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November 2019 Edition

# THE GEORGIA FLORIDA ISSUE



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## GET TO KNOW THE WRITERS

**JJ LANIER**

JJ Lanier is a native of North Carolina and studied communications at Appalachian State University. JJ currently resides in Asheville, North Carolina. JJ is an expert on the NFL and college basketball. JJ is also an insider on all things ACC.

**KIPP BRANCH**

Kipp Branch has been inside the Brunswick High Pirate Program for over a decade and is affectionately called Mr. Brunswick High. Kipp serves as one of the voices on the Pirates Radio Broadcast and pitched at Valdosta State University. Kipp is knowledgeable about all things 'Southern Sports'.

**TJ HARTNETT**

TJ Hartnett currently resides in Atlanta and graduated from Kennesaw State University. TJ has been an Atlanta sports fan his whole life and has an inside beat on all Atlanta sports teams.

**KENNETH HARRISON, JR.**

Kenneth Harison Jr is a long time Atlanta native and graduated from Kennesaw State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Communications. Kenneth has a pulse on not only the Atlanta sports scene but the entire southern sports scene as well.

**MIKE ANTHONY**

Mike Anthony is a Georgia Southern grad and currently still lives in Statesboro. Mike covers the Eagles on regular basis in all sports as a beat writer. Mike also has vast expertise on MLB.

**TEDDY BISHOP**

Teddy Bishop is from south Georgia and graduated from Armstrong Atlantic University. Teddy has been the voice of the Brunswick High Pirates for almost 20 years and is an expert on Tennis, High School Football and MLB.

**ROBERT CRAFT**

Robert is an expert on the Florida sports scene. From the Florida Gators to the Orlando Magic, Robert has you covered.

**JASON BISHOP**

Jason Bishop has spent time at CNN Sports and CSS Sports in Atlanta and is currently host of The Jason Bishop Show with Kipp Branch, southeast Georgia's most listened to sports talk show. Jason is from the Golden Isles and no one knows more about area high school football.

The Southern Sports Edition was created to offer sports opinions from a southern perspective. The Southern Sports Edition offers some of the top sports minds and opinions from around the South. From coverage on High School Football to a beat on the Atlanta Braves, the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets, SEC, ACC and all southern sports with actual southern opinions. The Southern Sports Edition is currently distributed in Southeast Georgia and Northeast Florida and growing everyday.

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NOVEMBER 2019 EDITION

THE SOUTHERN SPORTS EDITION

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# GEORGIA FLORIDA PREVIEW

Looking Ahead To Jacksonville By Jason Bishop



The Florida/Georgia game is a tradition like no other and has an argument as the best college football rivalry in existence.

These fan bases do not like each other one ounce....Jorts versus Overalls.

Both of these teams come into this game limping a bit.

Georgia was stunned at home in double OT against South Carolina and then struggled against Kentucky in the first half the following week.

Florida was thoroughly man handled against LSU in the second half of that game and then stole one against South Carolina due to some really sketch officiating.

Florida is the higher ranked team but Georgia has more talent on the roster and is favored in this game. UGA is an early 5.5 point favorite in this game.

Both teams have some issues offensively. The Dawgs' receivers have really struggled to get open this season, allowing opposing defensive coordinators to stack the box against UGA's running game and slowing it down in recent weeks.

Florida has no big time elite playmakers on offense and will rely heavily on the short and intermediate passing game to move the ball.

Defensively, both teams are elite. The Gator's have one of the country's best pass rushes and will make Jake Fromm's day miserable.

Georgia's defense is very physical and they have one of the best secondaries in the country.

Remember this name, Nolan Smith. Smith is a elite pass rusher and was the #1 recruit in the country last season. He has found his way onto the field as a true freshman for Georgia and is emerging as a disruptive force on defense.

This Georgia defense is actually better than the LSU defense that Kyle Trask struggled against just a few weeks back.

Trask is the X factor in this game. If Trask plays like he did against Kentucky the Gators will win. However, if he plays like he did against LSU the Gators stand no chance in this game.

The aforementioned Nolan Smith will be the difference in this game and will give Trask a long afternoon.

I look for Trask to make a couple of mistakes that will cost UF the game in the end. 19-14 Georgia.

