25 Moments To Remember

The 25 Greatest Moments of the Brut Sun Bowl

25. Winston Churchill Leads Charge

Minnesota
placekicker Lloyd "Winston Churchill" Rhys booted a 42-yard field goal with 23 seconds left to give the No. 24 Golden Gophers to a 31-30 win over Oregon at the 2003 Sun Bowl. The kick lifted Minnesota to a 10-3 record on the season, the Gophers' first 10-win season since 1905. The win truly was ironic. It was a reversal of fortune for the Ducks, who lost the lead late in the game at the 1999 Sun Bowl, before quarterback Joey Harrington connected on a 10-yard scoring strike to lift Oregon over Minnesota, 24-20. In 2003, the tables seeming turned, as the Englishman nicknamed Winston Churchill used his leg to be the deciding factor in front of a near capacity crowd of 49,864.

24. Derrick Thomas Dominates Army

Alabama
All-American linebacker Derrick Thomas blocked two Army field goal attempts and Alabama added nine fourth quarter points to give the Crimson Tide a 29-28 come-from-behind win over the Black Knights at the 1988 Sun Bowl. Thomas' two blocked kicks tied the NCAA bowl record. He finished the game with six tackles, two for a loss and one pass breakup to earn C.M. Hendricks Most Valuable Player honors. The Alabama senior earned first team All-America honors, won the 1988 Butkus Award and finished 10th in the Heisman Trophy voting.

23. Oklahoma
has a fourth quarter explosion

With a modest 10-7 lead heading into the fourth quarter, the Oklahoma Sooners exploded for an NCAA record 30 points in the final 15 minutes to roll past the Houston Cougars, 40-14 at the 1981 Sun Bowl. Oklahoma capitalized on a pair of Cougar fumbles and ran the wishbone to perfection for three fourth quarter rushing touchdowns, while adding a 49-yard field goal and a 28-yard interception return for the game's final score. Oklahoma finished the day with 409 yards on the ground and a pair of 100-yard rushers - Fred Sims (15-181) and Darrell

Shepard (17-107).

22. Charles Alexander Runs Wild

LSU
All-American tailback Charles Alexander had a field day against Stanford, as he set the Sun Bowl rushing record at the 1977 Sun Bowl against Stanford. Alexander carried the ball 31 times for a Sun Bowl record 197 yards and a touchdown - a record that stood for 30 years, until Oregon's Jonathan Stewart broke it last year. He was named the C.M. Hendricks Most Valuable Player for his performance. Despite all of Alexander's exploits, the Bill Walsh led Cardinal prevailed 24-14.

21. Auburn
Picks Its Way Past Arizona

In 1968, Arizona earned its first-ever bowl appearance, but the Auburn Tigers did not treat the Wildcats with much fanfare. On the first play from scrimmage, Wildcat quarterback Bruce Lee was intercepted. It was only a sign that it would be a long day for Arizona, as Auburn set an NCAA bowl record with eight interceptions that day, including six picks of Lee. Leading the way for the Tigers was All-American defensive back Buddy McClinton, who picked off Lee three times, including a 32-yard pick for a touchdown. Auburn added to the total with four interceptions of its own to set a combined NCAA bowl record with 12 interceptions in one game. In the end, the Tigers prevailed over the Wildcats, 34-10, on the first-ever CBS broad cast of the Sun Bowl.

20. Stevens Mines For Gold

He did not win the award once, he did it twice. UTEP quarterback Bill Stevens engineered second half comebacks in the 1965 and 1967, to lead the Miners to wins over the Southwest Conference's TCU and the Southeastern Conference's Ole Miss. His performances earned him the C.M. Hendricks Most Valuable Player Trophy in both years. In 1965, Stevens completed 21 of 34 passes for 208 yards against the Horned Frogs, which were all Sun Bowl records at the time. Two years later, Stevens led UTEP to a pair of fourth quarter touchdown drives to upset Ole Miss. He finished the afternoon 13 of 26 passing for 155 yards and a touchdown in his last collegiate game. He left the Miners as the NCAA career record holder for career passing yards with 6,495 yards.

