

= 1981 Peach Bowl ( January ) =

The 1981 Peach Bowl was a post @-@ season American college football bowl game between the Virginia Tech Hokies and the Hurricanes from the University of Miami at Fulton County Stadium in Atlanta , Georgia on January 2 , 1981 . The game was the final contest of the 1980 NCAA Division I @-@ A football season for both teams , and ended in a 20 @-@ 10 victory for Miami . Another game by the same name followed the 1981 NCAA Division I @-@ A football season and was played in December , 1981 .

Virginia Tech was awarded a bid to the Peach Bowl as a reward for finishing 8 ? 3 during the regular season , a record that included wins over nationally ranked teams such as the Clemson Tigers and the Virginia Cavaliers . Facing Virginia Tech was a familiar post @-@ season opponent ? Miami ? whom the Hokies had played in the 1966 Liberty Bowl , Tech 's last bowl appearance prior to the Peach Bowl . Miami finished the regular season with an 8 ? 3 record , including wins over Florida State and Florida .

The game kicked off at 3 : 00 p.m. EST under sunny skies and in temperatures of 46 ° F ( 8 ° C ) . Unlike the 1966 Liberty Bowl , in which Virginia Tech scored first , it was Miami who dominated the game 's early going . The Hurricanes scored a touchdown on the first drive of the game and tacked on another touchdown early in the second quarter . Tech was held scoreless in the early going , thanks to two Miami interceptions at the goal line as Virginia Tech was threatening to score . Late in the second quarter , Tech was finally able to get on the scoreboard with a field goal , but at halftime , the Miami Hurricanes led 14 ? 3 . After halftime , the Hokies threatened Miami for the first time all game . Virginia Tech mounted an 80 @-@ yard drive that resulted in a touchdown , cutting Miami 's lead to 14 ? 10 . But the Hurricanes ' defense clamped down on any further offensive attempts by Virginia Tech and denied the Hokies more points . Miami added two field goals : one in the third quarter and one in the fourth quarter that finally put the game out of reach for Virginia Tech . Miami 's win was its first bowl victory since the 1966 Liberty Bowl , which also featured a Hurricane victory over Virginia Tech .

= = Team Selection = =

= = = Miami = = =

The Miami Hurricanes came into the 1980 college football season after an 5 ? 6 season in 1979 under head coach Howard Schnellenberger . During that season , the team was nicknamed the " Jet Lag Kids " after they traveled an NCAA @-@ record 28 @,@ 000 miles ( 45 @,@ 000 km ) , including a trip to the Mirage Bowl in Tokyo , Japan . While impressive , the season wasn 't as successful as hoped , and Schnellenberger began his second season as coach hoping to improve upon the 5 ? 6 effort despite what was the toughest schedule ? in terms of opponents ' winning percentage ? in the country .

Miami got off to a good start doing just that as it raced out to four consecutive wins to begin the season , including a victory over nationally ranked rival No. 9 Florida State . On October 11 , however , Miami traveled to South Bend , Indiana , to face the Notre Dame Fighting Irish and suffered its first loss of the season to the undefeated Irish , who would go on to be ranked No. 1 in the country . This defeat was followed in succession by two others , but the Hurricanes were able to stop the slide on November 8 with a homecoming win over East Carolina . Miami added two more wins before the end of the season , and brought the regular season to a close with an overall record of 8 ? 3 .

= = = Virginia Tech = = =

The Virginia Tech Hokies , like Miami , entered the 1980 season after accumulating a 5 ? 6 record in 1979 . Though the Hokies traveled far less than Miami , they also hoped to improve upon their

losing record . Tech was coached by Bill Dooley , who was entering his third season as head coach

Like Schnellenberger , he got his team off to a fast start . In the season opener , Tech traveled to North Carolina to face the Wake Forest Demon Deacons . Wake Forest had attended the Tangerine Bowl the previous year and was favored in the game against Tech . Despite those facts , the Hokies won , 16 ? 7 . Virginia Tech won its first four games of the regular season before falling to the nationally ranked Clemson Tigers on October 4 . Tech recovered from the loss , defeating Rhode Island , then Virginia before a then @-@ state record crowd of 52 @,@ 000 people , but lost a second game , to Richmond on October 25 . The Hokies split their final three games of the regular season , winning two and losing one , and finished with a regular season record of 8 ? 3 . Tech 's 6 ? 0 record at Lane Stadium ? its home stadium ? was the best in school history . Tech 's selection by the Peach Bowl was announced in the locker room following the team 's final regular season game . The Peach Bowl representative present was mobbed by celebrating players chanting " Peach Bowl ! Peach Bowl ! " The representative later said , " I 've never seen a wilder celebration . "

