

## **The Dawgmeister's Weekend Forecast: Ole Miss Edition**

### **Pregame Comments:**

“We know this is going to be a 4<sup>th</sup>-quarter game.” ~Todd Grantham, pregame, as reported by Gary Danielson

“It is clear that our D is average, often mediocre. We can't stop the run, despite all of our first rounders; I didn't realize that John Jenkins had decided to take the year off. Our D backs don't cover very well, especially if you consider how many drops Kentucky had, or when guys were open and their QB made bad throws. After all these years of watching football, this is the first time when the most nerve wracking part of the game is when my team is kicking extra points. If we don't come out [against Florida] with some real fire, also noticeably absent yesterday, as it was against SC, we will get embarrassed, as we were by SC. I certainly hope they make me eat my words! Todd Grantham makes about \$800,000 to know more football than we do. I also can't believe that he has forgotten what he knew last year. However . . . . I just don't understand why we don't come out fired up for big games (e.g., the way we did, say, in the blackout game vs. Auburn). PLEASE tell me I told you so Saturday about 7:30.” ~Pregame comments by The Scowlmeister

### **Postgame Comments:**

“How many of y'all honestly thought we were going to win?” ~Malcolm Mitchel

“I did feel if we played our best, we'd have a good chance of winning. I just hadn't seen us play our best very much.” ~Mark Richt

“You all know the reason you came back here. That's the defense I know. Therefore, I expect nothing less. I expect us to come out here and play lights out from the beginning to the end.” ~Jarvis Jones


“The storm that is threatening 60 million Americans is a freakish and unprecedented monster that is expected to unleash its power over 800 miles, with predictions of widespread havoc, evacuation, and utter devastation to the state of Florida. The total is greater than the sum of the individual parts.” ~NOAA's summary of FrankenDawg, which swept through Jacksonville on Saturday

“I didn't really realize exactly what Jarvis had done until they told me and I looked at the line. That's on a bum ankle and I know his groin's not really 100 percent yet.” ~Mark Richt

“And it was a twofer! “~Little Woolly noting that Georgia Tech lost on Saturday

My personal note to the Scowlmeister: I told you so.

Haters, doubters, fickle fans, lend me your ears. I come to praise UGA, and to bury Florida. Call the game sloppy; call Aaron Murray jittery in big games; call the 1970s and tell them we've got

UGA dominance over Florida back. Also call Shawn Williams one BAMF, which was our term in the 70s for Bad Ass Mo Fo, for having the guts and passion to awaken our defense and turn it from individuals playing lazy, as one player termed it, to the FrankenDawg D that hits from multiple angles, leaves wreckage in its wake, and is greater than the sum of its parts. Having Jarvis Jones rested and much healed and as explosive as we've seen him sure does help too, and maybe the D had learned that he'd bail them out and so didn't need to play with all-out intensity on every snap, until his injuries and absence exposed their insufficient focus and effort, ably noted by Mr. Williams. With full-force intensity and Jarvis blowing up play after play, we looked at last like the D and team we thought we had during the optimistic pre-SC period, after which the Nation turned on the team mercilessly. The public verbal flogging of a 6-1 team on the verge of playing through their top rival for the SEC East and toward their reservation in Atlanta really took me aback, and made me wonder if the fan base is as willing to  as we are encouraging prospects to be. It'll be interesting to see if Dawg Fans rally to the team's cause after beating Florida, or continue to gripe about everything from coaching to kicking as we head toward a 11-1 regular-season record and date with the West champion in December.

#### Dawg Doots:

- A year after his greatest and most memorable game in a UGA uniform, on an afternoon when FB Merritt Hall left early and backup Quavvon Hicks was unavailable due to injury, Richard Samuel watched Zander Ogletree get all of the snaps at fullback on Saturday, something that nobody mentioned during the broadcast or wrote about after the game that I could tell. Aside perhaps from Auburn's extraordinary season-long meltdown after a recent national championship and a couple of terrific recruiting classes, Richard's absence on Saturday is one of the most surprising things of the season to me.
- Got to admire Aaron Murray for recovering from a terrible first half—not just the picks, but the easy checkdown passes he overlooked in order to throw them—and for doing what Gary Danielson said that he needed to do before our last scoring drive: move the team in the air, given the lack of likelihood we could just pound out a win on the ground.
- Georgia Tech has yielded 40 or more points 4 times in the last 5 games and vs. BYU scored zero offensive TDs in their unstoppable, ground-chewing offense whose time of possession on Saturday was 21 minutes out of 60. “I don't know,” said offensive guru and head coach Paul Johnson about his team's play. “I don't have an explanation for you.”
- Closest thing I've seen to Cam Newton: Braxton Miller. That guy is one bundle of talent.
- Closest thing I've seen to Tim Tebow: Collin Klein, minus the need for attention that makes Tebow so polarizing. Klein, like Tebow, might eventually become a useful role player; but unlike Tebow won't command attention every time the guy ahead of him makes a mistake. In part that's the Lamestream Sports Media's obsession with him, but it's hard to say he discourages the attention that makes him so divisive.
- The weekend's most welcome development: Southern Cal losing and thus ending their annual overinflated position in the rankings. Of course any good SEC fan revels in any Lane Kiffin flub, which makes us a happy bunch in general as he continues to get the nation's best jobs, recruit the nation's best players, get the Lamestream Sports Media to follow him around as if he's Justin Bieber dating Lindsey Lohan, and lead his program to the middle of the standings.

