

# THE HUDDLE



Volume LX • The official newsletter of the University of Georgia Football Lettermen's Club

Spring 2025

## Georgia Football Lettermen's Club Officers and Committees 2025

### Officers

President . . . . . Mack Guest  
Vice President . . . . . David Dukes  
Associate Vice President. . . Kelin Johnson  
Secretary/Treasurer . . . . . Mark Hodge  
Associate Secretary/  
Treasurer . . . . . Scott Williams

Jack Davis, David Weeks, Bryant Gantt,  
Knox Culpepper

### Tailgate Reunion Committee

Jim Baker, Daniel Dooley, Chuck  
Kinnebrew, David Dukes, Sylvester  
Elkins, DJ Jones, Fred Munzenmaier

### Parliamentary

Chuck Kinnebrew

### Finance Committee

Jack Davis, Knox Culpepper, Justin Scott  
Wesley, Mark Hodge, Mixon Robinson,  
James Brown, CJ Byrd, Robert  
Honeycutt, Dick Conn

### Jimmy Payne Hardship Committee

Robert Honeycutt, Marsay Simpson,  
Mack Guest, Dick Conn, Jack Davis,  
Mark Hodge, David Dukes, David Weeks

### Long Range Planning

Brandon Tolbert, Jevaris Johnson,  
Derrick Bailey, Jack Davis, Kelvin  
Williams, Tra Battle

### Executive Steering Committee

Mack Guest, Rennie Curran, David  
Dukes, Kelin Johnson, Mark Hodge,  
Wycliffe Lovelace, Jack Davis, Bryant  
Gantt, David Weeks, Gene Toodle

### Oconee Hill Cemetery and Bulldog Laundry Parking

Jack Davis, Ernest Ponder, Mike  
Thornton, Willie McClendon, James  
Brown, Cameron Allen, Travers Paine,  
Nat Hudson

### Bulldog Haven

Mark Hodge, Jack Davis, Mack Guest,  
Willie McClendon, Wycliffe Lovelace

### Reunion Halftime Security

Knox Culpepper, Josh James, DJ Jones,  
Horace King, Jim Milo, Kelvin Williams

### Lettermen Club Maintenance & Facilities

Ronnie Swoopes, Robert Miles, Steve  
Sleek, Chris Burgett, John Kasay

### Ole Faithful Dawg Award

Jim Baker, Terry Osbolt, Chuck  
Kinnebrew, Charley Whittemore, Ronnie  
Swoopes

### Wally's Boy's

Cicero Lucas

### Black Alumni Homecoming Celebration

Kelin Johnson, Gene Toodle, Chris  
Burgett, Jevaris Johnson, Justin Scott  
Wesley, Ryne Rankin, Mack Guest,  
Robert Honeycutt

### By-Laws Committee

Chuck Kinnebrew, Mixon Robinson,  
Ryne Rankin, Jeff Lewis, James Brown,  
Derrick Bailey, Greg Talley, Rosey  
Gilliam

### Nominations

Mark Hodge, Robert Miles, Knox  
Culpepper, Gene Toodle

### NFL Relations

Shaun Chapas, Bryant Gantt

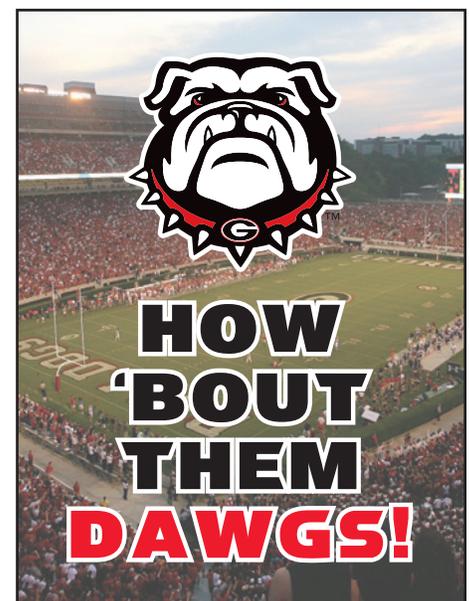
### Events – G Day BBQ, Golf, August Lunch

David Dukes, Horace King, John  
Lastinger, Wycliffe Lovelace, Brandon  
Tolbert, Des Williams, Scott Williams

### Huddle/Directory

Skip James, DJ Jones, Chris Burgett,  
Marsay Simpson

**\*\*Anyone interested in serving on  
a committee, please contact Mark  
Hodge (gmh@fbglaw.com) or Sally  
Haugabook (sallyhaugabook@  
ugalettermensclub.com.)**





# Lettermen's G-Day Cookout

Under the picturesque sunny, blue skies, our Lettermen's Cookout was fantastic! Held before G-Day on April 12, 2025 at the Oconee Hill Cemetery, lettermen and their families were treated to The Varsity and Crowe's BBQ food trucks which was the highlight of the event. Delicious food was enjoyed while the atmosphere was filled with laughter, shared stories, and a strong sense of camaraderie as lettermen reconnected and enjoyed their fellowship together. This could not have been possible without the support of the University of Georgia Athletic Association who hosted this event for all football lettermen and their families. We look forward to seeing even more lettermen and their families next year!



DO WE HAVE YOUR  
EMAIL ADDRESS?



# Lettermen's G-Day Cookout





**MAKE SURE YOU HAVE  
YOUR LETTERMEN'S CARD**

## *Letter from the President*

Dear Lettermen,

As the excitement of the 2025 UGA football season approaches with the kickoff on August 30th – UGA vs. Marshall, we look forward to hosting our annual tailgate party at Oconee Hill Cemetery. We will also have our reunion recognition that day of the 2015, 2005, 2000, 1995, 1985, 1975, & 1965 teams as well as all the lettermen who help build the tradition we enjoy today.

We wish Coach Kirby Smart and his team the best as they prepare for another Championship season. Enjoy the summer and we will see you in August.

Sincerely,

Mack H. Guest, III



## **IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

**August 14, 2025**

Board Meeting

**August 16, 2025**

Lettermen's Luncheon & Scrimmage  
*West End Zone  
Sanford Stadium*

**August 30, 2025**

Lettermen's Tailgate and Reunion  
UGA vs. Marshall  
*Oconee Hill Cemetery*

**Fall 2025-TBD**

Homecoming Tailgate  
*Myers Quad*



# 2025 GEORGIA Football Schedule

August 30	Marshall	Athens, GA
September 6	Austin Peay	Athens, GA
September 13	Tennessee	Knoxville, TN
September 27	Alabama	Athens, GA
October 4	Kentucky	Athens, GA
October 11	Auburn	Auburn, AL
October 18	Ole Miss	Athens, GA
November 1	Florida	Jacksonville, FL
November 8	Mississippi State	Starkville, MS
November 15	Texas	Athens, GA
November 22	Charlotte	Athens, GA
November 28	Georgia Tech	Atlanta, GA



## Wally's Boys Breakfast

The Wally's Boys held their annual breakfast on Saturday, April 12, 2025 at the Athens Country Club. The Wally's Boys are comprised of football lettermen who played for Coach Wallace Butts from 1939-1960. These lettermen and their families enjoyed this special time together.

*Photos courtesy of Rob Saye*



### 2025 Annual Campaign

THE GEORGIA FOOTBALL LETTERMEN'S CLUB  
1070 Lake Wellbrook Dr. • Athens, GA 30606

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

*Make checks payable to: The Georgia Football Lettermen's Club*

*Enclosed is my gift of:*

\$1,000

\$500

\$250

\$100

\$50

other: \_\_\_\_\_



# FEATURED LETTERMAN

## *MICHAEL JOHNSON*

2001-02-03

Born in the Sunshine State, I spent my early years in Orlando, Florida to be exact. We moved around a bit, but it wasn't until we moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma that I discovered how fun football is and immediately developed a lifelong love of the game. I wanted to be not just be good at it, I wanted to be great at it. So, I worked hard, studied the game, learned from great coaches and teammates and eventually, I mastered my craft. I soon learned that my hard work was paying off, of the large amount of interests I was receiving from different schools in the NCAA. I had dreamt of playing in the NCAA and now that dream was becoming a reality.

