

2011 Florida Football

Postgame Notes – TaxSlayer.com Gator Bowl

Florida 24, Ohio State 17

January 2, 2012

Team Notes

- With the 24-17 victory over Ohio State, Florida established a school record with its fourth-straight bowl win. UF had previously defeated Oklahoma in the 2009 BCS Championship Game, 24-14, stopped Cincinnati in the 2010 Allstate Sugar Bowl, 51-24, and knocked off Penn State in the 2011 Outback Bowl, 37-24.
- With today's win, the Gators have now had 24 consecutive winning seasons, the longest active streak in the country. Additionally, 2011 marks Florida's FBS-leading 32nd straight season with a winning percentage of .500 or higher.

Current Streaks - Top 10 Nationally (FBS only)

School	Consecutive Winning Seasons	Consecutive Seasons at least .500
Florida	24	32
Virginia Tech	19	19
Boise State	14	14
Oklahoma	13	13
LSU	12	12
Southern Cal	10	11
West Virginia	10	10
Wisconsin	10	10
Utah	9	9

- The Gators made their 21st-straight bowl appearance, which ranks first in the SEC and second nationally. This was also Florida's 18th January Bowl game since 1993, the highest total in the country, and was the team's ninth appearance in the Gator Bowl, which was played for the 67th time. Since 2005, Florida is one of four teams to post five bowl wins (Florida, LSU, TCU, Utah).
- Florida is now 20-19 all-time in bowls and owns a 7-2 record in the Gator Bowl.
- Florida improved to 2-0 against Ohio State with today's win. Each of UF's victories have been tallied in a bowl-game appearance (41-14 victory, 2007 Tostitos BCS National Championship).
- Using the 2011 conference alignments, Florida is 8-6 all-time in bowl games against Big Ten teams.
- Six first-year UF head coaches have earned bowl trips, posting a 3-3 record.

Bowl Trips for First-Year UF Head Coaches

1960	Ray Graves	Won	Gator Bowl vs. Baylor, 13-12
1989	Gary Darnell	Lost	Freedom Bowl vs. Washington, 34-7
2002	Ron Zook	Lost	Outback Bowl vs. Michigan, 38-30
2004	Charlie Strong	Lost	Peach Bowl vs. Miami (FL), 27-10
2005	Urban Meyer	Won	Outback Bowl vs. Iowa, 31-24
2012	Will Muschamp	Won	Gator Bowl vs. Ohio State, 24-17

- With today's win Florida Head Coach Will Muschamp became the 15th of UF's 22 head coaches to finish with a winning record in his first full season leading the Gators.
- Sophomore Andre Debose was named the TaxSlayer.com Gator Bowl MVP after he posted a 99-yard KO return for a touchdown, 128 total KO return yards and one catch for nine yards.
- With 12 tackles for loss (43 yards), the Gators reached a season high, after they tallied 11 against FAU (Sept. 3, 2011) and Florida State (Nov. 26, 2011), marking the third game this season in which Florida tallied 10+ tackles for loss.
- Junior linebacker Jon Bostic led the team with seven solo tackles, one assist and four tackles for a loss of 15 yards. He finishes the season leading the team in tackles with 94.
- Florida limited the Buckeyes to 2-of-10 on third-down conversions. With today's performance, Florida has held its foes to a combined 48-for-176 (.273) on third-down conversions, second in the nation – the best national ranking in school history. UF's third-down defense is its best since the 2001 season (.267), when it ranked fifth nationally.
- Freshman De'Ante Saunders' fumble recovery in the first quarter was the third takeaway for the safety in the last four games (INT at South Carolina, INT vs. Furman, FR vs. Ohio State). It marks the third time since 1996 that a Florida true freshman has recorded three takeaways in a single season, joining Janoris Jenkins (2008) and Daryl Dixon (1999).
- The fumble recovery by Saunders marked the fifth takeaway made in the first quarter this year by the Gators (Kentucky – 2, Georgia and South Carolina).
- With Andre Debose's 99-yard KO return, the redshirt sophomore earned his first KO return TD of the season and third of his career. It is both the longest play in Gator Bowl history, as well as Florida's longest KO return for a TD in its 39 bowl appearances.
- Debose's three career KO returns for a TD is a new UF career record, surpassing Bo Carroll (1997-2000) and Stacey Simmons (1986-88), who each recorded two TDs from KO returns throughout their time at UF. He is now one of six active players and the only underclassman to have two-or-more career KO returns of 99+ yards, joining Braxton Boykin of Georgia (3), Tyron Carrell of Houston (2), Taveon Rogers of New Mexico State (2), Jonathan Warzeka of Air Force (2) and and Foswhitt Whittaker of Texas (2).

