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December 2024 Edition

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GET TO KNOW THE WRITERS



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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.



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Colin Lacy is the voice of the Southeast Bulloch Yellow Jackets. Colin also works with Westwood One Sports and Bowl Season radio for National College Football and NFL broadcasts across the country. Colin also calls Georgia Tech baseball for the Georgia Tech Sports Network and also works with the ACC Network.



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Charlie Moon has been the voice for seven highschool football and baseball state championships in South Carolina and Georgia. Charlie has worked with Fox Sports South, SCETV, NFHS and Charlton Sports Network. Charlie is currently the voice of the Richmond Hill Wildcats.



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Mike Spiers is the voice of the Camden County Wildcats. Mike has been the public address announcer for Camden baseball for over a decade. Mike graduated from Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, LA. Mike is heavily involved in Camden County athletics.



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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.



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Jason Bishop graduated from Kennesaw State University and formerly worked at CNN Sports. Jason hosts "The Jason Bishop Show", south Georgia's most listened to sports talk show.

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 all across Southeast Georgia and growing everyday.

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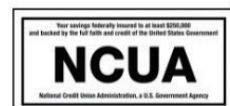


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CORRUPT **COMMITTEE**

Bias Playoff System By Charlie Moon



I have to say. I was searching a little for a column topic. But this one, it is about as easy as somebody trying to get me to eat a slice of pepperoni and sausage pizza. Yeah, if you're reading this and you know me, then you know. I had bariatric sleeve surgery in late September.

"Moon, thought you couldn't eat pizza anymore!" And I say.... "Shhhhhh, don't tell the doc!"

In all seriousness, I can still eat pizza. But - only a couple bites here and there.

Back to the lecture at hand. the ease of choosing the column topic. What I saw last on ESPN's College Football Playoff Rankings Show, was about as intellectually rewarding as blowing dandelions on a hot summer night. Who knows, maybe some scientist can argue that blowing dandelions actually do open the brainwaves a little.

You know, I try to give people the benefit of the doubt, no matter the industry. Usually, when our government makes decisions we don't get, I often give them the nod.

My best example is: 3rd and 1, and the offense runs a simple off tackle and gets stuffed for a 2-yard loss. What happens? Armchair quarterbacks start yelling, "What was that?" "What kind of play call was that?"

But not this time!!

Look, when I watched Warde Manuel give word salad on Tuesday night's show, I nearly had to go stand on my front porch to ensure our house had not been lifted into some 3rd dimension.

Ward Manuel is the current 8-year Michigan Athletic Director. He grew up in Michigan. He played football at Michigan under the great Bo Shembechler. Look, I'm sure he's a great guy and a great family man....all of that. But there is absolutely no way

a sitting athletic director can serve on the 12-person playoff committee that selects the 12-team playoff field.

When I did a little research, I was at Wild Wing Cafe in Statesboro. I nearly spit out the drink I was in the middle of. FIVE.... Count 'em FIVE.... of the 12 members are either current NCAA athletic directors or are high-ranking officials in those athletic departments.

We've always known these playoff committees have members of current athletic departments, but to see that they constituted almost half of this year's committee, was shocking.

I'm not going to dole out names, or give out their addresses like some of our national leaders do. But, I will criticize the committee and its member selection.

Normally, not much attention should be paid to the CFP rankings yet. But the problem is hearing their thoughts and how they rank teams.

When Warde Manuel explained why UGA was where they were and Texas was where they were, I was dumbfounded.

He said, "Yes they beat Texas. But their body of work - we just felt like 10 was the right spot."

Ummm....wrong. UGA has more top 25 wins than the 2nd-6th ranked teams combined. Sure, the Dawgs got hammered by Ole Miss, but their strength of schedule is #1. The message being sent is for teams to play no one.

Look, we could argue all day long about who should be where, but there is one thing that should not be up for debate. There is no way that current school officials should be a part of selecting the teams. I'm sure they try as hard as they can to be unbiased, but human nature is what it is.

