

Southern Conference Notes



New Face In 2005: The fraternity of Southern Conference head coaches experienced little change following the 2004 season. There was one head coaching change as The Citadel hired Kevin Higgins to replace John Zernhelt who left the Bulldogs to become an assistant coach with the New York Jets of the NFL. Higgins joined The Citadel from the Detroit Lions but previously was the head coach at Lehigh where he led the Mountain Hawks to playoff appearances in each of his last three seasons from 1998-2000.

Service Academies have SoCon flavor: The head coach at each of the three national service academies has strong ties to the Southern Conference. Navy's Paul Johnson is a graduate of Western Carolina University and was the head coach at Georgia Southern from 1997-2001, leading the Eagles to back to back national championships in '99 and 2000. Army head coach Bobby Ross played in the SoCon at VMI before becoming the head coach at The Citadel from 1973-77. Air Force head coach Fisher DeBerry is a graduate of SoCon member Wofford College and spent 10 seasons as an assistant coach at Appalachian State.

58 Percent of Starters Returning: The eight Southern Conference schools will return 58 percent of their starters for the 2005 season. Appalachian State, The Citadel and Elon will each return a total of 15 starters on offense and defense (not including specialists). The Citadel returns a league-high eight offensive starters while Appalachian's nine defensive starters returning is a league-best. Wofford has 13 returning starters followed by Western Carolina and Furman with 12 each, and 11 for Georgia Southern. Chattanooga has the fewest returning starters with nine.

Academics First: For the fifth consecutive year, the Southern Conference leads all District III conferences in the number of selections to the CoSIDA Academic All-District football team. The Academic All-District team is selected by members of the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA). District III includes Division I -A and I-AA teams in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. Seven Southern Conference student-athletes earned mention on the 2004 All-District team. The Atlantic Coast Conference had the second-most selections with five student-athletes on the team. In 2003, the SoCon led all District III conferences with eight selections while seven student-athletes were honored in 2002. The SoCon had 10 representatives on the team in both 2001 and in 2000. The seven SoCon student-athletes honored in 2004 include Katon Bethay, Matt Beavin, Shane Fast, Josh Smith, Jonathan Wheeler and Ben Whitney of Wofford, and Elon's

Brandon Mason. To be eligible for the Academic All-District team, football players must carry a 3.2 cumulative grade-point average or higher, have reached sophomore academic and eligibility status and have played in 50 percent of their team's games.

National Rushing Leaders: Georgia Southern led the nation in rushing in 2004 with an average of 369.9 yards per game. That marked the fourth straight season that the Eagles won the national rushing crown. In fact, Southern Conference teams have led the country in rushing yardage six times in the last 11 seasons. Before GSU's current streak, the Eagles wore the rushing crown in 1999 while The Citadel was the top running team in 1994. The Citadel also led Division I-AA in rushing in 1992.

Spectacular Offensive Performance: One of the greatest offensive games in SoCon history took place on Oct. 30, 2004 at Finley Stadium in Chattanooga. The Mocs defeated Appalachian State 59-56 in a game that saw numerous school and conference records set. The 115 points were the second-most ever scored in a SoCon game. Appalachian set a SoCon record for the most points scored in a loss. Quarterback Cedric Stevens of Chattanooga threw for 515 yards while ASU's Richie Williams threw for 410. The 925 yards passing by the two QBs exceeded the previous SoCon record of 898 yards. Stevens' 515 yards through the air were the second-most by a SoCon QB while Williams tied a SoCon record by throwing for three TDs in the fourth quarter. Stevens' 570 yards of total offense set a SoCon record while Williams' 517 yards were the third-most in the conference. The two teams combined for an NCAA record 16 touchdowns in the contest. The game lasted 3:40 and included 1,337 total offense yards and 115 total points.

