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January 2024 Edition

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Kipp Branch graduated from Valdosta State University where he pitched for the Blazers. Kipp serves as one of the voices on the Brunswick High Pirates radio broadcast and is known affectionately as "Mr. Brunswick High." Kipp also co-hosts 'The Jason Bishop Show w Kipp Branch,' south Georgia's most listened to sports talk show.



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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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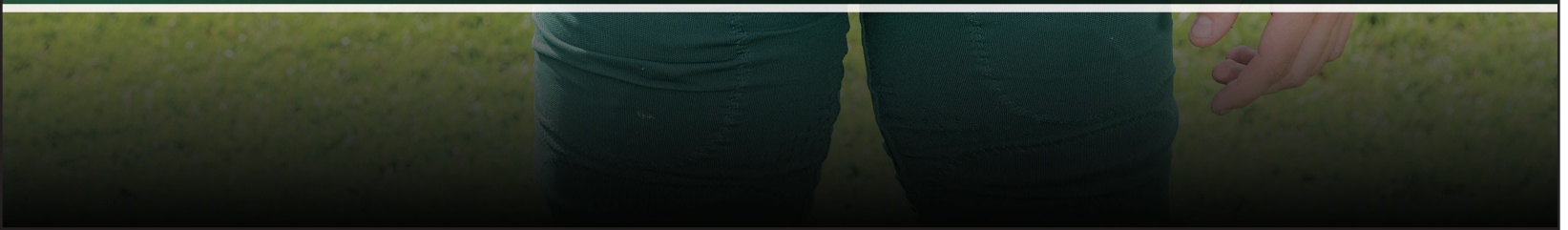
Brunswick-Jesup-Nahunta-Rincon





THE RIVER

Jordan Triplett Makes History By Jeff Doke





Sometimes football has an artistic flow to it. A rhythm, a rhyme. “Slam poetry,” if you will. Almost like a song.

Thus, is definitely the case with the high school career of one Jordan Bryce Triplett. His time as a Frederica Knight began and ended on the same field; Goddard Field on the campus of Valwood Academy. The opening and closing stanzas one might say.

And oh, what an anthem came between.

For those of us there in Hahira, Georgia on September 11, 2020, we had no idea what would follow that 167 yard/2 TD performance. Most of us were wondering who this freshman was that outran Senior RB Kyle “Meatball” Perez by almost 20 yards.

When Perez went down a few weeks later with injury, the wonder turned to concern as to whether the (as Coach Brandon Derrick called him) “racehorse with blinders” could handle the load.

The 1852 yards and 22 touchdowns he amassed by the end of his freshman campaign belayed those concerns. This was obviously a talented young man that knew where he wanted to go - the NFL.

“I’ve always had dreams of playing college football and eventually going to the NFL,” said Jordan to me recently via TwitterX. “The Lord was gracious and has kept me healthy to get me to where I am now.”

The Lord (with an assist from Frederica’s Head Athletic Trainer Adam Norman) did indeed keep him healthy for his four-year run. Ironical that his career was jumpstarted by

the injury to his teammate and friend.

“(Kyle) was one of the best mentors you could ask for,” Jordan recalls. “He was hard on me when he needed to be. It was critique that I desperately needed so early in my career. He showed me a lot in my one year with him.”

That freshman season wound up with a trip to the GIAA State Championship against long-time foe John Milledge Academy, who Jordan surprisingly doesn’t list as the most formidable opponent of his tenure.

“I think two teams that stand out are Calvary Day and Savannah Christian,” says Jordan. “Yes, JMA has been tough over the years, but those two teams truly were dominating their leagues when we played them.”

Regardless of the competition, Jordan continued to produce throughout his time ‘Under The Oaks’. He put up 1699 yards his sophomore year and 2305 as a junior, adding 26 touchdowns in both seasons. Those numbers set him up for what turned out to be a historic senior campaign.

This past season, Jordan broke or tied several prestigious records in the State of Georgia. The most notable being the career rushing record of 9,028 - the only player in state history to break 9,000 yards for his career.

To do this, it took 3,172 yards for the season - which tied the all-time single-season record for yardage. Both records had stood for 23 years.

