Missouri’s heartbreaking loss to Georgia in 2016 was a turning point in the Tigers’ season. Relive the loss through the eyes of players and fans.
Fast Five: The Missourian talked to Terez Hall about his favorite food and his pregame soundtrack. Sloppy Joes and Lil Boosie make the list.

Page 5

Toddlers to Tigers:
Tyler Badie has never been afraid of the spotlight. Why would he be? He’s been doing interviews since he was 8 years old.

Page 12

10 impossible questions about Georgia

1. Georgia football legend Herschel Walker rushed for a then-SEC-record 1,891 yards in 1981. How many carries did he have that season?

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### MISSOURI OFFENSE VS. GEORGIA DEFENSE

- **RB:** Damarea Crockett (16)
- **QB:** Drew Lock (3)
- **WR:** Emanuel Hall (84)
- **TE:** Albert Okwueghalu (81)
- **RT:** Paul Adams (77)
- **RG:** Trent Williams (75)
- **C:** Tristan Colon-Castillo (55)
- **L.T.:** Kevin Pendleton (71)
- **L.T.:** Yasir Durant (70)
- **CB:** Johnathon Johnson (12)
- **CB:** Nate Brown (7)
- **LB:** Tyson Campbell (3)
- **DE:** Jonathan Ledbetter (13)
- **LB:** Tyler Clark (52)
- **DT:** Julian Rochester (5)
- **LB:** Walter Grant (84)
- **LB:** Natrez Patrick (6)
- **LB:** Juwan Taylor (44)
- **FS:** Richard LeCounte (2)
- **SS:** J.R. Reed (20)
- **DT:** D’Andre Walker (15)

### GEORGIA OFFENSE VS. MISSOURI DEFENSE

- **RB:** D’Andre Swift (7)
- **QB:** Jake Fromm (11)
- **WR:** Tyler Simmons (87)
- **TE:** Isaac Nauta (18)
- **RT:** Isaiah Wilson (79)
- **RT:** Ben Cleveland (74)
- **C:** Lamont Gaillard (53)
- **LG:** Solomon Kindley (66)
- **LT:** Cade Mays (77)
- **WR:** Riley Ridley (8)
- **WR:** Ahkil Crumpton (25)
- **CB:** Adam Sparks (14)
- **DE:** Tre Williams (93)
- **DE:** Jerry Becker Jr. (5)
- **DT:** Walter Palmateer (99)
- **DE:** Chris Turner (39)
- **CB:** DeMarkus Ay (2)
- **LB:** Terez Hall (24)
- **LB:** Cale Garrett (47)
- **LB:** Brandon Lee (4)
- **FS:** Khalid Oliver (20)
- **SS:** Cam Hilton (7)

### SPECIAL TEAMS:

**MISSOURI**
- **Kicker:** Tucker McCann (19)
- **Punter:** Corey Fatony (26)
- **Long snapper:** Drew Wise (51)

**GEORGIA**
- **Kicker:** Rodrigo Blankenship (98)
- **Punter:** Jake Camarda (90)
- **Long snapper:** Nick Moore (43)
Missouri linebacker Terez Hall makes a tackle during the first quarter against the Purdue Boilermakers on Saturday at Ross-Ade Stadium in West Lafayette, Ind.

Fast five with **TEREZ HALL**

BY BRENDAN LAVELL

What’s your favorite place in Georgia?

“My hometown of Sparta. That’s where most of my family and friends are, all my classmates and stuff like that. I’ve got classmates in Atlanta, too, but that’s my hometown. That’s where my grandma, my mama, everybody grew up at. There’s nothing like that.”

What’s your favorite Southern-style food or drink?

“Snap, I ain’t going to lie to you. I like that sloppy Joe or some peanut butter sandwiches or something like that. And my drink, back in the day, it was that lemonade or some Kool-Aid or something like that. Now, I’m straight drinking water and Gatorade.”

What was your favorite sports team growing up?

“Football, ain’t nothing changed, it’s Patriots; and basketball, it’s the Nuggets. I’m still a Nuggets fan. I’m still a Patriots fan. We’re going to keep getting those wins. The Nuggets are going to win a championship this year. Usually, you stay with your hometown. I used to like Michael Vick back in the day. I used to want to be like him. But other than that, I didn’t end up as a true Atlanta fan. That’s my daddy. He’s more of an Atlanta guy.”

