

End of the Tournament

The integration of Tennessee high school basketball would effectively exclude the state from the tournament and Nashville as the host site. A new venue for the national tournament was found at Alabama State College in Montgomery. The NHSAA membership was down to seven states in 1965, and the future of the tournament was the main topic of the group's annual meeting. Some of the delegates from states close to integration voiced the opinion that the tournament should not continue, but in the end the membership voted for the tournament's continuation. The following year, however, the NHSAA lost another member when the Arkansas black schools merged with the white schools. Only eight southern states still had dual systems for white and black schools, and of those Louisiana and Texas were no longer participating in the tournament. Again at the annual meeting, the NHSAA had to deal with the tournament's future, and Charles Herbert Thompson said the delegates came to the conclusion that "until all vestiges of segregation were erased, the NHSAA felt it had a definite purpose to serve."⁵²

The 1966 championship saw only eight schools representing six states competing for the national title. When South Carolina withdrew in 1967, membership was down to five states. The NIHSBT, again held on the campus of Alabama State College, consisted of only six teams, the lowest total ever. Before the 1968 tournament was scheduled, the president of the NHSAA, C. T. Smiley, requested that each eligible state association make known by February 1, 1968, whether or not they planned to attend the national tournament. After Florida, Alabama, and Georgia, however, merged their black state associations with the white associations, membership was down to two, Mississippi and Virginia, and the NHSAA reluctantly canceled the 1968 tournament.⁵³

The executive committee of the National High School Athletic Association made the decision that the end had come, and on June 16 convened and in what Charles Herbert Thompson said was "probably a solemn occasion" agreed unanimously to dissolve the organization. While integration indicated progress in the country, the downside was that many black institutions, such as the National Interscholastic Basketball Tournament (and all its permutations), born of segregation, were forced out of existence. The great legacy of the tournament is that it was a wonderful athletic event for African American students, educators, and public, who, while kept out of the mainstream of the high school sport world, created their own sports institutions, which they could look on with great pride and with sense of accomplishment and fulfillment.⁵⁴

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The Black Heart of Dixie

The Turkey Day Classic and Race in Twentieth-Century Alabama

Thomas Aiello

Robert Russa Moton, the president of Tuskegee Institute, and J. Council Trenholm, president of Alabama State Normal School, didn't like each other very much. They had very different ideas about education, about civil rights, about everything. But they were, despite their differences, allies in both education and civil rights. Racism gave them little choice. And so in 1924 they formalized an athletic rivalry between their two schools by creating an annual neutral-site game that would celebrate black Montgomery and black education in Alabama.¹ The two schools' football teams had been playing each other since 1901, but now they would be playing the first game that became known as a "classic."

Classics between historically black colleges were more than just annual football games between rivals. They included parades, dances, and alumni gatherings. By the late twentieth century, they included job fairs and other contests between groups of competing students. The most influential of these early classics pitted Howard University and Lincoln University, which drew coverage from the black press throughout the country, serving as a touchstone for the race to demonstrate athletic and academic success. Classics were events. They were happenings. And they served as a staging ground for politics, culture, and class in the communities they represented.²

The 1924 Alabama classic game was contested between the two most prominent teams in the state—one the home of the Tuskegee Machine, the other a liberal facilitator of civil rights activism. Thus, the game's dynamics mirrored the various divisions in black life. One university was urban, one rural. One was largely absent the hardened conservative hierarchy that often dominated black colleges in the twentieth century, the other was not. The Classic then served not only as a center of Alabama's black sports, but also as a theater for the debates of black fans who

supported them. Despite the tumult of Jim Crow and the long civil rights movement in Alabama, there was always the game.

That game was the nation's oldest continuously played black college "classic," but the rivalry between the two schools had its genesis in the post-Reconstruction nineteenth century, well before either attempted to field a football team.

In fall 1886, tensions were high in Marion, Alabama, between the local black public college, Lincoln Normal School, and the local white Baptist one, Howard College. That semester, a group of more than twenty Howard students surrounded a Lincoln student after he refused to leave the sidewalk and allow his white counterparts to pass. The Baptists began beating their Lincoln counterpart, but the Lincoln student was able to fight back, defending himself and escaping before any more harm could be done. The incident gave Howard trustees leverage in their continued effort to have Lincoln removed from Marion, if not all together destroyed. "This question of self-defense must be settled and the sooner the better," wrote William B. Paterson, the normal school's white president, in a letter to Tuskegee's Booker T. Washington. "An educated man will not and can not take the abuse that an ignorant one will."³

Washington, for his part, supported Paterson with full throat in the school's battle with Howard. But he wouldn't go much farther than that. The incident convinced local Marion whites that the black school needed to leave, and so Paterson began scouting locations and lobbying the Alabama legislature for a change of venue. Ultimately, the choice would come down to Birmingham or Montgomery. Washington did everything he could at that time to lobby against Lincoln's relocation to Montgomery. That was, he argued, Tuskegee's sphere of influence. He didn't want any further competition. The school should move to Birmingham. "My object," he argued as early as February 1887, "is to prevent the Marion school from being located here."⁴

Later that month, on February 25, 1887, the legislature approved two measures that would grow the rivalry between the two schools. The first chartered Alabama Colored People's University from the ashes of Lincoln Normal and appointed a board of trustees to relocate the school from Marion. The second gave the Tuskegee board of trustees the power to purchase land for school use, thus removing a modicum of power from state commissioners and putting it in the hands of Tuskegee itself. On that day, February 25, the state legislature laid the foundation for modernizing its black colleges, while simultaneously giving birth to the modern versions of Tuskegee and what would become Alabama State University.⁵

It also created a legitimate rivalry between the two schools, re-founded (as it were) on the same day. Washington continued to make the argument over the coming months that Tuskegee's reach extended less than forty miles away to Montgomery, corresponding regularly with influential friends in the capital to

convince them of that fact.⁶ Paterson, meanwhile, also had an interest in the final location of his Marion school. "The whites of Bgham," he told Washington, "are at work to get a Baptist College there and will probably oppose the Colored."⁷ It was a not subtle warning to his friend and colleague. We might be coming to Montgomery against our will.

In July 1887, the Baptist leadership of Marion announced that Howard College would be leaving for a larger city. Though the school produced no formal plan, it was clear to most that Birmingham wanted the school, and that the feeling was mutual. The location became official later that week, allowing the white Baptists of Birmingham to argue against locating the black state college near the school that originally caused so many problems. With the white Marion school coming to Birmingham, the black Marion school was coming to Montgomery. It was coming to Tuskegee's backyard.⁸

Washington, for his part, would remain close to Paterson after the conflict. Such was the nature of black college life in the Heart of Dixie. There was a healthy nineteenth-century rivalry between Tuskegee, Lincoln, Talladega, and Alabama A&M, but the schools remained allies and coalesced around one another when threatened by the creeping hoard of white supremacy.⁹ Still, the ordeal hurt Washington's pride, and his paranoia would ensure that the Tuskegee leader would keep Paterson at arm's length. And his friends knew it. "I may some times seem to be with Paterson," wrote Cornelius Nathaniel Dorsette, the most prominent black doctor in Gilded Age Alabama, "but never fear its only to keep posted and to be prepared to work for Tuskegee and unless I loose my grasp on this people, you shall always have the major part of its pupils." William Jenkins, a member of the Tuskegee faculty, reported to Washington after visiting Alabama State that it was one of "the most miserable excuses I have ever witnessed." Paterson, for his part, "occupied most of the time in his usual style of braggadocio and mean insinuations."¹⁰ Years before the schools began playing football, the rivalry was on.