In addition to those, he clocked in at #3 all-time career

rushing TDs at 115 and became the only player in state history to have three 400-yard games.

“Never did it come to mind that we would be able to break the all-time rushing record. That’s something that seemed untouchable, but we did it and when I say we I mean the coaches and offensive unit.”

Triplett has always heaped praise and shared glory on his teammates and coaches. Even though he says he was closest to Tucker McClain, Sam Norris, and Sutton Ellis, one of his favorite memories involves a Frederica alumnus he never played with; the NFL-bound Jaylin Simpson.

“On the way (to the state championship), he called me and gave me some great advice. It consisted of how to be a leader on a team, which he knew I needed because of how young I was.”

Like Jaylin, Jordan has fielded speculation about how playing at a small school would be a detriment to his career. Neither Simpson nor the Triplett’s have any regrets.

“There is always the ‘unknown factor,’” according to his mother Becky Triplett. “Would he have more offers? Would he have had more opportunities? But, Frederica Academy is family. He has the best coaches, a top-notch education, an incredible support system, and the advantage of the small-town atmosphere.”

And we had the advantage of watching him make history.



Why Do Rotator Cuff Injuries Take So Long to Heal?



Beau Sasser, MD

A board-certified/fellowship trained orthopaedic surgeon, Dr. Sasser specializes in sports medicine and also serves as medical director of the Southeast Georgia Health System Sports Medicine program.

Summit Sports Medicine & Orthopaedic Surgery has offices in Brunswick, St. Simons Island and St. Marys.

To make an appointment with Dr. Sasser, call 912-466-7340.



Our shoulders are among the most complicated, hardest-working structures in our body. “The shoulder joint is comprised of the surrounding capsule and four muscles that together comprise the rotator cuff. These muscles help to compress, stabilize, elevate, extend, flex, and rotate the shoulder. Due to the complex mechanics of the shoulder it’s not surprising that a rotator cuff injury – whether from a tear or tendonitis – requires a prolonged period of time to regain proper function,” says Beau Sasser, MD, board-certified/fellowship trained orthopaedic surgeon at Summit Sports Medicine & Orthopaedic Surgery and medical director of the Southeast Georgia Health System Sports Medicine program.

Sports injuries are a leading cause of shoulder problems in adolescents; for older adults, wear and tear makes injuries more likely. Your risk increases if you perform repetitive overhead movement – the kind required in painting, construction, gardening, baseball, golf, tennis, and pickleball, to name a few.

To use a sports analogy, think of healing a rotator cuff injury as a marathon versus a sprint. “Healing can only begin after an accurate diagnosis. From there, you can follow a treatment plan beginning with pain control and progression to regaining range-of-motion then strength and finally back to normal activities.”

Why Injuries Don’t Heal

Let’s assume you saw an orthopaedic surgeon who suggested trying conservative treatments before considering surgery. There are several reasons you might not recover as fast as you would like when taking the conservative route. “Age is one culprit. The rotator cuff tendons that attach to the humerus have a poor blood supply. Therefore, as we age we have an increased risk of rotator cuff injury secondary to wear and tear,” explains Dr. Sasser.

The severity of the tear is another factor. “The larger and more chronic the tear, the harder it is to repair surgically and the longer it takes to heal,” Dr. Sasser says. The length of time you had the injury also matters. “You should not postpone seeing a physician. The sooner you’re diagnosed, the sooner we can start treatment and improve your outcome.”

Are you trying to play or work through the pain?

Aggravating an already vulnerable rotator cuff slows recovery. Dr. Sasser advises avoiding heavy lifting and overhead lifting as much as possible. Focus more on stretching and exercises below shoulder height. Although physical therapy is usually recommended, avoid rushing the process or getting too aggressive with exercises. Warm up by stretching and applying heat beforehand. You may need a rest day in between therapy days, but don’t stop moving altogether. “Unless you need a protective sling after surgery, I don’t recommend immobilizing the shoulder for long periods. A sling can be useful to decrease pain and inflammation. After these symptoms subside, I recommend beginning range-of-motion exercises to prevent a frozen shoulder.”

