



## ashley's avenue

By Ashley Murphy

Unless you have been living under a rock for the past couple of months, then everyone should already know... "Its Football Time In Tennessee!" And this particular girl is a hardcore Tennessee Volunteers fan all the way. While the Vols managed to pull out a win during their first game against Western Kentucky, the next few games haven't been so lucky. But, I still can't back down from supporting my team.

Now, for those of you expecting an actual sports column with numbers, stats, and players, then this article may disappoint you. As a girl that used to utterly despise football, until about four years ago, (for the exception of the Peyton years at Tennessee) I can honestly say that I am still in the learning process of all of the football terms, plays, and the way the teams are ranked. But I am giving myself credit, because I can say that I'm doing pretty good at keeping up with the guys when it comes to Tennessee Volunteer football.

But this is to give all of those fans out there just a little bit of background and history about the University of Tennessee Volunteers and Neyland Stadium.

While several collegiate items boast the University of Tennessee's founding date of 1794, the football program technically didn't get its start until 1891 and Shields-Watkins Field wasn't even built until 1921. The name didn't officially become Neyland Stadium until a dedication ceremony during the Alabama game in 1962. It was named in honor of Robert Neyland, Tennessee's longest running coach who started his career in 1926 and went on for 21 years. But those years weren't consecutive. Neyland had to interrupt his coaching career twice due to military service, then concluded with his retirement in 1952 due to poor health.

When Shields-Watkins Field was originally built in 1921 it had seating for 3200 people. Since its opening, the now Neyland Stadium, has gone through about 19 renovations and now seats upwards of 100,000 people. It is currently the second largest football stadium in the South, fifth largest in the United States, and the ninth largest in the world! This comes in handy for the university and their record breaking attendance crowds during the football season.

It is also one of the very few college stadiums in the nation that is located on a lake or river front.

I'm sure no one needs a history lesson as to how Tennessee became the Volunteers, but for those inquiring minds that really don't know, Tennessee gained their nickname from the reputation the state received during many of the early American wars. So many Tennesseans volunteered in these wars that the State of Tennessee became known as the Volunteer State and in 1902 the team started to be known as the Volunteers. And it wasn't until 1922 that the Vols started wearing the orange and white colors that make up the team. Those particular colors were chosen by a member of the first team in 1891, Charles Moore. He suggested the colors after seeing the American Daisies that grew on The Hill of the University Campus.

In 1953 the University finally picked a mascot. After a poll revealed the student's inclinations to have a coon dog as the mascot, the Pep Club held a mascot contest during halftime of that season's Mississippi State game. The contest brought several coon hounds, but only one stood out when introduced. "Blue Smokey" howled loudly and students started cheering, causing Smokey to

howl again. Smokey's show of "spirit" gained him the new title of mascot.

As for that catchy little

Southland Marching Band started using the song after Lynn Anderson's version made it a popular hit in the

brought in Lane Kiffin as Head Coach and an entire new coaching staff, which includes Kiffin's father, Monte Kiffin, as Defensive Coordinator. While many were hoping for a big blowout season under the new Head Coach and his staff, the new team still has some growing to do.

As of print, Tennessee is 1-2 (beating Western Kentucky and losing to UCLA and Florida), but there is still a big football season ahead and plenty of time for the Volunteers to show what the "Lane Train" has brought in. Who knows, maybe in the next couple of years we'll see another National Championship Title to go along with the six that the Tennessee Volunteers already claim.

*Questions or comments about Ashley's Avenue?  
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tune that so many of our opponents despise, we Tennessee fans love "Rocky Top." It is so widely used by the Pride of the Southland Marching Band that many believe it to be the University of Tennessee's official fight song, when in actuality, it isn't. The Pride of the

1970s. The University's official fight song is "Down the Field."

Tennessee football has come a long way since its official start in 1891 and now they are starting new again this year. Since the departure of Phillip Fulmer last year, the University has

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