

WRITTEN BY PETE RERIG

GAME ON!

A SOUTH CAROLINA COLLEGE FOOTBALL PREVIEW



Pull out the face paint, fire up the grill, and ice down the beer, it's time for college football in the Palmetto State. Whether you're cheering on The Citadel, Carolina, or Clemson, our College Football Preview is your ticket to the upcoming season—wha to watch, where to go, what to expect, and more



ALL HAIL

The Citadel Bulldogs



“**T**he Citadel has one of the best coaches in college football in Kevin Higgins,” says *Post and Courier* sportswriter Gene Sapakoff, “but the Southern Conference is just such a gauntlet that he doesn’t get enough credit. This year, consistency will be the key.” The Bulldogs finished last season 4-8, which included some serious (and not surprising) trouncings by Clemson and Florida. But exceedingly strong fan support never wavers at El Cid.

According to *P&C* reporter Jeff Hartsell, Higgins is going big with his recruiting. And by big, we mean huge. Of the 17 recruits for the 2009 signing class, seven are six-foot-two or taller and five weigh at least 275 pounds. Throw in some true behemoths—such as six-foot, 305-pound outside linebacker Jim Knowles from Belle Glade, Florida, and six-foot-four, 275-pound defensive tackle Kyle Anderson from Western Kentucky—and the Bulldogs line will be one tough machine.

Higgins concedes that, last season, he needed a team that was both big and fast, and they came up short, even with a handful of All-Southern Conference players on the field. Now, with an offense and defense deep with talent—and the return of some fifth-year seniors—fundamentals and techniques should be strong, and Higgins is preaching a “back-to-basics” philosophy.

And don’t overlook redshirt junior quarterback Bart Blanchard, who’ll return to the position after a record-setting sophomore year, during which the Rock Hill native wrote himself into the record books as The Citadel’s all-time leader in single-season total offensive yards with 2,609. He also threw 19 touchdown passes, a stat ranking second in the school’s history. Hopefully, with Higgins’ new approach and returning veterans, the Bulldogs can lift themselves back to the top of the Southern Conference.

Head coach Kevin Higgins with quarterback Bart Blanchard, who in 2008 had the fifth-best passing performance ever at the school. Last season, the Bulldogs finished 4-8.



Coach Higgins is going big with his recruiting. And by big, we mean huge. Of the 17 recruits for 2009, seven are six-foot-two or taller and five weigh at least 275 pounds.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROB PASIBE

Field of Dreams: Johnson Hagood Stadium, opened in 1948 and purchased by The Citadel in 1963, recently underwent a \$40-million renovation, which added new grandstands; an enhanced press tower; skyboxes, luxury suites, and a club lounge; and two large outdoor club-level terraces overlooking the field and the Ashley River. Another interesting fact? The Citadel now boasts the largest scoreboard in the state of South Carolina (it's the width of the playing surface and features a huge video screen).



{ ONE TO WATCH }

Andre Roberts



COURTESY OF CITADEL ATHLETICS

Last year, the All-American wide receiver caught 95 passes for more than 1,300 yards—the most receiving yards in a single season for the Dogs. The 2009 preseason All-American and team captain is the 2008 National Punt Return Champion and a 2008 Walter Payton Award Finalist.

The Citadel Bulldogs

FANATIC: Charlie Baker



PHOTOGRAPH BY ZACH SUGGS



COURTESY OF CHARLIE BAKER

Year Graduated: 1971
Distinctions: Former Bulldog linebacker, member of The Citadel Athletics Hall of Fame, founder of The Citadel Football Association, and the designer of “Spike,” the official logo of The Citadel Athletic Department
Ultimate Paraphernalia: A megaphone, which he carries into every game
Known For: Moving around the stadium and getting people riled up with his signature cheer: “Hit ‘em in the mouth!”
Game-Day Tradition: “It’s a new thing, but before every game I go up to the bulldog statue at the front of the stadium and rub it for luck.”
Dedication: Baker always brings his tow-behind grill to tailgate parties on game day and has been known to feed more than 100 people, often showing up in the wee hours of the morning to cook.



