

***For Frank “Moon” Gansz, N* ’60:
Navy 24, SMU 17
-- Smilin’ Proud on Both Teams.***

By Buddy Wellborn, N* USNA ’59.

November 12, 2011. From Gerald Ford Stadium in Dallas to my TV some 250 miles south in Dickinson Texas, the Mustangs of Southern Methodist University were hosting the Midshipmen of the U.S. Naval Academy for a football game for which the winner would be awarded the Francis Van Rensselaer Gansz Memorial Trophy.

[These two teams are connected by late coach Frank Gansz and play for a trophy in his honor. After playing center and linebacker for Navy from 1957-59, Gansz coached for 38 seasons-- 24 in the NFL and 14 in college, including Navy and SMU.]

It was a mostly sunny 73-degree Fall Saturday afternoon with a moderate breeze blowing in as a “2-club” crosswind from the Southwest at 12 knots with gusts to 17 knots. There were 21,080 in attendance for the game, and the field was fast and dry field—for a shoot-out.

[W came up from his ranch and did the coin toss and presented the trophy to the victor.]

Summary. The spirit in which the game was played would have made my good friend, and teammate, Frank “Moon” Gansz very proud, in that there was no “Give Up” in anybody’s “Get Up.” The key stat for this game was that Navy scored 4/4 in the Red Zone with 3 TD’s and 1 FG, while SMU was 3/5 scoring 2 TD’s and a FG.

[Yes, you could say that Navy dodged two bullets.]

Pointedly, the game really wasn’t the shootout expected, but was more like a deliberate, controlled contest between the “***Run-and-Shoot***” spread-offense, which had 65 plays for 386 yards run & pass scoring 1 TD by a rush and 1 TD by a pass, and the “***Triple Option***” offense, which had 64 plays rushing for 335 yards and 3 TD’s.

TOP favored Navy with 32’28” to 27’32” for SMU. Turnovers were even at 2&2. Navy only passed twice, of which one was intercepted and the other was incomplete. Navy fumbled twice and lost one. Whereas, more than half of SMU’s offense-effort was by passing 26-36-2 (turnovers) for 249 yards, while rushing 29 times for 137 yards—with no fumbles. Also notably, Navy sacked the SMU QB twice—and, harassed him many other times

Narrative. Navy won the toss, elected to receive, and would defend the North end-zone.

SMU’s kickoff with a quartering wind carried into the end-zone for a touchback. It was ***Game On--*** 1st&10 Navy on the N-20.

Navy’s drive was for 60 yards in 10 plays, all rushes, before they stalled out with 4th&5 on the S-20. The featured plays of the drive was Kriss Proctor’s 17-run on the keeper literally “weaving” through the SMU defense followed by another run for 9 yards on the counter off the opposite crease. **[Kriss Proctor is a top drawer FBS runner.]** And, SB John Howell turned the corner on the quick pitch for 11 yards. After three tries into the phone-booth only netted 5 yards, in came Jon Teague for a 37-yard FG attempt, which was good-- albeit a line-drive knuckle ball.

With 09:51 left in the 1st Quarter, it was:

Navy 3, SMU 0.

Jon Teague's kick against the wind only carried to the S-20 and was returned 23 yards to the S-43. SMU completed 3 passes but went 3&out because they were penalized 15 yards for a *Personal Foul*. SMU punted 39 yards out of bounds on the N-13.

Kriss Proctor made 9 yards in two rushes and SB Aaron Santiago [now considered to be the heart-and-soul of Navy's O] made 9 more yards turning it up at the corner. But then, three rushes inside netted only 7 yards and Navy stalled out with a 4th&3 on the N-38. Navy's punter, Pablo Beltran, hit a 43-yarder to the S-19 where it was downed.

SMU went 3&out primarily due to the play of ILB Matt Warrick who knocked down a pass, and DE Jabaree Tuani who rushed the passer and tipped the ball. On 4th&6 SMU punted 49 yards to the N-28 where Navy's Matt Aiken returned it 3 yards.

On 3rd&11 Kriss Proctor's pass was deflected and then intercepted. After a 7-yard return it was 1st&10 SMU on the N-46. ***Bummer!***

But turn around is fair play, it that Navy Plebe Chris Ferguson at FS intercepted SMU and returned it 28 yards to the N-44. ***Back in business—again!***

Alex Teich ran the FB sweep to the offside and made 6 yards. Kriss Proctor on the counter then made 8 more yards for another Navy 1st down. He followed that with 5 more yards off the edge as the 1st Quarter ended [Boy! How time flies when you're having a good] The score was:

Navy 3, SMU 0.

Alex Teich made 6 yards through the crease for another Navy 1st down. On the next play, Kriss Proctor passed to Gee Gee Greene on the slant but he was held by the SMU defender and SMU was flagged for *Pass Interference*. Navy got a new set of downs on the S-16, 1st&10 Navy.

Navy's backup FB Delvin Diggs made 4 tough yards, then Kriss made 7 yards on the option keeper, and it was 1st&goal Navy on the S-5. Alex Teich made 4 yards to the S-1. THEN, [making me sense that somebody is listening] SB Gee Gee Greene SCORED RUNNING FOR THE PYLON. The PAT was good, and with 12:32 left in the Half, it was:

Navy 10, SMU 0.