Appalachian State's DaVon Fowlkes, Consensus Offensive Player of the Year

Fowlkes had the most prolific season of any receiver in Southern Conference history in 2004. The senior from Appalachian State caught a conference record 103 passes for 1,618 yards and 14 touchdowns. He set school and conference records for receptions and receiving yards in a season as well as the most 200-yard receiving games in a season with three. Fowlkes also tied conference marks with seven 100-yard receiving games including three consecutive 100-yard receiving games.

Coaches Offensive Player of the Year (since 1989)

	No	Last	Yr
Georgia So	5	Jermaine Austin	2003
Marshall	4	Todd Donnan	1994
Furman	2	Louis Ivory	2000

E. Tenn St	2	B.J. Adigun	1997
VMI	2	Thomas Haskins	1996
Appalachian St	1	DaVon Fowlkes	2004

Media Offensive Player of the Year (since 1986; player of year 1948-85)

	No	Last	Yr
Furman	9	Louis Ivory	2001
Citadel	6	Gene Brown	1988
Marshall	6	Chris Parker	1995
Georgia So	4	Jermaine Austin	2003
W. Carolina	3	Jeff Gilbert	1984
VMI	3	Thomas Haskins	1996
Appalachian St	3	DaVon Fowlkes	2004
E. Tenn St	2	B.J. Adigun	1997

Furman's William Freeman, Coaches Defensive Player of the Year

Freeman, who began last season as Furman's starter at outside linebacker, moved into the middle after an injury to Mike Killian. Freeman led the Paladins with 86 tackles, the third-highest total in the SoCon. The junior also recorded 4.5 sacks, the fifth-best total in the conference. Freeman is the first Paladin to earn defensive player of the year honors from the coaches since middle linebacker Will Bouton in 2000.

Coaches Defensive Player of the Year (since 1989)

	No	Last	Yr
Appalachian St	6	K.T. Stovall	2003
Furman	5	William Freeman	2004
Georgia So	2	Freddy Pesqueira	2001
Chattanooga	2	Troy Boeck	1990
W. Carolina	1	Eric Johnson	1998
E. Tenn St	1	Mario Hankerson	1997

Media Defensive Player of the Year (since 1986)

	No	Last	Yr
Furman	8	Wm Freeman	2004
Appalachian St	7	Josh Jeffries	2002
Citadel	1	Scott Thompson	1986
Marshall	1	William King	1993
W Carolina	1	Eric Johnson	1998
Wofford	1	Matt Nelson	2003

Jayson Foster, Coaches Freshman of the Year

Foster, a redshirt freshman quarterback, became a jack-of-all-trades for Georgia Southern last fall. He found five different ways to score as he rushed for four touchdowns, threw a 54-yard touchdown pass, caught two scoring tosses and also scored on a 94-yard punt return and an 83-yard kickoff return. Georgia Southern leads the SoCon with four all-time freshman of the year honorees. Foster is the first Eagle so honored since Jermaine Austin in 2002.

Coaches Freshman of the Year

(since 1989)

No	Last	Yr
Georgia So	3 Jermaine Austin	2002
E Tenn St	3 Todd Wells	1997
Appalachian St	2 Dexter Coakley	1993
Wofford	2 Kevious Johnson	2003
VMI	2 Titus Green	2001
Marshall	1 Chad Pennington	1995
Chattanooga	1 James Roberts	1989
W Carolina	1 Lamont Seward	2000

Andrew Thacker, Media Freshman of the Year

Furman strong safety Andrew Thacker was named the Freshman of the Year. Thacker, a redshirt freshman, started the final seven games of the regular season. He recorded 58 tackles, 1.5 sacks, one interception and three pass breakups.

Media Freshman of the Year

(since 1979)

No	Last	Yr
Marshall	7 Randy Moss	1996
Appalachian St	4 Dexter Coakley	1993
Georgia So	3 Jermaine Austin	2002
Citadel	2 Stanford Glenn	1982
Furman	2 Brian Bratton	2001
Chattanooga	2 James Roberts	1989
East Tenn St	2 Todd Wells	1997
W Carolina	2 Lamont Seward	2000
Wofford	2 Kevious Johnson	2003

Ben Bainbridge, Jacobs Blocking Trophy

Bainbridge, a 6-6, 292-pound senior, anchored Furman's offensive line that averaged 226.2 yards rushing per game and produced the nation's seventh-best offensive unit at 454.9 yards per game. The Paladin offensive line allowed just nine regular season sacks, the fewest by a non-option offensive line in the SoCon. Bainbridge is the 12th Paladin to earn the Jacobs Blocking Trophy, the most of any SoCon institution.