Follow the protocols and practice patience. “These injuries generally take four to six months or up to a year to heal. If you follow the recommendations – rest, heat, ice, anti-inflammatory medications and/or steroid injections and physical therapy – and still don’t improve, speak to your physician. They may recommend other lifestyle changes, alternative therapies or surgery to help you heal.”



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SOMETHING SMELLS FISHY

CFP Gets It Wrong By Kipp Branch



"If somebody in that committee room doesn't think Georgia's one of the four best teams in the country, I don't know if they're in the right profession," UGA head coach Kirby Smart after the team's SEC championship game loss.

Forget about who got in and just look objectively at Georgia's resume heading last Saturday's game:

- Won last 2 national championships.

- Won an SEC record 29 straight games, three straight 12-0 regular seasons.

- No. 1 in the country 24 straight weeks heading into Saturday in AP and Coaches poll.

- Hadn't lost a game in 727 days.

- Has dominated college football and the SEC, the toughest conference in CFB, for two years.

- Lost first game Saturday in more than 2 years by just 3 points and its two best offensive players were playing injured.

If you look objectively at the facts, there is no way UGA is not one of the top 4 teams in the country.

I don't care who you cheer for, there is no way a team that has basically dominated college football for the last two years can lose one game by 3 points and drop out of the playoffs.

How do you go from being the overwhelming No. 1 team in the country for the previous 24 weeks and lose a championship game by just three points - with two of your best offensive players injured - and completely fall out of the playoff picture. There is no doubt Georgia

is easily one of the best four teams in the country and should have been included in the playoff.

Now on to Florida State. Florida State should bolt from the ACC now after the 13-0 ACC champion got left out of the playoffs.

The precedent has been set now and it's clear they should bolt to a more respected conference like the SEC or even the Big 10.

The committee had FSU in the playoffs after Ohio State lost to Michigan only to drop them out a week later after they won the ACC.

If Georgia would have beat Alabama, the committee was still going to put Texas in over FSU. FSU winning without their top 2 QB's stirred up the controversy but the plan was already in motion.

FSU was one of the best teams in the country prior to the Jordan Travis injury. The Philadelphia Eagles won the Super Bowl a few years ago with a back-up quarterback and beat Tom Brady and the Patriots in that game. Brady is the recognized GOAT at the QB position.

The ACC let you down FSU. You would have never been left out if you were in the SEC. It's time to get your lawyers working to find a way to exit the ACC.

The problem with this playoff committee is the messaging they use, and then have the ESPN talking heads spin it to drive viewership.

Greg McElroy had the nerve to say that "no team could ever overcome sub-par QB play and win a National Championship". Well Greg Alabama did it in 2009 with McElroy at QB. He passed for 58 yards in the title game win against Texas.

As of today, the best four teams are: Alabama, Georgia, Florida State, and Texas. Cheaters like Michigan did not deserve to go at all.

The gutless NCAA gave them a slap on the wrist. Ohio State lost to Michigan, and FSU has a championship defense. The Chicago Bears won a Super Bowl with a Championship defense and average QB.

The four most deserving teams are: Alabama, Florida State, Texas, and Washington.

Too much subjectivity in the only major sport in the entire country that does not have a true playoff system.

Also, ESPN is ruining college football. Guess who has the SEC TV rights starting in 2024? That's right ESPN. The same ESPN that revealed the rankings live last week with the same talking heads that said FSU did not deserve a spot. Coincidence?

You better believe they strong armed this committee into Alabama. Go back prior to the reveal and look how Herbstreit had his helmets aligned in the background.

Enough is enough.



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SHAFTED SEMINOLES

CFP Leaves Out Florida State By Robert Craft



All this College Football Playoff arguing will be moot with the CFP expanding to 12 teams next year.

Arguing over 3-5 is very different than 10-13. You lose your benefit of the doubt when you lose games. Even in the SEC.

But this year is still a four-team field, and with so many variables factoring into the decision, there is a lot to dissect. And to state it plainly: the College Football Playoff committee got it wrong.

College football has, or at least it used to have up until right now, the best regular season in sports because the games mattered most. We have a smaller sample size in this sport than any other.