= = Pregame buildup = =

= = = Miami offense = = =

The Miami Hurricanes entered the Peach Bowl with a record @-@ breaking offense that set the school mark for the most accumulated yards in school history with a total offensive mark of 3 @,@ 756 yards . Leading the aerial portion of the Miami offense was sophomore quarterback Jim Kelly , who completed 109 of 206 passes for 1 @,@ 519 yards , 11 touchdowns , and seven interceptions . Kelly 's 11 touchdowns tied the Miami record for most touchdowns in a season at that time . Kelly 's favorite receiver was wide receiver Larry Brodsky , who caught 33 passes for 570 yards and three touchdowns during the regular season . One of Brodsky 's touchdowns came on an 81 @-@ yard reception that tied the longest pass reception in the history of Miami football to that point .

The Hurricanes ' ground offense was led by running back Smokey Roan , who carried the ball 152 times for 669 yards and five touchdowns . Roan was assisted by an able offensive line . Miami offensive tackle John Canei was named as an honorable mention to the Associated Press All @-@ America team , which recognizes the best college football players in the country .

= = = Miami defense = = =

Miami 's defense shut out one opponent , and held six other opponents to single touchdowns or field goals . Middle guard Jim Burt was one of the Hurricanes ' defensive leaders , recovering four fumbles in a single game during the regular season . In recognition of this and other performances , Burt was named to the Associated Press All @-@ America list . Also recognized was defensive back Fred Marion , who was named an honorable mention to the All @-@ America list . Marion intercepted seven passes during the regular season , tying him for second in Miami history for the most interceptions in a season .

= = = Virginia Tech offense = = =

Throughout the regular season , Virginia Tech 's offense was led by running back Cyrus Lawrence , who accumulated what was then a school record of 1 @,@ 221 yards during the regular season . He also set a record for most carries by a Tech player in a season with 271 . Tech quarterback Steve Casey was called the " key man in the Tech offense . " Casey was Tech 's starting quarterback and completed 97 of 176 passes during the regular season for 1 @,@ 119 yards and 13 touchdowns . At the time , he ranked second among Tech 's career passing leaders , and was considered to be an offensive threat .

Casey 's favorite target was wide receiver Sidney Snell , who caught a Tech @-@ record eight

touchdown receptions during the regular season . Snell accounted for 568 yards on 43 receptions of all types . Tight end Rob Purdham only caught seven passes during the regular season , but four of the catches were for touchdowns .

= = = Virginia Tech defense = = =

The Tech defense was ranked among the top five in the country during the regular season , and set a school record for fewest points allowed during an 11 @-@ game regular season . Tech permitted just 109 points during the season , and allowed only 11 touchdowns in 11 games .

The leading tackler on the Tech defense was freshman linebacker Ashley Lee , who accumulated 95 tackles during the regular season . Lee was one of two freshman linebackers for the Hokies during their record @-@ breaking defensive season .

Virginia Tech 's defense also featured Robert Brown , who accumulated 10 tackles , including two quarterback sacks , in the Hokies ' regular @-@ season finale against the Virginia Military Institute . Tech head coach Bill Dooley lobbied in vain for Brown 's inclusion in the annual All @-@ America list recording the best college football players in the country , saying , " Robert Brown is an All @-@ American football player ... but because he was a transfer student , he received no preseason buildup . ... I guarantee the people who have seen him know he 's an All @-@ American . " Brown finished the regular season with 61 tackles , broke up four passes , and recovered three fumbles .

= = Game summary = =

The 1981 Peach Bowl kicked off at 3 p.m. EST on January 2 , 1981 , at Fulton County Stadium in Atlanta , Georgia in front of a crowd estimated at 45 @, @ 384 people . More than 14 @, @ 000 of those present were estimated to be fans of Virginia Tech . Weather at kickoff was sunny , with a temperature of 46 ° F ( 8 ° C ) and a north @-@ northwest wind estimated at 14 miles per hour ( 23 km / h ) . The game was televised nationally on CBS , with Curt Gowdy , Hank Stram , and Frank Gleiber serving as the announcers for the television broadcast . William Parkinson was the referee , Robert Aebersold was the umpire , and the linesman was Richard Farina . Miami won the traditional pregame coin toss used to decide first possession and elected to receive the ball to begin the game .

