

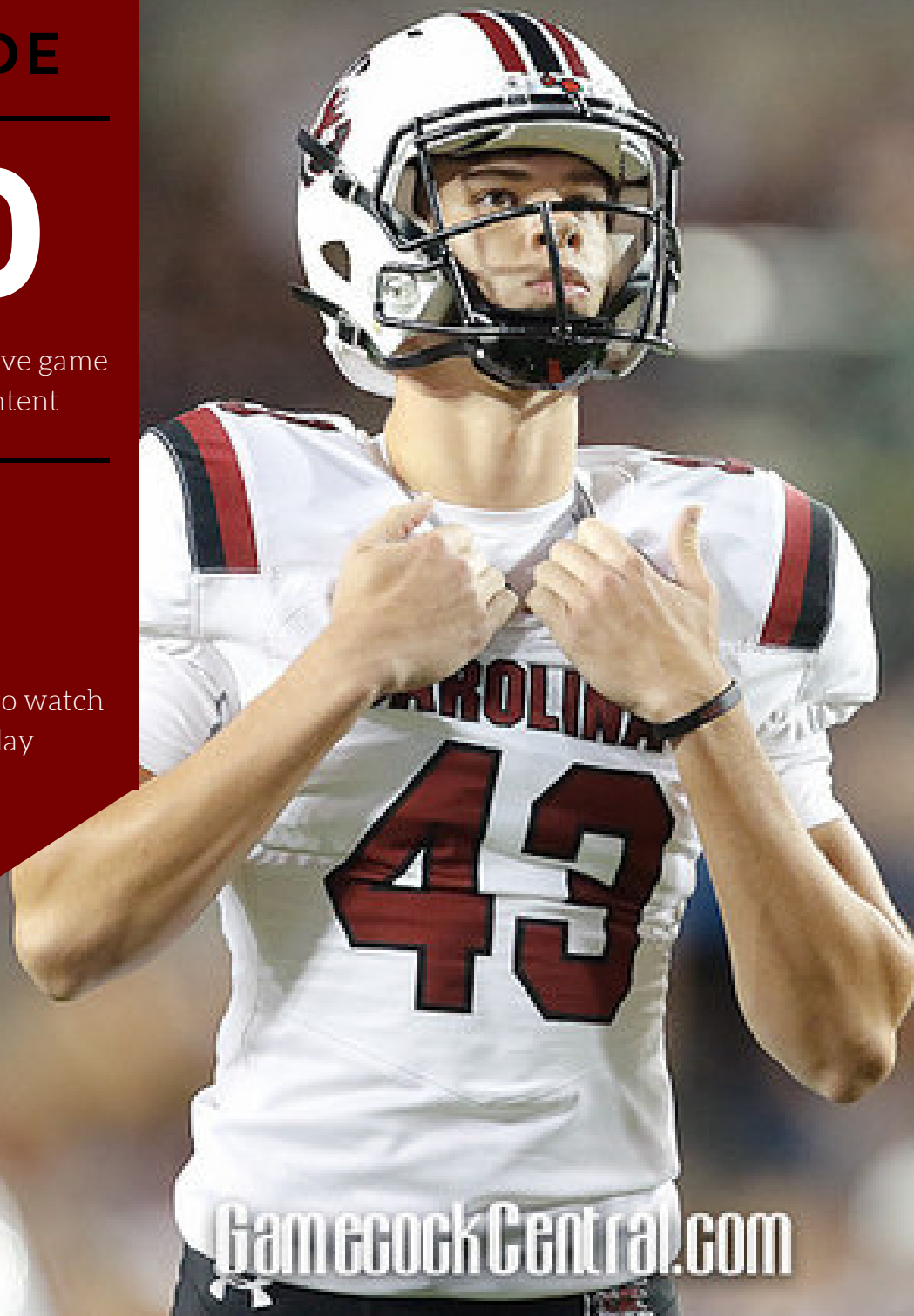
INSIDE

10

pages of exclusive game
preview content

3

key storylines to watch
for Saturday



GamecockCentral.com

GAMEDAY

OCTOBER 13 2018 • ISSUE 6 • VOLUME 1

WATCH & LISTEN

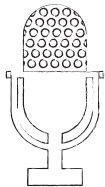
→ ON TV...