What music will you be listening to before the game Saturday?

“Same old thing, man. I listen to Young Nudy. You probably don’t know who he is. (I do not.) Young Nudy, man, he’s an Atlanta rapper. I listen to Future, too, but one of the guys I listen to before the games, Young Nudy and Lil Boosie, man. They’re my two main guys, man. I listen to that same song in walk-throughs, ‘Loaded Baked Potato’ by Young Nudy, man. That’s my go-to song right now. You’ve got to listen to it. Check it out. It’s one of my favorite songs.”

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THE IMPOSSIBLE QUIZ

10 things you don’t know about Georgia

In 1998, running back Terrell Davis became the second former Georgia player to win the NFL MVP Award. Who was the first?

a. Herschel Walker
b. Joe Geri
c. Charlie Trippi
d. Fran Tarkenton

Uga V, Georgia’s live bulldog mascot from 1990-99, appeared on the cover of what magazine?

a. Sports Illustrated
b. ESPN
c. Athlon Sports
d. Inside Sports

Vince Dooley, the father of Missouri offensive coordinator Derek Dooley, served as Georgia’s football coach from 1964-88 and as the school’s athletic director from 1979-2004. In what year was he inducted into the National College Football Hall of Fame?

a. 1994
b. 1999
c. 2001
d. 2005

The University of Georgia was the first public university in the United States to be created by a state charter. In what year did it receive its charter?

a. 1782
b. 1785
c. 1789
d. 1794

What Kansas City architecture firm designed the 2003-04 renovations to Sanford Stadium, Georgia’s football stadium?

a. Populous
b. HNTB
c. HOK
d. AECOM

The Tree That Owns Itself is a tree in Athens, Georgia that has legal ownership of itself. What kind of tree is it?

a. Red maple
b. American sycamore
c. Spruce pine
d. White oak

MLB catcher Brian McCann, an Athens native, has won how many Silver Slugger Awards in his career?

a. 4
b. 5
c. 6
d. 7

Mary Beth Smart, Georgia football coach Kirby Smart’s wife, attended Georgia and played what sport?

a. Basketball
b. Volleyball
c. Track and field
d. Tennis

In 2013, Georgia became the first university in the world to have a planetary system named after it when NASA discovered three planets in the Kepler-37 system. What nickname did the planetary system receive?

a. Kepler-Dogs
b. UGA-37
c. UGA-1785
d. Dogs-2013

**SCHEDULE**

| Sept. 1  | vs. UT Martin, W, 54-14           | Oct. 20 |
| Sept. 8  | vs. Wyoming, W, 40-13            | Oct. 27 |
| Sept. 15 | at Purdue, W, 40-37              | Nov. 3  |
| Sept. 22 | vs. Georgia                      | Nov. 10 |
| Oct. 6   | at South Carolina                | Nov. 17 |
| Oct. 13  | at Alabama                       | Nov. 23 |

ANSWERS: 1 (C) 2 (D) 3 (A) 4 (A) 5 (B) 6 (B) 7 (D) 8 (C) 9 (A) 10 (C)
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The dig route was perfect. He had the separation he needed. When J'Mon Moore caught the bullet from Drew Lock and turned up field, only one defender stood between him and the goal line.

But suddenly, Dominick Sanders, that one defender, drove his helmet straight into Moore's right arm and the ball was on the ground. Moore crumpled and pressed his face mask into the Faurot Field artificial turf. Behind him, Georgia's Juwuan Briscoe recovered the fumble.

September 17, 2016. Georgia 28, Missouri 27. 1:10 to play. Game over.

By most accounts, that loss to then-No. 16 Georgia is the most devastating in the Barry Odom era. Moore's fumble sealed the game for the Bulldogs and sealed the fate of the Tigers' 2016 campaign. The season spiraled out of control. Yes, an easy victory over Delaware State came the next weekend, but then Missouri lost five straight games.

