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Must-win game
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Put simply, Georgia’s a buzz saw.
And after their first game ended in a 45-21 battering of Clemson, the Bulldogs are looking for another block of wood to go through.
Saturday’s marquee matchup in college football wasn’t supposed to be a David vs. Goliath scenario. No. 6 Georgia and No. 24 South Carolina began the season ranked 12th and 9th, respectively. At the start of the year, the Gamecocks were favored to win the SEC East and Georgia was nipping at their heels, just outside of the top-10.
But the narrative of the 2014 season has read much differently than the prologue, and Saturday will see South Carolina (1-1) fighting for its life, and Georgia (1-0) looking to stay on the fast track to the College Football Playoff.
“I know our fans are looking forward to it — 3:30 here at Williams-Brice — and we’re going to try our best to give them something to cheer about,” head coach Steve Spurrier said. “We need to play better, so we’re trying to do that.”

The Bulldogs opened as 3.5-point favorites against South Carolina, a modest point spread, considering Georgia won their only game of the season by 24 points in the same week the Gamecocks lost by that same number.

THE SANDSTORM EFFECT

The great equalizer here — and the probable cause for Georgia’s noticeably slim advantage — is Williams-Brice Stadium.

The Bulldogs make the trek from Athens to Columbia every other season, and for the last 20 years, it’s been a dogfight. Georgia leads the series 5-4 in the last nine meetings on the Gamecocks’ home turf, but the Bulldogs have been unable to score more than 20 points in Columbia since 1994.

The most recent meeting between these two teams at Williams-Brice was one of the most lopsided affairs in the series’ history. As Gamecock fans will recall, South Carolina shut Georgia out in the first half on its way to a 35-7 victory, the biggest blowout in the rivalry since 1974.

Though the Gamecocks’ record-breaking 18-game home winning streak was snapped at the beginning of this season, South Carolina has crafted a unique home-field atmosphere that sticks with visiting players long after they leave Columbia.

To prepare themselves, Georgia players have been practicing this week with simulated crowd noise and a 1999 Danish techno song called “Sandstorm” blaring in the background.

“When Sandstorm first starts on first kick-off, both sidelines are excited,” redshirt senior quarterback Dylan Thompson said. “But if we get on a roll like we have in the past here in different games, it becomes kind of annoying for those guys.”

‘COULD GET A LITTLE BLOODY’

As the quality of competition between the Gamecocks and Bulldogs has ramped up in recent history, the ferocity of the rivalry has, too.

Georgia will always have its traditional clashes between Florida and Georgia Tech, and South Carolina’s yearly meeting with Clemson will always be a blood feud. The two teams have traded wins over years, launching their distaste for one another to an all-time high.

And in the build-up to this year’s installment, Georgia head coach Mark Richt perhaps described the rivalry’s current state best.

“I’ve got a feeling this game could get a little bloody,” he said. “Before it’s over, it may get down to a little bit of a fistfight.”

Regardless of records or rankings, “Georgia Week” has become one of the most electric atmospheres in Columbia

“I know our fans are looking forward to it, 3:30 here at Williams-Brice, and we’re going to try our best to give them something to cheer about.”

-Steve Spurrier
The Carolina Band

This week the Carolina Band keeps on bringing the hits featuring recent Top 40 artists.

Happy - Pharrell Williams
Runaway Baby - Bruno Mars
Bang Bang - Jessie J, Ariana Grande, and Nicki Minaj

#carolinaband #cb2014
on a yearly basis, centered on the fact that the winner seemingly gains an advantage in the SEC East race.

At least, that’s what it looks like at face value.

Georgia has reached the conference title game in two of the last three years, narrowly missing out on the Eastern Division title one year ago. In each of those two championship seasons, the Bulldogs have lost to South Carolina. And last year, when Georgia broke the Gamecocks’ miniature run of dominance, the Bulldogs were on the outside looking in when it came time for the SEC Championship.

But this season, with one loss already to its name, South Carolina can’t afford to play those odds.

“It’s pretty much a must for the division. If we’re going to have a shot to win the division, [beating Georgia] would be very helpful,” Spurrier said. “Certainly both teams, I think, would like to win it. You’d think whoever wins it would have a little bit of a better chance.”

