

The Dawgmeister's Weekend Forecast:
Chomping at the Bit

The Recap:

Today's vocabulary lesson: Of the following sets of words, one refers to The Scowlmeister, the other to Yours Truly:

Jeremiah, Cassandra, calamity howler, defeatist, killjoy, negativist, nihilist, prophet of doom, worrywart

Pollyanna, Pangloss, Micawber, optimist, dreamer, hoper, idealist, positive thinker, chiliast, wishful thinker

Any guesses which is which?

I imagine that The Scowlmeister is fretting mightily about our difficulty in winning this road game against a bad team. The Day Job had me out of town last week, and while I was driving back from the airport on Saturday afternoon I listened to the ESPN radio show, which among other things provided updates on Florida's beatdown of the Lattimore-less South Carolinians. Looking ahead to the evening schedule, the show's experts wondered if UGA might be looking ahead to the UF game and get trapped by UK. One said, UGA has a lot of guys who'll be playing on Sundays; UK has a lot who shouldn't be playing on Saturdays. So, even if the Dawgs are looking ahead, they should still win. And that's pretty much the way it went. (The ESPN guys also made the amazing comment that there are actually Auburn fans taking comfort in the fact that, in their loss to Vanderbilt, at least they beat the point spread, which favored Vandy by a TD.)

And yet, even after a game where we didn't dominate the only team in the SEC that might be worse than Auburn, we head into next week with an opportunity to control our destiny in the East, and that's what we play for. So, even though I was a wee bit of a worrywart when UK ran the ball so well in the first half, my Panglossian persona returned to lift my spirits, revel in the brilliant game played by Aaron Murray and the whole passing attack, and think that with something huge to play for next week against a UF team that personifies Winning Ugly, I've got one big week of anticipation ahead of me.

If we play Old Man Football, then UF plays Neanderthal Man Football. Three yards and a cloud of dust, and maybe a bit of blood, and that's what they do. It appears that they've figured out how to play Driskell to take advantage of his running and minimize his inability to read beyond his first stop in the progression. Although I'm no defensive coordinator, it seems to me that anticipating and locking down his first passing option will really throw their offense into confusion, at least on those occasions when they pass the ball. They mostly run the ball between the tackles, and that's where the game will be won and lost. Are we up for it, moreso than in the last two games? Only Coach Grantham can say for sure.

Back to Saturday: We sure are a different team with Jarvis Jones injured or out. He hasn't been the same since his electrifying game vs. Missouri, with a bad groin and bad ankle really reducing his explosiveness and acceleration, which are his greatest assets. Getting him back closer to full speed would really change our ability to tackle for losses and disrupt other teams' designs.

I thought that Mike Bobo did a good job of adjusting the game plan from the stated purpose of running more to the reality that they loaded their D to stop the run, which left Aaron with tons of options in the air. Whether we can adapt so impressively against UF's defense is another question, but the outcome of the game will surely hinge on our ability to generate points. I think UF's offense is mediocre; most of what they did Saturday came on generously short fields provided by USC's fumbles inside the red zone. Just as we are different without Jarvis, they are different without Marcus. Some guys are just that good.

A Coveted Dawgmeister Game Ball goes to the liberally hirsute Rhett McGowan, ex-walkon and scout teamer who now returns punts and has a role in the WR rotation (recall his big catch vs. Florida last year, and he hauled one in when we needed it on Saturday). "As a walk-on, my goal was to get on the field and help the team," he said. "When they awarded me a scholarship, it was an unbelievable feeling, the best feeling I've had in a while. And it's just a bonus. It doesn't affect the way I play now because I still go out there every day and compete like I don't have a scholarship. But more than anything, the best thing was being able to call my mom and tell her I had a scholarship and she didn't have to worry about me financially anymore. It was a great feeling because my mom has always been there for me and it's a struggle to pay for school here. That was the best feeling." Right on, Rhett. I'm saving this quote for Little Woolly for a similar statement of gratitude for the lovely Mrs. Butts when his manhood impends.