Throughout the early 1890s, the schools jockeyed for influence with the legislature, mainly to receive the largest possible shares of the state's meager resources for black education. There was predictable politicking, glad-handing, and the common backstabbing that comes with competition for state funds. Tuskegee had the benefit of longevity at its current location and the growing fame of Washington. Alabama State had the benefit of a location near the capitol and a white president.¹¹ In 1897, the rift grew greater, when one of Tuskegee's white board members attacked Paterson and Alabama State for hiring white teachers along with black teachers, thus encouraging an illegal "social equality." A frustrated Paterson wrote to Washington that "I believe the desire to have peace and good-will between our Schools is mutual," but that he was not above a fight.¹² And so, in the wake of Washington's 1895 Cotton States Exhibition address, the white head of Alabama

State was arguing for the validity of social equality with the black head of Tuskegee. The foundation of the rift between the two schools would continue along those same poles for decades.

For the student bodies, however, such bureaucratic bickerings were angels dancing on the heads of pins. The advantage for the students, as of 1893, redounded to Tuskegee, because in 1893, under the leadership of Coach Clarence Matthews, Tuskegee fielded its first football team. Of course, the team itself was a tenuous thing. Matthews wasn't just Tuskegee's coach. He was also a freshman student who had just arrived on campus. He would serve as coach until his graduation in 1897.¹³

The team played its first collegiate game in January 1894 against Atlanta University. Tuskegee lost in a shutout. It lost in a shutout in 1895. And in 1897. And in 1899. That fourth shutout loss was significant, however, because for the first time, Atlanta came to Tuskegee. "We are about [to] introduce a new feature in the social and Athletic side of Tuskegee," James Washington wrote to his brother Booker, "and I must write you for your support, both financially and morally. On the 15th of December we are to engage Atlanta University on our grounds in a game of foot ball, and of course we need co-operation from you." Sponsoring a game was something different from simply traveling to play one. "I hope to impress those Atlanta folks as to how to be received and treated, a point which all who have visited there will say, they are weak on. We are aiming to make their trip here, one of pleasure, also profitable, in fact it is intended to make the day a gala one."¹⁴

And so Tuskegee had its first experience with the gala event that is an annual college football rivalry. The team lost again in 1900, but for the first time, Tuskegee scored points. And so, prior to 1901, Tuskegee was 0-5, with all of its losses to Atlanta University. It was clear to then-coach Charles Winter Wood that the team needed an easier opponent. And so, in 1901, Tuskegee did for its local rival what more established Atlanta had done for it—it gave Alabama State a chance to play. State was still catching up to Tuskegee and only recently had created a football team. Its 1901 game would be its first. But even though its rival began a football program in 1893, Tuskegee had only played five collegiate games of its own; it had only hosted one previous contest; and it had only scored twelve meager points.¹⁵

Despite that lack of success, there is something to be said for experience. The Montgomery upstarts were no match for the Golden Tigers. They lost 37 to 0.¹⁶

That first game, however, would be played under a shadow that would reach through most of their twentieth-century games. That November, as the teams took the field, Alabama was writing, approving, and ratifying a new state constitution that would almost uniformly disenfranchise black voters in the state. It included a poll tax, a literacy test, and, perhaps most importantly, a "descendants" clause that served to exempt white voters from undergoing such rigorous tests for voting. While the local school was winning its first collegiate football game, the white *Tuskegee News*

was urging ratification. "If the intelligent and worthy negro could only realize the wonderful blessings which the new constitution brings them they would all vote for ratification," a typical editorial surmised. But "if the new Constitution should fail of ratification it will be solely because of the indifference of the white men who in all the battles for right, heretofore have borne the brunt of the struggle."¹⁷

Such was the racial climate in Alabama, ensuring that though there was a legitimate tension between the administrations of the two schools, and though their athletic rivalry would grow to match those bureaucratic tensions, they would often remain allies in the face of the racism that surrounded them. Still, the differences between Paterson and Washington as to what constituted "social equality" and the best means of achieving it were real, and in a climate of heightened racial tensions, those differences would exacerbate the sense of rivalry between the schools, particularly in sports like football.

The next season, 1902, with the new constitution ratified and the black vote all but eliminated in Alabama, Tuskegee and State played again. State lost 85-0. Alabama State didn't field a team in 1903, but in 1904, they played Tuskegee again. Again it was the only game on their schedule. Again they lost, this time 65-0.¹⁸

Less than a month prior to the 1904 game, on October 23, a bombshell article appeared in the *New York World* roundly criticizing Washington and Tuskegee and using Paterson and Alabama State as its counterexample. "The Negro Normal and Industrial School at Montgomery," the article claimed,

with a white man, W. B. Paterson, as President, had last year within 100 pupils as many as Tuskegee, with an income of \$13,000, compared to the stated income of \$71,933 and actual receipts of \$155,000 of the Washington school, yet it has never been said that the students of the former were not well equipped to take care of themselves.

The two schools illustrate the argument as to management for some time prominent, i.e., that the negro cannot manage successfully where great executive ability is required. If Paterson can do good work with \$13 a pupil, why does it take \$155 for Washington?¹⁹

The article's race baiting was an annoyance, but nothing that black leaders like Booker Washington weren't already accustomed to. What rankled Washington was the assumption of equivalency between Tuskegee and State, and the notion that he was doing far less for students with far more resources. The opinions could be brushed away, but the numbers were correct. The rivalry between the two schools continued to grow more significant as the stakes continued to rise. It was surely little consolation to Washington that his football team had trounced its rival 187-0 over the preceding four seasons, but advocates of the schools understood football scores far more than they did line-item budget projections and cost-per-student descriptions.

The numbers were simply clearer (and more readily available) in football. Tuskegee continued to dominate the series in the coming years, but it was evident that Alabama State was improving. The team lost to both Tuskegee and Talladega in 1905, but its loss to Tuskegee in 1906 was coupled with a tie with Talladega. In 1907, State again lost to Tuskegee, but it managed to beat Talladega twice. In 1908, the Montgomery squad defeated Talladega, Atlanta, and Florida Normal and Industrial, again only losing to Tuskegee. Finally, in 1909, Alabama State had defeated everyone on its schedule when it again met Tuskegee on December 3 in Montgomery. The years of frustration faded in a defensive struggle that allowed a single safety to win the game. Under the leadership of Coach John Hope, Alabama State defeated Tuskegee 2-0.²⁰

The win would be an anomaly in the early years of the rivalry, with Alabama State only winning one other contest in the next twenty-four years, a 13-0 victory in 1915. But 1915 would be more important to the schools for another reason. That year, both Booker T. Washington and William B. Paterson passed away. The relationship of the two had improved in their later years. Washington, for example, used his influence with Andrew Carnegie to help Paterson secure funds for a campus library in 1909.²¹ Their schools, however, had become entangled with the identities of their leaders and had grown in relation to the state of their rivalry. That being the case, rivalry would be one of the principal legacies that continued after their deaths.

In the years after 1915, Tuskegee not only returned to its winning ways, but it dominated Alabama State, leading by large margins in games that were not very competitive. Importantly, however, people still came to watch. It was a popular game, and white sports promoters in Montgomery realized that there was money to be made. Chief among them were sporting goods salesman Cliff Green and his friend Fred J. Cramton, the owner of a local lumber business.

