

Part 2. "Freshman Class Reviews" ... Coach Ray Perkins 1983-1986

Coach Ray Perkins accepted the job of head coach at BAMA in late December 1982. He arrived at his alma mater with the very difficult task of following a coaching legend and the standards of winning set at anything less than playing for the National Championship, an average season. Coach Bryant's last three recruiting classes were average incoming, but all 3 classes fell into the poor category outgoing. This meant Coach Perkins first two teams at BAMA, 1983 and 1984, had very few impact players. On top of that, Perkins first two recruiting classes were two of the lowest rated incoming groups since I started rating in 1980. The result of these consecutive poor incoming and outgoing classes was a 5-6 team in 1984. This was a difficult time for Coach Perkins and BAMA faithful. At this same time, rival Auburn had put together tremendous recruiting classes and was flirting with National prominence.

Coach Perkins made several controversial changes with the football program, but the primary problem was a lack of talented players. Coach Perkins last two recruiting classes in 1985 and 1986 turned the tide as both classes produced a significant number of major contributors and impact players. The 1985 class produced two legendary players and the largest number of all-star selections from any back to back classes came from the 1985 and 1986 groups.

Unlike the talent level left by Coach Bryant, Coach Perkins left after the 1986 season with a team full of outstanding freshman and sophomore players on it. When Coach Curry came in 1987, he inherited this group and as upperclassmen they put BAMA back on the map as a national power. Led by the freshmen classes of 1985 and 1986, the 1988 team posted a solid 9-3 season and the 10-2 1989 team won the SEC Championship and made a run at the National Championship, 10 years after their last one in 1979. Several costly mistakes in the Auburn game on the "plains" cost BAMA an undefeated regular season. They played Miami a very tough game in the Sugar Bowl before losing 33-25.

Ratings for 1983 – 1986 Recruiting Classes

	<u>.....INCOMING.....</u>	<u>.....OUTGOING</u>
19833.7*Average..... 2.7 * Poor
19843.9 *Average 2.4 * Poor
19854.0 *Good 3.0* Average
19864.0 *Good 3.5* Excellent

When I created my outgoing rating system in 1984, I often wondered if I had set the excellent rating too high, was it a realistic number to achieve. I wanted a class that achieved that number to really earn it. The 1986 class was outstanding individually and as an overall group. They won a SEC Championship, had several players earn all-star status, had several make it to the NFL, and good overall class contribution. After that year, I felt confident that my rating system was as fair and accurate as I possibly could make it.

*** I rated these classes each year as they completed their eligibility. I vowed to never change the individual ratings in later years because it would be too easy to keep going back and change them. Since my post in August, I changed a couple of player's ratings after some facts about them were pointed out to me. After researching those facts, I decided to update a couple of player's ratings. Those of you with the August post will know the changes.

*** The factors and criteria I used for my ratings and rating systems are at the end of this document. Opinions and comments are welcomed.

Part 3. Coach Curry Classes 1987 - 1989 - Will E-Mail Tuesday 11-16-99 (Maybe- G).
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1983 Freshman Class

INCOMING ANALYSIS AND RATING -- 3.7 * Average

Coach Ray Perkins started his BAMA coaching career in late December 1982. Coach Bryant had just stepped down and was struggling to secure prospects as this major coaching transition evolved. Coach Perkins was able to secure a strong in-state group of signees even though he got a late start. The key accomplishment was securing the two highly rated in-state prospects that had not committed and were being pursued by everyone, especially Auburn who was putting together its 3rd consecutive outstanding recruiting class. In the end, these two prize prospects signed with BAMA and went on to produce outstanding careers. LB Cornelius Bennett and DL Curt Jarvis, both of Birmingham, were National recruits and the key signees in this class. But overall, the class fell short on highly rated signees, especially the out of state prospects they pursued.

This class had an incoming rating of 3.7 *(Average). Of the 28 signees, I gave seven a “5” rating. Only 15 of 28 signees (54%) were rated a “4” or above. Far below the 80% I consider to be a good class percentage. Also, the key ingredient in a recruiting class each year is a large number of linemen, most coaches try to sign at least 10 each year. This class had only five linemen to sign. This small number was a significant negative factor with Coach Perkins first recruiting class.