De'Andre Swift will become a big factor late in the game as UGA uses him to salt the clock away and the Gators can't get the ball back in the end.

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# THE GAME

Call It What It Is By Teddy Bishop



**O**kay, is it the Georgia-Florida game, or the Florida-Georgia game?

Well, my oldest son is a Georgia fan, and my youngest son and my daughter are Florida fans, so for the purposes of this article, I'll just refer to it as THE Game.

The bitin' Bulldogs started the season ranked #3 with visions of winning a national championship. And they certainly moved in that direction until the Gamecocks from Columbia (South Carolina, not South America) rolled into Athens (Georgia, not Greece) and upset the Dawgs in double overtime, 20-17. Georgia could still make the playoffs, but, well, not really.

As for Florida, the Giant Water Lizards started the season at #7, having made improvements over the last two seasons. The Lizards from Gainesville (Florida, not Georgia) were rolling merrily along until they had to go to Red Stick, Louisiana and play the Big Kitty Cats. Final score: 42-28.

So, both teams come into THE Game with one loss.

Quarterbacks are always important in THE Game. In Athens, Jake Fromm kicked Justin Fields' butt on the practice field and sent Fields packing.

Fields appealed for a hardship case, saying a Georgia baseball player was prejudiced. The NCAA bought his story and allowed Fields to play in Columbus (Ohio, not Georgia) without sitting out a season.

The rumor on Fields was that he couldn't decipher the Dawg playbook and Fromm could. I guess Ohio State doesn't have a playbook because Fields has done excellent

work for the Buckeyes. (Can anyone tell me what a Buckeye is? I looked it up and it's either a shrub/tree, a butterfly, or a coupling for a railroad car. That's right off the internet, so it's got to be true. I originally thought it had something to do with a male deer's vision capacity, but apparently not. By the way, do you know the difference between beer nuts and deer nuts? Beer nuts cost \$4.95. Deer nuts are under a buck.)

At any rate, Justin Fields has taken Ohio State to a #3 ranking while the Dawgs have fallen to #10, making some people suggest that Kirby Smart should have kept Fields and let Jake Fromm at the mouth.

Speaking of Smart, Kirby has done an excellent job in Athens, despite the loss to SC.

Down in the swamp, Dan Mullen has Gator fans talking national championship again, but not this year.

When Florida quarterback Feleipe Franks left the Kentucky game with a season-ending injury, backup Kyle Trask entered the game and took the Lizards to a comeback win. And Trask has played well, the LSU game notwithstanding.

Georgia's offensive line is very good, and that could be a key to THE Game. They've opened holes for D'Andre to show how Swift he is. The Dawgs also have some pretty good receivers as do the Lizards. It could come down to the running game.

Whichever team can establish the running game early should have the inside track to winning the game.

THE Game will be played in Jacksonville (a neutral site) again, although Kirby Smart has expressed an interest in a home-and-home series. Tailgating will start at least a day ahead of time, even in Brunswick (Georgia, not Maine).

I guess it has come down to predicting the final score, so here goes: 24-17. (Smiley Face!)

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# THE SCOOP ON SPORTS CONCUSSIONS

Based on data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 200,000 people in the United States suffer a concussion while playing sports every year. Concussions can occur in any sport and affect athletes of any age. Recognizing a concussion and providing proper treatment is most important for the young athlete, whose brain is still developing and considered immature, until the third decade of life.



## What is a concussion?

A concussion occurs from a direct or indirect blow to the head that causes the brain to rapidly move back and forth in the skull reducing blood flow into the brain. This temporary impairment leads to a variety of acute and delayed symptoms.

## Concussion symptoms

"Some symptoms are physical manifestations, such as drowsiness," says Beau Sasser, M.D., board-certified orthopaedic surgeon, Summit Sports Medicine & Orthopaedic Surgery, and medical director, Sports Medicine, Southeast Georgia Health System. "Others are cognitive, like memory loss." The most common symptoms of concussion include drowsiness, headache, memory loss, irritability, confusion, balance problems, dizziness and light hypersensitivity.

**Beau Sasser, M.D.**

## Thorough evaluation is required

There is no blood test or radiologic scan that can diagnose a concussion. Imaging tests such as CT scans and MRIs typically do not detect the bleeding or bruising evident in brain damage and are usually only utilized if the athlete loses consciousness or if a spine injury is suspected.