‘AND THAT’S WHY WE’RE HERE’

While the weight of this game can be measured in tons, this weekend’s battle with Georgia isn’t the top of the mountain for South Carolina’s season. Just three games into the 2014 campaign, both of last year’s conference title game competitors in Auburn and Missouri are waiting down the road.

A win Saturday would by no means punch the Gamecocks’ ticket to Atlanta and the SEC Championship in early December.

A loss to the Bulldogs, though, would all but eliminate South Carolina from contention.

“You come here to play in these games and have the opportunity to play against a great team in a good atmosphere,” Thompson said. “And that’s why we’re here, to play this game, this challenge, and just go out there with your brothers and compete.”

Jeffrey Davis | Weekender
There are two ways to look at food. The first is as fuel to get you through the morning rush, two chem lectures and your too-long study session at the Thomas Cooper Library. The second way — the correct way — is to view food as an experience. West Columbia’s Cafe Strudel is all about the experience.

They’re proud of their roots and it shows. From the moment you walk in the door, you know you’re in for something special. All along the front windows are Certified SC Grown stickers. That is, if you can even see the windows — there’s hardly a time when Cafe Strudel isn’t jam-packed with people.

The furniture in the dining room is a charming mismatch of wood and metal, the result of two big moves since their opening in 1997. Pieces by local artists hang all over the walls in an inviting jumble. A huge case of pastries glows at the end of the full bar.

I’m almost too busy ogling at the lemon-berry mascarpone to hear my name called for a table. But I snap out of it just in time to sit down, stretch out and get pulled right back into a trance by the dinner menu. I immediately ask for an order of duck nachos. Crispy flour tortilla points covered in pulled duck breast, smoked Gouda Mornay and a sweet chili sauce. The chips are light and the Gouda is plenty. Don’t be afraid to get messy. It’s an excellent start to any meal that could easily act as a stand alone entrée.

But why would you only order an appetizer when Cafe Strudel serves seafood mac-n-cheese? You read that right. Seafood mac-n-cheese.

It’s a healthy helping of pasta topped with baked goat cheese, tender scallops and sautéed shrimp. And just when I think mac-n-cheese couldn’t get more savory, they put bacon on top of it all.

If you’re not feeling like seafood, you can always go for the chicken piccata with roasted seasonal vegetables. The wine sauce in this dish is so good that I mop it up with my cauliflower so none goes to waste.

And, of course, a meal at Cafe Strudel isn’t
complete without a slice of its namesake — the apple strudel is kept cold until just before serving. It’s placed on the griddle with a dollop of butter on top. It only takes about 10 minutes for the dough to become crisp and flake away from the bubbling apple filling, at which point, it’s topped with whipped cream and served.

Let me just say that it takes far more time to prepare the strudel than it does to devour it at the table.

Top it all off with a trip to their self-serve coffee bar, and slip into your post-dinner happy place. 🍓
influences are all over the place,” Walker said. “I guess we like the realness of the music that was written by the [same] people who perform it.”

Because every member of Rejectioneers is from the Midlands area, they have made a significant connection with other local artists who share their eagerness and dedication to music. Walker explained Columbia is in a sweet spot — the city is just big enough to support an active music scene that’s still local enough for the artists to connect.

“It’s a small enough town that the people are really tight knit,” Walker said. “You really get a lot of support from other musicians.”

Rejectioneers have become an integral part of Columbia’s scene, which makes it even more of a shame that this weekend’s show may be their last. They’ll headline Friday at the New Brookland Tavern, playing alongside Ivadell, Half Measures and Animals. It’s their final performance before their drummer moves to Indiana, but Rejectioneers are not necessarily breaking up.

“It’s probably best to present [this show] as the last thing we do for a while,” Walker said. “Just so we can sit back and figure out what the next stage looks like, which may honestly be nothing. We don’t know.”

Columbia isn’t always the most bustling city, but
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Columbia isn’t always the most bustling city, but according to Walker, that’s part of what makes it so friendly to new talent.

“People are interested in new music because they haven’t heard it before — they show up [to shows] because they’re curious and there’s not a whole lot to do around here,” Walker said. “Columbia really fosters growth musically just because there’s a need for something exciting.”

Rejectioneers can comfortably call the Midlands their home, and they aren’t the only ones.

As time goes on, fledgling bands have grown up in Columbia. As they age, they eventually have to leave home base venues like the New Brookland behind.

