

Edwards Stadium History



January 16, 1986

Governor Arch Moore, in a meeting with area business and campus leaders, said money for a new football stadium is available if Marshall puts together a package asking for it.

June 1986

Board of Regents gives the go ahead for Marshall University to begin acquiring property east of campus for a proposed new football stadium.

September 9, 1986

Marshall's first purchase of land in the targeted area for the location of the new football stadium was approved by the Board of Regents. The property was purchased from the Cabell County Board of Education for \$94,000. The parcel of land is located at 21st St. and 4th Avenue.

January 15, 1987

In his State of the State address, Gov. Arch Moore asked the Board of Regents to approve funding for the sale of bonds to finance the stadium.

June 7, 1988

The Legislature passed a state budget that gave the Regents authority to construct a new 30,000 seat facility if they can find a way to fund it.

July 9, 1988

The state Board of Regents passed a resolution that endorsed the construction of the new football stadium.

October 4, 1988

An architect's drawing of the new stadium is revealed to the Board of Regents by Stafford Consultants of Princeton. Stafford, along with Rosser Fabrap of Atlanta, will design the stadium. Regents were given a 1,800 square foot piece of property on the stadium site by the Huntington Area Chamber of Commerce.

November 1, 1988

The BOR voted to buy an \$8,900 parcel of land for the new stadium and hired investment bankers who will decide how to finance the project.

January 11, 1989

Board of Regents approves a \$70 million bond sale which includes \$30 million for the MU football stadium.

December 9, 1989

Demolition begins to clear a site for stadium construction.

July 18, 1990

Groundbreaking ceremonies take place for the new stadium at 2 p.m.

October 1990

Steel beams that will support the press box, Big Green Room and luxury suites on the west side of the stadium are erected.

December 16, 1990

Marshall athletic officials announce that the first game in the new stadium will feature Marshall hosting New Hampshire on Sept. 7, 1991 at 7 p.m.

September 7, 1991

The stadium opens as a then school record crowd of 33,116 watches the Thundering Herd edge New Hampshire, 24-23.

February 10, 1992

The Huntington Sports Committee announced that the NCAA has awarded Huntington the National I-AA Championship for 1992 and 1993 with an option for 1994.

July 1992

Marshall football staff and administrators move into the newly completed facilities building at the north end of the stadium.

December 19, 1992

Marshall defeats Youngstown State, 31-28, to win the National Championship in front an NCAA championship game record-crowd of 31,304.

September 3, 1993

James F. Edwards Field is dedicated in pre-game ceremonies at Marshall University Stadium prior to the Marshall-Morehead State contest.

July 1995

Construction of 2,000 south end zone seats increase the stadium's capacity to 30,000.

December 21, 1996

Marshall ends a perfect 15-0 season with a convincing 49-29 win over Montana for the NCAA Division I-AA National Title.

December 5, 1997

Marshall defeats Toledo, 34-14, to win the inaugural Mid-American Conference Championship.

October 5, 1998

Marshall avenges its only MAC loss of 1997 by defeating Miami, 31-17, in front of crowd of 33,204, now the second largest in school history.

December 4, 1998

Marshall wins its second consecutive Mid-American Conference Championship by beating Toledo, 23-17, before 28,021 fans. With the win, Marshall extended its school record to 24 straight victories at home.

December 3, 1999

Marshall earned its third consecutive MAC crown with a thrilling 34-30 come-from-behind victory over Western Michigan in a game that was the second highest rated in the history of the ESPN2 network. The stadium was sold out for four of seven games, giving the Herd a 96% capacity crowd for the season.

April 2000

Construction began on an additional seats, bowling in the south end of the stadium and giving the stadium a capacity of 38,019. The project started by taking down the scoreboard, moving it back and up to its current position.

August 2000

Newly expanded Marshall Stadium debuts with a seating capacity of 38,019.

May 2001

The addition of a state of the art video replay board is announced. The new board was installed in August prior to the start of the season.

September 8, 2001

"Herd Vision" makes its debut.

December 7, 2002

Marshall claims fifth MAC title in six years with 49-45 victory over Toledo.

August 30, 2003

Marshall plays the 100th game in stadium history in the season opener against Hofstra.

October 11, 2003

Marshall sets a new single game home attendance record with 33,537 fans at the Kent State game.

November 28, 2003

Marshall Stadium is re-named in honor of Joan C. Edwards at halftime of the Herd's 28-0 win over rival Ohio.

September 2004

A new Daktronics scoreboard with team a full team stats display in installed opposite of Marshall's main video scoreboard.

July 2005

Installation begins on a new FieldTurf playing surface at the stadium. The FieldTurf made its debut during fall practice.