I visited many universities, but it wasn't until I visited the University of Georgia that I knew without a shadow of a doubt that I was home. Coach Jim Donnan welcomed me with open arms. I immediately fell in love with the many opportunities both academically and athletically, the University of Georgia had to offer. I made the decision to come to the University instinctively, it was the best decision for me, and I have never looked back. I joined the biggest family in the world. Everywhere I go, I get nothing but love. It is truly great to be a Georgia Bulldog.



I was coached initially by Coach Donnan and then later by Coach Mark Richt, both great coaches and both made an impression. A lot of us arrived as boys and we left as men. Coach Richt taught to finish the drill, and that is exactly what we did many times. There were many highs and lows. One of the lows was when I injured my shoulder in my sophomore year and had to have surgery, followed by rehab. One of the highs was the most memorable one of all. The catch from David Greene that won us the 2002 SEC Championship. As they say, the rest is history!

I married the love of my life, Ruth, shortly after leaving Georgia, (best decision that I have ever made), 20 years and counting, it just gets better every day. She is the best wife, best friend, and mother to our children and my biggest fan. Ruth has been selflessly caring for the sick and has

been a servant leader in our community for many years. She has impacted and will continue to impact many more lives. I thank God for her gift and that I get to share her with the world. We have three amazing children. Not only are they smart, intelligent and beautiful but they are also wonderful human beings and excellent athletes. McKenzie, 17 will be a senior hoping to be a bulldog in 2026 to pursue a law





degree. Followed by Michaela, 15 and McKenly 12. They all inherited their athletic ability from the both of us. They are all working very hard to master the game of volleyball and so far, so good.

My playing days at Georgia and being surrounded by wonderful men of God helped sharpen me in all aspects of my life. The kind of husband that I am, the kind of father that I am, the kind of mentor I am, the kind of coach I am and the kind of friend that I am. Being at Georgia was life changing in more ways than one, for that I will forever be grateful. I will never forget my time at Georgia, and I hope the Bulldog Nation never forgets me. Although I have a sinking feeling that they won't! wink wink! It is truly great to be a Georgia Bulldog!

Go Dawgs! Sic'em!  
MJ 25



## Frostbite Tournament

The 37th Frostbite Golf Tournament was held on March 13-14, 2025 at Hickory Hills Golf Course in Jackson, GA. These lettermen had a wonderful time on and off the golf course and would love to have you attend next year. A big shout out to Ralph Clark for continuing to organize this event!



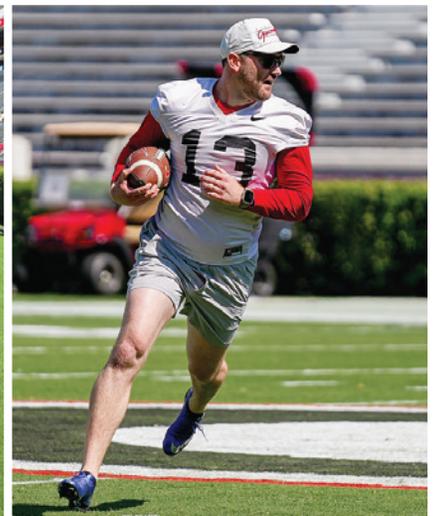
Pictured L to R: Dennis Whit, Ralph Clark, Mike Striplin, David McKnight, Johnny Cobb, Tom Zimmerlink



MAKE SURE YOU HAVE  
YOUR LETTERMEN'S CARD

# Alumni Flag Football Game

On April 12, 2025, another exciting flag football game brought together our lettermen for a nostalgic and entertaining showdown. These guys were able to relive their glory days on Dooley Field at Sanford Stadium and enjoyed sharing the field with their families before the game. This was a great way to celebrate sportsmanship and UGA legacy. We hope to see you there next year!





# *Alumni Flag Football Game*





## Loran Smith: UGA Hall of Fame

Following World War II, one of the sports that Americans were eager to embrace was college football. The nation was anxious to return to normal and the college campuses were filled with returning veterans who were anxious to obtain a degree and get on with their lives.

Student bodies also expanded and one of the great recreational outlets was college football on Saturday afternoons. This was before the television and mass media initiatives of today. The game flourished at the grass roots level and experienced remarkable growth.

In 1947, Red Blaik, the head coach at Army, war hero Gen. Douglas MacArthur and the legendary sportswriter Grantland Rice met and laid the groundwork for the National Football Foundation.

The first Hall of Fame class was inducted in 1951. Following a brief break, the banquet began its annual start in 1954 and has been a big date on the December calendar except for one year when COVID caused a shutdown of the Hilton Hotel where the NFF hosted its banquet.

Georgia has had 21 of its former players and coaches inducted into this august group and those affiliated with the UGA chapter of the NFF are working diligently to promote the candidacy of **George Patton**, two time All-American, who was the cornerstone of the Vince Dooley era.

The NFF for years held its annual induction banquet at the Waldorf Astoria in mid-town Manhattan. In 1975 William C. Hartman, then Chairman of the Georgia Student Educational Fund, took an associate to the Foundation induction banquet and continued throughout his life. After a couple of years, Hartman began buying a table and inviting several Georgia friends and supporters to attend the banquet.

For a few years this became an annual excursion for several of UGA's most enthusiastic supporters. From those casual and informal outings, a chapter was formed, with its first awards gathering taking place at the Athens Country Club with a luncheon in 1986.

From that loosely organized beginning and with Hartman and GSEF underwriting any budget shortfalls, the Chapter experienced a trial-and-error existence until it firmed up its volunteer board of directors and created a golf outing that enabled the chapter to grow and expand until it became the largest chapter in the country. It has enjoyed the No. 1 ranking for the last dozen or so years.

Headliner college head coaches, National Football League stars, media celebrities—from Kirby Smart, Georgia; to Bob Stoops, Oklahoma; to Archie Manning, Ole Miss; to Rick Neuheisel, former head coach at Colorado and UCLA and is now CBS college football analyst; Ron Jaworski, Monday night football; Mike Tirico, long time television play by play announcer now working with NBC; Jeff Foxworthy, comedian; Holly Rowe, ESPN sideline announcer and former players such as Herschel Walker and Terry Hoage.

Earlier this week the Georgia Chapter hosted its 39th annual awards dinner honoring a local son with a distinguished political and community service career, Michael Thurmond; the dean of the Terry College of Business, Ben Ayers, with its Distinguished American Award and Jonathan Taylor of Long Island, New York was recognized for his "Contribution to Amateur Football."

Fred Butler, Athens Coca-Cola Co., presented the Coca-Cola Helping Hand Award to Shawonna Coleman of the Athens Boys and Girls Club; Jesse Hickey of the Turner Family Foundation presented the Jack Turner Award to **Dan Jackson**, Georgia's overachieving defensive back, Dan Jackson; Tony Ferguson recognized on behalf of Georgia Power the two local public high schools Cedar Shoals and Clarke Central for their work with Play It Smart, an NFF program which provides support for academically at risk student-athletes; the most valuable players from the two schools (Taiwan Green, Cedar Shoals and Corey Watkins, Clarke Central) were awarded scholarships from Synovus Bank, hosted by John Tebeau.

Five former Georgia players **Hap Hines, David Jacobs, Clint Boling, Jeff Hipp, and Orson Prince-Charles** were honored for post graduate achievement which is sponsored by board member John Parker in memory of his parents Reid and Cynthia Parker. Lawton Stephens, a trustee of the Francis Wood Wilson Foundation, saluted Northeast Georgia scholar athletes: Jaiden Nelson, Clarke Central; Aiden Rainey, West Hall High; Jonah Burger, Franklin County High; Charlie Bradshaw, Chestatee High and Parker Crawford Grow, Athens Academy.

Julie Moran, a Thomasville, Ga., native and a magna cum laude graduate of the University of Georgia was the keynote



speaker who provided insights into the interesting things that have happened to her in her broadcast career.

A woman of firsts, her credits include co-founding NBC Sports' "Inside Stuff" with Ahmad Rashad and later becoming the first ever female sideline announcer for Dick Vermeil and Brent Musberger. She is the first woman to have an NBA trading card, and with "Inside Stuff" being inducted into the Naismith NBA Hall of Fame, this means she will soon be receiving an NBA Hall of Fame ring.