As No. 2 Georgia returns to Columbia this weekend, the memory of that disastrous defeat two years ago has not faded. The Missourian spoke with players and fans — past and present — about a night many would like to forget.

MISSOURIAN

PREGAME

Missouri entered the Week 3 conference opener in 2016 with a record of 1-1 in Odom's first season. A 61-point explosion a week earlier against Eastern Michigan afforded the Tigers' fan base a sense of optimism following the low-wattage offensive output of 2015. With a ranked Georgia team in town and Brent Musburger on the call, a reported 57,098 fans showed up to Memorial Stadium. The place was rocking.

Michael Scherer (redshirt senior, linebacker): “It started at Tiger Walk. Driving up and getting off the bus, you saw how many more people showed up for that game. That's kind of when it hit you. You realized the kind of game you’re about to play.”

Matthew Terry (Missouri student and fan, KCOU radio host): “I walked to the stadium through the pathway next to Stankowski Field, through all these tailgates going on. There was smoke in the air from all of the grills and music playing. It felt like a big day, like a real game day. That's what really got me going from the beginning.”

Jason Reese: (redshirt junior, tight end): “All week we had been begging to wear the all-gold uniform combo, but they weren't into doing it. We asked, and they turned us down. When we walked into the locker room, though, we pulled the pants out of the helmets and saw the gold. It got us all pretty hyped.”

J'Mon Moore: “Scoring against Georgia? At Faurot, full house, under the lights? That was the biggest touchdown of my career to that point. I busted open in the seam, caught the ball, and sprinted across the goal line. We were rolling. You couldn't stop us.”

Kevin Pendleton (redshirt sophomore, offensive lineman): “I looked fat as hell in that all-gold man, I looked big. There's one picture where I'm leaned over blocking, and man, I look a good 350 pounds there.”

Drew Lock: “We came out firing and started strong. We were staying with them.”

Jason Reese: “They were in the exact defense we thought they would be in on that first drive. We had every play designed for Cover-4, and they lined up in it every time. The drive was pitch perfect for the tight ends because every single one of us got into the game. I just happened to be the last one to get into the game and on that one play, they called the pop pass for the tight end.”

Matthew Terry: “(The Tigers) went up big early, and the defense was stopping Georgia, too. Everything was just going great. I was thinking, ‘This is great. The stadium is packed.’ I distinctly remember being so wowed by it all. Once the team got rolling and got up, it was electric. Faurot has never been like that since.”

Missouri 10 — Georgia 0

The Tigers stoked the crowd's excitement early, jumping ahead 7-0 with a 10-play, 72-yard touchdown drive culminating in a 15-yard touchdown pass from Drew Lock to Jason Reese. Minutes later, after a punt on Georgia's first offensive series, a Tucker McCann 33-yard field goal put Missouri ahead 10-0. Odom was seeking his first win over a ranked opponent — a feat still evading him — and his Tigers were cooking early.

Drew Lock: “We came out firing and started strong. We were staying with them.”

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J'Mon Moore: “Shoot, it was an amazing feeling on the sideline. That's something that fuels you. We were feeding off each other’s energy. We were rolling. You couldn't stop us that night. We were all in flow, everything was in sync. We were not backing down.”

Q1 8:20
Paul Adams (redshirt sophomore, offensive lineman): “It didn’t even feel like you were down. We’d played so well and so the locker room was upbeat. Everyone was really high spirited at that point.”

Terry Beckner Jr. (sophomore, defensive tackle): “At halftime, the locker room was really jumping. I was trying to make sure everyone kept their composure.”

Jason Reese: “Terry got up and said something. ... I can’t say exactly what he said, but he was more vocal than we’d ever seen him before that or any time since. He’s a big scary dude, so when he gets ramped up it catches everyone’s attention.”

Paul Adams: “Terry is one of those guys, when he talks, everyone listens. It was important to have somebody like him in that moment. He was just a sophomore, but he was a big leader for us.”

No one the Missourian spoke with would share what Beckner Jr. said at halftime — Beckner Jr. himself wouldn’t discuss the speech — but it’s clear it was intense.

Terez Hall (sophomore, linebacker): “He got loud on us that day.”

