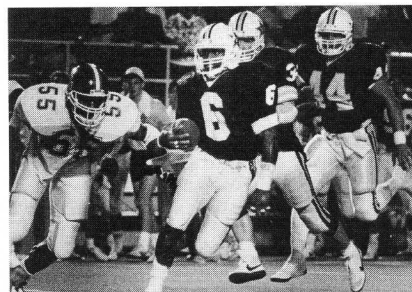
Defensive Stands Preserve Victory

VANDERBILT 24, MISSISSIPPI STATE 20

Two fourth quarter touchdown passes to Boo Mitchell and a pair of defensive stands within the 20-yard line in the final three minutes were the keys to victory as Vanderbilt defeated Mississippi State, 24-20, in the season opener in front of a Vanderbilt Stadium crowd of 41,365.

Trailing 13-10 entering the final quarter, Mitchell put the Commodores on top with a 48-yard touchdown reception from Eric Jones. Minutes later Mitchell tallied the winning touchdown on a 50-yard scoring strike from John Gromos. Jones had been shaken up on the preceding play and Gromos fired the game-winner on his only play of the game.

The victory was preserved by two late defensive stands. With 2:32 remaining and the Bulldogs faced with fourth-and-one from the Commodore eight yard line, DeMond Winston teamed with Kenny Pulce to stop a dive over the middle, forcing State to give up the ball on downs. With less than a minute to go the Bulldogs moved to the Commodore seven, but a quarterback sack and three incomplections blunted the visitors' final penetration.



MISS. STATE	7	0	6	7-20
VANDERBILT	0	10	0	14-24

MSU — Underwood 1 run (Logan kick). VU — Gaines 3 run (Clark kick). VU — Clark 31 FG. MSU — Logan 42 FG. MSU — Logan 24 FG. VU — Mitchell 48 pass from Jones (Clark kick). MSU — Anderson 4 pass from Davis (Logan kick). VU — Mitchell 50 pass from Gromos (Clark kick).

Commodores Win Wild Shootout

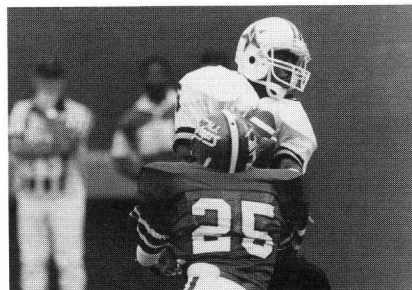
VANDERBILT 31, RUTGERS 30

In what ranked as the wildest offensive shootout of the season, Vanderbilt outlasted Rutgers, 31-30, as 23,477 looked on in Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N. J.

The teams combined to compile 61 points, 56 first downs, and 1,111 yards total offense. Quarterback Eric Jones led the way for the Commodores. Jones completed 18 of 30 passes for 233 yards and one touchdown. Boo Mitchell caught seven of those passes for 104 yards. Jones also rushed for 73 yards and two scores.

Meanwhile, Rutgers quarterback Scott Erney lit up the scoreboard with 35 of 55 passing for 436 yards. Eric Young paced the Scarlet Knights with 13 receptions for 171 yards.

Ironically, however, it was the defense which turned in the late game heroics for the Commodores. With the eventual final score already on the board, Vanderbilt claimed an interception and made two defensive stands which forced missed field goals of 51 and 59 yards.



VANDERBILT	3	14	7	7-31
RUTGERS	7	13	7	3-30

VU — Clark 29 FG. RU — Cann 1 run (Sclafani kick). VU — McCarroll 1 run (Clark kick). RU — Giles 3 run (Sclafani kick). RU — Sclafani 35 FG. RU — Sclafani 21 FG. VU — Mitchell 6 pass from Jones (Clark kick). RU — Botti 24 pass from Erney (Sclafani kick). VU — Jones 33 run (Clark kick). VU — Jones 1 run (Clark kick). RU — Sclafani 49 FG.

Tide Rolls to Victory

ALABAMA 44, VANDERBILT 10

The Alabama Crimson Tide celebrated the re-opening of expanded and renovated Bryant-Denny Stadium by defeating Vanderbilt, 44-10, before a record stadium crowd of 70,123.

