

**FP-018**

**COTTON BOWL STADIUM**

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Does the structure in front of you really need an introduction?

After all, Cotton Bowl Stadium is renowned worldwide as the venue that for more than 70 years hosted the Cotton Bowl Classic, pitting two of college football's premier powerhouses against one another on -- or near -- New Year's Day.

The roster of gridiron greats who have played inside this stadium reads like a roll call of athletic superstardom. Davey O'Brien, Bobby Layne, Sammy Baugh, Bart Starr, and Ernie Davis (who was the first black player to win the Heisman Trophy).

Let's not forget Roger Staubach, Joe Theismann, Joe Montana, Bo Jackson, Dan Marino and Woodrow Wilson High School graduate and Heisman winner, Tim Brown. Oh yes, and Troy Aikman, Doug Flutie and Eli Manning, as well.

You HAVE heard of some of those people, haven't you?

For more than 70 years, this stadium has also been the host of a piddly little rivalry you've probably never heard of, a rivalry between one team that wears Burnt Orange and White, and another that wears Crimson and White. And to be clear, down here that rivalry is always called the TEXAS/OU game ... never the other way around. The stadium also hosts the annual State Fair Classic featuring Grambling University and Prairie View A&M, perhaps the one football event in the country where the halftime band performances are more exciting than the game itself.

And in 2011, the stadium became the home of the new Ticket City Bowl, featuring teams from the Big 10 Conference and Big 12 Conference or Conference U.S.A. In fact, the Cotton Bowl has hosted more bowl games than any other stadium except for the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California.

But when all is said and done, this arena is now, and forever will be, "The House that Doak Built." Doak, of course, being Doak Walker, the legendary Southern Methodist University running back who also won the Heisman. During the late 1940s, Doak Walker drew tens of thousands of football fans to this stadium whether they could spell S.M.U. or not.

That said, the history of this stadium transcends college football. In 1950, it hosted a stunt baseball game that saw former greats Ty Cobb, Dizzy Dean and other greats flex their talents one more time. In 1984, it was the site of a major wrestling tournament. It has also been the home of two professional soccer teams and was one of the nine venues used for the 1994 FIFA World Cup.

Heck, this stadium's history transcends sports altogether. Did you know that a 21-year-old Elvis Presley performed here in 1956 to what was at that time the largest outdoor concert crowd in Texas history? That it hosted two Rolling Stones "farewell concerts" ... one in 1981 and another in 1989? That it has been the site of the Drum Corps International World Championships? That Eric Clapton held his very first Crossroads Guitar Festival here? And that during its 10-year run from 1978 to 1988, the Texas Jam Festival here spotlighted such renowned acts as Aerosmith, Journey, Van Halen, Santana and The Eagles, among many others?

The stadium is even a TV star, having appeared in episodes of Dallas, The Good Guys, and the reality series 4th and Long. In 1947, the popular TV game show Queen for a Day broadcast from the stadium. It even won an Emmy, in a way, when it pretended to be Berlin's Olympic Stadium in the 1984 made-for-TV movie, The Jesse Owens Story. And if you have a really grand party or special event to which you want to invite hundreds, or even thousands, of your closest friends, consider renting space at the Cotton Bowl.

Yes, Cotton Bowl Stadium is a venerable Dallas icon whose notoriety extends far beyond the Dallas-Fort Worth area ... sort of like mine.

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