Football 2001

The Daily Tar Heel

Seminoles Hope to Avoid Topple From Top

By IAN GORDON Assistant Sports Editor

The oft-sowed seeds of revolution are still waiting to take root. Since Florida State became an ACC

football team in 1992, the rest of the league's football teams have been biding their time, waiting for a chance to rebel and oust Tallahassee's titans from the top of the conference.

Sometimes it's a key injury that gives the others hope. Other times, it's a

Seminole loss during the regular season. This year, the departures of Chris Weinke, Travis Minor, Jamal Reynolds and Tay Cody to the NFL have lent new optimism to practice fields and coaching offices from College Park to Atlanta. But despite losing the nucleus of an

11-2 squad that fell to Oklahoma in last season's national championship FedEx Orange Bowl, FSU coach Bobby Bowden isn't running for cover quite yet.

"In the 47 years I've been coaching, this is not the first year I've been through a situation where I've lost everyone, Bowden said. "I've always found it more exciting when you have a lot of question marks. We've got more question marks

this year than in the last four years."

Many of FSU's concerns lie with its usually high-scoring offense. Adding to Bowden's worries is the fact that longtime offensive coordinator Mark Richt took the head coaching job at Georgia.

None more troublesome is the void Bowden has to fill at the quarterback spot. The Heisman Trophy-winning Weinke started for the Seminoles during the past three seasons and threw for 4,167 yards and 33 touchdowns in 2000. Bowden has tabbed freshman Chris Rix as his favorite to start the Seminoles

season opener on Sept. 1 at Duke. At wide receiver, FSU finds itself unusually thin, as starters Robert Morgan and Anguan Boldin both sustained season-ending knee injuries in the preseason. Atrews Bell and Javon Walker will see significant playing time

at wideout for the Seminoles Greg Jones and Kannapolis' Nick Maddox will battle it out to be the Seminoles' primary running back. Jones is FSU's leading returning rusher.

On the defensive side of the ball, senior free safety Chris Hope will lead an inexperienced secondary.

"My main concern is that they'll have

Florida State '01 Schedule

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ot. 1	at Duke
ot. 8	UAB
ot. 15	Georgia Tech
pt. 22	at UNC
ot. 29	Wake Forest
t. 13	Miami
t. 20	at Virginia
t. 27	Maryland
v. 3	at Clemson
v. 10	N.C. State
v. 17	at Florida

to stay focused," Hope said. "Coming from high school and being the best player on the field, they didn't get beat too many times."

Bradley Jennings and Kendyll Pope return to FSU's linebacker corps, and



Florida State

2000 record: 11-2 (8-0 in the ACC) Head Coach: Bobby Bowden (315-87-4 overall, 242-55-4 at Florida State)

Home Field: Doak Campbell Stadium (80,000) Returning Starters: 4 offense, 4 defense Key Returnees: WR Atrews Bell, RB Greg Jones, FS Chris Hope, LB Kendyll Pope, OT Brett Williams Key Losses: WR Anguan Boldin, WR Marvin Minnis, RB Travis Minor, DE Jamal Reynolds, Strengths: FSU should be able to run the ball behind an

experienced offensive line. The Seminoles also have defensive stars in Hope, a Jim Thorpe Award candidate, and Pope

Bobby Bowden

Weaknesses: Once again, the Seminoles lost a lot of talent to the NFL. But FSU was really hurt in preseason practice, when receivers Boldin and Robert Morgan went down to knee injuries, weakening an already questionable air attack

Keys to season: FSU needs to find a back to lighten the load on Chris Rix and his receivers, and the defense has to score points off turnovers, especially in big games. Key Game: Oct. 13 vs. Florida

Darnell Dockett will lead the defensive line. They will try to replicate the success of last year's defense, which allowed a little more than 10 points and 74 yards rushing per game.

Although they don't have the experi-

ence of past FSU squads, this season's roster still is stacked with high school All-Americans waiting for their chance. "You don't have to worry about us los-

ing any talent; we have plenty of that," offensive tackle Brett Williams said.

Clemson Needs to Overcome Crucial Losses

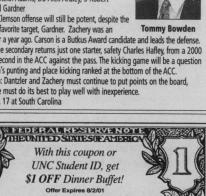


cessful season, that's the biggest ques-tion mark," Bowden said. "We lost a lot of players, and we don't have as much

Last year's squad ranked second in the ACC in scoring defense and third in total defense. But with just four starters returning, it's a whole new ball game for the Clemson defense, a defense that will be tested in the Tigers' season opener against Central Florida.

Bowden will turn to Butkus Award candidate Chad Carson to lead the Tigers' defense. Stepping in for the talented Adams, Carson must fill the void the second-round draft pick left.

"I think it is positive pressure because Keith was a great leader, and I've learned from him," Carson said.







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defensive players from its 2000 team. "With defense being the key to a sucdepth and experience defensively.'