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February 2020 Edition



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GET TO KNOW THE WRITERS



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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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# THE FROMM FACTOR

Where Does Fromm Rank? By JJ Lanier



**W**hen I heard Jake Fromm was entering the NFL Draft I started to think about where he ranks among Georgia's quarterbacks, which naturally led me to Phil Simms. Let me explain.

Years ago, I got into a debate with an uncle of mine about who the better quarterback was, Dan Marino or Phil Simms.

Like any reasonable fan that doesn't root for the New York Giants, I was on the side of Marino. My uncle argued Simms was better because one, he had won a Super Bowl and that automatically placed him above any player who hadn't- in which case please help me welcome Trent Dilfer and Brad Johnson to the NFL Elite.

The other reason was because Marino yelled at his teammates and Simms didn't. I guess that means Robert Horry was better than Michael Jordan because he was nicer? Doesn't make sense to me, but whatever.

Anyways, it was a great reminder that people's criteria for what makes a team or player great differs from person to person, and in some cases, doesn't make a damn bit of sense.

If you were to poll the Georgia fanbase on where Fromm does rank among his fellow quarterbacks, I imagine the results would be all over the place.

If you put a lot of weight into statistics, then you probably have Fromm ranked towards the top. As Fromm takes his talents to the NFL, he will leave Georgia as one of the winningest quarterbacks in school history, 2nd overall in passing touchdowns, and 4th in passing yards. It's worth noting, too, that all the quarterbacks he trails in those categories were four-year starters, as opposed to his three.

If you're someone who puts team accomplishments ahead of individual stats, you've also got a good argument in favor of Fromm. Three SEC Championship games, one SEC title, and a National Championship appearance in a three span looks pretty good on a resumé and stacks up well with just about any other Georgia quarterback.

Plus, he never lost to Florida, something you must go all the way back to the days of Buck Belue and John Lastinger to find.

Where it gets tricky is for those fans who go by the eye test. Let's pretend for a second that you are about to enter your senior year as a Georgia football player. You have no aspirations of playing in the NFL, so your answer to the question I'm about to ask won't be swayed by who can assist you the most in your quest to make it to the league.

If you could choose one Georgia quarterback, in their prime, to lead your final college season, how many other quarterbacks would you choose before you landed on Fromm?

Off the bat I imagine Fran Tarkenton, Belue, and probably Matt Stafford would be the first three.

How about players like David Greene, Quincy Carter, Aaron Murray, Ray Goff, Lastinger; would you choose any of them to lead your squad, over Fromm?

There's no right or wrong answer- unless you choose Joe Tereshinski and are not somehow related to him, then you're just wrong. (Sorry, Joe).

You could certainly dive deeper into this discussion, but personally, I think Fromm departs Athens as one of the more accomplished quarterbacks to have played at Georgia, even if he wasn't necessarily one of the best; and there's nothing wrong with that.

Then again, he does come across as an extremely likeable guy who didn't yell at his teammates a lot, and we all know that's what really matters.

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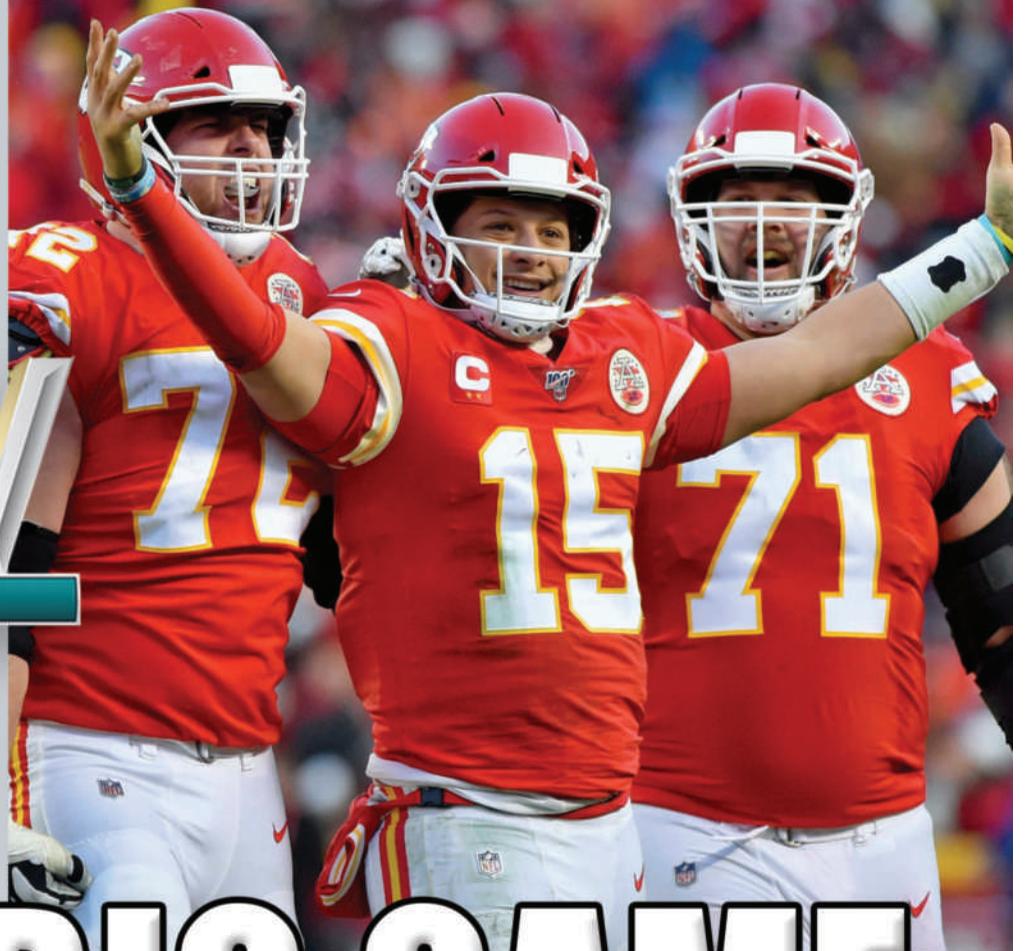