Evaluation for a concussion needs to be performed by a medical provider that is up to date on concussion management. Most providers will initiate an evaluation with a cursory neurologic examination to assess for balance, coordination, vision, hearing and reflexes. After the initial exam, the athlete will perform a neuropsychological test.

Southeast Georgia Health System provides the ImPACT neurocognitive test in Brunswick, a scientifically validated computerized concussion management tool that allows the provider to evaluate cognitive parameters, mental functions and healing progress.

## Rest is the best medicine

"The key to healing from a concussion is complete rest, both physical and mental, to give the brain time to heal. Reading, computer work, smart phones, video games and even television should be limited until all symptoms have resolved," advises Dr. Sasser. Recovery typically takes around 7 to 10 days, however, some studies show that a concussed brain may take weeks to return to baseline.

Once the athlete is free of symptoms, a gradual, slow return to physical and mental activity is recommended. If symptoms return at any point, activity should be decreased until symptoms fully resolve. Once this has occurred, the athlete may return to play.

## Back on the field

Return to play guidelines should be followed closely since getting back into a game too soon puts an athlete at risk for another concussion and may lead to long-term issues, such as learning difficulties and chronic headaches. "Although rare, repeat concussions that occur before a previous concussion has healed can cause permanent brain damage or even death from a phenomenon called second impact syndrome," Dr. Sasser cautions.

## It's not just safe, it's the law

In 2010, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended that young athletes with concussions be evaluated and cleared by a doctor before returning to sports. The American Academy of Neurology has issued similar statements and stressed that those doctors should be trained in managing concussions. This has been followed by many states enacting legislation with these same recommendations, including the Georgia Return to Play Act in 2013 which states that all parents of children in sports should receive information on concussions; if a concussion is suspected, the athlete is removed from play and cannot return to play until properly cleared by a medical provider.

"Athletes, parents and coaches all play a role in concussion management by recognizing the symptoms, removing the injured athlete from play and allowing the brain the proper amount of time to heal," says Dr. Sasser.

**For more information or to schedule an appointment with Summit Sports Medicine & Orthopaedic Surgery, please call 912-466-7340 or visit [sghs.org/summit](http://sghs.org/summit).**

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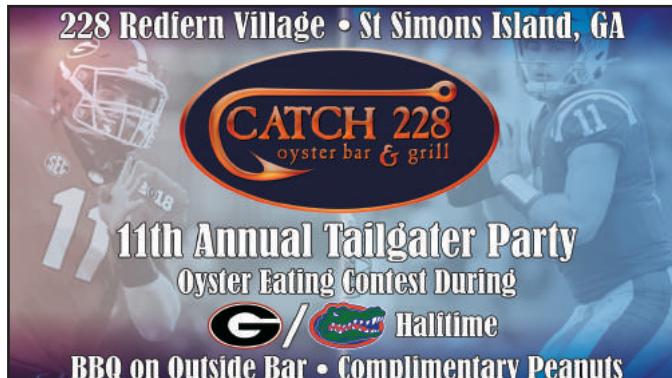
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# THE BEST RIVALRY

Lives Up To The Hype By Kenneth Harrison Jr



The SEC has some great programs and traditions. It seems like every team in each division is a rival with the exception of the two newest members (Mizzou and Texas A&M).

Some of the great rivalries are Alabama-Auburn, Ole Miss-Mississippi State, Arkansas-LSU and Florida-Tennessee. We can also add anyone that shares a border with Tennessee as one of their rivals.

The best rivalry in the conference has to be Georgia and Florida. There are several factors that make this very unique. Both teams are in talent rich states. They both recruit the best players from states that are top five in the nation in talent.

Both teams are extremely competitive and produce a lot of NFL talent consistently. Some of them have won the Heisman Trophy. Some legendary names that played in this series include Herschel Walker, A.J. Green, Matthew Stafford, Hines Ward, Emmitt Smith, Tim Tebow and Danny Wuerffell.

We cannot say the same for other programs in the conference like Arkansas, South Carolina, Kentucky, Mizzou and Vanderbilt.

