

GamecockCentral.com's

RECRUITING GUIDE

FINAL EDITION



**WHAT'S
INSIDE**

34 PAGES OF DETAILED RECRUITING COVERAGE
CLASS SUPERLATIVES | EARLIEST IMPACT PLAYERS
EXPERT ANALYSIS | IN-DEPTH COMMITMENT PROFILES

PHOTO BY RIVALS.COM | LAYOUT AND DESIGN BY JEFF TYNER

PROSPECT INDEX

Marquavius Lewis.....	6
Sherrod Pittman.....	7
Christian Owens.....	8
Dexter Wideman.....	9
Jerad Washington.....	10
Jalen Henry.....	11
Ernest Hawkins.....	12
Urlic Jones.....	13
Zack Bailey.....	14
Shameik Blackshear.....	15
Toure Boyd.....	16
Blake Camper.....	17
Joseph Charlton.....	18
Jalen Christian.....	19
Devante Covington.....	20
Mon Denson.....	21
Trey Derouen.....	22
Daniel Fennell.....	23
Rashad Fenton.....	24
Octavis Johnson.....	25
Kyle Markway.....	26
Dexter Neal.....	27
Lorenzo Nunez.....	28
Christian Peltage.....	29
Connor Redmond.....	30
Dante Sawyer.....	31
A.J. Turner.....	32
Quandeski Whitlow.....	33
Antoine Wilder.....	34

Signed Letter of Intent

*Information last updated 2/5/15

Zack Bailey	OL	6-5/300	★★★★★	5
Shameik Blackshear	DE	6-4/245	★★★★★	18
Toure Boyd	DB	6-1/190	★★★★	NR
Blake Camper	OL	6-6/281	★★★★	85
Joseph Charlton	K	6-5/180	★★★★	NR
Jalen Christian	WR	5-10/173	★★★★★	38
Devante Covington	DE	6-4/230	★★★	NR
Mon Denson	RB	5-10/215	★★★★	46
Trey Derouen	OL	6-3/324	★★★★	NR
Daniel Fennell	LB	6-2/220	★★★★	38
Rashad Fenton	DB	5-11/178	★★★★	NR
Ernest Hawkins	LB	6-2/225	★★★★	NR
Jalen Henry	LB	6-1/215	★★★★	NR
Octavis Johnson	DB	6-0/183	★★★★★	19
Urlic Jones	DE	6-6/290	★★★★	NR
Marquavius Lewis	DE	6-4/270	★★★★★	NR
Kyle Markway	TE	6-4/219	★★★★	NR
Dexter Neal	WR	6-2/197	★★★★★	31
Lorenzo Nunez	QB	6-2/190	★★★★★	16
Christian Owens	TE	6-5/205	★★★★★	11
Christian Peltage	OL	6-6/291	★★★★	51
Sherrod Pittman	LB	6-0/215	★★★★★	5
Connor Redmond	TE	6-4/220	★★★★	NR
Dante Sawyer	DE	6-3/270	★★★★★	NR
AJ Turner	RB	5-10/180	★★★★	44
Jerad Washington	WR	5-8/150	★★★★	NR
Quandeski Whitlow	DE	6-4/228	★★★★	24
Dexter Wideman	DT	6-3/280	★★★★★	NR
Antoine Wilder	DB	5-11/172	★★★★	NR

Committed/Not Yet Signed

Dennis Daley	OL	6-6/290	★★	NR
--------------	----	---------	----	----

WHY GC?

- Only **\$0.27** a day!
- Unrivaled recruiting coverage
- Inside scoop on your favorite team
- Have questions? Ask our experts anytime



- GamecockCentral.com opened on Aug. 27, 1998, debuted its premium content section on Dec. 5, 2001 and joined Rivals.com on Jan. 6, 2004.
- GamecockCentral.com covers Gamecock recruiting, football, basketball and baseball. We are a fully-credentialed online media publication, which means we're issued press box/sideline credentials and attend every football, basketball and baseball game -- home and away.
- GamecockCentral.com has five full-time employees -- publisher Brian Shoemaker, recruiting experts/football insiders Chris Clark and Wes Mitchell, beat writer Scott Hood and multimedia specialist Jeff Tyner -- in addition to several part-time writers and photographers. [Here's a full list of our crew.](#)
- GamecockCentral.com is a subscription-based website. While we have a lot of free content, we have even more content that requires a paid subscription to access. We offer two subscription plans: \$9.95 per month and \$99.95 per year. [Click here to subscribe.](#)
- GamecockCentral.com is home to the oldest Gamecock community on the Web.
- Give us a try now to find out why thousands of Gamecock fans subscribe to GamecockCentral.com. [Click here to subscribe.](#)

THE EXPERTS

CHRIS CLARK ([@GCChrisClark](#))

Chris Clark has been covering the South Carolina football program and recruiting since 2008 and joined the GamecockCentral.com staff in 2009. Chris is originally from Anderson, S.C., and has a political science degree from the University of South Carolina.

JOSH LOW ([@GCJoshLow](#))

Josh Low has been covering the South Carolina football program and recruiting since 2009 and joined the GC staff in July of 2012. Josh is originally from Lancaster, S.C. and attended the University of South Carolina-Lancaster.

WES MITCHELL ([@WesMitchellGC](#))

Wes Mitchell has been covering the South Carolina football program and recruiting since 2007 and joined the GC staff in August of 2014. Wes is originally from Hickory Grove, S.C. and has a journalism degree from the University of South Carolina.



CHECK OUT GC's SOCIAL ACCOUNTS

EXPERIENCE GAMECOCKCENTRAL.COM GET THREE FREE MONTHS NOW

We're passionate about covering the Gamecocks -- and you can see it every day on GamecockCentral.com.

It's our in-depth coverage -- going deeper than 140 characters -- with exclusive reports, expert analysis and special features you won't find anywhere else.

It's our experts and analysts talking with sources, scouting recruits, covering practices and games -- and working tirelessly to provide you with the very best coverage.

It's you having access to our team of experts and analysts and getting the most in-depth answers to all of your questions.

FOR A LIMITED TIME, sign up for an annual subscription and get three free months.

CLICK TO SUBSCRIBE

- Offer expires on Sunday, Feb. 1, 2015 at 11:59 p.m. EST.
- Offer not valid for current subscribers or anyone who was a Rivals.com subscriber as of Dec. 10, 2014.
- Offer can't be combined with other subscription promotions from the Rivals.com network.
- Subscriber must purchase an annual subscription, and be charged successfully, in order to receive the three free months.

Have a question? Email us at gcocks@gamecockcentral.com.

CLASS SUPERLATIVES

CROWN JEWEL



Chris Clark: DE Marquavius Lewis

The Gamecocks' most talented prospect in the 2015 class comes at the biggest position of need at end. As the nation's top junior college defensive lineman, Lewis is college-ready at 6-foot-4, 265-pounds and has already impressed everyone that has seen him upon his arrival on campus. He will have the benefit of going through spring drills and is already essentially penciled in as a starter despite not having played a single practice snap for USC. Lewis has size and athleticism and is adept at rushing the passer and stopping the run. He represents an instant upgrade and is one of the more talented prospects signed by USC in a while.

Wes Mitchell: DE Marquavius Lewis

It's very difficult for me to consider anyone but Lewis for this spot. Quite simply, Lewis was the guy in the class that South Carolina simply had to have. It's not very often that you look at a guy in a recruiting class and say he's 100 percent a starter for the next season, but if Lewis is healthy, then I see almost no way that he's not the starter for the Gamecocks season opener in Charlotte. As Josh says, Lewis has All-SEC and NFL Draft first round potential.

Josh Low: DE Marquavius Lewis

I think this one is pretty easy. I could put Lewis in a lot of categories but, I'm only going to use him once and this is the best place for him. There isn't a player in this recruiting class that is more important for South Carolina than Lewis. He is going to be counted on immediately to be South Carolina's best pass rusher and will probably be a starter at defensive end from day one this spring. South Carolina doesn't have a defensive lineman on campus like Lewis. If he reaches his potential, then he will be an All-SEC type player and a possible first round draft pick in a couple years.