There's no coincidence Manuel is a Big Ten guy and 4 of the top 5 teams are Big Ten. I'm not saying it "just because," but again. The Dawgs have more top 25 wins than Ohio St, Indiana and Penn St combined.

I'll just wrap it up this way. Let's go back to the computers - honestly!



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FLIGHTLESS FALCONS

Trending In Wrong Direction By Kenneth Harrison



The Atlanta Falcons got demolished by Denver, 38-6. It was their second consecutive loss. New Orleans snapped their seven-game losing streak against Atlanta the previous week, 20-17. The Falcons are now 6-5.

Rookie quarterback Bo Nix completed 85% of his passes for 307 yards and 4 touchdowns.

“No one play ever defines any game,” Falcons coach Raheem Morris said. “(But) that was a great-effort play by those guys and not a great-effort play by us. You’ve got to give those guys a lot of credit for playing hard, playing physical. And they absolutely went out there and beat us today with their effort and their physicality, and that was a key to the game.”

I thought Nix was a pretty good rookie but he looked like a Hall of Famer against the Falcons.

The Broncos swept the NFC South by a cumulative 125-37. It marks Denver’s first sweep of a division since they went 4-0 against the NFC North in 2015.

Atlanta is trending in the wrong direction and this loss raises some concerns. I can understand losing a game but they were blown out by a team that came into that game .500 with two consecutive losses. This reminds me of the Week 7 home loss to Seattle (5-5), 34-14.

The Seahawks were on a three-game losing streak coming into that game. On paper they should be able to beat these teams, or at the very least be competitive.

The one bright spot was kicker Younghoe Koo. He missed three of his four field goal attempts against New Orleans, one of those was blocked. Against Denver he made both of his field goals. One was 41 yards and the other was 51 yards.

Injuries are beginning to take a toll on the team. Atlanta ruled out eight players before the game, including several starters on defense. Falcons CB Kevin King was ruled out in the second quarter with a concussion and WR Darnell Mooney pulled a hamstring in the third quarter.

The Falcons are on their bye week now. Hopefully that will allow players to heal from injuries. The coaching staff needs to meet and figure out how to get better results on both sides of the ball.

The biggest problem the last

few years has been getting the ball to playmakers and that is still an issue.

QB Kirk Cousins is third in the league for passing yards with 2,807, 17 touchdowns and 9 interceptions. Only four players have more interceptions.

Running back Bijan Robinson is sixth in rushing, with 783 yards and 6 TD’s. Jahmyr Gibbs (Detroit) is fifth and he has 34 less attempts but more yards (796) and touchdowns (8).

Drake London is fifth in the league in receptions (61), with 710 yards and 2 scores but he has less yards and touchdowns than Darnell Mooney. Mooney has 48 catches, 711 yards and 5 touchdowns.

Tight end Kyle Pitts needs the ball more. He has great size and speed but he seems to disappear from the offense regularly. He had 1 catch for 9 yards against Denver on 3 targets. He had 1 catch for 11 yards on his only target against Dallas. In the first meeting with New Orleans, he did not record a catch and he was targeted 3 times.

Atlanta ranks 25th in total defense, giving up an average of 357.1 yards per game.

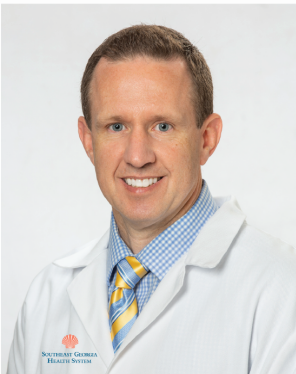
The first two games after the bye are against the LA Chargers (7-3) and at Minnesota (8-2).

Those are quality opponents so there is a good possibility to lose those games.





A Strong Flexible Spine Starts with Good Range of Motion



Jason M. Dancy, MD

A board-certified physiatrist, Dr. Dancy specializes in physiatry, physical medicine and rehabilitation.