Quarterback Jeff Dunn and tailback Bobby Humphrey provided the offensive spark for the Tide. Dunn passed for 133 yards and one touchdown while Humphrey ran for 101 yards and two touchdowns in his final game as a collegian. Humphrey was hurt in the game and was lost for the season.

Eric Jones led the Commodore attack with 327 yards passing, including a 79-yard aerial to Rodney Barrett which ranks as the fourth longest pass play in school history. Boo Mitchell snared 10 receptions for 159 yards.

The yardage statistics were actually fairly close as the Tide edged the Commodores in total offense, 391-342. But Alabama broke the game open by forcing five turnovers, holding Vanderbilt to zero net yards rushing by jamming the line of scrimmage, and returning a punt for a touchdown.



VANDERBILT	3	7	0	0-10
ALABAMA	7	13	7	17-44

VU — Clark 43 FG. UA — Jelks 37 punt return (Doyle kick). UA — Humphrey 7 run (Doyle kick). UA — Doyle 49 FG. VU — Barrett 79 pass from Jones (Clark kick). UA — Doyle 39 FG. UA — Humphrey 1 run (Doyle kick). UA — Doyle 44 FG. UA — Cross 3 pass from Dunn (Doyle kick). UA — Hill 26 run (Doyle kick).

Duke Hangs on for Win

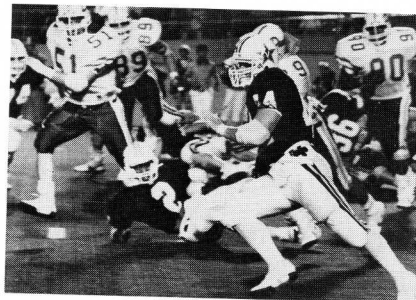
DUKE 17, VANDERBILT 15

The Duke Blue Devils converted a 44-yard field goal in the fourth quarter and survived a missed Vanderbilt field goal attempt in the closing seconds in defeating the Commodores, 17-15, before 39,372 fans in Vanderbilt Stadium.

The game was expected to be a wild scoring show, but a total of seven turnovers by the teams kept points off the board. Vanderbilt amassed 446 yards total offense. Eric Jones led the way with 257 yards passing and 66 rushing yards. Boo Mitchell had six receptions for 138 yards.

Duke passed most of the evening and quarterback Anthony Dilweg totaled 31 completions in 53 attempts, good for 349 yards. The Blue Devils finished with 419 yards total offense.

Duke's Doug Peterson nailed a 44-yard field goal attempt to shove his team on top, 17-15, with 3:47 left in the game. Vanderbilt took the kickoff and drove as far as the Duke 11, but the Commodores missed a 32-yard field goal with 10 seconds remaining.



DUKE	7	7	0	3-17
VANDERBILT	0	7	8	0-15

DU — Dilweg 1 run (Peterson kick). DU — Ewell 31 pass from Dilweg (Peterson kick). VU — Jones 3 run (Clark kick). VU — Safety, Malone tackles Rymiszewski in the end zone. VU — Gaines 3 run (pass failed). DU — Peterson 44 FG.

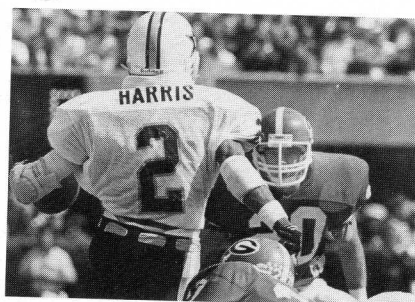
Worley Carries Bulldogs

GEORGIA 41, VANDERBILT 22

Tim Worley rushed for 161 yards and three touchdowns as Georgia defeated Vanderbilt, 41-22, as 81,104 looked on in Athens' Sanford Stadium in Vince Dooley's last game against the Commodores.

As was traditional for Dooley teams, a strong rushing attack and a defense which stiffened in the clutch carried the day for the home team. The Bulldogs ran for 302 yards, with Keith Henderson adding 73 yards to Worley's 161. Meanwhile, the Commodores penetrated the Bulldog 35-yard line on eight drives during the game but the Dogs allowed just 22 points.

Eric Jones led the Vanderbilt offense by rushing for 50 yards and completing 19 of 29 passes for 205 yards. Boo Mitchell eclipsed the 100-yard mark in receiving for the fifth straight game by catching 12 passes for 129 yards.



