

## 2000 Freshman Class

INCOMING ANALYSIS AND RATING – 4.2\* Excellent

As Coach Mike Dubose entered his fourth recruiting war at BAMA the depth situation on BAMA's roster is starting solidify with two straight strong recruiting classes providing some talent that is already making significant contributions. The small classes of 1995 and 1996 due to NCAA sanctions are leaving their legacy in BAMA history. Led by several 5th years seniors from the 1995 class, BAMA just completed a surprise season in it's rebuilding process by taking the 1999 SEC Championship from the Florida Gators with a convincing win in the 1999 SEC Championship game. RB Shaun Alexander and OL Chris Samuels led the TIDE with outstanding leadership and performance in a season that saw Coach Mike Dubose survive preseason personal problems that almost cost him his job. The players and coaches faced a difficult situation and somehow managed to keep enough focus to beat Florida not only in "the SWAMP" during the regular season but again at the SEC Championship. Add also to this magical season a first ever victory at "the PLAINS" in Auburn. So Coach Dubose entered the recruiting season on a high when things looked bleak months earlier.

Once again CRC spun his recruiting magic getting top talent to visit BAMA and keep the return to championship days again alive. Depth on the roster was improving but one more class like 1998 and 1999 was needed to maintain this sudden return to glory. With many outstanding skill players signed in those two classes the last piece to the rebuilding puzzle was to sign as many linemen as possible to solidify the key component to consistent winning seasons. That is line strength on both sides of the ball. All great programs have it.

Well, with most of the top linemen in the South at least showing interest, BAMA not only got numerous high profile linemen on campus for a visit but they signed and will return to T-Town next fall as members of the 2000 recruiting class. Led by several key linemen prospects the TIDE had it's 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive outstanding class of blue chip players. The class also includes 5 signees who sit out one year after not qualifying last year. They passed the test and are now qualified. Also signed was three JC all-stars. The five resigned prospects are DL Gerard Clark, WR Dre Fulgham, DB Raymond Hudson, DL Garry McNealy, and WR Derrick Woods. All were outstanding prospects last year but you take a gamble when kids don't play for a year and sit out. If they don't work out and condition their value could drop. The staff must feel good with each one being resigned. The JC signees was led by super athlete LB Aries Monroe who signed two years ago but did not qualify. He returns with great ability and high expectations. Also signed quietly on signing day were two JC all-stars from California. DE Shawn Oglesby and FS Connie Brown are both highly rated JC players signed for depth at thin positions on the roster.

This class had 30 signees and like the 1999 class had non-qualifiers. Again the numbers worked out in the end to give BAMA the 25 signees allowed. Non-qualifiers were WR

Derrian Walker and OL Maurice Mitchell who look to be headed to JC. Mitchell was a highly rated prospect expected to contribute immediately. DL Mac Tyler was a big-time prospect and BAMA fan but still must get his academic situation taken care of to get to T-Town. DL Garry McNealy is still trying to get eligible after sitting out last year. OL Reggie Cordy was a question mark and his future was on hold. The remaining 25 signees are qualified and solid with eleven being "5" rated prospects. This now gives BAMA 39 signees combined from 3 straight great classes that come into BAMA as highly rated "5" prospects. That means half the roster is full of high profile prospects that most all big-time schools were battling BAMA for their commitment. Now if the majority of these kids progress to the level of performance that my historical numbers show "5" rated kids achieve, then 40% of these kids will contribute as multiple year starters and many will make All-SEC and several will be All-Americans. That's a big 'if' but the amount of talent now on the BAMA roster is as strong on paper as anyone in the SEC. The problem is it's all young and inexperienced and needs solid coaching and leadership. If everything falls in place the championships could continue.

The 4.2 rating for this class is the third consecutive \*excellent rated class for Coach Dubose. After not having a \*excellent rated incoming class since I started in 1980 until the 1998 class, Coach Dubose has put three consecutive classes on the books with the highest rating in my system ... excellent. Last years 1999 class is first at 4.6 followed by the 1998 class at 4.3 and then this year a 4.2 for third. All this is great and exciting but what will we be their outgoing rating at the end of their careers. Chances look good for some great things to possibly happen but in big-time college football some funny things happen and let's hope we avoid that scenario.

