



2018 Florida Football Postgame Notes

Florida 53, Charleston Southern 6

September 1, 2018

Quick Hits

- ♦ Florida threw for five touchdown passes in a half for the seventh time in program history.
 - Oct. 14, 2000 – Auburn (Rex Grossman – five in first half)
 - Sept. 26, 1998 – Kentucky (Jesse Palmer – two in first half; Doug Johnson – three in first half)
 - Sept. 6, 1997 – Central Michigan (Doug Johnson – seven in first half)
 - Nov. 11, 1995 – at South Carolina (Danny Wuerffel – five in first half)
 - Sept. 3, 1994 – New Mexico State (Terry Dean – seven in first half)
 - Nov. 6, 1993 – SW Louisiana (Terry Dean – five in first half)
- ♦ The Gators defense held Charleston Southern to three passing yards, marking just the second time since 1996 UF held an opponent below 10 passing yards in a game.
- ♦ UF improves its all-time record against Charleston Southern to 2-0, winning those games by a combined score of 115-9.
- ♦ The Gators' 47-point margin of victory was the third-highest in program history in a new head coach's debut.
- ♦ Florida's 53 points are the second-highest total in a new head coach's debut, only behind the 61 points it scored on New Mexico State on Sept. 5, 2015.
- ♦ Florida's home winning percentage since 1990 improved to .843 (150-28)—a figure that ties Florida State (147-27-1) for the second-highest percentage among FBS teams during that span, only behind Ohio State (.872 / 166-24-1)
 - The next-best program during that span is Nebraska, which boast an .829 home winning percentage (160-33 – not updated tonight, kicked off 2018 home opener at 8 p.m. ET)

Gators Extend Nation-Leading Winning Streak in Home Openers

- ♦ Florida extended its winning streak in home openers to a nation-leading 29 games.
 - The streak remains ahead of Oklahoma State and Wisconsin (23 each), Illinois (21), Michigan State (20), as well as Arizona State (19 – not updated tonight, kicked off 2018 home opener at 10:30 p.m. ET)

Season Opener Numbers of Note

- ♦ Florida improved its all-time record in season openers to 84-28—which includes a 69-7 record in Gainesville
- ♦ Dan Mullen improved to 8-2 in season openers as a head coach
 - Mullen's eight wins in season openers have come by an average of 41.5 points.
- ♦ Florida head coaches are now 20-7 in their debut games (includes interim head coaches)
 - Five of Florida's last six head coaches have won their debuts—Randy Shannon (2017) was the only one to lose

Florida Offense

- ♦ Florida scored a touchdown on its opening drive for the first time in 15 games, with the last occurrence being against South Carolina on Nov. 12, 2016
- ♦ Feleipe Franks joined Chris Leak (Nov. 13, 2004), Rex Grossman (3 times – 2000-01), Doug Johnson (3 times – 1997-98), and Danny Wuerffel (Dec. 7, 1996) as the only Gators since 1996 to throw five touchdown passes in a game.
 - Leak was the last quarterback to throw five touchdown passes in a game, tossing six against South Carolina.
- ♦ Van Jefferson posted his first career multi-touchdown game; he came to UF with four career receiving touchdowns.
- ♦ Trevon Grimes finished his Gators debut with three receptions for 50 yards and a touchdown.
 - He had three catches for 20 yards last season with Ohio State.

Florida Defense

- ♦ Chauncey Gardner-Johnson recorded his second and third career sacks this evening.
- ♦ Gardner-Johnson's 2.5 tackles for loss were also a career high.
- ♦ Jachai Polite recorded the third forced fumble of his career on Charleston Southern's first drive of the second half.

Florida Special Teams

- ♦ Florida kickers have made 19 consecutive field goals, a streak that dates back to last year's opener against Michigan.
 - *Tonight*: Evan McPherson, 2 for 2 (21, 8:10 1st quarter; 31, 10:58 3rd quarter), Jorge Powell 1 for 1 (39—career long, 4:48 3rd quarter).
- ♦ Zach Carter's block of Charleston Southern's 22-yard field goal attempt at the end of the first half was Florida's first blocked field goal since Nov. 26, 2016 at Florida State (Joey Ivie blocked a 44-yard attempt)
- ♦ Jeremiah Moon's block on Charleston Southern's extra point attempt gave Florida its first game with two blocked kicks since the 2013 Sugar Bowl, when Sharif Floyd blocked a field goal and Mike Taylor blocked an extra point.