BIGGEST STEAL

Chris Clark: DE Quandeski Whitlow

Auburn ended up signing two great DE prospects in Byron Cowart and Prince Tega-Wanogho Jr. but had to go nearly down to the wire for both. Given the huge need the Tigers had, I wonder why it took Auburn until two days before signing day to call and seriously inquire about Whitlow. The three-star prospect's stock rose along the way after an early commitment to USC, and the Gamecocks held off a big push from Louisville and a potential visit to Florida that he ended up cancelling to land him. Whitlow's senior film is very good. He could make an early impact rushing the passer and as he gains more weight, really develop into a strong player for the Gamecocks. This is another nice pull out of Alabama for USC along the lines of Taylor Stallworth and Jonathan Walton. The runner up for me would be Octavis Johnson, who even as a Rivals250 member and a four star still has the feel of steal out of Georgia.

Wes Mitchell: DE Quandeski Whitlow

Whitlow may not get mentioned like Lewis, Sawyer or Shameik Blackshear, but he's another excellent addition to the Carolina defensive line. South Carolina has told Whitlow that he's going to play as a true freshman, and I see him playing a third-down pass rusher role very early in his career. Whitlow has an excellent first step and gets to the quarterback in a hurry once he disengages from a block. He might not have four stars by his name, but there's a lot to like about Whitlow as a player.

Josh Low: DE Quandeski Whitlow

I considered Whitlow and Sherrod Pittman for this award. South Carolina went into other states and got both of these prospects. I think both will have good careers at South Carolina. There is a reason why Florida and Auburn tried to come in late and get Whitlow. He does need to put on good weight to be able to be an every down defensive end. His quickness and speed off the ball could get him on the field early in passing situations. If he is developed right, then I think he could be a 2-3 year starter at South Carolina. I think he proves to be a steal out of Alabama for the Gamecocks in this class.

EARLIEST IMPACT

OFFENSE



Chris Clark: WR Jalen Christian

I was tempted to pick Nunez here because I think his skill set, different from any other USC quarterback, could push him into at least some level of early playing time. However, I'm going with a wide receiver given that USC is looking for new starters and rotation guys at that position. To me, Christian is the most dynamic out of the group. He will likely start in the slot for USC and, as an added bonus, has return ability if USC wanted to give him a look there.

Wes Mitchell: WR Jalen Christian

Christian is a guy that can make plays, and when you look at South Carolina's receiving corps, there's certainly an opportunity for a young player to step in and play. Christian can help in a lot of ways and looks like the slot receivers that have excelled in the Gamecocks' system in recent years. The Carolina program needs to get Pharoh Cooper and Deebo Samuel on the field at the same time next year, which will mean moving one of them from the slot. That could open the door for Christian to be a backup in the slot.

Josh Low: WR Dexter Neal

This is a tough one, but I'm going with Neal because I think he is the safe bet with the way the receiver position looks right now for South Carolina. Pharoh Cooper is the only returner at receiver that is a proven threat, so there will be chances for new guys to enter the rotation and possibly become a starter. Neal is the most physically ready receiver, he is a smart kid, and he offers a big threat that South Carolina doesn't have. I think he could make an impact next season.

DEFENSE

Chris Clark: DE Dante Sawyer

Several defensive prospects from the 2015 class will make an immediate impact, especially along the D-line, and I'm picking Sawyer since I chose Lewis for another category. Sawyer has college-ready size, experience from the junior college ranks and a lot of talent. Add onto that the fact that he plays the biggest need position for USC, and it's a call that's fairly easy to make.



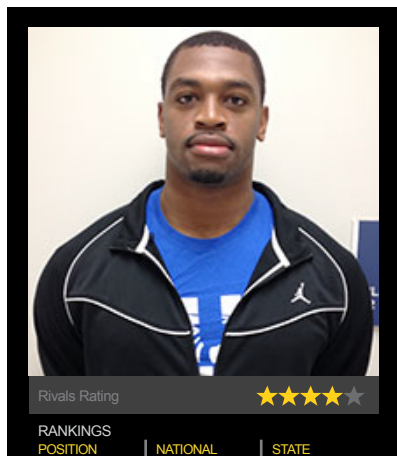
Wes Mitchell: DE Dante Sawyer

Marquavius Lewis and Toure Boyd are a couple of obvious picks, but I'm going to go a different direction here. Obviously Lewis and Boyd are going to make early impacts, but I believe Sawyer could easily be a starter by the end of the season, or earlier, as well. Sawyer is a relentless pass rusher off the edge, and there's no doubt that is something Carolina has missed. If Lewis and Sawyer can take over the defensive end positions, then Carolina will have upgraded both edges of its defensive line.

Josh Low: DB Toure Boyd

I think you could go a lot of different directions here with the amount of defensive linemen South Carolina is bringing in that are at least a year out of high school already. I'm looking at the safety spot for South Carolina, which was a huge weakness last season, and I think Boyd could work his way into a starting role there. He is a physical player and a good tackler, both of those things South Carolina needs more of in the secondary. I think he could prove to be one of the better late gets for South Carolina in this recruiting class.

COMMITMENTLIST



MARQUAVIUS LEWIS

Weakside Defensive End
Hutchinson, KS (Hutchinson C.C.)
Ht: 6'4"
Wt: 270 lbs

Rivals JUCO100 (#2)

*January enrollee

Rivals Rating



RANKINGS

POSITION

NATIONAL

STATE

NO RATING

NO RATING

NO RATING

Rivals Rating

About



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

It's pretty apparent as soon as you start watching Lewis that he's big, athletic and ready to play. He's 6-foot-4, 265-pounds and is a nightmare for other teams to block. He's not just big or just fast or just strong; he's all of them. He uses his hands well to beat offensive linemen, and when he gets to the quarterback, he's looking to strip the ball and make a big play for the defense.



THE IMPACT

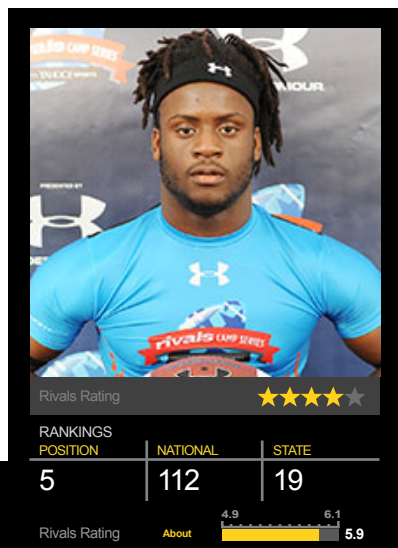
There are not many times that a prospect is basically penciled in as a starter before he even sets foot on campus, but that is the case with Lewis. Defensive end is a huge need for USC, and Lewis is pretty much what you would draw up in a big-time prospect at the position. He is ready physically, played at one of the country's best JUCOs and had a big year, and will give USC a two-way player rushing the passer and playing the run that it did not have this season.



THE PROCESS

The nation's best JUCO defensive end just happened to be a Palmetto State native, and USC was able to use Lewis' desire to get closer to home and play bigtime football immediately to its advantage. USC scored a summer commitment, but the competition remained stiff. Auburn made a huge push in the final hours, but Deke Adams and the Gamecock staff held off the Tigers to land a likely starter at end for the 2015 season and the best overall prospect in the class.

COMMITMENTLIST



A Rivals250 profile card for Sherrod Pittman. It features a photo of him in a blue Under Armour shirt. Below the photo is a 'Rivals Rating' of 4.9 stars. A table shows his rankings: Position 5, National 112, and State 19. At the bottom, there's a 'Rivals Rating' of 4.9 with a bar chart showing a range from 4.9 to 6.1.

RANKINGS		
POSITION	NATIONAL	STATE
5	112	19

Rivals Rating: 4.9

SHERROD PITTMAN

Inside Linebacker
Jacksonville, FL (First Coast)
Ht: 6'0"
Wt: 215 lbs

Rivals250 Member (#112)

*January enrollee



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Pittman chose the Gamecocks over offers from all over the country, and it's easy to see why so many top programs were interested. Pittman is a natural football player and a perfect fit at linebacker, where he has the athleticism and nose to track down plays and the size and toughness to punish offensive players when he arrives. He's capable of playing all three linebacker positions in the Carolina defense, though he's probably a better fit at one of the inside spots.