This cycle of new and old is part of what makes Columbia’s music scene welcoming to new acts. Soon enough, we’ll see a new group with the same passion for music we see in Rejectioneers today.
This week, Dailey tackles a few how-to queries:

1. Whether to join a sorority
2. Stick it out with your friendly Resident Mentor
3. Getting a good night's sleep will help in everyday life

You asked, and we answered. Introducing The Daily Gamecock's advice column, Ask Dailey. Whether it’s parking peeves, roommate rivalries or homework hassles, Dailey is here to give you some advice and a smile.

Tweet your questions, qualms and quarrels to @AskDailey or email them to viewpoints@dailygamecock.com.

Q: I joined a sorority, and it’s not what I wanted it to be. I don’t feel like I’m connecting with anyone and it’s kind of anti-climactic after rush. What should I do?

A: Sorority recruitment — the euphoric time of year where everything is new and oh-so promising — is almost always followed by life. During life, everyone is swamped with work and events and gets tired and hungry, and let’s be honest: socializing is hard. But the possibilities don’t wash away with the face paint and glitter. Your sorority has a ton of girls in it for you to get to know and you have that one uniting factor: you’re all in the same sorority. You go to the same meetings; you eat the same food; you have the same shirts. Try bonding over these little things and bonding over big things comes over time. Remember: school just started. Give it some time.

Q: I hate my resident mentor. I feel like I’m constantly getting in trouble, and there’s always some new rule. Do I have a demon? Can I report her?

A: Trust me, no RM wants to get you in trouble. When you get in trouble, they get a mountain of paperwork on top of what they already have to do as students. Go and talk to your RM. Ask about the rules and why they are the way they are, and, more than likely, the two of you can come to an understanding. Communication is key.

Q: I feel so stressed about school and friends and life. I’m a burning ball of stress. GAH. I’M GONNA EXPLODE. HELP.

A: Turn off your phone and go to bed. Turn off your phone and go to the gym. Go to the library. Do something by and for yourself at least once a day. Otherwise, you will feel like you’re going to explode. Don’t forget that it’s okay to say no. Your wellbeing comes first.
ON ANY GIVEN GAME

WEAR YOUR OFFICIALLY LICENSED SOUTH CAROLINA MERCHANDISE
In Columbia: Brunch

Katie Cole
@KATIECOLE19

Brunch is an important Sunday ritual, so why not plan ahead? Make plans for this Sunday to brunch somewhere new, and enjoy everything brunch has to offer.

DiPrato’s

Every Saturday and Sunday, DiPrato’s serves up a pretty incredible brunch. While their regular lunch menu is sometimes lacking, their brunch menu definitely makes up for what the regular menu doesn’t deliver. The crowd-pleaser at DiPrato’s is the irresistible cheesy potatoes. Pro tip: If a dish comes with one side of cheesy potatoes and another side of fruit or a something else, substitute the other side for another serving of potatoes. With other winning dishes on the menu, like Eggs Charleston (Eggs Benedict with crab cakes instead of Canadian bacon), the Breakfast Panini, omelettes and delectable peaches and cream pancakes, DiPrato’s has something for every customer that walks through the door.

Le Peep

The menu at Le Peep might seem intimidating at first, because they offer virtually every dish in the brunch world, but that just means you can go back for more. With menu sections that range from the Mexican dishes in “South of the Border” to the pancakes and French toast in the “Hot Off the Griddle” section, the customer is never short of options at Le Peep. The friendly atmosphere and wait staff make the experience all the more enjoyable, and at the end of the night, the bill won’t break the bank.

Crepes & Croissants

Despite recently coming to the Columbia brunch scene, Crepes & Croissants does not lack in quality. With twelve different entrée crepes, including a create-your-own option, seventeen dessert crepes, and other plates of omelettes and croissant sandwiches, the restaurant lives up to its name. Give the two-year-old establishment a try and see what all the fuss is about.

The Gourmet Shop

While surely a fixed spot on most people’s brunch list, The Gourmet Shop always delivers when it comes to the specialty cheeses, pasta salads, Belgian waffles and mimosa kits we all crave on Sunday mornings. The mimosa kits are a major selling point for brunch at The Gourmet Shop’s, they charge just $17.96 for an entire bottle of champagne and a karaff of OJ. The Gourmet Shop also offers an incredible selections of cheeses, breakfast items and pasta salads that will have customers coming back for the rest of their college — and adult — careers.