19. Dobbs Leads Tulsa To Victory

It was a battle of conference champions, as Missouri Valley Conference champion Tulsa faced off with Border Conference champion Texas Tech. From 1941 to 1945, the Tulsa Hurricane was one of the Top 10 programs in the nation, especially when Glenn Dobbs was under center. The speedy back became the first quarterback in Sun Bowl history to throw for over 200 yards in a game. Dobbs, the brother of legendary UTEP coach Bobby Dobbs, completed 20 of 31 passes for 201 yards in the game to establish Sun Bowl records in all three categories. With just over two minutes remaining on third down, he connected with end Saxon Judd on a 25-yard scoring strike for the game's only score. Dobbs sealed the deal, when he intercepted a Texas Tech pass with 90 seconds left in the game, giving the Golden Hurricane a 6-0 victory.

18. Thomas Sets Record

He was just a sophomore, but the All-Southwest linebacker from Pampa came ready to play at the 60th Annual Sun Bowl. Texas Tech's Zach Thomas set an NCAA record that day, as he recorded 15 tackles, an NCAA-best seven for a loss and two sacks against Oklahoma in a losing effort in 1993. By the time his career was over at Texas Tech, Thomas had become a three-time All-SWC performer and two-time All-American who had a coming out party in Sun Bowl Stadium.

17. Van Pelt Leads Comeback

He was just a freshman, but came out like a collected veteran, as Alex Van Pelt led No. 24 Pittsburgh to a come-from-behind win over No. 16 Texas A&M at the 1989 John Hancock Sun Bowl. With 4:20 left in the game and trailing 28-24, Van Pelt led the Panthers on a nine-play, 84-yard drive that culminated with a 44-yard touchdown pass to Henry Tuten with 2:19 to play to give Pittsburgh a 31-28 win. Van Pelt finished the day completing 20 of 40 passes and two touchdowns to win the C.M. Hendricks Most Valuable Player Award.

16. Orton Sets NCAA Standard

Just a freshman, Purdue's Kyle Orton did not know what to expect in his first bowl game. After throwing an interception for a touchdown to start the game, Orton came alive and gave the Boilermakers a 20-17 lead over No. 13 Washington State at the 2001 Wells Fargo Sun Bowl. Orton kept throwing pass after pass and when the final whistle blew, he had thrown the ball an NCAA bowl record 74 times, completing 38 for 419 yards - all Sun Bowl records. Orton would make two more

trips to El Paso in 2002 and 2004, throwing 983
yards in three trips to the Sun City.

15. Derrick Thomas lifts Tide

Alabama scored
nine-unanswered points in the fourth quarter and Derrick Thomas paced a defense that finally put the breaks on Army's option attack, as the Crimson Tide slipped past the Cadets, 29-28 at the 1988 John Hancock Sun Bowl. Thomas was amazing that day, he recorded just six tackles, but also had two tackles for a loss, one pass breakup and two blocked filed goal attempts. His efforts earned him the Jimmy Rogers, Jr. Most Valuable Lineman Trophy.

14. Arizona State's
Dynamic Duo

It took
a pair of freshman who were not considered starters when the season started to lead Arizona State to a 27-23 win over Purdue in the
2004 Vitalis Sun Bowl. Quarterback Sam Keller and running back Rudy Burgess did the improbable for Arizona State, as the two teamed up for a pair of fourth quarter comebacks in front of the largest crowd in Sun Bowl history - 51,288. Keller completed 25 of 45 passes for 370 yards and three touchdowns, while Burgess carried the ball 20 times for 125 yards and caught three passes for 64 yards. Burgess' two fourth-quarter touchdown catches from Keller were the deciding factor in a game that saw six lead changes.