COURTESY OF CHARLIE BAKER

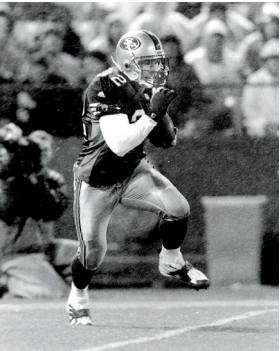
PRO ROSTER

Though they may not produce the NFL representation of their in-state rivals, the Dogs nevertheless have sent some outstanding talents to the big dance



COURTESY OF WASHINGTON REDSKINS

Nehemiah Broughton
(fullback)
This 2005 seventh-round pick debuted with the Redskins before moving to the Carolina Panthers last year and, most recently, the Minnesota Vikings.



COURTESY OF SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

Travis Jervey
(right back)
Drafted by the Green Bay Packers in 1995 as a fifth-round pick, he went on to play for the San Francisco 49ers and the Atlanta Falcons.



COURTESY OF CITADEL ATHLETICS

Cliff Washburn
(offensive tackle)
Signed by the New York Giants as a free agent in 2003, he currently plays for the Houston Texans.



PHOTOGRAPH BY TYLER LACROSS

Play by Play: NFL commentator **PAUL MAGUIRE** played tight end at The Citadel, where he led the nation in touchdown receptions in 1959. Drafted in 1960 by the Los Angeles Chargers, for whom he served as both a punter and a linebacker, Maguire also played with the Buffalo Bills, and his career includes six AFL Championship games. He worked his last NFL game on January 1, 2006, as *Sunday Night Football* ended on ESPN but is still covering college games for ABC.

Cheers!

Want to hang out with like-minded fans? Then head over to **BIG JOHN'S TAVERN**. Opened in 1954 by John Cannady, a Charleston native, All-American football player for Indiana University, and star of the New York Giants, this dive bar is a haven for cadets and alums alike. 251 East Bay St.; (843) 723-3483

2009 SCHEDULE



Sept. 5 at North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, 6 p.m.
Sept. 19 at Princeton, Princeton, NJ, 3 p.m.
Sept. 26 Presbyterian College, Johnson Hagood Stadium, 7 p.m.
Oct. 3 Appalachian State, Johnson Hagood Stadium, 1 p.m.
Oct. 10 at Elon, Elon, NC, 1:30 p.m.
Oct. 17 at Western Carolina, Cullowhee, NC, 1 p.m.
Oct. 24 Furman, Johnson Hagood Stadium, 2 p.m.
Oct. 31 Samford, Johnson Hagood Stadium, 1 p.m.
Nov. 7 Homecoming: Wofford, Johnson Hagood Stadium, 2 p.m.
Nov. 14 at Chattanooga, Chattanooga, TN, 2 p.m.
Nov. 21 at Georgia Southern, Statesboro, GA, TBA
For ticket information, call (843) 953-DOGS (3647), or purchase tickets online at www.etix.com.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JAIRY HUNTER

FOR MORE ON THE DOGS VISIT charlestonmag.com

Dog Days: Bulldog mascots have been part of The Citadel football experience since the 1950s, but it wasn't until 2003 that the morale-boosting pooches lived on campus, where they are cared for by assistant athletic director Mike Groshon. The current two-dog team, **The General** and **Boo V** (both born in 2003), attend every game and are often seen barking at opponents. They also preside over the weekly Corps of Cadets parade, sitting in the reviewing stand, a true place of honor.

CAROLINA PRIDE

*The University of
South Carolina Gamecocks*



A

lthough head coach Steve Spurrier continues to deny it, rumors of his retirement after only four seasons at USC still circulate. Regardless of whether he opts out of his position after this season or not, the former University of Florida coach, who led the Gators to six SEC titles, does admit he has a lot to accomplish this fall.

The Gamecocks' last season ended with a less-than-glamorous record (7-6), the team having lost their last two regular season games (including a competent defeat by Clemson) and gotten hammered by Iowa in the Outback Bowl 31-10. The complaints were numerous: USC seemed unable to achieve third-down conversions or put up big offensive scoring numbers, resulting in a precipitous drop in the polls, if they were ranked at all. "South Carolina must get production out of quarterback Stephen Garcia—he has so much potential," says the *P&C*'s Gene Sapakoff, referring to the probable starting QB. "I still think he can be a top-of-the-SEC-caliber passer and leader." Spurrier is also beefing up his offensive line with strong recruiting from around the Southeast and has some great returning players, such as senior center Garrett Anderson and Garcia, poised to make things happen.

So, with strong fan support, promising talent, and an experienced coaching staff, can Spurrier pull it all together and recover some face in 2009?