September 1, 2005

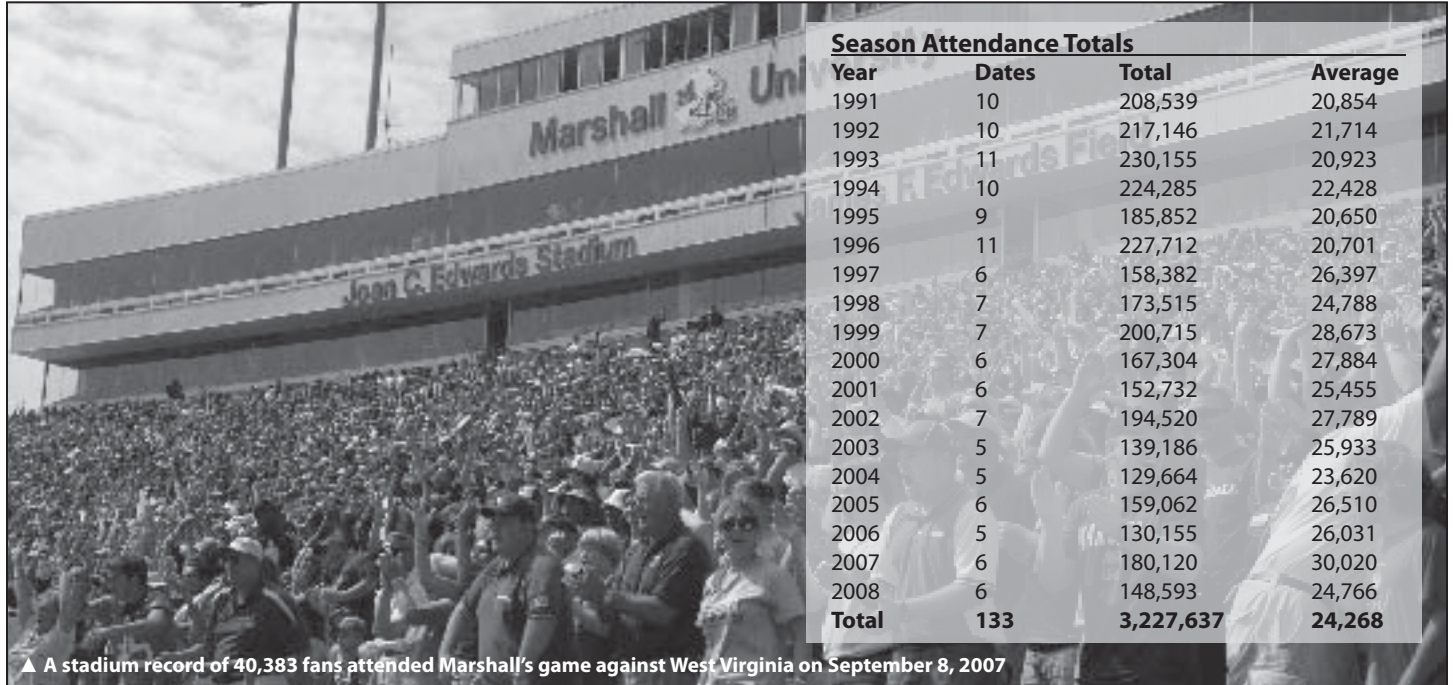
Marshall's season opener against William & Mary featured the public unveiling of the new FieldTurf surface at Edwards Stadium.

September 10, 2005

A Joan C. Edwards Field-play record crowd of 36,914 watched the Thundering Herd play host to Kansas State on ESPN2. The Wildcats won 21-19.

September 2009

Joan C. Edwards Stadium will host its 18th football season. Marshall has a winning percentage that is better than 87% in the facility, the highest winning percentage of any FBS school in its current stadium. Alabama is second with a .822 winning percentage at Bryant-Denny Stadium.



▲ A stadium record of 40,383 fans attended Marshall's game against West Virginia on September 8, 2007

Season Attendance Totals

Year	Dates	Total	Average
1991	10	208,539	20,854
1992	10	217,146	21,714
1993	11	230,155	20,923
1994	10	224,285	22,428
1995	9	185,852	20,650
1996	11	227,712	20,701
1997	6	158,382	26,397
1998	7	173,515	24,788
1999	7	200,715	28,673
2000	6	167,304	27,884
2001	6	152,732	25,455
2002	7	194,520	27,789
2003	5	139,186	25,933
2004	5	129,664	23,620
2005	6	159,062	26,510
2006	5	130,155	26,031
2007	6	180,120	30,020
2008	6	148,593	24,766
Total	133	3,227,637	24,268