How to: Write a Term Paper With No Time Left

Ben Crawford
@THEGAMECOCK

1. Recognize the situation

Well, it’s come to this. You’ve been juggling classes, due dates and extracurricular stuff for the past three weeks, and crunch time is just about over. You can almost feel the metric ton of work tottering off your back like a large fluffy cat waking up from a nap. Suddenly, BOOM. You’re flipping absenty over your syllabus, and there it is: 5 to 8 pages on Kierkegaard’s Influences on 20th Century Existentialism. Due tomorrow at 9:40 a.m.

2. Don’t panic

Deep breaths, now. There’s no use hyperventilating and getting yourself worked up. What’s needed now is immediate action. Grab your preferred caffeine delivery system — more than one cup or can, if possible — and sit down at your desk, not on your bed. No sleeping allowed. Skim the relevant course materials (if you still have them.) Even if you don’t, remember: no panicking. Find something useful or seemingly meaningful online.

3. Plan, then plan some more

Find a meaningful-sounding quote or general idea and start plotting out reference points. It doesn’t matter how fanciful or tenuous the connection: you’re going for quantity, not quality. Even if you’re trying to connect Winnie-The-Pooh to Post-Poststructuralist Hyper-Feminist Interior Design, hold on to it. You’re going to need ideas and lots of them.

4. The long haul

Here’s the hard bit: looking at the empty page and filling it. No mucking about with fonts or period-sizes. Even the most senior professors have a handle on that by now and won’t be fooled by those tricks. Fill space as best you can — as long as you’re writing, you’re making progress, so don’t look at the clock. As long as it’s still dark outside, you have time. Get your main points out there in disconnected blocks, then go back and hot-glue them together with transition sentences.

5. Break the wall

Eventually, you’re going to experience what runners call “hitting the wall,” the point that seems impossible to break through. You’ve sped through with relative ease until then, but somewhere in the middle of the third page the initial rush peters out. My advice: keep your head down and bust through it. Sip more coffee and continue.

6. Accept mediocrity

Dawn is coming up fast and you’ve finished — barely. There is no time to rest and look over it again. If you feel up to it, read the sentences out loud. If they feel too long, cut them. If they’re too short, fill them out. Don’t expect an A, either. A good paper is like a good wine. Give it attention and time, and you’ll get something worthwhile. Your aim with at the last hour is number of pages and legibility. If you managed that, you’ve more than earned an all-day nap.
FRIDAY

REJECTIONEERS / IVADELL / HALF MEASURES / ANIMALS
New Brookland Tavern, 122 State Street
Fri, 7:30 p.m., $5 / under 21 $7
Columbia’s own Rejectioneers will be playing this Friday at the New Brookland Tavern in their last show of the year. They will also perform alongside Columbia-based Ibadell, Brooklyn-based Half Measures and Charlotte-based Animals.

MEN’S SOCCER VS. UNC WILMINGTON
Stone Stadium
Fri, 7 p.m., free with CarolinaCard
The South Carolina men’s soccer team looks to keep its undefeated 3-0-0 record intact Friday with a home tilt against the UNCW Seahawks. The Gamecocks recently jumped into the top-25 of two national rankings, landing at No. 17 in the NSCAA Poll and 20th in the Soccer America Rankings.

SATURDAY

THE BURRITO BASH
El Burrito, 934 Harden Street
Sat, 7 p.m., $3 / under 21 $5
WUSC-FM will host a kickoff event this Saturday to start off the semester right. Head to El Burrito, have a meal and enjoy Michael Parallax, Family and Friends Band, Bois and improv duo 1-800-DOG-CIGS.

WOMEN’S CROSS COUNTRY USC OPEN 1
Hilton Field, Fort Jackson
Sat, 9 a.m., free with government issued photo ID
In South Carolina’s second event of the year, the Gamecocks look to build off of their win at the Carolina Invitational.

SUNDAY

TRUSTUS THEATRE PRESENTS VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE
Trustus Theater, 520 Lady Street
Sun, 3 p.m., $22 / $15 student
This award-winning Broadway comedy is headed to the Trustus Theatre this weekend. The show focuses on two siblings leading humdrum lives when they are visited by their successful actress of a sister. The production starts this Friday and will run until Sept. 27.

