



# JACKSONVILLE STATE GAMECOCKS

**LOCATION**.....Jacksonville, AL  
**LAST SEASON**.....10-3 (.769)  
**CONFERENCE (OVC)**.....(6-1)  
**Key Wins: FIU (19-10), #24 Tennessee Tech (27-10), #16 Murray St (28-14)**  
**Lost 2nd Round of FCS Playoffs (Delaware 20-14)**  
**COLORS**.....Red & White  
**HOMEFIELD**.....Burgess-Snow Field @ JSU Stadium (24,000 capacity) Pro Grass Artificial  
**HEAD COACH**.....John Grass (JSU '90)  
**RECORD AT SCHOOL**.....68-21 (7<sup>th</sup>)  
**CAREER RECORD**.....68-21  
**ASSISTANTS:**  
**William Green** (Run Defense/ D-Line) (Florida '12)  
**Kelvin Sigler** (Ast HC/ Def Coordinator/ Safties) (Alabama '99) 8<sup>th</sup> Year  
**Owen Kilgore** (Pass Defense Coord/ CB) (Tennessee '13)  
**Tyler Allen** (QB Coach) (LSU '17)  
**Jimmy Ogle** (Ast HC/ Off Coord/ RB) (Tennessee '99)  
**Kevin Revis** (Offensive Line) (Chattanooga '14)  
**J.R. Sandlin** (Tight Ends/ Recruiting) (UCF '09)  
**Josh Linam** (Inside Linebackers) (UCF '12)  
**Maxwell Thurmond** (Outside LB/ Special Teams) (JSU '01)  
**Cody Wells** (Wide Receivers) (ULM '13)  
**TEAM WINS (LAST 5 YRS)...**10-10-9-6-10 (45-17)  
**2019 FINISH**.....(6-6, 3-5)  
**2019 Key Wins: E. Washington (49-45), Murray State (14-12)**

## COACH AND PROGRAM

John Grass came to the Jacksonville State football program after two decades of coaching high schools in Alabama. He was brought on as an offensive coordinator in 2013 under former Head Coach Bill Clark, who was at JSU for one season. Coach Clark's jump to UAB left an opening for Grass to fill, and he has made the most of the opportunity. JSU has won six OVC championships and played for the FCS National Championship in 2015. In 2020, JSU was one of 15 teams to start playing football in the fall, and even fewer played into spring 2021. The Gamecocks took advantage of teams looking to schedule games and added four opponents in October 2020. JSU then played seven additional FCS games in the spring. The program's success earned them the OVC championship and a trip to the 16-team 2020ish FCS playoff. A first-round win versus Davidson and a second-round loss to Delaware wrapped up JSU's COVID year, but there is little doubt about the talent and potential of this Gamecock program. Jacksonville State rose to 7th in the national rankings in 2020-21. The Gamecocks finished the OVC season with a 6-1 record to claim its ninth OVC regular-season championship. They have won titles in 2003, 2004, 2011, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2020 and earned the OVC's automatic bid to the FCS Playoffs. This year marks the 10th overall Division I playoff appearance for the program, which appeared in 2003, 2004, 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018. JSU is now 7-10 all-time in the playoffs. Jacksonville State's senior tight end **Trae Barry** was named the **2020-21 FCS National Tight End of the Year**, while defensive back teammate **Nicario Harper** was named the **Defensive Back of the Year** by the

### Coaching Bio: John Grass

#### Jacksonville State (2014–present)

*Head Coach*

6 OVC Championships  
2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020

3X OVC Coach of the Year (2014-2016)

#### Jacksonville State (2013)

*Offensive Coordinator*

Division I Football Championship Subdivision Athletics Directors Association (FCS ADA) and a unanimous selection as an All-American. He also was the Defensive Player of the Year in the OVC. Coach Grass has had

### D-I FCS PLAYOFF HISTORY

Year	Round	Opponent	Result
<a href="#">2003</a>	First Round	Western Kentucky	L 7–45
<a href="#">2004</a>	First Round	Furman	L 7–49
<a href="#">2010</a>	Second Round	Wofford	L 14–17
<a href="#">2013</a>	First Round Second Round Quarterfinals	Samford McNeese State Eastern Washington	W 55–14 W 31–10 L 24–35
<a href="#">2014</a>	Second Round	Sam Houston State	L 26–37
<a href="#">2015</a>	Second Round Quarterfinals Semifinals Championship	Chattanooga Charleston Southern Sam Houston State North Dakota State	W 41–35 <sup>OT</sup> W 58–38 W 62–10 L 10–37
<a href="#">2016</a>	Second Round	Youngstown State	L 24–40
<a href="#">2017</a>	Second Round	Kennesaw State	L 7–17
<a href="#">2018</a>	First Round Second Round	East Tennessee State Maine	W 34–27 L 27–55

tremendous success at JSU, but fans want more. Critics of Grass point to the lack of playoff wins and a deep playoff run. Since taking over the JSU program as head coach, Grass has led the Gamecocks to the playoffs six of his seven years. The Gamecocks made a run to the FCS Championship in 2015, but one and done years in 2014, 2016, and 2017 have brought out the nay-sayers. A second-round loss to Delaware in the 2020 FCS playoffs may quiet the chatter for now, but the natives could be restless as JSU joins the new ASUN-WAC Challenge, which is projected to be one of the more difficult conferences in the FCS. The new AQ7 teams feature 2020 FCS Champion Sam Houston, which the Cocks are 5-5 against all-time. Another brutal 2021 schedule for JSU includes two FBS opponents (Sept 1 – UAB, Sept 11 – Florida State). The season could start with epic program victories or an 0-2 start with games against Kennesaw State, Sam Houston, and Central Arkansas looming. The road is challenging for the 2021 JSU Gamecocks, but a talented and experienced football team is expected to be ready for the grind. The reality is JSU has become a premier FCS football program and is again likely to be a real contender in 2021. Impatient Gamecock fans have a lot to be excited about, but they will keep the pressure on the JSU coaching staff to succeed and make deep playoff runs.

