

**THE DAWGMEISTER'S WEEKEND FORECAST:  
DAWGS KEEP OLE MISS IN THE SLOW LANE**

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**GATORADE WINNER & ESCAPADE SPINNER  
JAXSON DART ANAKIN SKYWALKER**

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I guess it's a sign of prosperity that when UGA beats Florida by two touchdowns—in a game with a 14.5 point spread—for its fourth straight win in the series, something not done since Vince Dooley coached the Dawgs, the fans are screaming to fire the offensive coordinator and bench the quarterback.

This dissatisfaction centers on the interception problem that has plagued Carson Beck's season and the Dawgs' offense. That 2-TD point spread would have been much greater had Beck not forced passes into coverage. As the thinking goes, we should have blown

out a team whose paper-thin QB room had an Ivy League refugee taking most of the snaps. (Note: per my Ivy League connections, Yale and the other schools in the league don't do redshirts, no matter what the guys in the booth kept saying. Perhaps the broadcasters didn't attend one.) Although Aidan Warner didn't get the team into the endzone much, and had a pretty bad stat line after been chased around by our defenders, Florida was in the game till C.J. Allen's sensational pick put the Dawgs in position to build a cushion and bring home the W.

It was, as many have noted, a puzzling afternoon. But not as puzzling as it was in Clemson's home stadium, or in the other games where teams aspiring to play in January got handled by allegedly lesser opponents. Ask ATM U if they'd trade places with Georgia on Sunday morning. And ask Florida State if they'd like to cancel the rest of the season. It's one of those seasons, perhaps indicative of what is to come in college football. I'm taking a double-digit win over a hated opponent any day, no matter how flawed it might have been.

Billy Napier now has a pretty good case to make for returning. His Gators and their parade of players to the blue tent played UGA toe-to-toe for much of the game behind a solid defense and a QB who had little business playing in a game of this magnitude. On the other hand, UGA put up 34 points on that solid defense and the loyal fans want to fire the coordinator and bench the quarterback. Everything is relative, they tell me.

But then, Napier might be faulted for recruiting the position so poorly, even with the portal full of backups looking for a better situation (B. Vandagriff) or starters looking for a better team (D. Gabriel) or guys in high-pressure programs looking to play under a dimmer spotlight (K. McCord). (Note to Billy: I hear that DJ Uiagalelei may be available before the trade deadline.) I wouldn't feel too hopeless if Beck got hurt, then Stockton, and we had to play Rashada or Puglisi. But when Lagway grabbed his hammy and never returned, it made a difficult game near-impossible for Florida.

The week before the game, the sports media was full of narratives. Etienne was playing against his old team. Beck was returning to Jacksonville. Resurgent Florida was looking as though it had developed a competitive pulse, maybe enough to save Napier's job. The betting line, seemingly a bit too great for a rivalry game featuring an opponent that had recently blown out the Kentucky team that gave us fits, turned out to be accurate. All week the experts in the studio were talking up Florida, perhaps to generate interest in the game, perhaps because they really believed that this game would be closely contested.

During the week we heard repeatedly that something's wrong with Carson Beck this year. We also heard how D.J. Lagway is the sort of mobile QB who gives UGA fits. One trending down, one trending up. Might their teams trend along with them? David Pollack has questioned the Dawgs' tight end room. Everybody else has questioned a WR room that no longer has Bowers and McConkey, and that misses the two dismissed transfer receivers more than we anticipated they would. Can the remainder of the group get the job done? Not according to the vast set of experts on the couch and on social media.

Those narratives, like many generated during the lull between games, failed to play out once the whistle blew. Lagway was out of the game fairly early. Etienne too, leaving our RB rotation in the hands of a freshmen or two and a walkon. Aside from a post-pick TD pass from Lagway, the Dawgs' D generally stuffed Florida, helped by the Gators' reliance on a QB whose SAT scores got him into Yale, but whose game experience got him in over his head against our defense.

The one area of the narrative that got traction was in Carson Beck's inconsistency. Facing a strong rush, he made desperate throws that got intercepted. One thing I noticed was that he often went for the downfield throw into coverage when he had an open receiver underneath and well in range of the line to gain. I'm no football coach, unlike the thousands of experts criticizing the team on social media. But I'm hoping that Carson sees these tendencies in film study this week and stops throwing deep passes into crowds of defenders when he's under pressure.

Speaking of fans and their opinions: I have never understood the fan base's hostility to Chaz Chambliss. The guy has been a solid player for three years now, playing ahead of some highly-ranked recruits and doing his job damn well. That cat plays all-out and made some big plays on Saturday. I hope the fans can begin to appreciate a DGD who has logged a whole lot of snaps on teams that rarely have lost with him on the field.