She is the first woman to solo host ABC's Wide World of Sports, later shifting to an assignment with "Entertainment Tonight," in New York and Los Angeles. She left "Entertainment Tonight," to raise her daughters Makayla and Maiya. She teams with her husband, Rob Moran, producing movies and documentaries. Their production company, "Silver Fox Productions," is named for her grandfather, Sterling Dupree, Vince Dooley's first recruiting coordinator.

An athlete herself, she made the All-State basketball team in high school at Brookwood Academy in Thomasville and she is being nominated by the University of Georgia for induction in the state of Georgia Sports Hall of Fame.

Read more at: <https://www.lagrangenews.com/2025/04/26/contributors-view-loran-smith-uga-hall-of-fame/>



## LETTERMEN CONTACT INFORMATION



**MOVING? CHANGE IN JOBS?? NEW EMAIL ADDRESS???** Please be sure to contact Sally Haugabook at [sallyhaugabook@ugalettermensclub.com](mailto:sallyhaugabook@ugalettermensclub.com) with any change in your contact information. It is important for us to have the current mailing address for you. Also, if Sally does not have your email address, please send it to her. She periodically sends out emails concerning lettermen, tailgating, golf tournaments, and shirt sales. Thanks for your help!



### *In Memoriam*

*Let us not forget the recent deaths  
of our lettermen.  
These men loved the game of football  
and all that it had to offer.*

- Bill Burt
- Roy Curtis
- Phil Green
- Dan Inman
- Bucky Kimsey
- Mike Lopatka
- Butch Mulherin
- Greg Waters

## JIMMY PAYNE HARDSHIP FUND

The Jimmy Payne Football Lettermen's Hardship Fund has been established by the Georgia Football Lettermen's Club for the purpose of providing financial assistance to needy football lettermen who find themselves under hardship conditions.

For an application, please  
visit our website -  
[www.ugalettermensclub.com](http://www.ugalettermensclub.com)



## LETTERMEN REUNION

All lettermen will be honored during the UGA vs. Marshall football game on August 30, 2025. Instructions on where to meet and stand once your team is called will be provided at the Lettermen's Tailgate registration table at Oconee Hill Cemetery that morning. There will be a special recognition for the class reunion teams of 10, 20, 25, 30, 40, 50, and 60 years.

### *10 years ago 2015*

Taxslayer Bowl

(10-3) Coach: Mark Richt

Captains: John Theus, Malcolm Mitchell, Jordan Jenkins, Jake Ganus, Ryne Rankin, Nathan Theus

### *20 years ago 2005*

SEC Champions

Nokia Sugar Bowl

(10-3) Coach: Mark Richt

Captains: D.J. Shockley, Greg Blue, Kedric Golston, Max Jean-Gilles, Mike Gilliam

### *25 years ago 2000*

Jeep O'ahu Bowl

(8-4) Coach: Jim Donnan

Captains: Quincy Carter, Jonas Jennings, Brett Millican, Richard Seymour, Marcus Stroud

### *30 years ago 1995*

Peach Bowl

(6-6) Coach: Ray Goff

Captains: Whit Marshall, Brice Hunter, David Weeks, Paul Taylor, Phillip Daniels

### *40 years ago 1985*

Sun Bowl

(7-3-2) Coach: Vince Dooley

Captain: Peter Anderson

### *50 years ago 1975*

Cotton Bowl

(9-3) Coach: Vince Dooley

Captains: Glynn Harrison, David Schwak

### *60 years ago 1965*

(6-4) Coach: Vince Dooley

Captain: Doug McFalls

# Alumni Flag Football Game

(more photos)





## Send a Memorial

You can send a memorial gift to the Georgia Football Lettermen's Club in memory or in honor of a loved one. This is a special way to honor those people who you loved. Gifts can be sent to 1070 Lake Wellbrook Drive, Athens, GA 30606. For more information, please contact Sally at [sallyhaugabook@ugalettermensclub.com](mailto:sallyhaugabook@ugalettermensclub.com). Thank you to those people who have taken part in this opportunity.

*Jim Massey in memory of Bucky Kimsey*

*Jim Massey in memory of Mike Lopatka*

*Mack H. Guest, III in memory of John McMullan*

*Mack H. Guest, III in memory of Steve McGrath*

*Mack H. Guest, III in memory of Sonny Smart*

*Jim Baker in memory of Sonny Smart*

*Jim Baker in memory of Tom Theus*

*Jim Massey in memory of Butch Mulherin*

*Jim Baker in memory of H.A. Loy*

*Jim Baker in memory of Butch Mulherin*

*John Smith in memory of Vince Dooley*

### IN HONOR OF...

*Jim Massey in honor of Mack H. Guest, III*

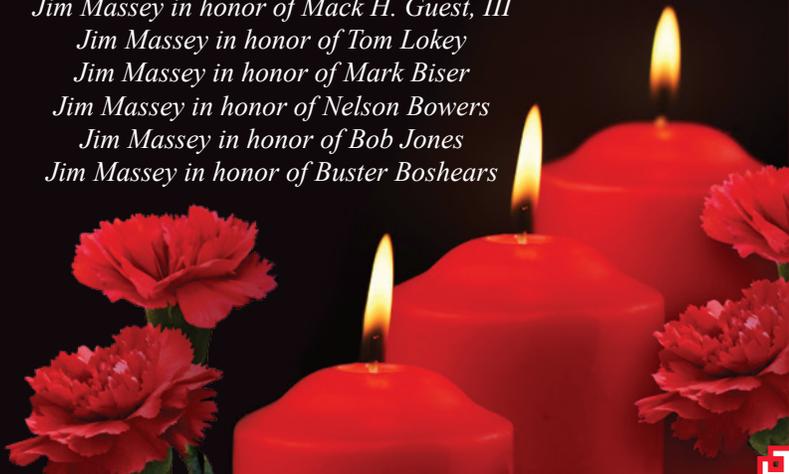
*Jim Massey in honor of Tom Lokey*

*Jim Massey in honor of Mark Biser*

*Jim Massey in honor of Nelson Bowers*

*Jim Massey in honor of Bob Jones*

*Jim Massey in honor of Buster Boshears*



## Holiday Inn Express Room Block Reunion & Tailgate Weekend

August 29-31, 2025

We have a room block in place at the Holiday Inn Express in Athens for August 29-31, 2025 – our Tailgate & Reunion weekend. The booking link is below, or you can call the hotel directly at (706) 546-8122 and reference group code "GAF".

There is a two-night minimum stay required and the cutoff date for making reservations is 7/30/25.

[https://www.hiexpress.com/redirect?path=hd&brandCode=EX&localeCode=en&regionCode=1&hotelCode=AHNDT&\\_PMID=99801505&GPC=GAF&cn=no&viewfullsite=true](https://www.hiexpress.com/redirect?path=hd&brandCode=EX&localeCode=en&regionCode=1&hotelCode=AHNDT&_PMID=99801505&GPC=GAF&cn=no&viewfullsite=true)



### REMINDER

Georgia Football Lettermen's Club logo is for approved Georgia Football Lettermen's Club events only. Thanks for your cooperation!



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## Lettermen News

**2023: Cade Brock** is excited to share that DGD Outdoors was founded in 2021 by UGA Football players, originally to share their passion for the outdoors with others. However, they soon realized how much their very own teammates enjoyed hunting and fishing, especially those who had never been provided the opportunity. Since then, they have been sharing their love and outdoor experiences with not only UGA Football Players but all athletes at the University!

They use their platform as athletes and their connections in the community to provide outdoor opportunities to UGA Athletes as well as kids across the state. To learn more, visit their website at <https://dgdoutdoors.info/>.

Email Address: [Cadebrock@uga.edu](mailto:Cadebrock@uga.edu)

**2018: Morgan White** married UGA alum (2021) Hannah Logan North on October 22, 2022. They moved to Bremen, GA in March of 2024. On June 15, 2024 their first child was born, Thomas Wells White. Then in July of 2024, Morgan started a new job at Harrison Contracting.

