

**THE DAWGMEISTER'S WEEKEND FORECAST:
DAWGS PUT RAPIER THROUGH NAPIER**

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SEPARATED@BIRTH?



**SCHEMES A YAWN GAME & DEMONS ON PLANES
DAN MULLEN KENNETH COPELAND**

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Fulton County Jail Mug Shot of the Week

Sometimes, good enough is good enough.

The Dawgs were good enough to come out of Nashville with a W. It wasn't a performance for the ages. It didn't help that the offense was playing with a thin roster. But no excuses. Everybody's got injuries. Maybe the 11AM start helped explain the first series on offense and defense. But no excuses. It was 11AM for both teams.

The good news is that we won on the road in spite of playing with only one scholarship RB for much of the game, and it helped that he had his greatest game. Please, Santa Claus, give Kendall Milton a healthy body, and deliver it early, like the Christmas

decorations already up in the stores. We also played much of the game with a freshman backup to the backup at right tackle, paired with a RS-Freshman at left tackle and the sophomore rotation of Fairchild/Morris at LG. There was someone else who got hurt....right, Bowers, I think his name is. When he went out, Todd Hartley plugged Lawson Luckie in as the #2 TE, and Beck threw possession-extending passes to Delp. He's not the game-breaker that Bowers is—who is?—but he got the job done on Saturday.

The defense played generally well after the disastrous opening score by Vandy. Fifteen carries, 18 yards, with only 1 sack to deflate the stats. Vandy was outrushed by Brock Bowers, who got 21 yards on 2 carries. With so many completions against the middle of our zone, I wonder why they tried to run at all.

Many have noted that Carson Beck isn't a dual threat QB like Stetson Bennett, who is an exceptional all-around athlete who can take off around the edge and downfield. But with a 6'-4", 225 pound QB like Beck, there's a play in the game plan that we haven't run in recent memory: the QB sneak. Maybe that's a Bobo play that Monken didn't like, or maybe the personnel now has allowed the sneak on short yardage plays after several years of the fragile J.T. Daniels and the undersized Stetson Bennett. It sure always seems to work for Beck. Another thing that works for CB: a drive with under a minute to go before a half. That cat delivers.

But it wasn't overall a great day for the QB. He was high on several throws, threw an all-but-pick-six, and had his receivers drop too many catchable balls. I watched from home, so couldn't tell how the wind was affecting things—the stadium flags were blown horizontal for much of the game—but something wasn't clicking.

Where the offense executed well was on third down, which is how we had such long, time-eating drives, much to the chagrin of Coach Smart, who wants more explosive plays and fewer grinding drives down the field. OK, so it was just Vandy. But they showed up and played pretty well, and after looking at the national scoreboard, I see that not everyone took care of business. We did, and are now 7-0 heading into the bye week. Who wouldn't take that?

A lot of the sportswriting heading into the game was the importance of “garbage time” in the development of young talent. First, it's not garbage by any definition. It's the reward for playing as coached for the first 2-3 quarters ([take note, Shane Beamer](#)) and the reward to backups for practicing hard and preparing the front-line players for the game. That's not garbage. That's something earned and should be respected. And, with injuries, Lawson Luckie and Monroe Freeling got game action when it mattered. That'll pay off down the road too.

Before continuing, I wish to thank the athletic department at Vanderbilt for undertaking a stadium seating capacity expansion. Now, even more UGA fans in red t-shirts can pack FirstBank Stadium on their trips to Nashville. The broadcast team was heaping praise on Vanderbilt for elevating their facilities and predicting great recruiting things ahead for the Commodores. A frightened league quakes in anticipation.

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

TogetherATL: The needs in our community are pressing and we need to move with the urgency of now to address those needs. The Community Foundation has unequivocally embraced equity as the Foundation's #1 priority. Named TogetherATL, this strategy provides a blueprint for how the Community Foundation will champion equity and lead boldly in collaboration with our community partners to work TOGETHER to secure prosperity for all throughout the region. Atlanta is #1, but this time, it's not a good thing. Atlanta is the worst in the nation for income inequality. In order to thrive as a region and a community, it must be addressed. Our region will see even greater growth when all residents have an equal and equitable opportunity to learn, work, civically engage and contribute to a healthy, just, thriving and prosperous community. TogetherATL has two major facets: a focus on place and an emphasis on changing the systems that underpin our region for lasting impact.

