

**The Dawgmeister's Weekend Forecast
November 12th Edition: Auburn Burns**



"He who spareth the rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him correcteth him betimes." (Proverbs 13:24)

"Withhold not correction from a child: for if thou strike him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and deliver his soul from hell."
(Proverbs 23:13-14)

"I've always felt like you have to have an element of punishment, something that will sting, something that will make somebody think twice about doing something or other guys who are watching. But you have to educate them, then you have to love them still. They're still part of this family and we want them to understand we're supporting them through it. But, you know, if the attitude is right and they're ready to learn from it and become better for it, discipline can be a very positive thing." (The Gospel According to Mark)

"No, not the stick!" (Little Woolly 1:1)

The Recap: "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:3)

Good question there, Matt. I borrow it for this week's column because many in the blogosphere are questioning whether there are character issues with Isaiah Crowell and Co. because Isaiah had a one-quarter suspension a few games ago, and a full-game suspension for the NMSU game on Saturday. Many observers raise this question of a rural town teenager who is suddenly under a glaring spotlight as a feature RB in a nationally-ranked program, a player with enough talent to come out of high school ranked as the top back in the nation and enough potential to find himself paired with the H-word in eager fans' discussions of the possibility that he'll lead us to our first national title in three decades.

And in so doing, people seem to overlook their own spotty histories as fragile human beings weathering life's vicissitudes, often by means of libation. If Isaiah's got character issues, then who among us doesn't? Even those among us who eschew potatoes and the wacky tobacky

yield to temptations of other sorts; witness the sober and pious Mormons of Utah, whose downloading of internet porn on Sunday afternoons leads the nation by a goodly margin.

So, before you judge our trio of running backs for their youthful excursion into the mystical land afforded by the hookah, look thyself in the mirror and see if you don't find a flawed reflection returning your gaze. The man in my mirror has no illusions about the many wrong turns that have characterized his own path to adulthood.

Before I depart this issue, I'll allow that I know someone who was privy to Isaiah's first suspension, and it had nothing to do with breaking a training rule; it was imposed following a relatively small dust-up that was dealt with swiftly and effectively. And he had [an occasional outburst in high school as well](#), suggesting that he's still a man-child. Let's hope that the man keeps showing up on Saturdays, and begins visiting more often during the week. And yes, when we were all teenagers, we probably went off the leash a few times and sometimes paid the price. We just weren't Division I athletes living in the fishbowl of SEC football coverage.

Mark Richt talked before the game about how hard that first semester is for incoming freshmen: The football competition is greater, the university is large and bewildering, the kids are often first-in-family to attend college and so don't have people to lean on for advice in navigating the institution, the classes are often lecture-hall events where the students must learn how to take notes on a whole new scale and exams demanding extensive knowledge of arcane subjects, the academic pressure and expectations are astronomically higher, and the kids are away from home for the first time. Now, that doesn't explain why Carleton Thomas still finds time to relax over a nice bowl with his friends, but is something to keep in mind when we expect true freshmen to act like mature adults in their first fall on campus.

And yes, there was a game at Sanford Stadium. We won. Feels good to be in first place, doesn't it? Now, aren't you ashamed of all the things you were saying after the first two games of the season? For their defeat of South Carolina, I hereby pledge to abstain, for the next week, from any hating of, or hating on, The Swine, as well as the Razorbacks. But I must say that, as live mascots go, a wild pig in a crate doesn't do much for me.

By game time, Knute "Bear" Lombardi, The Guy Who Sits Behind Me, hadn't show up yet, and so I went and sat with The Scowlmeister, whose cheery disposition calls to mind Richard Simmons on a weekend pass to Fire Island compared to The Guy Who Sits Behind Me. Even The Scowlmeister was pretty impressed by the Dawgs' showing, as one might be in a game such as this. And yet, with about two minutes left in the first half, when we were up 42-3 and on our way to one more score, somewhere in the deepest recesses of my mind I heard The Guy Who Sits Behind Me observe, in a most sonorous tone, "No urgency out there. We couldn't beat the Chase Street Elementary School girls' flag football team today. We need to get Bozo out of there and bring in someone who can call some plays."