- ◆ With six sacks on the day, the Gators set a season-high mark. It is the most sacks made in a single game since Florida had six against Tennessee on September 18, 2010, and ties the most made by an SEC school this season (LSU at Miss. State, 9/15/11; South Carolina vs. Vanderbilt, 9/24/11; LSU vs. Auburn, 10/22/11; Georgia vs. Florida, 10/29/11).
- ◆ Chris Rainey's blocked punt was his second of the season and the sixth of his career. Rainey is both the school and SEC record holder for blocked punts, and is the active leader, nationally.
- ◆ The blocked punt by Rainey was UF's sixth blocked kick of the season.
- ◆ Freshman linebacker Graham Stewart recorded his first career points donning the Orange and Blue when he recovered a blocked punt and returned the ball 14 yards to put the Gators up 21-10 in the third quarter. He became the fourth true freshman to score a touchdown on the season, joining Jacoby Brissett (2), Hunter Joyer (2) and De'Ante Saunders.
- ◆ It is the first blocked punt to be returned for a TD in the Gator Bowl since Dec. 29, 1991, when Russell Jones of Oklahoma returned a block punt four yards for a TD vs. Virginia.
- ◆ Redshirt sophomore Nick Alajajian each made his first career start in the TaxSlayer.com Gator Bowl, starting at left tackle.
- ◆ Florida has had the ball first in each game this season, and scored on its first drive four times (Alabama, Tennessee, UAB, FAU).
- ◆ Sophomore defensive tackle Sharrif Floyd recorded his first career sack when he brought down Ohio State's Braxton Miller, for a loss of two yards in the first quarter.
- ◆ Floyd's sack was immediately followed by a second for three yards, which credited him alongside redshirt senior defensive tackle Jaye Howard. It marked the first time this season that the Gators have recorded back-to-back sacks in a game.
- ◆ Redshirt senior Deonte Thompson recorded his 100th career catch from a 10-yard pass from John Brantley at the 14:05 mark. The pass was good for a first down, making 13 of his 20 (65%) receptions good for a first down on the season.
- ◆ Quarterback John Brantley connected with senior Deonte Thompson on a 17-yard grab to put the Gators up 7-0 in the first quarter for Thompson's first TD of the season. The TD reception marked the ninth of his career, and first since November 6, 2010 vs. Vanderbilt.
- ◆ With Caleb Sturgis' 17-yard field goal, which put the Gators up 24-10, UF scored four different ways: receiving TD, KO return, blocked punt return and FG.

Other

- ◆ *Today's Attendance:* 61,312
- ◆ *Game Captains:* Seniors John Brantley (QB), Jeff Demps (RB), Will Green (DE) and Jaye Howard (DT).
- ◆ *Weather at Kickoff:* 57°F, sunny with increasing winds. Temperatures steady or falling to near 54°F. Winds WNW at 15 to 20 mph.
- ◆ NASCAR driver Dale Earnhardt, Jr. served as the honorary captain of today's TaxSlayer.com Gator Bowl. He drove his number five TaxSlayer.com car that will be driven in the Nationwide Car Series in Daytona Beach.

