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Archie Manning Looks Back on 1970 Sugar Bowl

DECEMBER 30, 2015 BY [CHRISTINA STELBE](#)

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Archie with his Sugar Bowl MVP Trophy

The last time Ole Miss played in the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans was in 1970, 46 years ago. The Rebels were led by one of the nation's best quarterbacks, Ole Miss legend Archie Manning.

Manning recalls fond memories of that 1969 season, ending with the New Year's Day Sugar Bowl game. He and his family are excited that his Rebels are finally starting the New Year in New Orleans again.

"Olivia and I and Cooper and his family couldn't be happier," Manning said. "Eli won't be able to come, but the Mannings are just extremely, extremely excited about Ole Miss coming to the Sugar Bowl and we look forward to seeing

everyone."

What do you remember about the Sugar Bowl in 1970?

Manning: It was the 1969 season. Although it was kind of an up-and-down season for us, it turned out to be a memorable season. It was also the 100th year of college football, which was pretty special. All the teams wore a "100" decal on their helmets.

We were picked to be pretty good, but we lost our second and third games by one point – conference games. We got upset by Kentucky and then we lost a very memorable game to Alabama in Birmingham. It was a high-scoring game. Big numbers, record numbers, which was unusual for the SEC in 1969. That was probably the best game I ever had. It was one of the first college games ever televised at night on national television. They beat us 33-32. So we were kind of in bad shape early in the season.

We went on to beat three nationally ranked, undefeated teams, all in Jackson. We played our big games in Jackson in those days. We beat undefeated (No. 6) Georgia, we beat undefeated (No. 8) LSU and we beat undefeated (No. 3) Tennessee, so we were playing very well by the end of the year.

We lost one more game along the way, a nonconference game to Houston in the AstroDome. They were really good in those days, really good. When we played Tennessee late in the year, they were 7-0. We were 5-and-3 and ranked No. 18. We're playing good and Coach (John) Vaught loved to go to the Sugar Bowl. He had already taken seven teams to the Sugar Bowl. If we could beat Tennessee, he thought he could get us in the Sugar Bowl. In those days, the coaches, athletic directors and bowl officials lobbied each other to get in bowl games. The selection process wasn't set up like it is now.

Sure enough, we beat Tennessee 38-0 and the Sugar Bowl told us after the game we would be invited if we went ahead and beat Mississippi State, which we did, (48-22). So, we came with a 7-3 record and played a real good Arkansas team and were fortunate enough to beat them. So it capped off a really good season for us. We were a really good team and it was a real thrill for all of us to play in the Sugar Bowl.

Most of our guys were from Mississippi and kind of grew up watching Ole Miss teams and Coach Vaught teams go to the Sugar Bowl. Getting to go was a real thrill. Our fans and students had a great time. We had a great time and won the game, so it was very memorable.

A year later, I married Olivia and a week after that, I was drafted by the Saints, so we lived here for 45 years. I don't think anyone would have thought on Jan. 1, 1970 that it would be 46 years before Ole Miss came back to the Sugar Bowl. Olivia and I said we just hope in our lifetime that Ole Miss comes back to the Sugar Bowl. We're thrilled and I think by the way all the tickets are going, Ole Miss fans are excited about coming, too.

It's going to be fun. We're playing a formidable and a good opponent in Oklahoma State, which played

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Campus Briefs

Students Learn 'Real Politics' in Washington, D.C., Winter Session

OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates'

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Young Alumna Gives Back to School of Accountancy

OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy's new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying "thank you." "It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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Ole Miss In the News

Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to abate. The Federal Reserve's

in the 1946 Sugar Bowl. They'll travel good too, so it'll be a great time in New Orleans.

What is it about the Sugar Bowl that makes it such a destination game?

Manning: Well I think (the city of) New Orleans. We have great tradition, great history. Back when I was growing up, there wasn't but four bowl games that you thought about initially. It was the Rose, Cotton, Sugar and Orange. To be able to go to one of those back then – which Ole Miss did often – was special.

I think for Mississippi people and Ole Miss people, the Sugar Bowl is always the one you'd like to go to because of New Orleans and because of the history that Ole Miss has there.

What does it mean to you as a fan, alum and New Orleanian that Ole Miss is going back to the Sugar Bowl?

Manning: Well, I think it means that our program is moving in the right direction. Coach (Hugh) Freeze has brought us a long way in a short time, so it's a real compliment to Coach Freeze and his staff, the players and (athletics director) Ross Bjork and the athletics department. For us to fight our way through a tough Southeastern Conference schedule and be the second-highest rated team in the Southeastern Conference and come to the Sugar Bowl is a great accomplishment. I think everybody should be very proud.

What was your favorite memory from the Sugar Bowl?

Manning: We jumped off to an early lead and then we got some people hurt. Arkansas was really good, and we kind of had to hold them. Just to win. It means so much when you win your bowl game. It carries you through the spring and the offseason and it elevates everybody. I was fortunate enough to be named MVP of that game, so that was a thrill. I've still got the trophy.

To be on the Sugar Bowl Committee and to serve on that for over 25 years and to see Ole Miss come back is really a thrill for me.

Do you have any analysis of the upcoming game?

Manning: I think there will be some points scored. I don't think this is going to be 6-3.

Do you see any similarities between the way you played and the way (Ole Miss quarterback) Chad Kelly plays?

Manning: A little bit. I ran. Chad's a really good runner. He's got a great arm. I'm really proud of Chad. He's played good, solid football for Ole Miss. I think it's just a real credit to him. A year ago, he was playing junior college football and one year later he's playing in the Sugar Bowl. That's pretty doggone good.

Do you have any recommendations on what Ole Miss fans should do while in New Orleans?

Manning: I don't think the Mississippians that I know are going to have any problem finding something to do in New Orleans. There's plenty of good places to eat and a good time to be had. I have a restaurant here, uniquely named Manning's, and we are expecting pretty good crowds. I'm just excited.

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