VANDERBILT	3	10	3	6-22
GEORGIA	3	14	7	17-41

VU — Clark 43 FG. UG — Kasay 43 FG. UG — Henderson 3 run (Kasay kick). VU — El Sheshai 1 pass from Jones (Clark kick). UG — Worley 12 run (Kasay kick). VU — Clark 31 FG. UG — Worley 1 run (Kasay kick). VU — Clark 41 FG. UG — Worley 8 run (Kasay kick). UG — Crumley 25 FG. VU — Jones 21 run (pass failed). UG — Ware 20 run (Kasay kick).

Commodore Defense Sparks Triumph

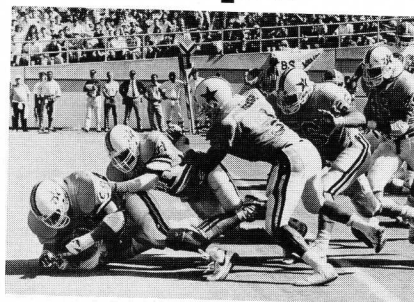
VANDERBILT 24, FLORIDA 9

The Vanderbilt defensive unit played its best game of the season as the Commodores defeated Florida, 24-9, before a Vanderbilt Stadium capacity crowd of 41,000.

The Commodores limited the Gators to just 275 offensive yards. The Vanderbilt defense also recovered a fumble, intercepted two passes, and made three sacks. Linebacker Billy Cunningham led the way with an interception, a sack, another tackle for loss, and one pass breakup.

The Vanderbilt offense also played steadily against one of the nation's top-ranked defenses. Eric Jones completed 16 of 30 passes for 171 yards. Boo Mitchell had his 100-yard streak stopped at five games, but still caught eight passes for 93 yards. Fullback Sean Guerin enjoyed his best game as a Commodore with 58 yards on 10 carries.

The game was even for three quarters as Vanderbilt nursed a 10-9 score into the fourth stanza. But Jones directed an 80-yard touchdown drive to give the Commodores some breathing room and Mark Johnson iced the victory with an 11-yard scoring jaunt with a minute remaining.



FLORIDA	0	0	6	3-9
VANDERBILT	0	7	3	14-24

VU — Gaines 1 run (Clark kick). UF — McClendon 2 run (kick missed). VU — Clark 31 FG. UF — Francis 40 FG. VU — Kosanovich 1 pass from Jones (Clark kick). VU — Johnson 11 run (Clark kick).

Rebels Rally in Fourth Quarter

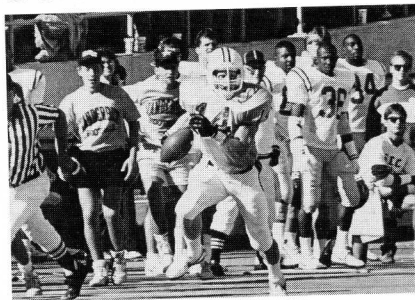
OLE MISS 36, VANDERBILT 28

The Ole Miss Rebels rallied for 22 points in the fourth quarter to post a 36-28 win before a Vanderbilt Stadium Homecoming crowd of 41,276.

Trailing 28-14 entering the final stanza, the Rebels struck for three touchdown passes and a field goal on their final four possessions. Quarterback Mark Young engineered the comeback and finished the day with 18 completions in 29 attempts for 273 yards and three touchdowns. Shawn Sykes led a capable rushing attack with 76 yards.

The Vanderbilt offense also had its moments. Eric Jones passed for 255 yards. Steve Kosanovich was the leading receiver with five catches for 59 yards. Mark Johnson had perhaps his best day as a Commodore, rushing for 67 yards and catching a touchdown pass.

Cornerback Steve Law was the top Commodore defender. Law intercepted a pass in the second quarter and, on the final play of the third quarter, picked off a fumble in the air and returned it 46 yards for a touchdown.



OLE MISS	0	14	0	22—36
VANDERBILT	6	0	22	0—28

VU — Clark 39 FG. VU — Clark 43 FG. UM — Mickles 1 run (Owen kick). UM — Coleman 30 pass from Young (Owen kick). VU — Johnson 34 pass from Jones (pass failed). VU — Jones 4 run (Kosanovich 4 pass from Jones). VU — Law 46 intercepted fumble return (Barrett pass from Jones). UM — Walls 3 pass from Darnell (Owen kick). UM — Coleman 27 pass from Young (kick failed). UM — Green 25 pass from Young (pass failed). UM — Owen 18 FG.