Cramton, born in 1868 in Michigan, moved after his high school graduation from his hometown of Hadley, Michigan, to Montgomery, Alabama, where he worked as a wood planer in a local excelsior mill. He wasn't a man of means when he arrived, but he worked hard and took advantage of opportunities along the way. He married an Alabama girl, Abbie, and together, in 1901, they had a daughter, Hazel. During that first decade of the twentieth century, Cramton was able to parlay his success and connections into the creation of his own firm, and the lumber company would only grow in the years to come. By 1921, Cramton had moved his family to the exclusive Cloverdale neighborhood of Montgomery. He and Abbie toured Europe together.²² Both, however, would return in time to witness the grand opening of the side project that had occupied Cramton through much of the late 1910s.

That project had begun when Cramton donated a landfill he owned to the city of Montgomery for the construction of a baseball park. It was the kind of

civic donation that helped grow many of the metropolitan areas in the Sunbelt, affluent businessmen growing their bottom lines by growing the infrastructure and capabilities of their cities. Cramton worked with the city to develop the stadium, but after a series of bureaucratic handwringings, Montgomery gave the land back, deciding that the project was too ambitious and expensive. A frustrated Cramton, in turn, decided to build the stadium himself. He worked with the local Jaycees to raise \$33,000. He already had access to lumber. By 1922, the new venue was able to host its first event, a college baseball game between Auburn and Vanderbilt.²³

Cliff Green, like Cramton, came from relatively humble beginnings. Born in Atlanta in 1882, Green came to Montgomery to become a clerk in a sporting goods store. He married into a wealthy family, however, and he and his wife Wilsie promptly moved in with her widowed father, William A. May, and his black servant, Rachel Bradley. In the early 1910s, however, Green rose quickly, probably with May's money, to own his own sporting goods store. With the exception of military service in World War I, nothing interrupted his rise to local prominence. By 1920, Green had his own home, he had four daughters, and he had his own black servant, Julia Robinson.²⁴

Green, like Cramton, had a vested interest in the development of sports in Montgomery. He sold sporting goods, Cramton owned the stadium that quickly became known as Cramton Bowl, and the occasional collegiate baseball game would not be enough to provide an adequate return on Cramton's investment and create a culture of sports to fuel Green's business. And so the two worked to find other games for the new venue.

There was, of course, a clear racial line in Jim Crow Montgomery, and wealthy business leaders were a part of it. Montgomery was a segregated city, the capital of a stifflingly racist state. Neither Cramton nor Green was a pioneer in racial cooperation and equality. Both were part of the class of high-ranking whites that supported the apartheid system that dominated Alabama. At the same time, however, both were sports fans with a vested financial interest in well-attended events at Cramton Bowl. And so they looked to the two local rivals, both with strong black fan bases who attended games even when the contests were not close.

For their part, both Tuskegee and Alabama State also had an interest in creating an annual neutral-site game. They understood that by playing the game at a neutral site, they could generate fan interest, thereby increasing revenues. Tuskegee was close enough to Montgomery to make the contest fair for both teams, and with much of the alumni base of the schools largely remaining in the area after graduation, it would serve as a celebration and showcase of their alma maters in the heart of segregated, racist Dixie. The colleges signed with Cramton and Green in 1924, and the concept of the classic—an annual neutral-site contest accompanied by broader celebrations of both universities and their alumni—was born.²⁵

On November 15, 1924, 2,182 fans entered the new arena to see Tuskegee's Tigers take on the team still known in the 1920s as the Yellow Jackets. Alabama State was obviously an underdog, considering its history, but the team surprised everyone by taking the opening drive for a touchdown. That success, however, would prove an anomaly, and Tuskegee would simply overpower State for the rest of the game, ultimately winning 28–7. It was an outcome most fans expected. Under the leadership of second-year coach Cleveland L. "Cleve" Abbott, the Tigers would go on to win the championship of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and would be named the mythical Black College National Co-Champions, the first of six such titles in the following seven years.²⁶

That first game deemed a classic was neither called the Turkey Day Classic nor was it played on Thanksgiving, but it would establish a precedent for the years to come.²⁷ Writing the following year, Will Rogers described arriving at the Birmingham train station and being shocked by the number of black customers waiting for the train. "Well here is what it was," he explained in his own stammering, racist way.

"The entire Bent Haired population of Birmingham was going to Montgomery, Alabama, to a Football game. Tuskegee Institute was to play Alabama State Normal that afternoon, and they were going on the same train that I was. (Black, High Brown, Chocolate, dark bays, Low yellows, ashy, every shade in the world.) There wasn't nothing else but—"²⁸

The most immediate precedent, however, was the dominance of Tuskegee. That was the way the games had gone prior to the neutral-site classic; that was the way they would continue. Though Alabama State would manage two ties in 1927 and 1928, the team would win no games against the Tigers in the 1920s. The Hornets would win three in the 1930s and only one in the 1940s. Attendance had grown from the small crowd in 1924 to 13,257 fans in 1947. Though the rivalry was fierce in those years because of the proximity of the schools, it was by no means as prominent as many of the other budding "classic" games in black college football simply because of the lopsided nature of the contests. The game moved to Thanksgiving Day in 1928, for example, but until the 1950s, the game was known principally as the Dixie Classic. When fans of the 1930s and 1940s talked about the Turkey Day Classic, they were referring to the annual rivalry game between Atlanta schools Morris Brown and Clark University.²⁹

In the 1950s, however, the dynamic between Tuskegee and Alabama State would change. Cleve Abbott, who had seen so much success for the Tigers in the 1920s, was finishing his career. His last season would come in 1954, and it would not be a good one. Tuskegee had only three winning seasons in the 1950s. Their struggles, however, only strengthened the rivalry, because Alabama State finally had

a legitimate shot at winning. The Hornets won six games against the Tigers in the 1950s. From 1952 to 1955, they won four games in a row, a feat the school had never managed before.³⁰ The games in the 1950s, however, would take on a new hue less because of Alabama State's success, and more because of the civil rights maelstrom swirling around the games.

As the decade opened, the Supreme Court's decisions in *McLaurin v. Oklahoma* (1950) and *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950) ruled against segregation in American graduate schools and law schools. Four years later, the Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision would cite both of those cases in ruling against segregation in primary and secondary public education. In May of the following year, the Court demanded compliance in *Brown II* (1955). The system that had sustained the white South since well before the Turkey Day rivalry began—and the system, to be fair, that had created the conditions for the existence of both Alabama State and Tuskegee—was crumbling, and whites were not going to passively accept such indignities. Three months after *Brown II*, for example, Roy Bryant and J. W. Milam murdered Emmett Till in Mississippi.³¹

There had been, in the years since Tuskegee and Alabama State first played, dozens of Emmett Tills in Alabama, dozens of unpunished murders of black boys and girls, men and women, at the hands of racist vigilantes. But in the wake of such massive social change, the black South, and black Alabama in particular, would begin to fight back. In March 1955, Claudette Colvin refused to leave her seat on a bus in the Capital Heights section of Montgomery, less than two miles from the Alabama State campus. Her case would ultimately become *Browder v. Gayle* (1956), which would formally declare Montgomery's bus segregation unconstitutional.³² Colvin's activism, however, would not exist in a vacuum, and its proximity to Alabama State would be fitting, as the area's response to racism was fed largely by the university whose version of "social equality" was much different from that of its regional counterpart.