1991 (10-0)		
33,116	Sept. 7, 1991	Marshall 24, New Hampshire 23
24,127	Sept. 14, 1991	Marshall 70, Morehead State 11
22,223	Sept. 28, 1991	Marshall 46, Brown 0
20,466	Nov. 2, 1991	Marshall 27, Western Car. 24 (2OT/HC)
18,003	Nov. 9, 1991	Marshall 37, The Citadel 31
17,535	Nov. 16, 1991	Marshall 61, VMI 0
18,256	Nov. 23, 1991	Marshall 63, East Tennessee State 9
16,840	Nov. 30, 1991	Marshall 20, Western Illinois 17 (OT)*
16,889	Dec. 7, 1991	Marshall 41, Northern Iowa 13*
21,084	Dec. 14, 1991	Marshall 14, Eastern Kentucky 7*
1992 (9-1)		
27,062	Sept. 5, 1992	Marshall 49, Morehead State 7
25,556	Sept. 12, 1992	Marshall 63, Eastern Illinois 28
28,272	Oct. 10, 1992	Marshall 48, Furman 6
21,135	Oct. 24, 1992	Marshall 52, Tenn.-Chattanooga 23
21,497	Nov. 7, 1992	Appalachian St. 37, Marshall 34 (HC)
15,388	Nov. 14, 1992	Marshall 52, Tennessee Tech 14
16,598	Nov. 28, 1992	Marshall 44, Eastern Kentucky 0*
14,011	Dec. 5, 1992	Marshall 35, Middle Tennessee 21*
16,323	Dec. 12, 1992	Marshall 28, Delaware 7*
31,304	Dec. 19, 1992	Marshall 31, Youngstown State 28S
1993 (10-1)		
27,117	Sept. 4, 1993	Marshall 56, Morehead State 0
21,208	Sept. 11, 1993	Marshall 29, Murray State 3
29,464	Sept. 18, 1993	Marshall 13, Georgia Southern 3
19,187	Oct. 9, 1993	Marshall 51, VMI 0
25,175	Oct. 23, 1993	Marshall 35, Appalachian State 3 (HC)
19,018	Nov. 6, 1993	Marshall 33, East Tennessee State 9
18,055	Nov. 20, 1993	Marshall 20, Western Carolina 16
13,554	Nov. 27, 1993	Marshall 28, Howard 14*
13,687	Dec. 4, 1993	Marshall 34, Delaware 31*
14,472	Dec. 11, 1993	Marshall 24, Troy State 21*
29,218	Dec. 18, 1993	Youngstown State 17, Marshall 5S
1994 (9-0)		
23,885	Sept. 3, 1994	Marshall 71, Morehead State 7
24,177	Sept. 10, 1994	Marshall 24, Tennessee Tech 10
20,037	Sept. 24, 1994	Marshall 48, West Virginia State 0
26,036	Oct. 1, 1994	Marshall 62, Tenn.-Chattanooga 21
24,968	Oct. 15, 1994	Marshall 38, Western Carolina 14
23,260	Oct. 29, 1994	Marshall 42, The Citadel 30 (HC)
20,405	Nov. 12, 1994	Marshall 35, Furman 14
17,349	Nov. 26, 1994	Marshall 49, Middle Tennessee 14*
16,494	Dec. 3, 1994	Marshall 28, James Madison 21 (OT)*
27,674	Dec. 17, 1994	Youngstown State 28, Boise State 14S
1995 (7-2)		
23,743	Sept. 9, 1995	Marshall 45, Tennessee Tech 14
19,983	Sept. 16, 1995	Marshall 37, Georgia Southern 7
19,702	Oct. 7, 1995	Marshall 56, VMI 21
26,982	Oct. 21, 1995	Appalachian State 10, Marshall 3
18,749	Nov. 4, 1995	Marshall 52, East Tennessee St. 0 (HC)
17,080	Nov. 18, 1995	Marshall 30, Hofstra 28
13,035	Nov. 25, 1995	Marshall 38, Jackson State 8*
14,472	Dec. 2, 1995	Marshall 41, Northern Iowa 14*
32,106	Dec. 16, 1995	Montana 22, Marshall 20S
1996 (11-0)		
26,054	Sept. 7, 1996	Marshall 55, Howard 27
21,851	Sept. 14, 1996	Marshall 42, West Virginia State 7
20,755	Sept. 28, 1996	Marshall 37, Western Kentucky 3
22,078	Oct. 5, 1996	Marshall 45, Tenn.-Chattanooga 0

19,330	Oct. 19, 1996	Marshall 56, Western Carolina 21
21,038	Nov. 2, 1996	Marshall 56, The Citadel 25 (HC)
22,615	Nov. 16, 1996	Marshall 42, Furman 17
15,429	Nov. 30, 1996	Marshall 59, Delaware 14*
14,096	Dec. 7, 1996	Marshall 54, Furman 0*
14,414	Dec. 14, 1996	Marshall 31, Northern Iowa 14*
30,052	Dec. 21, 1996	Marshall 49, Montana 29S
1997 (6-0)		
26,724	Sept. 20, 1997	Marshall 48, Western Illinois 7
26,642	Oct. 11, 1997	Marshall 52, Akron 17
21,474	Oct. 25, 1997	Marshall 48, Eastern Michigan 25
23,509	Nov. 8, 1997	Marshall 28, Bowling Green 0 (HC)
32,012	Nov. 15, 1997	Marshall 27, Ohio 0
28,021	Dec. 5, 1997	Marshall 34, Toledo 14%
% Mid-American Conference Championship Game		
1998 (7-0)		
25,652	Sept. 12, 1998	Marshall 42, Troy 12
33,204	Oct. 3, 1998	Marshall 31, Miami 17
23,481	Oct. 17, 1998	Marshall 42, Kent State 7
21,534	Oct. 24, 1998	Marshall 42, Ball State 10
23,082	Nov. 7, 1998	Marshall 28, Central Michigan 0 (HC)
18,477	Nov. 21, 1998	Marshall 29, Wofford 27
28,085	Dec. 4, 1998	Marshall 33, Toledo 17%
% Mid-American Conference Championship Game		
1999 (7-0)		
26,374	Sept. 11, 1999	Marshall 63, Liberty 3
29,741	Sept. 18, 1999	Marshall 35, Bowling Green 16
30,194	Sept. 25, 1999	Marshall 34, Temple 0
30,203	Oct. 14, 1999	Marshall 38, Toledo 13
30,081	Oct. 30, 1999	Marshall 41, Northern Illinois 9 (HC)
26,053	Nov. 26, 1999	Marshall 34, Ohio 3
28,069	Dec. 3, 1999	Marshall 34, Western Michigan 30%
% Mid-American Conference Championship Game		
2000 (5-1)		
30,225	Aug. 31, 2000	Marshall 63, SE Missouri State 7
29,089	Sept. 30, 2000	Marshall 47, Buffalo 14
27,109	Oct. 5, 2000	Western Michigan 30, Marshall 10
25,646	Oct. 21, 2000	Marshall 34, Kent State 12 (HC)
30,419	Nov. 11, 2000	Marshall 51, Miami 31
24,816	Dec. 2, 2000	Marshall 19, Western Michigan 14%
% Mid-American Conference Championship Game		
2001 (6-0)		
27,533	Sept. 8, 2001	Marshall 49, Massachusetts 20
32,034	Sept. 29, 2001	Marshall 37, Bowling Green 31
30,063	Oct. 20, 2001	Marshall 42, Central Michigan 21 (HC)
22,129	Oct. 27, 2001	Marshall 50, Akron 33
24,932	Nov. 17, 2001	Marshall 42, Ohio 18
16,041	Nov. 24, 2001	Marshall 38, Youngstown State 24
2002 (7-0)		
31,042	Aug. 31, 2002	Marshall 50, Appalachian State 17
32,900	Sept. 20, 2002	Marshall 26, UCF 21
28,200	Oct. 12, 2002	Marshall 66, Buffalo 21
27,121	Oct. 19, 2002	Marshall 24, Troy 7 (HC)
26,851	Nov. 12, 2002	Marshall 36, Miami 34
23,824	Nov. 30, 2002	Marshall 38, Ball State 14
24,582	Dec. 7, 2002	Marshall 49, Toledo 45%
% Mid-American Conference Championship Game		
2003 (4-1)		

