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Albion Homecoming Football Through The Years: From 1919 to Present

Kenna Childress
Sports Editor

According to the Pro Football Hall of Fame, the first game of college football was played on Nov. 6, 1869 by Rutgers and Princeton University, which was also 23 years before professional football made its debut. While the first homecoming football game is under question, according to Active.com, the NCAA sanctioned the Nov. 25, 1911 University of Missouri vs. Kansas as the first ever homecoming game.

Eight years later in 1919, Albion College had their first homecoming game, and ever since, Albion College has had a football game to commemorate their homecoming celebrations. This was also the year the Albion College community voted to change their school colors from pink and green to purple and gold.

Homecoming at Albion has changed over the years. In years past, floats were created by the fraternities, and sometimes sororities, on campus and presented in a downtown homecoming parade. The homecoming queen was also given a ride in the parade.

"My junior year the parade got dumped, because we'd spend three nights making these," said Jim Whitehouse, '69. "Eventually we got tired of it."

Before the games, the fraternities would build door decorations based on who the football team was playing against as well. They were centered in front of the old fraternity houses, and could be up to two stories high.

"They would be these elaborate decorations," said Jim Whitehouse, '69, "Like a dragon, or the mouth of the big Tiki god, or something you'd have to walk through to get to the house."

Another homecoming tradition from earlier years is centered around the men's

cross country team. Their race would start before kick off, and was usually spaced out enough to where by the time the football game reached half-time, the race would be concluding, with the men finishing at the 50-yard-line on the field.

"It was so cool, because everybody would be on their feet," said Whitehouse. "Cheering, and yelling, and you don't get that kind of crowd in cross country normally."

The marching band has also become an integral part of homecoming football tradition. According to Halftime Magazine, the first halftime show was performed Oct. 19, 1907, by the University of Illinois band during their game against University of Chicago. The tradition took hold at homecomings across the country, including Albion.

"It was always a lot of fun for homecoming because alumni would come back and play with us," said Elizabeth Palmer, '10. "Friends of mine that had graduated and also my sister, who is an alumnae, and we're five years apart, so this was the first time we got to be in an ensemble together."

Alumni classes were also awarded each year at halftime based on the highest percentage of money donated to the college that year.

"Our class was presented with the highest percentage of giving," said Marsha Whitehouse '70. "I had to walk out onto the field and accept what I assume was some form of plaque. That was quite an honor."

Football has become a sport of American tradition, and attending football games has become a bonding activity for many. To those that enjoy it, it makes sense that the focal point of each homecoming would be an experience both alumni and current students can share in.

"Just sitting there, talking and



The 1919 Albion College Football team, who played the first ever Albion homecoming game. Since 1919, both football and homecoming traditions have changed and created a rich history that follows it (Photo courtesy of the Albion College Archives and Special Collections).



An Albion College homecoming parade float from 1925. Up until the late 1960s, the homecoming parade and float making were traditions of Albion College homecoming (Photo courtesy of the Albion College Archives and Special Collections)

cheering for the football team," said Palmer. "Those are some of my favorite memories."

Whitehouse also recalls how football reconnected him with an alumnus fraternity member Jim Pastor, who he became friends with and stayed in contact with even after graduation. After giving him a

tour of the house, they walked to the game together.

"We sat together and we became friends," said Whitehouse. "Long after I graduated, I would come to homecoming games and the first thing I'd do is see if I could find Jim Pastor, and I always did."

Annual Women's Lacrosse Alumni Game Returns for Homecoming Weekend



Albion College Women's Lacrosse (ACWL) competed at Central Michigan University on Oct. 2. ACWL will be hosting an alumni versus alumni game this Saturday as a part of the homecoming festivities (Photo courtesy of Cindy Flynn).

Erin Lathrop
Sports Editor

Every year since 2010 on homecoming weekend, the Albion College Women's Lacrosse team has put on an alumni game in which several alumni come back to play a scrimmage against the current members of the team.

Head Coach Laurie Merian keeps the game on homecoming weekend to give another reason for alumni to come back to campus along with all the other festivities.

A reason that Abby Sheklow, La Crescenta, Calif. senior, says this game means a lot to her is because of the team value of legacy.

"I think a huge part of ACWL (Albion College Women's Lacrosse) is a legacy and the legacy that the people before us leave," said Sheklow.

Read more at albionpleiad.com

Albion College 2021 Homecoming Schedule:

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22

All Day - Spirit Day!