Jason Reese: “Once Georgia jumped ahead, we’re looking at each other on the sidelines like, ‘Who’s going to make a play?’ When J’Mon caught that pass and took it to the house, it changed the entire momentum of the game. It brought us back into it.”

Johnathon Johnson: “That was big. J’Mon ran a slant and made one guy miss, then he took it to the house.”

Drew Lock: “When I hit J’Mon on that long one, I came to the sideline with more juice than I’d probably ever had. It took me a while to get settled.”

J’Mon Moore: “In that moment, running down the field, I’m thinking ‘This is going to be one for the books. We’re going to make it happen here.’”

With 1:48 remaining in the first half, Bulldogs wide receiver Isaiah McKenzie caught a pass over the middle for a 20-yard score to put Georgia in the lead at halftime. But the Tigers were emboldened by their first-half performance. They knew they could hang with Georgia.

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Terez Hall (sophomore, linebacker): “He got loud on us that day.”

Jason Reese: “The mood was good going out of halftime after that because we were right on track with where we wanted to be. We knew that it was going to be a four-quarter game. We didn’t want to get too high or too low.”

Please see AGONY, page 10C.
Missouri 27 — Georgia 21

Beckner Jr.’s message — whatever it was — manifested itself almost immediately. On Georgia’s third play from scrimmage after halftime, Tigers safety Cam Hilton jumped a pass from Eason intended for McKenzie and returned the interception all the way to the Georgia 6-yard line.

Michael Scherer: “Eason started rolling to his right and threw it back across his body. We got a good rush on him. Cam got to it and ran it back all the way down the 6-yard line or so. That was a huge play out of the half, it gave us the momentum back.”

Brandon Lee (redshirt sophomore, linebacker): “Cam was doing his thing. He dropped in low as a safety and read Eason’s eyes. We knew that they were going to McKenzie a lot, so Cam was alert on that.”

Terez Hall: “Cam read it right and picked it off. He gave us the ball back. That got us all going.”

One play later, Moore burned Briscoe on a goal line slant for 6-yard touchdown reception. The Tigers led 27-21.

Jason Reese: “We ran a slant to J’Mon, and he caught it on the left side of the end zone. Boom, touchdown. Wasn’t much else to it.”

Q3 13:54

Georgia 28 — Missouri 27

The 27-plus minutes of football that followed were eventful, but didn’t produce any scoring. Lock threw three interceptions. The Bulldogs lost a fumble, missed a field goal and failed to capitalize on Missouri’s mistakes. With 3:36 on the game clock, facing a fourth-and-10 from Missouri’s 20-yard line, Eason dropped back and floated a ball into the arms of McKenzie. Georgia regained the lead with less than 90 seconds remaining.

Michael Scherer: “Sony Michel was out to my left in the slot. I thought they were going to go to him. I wasn’t thinking about Isaiah McKenzie. (Tigers defensive back) Aarion Penton was lined up with him.”

Matthew Terry: “The student section was going loud because they knew that could have been the game. We were about to get that Top-25 victory.”

Michael Scherer: “I’m focused on Michel and staying on his tail. When I looked up, the ball was in the air and Aarion was in position. He got his hands in there, but it was just a great throw and catch by them. It was tough.”

Brandon Lee: “It was deflating. Aarion played it really well. It was just a great ball Eason threw, and a really great play there by No. 16 (McKenzie). That play just didn’t happen for us.”

Terez Hall: “It came down to the wire for us. We just needed to get a stop there and turn them over. That could have been the last play of the game. We could have ended it right there. Getting that close and not winning, it killed us.”

Whenever you see a big play like that, it gives you a spark. It brought up the mojo of the team.”

One play later, Moore burned Briscoe on a goal line slant for 6-yard touchdown reception. The Tigers led 27-21.

Johnathon Johnson: “I thought we were finna go down and win the game on that drive.”

Terry Beckner Jr.: “When he caught it, I was thinking he was finna mess around and score.”

Matthew Terry: “I remember J’Mon Moore in that gold jersey coming across the middle.”

Johnathon Johnson: “I know for a fact J’Mon would have scored if he would have held onto that ball.”