The prize “5” rated signees in the class were LB Cornelius Bennett and DL Curt Jarvis from Birmingham. Jarvis was a Parade All-American and considered one of the top 25 players in the nation by all national publications. Bennett was listed as a highly rated fullback, but everyone knew he was destined for LB at BAMA. Other “5” rated signees from in-state were DB Marvin Humphries from Montgomery, OL Bill Jordan from Geneva, and WR Greg Richardson from Mobile. The only out of state “5” rated signees were from Florida. The prize prospect with the famous name was QB Mike Shula . He was on all the national list, but some questioned his ability and felt his name got the rating. The fact is he was an all-state QB from the highly competitive Miami area and definitely had the football mentality you would expect from the son of Don Shula. Also, “5” rated TE Thorton Chandler was signed after transferring from Florida A & M.

OUTGOING ANALYSIS AND RATING -- 2.7 *Poor

This class had an outgoing rating of 2.7 *(Poor). Only 12 of 28 signees (43%) contributed “3” plus careers. (60% a good class contribution) On top of that negative, 10 signees were rated a “1” (never arrived, left, quit, etc). As you will see, Perkins first three recruiting classes all had 10 or more “1” rated signees. That basically means, approximately 40% of the total class signed in each of those first three classes never finished their careers. This is the only period of time since 1980 that this type attrition occurred. Looking at the players that were rated “1”, it looks like a case of too many kids being overrated or signing to many “sleepers”. This is really an amazing number. Facts like this, explain why no National Championships were won in the 80’s and no SEC Championship from 1982 thru 1988.

Without a doubt, the premiere member of this class was legendary LB Cornelius Bennett. He was a 3-time All-American and All-SEC selection. He won the 1986 Lombardi Award for the nation’s top lineman. “Biscuit” is definitely one of BAMA’s all-time legends. Two players were 2-time All-SEC selections. DL Curt Jarvis and LB Wayne Davis had outstanding careers. Mike Shula was an All-SEC QB in 1985. A real success story was LB Randy Rockwell from Daphne. He came in as a “2” rated LB, but the hard nosed signee played and worked hard and was selected All-SEC in 1987. Highly rated signee OL Bill Jordan never contributed at BAMA .

This class was never a part of a championship team. They were among the upperclassmen on the 1986 10-3 team which was helped significantly by the tremendous 1985 and 1986 classes. Several were 5th year seniors on the 1987 7-5 team.

*** The factors and criteria I used for my ratings and rating systems, are at the end of this document.
Opinions and comments are welcomed.

1983 Class – Ray Perkins						
Name	Pos.	St.	Incoming Rating	Outgoing Rating	Honors	NFL
Larry Abney	WR	LA	3	2		
Cornelius Bennett	LB	AL	5	6	A-A (3), SEC (3)	*
Jeff Bentley	OL	AL	4	2		
Allan Brown	OL	AL	3	1		
Phillip Brown	LB	AL	3	3		*
Thorton Chandler	TE	FL	5	4		*
Britton Cooper	DB	AL	3	2		
Wayne Davis	LB	AL	4	6	SEC (2)	*
Louis Dean	DB	AL	4	1		
Craig Epps	LB	FL	3	2		
Andrew Gilder	RB	AL	4	1		
Kerry Goode	RB	AL	4	4		*
Steve Hartley	LB	AL	3	1		
Tim Hecht	QB	VA	4	1		
Marvin Humphries	DB	AL	5	1		
Curt Jarvis	DL	AL	5	6	SEC (2)	*
Jerry Jones	RB	GA	3	1		
Bill Jordan	OL	AL	5	1		
Dante Knox	DB	AL	3	1		
Lydell Mitchell	DB	AL	4	3		
Randy Moore	OL	AL	3	1		
Greg Richardson	WR	AL	5	4		*
Carlos Robinson	RB	AL	4	2		
Randy Rockwell	LB	AL	2	5	SEC	
Mike Shula	QB	FL	5	5	SEC	*
Angelo Stafford	QB	AL	3	2		
Ricky Thomas	DB	FL	3	4		
John Wright	RB	AL	2	3		
Overall			3.7	2.7	A-A (1), SEC (5)	8