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

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

Athletes and weekend warriors of all ages benefit from a flexible spine, says Jason Dancy, MD, a board-certified physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist. In his role at Summit Sports Medicine & Orthopaedic Surgery, Dr. Dancy provides nonsurgical diagnosis and treatment for people experiencing pain from an injury or disease condition. “Improving your range of motion (ROM) helps prevent contracted muscles, ligaments and tendons. Good range of motion protects your joints, helps avoid injury, improves balance and posture, and delays the onset of arthritis by lubricating your joints and tissues. It’s a win-win for your body.”

It’s especially important to maintain a flexible spine. “The spinal vertebrae are divided into five sections – cervical, thoracic, lumbar, sacrum and coccyx. When a patient comes to me with an injury or back pain, I evaluate their range of motion in each area by having them bend forward, backward, sideways and then rotating their body. In combination with X-rays or imaging scans, their ability or inability to perform those movements reveals a lot about their condition,” explains Dr. Dancy.

According to Dr. Dancy, there are three types of range of motion:

1. Passive: Moving the joint with full assistance, such as pulling your leg into a quadricep stretch.
2. Active-assistive: Requires partial assistance, such as when a physical therapist guides a limb into a stretch.
3. Active: Moving the joint without help such as lifting your arms over your head.

To maintain a healthy back, add range of motion exercises into your routine. “Anything you do to enhance movement is advantageous, from pre-workout warm-ups like walking or dynamic stretching such as hip circles and side stretches. After workouts, static stretches where you hold the stretch for at least 30 seconds improves ROM. Using a foam roller also helps,” Dr. Dancy says, adding, “Variety is key – perform dynamic and static stretches and alternate strength workouts with flexibility exercises such as yoga.”

If your sport or profession places demands on your back, pay particular attention to that area. “Football players, wrestlers and cheerleaders, for example, must maintain good spinal range of motion to compensate for the impacts they experience. They benefit by learning specific back strengthening exercises under the guidance of a physiatrist or physical therapist,” Dr. Dancy says.

Just as we strive for equilibrium in life, range of motion is all about balance. Dr. Dancy’s advice doesn’t just apply to athletes. “Laborers, office workers and busy parents also expect a lot from their body, particularly their spine. Maintain a healthy range of motion, and you will stay strong and flexible throughout life.”





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WILD SEASON

Camden's Ups and Downs By Michael Spiers



The 2024 football season came to an end for the Camden County Wildcats recently.

New head coach Travis Roland finished his first year in Kingsland with a 7-4 overall record following a 28-7 loss to North Cobb High School in the first round of the GHSAA 6A state playoffs.

Coach Roland brought a new attitude and a new playing style to Camden. Offensive Coordinator Grant Alford, also in his first season with the Wildcats, installed a new pro-style offense and in infusion of RPO (run-pass option) schemes.

Second-year starting quarterback Parks Riendeau, a junior, took to the new offense enthusiastically and posted stats not seen by a Camden quarterback since Brice Ramsey in 2013.

Riendeau finished the season with 131 completions on 224 attempts, tossing 21 touchdowns to just 6 interceptions.

Riendeau's top target, senior tight end/wide receiver Elyiss Williams, put up dominating performances all season and displayed all of the talent you would expect from an athlete committed to play at the next level for Kirby Smart and the Georgia Bulldogs. Williams hauled in 54 passes for 789 yards and 11 touchdowns.

The Wildcats cruised through their non-region schedule and found themselves at 5-0, averaging 54.4 points and 420 yards of offense per contest.

Those five contests included victories over Brunswick 51-41; East Lake (Tarpon Springs, FL) 60-15; West Broward (Pembroke Pines, FL) 52-29; Ribault (Jacksonville) 62-6; and Spruce Creek (Port Orange, FL) 47-20.

As expected, things got much tougher when Camden began region play.

