

THE DAWGMEISTER'S WEEKEND FORECAST:

GOOD MAN BEATS EVIL GENIUS ANY DAY

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SEPARATED AT BIRTH?



Steve Spurrier & David Hasselhoff

Oh, fiddlesticks. Close, but not quite there. Clemson's a good team, and there's no shame in losing in their stadium. But we could have pulled it off with greater consistency on the OL, both in blocking and penalties, and one cleaner long snap. Maybe one less air bump following Gurley's sensational TD fun. But you knew that, since you saw the game and since every other account of the game said the same thing. Not much expertise to add from here on what was required to change the outcome.

So, with all the fretting about the babes on the defense, most of the snafus came from the veterans. Clemson averaged more last year than they scored on Saturday, so I can't say that all those freshman defenders cost us the game. Clemson had some drives where they moved the ball easily, but they do that to everyone. There were also a bunch of possessions where they went nowhere. On the whole, with 8 freshmen in the defensive 2-deep and only 2 seniors (Garrison Smith and Connor Norman, who seemed to be the most heavily targeted DB by Boyd), you've got to think that the unit will improve a great deal over the course of the season. The question right now is how much they'll improve by next week.

Much was also made of Clemson's lightening pace, but on the whole we managed it reasonably well. Even with the yardage we piled up and with Mitchell out and Gurley limited to 12 carries, though, the OL seemed to be the one unit on the team that played inconsistently, and they were the group I was least worried about going into the game. Lots of work to do before South Carolina comes to town on Saturday.

On that topic: It's now well established that Jadeveon Clowney is the best player in the history of organized sports, and the presumptive top pick in the draft, with his bust in Canton already being fitted for dreads, although you'd never know it from the UNC game where he looked pretty ordinary and showed the effects of his celebrity offseason by taking a lot of plays off. It's less well established that he can single-handedly stop an entire offense by himself. I've read that this year's Wazoos are Spurrier's most talented team of his post-NFL coaching career, and their first

game showed that they've got a superior OL, some tough RBs, an experienced and athletic QB who bails on his progressions too early to be a passing threat if you've got the first read well-covered and get a good rush on him unless the D is too deep in the box to cover well downfield, and a lot of other good defenders.

So, what's an offensive coordinator to do? I'm not exactly Mike Bobo's go-to consultant for game-planning, but it wouldn't surprise me at all if he's going to do what Alabama eventually did to Jarvis Jones last year: run right at him to take away his pass rush. I think we run, run, run in this game, assuming that Gurley's thigh is good to go, and run to Clowney's side of the line so he can't make plays in pursuit, which he might be too winded to do anyhow after a few series, if the UNC game is any indication of his approach to summer conditioning. Whatever he can do, and however great he is, I don't think he can run down Gurley or Marshall in the open field should they get past him. So that's my game plan: run at Clowney, throw screens over him as UNC did, and reduce the number of occasions when Aaron sits in the pocket running through his progressions and allowing Clowney to beat his guy, and the next couple of guys we put in his path to the QB. And on those plays when we do drop Aaron back, roll him away from Clowney and/or have a back chip him on his way into a pattern while the fullback stays in to help with protection. But protection will be the key, and not holding, and I'm guessing that Coach Friend will emphasize that point a few times this week in practice. So there you have it, one great game plan from a guy who's never called a play in his life.

Dawg Doots:

- Many people are upset at the punishment meted out to Johnny Manziel for selling autographs, but I think that being suspended for an entire half without pay is fitting.
- Before Saturday, I didn't realize that the famed **12TH MAN** signage at the A&M stadium referred to their extra helpers at the **NCAA**.
- A&M's 13th Man is **ESPN**, which treated Manziel's return in the second half as if it was the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, if, that is, Jesus had sold tickets to the Sermon on the Mount, charged 10,000 drachmas a plate for the Last Supper, and worn robes covered with ads like a **NASCAR** driver's suit while he was nailed to the cross.
- Brent Musburger, never one to miss a good stereotype, referred to a white guy on Clemson who caught a pass as a "sure-handed" receiver, an adjective he never applied to any of their equally sure-handed black guys. C'mon Brent, you forgot to mention that he's one of the team's hardest workers, runs precise routes, spends extra time in the weight room and film room, gets the most out of his ability, and is intelligent.
- The next time somebody starts putting down football players as dumb jocks, tell them to read the article at <http://www.shakinthesouthland.com/2013/8/19/4631446/georgia-and-the-3-4-defense>. The Scowlmeister has 6 Ph.D.'s and has been CEO of 5 Fortune 500 companies, and he had trouble following the technical details, and even the numbering system of gaps, of the 3-4 defense that the article explains. And he had the leisure of reading it by the poolside while sipping his glass of Chablis and munching on an arugula and warm goat cheese salad, with nothing distracting him but the gnats and mosquitos that have taken over Athens this summer. Imagine putting that system into action on the field under the pressure of an international TV audience and with QBs, centers, and linebackers pointing and calling signals, players shifting and going into motion, an audible called with more pointing and shifting, defenders changing positions

continuously and shouting their recognitions throughout the play, coaches screaming and holding up posters of Chris Farley and Justin Bieber to change the formation, 93,000 fans screaming in a deafening uproar, flashbulbs popping like a disco strobe light, players talking trash, Foghorn Bullhorn bellowing above the din abusing the officials, mosquitos and gnats flying into their eyeballs and ears and up their nostrils, and the sudden violence, deception, and explosion after the snap with 22 superb athletes in furious, ferocious motion. Dumb my ass.