25,141	Aug. 30, 2003	Marshall 45, Hofstra 21
31,511	Sept. 12, 2003	Toledo 24, Marshall 17
33,537	Oct. 11, 2003	Marshall 49, Kent State 33 (HC)
29,884	Nov. 1, 2003	Marshall 42, Akron 24
19,113	Nov. 28, 2003	Marshall 28, Ohio 0
2004 (4-1)		
29,382	Sept. 4, 2004	Troy 17, Marshall 15
27,229	Sept. 29, 2004	Marshall 33, Miami 25
30,128	Oct. 23, 2004	Marshall 48, Buffalo 14 (HC)
23,122	Oct. 30, 2004	Marshall 20, UCF 3
19,803	Nov. 20, 2004	Marshall 31, Western Michigan 21
2005 (3-3)		
25,102	Sept. 1, 2005	Marshall 36, William & Mary 24
36,914	Sept. 10, 2005	Kansas State 21, Marshall 19
25,218	Oct. 1, 2005	Marshall 16, SMU 13 (OT)
27,182	Oct. 15, 2005	Marshall 20, UAB 19 (HC)
22,238	Nov. 8, 2005	Southern Miss 27, Marshall 24 (OT)
22,408	Nov. 19, 2005	East Carolina 34, Marshall 29
2006 (4-1)		
26,861	Sept. 9, 2006	Marshall 54, Hofstra 31
27,572	Oct. 4, 2006	UCF 23, Marshall 22
29,204	Oct. 28, 2006	Marshall 41, Memphis 27
25,128	Nov. 4, 2006	Marshall 42, Tulane 21
20,783	Nov. 18, 2006	Marshall 49, UTEP 21
2007 (3-3)		
40,383	Sept. 8, 2007	West Virginia 48, Marshall 23
27,255	Sept. 15, 2007	New Hampshire 48, Marshall 35
27,234	Oct. 21, 2007	Southern Miss 33, Marshall 24
31,768	Oct. 27, 2007	Marshall 34, Rice 21
26,718	Nov. 10, 2007	Marshall 26, East Carolina 7
26,762	Nov. 24, 2007	Marshall 46, UAB 39
2008 (3-3)		
25,661	Aug. 30, 2008	Marshall 30, Illinois State 10
27,349	Sept. 13, 2008	Marshall 17, Memphis 16
29,237	Oct. 3, 2008	Cincinnati 33, Marshall 10
20,716	Oct. 28, 2008	Marshall 37, Houston 23
24,059	Nov. 15, 2008	UCF 30, Marshall 14
21,571	Nov. 29, 2008	Tulsa 38, Marshall 35

* NCAA Division I-AA Playoffs
 \$ NCAA Division I-AA National Championship Game

Edwards Stadium History

Joan C. Edwards Stadium hosted the 1,000 game in school history when the Herd defeated Miami on September 29, 2004, to add to Marshall's home field mystique.

The Herd lost only five times in the first 100 games at the stadium, marking an amazing .950 winning percentage. Marshall has posted an overall mark of 115-17 (.871) in the facility - the best home field mark in the nation. The following are recaps of 12 great games at the facility.

September 7, 1991

Marshall 24, New Hampshire 23

It was called the "Field of Dreams" by many Marshall fans. A 30,000 seat, magnificent, modern facility for Thundering Herd football. It included 20 ultra-plush sky boxes, a Big Green donors room on level two, spacious work areas for the press on level three and working boxes on level five for game video, coaches, security, visiting radio and athletic directors.

Marshall fans were excited about the home opener on September 7, despite a poor game and 9-3 loss at Appalachian State the week before in Boone, NC. The opponent for the opener would be new to everyone, even the man who helped set up the game. New Hampshire President Dale Nitzchke had been Marshall's headman from 1984-1990 and had agreed to open the new stadium with his new school.

On a beautiful autumn evening in Huntington, a crowd of 33,116 people, 3,116 over capacity, gave Marshall a larger crowd than WVU had drawn earlier in the day. At kickoff everyone was standing, as the sun slide down behind the west stands and painted the sky with deep reds, purple and blue, and MU prepared to open a new era.

The first score at Marshall Stadium came off the leg of senior Dewey Klein, who hit a 32-yard field goal at the 10:09 mark of the first quarter. The lead was extended to 10-0 late in the quarter when Michael Payton hit Boyd Dowler with a 75-yard score. New Hampshire came roaring back with 17 straight points in the second quarter and threatened to lead at the half until Glenn Pedro got in from one-yard out with 30 seconds left to send the teams into make-shift locker rooms locked at 17-17.

Defense stepped up in the second half, after Marshall took a 24-17 lead on a 46-yard touchdown pass to Troy Brown only 2:40 into the third quarter. UNH quarterback Matt Griffin led the Wildcats down for a score with 1:42 left in the game that made the score 24-23. UNH chose to go for the win on the road, but Griffin misfired on the two-point attempt.

The Wildcats successfully recovered an on-side kick and had one more shot at beating the Herd in the opener. Griffin had a fourth down pass attempt batted away from his receiver by defensive back Charles McGregor to seal a hard fought win for the Herd.