= = = First quarter = = =

After the Virginia Tech kickoff and a short return , Miami began the first drive of the game at its 32 @-@ yard line . The game 's first play was an incomplete pass from Miami quarterback Jim Kelly . After a one @-@ yard rush , Kelly completed his first pass of the game , an 18 @-@ yard toss that drove Miami to the Tech 49 @-@ yard line and gave the Hurricanes a first down . Miami then committed a 15 @-@ yard penalty , pushing the Hurricanes back into their side of the field . On the second play after the penalty , Kelly completed a 29 @-@ yard pass that gave Miami a first down . The Hurricanes were further aided by a 15 @-@ yard roughing the passer penalty against Virginia Tech , giving Miami a first down at the Tech 20 @-@ yard line . From there , it took Miami just three plays to score a touchdown , the final play being a 15 @-@ yard pass from Kelly to Larry Brodsky . With 12 : 37 remaining in the quarter , Miami took a 7 ? 0 lead .

Following Miami 's post @-@ touchdown kickoff , Virginia Tech began its first offensive possession of the game at its 24 @-@ yard line . A three @-@ yard rush from fullback Scott Dovel was followed by two rushes from Tech 's Cyrus Lawrence : one for eight yards and a second for 17 more . These drove Tech into Miami territory and gave the Hokies a first down . Once there , however , Miami 's defense stiffened and Tech was forced to punt . Miami recovered the ball at its 12 @-@ yard line , and the Hurricanes began their second possession of the game . Fullback Chris Hobbs and running back Smokey Roan alternated carries , picking up yardage and first downs before entering Virginia Tech territory . On the Hurricanes ' first play on Tech 's side of the field , however , Miami committed two penalties , pushing the Hurricanes back 20 yards . Following the penalties , Miami was unable to

pick up a first down and punted back to the Hokies .

Tech recovered the punt at its 30 @-@ yard line and began its second possession . Lawrence rushed for five yards , and Miami committed a five @-@ yard offsides penalty , giving Tech a first down by penalty . Dovel and Lawrence then combined for another first down after two plays . Tech was unable to gain another first down and punted the ball away . Attempting to field the ball , Miami 's Fred Marion fumbled the ball , which was recovered by a Tech defender at the Miami 25 @-@ yard line . Despite beginning with excellent field position , Tech was unable to score . On the first play after the fumble recovery , Tech attempted to run a trick play involving a pass by Lawrence . The pass was intercepted by a Miami defender at the Hurricanes ' one @-@ yard line , and Miami 's offense returned to the field .

From their one @-@ yard line , the Hurricanes ran a short rush up the middle , then Kelly connected on a 28 @-@ yard pass to tight end Mark Cooper for a first down . Three short rushes by fullback Speedy Neal resulted in 12 yards and a first down . With time running out in the quarter , Kelly attempted and completed a 27 @-@ yard pass to wide receiver Rocky Belk , driving the Hurricanes to the Tech 30 @-@ yard line and bringing the quarter to an end . Miami led , 7 ? 0 at the end of the first quarter .

= = = Second quarter = = =

Miami began the second quarter in possession of the ball and facing a first down at the Virginia Tech 30 @-@ yard line . From there , it took Miami just four plays to score . Roan ran for seven yards , Kelly completed an 11 @-@ yard pass , threw an incomplete pass , then Hobbs ran 12 yards for the touchdown . The score and following extra point gave Miami a 14 ? 0 lead with 13 : 47 remaining before halftime .

Virginia Tech received the post @-@ touchdown kickoff and was promptly penalized 10 yards for an illegal block during the kickoff . Despite the initial setback , Tech made good the penalty with two passes from quarterback Steve Casey . After gaining one first down , the Hokies gained several more with a combination of passes from Casey and rushes from Lawrence . Tech drove into Miami territory and penetrated the Hurricanes ' red zone , in the process gaining a first down after facing a fourth down near midfield . Attempting to pass for a touchdown , however , Casey threw an interception at the goal line to a Miami defender . The Hurricanes thus again denied Tech a scoring opportunity and the Miami offense began anew .

The Hurricanes picked up a first down on one rush each from Hobbs and Roan , but were unable to gain another . After a Miami punt , Tech returned to offense from its 46 @-@ yard line . Casey picked up a first down on a pass , then gained another after a seven @-@ yard scramble that followed a three @-@ yard rush by Lawrence . Lawrence then gained a first down on his own after rushing for nine yards and five yards , driving the Hokies to the Miami 15 @-@ yard line in the process . After entering the Miami red zone , however , Tech was unable to gain a first down and Casey was sacked for a loss of 13 yards . Facing a fourth down and needing 20 yards for a first down , Tech coach Bill Dooley sent in kicker Dennis Laury to attempt a 42 @-@ yard field goal . The kick was successful , and with 29 seconds left in the first half , Tech cut Miami 's lead to 14 ? 3 .