THE IMPACT

South Carolina returns multiple players with plenty of experience at linebacker next season, but it's going to be hard to keep someone like Pittman off the field. He may not be in the two-deep from day-one, but his versatility and natural ability should give him the chance to play for the Gamecocks as a true freshman. He's also the type of player you want providing a physical presence on special teams.

★ THE PROCESS

South Carolina returns multiple players with plenty of experience at linebacker next season, but it's going to be hard to keep someone like Pittman off the field. He may not be in the two-deep from day-one, but his versatility and natural ability should give him the chance to play for the Gamecocks as a true freshman. He's also the type player you want providing a physical presence on special teams.



Rivals Rating ★★★★★

RANKINGS POSITION	NATIONAL	STATE
11	NO RATING	33

Rivals Rating About 4.9 6.1 5.8

CHRISTIAN OWENS

Tight End
Griffin, GA (Griffin)
Ht: 6'5"
Wt: 205 lbs

Rivals.com 2015 Tight Ends (#11)

*January enrollee



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

South Carolina had the goal of adding size to its receiving corps, and there's no doubt that Owens provides that as he'll instantly become the tallest receiver on the South Carolina roster. Owens is ranked as a tight end by Rivals.com, but projects to play wide receiver for the Gamecocks. Owens is also a smart kid who is well-respected by everyone he comes into contact with.



THE IMPACT

It's never easy for wide receivers to play as true freshmen at South Carolina, but the Gamecocks need size, and if Owens can pick up the offense fast enough, he could sneak into the mix at the outside 'B' receiver position. The fact that Owens is able to enroll early at South Carolina certainly gives him a better chance of getting into the mix.



THE PROCESS

The big receiver was Georgia's first commitment of the 2015 class but parted ways with the Dawgs back in November. What followed was a very quick turnaround in Owens making contact with the South Carolina staff, and a commitment was secured. Lorenzo Ward had a connection with the Griffin High staff that enabled USC to quickly swoop in once Owens hit the market. He made his pledge after his official visit to USC, although it was simply a formality at that stage.



DEXTER WIDEMAN

Defensive Tackle
Camden, SC (Camden Military)
Ht: 6'3"
Wt: 280 lbs

Rivals.com Prep School Top 25 (#2)

*January enrollee

RANKINGS		
POSITION	NATIONAL	STATE
NO RATING	NO RATING	NO RATING
Rivals Rating	About	4.9 6.1 5.8



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Wideman is another defensive line prospect with the size and athleticism combination that the Gamecocks have sorely missed. He's got a nice first step for someone as big as he is, and he should also be able to hold up against the run as well. Wideman is also versatile in that he could help Carolina either at end or on the inside.



THE IMPACT

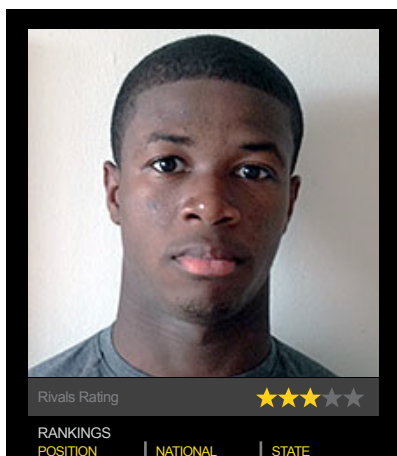
Wideman's ultimate destination may be inside at defensive tackle, but he's currently got the size to potentially help the Gamecocks' right away at defensive end or inside in the rabbit package. He's a year removed from high school and will be able to go through spring practice, which also helps make the case that he could help the Gamecocks as a freshman if he shows he has the work ethic to get on the field.



THE PROCESS

The in-state product was another prospect originally from the 2014 class that USC placed in prep school. Publicly, there was never much doubt about Wideman's status with USC. He did have some worries later in the process about USC's defensive coaching staff stability after media reports and rumors, but those were alleviated fairly quickly.

COMMITMENTLIST



JERAD WASHINGTON

Wide Receiver
Jacksonville, FL (First Coast)
Ht: 5'8"
Wt: 150 lbs
40: 4.45 secs

Rivals Rating ★★☆☆☆

RANKINGS	NATIONAL	STATE
POSITION		
NO RATING	NO RATING	NO RATING

Rivals Rating About 4.9 6.1 5.6

*January enrollee



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

What Washington lacks in size, he makes up for with his quickness, strong hands and route-running ability. Washington has been impressive in the South Carolina camps that he's attended and caught the eye of South Carolina wide receivers coach Steve Spurrier Jr. Washington will remind many of Gamecocks wide receiver Nick Jones, who Carolina will have to replace next season.



THE IMPACT

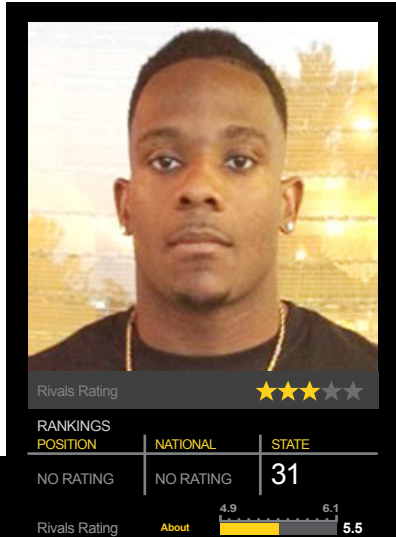
Like Jones, Washington is going to have to become a craftsman at the receiver position to make a big impact at the SEC level. He has a willingness to learn, though, and the fact that he's enrolling early for South Carolina will certainly give him an early opportunity to begin learning the offense. Washington is likely ticketed for the 'Z' receiver position, which is usually lined up in the slot in the Carolina offense.



THE PROCESS

There was a question for quite a while as to whether or not Washington was “officially” in the class, but once it became clear he would be part of the group, there was never any doubt on Washington's part. USC had Washington on campus early, and things progressed very quickly from there.

COMMITMENTLIST



JALEN HENRY

Outside Linebacker
Foley (AL) Foley
Ht: 6'1"
Wt: 215 lbs

Rivals.com Alabama Final Top 40 (#31)

*January enrollee



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Henry is a tackling machine at the high school level. He always seems to be around the ball. He's a smaller backer and may remind some of former Gamecock backer and current USC quality control assistant Shaq Wilson. His height and speed are not off the charts, but he's savvy. He's a play executor that knows his assignment and has a good understanding of what offenses want to do. His size is not a disadvantage at all at the high school level because he seems to beat the offense at its own game at times.



THE IMPACT

Like other linebackers in this class, there may not be a lot of playing time available for youngsters. Henry also may need some time to get acclimated in the strength and conditioning program like most newcomers. Whenever he is ready, USC is eyeing Henry at the WILL spot and he has the look of someone that could play well on special teams.



THE PROCESS

Henry led his team in tackles in 6A Alabama football as a sophomore. The following season, after just two weeks Henry suffered a broken foot that caused him to miss the remainder of the year. While Henry didn't draw the high-level recruiting interest he may have otherwise, he did land an offer from Gamecocks linebackers coach Kirk Botkin. In June of last year, Henry took an unofficial visit to Columbia and committed to the Gamecocks on the same trip. Henry remained firmly committed throughout and enrolled at South Carolina in January.

COMMITMENTLIST



ERNEST HAWKINS

Outside Linebacker
Salinas, CA (Hartnell C.C.)
Ht: 6'2"
Wt: 225 lbs

Originally from Baltimore, MD (2012 HS Class)

*January enrollee

Rivals Rating ★★☆☆☆		
RANKINGS	NATIONAL	STATE
POSITION		
NO RATING	NO RATING	NO RATING
Rivals Rating	About 4.9	6.1 5.5



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

From a size standpoint, Hawkins is similar to current Gamecock Skai Moore. On the hoof, he looks like he could play any of USC's linebacker spots. He's an athletic linebacker who will be able to turn and run in coverage, blitz, and get to the ball in space.