As early as 1943, E. D. Nixon founded the Montgomery Voters League. Nixon, a former Pullman train porter who had risen to become the president of the Alabama chapter of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, was also the president of the Montgomery branch of the NAACP. He designed the Voters League to help register black voters, still suffering from the restrictions put in place by the 1901 constitution. Coming on the heels of the group's creation, the Women's Political Council was founded in 1946. Mary Frances Fair Burks was chair of the Alabama State College English department, but when she was unable to participate in the local chapter of the League of Women Voters, she created her own organization. It was middle class and all female. It was small, but it was incredibly influential.³³

This wasn't rare—the history of activism coming from black colleges, often led by faculty members. But the involvement of Burks was unique in that Alabama

State didn't seem to mind. For the most part, the administrations of historically black colleges and universities were incredibly authoritarian and conservative. When students at Fisk protested a local lynching and picketed the local segregated theater, for example, President Thomas E. Jones expelled the leader of the protests for actions that were "detrimental to the best interests of the University." Lincoln University (Pennsylvania) and Alcorn A&M also witnessed such protests. Similarly, when the student council president of South Carolina College for Negroes helped organize a post-*Brown* desegregation petition, he was expelled, touching off campus-wide protests that culminated in the expulsion of more students and the dismissal of several members of the faculty and staff. "It must be reported as one of the bitter ironies in the civil rights movement in the South," wrote William P. Fidler, president of the American Association of University Professors in 1965, "that the administrations of some Negro institutions have exercised autocratic control over the actions and utterances of their faculties and students."³⁴

But that autocratic control wasn't happening at Alabama State. And after World War II, the Montgomery Voters League and the Women's Political Council worked together to challenge white hegemony in Montgomery. Four days after *Brown*, for example, Council member Jo Ann Robinson, another Alabama State professor, wrote a letter to Montgomery's mayor bemoaning the segregation on the city's buses. The mayor ignored her letter, of course, but, more importantly, she was able to pen the letter without consequence, a reality that most likely didn't exist for professors at Tuskegee.³⁵

In the wake of such activism and race controversy, on November 24, 1955, a massive parade choked the downtown area. It wasn't a protest march. There was no anger. It was simply the pregame celebration for the Turkey Day Classic. "None of the games or the parades can equal that in Montgomery each Turkey day," wrote *Chicago Defender* sports editor Fay Young. But even more impressive to Young than the parade, more impressive than the eight-page game-day insert in the local black newspaper, the *Alabama Journal*, was the coverage of the events in the race-torn capital's white newspaper. "Time and again we have marveled at the spirit displayed by the Montgomery Advertiser," wrote Young, "the day prior to the game, the day of the game, and the morning following the Dixie classic."

Down in Montgomery it is quite a bit different. Alabama is the home of both Tuskegee Institute, founded by Booker T. Washington, and the Alabama State College. Alabama is Alabama and that means exactly that State is looked upon as an Alabama institution.

Thus the 5,000 or more white fans, who delay their turkey dinner each year to pull for the hometown boys, weren't bothered where the players came from as long as they wore the uniforms of State.³⁶

The white fans did not attend the alumni parties, the festival, or any of the student events sponsored by both universities that made the classic a happening. But coverage of the event always included the parade and parties that accompanied the game, those elements of Thanksgiving week that drew together the black community in and around Montgomery. The game that followed the revelry in 1955 ultimately ended in a 19-13 win for Alabama State, its fourth in a row, and that recent success surely helped local white attendance.³⁷ But the significance of Young's report cannot be overstated. The race antipathy in Montgomery was intense. Alabama State had been the prime mover behind a series of organizations designed to capitalize on Supreme Court decisions to overthrow the apartheid system that had existed for the entirety of the lives of many if not most of those living in the city. And yet thousands of whites attended the game. The local paper, whose editorials railed against *Brown* and its consequences, reported heavily on the game and its attendant festivities.

The temptation is to assume that somehow sports was able to trump racial discord and bring disparate peoples together, but such is the stuff of popular movies. The struggle for racial equality in Montgomery was still, as of Thanksgiving 1955, theoretical in the minds of whites. The schools were still segregated, as were the buses. Rights organizations had formed, letters were mailed, but there was, as of yet, no legitimate threat to white hegemony in the city, and therefore there was no problem with traversing the racial line for the sake of a good game.

One week after the Alabama State win, the threat would become real. On December 1, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus to a white man, just as Colvin had done earlier that year, and the Montgomery Voters League and Women's Political Council sprang into action. Nixon bailed her out of jail. Robinson, with the tacit support of her university, wrote and distributed a flyer. "Another Negro woman has been arrested and thrown in jail because she refused to get up out of her seat on the bus for a white person to sit down," it said. "This has to be stopped. Negroes have rights too, for if Negroes did not ride the buses, they could not operate."³⁸

She was right. On Monday, December 5, with the help of the publicity provided by those flyers, black Montgomery quit riding the buses.³⁹ The bus boycott would last 381 days, which meant that the next time Alabama State and Tuskegee met on Thanksgiving, the racial conflict in Montgomery would no longer be theoretical. "It was on Monday, Dec. 5, 1955, that a stick of moral dynamite exploded in the faces of lily-white Montgomery officialdom," reported the *Pittsburgh Courier's* Ric Roberts, "and now, a year later, that it is now certain the dynamic persistence of the bus boycotters has severed the iron grip of the past." And white officials knew it. State attorney general John Patterson watched with a scowl from his third-floor office as the Classic parade moved through downtown. There were twenty-six

high school bands participating, up from twenty the previous year. The mile-long procession moved slowly past the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, home to boycott leader Martin Luther King. Unlike the previous year, the tension was thick, overwhelming the normal feeling of celebration. The *Courier* explained, "It was being whispered among the Negroes that 7,000 members of the Ku Klux Klan would be marching along Dexter St. Sunday." And they would.⁴⁰

It wasn't simply the presence of the Klan that would set the crowd on edge. White Montgomery police were clearly there to harass just as much as protect. "Two young police officers," Roberts reported, "strangely keeping rival football factions apart, narrowed their flint-hard eyes and one commanded, firmly, 'Get back in them stands, Boy, and quick.'" Tuskegee won the game 19-13, ending the Alabama State win streak, but that was hardly the story following the event.⁴¹ The world had simply changed. It wouldn't be the same again.

The boycott could have gone on much longer. Most of the white anger directed at the football fans existed because the boycott was having the intended effect. The city was losing 65 percent of its bus business. It cut schedules, laid off drivers, raised fares to try to compensate. White merchants also suffered. But the city government wouldn't capitulate. The frustration among protesters was palpable, and there was talk about calling it off and chalking the whole thing up as a failure. But on November 13, 1956, almost a year after Parks's arrest and nine days prior to the Classic, *Browder v. Gayle* trumped white Montgomery's intransigence. The bus company agreed to integrate. It agreed to black drivers. On December 21, 1956, black citizens boarded the buses.⁴²

The following Thanksgiving witnessed a record-low attendance by white fans in the history of the Classic. The Hornets would win that 1957 contest, and for the rest of the decade, the two teams alternated victories, but the overwhelming progress of the civil rights movement had severed relations between the races even as desegregation had brought them closer in physical proximity.⁴³ The tension would ultimately boil over at the 1960 Classic.