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DAWG DOOTS

- ☞ In a shocking new development unforeseen by the Lamestream Sports Media, yet learned through Dawgmeister AI Research, Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, in an effort to "Woo the Woke," has ordered the University of Florida to rename its men's, women's, and nonbinary sports teams the Gatorx.
- ☞ I noticed over the weekend that Deion Sanders took a break from his main job—recording commercials—to coach a football team for a few hours. And the outcome showed that maybe he needs to focus more on the football side of things.
- ☞ Alabama's Jalen Milroe has now been sacked at least four times in five straight games, which ties the longest streak for an FBS quarterback in the past 20 seasons. When an athletic QB gets sacked a lot, he's either got a porous OL, or is [protecting his passer rating](#), or doesn't know how to get rid of the ball when under stress, or maybe all of the above.
- ☞ Against USC, Notre Dame had a 5-0 turnover edge, tied for the 4th-best against an AP top-10 team in the past 20 seasons.
- ☞ And Notre Dame became the first team to have a 5-0 turnover advantage and a special teams score against an AP top-10 opponent in the past 20 seasons.
- ☞ Why does Shedeur Sanders wear a watch while playing football? Takes a licking and keeps on ticking, I guess (the watch, that is). Is he in a hurry to get somewhere?
- ☞ Coach Mark Stoops, whom both Coach Smart and I generally admire, laid an egg with his comments about how NIL money allowed UGA to amass such a talent base. First, ever met John Calipari? Second, for the reality of who's making NIL cash, see statistics compiled by Dawgmeister Analytics and reported in the [On3](#)

[NIL 100](#). UGA's top earner? Dylan Raiola, #43 on the list. I didn't see him on the field against Kentucky, or Vanderbilt, or anybody but Mill Creek HS. Others: Brock Bowers (#54), Carson Beck (#62), Amarius Mims (#86). UK landed 4 on the list, with only Devin Leary (#98) playing football. But with only three on-roster Dawgs making the list, it's hard to say that we are buying vast amounts of talent through NIL. Eight Texas Longhorn football players (and a track star) made the list, with Arch Manning at #4 and Quinn Ewers at #19. Colorado has 2 of the top 6 and one at #38. Three-star basketball recruit Bryce James is at #15 (his brother Bronny is #1), because those kids grew up poor and want to buy mama a new house.

- ☞ The Phillies might have taken it to the Braves, but my goodness, for true domination, see their takeover of the [Baseball Wing](#) of the Dawgmeister's Bad Hair Hall of Fame.
- ☞ Why do broadcasters still say a team will "take the points" by attempting a field goal? [Don't they miss sometimes?](#) Didn't those broadcasters once play the game?
- ☞ Just about every football broadcast refers to players and teams who have a "chip on their shoulder." Dawgmeister Historical Society researchers report that this phrase is about 200 years old, with the *Long Island Telegraph* stating in 1830 that "when two churlish boys were determined to fight, a chip [of wood] would be placed on the shoulder of one, and the other demanded to knock it off at his peril." There must be a lot of churlish boys playing football these days.
- ☞ Apparently, C.J. Stroud had a tough time at the Combine with the Wonderlic test. I heard Mark Schlereth say that if he were in charge of the world, nobody would have to take this "cognitive test." So I looked up the test to see what they are testing that would help a team evaluate a football prospect. This is an actual question from a [practice test](#). I report, you decide.

If the first two statements are true, is the last statement true as well? Orange butterflies head to the south for the winter. Derek is a butterfly. Derek will head south for the winter.

no

yes

uncertain

Those who got the question wrong: Sorry, you are headed like a butterfly for free agency.