Like you, I stayed up for the LSU/Alabama game. I've read accounts of the game in the Lamestream Sports Media that said that a national title game rematch is out of the question because Alabama missed some field goals and, in the view of Gene Wojciechowski, "Not when Oklahoma State, which played, hands down, the most entertaining game of the day against

Kansas State, is still undefeated.” Now, I don’t begrudge OSU a spot in the title game on the basis of being unbeaten, which I don’t think they’ll be after the Oklahoma game. But if entertainment is what you want, match Northern Illinois and Nevada in the title game, because they sure do score a lot of points. The highest ranked SEC offense in the nation (at least before the LSU game) was Alabama at #28. Most SEC teams are ranked lower than #60, including UGA (though Saturday might change that). Yet SEC teams annually win the national championship because they play defense better than anyone, which is why not only SEC defenders but the SEC offensive players who have to play against them are all over the NFL. Gary Danielson said that there were 10 future NFL defensive backs in the LSU/Alabama game, and he’s always right. Just ask those juggernauts from Oregon, Oklahoma, etc. who’ve gotten stoned in the last few championship games just how entertaining they were against SEC defenses. I doubt if we’ll see two SEC teams in the National Championship game, because you never know; and after UGA beats LSU in the SEC title game, that question will be out the window anyhow.

The Coveted Dawgmeister Good Guy of the Week Award goes to Trinton Sturdivant. Trinton’s history of injuries is well known to the Dawg Nation. He came in as a January enrollee with a high GPA and the reputation as a guy who didn’t need football to succeed in college. He was also, of course, a highly-ranked OL prospect who started as a true freshman. Trinton, or Ty as he is known around the Terry College of Business, will graduate in December with a double major in finance and management. As we know, his knees have just not held up to the rigors of this violent game; and as we read recently, he aspires to return to football next fall as a tight end anyhow, given that he’s lost a good 60 lbs. since his latest injury, because he loves the game and wants to continue to earn his scholarship and be with his teammates. [And according to the picture that accompanies this story, he’s one natty fellow.](#) A DGD and proud recipient of this week’s Good Guy Award.

Dawg Doots:

- Quote of the Week: Pathological liar Lane Kiffin on Pac-12 officials: “I was basically lied to.”
- [Tebow doesn't think Lions were mocking him.](#) Yes, Tim, they were.
- Factoid of the Week: Guys who complete degrees while in college have longer NFL careers than guys who don’t, possibly because they tend to take care of business, do the little things, and have a sense of responsibility.
- Amazing tidbit of the week: Stanley Williams, our 2013 RB commit, got kicked off the Apalachee HS team. No, he wasn’t smoking the wacky tobacky. His violation: His parents visited the Walton Academy to inquire about their academics. Yes, that’s it. Stanley will complete his career at Walton, and I’m sure they’re pretty happy to have this terrific kid, who runs a 4.23 40 and makes the grade in the classroom.
- Aaron Murray has been compared to Drew Brees by many, although Danielson said that if he wants to be that good, he needs to get better. I suspect that he’s somewhere between Chris Leak and Drew Brees, but where on that continuum he falls remains to be seen. Both Leak and Brees were terrific, yet small, college QBs, but Leak never even got drafted after starting at QB for a national champion (and to all you young folks out there, Leak, not Tebow, was the QB for Meyer’s first championship, even though the Lamestream Sports Media seems to remember it differently). A year or two I said that

we'd win a national championship before Murray graduates, and next year might be the year, given that we return just about everyone. How far he'll go in the pro game remains a developing story.