This game is also played at a neutral site. The Auburn-Alabama game used to be played in Birmingham at Legion Field. Since 2000, they are played on campus.

Arkansas – Texas A&M game is played at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Tx. The contract was signed before A&M joined the conference and it ends in 2024.

The first time both teams met was in 1915 and has been played every season since 1926, except for a war-time interruption in 1943.

The game has been played in Jacksonville since 1933 with just two

exceptions. It was formerly called the "World's Largest Outdoor Cocktail Party" but that name is no longer used officially.

The schools also dispute their first meeting, which UGA counts as a 52-0 win in 1904. UF does not count this because it was one of their predecessor institutions, called Florida Agricultural College based in Lake City.

The modern university was established the next year in 1905 and fielded the first officially recognized football team in 1906.

Since the league was divided into two divisions in 1992, both teams have been competing to win the SEC East. The game is high stakes and that makes it more entertaining.

This year both teams have one loss and are ranked in the Top Ten. The team that wins this game will win the division. As long as they continue to win, they will make the College Football Playoff.

Steve Spurrier was known for taking shots at rival teams and it seems current Gators head coach Dan Mullen is continuing the tradition. He trolled UGA this offseason when he announced the attendance for the spring game was 39,476. Mullen previously admitted he has having fun with the spring game numbers to rile up his rivals.

Georgia has not won a championship in 39 years and has played 476 games during this drought. Now, Mullen claims he doesn't know where that number came from.

"I had no idea. I don't even know how they came up with that number, the most random thing ever," Mullen said. "But everybody started freaking out about it, I guess, until three days later somebody put enough math together to go figure that out. Maybe Georgia fans were really so uptight they haven't won in 39 years they got all uptight and tried to figure it out. But it was pretty random actually, it was pretty funny."

I hope this game lives up to the heavyweight matchup we are all expecting.



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# DROPPED THE BALL

Same Ole Georgia By Kipp Branch





The 2002 Georgia Bulldogs finished the season as SEC Champions for the first SEC title in 20 years for UGA.

UGA beat FSU in the Sugar Bowl and finished ranked #3 nationally. This was Mark Richt's best football team in his 15 years at UGA, but the only blemish on the schedule was at The World's Largest Outdoor Cocktail party. Here is that dreadful day through the eyes of this writer.

November 2, 2002 was a beautiful day in Jacksonville.

Weather was great and Georgia fans were in Jacksonville in force.

UGA was unbeaten, Spurrier was gone to the NFL and Florida was down. They were coming into the game with three losses for the first time since the 1980's.

This was going to be the year that UGA put UF in its place and took control over the series again.

UGA fans had been beaten into submission by the Evil Genius before he took the Washington Redskins job. Spurrier had gone 11-1 against UGA in his 12 years in Gainesville.

Ron Zook was the Florida coach and UGA came into this game very confident that they would blow out Florida.

I was supremely confident also. You could tell early in the day that the Gator Nation was nervous, and we smelled that and it was like a hungry football team attacking an all you can eat country buffet.

The game was the first and only night game at the Cocktail party. I have never talked so much trash at a football game in my life.

I just knew unbeaten UGA was going to blow out the Gators. I had my best trash talk lines ready like "Shreveport in December at the Poulan Weed Whacker Bowl, you better have a winter jacket Gators", or my favorite "The Grand Ole Opry at Christmas time is the highlight of a Music City Bowl Trip".

We knew well because UGA was just there the previous season, but when talking trash facts do not enter into the mix, and it's UGA/UF and we had an 8 hour tailgate experience and who cares Georgia keeps Florida from falling into the ocean on any map or atlas you can purchase.

We started the walk from our tailgate spot to the stadium looking like Ric Flair making a championship match entrance and talked down to just about every Florida fan that would make eye contact.

We got to our seats and settled in, thankfully. Drink of the day was Jim Beam and 7-Up.

Fred Gibson was hurt and could not play. Billy Bennett missed 3 FG's and Rex Grossman threw the WR screen pass 237 times that day and UGA just could not stop it.

At halftime I talked Scott Spence

out of walking back to the truck. When UGA struggles Spence will head to back to the vehicle in a New York second. Then it happened trailing 20-13 in the 4th quarter Terrence Edwards dropped a wide open TD pass that would have tied it and reality starts creeping in.