And now, new narratives will be generated for the Mississippi game. The Rebels have run up gobs of points, including 63 on Saturday against a team that was starting to roll. Wiley ol' Lane Kiffin has got his offense humming, and the Dawgs are his next victim. But one thing I noticed on Saturday is that some coaches, with a game well in hand, will play their starters all the way through the end in an effort to build style points and stats. Miami was blowing out Duke, but Cam Ward was still in the game with a few minutes left, throwing to the endzone. I didn't see the Mississippi game, but the box score has Dart's backup throwing three passes, suggesting that Dart was in there piling up stats on behalf of Lane Kiffin's X account. I prefer UGA's style of not embarrassing opponents more than is necessary by subbing starters out and playing a conservative style. That's better for opponents' egos, and also develops the backups for their shot at game reps. But the Lamestream Sports Media just loves big-stat players, and lame-ass coaches just love gaudy stats.

How will the narrative play out? We'll see. For all the fans' fretting about this team, they are 7-1, more or less covered a large point spread in a rivalry game that extended the streak to four games, and are ranked second as the season hits the home stretch (I'm writing this before the week's ranks are issued). Everything's still in order, everything's still possible. Nothing is easy in this game or in this conference. It's a grind, and a long haul. I'm looking forward to seeing how the team shows out in Oxford.

## **DAWGMEISTER GOOD WORKS OF THE WEEK**

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**The Gary Sinise Foundation** was established under the philanthropic direction of Gary Sinise, an actor and 40-year advocate for the nation's military and defenders. The foundation's outreach supported those who sacrifice to defend the United States: active duty, veterans, first responders and their families. The foundation achieves its mission through a number of programs designed to show gratitude for these American heroes through entertainment, family support and acts of appreciation. The foundation builds specially adapted homes for severely wounded veterans, hosting daylong morale-boosting celebrations at military medical centers across the country and providing meals to veterans and their families across the country. The foundation is committed to ensuring veterans' sacrifices are never forgotten.

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### **SAT PREP SESSION**

**SAT Question of the Week:** Which of the following slogans found in stadium endzones and other prominent locations has done the most to alter society's dynamics forever and make the world a better place?

Be love.  
Black Lives Matter.  
Choose love.  
End Racism.  
Hotty Toddy.  
Inspire change.  
It takes all of us.  
Say their stories.  
Stop hate.

**Answer:**

I got mine, go get your own.

### **Disconcerting Signals**

On Mississippi's playoff prospects, preseason: "I would say no. Everyone in the media, we're on the older statesman side of it, is in love with Lane Kiffin. They think he's hilarious. I don't think he's that funny. I don't think his tweets are that interesting, and his coaching has been underwhelming at times. I'll believe it when I see it, and I haven't seen enough for me to believe right now. How did someone like Lane Kiffin ever get these jobs? How did he land the Raiders job? At Tennessee? And particularly the one at USC? People think it's because of his father, Monte, the great defensive wizard. In some respects, Lane Kiffin is the Miley Cyrus of college football. He has very little talent, but we simply can't take our eyes off him." ~Paul Finebaum

## **DAWG DOOTS**

- ⦿ After Alabama's loss to Tennessee, fans began calling for Jalen Milroe to be benched, and to be replaced with Arch Manning.
- ⦿ [They're not too happy with Coach DeBoer, either.](#) And that was before the Tennessee game. Rumored replacements include Nick Saban, Urban Meyer, Bill Belichick, Jon Gruden, Tim Walz, Billy Napier, and Lane Kiffin.
- ⦿ Many teams are now devoting 15 minutes of each practice to falling down, pretending to be injured, and limping off the field in order to stop an opponent from running the next play.
- ⦿ Herbie is giving me headaches running replays back and forth as if we're in the film room.