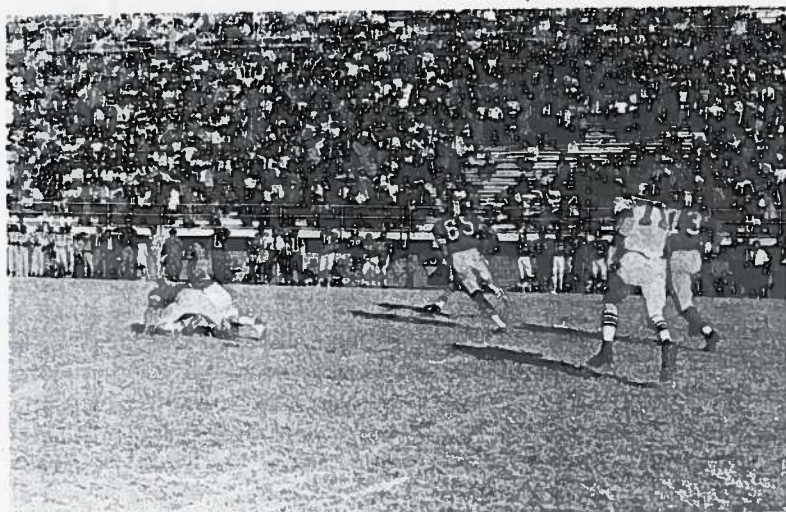
In 1957, while the Classic was experiencing a record-low white attendance, there were a series of black Baptist church bombings that rocked Montgomery. Bell Street Baptist, Mount Olive, Hutchinson Street, and First Baptist all experienced bombings. So too did First Baptist's parsonage, where its pastor and leading civil rights organizer Ralph Abernathy lived. In a climate of white retribution, a climate that even kept white fans from attending a football game, it should come as no surprise that the indictments following the crimes either ended in acquittals or dropped charges. Three years later, in the week prior to Thanksgiving, the Ku Klux Klan and other groups posted signs around Montgomery urging "10,000 white people" to meet at Cramton Bowl on Thanksgiving. Those whites who "care about your children and their future" should come and come armed.⁴⁴

Such anger wasn't occurring in a vacuum. Earlier in 1960, following the birth of the sit-in movement by students at North Carolina A&T in Greensboro, student demonstrations at Alabama State protested the continued intransigence of segregation and discrimination in Montgomery. Here again the rare willingness by the Alabama State administration to tolerate race activism set it apart from the administrations of schools like rival Tuskegee. There would, of course, be many Tuskegee students who would join the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, but Tuskegee's student activism would not be sanctioned by its administration, and thus would not draw white anger to the school. Still, it would feel such anger by default because of the school's rivalry with State. In the days before the game, the Klan tied a group of sticks wrapped in brown paper to mimic the appearance of a bomb to the main gate at Cramton Bowl along with a Klan banner and a note that warned, "This could be real Thanksgiving Day at Cramton Bowl."⁴⁵

In response to the threats, both the Hornets and the Tigers agreed to cancel the parade for the first time since the rivalry became a "classic." A local restaurant with a liquor license was ordered closed for gameday. Still, five armed white men were arrested in the restaurant parking lot prior to kickoff, men clearly there to foment the race riot that the Klan had been promising. Two of those arrested, Henry Alexander and Sonny Kile Livingston, had been indicted for participating in the 1957 Montgomery church bombings.⁴⁶

Though Montgomery's police commissioner, L. B. Sullivan, blamed the tensions on student demonstrations at Alabama State and actually recommended the cancellation of the game, his force, to their credit, ensured that no violence occurred that Thanksgiving. The Tigers won the game that day, the first of what would become their own four-game winning streak. The story, however, was the threat of riot that loomed over the day's proceedings.⁴⁷ It demonstrated that though sports could serve as a binding agent and a refuge from the race antagonism swirling around them, that antagonism could also seep into the function of those sports, could make them a theater for all of the broader problems in society at large. Whites had returned to Cramton Bowl, but they had returned with guns.

Games between the two continued. While Alabama State would begin its own three-game winning streak in 1964, Tuskegee would dominate the late 1960s and early 1970s. That sustained period of success would lead to eleven NFL draft picks from 1967 to 1971, including linebacker Walter Johnson, tackle Fritz Latham, defensive end Otis McDaniel, and receiver Alvin Griffin. In 1971, the teams would not play each other for the first time since fifty years prior in 1921. The absence was the result of a feud between Alabama State president Levi Watkins and his Tuskegee counterpart Luther Hilton Foster. The dispute arose after Tuskegee agreed to play an additional game in Cramton Bowl, which the Hornets claimed as being under their own sphere of influence. The resulting bickering led to each president feigning



The Turkey Day Classic, the annual football game held in Montgomery, Alabama, between Alabama State College and Tuskegee Institute. *Image courtesy of Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.*

innocence and outrage at the other. "Charges and counter-charges have brought the two fine Alabama institutions into an almost unsolvable *en passé*," reported the *Atlanta Daily World's* Marion Jackson, "which has created almost calamitous trepidation among friendly neighbors." Fortunately, however, the anger would subside. But in the three years that followed, the Classic between the two was the last game on the schedule, placing it in December, rather than on Thanksgiving. Such is the nature of advance collegiate scheduling in the middle of a feud. When the game returned to Thanksgiving in 1975, Alabama State began a long streak of success, winning fifteen of the next seventeen games.⁴⁸

State had grown to nearly twice the enrollment of its longtime rival, which certainly aided its ability to further develop the football program. In 1973, the NCAA began dividing university athletic programs into divisions, and with the smaller Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference schools like Tuskegee claiming a place in Division II, the larger Alabama State found itself at a crossroads. In 1976, the Hornets abandoned their affiliation with the SIAC, and later that decade they began playing many of the schools that made up the Division I Southwestern Athletic Conference. In 1982, the Hornets officially joined the SWAC, and the scheduling problems associated with the changes left Tuskegee and Alabama State

suspending the Classic again for 1986 and 1987. Tuskegee ended its season well before Thanksgiving for those seasons, while Alabama State supplemented the Tigers with Clark Atlanta in 1986 and Johnson C. Smith in 1987. Frustrated fans of both schools, however, convinced the administrations to bring the game back. Johnson C. Smith would never be an adequate replacement for Tuskegee.⁴⁹

The year 1987 also served as a milestone for Alabama State because that year it hired a new coach, Houston Markham. The early 1980s had been difficult for the Hornets, who consistently finished in last place in their new conference. But they managed in 1987 to woo longtime Jackson State assistant Markham, who would turn the program around. "I see a big hill," he told reporters upon his arrival in Montgomery. "I'm a climber, and I'm determined to climb that hill." Markham would win sixty-eight games in his eleven seasons at ASU, earning more wins than any coach in the school's history, including six consecutive wins against rival Tuskegee from 1988 to 1995. Markham's tenure would feature many of the school's most decorated players, including Eddie Robinson, Zefross Moss, Brad Baxter, and Reggie Barlow.⁵⁰

In 1990, the game reached another milestone when BET broadcast a tape-delayed version of the game. Seven years later, Tuskegee became the first historically black college to reach five hundred victories, and the Tigers did so against their rival in the Turkey Day Classic. Not only would Tuskegee's 1997 victory provide them such a milestone, it would also usher in a long period of dominance through the late 1990s and the twenty-first century. In 2009, the schools would sign a broadcast contract with ESPN, which still holds the rights to the Classic.⁵¹

The final Turkey Day milestone occurred in 2012. Since the Classic began in 1924, the one constant in the game had been Cramton Bowl. It was the stadium's creation that allowed for the development of the Classic in the first place. Even when the Ku Klux Klan placed mock bombs and warning signs on its gates, the Hornets and Tigers had always met at the iconic Cramton Bowl. But 2012 witnessed the completion of Alabama State's new on-campus stadium, complete with luxury boxes, shops, and a restaurant. Unlike most schools that debut new facilities at the beginning of athletic seasons, the Hornets chose to debut theirs at the end. Their most important game, after all, happened on Thanksgiving. "Make no mistake about it. Thursday was Alabama State's day," argued reporter Nick Birdsong, noting the sold-out crowd at the debut of the new stadium. "But it was their guest's game." Tuskegee won 27–25, taking the first game in State's new stadium and ensuring that the fire of the rivalry would have plenty of fuel for generations to come.⁵²

Still, as intense as the rivalry remains, that fuel has fundamentally changed. No longer are the two schools uneasy allies against white supremacy with different notions of "social equality" and the best methods of achieving it. No longer are fans

riding on segregated buses to arrive at the stadium. No longer are Klan members threatening to bomb the stadium. Or churches. Or houses.