Well UGA blows the game and a National Championship appearance to UF, and in classic Gator form they were waiting on us on what seemed like 10 mile walk back to the truck.

One lady yelled in my ear "Same ole Georgia" It escapes me what my response was back. One guy was standing on top of a planter yelling "I heard a lot of crap coming in here today, but I don't hear anything now".

We labeled the one hour trip back from Jax to the Golden Isles as "The Trail of Tears". I fired Mark Richt after this game. 5th straight loss to the Gators.

Looking back on this makes me understand now that this isn't the same ole Georgia of 2002.

Kirby has instilled toughness in the program. Georgia has better talent, and a two game winning streak and has physically whipped Florida over the past years to a combined score of 78-24.

Give me UGA 27-20 in 2019, but the game is on November 2nd again, however which makes folks like me nervous.

Steve Spurrier created that doubt in all of us Dawg fans. Damn you Ball Coach. The WLOC is a great American sporting event that you need to experience at least once in your lifetime.





# FOLLOW THE MONEY

Jimmies and Joes vs X's and O's By Robert Craft



**I** have always believed that stars matter when it comes to college football recruiting. Old time coaches used to say that “it’s not about the X’s and O’s, but the Jimmies and Joes.” Some sayings never go out of style.

With the annual “The World’s Largest Outdoor Cocktail Party” just around the corner, let’s breakdown the roster team talent composite rankings.

Since Kirby Smart arrived at Georgia, he has pulled in recruiting classes no lower than number 6. Georgia has signed the nation’s number 6, 3, 1 and 2 recruiting classes.

Georgia’s current roster is loaded. The Bulldogs are number 3 in team composite ranking (Alabama 1 & Ohio State 2). Georgia has 14 Five-Star players, the most in college football.

The Bulldogs have a composite score of 960.16.

Georgia also leads the nation in dollars spent legally on recruiting. The Bulldogs spent \$2,626,622.00 in 2019, the most in college sports.

Take a look at where Georgia’s opponents rank:

Vanderbilt 53,  
Arkansas 102,  
Notre Dame 14,

Tennessee 15,  
South Carolina 21,  
Kentucky 34,,  
Missouri 39,  
Auburn 13,  
Texas A&M 12,  
Georgia Tech 45,  
and Florida 15 .

Moving onto my Florida Gators, Dan Mullen in his second year at Florida has signed the number 14th and 9th classes the past two years.

The Gators have zero Five Stars players and a team composite score of 835.68.

Florida is ranked 14th in dollars spent in recruiting. The Gators spent \$1,155,802.00 last year in recruiting.

Take a look at where Florida opponents rank:

Miami 18,  
Kentucky 34,  
Tennessee 15,  
Auburn 13,  
LSU 5 ,  
South Carolina 21,  
Georgia 3,  
Vanderbilt 53,  
Missouri 39,  
and Florida State 6.

If you just go by the team composite ranking, this should not be much of contest. There is a 134.48-difference between the teams. Georgia should be a two touchdown favorite on November 2nd.

Now to the X’s and O’s, Kirby Smart versus Dan Mullen.

Kirby Smart is in his 5th season as the Bulldogs head coach

with a record of 38-11 and 2-2 in bowl games.

Kirby’s biggest win to date is the come from behind win against Oklahoma in the 2017 Rose Bowl. Kirby has upgraded Georgia’s roster to an elite level.

However, there are questions about Kirby’s performance in big games, especially with national interest, such as National Championship game against Alabama, SEC Championship game against Alabama, 2018 blow out lost to LSU, and 2019 Sugar Bowl loss to Texas.