Saturday's game will kick off at 3:30 ET and will be broadcast on SEC Network.

Taylor Zorzour and Matt Stinchcomb will be on the call with Kris Budden on the sidelines.

→ ON THE RADIO...



Locally, catch the Gamecock Radio Network's broadcast. The station's feed is 107.5 FM; due to contractual stipulations, no USC athletic events have audio streaming online. The game is also on Sirius 103/XM 191.

→ ONLINE...



While you are not able to actually watch the game on GamecockCentral, you can still hang out with thousands of other passionate fans on our site.

Head on over to *The Insiders Forum* to get our live updates and analysis, discuss the game as it happens with fellow Gamecocks, check the main page and forum for the latest recruiting scoop and news, and much more.



CHANCE FOR BREAKTHROUGH

By Chris Clark

Coming off a thrilling victory on a rain-soaked field on Saturday, South Carolina moves on to a significant test with Texas A&M coming to town.

A&M remains unranked, but has the type of team that could be by year's end, taking Clemson down to the wire and suffering its other loss this season to an absolutely elite Alabama squad. In two games against the most quality opponents to date this season, South Carolina has not performed well, dropping contests to Georgia and Kentucky.

The Aggies will bring a lot of talent to Williams-Brice Stadium as the Gamecocks look to notch their first SEC victory over the program. Last week's contest against Missouri produced plenty of talk about the Gamecocks' quarterback play as Jake Bentley sat due to injury and Michael Scarnecchia turned in a clutch performance. All indications are that Bentley is back, but he's far from the only one that will need a good performance on Saturday.

A&M's bread and butter is running the ball and stopping the run, two areas with which USC has struggled this season. As well, the Gamecocks will have to play the team's most complete game of the year in order to win. We'll cover more of the keys and important players in the pages to come.

This one, if USC could pull it off, would be an important win.



"All gas, no brakes..."

Let's use the eye test: how close in talent is this Gamecock team to Texas A&M?

That's a tough question. Texas A&M is clearly the more talented team on paper and the Aggies have more built-in depth than the Gamecocks due to a history of top recruiting classes under Kevin Sumlin. That said, these players were recruited for a different scheme than the one they're playing in; South Carolina has played the Aggies close for the last two seasons and is only a 2-point underdog this week.

Clearly, Carolina's first group has been able to match up with A&M's first group. Throw in the fact that this isn't expected to be a game played in sweltering heat and that A&M isn't an up-tempo team, and Carolina should be able to hang in there. But certainly on paper, there is still a gap between the talent on the A&M sideline and the Carolina sideline.

**TWO KEY
QUESTIONS FOR
TEXAS A&M...**

**WITH GCC's
WES MITCHELL**



"Effort, toughness, discipline..."

Kellen Mond hurt South Carolina greatly last season. Which players for the Aggies do you believe will have the biggest impact on this contest?

Other than Mond, who very clearly is going to be a major factor in this game, I'd say that running back Trayveon Williams is the one to watch. Williams has been outstanding this season with 720 rushing yards and 7 touchdowns already and he's the type of bruising back that you need to thrive on the ground in the SEC.

Add in the fact that South Carolina has struggled to stop the run -- look at the number of explosive plays that Missouri created on the ground last week -- and it's easy to see why this is the matchup to watch. Williams is almost surely going to get his yards, but the Carolina defense is going to have to make him earn it and limit his number of chunk plays. As bad as Carolina played against Kentucky, they were able to limit top back Benny Snell to an extent, so it is possible, but they'll have to fill their gaps far better than they did last week.

TWO KEY QUESTIONS FOR TEXAS A&M

WITH GCC's
WES MITCHELL



**WEEK
7**

TEXAS A&M

TOP PLAYERS

QB	Kellen Mond
RB	Trayveon Williams
TE	Jace Sternberger
LB	Otaro Alaka
S	Donovan Wilson
LB	Tyrel Dodson

KEY NOTES

Texas A&M sits at 4-2 in Jimbo Fisher's first season in College Station, with both losses coming to quality teams in Alabama and Clemson. USC has yet to defeat the Aggies since the team joined the SEC West. USC is now 3-2 on the season.

LAST TIME...