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# THE BIG GAME

Offense VS Defense By Kenneth Harrison Jr





**T**he matchup for Super Bowl LIV is set, San Francisco versus Kansas City. The 49ers are the top seed in the NFC and the Chiefs are No. 2 in the AFC.

The teams are polar opposites. San Fran (15-3) has an elite defense, ranked second in total defense. They only give up 19 points per game and 282 yards. They have a great front four and can generate pressure with them. They ranked fifth in sacks with 48.

They also rank second in rushing offense. They average 31 rushing plays and 144 yards per game. The only team that had more yards was Baltimore.

This is old school football we used to see in the 80's and 90's. The surprising thing is that the Niners don't have a bell cow running back.

They have a true committee with Tevin Coleman, Matt Breida and Raheem Mostert.

Each of them has at least 530 yards during the season. Mostert was the star of the NFC Championship game against Green Bay, rushing for 220 yards and 4 touchdowns.

"I did have a lot of doubters and naysayers," said Mostert, who has been cut seven times in his career. "Now I get to actually tell them, 'Look where I'm at now. I never gave up on my dreams.'"

Kyle Shanahan is in his third season as head coach in San Francisco. He was the offensive coordinator for Atlanta prior to this and he coached them in Super Bowl LI.

The Falcons had a decisive 28 – 3 lead late in the third quarter but lost. Shanahan was criticized for

being too aggressive and not trying to run the ball more to control the clock.

Quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo only had 8 pass attempts in the NFC Championship. He's the one obvious weak link on the team.

San Francisco is playing in their seventh Super Bowl. They are trying to tie Pittsburgh and New England for the most Super Bowl wins for a franchise with six.

On the flip side Patrick Mahomes is the catalyst for the Kansas City offense. He was the league MVP last season. He missed two games in 2019 and still finished 10th in passing yards. Garoppolo was 12th.

In the AFC Championship, Mahomes threw for 294 yards, 3 TD's and 0 interceptions. He also ran for 53 yards and a touchdown. The Chiefs (14-4) have not been to a Super Bowl since 1970.

KC has great skill players and a lot of speed. Travis Kelce might be the best tight end in the league. Tyreek Hill is a top ten receiver and the fastest player in the NFL.

The Chiefs do not have a running game. They were 23rd in rushing and average 98 ypg. KC also has an average defense, ranked 17th in total defense. They give up 350 ypg.

Andy Reid has the most wins without a Super Bowl victory. He's looking to change that in Miami.

I think this will be a very close game. I think the 49ers can get pressure on Mahomes without blitzing. They have a good secondary, so they can slow down the explosive Chiefs offense.

Kansas City's defense has to stop San Francisco from running and force Jimmy G to beat them.

I give the slight edge to the 49ers.

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# RECOGNIZING AND TREATING CONCUSSIONS

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Parents, you know the drill. Your budding sports star gets bumped on the head by an opponent. Should he get back in the game, sit on the sidelines or see a doctor?

Knowing the difference between a bump and concussion isn't always easy. Your athlete may insist he's fine. Symptoms might not appear right away. Concussions may be tricky to detect, but knowing how to act is vital, says Lindsey Sweat, M.D., a family medicine and sports medicine physician with Southeast Georgia Physician Associates-Camden Primary Care. Fortunately, with timely medical intervention, most people recover from concussions.

## Concussion Symptoms

A knock to the noggin isn't uncommon in contact sports. Concussion signs that may appear immediately include:

- Headache or pressure in the head
- Loss of consciousness
- Confusion
- Amnesia – not remembering the injury
- Dizziness
- Uneven pupils
- Numbness or tingling
- Nausea or vomiting
- Ringing in the ears
- Increased fatigue
- Inability to answer questions
- Slurred speech

Other symptoms tend to surface later, including:

- Memory and concentration problems
- Irritability or unexplained crying
- Difficulty sleeping
- Sensitivity to noise and light
- Taste and smell disorders
- Depression or behavior problems

The bottom line? “If your child is more emotional, fatigued than usual or not themselves, see a doctor,” states Dr. Sweat.