Email Address: [morganw96@comcast.net](mailto:morganw96@comcast.net)

**1999: Dustin Luckie** along with his family: Nicolette (former UGA Soccer Player), Drake (18), Gino (15), and Sylvan (11) all reside in Marietta, GA. Dustin owns Jump and Slide, a party/event rental company specializing in bounce houses, wet/dry water slides/etc. and is excited about the launch of the business and hopes that Bulldog Nation supports his new endeavor- visit [jumpandslide.com](http://jumpandslide.com) for bookings. Drake has just graduated from Walton High School and is attending UT Chattanooga and will play football in the fall. Gino and Sylvan are active with travel baseball and football as well and they look forward to the upcoming UGA Football season in the fall. Go Dawgs!

Email Address: [dluckie50@gmail.com](mailto:dluckie50@gmail.com)

**1992: Rob Miller** is proud to say that his daughter, LauraLee, got married in March. She and her husband, Caleb, also just purchased their first house. They live in Summerville, SC where she is an ER/Trauma nurse.

He is also very proud to announce that his son, Trey, graduated from the University of Georgia on May 9th. Trey will be coming to work with Rob at their family business, Duncan Tire Company in Dublin, GA. Go Dawgs.

Email Address: [rob@duncantire.com](mailto:rob@duncantire.com)

**1987: John Brantley** and his wife, Diane, are pleased to announce the arrival of their 3<sup>rd</sup> grandchild, John Everest Brantley "Jeb," who was born on January 18, 2025, weighing 6 lbs. 5 oz.

Email Address: [jbrantley42@hotmail.com](mailto:jbrantley42@hotmail.com)

**1985: Donald Chumbley** is thrilled to share that his daughter, Anna, 2020 Honor Graduate at UGA and 2023 Emory Law School Graduate had her first child, Stratton Jack Haines on January 1, 2024. This is Donald's first grandchild. Go Dawgs!

Email Address: [dchumley@calvarydayschool.com](mailto:dchumley@calvarydayschool.com)

**1983: Jody Tanner** and his wife, Debbie, have some exciting news to share. Their middle daughter, Tori, and her husband, Matt Grandstaff, have both finished their PhDs recently at UGA. Their youngest child finished her MBA at UGA last May and works for Keurig Dr Pepper in Texas. Their son, Clay will be promoted to Major in the United States Army in September. He and his wife, Lindsey, have twin boys that will be three in September. Tori and her husband are expecting a baby in September.

Email Address: [Jodytanner5@yahoo.com](mailto:Jodytanner5@yahoo.com)

**1981: Tripp Simpson** is pleased to announce that Lee and Madison Simpson and their 3 year old daughter, Brett, of Athens welcomed little sister, Wesley Ann, into their family on March 14, 2025.

Their youngest daughter, Landry Simpson Galloway, and husband, Hunter, of Milledgeville had their first child, Emory Elizabeth Galloway on April 2, 2025. Their middle daughter, Lindsey Simpson King, her husband, Will, and 3 year old daughter, Cami, of Milledgeville welcomed Naomi Ruth King on April 28, 2025 for Tripp and Robyn's 5th granddaughter. Please pray for them!!!

Email Address: [trippsimpson7@gmail.com](mailto:trippsimpson7@gmail.com)

**1980: Philip Kelly** is excited to share that his daughter, Lindy Kelly, graduated from Augusta University School of Nursing Athens Campus on May 9th! She starts a JOB with Piedmont Hospital in Athens Labor and Delivery in July!!!

Email Address: [pmkuga@comcast.net](mailto:pmkuga@comcast.net)

**1980: Pat McShea** is proud to announce that his daughter, Kaitlin McShea Messick, has received an award. It is called the Walter Barnard Hill Award for Distinguished Achievement in Public Service and Outreach by UGA faculty members and service professionals.

Email Address: [mcshea41@gmail.com](mailto:mcshea41@gmail.com)

**1978: Jeff Lewis** is resuming his career in show business. Check Facebook for news of his next show at The Old Vinings Inn in Atlanta. Why? "The show must go on!"

Email Address: [jeffrey.lewis@agg.com](mailto:jeffrey.lewis@agg.com)

**1978: Bill Spencer** and his wife, Ann, are thrilled to announce the birth of their first grandchild, Spencer Edwin Thaxton. He was born on June 12th, 2024 at St. Mary's in Athens to their daughter Kim and her husband Paul.

Email Address: [spencersjewelers@bellsouth.net](mailto:spencersjewelers@bellsouth.net)



## Lettermen News

**1973: Ralph Clark** is giving away his Georgia Bulldog golf bag and Ping Woods and Irons for FREE. The Ping Clubs are 20 years old but they are great- Ping driver (13 degree), 5, 7, 9 woods and 5 to sand wedge irons. He thinks they would be great for a letterman or a son who is learning to play golf. Contact Ralph at (478) 731-3308 or email him.

Email Address: ralphclark137@gmail.com

**1970: Mike Oakes** is proud to announce that his granddaughter, Ella Pulliam, daughter of Lara Oakes Pulliam and Bryan Pulliam graduated from Athens Academy and is looking forward to beginning college.

Email Address inodatsrite35@yahoo.com

**1968: E. Russell “Rusty” Epperson** received the Commercial Board of Realtors Bruce B. Wilson award. The award is given to 45 consecutive years in the Real Estate Board Million Dollar Club.

Email Address: repperson@WHNRE.com

**1967: Stu Mosher** is pleased to announce that on Monday, January 27, 2025, his son, Scott Mosher, was awarded the Forsyth County News, 2025 Best of Forsyth Reader’s Choice Award for Best Teacher in Forsyth. The Best of Forsyth is an annual voting contest presented by the Forsyth County News that allows residents to vote for their favorites in over three hundred different categories. Scott is the 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Covenant Christian Academy in Cumming, Georgia.

Email Address: stuartmosher@aol.com

**1957: Buck Wilson** would like to offer any assistance and advice he can to any Letterman that has an interest in Aviation as a career. Buck has worked in Aviation at all levels now for more than 60 years. He is available to speak to any letterman to answer any questions and act as their advocate or agent, or to write a letter of recommendation to assist them receiving an interview for the career choice in aviation. There will be no fees for any services he provides. Buck can be reached by phone at (404) 538-7969 or by email.

Email Address: airdawgwilson@gmail.com.

## Circle of Honor

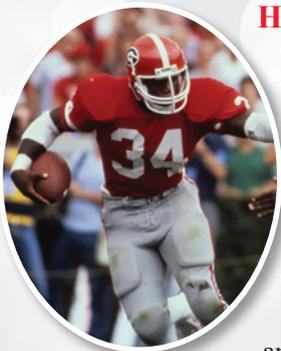


## Class of 2025

**Herschel Walker** — 1982 Heisman Trophy winner and member of the College Football Hall of Fame — along with legendary tennis coaches Manuel Diaz and Jeff Wallace have been selected for induction into the UGA Athletic Association Circle of Honor Class of 2025.

Established in 1996 to recognize and celebrate the best of the best among Georgia student-athletes, coaches and administrators, the Circle of Honor is the highest honor a Bulldog can receive. The addition of Diaz, Walker and Wallace brings the total number of inductees to 93.

In addition to this year’s Circle of Honor selections, Judge William T. Moore will be honored with the Bill Hartman Award. This year’s group of honorees will be inducted formally during the Circle of Honor Gala on August 29 in the Butts-Mehre Building.



### Herschel Walker

One of the greatest players in college football history, Wrightsville, Georgia, native Herschel Walker was a unanimous All-America selection in each of his three seasons at Georgia. At the conclusion of his college career, Walker owned 41 school records, 16 Southeastern Conference records and 11 NCAA records.

As a freshman in 1980, Walker led Georgia to a perfect 12-0 record and the national championship. That season, he rushed for a NCAA freshman record 1,616 yards — a mark that stood until 1996.

Walker finished third in the Heisman Trophy voting in 1980, second in 1981 and first in 1982 and was the first three-time All-American in program history. Over his career, he amassed 5,259 total rushing yards, an average of 159.4 yards per game — both still Georgia records to this day. Walker’s No. 34 is one of four retired jerseys for the Bulldog football program.