The players circled the field in a victory lap, shaking and slapping the hands of fans all around the jam-packed facility. Marshall football had successfully entered into a new era.

November 2, 1991

Marshall 27, Western Carolina 24 (3 OT)

Marshall entered the game on a two-game losing streak, having lost at N.C. State, and having dropped an important Southern Conference game at UT-Chattanooga.

Marshall owned a four-game win streak over WCU. One more loss would not only kill league hopes for the season, but also a possible third trip to the I-AA playoffs.

The game was scoreless at the half, but Glenn Pedro gave MU the first lead with a four-yard run 42 seconds into the second half. Western rebounded to tie the game 7-7. Dewey Klein's 19-yard field goal put the Herd up 10-7 near the end of the third, but Western tied the game with 6:11 to play in the fourth.

In the first overtime, WCU's Kevin Thigpen scored his second TD of the game on a one-yard run. Marshall answered when Todd Donnan found Ricardo Clark for a nine-yard score. MU took the ball first in the second overtime and Pedro scored his second TD, from nine-yards. Thigpen topped Pedro with a third score, hauling in a nine-yard pass from Derrick Harris.

Western was on offense to start the third overtime, but failed on a fourth and one at the 16-yard line. Marshall only needed a field goal for the win.

Marshall ran the ball three times, but only got to the 18-yard line to set Klein up for a 34-yard try. It was wobbly and it was right. After it hit the right upright the ball awkwardly fell in over the crossbar for the win.

November 28, 1992

Marshall 44, Eastern Kentucky 0

Marshall fans were licking their chops for a first round playoff rematch with Eastern Kentucky and their coach, Roy Kidd. The Colonels' coach had complained loud and long about having to play the semifinal game at Marshall Stadium in 1991, despite being ranked higher. He also didn't like the fact that, in 1991, the teams had to dress three blocks away, at the Henderson Center, due to the new facilities building not being completed.

EKU had the all-time leading rusher in I-AA football, Markus Thomas, who embarrassed the Herd in 1989 with a 300-yard rushing performance. On this day, however, it was Thomas and his Colonel teammates that were embarrassed by the high-powered Marshall offense and a better-than-its-press defense that was often overshadowed by offensive stars Michael Payton, Mike Bartrum, Orlando Hatchett and Troy Brown.

Hatchett got it going for Marshall with a two-yard touchdown late in the first quarter. A David Merrick extra-point made it 7-0. With 19 seconds left in the first, Merrick added a 34-yard field goal for a 10-0 lead. Less than three minutes into the second, Payton hit Brown with the first of three scores on the day to give Marshall a 17-0 lead and the maroon and white-clad Colonels appeared to be in over their heads. Brown put an exclamation mark on that thought with a 71-yard punt return for touchdown.

Nothing EKU tried worked. Marshall had an interception that led to a score and held the NCAA I-AA's all-time leading rusher to minus-four yards on nine carries for the day. MU out-gained EKU 524 to 192 in total offense.

Just to rub it in a bit, Marshall coach Jim Donnan put 300-plus pound offensive tackle Johnny McKee in the backfield on Marshall's next trip to the redzone and he did his "Refrigerator" Perry impersonation with a one-yard score to make it 31-0 in the second quarter. Merrick hit a 33-yard field goal to end a 34-0 half dominated by the Herd.

In the third, Payton and Brown hooked up for a 44-yard touchdown and a Merrick 24-yard field goal made it a 44-0 final. Marshall had used smoke for the first time to enter the field in the 1991 semifinal game, but on this day the only thing smoked were the Colonels.



December 19, 1992

Marshall 31, Youngstown State 28

Marshall Football was all settled into its new stadium and athletic facility for 1992.

The Huntington Sports Committee, newly formed and ready to host the I-AA title game for at least the next three years at Marshall University Stadium, was hoping the Herd would make a return appearance in the title game as they had in 1987 and 1991. Marshall had lost close games both times, but there was no doubt the 1992 team was loaded. The Herd was the preseason number one pick. Marshall made the playoffs, but had not won the SC due to an upset loss at Western Carolina. The team also lost its first home game when Appalachian State came back to beat MU 37-34 in week nine.

The 8-3 Herd got on a roll in the playoffs, dusting Eastern Kentucky 44-0, Middle Tennessee State 35-21 and Delaware 28-7. Next was the rematch everyone in Huntington wanted: Marshall versus Youngstown State. The Penguins overcame a MU lead in the title game in Statesboro, Georgia, the year before to win 25-17.

In front of the largest crowd to ever attend an I-AA championship game, fans and CBS Television got a dandy. After a scoreless first quarter, MU scored on a Michael Payton pass to Mike Bartrum and Orlando Hatchett made it 14-0 at the half.

It was more of the same in the third quarter when Glenn Pedro stretched the lead to 21-0. When Hatchett caught a scoring pass from Payton with 5:46 left in the third, MU had a 28-0 lead.

Things started going bad when linebacker William King sustained a concussion and cornerback George Thomas injured his knee.

YSU started to come back as the Marshall defense looked stunned and the offense bogged down. YSU scored four times, led by bullish back Tamron Smith, who ran over and through Marshall to tie the game at 28-28 late in the fourth quarter.

The Herd looked to be in trouble when Payton was hit on Marshall's first play. But, Payton bounced back by engineering a drive that mixed in throws to Brown and runs by Hatchett. The Herd quickly moved to a first and goal at the five with 14 seconds left to play.

Willie Merrick, who was attempting the first field goal of his career, came onto the field. Merrick was one of the best soccer players to play at Marshall, but got the chance in this game after his brother, David missed Thursday's practice because he overslept. With his regular kicker suspended coach Jim Donnan turned to Willie, who had kicked one extra point in his career prior to the championship game.