THE IMPACT

USC returns everyone at MIKE and WILL linebacker next season, and Hawkins could play either of those spots. Unlike most JUCO products, he has four years to play three so he could take a redshirt if it was deemed necessary. That may not be a bad idea with other more experienced players in front of him in order to get him acclimated to the system. He will arrive in January, giving him a jump.



THE PROCESS

As much media coverage of recruiting that now exists, it's extremely rare for a prospect to come completely out of nowhere late in the process, but that's exactly what happened with Hawkins who made a surprise commitment to South Carolina in mid-December (without having offers from other major programs) and then enrolled at the school in January. Hawkins is originally from Dunbar High School in Baltimore, Md., and signed with UTEP out of high school but never enrolled, and joins the Carolina program via Hartnell College in Salinas, Calif.



URLIC JONES

Strongside Defensive End
El Dorado, KS (Butler County C.C.)
Ht: 6'6"
Wt: 290 lbs

Rivals.com JUCO100 (#75)



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

South Carolina wanted to add some size and athleticism to the interior of its defensive line and Jones provides that easily. Jones not only would bring that athleticism to the Gamecocks' defensive tackle position, but his height should allow him to disrupt passing lanes and bat down passes.



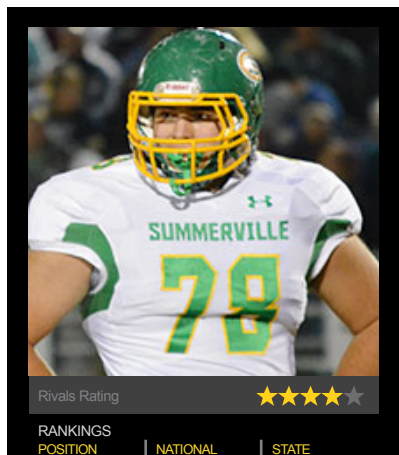
THE IMPACT

Jones may be a bit more comfortable off the edge at this point in his career, so there will be a transition period, but he's unlike any other player the Gamecocks have on their roster. That alone, gives him an edge early on. Can he be an immediate impact player? Only time will tell that, but there's no doubt the Gamecocks need help on their defensive line and he's another prospect with an opportunity to provide that.



THE PROCESS

Jones' recruitment primarily came down to two schools -- South Carolina and Maryland. The massive JUCO defensive lineman took official visits to both programs in December but ultimately signed with the Gamecocks during the early signing period despite knowing it was more likely he'd have to spend another semester at junior college by going with the Gamecocks. Jones ultimately has to spend that extra semester at Butler meaning he had to again sign a letter of intent in February, but he never wavered on his commitment during the time inbetween.



ZACK BAILEY

Offensive Guard
Summerville, SC (Summerville)
Ht: 6'5"
Wt: 300 lbs

Rivals100 Member (#72)

Rivals Rating ★★★★★

RANKINGS
POSITION NATIONAL STATE

5 72 1

Rivals Rating About 4.9 6.1 5.9



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

No spotlights or fancy highlight arrows needed for this reel; just look for the biggest guy on the field. Bailey is a large interior lineman, and if he finds someone on the second level he's frequently seen mauling linebackers past the line of scrimmage after pulling. Bailey is not seen a lot in pass protection on film, and no doubt the run game is his strong suit. Against smaller high school players, once he makes contact not many have a chance.



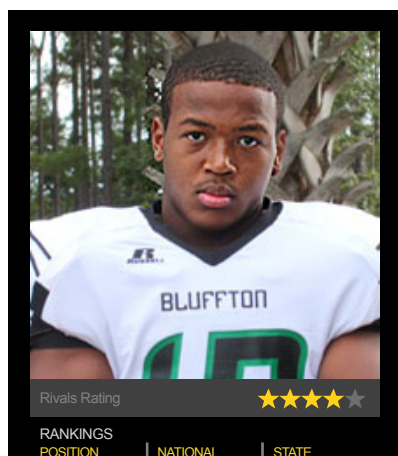
THE IMPACT

While Bailey is more of an interior prospect, USC has more questions at tackle next season. Could he get a look? We will see. Like most offensive linemen, Bailey could be better suited to get into the strength and conditioning program and learn for a while. From a size standpoint, he's closer to ready than most but it will be the mental aspect of things that will determine how quickly he sees the field.



THE PROCESS

While Bailey had some interest in out-of-state schools like Oregon, Georgia and Florida State, this was primarily an in-state battle between South Carolina and Clemson. After the Gamecocks took an early lead, it was Clemson that took a huge lead during Bailey's junior season. But after a late-season visit to Columbia in 2013 and then multiple trips to the school in the spring of 2014, the Gamecocks took a lead that would not be relinquished. While Bailey continued to receive interest from Clemson after his August commitment, he was always solid to the Gamecocks.



SHAMEIK BLACKSHEAR

Strongside Defensive End
Bluffton, SC (Bluffton)
Ht: 6'4"
Wt: 245 lbs

Rivals.com South Carolina Top 20 (#5)

Rivals Rating ★★★★★

RANKINGS	NATIONAL	STATE
POSITION		

18	NO RATING	5
----	-----------	---

Rivals Rating About 4.9 6.1 5.8



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Interestingly, Blackshear plays in a three man front in high school which means we may not get to see the full range of his skill. He looks like a million dollars in terms of his measurables and he can run like a linebacker. Blackshear flashes the ability to shoot through gaps and make a play on the ball carrier or quarterback, or go around offensive linemen. He can be physical, but needs to be more consistent disengaging blockers particularly against the run. He has a strong first step and burst and his athleticism really jumps out.



THE IMPACT

Blackshear unfortunately suffered a torn ACL during his senior season and is currently undergoing rehab. He could be ready by the time the 2015 season rolls around and he's a freshman, but no doubt it's the type of injury with which you proceed cautiously. While talented, Blackshear is raw and there are some experienced players from junior college joining the rankings next season. Perhaps that means we hear more of him down the road than immediately.



THE PROCESS

Blackshear's recruitment wasn't that of the typical blue-chip prospect. Blackshear committed to South Carolina in May of 2013, a big surprise at the time. While Blackshear discussed taking visits to other programs early on, he never followed through with that and remained firmly committed to Carolina the entire time. He did have a bit of fun late in the process when he said on Twitter that he would choose between Carolina and FSU, but that was more to get a rise out of the media than anything.

COMMITMENTLIST



TOURE BOYD

Cornerback
Rancho Cucamonga, CA (Chaffey C.C.)
Ht: 6'1"
Wt: 190 lbs

Rivals.com JUCO100 (#68)



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

The first thing that stands out about Boyd on film is that he arrives at the ball-carrier with bad intentions and is an excellent hitter. Boyd has some of the positive attributes of current Carolina safety T.J. Gurley, but is also probably a more athletic player. Boyd isn't just a big-time hitter, he also has a knack for making the big play and blocked three field goals last season. Boyd is probably capable of playing cornerback, but will fit in the Gamecocks' scheme as a free safety.



THE IMPACT

The Gamecocks don't typically sign junior college players in the secondary and certainly wouldn't have done so if they didn't feel he could come in and contribute right away. At the very least, Boyd will be in the rotation at safety for Carolina during his first year in the program. It's also very possible that Boyd can make the move directly up the depth chart and into the starting lineup. Boyd has the opportunity to be a leader in the Carolina secondary and could be the rangy, big-hitting safety that they need.



THE PROCESS

The recruiting process for Boyd with the Gamecocks played out fast and furious. South Carolina found Boyd on film and reached out to him in January. A few days later, after doing their due diligence on his transcript, South Carolina extended an offer. Boyd committed to the Gamecocks a day later and said that he had always wanted to play in the SEC.

COMMITMENTLIST



BLAKE CAMPER

Offensive Tackle
Virginia Beach, VA (Cox)
Ht: 6'6"
Wt: 281 lbs

Rivals.com Virginia Final Top 45 (#26)

Rivals Rating



RANKINGS

POSITION

85

NATIONAL

NO RATING

STATE

26

Rivals Rating

About



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Most of Camper's senior film features him turning his man then driving him to the turf on running plays. He may be more comfortable in that aspect of his game at this point, but he does have excellent length and long arms which should help in pass protection as well. Offensive linemen are always difficult to project, but Camper certainly has a lot of tools.