USC carried a 17-10 lead into the fourth quarter on the road in College Station in 2017, but could not finish the job. A&M scored 14 unanswered points in the fourth quarter to seal the win. A&M outgained USC on the ground by more than 200 yards and USC was 2-13 on third downs.

CRITICAL GAMECOCKS



JAKE BENTLEY

QB

ENTERING THIS GAME...

Bentley is completing nearly 64 percent of his passes for 928 yards and 7 touchdowns, with 6 interceptions.

WHY IS HE IMPORTANT?

He touches the ball every play, and when he plays well the Gamecocks are going to have a much better chance of winning. Nobody played well against UGA, and not many against Kentucky. But Bentley's interception numbers need to improve, and he's a capable trigger man for the offense.



BRYAN EDWARDS

WIDE RECEIVER

ENTERING THIS GAME...

Edwards has already matched his TD total from last season - 5- with many games remaining. He has 24 catches for 309 yards.

WHY IS HE IMPORTANT?

Every receiver is key in this game, but Edwards has been a huge big-play guy for the Gamecocks. There will be one-on-one opportunities downfield in this game and Edwards is someone USC will count on to convert.



KEIR THOMAS

DEFENSIVE LINE

ENTERING THIS GAME...

Thomas has 15 tackles, 2 tackles for loss, half a sack, and a forced fumble so far this season.

WHY IS HE IMPORTANT?

Eyes will be on many USC defenders in this contest, and there is no shortage of important figures. Yet Thomas, if he plays well, could be an unsung hero. He'll be vital to trying to create chaos in the backfield and from Kellen Mond and Trayveon Williams making plays at the second level of the defense.



JAYCEE HORN

DB

ENTERING THIS GAME...

Horn has 19 tackles and a sack this season as a true freshman.

WHY IS HE IMPORTANT?

He can play cornerback or nickel and made some huge plays against Missouri that helped save the game and preserve leads for the Gamecocks. Whether it's tackling on the perimeter or covering A&M receivers, Horn is an important commodity for Muschamp's defense.

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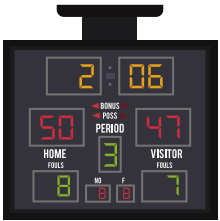
→ STOPPING THE RUN



USC has had issues stopping the run this season, and A&M's Trayveon Williams is certainly a good one who's gone over 120 yards in four games this season.

In A&M's two losses to Alabama and Clemson, Williams has been held to exactly 31 yards in each contest. QB Kellen Mond is a running threat from his position as well. The Gamecocks have to do better here.

→ SUCCESS IN THE AIR



A&M is stout against the run, although part of that statistical skew seems to be opposing offenses focusing on a more aerial attack. Still, they're athletic and active up front and in the front seven.

That means it could be tough for USC to run the football, and USC will have to find some big plays and ways to move chains by passing the ball.

→ A CLEAN GAME



A&M is a talented team, and South Carolina absolutely cannot afford to make crucial mistakes that will hinder its chances to pull a home upset here.

That means that USC has to get into the positive column with turnover margin, cannot give up big plays on special teams, and needs to avoid drive-killing (or on defense, drive-extending) penalties. A&M punter Braden Mann is one of the best in the country, so that's an angle to watch.



KEYS TO THE GAME

By Chris Clark & Wes Mitchell

On paper this doesn't seem like a great matchup for South Carolina, but the folks in Vegas see the Aggies as just a 2-point favorite and the Gamecocks have managed to play A&M close the last two seasons despite a talent disadvantage. It seems cliché to always go back to the running game - on both offense and defense - but finding some running room on offense and limiting explosive run plays from A&M are clearly two of the biggest keys for South Carolina to win this game.

Defensively, it's quite simple. South Carolina has to play much better against the run. Quarterback Kellen Mond really hurt the Gamecocks extending plays with his legs and picking up key first downs in the second half of last season's game. It's running back Trayveon Williams who is perhaps a scarier proposition for USC.

He's gone over 120 yards in four games - all wins - for A&M this season. In the Aggies' two losses, he's been held to 31 yards each time. It's too much to expect the Gamecocks to limit him to that low a total, but the defense will need a good performance in not letting Williams get loose on the second level.

There's been a lot of talk about Carolina being "hardheaded" in the running game and they'll have to continue to be this week too. Being a bit more productive in that area than they were against Missouri would help too, and some more creativity will also likely be needed, but even when the running game isn't ultra successful, they're going to need to stick with it just to keep A&M honest.

