



Sumter  
Tide

## Sumter Tide Alumni Chapter 2011 1st Quarter Newsletter

P.O. Box 999 Livingston, AL 35470 [sumtertide@yahoo.com](mailto:sumtertide@yahoo.com)

[www.alumlive.ua.edu/chapters/sumter-tide](http://www.alumlive.ua.edu/chapters/sumter-tide)

### *Letter from the President*

Roll Tide! What an exciting yet somewhat disappointing few months it has been since our last Sumter Tide newsletter and our annual Kickoff Social. We began the year as the defending national champions and watched the Tide rattle off impressive wins over Penn State and Florida, only to lose to South Carolina and have our BCS title hopes dashed in Baton Rouge. The low point of the year was undoubtedly the loss to Auburn—a game we had under wraps for thirty minutes and let slip out of our clutches in the fourth quarter. All in all, the season was not a complete wash. In a way, it reminded me of what it means to be Alabama.

Being Alabama means not settling for second best. Being Alabama means a ten win season and an impressive bowl victory are not good enough—there were opportunities to be better. Being Alabama means sustained success; we build programs, not seasons. While certain teams will come and go, Alabama is here to stay.

Despite the shortcomings of the 2010 season, we have an awful lot to be excited about in 2011. We return a strong cast of players, highlighted by Trent Richardson, Mark Barron, Donta Hightower, and Courtney Upshaw, and should begin the season ranked in the top 5 yet again. Alabama has a very good chance of hoisting the crystal ball for the second time in three years again this upcoming season. The 2011 version of the Tide simply needs to learn from its mistakes in 2010 and strive to finish strong in each game in 2011.

Sumter Tide is very excited about finishing strong this upcoming year. Our annual “Recruiting Roundup” is set for **February 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM at Diamond Jim’s**, and Tim Watts, Head Recruiting Analyst for BamaOnline.com, will be joining us to discuss the Tide’s 2011 football signing class. You do not want to miss this event; it has been one of our more popular events over the past few years. We are also working on another exciting event that will likely be in the summer months. Please stay tuned for more info!

#### UPCOMING EVENTS:

**NATIONAL SIGNING DAY: February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2011 Live coverage all day on ESPNU  
RECRUITING ROUNDUP with TIM WATTS, BAMAONLINE.COM February 8<sup>th</sup>,  
Diamond Jim’s, 6:00 PM**

As always, please feel free to give us feedback on how we can better serve you as Alabama alumnus and fans. What we ask in turn is to make a commitment to attend our events and become a vital part of our organization, and if you haven't already, that you join our group. All of our membership dues go towards scholarships and funding events.

Thank you again for your support and Roll Tide!

*David Hawley, President*

*Sumter Tide*

### **Tide Has Rollercoaster 2010, Looks Strong for 2011**

As Alabama fans, we expect to play for championships, and are disappointed when we do not. It's just a vibrant part of the culture known as Alabama football. 2010, by our standards, was a disappointing season; we had chances to play for the crystal ball yet again but let those chances slip away with painful losses to South Carolina, LSU, and Auburn. Perhaps the fact that Auburn was able to navigate their schedule and win the BCS title doused the flames of disappointment, but overall, the 2010 season left much to be desired.

Youth and inexperience plagued the 2010 Tide, as did nagging injuries that kept several key players out in crucial situations. The simple fact is that repeating is quite possibly the hardest feat to accomplish in sports, especially when dealing with 18-22 year old college kids. They simply lack the maturity and mental fortitude necessary to block out the clutter that comes with being a defending national champion.

The 2011 Tide will have to do two key things in order to return to college football's pinnacle: regain the physicality it had in 2008 and 2009, and develop a killer instinct in the second half. With virtually the entire roster returning in 2011, the talent should be there, but will the hunger? To be quite honest, if the hunger is not present after the 2010 season, then it will probably never be there.

The defensive side of the ball returns 9-10 starters (depending on how you look at the departed Luther Davis' role in 2010) off a unit that quietly and inconspicuously finished the year in the top 5 in both total and scoring defense. For a group that returned just two starters from the 2009 squad, that was pretty impressive. If the 2011 defense can continue to improve and gel as a unit, it may end up one of Alabama's best defenses. The decisions of safety Mark Barron and linebackers Courtney Upshaw and Donta Hightower to return for their senior season will undoubtedly prove to be solidify the defense from a leadership and talent standpoint.



On offense, the Tide must replace starters Greg McElroy, James Carpenter, Preston Dial, Julio Jones, and Mark Ingram, but a talented group of playmakers highlighted by Trent Richardson will leave the Tide's cupboard with options. The quarterback battle between AJ McCarron and Phillip Sims should be an exciting one to watch, as they will fight to replace McElroy. While Marquis Maze and Darius Hanks return in 2011, the Tide will need its young receivers, namely Kevin Norwood, DeAndrew White, Kenny Bell, Michael Bowman, and signees Marvin Shinn, Danny Woodson, and Bradley Sylve to step forward to offset the departure of Jones and assist in the maturation of the winner of quarterback battle. The offensive line loses only Carpenter, whose void should be filled by either Arie Kouandjio or Aaron Douglas, a JUCO transfer who was a freshman All-American while at Tennessee. From left to right, Chance Warmack, William Vlachos, Barrett Jones, and DJ Fluker all return, with Warmack and Fluker expected to make huge strides from their first year as a Tide starter.

### **RECRUITING ROUNDUP**

With National Signing Day less than two weeks away, Coach Nick Saban and his staff will work overtime to put the lid over another top 5 class. Saban and Co. have done an incredible job to this point, securing 21 commitments, headlined by Orlando five-star safety Hasean Clinton-Dix, and is in a strong position to land several other big time players, including the nation's number one player, Jadaveon Clowney. The Tide's class is currently ranked number two by Rivals.com, just behind the Texas Longhorns. The Tide's emphasis this year has been along the line of scrimmage, as it dipped into the JUCO ranks to secure commitments from impact defensive linemen Jesse Williams and Quinton Dial and offensive lineman Aaron Douglas, along with high school linemen Ryan Kelly and Isaac Luatua. Additionally, Alabama is considered the odds-on favorite to land the services of Cyrus Kouandjio, the nation's number ten player per Rivals and the second best offensive tackle. If the Tide is able to close the deal on Kouandjio, the Tide's offensive line will be in good shape for years to come.

Also on offense, the Tide snagged the commitment of Clinton-Dix' teammate, Dee Hart, an electrifying running back and special teams phenom. Hart scored 50 (yes 50) touchdowns on the year and was named the US Army High School Player of the Year. Hart will be complimented by receivers Marvin Shinn, Danny Woodson, Bradley Sylve, and Daryl Collins at receiver and Malcolm Facaine at tight end.

Alabama would like to land the services of Georgia natives Isaiah Crowell, Malcolm Mitchell, and Jay Rome, although Mitchell looks to be the safest bet at this point for the Tide. Crowell and Rome are facing intense pressure to sign with Georgia, and are being sold on being a part of the class "that turns it around" for Georgia.