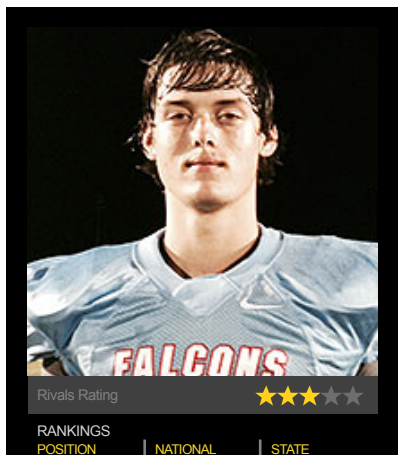
THE IMPACT

Like most high school offensive linemen making the transition to college, it seems likely that Camper will take a redshirt his first year in the program. That said, South Carolina does have a huge need at offensive tackle and if Camper makes a quick transition, there's certainly the chance that he could get on the field, particularly if Carolina has some injuries at the position.



THE PROCESS

Camper committed to Rutgers last June and appeared completely solid in that commitment until South Carolina offensive line coach Shawn Elliott reached out to him about taking a visit to the program. Camper, whose father played for Spurrier at Duke, fell in love with everything about the school and program during his official visit and flipped his commitment from Rutgers to Carolina a few days later.



JOSEPH CHARLTON

Kicker
Columbia, SC (A.C. Flora)
Ht: 6'5"
Wt: 180 lbs



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

The first thing you see when flipping on the Columbia product's tape is his size: he's 6-foot-5, 180-pounds which really makes him stand out among your average kicker. His leg is also big, as Charlton can boom punts with nice hangtime and distance or kick it out of the end zone – as in out of the back at times. His directional kicks cause teams some problems, too.



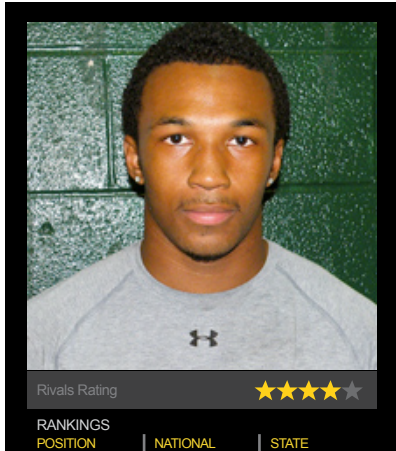
THE IMPACT

With his leg strength, Charlton's biggest impact will be felt as a kickoff specialist. It's an area in which he could challenge as soon as next season. With Tyler Hull gone to graduation, punting is a question mark for USC next season as well. Charlton is not a finished product at punter but has plenty of upside because he can really boom it when he hits one solidly. If he can improve his consistency and placement, he could be a difference maker there at some point too.



THE PROCESS

A scholarship punter/kicker for the Gamecocks, Charlton's recruitment was as simple as they come. Special teams coach Joe Robinson reached out to Charlton on Twitter and told him to give him a call. On the ensuing phone call, Robinson offered Charlton a scholarship. It was just a matter of hours before Charlton pulled the trigger with a commitment to the Gamecocks.



JALEN CHRISTIAN

Wide Receiver
Damascus, MD (Damascus)
Ht: 5'10"
Wt: 173 lbs

Rivals.com Maryland Final Top 35 (#8)

Rivals Rating ★★★★★

RANKINGS		
POSITION	NATIONAL	STATE
38	NO RATING	8
Rivals Rating	About	4.9 6.1 5.8



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Christian plays receiver, defensive back, and returns kicks and punts for his high school team so he's a versatile performer. His team likes to get him the ball in space on sweeps, inside runs from a wing position, or occasionally with deep shots downfield and Christian is adept at all of them. He doesn't have great size and he's quicker than fast but he's very good in space and has good vision in the open field. He can get separation in tight spots and his decision-making abilities help him turn short gains into long plays or touchdowns.



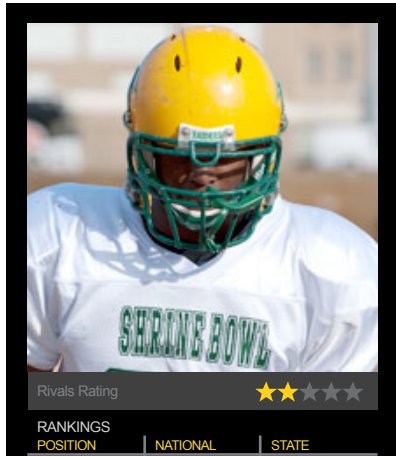
THE IMPACT

USC has had plenty of success with smaller receivers lately, and Christian could be the next. USC has a need for someone to step up at receiver alongside the returning Pharoh Cooper, and with Christian's unique size and skill set could he get an early look? It's possible, but there will be plenty of competition. USC has used receivers of Christian's size both inside and outside, so he could play any of the three receiver spots or factor in as a return man as well during his career.



THE PROCESS

The shifty athlete's recruitment came down to South Carolina and Maryland. While the home-state team was always right there for most of the process, South Carolina, led by the efforts of G.A. Mangus, offered Christian first, and seemed to have the edge for pretty much the entire process. Mangus and South Carolina made Christian feel wanted and comfortable for the entire recruiting cycle. Christian, also a talented defensive back, liked the fact that the Gamecocks wanted him with the ball in his hands and that Carolina has had success with smaller receivers. Once Christian committed last May, he stayed loyal to the Gamecocks despite other prospects flipping.



DEVANTE COVINGTON

Weakside Defensive End
Milledgeville, GA (Georgia Military)
Ht: 6'4"
Wt: 230 lbs



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Covington is a pass rusher first and foremost and appears to be a high motor guy on film. He doesn't seem to have elite length and will need to continue to develop pass rush moves, but is an athletic kid who moves well for his size from what can be told from the limited film out there on him.



THE IMPACT

South Carolina needs athleticism at the defensive end position and while Covington isn't likely to step in and start right away for South Carolina, he's got the chance to step right in and be a backup or pass rushing specialist. Covington has put on some weight in his two years at Georgia Military and like all of South Carolina's additions at defensive end, should be given every opportunity to prove that he can help upgrade that position.



THE PROCESS

Covington signed with South Carolina out of high school in 2013 and never really wavered on that loyalty to the program during his two seasons at GMC. While Covington had always planned to be a part of the 2015 class, word that he would definitely signing with the Gamecocks went public in January.

COMMITMENTLIST



Rivals Rating ★★★★☆

RANKINGS POSITION	NATIONAL	STATE
46	NO RATING	46

Rivals Rating About 4.9 6.1 5.7

MON DENSON

Running Back
LaGrange, GA (LaGrange)
Ht: 5'10"
Wt: 215 lbs

Rivals.com Georgia Final Top 75 (#46)



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

They're not clones, but Denson is a similar back in body type to Mike Davis: a thick-legged runner with some speed. The things that stand out about the Georgia product on tape, aside from size, is that he has excellent body lean and some big-play ability. He does not go backwards often, and although he's not as shifty as a guy like Davis nor does he break as many tackles right now, he can make defenses pay for letting him into the open field.



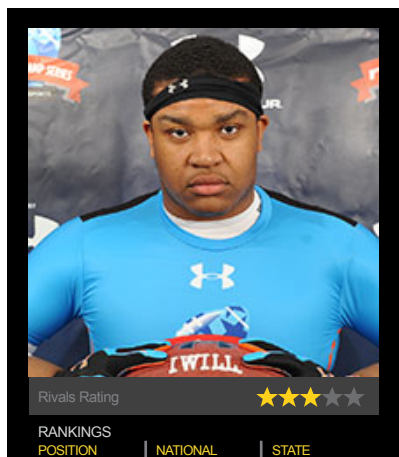
THE IMPACT

USC will likely have three backs returning in 2015 with experience, but as we have seen an injury or two can necessitate someone playing earlier than anticipated. If a back does play next season for whatever reason, Denson could be the one to get a look. Size will not be a question mark for him and he can get his team positive yardage if called upon.