## Diagnosing Concussion

Your young athlete wants back in the game, but you're concerned. “Trust your gut. We're talking about future brain function,” says Dr. Sweat. However, if you rush to the ER, that could result in costly, unnecessary CT scans. “Sports medicine specialists look for neurological findings. I don't do imaging except for when a violent blow to the head or unusual symptoms indicate a brain bleed.” If a specialist isn't available, seek medical care; just consider options besides emergency care for minor bumps.

## Prevention, Risks and Recovery

Protective gear is important, but Dr. Sweat also suggests asking your child's school if they follow “Graded Return to Play” guidelines. Dr. Sweat uses this protocol to protect athletes from playing too soon after an injury. “I evaluate their response to increased activity. I never advance them if they're symptomatic. One concussion increases the risk for a second, which can lead to a traumatic brain injury, also known as a TBI.” If a third concussion happens, she initiates a “risk and benefits discussion” about whether the athlete's plans include college, a professional sports career or a job requiring high level cognitive function.

Minor concussions generally resolve in a week or two. Injuries involving amnesia or loss of consciousness need careful monitoring and longer rest periods. And sleeping after a concussion isn't always a bad thing. “Concussions increase fatigue, which makes you want to sleep more. It's the body's way of healing the injury. However, serious impacts with neurological abnormalities could be signs of a more serious condition, such as a brain bleed.” Parenting decisions aren't easy, but one thing's for certain. When it comes to concussions, “Error on the side of caution,” says Dr. Sweat.

**To schedule an appointment with Dr. Sweat, call 912-882-6767 or visit [sghs.org/primary-care](http://sghs.org/primary-care).**

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# PAST 10 SUPER BOWLS

2019

	<b>W 13</b>
	<b>3</b>

2014

	<b>W 43</b>
	<b>8</b>

2018

	<b>W 41</b>
	<b>33</b>

2013

	<b>W 34</b>
	<b>31</b>

2017

	<b>W 34</b>
	<b>28</b>

2012

	<b>W 21</b>
	<b>17</b>

2016

	<b>W 24</b>
	<b>10</b>

2011

	<b>W 31</b>
	<b>25</b>

2015

	<b>W 28</b>
	<b>24</b>

2010

	<b>W 31</b>
	<b>17</b>



SUPER BOWL



# DAYTONA 500

Starting Out Strong By JJ Lanier



**G**ood things come to those who wait. As it pertains to sports, if you show patience through a long and grueling regular season, followed by an oftentimes anti-climactic playoffs, the payoff will be the championship game/series where two titans face off against each for athletic dominance.

In most cases, the end rarely justifies the wait, which is kind of why I respect NASCAR and how they go about their season.

Instead of holding their biggest race for the end of the season, they've basically given the sports gods and all their unwritten rules the middle finger, by beginning their season with it.

And make no mistake about it either, while other races may be more popular among individual fans, no race has a bigger build up and more pageantry than the Daytona 500.

The festivities begin a few weeks prior to the 500, normally the weekend before the Super Bowl, with the Rolex 24 At Daytona.

The Rolex 24 At Daytona (if you're a NASCAR fan you know about the importance of getting those sponsors in) is a four-man, 24-hour race that doesn't have much significance other than signaling the arrival of racing season.

Back in my younger days I actually attended (worked) the race that both Dale Earnhardt Sr. and Jr. participated in, weeks before Earnhardt Sr's death on the final lap of the Daytona 500.

The real lead up to the season's initial race though, begins roughly two weeks later with qualifying.

Now, at most races qualifying is pretty straightforward; each car runs a few laps on their own and the pole position is determined based on those times. Much like

NASCAR's penchant for doing things differently, the unique qualifying for the Daytona 500 consists of a timed round of qualifying, two 150-mile races (Bluegreen Vacations Duel), exemptions, former winners, and owners' points.

It's as if NASCAR wanted the most confusing way to determine the starting positions and commissioned Hunter S. Thompson and Jackson Pollock to devise the system.

During the years I have followed NASCAR, like most fans I would watch the first few laps of a race, take a nap, and wake up to watch the final 20-25 laps.

The few exceptions were short track races and the Daytona 500. This was partly because of the prestige the race held, but also because it was a restrictor plate race, (limits the engines power) which causes the sea of race cars all over each other's bumpers like you see when watching the highlights of the race.

Restrictor plate racing, which is no longer being used in NASCAR, was somewhat of a necessary evil. On one hand, by limiting the engines power it kept cars on the track instead of flying off it, but it also increased the danger- when you have 35 cars driving that close to each at the speed they're traveling, one small mistake can take out half the field.

The Daytona 500 is oftentimes compared to the Super Bowl, but it really feels more like the Masters to me.