Miami was penalized 15 yards for roughing the kicker during the field goal attempt , allowing Tech to kick off from the Miami 45 @-@ yard line following the score . Instead of kicking off to Miami , Tech attempted an onside kick , which would allow Tech to retain possession if the ball was recovered by the kicking team after traveling 10 yards from the point at which it was kicked . The ball did not travel the needed 10 yards , however , and Miami began offense at its 37 @-@ yard line , where the ball rolled out of bounds . On Miami 's first play after the kick , Kelly attempted a long pass into Tech territory , but the ball was intercepted by Tech 's Mike Schamus at the Hokies ' 12 @-@ yard line . With just 21 seconds remaining in the first half , Tech attempted to gain quick yardage in an effort to close within field goal distance . Though Lawrence picked up 15 yards and a first with a rush , the Hokies were unable to enter the Miami side of the field before time expired . At the end of the first half , Miami still held a 14 ? 3 lead .

= = = Third quarter = = =

Because Miami received the ball to begin the game , Virginia Tech received the ball to begin the second half . After Miami 's kickoff and a touchback , Tech began the first possession of the second half at its 20 @-@ yard line . The Hokies picked up a quick first down off a rush each by Lawrence , Dovel , and Casey . Lawrence picked up another with two rushes that resulted in 13 yards and drove the Hokies to their 44 @-@ yard line . There , Casey completed his longest pass of the game ? a 42 @-@ yard throw to tight end Rob Purdham ? that gave Tech a first down at the Miami 14 @-@ yard line . Tech continued to drive , picking up short yardage with multiple rushes . The Hokies suffered a near @-@ disaster when Lawrence fumbled the ball , but Tech retained possession when the ball rolled out of bounds at the one @-@ yard line . Two plays after the fumble , Lawrence vaulted over the goal line for Tech 's first and only touchdown of the game . Following the extra point , Tech cut Miami 's lead to 14 ? 10 with 8 : 52 remaining in the quarter .

Following the Tech kickoff , Miami began a drive at its 20 @-@ yard line and went three and out . Following the Hurricanes ' punt , Tech 's offense began work at its 22 @-@ yard line . Despite having a chance to take the lead with a successful drive , the Hokies also went three and out , punting back to Miami and allowing the Hurricanes to begin a possession at their 33 @-@ yard line . This possession was more successful than Miami 's first of the second half . Kelly ran for four yards , then completed a six @-@ yard pass for a first down . Tech committed a 15 @-@ yard grabbing @-@ the @-@ facemask penalty , and Kelly completed a 15 @-@ yard pass that pushed the Miami offense to the Tech 22 @-@ yard line . Young picked up 12 yards and a first down with a rush to the left , but Kelly was sacked for a loss of 13 yards , negating the gain . Unable to gain another first down or a touchdown , Miami was forced to settle for a field goal attempt . The 31 @-@ yard attempt was good , and Miami expanded its lead to 17 ? 10 with 29 seconds remaining in the quarter .

Tech received Miami 's kickoff for a touchback , and the Hokies ' offense began work at the Tech 20 @-@ yard line . Lawrence ran for six yards , and time ran out in the quarter . With one quarter remaining , Miami held a 17 ? 10 lead .

= = = Fourth quarter = = =

Tech began the fourth quarter in possession of the ball and facing a second down at its 26 @-@ yard line . Despite needing just another four yards for a first down , Tech was unable to gain the needed yardage and was forced to punt . During the kick , Miami was penalized five yards , and began its first possession of the fourth quarter at its 18 @-@ yard line after the penalty . Kelly completed an 18 @-@ yard pass for a first down , but Miami was unable to gain another . After punting to Tech , the Hokies were likewise unable to gain a first down and went three and out after committing a delay of game penalty .

Tech 's punt was short , and Miami began a possession at the Tech 41 @-@ yard line . The Hurricanes picked up a first down with two rushes by Roan for a total of 14 yards . Despite further short gains by Roan , the Hurricanes were stopped short by the Tech defense and were unable to gain another . Miami sent in kicker Dan Miller , who kicked a 37 @-@ yard field goal to give Miami a 20 ? 10 lead with 6 : 27 remaining in the game .