1984 Freshman Class

INCOMING ANALYSIS AND RATING -- 3.9 *Average

Coach Perkins followed up his first class with another average rated class. Due to a small number of highly rated in-state prospects, Coach Perkins and staff were forced to put a heavy emphasis on out of state prospects. The results were not what he needed in numbers of potential impact players. This class had an incoming rating of 3.9 *(Average). Of the 27 signees, I gave only six a "5" rating. 18 of 27 signees (66%) were rated a "4" or above. The second consecutive year of less than 80% for Coach Perkins and the fourth straight year overall going back to 1981. This means that the roster was carrying a large number of "3" rated signees. Many "3" rated signees go on to be impact players, but at this period of time BAMA needed big time talent in large numbers to get back into the championship hunt. Also in this class, only 6 linemen were signed. That makes only 11 linemen signees in Perkins first two years. IMO this hurt BAMA more than any other part of recruiting during this period. Most coaches have always stated that recruiting starts with quality linemen for both sides of the ball and most sign a plentiful number each year.

The most notable signee would have to be QB Vince Sutton from Georgia. He was rated one of the top 3 QBs in America and was selected a Parade and USA Today High School All-American. Another Parade All-American signed was DB Johnny Norwood from Texas. Both of these signees were "5" rated. The other out of state "5" rated signees were DB Rory Turner from Georgia and QB Gene Newberry from Arkansas. There was only two in-state signees rated a "5" and both were from the Mobile area. OL Bill Condon and LB Willie Sheppard came from a very small number of Div. #1 prospects available in Alabama.

OUTGOING ANALYSIS AND RATING -- 2.4 *(Poor).

This class had an outgoing rating of 2.4 *(Poor). This class would get a "Very Poor" rating if I had one. This is by far the lowest rated outgoing class since I started in 1980. Only 10 of 27 signees (37%) contributed a "3" plus career. (60% a good class contribution) For the second consecutive year a very high number did not complete a full career. After 10 in 1983, eleven signees were rated a "1" in this class. The individual numbers are no better. Only 1 signee produced a "6" rating and I gave no one a "5" rating.

OL Bill Condon was a 2-time All-SEC selection and by far the lone star of this class. P Chris Mohr was the only other player to earn All-SEC. One time All-SEC players usually get a "5" rating, but I personally cannot give a punter that rating. Other solid contributors from this class was FB Doug Allen, WR Greg Payne, and LB Willie Sheppard. DB Rory Turner had a solid career and is remembered for his brutal hits. A famous quote from Rory was made after a vicious hit against Auburn to save a touchdown, "I REALLY WAXED THAT DUDE!" Also WR Clay Whitehurst was a steady and solid contributor during his scareer. Incoming Parade All-American DB Johnny Norwood never contributed at BAMA. The other Parade All-American signee, QB Vince Sutton, never developed into the impact player many felt sure he would. The other highly rated QB in the class, Gene Newberry, ended his career at TE.

This class was the upperclassmen on the 1987 7-5 team. Fifth year players were on the 1988 9-3 team, but few contributed significantly. Over all, this class made few major contributions at BAMA.

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Opinions and comments are welcomed.