'Cats Nip Commodores

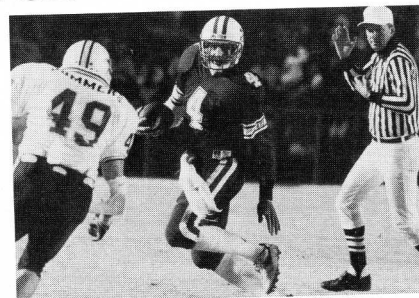
KENTUCKY 14, VANDERBILT 13

In a game marked by rain, gusting winds, and cold temperatures, the Kentucky Wildcats held off a late Vanderbilt charge and defeated the Commodores, 14-13, before an announced attendance of 44,105 in Lexington's Commonwealth Stadium.

The treacherous weather conditions placed a great premium on the running game. Kentucky picked up 230 yards on the ground, led by Glenn Fohr (65), Alfred Rawls (61), Ivy Joe Hunter (51), and Al Baker (45). Rawls and Baker each ran for a touchdown.

Despite the gusting winds, Eric Jones managed to complete 23 of 40 passes for 251 yards. Brett Hayes caught seven passes for 41 yards and Steve Kosanovich pulled down five, good for 50 yards.

Trailing 14-0 in the third quarter, the Commodores got their first score on a five-yard run by Sean Guerin. Jones hit Andy McCarroll with a five-yard touchdown pass with 32 seconds remaining in the game, but the two-point conversion pass failed. Vanderbilt recovered an on-sides kick and moved to the Kentucky 30, but Johnny Clark's 47-yard field goal attempt never had a chance in the teeth of the strong wind.



VANDERBILT	0	0	7	6—13
KENTUCKY	0	7	7	0—14

UK — Baker 3 run (Willis kick). UK — Rawls 7 run (Willis kick). VU — Guerin 5 run (Clark kick). VU — McCarroll 5 pass from Jones (pass failed).

Army Marches to Victory

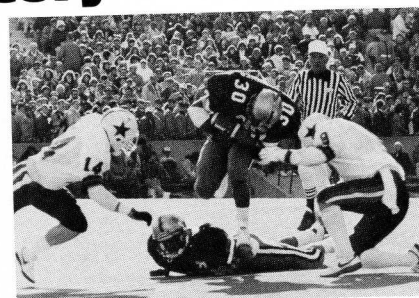
ARMY 24, VANDERBILT 19

The United States Military Academy used a steady rushing attack to grind out a 24-19 victory over Vanderbilt on a beautiful, sunny day as 40,339 watched at Michie Stadium in West Point, N. Y.

Army struck first with a touchdown on its first possession, but the lead changed hands four times during the game. The Cadets tallied their game-winning score with a 63-yard drive, capped by a two-yard run by quarterback Bryan McWilliams, with 1:28 remaining in the game.

With the wily McWilliams at the controls of the wishbone, Army rushed for 303 yards. McWilliams gained 145 yards and scored two touchdowns. Mike Mayweather rushed for 77 yards and Ben Barnett scooted for 45.

The Commodore passing game made a fine showing as Eric Jones completed 23 of 37 passes for 287 yards and two touchdowns. Boo Mitchell caught both touchdown passes and finished the game with 11 receptions for 167 yards. Mitchell also broke the SEC career pass receiving yardage record during this game.



VANDERBILT	7	3	6	3—19
ARMY	7	7	3	7—24

USMA — McWilliams 34 run (Walker kick). VU — Mitchell 12 pass from Jones (Clark kick). VU — Clark 24 FG. USMA — Mayweather 1 run (Walker kick). USMA — Walker 46 FG. VU — Mitchell 21 pass from Jones (run failed). VU — Clark 21 FG. USMA — McWilliams 2 run (Walker kick).

Tigers Splash to Victory

MEMPHIS STATE 28, VANDERBILT 9

In what must rank as one of the wettest games in Vanderbilt history, the Memphis State Tigers slogged through a torrential rainstorm to defeat Vanderbilt, 28-9, in front of 10,051 fans in Memphis' Liberty Bowl Stadium.

As is usually the case when there are poor field conditions, the team with the better running game carries the day and this game was no different. The Tigers piled up 222 yards rushing against 115 for the Commodores.