From *georgiadogs.com*



## Loran Smith: On Butch Mulherin

*Bulldawg Illustrated*

March 29, 2025

Butch Mulherin, the first orthopedic MD to hang out his shingle in Athens, was a Georgia native, a Bulldog football letterman, a man of good humor with a deep and abiding passion for following a bird dog through the brush and bramble of family acreage near Damascus in deep Southwest Georgia.

Seeing patients flourish physically following surgery and knocking down a pair of Bob Whites on a covey rise forever exhilarated this Damn Good Dawg.

His athletic career was circuitous, but when he found his way, owing principally to the influence of his late wife, Ann, Butch's medical journey was pioneering and ultimately thriving and pace setting in the Athens community.

Butch was a highly respected physician; he "fixed" a lot of broken bones, and repaired innumerable anterior cruciate ligaments that enabled countless athletes to return to lineups where glory was achieved in competition.

While I have not set about conducting a survey with his legion of patients, I don't see how any doctor could have had a more uplifting bedside manner than Butch who would engage his patients in small talk about their family or their interests. He was always smiling, affable, and sentimental.

A native of Augusta there were at least seven Mulherin's who answered to the title of, "Doctor," but that did not influence him, early on, to study medicine. His father and grandfather were pediatricians but he had no interest in following in their footsteps. He was a late achiever, dating back to the time he was in high school. He did not play football initially, preferring the country club sports of tennis and golf.

He was good at sports involving the use of his hands which would eventually bode well for him professionally. "To be honest," he once said, "I was experiencing a fun life without a commitment to serious sports involvement and the classroom was for just getting by." His passion for his signature hobby, woodworking, would become an asset later in his career.

Because he stood 6-4, his high school football coach, Frank Inman, advised him that he would be a natural at basketball. The coach was right which revealed that underneath all that reluctance, Butch Mulherin was blessed with notable athletic



ability. Inman talked him into playing football. He played end and played it well enough to get the attention of the UGA football coaches after only one year on the gridiron. Serendipity smiled in his direction when he was offered a grant-in-aid to play for the Dogs.

In Athens, he developed a relationship with Zeke Bratkowski and became a favorite pass catching target of the man who would become one of the most valuable members of the Vince Lombardi title grabbing Packers. Zeke was the backup to Bart Starr in the ultimate glory days of the Green Bay Packers.

Even so, Butch knew that he would not follow a path to the NFL. While it was not blatantly obvious, the medical tradition of his family lay heavily on his mind. Much of that had to do with his social relationship with Ann Collins. Dating this bright, attractive co-ed with a scholarly bent brought focus and direction to his life.

Suddenly, Butch was socializing at the library. Not only did his report card show improved grades, but he was also enjoying a fulfilling campus experience. With academic enlightenment came love and marriage. In the days that followed, Butch returned to Augusta to enroll in the Medical College of Georgia, graduating in 1961. Following residency training, he began thinking of a community in which to settle. Augusta would have been a good fit, and so would Atlanta, but there was serious interest in Athens, although his plans to become the first full-time orthopedic were not met with any enthusiasm in the Classic City medical community. One doc who welcomed him with open arms was Marion Hubert, the longtime Georgia team physician.

At the time, players who suffered serious injury such as anterior cruciate ligament damage had to journey to Atlanta for surgery. A former Bulldog player, Dr. Joe Boland, was an able physician and so was Fred Allman who followed. Players undergoing surgery in Athens and being able to recuperate in a more familiar environment fared much better. Butch's timing was acutely propitious.

I'll always appreciate Butch Mulherin for his many fine qualities as a person. His skills and expertise as a physician always brought high marks from his peers and his patients.



Road games when the Bulldogs journeyed out of town were great fun. Tennis matches, if a court were near the team facility, meals at the leading restaurants, and cold beers before dinner where story telling was a staple of the evening remain indelible in my memory. Butch loved a good joke and a good story.

I never saw him angry or mad. He had the countenance of your sagacious grandfather. He treated all the Georgia football players with the care that he would have underscored for his own son.

His sense of humor was ingrained in his personality. Once

in the Herschel Walker era, the great running back's ankle got twisted in a pileup. The master of playing hurt, Herschel hobbled to the sideline and was taken to a training table.

When trainer Warren Morris came over and asked, "What does it look like?" Butch said, "It's broken." The Bulldog trainer almost fainted as Butch grinned with a "just kidding" remark. As the Georgia radio network sideline announcer, I told that sideline episode on the air. The entire South stands seemed to be listening in, and when I quoted Butch's "just kidding" remark, there was a crescendo of grateful "Ahhhaaa's" emanating from Bulldog fans.

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**Lost Lettermen!** The following lettermen do not have a current address with us. If you have any information of their whereabouts, please contact Sally at [sallyhaugabook@ugalettermensclub.com](mailto:sallyhaugabook@ugalettermensclub.com) or mail information to 1070 Lake Wellbrook Drive, Athens, GA 30606. Thanks for your help!

Gary Adams	Glenn Fox	Ben Lane	Kirby Stewart
Kendall Baker	Lamont Gaillard	Richard Lecounte	Ricky Styles
Collin Barber	Steven Donald Gates	Josh Paul Lowell	Tyler Sullivan
Herman Bell	Carl George	CJ Madden	Michael Taylor
Terreal Michael Bierria	Walter Grant	Clete Marshall	Nathaniel Taylor
Austin Blaske	A.J. Green	Tyrique McGhee	Lemonte Donzell Tellis
Gregory Blue	Todd Gurley	Thomas McKinnon	Walter Tereshinski
Devin Bowman	Michael Hagerty	Jackson Meeks	Trenton Thompson
Larry Bowie	Michael Hall	Prince Miller	Jimmy Vickers
Latavious Brini	David Hargett	Emmett Mitchell	Michael A. Wallace
Douglas Burnett	D'Marcus Hayes	Tymon Mitchell	Thomas Michael Wallace
Robert Burns	Terry Henderson	Jesse Murray	Damon Ward
Brandon Carley	Albert H. Hollis	Andrew Owensby	James Edward Warner
Tyler Catalina	Mark Howard Holmes	Patrick Pass	David West
Sevaughn Clark	Robert Allen Hope	Suquorey Pitts	Evan J. Wells
Brian Cleveland	Bertrand Jackson	James Ray	Gregory Steven Williams
Anthony W. Clincy	Darius Jackson	Keyon Richardson	Henry Williams
Antonio Cochran	Willie K. Jackson	Riley Ridley	Charles Willis
James B. Collins	David Jenkins	Michael Robinson	Michael W. Willis
Brandon Coutu	Jermaine Johnson	Dominick Sanders	Timothy Worley
Ahkil Crumpton	Kennar Johnson	Justin Shaffer	Billy Worrell
Vance Ervin Cuff	Wayne Johnson	Robert Singleton	
JT Daniels	Jake Jones	CJ Smith	
Brent Davis	Marvin Jones	Darris Smith	
Reginald Davis	Preston Jones	Jonathan Smith	
West Davis	Clarence Kay	Matt Smith	
Akeem Dent	Torin Kirtsey	Michael Smith	
Jamon Dumas-Johnson	Greyson Lambert	Reggie Stargill	
Reuben Faloughi	Matt Landers	Michael James Steele	





# BULLDOG HAVEN

[www.bulldoghaven.org](http://www.bulldoghaven.org)

As UGA football lettermen, we take immense pride in the University of Georgia and its traditions. To continue the University's exceptional heritage, the UGA Football Lettermen's Club has started a new tradition

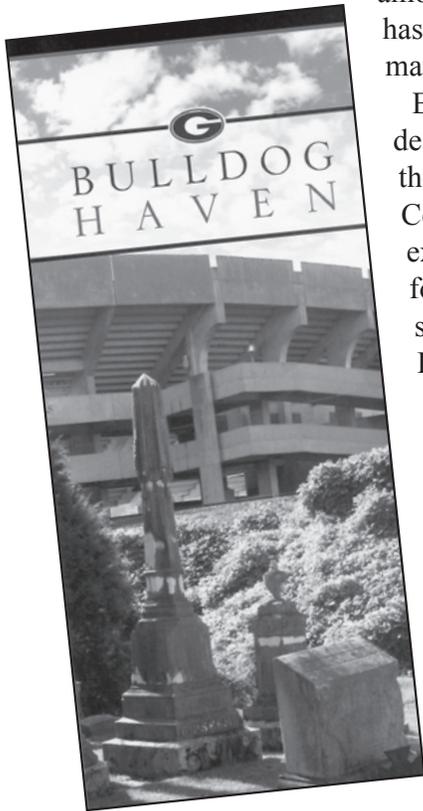
among those for who UGA has been more than an alma mater, but a way of life.