1984 Class – Ray Perkins						
Name	Pos.	St.	Incoming Rating	Outgoing Rating	Honors	NFL
Doug Allen	RB	FL	3	4		
Freddie Boles	WR	AL	4	1		
David Casteal	RB	AL	4	3		
Tommy Cole	NG	AL	4	4		
Bill Condon	OL	AL	5	6	SEC (2)	
Paul Davenport	RB	AL	3	1		
Norbert Dean	OL	AL	3	1		
Shannon Felder	DB	TX	4	2		
John Fruhmorgan	OL	FL	4	2		
Felix Hampton	DB	AL	3	1		
Butch Lewis	OL	AL	3	2		
Don McClain	RB	GA	4	1		
Chris Mohr	P	GA	4	4	SEC	*
Vic Molton	DB	AL	2	1		
Andy Moon	QB	TN	4	1		
Brett Nance	OL	AL	3	1		
George Nathan	RB	AL	4	1		
Gene Newberry	QB	AR	5	2		
Johnny Norwood	DB	TX	5	1		
Greg Payne	WR	AL	4	4		
Willie Sheppard	LB	AL	5	4		
Ben Steele	WR	MS	3	1		
Vince Sutton	QB	GA	5	4		
Rory Turner	DB	GA	5	4		
Daryl Whetstone	LB	AL	4	2		
Clay Whitehurst	WR	TN	4	4		
Steve Wilson	DB	AL	3	2		
Overall			3.9	2.4	SEC (2)	1

1985 Freshman Class

INCOMING ANALYSIS AND RATING -- 4.0 * Good

This class was Coach Perkins third recruiting class. The need for a super class of talent was the objective Coach Perkins had to achieve. This class had a "good" incoming rating, but produced some significant players at a time they desperately were needed. The incoming rating for this class was a 4.0 * (Good), 18 of 27 signees (66%) were rated a "4" or above. Again short of the 80% I considered to be a good incoming percentage. A key accomplishment by Coach Perkins and staff in this class was the number of "5" rated prospects they were able to secure. Out of 27 signees, I gave eight a "5" rating. Two of those 8 were highly rated in-state RBS. Also, a good number (10) of linemen were finally signed. Desperately needing help at the skill positions, two JC WRS were signed.

The two highly rated in-state "5" rated RB signees were Bobby Humphrey from Birmingham and Gene Jelks from Gadsden. Both possessed the speed BAMA desperately needed at RB. The JC WR signees were Albert Bell from Los Angeles and Daryl Thomas from Texas. Bell was a Parade All-American out of high school but had to go the JC route due to grades. He arrived at BAMA needing to contribute quickly. Other "5" rated signees were DB John Easterling from MS, DB Kermit Kendrick from MS, and DL Anthony Smith from NC. The last two "5" rated signees were two in-state linemen, a position Coach Perkins had made a priority for this recruiting year. Larry Rose and big Joe King from Gadsden were both highly rated prospects. One other signee of note was a "3" rated LB prospect from Miami. Many considered this signee to be one of BAMA's biggest recruiting steals ever. Taken right out of National power U of Miami's back yard was LB Derrick Thomas. Considered the 3rd best LB in the city of Miami, this 6-3 220 lb. athlete had been clocked at a sub 4.5 forty. The coaches were very excited with this "3" rated signee.

OUTGOING ANALYSIS AND RATING -- 3.0 * Average

This class had an outgoing rating of 3.0 *(Average). The rating for this class really does not dictate how unique this class was. First the negative factors. Two signees died during their careers. RB George Scruggs from Decatur was killed in a car wreck. DL Willie Ryles from Phenix City died from health complications. A very unusual and sad occurrence. I did not rate these two kids incoming or outgoing and they are not included in the class rating. The other negative factor was for the 3rd consecutive year an amazing number of signees were rated a "1". Of the 27 signees, 11 were rated a "1". Again a "1" rating is for less than a full career. The combined 3 year total (1983,1984,1985) for this attrition was 31 of 82 signees left before completing a full 4-5 year career. This number destroys an outgoing class rating, but IMO a signee's full commitment to BAMA is crucial to team stability. This high number of detractors has only happen one time and this was the period it occurred. Without this high number of "1" rated signees, this class would have achieved an "excellent" outgoing rating. Another unique situation occurred for the first time. DL Anthony Smith contributed 3 solid years before leaving prior to his senior year. I still rated him a "1" for early departure even though he contributed to the program.

The positives for this class are significant. Only 14 of 27 signees (52%) contributed "3" plus careers. But the key to this class is the number of impact players it produced when BAMA needed them most. I gave 5 players a "6" rating and 2 more a "5" rating. Four players were All-Americans and those four plus 3 additional players gave the class seven All-SEC selections. These are significant numbers for all-star type players from one class.