11 a.m. - 1 p.m. - Spirit Day raffle table in the Kellogg Center

12 p.m. - 5 p.m. - Welcome and Registration for visitors will be held outside of the Kellogg Center

2 p.m. - 4 p.m. - BritX Talks at the Ludington Center followed by food and networking

4:30 p.m. - The Leaders in Philanthropy Celebration in the Kellogg Center Living Room

5:30 p.m. - Hall of Fame dinner in Upper Baldwin to induct new members into the Athletic Hall

7 p.m. - Albion College Women's Volleyball v.s. Oberlin in the Kresge Gymnasium

BritX Talks to Feature Alumni Award Winners

Sam Semerau
Editor-in-Chief

Today, five Albion College alumni will take the stage at the Ludington Center from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. to present BritX Talks as a part of homecoming festivities.

The event, organized by Institutional Advancement and the Career and Internship Center, has been an annual part of Albion's homecoming activities since 2017. BritX Talks was preceded by Briton Career Connections, a student-alumni networking event that launched in 2013. As attendance numbers failed to meet expectations, the format was changed to include talks provided by alumni followed by time for networking.

While last year's BritX Talks featured only faculty speakers to reduce travel due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the BritX Talk speakers are typically alumni with unique career paths that utilize their Albion education.

This year, all five speakers are set to be recipients at the Alumni Awards Ceremony which is to be held on Saturday. The awards ceremony will feature both 2020 and 2021 winners, as the traditional April date for the

ceremony had to be rescheduled due to COVID-19.

Dr. Coletta Thomas, '76

Thomas's talk, "The Journey from Albion to Becoming a Clinical Psychologist," will be from 2:03 p.m. to 2:23 p.m. in the Ludington Center. She is the recipient of the 2021 James L. Curtis Alumni Leadership Award, which is given to Black alumni that have significantly contributed to Albion College and its students.



The Albion Homecoming word cloud includes the responses to the following: List a word that describes Albion to you (Photo illustrated by Irene Corona-Avila)

Caryn Ryan, '79

Ryan's talk, "Have the Half Time of Your Life," will be from 2:23 p.m.

to 2:43 p.m. in the Ludington Center. She is one of the winners of the 2021 Distinguished Alumni Award, which is given to alumni that demonstrate success in career achievements as well as contributions to their community.

Shea Gardner, '12

Gardner's talk, "Healing Through Helping Others," will be from 2:43 p.m. to 3:03 p.m. in the Ludington Center. She is one of the winners of the 2021 Young Alumni Award, which honors alumni that have succeeded in the first 10 years after their graduation

Craig Kirby, '85

Kirby's talk, "Purpose, Belonging and Action," will be from 3:03 p.m. to 3:23 p.m. at the Ludington Center. He is a winner of the 2020 Distinguished Alumni Award, which is given to alumni that demonstrate success in career achievements as well as contributions to their community.

Dr. Bonciel Griffin-Burrell, '97

Griffin-Burrell's talk, "Navigating Dental School and Beyond," will be from 3:23 p.m. to 3:43 p.m. at the Ludington Center. She is a winner of the 2020 Distinguished Alumni Award, which is given to alumni that demonstrate success in career achievements as well as contributions to their community.

Read more at albionpleiad.com

"I grew up to be someone who always wanted to make sure someone could laugh when they are down or just someone to talk to about anything. With being honored to even submit my application, this shows me that all the people I got to share experiences with even if it was just a simple hello meant something to them and that is the most important thing to me about becoming a Royal Briton," said Thomas Nelson, Simi Valley, Calif. senior.

"For me, being a Homecoming Royal Briton would mean the world to me, as I am proud of being a part of both Albion community and the Albion College community. Being a Royal Briton would show to both communities that we are great together and are powerful to represent places we love," said Dom McDonald, Albion senior.

"A Royal Briton is someone who truly embodies the spirit of Albion and gives back to the community they call home. This is through service, philanthropy, leadership, and actively uplifting others to become a better version of themselves. By becoming a Royal Briton, I am representing the Latinx community, the LGBTQ+ community, Greek life, and so many others," said Frank Hernandez, Houston senior.

"This town and its people have shaped me into the woman I am today, and one of the ways I try to give back to the community that raised me is by educating people associated with the college about the community they reside in and how they can help community members. Being named a Homecoming Royal Briton would allow me to continue this work by making my name known to thousands of alumni all over the country," said Haley McQuown, Albion senior.

"For me especially, I would be honored to receive this title being a member of the community of Albion. This is important for me because it would show that the hard work that goes on to bridge the gap between the two entities is not going unnoticed. And finally, as a person of color, it would feel good to be recognized in a way that people who look like me are not often," said Akaiia Ridley, Albion senior.

What does it mean to you to be a Homecoming Royal Briton?