Bulldog Haven is a designated section of the historic Oconee Hill Cemetery that is open exclusively to UGA football lettermen, their spouses and families. Located adjacent to Sanford Stadium, Bulldog Haven offers a unique resting place in the heart of the University of Georgia campus. This is Athens' only cemetery designated to honor and celebrate the lives of UGA football lettermen. We invite you to consider

supporting Bulldog Haven by deciding now to invest in a plot for yourself and your loved ones.

Bulldog Haven is a non-profit venture that will support the maintenance and restoration of historic Oconee Hill Cemetery. In addition to the noteworthy University of Georgia personalities interred there, Oconee Hill Cemetery is also the resting place of many important figures in Georgia's history.

Private tours of Bulldog Haven are available by calling **General Manager Doc Eldridge** at (706) 543-6262 or (706) 714-9172 or by email - [doc.eldridge@gmail.com](mailto:doc.eldridge@gmail.com).



## BULLDOG HAVEN

### LETTERMAN INFORMATION

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Method of Contact *(please choose one)*

Mail     Phone     E-mail

Year(s) Lettered at UGA: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of Plots Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Plot Numbers:

*(listed on landscape plan at [www.bulldoghaven.org](http://www.bulldoghaven.org))*

\_\_\_\_\_

Number of Plots Requested:

\_\_\_\_\_ x \$6,000\* = \_\_\_\_\_ (total)

\_\_\_\_\_

#### MAIL CHECKS AND CORRESPONDENCE TO:

BULLDOG HAVEN

c/o MACK H. GUEST, III

1070 LAKE WELLBROOK DRIVE, ATHENS, GA 30606

[INFO@BULLDOGHAVEN.ORG](mailto:INFO@BULLDOGHAVEN.ORG)

## SPORTS TALK RADIO BY DJ JONES LAUNCHING IN COLUMBUS

92.1 FM, hosted by the sports legend, will cover local, regional, and national sports 24/7

**COLUMBUS, GA.** – Sportsvisions Media and Events, DJ Jones’s sports agency, is proud to announce a partnership with PMB Broadcasting to launch an all-new sports talk radio network in January:

**Sportsvisions 92.1 FM.** The station marks a significant milestone for Sportsvisions, evolving from a successful digital and events platform into a 24/7 broadcast radio network covering sports ranging from local high school teams to the NFL.

“Having our own radio network has been a dream since I started in radio in 1997,” said DJ Jones, President and CEO of Sportsvisions and Partner of 92.1 FM. “Thanks to Jimbo Martin and the team at PMB Broadcasting, this vision has become a reality. This station is the most important step Sportsvisions has taken since our founding in 2004, and we are excited to bring the best sports coverage we can to Columbus and beyond.”

Jimbo Martin said, “We are excited to partner with DJ on this new all sports station. We have been working for some time to afford the platform he deserves. His talents are certainly unmistakable and he brings so much knowledge to the world of sports.” Mr. Martin went on to say, “DJ’s devotion to the young athlete in Columbus for the last 20 years is remarkable.

DJ has built his legacy around Sportsvisions for the last 20 years and we are extremely proud to partner with him and the addition of Sportsvisions 92.1 FM. The Voice of Sports in Columbus and The Valley area.”

DJ Jones, 62, a Columbus native and accomplished athlete, brings both credibility and community ties to the station. A former star athlete at the University of Georgia with three SEC titles (including 1980 National Champion), an All-American QB drafted by the Pittsburgh Pirates and Green Bay Packers, and longtime TV and radio talk show host, Jones has built Sportsvisions into a trusted brand over the past 20 years. His resume includes time at WRBL TV News3 as Sports Director and UGA Bulldogs Sports Network Analyst.

“Columbus is a passionate sports city,” Jones added. “We’re surrounded by Auburn, Alabama, Georgia, Georgia Tech and HBCU fans. Combine that with our love for the Braves, Falcons, and high school sports, and you have a unique sports culture that we’re proud to serve.”



Sportsvisions 92.1 FM will cater to the Chattahoochee Valley’s robust sports community with programming that includes:

- **Morning programming:** Longtime radio host, former WRBL Sports Director, and Chattahoochee Valley Sports Hall of Famer DJ Jones and his side kick Thrift Barringer will inform, educate, and entertain Columbus in the mornings from 6 to 9 am with the best in local, regional, and national sports news and interviews
- **Syndicated content:** The station will air top national shows like **Paul Finebaum**, Dan Patrick, and Colin Cowherd
- **Team affiliations:** Coverage of the Georgia Bulldogs, Atlanta Falcons, Atlanta Braves, Nascar, and High School Football
- **High school sports:** Comprehensive reporting on male and female high school sports

The network will be accessible on 92.1 FM and streamed digitally through its website, Facebook page, and a dedicated mobile app.

The station officially launches on January 15, 2025.

***Congratulations DJ on this exciting adventure. Contact DJ at [djjones17dawgs@gmail.com](mailto:djjones17dawgs@gmail.com).***



## Loran Smith: Championships Don't Define Careers, But 'Philly Dawgs' Don't Have To Wonder

Loran Smith

*Special to the Athens Banner-Herald*

With 57 former Georgia players with their names on National Football League rosters, it is often difficult to pull for one team over the other, but for the Super Bowl, I was happily lined up in support for the Eagles.

There is a personal history with the Eagles, which dates to their 1960 NFL championship team which had four Bulldogs on their roster. With Mecole Hardman (3) and Malik Herring (1) having won Super Bowl rings with the Kansas City Chiefs, I was happy to become an Eagles fan in this big game. For the six players on the Philadelphia roster, it would have been something they would have to live with, perhaps forever, had they not won the big game last Sunday.

This situation begs the question: Is there too much made of NOT winning a Super Bowl ring? There are many reasons we should not consider those who do not win a ring, "losers." You are a winner by just getting to the ultimate championship.

Jordan Davis, Nolan Smith, Jalen Carter, Kelee Ringo, Lewis Cine and Nakobe Dean won't have to slink out the back door when a discussion is taking place about who won or who did not win a Super Bowl ring.

The list is long when you note those who never won a ring including Jack Youngblood, Terrell Owens, J. J. Watt, Eric Dickerson, Larry Fitzgerald, Randy Moss, Barry Sanders and Dan Marino.

Champ Bailey did not win a ring. Fran Tarkenton was 0-3 in Super Bowls. Jim Kelly was 0-4.

Consider the list of those who did not even play in the big game. If you have visited this space before, you are likely to have seen a reference to both Tarkenton and his coach Bud Grant, who never won a ring.

You also may be familiar with an interesting reference involving Ted Williams who only played in one World Series in 1946 when the Red Sox lost to the St. Louis Cardinals. He said that he believed his body of work should define his career, not one Series.

Tarkenton in later years has come around to that position. There are some, including Bud Grant, who believe that Tarkenton, who played 18 years in the NFL, was the greatest quarterback even when compared to Tom Brady who won seven Super

Bowl rings—six with the Patriots and one with the Tampa Bay Bucs.

It would be easy to make the assessment that Tarkenton has not been given credit he deserves because he did not win a championship in all those years he played for Grant and the Vikings.

For years I have had discussions about this topic with many NFL coaches and players. Sonny Jurgenson was on crutches when the Redskins played the Dolphins in Super Bowl VII. He has never carped about not winning the game. He didn't start and he didn't play.

Nonetheless, he does not have any regrets. Like Ted Williams, he feels that his body of work should determine how his career is rated.