Two all-time greats head this class of all-stars. The low rated LB from Miami was the “real-deal-steal.” Derrick Thomas was a 2-time All-American and All-SEC selection. He also won the Dick Butkus Award in 1988 for the nation’s best LB. The other all-time great is RB Bobby Humphrey, BAMA’s all-time career rushing leader. He was a 2-time All-American and All-SEC selection. Another 2-time All-American and All-SEC selection from this class was OL Larry Rose. DB Kermit Kendrick had an outstanding career and made All-American in 1988. He also was a 2-time All-SEC selection. Two other players making All-SEC during their careers were TE Howard Cross and RB Murry Hill. Another unique occurrence from this class was how to rate a JC signee for a career of only two years. JC WR Albert Bell was a 2-time All-SEC selection. I felt JC players are signed for an immediate contribution due to a significant need on the team. After I determined what a JC signee should accomplish IMO, I gave Bell a “5” rating for his career. I have continued using that rationale for rating JC signees and believe it’s fair. Other players contributing solid careers were WR Marco Battle, LB Vantriese Davis, and LB Greg Gilbert. Another famous player from this class was highly rated RB Gene Jelks. He is best known for his negative relationship with the University, but was a talented RB who suffered a severe knee injury. He came back as a DB but lost so much physical ability from the injury and lack of rehabilitation, he never reached all-star or NFL status.

This class was the first of two consecutive that produced a significant number of impact players. The following class of 1986 is the other. This class was a part of the 10-3 team in 1986 and 9-3 team in 1988. Also, on the 1987 7-5 team under first year coach Bill Curry. The 5th year players were seniors on the 1989 10-2 SEC Championship team that made a run at an undefeated season and the National Championship before losing their last two games.

*** The factors and criteria I used for my ratings and rating systems, are at the end of this document.
Opinions and comments are welcomed.

1985 Class – Ray Perkins							
Name	Pos.	St.	Incoming Rating	Outgoing Rating	Honors	NFL	
Andy Anderson	TE	GA	3	1			
Bennie Atkinson	DT	GA	4	1			
Marco Battle	WR	AL	4	4			
Albert Bell (JC)	WR	CA	5	6	SEC (2)		
George Bethune	DE	FL	4	3		*	
Mike Burch	QB	AL	3	1			
John Cassimus	RB	AL	4	3			
Howard Cross	TE	AL	4	5	SEC		*
Vantrise Davis	LB	AL	4	4			
John Easterling	SS	MS	5	1			
Greg Gilbert	LB	AL	4	4			
Murry Hill	RB	AL	4	5	SEC		
Bobby Humphrey	RB	AL	5	6	A-A (2), SEC (2)		*
Gene Jelks	RB	AL	5	4			
Kermit Kendrick	SS	MS	5	6	A-A, SEC (2)		
Joe King	OL	AL	5	2			
Waymon McGriff	DT	AL	3	1			
John Meloche	DT	AL	3	1			
Terry Palmer	LB	FL	3	1			
Tray Pruet	OL	TX	4	1			
Larry Rose	OL	AL	5	6	A-A (2), SEC		
Derrick Rushton	DT	AL	3	2			
Wayne Shaw	RB	TN	3	3			
Anthony Smith	DE	NC	5	1			*
Darryl Thomas (JC)	WR	TX	4	1			
Derrick Thomas	LB	FL	3	6	A-A (2), SEC (2)		*
Daryl Whitfield	OL	AL	3	1			
Willie Ryles	DT	AL			Died		
George Scruggs	RB	AL			Died		
Overall			4.0	3.0	A-A (4), SEC (7)		5

1986 Freshman Class

INCOMING ANALYSIS AND RATING -- 4.0 * Good

This class was Coach Perkins 4th and last recruiting class. It is the second consecutive outstanding class for Coach Perkins. Most recruiting experts rated it one of the nation's finest. The class is full of highly rated signees, but rated in the "good" category in my rating system. A total of ten "3" rated signees in the class kept it out of my "excellent" category. Still, when combined with the 1985 class, these two classes produced a large number of quality impact players at a crucial time at BAMA. It had now been 4 years since BAMA's last SEC Championship and 6 years since it's last National Championship. There was an uneasy feeling among BAMA faithful and Coach Perkins may have started to feel a little pressure. These two classes eased some of that uneasiness and this 1986 class caused a stir of excitement about the future.

