

The Dawgmeister's Weekend Forecast  
September 18<sup>th</sup> Edition: The Dawgs host The Swine, and His Football Team, Too

Weekend wrap-up: Well, at least Tech lost.

I assume that all four of my readers have eyeballs and saw the same game that I did, and so there's probably little I have to offer in terms of insightful analysis that hasn't been written already. We just couldn't tackle #21, who looked to me like a runaway train with moves. I couldn't tell if it was bad technique or just that this kid is such a tremendous runner that he can't be brought down by one guy. Some observers thought that some of our defenders didn't entirely come to play; as reported in Bill King's Junkyard Blawg, "Verron Haynes tweeted after one play that Rambo took off: '[I'm] usually not [negative] on players but #18 that was not UGA football!! We hit hard EVERY PLAY.'" Like Haynes, I am not one to call out players, although unlike Haynes, I'm not one to either tweet or read somebody else's twitters. I did keep wondering, though, about the heavy hitting we'd been reading about from the safeties throughout fall camp, which has not been in evidence yet on the playing field.

I thought that Aaron Murray played pretty well, and with the run game's inconsistency, I was hoping that we'd turn him loose. If Orson Charles hadn't dropped a well-thrown ball at the goal line, and if Ealey hadn't fumbled, we might be beaming today about Murray's outstanding play and our impressive win. He protected the ball well (threw it away when he had to, was on target when he had time, and played as well as Garcia, who is in his 10<sup>th</sup> year under Spurrier's tutelage), was sharp with his throws (and don't we wish he'd led Durham just a little bit more on the 55-yarder), and showed good ball-handling skills. Let's hope that Coach Bobo and the rest of the guys start to build enough confidence in him that we develop options when the running game's not clicking.

The game sure could have been explained better by the broadcasters. Bob Davie showed once again why he is the worst announcer in college football, and let's make that pro football, women's flag football, high school ball, peewee league, and Mr. Klutz's 8<sup>th</sup> grade gym class too. Caleb King didn't get in the game after being named the starter in fall camp and starting in Week 1, and the camera panned to him and his sparking clean uniform on several occasions, yet "Davie-Jones" never once even mentioned his name. Was he suspended? Injured? Beaten out? Who knew until Sunday morning, when the newspapers reported that he'd injured his ankle? There was also a significant sub in the OL, where Tanner Strickland took over Chris Davis's position at one point. Was Chris hurt? Are his chronic injuries debilitating enough that he needs breaks, or are they reducing his effectiveness to the point where he needs to be replaced? Has Strickland beaten him out? Who would know based on the broadcast, since they didn't seem to notice the substitution of a new guy for a 4-year starter. Could this substitution have helped explain Ealey's 3.9 yards-per-carry, just as Josh Davis's injury last year made a big difference in the OL's performance? Or maybe it was Shaun Chapas getting hurt in the first half and not returning? Did SC load the box in AJ's absence to shut down the run? Might announcers who have all week to prepare for a broadcast actually do some work to learn a few details that could lead to an informed analysis?

A pal who played college ball and now coaches at the high school level wrote on Sunday and observed that in the second half “it looked like [UGA] started sending their ILB's on inside run blitzes quite a bit to put [SC] in obvious passing situations, and then they could pin their ears back and go after Garcia with Houston off the edge specifically.” Now that’s an insight I couldn’t come up with, because back when I played football, we spent most of the pregame stuffing newspapers into our leather helmets and didn’t have time for such things as “inside run blitzes” which hadn’t been invented yet, nor had the plural Inside Linebackers positions. Perhaps an astute professional college football announcer could take a moment to provide such enlightenment, rather than yapping on and on about off-season off-field incidents, about which he has a folk theory he’d like to share.

Ah, but what topics they did cover. Bob Davie again showed how out of touch he is with anyone under 40 years old by criticizing someone sending a text message in the stands, which only happens about 20,000 times during a game, even if old Bob is still trying out how to make the transition from rotary to touch-tone telephone. At least he didn’t spend 15 minutes talking about Facebook. And then, during a pretty critical drive just before the half, he and Jones went into their prearranged routine to talk unabated about offseason arrests. It seems that Davie picks a topic before the game and they run with it no matter what’s happening on the field. They sound like a couple of baseball announcers shooting the breeze in the 8<sup>th</sup> inning of a 10-1 game. Why explain why UGA’s running game is getting under 4 yards per carry when there’s a guy at the top of the stadium sending a text message you can chortle at on such a beautiful afternoon? At least when Todd Blackledge shows a short bit about a local restaurant, they air it when there’s a break in the game.

On the whole: SC might just win the East. UF isn’t exactly looking like world-beaters, and UT got hammered by Oregon as expected. Kentucky could surprise and that Randall Cobb is one scary weapon. This might be one of those years where everyone loses 2 or more conference games, and a formula’s needed to sort it out after the last whistle. A slobberknocker season—let’s hope that we’ve got it in us to fight back and get back in the race. It’s easy to blame the loss on AJ’s suspension, but he missed a third of last year too and we mostly won. Time to hunker down and figure out how to play through his suspension, hang on to that football, and secure the tackles.