J’Mon Moore: “This is exactly what I remember: I ran a dig route, caught the ball and turned up field. The defender — I truly believe this in my heart — got lucky. If he wouldn’t have hit the ball, we would have won the game. I was going to score.”

Q4 1:29

Georgia 28 — Missouri 27

The fumble shocked everyone inside Memorial Stadium. Lock hit Moore 10 yards downfield with only Sanders to beat. When the whistle blew, the ball belonged to Georgia, and the game was over.

Johnathon Johnson: “After that happened, we really just kind of realized it was done.”

Johnathon Johnson: “Once I saw Georgia had it, I kind of just broke down. I realized that was it, that was the game. It hurt going back to the sideline without those points that I knew we needed. The feelings and the emotion I felt in that moment were overwhelming.”

Please see AGONY, page 11C
When the tailgating is over and the game clock expires, don’t let the fun stop! Time and time again, visitors are delightfully surprised by what Columbia has to offer. From picturesque parks and clever cuisine to amazing art and superb shopping, visitors find that Columbia is ‘surprisingly sophisticated.’

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Buoyant Badie was hyper-focused once he stepped on gridiron

BY BRENDAN LAVELL

Shaun Badie wasn’t 100 percent sure if his son was serious about football. Tyler Badie was a bubbly, happy kid — and a bit of a jokester. His dad thought the 6-year-old might have picked up flag football as a way to hang out with friends.

Tyler Badie would laugh and play around with teammates during pregame warmups. Then, he’d take the field and become an entirely different kid. Serious. Focused.

During his first game, Tyler Badie took a handoff and found open field. There was just one defender left between him and the end zone.

Badie gave him the shake-and-bake.

The defender’s ankle rolled up and betrayed him as he fell to the turf. About 50 spectators who were moderately interested beforehand suddenly exploded with noise as the young Badie sprinted downfield for a touchdown.

Shaun Badie learned two things that day. First, his son had the potential to reach great heights playing football. Second, his wife, Tanjala Gipson, who failed to capture the play on the couple’s video camera, was never going to be the one in charge of recording game tape again.

After that, Badie became a must-watch attraction on Baltimore’s youth football circuit. Families from the game before stayed late to watch Badie’s first touches. Those involved in the games afterward showed up early to get a glimpse of the phenom before they started preparing for their own games. Throughout his childhood, Tyler Badie’s love for the sport drove him as he excelled through the stages of recreational and school football.

“(I enjoyed) that excitement and buzz that he brought to the sport and that anticipation of people saying, ‘I need to be a part of something special that could happen,’” Shaun Badie said. “When they look at him on TV now and they can say, ‘Oh, I remember this kid. Ten, 12 years ago, he did this in this game.’”

Even before he played in an organized league, Tyler Badie surrounded himself with football. Badie was born in New Orleans. His family was forced to relocate during Hurricane Katrina, but he still learned to root for his family’s hometown team, the Saints. Most young children prefer to watch TV shows because they don’t have the attention span for a three-hour football game. Badie, however, loved watching football. His favorite player — and the model for his own game — was Reggie Bush.

“I just take everything that he had,” Tyler Badie said. “Speed, quickness, his cuts. And I just watched that and studied all the time. I like his speed (the most). You can’t teach speed.”

When he wasn’t watching football, he was playing it outside with family or friends. Games could happen anywhere — the street, the backyard, the playground, you name it.

“It was just something that he wanted to do every single day,” Shaun Badie said.

When the father realized his son’s potential, he began to record all of Tyler’s games.

“If he made it to the NFL and fulfilled his career goals, I think it’d be a cute story to look back on once he becomes famous,” Shaun Badie said. “And you can say, ‘OK, this is how I started. This is what I used to do that made me into the person I am today.’”

Tyler Badie liked to watch the tape with his dad afterward, but he wasn’t a Peyton Manning-esque film junkie — yet. He was only 6 years old, after all.

“I didn’t really look at the whole game,” Tyler Badie said. “I just kind of watched my big plays.”

As he matured and his focus intensified, he became more dedicated to the film. By the time he was a freshman in high school, he would come home from practice and close himself in his room, studying tape from practice or the previous game and focusing on the areas he needed to improve. Coaches raved about Badie’s football IQ compared to that of his peers.