- The St. Louis Rams start two ex-Dawgs at LB: Alec Ogletree and Will Witherspoon.
- I think that Louisville is going to win all their games this year against a stupendously weak schedule. It'll be interesting to see how that plays out in the pre-playoff era. It seems that they playoff system is designed to accommodate exactly these situations, where someone runs the table against bad teams and can't either be eliminated from or supported for a shot at the championship.
- Teddy Bridgewater reminds me a bit of Donovan McNabb in terms of ability, smarts, poise, leadership, and promise.
- It never ceases to amaze me that since Steve Spurrier arrived at SC in 2005, Jaybo Shaw's less heralded little brother is the best QB he has been able to recruit, and that SC's rise after Lou Holtz's fall has been built on defense and a running game.
- Spurrier, incidentally, is from Johnson City, TN, where as a high school lad he was a three-sport letterman and All State selection in football, basketball, and baseball, and an All American QB in football; and in three years as starting pitcher, was undefeated and was the star of two state champion baseball teams. I'm guessing that people hated him back then, too.
- While watching the Alabama-VA Tech game, and pulling for Alabama because the league benefits when our teams do well, it occurred to me that rooting for Nick Saban is about the same thing as rooting for Donald Trump.
- Most universities don't want to be known as Safety U, but from a football standpoint, you'd have to consider UGA for the honor. Here's a great article on [Reshad Jones](#), one of our many ex-safeties now earning millions in the NFL. I think that our freshman class will produce a few more.
- From what I can tell, based on what I saw on ESPN this week, sometime in August Lou Holtz fell asleep in the tanning booth.
- This is where Coach Holtz gets his work done, incidentally, due to his nostalgia for the tanning he got for his 50th birthday:



- Here's an actual photo of the testing of a football helmet, conducted in 1912, and I believe that it's from Ryne Rankin's family collection:



And here's the same guy testing a bulletproof vest, this time in sepia:



Those Rankins are some B.A.M.F.s

- The AJC actually ran a [story](#) before Saturday on how the game would feature the return of the AFLAC duck. You'll surely want to know that "The duck has been updating his recovery on his Facebook page, which has generated more than 400,000 "likes". . . . The Aflac duck made his debut in commercials in January 2000. He is also used in marketing campaigns in Japan. . . . The duck is "very, very popular" in Japan but "he's not as loud"

due to cultural considerations, the spokesman said. "The duck is a much more sage and less boisterous duck in Japan."

- Somewhere, Verne Lundquist is smiling, sagely.
- According to Brent and Herbie, Clemson has one of the greatest traditions in all of college football, which consists of all the guys on the team getting on buses and driving in a circle around the stadium before disembarking, rubbing the Scrotum Pole, and running down a hill. This last part, from Scrotum Pole to football field, is believed at Clemson to comprise "the most exciting 25 seconds in all of college football." And they think this tradition can be regarded at the same level as the Spell Georgia Cheer, which we get right week after week, season after season? What did they do before buses were invented, go for a hayride around the stadium; and whose scrotum poles did they rub before someone donated a rock to the university to boost their endowment?

The Coveted Dawgmeister Good Guy of the Week goes to a guy you might only vaguely remember: Albert Hollis, the California RB who looked like a god but, due to injuries, never got much time on the field. Well Mrs. Butts has this poster up on her wall for reasons I can't quite fathom:



What is he doing with all those assets? What else, he's a personal trainer in Atlanta who has also done some acting and modeling. Albert's the founder and president since 2008 of a non-profit organization, "Why Not Me?" that is dedicated to helping kids realize that they are capable of doing great things in their lives. He also has a clothing line, "The Dynast Collection," reads poetry, and on the whole represents his alma mater with class. Nice job of taking your life in a positive direction when football didn't work out, and for being a DGD in the long haul.

The Forecast: Steve Spurrier has proven one hard coach for UGA to beat throughout his career, and last year's blowout was one of the worst games of the Richt Era for the Dawg faithful. Connor Shaw is a terribly underrated QB, and their D around Clowney continues to be the strength of the team. But if Gurley's back close to normal, I like our chances. The guy is a stallion, and will get better blocking next week and have fewer runs called back due to penalties. It'll be tight, but I'm sticking with my guys. Dawgs, 28-24.

National Game of the Week: On the whole, a really cruddy slate of games, if major matchups are what you're after. So although I think Notre Dame is undeserving of this level of respect, it's ND at Michigan, another program I've never warmed up to. I think these are two of the most overrated programs in the country, both this year and historically, but what am I supposed to do,

make Prairie View A&M at Texas State the National Game of the Week? Anyhow, I simply have no capacity in my generous soul to pick Notre Dame to win a football game, and so I'll take Michigan at home, 17-14.

Upset of the Week: The matchups are so bad and lopsided this week that it's unlikely that any of the cupcakes can actually pull off an Appalachian State win at the Big House, or did I mean North Dakota State over Kansas State, or was that Eastern Washington over Oregon State; but it's my sworn duty to predict a weekly upset, so here we go. Virginia over Oregon is enticing, so I'm taking it; if EWU can handle OSU, anything's possible except Temple beating Notre Dame. The game's in Charlottesville, which is one long plane ride. Oregon's got a new coach while the Cavs have continuity. So, in the spirit of Why Not?, UVA ends the Ducks' quackquest early: Mr. Jefferson's Guys, 31-30.

Caution: The Dawgmeister's Forecasts should not be used as the basis for an actual cash wager, and may be harmful to your health.