GATORS[®]

FOOTBALL

- ♦ Austin Perry's return of the blocked extra point for a defensive two-point conversion was Florida's first since the 2016 SEC Championship game against Alabama (Jabari Zuniga block, David Reese return for two points).

Gators Career Firsts

- ♦ **First reception:** Trevon Grimes (34-yard touchdown reception, 1st quarter); Van Jefferson (13 yards, final play of 1st quarter); Kemore Gamble (seven yards, 2nd quarter) Lucas Krull (three yards, 2nd quarter); Rick Wells (six yards, 3rd quarter)
- ♦ **First rushing attempt:** Damien Pierce (27-yard run, 3rd quarter) Kyle Trask (12-yard touchdown run, 3rd quarter); Iverson Clement (four yards, 4th quarter) Emory Jones (fumbled and recovered own fumble, 4th quarter)
- ♦ **First pass attempt:** Kyle Trask (4-yard completion to Trevon Grimes)
- ♦ **First touchdown:** Trevon Grimes (34-yard reception, 1st quarter – also first career Gators reception); Van Jefferson (6-yard reception, 1st quarter); Josh Hammond (6-yard reception, 2nd quarter); Kyle Trask (12-yard run, 3rd quarter)
- ♦ **First fumble recovery:** TJ Slaton (first drive of 3rd quarter, with 22-yard return); Adam Shuler (3rd quarter)
- ♦ **First tackle:** Lacedrick Brunson, Amari Burney, Zachary Carter, Andrew Chatfield Jr., Trey Dean III, Marlon Dunlap Jr., James Houston IV, John Huggins, Malik Langham, Ventrell Miller, Nick Oelrich, Damien Pierce, David Reese (DB), Tanner Rowell, Umstead Sanders, Adam Shuler
- ♦ **First pass breakup:** Jeremiah Moon, Jachai Polite
- ♦ **First interception:** John Huggins (next-to-last play of game)

Big Plays

- ♦ **Josh Hammond:** 11-yard rush, 1st quarter (longest rush of career)
- ♦ **Trevon Grimes:** 34-yard touchdown reception, 1st quarter
- ♦ **Feleipe Franks:** 10-yard rush, 1st quarter
- ♦ **Freddie Swain:** 46-yard reception, 1st quarter (longest reception of career)
- ♦ **Lamical Perine:** 23-yard rush, 2nd quarter
- ♦ **Lucas Krull:** 30-yard reception, 2nd quarter
- ♦ **Malik Davis:** 16-yard rush, 2nd quarter
- ♦ **Malik Davis:** 16-yard rush, 2nd quarter
- ♦ **TJ Slaton:** 22-yard fumble recovery (3rd quarter)
- ♦ **Damien Pierce:** 27-yard rush, 3rd quarter (first career rush)
- ♦ **Kyle Trask:** 12-yard touchdown rush, 3rd quarter (first career rush)
- ♦ **Damien Pierce:** 19-yard rush, 4th quarter
- ♦ **Damien Pierce:** 12-yard rush, 4th quarter

Other

- ♦ **Florida Game Captains:** CJ Henderson, R.J. Raymond
- ♦ Florida won the opening coin toss and chose to receive; Charleston Southern defended the south end zone.
- ♦ Attendance: 81,164
- ♦ Prior to the game, Athletic Director Scott Stricklin accepted the GateHouse Media 2017-2018 SEC All-Sports trophy.



2018 Florida Football Postgame Quotes

Dan Mullen, Florida Head Coach

Florida 53, Charleston Southern 6

September 1, 2018

Opening Statement:

"I'll tell you that was awesome for me. Almost surreal. You're with the team in the tunnel, coming out pregame, running out in the Swamp for the first time was something that was really, really special. For me, it was something I will always remember. I want to thank our fans, unbelievable atmosphere tonight. I thought they did an amazing job. You know, we asked them to show up, come support this team, come help us build and get the Gator standard back where it needs to be. They did that and they stayed all the way. To me, the most impressive thing was the start of the fourth quarter, there were still a lot of people here cheering us on in a game that was pretty much in hand and a night game. It just shows the support that they are giving us and the work they are doing and the relentless effort our fans are putting in to support this team. Lot of fun for our team. You know, I mean we got a lot of good work in. I thought our guys did it in the first half. We did a good job of working the game and of getting used to what we were doing offensively. Defensively, all-around, I thought we played well. I think you saw we got to play a lot of different players in the second half and you can see a lot of them have a long way to go. But now they have a little bit of experience in a real game. They have taken snaps in the Swamp. That's something you know that they can go and build off of. We have a lot of work to do as a team. You want to see huge improvement from week one to week two. We're out of training camp, we've got a game under our belt, now let's make some huge strides during practice week, during our preparation, in everything that we do. We got to do a better job of game management on the sidelines, unfortunately. I think our coaches did a good job, part of that is players. I don't think we had any sideline infractions or issues. It was a little more chaotic on the sideline than I really want it to be on the sideline for our guys. But I think that will come with experience and in us managing getting on and off the field, getting guys back, getting guys where they need to be when they need to be and go from there. It was a great win. It was a great win for us. We have a lot of work to do. But we're going to come back, get back after it on Monday and get ready to start SEC play this week."

On Franks' five touchdown performance

"I think it was pretty good. There will be some things watching the film that he'll see that he missed. But I think he also made some plays. I think getting into the decision making was great for him. His communication was pretty solid, during the game, coming off the field, understanding what happened, the talk through a previous series, there is so much of that. What did you see? Why did you this? This is what we are going to do moving forward.

I think he made pretty good decisions for the most part and made some plays. He had some solid numbers, had a couple drops in there or right on the edge, right on the finger tips or could have been caught, missed a throw by three or four inches, but overall, I thought he played well. I thought he made some good decisions in the run game as well and was able to move deep and get the football in the end zone."

On the tempo of the game...

"Yeah that was good. If we can go up-tempo, we want to get our guys some reps, get plays in. I think it keeps the defense on its toes. And for us, we have some guys that can do stuff with the ball. And so what we do is the opportunity to go spread the ball around and up tempo puts the defense



on its heels. I thought they did a good job. I was worried that was one of the big things for us going into the game. I wanted to play at the right tempo. Get up, get down, getting adjusted to doing that within the offense. I thought that they handled that. I think there's a lot of things we could get a little faster at and getting moving at times, but I thought we did a good job."

On the offensive line

"I thought we did ok. As the game went on, the run game got really sloppy. You know snaps over the head, quarterback making some wrong decision, fumbling the ball. I thought that was a little bit messy. But in the first half, they were solid. I think there's a couple things that'll look at and say ok I see it now and need to improve it. I don't know if it was as bad as guys were coming off and talking about it. They were understanding the mistakes they were making, which was really important for them. When you say "hey" you need to need to step and stretch it a little bit further. Yeah I saw the film, I saw that."

On embodying the Gator standard:

"I think everyone is learning. The guys got to learn. We want a lot of accountability in our program, within the players. And if guys don't live up to that standard, they are going to learn to for them to be accountable to their teammates, to themselves and their teammates. I think that's huge. I had fun. I hope everybody else and everyone in Gator Nation had fun out there. I think our players had a good time on the sidelines and within the course of the game, too."



2018 Florida Football Postgame Quotes

Florida Players

Florida 53, Charleston Southern 6

September 1, 2018

Redshirt Sophomore QB Feleipe Franks

On how far he has progressed from last year's opener

"Well, I think – it's just not me, but the team - we just hit the surface. I think that we still have a long way to go. We're just scratching surface. So, we have a long way to go. We have our SEC start next week. Big game against Kentucky, so we're going to start preparing."

On if this game was a confidence builder

"Yes, I think it was definitely a confidence builder not just for me, but for the other players as well."

On what he likes about this offense and on people saying he might not fit in this style, but seems to fit well

"I mean there's not much to say about them. We put that many points up tonight, what's not to like? You know, they're a bunch of good players. They played really well tonight. A bunch of guys got in. A bunch of guys got a taste of what it feels like to be on the field and I think we only go up from here."

On the chemistry between offensive coaches on the sidelines

"Yeah, I mean you notice that not just on the sidelines. It's like that in the offense, you know, they're always on the same page. They all think alike and that's meant to be like that when they're together, anywhere they go. So you know, their chemistry is really good— whether it's in the field, it's good on the sideline—everywhere they go."