The first Region 1-6A contest was delayed due to Hurricane Helene and required the Wildcats to travel to Bazemore-Hyder Stadium on a Saturday to tangle with the Valdosta Wildcats. Camden was sent home with a 56-37

loss.

The Blue Wildcats returned home the following week and rebounded by playing their most complete game of the season, a 28-10 victory against Richmond Hill. Camden County pushed their overall record to 6-1, but found themselves just 1-1 in Region 1-6A.

Another trip to Valdosta followed in week 8, but this time it was on to the Concrete Palace to face the Lowndes Vikings, which resulted in a 33-7 loss.

The next week the Wildcats returned home again, and suffered their second straight region loss, this time to Colquitt County by a score of 54-41.

Camden County was now 6-3 overall and 1-3 in region play, needing a victory in the final week against Tift County AND a Colquitt victory over Richmond Hill just to make the playoffs.

As fate would have it, Camden beat Tift 38-28, and Colquitt took care of Richmond Hill, which earned the Wildcats the fourth seed out of Region 1.

This set the stage for the matchup with the North Cobb Warriors, the top seed out of Region 5.

The Region 5 champion Warriors (11-0) capitalized on mistakes by the Wildcats (7-4), securing a 28-7 victory in the first round of the Class 6A playoffs.

All of North Cobb's scoring occurred in the second and third quarters, with two Camden turnovers turning into points.

Senior RB Jordan Hardy finished the season with 997 yards rushing and 17 touchdowns.

Camden County had multiple players recognized as all-region standouts for their efforts this season, including Elyiss Williams, who was named the Region 1-6A Offensive Player of the Year, and junior cornerback/wideout/return specialist David Coleman, who was named the Region 1-6A Athlete of the Year.

All-region first team offensive nods were given to junior QB Parks Riendeau, senior OL and University of Cincinnati commit Zack Taylor, and sophomore wideout Sean Green.

All-region first team defensive selections from Camden included junior inside linebacker Xavier Brown, senior outside linebacker Wayne Austell, and senior safety Ja'maric Daley.

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TERRORS DOWNED

Glynn's Season Highlights By Joe Delaney



The Glynn Academy Red Terrors saw their 2024 season come to an end.

After a long 7-hour bus trip to Rome, the Terrors ran into a bunch of hungry Wolves and the outcome wasn't pretty. The turnover plagued Terrors fell 49-17 and it really wasn't that close. The number 1 seeded Wolves feasted on those Terror turnovers early and often.

While the Terrors had shown

second teamers.

While the Terrors were outgunned and outclassed they never quit against a much better team and put two scores on the board in the second half.

The first was on a blocked punt. Cooper Reiss blocked the punt and scoop and scored to put Glynn on the board and then T. Y. Chisolm scored on a determined 33-yard run in the final minute to put the final points on the board.

The first-round playoff loss left the Terrors with a final 6-5 record and a long bus ride home.

The Terrors final record included wins Wayne County, Bradwell Institute, Statesboro, South Effingham, Greenbrier, and Evans.

The losses were to Richmond

season and making the playoffs for the 17th season in a row was a testament to the grit, determination, and hard work of the boys and the coaching staff.

When you reach the playoffs in any sport for over 15 years in a row, it says something about your team and program.

In the Rome Wolves, the Terrors took on a hot team. After losing their first 2 games, the Wolves had been on a 7-game winning streak, now 8.

The Wolves are prolific on offense scoring 59, 28, 70, 63, 35, and 50 in their last 6 games going into the 1st round matchup with the Red Terrors in the first round of the GHSA 5A playoffs.



resiliency and fight throughout a tough season, this one was over quickly.

The superior Wolves broke a 47-yard touchdown in the first minute of the contest. It was 7-0 before everyone had gotten into their seats.

Two Red Terror turnovers on the next two Terror possessions in the first quarter doomed the Terrors as Rome quickly went on scoring drives breaking off chunks of yardage and going up 21-0.