To leave out an undefeated 13-0 Florida State in a Power 5 ACC was the wrong decision.

Michigan and Washington, both undefeated with top-10 wins, were the easy ones. The problem for the College Football Playoff committee was that there were three teams with legitimate arguments for the final two slots.

Sorry, Georgia. You didn't win your conference title, and in this format, that has to count for something.

Alabama and the SEC are the proverbial elephant in this room. Nick Saban is the greatest coach of all time, and to me, this year was the greatest coaching job he's ever done.

His team got whipped at home by Texas in Week 2 and didn't look any better struggling with South Florida the following week.

But Jalen Milroe kept making big strides and when it mattered most, the Tide made enough plays to knock off a Bulldog team that wasn't anywhere near as dominant in their previous two title seasons.

The problem for Alabama and the SEC is Texas. They beat Alabama convincingly in Tuscaloosa. That happened,

and there was nothing fluky about it.

The Longhorns went 12-1, but there wasn't a second-best team in the Big 12 this year. Here's how it broke down: Oklahoma State beat Oklahoma, and Texas unsurprisingly hammered OSU Saturday.

Remember, this was an Oklahoma State team that went 9-3 and had lost by a combined score of 78-10 against South Alabama and UCF. That wasn't going to help Texas' cause.

With that, do we forget that a week ago Alabama barely escaped against Auburn? Auburn got blown out at home the week before by New Mexico State, 31-10.

The bigger issue this year was Florida State, at 13-0 from the ACC. As we all know, FSU's star quarterback Jordan Travis received a season ending injury near the end of the season. The Seminoles' backup Tate Rodemaker didn't look great at arch-rival Florida. He also sustained a concussion.

FSU's third-stringer, Brock Glenn, had a shaky outing in the ACC Championship Game, but their defense was dominant.

Braden Fiske and Jaden Verse led the Seminoles with 14 TFLs and 7 sacks. Not so coincidentally, that same FSU defense began the year by dominating LSU and the SEC's biggest star, Jayden Daniels. Florida State held the nation's No. 1 offense to its worst performance of the season.

FSU was the only team that held Daniels under 60 percent passing in a game. Daniels ran for almost 100 yards less (99) against the Noles than when he played the Crimson Tide.

I get it. The SEC has been the most dominant conference in college football for the past two decades. But this year is not like those other years. Have you been paying attention?

It's a down year for the SEC. The ACC actually went 6-4 against the SEC in 2023. If this was a one-loss FSU, I'd say they didn't earn their way in, but they won, so they did.

In the same argument, Texas should not have been left out for a team they beat.

What's the point of winning if the CFP will rationalize them away?



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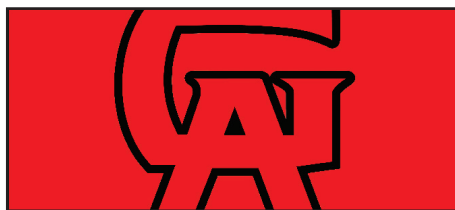
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TERROR-IFIC SEASON

Glynn Academy Season Recap By Joe Delaney



Well, as we head toward the holidays, it's time to take a look back at the 2023 Red Terrors football season.

The Terrors rolled to a successful 8-3 campaign, claiming the second seed in the region, and barely missing out on another playoff win. And while the Red and White southsiders would have loved a few more W's, it was all and all a great season capped off with an overtime sinking of a Pirate ship. Any season with a city championship win over the Brunswick Pirates is considered a successful campaign for the Red Terrors. Trust me, I know!

So, let's do a quick recap of another fine season for the Terrors and take a quick look at what's coming back for the 2024 outfit.

8/18 Glynn Academy vs Statesboro Blue Devils. Terrors roll in the opener 21-0.

8/25 Glynn Academy @ MCA Buccaneers. The Red Terrors cruise up Highway 17 and take out the always tough Buccaneers in a close one 14-6. McIntosh Academy always plays bigger than they are and this one was no exception.

9/1 Glynn Academy vs Camden County Wildcats. The Terrors find out on this Friday night that they ain't the biggest boys on the block as the Wildcats rough up the homestanding Terrors 44-13. The Wildcats and Jeff Herron go on to the Final Four of the 7A playoffs.