THE PROCESS

North Carolina and Tennessee made up Denson's top two early in the process, but that all changed when Denson worked out for Carolina at the Gamecock Showcase Camp last July and picked up an offer from running backs coach Everette Sands. South Carolina was honest with its running backs -- telling all the ones with offers that the first two to commit would have spots in the class -- and Denson didn't want to miss out. He quickly set an announcement time and went public with a commitment to the Gamecocks just says later. Denson never wavered on that commitment.



TREY DEROUEN

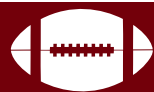
Offensive Guard
Lilburn, GA (Parkview)
Ht: 6'3"
Wt: 324 lbs



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Although he played some tackle at times for his high school, Derouen's size and skill set make him better suited for his natural position of offensive guard. He does not show elite quickness, but the Georgia product has a wide base and does not lose battles one-on-one when he locks up on film. Derouen can get to the second level and once he gets his hands on smaller players, they have a tough time disengaging. Like many linemen that make the transition to major college ball, pass protection and finding quick linebackers in space to block will be his biggest adjustment.




THE IMPACT

USC has some questions at offensive guard with having to replace A.J. Cann, plus injury concerns at the position. Ideally, Derouen would be a redshirt for Shawn Elliott to allow him to learn and get a year under his belt in the strength and conditioning program.



THE PROCESS


USC had three defections from the 2015 offensive line class along the way and was looking for more help in January, which can be a tough proposition. Derouen, a former Mississippi State commitment, gained traction with late pushes from Florida, Kansas State, and Louisville among others. Following an official visit to USC in late January, Derouen canceled planned final visits to K-State and Gainesville in favor of making a commitment to USC.



Rivals Rating ★★☆☆

RANKINGS	
POSITION	NATIONAL
38	NO RATING

RANKINGS	
POSITION	STATE
38	45

Rivals Rating About  5.7

DANIEL FENNELL

Outside Linebacker
Loganville, GA (Grayson)
Ht: 6'2"
Wt: 220 lbs

Rivals.com Georgia Final Top 75 (#45)



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

While he does not have elite measurables, Fennell has the appearance of a smart linebacker on film. He does not take many false steps or run himself out of the play. He's able to quickly diagnose what the offense is doing, find the ball, and get there to make a play. The easiest way to get to the ball is to avoid the players trying to block you, and Fennell uses his football IQ to get to spots before offensive blockers can so that he can make a play.



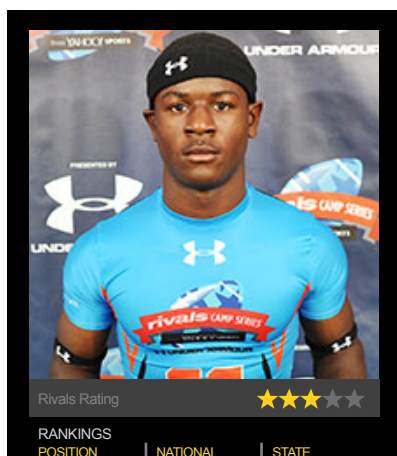
THE IMPACT

With plenty of returning experience at linebacker, it's unclear if USC will need a true freshman to step in and play early. Fennell could always surprise or at the minimum provide some good competition in practice early in his career until he's ready to contribute. He could play WILL or MIKE and help out on special teams.



THE PROCESS

Fennell was primarily looking at Michigan State, Texas A&M, Missouri and Georgia Tech prior to South Carolina stepping forward with an offer in early November. A couple of weeks after an unofficial visit for the Gamecocks' win over South Alabama, Fennell made a surprise commitment to Mangus during an in-home visit. Fennell had planned to take an official visit to Georgia Tech on the following weekend but cancelled that trip, choosing to only visit the Gamecocks officially for the annual Big Recruiting Weekend on Jan. 21.



RASHAD FENTON

Cornerback
Miami, FL (Carol City)
Ht: 5'11"
Wt: 178 lbs



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Fenton has solid size for the cornerback position, and in many ways he's the "prototypical" south Florida athlete. He has some speed, plenty of athleticism, quick-twitch ability and ball skills to make plays on bad balls by opposing quarterbacks. He also is a strong return man, which enhances his value for USC.



THE IMPACT

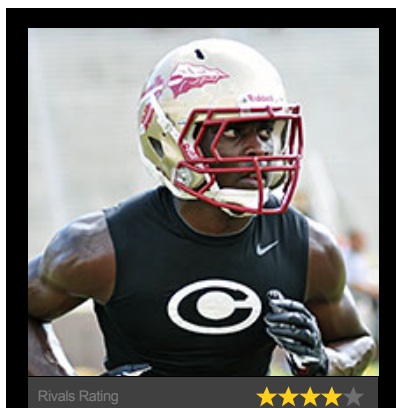
While USC has several young defensive backs on the roster, Fenton will get every opportunity to show what he can do in preseason practice. It seems more likely that he will redshirt, but with new blood on the coaching staff things could open up even more in the secondary. Fenton's return ability cannot be understated, either.



THE PROCESS

USC always had Fenton as a prospect it liked and kept in touch along the way. In fact, Fenton named USC his leader back in August but things did not really heat up between the two parties until January. By that time, Fenton had picked up offers and big interest from Auburn, Florida, Louisville, Miami, and others as well. USC used a late January official visit to beat Florida and hold off a push from Louisville to land the south Florida corner. Grady Brown's connections in the area paid off on Fenton.

COMMITMENTLIST



OCTAVIS JOHNSON

Cornerback
Homerville, GA (Clinch County)
Ht: 6'0"
Wt: 183 lbs

Rivals250 Member (#209)

Rivals Rating ★★★★★

RANKINGS	NATIONAL	STATE
POSITION		
19	209	19

Rivals Rating About 4.9 5.8



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Johnson plays quarterback for his high school team and may remind some of current Gamecock Pharoah Cooper, who also starred as a high school quarterback. Johnson is intriguing on offense because he is dangerous with the ball in his hands. His defensive film is limited, but he has good size at 6-foot-1, 180-pounds to play in the secondary or as a hybrid player and shows nice break on the ball and range defending the run.



THE IMPACT

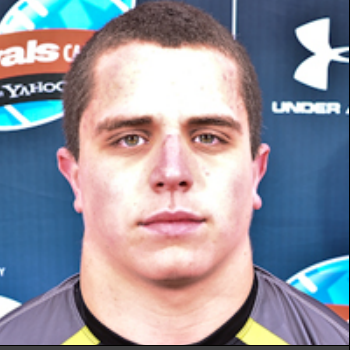
Another versatile prospect in the class, USC has Johnson pegged as a SPUR linebacker right now. He will surely need to add weight to become more effective there, but he has the skills that the role requires. Given that he will be transitioning to a new spot on defense and needs to get bigger and stronger, Johnson may be well suited to take a redshirt if he stays on defense. Johnson certainly has the ability to play offense as well.



THE PROCESS

While many prospects of Johnson's caliber relish the media attention and hype that the recruiting process brings them, Johnson approached the process in a completely different way, rarely doing interviews. In June of last year, Johnson, who at one time had Tennessee out front, chose the Gamecocks over offers from the Vols, Auburn, Clemson, Florida State, Georgia Tech, Kentucky, Mississippi State, Ole Miss, Missouri, Texas A&M and Wisconsin among others. He remained firmly committed throughout and didn't even go on record about that pledge until following his official visit in January.

COMMITMENTLIST



Rivals Rating ★★★★☆

RANKINGS	NATIONAL	STATE
POSITION		13
NO RATING	NO RATING	

Rivals Rating About 4.9 6.1 5.5

KYLE MARKWAY

Tight End
St. Louis, MO (St. John Vianney)
Ht: 6'4"
Wt: 219 lbs

Rivals.com Missouri Final Top 15 (#13)



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

The first-team All-State selection is a gritty performer who lines up at tight end, fullback, flexed out at receiver and at defensive end for his high school team. Markway doesn't have great speed, but he does have a knack for doing what it takes to help his team win and is a hard worker. Markway is the type player that isn't extremely flashy, but he does the little things right and fights for the extra yardage after the catch. Every team can use that type of player.