By halftime the Terrors had fallen into a 42-3 hole and the second half was played with mostly Rome

Hill, Lakeside Evans, Brunswick, Effingham County, and the Wolves.

The win over Wayne County was a milestone as the Red Terrors became the 25th school in the state of Georgia history to win 600 games! Yes that's SIX HUNDRED!

The Glynn seniors ended up going 20-13 for their 3 years and will be sorely missed.

The Red Terrors of 2024 showed remarkable poise and determination.

They were knocked down and always got back up. Having a winning

Defensively in those six games, they've given up 35 points total. The Terrors definitely had their hands full.

After a long season full of highlights and a few lowlights the Terrors can begin looking toward the 2025 season.

The old adage that says winners never quit and quitters never win was never more appropriate than with this outfit. So now the Terrors will look to off season workouts and start laying the foundation for the 2025 edition.

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KNIGHTS JOURNEY ENDS

Frederica's Bright Future By Jeff Doke



During the offseason leading up to the 2024 football season, the speculation regarding the Frederica Academy Knights was that this would be a team in serious rebuilding mode.

When All-Time State Rushing Leader Jordan Triplett graduated last year, he took over 90% of the Knights' offensive production with him. Many observers expected this year's squad to suffer some serious growing pains.

While it's difficult to replace a legend, the 2024 Knights made a valiant attempt. So much so that longing for the glory days of "The River" turned out to be an afterthought.

Opening week against the hapless Savannah High Blue Jackets set the expectations for the season higher than originally expected.

Sophomore QB Stanton Beverly proved effective thru the air and on the ground, rushing for three touchdowns and throwing for another two. Beverly's running style drew comparisons to Stetson Bennett, and he continued to be the team's rushing leader on and off throughout the season - and at one point, he was also the leading rusher in the region as well.

While the first game of the season was encouraging, the next four were anything but. Two lopsided losses to an oversized West Nassau team and the defending state champion Valwood Valiants were followed by two frustratingly close defeats at Tiftarea and Stratford, and Coach Brandon Derrick's squad found themselves at 1-4.

The second half of the season went much better as the Knights flipped the script and went 4-1 for the back half of the year.

While the lone loss that came at the hands of hated rivals Bulloch Academy cost them another region title, the four victories were quite satisfying.

The Knights were able to notch payback victories against Brookwood and Pinewood, as well as recording their first shut-out since the 2020 season - a 42-0 shellacking of Robert Toombs Christian Academy.

Although Frederica was clicking at the right time, a deep run into the playoffs was not meant to be. For the second year in a row, the Knights' season ended on the campus of Valwood Academy, this time in the opening round instead of the semi-finals.

One would think that considering the up-and-down nature of this first post-Triplett season that Frederica would be thankful to have gotten that far. Surprisingly enough, that's not the case.

This didn't feel like a season that was destined to end this quickly.

The offense was finally starting to click with Jayden Gibson finding running lanes on the inside that simply weren't there and Jaylin Baldwin adding a jet sweep in the Apache/Cherokee formations that were faster than what we've seen since another notable Jaylin roamed the Frederica sideline.

JC Wessel was finally starting to knock off the rust of almost a decade of not playing football and Braxton Sykes was proving valuable as a receiver as well as the backup quarterback.

The twin kickers of Mary Ford Fitzjurls and Noah Restrepo were as reliable as they come.

But alas, a deep run was not meant to be. True, the fact that there are 18 starters from this year's squad set to come back next year should offer a fair amount of hope to the Frederica Faithful, but you just can't help but wish that there could have been more for this year's senior class.

Hayes Carter, Esai Hernandez, Tucker McLain, and Will Johnson had been through so much since their freshman campaign.

The final survivors of the infamous "Mean Nineteen" year, their contributions on both sides of the ball were instrumental in the record setting seasons of the previous three years.

You just can't help but wish we could have seen them together for another two weeks.

2025 promises to be another step up the ladder for the Knights, perhaps even another trophy to hoist could be in the cards.