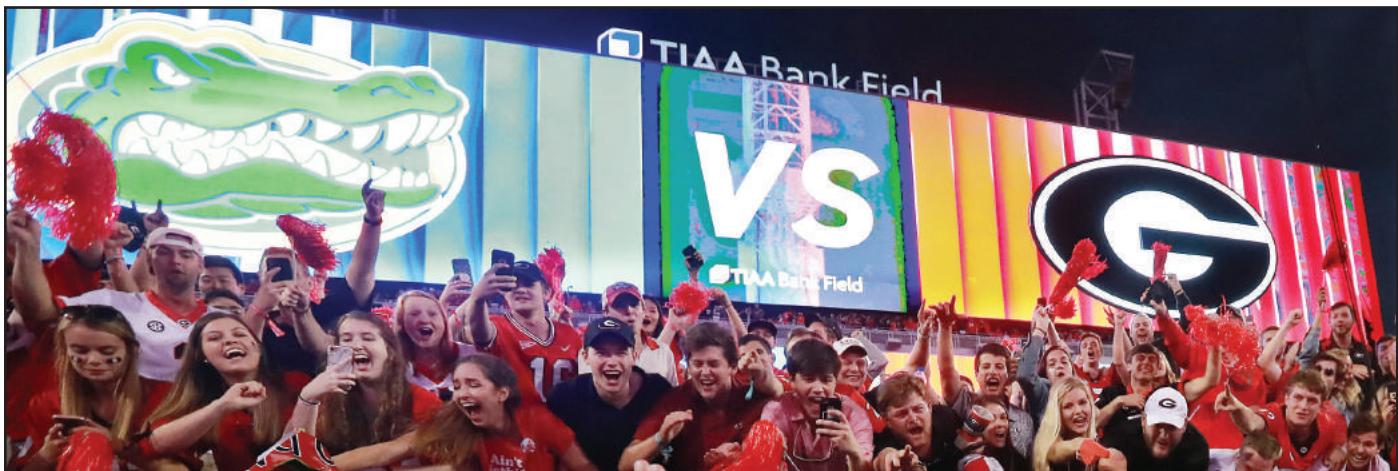
Dan Mullen is in his 2nd season as the Gator head coach with a record of 17-4 and 1-0 in bowl games. Mullen is known as a quarterback whisperer. He is the all time winningest coach at Mississippi State. Taking Mississippi State to a school record eight straight bowl appearances.

Mullen’s strength is X’s and O’s and development of players. Mullen has a track record of taking 3-Stars players and turning them into quality NFL prospects.

Jimmies and Joes will always determine the outcome. There is a definite talent difference in this game. Can coaching and game planning beat pure athleticism?

Gators vs Bulldogs, the winner of this is in the driver's seat for the SEC EAST.

November 2nd, Jacksonville, Florida, Jimmies and Joes vs. X’s and O’s.





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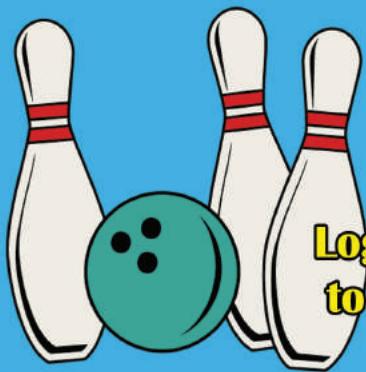
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# A FAN'S VIEW

Never Any Love Lost By Mike Anthony





In these parts, the end of October can mean only one thing - another chapter written in the rivalry between Georgia and Florida.

To be perfectly honest, I have no stake in this matchup.

I spent the first 14 years of my life embroiled in the various college football rivalries of the Mid-Atlantic and Rust Belt states.

And while I've enjoyed all of the ACC and SEC rivalries since moving down south, I've never taken a side and simply appreciate each game as it comes while not digging too deep into the history.

So, I consider myself unfit to discuss the ins and outs of Georgia and Florida. Luckily, I'm never short of friends with deep roots in various teams throughout the south.

With the latest edition of Florida/Georgia on tap, I turned to Sudie Pennebaker (a huge Florida fan from the Sunshine State) and Morrell McCaskill (a lifelong Georgia fan) to try and sway me to their side.

Here's a few pieces of the argument that ensued.

Me: So, let's jump right into it. Where do we stand in this rivalry? Who's getting the best of it?

MM: First off, UGA not only won the first ever game in this rivalry, but it still holds the largest victory in the series and is ahead in the overall record with 52 wins. Florida is more like a bitter little brother in the series. Outside of the Spurrier era, UGA has owned the rivalry.

SP: Eh... 51 wins. Georgia says 52 because they count a game when they played a school that wasn't actually UF. And Spurrier left in 2001. We've won 10 times since then. Not sure how you can say Georgia has owned the rivalry when they only have seven wins in that span.