Now it was Navy's turn to have the wind quartering off their back, and Jon Teague's kick-off bounded through the end-zone for a touchback. SMU drove 74 yards in 12 plays and were 3rd&goal on the N-6. Navy's DB's couldn't back up anymore and had to play man-on-man coverage. Well, CB David Sperry read the eyes of the QB, broke on the ball, and intercepted in the end zone. Way to go D! ***Way to go David!***

[Navy dodged bullet #1 of two!]

Navy drove the ball 28 yards with four rushing plays and an incomplete pass. With 4th&7 on the N-48, Pablo Beltran punted 41 yards to the S-11 and SMU lost a yard in trying to return it.

It was 1st&10 SMU on the S-10. SMU drove the ball 79 yards in 13 plays completing 8 of 10 passes under the coverage. With 4th&9 on the N-11, SMU's 28-yard FG attempt was good and SMU was on the board as the clock ran out for the first Half with the score:

Navy 10, SMU 3.

[I know a lot of you have enjoyed watching paint dry, but this was Navy winning football—warts and all.]

Okay, how about keeping on, keeping on for the 2nd Half—like, *Run for Daylight*—and, *Tackle the Ball Carrier!* [Be innovative—keep it simple.]

Navy kicked off with the wind quartering off their back and kicked the ball through the end zone.

Now remember when I advised that the other team doesn't go through the trouble of putting on full harness and getting taped TO LOSE! That is SMU not only suited out for this game, they came to win. After all, they were one of the leaders in Conference USA—of the FBS.

SMU determinedly drove the ball 80 yards in 9 plays of which 5/5 were completed passes, and scored on a 7-yard slant by SB Cole Beasley. Their PAT was good, and with 10:56 left in the 3rd Quarter, it was a new ball game, it was:

Navy 10, SMU 10.

Okay, hold on, it's Navy's turn—to answer!

Navy returned the kick-off 26 yards to the N-32 but was penalized 10 yards for *Holding* [Navy's **only penalty in the game.**] The Navy drive started with a 1st&10 on the N-22. In 13 different twists of the Triple Option, Navy put on a *show-and-tell* rushing show on how little guys can overcome prospective-NFL big guys.

One of the featured runs was by Kriss Proctor making his way through the dark shadows of the fireplugs running for daylight to make 17 yards. This drive's work-horse though was Navy's not-to-be-denied Captain, FB Alex Teich, and Navy's *bring-home-the-bacon* Offense Linemen. I'd mark them somewhere between a low fantastic and high magnificent.

Having been there in that booth, and the creases to its left and right, I can tell you that that's peeling the banana inside the hungry gorilla's cage. Alex made 5 yards inside, Gee Gee Greene made 2 more at the corner, and then Kriss ran off the edge for 5 more yards. [*Moving the chains, aye.*]

Alex made 3 more, then SB Aaron Santiago turned the corner for 9 yards, then FB Delvin Diggs made 9 yards inside. Then Alex, fresh from taking a blow, came back in and made 4 yards, then 5 yards, then 6 yards, and then driving over the pile of debris he left behind made 10 yards to the 1-foot line.

Now, are you ready for this? I have never seen so much beef packed in so tight between the tackles-- it looked like stacked shish kabob of Pony meat. Well, well, well, somebody's listening—John Howell ran for the pylon—untouched! Navy made the PAT, and with 05:17 left in the 3rd Quarter, it was:

Navy 17, SMU 10.

Paint ain't dry yet!

Navy's kick-off carried to the goal line and SMU returned it 20 yards. SMU completed a pass for 20 yards, and then rushed for 8 yards followed by another rush that Navy stuffed. On 3rd&2, Navy's OLB "Striker," Brye French, sacked the QB and SMU had to punt.

Remember what I told you about smiling too early, and not checking to see if Murphy is riding co-pilot with you. Matt Aiken fumbled the punt and SMU recovered! ***Oh yea, ___it happens!***

Damn! It was 1st&10 SMU on the N-25. ***C'mon D!***

This is when the Man comes to mark against your name for how much you got to give. If there ever was a time to be a cool hand Luke, it was now. Play tough—and play smart.

SMU's leading rusher, Zack Line, made 6 yards, and SMU was in the Red Zone with a 2nd&4 on the N-19. Navy's "Raider" OLB Mason Graham blitzed into the backfield and stopped Zack Line for a -1-yard loss. Then Navy's ILB Matt Warwick knocked down SMU's QB pass and it was 4th&5 on the N-20.

SMU Coach June Jones did not hesitate; SMU was going for it—because they knew that they could complete a pass under Navy's retreating pass the coverage.

Every once in awhile you catch Murphy's cousin O'Toole with his Irish eyes a smilin'. Navy's ILB Matt Warwick played up, and didn't retreat. He kept his head and eyes glued on the SMU QB and broke on the ball in front of the receiver and knocked the ball down-- almost intercepting it. The ball went over to Navy on downs!

[Navy dodged bullet #2 of two!]