Dawg Doots:

- Saturday marked the debut of our new [Milliken 5-ft 4-in x 7-ft 8-in University of Georgia College Football Field Area Rug](#), which dear Mrs. Butts gave me for our anniversary present, because Dawg football is something we share to the pits of our hearts and souls, and we want to have a facsimile of the Sanford Stadium football field experience in The Dawg Room, at the foot of The Big Screen, to remind us of this passionate bond on a daily basis. Little Woolly was so excited that he has decided to plant hedges around the perimeter for his science project, which should do wonders for the footing in The Dawg Room.
- Funny thing about Georgia Tech in the Johnson Era (R.I.P.). With all the emphasis and excitement surrounding their high school running schemes, the only GT players I see playing on Sundays are wide receivers and defensive players.
- Kentucky's Commonwealth Stadium seats 67,942 but has held crowds in excess of 70,000. Attendance at Saturday's Homecoming Game vs. a Top 11 opponent: 54,553, although it didn't look nearly that large.
- The hype surrounding Geno Smith after he ripped bad teams to shreds (in retrospect, with a dink-and-dunk approach where his wideouts beat cruddy DBs to produce long gains after the catch) and how those games made him the Heisman favorite reinforce my belief that until a team is halfway through its conference schedule, nobody should be allowed, by law, to say anything definitive about its performance. If you think the 6-1 Dawgs have

let you down this year, how'd you like to live in Morgantown these days, with your Geno for Heisman poster hidden in the closet?

- “The Georgia-Florida game is a college football tradition and one of the highlights of the football season. We certainly want everyone to have a good time, but we also want everyone to be safe. Troopers will be patrolling throughout the weekend, watching for impaired drivers in an effort to prevent tragic crashes on the roads of the two states. Remember to use a designated driver if alcohol will be part of your celebration and if you're hosting a party, remember to include non-alcoholic beverages for designated drivers.” ~Col. Mark McDonough, commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Safety.
- Best college football nickname: Johnny Football, freshman QB at Texas A&M
- Many have cringed over our special teams play, but I think Collin Barber has punted pretty well for us this year. UK had zero return yards on Saturday on punts, which means he's getting it done.

Good Guy of the Week: Demetric Evans played more years in the NFL (9) than he started games at UGA (3), which says a lot about the talent at his position when he was at UGA, where he played behind Richard Seymour, Marcus Stroud, Charles Grant and Josh Mallard. In the NFL he played 3 years at Dallas, 4 at Washington, and 2 at San Francisco, mostly in backup roles but always in the rotation. NFL means Not For Long for most guys, but a 9-year career is pretty impressive. So is marrying an OBG-GYN (Dr. Aungel Evans) and returning at the end of an NFL career to complete his UGA degree, which he did last December, saying, “It's something that I earned. It's something that I promised myself when I was in high school being recruited to become a college athlete. Playing football is great. But that's the only thing that would empower me as an individual, a degree.” Next up: a master's degree. He sees his life as especially blessed, as a kid from a rural town in Louisiana who ended up making millions for playing a game he loves. But instead of retiring to the golf links and life of ease in the 19th hole, he says that “I want to change people's lives, because I grew up in a small town in a single-parent home where getting a college degree and playing in the NFL seemed unachievable. Not only have I finished my degree, but I played in the NFL for three times the life expectancy of the average player. I'm an example of what hard work and dedication can bring.” While in the NFL, Evans founded the [92 Blessings Foundation](#), with 92 his uniform number and also the number of families he would provide with food and gifts during the holidays. But his good works are not over. “I'm hoping to improve the literacy rate,” he said. “I want to raise funds to start an after-school program in my hometown for under-privileged kids, and all kids really, to prepare for the ACT and SAT and to get tutoring for classes they're struggling in so they can increase their GPA and compete for college scholarships.” That's one DGD we can be proud of.

The Forecast: A slugfest, which I'm sure UF is anticipating this week; and I suspect we will be too. Our OL is still a bit erratic, and at times John Theus reminds us that, even though he stepped in and owned Right Tackle since his first week on campus, he's still a freshman who had no spring practice to advance his development. That will change over the next year, but next week is today's concern. We need the OL to crack some holes so the RBs have more room than they've had the last two games. On the other hand, their pass protection gave Aaron time for the most part to hit his passes, long and short. Can we do that in Jacksonville? Yes. I think this game will

be tight and low scoring, and my Pollyannan Positive Thinking sees us on top and in control. Good Guys, 14-13.

National Game of the Week: Notre Dame at Oklahoma. As a long-time ND hater and OU follower, there's no doubt where I'm headed for this one. It's about time to put the ND-return-to-glory narrative back in the coffin where it belongs. OU, 28-21.

National Upset of the Week: Washington over Oregon State. Why? Who knows? Huskies, 24-17.