9/7 Glynn Academy vs Baker County (FL) Wildcats. Glynn grounds out a tough 27-20 win over the Wildcats to bounce back into the win column and all eyes turn to the Pirates, who have already taken out a Camden team that ripped Glynn the week before.

9/22 Glynn Academy vs Brunswick High Pirates. Ahhhhhhhhhhhh lets enjoy this one again. The Red Terrors sink the Pirates in a 22-15 overtime thriller.

The City Championship once again resides in the Glynn Academy trophy case. In this one the Terrors and Pirates find common ground from the top down to the 3rd stringers. We don't like them and they don't like us. Agreed..... Once again GLYNN 22 Brunswick 15.

9/29 Glynn Academy @ Effingham County Rebels. What goes up..... The Red Terrors play like they have a hangover that a whole bottle of aspirin won't help. 49-3 Rebels, who go on to win the region championship.

10/6 Glynn Academy vs South Effingham High School Mustangs. The Terrors regroup and pulverize the Mustangs 35-0.

10/12 Glynn Academy @ Grovetown Warriors. Glynn has a nice trip up north and walks and runs all over Grovetown 43-3.

10/20 Glynn Academy @ Evans Knights. Another road trip and another win as the Terrors take out a tough Evans team 22-14.

11/3 Glynn Academy vs Lakeside Panthers. The Terrors get tuned up for the 6A playoffs with a 50-7 pasting of the Panthers at Glynn County Stadium.

11/10 Glynn academy vs Jonesboro Cardinals. Let's see, what

do you get when you fumble 3 times and have 2 punts blocked? It doesn't matter who you are. 98% of the time you lose.

Well, the Terrors did their absolute best to be in the 2% but fall short in a heartbreaker 32-31.

Too many mistakes to overcome against a team that took advantage of them.

The Terrors lose at home in the final game of the year and end up with an 8-3 record. Not what Coach Rock and the Terrors wanted but another successful campaign for the Red and White.

The Terrors graduated some real leaders in 2023. Kids that worked their tails off and stuck with the program.

Among them were Peyton Parker, who earned Region Defensive Player of the Year, and David Prince Glynn's great wide receiver.

The all-region team was well represented with Jayden Ellis at QB, Parker, Prince, RB Willie Butler, Max Poysky OL, Quay Evans DL, Da'Vontae Lang ILB, Trent Tankersley OLB, Ryan Young DB, Marshan Turner DB and Tuck Tucker P all First Team selections.

Second teamers included Deuce Hidalgo TE, Harrison Knight OL, Camden Wilson DL, Gavin Wells OLB and T.Y. Chisom DB. Honorable Mentions were Michael Torello FB, Zeb Jackson WR, Sean Wallace WR, Caziah Alston, Benton Dyal and Josh Baker all on the OL, Tae Green DL, Chandler Owens LB, Bruce Edwards DB and LS Jeb Carson.

Quite a list and a testament to the consistent work ethic put in by the Terrors and the coaching staff.



SUCCESSFUL PIRATE VOYAGE

Brunswick High Season Recap By Kipp Branch



The 2023 Brunswick High Pirates had another good sailing through the waters of region 2-AAAAAA this fall.

The Pirates finished with a fine 7-4 record and won a first round State playoff game over Mundy's Mill 28-22 after trailing 22-7 at halftime.

This senior class leaves the program in fantastic shape, leaving with a 36-10 overall record, three region championships, and three city championships.

Head Coach Garrett Grady had this to say about the 2023 Pirates:

"We had another great football season at Brunswick High School. This team and group of seniors accomplished many things in their career here at Brunswick High. Looking back at this season it was definitely built on the hard work & dedication from the off-season workouts, spring football, summer workouts, summer OTAs, & in season practices. I am proud of this team and the way they competed from every start of each game to the final whistle.

I am very proud of our coaching staff and the job that they did this season as well. Our coaching staff not only developed our players on the field, but they developed them into young men with character and prepared them for the game of Life. This team showed a lot of resiliency & grit.

This team went through a lot of adversity and instead of letting it get the best of them, they fought through

it and developed as a TEAM. Many players gained valuable experience that we can build on and I am looking forward to next year. GO PIRATES!"