The racial problems of Montgomery and the broader South, of course, have yet to be fully solved. But the institutionally sanctioned terrorist violence that accompanied an earlier version of that racism has largely dissipated, making the stakes game between different ideas of how best to accomplish black equality less important. And that, in turn, has reshaped the contest between Alabama State and Tuskegee. "Both schools and their alumni know that the game is a much anticipated and beloved event," said Alabama State president C. C. Baker in 1993, "and the city of Montgomery knows the game brings revenue to city businesses and city tax coffers."⁵³ Through the late twentieth century and into the twenty-first, the rivalry between the two schools has grown, but it has grown as a game between a set of otherwise friendly adversaries, rather than one between ideological foes using football as a surrogate for broader debates about Patersonian or Washingtonian versions of "social equality."

And such is for the best. As those debates—and their necessity—have faded, there has always been the game. Whether at Cramton Bowl or the Alabama State campus. Whether known as the Dixie Classic or the Turkey Day. Whether a battle for SIAC supremacy or an intra-conference, intra-division rivalry whose only consequence is pride.

There has always been the game.

7

Gold and Glory Sweepstakes

An African American Racing Experience

Todd Gould

In 1991, Willy T. Ribbs became the first African American to qualify for the Indianapolis 500-Mile Race. His accomplishment was historic. And yet, it was only one thrilling moment in a remarkably rich, yet largely forgotten, black auto racing legacy that preceded Ribbs by nearly seven decades.

During the 1920s, when groups like the Ku Klux Klan wielded tremendous influence within Indiana's social and political circles, and sports venues like the Indianapolis Motor Speedway were segregated, a dedicated group of individuals created a sporting event exclusively for African Americans—a racing spectacle so grand it attracted the attention of national newspaper and newsreel agencies, as well as thousands of spectators from all over the country. The event was the Gold and Glory Sweepstakes, a freewheeling, dust-raising, 100-mile grind around the dirt track at the Indiana State Fairgrounds in Indianapolis.

"The Gold and Glory Sweepstakes was the race that belonged to the colored people. It was *ours*," noted Boniface Hardin, historian and president emeritus of Martin University. "It was something our community could take joy in. And there was truly glory attached to winning it." Former driver Leon "Al" Warren remembered, "We drew great crowds all the time, up to 10,000 to 12,000 people. The stands would be overflowing." Another driver, Joie Ray, recalled, "We were treated like heroes. It was really our time to shine."

The Queen of Central Western States

In 1903, the *Indianapolis Star* debuted as a new daily newspaper in the Hoosier capital. A column from one of the paper's early issues quoted a national business journal that viewed the state of Indiana and its capital city as a land of great potential.

Segregation," in *100 Years of Madness: The Illinois High School Association Boys' Basketball Tournament* (Bloomington: Illinois High School Association, 2006), 58–61; Taylor H. A. Bell, *Sweet Charlie, Dike, Cazzie, and Bobby Joe* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 41–44.

32. Troy D. Paino, *Journal of Sport History* 28, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 66–72; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 192–93.

33. *Chicago Defender* (nat. ed.), March 23, 1935; *Chicago Defender*, March 27, 1937; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 66–67.

34. *Chicago Defender* (nat. ed.), March 22, 1941; *Chicago Defender* (nat. ed.), April 4, 1942; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 68–69, 193; The participation figures Thompson uses may be problematic, when one examines his Tournament Summary for 1942.

35. *Chicago Defender* (nat. ed.), March 16, 1935; *Chicago Defender* (nat. ed.), January 25, 1941; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 49, 192, 197.

36. *Chicago Defender* (nat. ed.), March 24, 1945; *Chicago Defender* (nat. ed.), April 7, 1945; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 70–72, 85; Linda T. Wynn, "Pearl High School Basketball: National and State Championships," Profiles of American Americans in Tennessee, Nashville Conference on African-American History and Culture, Tennessee State University, 2007, http://www.tnstate.edu/library/digitalresources/profiles_of_african_americans_in_tennessee.aspx.

37. Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 72–73.

38. *Chicago Defender* (nat. ed.), April 20, 1946; *Chicago Defender* (nat. ed.), April 19, 1947; Gerald R. Gems, *Windy City Wars: Labor, Leisure, and Sport in the Making of Chicago* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1997), 181–82; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 75–78, 199–201.

39. Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 78–79.

40. "National Prep. Cage Play on March 25–27," *Chicago Defender* (nat. ed.), March 7, 1948; "St. Elizabeth Will Play in Nat'l Tourney," *Chicago Defender* (nat. ed.), March 20, 1948; *Afro-American*, April 4, 1950; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 81–85.

41. *Afro-American*, March 25, 1947; *Afro-American*, March 23, 1948; *Afro-American*, March 22, 1949; *Afro-American*, March 29, 1949.

42. "Southern Trip," *The 1951 Elizabethan* (Chicago: St. Elizabeth High School, 1951), unpaginated; *Afro-American*, April 4, 1951; *Afro-American*, April 10, 1951; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 86–88.

43. *Afro-American*, March 25, 1952; *Afro-American*, March 24, 1953; *Afro-American*, March 31, 1953; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 89–90.

44. *Afro-American*, March 29, 1955; *Afro-American*, March 26, 1956; Barnett, "The Finals," 33–35; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 100–101, 223.

45. *Chicago Tribune*, March 26, 1955; *Chicago Tribune*, March 21, 1957; *Chicago Defender* (nat. ed.), April 13, 1957; "By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them," *'57 Seniorama*

(Chicago: St. Elizabeth, 1957): 17; "The Memory Lingers On . . .," *1961 Spirit* (Chicago: St. Elizabeth, 1961), unpaginated; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 101–2, 211, 214, 217.

46. Wynn, "Pearl High School"; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 102–3.

47. *Chicago Defender* (nat. ed.), April 11, 1959; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 104–5.

48. *Pittsburgh Courier*, January 26, 1963.

49. Mike Lenehan, *Ramblers: Loyola Chicago 1963—The Team That Changed the Color of College Basketball* (Chicago: Midway, 2013), 79, 85, 89–93.

50. *Tri-State Defender*, April 7, 1961; *Tri-State Defender*, March 24, 1962; Earl S. Clanton III, *Pittsburgh Courier*, March 23, 1963; Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 105–9.

51. *Tri-State Defender*, March 24, 1964; Wynn, "Pearl High School"; Gene Peirce, "Nashville Pearl's Short Road to Glory," Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, www.tssaa.org/2005Champions/StateBBasketball/Pearl.pdf (accessed December 25, 2012).

52. Thompson, "The History of the National Basketball Tournaments for Black High Schools," 111–15.

53. *Ibid.*, 116–18, 245.