Neither event crowns a champion for the season, but the gravitas that comes with winning either event is almost as great, if not greater, than winning an actual championship.

If you've never watched a NASCAR race before, I highly recommend giving the Daytona 500 a shot.

If there's one thing NASCAR has learned and might do better than everyone else, they don't save the best for last.



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# THE BRINGER OF RAIN

Donaldson Burns Braves By Mike Anthony



Late Tuesday, news broke that Josh Donaldson had agreed to sign with the Minnesota Twins.

Donaldson, 34, had suffered through a few injury-plagued seasons, as he fell from his former MVP status before signing a one-year deal with the Atlanta Braves in 2019 and reigniting his reputation as a slick-fielding third baseman, who can power his team to victory at the plate.

The immediate reaction from many Braves fans was one of dismay. After all, Donaldson had plenty to do

performance was a personal showcase for exactly what transpired in the free agent market. Donaldson's injuries left him with few options in 2019.

Plenty of teams would have taken him on at a low rate for a few years in hopes of getting a steal.

Instead, Donaldson bet on himself. He took a lucrative deal in Atlanta that came with the pressure of a single-year contract that could have spelled the end of his career if he didn't produce.

But he returned to All-Star form and - because of that - was able to get right back on the open market for a premium price over a longer span.

And while the Braves are in a position where they could have competed with just about any team vying for Donaldson's services, it is probably in their best interest to have bowed out and saved their money for other ventures.

power bat in the order to keep pitchers honest.

But the current state of baseball is all about adjusting strengths to where money can be spent most efficiently.

Atlanta is currently enjoying the likes of Riley, Max Fried and Mike Soroka on dirt-cheap contracts, but those numbers will skyrocket in the next few years if those players continue to perform at their current levels.

There is also added spending for the Braves this season on the mound as they now own the full contracts of the high-price relief pitchers traded for last season, to go along with the offseason acquisitions of closer Will Smith and starter Cole Hamels.

In the end, the decision was probably a simple one for the Braves' front office.

There is every possibility that Donaldson will have another huge year



with turning the team from a surprise division winner in 2018 to a legitimate powerhouse and a dark horse World Series contender last year.

There's no doubt that Atlanta's lineup won't be as imposing on Opening Day 2020 as it was in last year's playoffs.

But the Braves are positioned for success beyond 2020. And in the current structure of Major League Baseball and how its payrolls and contracts work, letting the Twins win the bidding war for Donaldson may prove to be a good move.

As much as Donaldson did for the offense and contributed to the team's identity, last year's

Sure, Austin Riley might not be able to play third base at an MLB level. Sure, Johan Camargo is nowhere near the offensive threat as Donaldson in the everyday lineup. And sure, the stats of Freddie Freeman and Ronald Acuna could suffer a bit without a third true

in 2020 that won't help the Braves, but years of statistics suggest that the money the Twins will be paying him over the last couple of years of his new contract won't be met with comparable results.

As for Atlanta, all of the money that could have been sunk into Donaldson can now be spent to lock up much younger and still-progressing players, or could be saved for leverage in a midseason trade to make a necessary move.

By letting Donaldson walk, the Braves will pay a price in offensive production on the front end, but will extend their financial flexibility as a younger core that continues to improve over the next few years.

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# LOW TIDE ON JAGUARS

What Went Wrong In Duval? By Robert Kraft



As the NFL playoff's kick into high gear, let's take a look at what went wrong in Duval. The Jacksonville Jaguars had a rocky season.

It started when Jalen Ramsey showed up to OTAs in a security truck (armored bank truck) and the downhill slope started.

Hopes were high when the Jaguars signed Nick Foles to a four year, 88 million dollar deal with

touchdowns and two fumbles.

After the game, head coach Doug Marrone announced that Foles would be benched and Gardner Minshew would retake the starting job.

Minshew was drafted by the Jaguars in the sixth round of the 2019 NFL Draft. Minshew may be the lone plateau in the Jaguars downhill tumble.

Gardner Minshew or Minshew Mania was the topic on every sport station in Jacksonville. As a starter, Minshew lead the Jaguars to 6 wins, throwing 21 touchdowns, 6 interceptions and 3,271 yards.

In a Week 2 loss against the Houston Texans, Jalen Ramsey was

excessive fines and player grievances.

On December 18, Jaguars owner Shad Khan fired executive vice president of football operations, Tom Coughlin. In the grievance letter, former player Dante Fowler was fined more than \$700,000 for missing rehab during the 2018 offseason.

After the Coughlin firing, surely nobody would survive after Black Monday (the Monday following the final game). I was wrong. Head Coach Doug Marrone and General Manager Dave Caldwell hang on for another season.

The Jaguars have many questions to answer leading into the 2020 season: Is Doug Marrone the coach to lead to the playoffs? Who



50-million guaranteed. In Week 1 of the season, Foles suffered a shoulder injury and was placed on the injury reserve.

