

**THE DAWGMEISTER'S WEEKEND FORECAST:
DAWGS ENJOY SOUTHERN LIVING**

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**SEPARATED@BIRTH? ARCHIVE
SEPARATED@BIRTH?**



**SKATING COACH & THE JOKER
ALEXANDER
GAZSI**

To Brother Todd Gurley: *Thanks for everything, and Godspeed on your way to your fabulous future.*

**November, 2013, Auburn, Alabama: *The Disaster in the Pasture*
November, 2014, Athens, Georgia: *The Sledges between the Hedges***

That's sledges, as in sledgehammers.

Brother Willie Butts is the Dawgs' greatest good luck charm. This weekend he made his annual trip to Athens to take in a game, and he doesn't settle for just any game on the schedule. Rather, when he takes Little Woolly's ticket for the weekend, he makes sure it's for the season's biggest home game, a tradition that began with the great Blackout Game of 2007. In his seven trips to Sanford Stadium—missing only one year in the streak—he's now 6-1, the only loss being the infamous LSU game in which A.J. Green got unnecessarily flagged for celebrating his spectacular TD catch, giving LSU a short field on the kickoff and a last-second score to steal the win.

Good news: Next year, he's coming down for the Alabama game.

I don't know much, but one thing I knew for sure heading into Saturday's game was that Auburn was going to score a lot of points and rack up half-a-thousand yards, as they had done to everyone all season. The main question was whether or not we could score more. Auburn's opening drive caused the nippy kickoff temperature to drop a few degrees more in the souls of Georgia fans. They went straight down the field and into the endzone, scoring on the kind of outside run that Florida used to run us into the ground, and I knew we were in for a long night.

The gamechanger: As Auburn's kickoff flew into the night air, Foghorn Bullhorn let out a roar of such titanic decibel-strength that comets in deep space were thrown off their orbits, his lovely wife, Mrs. Bullhorn, ended up on top of the press box, and Todd Gurley was blasted from one end zone directly into the other.

But that changed too with a holding call. I re-watched the game on the Big Screen later and there was indeed an Auburn jersey grabbed in **T2**'s vicinity, although not being worn by a player capable of slowing down that locomotive. With the ball returned to the site ten yards prior to the spot of the hold, our first drive stalled out, leading to our fabulous fake punt that, too, was called back because a lineman drifted a quarter of an inch over his allotted three yards downfield, and did so on the right side of the field when the play went left, thus earning the Coveted Dawgmeister Least Necessary Nitpicky Call of the Week Award.

Auburn took our subsequent punt and now I was worried that we might fall behind 14-0 and never catch up. Channeling the Scowlmeister can be hard on your nerves, much less your optimism. Little did I know that down on the sidelines, after Auburn's score (and I almost said *first* score), Damian Swann had channeled his inner Erk Russell and exhorted the defense to follow its assignments and not let Auburn make this a high-scoring game. Senior leadership to the rescue; now all they had to do was follow the plan, playing with fierce energy while minding responsibilities, and keeping the endzone free and clear for the next 55 minutes.

But Auburn again moved the chains, and things got a bit nervous until the D held, they punted, and we tried again, only to drop a TD pass and again have to punt. And that's when the game changed for real. Georgia native Quan Bray lost his focus and flubbed the catch, Lucas Redd recovered, the short drive produced a TD on a sharp slant route to Malcolm Mitchell, and we evened it at seven.

And then we blew them out of the stadium.

A few things I picked up re-watching the game on the Big Screen: Gurley really banged up his left elbow and played most of the game with a huge brace on his arm, which eliminated the straight arm from his repertoire. On the whole, even though his yards-per-carry were not astronomical, he played one rugged game. The irony of his career ending on a non-contact play after he had spent most of the game fighting through tackles is not lost on old literature majors like The Owlmeister.

There was also a play that went our way that, with another outcome, could have made this a very different sort of evening: Collin Barber's early punt on which he was roughed. Their guy came within a hair of blocking the punt, which could easily have produced a score and tied the game at 14, given how deep in our territory we were. But he whiffed and roughed, we continued the drive and nailed a field goal, and the half ended 17-7.

Lou Holtz had some interesting comments at halftime, especially his insight into why we were ahead: "Fzzstfxxyyywzzzfsztszstfshlkw."

The reports on Sunday were revealing. Few Dawg defenders had solo tackles—it was a major team effort that took Auburn out of their game and kept them from getting gainers that enable them to run at high tempo. The trademarked Malzahn Hurry Up No Huddle was trumped by our Gurley up Yo Middle, and that #27 looked like a promising young pup as well, one we'll need from here on out. But even if the offense had stumbled, the defense had a historic day, shutting down a team that nobody has stopped with Malzahn on the sidelines.

Mason's stats were OK, but if a couple of balls had been caught instead of dropped, he'd have looked better in the numbers game, aside from that 34-7, which is as nice a set of numbers as I've seen in a while. What mattered were not his stats, but his turnover-free leadership on a day when the defense forced three and, rather than trick plays producing points, the offense dominated Auburn with smashmouth, fundamental excellence.

Obviously, the running backs had tremendous days and kept the ball out of Nick Marshall's hands, ultimately forcing him to be a pass-first QB, which is not his game. On the postgame radio show, one of the guys said that Nick Chubb plays football as if he's a Demolition Derby car, just crashing into whatever's in front of him and then looking for more trouble to cause. I'm guessing that Auburn defenders would not disagree.