Me: The game has the moniker of "The World's Largest Cocktail Party", but that name has been shuttered recently. How devastating is it to lose

such a great nickname.

MM: I think it's a buzzkill. The cocktail party name lends to the two schools' strong tailgating traditions. It also bleeds into the crowd that isn't so into football, but loves a good party. That does nothing but help college football's cause.

Me: How about the neutral site? Would the game be even better if it was a home-and-home?

SP: On one hand, I like Jacksonville because A.) Family is close by, B.) Go Jags and C.) It feels like a home game. But I don't think it's really a neutral site.

MM: Neutral? 71 miles vs. 362 miles doesn't seem too neutral to me. I would love if it was home-and-home. Georgia does that with Auburn every year and that works great. Florida fans may be worried about wearing their jean shorts in late October in Athens though. It could be chillier than what they're used to.

SP: Nah. We'll just wear the jeans that we will turn into shorts next summer.

Me: You obviously have all the great moments for your team committed to memory. What's a low point for you?

SP: I am not fond of 2012... Stupid Jeff Driskel. Stupid Will Muschamp. (editor's note - at this point, Sudie wandered off topic and spent the next five minutes lamenting the Muschamp era)

MM: 2012 was a great year. The one I hate was 2014. We had just beaten Missouri 34-0. Florida wasn't even ranked. We got beat handily and that was shocking. Plus, it basically sealed the SEC East for Missouri.

In the end, we all ended up right where we had started. There will never be any love lost in this rivalry and - as is often the case - this year's matchup is heightened by the fact that the winner will be in position to claim the East and play for the conference championship.

I'll probably remain on the fence when it comes to picking sides. Our discussion cast some light on the pride and pain each side has experienced, but I get enough of that from the allegiances I already claim.

No matter who you root for, it's going to be one heck of a party - cocktails or not.

The logo for Schell &amp; Hogan LLP. It features a stylized red flame icon above the letters 'S&amp;H' in gold. Below 'S&amp;H' is a horizontal line, followed by 'SCHELL &amp; HOGAN' in red, with 'LLP' in smaller letters to the right. At the bottom, the text 'CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS' and 'SERVING MORE THAN 50 YEARS' is written in small red capital letters.

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# RISING GATORS?

Ahead Of Schedule By Jason Bishop



The Florida Gators have risen to no. 6 in the AP rankings and look to be on their way back to national prominence, if they are not already there.

In reality, the Gators are a year ahead of schedule, as far as being a national title contender. If the Gators can knock off Georgia

On September 7 Florida blew out Tennessee-Martin 45-0 and began to get some buzz nationally.

The Gators went to Lexington on September 14, lost starting QB Feleipe Franks for the year but found a way to beat Kentucky with backup Kyle Trask, 29-21.

The Tennessee Volunteers paid a visit to the Swamp on September 21 and left with a 34-3 beat down at the hands of the Gators.

Another blowout win for

The Tigers, now #1 in the country, pulled away from the Gators in the second half, en route to a 42-28 win. The playoff committee will see this as a quality loss, as the Gators lost to the #1 team in the country on the road in Baton Rouge.

The Gators still have everything in front of them and with a win over Georgia will have a very easy ending to their 2019 campaign.

After the Cocktail Party, the Gators host 2-5 Vandy, head to an over rated Mizzou team, and then



this weekend, they will position themselves to be in the conversation for a playoff spot, pending an SEC Championship game win at the end of the season.

Dan Mullen has done a tremendous job of reinstalling some of the swagger the Gators had in the 90's under head coach, Steve Spurrier.

The Gators opened the season with a hard fought 24-20 win over the Miami Hurricanes on August 24.

Florida, 38-0, on September 28 against Towson saw the Gators undefeated to enter October.

The Gators took to the road against Auburn on the plains in Alabama. Florida was an underdog against the Tigers and many thought the undefeated run would end there for blue and Orange.

It did not. Florida chomped War Eagle 24-13 and all looked good heading into the next week against rival LSU.

host the dumpster fire that is the Florida State Seminoles.

I see the Gators doing no worse than 10-2 and a major New Year's Day bowl and that is assuming Florida goes down to Georgia, which I am not thoroughly convinced they will do.