2011 Florida Football
 Season Ending Notes
 January 2, 2012

Team Notes

- ♦ With today's win, the Gators have now had 24 consecutive winning seasons, the longest active streak in the country. Additionally, 2011 marks Florida's FBS-leading 32nd straight season with a winning percentage of .500 or higher.

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- ♦ Florida is now 20-19 all-time in bowls and owns a 7-2 record in the Gator Bowl.
- ♦ Florida Head Coach Will Muschamp is the sixth UF coach in Florida history to reach a bowl game in his first season as head coach, and the third to win in his first year at the helm.

Bowl Trips for First-Year UF Head Coaches

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- ♦ UF played 15 true freshmen and 24 freshmen overall this season. Five true freshmen and four redshirt freshmen started games. Fifteen true freshmen seeing game action is tied for third-most in school history.
- ♦ Four true freshmen scored six touchdowns in 2011 (Brissett 2; Joyer 2; Saunders; Stewart)
- ♦ With today's win, Florida Head Coach Will Muschamp became the 15th of UF's 22 head coaches to finish with a winning record in his first full season leading the Gators.
- ♦ Florida had four different players with a rush or reception of 60-or-more yards on the season. UF finished the season tied for the national lead alongside Baylor and Nevada, each with three plays of 80 yards-or-more. The Gators had eight total plays from scrimmage of 60-or-more yards, tied with Houston for the fourth-most in the country.
- ♦ Florida held its foes to a combined 48-for-176 (.273) on third-down conversions, second in the nation – the best national ranking in school history. UF's third-down defense was its best since the 2001 season (.267), when it ranked fifth nationally.
- ♦ The Gators' defense finished the season on a high note, totaling an SEC-high-tying six sacks and 12.0 total tackles for loss against Ohio State in the TaxSlayer.com Gator Bowl. UF collected at least four sacks three times (4 at UK, 4 vs. FSU, 6 vs. OSU) and had 10-or-more TFL three times (11.0 vs. FAU, 11.0 vs. FSU, 12.0 vs. OSU).

Individual Notes

- ♦ Running backs Jeff Demps and Chris Rainey both finished in the top 10 among career rushers at UF. Demps finished with 2,474 yards and ranks 8th all-time, while Rainey passed John L. Williams (2,409 yards) with 71 yards in the bowl game to finish just behind Demps in ninth all-time with 2,464 yards.
- ♦ John Brantley finished with 4,750 yards in his career, just 98 yards shy of Florida's all-time top 10.
- ♦ Redshirt junior Caleb Sturgis went 22-for-26 in field goals on the season, tying his 22 FG made in 2009 (30 att.) which is just one shy of the school season record. Additionally, he was 31-for-31 on PAT, marking the eighth time in Gator history that a kicker was perfect on the season (min. 25 attempts). He is now 46-for-60 (76.7%) in FG and 96-for-101 (95.0%) in PAT for his career, and ranks fourth all-time at Florida with 234 career points.
- ♦ Sturgis had three 50+ yard field goals in 2011, passing Berj Yepremian (4) to set a new school record with five career 50+ FG made (51, 51, 55, 55, 56) including three of the five longest FG in UF history.
- ♦ Andre Debose's 99-yard kickoff return in the Gator Bowl was his school-record third career kickoff return for a touchdown. It was also the longest kickoff return in Gator Bowl history and in Florida's bowl history.

- ♦ Chris Rainey's blocked punt in today's game was his school and SEC-record sixth career blocked punt, and UF's sixth blocked kick of the season.
- ♦ Jon Bostic tops the Gators with 94 total tackles on the season, tied for second with 10.0 tackles for loss. Matt Elam led the team with 11.0 TFL and was second with 78 total tackles. Jaye Howard finished third with 76 tackles, tied second with 10.0 tackles for a team-best 64 yards for loss.