RODRICUS FITTEN

What really stands out about Fitten is his first step; he's very quick off the ball and has natural pass-rushing ability to go with a big motor. In some ways, he could end up being like current Gamecock Bryson-Allen Williams, who was not the biggest out of high school in the early stages but grew into his body and can play multiple positions in college. Fitten projects as a BUCK for USC, and should bring some strong pass-rush ability.

DEVONTAE DAVIS

USC loves Davis' game; he worked out at multiple positions at the Gamecocks' camp during the first summer Muschamp was in Columbia. The Gamecock staff was able to get him to go to junior college instead of signing with a lower-level school and now stand to reap the benefit. Davis could play inside or outside and is still learning the game. He has size, can move, is versatile, and has quick twitch athleticism.

JAHKEEM GREEN

A Sumter native, Green is a high-upside defensive lineman who made an early commitment to the Gamecocks. He's still working through his academics in order to become eligible for Division I admission, but has an intriguing blend of size and talent. His former high school coach, Mark Barnes, coached Jonathan Bullard in high school and noted some similarities in their game. If he's someone who gets on campus, he could be a difference-maker.

“ As soon as I got to know the coaches and the fan base, I started to favor them even more... ”

Q&A: RODRICUS FITTEN

The 2019 4-star pass-rusher goes on the record...

ON HIS EARLY PLEDGE TO USC...

"What makes them right for me is that it is a new, developing football program. Coach [Will] Muschamp is a good coach and he can develop me into a great student-athlete."

FITTEN'S HIGH SCHOOL COACH, DERRICK AVERY, ON HIS GAME...

"We have him play multiple positions. He creates a lot of mismatches for high school tackles. They're always trying to find out where he is and where we move him. They game plan around him. He has his natural knack for the football. He's very instinctive about going to get ball carriers."





2018 ROSTER

MEET THIS YEAR'S
GAMECOCK SQUAD

1 Nick Harvey DB	26 Jaylin Dickerson DB	53 Ernest Jones LB	99 Jabari Ellis DL
1 Deebo Samuel WR	27 Ty'Son Williams RB	54 Jovaughn Gwyn OL	
3 KC Crosby TE	28 Joe Thomas DB	55 Christian Pellation OL	
3 Javon Kinlaw	29 JT Ibe DB	57 Jazuun Outlaw DL	
4 Bryson Allen-Williams LB	30 Damani Staley LB	59 Alex Deloach LB	
4 Darius Douglas QB	31 Jamel Cook DB	60 Chandler Farrell OL	
5 Rico Dowdle RB	31 Lavonte Valentine RB	61 Javion Duncan DL	
5 Keir Thomas DL	32 Kevin Pickens DB	61 Cameron Johnson OL	
6 TJ Brunson LB	32 Caleb Kinlaw RB	63 Blake Camper OL	
6 Josh Vann WR	33 Zay Brown DB	66 Will Putnam OL	
7 Jaycee Horn DB	33 Slade Carroll RB	68 Wyatt Campbell OL	
7 Dakereon Joyner QB	34 Mon Denson RB	70 Hank Manos OL	
8 Randrecous Davis WR	35 Trey Adkins WR	71 Eric Douglas OL	
8 DJ Wonnum DL	35 Daniel Fennell LB	72 Donell Stanley OL	
9 Keisean Nixon DB	36 Jonathan Gipson DB	73 Summie Carlay OL	
10 RJ Roderick DB	39 Dawson Hoffman DB	74 Dennis Daley OL	
10 Jay Urich QB	40 Jacob August TE	75 Jordon Carty OL	
11 Corbett Glick QB	40 Jason Senn DB	76 Jordon Rhodes OL	
11 Eldridge Thompson LB	41 Caleb Jenerette TE	77 Malik Young OL	
12 Michael Scarnecchia QB	42 Rosendo Louis LB	78 Zack Bailey OL	
13 Shi Smith WR	42 Alexander Woznick K	79 Dylan Wonnum OL	
14 Deshaun Fenwick RB	43 Parker White K	81 Darius Rush WR	
15 Evan Hinson TE	44 Sherrod Greene LB	82 Bailey Rogers WR	
15 Aaron Sterling DL	44 Ben Asbury LS	83 Chavis Dawkins WR	
16 Rashad Fenton DB	45 Spencer Eason-Riddle LB	84 Kyle Markway TE	
16 Bailey Hart QB	46 Patrick Reedy TE	85 Michael Almond P	
17 Javon Charleston DB	46 Noah Vincent LB	86 Chad Terrell WR	
17 Danny Gordon QB	47 Jaylan Foster DB	87 Kiel Pollard TE	
18 OrTre Smith WR	47 Cole Hanna K	88 Will Register TE	
19 Jake Bentley QB	48 Sean McGonigal LB	89 Bryan Edwards WR	
19 Brad Johnson DL	48 Will Tommie K	90 Rick Sandidge DL	
20 Joseph Charlton P	49 Matthew Smith LS	91 Shameik Blackshear DL	
21 Jamyest Williams DB	50 Griffin Gentry DL	92 Tyreek Johnson DL	
22 Steven Montac DB	50 Sadarius Hutcherson OL	93 Jesus Gibbs	
23 Korey Banks DB	51 Max Iyama OL	94 MJ Webb DL	
24 Israel Mukuamu DB	51 Donovan Wirt LB	95 Kobe Smith DL	
25 AJ Turner RB	52 Kingsley Enagbare DL	96 Josh Belk DT	



WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

It's the best \$10/month I spend along with Netflix- If you are a true Gamecock fan or graduate, you need to have a membership!

jamesleuscpte2013

There is literally no better source of content that covers USC across the board. The staff is world class and always has their ear to the ground to provide consumers the best, most accurate content possible. To top it, all of the forums provided are more than just forums. They are a community of knowledgeable fans, insiders and family. If you're looking for the best Gamecock content, then you've come to the right place.

Gyandle

First class folks run this site; they are helpful and even fun to talk with. I truly appreciate this site.

hopegousc

Totally worth the money.

mrbrentharmon

For the most accurate, thoughtful, dedicated and personally-tailored coverage of the South Carolina Gamecocks athletics program, there is one clear choice -- GamecockCentral.

-vogtne

GamecockCentral has been and will continue to be the best site on the internet for Gamecock sports fans. Their in-depth and honest coverage is unmatched!

ChucktownCock2001

This site is unquestionably the best sports site on the Internet. If you love the Gamecocks and are not a part of this site, you are making a huge mistake. If you aren't already a member, come join us. We are ready for another #SpursUp..... and that one is meant for you!

BreakinDownFilm

Love every minute I use it...

JBSC88

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ABOUT US

I very much believe the reason for our existence will always separate us from other media outlets.

Gamecock Central's foundation -- our roots, our basic DNA -- will always be different than websites created with the sole intent of making a profit. Certainly, we have a bottom line, but all decisions aren't based on it. Of course, passion alone isn't going to satisfy our subscribers.

We have a tremendous team of insiders, analysts and photographers. They're all very skilled and nobody works harder. Together, they provide the most in-depth, accurate and professional coverage of Gamecock sports and recruiting.



"It's where the most passionate fans hang out..."

What do you get when you combine our unrivaled coverage and our passionate community?

An online home for thousands of hardcore Gamecock fans.

I'd like to personally invite you to join Gamecock Central so it can be Your Home for Gamecock Sports!

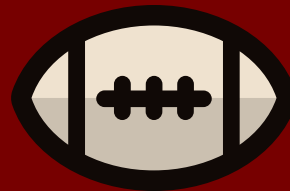
Join us now for great information and tons of fun!

Brian Shoemaker
Publisher

fun facts about GAMECOCK CENTRAL

* The site went online on August 27, 1998. We just celebrated our 20th anniversary earlier this month.

Over the course of the next two seasons, the Gamecock football team went 1-21. Our premium service went online on December 5, 2001.



The original name of the site was "CockFans.com".

We were the first online publication to be credentialed by USC's media relations department.



Each spring, we used to have a "I Love That Dang Chicken Golf Tournament."

We signed our agreement to join the Rivals.com network in December 2003 and moved over in January 2004.

r rivals

The website once had a group called the "12th Man Club", which was shut down after a cease and desist order from attorneys representing Texas A&M.

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clark@gamecockcentral.com