USC CORNELIA FREEMAN CONCERT
USC School of Music, 813 Assembly Street
Sun, 3 p.m., $12 / $5 student
Proceeds from this concert series will go toward scholarships for incoming USC music students. All concerts are held in the Recital Hall, Room 206.
When you’re the top high school running back in a talent-heavy state like Georgia, doors tend to open up for you.

In Mike Davis’ case, 11 doors opened up.

South Carolina’s junior running back from Stone Mountain, Georgia received offers from top programs like Florida, Clemson and UGA and initially committed to the Gators.

Davis decommitted after the four-star prospect felt he was being misled by the coaching staff at Florida.

He also had ties to Clemson — his brother James Davis played for the Tigers from 2005-08 and earned first-team all-ACC accolades before he received a draft pick from the Cleveland Browns.

After Georgia landed North Carolina-native running backs Todd Gurley and Keith Marshall, Davis landed with the Gamecocks.

Now, three years removed from the recruiting process, Davis has a chance to prove he made the right decision when he picked South Carolina over Georgia.

And if Davis’ sentiments about his teammates are any indication, he did.

“IT felt good to be back out there, just having fun with my teammates,” Davis said. “I love those guys to death, you know. I’d go out there and do anything for those guys, even laying my body on the line for them.”

An 18-carry 101-yard performance from Davis against East Carolina not only powered the South Carolina offense to a 33-23 victory over the Pirates, but also reestablished the ground game that the Gamecocks need to be successful in the SEC this season.

South Carolina’s success on the ground also took pressure off of fifth-year senior quarterback
Dylan Thompson, who was able to shake off an opening-game loss to complete 25 passes for 266 yards and a touchdown.

As Thompson went, so did junior wide receiver Shaq Roland. Roland reeled in seven passes for 94 yards, gaining many of his yards after the catch.

After jumping out to a 30-16 lead, South Carolina was able to keep the ball away from the Pirates, using a bruising running attack to pound out an 18-play drive that took up over 10 minutes and culminated in a field goal.

But that wasn’t what stood out to head coach Steve Spurrier.

“It was encouraging to run the ball with Mike and Brandon [Wilds],” Spurrier said. “Obviously, everyone in the ball park knew what play was coming. And we just kept handing the ball off and letting the clock run.”

Against the Bulldogs, running the ball with tenacity could be the formula for success for the Gamecocks.

Davis logged 149 yards on 16 carries last year against Georgia, outrushing Gurley by 17 yards. In the game, Davis’ average yards per carry was an astonishing 9.3, while Gurley managed nearly four-and-a-half yards each time he ran the ball.

South Carolina’s success in Saturday’s matchup will likely be measured by Davis and Wilds’ ability to move the ball on the ground.

One mistake by way of a Connor Shaw fumble spelled doom for the Gamecocks last year, and one mistake is likely one more than South Carolina can afford to make Saturday. ♦
After showing improvement in the second half against East Carolina last Saturday, the Gamecock defense undoubtedly spent the week thinking one of the most chilling notions in college football:

“We have to prepare for Todd Gurley.”

Georgia’s star junior running back, Gurley looked unstoppable against Clemson two weeks ago after he ran for 198 yards on just 15 carries and scored three touchdowns. He also took a kickoff 100 yards for another score.

“Todd Gurley’s an outstanding running back (and) a great player,” redshirt sophomore spur Jordan Diggs said. “It’s on us to do our job and execute what our coaches tell us to do. I feel like if we fly around and have 11 hats to the ball, our defense can be really good.”

The idea of 11 players flying towards Gurley certainly isn’t a bad one because in one-on-one situations it appears nobody can bring the Heisman front-runner down. If a defender tries to arm tackle him high, he runs through it without a problem. And if you go low on Gurley by yourself, he could trample you or give you a powerful knee to the face.

Gamecock junior safety T.J. Gurley, no relation, said Todd Gurley’s running style is more downhill and doesn’t make too many moves. Todd’s goal is to make defenders fear tackling him, T.J. said.

The Bulldogs are stacked at the running back position. South Carolina defensive line coach Deke Adams said Georgia has four backs that could probably start for any team in the conference.