This class had an incoming rating of 4.0 * (Good). 18 of 28 signees (64%) rated a "4" or above. This is below my good percentage of 80% and was caused by ten signees that were rated "3". But, the number of highly rated "5" signees was excellent. I gave a total of ten signees a "5" rating. This was the highest number of "5" rated signees since I started in 1980 and a number I felt BAMA was capable of securing each year. The highly rated signees included 2 QBS and 5 linemen. For the second consecutive year a primary objective for this class was linemen. A total of 13 linemen were signed in this class.

Heading the class were two highly rated QBS. Billy Ray from GA and Jeff Dunn from NC were ranked among the top ten QBS prospects in America. Ray caused a real stir of excitement as many recruiting services rated him the top player in the South. A third QB was signed who was not highly rated, but highly thought of by the staff, Gary Hollingsworth from Hamilton. The five prize linemen signed were Danny Cash from SC, Glenn Watts from FL, Mike Zuga from GA, Byron Holbrooks from Haleyville, and Willie Wyatt from Birmingham. RB Pierre Goode from Town Creek followed brother Kerry to BAMA as a pipeline was starting to this small talent rich town. LB Robert Stewart from Ashford was a highly rated LB but most expected him to grow into a lineman. The last "5" rated signee was National recruit PK Alan Ward from FL.

OUTGOING ANALYSIS AND RATING -- 3.5 *Excellent

At last, a class achieved an "excellent" outgoing rating. This class rated a 3.5 and finally confirmed to me the "excellent" rating in my system could be achieved. 18 of 28 signees (64%) contributed "3" plus careers, making this the first class since I started to have my desired 60% of the class contribute "3" plus careers. After 3 consecutive years of high attrition or "1" rated signees, this class only had seven not complete a full 4-5 year career. Three players were selected All-Americans and those three plus five others gave this class 8 All-SEC selections. That makes the two year combined total of all-star players from the 1985 and 1986 classes pretty significant. Those combined classes produced 7 All-Americans and those seven plus eight more means 15 players were All-SEC selections. These type consecutive classes usually produce success and they did in 1989 with a SEC Championship team.

Many of the prize signees did not produce outstanding careers. QB Billy Ray never produced and left for Duke and Coach Steve Spurrier. QB Jeff Dunn held off Ray for a couple of years, but never reached the success level many expected. As destiny would have it, the QB that succeeded was Gary Hollingsworth. He was an All-SEC selection in 1989 and prospered from the guidance QB Coach Homer Smith. He still holds many of BAMA's career passing records. The three All-American selections from this class were DB John Mangum, TE Lamonde Russell, and DL Robert Stewart. All three players were also 2-time All-SEC selections. Other 2-time All-SEC players were OL Terrill Chatman, DL Willie Wyatt, and C Roger Shultz. DB Lee Ozmint also was selected All-SEC in 1988. Another player who contributed a very solid career was LB Spencer Hammond. Highly rated DL Glenn Watts from FL never contributed at BAMA.

This class went through a dramatic coaching change as Coach Perkins left after their first year and was replaced by Coach Bill Curry in 1987. Some 5th year players played for 3 different coaches as they finished with Coach Gene Stallings in 1990. This team had significant contributors on the 10-2 1989 SEC Championship team.

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Opinions and comments are welcomed.

