

The Dawgmeister's Weekend Forecast Season Post-Mortem

“Some halves you’re the window, some halves you’re the bug.” ~Confucius

Not much here to add to what is clear to everyone: LSU is one great team, and deserves to win the SEC and play in the national championship game. Who knows how it'd have gone if we'd held on to those two TD passes in the first half, along with the first-down pass that Figgins dropped? But we didn't, and we needed to make every play count to beat these guys. I do hope that we learned enough to build on for next year. One thing I learned is that Ken Malcome is looking pretty good, and I imagine he'll be getting increased reps in the next month or so.

That's about all the analysis I can add to what's already out there. Congratulations to Les Miles for putting together a tough and physical team that just beats opponents down over the course of a game. It's one thing to recruit talent, it's another to keep it all happy and focused on team goals so that they play together with passion. Alabama must be pretty good to get them into overtime and hold them to a handful of field goals. The Lamestream Sports Media Dumb-Ass Article of the Week goes to Rick Reilly, who calls the first LSU/Alabama game “[Dullapalooza](#)” and doesn't want a rematch, which he believes only follows from the national “SEC bias” that he believes accounts for the fact that SEC teams keep winning championships over high-scoring teams from lesser leagues. Rick wants an offensive juggernaut to play LSU and expose the SEC for the sham that it is, because he finds epic defensive battles to be a snooze. (And wouldn't “Snoozapalooza” be a much better title than his tedious “Dullapalooza”?) Thanks Rick, you cretin.

As you may know, the Heisman Memorial Trophy committee has granted a vote to one local pseudonymous football blogger, and this year it is my privilege to cast this vote. (I should note that Rick Reilly has already declared that “You don't think a Stanford team led by Heisman Trophy shoo-in QB Andrew Luck wouldn't make any SEC defense wonder whether to scream or go bowling?” and he's never wrong, is he?) Most of the players on most of the short lists out there are quarterbacks, which makes sense because they handle the ball on every play, read the field before the snap and make adjustments, and read the field after the play begins in order to direct action once all the parts start moving, some quite quickly. They also need to be a threat of some sort themselves as either a passer or runner or both. So they justifiably get a lot of attention in the conduct and outcome of games. Before Saturday's games, I checked on the national ranking of quarterbacks in terms of QB rating, which is imperfect but does tend to provide a good conversation starter. Here's the national top 40:

Quarterback Rating Leaders - Qualified

RK	PLAYER	TEAM	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	YDS/A	LONG	TD	INT	SACK	RAT
1	Russell Wilson , QB	WIS	260	189	72.7	2692	10.4	66	28	3	17	192.9
2	Robert Griffin III , QB	BAY	347	252	72.6	3678	10.6	87	34	5	22	191.1
3	Case Keenum , QB	HOU	467	342	73.2	4726	10.1	84	43	3	13	187.3
4	Kellen Moore , QB	BSU	372	272	73.1	3194	8.6	71	38	7	6	175.2
5	Andrew Luck , QB	STAN	373	261	70.0	3170	8.5	62	35	9	9	167.5
6	Terrance Owens , QB	TOL	206	147	71.4	1812	8.8	75	15	3	2	166.4

7	Casey Pachall , QB	TCU	292	198	67.8	2530	8.7	75	24	6	13	163.6
8	Brandon Weeden , QB	OKST	486	355	73.0	4111	8.5	66	34	12	11	162.2
9	Matt Barkley , QB	USC	446	308	69.1	3528	7.9	82	39	7	8	161.2
10	Bryn Renner , QB	UNC	308	212	68.8	2769	9.0	75	23	12	25	161.2
11	Dan Persa , QB	NW	260	193	74.2	2163	8.3	90	17	7	25	160.3
12	Darron Thomas , QB	ORE	280	174	62.1	2274	8.1	69	27	5	8	158.6
13	Keith Price , QB	WASH	325	219	67.4	2625	8.1	70	29	11	26	157.9
14	Aaron Murray , QB	UGA	331	202	61.0	2698	8.2	75	32	10	24	155.4
15	Chandler Harnish , QB	NIU	322	203	63.0	2692	8.4	79	23	4	8	154.4
16	Tyler Tettleton , QB	OHIO	356	228	64.0	2868	8.1	78	26	7	19	151.9
17	Austin Dantin , QB	TOL	185	120	64.9	1398	7.6	63	15	3	7	151.9
18	Geno Smith , QB	WVU	448	291	65.0	3741	8.4	84	25	5	25	151.3
19	EJ Manuel , QB	FSU	280	183	65.4	2417	8.6	68	16	8	28	151.0
20	Alex Carder , QB	WMU	414	277	66.9	3251	7.9	64	28	9	19	150.8
21	Jacory Harris , QB	MIA	300	195	65.0	2486	8.3	77	20	9	17	150.6
22	Blaine Gautier , QB	ULL	304	192	63.2	2488	8.2	65	20	5	19	150.3
23	AJ McCarron , QB	ALA	294	196	66.7	2400	8.2	69	16	5	11	149.8
24	Kirk Cousins , QB	MSU	339	218	64.3	2735	8.1	69	21	6	14	149.0
25	Tyler Wilson , QB	ARK	407	257	63.1	3422	8.4	68	22	6	23	148.7
26	Landry Jones , QB	OKLA	487	312	64.1	4052	8.3	64	28	12	5	148.0
27	G.J. Kinne , QB	TLSA	359	230	64.1	2876	8.0	69	25	12	11	147.7
28	Cody Fajardo , QB	NEV	199	142	71.4	1647	8.3	58	6	5	10	145.8
29	Nick Foles , QB	ARIZ	560	387	69.1	4334	7.7	54	28	14	23	145.6
30	Tyler Bray , QB	TENN	247	147	59.5	1983	8.0	81	17	6	11	144.8
31	Derek Carr , QB	FRES	411	260	63.3	3208	7.8	86	24	8	17	144.2
32	Zac Dysert , QB	M-OH	448	295	65.8	3513	7.8	71	23	11	46	143.8
33	Colby Cameron , QB	LT	172	97	56.4	1403	8.2	90	11	2	5	143.7
34	Tajh Boyd , QB	CLEM	424	254	59.9	3338	7.9	65	28	10	27	143.1
35	Denard Robinson , QB	MICH	224	124	55.4	1958	8.7	77	18	14	10	142.8
36	James Vandenberg , QB	IOWA	360	214	59.4	2806	7.8	88	23	6	26	142.7
37	Connor Shaw , QB	SCAR	171	112	65.5	1218	7.1	55	12	6	19	141.5
38	Austin Davis , QB	USM	401	251	62.6	3052	7.6	90	24	10	15	141.3
39	James Franklin , QB	MIZZ	354	224	63.3	2740	7.7	53	20	10	18	141.3
40	Logan Thomas , QB	VT	319	193	60.5	2525	7.9	63	18	7	13	141.2

