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Fans, Bulldogs mingle at 'Countdown to Kickoff'

By [JENNA MARINA](#)

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**Athens** — Wayne Parker took no chances when it came to claiming the first spot in line Georgia's "Countdown to Kickoff" — not this year. Not for this season.

He arrived at 10 a.m. for the fan day, which started at 3 p.m., ready to lead the stampede seeking autographs and photos with their favorite players.

Along with roughly 2,000 other fans, Parker, who is from Jackson, vibrated with the buzz of the potential for one of the greatest seasons of Georgia football.

"We're going to win a national championship, no doubt," Parker said. "You can underline that."

Junior Geno Atkins gave his cramping hand a brief break from autographs to pose for a photo at the request of quite possibly his No. 1 fan, Enon Hopkins, a medical student in Augusta.

"You won't believe how much I scream for you. I love watching you knock some helmets off," Hopkins told the defensive tackle. "I'll take you out for steak and lobster if you knock [Tim] Tebow's helmet off this year. That's a promise."

Atkins is hoping to build upon his All-SEC first-team sophomore season. He finished with 41 tackses, 14.5 tackles for loss and 7.5 sacks.

"I want to be disruptive. I want to be a playmaker," Atkins said. "I want to win a championship. That's what I came here for."

Hopkins, 31, has been a Bulldogs fan all his life, though he was too young to remember Georgia's 1980 national championship season.

"Since then, this is the most buzz that I can remember," he said.

He and his girlfriend, Stacy Gray, are particularly looking forward to the Georgia-Florida game this season.

"I'd like to see a blackout for that game," Gray said, referring to Georgia's wardrobe choice against Auburn last season. "I think black is the appropriate dress for an outdoor cocktail party."

Former All-American defensive tackle Bill Stanfill decided to commemorate the 40th anniversary of his senior season by appearing for autographs.

Stanfill played for the Miami Dolphins for eight seasons, including their 17-0 Super Bowl season in 1972.

The five-time Pro Bowler doesn't see why the Bulldogs couldn't pull off an undefeated season this year.

"With some breaks and not having some key injuries, they could do it," he said. "The level of coaching is there. The talent level is there."

One member of the Bulldogs family noticeable missing was Uga.

The majorette squad performed a routine in front of a poster-made white-and-red doghouse. The lettering read, "In Memory of Uga VI" and a photo of Uga in a black jersey adorned the front.

Stacy Bennett and her husband, Donald, chose not to break the news about Uga's death to their 2-year-old daughter, Chloe.

"We're just going to let her see the new one," Stacy Bennett said. "She's tenderhearted. She would squall. We'll just tell her when she's older."

Fans are usually invited to bring their dogs to the event, but this year, the event's coordinators decided it was best not to.

Robert Brumbelow, 60, of Cumming, purchased a photo of "the legend" in downtown Athens earlier Saturday.

He hoped to have the current players sign it as a tribute to the dog.

"I usually bring my grandchildren, and they like to take a picture with him," he said. "It's like one of the family is missing."

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