On November 5, Foles was activated and returned as the Jaguars starter against the Indianapolis Colts. He had a respectable day throwing for 296 yards, 2 touchdowns and 1 interception in a 33-13 loss.

In Week 13 against the Tampa Bay Bucs, Foles was benched due to poor performance. He was 7 of 14 for 93 yards, one interception no

involved in a verbal altercation with Head Coach Doug Marrone. Ramsey and Marrone had to be physically restrained from each other. Ramsey, the Jaguars best player, demanded a trade the next day.

On October 15, Ramsey was traded to the Los Angeles Rams for a 2020 first round pick, a 2021 first round pick and a 2021 fourth round pick.

On December 16, the NFL Players Association warned players of signing with Jacksonville because of

will be the starting quarterback in 2020? Who will Dave Caldwell draft with extra picks? Can the Jaguars trade Leonard Fournette? Where is the defense?

Tom Coughlin was definitely a huge problem, but it is unfair to put the entire blame on him? Jacksonville is a total rebuild from the roster to franchise culture.

The biggest question heading into this offseason: What have the Jaguars learned from the 2019 season?



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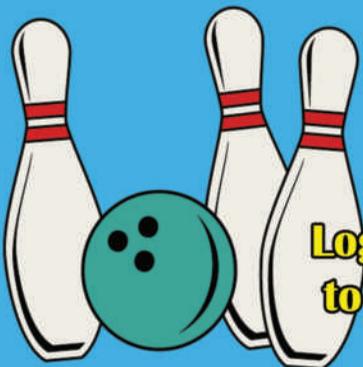
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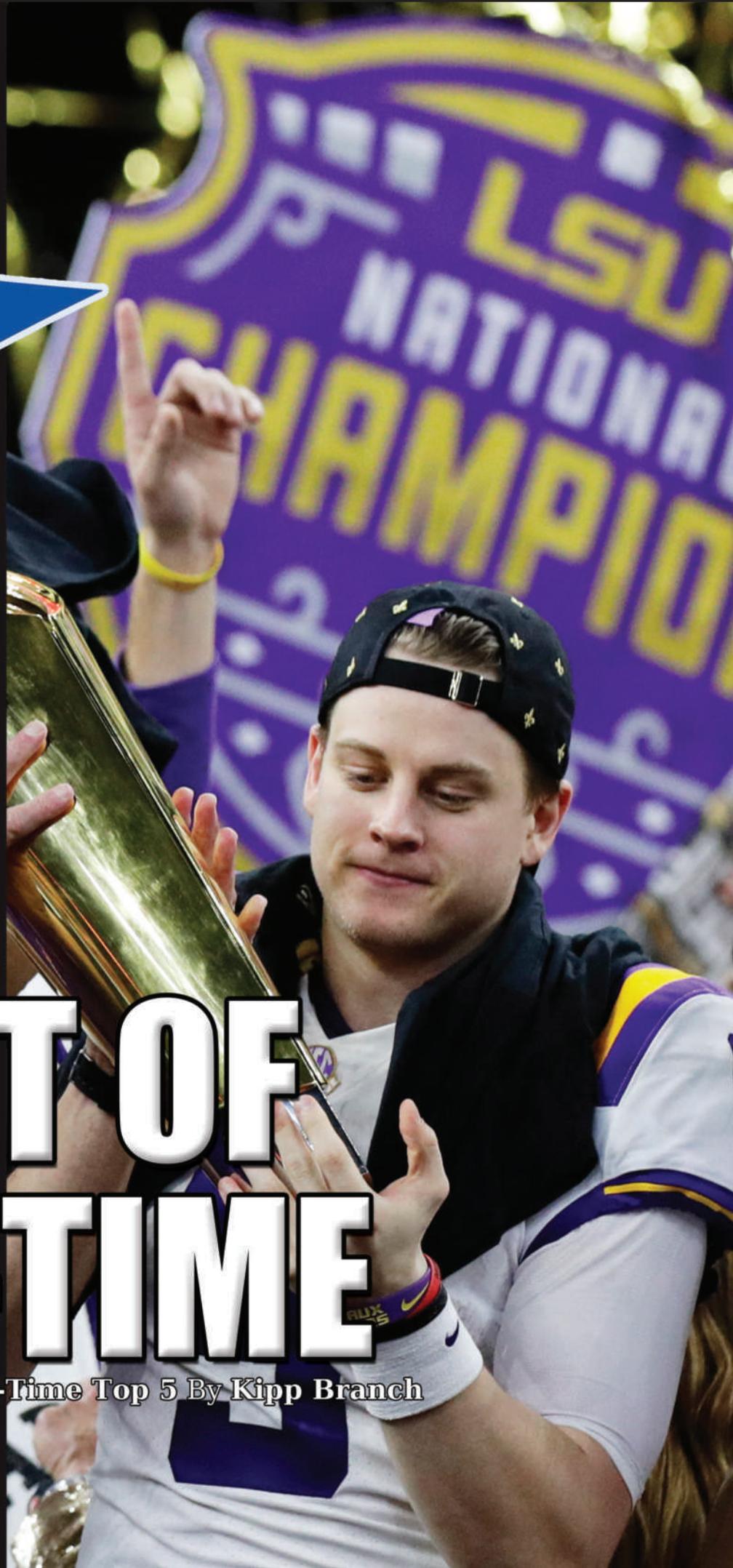
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# BEST OF ALL-TIME

College Football All-Time Top 5 By Kipp Branch



**L**SU just finished one of the most dominant football seasons in recent memory with a 42-25 win over Clemson for the National Championship.