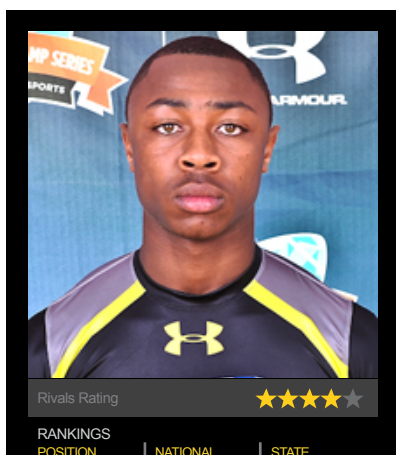


THE IMPACT

South Carolina returns Jerrell Adams at tight end, but will have to replace Busta Anderson and Cody Gibson at the position. While returning players will have the edge on Markway heading into next season, there's certainly room for a tight end to come in and play if he picks up the offense quickly and has a good summer in the weight room. Markway also is a potential special teams standout for the Gamecocks.

★ THE PROCESS

USC stepped outside its normal recruiting footprint to pull this St. Louis product. The Gamecock staff found Markway on film, reached out to his head coach who gave him a big stamp of approval, and the rest was history. Markway made the trip to Columbia for USC's spring game and made a commitment to the Gamecocks the next month from which he never wavered.



DEXTER NEAL

Wide Receiver
Stone Mountain, GA (Stephenson)
Ht: 6'2"
Wt: 197 lbs

Rivals.com Georgia Final Top 75 (#25)

Rivals Rating



RANKINGS

POSITION

NATIONAL

STATE

31

NO RATING

25

Rivals Rating

About



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Neal has very good size at a verified 6-foot-3 and uses that size to his advantage, particularly in the down field passing game. It's easy to tell that Neal's quarterback trusts his big receiver target enough to put the ball up even when Neal initially appears to be covered. Neal doesn't have blazing speed, but he's fast enough and also is solid in the run-after-catch department as he makes decisive cuts and gets up field in a hurry rather than bouncing around.



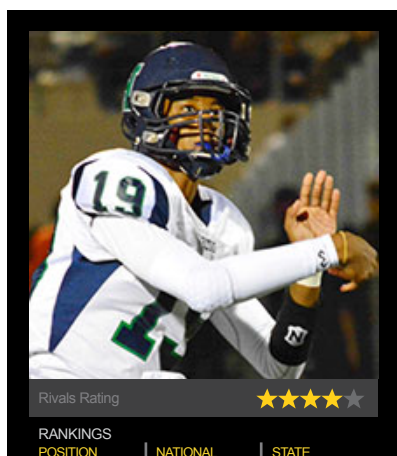
THE IMPACT

Whether or not Neal can make an impact for the Gamecocks as a freshman is going to depend entirely on how hard he works early on and how quickly he can pick up the playbook. In general, true freshmen haven't easily stepped on the field for the Gamecocks at the wide receiver position. While we'd expect Neal to redshirt, Carolina needs some size at the position and Neal certainly has that, so if he learns the playbook quickly, he could definitely play as a true freshman. Neal plays outside and in the slot at his high school, but appears to be more of an outside receiver in Carolina's offense.



THE PROCESS

The Atlanta receiver was another early commitment for the Gamecocks, but at times caused some uncertainty along the way with his public comments about the strength of his commitment. It ranged from 70 to 95 percent, depending on the week, but at the end of the day Neal never seriously considered other programs and everyone expected him to end up in Columbia. Towards the end of the process, he was even publicly solidified in his pledge.



LORENZO NUNEZ

Dual-threat Quarterback
Kennesaw, GA (Harrison)
Ht: 6'2"
Wt: 190 lbs

Rivals.com Georgia Final Top 75 (#26)



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

The first thing that pops out about Nunez on film is that he's an excellent, natural runner. Some guys just make it look easy and Nunez fits that description as he glides past defenders which rarely get a clean shot on him. Defenses are going to struggle to bottle Nunez up in the running game. In the passing game, he can make all the throws but will have to continue to learn the nuances of the quarterback position. That said, Nunez is a sharp kid and a hard worker who will be quite the dual-threat as his passing game continues to progress.



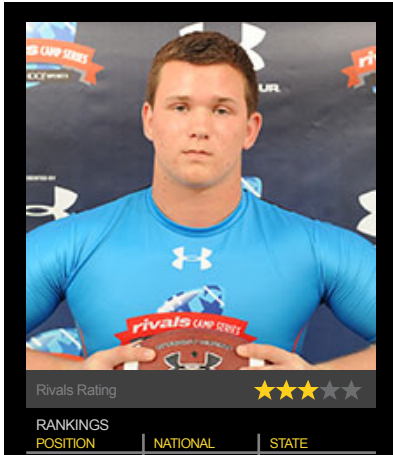
THE IMPACT

Nunez projects to play as a true freshman for the Gamecocks. How much will be determined by how quickly he picks up the offense and how the Gamecocks' returning quarterbacks perform. At the very least, the Gamecocks will develop a package with a condensed version of the playbook to allow the talented signal-caller the opportunity to get on the field earlier. Nunez is a huge piece of the puzzle in the future of the Gamecocks' offense.



THE PROCESS

After drawing a nice offer list from some impressive programs, Nunez zeroed in on USC and NC State as his two finalists. The Gamecock staff, led by G.A. Mangus, did a nice job during the spring at convincing Nunez and his family that South Carolina was the best school for him. Nunez was looking for a place that would have potential early playing time and that would take advantage of his unique skill set, and at the end of the day believed that wearing the Garnet and Black would afford him those chances.



CHRISTIAN PELLAGE

Offensive Tackle
Brooksville, FL (Nature Coast)
Ht: 6'6"
Wt: 291 lbs

Rivals.com Florida Final Top 100 (#75)



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Flip on Peltage's film and it's immediately obvious that he's got an excellent frame to play the tackle position in college. Peltage fires low out of his stance with a solid base while run blocking and drives through his opponent, often finishing off the block with the defender on the ground. Peltage shows off the athleticism he has for a player his size by running down plays from his defensive tackle position as well.



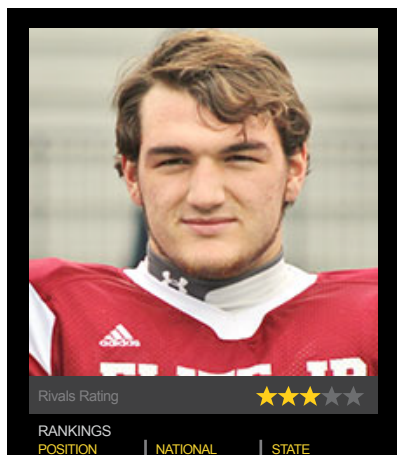
THE IMPACT

South Carolina needs talented offensive tackles in the program for the sake of the near future of the offensive line and Peltage has plenty of length at the position. Is it likely that Peltage starts in 2015? Probably not. But Peltage will certainly have the opportunity to play early in his career. He's a sharp kid who could be able to pick up the mental part of the game quickly.



THE PROCESS

Although the Florida native carried a huge offer list in recruiting, he did not gain a lot of fanfare when he committed to the Gamecocks over the summer despite being a talented prospect at a position of need. That changed in the final weeks of recruiting once home-state Florida secured an official visit and made a big push. Still, Peltage's long-standing commitment to the Gamecocks and the work done by Shawn Elliott and Everette Sands won out, as he stuck with his commitment to USC. Some fans worried, and Peltage thought it out, but it was always going to be USC in the end.



CONNOR REDMOND

Tight End
Lawrenceville, GA (Archer)
Ht: 6'4"
Wt: 220 lbs

Rivals Rating ★★☆☆☆

RANKINGS	NATIONAL	STATE
POSITION		
NO RATING	NO RATING	NO RATING
Rivals Rating	About 4.9	6.1
		5.5



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Redmond has the size and frame along with the hands to become a dual-threat option as both a blocker and pass-catcher at the tight end position. While Redmond's not going to blow by defenses with his speed, he's comfortable flexed out wide and also has good ball skills and body control for a player his size. Like most any high school tight end, he'll need to continue to put on weight to play in the SEC, but he's got the potential to be a good one in the Gamecocks' offense.