If the Gators once again cause heartache to the Georgia fan base, they will be in Atlanta to play either LSU or Alabama for the SEC title and a spot in the college football playoff.



# COCKTAILS IN RIVER CITY

Is It Neutral Territory? By TJ Hartnett



The University of Georgia and the University of Florida have fought the same battle on the same battleground for nearly a century. That won't be changing for the next several years.

The city of Jacksonville, Florida, where the two rivals have played their annual game since 1933, agreed to continue hosting the collegiate contest through at least 2023 with an option to extend to 2025.

Press releases were sent out with all parties involved expressing a positive feeling about the deal, espousing words of tradition and history; if it ain't broke, don't fix it, essentially.

The idea behind playing this game in Jacksonville each year is housed in the notion that it's a neutral ground. With the two teams claim to be the "University of" their respective states, Jacksonville also serves as a borderland over which the game's victors can claim.

But it's not quite neutral territory, is it? Ignoring the fact that the game is played inside the state lines

of Florida, the geography is actually staggeringly lopsided.

The rabid, eager fans of the Georgia Bulldogs make the trip every year, often with a pit stop on a beach or coastal island like St. Simon's, to cheer on their team. Thus, is the level of their passion.

It's an overnight trip, for sure. It takes over five hours to make the trek from Athens, Georgia to Jacksonville.

Gas money, hotels, food and alcohol, and eleven or more total hours in a car are all costs that the Bulldog faithful must pay to root for their home team.

The Florida Gator Nation? They could easily sleep in their beds the night of the game. It's less than an hour and a half travel time to get from Gainesville to Jacksonville. Sure, many Gators will stay in Jacksonville and revel in the festivities, but with a DD in tow, driving back home is very much an option.

Granted, so many fans of college football – and these two teams in particular – aren't current (or have ever been) students of their respective schools; but the stadiums in Gainesville and Athens aren't filling up with 5-hour commuters every Saturday. They're being attended by people who can commute to the games.

So, even those season ticket holders for UGA, who aren't living

in Athens aren't living an hour and a half from Jacksonville either.

This isn't to say that Florida has home field advantage every year but it's not a far cry from it.

There's been talk of moving the game from Jacksonville in the past. Recently there has been a notion for a home-and-home series between the two teams, for example.

I've even heard it suggested that the annual game switch between Jacksonville and Atlanta (for those counting mileage, the travel times essentially switch, but with a slightly shorter trip time from Gainesville to Atlanta than Athens to Jacksonville).

Last week's news of the game remaining in Jacksonville puts those options to bed, for now, anyway.

Truthfully it does seem unlikely that a game with such rich history in one location would be altered. Especially now that they're locked in for a 90th year, why stop shy of a century?

Who knows if either of those options, or a third, heretofore unknown choice, will ever be utilized.

The game is too big each year to not involve some kind of pomp and circumstance, even when the teams aren't having their best years.

So maybe Jacksonville isn't the most elegant solution; it doesn't seem like there will be another one anytime soon.





# 2019 GEORGIA BULLDOGS SCHEDULE

8/31	@ Vanderbilt	W 30-5
9/7	vs Murray State	W 63-17
9/14	vs Arkansas State	W 55-0
9/21	vs Notre Dame	W 23-17
10/5	@ Tennessee	W 43-14
10/12	vs South Carolina	L 20-17 2OT
10/19	vs Kentucky	W 21-0
11/2	vs Florida	3:30pm
11/9	vs Missouri	TBD
11/16	@ Auburn	TBD
11/23	vs Texas A M	TBD
11/30	@ Georgia Tech	TBD



# 2019 FLORIDA GATORS SCHEDULE

8/24	vs Miami	W 24-20
9/7	vs UT Martin	W 45-0
9/14	@ Kentucky	W 29-21
9/21	vs Tennessee	W 34-3
9/28	vs Towson	W 38-0
10/5	vs Auburn	W 24-13
10/12	@ LSU	L 42-28
10/19	@ South Carolina	W 38-27
11/2	vs Georgia	TBD
11/9	vs Vanderbilt	TBD
11/16	@ Missouri	TBD
11/30	vs Florida State	TBD

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