It was LSU's third national championship this century to go along with titles in 2003, and 2007. I have been watching college football since the 1970's and here are my top five college football teams in the window:

Honorable Mention: 1976 Pittsburgh 12-0: The Panthers with Heisman winner Tony Dorsett drilled SEC Champion and 4th ranked UGA in the Sugar Bowl 27-3 as Dorsett rushed for over 200 yards.

1999 Florida State 12-0: The Seminoles beat a Michael Vick led Virginia Tech team in the Sugar Bowl to win Bobby Bowden's second National Title in Tallahassee. Where have those days gone FSU fans?

2005 USC: 12-1: The Trojans were a great team that lost to Texas for the National Title. Reggie Bush and company were defending champions but this team was better than their 2004 title team.

1979 Alabama 12-0: This was Bear Bryant's last National Title team at Alabama.

They won seven games by 20 or more points. The Tide led the nation in scoring defense and beat a very good Arkansas team 24-9 in the Sugar Bowl.

2018 Clemson 15-0: This team beat Alabama 44-16 to capture the National Title, and blew out Notre Dame in the semifinals 30-3. Dominant defense with four NFL players on the defensive line.

My Top Five College Football Teams of All-Time:

5. 1996 Florida 12-1: This was great football team and Steve Spurrier's only National Champion that blew out unbeaten FSU 52-20 in the Sugar Bowl to avenge a 24-21 regular season loss to the Seminoles.

Bob Stoops was the defensive coordinator and the team was led by Heisman Trophy winner Danny Wuerffel at QB and All-American receivers Ike Hilliard and Reidel Anthony.

The Gators outscored their opponents 612-228 during the season. The Ole Ball Coach put Florida football on the map when he took the job in 1990 and won 127 games in 12 years in Gainesville.

4. 2005 Texas 13-0: Vince Young led the Longhorns to a classic 41-38 win over USC in the Rose Bowl.

Texas scored 652 points during the 2005 season while giving up only 213. The Rose Bowl that year may be the greatest college football game I have ever watched on television.

3. 2001 Miami 12-0: The 2001 Canes only allowed 117 points all season, and hammered Nebraska 37-14 in the

Rose Bowl for the title.

Many say this was the most talented team in the history of college football with players like Ed Reed, Jeremy Shockey, Clinton Portis, Andre Johnson, this roster was littered with future Pro-Bowlers.

2. 2019 LSU 15-0: The first team in the history of the SEC to go 15-0. Led by Heisman winner Joe Burrow, who tossed for 60 TD's to only 6 Int's on the season.

This LSU team will go down as the best team in the history of the SEC. The Tigers beat Clemson for a National Title, while Clemson was riding a 29-game winning streak.

This team beat five teams ranked in the top 10 of the final rankings, and six of the top 15. This team will stand the test of time for greatness.

1.1995 Nebraska 13-0: The most dominant team in college football history. The 1995 Cornhuskers averaged 53 plus points a game and defeated four teams ranked in the Top 10.

No team all year came closer than 23 points to the Huskers, and this team beat a great undefeated Florida team 62-24 in the Fiesta Bowl and it looked like men playing middle schoolers.

27 players from this team played in the NFL. QB Tommie Frazier is one of my favorite college football players of all-time. He Led the Huskers to back National Championships in 1994 and 1995.

There you have it folks. College Football is our greatest game. Nothing really comes close.





# STAYING THE COURSE

Falcons Making Right Choice? By TJ Hartnett



I leaned towards it being time to move on for the Atlanta Falcons to move on from Dan Quinn and bring in fresh blood at the top of the Atlanta heap.

However, the Falcons decided that both Quinn and General Manager Thomas Dimitroff are returning to the team for the 2020 season.

Let's unpack why the Falcons made this decision, which at first glance appears to be both a safe and a risky call.

Keeping the two of them around does ring of hollow confidence. They've been good enough, so let's keep them; on the other hand, keeping them also rewards them for the massive improvements the team made after the bye week in 2019, particularly the defense.

But, it's that last half that could undo the argument for keeping them around.

Yes, the Falcons were on another level for the end of 2019, but if that's an outlier, then maintaining a Dimitroff/Quinn regime will bear no fruit.

If the decision makers in

Atlanta looked at the back half of games and used them as justification, what happens if the Falcons don't show up on that level for the first 16 games of this new decade?