13. North Carolina
tops Texas
Tech

It
was a seesaw battle at the 1974 Sun Bowl that featured five lead changes, but in the end turnovers helped No. 14 North
Carolina topple Texas Tech, 32-28. Red Raider running
back George Smith had an incredible day, rushing for a then record 177 yards and three touchdowns, but it was the Tar Heel passing game that made a difference. Nick Vidnovic and Ted Leverenz combined for two touchdown receptions in the second half. Billy Hite added a touchdown on the ground, but a successful two-point conversion was also a Vidnovic-Levernez connection. Ellis Alexander made one extra point attempt but missed the second to give the Tar Heels just a two-point lead with one minute remaining in the game. Texas Tech needed a miracle to get into field goal range. Instead, North Carolina's ferocious defense sacked quarterback Joe Barnes on second down in the end zone for a safety with 43 seconds remaining, giving the Tar Heels the 32-28 win.

12. Jesse's Grand Day

It was

the culmination of the perfect day. Nothing seemed to go wrong for the senior quarterback for Texas Western. Jesse Whittenton threw for three touchdowns, ran for two more scores and kicked five extra points to set the Sun Bowl record for points responsible for with 35 points. He broke the record established in the very first Sun Bowl by Ken Heineman, who accounted for 25 points in the 1935 edition of the game. Whittenton's efforts earned him C.M. Hendricks Most Valuable Player Honors. He was also a 1998 inductee in the Legends of the Sun Bowl, the association's hall of fame.

11. New Mexico State
Perfection

No. 17
New Mexico State entered the 1960 Sun Bowl on a 14-game winning streak and fresh off its Border Conference championship. Only one team stood in the way of the Aggies' perfect season - the 9-1 Utah State Aggies. NMSU trailed 13-7 at the half, but a 32-yard touchdown run by Bob Gaiters in the third quarter gave New Mexico State the lead, 14-13. C.M. Hendricks
Most Valuable Player Charley Johnson added a fourth quarter touchdown pass to E.A. Sims to seal a perfect 11-0 season. It is also the last time NMSU has appeared in a bowl game.

10. Haskell Henshaw and Lady Liberty

The
"Terror of Tombstone," Haskell Henshaw, led Arizona State
to back-to-back Sun Bowl appearances, but he may be most known for a single play. He led Arizona
State to back-to-back
Border Conference championships in 1939 and 1940. But it was on Jan. 1, 1941, where he became a household name nationwide, when he took a handoff on the Statue of Liberty play and raced 94 yards for a touchdown. At the time, it was the longest run from scrimmage in NCAA bowl history. He finished the game with 147 yards on 29 carries and was named to the 1941 All-American Bowl Team.

9. TCU Stuns USC

They
were not supposed to be there. They were a last-minute invite to the party and made the best of it. Texas
Christian University
put up 21 unanswered points to start the game and cruised to a 28-19 win over heavily-favored USC in the 65th edition of the game. TCU picked up 314 yards on the ground behind the running of Basil Mitchell, Patrick Batteaux and LaDainian

Tomlinson. Mitchell finished the day with 185 yards rushing on 19 carries to be named the game's most valuable player.

8. Maryland Does It Again

Great teams are often remembered for their great comebacks. For Maryland, it happened twice. Earlier in 1984, the No. 12 Terrapins engineered the greatest comeback in NCAA history against Miami. Maryland did it a second time in the Sun Bowl, as the Terps battled back from a 21-0 halftime deficit to upend Tennessee, 28-27. After trailing, 21-0, Maryland opened the third quarter scoring on four consecutive drives to take a 22-21 lead. But it seemed to good to be true, as Tennessee's Pete Badanjek returned the ensuing kickoff 100 yards for a touchdown. The two-point conversion failed, giving the Volunteers a 27-22 lead. Maryland battled back and scored the game's winning touchdown for the 28-27 win.

7. The Fog Bowl

A freak winter storm hit El Paso the night before the 1974 Sun Bowl, leaving snow on the floor of Sun Bowl Stadium. Although removed field, the snow left moisture that turned to steam when the sun came out during the game. Beside the drama, their was also a great game taking place, as Mississippi State just edged North Carolina, 26-24, in a game that featured seven lead changes. The game's final score came on a 16-play, 83-yard drive that culminated in a two-yard run up the middle by the game's most valuable player Terry Vitrano.