There are several great quarterbacks who not only do not own a ring, but they also never played in the game. That list includes John Brodie, Dan Marino, Dan Fouts, Jim Hart, and Randall Cunningham.

How is it that they, Jim Kelly, Fran Tarkenton and so many others did not enjoy the raining down of the confetti on the winners and Tom Brady has rings for seven of his eight fingers? Chuck Howley is next on the list of Super Bowl Rings won with five, two from his years with the San Francisco 49ers and three while playing for the Dallas Cowboys.

If your team is great, then there is the likelihood of there being multiple great players becoming honored. There are many players who played for the Chuck Noll Steelers who accumulated four rings, one of whom is Lynn Swann, the elite receiver who now lives at Lake Oconee.

As a member of Augusta National Golf Club, he has had fun when serving as a committee host at the upscale restaurant and sports bar, Berckman's Place, by allowing fans to have their photo made with him and his four Super Bowl rings.

For some in the sports arena, when it comes to championship artifacts, there is an embarrassment of riches and for others there is the affiliation of the quote in John Greenleaf Miller's poem Maud Miller: "For all sad words of tongue and pen, the saddest are these, 'It might have been.'"

None of the Philly Dawgs will ever have to recite those words.

## Dawgs in Italy

In April, Ashley Madray (1977-79) and his wife, Lee, traveled to Italy and spent a few days in Cortona, Italy. While they were there, they visited the UGA campus which held a beautiful view and a great looking bunch of students. Ashley said, “No trip is complete without a Gooooo Dawgs cheer!”



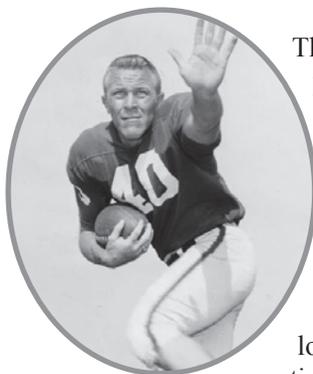
## Georgia Sports Hall of Fame

*Congratulations to Theron Sapp (1956-57-58) who was inducted to the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame in February. We are so proud of you on this great accomplishment!*



### Theron Sapp

Theron Sapp was born in Dublin, GA grew up in Macon where he played football, eventually playing for UGA. In 1957, he became an iconic Bulldog for his performance against Georgia Tech, ending an eight-year losing streak and garnering him the nickname “The Drought Breaker.” His jersey, number 40, is one of only four that the Bulldogs have retired (the others being for Frank Sinkwich, Charley Trippi, and Herschel Walker). He was named UGA’s Back of the Decade (1950-1959).



Theron was drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles in 1959. In 1960, he won an NFL Championship with the Eagles, defeating the Green Bay Packers 17-13, the only playoff loss for a Vince Lombardi team. He would be traded to the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1963. In retirement, Theron became a business owner in the Augusta area.

*From Miguel Legoas  
Athens Banner-Herald*



## Loran Smith: On Sonny Smart

*Bulldawg Illustrated*

January 15, 2025

RABUN GAP – The Presbyterian Church here last weekend was overflowing with mourners who came to pay respects to Clyde J. (Sonny) Smart in a modest and simple service that reflected the essence of a man who spent his life underscoring leadership principles that made young people the beneficiary of a philosophy that incorporated selflessness, altruism, goodwill, and fair play.

In this modest setting which once was the playground of Cherokee Indian boys, one was reminded that unpretentiousness, simplicity, making do, and following the tenets of the golden rule are most likely to be achieved where humility prevails. This is that kind of place, and Sonny Smart was fit for its environment.

Coach Smart was not a complicated man. He was one who gave of himself to the institutions which framed and perpetuated his life of 76 years. He was giving, caring, and got the greatest pleasure out of a well-struck golf ball, knocking down a pair of quail on a covey rise, and seeing a young athlete learn to excel at a game that teaches one to accentuate second effort and teamwork to realize the goal of winning championships.

Eulogizers, which included his offspring—Karl, Kirby and Kendall—spoke of his appreciation for family values, the emotional fulfillment he found in bringing to earth an agile dove with its clipped wingbeat that enables it to dart—like Barry Sanders in the open field—to heighten the challenge for a hunter and the rush that comes with hitting an exploding quail which takes flight at the edge of the woods, and coach young athletes to excel.

As a coach, he gave rapt attention to details and fundamentals. He was a good teacher. Most of all he was a good listener.

He belonged to that fraternity of coaches who loved their work and found the greatest reward in seeing athletes succeed and experience growth and development by excelling in sport and then finding their way in life. When an overachiever made the team; or in a serendipitous moment brought about a scholarship against the odds, that was the ultimate in fulfillment for him. Proud of all his children, he was a doting grandfather who identified with the “reading, writing and ‘rithmetic” platform of his forebears. The moral code was important and good



grades were a milestone to be coveted. He had a wry smile and detached manner, never taking the lead in conversation but always responding insightfully.

Not far from the church is a modest house on the side of a mountain where he and his wife, Sharon, lived their final years together. There is a beautiful view of the valley below, which showcases meadows which sparkle in the early morning dew, along with fields, and farms that keep Rabun County bustling with activity from the daffodils of April to the turning of leaves in the fall. He identified agreeably with the good living that came with being a resident of Rabun County having escaped “life below the gnat line” as he approached his sundown years.

I have visited the Smarts on occasion over the years and have never departed for home without them handing over a small bag of tomatoes and other garden staples. This not only reflected their good neighborly way, but an appreciation for nature, the land, down home industriousness, and the emotional fulfillment that came from a green thumb.

One of the highlights of the success of the Georgia football program, orchestrated by their middle child, Kirby, was visiting with Sonny pre-game and the two of them afterwards, when Sharon came down from her box seat upstairs to join him for a victory celebration.

Pre-game we always met up for a brief session at the Georgia bench, both of us hopeful for success, but ever cautiously optimistic. He knew the nuances of the game kept it from being as simple as the critics preached.

One hot September afternoon early in Kirby’s tenure, I asked Sonny why he would leave the air-conditioned comfort with refreshments at hand and endure the heat of the sidelines, he replied: “Well, everybody up there seems to think they know more football than I do, so I come down here so I can enjoy myself without having to listen to all that.”

Sonny, a passionate golfer, was an aficionado of Donald Ross designed golf courses. After Kirby got a healthy raise one year, I kidded him that he ought to get his world class coach/son to take him to Dornoch, Scotland, the birthplace of the



famous Scottish course designer and play the course that influenced Ross' design philosophy. He smiled, but I knew he would never make that ask.

That is one of the many things to appreciate about the senior Smart. He never doted on Kirby publicly. He did no interviews, he never proffered any quotes, and he avoided all cameras.

We were within arm's length of each other when Kelee Ringo intercepted Bryce Young for the game clinching score that brought Kirby his first national championship in Indianapolis. We embraced briefly, and then I sprinted down the field to the end zone celebration. I can only imagine what went through his mind. To have a son coach his team to the national championship had to be one of the most fulfilling moments of his life, but he never injected himself into the mix in any way.

They had private talks about the historical journey Kirby was making; the son, especially early on in his career, sought out the father for advice. Nick Saban has a reputation for being difficult to work for but Sonny always told Kirby that he was the beneficiary of a great learning experience. Kirby always knew that Sonny was right.

Following retirement, Sonny started the "Georgia Mountain Senior Golf (GAMSGolf) Association, which he ran successfully for years. He gave it his fullest attention, which



*He was a good teacher.*

*Most of all he was a  
good listener.*

kept him active. In the process, it helped make countless seniors in North Georgia active.

There were tears at the service, but also laughter. Kirby told a story that had to do with Sonny's interview for a job in Bainbridge. After the interview, he agreed to take the job. He had hardly returned home to Slapout, Ala., when he got a better offer from another school.

Sonny went to his father (Kirby's grandfather) and told him of his dilemma which elicited this response: "Didn't you tell those folks in Bainbridge you were going to take that job?" When Sonny replied, "Yes," Sonny's father said, "Son, I don't think you have a decision to make."