That's not an unreasonable scenario, and if it happens then the fault will be less on Dan Quinn and more on ownership than the last few years of disappointments ever were.

Let's not overlook the fact that Matt Ryan and Julio Jones aren't in their mid-20s. The window of time to take advantage of their talent is closing.

If a change at the top is the thing that ends up making a difference then the Falcons will have wasted an entire precious year of their careers. There is enough talent on the Falcons' roster to say that the time to strike is now, while the iron is hot and if not making a change proves to be a failure, it'll prove to be a massive miscalculation.

But it may prove not to be a failure. To repeat myself, there's enough talent on the Falcons' roster to say that the time to strike is now, while the iron is hot and if Atlanta can take that momentum, which they built up with Dan Quinn calling the plays, then not making a change could prove to be have been the difference.

Let's not discount the fact that Quinn made changes around the time that the Falcons started winning games. Raheem Morris and

Jeff Ulbrich, the team's new defensive coordinator and assistant head coach after last week's promotions, were given the reigns to the D halfway through the season; to notable success.

It's the kind of adaptation and people managing that Quinn can continue to do and will win games for his team.

In short, it's all there on paper. A Super Bowl team potentially resides in Atlanta. Putting people in the right places for success will be the name of the game.

So, what will make this decision the "right" one, come this time next year?

Nothing short of the Falcons still playing this time next year, I think. Atlanta was 7-9 in 2019, only by the grace of the second half of the season.

Arthur Blank is putting a lot of faith in the 6-2 and is basically ignoring the 1-7, which means he should be expecting a 2020 season that puts up numbers like a 6-2 team should.

That's not necessarily 12-4, but I have to imagine the endzone here for Quinn is double digit wins and a playoff berth.

If that doesn't happen, or even if it's halfway through the year and looks like it isn't, then keeping him on is likely to be a mistake that is very swiftly corrected.





# BUILDING THE HIVE

Tech's Strong Recruiting By Kenneth Harrison Jr



The college football season is almost over but one aspect never ends, recruiting. The early signing period was last month and signing day is in February. I want to look at a team that is making a splash in recruiting in 2020, Georgia Tech.

So far, the Yellow Jackets have the 26th ranked recruiting class in 2020. Under Paul Johnson, they routinely finished almost last in the ACC. This is a major improvement by

but suffered from mental-health issues and homelessness. This was a big loss for the program and I'm not referring to on the field.

One of the best running backs in the state of Georgia, Jahmyr Gibbs is a hard commit. Gibbs played for Dalton High School and in 11 games this past season he rushed for 2,554 yards, 40 touchdowns and averaged 11 yards per carry. The four-star recruit played in the All-American Bowl last week.

Four-star dual threat quarterback Jeff Sims from Jacksonville, Fl played in the Under Armour All-America Game. Sims is 6'3, 205 pounds and very athletic. He was initially committed to Florida State before he signed with Tech.

Ohio State.

Brooks has an official forty time of 4.52 and a 35.3-inch vertical.

It is interesting to see players come to Tech that were also recruited by major programs. Under CPJ you would see guys and the other teams recruiting them would be Wofford and Middle Tennessee State. The best offer they had was from GT so that is why they committed.

Defensive End Jared Ivey from North Gwinnett High School is another four-star. He's 6'6, 225 pounds so he has prototypical body for the position. In the 2019 season, he wreaked havoc with 80 tackles, 32.5 tackles for loss and 20 sacks. He also broke up four passes and has a forced fumble.



them after head coach Geoff Collins' first season. They had a rough year finishing 3-9 but they are attracting better talent.

The first player I have to mention is four-star wide receiver Bryce Gowdy. By now, I am sure you heard his tragic story. The talented Deerfield Beach, Florida native took his own life and was hit by a freight train December 30.

He was supposed to start classes at Tech this week. He was an honors student that graduated early

There is another QB from Florida that signed with GT, three-star recruit Tucker Gleason. Gleason played for Plant High, which is a very good program. He 6'3, 220 lb. pro style quarterback.

Collins is recruiting the state of Florida very well and more specifically the Jacksonville area. Four-star cornerback Miles Brooks played at Trinity Christian Academy. Brooks is 6'2 so he has great size for the position. He also had offers from Alabama, Auburn, Virginia Tech and

Wide receiver Nate McCollum is also a Georgia native from Dutchtown High (Hampton). He's a small receiver (5'11) but he is very fast, running the forty in 4.41 seconds. He's also a stand out in baseball and we will see him on the diamond at Georgia Tech.

There are seventeen more three-star commits in this class. They are getting faster and more athletic at every position. We will see if these players can turn the program around in year two under Collins.



# GEAUX TIGERS

LSU Wins National Championship By Kenneth Harrison Jr



The CFP National Championship game was a matchup of two great teams. No. 1 LSU (14-0) versus defending national champion No. 3 Clemson (14-0). Both sets of Tigers were trying to make history.