The Pirates placed many players on the All-Region Team:

Region 2-AAAA First Team

Jack Hunt/OL: Hunt had a fantastic senior campaign playing center for the Pirates. Hunt was a team leader on the offensive line and will play college football next fall.

Heze Kent/TE: Kent will more than likely be the highest rated football prospect to ever come out of Glynn County once his career is finished at BHS. The wonderful thing for Pirate fans is that Kent has two more years in the blue and gold.

Jamarious Towns/RB: Towns returns for his senior season next fall, and you can expect massive things from him and the Pirate offense next season.

TJ Mitchell/WR: The most prolific pass catcher in BHS history. Mitchell's play-making abilities will long be talked about on Altama Avenue, and he will be missed greatly.

River Creel/DL: Creel played a lot of football for BHS. Played well as a freshman and will be hard to replace next season.

J'Shawn Towns/LB: Towns is a thumper. His best football is ahead

of him.

Devin Smith/LB: The Kentucky bound Smith is simply one of the greatest players ever to roam on the defensive side of the ball for Brunswick High School. Period end of story. You do not replace a Devin Smith.

McClain Fineran/K: Fineran made some huge kicks for BHS in his career. He will be missed.

Landon Etheridge/LS: Etheridge had a fantastic season at long snapper and stepped in and made a huge 38-yard FG in the City Championship game this fall.

Region 2-AAAA Second Team:

Grant Moore/QB: Moore will be a junior next fall. Expect huge things from him.

William Heck/RB: Heck had a fine junior season.

Waseem Murray/WR: Remember this name folks.

Chase Richardson/OL

Donyea Broughton/DL

Michael Daniels/LB

Tavion Gadson/DB

Garrett Grady's Pirates will be elite on offense in 2024. Defense will need to replace some studs. Look for the Pirates to compete for another Region Championship in 2024.





THE KNIGHTS JOURNEY

Frederica Season Recap By Jeff Doke



Coach Brandon Derrick is pretty confident for a guy with a combined .500 record over the last three seasons.

But confident he is, and so are his players - players who trust the process. It's a process that goes by the philosophy that you can't make yourself a better team playing against lesser competition.

Steel sharpening steel, iron sharpening iron, buzzsaw scheduling – whatever you want to call it, the results are tangible.

Said results would need to be evident quickly this season. With QB Sutton Ellis graduated, Coach Derrick made the bold decision to move to a full-time wildcat formation with rising senior RB “The River” Jordan Triplett under center.

The big question would be how the change in offensive scheme would affect Triplett's pursuit of history. Triplett would start the year with 5,856 rushing yards and 92 TDs. Those numbers meant that with an

average (by his standards) season, he could easily find himself in the top 20 all-time for both categories in the state of Georgia.

The season opener let us know that “average” was not to be expected this year. Going up against a Brookwood team that beat the Knights by 4+ touchdowns in a quarter and a half of play in 2022, Frederica showed that this is absolutely a different team by notching a 56-41 win.

Week 2 wound up being more of the same, with The River running for another 349 yards and 5 TDs, as well as a TD pass to senior WR Kwon Vaughn en route to a 39-35 squeaker against Tiftarea Academy.

The original Week 3 game against Valwood Academy was canceled due to Hurricane Idalia, so a pickup game against Class 4A (SC) Bluffton was added. It was an ugly 44-13 loss.

Bluffton would prove to be the first of 4 straight losses against powerhouse teams. The high point of the run was arguably limiting John Milledge Academy to 17 points (their lowest output since the 2018 state championship game), whereas the low point was the 41-13 loss to Tatnall Square.

A victory the following week

against longtime rival Robert Toombs wrapped up non-region play by a score of 42-21.

Region play started at home versus hated rivals Bulloch Academy. Not only was the game a loss, but eventual All State LB Hamp Thompson was lost for the rest of the season with a knee injury.

Junior LB Hayes Carter filled in quite admirably, and the Knights were able to run the rest of the region table. Frederica ended the year tied for second in the region and secured a first round playoff bye.