On how far he has progressed as a leader for this team

"We have bunch of good players on this team. I am very grateful to say that I think I am one of them. You can't take it for granted, you have to use it for what it is. You've got to be able to encourage guys when they're down, you know. When a guy puts his head down, you've got to be able to encourage him to bring him back up. When they make a good play, be able to be right there. It's a great thing to be name one of the leaders of the team."

Redshirt Junior LB Rayshad Jackson

On what the crowd was like in The Swamp tonight:

"It was great, I loved it and I want it to be like that all the time."

On special teams:

"Mullen always preaches special teams first, that is what is going to win the game. I had never noticed the game before the game with special teams, but when we do make plays on special teams, it is a great feeling."

On Jacahi Polite:

"He gives his all every day in practice and in the game, so I expect that type of performance from him every time."

On blocking Charleston Southern's field goal attempt:

"It was a great feeling. We went out there and did our job – it was a great feeling."

Redshirt Freshman DE Zachary Carter

On special teams:

"Coach Mullen put a lot of emphasis on special teams this whole camp and throughout the spring. He said special teams is the most important part of the game because it sets up plays for both the offense and the



defense. He made it clear that if you can make plays on special teams, then you will get more playing time on offense and defense.”

On atmosphere:

“You could feel the intensity from the crowd from the moment we ran out. I looked out and saw no empty seats in the stands. I feel like we need the fans and the atmosphere to continue to be like that to continue to push the team and get our guys going.”

On defensive effort:

“We take a lot of pride on defense. Fast, physical and aggressive is our motto so for our guys to come out and perform like that in the first game is a pretty big deal.”

On what came together defensively:

“Defensively we have a new scheme this year. I think our guys played very well in this scheme and I feel we can take it to another level.”

Redshirt Junior WR Van Jefferson

On this game being a confidence boost:

“It was good, you know, coming out of football camp and onto the field. It was a good booster for us you know now, we have to keep going and get ready for Kentucky.”

On assimilating to the team:

“I think it’s just hard work, me coming in and doing what I had to do and getting the coach’s trust and things like that, but I think working hard pays off.

On Feleipe’s performance:

“It was expected, Feleipe has worked his tail off this summer, this spring, and he’s had an excellent camp, so I knew he was going to come in and do great. His confidence is through the roof. He went out and played well.”

On scoring in The Swamp:

“It was good, my first touchdown in the swamp – it was electric. I hope for many more.”

On the jump pass:

“It was great, Feleipe don’t got a lot hops like that, so he had to get up a little bit, but you know he did a great job and Tyrie caught the ball and it was a touchdown... I’ll probably give him some pointers on how to jump higher and stuff like that.”

Redshirt Sophomore TE Lucas Krull

On playing in The Swamp:

“It definitely exceeded expectations. The guys talk about it, and they let you know as much as they can what it’s going to be like, but it’s more than you can imagine.”

On getting back into football:

“It’s been awesome. It’s been a transition for sure, but it’s been a great transition, and you get better every day. All the coaches have been on me to make sure I keep my head down and just get to work and go as hard as I can every day and try to get as much better as I can every day and then try to continue to compete to get more playing time.”

On his first play

“Oh, it was just, alright here we go. It’s my time to go, so that was really it. I was super excited. I was ready to go, and I was just waiting for coach to call my number. And I got my number to get called and got two plays and got two catches and it was awesome. I was trying to get into the end zone but didn’t make it. But it was awesome.”



2018 Florida Football Postgame Quotes
Charleston Southern Head Coach – Mark Tucker
Florida 53, Charleston Southern 6
September 1, 2018

Opening Statement:

"Our kids have always known that we are going to compete for 60 minutes of football. They didn't disappoint from that standpoint. If I wanted to compare and contrast last year's opener to this year's opener, the rate of production—the one thing we managed to do offensively last year—is not turn the football over. And we turned it over three times tonight. That's not acceptable. We rushed the ball well at times. We knew coming in here that we would have to take advantage of every single mistake that they made, and they didn't really make a whole lot of them. The ones that they did, they recovered from, and we made far too many. We got off schedule. I don't want to compare and contrast that much because it's two different football programs, though it's basically the same philosophy. We talk to our kids all the time about [that] every game is different. Every season has its own identity and every play has its own identity. There's an awful lot of positives. We worked together, and that, at the end of the day is the most satisfying thing. We got a chance to move forward. We have some time to heal; we have two weeks to prepare for The Citadel. Go down to the heart of Charleston—near our home—and play the rivalry game. And we're going to be prepared to play. I'm incredibly proud of our young men because of who they are and what we represent. We knew the challenges ahead of us. Dan Mullen is a class act. At least he didn't have to start fair catching punts like he did a year ago. First thing he asked me at midfield is 'Are you healthy' and I said, 'Yes sir, we are.' He wished me well and I wished him well. Dan Mullen's a class act and Florida's a class program. He will get them where they want to go. I hope it's sooner rather than later. Good people should have success in this profession. I do believe we are going to be fine. We need to stay healthy. We don't have the depth that we've had in years past at certain positions. We don't have the luxury of some of the things that we've enjoyed in the past. But, we've got playmakers. I was very pleased with our running backs tonight. We challenged them. For the most part, from the standpoint of production, we rushed the ball well. We've got to throw and catch the ball well. And they matched us. We made some mistakes at quarterback. We made some really good things happen at quarterback. The turnovers are what bothers me. And two of them were in the condition of us not paying attention with the condition of the ball. It's Florida, it's night, it's the summer, and the ball's going to get moisture, and it's going to get wet. And we put it on the ground twice because of it, but we can't do that. What if we play in a rainstorm? Nobody's going to have a towel out there then. We got to be able to handle those things. But, I saw some really, really good things. Our defense played well. My biggest concern is that we needed to help them. We did it at times, but we didn't do it often enough. But, we're going to be okay. I believe that we're going to be okay — mostly because we have character young men, and character, preparation and brotherhood will win it. It always has.



On what was said at the half:

About the great things that I just talked to you about — about who we are. About what we do. Everything is a choice — a mindset, attitude — preparation's all about choice. Because other people don't care — they want to play, too. And if you walk out in the middle of that field and you're not ready to play, nobody cares because they do — they want to play. [Florida] wants to play. They want to produce. They're competing. We better be ready to compete. And we did, for the most part. We have to take care of us. That's all of us. We take care of us, results will take care of themselves. We need to take care of us. I was asked twice this past week, 'What type of measuring stick does a game like this [have]?'. This isn't a measuring stick. The only measuring stick is where we are relative to who we have to compete against to advance ourselves in time. The only thing that matters is our preparation for The Citadel for the next two weeks. We take care of us. It's what John Wooden talked about his entire career and long beyond [after] his career was over. Take care of yourself and results, in turn, will take care of themselves. That's where we're at and that's who we are. We need to take from this. There's plenty of mistakes, but there's good things in here. It's good teaching film. It will be what we allow it to be. We've been in this place before. Outside of our game against Vanderbilt in 2014, this has pretty much been the result with Big South Conference Championship teams. This is the SEC. This is real, big-boy football. If we just can't match up — either by speed, physicality or whatever — but our execution is good, then I'm fine. God gives talent to certain young men to do certain things and he gives certain talent to other young men. Not everybody can be an SEC player. Not everybody can be a Big South player that door swings both ways. We have to be us, and that's all I'm concerned about. We've got things to go upon.



2018 Florida Football Postgame Quotes

Charleston Southern Players

Florida 53, Charleston Southern 6

September 1, 2018

Redshirt Senior DE Solomon Brown

On playing in the atmosphere here:

"It's really great to play in these environments like this, especially being at a smaller D1 school. We don't really have many opportunities to showcase our talents on a big stage like this, in front of 90 something thousand people. So I appreciate the opportunities that we have like this and I try to take advantage of it as much as I can."

On hitting a career milestone on this big of a stage:

"It's great that I hit that milestone. I was always aiming to be one of the greatest that's come through CSU and hitting that milestone means I'm on the right track. The fact that I hit it during this great game against this great opponent, Florida, makes it even more special. Just the talent level Florida has and just the speed, it's incredible, so it was great to achieve that goal against them."

Redshirt Junior QB London Johnson

On what positives can come out of this:

"Just how bad we wanted it, but we knew once we got in the red zone if we can get past the 50- yard line, then we had opportunities to put ourselves in position to score. First red zone, we're down there and I kind of went to the wrong side. I knew I had the number one matchup, but like coach Tuck [Mark Tucker] said, we got great learning film. We are going to be good when we get back in our league. We had some insight to what we're going to be able to do this year. That was the biggest thing, is what can we take from this game and I feel like we got some great things ahead for us in the future."