- Aaron Murray's second quarter against NMSU should, I believe, end all discussion of Case Keenum as a Heisman candidate. NMSU is about the caliber of most teams on Houston's schedule, and I'm sure that Aaron could throw for a few billion yards and scores against them too. If Luck ever shaves that skanky beard of his, he'll get my vote. Heck, even Tebow finally looked in the mirror and got out the razor blade.
- Keep The Owlmeister in your prayers, because Temple is tanking. The Steve Addazio era is not quite maintaining the level of the Al Golden era, and perhaps people who followed his career at Florida are not surprised.
- Interesting that throughout Sunday, I heard about how great Alabama is. Pretty much every Alabama player interviewed after the LSU game stated without reservation that they are the better team and would win a rematch. On Sunday Terry Bradshaw said, out of the blue, that even though Alabama lost, Nick Saban is the best coach in college football. And yet they lost, according to the box score I saw, and Miles has owned Saban of late, in the program Saban was too good to stay at, even though Saban's recruiting classes always top out in the rankings.
- Todd Grantham may well win the American Football Coaches Association Assistant Coach of the Year Award, and I'd be first in line to congratulate him. But don't overlook the job Tony Ball's done with our WRs, who catch the ball better in traffic than any group I've seen here at UGA. Maybe the AJ Green example still lingers for these guys, but that doesn't explain Chris Conley. One thing I expect to see eventually is the return of the endzone fade pass, which Mrs. Butts could probably have completed to AJ since he was so dominant in that formation. But Michael Bennett is a big, rugged kid who loves to catch the ball over a defender, and I think he'd be one tough hombre on the fade route.

The Forecast: This is what it's all about, and has been for many years: The Auburn game dictates at least one SEC Division race's outcome. Auburn has yet to establish a quarterback from among their 3 aspiring candidates, and that's never a good sign late in the season's third month. I think that our D takes away their one consistent weapon, Dyer, by executing at Rick Perry Level and harassing them like Herman Cain getting after the ladies at a National Restaurant Association convention in Vegas. This game will be one of the few that we've started with just about everyone eligible and healthy enough to play in. Richard Samuel, who is my honorary Team Captain for this game, is on crutches till at least the bowl game, and Dallas Lee joins him on the sidelines; and I'm guessing we'll redshirt Wooten and save him for another year. No word yet on Malcolm Mitchell, and I doubt if we'll know till game time if he plays. But otherwise, we're taking on Auburn with a nearly-full roster, and I can't imagine a team being more motivated on more levels to win on a Saturday. We do a good job of shutting down one-dimensional teams. We might not hold Auburn to negative rushing yards, but we've shown what happens to teams that don't have a variety of weapons to attack a defense. Meanwhile, we have replaced our essential guys with backups who have not missed a beat, no matter what position: RB, inside linebacker, WR, it doesn't seem to matter, the next guy just steps up and plays like a starter. Anyone who thinks that isn't a function of coaching needs to start paying more attention. I see us taking the field with determination and focus and coming out on top, no matter what happens on special teams, which can't get much worse and which have begun their overhaul. Dawgs

continue on their March to Atlanta, and come out ready to clinch a spot in the championship game. Good Guys, 23-13.

National Game of the Week (2 ranked teams): Oregon at Stanford: I'm sure this one will light up the scoreboard and keep everyone entertained. Maybe when it's all over, Gene Wojciechowski will say that they are so entertaining that they should be rematched in the national championship game. I would prefer that Stanford win because I still can't believe some of the guys that Kelly at Oregon allows on the field once he bails them out of jail. But they sure can score touchdowns. Stanford in the day's second-best game, 45-42.

National Upset of the Week (unranked team over ranked team): Florida over S. Carolina: Yes, the Gamecocks are still ranked, although not where they were before they stepped in a steaming Petrino in Fayetteville on Saturday. SC might sink like a stone by season's end. I saw a couple of minutes of Spurrier's TV show on Sunday, and he looked a bit forlorn for a guy still contending for a title. But the race in the East will be over by this time next week. Gators, 21-17.