The Knights dispatched Terrell Academy in their quarterfinal matchup, before falling 56-30 to eventual State Champions Valwood.

In addition to the All-State honors to Triplett and Thompson, All-Region laurels were bestowed upon LB Hayes Carter, RB Rico Holmes, Kickoff Specialist/Punter Blake Holloway, and OL/DLs Tucker McLain & Will Johnson.

In addition, K Mary Ford Fitzjurls wound up #2 in GIAA Class 3A in Kick Scoring, and RB/DB Colt Howes was #4 in 3A for Kickoff Returns and #5 in Punt Returns.

As far as the freshman class goes, I get the feeling we should expect big things from QB Jaylen Baldwin and RB Jayden Gibson.





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SAVE THE DATES

2024 SEC Schedules By Kipp Branch





2024 is upon us. The college football playoff landscape expands to a 12-team beauty contest moving forward.

The SEC officially released next year's schedules recently. Not enough space to go through them all, but I will go through the historical SEC programs and Oklahoma and Texas.

Alabama

Aug. 31: vs. Western Kentucky
 Sept. 7: vs. USF
 Sept. 14: at Wisconsin
 Sept. 21: BYE
 Sept. 28: vs. Georgia
 Oct. 5: at Vanderbilt
 Oct. 12: vs. South Carolina
 Oct. 19: at Tennessee
 Oct. 26: vs. Missouri
 Nov. 2: BYE
 Nov. 9: at LSU
 Nov. 16: vs. Mercer
 Nov. 23: at Oklahoma
 Nov. 30: vs. Auburn

First Glance: Bye weeks before Georgia and LSU. @Tennessee, @LSU, and @Oklahoma the week before the Iron Bowl. The Tide will be road warriors in 2024.

Florida

Aug. 31: vs. Miami (FL)
 Sept. 7: vs. Samford
 Sept. 14: vs. Texas A&M
 Sept. 21: at Mississippi St.
 Sept. 28: BYE
 Oct. 5: vs. UCF
 Oct. 12: at Tennessee
 Oct. 19: vs. Kentucky
 Oct. 26: BYE
 Nov. 2: vs. Georgia (in Jacksonville, FL)
 Nov. 9: at Texas

Nov. 16: vs. LSU
 Nov. 23: vs. Ole Miss
 Nov. 30: at Florida State

First glance: The last five games are brutal. Will Billy Napier still be employed by November? Only one cupcake on the slate.

Georgia

Aug. 31: vs. Clemson (in Atlanta, GA)
 Sept. 7: vs. Tennessee Tech
 Sept. 14: at Kentucky
 Sept. 21: BYE
 Sept. 28: at Alabama
 Oct. 5: vs Auburn
 Oct. 12: vs Mississippi State
 Oct. 19: at Texas
 Oct. 26: BYE
 Nov. 2: vs Florida (Jacksonville, FL)
 Nov. 9: at Ole Miss
 Nov. 16: vs Tennessee
 Nov. 23: vs UMass
 Nov. 30: vs Georgia Tech

First glance: Clemson in Atlanta, @Texas and @Alabama, and a trap game @Ole Miss sandwiched between Florida and Tennessee.

Oklahoma

Aug. 31: vs. Temple
 Sep. 7: vs. Houston
 Sep. 14: vs. Tulane
 Sep. 21: vs. Tennessee
 Sep. 28: at Auburn
 Oct. 5: BYE
 Oct. 12: vs. Texas (at Cotton Bowl in Dallas, TX)
 Oct. 19: vs. South Carolina

Oct. 26: at Ole Miss
 Nov. 2: vs. Maine
 Nov. 9: at Missouri
 Nov. 16: BYE
 Nov. 23: vs. Alabama
 Nov. 30: at LSU

First Glance: @Auburn welcome to Jordan Hare Sooners where dreams go to die. Alabama and @LSU to close the regular season. Are you sure you wanted this Oklahoma?