After leading the Florida Gators to six SEC championships, head coach Steve Spurrier took over the helm at USC in 2005. His conference record for his four completed seasons with USC is 15-17. Starting quarterback Stephen Garcia (opposite)



PHOTOS (2) COURTESY OF SIDELINE CAROLINA; HELMET IMAGE COURTESY OF RIDELL, INC.



"South Carolina must get production out of quarterback Stephen Garcia.... I still think he can be a top-of-the-SEC-caliber passer and leader." —Gene Sapakoff, Post & Courier



COURTESY OF JOHNNY HELMS

All Aboard! Anyone visiting Williams-Brice Stadium will notice the 22 railroad cars that line an old section of track just outside the stadium walls. In the late 1980s, two crafty businessmen, Edward R. Robinson and Carl F. “Doc” Howard, began acquiring and renovating the cabooses and rail spur, inaugurated the “Cockaboose Railroad,” to cater to upscale Gamecock tailgaters. In 1990, it took them only two days to sell 20 of the high-end hangouts outfitted with luxurious accoutrements, from built-in stereo systems and wide-screen TVs to mahogany cabinets and marble countertops. Of course, they kept two for themselves. While owners aren’t likely to give up their posh digs, when they do come on the market, count on paying some big bucks (read: mid-six figures).



{ ONE TO WATCH }

Eric Norwood



COURTESY OF USC ATHLETICS

The 21-year-old linebacker returned to the Gamecocks for his senior year with an NFL option, something the team is no doubt grateful for. “He’s one of the best tacklers in the SEC right now,” says Sapakoff.

USC Gamecocks

FANATIC: Billy Shuman

“You should’ve seen the faces of the UGA fans when we pulled up with Big George Rogers and the Heisman Trophy in our golf cart!” (on the annual Border Bash golf tournament, held the day prior to the USC-UGA game)

Year Graduated: 1996

Known For: His Steve Spurrier impersonation. “People always say that I resemble Coach Spurrier. I’m a pretty good mimic, so I learned to imitate him fairly well.”
Ultimate Paraphernalia: A framed newspaper article signed by Steve Spurrier. “A friend and I were at the Clemson-Carolina game one year and hanging out at the Esso Club. I had my visor on and was entertaining a few friends with my Spurrier act when Bob Gillespie of *The State* walked up. He said that was the best Spurrier impersonation he had ever witnessed. The following season, he wrote about it in a story that came out on the eve of the USC-Florida game in Gainesville. When I met Spurrier a while later and asked him to sign the article, he gave me that quirky look and said, ‘Ah, you’re that guy!’”

Game-Day Tradition: “Getting to Williams-Brice at least five hours prior to kickoff and visiting with all of the great Gamecock fans I’ve met over the years. The Murdaugh family from Hampton parks near the team’s locker room, and it’s always awesome to hang out with them and greet the players after a big win.”
Dedication: “Game day is sacred for me. I usually can’t sleep the night before, so I pack the car and get ready to roll. When Saturday morning arrives, I’m like a little kid ready to go on a class trip.”



PHOTOGRAPHS (2) BY ZACH SUGGS



Cheers!

Called “the quintessential sports bar” by the *Charleston City Paper*, **BOBBY HARTIN’S** is the perfect game-day substitute. There are lots of TVs and plenty of room, and when the Gamecocks are on the tube, this normally quiet joint erupts into pandemonium. 1124 Sam Rittenberg Blvd.; (843) 832-0555

PRO ROSTER

IMAGES (7) COURTESY OF USC ATHLETICS



The Gamecocks had seven players selected in the NFL draft this past April—the most USC players from a single season to go big in 55 years

Jared Cook (tight end) was drafted by the Tennessee Titans in the third round (the first Gamecock selected).

FIFTH-ROUND PICKS:



Kenny McKinley (wide receiver) was drafted by the Denver Broncos.



Jasper Brinkley (linebacker) was drafted by the Minnesota Vikings.



Jamon Meredith (offensive tackle) was drafted by the Green Bay Packers.