54. *Ibid.*, 118–19.

6. The Black Heart of Dixie: The Turkey Day Classic and Race in Twentieth-Century Alabama

1. *Pittsburgh Courier*, November 25, 1967, 11.

2. For more on the Howard-Lincoln game, see David K. Wiggins, "The Biggest 'Classic' of Them All: The Howard and Lincoln Thanksgiving Day Football Games, 1919–1929," in *Rooting for the Home Team: Sport, Community, and Identity*, ed. Daniel A. Nathan (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013), 36–53. For more on the classic as a staging ground for black success and a theater for black political, cultural, and social disagreements, see Thomas Aiello, *Bayou Classic: The Grambling-Southern Football Rivalry* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010).

3. For its part, Howard would also leave Marion in 1887, heading to Birmingham to take advantage of the booming Gilded Age iron economy. Howard would remain affiliated with the Baptist church, and in 1965 the school would change its name to Samford University. "William B. Paterson to Booker T. Washington," in *The Papers of Booker T. Washington*, vol. 2, 1860–1889, ed. Louis Harlan (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972), 319–20.

4. "William B. Paterson to Booker T. Washington," in *The Papers of Booker T. Washington*, vol. 2, 319–20; and "Booker T. Washington to Warren Logan," in *ibid.*, 331–32.

5. "Booker T. Washington to Warren Logan," in *ibid.*, vol. 2, 332.

6. Seay, for his part, was seeking "Montg. Col. people to offer some induc[e]ment in money to get it saying that Birmingham wants it also & will make a good offer for it." His was less a concern about race and religion and more a concern about money. "Booker T. Washington to Arthur L. Brooks," in *ibid.*, 343–44; "Booker T. Washington to Arthur L. Brooks," in *ibid.*, 344; and "Cornelius Nathaniel Dorsette to Booker T. Washington," in *ibid.*, 321–22.

7. "William B. Paterson to Booker T. Washington," in *ibid.*, 346–47.
8. "Warren Logan to Booker T. Washington," in *ibid.*, 373; "Booker T. Washington to Warren Logan," in *ibid.*, 376; "Booker T. Washington to Warren Logan," in *ibid.*, 376; and "T. W. Coffee to Booker T. Washington," in *ibid.*, 376–77.
9. "Booker T. Washington to William Hooper Council," in *ibid.*, 307–8.
10. "Cornelius Nathaniel Dorsette to Booker T. Washington," in *ibid.*, 387; and "William Jenkins to Booker T. Washington," in *ibid.*, 459.
11. "Booker T. Washington to William Hooper Council," in *The Papers of Booker T. Washington*, vol. 3, 1889–1895, ed. Louis Harlan (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974), 77–78; "Warren Logan to Booker T. Washington," in *ibid.*, 99–100; and "Warren Logan to Booker T. Washington," in *ibid.*, 122–23.
12. "William Burns Paterson to Booker T. Washington," in *The Papers of Booker T. Washington*, vol. 4, 1895–1898, ed. Louis Harlan (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975), 325.
13. Matthews would go on to Harvard and Boston University Law. A standout athlete, he started on Harvard's baseball team, became the only black player in the minor Northern League, and then eventually went on to become an assistant US attorney in Boston. He would serve as Marcus Garvey's lawyer and a leading black figure in Republican politics in the 1920s. After the election of Calvin Coolidge, the new president appointed him as an assistant attorney general. For more on Matthews, see Karl Lindholm, "William Clarence Matthews: Brief Life of a Baseball Pioneer, 1877–1928," *Harvard Magazine* (September–October 1998), <http://harvardmagazine.com/1998/09/vita.html> (accessed June 23, 2013).
14. "James B. Washington to Booker T. Washington," in *The Papers of Booker T. Washington*, vol. 5, 1899–1900, ed. Louis Harlan (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977), 268; "Booker T. Washington to Warren Logan," in *ibid.*, 270–71.
15. "Tuskegee Yearly Results," College Football Data Warehouse, http://www.cfbdatawarehouse.com/data/div_ii/siac/tuskegee/yearly_results.php?year=1900 (accessed February 14, 2013).
16. *Ibid.*
17. Quote from *Tuskegee News*, November 7, 1901. See also R. Volney Riser, "Disfranchisement, the US Constitution, and the Federal Courts: Alabama's 1901 Constitutional Convention Debates the Grandfather Clause," *American Journal of Legal History* 48 (July 2006): 237–79; and *Tuskegee News*, November 14, 1901; November 21, 1901; November 2, 1901.
18. "Alabama State Yearly Results," College Football Data Warehouse, http://www.cfbdatawarehouse.com/data/div_iaa/southwestern/alabama_state/yearly_results.php?year=1901 (accessed February 14, 2013); and "Tuskegee University: Golden Tiger Pregame Notes—Game 11," Tuskegee University, athletics.tuskegee.edu/sites/.../Football%20Pre-Game%20Notes.PDF (accessed February 14, 2013).
19. "Leaving Booker T. Washington," *New York World*, October 23, 1904, in *The Papers of Booker T. Washington*, vol. 8, 1904–1906, ed. Louis Harlan (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979), 105–7.
20. "Tuskegee Yearly Results," College Football Data Warehouse; "Alabama State Yearly Results," College Football Data Warehouse; and "Tuskegee University: Golden Tiger Pregame Notes—Game 11," College Football Data Warehouse.
21. "Tuskegee University: Golden Tiger Pregame Notes—Game 11"; "Booker T. Washington to William Burns Paterson," in *The Papers of Booker T. Washington*, vol. 10,

- 1909–1911, ed. Louis Harlan (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 16; "Booker T. Washington to William Burns Paterson," in *ibid.*, 27–28; and "Booker T. Washington to John William Beverly," in *The Papers of Booker T. Washington*, vol. 13, 1914–1915, ed. Louis Harlan (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 256.
22. United States Federal Census, 1880, Roll 589, Film 1254589, Page 235A; *Montgomery City Directory, 1891* (Montgomery: CJ Allardt and Co., 1891); *Montgomery City Directory, 1893* (Montgomery: Walter Howard, 1893); United States Federal Census, 1910, Roll T624_29, FHL microfilm 1374042, Page 14B; United States Federal Census, 1920, Roll T625_37, Page 1B; and United States Passport Applications, January 2, 1906–March 31, 1925, ARC Identifier 583830/MLR Number A1 534, National Archives and Records Administration, Series M1490, Roll 1611.
23. *Montgomery Advertiser*, February 9, 1921; and Tommy Fields, "The Cramton Conversion," *More*, http://mymaxmore.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=120:the-cramton-conversion&catid=1:current&Itemid=32 (accessed February 15, 2013).
24. United States Federal Census, 1900, Roll 200, FHL microfilm 1240200, Page 12B; United States Federal Census, 1910, Roll T624_28, FHL microfilm 1374041, Page 3A; United States World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917–1918, National Archives and Records Administration, M1509, Roll 1509445; Alabama Military Card Files, 1917–1918, Alabama Department of Archives and History, SG017111-3; and United States Federal Census, 1920, Roll T625_36, Page 1B.
25. "Tuskegee University: Golden Tiger Pregame Notes—Game 11."
26. Abbott would continue coaching the Tigers until 1954, the year prior to his death. In that time he would compile 205 wins, far and away the most by any coach in the school's history. Abbott also created the school's women's track and field program in 1937, a program that would go undefeated from its creation until 1942 and would generate six Olympic athletes. *Pittsburgh Courier*, November 22, 1924; *Atlanta Daily World*, November 26, 1957; "Tuskegee Yearly Results," College Football Data Warehouse; "Tuskegee University: Golden Tiger Pregame Notes—Game 11"; "Tuskegee Coaching Records," College Football Data Warehouse, http://www.cfbdatawarehouse.com/data/div_ii/siac/tuskegee/coaching_records.php (accessed February 15, 2013); and "Abbott, Cleveland Leigh (1892–1955)," <http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aah/abbott-cleveland-leigh-1892-1955> (accessed June 24, 2013).
27. For more on classics and their role in black collegiate athletics and the black community in general, see Michael Hurd, *Black College Football, 1892–1992: One Hundred Years of History, Education, and Pride* (Marceline, MO: Walsworth Publishing, 2000); David K. Wiggins, "The Biggest 'Classic' of Them All: The Howard and Lincoln Thanksgiving Day Football Games, 1919–1929," in *Rooting for the Home Team: Sport, Community, and Identity*, ed. Daniel A. Nathan (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013), 36–53; Hasan Kwame Jeffries, "Fields of Play: The Mediums through Which Black Athletes Engaged in Sports in Jim Crow Georgia," *Journal of Negro History* 86 (Summer 2001): 264–75; Samuel G. Freedman, *Breaking the Line: The Season in Black College Football That Transformed the Sport and Changed the Course of Civil Rights* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2013); and Thomas Aiello, *Bayou Classic: The Gmbling-Southern Football Rivalry* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010).
28. Will Rogers, "Football Needs Plenty of Color," *Washington Post*, November 29, 1925.
29. "Tuskegee Yearly Results," College Football Data Warehouse; "Alabama State Yearly Results," College Football Data Warehouse; "Tuskegee University: Golden Tiger