Merrick's 22-yard field goal was true and, with 10 seconds left, MU led 31-28. The kickoff return left Youngstown State deep in their own territory and a last, desperate pass was picked off by Brown, in as an extra defensive back.

Marshall finally had its championship and Huntington celebrated the win, as well as the Phoenix-like return of football from the ashes of the 1970 plane crash to the glory of a national title.

December 4, 1993

Marshall 34, Delaware 31

The defending I-AA champs were back in the quarterfinals for a third straight year, hosting the Blue Hens of Delaware. Marshall defenders had their hands full trying to find the man with the ball against the Blue Hens' Wing-T offense, but the Blue Hen defenders knew who the man was for Marshall.

Running back Chris Parker stepped into the void left by graduation of Orlando Hatchett and, along with fullback Glenn Pedro, the Marshall running game had not missed a beat. Parker and Pedro teamed for more than 2,000 yards, with Parker getting about two-thirds of that total.

Parker scored first, but Delaware came back with a score and field goal to go up 10-7. Parker scored from five-yards out, but UD threw a touchdown pass and went to the locker room up 17-14. Parker took over the third quarter and into the fourth, piling up his third and fourth scores of the day. A David Merrick field goal gave MU a 31-17 lead.

Delaware answered with two touchdowns, the final one at the 1:14 mark, to tie the game at 31. The ensuing kickoff sailed to Marshall's Tim Martin, who returned the ball 39 yards, but fumbled ahead into Delaware territory. In a pile of Blue Hens, Marshall linebacker Brian Stump managed to come up with the ball at the Delaware 39-yard line.

Five plays later, Merrick showed there were good bloodlines in the family. David calmly nailed a 38-yard field goal with three seconds left to beat Delaware 34-31.

December 7, 1996

Marshall 54, Furman 0

The toughest rival for Marshall to overcome in the Southern Conference was Furman. Marshall was 0-26-1 in the first five seasons of SC play and did not beat Furman until their 13th meeting. Even when MU finally toppled the Paladins in 1988, Furman came back to upset the Herd in the I-AA Quarterfinals and went on to win the National Championship.

The Paladins made their way to Huntington for the last regular season game of 1996. Marshall was on its way, behind Randy Moss and Eric Kresser, to an undefeated season, but when Furman went to the locker room with a 17-14 lead, their players felt they were going to knock off the undefeated Herd and many ran to the goal post and punched the "HERD" on the padding before running back to the sideline and up the ramp to the locker room. The slightly enraged the Herd, shut out Furman 28-0 in the second half and finished the regular season 11-0.

Unfortunately for Furman, they had to return to Huntington for the quarterfinals of the I-AA playoffs, just as they had in 1988, but the Herd

exacted revenge for the years of humiliation at the hands of the Purple Paladins. Marshall scored 14 in the 1st, 10 in the second, 16 in the third and 14 more in the fourth while holding Furman scoreless to put up a 54-0 rout in the final meeting between the schools. Furman gained only six first downs, and 27 yards of total offense in the first half, while the Marshall offense piled up 539 yards in total offense in the game.

December 21, 1996

Marshall 49, Montana 29

Marshall had outscored its opponents 144-28 in the 1996 I-AA playoffs and no one expected any less in the championship rematch with the Grizzlies. Montana had defeated Marshall 22-20 the previous year to take the title back home, so they knew all about Marshall. What they were unable to prepare for was Randy Moss.

Bob Pruett took over a team that was loaded and quickly added Florida transfer Eric Kresser to the team and gave Moss his last chance at collegiate football. Catching a TD in every game, 24 on the season, I-AA defenders were over-matched all season long.

Moss and Kresser hooked up for four touchdowns, while Doug Chapman added two more and Tim Openlander kicked two field goals in a rout for the Herd that was 46-6 at one point early in the fourth quarter.

Moss set a MU, Southern Conference and Division I record with 28 touchdowns in one season, while Marshall won the SC league title and their second National Championship with a school record 15-0 season.

December 5, 1997

Marshall 34, Toledo 14

Marshall left I-AA football and the Southern Conference for Division I-A and a return to the Mid-American Conference in 1997.

After a close loss to West Virginia in MU's first I-A game, the Herd had won at Army, at Kent State, at defending league champ Ball State and at home against Akron before stubbing a toe late at Miami. The Herd ran the table, and a Miami loss gave Marshall an East Division Title in its first season.

Toledo was 9-2, 7-1 in the West Division, when they came to town for the title game. Randy Moss was continuing what had begun in I-AA, now with Chad Pennington at the helm. Marshall's defense was no slouch either, shutting out Bowling Green and Ohio in back-to-back games to clinch the East. The game was held on a Friday night, with a light snow predicted.

Two hours before kickoff, the weathermen changed the story as the snow began to fly. By kickoff, the field was covered with about an inch. Both teams struggled with the conditions and Toledo led 7-3 at the half.



The second half was vintage Marshall. Despite the elements the Herd began to click. Pennington and Moss hooked up twice in the third quarter to give the Herd an insurmountable lead. Billy Malashevich added a 25-yard field goal to start the fourth quarter. Moss and Pennington struck again from 20 yards and when Doug Chapman added a score late, MU led 34-7.

A late score by Toledo set the final. "The Snow Bowl," as Marshall fans still call the game, gave MU the first of four straight MAC titles and the invitation to the Motor City Bowl.

December 4, 1998

Marshall 23, Toledo 17

Very little luck was needed for Marshall to return to the MAC title game. The Herd stormed to a 10-1 regular season mark, and was undefeated against the East Division. For the second consecutive year, Marshall hosted Toledo for the league crown.

This time, the game was much closer.