Jacobs Blocking Trophy

(since 1933)

No	Last	Yr
Furman	11 Donnie Littlejohn	2001
Richmond	7 Rodney Elam	1975
VMI	6 Lorenzo Carpenter	1991
Appalachian St	5 Derrick Graham	1989
Virginia Tech	5 Sonny Utz	1964
Wake Forest	5 Nick Ognovich	1947
Georgia So	4 Charles Clarke	2002
Duke	4 Louis Tepe	1952
W Virginia	4 Chuck Howley	1957
Wm & Mary	4 Jackson Neal	1971
Marshall	4 Aaron Ferguson	1996
No Carolina	3 Mike Cooke	1942
NC State	2 Robert Bowlby	1949
East Carolina	2 Kevin Moran	1967
Maryland	1 John Gormley	1936

Geo Wash	1 Brad Cashman	1966
Chattanooga	1 Mike Nease	1983
Wofford	1 Eric Deutsch	2003
Clemson	1 Dick Hendley	1950

Mike Sewak, Coaches Coach of the Year

Sewak, in his third season as Georgia Southern's head coach, led the Eagles to a 9-3 overall record and a regular season co-championship in 2004. He has compiled a 27-10 overall record and his 18-5 conference record (.783) is the best among active conference coaches. Paul Johnson was the last Georgia Southern head coach to earn coach of the year honors in 1998. GSU has had four coaches honored, the most of any SoCon school since the coaches award started in 1989.

Coaches Coach of the year

(since 1989)

No	Last	Yr
Georgia So	4 Mike Sewak	2004
Appalachian St	3 Jerry Moore	1995
Furman	2 Bobby Johnson	1999
W Carolina	2 Bill Bleil	2001
Wofford	2 Mike Ayers	2003
VMI	1 Cal McCombs	2002
Chattanooga	1 Buddy Nix	1990
E Tenn St	1 Mike Cavan	1996

Bobby Lamb, Media Coach of the Year

Furman's Bobby Lamb was the media choice for Coach of the Year. Lamb, in three years as head coach, has compiled a 24-12 career record and led the Paladins to a 10-3 mark last season, a share of the conference championship and a number two seed in the Division I-AA playoffs.

Media Coach of the Year

(since 1948)

No	Last	Yr
Furman	7 Bobby Lamb	2004
Appalachian St	6 Jerry Moore	1995
VMI	5 Bob Thalman	1981
Richmond	5 Jim Tait	1975
Citadel	4 Charlie Taafe	1990
Georgia So	3 Paul Johnson	1998
W Carolina	3 Bill Bleil	2001
Wofford	3 Mike Ayers	2003
Wm & Mary	3 Jim Root	1976
Geo Wash	3 Jim Camp	1966
Virginia Tech	2 Jerry Claiborne	1963
Chattanooga	2 Joe Morrison	1979
Duke	2 Bill Murray	1952
West Virginia	2 Art Lewis	1954
East Carolina	2 Sonny Randle	1973
Clemson	1 Frank Howard	1948
E Tenn St	1 Mike Cavan	1996
Wash & Lee	1 George Barclay	1950
Maryland	1 Jim Tatum	1951
Davidson	1 Homer Smith	1969