THE IMPACT

South Carolina returns Jerrell Adams at tight end, but will have to replace Busta Anderson and Cody Gibson at the position. While returning players will have the edge on the freshmen heading into next season, there's certainly room for a tight end to come in and play if he picks up the offense quickly and has a good summer in the weight room. It's hard to imagine both Redmond and Markway playing as true freshmen, but one of the two could avoid a redshirt in year-one.



THE PROCESS

From the time that USC offered the Georgia product and got him on campus, it was the team to beat. The Gamecock staff was sold on Redmond early and after getting a spring visit, Redmond did end up waiting his decision out until late June. The result was fully expected in the form of a pledge to USC.



DANTE SAWYER

Weakside Defensive End
 Scooba, MS (East Mississippi C.C.)
 Ht: 6'3"
 Wt: 270 lbs

Rivals.com JUCO100 (#11)



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Sawyer is exactly what the Gamecocks need -- a relentless pass-rusher off the edge who is already big enough to hold up against the run in the SEC. At 6-foot-3, Sawyer isn't quite the long, lean pass-rusher that the Gamecocks have made a living with prior to this past season, but he's a bulldog off the edge who arrives at the quarterback with bad intentions.



THE IMPACT

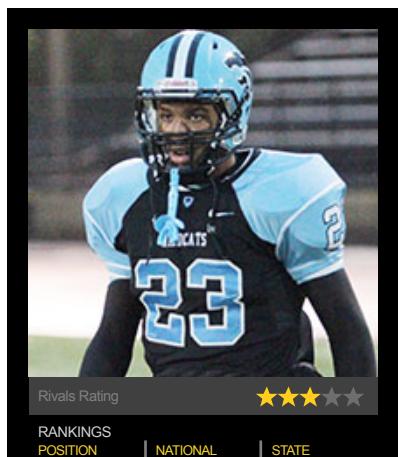
If Sawyer can get to South Carolina and pick up the playbook quickly, then you can pencil him into the Gamecocks' two-deep next season based on talent alone. Ultimately, Sawyer could play inside at Carolina, and should be a nice option inside right away on third and long situations like the way Carolina has used its bigger ends in the rabbit package in the past. Regardless of his role, there's a very strong chance that Sawyer finds his way onto the field next season.



THE PROCESS

Originally a member of the 2014 class, USC simply had to hold on to Sawyer once he headed out to junior college. After he signed in the previous class, there was never much concern about Sawyer eventually making his way to Columbia on an accelerated timeframe. USC continued recruiting him hard throughout just to make sure.

COMMITMENTLIST



AJ TURNER

Running Back
Clifton, VA (Centreville)
Ht: 5'10"
Wt: 180 lbs

Rivals.com Virginia Final Top 45 (#18)

Rivals Rating ★★☆☆☆

RANKINGS	NATIONAL	STATE
POSITION	NO RATING	18

44

Rivals Rating About 4.9 5.7



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Turner is a smooth runner who has good vision and patience. He doesn't do much dancing around, but instead makes his cut and gets north then uses his speed to produce big plays. Turner is a sharp kid who seems to have a good understanding of the game and unlike some young running backs, he's got a real feel for the pace of the game and allows plays to develop before charging forward. He's a nice complement to the Gamecocks other running back commitment, Mon Denson.

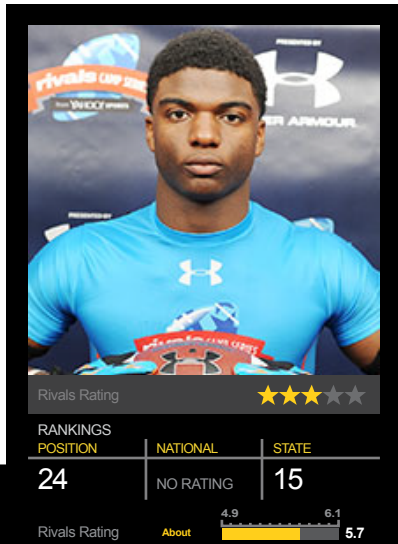


THE IMPACT

South Carolina will have to replace Mike Davis next season, and despite the return of three running backs, there's certainly the opportunity for one of the true freshmen to play at a position that depth is almost always tested at due to injuries. It seems unlikely that both Turner and Denson will play next season, but one or the other will definitely have the opportunity to help the Gamecocks during his first year in the program.

★ THE PROCESS

Things were a little more hectic in this one than most realized. Even though Turner never publicly wavered in his commitment, behind the scenes he thought about it and considered Oregon, Ohio State, Michigan State, and Virginia. USC used a series of in-home visits and the official visit for Turner in late January to ensure that he was all aboard and at that point USC had no more worries heading into signing day.



QUANDESKI WHITLOW

Weakside Defensive End
Opelika, AL (Opelika)
Ht: 6'4"
Wt: 228 lbs

Rivals.com Alabama Final Top 40 (#15)



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

Whitlow isn't always mentioned in the same breath as the Gamecocks' other defensive end pick-ups, but that's probably not fair to him. Like defensive tackle Taylor Stallworth last year, Whitlow is a three-star prospect from Alabama who the Gamecocks are high on, and like Stallworth, Whitlow was a standout at the Alabama- Mississippi All-Star game. Whitlow has an excellent first step and could be one of the true sleepers in the Gamecocks' class as they continue to mine Alabama for under-the-radar prospects.



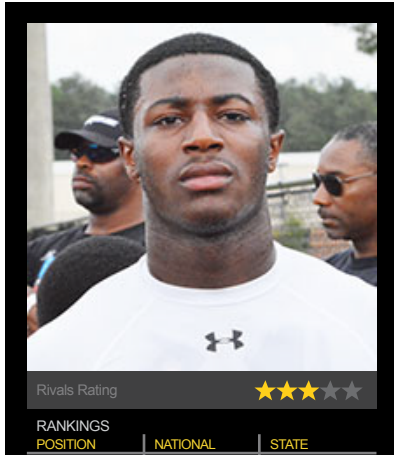
THE IMPACT

On the surface it may appear that Whitlow would be a likely redshirt, but the Gamecocks need pass-rushers in a bad way so don't count him out for next season. If Whitlow shows that he can help Carolina get to the quarterback, then he'll get on the field next season -- it's as simple as that. He may come it somewhat overshadowed, but we have a feeling he can make an impact for the Gamecocks during his career.



THE PROCESS

Whitlow was another early commitment from USC that was a bit of a surprise in terms of its timing, but also one that it was obvious that USC may have work to do in the future to hang on to him. In the end it turned out to be more than anyone imagined. Louisville and Florida made big pushes and Whitlow thought hard about Louisville before USC turned him back for good following a late January official visit. He cancelled a trip to Florida, and a call from Auburn two days before signing day also did not sway him.



ANTOINE WILDER

Safety
Atlanta, GA (Hapeville Charter)
Ht: 5'11"
Wt: 172 lbs

Rivals Rating ★★☆☆☆

RANKINGS		
POSITION	NATIONAL	STATE
NO RATING	NO RATING	NO RATING
Rivals Rating	About 4.9	6.1 5.5



FILM SESSION

[View Full Profile](#) | [View Film](#)

It's evident from Wilder's film that he enjoys delivering the big hit and South Carolina saw enough from him in coverage in camp to offer him a scholarship, which he accepted on the spot. Wilder could play either safety spot or even end up at SPUR in the Gamecocks' defense. South Carolina also likes the heart and determination that Wilder plays with and he's got the chance to be a leader for the Gamecocks.



THE IMPACT

South Carolina needs big hitters in its secondary and Wilder certainly can provide that. He's comfortable in a free safety role at the high school level and is probably best early on patrolling the middle of the field. The Gamecocks need help at safety and Wilder can't be counted out there and on special teams, where he could provide a physical presence.



THE PROCESS

Wilder was a big sleeper for the majority of his recruitment, with Mississippi State, Louisville, South Carolina, and some light interest from UGA representing the schools on him. USC wanted to see his ability to cover in camp, and once the staff pulled the trigger on an official offer back in the summer it took just minutes for Wilder to return the favor with a commitment.