

THE DAWGMEISTER'S WEEKEND FORECAST: DAWGS PLAIN AWESOME

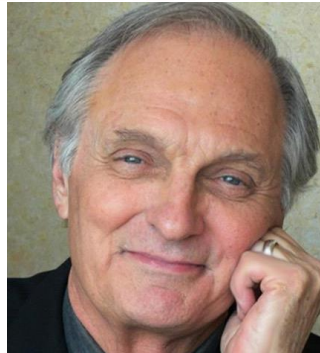
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SEPARATED@BIRTH?



**AUBURN
DEFECTOR
VINCE DOOLEY**



**HAWKEYE
DEPICTER
ALAN ALDA**

SEPARATED@BIRTH? ARCHIVE

“I’m so tied in with what we’ve got this week, I don’t even think about [national rankings]. I don’t have any idea and don’t care. Everyone knows it doesn’t matter. What matters is how we play against Missouri. That’s the only thing we can control.” ~Kirby Smart, mid-week

And we played well enough to annihilate the 18-point spread that the wise ones in Las Vegas had established before the game, and end the evening with another pristine goal line and end zone, courtesy of the defense. The game wasn’t always pretty, with a sub-50% completion rate against Missouri’s excellent pass defense and a shuffle of players snapping the ball as one lineman limped off after another. The theater critics in the stands around me were generous in opining about which play should have been called instead of the one we ran. In my experience of attending games for many decades now, each play in their alternative world would have produced a touchdown, or maybe two.

But I’ll take the world that I saw from the stands on a nippy evening in Athens. We played our game, even if we got more field goals than even our perspicacious coaching staff would prefer, at the expense of touchdowns. I’d say that losing Cager and a set of centers may have slowed us down, Pickens’ dominance notwithstanding. That’s the way it always goes at this point in the season: you find out how deep you are, because the game is so oriented to violent collisions that backups need to perform like starters. I think the guys we suited up did just fine, if not fine enough for championship-level play. We’ll see about that later.

Nobody in my section complained about the defense. Some might say, sure, y’all shut them out, but y’all played another team playing a backup QB. To which I say, we may have been equally affected on offense by playing backup centers, whose snaps need to be

crisp and on target for an offense to click. We didn't execute quite the way the fan base and coaches would have preferred. And yet, 27-0 sounds good to me against a solid opponent coming off a bye week.

SAT PREP SESSION

SAT Question of the Week: Which current college student-athlete matches the following description?




The son of a coach, this four-star prospect was named his state's Gatorade Player of the Year as a senior. He is not currently playing football for the university he originally committed to. He was ranked the #9 dual-threat quarterback in his class, and #305 national prospect overall; and in basketball, where he played point guard, was ranked #2,127 nationally and #82 in his home state.

- A. Justin Fields
- B. John Rhys Plumlee
- C. Jalen Hurts
- D. Shane Buechele
- E. Tate Martell
- F. Kelly Bryant
- G. D'Wan Mathis

The correct answer is: Joe Burrow of The Plains, Ohio

THAT MULLEN MAGIC

Mrs. Butts was out milking the elk one night last week, so I took my talents to the internet to produce a comparison between the current Florida football coach and his two most recent predecessors:

-  Jim McElwain, who was fired in midseason in Y3 for a combination of losing some games, including that week's blowout loss to UGA, and acting loony
-  Dan Mullen, who is less accomplished than McElwain, yet who is still considered a genius for the ages even with a comparable blowout loss to UGA on his record
-  with a little Will Muschamp thrown in for good measure.

Here are McElwain's and Mullen's records as coach of Florida:

McElwain

Year	Team	Overall	Conference	Standing	Bowl/playoffs	Coaches#	AP°
2015	Florida	10-4	7-2	1 st	L Citrus	25	25
2016	Florida	9-4	6-3	1 st	W Outback	13	14
2017	Florida	3-4	3-3	5 th			
Florida:		22-12	16-8				

Mullen

2018	Florida	10-3	5-3	T-2 nd	W Peach [†]	6	7
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2019	Florida	7-2	4-2	2 nd or lower		9	9
Florida:		17-5	9-5				

They look pretty similar, the main differences being:

- 🏆 McElwain's 2 SEC East championships and Mullen's zero;
- 🏆 Their record vs. UGA (2-1 for McElwain vs. 0-2 for Mullen, and counting);
- 🏆 Mullen's teams' higher rankings, which seems to reflect his odd reputation for brilliance more than his teams' performances.

