

SPRING GUIDE 2023



A CLEMSONKICKOFF.COM E-MAGAZINE, POWERED BY THE REIGN SUPREME ALWAYS PODCAST

CLEMSON SPRING FOOTBALL GUIDE 2023

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Dabo Swinney and the Tigers will look this year to make their first College Football Playoff appearance since 2020 – and before they kick things off Sept. 4 against the Duke Blue Devils, this year's spring practice season and Orange and White game will give the Clemson Family a glimpse at how the team will look. This e-magazine offers insights on the top changes in the program, what has unfolded this spring and expectations for the season ahead. Go Tigers!

1. A new QB we all know

We've seen the potential in Cade Klubnik, thanks to his breakout performance off the bench in the ACC Championship Game, when he led Clemson to a convincing 39-10 win over North Carolina and took the job from DJ Uiagalelei, who transferred out. Klubnik's first start, however, brought red-zone troubles for the offense in a disappointing 31-14 Orange Bowl loss to Tennessee. Somewhere in between those two performances, very likely, lies a reasonable expectation for what to expect from Klubnik in 2023. His experience should benefit him, as should another big change on campus ...

PRESS PLAY | Klubnik leads ACC win

The Reign Supreme Alway podcast recaps Clemson's big win over UNC in Charlotte in December, when QB Cade Klubnik had the biggest performance of his year and showed promise for a stronger 2023.

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2. A new OC we don't know

Welcome to Clemson, Garrett Riley. The Tigers' new offensive coordinator brings Air Raid passing schemes to Death Valley, yet marries them with a power running game to create a system that got Texas Christian University all the way to the national championship game last season with a quarterback who started the year as a backup (let's not discuss how that final game ended, though). Riley replaces Brandon Streeter, who seemed to abandon the run too quickly in the Tigers' three losses in 2022. The new offensive sheriff in town must maximize the talents of running backs Will Shipley and Phil Mafah, while creating at least four go-to pass catchers from a group that includes Antonio Williams, Beaux Collins, Adam Randall, Jake Briningstool and more. Riley must also help offensive line coach Thomas Austin blend the progress of last season with the new system for 2023.

PRESS PLAY | Dabo hires Garrett Riley

The Reign Supreme Alway podcast analyzes the hiring of new offensive coordinator Garrett Riley, who brings his background in an Air Raid passing scheme but mixes it with a strong running game.

DETAILS | 2023 ORANGE AND WHITE SPRING GAME

- **DATE** | Saturday, April 15
- **TIME** | 1 p.m. EDT
- **TV** | ACC Network Extra
- **ROSTERS** | Coming in April

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3. Reload on defense

Headlining the losses on defense last season are linebacker Trenton Simpson and defensive tackle Bryan Bresee. Each is expected to be a first-round draft pick, along with defensive end Myles Murphy. Expect a cast of new faces, including Wade Woodaz to replace Simpson, while Bresee’s snaps likely will be absorbed by the rest of the rotation returning at defensive tackle – although freshman phenom Peter Woods could have something to say about that. At end, Xavier Thomas returns to help fill the void left by Murphy and KJ Henry, with Justin Mascoll a probable starter and emerging talents needing to step up to provide depth (possibly including Woods). Some players from the secondary may be counted on to replace Simpson as well, as a trio of top safeties (Andrew Mukuba, Jalyn Phillips, R.J. Mickens) and two starting cornerbacks (Sheridan Jones, Nate Wiggins) return.

PRESS PLAY | Goodwin’s D clicks midyear

The Reign Supreme Always podcast recaps Clemson’s defense putting all the ingredients together for a convincing win over N.C. State in 2022, with insights on why things created a model to follow.

SCHEDULE | 2023 REGULAR SEASON

9/4 at Duke	10/21 at Miami
9/9 CHARLESTON SO.	10/28 at N.C. State
9/16 FLORIDA ATLANTIC	11/4 NOTRE DAME
9/23 FLORIDA STATE	11/11 GEORGIA TECH
9/30 at Syracuse	11/18 NORTH CAROLINA
10/7 WAKE FOREST	11/25 at South Carolina

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4. Evaluating freshmen

The incoming group of talented new players extends well beyond Woods – and includes more than a dozen early enrollees taking part in practice this spring. Even extra practice before the season starts doesn't always guarantee an immediate major role, but it certainly gives players a head start in learning the system and coaches a chance to spend extra weeks evaluating strengths and areas for improvement. Vic Burley, Stephiylan Green and T.J. Parker join Woods on the defensive line, all three offensive linemen are on campus early and friendly battles between wide receiver Noble Johnson and cornerback Shelton Lewis already are unfolding. QB Christopher Vizzina, LBs Jamal Anderson and Dee Crayton, and safeties Khalil Barnes and Kylen Webb also are already on campus. Riley and defensive coordinator Wes Goodwin can start coaching these guys up early, which is a plus.

PRESS PLAY | 2023 Signing Class

The Reign Supreme Alway podcast recaps Clemson's recruiting haul for the 2023 signing class, from versatile DL Peter Woods to muscular DT Vic Burley, QB prospect Christopher Vizzina and more.

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5. Impress the next group of recruits

It's one thing to feel excitement when a new coordinator is brought in from a playoff team – but it's another to show proof of why the change was made. With just six players committed for Clemson's class of 2024, and just two on offense, Garrett Riley must use the spring practice season to ensure remaining prospects including QB Air Noland, OL Michael Uini, WR Alex Taylor and numerous others can see for themselves the positives that Riley brings to Death Valley. The televised spring scrimmage we'll all be able to see in the stadium won't serve as a full reveal of the new offense, but it can provide a sense of what's to come. On defense, returning coordinator Wes Goodwin must show he has learned from running the defense for the first time in his career, when his position group arguably had the most success, and has a plan to address shortcomings in assignments and leverage.

PRESS PLAY | '24 RB Eziumume commits

The Reign Supreme Always podcast recaps Clemson's secured commitment from its top RB offer for 2024 in David Eziumume out of Georgia, and why it could signal an upswing for the Tigers' offensive recruiting.

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