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

**Daylen Everett** came to UGA as a 5-star cornerback from IMG Academy. The Norfolk, Virginia native was a sensational high school player, ranked as the #3 cornerback prospect nationally, the #5 prospect in Florida, and the #26 prospect nationally at any position. There was a bit of a catch to his excellence, however: Nobody threw the ball in his direction. He'd never been the other guy in the defensive backfield, the one that quarterbacks try to pick on. At UGA, he had to adjust. Teammate and fellow defender Zion Logue, a wizened veteran and team leader, took it on himself to provide Daylen with the tough love he needed to realize his potential. Daylen played as a reserve his first year, and then started as a sophomore along with Kamari Lassiter, who was emerging into his own stardom and always took on the opponent's biggest threat. That meant that Daylen, once the superstar that nobody would throw against, was the guy getting targeted by opposing coordinators. It takes a man to stand up to that withering pressure, and Daylen was up to the task and embraced it as part of his job and development. By his sophomore year, Daylen was the one counseling younger players. When the Dawgs were recruiting another IMG stud, Ellis Robinson, Daylen was his counselor and companion: "Daylen is like a big brother to me. Yeah, he is. Definitely. I hang out with him all the time whenever I'm at Georgia. I'm with him 24/7. That's him. JaCorey Thomas. I know a lot of dudes there, but Daylen definitely sticks out. Just the person he is. He's a great dude overall. Just a good dude to talk to about anything. It doesn't even have to be football. He's just a good dude overall. That's what I really like about him." This really good dude has earned a Roger F. and Michael A. Kahn Football Scholarship to support his Business major, and he's got a bright future whether it's football, business, or looking out for others. Every team needs guys who hold the program together emotionally while also setting a high standard on the field and in the classroom. IMG has delivered UGA a terrific guy, and he's just getting started developing into a success no matter what the field of play.



## **THE FORECAST**

### **DAWGS VS. MISSISSIPPI**

Ole Miss looked fantastic during the opening games of the season, blowing out undermanned teams in their home stadium before sobering up when the SEC games began, when they took both home and away losses. One was to Kentucky, which the Catmeister has recently said is circling the drain on the season, to which the drain is saying, Come on down! It's the Kiffin way: Spend your time on social media when the opposition is studying film. Georgia has not exactly played lights-out on offense after their breathtaking comeback in Tuscaloosa, with too much inconsistency between QB and receivers. I suspect that the Jugs machine has been humming during the last few weeks of practice, and how about Arian Smith's newfound reliability in catching the football? I also assume that making sure that receivers run the routes that the QB expects has been a point of emphasis, although Carson Beck did appear frustrated with receivers' lack of attention to hand signals that changed their routes. The defense? The Texas game wiped away the unpleasant memories of the torching that came at the hands of Michael Van Buren, and I am confident that as the level of competition increases, and as Mykel Williams's snaps go up in frequency, so will our defensive intensity. Anyone who saw Jalon Walker's ripsnorting demeanor on the sideline in Austin would be encouraged to believe that when his hair is on fire, our defense is burning an opponent's house down. So here comes Mississippi and offensive genius Lane Kiffin. But he's not playing Furman or Georgia Southern, or even Arkansas. Those plays don't work quite as well when Walker and Williams are in the backfield the whole game. So I'm taking the Good Guys to own another ranked opponent in its own stadium: UGA 38, Mississippi 27

### **NATIONAL GAME OF THE WEEK: LSU OVER ALABAMA**

It's not that I'm down on Alabama, or up on LSU. It's more that Alabama played its best football in the first half of the Georgia game, and has looked erratic and sloppy ever since, even getting manhandled by Vandy at the line of scrimmage. Throw in double-digit penalties in every game, with Nick Saban piling on from the studio, and you're looking at a team that is struggling to find its way after seeming to have established itself as the nation's best team under its magnificent new coach and his more relaxed style. For a half, anyhow. LSU now plays a QB who scorched UGA in the SEC championship game a few years ago, yet who completed half of his 50 passes and who threw three picks in their loss to ATM U. On paper, this game's a tossup, but the greatest likelihood is that someone will win the game. I'm going to take the Tigers in a close one between two teams desperate for a win to stay in the playoff conversation. LSU 35, Alabama 34



### **NATIONAL UPSET OF THE WEEK: GEORGIA TECH OVER MIAMI**

Brent Key is firmly on record as a certified UGA Hater. I don't think that's a bad thing, given how lousy GT has been for much of this century, and how flat our historic rivalry has become. I think he's the best thing that's happened to their program since Joe Hamilton was their QB, and that was when George O'Leary was coach. So I'll begin with a salute to the guy who may actually make GT relevant, and that's good for UGA's competitive spirit. At the same time, Tech has begun a Kentucky-esque drain-circling when its QB1 can't suit up. Meanwhile, Miami has found its savior QB in Cam Ward. Unlike some imports from the fumes of the PAC-12, he's been terrific. So this game should be a good one, assuming that GT has its QB1 on the field. The glamour guys are pretty good, but the trenches are where games like this are won. Key is an old lineman—well, so is Mario Cristobal—and his mentality is to dominate the trenches, and incidentally, the state of Georgia, or so they tell me. Let's set aside the latter issue and focus on the Miami game. I'll take the Jackets over the Canes in a major shakeup of the ACC and the tournament selection committee: GT 31, Miami 28

*Note: These predictions have been certified by the wagering site FanFool*