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NEW ORLEANS (AP) _ Alabama recaptured the glory of the Bear Bryant era Friday night by winning the national championship and depriving Miami of its fifth title in a decade of dominance.

The Crimson Tide defense humbled the No. 1 Hurricanes 34-13 in the Sugar Bowl, giving No. 2 Alabama its first championship in 13 years. Alabama will be officially crowned college football's champion Saturday when The Associated Press poll is released.

Miami was trying to become the first back-to-back champion since Alabama under Bryant in 1978-79, and the first school ever to win five titles in 10 years.

But the Tide controlled the showdown between the last two unbeaten, untied teams in the country, helping Alabama capture its sixth national title and snapping Miami's 29-game winning streak.

"We had a great game plan for the the Miami offense," said Alabama linebacker Antonio London. "They talked a lot of noise all week long. They were talking a lot of trash (but) they couldn't get it done."

Miami receiver Lamar Thomas was disappointed that Miami failed to make history, but he said the season wasn't lost.

"When I look back over the season and think about all the things we've accomplished, I know that losing this game isn't the end of the world," Thomas said. "Give Alabama all the credit. They played an outstanding game."

The Tide's top-rated defense, inspired by a screaming, crimson-clad crowd of 76,789 in the Superdome, broke the game open by intercepting Heisman Trophy winner Gino Torretta on Miami's first two plays of the second half and scoring two touchdowns within a 16-second span.

After Tommy Johnson's interception led to a 1-yard TD run by Derrick Lassic, George Teague picked off another Torretta pass and returned it 31 yards to put the Tide ahead 27-6 _ Miami's biggest deficit since a 35-7 loss to Tennessee in the 1986 Sugar Bowl.

"I've been dreaming about one of those for about four years now," Teague said of the interception return for a touchdown. "Gino just happened to throw it right to me."

Miami pulled to 27-13 on a Sugar Bowl-record, 78-yard punt return by Kevin Williams with 12:08 left in the game. But the Hurricanes could score no more points against a stifling Alabama defense, and the Tide padded its cushion with a 4-yard touchdown run by Lassic.

"The coach was saying, 'It's not over, it's not over,' but it was over. There's no offense in the world that's going to score that many points off us," Lassic said.

Miami's frustration was epitomized two plays later when Thomas caught a short pass from Torretta and raced down the sideline for 82 yards, only to have Teague strip the ball away near the Alabama 10. An offside penalty against Alabama wiped out the play and gave the ball back to Miami, but nothing could make things go the Hurricanes' way.

"We just flat out got beat," Miami coach Dennis Erickson said. "They beat us offensively and defensively. They deserve to be national champions."

The victory extended Alabama's winning streak to 23 and made the Tide only the third Division I-A team to go 13-0 and win the national championship. The others were Nebraska in 1971 and Brigham Young in 1984.

It was a particularly rewarding win for Alabama coach Gene Stallings, who played for Bryant at Texas A&M and worked for him as an assistant at Alabama. Stallings is one of Bear's boys, a group of Bryant disciples who have carried on his tradition of hard-nosed defense and simple, straight-ahead offense _ a formula that helped Bryant win five national titles in the 1960s and 1970s.

"To win 13 games and win the national championship, I'm not smart enough to describe how I feel," Stallings said.

Lassic, the Sugar Bowl MVP, provided the offensive punch. He rushed 28 times for 135 yards and two touchdowns against a Miami defense that was giving up only 121 yards rushing and 11.5 points per game.

"Miami said a one-dimensional offense could not beat them, and our offense accepted the challenge," Lassic said. "Not too many people expected Alabama to win this game. But we knew we would do it and our fans knew we would do it. We went out there and proved it to the world."

The Alabama defense did its part by intercepting Torretta three times and limiting the Hurricanes to a pair of field goals and Williams' punt return. Torretta, who suffered only his second loss in 28 games as a starter, completed 24 of 56 passes for 278 yards but didn't throw a TD pass for only the third time this season.

"They put a lot of pressure on Gino. He was forced to throw when he wasn't ready to throw," tight end Coleman Bell said. "We just didn't have time to run precise routes."

In the closing minutes, Alabama fans shouted "We're No. 1" and "Roll Tide" and then stormed the field to celebrate. A group of Tide players dumped a bucket of Gatorade on Stallings and even the stoic coach had to smile.

Alabama quarterback Jay Barker passed for only 18 yards, but the Tide didn't need a passing attack because it outrushed Miami 267 yards to 48.

It was the fifth straight time that the No. 2 team beat the No. 1 team in a bowl matchup, giving No. 2 a 5-4 lead overall.

The game featured a few scuffles and skirmishes, but all the pregame trash-talk took a backseat to the hard-hitting play on the field.

The Tide, an 8-point underdog, rolled to a 13-6 halftime lead behind its powerful ground game and dominating defense. Alabama outrushed Miami 152-6 and limited the Hurricanes to two field goals by Dane Prewitt.

Alabama took a 3-0 lead on Michael Proctor's 19-yard field goal with 10:56 left in the first quarter. Miami tied it later in the period on a career-best 49-yard field goal by Prewitt.

The next three possessions ended with turnovers. Miami stopped Alabama when Casey Greer and Ryan McNeil picked off passes by Barker, who had more interceptions than completions at that point. The Tide halted the Hurricanes when Tommy Johnson stripped the ball from Lamar Thomas and the ball was recovered by Willie Gaston.

The Tide went ahead 6-3 on Proctor's 23-yard field goal with 10:48 remaining in the half, but Stallings was furious that an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty took away a chance for a touchdown.

Lassic was grabbed by the face mask as he ran 10 yards to the Miami 1, but he was penalized for taunting Miami by spinning the ball on the ground after the play. The flag brought the ball back to the Miami 15, and Alabama was forced to settle for the field goal.

Stallings, usually mild-mannered, was so upset by the penalty that he continued to argue with officials after the score.

A 33-yard interception return by Sam Shade set up an Alabama touchdown that put the Tide ahead 13-3, Miami's largest deficit since 1990. Five players after Shade's theft, Sherman Williams ran over from the 2 for the touchdown.

Torretta, who had thrown five straight incompletions, threw five consecutive completions to set up a 42-yard field goal by Prewitt as time expired in the first half.

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