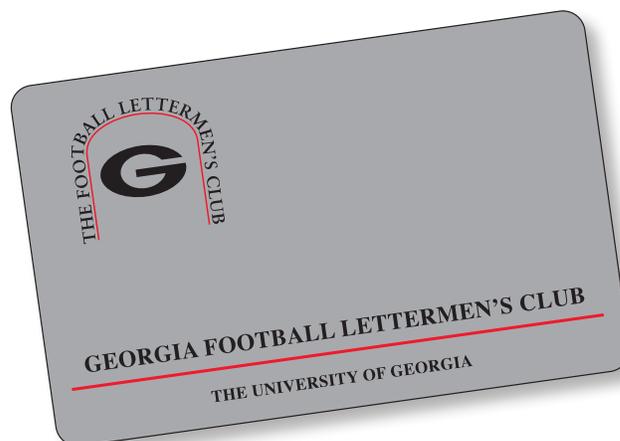
Such integrity is a hallmark in the Smart family.



## Georgia Football Lettermen Card

**MANDATORY: You must present your Georgia Football Lettermen's Club card to enter the Lettermen's Club at Sanford Stadium on gamedays.**

If you are interested in ordering a lettermen's card, please send us a check for \$25.00 made payable to the Georgia Football Lettermen's Club and mail to 1070 Lake Wellbrook Drive, Athens, GA 30606. (You can also pay via Venmo- UGA Football Lettermen @UGA-FbLettermen.) Please include your mailing address for only one card will be printed. If you already have a card, there is no reason to get a new one. They are the same. We will place one large



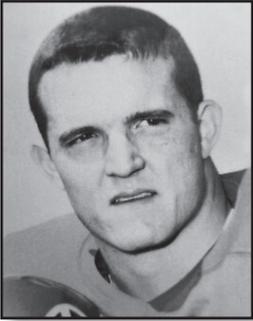
order in July and will mail these to you in August. Deadline to order is July 15th.



## Loran Smith: On Tommy Lawhorne

*Bulldawg Illustrated*

March 20, 2025



Recently at a beachside gathering, Bill Griffin invited Tommy and Susan Lawhorne to join friends for a social outing at which the conversational theme focused on the University of Georgia.

Bill and Tommy have much in common. Both are small town boys—Bill from Rutledge and Tommy from Sylvester—and few

graduates of UGA could be more passionate about their alma mater than this pair of alumni stalwarts.

Each has a resume that is replete with signature contributions to the University.

Griffin grew up virtually within arm's length of the Georgia campus and there never was any question about where he would be furthering his education following high school graduation.

Lawhorne was a focal point for college recruiters. He was an A-plus student and he was also an excellent high school linebacker. He could have matriculated at an Ivy League institution if he had chosen but preferred to enroll at his state university where he wowed academicians and played football for Vince Dooley, the brand new 31-year-old coach who had just taken over the football program in Athens.

Dooley liked what he saw in Lawhorne. He was a quality linebacker who was imbued with competitive fire and a canny presence on the field. He became expert about offense. As a result, Lawhorne was often in the right place at the right time which made him a big play player. Lawhorne was motivated to make his Saturday afternoons between the hedges an enhancement for success in the Southeastern Conference. Winning football games was important to him.

His young head coach, a serious academic aficionado himself with a Masters degree, enjoyed lionizing his perspicacious linebacker. A mutual admiration society existed with the two men. Years later, the player became an outspoken advocate for the field at Sanford Stadium being named for his former coach. Where Lawhorne got the most attention was in the classroom. Most of us would call for champagne for a "B better" classroom performance. Not Tommy Lawhorne.

He had enduring contempt for any grade less than an A. If he made one during his time at UGA, I have never heard about it. Lawhorne was an All-SEC Academic selection, he made Academic All-America, and was valedictorian of his senior class while helping Dooley win his first conference championship in 1966.

Football was over for him following the 1967 Liberty bowl, but he left campus with three bowl watches and a conference championship ring. He heard the chapel bell ring often and was appreciative of the enriching campus experience that he had enjoyed. Few college athletes in his time better represented the essence of the term, "student-athlete," than Thomas W. Lawhorne.

His next stop would be to study medicine at one of the nation's biggest big-league academic institutions, Johns Hopkins, where he distinguished himself as a student. He was graduated with honors and returned home to Georgia and hung out his shingle in Columbus, getting the ultimate endorsement from Dr. Andy Roddenbery, a former Bulldog quarterback in Coach Harry Mehre's Notre Dame box formation, and a highly regarded surgeon.

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*Dooley liked what he saw in Lawhorne. He was a quality linebacker who was imbued with competitive fire and a canny presence on the field.*

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During his time in Columbus Tommy and Susan were community volunteers and stayed closely connected with their alma mater. Tommy would keep in touch with his teammates and classmates. He

was particularly attendant to any needs of those with whom he played.

He would call and check on a former Bulldog player with a medical issue and would inform all their teammates that there was need for a comforting word for the family and a prayer.

Whenever a former teammate passed on, Tommy would take time off and show up at the funeral but he did his best to help his old friends avoid funerals or at least prolong their days. No doctor ever embodied the Hippocratic oath more fluently than Tommy did.

Now in retirement at Sea Island, Tommy has taken advantage of a state law that allows citizens to enroll at state colleges and continue academic opportunity. As they say in his native Worth County, Tommy jumped on that opportunity like a duck on a June bug.

All the while, he has been a Damn Good Dawg.



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Advertising packages are available for the Lettermen Huddle Magazine. This is a great opportunity to promote your company to all of your fellow lettermen. Listed below are the packages that are available. Please contact Sally at [sallyhaugabook@ugalettermensclub.com](mailto:sallyhaugabook@ugalettermensclub.com) for questions. Send us your ad and make your check payable to the Georgia Football Lettermen's Club and mail to 1070 Lake Wellbrook Drive Athens, GA 30606 or pay via Venmo-@UGA-FbLettermen.

### Top Dawg: \$500

Full page ad in the Huddle newsletter

### Between the Hedges: \$250

1/2 page ad in the Huddle newsletter

### Silver Britches: \$125

1/4 page ad in the Huddle newsletter

### Dawg Pound: \$35

Business Card in the Dawg Pound

- The Dawg Pound is a special section of the Huddle solely devoted to business cards. Everyone needs to take advantage of this.
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Colossians 3:23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord, not man.



## HUDDLE EXCLUSIVE ANNOUNCEMENT “THE FIVE ARE BLAZING NEW TRAILS & WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!”

### ✔ It's Official.

The legendary Original Five—a brotherhood of Georgia Football Lettermen—have launched the Bulldog Original Five Foundation, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Our mission: to uplift future generations through scholarships, mentorship, and leadership.

### 🏆 History in the Making.

For the first time ever, a group of UGA football lettermen have united to endow two scholarships in partnership with UGA Student Affairs and the Office of Multicultural Services and Programs (MSP). This is legacy in action.

### 🗣️ Launching Our Campaign.

We're just getting started. Our next mission: raise funds to endow even more scholarships. Join us in supporting underserved and underrepresented students—those following in our footsteps and forging their own.

### 🎬 Premiering February 13, 2026

In collaboration with BALC, we're premiering the documentary on “The Five”—a powerful story of perseverance, purpose, and progress. This premiere also kicks off our fundraising efforts to build a sustainable scholarship legacy.

**MAKE AN IMPACT TODAY.**  
**HELP US HONOR THE PAST AND INVEST IN THE FUTURE.**



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**FOR MORE INFO: CONTACT OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
CHRIS BURGETT AT CHRISBURGETT@GMAIL.COM**

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## *Lettermen, What's Your News?*

Change in address? Promotion? Transfer? Family News? We want to publish your news in THE HUDDLE. Just fill out the following form and submit to **Sally Haugabook**, 1070 Lake Wellbrook Drive, Athens, GA 30606 or email her at **sallyhaugabook@ugalettermensclub.com**. Letters and suggestions for THE HUDDLE are also welcome. **CALLING ALL LETTERMEN!** Send THE HUDDLE your current e-mail address. You and all of your teammates will be able to keep in touch!

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Business Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

My news is \_\_\_\_\_

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