- I was sorry to see Marcus Lattimore go down with what was the most horrifying injury I've seen since Joe Theisman's hideous leg break a long time ago. Everything I've heard about him since he arrived in Columbia has been positive, much like our own Gurley and Marshall. The face of the college game often seems to be Isaiah Crowell and Michael Dyer and Tyrann Mathieu, guys who have a big chance to use football to advance their lives but just can't break from their well-engrained bad habits. Lattimore's head is screwed on really well, and if there's a star who could survive the loss of a career in sports and become a productive and happy human being, he's a great candidate. I hope he gets another shot at football, but in case not, I am confident he'll make it elsewhere.

Dawg Good Guy of the Week: Ever heard of Geoff Rapp? Is he one of those guys that Loran Smith talks about from the 1940s, a 210 pound defensive tackle who once saved the Clemson game with a sack in the fourth quarter, and then proposed to his high school sweetheart on the 50 yard line? No, he's a current Dawg, and one we can all be proud of. Geoff's a walkon tight end of whom Artie Lynch says, "My respect for him is out the roof. I've heard what they have to go through. Obviously, you serve our country, you deserve a standing ovation wherever you go. What they sacrifice is a lot more than what we sacrifice out here." He's referring to Geoff's 9-month rotation in a Marine Corps special ops unit in Afghanistan. After playing well, but not well enough for Division I recruiters, at N. Cobb HS, he enlisted, like many of the men in his family. I'm no military expert, so I'll take his word when he said, "A lot of people say there's not a lot of good being done over there, but that's definitely not the case. If we went into ground regions that hadn't been explored or cleared before, that's where we ran into a lot of heavy IED (improvised explosive device) activity. We were making those areas safe a little bit at a time." Geoff actually began taking Internet college courses while deployed, then contacted UGA's coaches when stateside and earned a tryout with the Dawgs. He's now a 23-year old redshirt freshman, working with the tight ends and using the Montgomery GI Bill and Hope Scholarship in conjunction with loans to finance his education. I'll leave it to his position coach, John Lilly, to summarize what he brings to the team: "He's a very serious kid. A lot of guys who kind of know where they fit in things, you'll be in the meeting room and you'll go over something and ask if there any questions. The starter might ask something, the third-team guy, but this guy over there in the corner is going to ask like he's getting ready to play for the national championship. I admire that. That guy knows there's a whole other world out there that's a whole lot more dangerous, that is more life and death than these little battles we engage in out here."

The Forecast: Coach Richt put it in perspective by saying, "All we've done is give ourselves a chance to play Ole Miss and have it mean something." The Great Awakening, courtesy of Shawn Williams's alarm, should continue against improving Mississippi. Murray learns to drop to his checkdowns in the progression in the film room this week, Dawgs protect the ball better, dial back the chippiness that gave them more penalty yards than rushing yards on Saturday, and ring the chapel bell at game's end. Dawgs, 31-14.

National Game of the Week: Alabama at LSU. Everyone says Alabama is just too good, and they probably are. LSU's offense just hasn't clicked under Mettenberger, and Alabama's speed should put him on his back a few times too many, with LSU still missing too many frontline players with injuries. LSU reminds me a little of UGA in Stafford's junior year: lots of preseason optimism undermined by too many injuries to too many guys. Tide, 27-13.

National Upset of the Week: Missouri over Florida. Gators' weaknesses exposed vs. UGA will be exploited by Missouri, who's feeling it after getting into the SEC win column, albeit vs. Kentucky. Dawgs take insurmountable lead in East as Tigers win, 17-14.