2004 Game Superlatives

100-Yard Rushers

190	John Taylor, Elon vs UTC, 10/16
183	Kevious Johnson, WOF vs ELON, 10/9
181	Nehemiah Broughton, CIT vs UTC, 11/6
170	Gabriel Jackson, WOF vs CIT, 10/30
167	Jermaine Austin, GSU vs UTC, 9/25
159	Chaz Williams, GSU vs UNH, 11/27
156	Kevious Johnson, WOF vs UTC, 10/2
154	John Taylor, Elon vs NCAT, 9/25
153	John Taylor, Elon vs LIB, 11/20
147	Jermaine Austin, GSU vs FIU, 11/13
143	John Taylor, Elon vs DSU, 9/18
140	Lance Turner, GSU vs JCS, 9/11
135	Kevious Johnson, WOF vs CIT, 10/30
134	Darius Fudge, WCU vs ASU, 11/13
133	John Taylor, Elon vs CIT, 11/13
133	Chaz Williams, GSU vs CIT, 10/23
132	Kevious Johnson, WOF vs G-W, 11/6
129	Jermaine Austin, GSU vs WCU, 10/9
123	Jermaine Austin, GSU vs UNH, 11/27
120	Nehemiah Broughton, CIT vs BEN, 10/7
115	Jermaine Austin, GSU vs SDSU, 10/30
114	Eugene Cousart, UTC vs LIB, 11/13
114	Jermaine Austin, GSU vs FUR, 11/6
112	Bryce Carter, GSU vs Elon, 10/2
109	Jayson Foster, GSU vs JCS, 9/11
107	Richie Williams, ASU vs UTC, 10/30
105	Ronnie Dargan, ELON vs ASU, 11/6
104	Cedrick Gipson, FUR vs UTC, 11/20
104	Jermaine Austin, GSU vs ASU, 10/16
103	Brandon Mays, FUR vs Pres, 9/4
102	Chaz Williams, GSU vs SDSU, 10/30
101	M. Abdus-Salaam, UTC vs WOF, 10/2

300-Yard Passers

515	Cedric Stevens, UTC vs ASU, 10/30
413	Richie Williams, ASU vs FUR, 10/9
410	Richie Williams, ASU vs UTC, 10/30
408	Richie Williams, ASU vs ELON, 11/6
405	Richie Williams, ASU vs WOF, 10/23
368	Richie Williams, ASU vs NWST, 9/25
364	Cedric Stevens, UTC vs LIB, 11/13
350	Justin Clark, WCU vs UTC, 10/23
319	Richie Williams, ASU vs ECU, 9/11
303	Ingle Martin, FUR vs ASU, 10/9

100-Yard Receivers

280	DaVon Fowlkes, ASU vs ELON, 11/6
247	Alonzo Nix, UTC vs ASU, 10/30
236	DaVon Fowlkes, ASU vs UTC, 10/30
202	DaVon Fowlkes, ASU vs WOF, 10/23
191	DaVon Fowlkes, ASU vs NWST, 9/25
171	DaVon Fowlkes, ASU vs ECU, 9/11
154	Calvin Guinyard, WCU vs UTC, 10/23
153	DaVon Fowlkes, ASU vs WY, 9/4
148	DaVon Fowlkes, ASU vs FUR, 10/9
132	Isaac West, FUR vs WOF, 11/13
130	Michael Mayers, Elon vs CIT, 11/13
130	Emanuel Hassell, UTC vs LIB, 11/13
127	Emanuel Hassell, UTC vs ASU, 10/30
127	Isaac West, FUR vs PITT, 9/25
123	Matt Beavin, WOF vs FUR, 11/13
121	Alan Atwater, ASU vs FUR, 10/9
117	Teddy Craft, GSU vs WOF, 9/18
116	Isaac West, FUR vs CIT, 10/16
115	Brian Bratton, FUR vs G-W, 9/18
113	Isaac West, FUR vs JSU, 11/27
109	Eddie Cohen, WCU vs ASU, 11/13
108	Emanuel Hassell, UTC vs FUR, 11/20
107	Teddy Craft, GSU vs WCU, 10/9
104	Tyrus Ward, UTC vs MEM, 9/11
100	Isaac West, FUR vs ASU, 10/9
	Michael Reeder, WCU vs UTC, 10/23