

# 1988 Cotton Bowl Classic

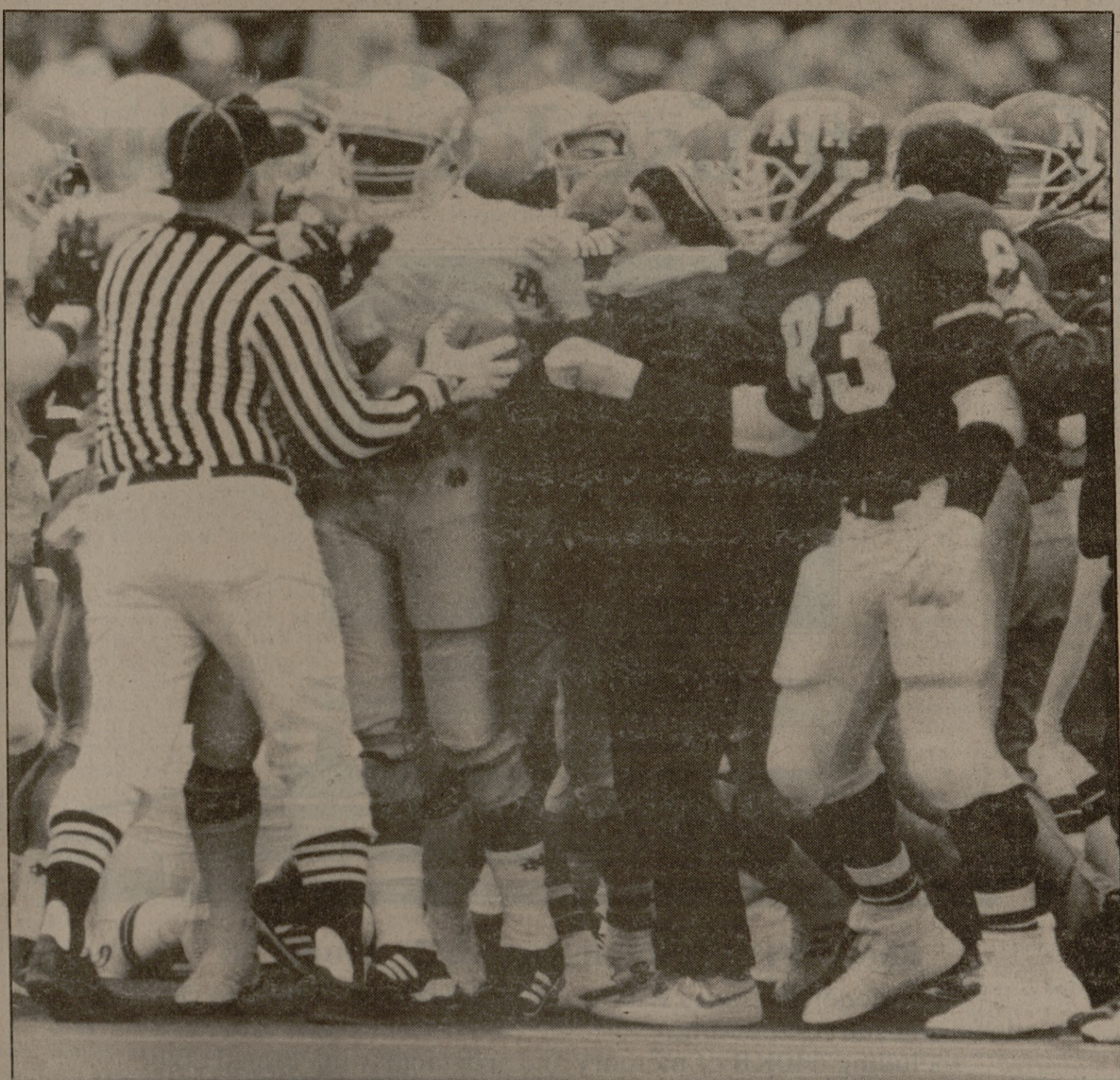


Photo by Peter Rocha, Bryan/College Station Eagle

Tim Brown, Notre Dame's Heisman trophy winner, clutches his towel and explains to an official why he tackled 12th man teamer Warren Barhost after a kickoff.

## Notre Dame refusal to pass helps Aggs win Cotton Bowl

By Hal L. Hammons  
Assistant Sports Editor

DALLAS — Notre Dame's unexplainable refusal to throw the ball on first down may have been the biggest factor in Texas A&M's impressive victory in the 1988 Cotton Bowl.

The Irish only passed seven times in 17 first down opportunities in the first half.

Quarterback Terry Andrysiak completed five of the seven for 93 yards and four first downs.

That amounts to an average of 18.6 yards per first down completion and over 13 yards per first down pass attempt.

But still Notre Dame insisted on running on first down. The Irish ran 10 times for 17 yards and no first downs. Five yards was the longest of them, and only three netted more than two yards.

The success passing was due to A&M's reluctance to blitz on first down.



When the Irish passed on first down, they kept either a back or the tight end in the backfield, resulting in the Irish having six or seven men to block three or four Aggie rushers.

A&M was concerned with stop-

ping the rush to the extent that the pass went largely unchallenged. Heisman Trophy winner Tim Brown was left in single coverage most of the half.

