

The 12th man
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Introduction:

What started in 1922, as a sign of sportsmanship, has become one of the greatest traditions in college athletics. A tradition goes beyond a game day ritual, demonstrating that sportsmanship goes beyond the game field. It started when E. King Gill, a former Aggie football player, played in the Dixie Classic after being called down from the stands. He stood on the sidelines ready to play if the team ever needed him, demonstrating his commitment to the institution, his peers, and the student body. To honor such commitment, the entire student body became the Twelfth Man, standing during the entire game to show their support, always waiting to be called upon if needed. The 12th man tradition is a unique and outstanding showcase of Aggie's unity, loyalty, and willingness to serve selflessly when called to do so. Beyond being the most visible throughout game days, the 12th man reminds every Aggie of their commitment and spirit through generosity and service to their peers, community, and the world. When talking about the 12th man, it is safe to say that more than a tradition is a foundational principle to the beliefs, that define a true Aggie.

More about the tradition:

On January 2, 1992, during the Dixie Classic in Dallas, the Texas A&M football team faced the heavily favored Centre College Praying Colonels. Plagued with injuries, Aggie's were left with only 11 players, and needed help to keep up. Rapidly the bench became empty, but as Coach Dana X. looked across the stands, he remembered about Gill.

Gill was quickly brought down to the sidelines and was told to suit up. Returning to the sidelines, Gill stood up ready to play for the entirety of the game in case the 11 men left needed assistance, earning the title of "12th man". Aggie's won the 22-14, and Gill remained the only player left on the bench; not only at the service of his team, but most importantly at the service of his community.

Who created the tradition and when did it start?

- Created in 1992 by E. King Gill

When and Where it takes place?

- The 12th man tradition takes place during every home football game at Kyle field
- Kyle field

Who is involved:

- The Student Body :
 - The entire student body embodies the 12th man spirit. Throughout every Aggie football game, students stand for the entirety of the game to symbolize thier support and loyalty to the team.
- The 12th Man player:
 - Every football season a student-athlete is selected to wear the No. 12 jersey to represent the 12th man spring in the field.
- The Texas A&M football team:
 - The Texas A&M football team recognizes the significance of the 12th man, hence they acknowledge the student body and the selected 12th-man player as a vital factor in their success.

Why is this tradition important?

- Student involvement and pride
- Symbol for loyalty, commitment, and service
- Legacy in Aggie football