1986 Class – Ray Perkins						
Name	Pos.	St.	Incoming Rating	Outgoing Rating	Honors	NFL
Charlie Abrams	TE	AL	3	3		
Danny Cash	OL	SC	5	2		
Terrill Chatman	OL	AL	4	6	SEC (2)	
Jeff Dunn	QB	NC	5	4		
Pierre Goode	RB	AL	5	4		
Spencer Hammond	LB	GA	3	5		
Bryron Holbrooks	DT	AL	5	4		
Gary Hollingsworth	QB	AL	3	6	SEC	
William Kent	RB	GA	4	1		
Greg Kiker	OL	AL	3	1		
David Lenoir	DT	TN	4	3		
John Mangum	DB	MS	4	6	A-A, SEC (2)	*
Lee Ozmint	DB	SC	4	5	SEC	
Trent Patterson	OL	NY	4	4		
Kevin Penny	OL	AL	3	1		
Anthony Ramsey	OL	MS	3	1		
Billy Ray	QB	GA	5	1		
Chris Robinette	OL	AL	4	4		
Lee Rockwell	LB	AL	3	2		
Lamonde Russell	TE	AL	4	6	A-A, SEC (2)	
Roger Shultz	OL	GA	3	6	SEC (2)	
Mike Smith	DB	FL	3	3		
Robert Stewart	LB	AL	5	6	A-A, SEC (2)	
Scott Tucker	TE	MD	3	1		
Alan Ward	K	FL	5	2		
Glenn Watts	DT	FL	5	1		
Willie Wyatt	DT	AL	5	6	SEC (2)	*
Mike Zuga	OL	GA	5	4		
Overall			4.0	3.5	A-A (3), SEC (8)	2

RATING FACTORS

INCOMING RATING

In the early 80's, there were very few recruiting publications available. I ordered Joe Terranova in 1980 because he was generally regarded as the National expert. Blue Chips out of California was also a National publication I ordered. I used newspapers like the Atlanta J-C and B'Ham P-H for the Southeastern list and ratings. In the following years, I subscribed to Max Emfinger for a National list. In the South, Forrest Davis came on the scene and finally in the late 80's numerous publications became available. The best of which IMO was and still is Pigskin Preps. Barry Holland and I are from North Alabama and learned of each other's interest in recruiting. We shared information and many phone calls for years. Then Barry and Freddie Kirby started Pigskin Preps, a very accurate recruiting publication was created. Freddie is a "walking computer" full of recruiting information. Many of you know him and will agree. These guys got me started going to T-Town to observe prospects on their official visits and it remains an annual ritual.

My incoming ratings are based on a 1 to 5 scale with a "5" rating the highest. A "5" rated player is basically a top 75 prospect in the Southeast or a top 200 player in the nation. Each year I get several different lists of ratings for high school prospects, then give each signee an incoming rating based on those sources. I then take those individual ratings and average them for a "class incoming rating". I consider a class incoming rating of 4.0 to 4.1 as good. It requires 80% of the total class to be rated a "4" or above to achieve that number.

CLASS RATING SCALE

3.6 – less Poor
3.7 – 3.9 Average
4.0 – 4.1 Good
4.2 – above ... Excellent

OUTGOING RATING

I created my own rating system based on factors I personally believe distinguish a career. Positive factors would be fulfilling 4-5 year commitment, contributing with significant playing time for multiple years, starter multiple years, and of course achieving all-star status. Negative factors would be not staying with the program for a full 4-5 years and no significant playing time during entire career.

My outgoing ratings are based on a 1 to 6 scale with a "6" rating the highest. A "6" rated player is your All-American or multiple All-SEC selections. After giving each original class member an outgoing career rating, I average the individual ratings for a "class outgoing rating". I consider a 3.2 to 3.3 to be a good class rating. It requires approximately 60% of the entire class to contribute a "3" rated career or above. Even today, most coaches consider that to be good overall contribution from a recruiting class.

RATING SCALE – PLAYER

"1" Never reported, quit, didn't complete full 4-5 year commitment
"2" On squad, limited playing contribution
"3" Part-time starter, backup on 2-deep depth chart
"4" Starter multiple years, significant contribution
"5" All-SEC one year, Impact player
"6" All-American or multiple All-SEC selection

CLASS RATING SCALE

2.8 – less Poor
2.9 – 3.1 Average
3.2 – 3.3 Good
3.4 - above .. Excellent