Shaun Badie also helped his son stay ahead of the curve in handling the media. When Tyler Badie started playing organized tackle football at 8 years old, his dad invited local broadcast students to interview Badie after some of his games. The younger Badie didn’t want to participate at first.

“I was a little nervous,” Tyler Badie said. “Being young and everyone looking at me like, ‘Oh, he’s doing an interview.’”

Now, Badie is grateful his father introduced him to the glaring light of the cameras at an early age. It prepared him for life as a college football player in the Southeastern Conference.

Badie also tried his hand at baseball, basketball and track while growing up. While he enjoyed those sports, he also focused on having fun and goofing around with friends.

But once he stepped on the game day gridiron, he was a different animal. From the time he was little, Badie flashed the steely demeanor that led Missouri to trust the freshman as the sole running back on the final possession of a tie game against Purdue.

“Normally, you see a young guy’s eyes light up in situations like that,” quarterback Drew Lock said after the 40-37 win. “His eyes stayed the same. Really narrow, level-headed the whole time. For the situation we were in, I think a young me might have been bright-eyed. But he was a stone-cold killer the whole time.”

Some spectators might have been surprised to see the freshman on the field in such a high-leverage situation. Now, they know the moment is never too big for Tyler Badie.

“TODDLERS TO TIGERS

BY BRENDAN LAVELL

sports@columbiamissourian.com

Supervising editor is Eric Lee.

YEHYUN KIM/Missourian

Missouri running back Tyler Badie catches a ball during Tuesday’s practice at the Mizzou Athletics Training Complex. Missouri football has recorded three wins during the first three games of this season.

When they look at him on TV now and they can say, ‘Oh, I remember this kid. Ten, 12 years ago, he did this in this game.’”

SHAUN BADIE

Tyler’s father

YEHYUN KIM/Missourian

COURTESY OF SHAUN BADIE

Missouri running back Tyler Badie catches a ball during Tuesday’s practice at the Mizzou Athletics Training Complex. Missouri football has recorded three wins during the first three games of this season.
Anger. Disappointment. Sadness. Agony. The feelings many felt in the dying moments of the game that night remain largely unchanged even two years later.

Paul Adams: “That was probably one of the more heartbreaking losses that I’ve ever had. I’ve tried to forget about it so hard. I just know that we had it in our hands, and we let the wheels fall of the wagon.”

Jason Reese: “It hurt. People were cussing out loud, a couple of guys had to be calmed down. All that hard work goes down the drain when you lose. We were mad. Tears were shed.”

Matthew Terry: “It felt like classic Mizzou. Of course they would go up by six on Georgia, throw three second-half interceptions, give up a touchdown with a minute left and fumble on the first play of the next drive. There’s just this feeling that things are always going to go wrong.”

Drew Lock: “It was a hard one to lose. To this day, I still haven’t swallowed much of it yet.”

Michael Scherer: “Some losses stick with you more than others. This was one of those losses.”

Terry Beckner Jr.: “If we would have won that game, that one right there would have changed things that season tremendously; the season would have just had a whole other dimension, kind of like 2017.”

Paul Adams: “There were so many opportunities left on the field that we could have just executed, and it would have been a totally different game. I’m still mad about it. Honestly, I think if we won that game, it would have been an entirely different season.”

Missouri now finds itself at a similar juncture this weekend as its performance in Georgia’s return to Columbia on Saturday could set the course for remainder of the 2018 season. Win, and this season might be headed somewhere special. Lose in devastating fashion once again, and things could go downhill fast.

Those who were on the field that day know just how slippery the slope can be.

J’Mon Moore: “That loss killed us that year, it was a missed opportunity. It’s not like we weren’t good enough; we were the reason we didn’t win.

“I was the reason we didn’t win.”

Brendan Lavell and Eric Lee contributed to the reporting of this story.
The Bulldogs boast an elite offense led by star sophomore quarterback Jake Fromm

BY ELI LEDERMAN
sports@columbiamissourian.com

Missouri has entered its first three games of the 2018 season as the favorite, with Vegas oddsmakers spotting the Tigers at least 6.5 points in each contest.

That changes in Week 4.