For comparative purposes, here are the LSU QBs, none of whom played enough to be ranked, and all of whom handed off a lot more than most of the guys who top out this list (you'll have to figure out the stat line, which is different from how the top 40 are listed):

Jarrett Lee	104	167	1306	62.3	7.82	14	3	152.0
Jordan Jefferson	45	70	654	64.3	9.34	5	1	163.5
Zach Mettenberger	8	11	92	72.7	8.36	1	0	173.0

Totals

157 249 2052 63.1 8.24 20 4 155.6

OK, I'm not quite ready to give the Heisman to Zach Mettenberger, lofty QB rating notwithstanding, although it'll be fun to see what he does as a 2-year starter in a program that might win several national championships in the next few years. What's interesting to me is that guys like Landry Jones are on a lot of Heisman lists, and even in a pass-first offense built around the QB's skills, he's pretty far down the ratings list, well behind Aaron Murray, who is in nobody's Heisman discussion this year, even as both teams finish out at 9-3 and even as OU is somehow rated ahead of UGA in the final rankings after losing a home game to bottom-feeder Texas Tech.

The first thing I do with a list like this is kick off the guys who play against lesser competition. First to go is Case Keenum, whom I saw on Saturday for the first time and who is strictly a dink-and-dunk system quarterback with inflated stats against bad teams. Also the guys from Toledo, Ohio, and Northern Illinois; and Kellen Moore needed to go unbeaten to be a player in this competition.

Once the smoke clears, it seems that Russell Wilson and RG3 have had substantially better seasons than anyone else at QB. Both are reputed to be super-good-guys in the locker room and beyond, and both are in major conferences, albeit not conferences with SEC defenses. Wilson played with a superior running attack (see below), so you could argue that RG3 is the nation's top QB this year, given that he was the whole show at Baylor and had them winning big games for the first time in ages.

Luck, Weeden, and Barkley comprise the next tier, and each plays in a league where offense comes first. Luck plays in a glorified Arena Football League when it comes to defense, so I don't trust his gaudy stats, even though Rick Reilly has already awarded him the Heisman. Weeden is disqualified because guys D.J. Shockley's age should not still be playing college football. And Barkley is coached by Lane Kiffin, which removes him for consideration automatically. I'd like to see what these guys could pile up against the better SEC Ds, which I suspect would be similar to what Sam Bradford, the resident hoodlum from Oregon, and other luminaries have achieved in recent national championship games: not much.

Running backs also get Heisman consideration, and Montee Ball, LaMichael James, David Wilson (VaTech), and Trent Richardson have been the best of the power conference runners this year (in that order, if yardage is the measure of success here). SEC fans think that only Richardson is a viable Heisman candidate, although the other guys have had comparable years, and Ball is by far the leader of them all in terms of scoring touchdowns. (See http://espn.go.com/college-football/statistics/player/_/stat/rushing for the complete listing.) It'd be hard to single out any runner as clearly better than the others.

So, all things considered, who gets my Heisman vote? Tyrann Mathieu. He just killed us on Saturday, and it was a typical game for him. Not bad for the smallest guy on a field filled with Brobdingnagian Beasts.

The Coveted Dawgmeister Good Guy of the Week Award goes to David Pollack, one of the greatest players in program history. DP is now advancing up the ranks as a broadcaster and getting increased screen time as part of the ESPN Game Day broadcast, where he's a welcome antidote to [the goofs and doofuses who populate their programming](#). #47 also established FanBan, which manufactures sports banners that feature sports photographs and college team logos and has raised money for scholarships that enable underprivileged kids to participate in YMCA programs. A DGD and deserving Good Guy who continues to build his legacy in the Dawg community and beyond.

Dawg doots:

- This week, all dawgs were curbed.

National Game of the Week: Army vs. Navy. The Forecast: I deeply appreciate what our troops do in battle, but really, who cares about this game?

OK, Mrs. Butts insists that I take some time off, so I'll file a forecast and review for the Outback Bowl in a few weeks. Otherwise I'll be stringing lights and baking cookies with Little Woolly, taking Wags out for walks where he can deposit his Petrinos and Kiffins (which are too toxic to scoop and bag), and watching NASCAR reruns with Mrs. Butts. All the best for a festive season of peace and happiness from all of us in the family seat of Butts County.