"To be a Homecoming Royal Briton would mean that I have been recognized by my peers as being not only an influential leader, but a genuine and inspirational young human being. If I am voted to as a Royal Brit, it will seem as a peer-elected reward for my service and dedication, not only in the past year, but in the past four years that I have been on campus," said Skylyr Zink, Manchester senior.

"If I were to have the privilege of taking part of something as meaningful as this, I would work even harder to continue my image as a Royal Briton and push others to strive for this merit," said Bree Henk, Warren junior.

"Being a Homecoming Royal Briton to me means a recognition of a person's hard work and dedication to the community and the campus. Royal Britons are people who are active on campus and have a positive attitude when interacting with others," said Caitlin Cummings, Gurnee, Ill. senior.

"Being a Homecoming Royal Briton means that you are an individual that gives a lot to the Albion community, that you are involved and show just how much you care through your actions and membership in organizations. Being a royal Briton means that you have made your home here at Albion but also made it home for others," said Shelby Palmer, Holt senior.

"To me this means being a role model for the younger generations of Britons as someone who faced a lot of adversity and wears a lot of hats. Albion has allowed me to flourish as a student, a sorority member and as a soldier. You can do anything you set your mind too," said Lexie Davidson, Crosswell senior.

Homecoming Match-up: Albion vs. Olivet

Erin Lathrop
Sports Editor

The Albion College football team is set to match-up against Olivet for its homecoming football game. The game is scheduled to take place on Saturday at 1 p.m. The homecoming football game is typically one of the focal points of Albion's homecoming festivities. This year is no exception.

The Albion College football team as of the writing of this article currently holds a record of 4 - 1. The team

defeated Mt. St. Joseph (36 - 20), De-fiance (51 - 0), Hanover (24 - 14), Wisconsin Eau Claire (23 - 20) and Kalamazoo College (49-0). They lost to Adrian earlier this month (7 - 21).

The single loss to Adrian, however, does not seem to have swayed Albion's can-do attitude.

"Fans should expect a great game between two really good teams, said Andy Durand, Pinckney Junior and wide receiver. "They should expect high effort all game long, from start to finish."

Albion and Olivet's football teams

last competed against each other in April 2021, in which Albion came out victorious. This does not cause the Albion College football team to take the game any less seriously.

"This is going to be a competitive game with two teams that will do whatever it takes to come out as the winner," said Durand.

Jack Bush, Chelsea senior and quarterback, shares a similar outlook.

"I think that people should expect a very competitive and physical game as Olivet is a very good team," said Bush.

Read more at albionpleiad.com

Albion College 2021 Homecoming Schedule:

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23

8 a.m. - 9 a.m. - Jason Raddatz will lead a walk along the Rail Trail at the Whitehouse Nature Center

9 a.m. - Washington Gardner High School and Middle School alumni will be treated to a buffet-style breakfast at the former Washington Gardner school building

9 a.m. - 2 p.m. - Welcome and Registration for visitors will be held outside of the Kellogg Center

9 a.m. - 12 p.m. - The Albion College Archives and Special Collections will host a digital exhibit and showcase yearbooks in Kellogg Center Living Room

10 a.m. - Women's Lacrosse Alumni vs. Alumni game

10 a.m. - The announcement of renovation plans for the Catholic Church on Cass Street to become the Alumni Unity Hall will be held at 501 E. Cass Street

10 a.m. - 12 p.m. - The sisters of Pi Beta Phi will gather for refreshments in the SEE space on the second floor of the Kellogg Center

11 a.m. - Former professors Doug White and Dale Kennedy will be honored with the dedication of the Wren trail near the rock with the rain site at the Whitehouse Nature Center

11 a.m. - 1 p.m. - A competition to find the "Best Food" and "Most Spirited" tailgaters will be held in the Ferguson parking lot, featuring live music from Who Cross Dat Road?

11 a.m. - 2 p.m. - The new eSports lounge will be shown off and prizes will be raffled off at the eSports Open House in the Ferguson Computer Lab

1 p.m. - The football team will take on Olivet at Sprankle-Sprandel Stadium

2 p.m. - 5 p.m. - Apple cider and donuts will be served and animals will be available to be handled at the Whitehouse Nature Center Visitor's Center

4:30 p.m. - The men's soccer team will take on Trine at Alumni Field

4:30 p.m. - The restoration of the Haven House near Bellemont manor will be celebrated at 901 Haven Road

5:30 p.m. - Winners of the 2020 and 2021 Alumni Awards will be celebrated at the Alumni Awards Ceremony in Upper Baldwin

7:30 p.m. - Concert Choir, Briton Singers, the Symphony Orchestra and the Jazz Ensemble will perform their Homecoming Concert at Goodrich Chapel



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