BY ELI LEDERMAN
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The No. 2 Georgia Bulldogs (3-0) come to town as early 15.5-point favorites ahead of Missouri’s Southeastern Conference opener at 11 a.m. Saturday at Memorial Stadium. Kirby Smart’s Bulldogs are the highest-ranked opponent to visit Columbia since eventual national champion Alabama thrashed the Tigers in October 2012 as the top-ranked team in the nation.

Missouri is 0-4 against ranked opponents under Barry Odom, including a crushing 28-27 loss to the Bulldogs in 2016, and has not beaten a Georgia team since 2013.

The Tigers come into their fourth game of the season undefeated for the first time since 2015 after a thrilling 40-37 victory at Purdue last Saturday. The back-and-forth contest was their first true test in 2018, and the win required an overturned touchdown call and a Tucker McCann game-winning field goal in the game’s dying seconds. Although the secondary withered without cornerback DeMarkus Acy, and Drew Lock and company failed to put the game away early, Missouri emerged from Ross-Ade Stadium without a blemish on its record.

“I’m proud of the way they fought,” Odom said postgame. “Obviously, it wasn’t pretty. But we went out and won a game on the road when it didn’t always go our way.”

This weekend, Missouri faces its toughest test yet — quite possibly its toughest of the season — in the visiting Bulldogs.

After jumping Clemson this week in the Associated Press Top 25 poll, Georgia enters Saturday’s game just one spot behind No. 1 Alabama. The Bulldogs have fired on all cylinders out of the gate this fall, eclipsing the 40-point mark in each of its three games, averaging a margin of victory of nearly 37.

In Week 2 on the road against then-No. 24 South Carolina, Georgia turned what was meant to be an early season challenge into a 24-point rout that featured nearly 500 yards of offense for the Bulldogs.

The College Football Playoff runners-up from a year ago are once again led by sophomore quarterback Jake Fromm, who has completed 80 percent of his passes and thrown six touchdowns in three games. He’s yet to take a single fourth-quarter snap this fall.

Although Fromm might have an easy time picking apart a Missouri secondary that allowed 572 yards to Purdue’s David Blough, it’s Georgia’s three-headed monster of running backs — Elijah Holyfield, D’Andre Swift and Brian Herrien
— that the Tigers need to worry about this week. Through three games, the Bulldogs have averaged 272 yards on the ground as a team, and the trio has accounted for five of its nine rushing scores.

The Tigers' defensive line has yet to have much asked of it in the running game, but that will change Saturday.

Missouri will also have its hands full with playmaking receiver Mecole Hardman, whose explosiveness shows up as a runner, pass catcher and return man. The team’s leading receiver with 12 receptions and 187 yards, Hardman has caught a touchdown in each game the Bulldogs have played this season, and he also returned a punt 70 yards for a score last week against Middle Tennessee. Missouri struggled against a player similar to Hardman in Purdue’s Rondale Moore a week ago and will receive no respite this week in attempting to corral Georgia’s playmaker.

After losing linebacker Roquan Smith and several other talented defenders from last year’s team, Georgia’s defense no longer possesses the same fire power or name recognition it did this time last year, but the unit has been just as effective in 2018. Without the same potent pass rush from a year ago — the Bulldogs have just one sack to this point — Georgia has leaned heavily on its run defense, which has held opponents to 101 yards a game on the ground and has yet to allow a rushing touchdown.

The most intriguing one-on-one matchup of the day will come in the Georgia secondary, where Bulldogs’ cornerback Deandre Baker will likely be tasked with defending Tigers wideout Emanuel Hall. The preseason All-SEC cornerback has two interceptions on the season and is among the most menacing defensive backs in the country. If Hall is fully healthy after aggravating a nagging groin injury against Purdue, Hall versus Baker will not only be a fun matchup to watch, but one that could dictate this game.

Saturday’s 11 a.m. kickoff will be broadcast nationally on ESPN. The broadcast crew will consist of play-by-play commentator Steve Levy, color-commentator Brian Griese and sideline reporter Todd McShay.

Georgia quarterback Jake Fromm (11) calls signals in the first half of Saturday’s game against Middle Tennessee in Athens, Ga.
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