Bonus coverage: In Y2 at UF, Will Muschamp was:

- 🏆 11-2, one of Florida's best 4 records since Spurrier's 1995 and 1996 teams, which went 12-1. The other 3 go to Urban Meyer's 2006, 2008, and 2009 teams (all 13-1).
- 🏆 SEC Coach of the Year
- 🏆 Ranked in the final top ten
- 🏆 Popular with the fan base

More bonus coverage:

- 🏆 Mullen's all-time record vs. Kirby Smart (including Mississippi State and annual national power Florida): 0-3.
- 🏆 Will Muschamp vs. Kirby Smart (all at annual noncontender South Carolina): 1-3.

Tactical genius Mullen's two lowest offensive outputs at Florida:

- 🏆 2018: Yards: 275. Opponent: Georgia
- 🏆 2019: Yards: 278. Opponent: Georgia

Final bonus coverage: Here's how the UGA/Florida series has looked under the last 4 coaches (Meyer actually started in 2005 but I randomly cut it off at 2008 because we know he owned us, and this is about the guys who came after).

- 🏆 We dominated them when Muschamp was there, ironically aside from his final year when they upset us in dominating fashion;
- 🏆 McElwain beat us twice before we routed them and they cut him loose;
- 🏆 Mullen got blown out once and beaten once. Will another loss next year put him on the path Muschamp took there, minus the Coach of the Year award and East championship, and perhaps without a win over UGA in his tenure there?

2008	Meyer	#5 Florida	49	#8 Georgia	10
2009	Meyer	#1 Florida	41	Georgia	17
2010	Meyer	Florida	34	Georgia	31 OT
2011	Muschamp	#22 Georgia	24	Florida	20
2012	Muschamp	#12 Georgia	17	#3 Florida	9
2013	Muschamp	Georgia	23	Florida	20
2014	Muschamp	Florida	38	#9 Georgia	20
2015	McElwain	#11 Florida	27	Georgia	3
2016	McElwain	#14 Florida	24	Georgia	10
2017	McElwain	#3 Georgia	42	Florida	7

2018	Mullen	#7 Georgia	36	#9 Florida	17
2019	Mullen	#8 Georgia	24	#6 Florida	17

DAWGMEISTER GOOD WORKS OF THE WEEK

The Weekend Forecast is offered as a free service to its readers; neither the Dawgbone nor The Dawgmeister profits financially from its publication. If you read the Forecast and want to contribute something back to our communities, please consider making a donation to this week's featured Good Works service. There are many people living in needy circumstances, and every dollar helps to support them through another day, week, month, and year. This week's featured Good Works organization is

Cobb Police Athletic League (PAL) is a charitable non-profit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of young people ages 4-18. Cobb PAL focuses on juvenile crime prevention through athletic and recreational activities. Through the various athletic and recreational activities these youth are surrounded with the positive influences of adults, police officers, and volunteers in a controlled, supervised environment. The PAL program helps expand public awareness about the role of a police officer and the strengthening of the responsible principles and attitudes instilled in young people by their parents. The Cobb PAL organization is a great example of providing a positive environment for youth to interact with police. Cobb PAL specifically encourages children who have never had the opportunity to participate due to an inability to pay the costs often associated with organized sports. Police officers serve as coaches and mentor the children and in the first season alone, logged over 500 volunteer hours. Since its establishment in 2011, Cobb PAL has experienced overwhelming support from the local community and was asked to expand its programs. Cobb PAL now offers a competitive track program, a football camp, midnight basketball, baseball camp, soccer camp, stepping, martial arts, and mentoring.

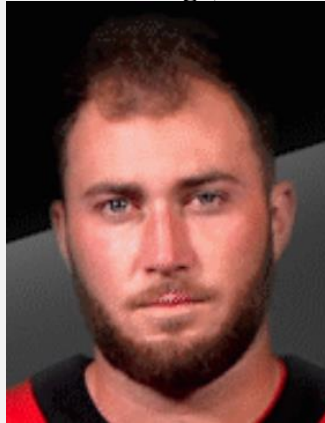
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DAWG DOOTS