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STAYING ALIVE

Playoff Hopefuls By Robert Craft



Which teams control their destiny to make the Playoff?

Right now, it feels there are about 20 of them, and it's making for some great angst and drama.

Everyone from No. 1 Oregon (which is already in at this point) through No. 8 Miami (which would win the ACC) is safely in if they don't lose another game.

Ditto these teams that will win their conference and an automatic berth if they win out: SMU (ACC), Texas A&M, Colorado (Big 12), Georgia, and Arizona State (Big 12).

So, that's 13. But let me address some of the ones I left out.

If nothing else, Texas A&M winning the SEC would bump everyone else down a rung. Or Georgia loses the title game and then drops too far to remain an at-large team. (This would be painfully

dumb, but I wouldn't rule it out.)

I have Boise State in the group above.

I suppose you have to include Arizona State in that pool.

So, it's 14 that control their destiny and, by my count, 23 that still hold at least a glimmer of hope plus Tennessee, Clemson (can win the ACC), No. 18 a South Carolina (slim at-large hopes), No. 20 Tulane (G5), No. 22 Iowa State (can win the Big 12) and No. 24 UNLV (G5).

Twenty-three teams with a shot with three weeks to go. Last year at this same point, there were eight.

My question is should head-to-head play a factor?

Because head-to-head is not as simple as Team A beat Team B. Was the game close or a blowout? The latter is harder to overlook. Did Team B lose at home or on the road? Losing at home is less excusable.

And most importantly, in the context of their larger seasons, did this result fit with what the teams did the rest of the year, or was it wildly out of character? One game shouldn't automatically void the other 11.

I was mildly surprised the committee held Texas' Week 2 road win over Alabama last season so sacrosanct given it happened so early in the season, but it felt it couldn't include the Tide in the final four without having the Horns one spot above them.

But I can think of one possibility that would be an absolute nightmare for the committee.

Say Notre Dame loses to USC to finish 10-2. The Irish are out, right?

Except, what if Texas A&M beats Texas to advance to the SEC Championship Game, loses that game on a last-second field goal and finishes 10-3?

Greg Sankey will lose his mind if the committee keeps the Aggies out because they played a 13th game and leave out 10-win Notre Dame that won in College Station, right? It's the same scenario as Texas-Alabama last year.

Either both would be in or neither would be in.

Buckle up it's gonna be an exciting last week of college football. Let's see what happens!



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BUCS VOYAGE

Bucs' 2024 Season Recap By Jason Bishop



The 2024 season has come to an end for McIntosh County Academy Buccaneers.

Once again the Bucs made the playoffs under head coach Bradley Warren.

Unfortunately for Bucs fans MCA made a first-round exit from the playoffs for the second season in a row, this year falling to Wilcox County 9-0 on the road.

Portal Panthers, the Screven County Gamecocks, the Claxton Tigers and the Savannah Blue Jackets all in region.

MCA started the season on the road against the Islands Sharks and showed right away a dominant defense, beating the Sharks 22-0 to start the season on the right foot.

Week two was the home opener at 'The Ship' in Darien against the Charlton County Indians and while the defense played well, the offense stumbled and the Bucs took a 19-0 loss to Charlton.

The Bucs would open region play against the ECI Bulldogs after a week three bye in week four. The Bucs defense would once again show up, limiting ECI to only 6 points. This

2 seed in the region.

MCA would rebound the following week on the road beating Bryan County 36-14 and improving to 5-2 on the season and 4-1 in the region.

The Metter Tigers visited Darien the next week taking down the Bucs 12-6 in a defensive struggle. Metter went on to win the region.

MCA trekked up to Savannah the next week and beat the struggling Savannah Blue Jackets 46-6 to get things back on the right track, improving to 6-3 on the season and 5-2 in region.