The big-time prospects in this class are also big-time in size. Big linemen was the priority and we got them. Leading the way were buddies OL Wesley Britt and OL Justin Smiley. Both highly touted and wanted by Florida Coach Steve Spurrier, they became friends on their visit as did their parents also. With non-qualifier OL Mo Mitchell signing, some sources have said BAMA signed the top three OL prospects on Florida's recruiting board. Coach Spurrier loses twice to BAMA during the 1999 season and during the following recruiting season he loses the top three OL prospects on his wish list to BAMA. Things may be changing at the top of the powers list in the SEC. Britt is 6'8" and both he and Smiley are 300-plus pound size linemen. They could be something special together at BAMA.

The strength of this class is on the defensive side of the ball. DL play makes or breaks the other positions on the defense. BAMA signed a great list of DL in this class. DL Albert Means was on everybody's wish list but signed with the TIDE. He is a highly rated prospect and much publicized. Another top signee from the Memphis pipeline to T-Town. DL Anthony Bryant is huge and pure raw talent. He is from a small school but has unlimited potential. His huge calves are a sight to see. From Canada comes DE Nautyn McKay-Loescher with talent and a love for BAMA. DE Antwan Odum is tall and quick and a highly rated prospect nationally. At LB BAMA added some gifted talent. Brooks Daniels is super quick and one of the top prospects in FL. LB/FB Harold James is one of Arkansas top prospects and has big-time talent. He loves RB but BAMA will push him

towards the LB slot. Several DB prospects are highly rated. Carlos Andrews and Thurmun Ward are big DB's with good speed. Their larger size was something targeted in this class by the staff. Ward is 6'2" and Andrews carries 200 pounds as a cornerback. A highly thought of prospects who was rated a "4" but the coaches wanted badly was LB Cornelius Wortham from MS. He is a 6'2" safety they feel will be a great LB when he gets bigger. He has great speed and TN wanted him badly. He chose the TIDE.

Overall it's another great class full of talent and potential. With 3 consecutive top rated classes Coach Dubose has to feel good about the future and now his leadership and his staff's coaching ability must turn the majority of these blue-chip signees into solid football players. With an unexpected SEC championship this past season the expectations have moved up on the time chart for the Coach. With all these highly rated prospects the pressure is on to win and time will tell if Coach Mike Dubose can sign great recruiting classes and turn them into championship teams.

\*\*\* Class list on following page .....

2000 Class - Coach Mike Dubose						
Name	Pos.	St.	Incoming Rating	Outgoing Rating	Honors	NFL
Carlos Andrews	DB	FL	5			
Wesley Britt	OL	AL	5			
Connie Brown	JC	FS	CA	4		
Anthony Bryant		DL	AL	5		
Gerard Clark	PREP	DL	FL	4		
Brooks Daniels		LB	FL	5		
Dre Fulgham	RESIGN	WR	AL	4		
Tarry Givens		WR	FL	4		
Raymond Hudson	RESIGN	DB	FL	5		
Chris James		DB	GA	3		
Harold James		LB	AR	5		
Donnie Lowe		FB	TN	3		
Triandos Luke		WR	AL	4		
Danny Martz		OL	MY	2		
Evan Mathis		OL	AL	3		
Nautyn McKay-Loescher		DE	CANADA	4		
Albert Means		DL	TN	5		
Aries Monroe	JC	DE	FL	5		
Antwan Odom		DE	AL	5		
Shawn Oglesby	JC	DE	CA	4		
Jason Rawls		LB	GA	3		
Mathew Sanders		P	AL	4		
Justin Smiley		OL	GA	5		
Thurman Ward		DB	MS	5		
Derrick Woods	RESIGN	WR	TN	4		
Cornelius Wortham		LB	MS	4		
Non-Qualifiers / Problems						
Reggie Cordy		OL	GA			
Garry McNealy		DL	FL			
Maurice Mitchell		OL	GA			
Mac Tyler		DL	AL			
Derrian Walker		WR	AL			
Overall			4.2			

### Incoming Class Rating System

- 3.6 – Less.....Poor
- 3.7 – 3.9.....Average
- 4.0 – 4.1.....Good
- 4.2 – Above.....Excellent