

**THE DAWGMEISTER'S WEEKEND FORECAST:  
DAWGS DOMINATE ON THE FLATULENCE**

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On “Say-What? Saturday” it seemed that every game went against form and forecast. Eight teams in the top 25 lost; two of these losses were to other ranked teams, with the lower ranked team winning one of them. Teams needing big wins either got skunked or barely won over underdogs. A few of the losses were stunners, with SC routing UT and GT beating UNC highlighting the afternoon. Vandy did it again too, beating Florida at home for the first time since the Reagan Administration.

How’s this for rock-paper-scissors for the 2022 SEC season: Alabama beat Ole Miss; Tennessee beat Alabama; South Carolina beat Tennessee; Arkansas beat S. Carolina; TAMU beat Arkansas; Auburn beat TAMU; Ole Miss beat Auburn; LSU beat Ole Miss; Ole Miss beat Kentucky; Kentucky beat Florida; Florida beat S. Carolina; Vandy beat Florida; Missouri beat Vandy; Vandy beat Kentucky; Kentucky beat Florida; Florida beat Missouri; Missouri beat S. Carolina; S. Carolina beat Kentucky; Kentucky beat Mississippi State; Mississippi State beat Arkansas; Arkansas beat Ole Miss.

But nobody’s beaten UGA.

On a cold and windy day in Lexington, UGA had its own struggles against the team that had lost to Vanderbilt just a week before and was presumed outside UGA’s locker room to be among the walking dead. The Dawgs talked all week about how they were prepared for a slobberknocker, which fans mistook for coach-speak about opponents. Kirby Smart, who talked about Kentucky’s toughness all week, said after the game, “We knew it would be this kind of game.”

And it was, especially with the passing game lost to the winds, making it a grinding ground day for the Dawgs. My view of Will Levis improved somewhat, but not enough to think he’s an NFL QB, much a first round pick, much less a top 3 pick. On a raw day like

Saturday, the running game was essential. The Dawgs ran well except for in the shortest of short yard situations, leaving many fans grumbling.

Meanwhile, UK got 3.6 yards a carry all day and hit timely passes to burn huge chunks of time off the clock. They never seemed to move the ball much, but always moved it enough to move the chains on long, often pointless drives. But those drives kept our offense on the sidelines and kept the game within reach until a worm-burner of a snap on a field goal attempt resulted in a wide miss that gave UGA the W.

I caught parts of the radio post-game show, and the commentary was strikingly split. The Butler et al. team talked big picture, celebrating the fact that Kirby Smart's program became just the third team in the SEC since the divisional alignment to go undefeated in league play in back-to-back years. The other two coaches achieving this feat are Steve Spurrier and Nick Saban, two of the most successful coaches of the last half-century. The post-game hosts were truly awed by where Kirby Smart has taken this program.

But the callers, oh boy were they annoyed at the win. They were especially unkind to the playcalling that got stuffed between the guards. Most callers had much better plays than the ones Todd Monken called. Like all plays never run, their calls would have worked to perfection. A disgruntled fan base, on a day when so many contenders either lost or almost lost, accepted no excuses for the win on a hostile field under brutal conditions.

And yet, looking at the whole day's games, 16-6 looks like a blowout.

On the other hand, both hosts and callers lavished love on Kenny "The Great Scot" McIntosh. He was surely the main man for Georgia's offense. But they really raved about what an admirable person he is. In his post-game interview he thanked God and his OL, and brushed off credit for himself. He's just a humble and team-driven guy who is all about winning and doing what's necessary to make it happen. Yesterday he was the guy who carried the team on his back, and it's great when a player's performance matches his high character.

And so, the Dawgs sit at 11-0 again, with Tech coming to town on the heels of one of its greatest wins in years, on the road against a ranked opponent. They ended one Heisman campaign on Saturday and are no doubt motivated to end Stetson's in Athens. This week the coaches will talk about how much respect they have for Brent Key and the GT program, and you've got to respect what he's done after taking over the Collins shambling wreck of a team. The AJC summed it up well: "The Jackets are now 4-3 under Key's watch. The ousted Geoff Collins never won more than three games in any of his three full seasons. Key already has more wins over ranked teams (two) in seven games than Collins had in 38 (one)."

Taking them for granted is not an option, if you study the rock-paper-scissors scenarios above. Nobody practices all week to lose. I think this game will be a little tougher than it seemed it'd be in October. Meanwhile, enjoy this win over UK. No matter how lightly we took them from the couch and keyboard, the team took them very seriously, and it's a good thing they did. Just ask Tennessee what happens when you start believing people

like Rick Neuheisel and his claim that UT would be UGA in a rematch because a neutral field would reduce crowd noise, as though Tennessee's heavy home schedule never worked to their advantage. None of that chatter matters once the game begins. Ask not for whom the whistle blows. It blows for thee.

### **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*

Genesis Joy House Homeless Shelter, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to ending chronic homelessness among women veterans in the Southeast. For these women, the return to civilian life is very hard. Many suffer from issues such as PTSD, traumatic brain injury, and military sexual trauma. We provide transitional housing, career training, mental health counseling, life skills classes and education programs that put female veterans back on the path to independence and self-sufficiency. Genesis also assists homeless female veterans in taking stock of their life experiences. They are given practical and effective tools to take charge of their lives and transform their futures. We know that thousands of lives will be turned around through our programs.