Pregame Notes—Game 11”; *Atlanta Daily World*, October 31, 1932; November 26, 1957; *Chicago Defender*, October 13, 1928; November 24, 1928; and *New York Amsterdam News*, November 14, 1928.

30. “Tuskegee Yearly Results,” College Football Data Warehouse; “Alabama State Yearly Results,” College Football Data Warehouse; “Tuskegee University: Golden Tiger Pregame Notes—Game 11”; and *Atlanta Daily World*, November 28, 1952.

31. *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents*, 339 US 637 (1950); *Sweatt v. Painter*, 339 US 629 (1950); *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 US 483 (1954); and *Brown v. Board of Education II*, 349 US 294 (1955). The literature on Emmett Till is obviously vast. For strong general accounts, see Stephen Whitfield, *A Death of the Delta: The Story of Emmett Till* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); and Christopher Mettress, *The Lynching of Emmett Till: A Documentary Narrative* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002).

32. *Browder v. Gayle*, 142 F. Supp. 707 (1956).

33. Randolph Hohle, “The Color of Neoliberalism: The ‘Modern Southern Businessman’ and Postwar Alabama’s Challenge to Racial Desegregation,” *Sociological Forum* 27 (March 2012): 142–62. For more on activism in Alabama and the frustrated white response, see David Alan Horowitz, “White Southerners’ Alienation and Civil Rights: The Response to Corporate Liberalism, 1956–1965,” *Journal of Southern History* 54 (May 1988): 173–200. The story of the work of Alabama activists in the creation of the Montgomery bus boycott is ubiquitous. David J. Garrow’s *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: HarperCollins, 1988), for example, carries a thorough description of the boycott and its antecedents, as do many others.

34. Joel Rosenthal, “Southern Black Student Activism: Assimilation vs. Nationalism,” *Journal of Negro Education* 44 (Spring 1975): 114–18; and William P. Fidler, “Academic Freedom in the South Today,” *AAUP Bulletin* 51 (Winter 1965): 415. For more on this phenomenon, see Thomas Aiello, “Violence Is a Classroom: The 1972 Grambling and Southern Riots and the Trajectory of Black Southern Student Protest,” *Louisiana History* 53 (Summer 2012): 261–91.

35. Such is relatively common fare in studies of civil rights, but one of the most accomplished historians of this subject is Michael J. Klarman, whose studies have informed the author’s thinking about such matters. See Michael J. Klarman, “Brown, Racial Change, and the Civil Rights Movement,” *Virginia Law Review* 80 (February 1994): 7–150; and Michael J. Klarman, “How Brown Changed Race Relations: The Backlash Thesis,” *Journal of American History* 81 (June 1994): 81–118.

36. Frank “Fay” Young was friends with Cleve Abbott before his old friend passed away. He was also close with B. T. Harvey, who was, as of the mid-1950s, commissioner of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. In May 1956, the end of the school year that featured the 1955 Classic, Tuskegee gave Young an honorary degree. *Chicago Defender*, December 17, 1955; and *Atlanta Daily World*, May 22, 1956.

37. “Alabama State Yearly Results,” College Football Data Warehouse.

38. See Jo Ann Gibson Robinson, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It: The Memoir of Jo Ann Gibson Robinson*, ed. David J. Garrow (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987); Stewart Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom: The Montgomery Bus Boycott* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Jeanne Theoharis, *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1913); Douglas Brinkley, *Rosa Parks: A Life* (New York: Penguin, 2005); and Rosa Parks, *Rosa Parks: My Story* (New York: Puffin, 1999).

39. To organize the boycott, Nixon and others created a new organization, the

Montgomery Improvement Association, to coordinate the protest. And coordinate it did. The group organized a massive car pool service to help people get to and from work. Many chose to walk to work, some for miles every day. There were community meetings almost nightly to keep people informed and to keep their spirits up. His two principal helpers were Fred Shuttlesworth and Ralph Abernathy, local ministers who had been working in Montgomery for years. For citations, see notes 32, 34, and 37.

40. *Pittsburgh Courier*, December 15, 1956; and *Montgomery Advertiser*, November 22, 1956.

41. The *Advertiser* estimated the crowd at the Klan rally at one thousand, not seven thousand. The paper devoted a large portion of its first two pages the day following the rally to the KKK, including a series of articles and several pictures of the event. Significantly, however, and keeping with the general trend, the same paper reported on the Turkey Day Classic both before and after the game, making coverage of the event central to its holiday sports coverage. “Alabama State Yearly Results,” College Football Data Warehouse; *Pittsburgh Courier*, December 29, 1956; and *Montgomery Advertiser*, November 22, 1956; November 23, 1956; November 24, 1956; November 25, 1956.

42. *Browder v. Gayle*, 142 F. Supp. 707 (1956). See also notes 32 and 37.

43. “Tuskegee Yearly Results,” College Football Data Warehouse; and *Atlanta Daily World*, December 1, 1957.

44. Donnie Williams and Wayne Greenhaw, *The Thunder of Angels: The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the People Who Broke the Back of Jim Crow* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill, 2006), 260–61; and *Los Angeles Sentinel*, December 1, 1960.

45. *Los Angeles Sentinel*, December 1, 1960; *Boston Globe*, November 25, 1960; *Los Angeles Times*, November 25, 1960; and *Washington Post*, November 25, 1960.

46. *Los Angeles Times*, November 25, 1960; *Washington Post*, November 25, 1960; and Williams and Greenhaw, *The Thunder of Angels*, 264.

47. Ralph Abernathy denounced Sullivan in the strongest terms for suggesting cancellation of the football game. *Los Angeles Sentinel*, December 1, 1960; *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 22, 1960; and *Chicago Defender*, November 28, 1960.

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