Louisiana State is led by Heisman Trophy winner Joe Burrow. Burrow broke the single-season passing touchdown record previously set by Hawaii quarterback

Clemson led 17 – 7 early in the second quarter before the Bayou Bengal offense started clicking. Burrow finished the game with 463 passing yards, 5 touchdowns through the air and 1 rushing TD.

Biletnikoff Award winning wide receiver Ja'Marr Chase finished with nine catches for 221 yards and 2 touchdowns. Justin Jefferson had 9 catches for 106 yards.

"He's one of the greatest players in LSU history," Tigers coach Ed Orgeron said. "He's done so much for the state of Louisiana and LSU. We are so grateful to Joe Burrow."

Running back Clyde Edwards-Helaire had 16 carries for 110 yards. He also had 5 catches for 54 yards.

yards with no touchdown or interception. He also rushed for 49 yards and a touchdown. Travis Etienne had 15 carries for 78 yards and a TD.

"This team is going to be mentioned as one of the greatest teams in college football history," Orgeron said, "15-0, as one of the greatest teams in LSU history. But that's for you guys to decide."

This team might be on the short list with teams like 1995 Nebraska and 2001 Miami. This is LSU's first national title since 2007 and fourth overall.

This has been a very impressive year because LSU has struggled on offense for the last decade. They typically have great skill position



Colt Brennan in 2006 with 58. Burrow had 60 this season.

Before this game Trevor Lawrence was undefeated as a college player. Early on Clemson had the momentum. They scored first to take a 7-0 lead. LSU scored on their opening drive in the previous six games but got off to a slow start.

Clemson squandered opportunities on their first two drives. They got inside the LSU forty, but they did not score and they had to punt both times.

LSU won the game 42 – 25.

"This is what I wanted to do from the time I was 5 years old, was hoist this trophy, and bringing it back to Louisiana," Burrow said, then caught himself. "I guess we're in Louisiana, but staying in Louisiana, we weren't going to let someone come in here and steal this from us in our home state. We have a great fan base that came out and supported us. We were going to keep this thing right here."

Lawrence had 234 passing

players but poor quarterback play. Now they have a QB that probably had the best season ever at the position.

"What this offense has done, I'm amazed. I really am," co-offensive coordinator Steve Ensminger said. "We changed the whole darn thing in one year, you know what I'm saying? We changed everything in one year. And these guys bought into it. They worked their ass off to get where they're supposed to be, to get where they want to be, and they did it."



# NEW LEAD EAGLE

GSU's Search For New Athletic Director By Mike Anthony



Most Georgia Southern fans still hadn't shaken off the haze of the always-blurry week between Christmas and New Year's when they were surprised to hear that the Eagles will have a new person heading up the athletics department in the coming weeks.

With Tom Kleinlein's announcement that he's off to Ole Miss, Georgia Southern finds itself looking for an athletics director for the first time since it was an FCS school.

Belt features large public schools that are continually growing as opposed to the Eagles' former home in the private school-dominated Southern Conference.

So, with all the changes that have taken place since the school's last athletic director hire, I think it's time to keep that trend going.

It's likely that - following Kleinlein's final day on the job and during the school's national search for his replacement - a member of the current athletics administration staff will be named the interim athletic director.

The Eagles definitely have an ideal candidate in current Deputy AD Lisa Sweany, who served as the athletic director at Armstrong Atlantic before the school was absorbed by Georgia

has fallen off a cliff since then, but nothing has gotten significantly better either.

More importantly, the surge of money and fans that ushered in the FBS era has slowed. The stands haven't been as crowded at any GS venues in recent seasons and balancing the budget is becoming a tougher task with each season.

It's time for Georgia Southern to think outside the box.

The school and its athletic programs are too big and too notable to not transform into something bigger than they currently are.

Maybe that needs the touch of a business-savvy director, who can bring more donors and partnerships into the fold? Maybe it will take an aggressive and visible athletic



While the university is roughly the same in terms of students, it will be a whole new ballgame for the next person to take the reins.

For starters, Georgia Southern Athletics is a much larger operation nowadays. The budget is now well over \$20 million, where it hovered around half that mark before Kleinlein took over.

There are also more sports to oversee as women's golf and women's rifle began play in conjunction with the school's move to FBS.

There is also the pressure to keep up with the Jones' as the Sun

Southern.

By all accounts, Sweany did a good job at Armstrong and has continued the good work in Statesboro. But the athletic program, in its current state, is in need of a shove forward and keeping the administration in roughly the same order isn't the best way to accomplish that.

Five years ago, the school boasted a skyrocketing football team, a men's basketball squad on the verge of making the NCAA tournament and a baseball and men's golf team that were postseason regulars. Nothing

director that will challenge the bubble immediately outside of Statesboro that is full of potential fans that don't always fall on the Eagles' side of the fence.

Kleinlein's efforts were much-needed and he was the right guy at the right time for what had to be accomplished half a decade ago.

Now it's time for Georgia Southern to find the right person once again. And if the athletic program wants to be more of a national presence, then it would do well to make sure it covers every corner of the map to find that person.



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