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*Jalen Carter, jealous that Stetson Bennett is both the Mailman and the Milkman, makes a case for being known as the Breadman, because he makes so much dough*

### **DAWG DOOTS**

- ☞ [More proof that the reason Georgia Tech is terrible at football is their high admissions standards.](#)

- ☞ “Tonight, that’s one of the best wins in college football history.” ~Spencer Rattler, not a history major, after SC’s win over Tennessee
- ☞ But really, it’s fortunate that UGA played SC and Vandy early before they caught fire, ain’t it?
- ☞ “I don’t know if there’s one place that you can say has been the deficiency and the reason why, but just getting to be with them every single day, adding my expertise to it is going to be beneficial for all of us.” Geoff Collins, fall camp, 2022
- ☞ “I’ll really miss that guy.” ~Little Woolly

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

Kirby Smith is an old defensive back who recruits great defensive backs and turns them into NFL players. If he speaks admirably about a member of his secondary, you’d be wise to pay attention. Here’s his view from last season of then-freshman Dawg DB **Kamari Lassiter**, recruited out of American Christian Academy program in Tuscaloosa: “Kamari Lassiter . . . has really been a surprise highlight of [fall] camp. He’s intentional. He’s smart. He cares about special teams. He learns the first time you tell him. Just another evidence that if you go get smart students that can run, they can play.” Kamari was a major prospect, a 4-star ranked #18 among national cornerbacks, in the 2021 class. His high school coach Chris Smelley loved him: “One of the things about Kamari is just the way that he competes in everything he does. He’s a super competitive kid and so he’s not going to miss workouts. When he’s in the weight room, he’s challenging guys around him. The other thing is the football IQ he brings to the table. He’s a 4.0 honor student [taking AP courses] who does really well in the classroom and that translates right over to the football field. He can see things and he’s able to use his brain as a way to give him an extra advantage out there in the middle of the game.” Kamari explained how an Alabama kid ended up in Athens: “In my heart, I am a Georgia boy. I am from Savannah in Georgia. All my family was rooting for me to go to Georgia in the first place. I take a lot of pride in what I do as a profession. So I am going to take a lot of pride in whatever it takes to play for Georgia. I am going to work my tail off and make sure I make my family proud and my home state proud.” Kamari, early in his studies, has been awarded a James E. Farish Football Scholarship, with a biochemical engineering major likely. There’s a lot to look forward to in this young man’s career and life, and he’s got the tools and mental makeup to make the most of his opportunities. He’s no longer a surprise to anyone, and is destined to be a leader on and off the field.



## **THE FORECAST**

### **DAWGS VS. GEORGIA TECH**

“A bunch of us in that class were at Georgia Tech that last week in January. Chad Chosewood is in line behind me for breakfast one morning. There is a long line of recruits and I ask him where he is thinking about going. He says, ‘I can tell you one thing, I sure as hell ain't going here.’ And I say, ‘Yeah, neither am I.’ He told me he thought he was going to Georgia and I said, ‘I am leaning that way, too.’ There were a bunch of other guys committed to Georgia—at Tech on their official visit—and we all got together and talked about it. So the majority of us that were at Tech on an official visit decided to commit to Georgia.” ~[David Weeks](#), Dawg OL in the early 1990s

My original thought was that this would be a huge blowout win for the Dawgs, but I’m getting cautious as this unpredictable season unfolds. UGA has every advantage: home field, better players across the board, motivation to win out, a superior and stable coaching staff, and an established QB1 leading the show instead of GT’s backups. That looks like about a 51-0 win. But is Tech actually competitive? UNC thinks so. I’m sure that the win in Chapel Hill will get this team’s attention. The weather forecast for next weekend is actually quite mild: sunny and 60. We’ll see if that’s what we get, and if it is, it’ll probably work to our advantage. But weather is just another distraction to these guys. I think they’ll be lasered in all week in practice, and ready to roll. Good Guys 31, Tech 6.

### **NATIONAL GAME OF THE WEEK: OHIO STATE OVER MICHIGAN**

This has always been a grudge match, none more so than now. A shot at the final four is virtually guaranteed, and the loser may or may not make the cut. I haven’t exactly watched these teams play till my eyeballs bleed, so am operating from a less-than-great perspective as an authority. For some reason, OSU is coming up a winner in my unscientific thinking. So here we go: The plant-based Buckeyes 34, the Angry Weasels from Ann Arbor 31.

### **NATIONAL UPSET OF THE WEEK: NOTRE DAME OVER USC**

This forecast encapsulates my enduring doubts about whether Lincoln Riley is a great coach or not. He fell into a great situation built by Bob Stoops at Oklahoma and showed that he can be good enough to win their cruddy league but not advance in a playoff. He then showed that he can parlay that qualified success into a huge contract negotiated while his Sooners were fading into oblivion, earning him the eternal hatred of all good OU fans. Playing in the SEC was just too much of a risk to take when you need defense-averse teams on your schedule, so it was off to the west coast, pending their relocation to the frigid Upper Midwest and the Big Ten. His teams score points, but can’t stop anyone. Meanwhile, ND got off to a dreadful start but is having a good second half. Their record doesn’t indicate their current strength. So I can see a day where USC piles up points and gives up enough to lose. Irish 48, Trojans 45.