Sharing the load in the backfield with Gurley will likely be junior Keith Marshall and freshman Nick Chubb, who had 70 yards and a touchdown against Clemson.
Georgia has an offense built more on pounding the run game as opposed to the spread offenses that East Carolina and Texas A&M used. Perhaps a change in style will be kinder to the Gamecock defense.

South Carolina has not allowed 20 or more points at home against the Bulldogs since 2004, and with how the Gamecocks have played recently, it would be a shock if the streak continued on Saturday.

Through two games, South Carolina is 114th out of 120 teams in yards allowed per game, with a 566.5 average. The defense has been particularly abysmal on third down, with opponents converting 62 percent of their chances. Head coach Steve Spurrier pointed out the statistic as a key to Saturday’s contest, saying if his team can’t get off the field on third down, it will be a long day.

One positive note for the Gamecocks is that Georgia is dealing with a depleted receiving corps — Bulldogs’ senior Jonathan Rumph and junior Malcolm Mitchell have been ruled out for the game.

Junior Justin Scott-Wesley was doubtful, according to Georgia head coach Mark Richt earlier in the week but practiced the last couple of days and should be set to catch passes from senior quarterback Hutson Mason.

Mason, a first-year starter, has shown he can manage the game effectively and let workhorses like Gurley, Marshall and Chubb take over.

Adams said he plans to keep rotating players along the defensive line throughout the game to keep everyone fresh. He added that against East Carolina, no lineman played more than 35 snaps, which paid off in the second half.

Members of the Gamecock defensive line believe the battle in the trenches will be a major factor in the game. “It’s going to be old school football,” redshirt junior defensive tackle Gerald Dixon Jr. said. “The front is going to determine a win or loss of the game.”

Diggs, who just moved into the starting lineup with T.J. Gurley, said the defense was glad to see improvement against East Carolina, but the players know they have to keep improving to beat the Bulldogs.

“As a defense, we’re not satisfied,” Diggs said. “We’re just working hard, just tried to put this win behind us and focus on this week. Everybody’s still hungry, and our goals are still in front of us. And this definitely is a big week for us.”
Week Three Predictions
from the staff of

Louisville (21) vs. Virginia
Louisville

BYU

Central Florida

Missouri

Virginia Tech

East Carolina

Virginia Tech

Oklahoma

Oklahoma

Arkansas State

Arkansas State

West Virginia

West Virginia

Florida

Florida

S. Carolina 28

S. Carolina 25

S. Carolina 28

Georgia 27

Georgia 37

Georgia 45

S. Carolina 30

Georgia 27
Central Florida at No. 20 Missouri

This game makes for an extremely intriguing matchup. Over the course of two weeks, the Tigers have steamrolled the likes of South Dakota State and Toledo, averaged 447 yards per game and 43.5 points, running their offensive scheme like clockwork. Their defense, especially after suffering the loss of SEC defensive player of the year Michael Sam to the NFL and returning only four starters has been suspect. Against two extremely mediocre opponents, the Tigers have allowed an average of 388 yards a game and haven’t looked like a cohesive unit. One game on the road against a ranked SEC team should be enough to determine that.

Kentucky at Florida

Remember the Florida Gators who ended the 2013 season on a seven-game losing streak and missed a bowl game for the first time since 1990? They’re the same Gators who lost to an FCS opponent and couldn’t figure out which team they were supposed to block? Well, forget about it because this Gator team is light-years better than the impersonators who donned the blue and orange last year. The Kentucky Wildcats, who haven’t won an SEC game since 2011, were nice enough be the sacrificial lamb in Florida’s first step back towards conference relevance. In fact, even in the midst of all the turmoil the Wildcats faced last season, they still had no problem dismantling the Wildcats 24-7 on their own field. This game at “The Swamp” should be a walk in the park for Florida.

Tennessee at No. 4 Oklahoma

If you’re looking for an upset in this non-conference bout, kindly look elsewhere. The Tennessee Volunteers have been college football’s perennial C- student ever since Eric Ainge took off his shoulder pads for the last time back in 2007. Since that year, the Vols haven’t been able to put together one season with more than seven wins, though they’ve been a stunning model of consistency, winning at least 5 games in all of those seasons. In other words, they never seem to have what it takes to compete in the SEC anymore, but they also never fold completely. However, the first two games for the Vols this year have been extremely positive. Justin Worley looks like a changed man at quarterback, Marquez North is developing into the dominant receiver we all knew he was capable of being, and the Vols have won handily in both contests. But while the Tennessee fans are all celebrating and singing Rocky Top, the Oklahoma Sooners are preparing to give them a shellacking at Memorial Stadium Saturday. The Sooners, led by upstart quarterback Trevor Knight, possess a dominating offense and an extremely capable defense, both of which have goals of reaching the first College Football Playoff. While Tennessee might attain the winning season they so desperately desire, they won’t get any help from this game.