MU scored first on Chris Hanson's rush on a fake field-goal. Toledo answered with a Chester Tait touchdown for a 7-6 lead. Neither team gave much on defense and, in the second quarter, bad luck raised its ugly head. Chad Pennington was hit awkwardly on the sidelines by Toledo defenders and suffered a groin injury that he could not get up and walk away from.

Freshman Byron Leftwich, who had thrown only 12 passes all season, came in and immediately threw an interception. Marshall's hopes looked dim, even when the defense held and Pennington limped back into the game. It remained 7-6 Toledo at half.

The two teams battled through a scoreless third quarter as Pennington continued to play in obvious pain. He limped to the line, to the sidelines and to the huddle. The Rockets started the fourth quarter with a Todd France field goal to take a 10-6 lead, but Pennington's heart was bigger than his pain. He led Marshall on a scoring drive on the very next series, giving MU a 13-10 lead on a 19-yard touchdown pass to Nate Poole.

Danny Derricott, who seemingly was always in the right place at the right time in championship games, scooped up a fumble after a catch by the Toledo tight end and returned the miscue 20 yards for a 20-10 Herd lead. After a defensive stop Billy Malashevich gave Marshall a 23-10 lead with a 32-yard field goal. Toledo got back within a touchdown with 1:03 to play, but Marshall ran out the clock and clinched its second MAC title and third bowl game invite in school history.

December 3, 1999

Marshall 34, Western Michigan 30

Marshall was undefeated and untied in the regular season for the third time in school history. The Herd, behind QB Chad Pennington, had run roughshod over opponents since sneaking by the Clemson Tigers in the opener. The Herd had gone to Kalamazoo and run up a 31-10 lead on the Broncos before a late score set the final at 31-17.

The rematch was the only thing standing between a bowl trip and a potential top 10 national ranking. Western Michigan, coached by Gary Darnell, had other ideas and raced out to a 10-0 lead in the first quarter on a Tim Lester TD pass and a Brad Selent field goal. Robert Sanford scored from one-yard out and another Selent kick gave the Broncos a 20-0 halftime lead.

Although the Marshall fans and players reminded themselves they had trailed Toledo at halftime of the first two title games, those reassurances sounded hollow after an early third quarter Selent field goal made the score 23-0.

The Herd gathered itself and proceeded to score 27 points on only 18 offensive plays. Touchdown passes from Pennington to Nate Poole and James Williams were complimented by Doug Chapman's two scores, giving Marshall a 27-23 lead and brought the crowd back into the game.

Lester rallied the Broncos to re-take the lead with 7:20 to play by hitting Jake Moreland for a score.

That set the stage for Pennington to fix his name in the legendary roll of Marshall greats. Moving the Herd on a 76-yard drive, Pennington ran the clock and the team down the field, denying the Broncos the ball and putting the Herd in scoring range.

With only seven seconds on the clock, Marshall faced third and goal at the one-yard line. With no timeouts left, Pennington rolled right and found the most unlikely hero, converted linebacker Eric Pinkerton. Lined up as the "H-Back", Pinkerton ran toward the outside linebacker, who let him go by, and headed to the right corner of the end zone. Pennington threw a strike, the defender realized his mistake too late and "Pink," made the catch of his life.

It was the first and only TD reception in Pinkerton's career and it gave Marshall a third MAC title, to the amazement of Bronco fans everywhere.



December 2, 2000

Marshall 19, Western Michigan 14

Marshall was in the MAC Championship game for the fourth year in a row. WMU had won handily in Huntington back on October 5, becoming the first MAC squad to beat Marshall at MU Stadium. Robert Sanford torched the Herd for 203 yards rushing in that game and the Broncos seemed certain to run at Marshall again.

The Herd won the East Division with a 5-1 league mark and had an unimpressive 6-5 overall regular season mark.

Marshall had trailed at halftime in each of the first three MAC title games, but rallied to win. This time the Herd found itself up 13-0 at the break, behind two J.R. Jenkins field goals and a 44-yard touchdown strike from Byron Leftwich to Darius Watts.

Marshall's defense changed its scheme for this game, going to a 4-4-3 alignment in an attempt to slow Sanford. The change worked as Sanford gained only 67 yards.

Broncos quarterback Jeff Welsh rallied Western with two scores to take a 14-13 lead. However, Leftwich, in his first championship game as starting quarterback, was not to be denied. He threw for 358 yards in the game, including the 29-yard touchdown to John Cooper for the winning score.

Danny Derricott sealed the deal with an interception of Welsh on Western's last drive.

November 12, 2002

Marshall 36, Miami 34

Byron Leftwich wanted to play, however a cracked bone in his leg, suffered on a hit at Akron 10 days earlier, made the Heisman Trophy candidate unavailable for what amounted to the MAC East Championship game, a Tuesday night showdown with Miami that was carried live by ESPN. The coaching staff had only 10 days to prepare sophomore backup Stan Hill to replace Leftwich. Hill had struggled somewhat at Akron when he was thrown into the fray mid-way into the first quarter, and the jury was out on whether the young quarterback could lead Marshall to victory over such a formidable opponent.

With Marshall's loss at Akron, the door was open for the Redhawks to do something that had eluded them since Marshall rejoined the Mid-American Conference - win the East Division and play for the MAC Championship.

Early on in the contest, Marshall defensive tackle Orlando Washington picked off a Ben Roethlisberger pass and returned it inside the Miami 10-yard line, giving Hill excellent field position from the start. Moments later, the Herd grabbed a 7-0 lead on a Hill to Darius Watts touchdown pass.

Marshall stretched the lead on a field goal from Curtis Head. Miami recorded its first points on a 27-yard field goal by Jared Parseghian.