THE COVETED DAWGMEISTER GOOD GUY OF THE WEEK AWARD **Good Guy Archive**

Lamont Gaillard was a highly regarded defensive lineman and Under Armour All-American out of Fayetteville, NC, among many honors and recognitions. Lamont signed with the Bulldogs in 2014. He spent his first year as a redshirt and scout team member, during which he made a significant move to the offensive line. He began as a guard, starting for part of his RS-F season and all of his second season. For his junior year he moved once again, this time settling in at the center position, playing well enough to be

invited to the 2019 East-West Shrine game. Lamont made the most of the education afforded by a football scholarship. He graduated on time with a major in Sociology, a challenge for young men balancing the rigors of a sport with the demands of the classroom. His studies were impressive enough for him to receive financial support beyond his scholarship allowance through a Quinton Lumpkin Football Scholarship, with his academic work recognized by his appointment to the J. Reid Parker Director of Athletics Honor Roll. He was also a tireless competitor on the practice field, earning a host of program awards: the Offensive Up Front Award, the Own the Trenches Award, and the team's Most Improved Offensive Player Award. His dedication and performance earned him a shot at the NFL. The Arizona Cardinals drafted him in the sixth round, using the pick acquired in the unusual trade of the rights to head coach Bruce Arians from Tampa Bay. His professional career has been spent on the margins of competition, mainly playing to replace an injured starter. He took a leave of absence when his daughter was born, then was released the next year, to be picked up on waivers by Cincinnati, where he largely moved between the waiver list and the practice squad. Showing remarkable perseverance, Lamont was signed in late 2022 to the Miami Dolphins practice squad before being released just before the playoffs. Lamont may never set the NFL on fire. But he's shown that he can work through a challenge and work toward his goals. Regardless of what he does next, he'll do it well, on or off the field.



THE FORECAST

DAWGS VS. FLORIDA

“The standard at Florida used to be to win it all, so Napier has the advantage of dumbed down expectations.” ~Paul Finebaum, August 2023

Billy Napier's life and career are about to take a turn for the worse. The Gatorx have been hard to beat in The Swamp, but aren't so good away from their friendly confines. UGA has played better at home, but well enough to beat teams of Florida's caliber outside the Hedges. This game is often considered to be in Florida's backyard and so to their advantage, but I doubt if that will matter once the whistle blows. The Dawgs are chasing history, and won't let these chøumps spoil their march to glory. The Dawgs keep rising while Florida keeps treading water, which will get you drowned in Gainesville. UGA 31, UF 13.

WEEK 8

NATIONAL GAME OF THE WEEK: PENN STATE OVER OHIO STATE

Ohio State and Michigan are the presumptive top teams in the Big Whatever, with Penn State presumably a second tier competitor. I'm guessing that the Lions will be ready to disrupt the narrative of the last 100 years that this is a 2-team league. Let's take Happy Valley Campers over the Horseshoe Crabs: PSU 34, OSU 24.

NATIONAL UPSET OF THE WEEK: UTAH OVER USC

Lincoln Riley's teams will almost always score points (for an exception, see Saturday's game vs. ND). And they both giveth and receiveth. USC needed several OTs to take down a mediocre Arizona team at home, and living dangerously can be dangerous, as they showed on Saturday. USC eliminates itself from title talk with their latest defensive showing. Utah 51, USC 48.

WEEK 9

NATIONAL GAME OF THE WEEK: KENTUCKY OVER TENNESSEE

Even after their struggles in Athens and now at home vs. Missouri, UK has a solid, tough team. UT continues to coast off the shiny-new-object attention they got last year and points-fests everywhere but against UGA and S. Carolina....well, you get the idea. Put a defense on the field, and they're not so hot. So I'm taking Stoops to Conquer the guys who are just Joshing about a return to powerhouse status, in spite of their home win over a TAMU team whose [fans are pretty fed up with their coach](#). And have you noticed that the ATM logo reads like an ATM machine? Kentucky 28, Tennessee 24.

NATIONAL UPSET OF THE WEEK: KANSAS OVER OKLAHOMA

OU is sky-high after beating Texas, as they well should be. They got embarrassed by Kansas last year (and many other teams too), playing with the remnants of Riley's midnight run to USC, and will look for revenge. They are actually playing some defense now. But they are going on the road, where life can be precarious. I'll take the Jayhawks in an upset: KU 24, OU 21.