Gators and Wildcats open SEC play, Volunteers look for upset against OU

JP West
@JPWEST4

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Campus Ministry
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www.palmettochurch.org/csc
1. Running back Todd Gurley is one of the early frontrunners for the Heisman after his performance against Clemson. What makes him so good, and do you see him being able to sustain that success this year?

Gurley has been impressive throughout his time at Georgia, and I think the thing that makes him so successful is that he just does not want to go down. It's really hard to tackle Gurley; he's 6-foot-1, 226 pounds and has the speed of a track star. He runs harder than anyone I've seen in my four years at Georgia, and he showed great vision against Clemson with a couple cutback runs for long gains. Gurley was impressive last year as well, but missed the better part of the season with an ankle injury. That's what Georgia is trying to prevent this year. Gurley had only four carries in the first half of the Clemson game, and finished the game with 15. He rushed for 198 yards and three touchdowns, and I think he will continue to have success throughout the year. The only thing that will prevent him from getting his yards and scores will be injury. But with Georgia's stock of running backs, I don't think Gurley will get overworked.

2. What do you think of quarterback Hutson Mason as the full-time starter now that he has one game under his belt in that role?

It's hard to say because Georgia fans didn't really see much from Mason against Clemson. Mason finished the game the game 18-for-26 with 131 passing yards. He did what he had to do. Mason ended the game with a 111.55 passer efficiency rating, but his longest completion was a 23-yard completion to Michael Bennett. Georgia didn't really stretch the field at all, but it didn't have to because it was having so much success on the ground. I think I'll have a better answer for this question after Saturday's game.

3. The Bulldogs have struggled at Williams-Brice Stadium in recent history. What do you think has given Georgia so many fits there and what do you think will be different about the 2014 installment of the rivalry?

I can't say for sure, but I know that coach Richt always comments on how hard it is to play in Columbia. Georgia hasn't scored many points in Williams-Brice in the past 10 years, and maybe the Bulldogs can't handle Sandstorm. I don't know what to tell you about the past, but I think Georgia will be ready this time around. They had two weeks to prepare for the Gamecocks, and the Bulldogs will be well-rested heading into Saturday. South Carolina doesn't seem like the same team they've been in the past, and I think Georgia looked stronger in its opener.

4. How much improvement have you seen out of the Bulldog defense throughout fall camp and after one regular season game?

Based on the Clemson game, the Georgia defense looks better than last year's squad. It's tough to say because the Bulldogs only played one game, but a shutout in the second half against Clemson is something to be encouraged about. The defense still looked a little shaky, but Georgia was getting after the quarterback with ease in the second half. [Defensive Coordinator Jeremy] Pruitt moved around a lot players — putting Damian Swann at linebacker, Leonard Floyd at nose tackle — and it seemed to cause some confusion on the Clemson offense. The front seven is strong like everyone expected, but the secondary is still unproven.

5. Who is a player to look out for on the Georgia team that Gamecock fans may not have heard of?

I don't know how familiar South Carolina fans are with Georgia, but sophomore outside linebacker Leonard Floyd is a player to watch. He's a lean-looking athlete, but he is explosive and gets up the field to the quarterback in a hurry. He had seven tackles, two sacks, a forced fumble and six quarterback hurries against Clemson. Another player to keep an eye on is freshman running back Nick Chubb. Chubb got his first carries against Clemson and made the most of them, taking four carries for 70 yards and a touchdown. Chubb backs up Gurley with fellow freshman Sony Michel and junior Keith Marshall, but his performance two weeks ago may be good enough to give him some more carries on Saturday.

Prediction:
I'll go with Georgia 34-24. I don't think South Carolina is what everyone expected them to be. While I don't think Gurley will have the same day he did against Clemson, he's still going to get his yards. I think Mason proves what he is capable of, and Georgia improves to 2-0.
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