Tech received Miami 's post @-@ score kickoff needing to score quickly in order to have a chance to have a second opportunity on offense ? needed because Tech was now two scores behind . Tech returned the kickoff to the 24 @-@ yard line but were penalized 12 yards for an illegal block . Casey passed for an eight @-@ yard gain and ran for three yards for a first down . After that gain , things went against the Hokies . Casey was penalized 15 yards for intentional grounding , and Tech was unable to gain another first down . The Hokies punted , and Miami took over on offense at its 46 @-@ yard line . In possession of the lead , Miami began to run out the clock , executing multiple rushing plays in succession in order to force the game clock to continue to count down . Tech 's defense forced a stop , but because Miami punted the ball with just 2 : 20 remaining in the game , there was little chance that Tech would be able to make up the needed two scores .

Tech received the ball at its 16 @-@ yard line , and Casey completed a quick 14 @-@ yard pass to Purdham for a first down . But Tech was unable to gain another first down , and after four plays were stopped short , Tech turned the ball over to Miami after Casey threw an incomplete pass on fourth down . Miami received the ball with 1 : 24 remaining and ran a series of inconsequential plays to draw down the clock and bring the game to an end . Miami earned the win , 20 ? 10 .

= = Statistical summary = =

In recognition of their performances during the Peach Bowl , Miami quarterback Jim Kelly and nose guard Jim Burt were named the game 's offensive and defensive most valuable players of the game , respectively . Kelly finished the game having completed 11 of his 22 pass attempts for 179 yards , one touchdown , and one interception . Burt , the other MVP , accumulated nine tackles ? the second @-@ most of any player in the game ? including seven unassisted tackles and one tackle for loss .

Virginia Tech running back Cyrus Lawrence finished the game with 27 carries for 137 rushing yards and a touchdown . The 27 carries remain the most ever recorded by a single Virginia Tech player in a bowl game . Tech quarterback Steve Casey led the Hokies in passing yardage , completing nine of his 23 pass attempts for 119 yards and one interception .

The Hurricanes ' ground offense was led by Smokey Roan , who carried the ball 16 times for 86 yards . Second to Roan for Miami was Chris Hobbs , who contributed 66 yards and a touchdown on 10 carries . Hurricanes wide receiver Larry Brodsky finished with four catches for 80 yards and a touchdown . Miami turned the ball over four times during the course of the game . Tech 's 80 @-@ yard touchdown drive in the third quarter remains tied for the longest ever recorded by a Tech offense during a bowl game . Conversely , the 99 @-@ yard drive allowed to Miami remains the longest scoring drive Tech 's defense has ever allowed in a bowl game .

On defense , Virginia Tech linebacker Ashley Lee 's 15 tackles remains the most ever recorded by a Tech defender in a bowl game . Three Tech players were tied for second on the team with eight tackles . Behind defensive MVP Burt , Miami had one player with eight tackles and two with seven . Fred Marion , one of the Hurricanes with seven tackles , also intercepted a Tech pass and broke up another pass .

= = Postgame effects = =

In exchange for their participation , each team received \$ 663 @,@ 389 . Miami 's win brought the Hurricanes to a final record of 9 ? 3 for the 1980 college football season . Likewise , the loss dropped Virginia Tech to a final record of 8 ? 4 . Miami 's win also was its first bowl @-@ game victory since a similar win over Tech in the 1966 Liberty Bowl .

The 1980 Peach Bowl victory is sometimes cited as the turning point in the Miami football program , as the Hurricanes went 9 ? 2 and 7 ? 4 over the next two season before participating in the 1984 Orange Bowl , the championship game of the 1983 college football season . Tech also participated in a 1984 bowl game ; the 1984 Independence Bowl , which followed the 1984 college football season . The Hokies did not win a bowl game until the 1986 Peach Bowl ; however , the game had lasting effects on Virginia Tech 's football recruiting efforts . Eventual star players Bruce Smith and Jesse Penn signed letters of intent with Virginia Tech following the game .

Miami had a handful of players selected in the 1981 NFL Draft : Cornerback John Swain was picked with the 101st overall selection , Jim Joiner with the 263rd pick , and Pat Walker with the 290th pick . Miami quarterback Jim Kelly , a sophomore during the 1981 Peach Bowl , was selected in the first round of the 1983 NFL Draft and went on to become a member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame in recognition of his performance during 10 seasons with the Buffalo Bills . In 2002 , Kelly was named to the Peach Bowl Hall of Fame in honor of his performance in the 1980 game .

= = Later aftermath = =

Miami and Virginia Tech would both be charter members of the Big East Conference 's football league in 1991 , and in 2004 , both schools moved to the Atlantic Coast Conference - which now has a tie @-@ in for what is now called the Chick @-@ Fil A Bowl .