SEVENTH-ROUND PICKS:



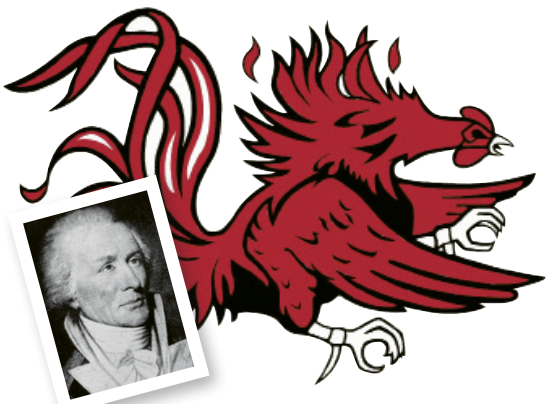
Captain Munnerlyn (cornerback) was drafted by the Carolina Panthers as the 216th pick overall.



Stoney Woodson (defensive back) was drafted by the New York Giants as the 238th pick.



Ryan Succop (kicker), deemed “Mr. Irrelevant” by being the 256th and final selection, was drafted by the Kansas City Chiefs.



The Name Game: “You won’t find any more loyal fans...than those who follow the South Carolina Gamecocks,” says Tim Brando of *CBS Sports*. Nevertheless, even the most avid follower might not know the origins of the moniker. Through the turn of the century, there were many nicknames for the team, including “The Fighting Gamecocks”—supposedly named in honor of notoriously feisty Revolutionary War general Thomas Sumter of South Carolina. Then, in 1903, *The State* referred to them as the “Gamecocks.” The name stuck, and to this day Carolina fans are as energetic and tenacious as their feathered fighting namesakes.

2009 SCHEDULE

Sept. 3 at North Carolina State, Raleigh, NC, 7 p.m.
Sept. 12 at Georgia, Athens, GA, 7 p.m.
Sept. 19 Florida Atlantic, Brice-Williams Stadium, TBA
Sept. 24 Mississippi, Brice-Williams Stadium, 7:30 p.m.
Oct. 3 SC State, Brice-Williams Stadium, TBA
Oct. 10 Kentucky, Brice-Williams Stadium, TBA
Oct. 17 at Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL, TBA
Oct. 24 Homecoming: Vanderbilt, Brice-Williams Stadium, TBA
Oct. 31 at Tennessee, Knoxville, TN, TBA
Nov. 7 at Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR, TBA
Nov. 14 Florida, Brice-Williams Stadium, TBA
Nov. 28 Clemson, Brice-Williams Stadium, TBA
For tickets and parking information, visit www.gamecocksonline.cstv.com.

FOR MORE
ON THE
GAMECOCKS
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ON THE PROWL

Clemson University Tigers



Many Clemson fans left last season more than a bit disappointed. Initially ranked number nine in the country, the Tigers suffered some heartbreaking losses to teams most observers agree should have been gimmes—recall the Wake Forest and Maryland debacles? Couple those with a beating by Florida State; the unceremonious October 2008 departure of head coach Tommy Bowden (personal decision or forced resignation? The jury's still out); and a new coach, Dabo Swinney, taking charge, and the Tigers have a lot of expectations to fulfill.

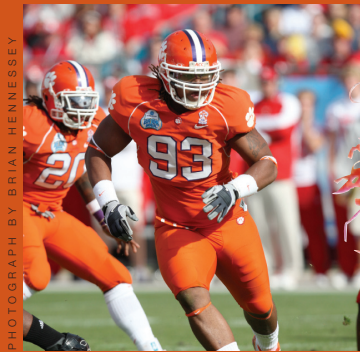
However, there were some bright spots, including the 31-14 victory over their in-state rivals, the Gamecocks (Clemson leads the 11-year-old rivalry 65-37, with four ties). Add in some impressive stats: The Tigers won four of their last five regular season games, made their fourth consecutive bowl appearance, and were the only ACC team to rank in the top four in both offensive and defensive scoring. “Clemson is going to have to hide its inexperience at quarterback with a stellar pass rush and pass defense, plus the running of C.J. Spiller,” notes *P&C* writer Gene Sapakoff. “It’s more than possible, but the schedule is tough early, and stumbling out of the gates is never a good idea.” And as for Swinney calling the shots? “He showed some good leadership, but he’ll have to prove it over two or three seasons, not just a few games.”



New head coach Dabo Swinney (far left) faces his first full season leading Clemson. The mighty Tigers take the field (center). Former running back James Davis (right) was drafted by the Cleveland Browns.



{ ONES TO WATCH }



PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN HENNESSEY

DaQuan Bowers

The starting sophomore, who ESPN voted as Number One defensive end, is a powerhouse of pass rushing. He had 47 tackles last season (top among defensive linemen) and was one of the main reasons the Tigers were ranked 10th in the nation. He also had six tackles in the Gator Bowl against Nebraska and was named Defensive MVP of the game.