The season finale was a home game against the Portal Panthers where the Bucs played a complete

MCINTOSH COUNTY ACADEMY BUCCANEERS

Last season, the Bucs went down to rival Clinch County 38-14 in the first round of the GHSA playoffs.

Despite the early exit this season huge strides were made from last season.

In 2023, MCA finished the season with a 4-7 record. 2024 saw the Bucs improve to a 7-4 mark and earn a three seed in region 3-A Division II with a 6-2 region record.

The 2024 schedule was a tough one with tough region play. The Bucs had the Metter Tigers, the Jenkins County War Eagles, the ECI Bulldogs, the Bryan County Redskins, the

led to a 7-6 MCA win to get back over .500 at 2-1.

The Bucs hosted Claxton in week 5 in a 'get right' game for the offense, throttling the Tigers 48-6. MCA improved to 3-1.

In week 6 the Bucs traveled to Sylvania to take on Screven County. They would continue to roll, beating the Gamecocks 32-14.

The 4-1 Bucs hosted Jenkins County with first place in the region on the line. Bradley Warren's team would fall short against the War Eagles 37-19. MCA would fall to 4-2 taking their first region loss of the season. Jenkins County went on to claim the

game beating the Panthers 40-0.

With the win over Portal, MCA earned a 3 seed in the region with a 7-3 regular season and 6-2 in region.

Unfortunately, Gus Bradley's team got a tough first round draw and had to head to Rochelle, GA to play the Wilcox County Patriots. After a hard fought 9-0 loss the season had ended with a 7-4 record for MCA.

Coach Warren continues to be successful in Darien and will look to once again be a playoff team next season.



SEC TITLE GAME

Is It Better Not To Play? By Colin Lacy



As we approach the end of the regular season, fans across the Southeastern Conference are starting to raise an eyebrow to the question that twelve months ago would have seemed preposterous: Is it better to not play in the SEC Championship game?

Entering week 14 of the College football season, the SEC holds a logjam of three teams still fighting for a spot in Atlanta to play for the SEC crown.

Texas sits atop the league at 6-1 (still having to play Texas A&M on the final week of the regular season), while Georgia and Tennessee enter the week with two SEC losses (Georgia with no remaining conference games and Tennessee with only one).

While an SEC title and an automatic bid into the newly expanded College Football Playoff is great for the winner of the game, is the risk greater

than the reward.

Texas and Georgia are firmly in the conversation of the College Football Playoff, but most would agree that at least one and possibly two of these teams will be left out of the “big dance.”

So, the question comes up again: Is it better to not play in the SEC Championship game?

Texas sits atop this group with a 10-1 record on the season (again still having to play A&M) while Georgia and Tennessee both have a 9-2 record.

Now, I understand that this predicament only becomes a question if Texas A&M wins out. The questions stem from a pre-conceived notion that a three-loss team would be on the outside looking in. But does that still apply if that third loss comes in the Conference Championship game for Georgia? These are the things that we simply don't know in the first year of the expanded 12-team playoff format. What I do know, it's not just a doofy radio guy in Georgia asking this question.

Ole Miss Head Coach Lane Kiffin pulled the curtain back a little bit saying, “I've talked to the other coaches (in the SEC), so I'll just kind

of give you the feeling from some other coaches that they don't want to be in it. You know the reward to get a bye (in the CFP) versus the risk to get knocked out (of the CFP) completely? I mean that's a pretty big...that's a really big risk.”

In other years, this is probably a non-issue, and the SEC “runner up” would be a lock for a spot in the College Football Playoff, but not this year.

That being said, nobody is talking about the benefit of this. If there is even more pressure to win the conference title, the two teams that make it to Atlanta could (at least think) be playing for their playoff lives and make it an even better event.

On the flip side, does this actually put a deserving team on the chopping block? There are some that believe both teams in the SEC Championship game will all but have a clear path into the 12-team field.

Personally, I think there are some teams that would be in regardless. The fun part (unless you're a faithful to one of these teams), until the final rankings come out... Nobody knows!



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