Not to minimize Chubb's and Gurley's impact, but the OL was again simply magnificent in opening holes and pushing defenders into the secondary. And teams can't run the ball without hard blocking from the fullbacks, TEs, and wideouts. Coveted Dawgmeister Game Balls go to all those guys who don't get listed on the stat sheet but who created the spaces the RBs needed to control the ball, clock, and scoreboard. When I watched the game on Sunday on the Big Screen, one thing that stood out was how well Quayvon Hicks blocked throughout the game. He was devastating in helping the linemen blow open the holes that produced nearly 300 yards on the ground.

So: UGA blows out Auburn. Missouri handles A&M. We killed Arkansas, which shut out LSU, which beat Ole Miss, which beat Alabama, which beat Mississippi State. The season's narrative is that the West is far, far better than the East and that the championship game rout will be a formality. Nothing in this paragraph suggest that such a thing is true. The Dawgmeister has spoken.

DAWG DOOTS

- ☞ I went to the exciting new AJC website to read about the game on Sunday, but it's so exciting that I couldn't find anything except a randomly assembled bunch of pictures.
- ☞ According to police in Colorado, Aaron Hernandez is now a suspect in the 1873-1874 murders and cannibalization of the gold rush era.
- ☞ Will Muschamp, R. I. P.
- ☞ "If y'all came here for an education, you should have went to Harvard." ~Butch Davis addressing the UNC-Chapel Hill football team during his term as head coach

- ☞ “I said that, OK, in the context that I made that statement one time, and it was a poorly phrased context, but I said it half comical and half in the form of ‘stop complaining. Your days are long. It’s a long, hard day. You’ve got to practice, you’ve got to study, you’ve got to go to class, you’ve got to take notes, you’ve got to do extra work. If you wanted to just get an education period, and you didn’t want to play in a high profile football program, and you didn’t want to chance to go to the NFL, you should have gone to Harvard. It was totally kind of halfway joking and halfway whimsical, comical, and halfway saying ‘hey guys, I hear you. I know being a student-athlete in a Division I major college program in any sport is harder than just being a student.’ If you just wanted to be a student, you should have gone to Harvard, you know?” ~Butch Davis explaining his comments to a curious public
- ☞ As all three of my readers know, I think that Gary Danielson is the best college football color man in TV history. His primary drawback, in my view, is his love affair with Nick Saban and constant references during Alabama games to “Nick” that suggest that between the teams, there is only one coach on the field. Imagine my surprise, then, to find that Alabama fans think he’s biased against them.
- ☞ On the other hand, I’m sure that Florida State’s fan base thinks that the New York Times is biased against them. But any broadcaster who calls an FSU game or interviews Jimbo Fisher without mentioning that they continue to play guys who should be in jail, and continue to deny and stonewall any effort to have the justice system work on behalf of victims, should have his license taken away.
- ☞ David Pollack: [Just can’t help himself](#).

THE COVETED DAWGMEISTER GOOD GUY OF THE WEEK AWARD
GOOD GUY ARCHIVE

Mohamed Jah Massaquoi came to UGA from Charlotte, NC, born to Liberian immigrants. His Independence HS team went unbeaten in his four years, winning state championships every time. At Independence, Mohamed was a 2004 Parade Magazine All-America Team, Superprep All-America selection, three-time Associated Press All-Stater, and NC state record-holder for career receiving yards (4,851), receiving yards in a season (1,834), touchdown catches in a career (76), TD catches in a season (32), and single-season receiving (1,834 yards). MoMass had a stellar career at UGA, where he caught 158 passes for 2,282 yards and 16 touchdowns, fourth best in program history. A psychology major, Mohamed was selected as Team Captain, Academic All-SEC, and 1st Team All-SEC. His good-guy credentials include volunteering for the NFL Play 60 program, the Special Olympics, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the Police Athletic League, and the American Red Cross. In the NFL draft he was selected in the second round by Cleveland, where he led the team in receptions as a rookie. His four-year career with the Browns was undercut by a series of concussions, most savagely administered by James Harrison of Pittsburgh in a hit that produced a \$75,000 fine in 2010 and no doubt today would result in much greater penalties. After being released by Cleveland, he had several tryouts without catching on, and so turned to the rest of his life. Helped by enrollment in the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton Executive Education Program, MoMass launched his entrepreneurial career, co-founding Higher

Altitude, the team behind Prizm, a social discovery app with a visual journal that uses users' interests to connect them to new opportunities. Married in 2013 to Kelli Pickett, he's put football behind him and is now a man on the move, setting a great example to younger players of how to embrace life after the games are over.



THE FORECAST

DAWGS VS. CHARLESTON SOUTHERN

Enjoy the day. Have a picnic, throw the Frisbee with the kids, and watch the blowout that awaits teams that schedule games like this. Looking forward to seeing Ramsey and Bauta and the rest in action. Dawgs, 66-6.

NATIONAL GAME OF THE WEEK: USC AT UCLA

There's always a weekend near the end of the season where everybody's playing a cupcake, and it's hard to even find a national game to feature. Aside from Arizona-Utah, there are no games featuring two ranked teams. So, how about a traditional rivalry in which one is ranked. Southern Cal is still trying to recover from their decision to hire Monte Kiffin's boy, and the stench from the steaming pile Lane left remains in the Trojan program. I'm taking the home team here. Bruins, 31-21.

NATIONAL UPSET OF THE WEEK: OLE MISS AT ARKANSAS

Arkansas keeps rolling. Hogs, 28-24.