Texas

Aug. 31: vs. Colorado State
 Sept. 7: at Michigan
 Sept. 14: vs. UTSA
 Sept. 21: vs. Louisiana-Monroe
 Sept. 28: vs. Mississippi State
 Oct. 5: BYE
 Oct. 12: vs. Oklahoma (Cotton Bowl – Dallas, TX)
 Oct. 19: vs. Georgia
 Oct. 26: at Vanderbilt
 Nov. 2: BYE
 Nov. 9: vs. Florida
 Nov. 16: at Arkansas
 Nov. 23: vs. Kentucky
 Nov. 30: at Texas A&M

First glance: @Michigan, Oklahoma, and Georgia back-to-back, and a Thanksgiving trip to Aggieland. SEC was kind to Texas with the road slate to State, Vandy, and Arkansas who all are terrible now.

Whoever wins the SEC in 2024 will be tested for a deep playoff run.





JEKYLL AND HYDE

Georgia Southern Season Recap By Colin Lacy



The 2023 football season in Statesboro has been a year out of Robert Louis Stevenson's novel of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Year two for the Georgia Southern Eagles in Statesboro for Clay Helton has seen highs of capping off a 6-2 start with a Thursday night 44-27 victory over rival Georgia State, and devastating lows of finishing the regular season by falling in the final four games including 55-27 in Boone, NC to App State.

Despite the downhill slide in the back half of the year, the Eagles finish the regular season with a 6-6 record and earned an invitation to the Myrtle Beach Bowl to face Ohio from the MAC. So how did we get to this point?

The Eagles began the season taking care of business to the tune of 2-0 with an opening game win over The Citadel and a revenge victory over the Blazers of UAB 49-35.

Helton's crew then soared to Big Ten country to take on Wisconsin. Although a good showing early, 6 turnovers (including 5 interceptions) got the best of the Blue Birds and saw the Badgers pull away late 35-14.

Georgia Southern would respond the next week on the road at Ball State with 530 yards of total offense and pick up a road win in Muncie 40-3.

After falling to a rolling and undefeated James Madison 41-13 on the road, the blue and white would rattle off 2 straight wins at the prettiest little stadium in America. A come from behind victory against ULM 38-28 at Paulson set up a 5-2 Georgia Southern hosting a 6-1 Georgia State

team on ESPN 2 the Thursday prior to Halloween.

Georgia Southern dominated the Panthers from the word go, racking up almost 300 yards rushing, and knocking off the in-state rival 44-27.

That's when the Jekyll turned to Hyde for GSU with a tough final 4 games of the year and 3 of those on the road.

It began with a 45-24 Texas State victory deep in the heart of Texas to a much-improved Bobcat team under first year head coach GJ Kinne.

Next, Marshall would get the best of the Eagles 38-33 on an emotional weekend in Huntington, WV as the Thundering Herd remembered the 30-year anniversary of the Marshall plane crash.

The Blue and White would return home to try and get off the spiral against Old Dominion but wouldn't go the way for the Eagles. ODU led in this game 17-10 in the 4th quarter, Georgia Southern tied the game at 17-17 on a Davis Brinn TD pass to Jjay McAfee with 1:25 remaining.

It appeared that the game would be heading to overtime, but Monarch QB Grant Wilson ran for 28 yards up the middle to the 5-yard line to set up the Ethan Sanchez 22-yard

field goal as time expired to snatch the win away from GS 20-17.

The season would wrap up at the Rock against Appalachian State in-front of a sold-out crowd at Kidd Brewer Stadium.

Georgia Southern would take a 14-3 first quarter lead, but App State would score the next 6 touchdowns and take a 48-17 lead thanks to 4 Eagle turnovers. The Mountaineers would finish off the regular season finale 55-27 over the Eagles.

It's not only been a Jekyll and Hyde Season for the team as a whole, but for some individuals as well. Quarterback Davis Brin has seen highs of throwing for over 300 yards 6 times this year including a high of 383 at Wisconsin, but also the lows of multiple interceptions in 4 games with the high of 5 also coming against the Badgers.

OJ Arnold, who has been hampered by injuries this year, has shown what the future at running back can look like with 405 yards and 4 scores in just 9 games played. Jalen White racked up just shy of 900 yards on the ground and 10 total TDs.

As expected, Georgia Southern pulled a Jekyll and Hyde in the Cure Bowl against the Ohio Bobcats, losing 41-21.



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