Navy ran a quick pitch to the corner and loss 2 yards as the 3rd Quarter ended, the score was:

Navy 17, SMU 10.

On the opening play of the 4th Quarter, Gee Gee Greene turned the corner for 29 yards. Navy was back in business—and playing fast. In 8 rushing plays Navy drove the ball 80 yards and scored on a 5-yard quick pitch sweep to SB Mike Stukel. Navy made the PAT, and with 12:20 remaining in the game, it was:

Navy 24, SMU 10.

But, it ain't over, 'til it's over. Keep your head in the boat, Navy.

Navy's kickoff against a right-front wind was short to the S-25 and SMU returned it 15 yards.

Navy's D made a stop as SMU went 3&out and punted 48 yards to the N-13 where Matt Aiken returned it 7 yards to the N-20, 1st&10 Navy.

Navy drove the ball 22 yards in 6 plays, but failed to convert on a 3rd &1, and punted 41 yards back to SMU who called for a “Fair Catch” on the S-17.

SMU drove 83 yards in 11 plays of which 4/5 were completed passes, and 4/6 were rushes by Zack Line. On a “Wildcat” keeper, SMU’s Cole Beasley scored from 2 yards out. SMU made the PAT, and with 03:40 remaining in the game, it was:

Navy 24, SMU 17.

Play smart Navy. The best way to protect the ball is run wide with it—away from the crowd.

Navy put ten men up expecting an on side kick, but SMU kicked it away through the end zone for a touchback. It was 1st&10 Navy on the N-20.

Kriss Proctor was stuffed for no gain. SMU took their last TIMEOUT at 03:36. Alex Teich made 4 yards off the crease. Okay, Teich got it again—no he didn’t! Kriss faked it to him and mad a long pitch to Gee Gee Greene who was at full speed after being in motion. Gee Gee turned the corner for 8 yards—and stayed in bounds. It was Navy 1st&10 on the N-32.

Alex Teich made 5 yards in the crease, and then Kriss Proctor made a yard off the edge. The game clincher though was by Navy’s best as Kriss Proctor made 4 yards to the marker on the option-keeper for a Navy 1st down. That was the *coup de grace* in that all that was left was to take a knee as the clock expired.

Game Over: Navy 24, SMU 17.

Overview. It was two volatile Offenses pitted against two Defenses that seemingly controlled the game and dampened it between the 20’s. It was still a nail-biter, replete with coughs, spits, and snotty nose wipes—all mixed with angst and apprehension. Was it exciting? Well, in a way, considering that a knife-throwing contest is exciting—from the target’s perspective.

Navy’s leading rushers were QB Kriss Proctor with 17 rushes for 107 yards and FB Alex Teich with 21 rushes for 90 yards. SMU’s leading rusher was TB Zack Line with 24 rushes for 135 yards. SMU’s QB was 26-36-2 passing for 249 yards. SMU’s top receiver (of six) was Cole Beasley with 8 catches for 65 yards.

SMU’s leading tacklers were LB Taylor Reed with 14, DB Chris Banjo with 11 and DB Justin Sorrell with 10. SMU had no sacks (on Navy’s 2 pass attempts) and 3 TFL’s on rushes. Navy’s leading tacklers were ILB Matt Brewer with 9 and SS (ROV) Tra’ves Bush with 9, which included one TFL. Of special note are the 4 solo tackles of Navy’s DE Jabaree Tuani in that 3 were TFL’s and the other was a sack of the QB.

SMU punted 4 times and averaged 41.0 yards per punt. Navy punted 3 times and averaged 41.7 yards per punt. SMU had 6 penalties for 60 yards, and Navy had 1 penalty for 10 yards.

Epilogue. This season Navy (4-6) has three wins in seven games which I predicted to be 50-50 toss-ups with one more toss-up yet to play—Army (3-7), *a la*, **The Game**. Navy also has one win over one of the two of the teams that I had predicted in the pre-season to be high-probability wins for Navy with one yet to play that will be this week—San Jose State (3-7).

Navy next plays the Spartans of San Jose State (3-7) in San Jose at 4:00 PM ET on November 19, 2011, and will be favored. San Jose State has lost its last three games having just lost 33-34 to Utah State this past week, 29-32 to Idaho the week before, and two weeks ago 28-38 to Louisiana Tech after a big win over Hawaii 28-27. Please check with www.navysports.com at the end of the week for the broadcast schedule.

Air Force (5-5), the winner of the CINC Trophy for 2011, just lost 17-25 to Wyoming. The Falcons next play the University of Nevada Las Vegas at 6:00 PM ET this coming Saturday, November 19, 2011.

Army (3-7) just lost 12-27 to Rutgers. The Black Knights next play Temple at 1:00 PM ET this coming Saturday, November 19, 2011.

After Navy's season-significant win over SMU, I predict that Navy has better than a 50-50 probability of posting a 6-6 season—and thereby will become eligible to play in the Military Bowl in Washington D.C. on December 28, 2011. It absolutely is imperative that Navy stay focused on one game at a time, and adeptly prepare for their upcoming game with San Jose State. Stay tuned.

GO NAVY!