- ☞ [Florida's SEC East 2019 funeral video is now available.](#)
- ☞ The woman who thinks that Florida has still got a shot [sounds a lot like Dan Mullen.](#)
- ☞ Dan Mullen on Florida's innovative game plan vs. UGA: "We wanted to take the lead and we fell behind early, so we were throwing a bit more. The goal was to try to take the lead." Damn, taking the lead. How'd I miss that?
- ☞ Like Father (or Coach), like son: "I think we are an elite team. It wasn't anything talent-wise [in the loss to UGA]. We just need to execute at a higher level." ~Kyle Trask
- ☞ "Jabari was Jabari. . . . he did what he did." ~Lloyd Pierce's insights regarding Jabari Parker

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

Buford's **Isaac Nauta** took a detour on his way to UGA to play for IMG Academy in Florida before deciding to bring his 5-star talents home for his college career. He was a major catch for new coach Kirby Smart, and did a lot of catching during his 3 years in the program. He had to check his ego at the door, because the team's commitment to running meant that he had to block his way into the rotation, something he took up with relish and a skill he'll need at the next level. "When you look at some of the backs we had and the amount of times we ran the football, just being able to block for some of those guys was something special too. Not everyone gets to say they blocked for Sony Michel and Nick Chubb and Holyfield and D'Andre Swift. We had a lot of good players. There were games where we had to block and do it well to win games and that is what we did. A big part of the tight end position is being able to do that. You have to be able to hold up against big defensive ends and something I take a lot of pride in." That team orientation took considerable humility for a guy with his receiving skills. His decision to declare for early entry in the draft produced regrets for not being on a possible national champion and because he hasn't yet completed his degree in Sport Management, which he's pursued with the help of a Watkins Family Football Scholarship, and with the recognition of a 2017 SEC Fall Academic Honor Roll appointment. On his way to the NFL Combine, he started giving back to his community and team, creating a "pledgeit" account to raise money for the Northeast Georgia Food Bank. "It's a cause that's near and dear to my heart," he said. "When the stock market crashed in 2008, there was a time me and my family were getting food from the food bank. I thought this would be a good way to give back to something that helped me and my family out." We often see these guys on the field and assume that kids who appear healthy and hearty have grown up without worrying about their next meal, but Isaac did some of that very worrying as a kid. Now he's trying to help other families put food on the table. That's some good work he's doing, and no doubt with his NFL earnings, it's not the last time he'll be giving back.



THE FORECAST
DAWGS VS. AUBURN

Anyone who thinks this will be easy hasn't been paying attention. Auburn's got a solid defense and some good offensive players, and they will play us at home after a bye week. Bo Nix has a lot of potential, but he has looked like a freshman plenty as well. I think

we'll do to him what we did to Kyle Trask, who had to call 2 timeouts on Florida's opening drive because he wasn't quite sure what he was doing, although some now blame the coaching staff for providing players with the wrong play-call armbands, which may explain Einstein-with-a-whistle Dan Mullen's dressing down of assistant coaches during the game.

But Auburn is the team of concern here. I think that we'll again be looking at a stacked box full of defenders, and that running the ball will be both necessary and challenging. That's where the difference between Fromm and Nix will start to show up: managing pressure and making the right throw. Outside that matchup, UGA's offensive stats—the ones that the Dawg Nation and many national observers find underperforming—[are better than Auburn's](#). All that won't matter once the whistle blows at 3:30 next Saturday, but it does speak to the likelihood that the game won't be a shootout. The good news is that our injured warriors from Saturday should be back in time to take on another opponent (now 3 straight) coming off a bye week.

I think it'll be tight, but that at the end of the game the visitors will come home with their tickets to Atlanta in their pockets. A tough, ferocious SEC game against old rivals seeking to complete memorable seasons: Dawgs 23, War Eagle 16.

NATIONAL GAME OF THE WEEK: OKLAHOMA OVER BAYLOR

A big game for the Big 12, with the loser playing in a December bowl game. Baylor still seems to be a bit of a mirage to me, so it's up to them to materialize as a real national competitor. OU will score a ton, and the question is whether or not Baylor can keep up in the fashion of Kansas State or Iowa State or pretty much anyone who's lit up OU's defense the last few years. It says here: no. Sooners 45, Bears 44.

NATIONAL UPSET OF THE WEEK: MISSOURI OVER FLORIDA

I am seeing a psychological lapse for Florida after losing yet again to UGA and thinking that they can, as someone accused us of doing vs. S. Carolina, just throw their helmets out there and win. If SC can beat us in Athens, then Mizzou can take down Florida in Columbia. Tigers chomp Gators, then Dan Mullen explains why Florida is the better team. Mizzou 21, Flozzou 20.