

The Elephant Story

The story of how Alabama became associated with the "elephant" goes back to the 1930 season when Coach Wallace Wade had assembled a great football team.



On October 8, 1930, sports writer Everett Strupper of the Atlanta Journal wrote a story of the Alabama-Mississippi game he had witnessed in Tuscaloosa four days earlier. Strupper wrote, "That Alabama team of 1930 is a typical Wade machine, powerful, big, tough, fast, aggressive, well-schooled in fundamentals, and the best blocking team for this early in the season that I have ever seen. When those big brutes hit you I mean you go down and stay down, often for an additional two minutes.

"Coach Wade started his second team that was plenty big and they went right to their knitting scoring a touchdown in the first quarter against one of the best fighting small lines that I have seen. For Ole Miss was truly battling the big boys for every inch of ground.

"At the end of the quarter, the earth started to tremble, there was a distant rumble that continued to grow. Some excited fan in the stands bellowed, 'Hold your horses, the elephants are coming,' and out stamped this Alabama varsity.

"It was the first time that I had seen it and the size of the entire eleven nearly knocked me cold, men that I had seen play last year looking like they had nearly doubled in size."

Strupper and other writers continued to refer to the Alabama linemen as "Red Elephants," the color referring to the crimson jerseys.

The 1930 team posted an overall 10-0 record. It shut out eight opponents and allowed only 13 points all season while scoring 217. The "Red Elephants" rolled over Washington State 24-0 in the Rose Bowl and were declared National Champions.