6. The Goal Line Stand

It was the highest scoring Sun Bowl to date, but the game was decided on a two-point conversion. Oklahoma State slipped past West Virginia, 35-33, when Shawn Mackey tackled West Virginia tight end Keith Winn just shy of the goal line on a two-point conversion attempt with 1:13 remaining. Thurman Thomas seemed to will Oklahoma State to victory, as he carried the ball 33 times for 157 yards and a record four touchdowns. On the game-winning drive, Thomas would carried the ball on eight of 13 plays, while his backup Barry Sanders picked up the slack on the drive. One year later, West Virginia played Notre Dame for the national title in the Fiesta Bowl.

5. How It All Started

The Sun Bowl started as a dream and Ken Heineman made it a reality, as the El Paso High School quarterback accounted for every single point for the locals. The El Paso High School All-Stars defeated the state's No. 2 Ranger High School, 25-21, in the inaugural Sun Bowl game played at El Paso High's Jones Stadium. That day, Heineman rushed for one touchdown, threw two more and added a 70-yard interception return for a score. He also kicked an extra point to finish the day responsible for all 25 El Paso points and more importantly, a game was born.

4. Stewart's Last Stand

Jonathan
Stewart overcame a bad case of turf toe to set a Brut Sun Bowl rushing record, as the Oregon
running back rushed for 253 yards on 23 carries. Stewart had just 23 yards rushing at the end of the first quarter, but then he exploded in the second quarter for 119 yards on eight carries, including a 71-yard touchdown run. He added 111 yards in the second half to end the game with an 11-yard per carry average. Stewart's performance is the 11th best effort in a bowl game.

3. Triple The Pleasure

Only
one time in the history of the NCAA has one school had three different players rush for over 100 yards in a collegiate bowl game - the 1975 Sun Bowl. The Pittsburgh Panthers relied on the triple-threat attack of Tony Dorsett, Elliot Walker and Robert Haygood to become the first and only team in bowl history to see three different players rush for over 100 yards in a bowl game. Dorsett ran for 142 yards on 27 carries and two touchdowns, Walker added 123 yards on 11 carries and a pair of touchdowns, while Haygood added 101 yards on 14 carries. The trio combined for 366 of the Panthers' 372 yards rushing.

2. Holmes Leads Texas To Victory

If
there was ever a moment where a player put a team on his back to carry them to victory, it would have to be Texas'
Priest Holmes in the 1994 Sun Bowl. Holmes was like a locomotive, gaining steam as the game went on. He rushed five times for 36 yards in the first quarter and carried the ball four times for 29 yards in the second quarter. He added six carries for 45 yards in the third quarter and added rushed 12 times for 61 yards in the fourth quarter. Along the way, he recorded a recording-tying four rushing touchdowns and touched the ball on eight of 10 plays on the Longhorns' game winning drive. His efforts earned Holmes the C.M. Hendricks Most Valuable Player Trophy.

1. Oregon State
Goes For Two

Oregon State
converted a two-point conversion with 23 seconds left to come back from a 14-point deficit in the fourth quarter to pull past Missouri, 39-38, at the 2006 Brut Sun Bowl. OSU's Matt Moore set a Sun Bowl record with four touchdown passes and accounted for 30 points in the game to win the C.M. Hendricks Most Valuable Player Award, but it was Yvenson Bernard's two-point plunge that sealed the game and the victory for head coach Mike Riley's Beavers. It was an offensive explosion that day, with the two teams combining for 1,018 yards of total offense. Oregon

State All-American Sammie Stroughter set up the game winning score with a 39-yard punt return to the OSU 46-yard line. Moore then engineered a seven-play scoring drive that culminated with a 14-yard scoring strike to Joe Newton. Riley called a timeout and decided to go for the win.