Dawg doots:

- Last week Ed Green, who is part of a research team that partially sequenced the genome of Neanderthals from DNA found in bones buried in a Croatian cave, spoke at UGA. He reported that a major finding from their research is that Neanderthals were reproductively compatible with humans, allowing the two species to interbreed. How their offspring got from Croatia to Arkansas remains a mystery.
- During the game the camera operators frequently focused on buxom co-eds wearing t-shirts with such slogans as “Go Cocks” and “I’m a Sucker for those Cocks,” leading Mrs. Butts to cover Little Woolly’s eyes so as to protect his tender sensibilities.
- Quote of the week: “Grantland Rice, the great sportswriter, once said, ‘It’s not whether you win or lose, it’s how you play the game.’ Well, Grantland Rice can go to hell as far as I’m concerned.” ~ Gene “The Singing Cowboy” Autry
- I think that Robert Smith is the best of the studio announcers doing games this year.

- I'm not sure why, but it seemed that Drew Butler was punting into the wind all day. Perhaps the announcers could have helped us understand why.
- At least we don't seem to be committing so many penalties this year.
- Lattimore is fabulous, but I've got to wonder how long he'll hold up carrying the ball 35+ times a game, even with that body.
- I saw that John Blake resigned as recruiting coordinator at UNC last week. A strange guy. His dedication to his Lord and Savior makes Mark Richt look like Bill Maher channeling Christopher Hitchens, but here he is taking the fall for the recruiting investigation at clean-as-as-whistle UNC. When he left Oklahoma after his stint as their worst head coach ever, Blake destroyed all of his recruiting records. This is also the guy who, when he was on the Dallas Cowboys staff in the 1990s, accused Troy Aikman of being a homosexual and racist. I'm sure that next year he'll be on Lane Kiffin's staff, because he sure can recruit.
- Parking rules in effect for Arkansas visitors: Here in Athens, you are not allowed to park your vehicle on the lawn of local residents. Violators will have the cinder blocks removed, and the vehicle will be towed to car graveyard it was originally purchased from.
- As their approach to AJ's case shows, the NCAA has an interesting take on "innocent until proven guilty." Mike Wilbon has an excellent commentary at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/09/AR2010090906372.html>, and I'm sure you have read Tony Barnhart's equally good column on the matter.
- I didn't see Justin Anderson or Kwame Geathers out there at NT, and hope they develop soon, because we could have used a load in the middle of the field on Saturday.
- Seems we haven't thrown a flanker screen pass yet this year, and it's been a staple of the offense the last few. I know that Murray can throw the pass. I wonder if it's something they do with AJ more than the other WRs, but we've got other guys with some wiggle who could catch-and-run too. Perhaps a better set of announcers could help explain this one.
- I wasn't at the game, but at least from my seat on the couch, I didn't see any SC fans waving the fearsome red panties at our team, as we'd been threatened with throughout fall camp. Gotta at least give the Bimbo credit for wearing (or not) our school colors.
- Tebow hater alert: From the Denver Post [http://www.denverpost.com/sports/ci\\_16059940](http://www.denverpost.com/sports/ci_16059940), an article on the "novelty act" that gets more media attention than the guys who matter on the Broncos. And of course ESPN ran a highlight on one of The Savior's 1-yard runs, but not Knowshon's amazing run that left several Jaguars empty-handed.
- Marc Weiszer made the good point that "By the time he plays against Colorado on Oct. 2—which is the game he will make his return at under the current length of the suspension—Green will have gone nearly an entire year since his last touchdown for the Bulldogs. That was a 65-yard score off a screen pass on Oct. 17 against Vanderbilt." I think he'll then have missed 8 straight regular-season games. Let's hope that we end up winning 6 of them (Saturday and the UK disaster of last year being the exceptions).

The Forecast: Mallett leads the Swines into Sanford Stadium. He is a tremendous talent who will be a high draft choice next summer, and The Big Swine Himself, although a loathsome human being, calls a good offense for him. The only times I've seen Mallett get rattled have been when

teams like Alabama and Florida put a huge rush on him. Even though we couldn't tackle Lattimore, we did pressure Garcia pretty well for the most part, and the secondary seemed to help except on some long gainers. As scary as this might sound, Marcus Lattimore was the #1 ranked RB in the nation last year among high schoolers, and Michael Dyer of Arkansas was #2, although I can't imagine that he's got Lattimore's power, given that I don't think I've seen anyone just manhandle defenders the way he did on Saturday. At any rate, the plan I'm sure will be to pressure Mallet on D and keep him off the field on O. Doing that will require a stronger running game than we've seen so far this year, and/or more confidence in Murray's ability to run the passing game. He's got my confidence already, and I think that Coach Bobo will take some restraints off him next week. Good Guys, 41-38.

National Game of the Week: The best matchup will be Georgia Tech at UNC, but by definition, the national game of the week cannot be played by a team whose mascot is a common household pest, or a team that just lost to Kansas and by implication to North Dakota State. So I'll take a different tack and go with Nebraska at Washington, because I'm going with the upset here. I'm not sure how Nebraska went from train wreck to #8 in two years, but I think it has to do with their historical success, not what they've got at the moment. Washington appears to have gotten the best of the ex-USC assistant coaches in Sarkisian and is viewed as a team on the rise, even if they haven't risen quite yet. But upsets happen—right Coach Johnson?—and I'm picking one here. Huskies over Huskers, 28-21.

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