Of 105 receiving yards for Brown in the first half, 77 came on first down passes.

After Notre Dame only got 29 yards on 18 rushes in the first half, Aggie worries about the run were slight enough to risk the first down blitz. This and a double-team on Brown resulted in the Notre Dame Irish getting only 24 yards through the air.

Notre Dame did not catch a pass the entire half.

Notre Dame eschewed the first down pass the entire second half, even with the first-down blitzing and a substantial scoring deficit.

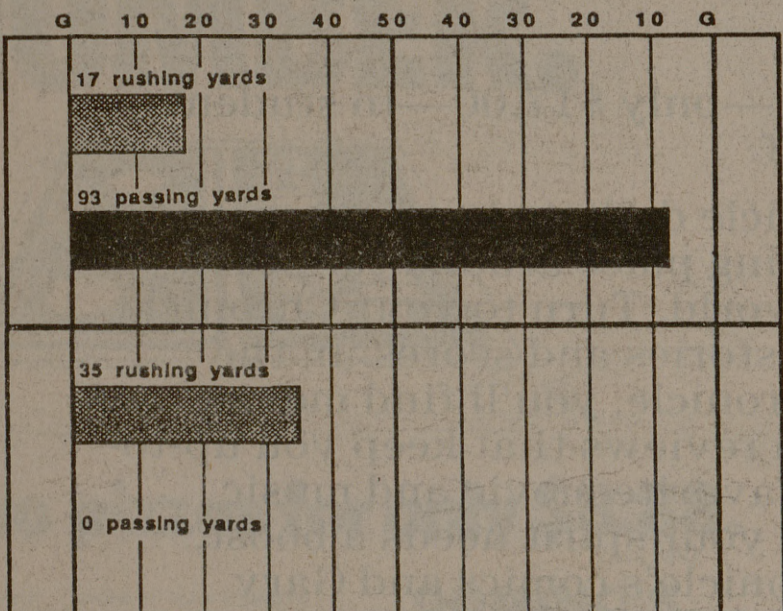
The first pass thrown by Notre Dame on first down in the second half was with less than five minutes remaining, when A&M led by 25 points.

**FIRST HALF**  
Rushes: 10  
Rushing yardage: 17  
Yards per attempt: 1.7

Passes: 7  
Completions: 5  
Passing yardage: 93  
Yards per attempt: 13.3

**SECOND HALF**  
Rushes: 11  
Rushing yards: 35  
Yards per attempt: 3.2

Passes: 1  
Completions: 0  
Passing yards: 0  
Yards per attempt: 0



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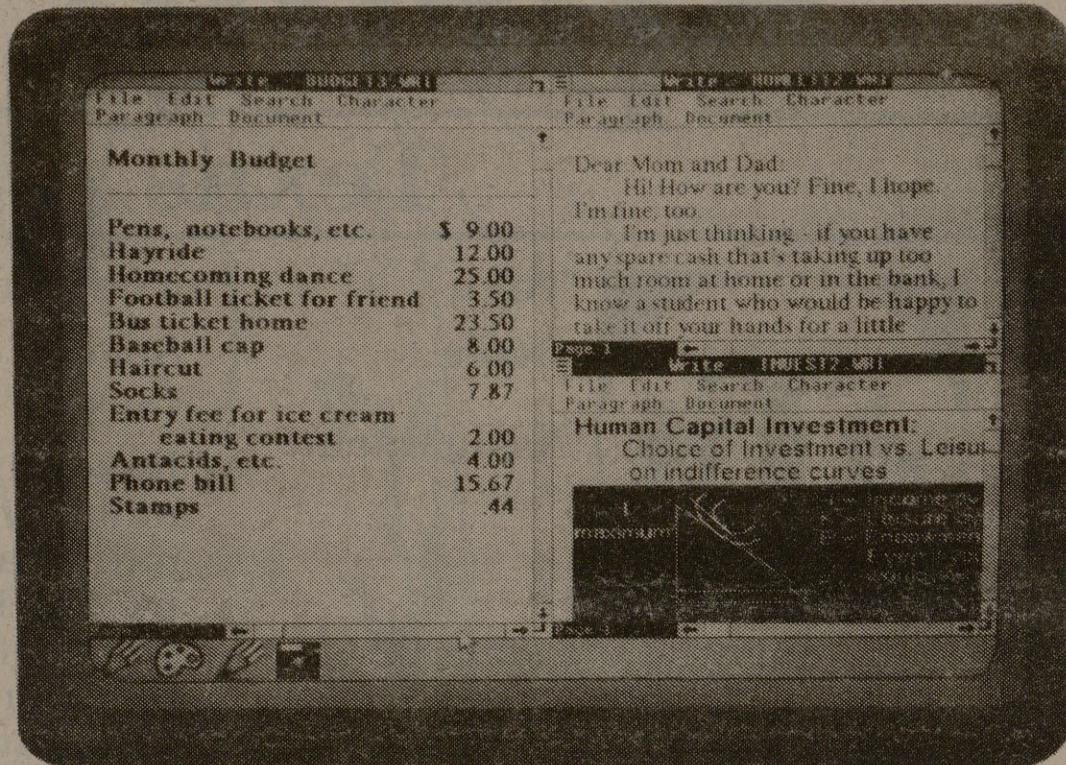
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