Running back Marvin Cox paced the Tiger attack with 103 yards and a touchdown on just 16 carries. Quarterback Rusty Trail also had a good day, rushing for 47 yards and one touchdown while completing 12 of 21 passes for 159 yards and another score.

Top Vanderbilt performances included five receptions for 65 yards by Boo Mitchell and 44 yards rushing by freshman Anthony Carter. The Commodore touchdown was a five-yard pass from Eric Jones to Rodney Barrett.



VANDERBILT	3	6	0	0-9
MEMPHIS STATE	7	7	0	14-28

MSU — Cox 2 run (Butler kick). VU — Clark 32 FG. MSU — Craft 32 pass from Trail (Butler kick). VU — Barrett 5 pass from Jones (kick failed). MSU — Young 62 interception return (Butler kick). MSU — Trail 6 run (Butler kick).

Volunteers Take Intrastate Finale

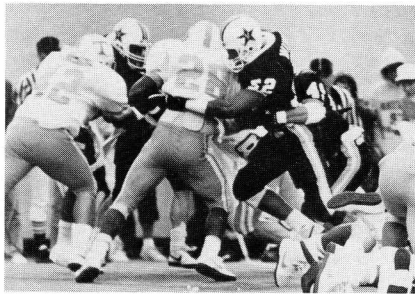
TENNESSEE 14, VANDERBILT 7

The Tennessee Volunteers claimed victory in the annual intrastate regular season finale by defeating Vanderbilt, 14-7, before an overflow crowd of 41,404 in Vanderbilt Stadium.

The dominating force of the game was neither Tennessee nor Vanderbilt, but instead a very strong wind which gusted up to 35 miles per hour for most of the game. Passing into the wind was difficult and kicking into the wind was almost impossible. The teams managed to move the ball well, but scoring points was another matter. Turnovers combined with the treacherous winds to deny many scoring opportunities.

Eric Jones' final game as a Commodore saw him complete 23 of 39 passes for 272 yards and a touchdown. Boo Mitchell, holder of the SEC career receiving yardage record, also went out in fine style with nine catches for 140 yards.

Tennessee's Keith Davis was the rushing star of the game with 162 yards on 25 carries. Quarterback Jeff Francis completed 17 of 25 passes for 169 yards.



TENNESSEE	0	6	8	0-14
VANDERBILT	0	7	0	0-7

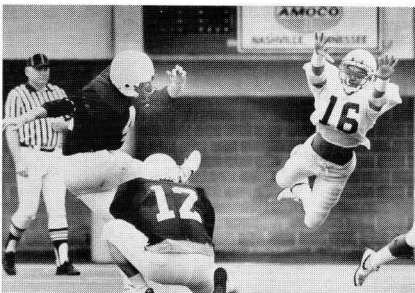
UT — Amsler 2 run (kick failed). VU — Pearcey 5 pass from Jones (Clark kick). UT — Davis 5 run (run failed). UT — Safety, VU center snap out of end zone.

Brown Pleased With Spring

Vanderbilt head coach Watson Brown was pleased with his team's work during 1989 spring practice and looked forward to the fall season following the final scrimmage of spring drills.

Quarterback John Gromos highlighted the scrimmage by completing 21 of 32 passes for 286 yards and two touchdowns. Gromos' young receiving corps was led by Clarence Sevillian (six receptions, 78 yards), Kerry Clem (5-65), Derrick Payne (5-55), and Corey Harris (4-74, two touchdowns). The diminutive Payne also led all rushers with 78 yards and a touchdown among his 11 carries. In addition, Payne returned five punts for 144 yards, including a 57-yard scamper for a score.

The Commodore defense, which dominated the early phases of spring practice, also had some moments in the final scrimmage. Freshman Eric Bentley picked off a pass and returned it 54 yards for a touchdown. Derrick Sartor recorded a safety on a quarterback sack.



Payne 57 punt return (Clark kick). Bentley 54 interception return (Chura kick). Thomas 5 run (Clark kick). Harris 36 pass from Gromos (Clark kick). Payne 13 run (Chura kick). Harris 3 pass from Gromos (Owen kick). Safety, Sartor tackles Nomborg in the end zone. Clark 37 FG. Thomas 4 run (Chura kick).