PHOTOGRAPH BY TYLER LACROSS

C.J. Spiller

The senior running back is an absolute game-breaker, "with the potential to score anytime he touches the ball," says Sapakoff. With 4,908 all-purpose rushing yards and as the holder of 10 Clemson records (including most touchdown plays of 50 yards or more and six career touchdown plays of 80 yards or more), he promises to continue to do big things this season.

Clemson Tigers

FANATIC: Heather Byrd



PHOTOGRAPHS (2) BY ZACH SUGGS

"Basically, I live and breathe Clemson football. My life revolves around supporting the team and organizing the local fan base. I can't imagine things any other way."

Year Graduated: 1999

Distinctions: President of the Charleston County Clemson Club, chair-elect of the Clemson Women's Alumni Council, host of Bring Your Daughter to Clemson Weekend 2009, and Charleston County vice IPTAY chair

Ultimate Paraphernalia: My first Tiger rag (a bandana)

Game-Day Tradition: In a word: "tail-gate!" She and husband Ryan have a house near Clemson dubbed the "Pendleton Paw Palace" and start at 7 a.m. for every home game.

Dedication: "My life revolves around Clemson; when I'm shopping I look for anything orange. I even have a tiger paw on my suitcase."

Small World: "I was at an art museum in London and was carrying my tiger paw backpack. Someone from Greenville came up to me and said, 'My father graduated from Clemson in 1938!'"



PHOTOGRAPH BY TYLER LACROSS

PRO ROSTER

Clemson currently boasts 17 former players on NFL rosters, including these 2009 picks



PHOTOGRAPH BY TYLER LACROSS

Chris Clemons

(free safety) was drafted in the fifth round by the Miami Dolphins.



PHOTOGRAPHS (3) BY BRIAN HENNESSEY

James Davis

(running back) was drafted in the sixth round by the Cleveland Browns.



Michael Kamlin

(free safety) was drafted in the fifth round by the Dallas Cowboys.



Dorell Scott

(defensive tackle) was drafted as a third overall pick in the fourth round by the St. Louis Rams.

FOR MORE ON THE TIGERS VISIT
charlestonmag.com

Cheers!

The official meeting place for Charleston's Clemson Club is **POINT GRILL AT OMAR SHRINE**. The club rents out the bar for every Tiger game, and food and libations flow freely. But beware: it's liable to get rowdy. 176 Patriots Point Rd., Mount Pleasant; (843) 216-1168



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROB WILLIAMS

Rock of Ages For years, a mysterious rock sat in head coach Frank Howard's (1940-1969) office, used as a doorstep and all but ignored. Though it was a gift to Howard from a friend who brought it from Death Valley, California, to "Death Valley," South Carolina (the popular name given to Memorial Stadium in the 1940s), Howard ordered that the rock be discarded in 1966. Instead, a clever promoter had it mounted on a pedestal and placed in the middle of the east end zone hill, down which the Clemson football team runs when entering the field for each game. On September 24, 1966, the Tigers ran by the rock for the first time and went on to beat conference rival University of Virginia 40-35.

From then on, Howard used the rock as a motivational tool, declaring "Give me 110 percent or keep your filthy hands off of my rock." Beginning the next season, the team started rubbing the rock on their way down the hill, establishing one of the great traditions in college football and forever immortalizing "Howard's Rock."

FUN FACT: As of the end of the 2008 season, the Tigers have made the run down the hill 327 times.



2009 SCHEDULE

Sept. 5 Middle Tennessee, Memorial Stadium, 6 p.m.
Sept. 10 at Georgia Tech, Atlanta, GA, 7:30 p.m.
Sept. 19 Boston College, Memorial Stadium, noon
Sept. 26 TCU, Memorial Stadium, TBA
Oct. 3 at Maryland, College Park, MD, TBA
Oct. 17 Wake Forest, Memorial Stadium, TBA
Oct. 24 at Miami, Coral Gables, FL, TBA
Oct. 31 Homecoming: Coastal Carolina, Memorial Stadium, TBA
Nov. 7 Florida State, Memorial Stadium, TBA
Nov. 14 at North Carolina State, Raleigh, NC, TBA
Nov. 21 Virginia, Memorial Stadium, TBA
Nov. 28 at South Carolina, Columbia, SC, TBA
For tickets and parking information, visit www.clemsontigers.cstv.com.