Just six seconds into the second quarter, running back Brandon Carey caught a 10-yard touchdown pass from Hill to make it 17-3. The RedHawks roared back in the second quarter, scoring on a 32-yard Roethlisberger pass to Jason Branch and a 13-yarder to Randy Stegman.

Hill and Watts hooked up again to start the third quarter, with a five-yard score. For the game, Hill threw 39 times, completing 25 for 292 yards and four touchdowns, with Watts pulling in nine of those completions for more than half of the yards (149) and three touchdowns.

Watts' third score of the game came from 11 yards out and gave Marshall a commanding 31-17 lead.

Roethlisberger connected with Luke Clemens to make it 31-24 only 44 seconds later and Parseghian added a field goal to close the gap to 31-27.

The defenses on both sides began to assert themselves in the fourth quarter. Both teams had turnovers and punts, but no one dented the scoreboard until just 6:33 was left in the game. Clemens scored to give Miami its first lead at 34-31. Marshall gave the ball back to Miami on the next series but the RedHawks were unable to take advantage. With 1:39 to play, Hill put on a show that would have made fellow Mississippian



Brett Favre proud. He led the team down the field, and on a fourth down inside the Miami 20-yard line, rolled right and lofted a pass into the end zone for receiver Josh Davis. Miami defensive back Alphonso Hodge grabbed a handful of Davis' jersey while batting the ball away prompting a pass interference call that gave Marshall another chance. After another interference call on the next play, Marshall had time for one or two more attempts at the endzone. From the

five-yard line, Hill rolled left on a pass-run option. Seeing a seam created by left tackle Steve Scuillo, he cut up field and into the end zone for a winning touchdown with five seconds to play.

Hill accounted for 320 yards of offense and five scores in the best first start ever by a Marshall quarterback, placing his name in the pantheon of Herd greats who got it done when his team needed him the most.

October 1, 2005

Marshall 16, SMU 13 (OT)

The 2005 season marked a new era of Marshall football. The Herd's game against SMU was its first Conference USA game at Joan C. Edwards Stadium. Down 10-0 in the fourth quarter, the Marshall Thundering Herd scored twice in the final seven minutes of regulation and used a Bernard Morris 15-yard touchdown scamper in overtime to take a thrilling 16-13 win over SMU at Joan C. Edwards Stadium.

The overtime thriller marked the fifth time in school history that Marshall played an overtime game, with the Herd posting a 5-0 record. It is only the second overtime game for the Herd as a member of Division I-A. The Herd's only other overtime game in I-A came against East Carolina in the 2001 GMAC Bowl - a 64-61 double-overtime win over the Pirates.

Bernard Morris led the Herd in rushing and passing, amassing 377 total yards of offense. Morris was 34-of-64 for 314 yards with an interception. Morris' 60 pass attempts were the most by a Marshall quarterback in Joan C. Edwards Stadium history. Morris added 63 rushing yards on 15 attempts with two scores, including the game-winner in overtime.

SMU returned the opening kickoff 17 yards and was given excellent field position after a late hit penalty was called on Marshall's Paco Jones.

The Mustangs would drive down to the Marshall 40-yard line, where they went for it on fourth-and-three. Romo attempted a pooch punt that hit an SMU lineman in the back and was recovered by the Mustangs for

a 14-yard loss, giving possession back to the Herd.

However, the Herd was unable to take advantage of the good field position, as Marshall went three-and-out in SMU territory.

Marshall had an opportunity to put the first points of the game on the board, but a 26-yard field goal attempt off the foot of kicker Ian O'Connor at the beginning of the second quarter sailed wide left.

Marshall again relied on O'Connor to put the Herd on the board in the second quarter after Shawn Lauzon dropped a would-be touchdown in the end zone, setting up a 43-yard kick. But, O'Connor missed his fourth consecutive field goal attempt, keeping the game scoreless.

Late in the second quarter, SMU used an 11-play 69-yard drive in 5:31 to score its first offensive touchdown in nine quarters.

SMU's final drive of the opening half was keyed by a 33-yard pass from Romo to Bobby Chase down to the Marshall 16-yard line. Five plays later, Romo connected with Reynaldo Pellerin for a seven-yard score - the first offensive score for SMU since the first quarter of its 66-8 loss at Texas A&M on Sept. 17.

Marshall, which was held scoreless in the first half for the second consecutive game, out-gained the Mustangs 161-122 on offense in the first half. Morris threw 128 yards on 13-of-22 passing with an interception, while Romo was 7-of-14 with 84 yards and a touchdown.

SMU would use another 69-yard drive - this time on eight plays - to increase its lead to 10-0 in the third quarter. The Mustangs used up 2:40 on the clock, capped off by a 34-yard field goal by Chris McMurtray.

With 12:20 remaining in regulation, Marshall would begin its rally from the 10-point deficit. The Herd drove 69 yards on 15 plays in 5:36, sparked by Morris, who went 6-for-9 with 58 yards. O'Connor nailed a 24-yard field goal at the 6:44 mark to trim the SMU lead to 10-3.

On the ensuing SMU possession, Marshall's defense stopped the Mustangs, forcing SMU to punt after three plays (losing nine yards).

With just 4:08 left in the fourth quarter, Marshall drove 59 yards on nine plays in 2:38, capped off by the first of Morris' two rushing touchdowns of the night - a four-yard run to the right to tie the game at 10-10 to force overtime.

In overtime, SMU struck first on a 40-yard field goal by Chris McMurtray, giving the Mustangs a 13-10 lead.

Marshall, however, did not quit as the Herd relied on the legs of Morris, who scampered 15 yards around the left side, diving over the goal line to give the Herd the 16-13 come-from-behind overtime win.