### HISTORY

Jacksonville State University's first football team, the Eagle Owls, was formed in late

1904. A change came in 1947 when JSU changed the team colors from blue and gold to the current red and white. The Eagle Owls were gone, and the mascot became the Gamecocks. The rivals for the JSU are Troy University and Samford University. JSU was named one of the top ten traditions in FCS football when the JSU Marching Southerners and the football team join fans in singing "I'll Fly Away," a 1929 hymn.

After 17 years in the Ohio Valley Conference, JSU will be playing in the alliance between the ASUN and the WAC, known as the ASUN-WAC Challenge for 2021. The alliance allows both conferences to merge for one season and have an automatic qualifier for the 2021 FCS Playoffs. The seven teams playing in the ASUN-WAC Challenge will be known as the AQ7. After the 2021 season, the ASUN and WAC will divide into their own

football conferences. The ASUN Football Conference will currently include Central Arkansas, Eastern Kentucky, Jacksonville State, Kennesaw State, and North Alabama. One additional team must join the ASUN to receive an automatic qualifying bid to the FCS playoffs each year. Speculation that Chattanooga and Mercer may be interested in joining the ASUN is out, but there is no reliable information on what expansion of the ASUN may include.

## QUARTERBACKS

The Jacksonville Gamecocks received a tremendous athlete when **#6 Zerrick Cooper** joined the Red & White after a couple of years at Clemson. Cooper was rated exceedingly high out of Jonesboro High School by ESPN, 247 Sports, Rivals, and Scout, including being the top QB coming out of Georgia and seventh in the nation. A 2017 redshirt year led to Zerrick served as backup QB for the tigers and got significant playing time. He continued to display his talents when he transferred to JSU in 2018 leading the team to a 9-4 record and a playoff appearance. In 2019, Cooper took a step backward, throwing 12 interceptions, and JSU had a disappointing 6-6 season. Fast forward to the eight-month football season of 2020 (Spring 2021) saw Cooper start the fall season in 2020 and lead the Gamecocks to a 3-1 start, including three TDs in a comeback win over future ASUN opponent North Alabama. The following week Cooper got injured, and **#10 Zion Webb** was introduced to the JSU fan base. He led the Cocks to an FBS win over FIU, 19-10. Post-game comments from Coach Grass praised Webb and the team's performance. "I can't say enough about Zion Webb," said Grass. "Zion has hardly been able to practice the last two weeks. He came in and just a great job." Webb led JSU into the Spring season and went 7-2 as a starter in the regular season, with a loss against Austin Peay. The Phenix City, Alabama native has a beautiful delivery on passes and can sling it downfield. Webb threw eight interceptions in the spring and is an area to improve moving forward. But, the 2020 experience will help Webb's development. He led the Gamecocks into the playoffs and had big runs against Davidson in the opening round but could not get past Delaware in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round. Webb went down with an ACL injury versus Hens.

Cooper has received confirmation he has another year of eligibility and announced he would be a Gamecock for the Fall 2021 season. Crazy-good talent at the QB position for the Gamecocks makes the nation notice. Football isn't a one-man game but having a solid field general is essential. Cooper's natural talent and Webb's quickness and athleticism combined with his experience from the spring make the QB-room one of the top at the FCS level. Webb's recovery timetable is a question mark, but JSU fans feel good about Cooper's return and the future at the QB position.

When Webb was injured against Delaware, **#8 AC Graham** and **#7 Chance Newman** got some playing time and playoff experience. Newman is another big and powerful QB, while Graham is a bit smaller and more maneuverable. Coach Grass also added a big freshman kid, **#5 Matthew Caldwell**, during recruiting from Auburn, Alabama, to add to the QB corp.

## RUNNING BACKS

Jacksonville State had several great options in the backfield in 2020 and all return for the Fall 2021 season, led by **#5 Josh Samuel** (5'11" 200lbs/ WKU) and **#10 Uriah West**. Samuel was fourth in the FCS in Rushing Yards with 773 yards and Rushing TDs with eight. West, a bruising back from Douglas, Georgia, was on the heels of Samuels with 687 yards rushing and eight touchdowns. **#3 Pat Jackson** saw his share of carries as well with 404 yards and 93 rushes. Jackson contributed three TDs for the Gamecocks during their extended season. All three RBs had spark on pass receptions out of the backfield, but West and Samuel had the most success, although Jackson showed up big playoff time. Again, the RB position is solid with these three strong and fierce

runners. You won't get much shiftiness, but you will see some serious hard-nosed running from the Cock's backfield.

### Additional RB:

**#24 Darren Meads** – Fr – 5'10" 200 lbs, Hokes Bluff, AL 2020@JSU: 6 games, 9 carries, 26 yards, 2.6 net avg

**#26 Ron Wiggins** – Fr – 5'11" 170 lbs, Jacksonville, AL Other Offers: Arkansas State, Georgia Southern, South Alabama, Tulane, SMU, Southern Miss, Troy, UAB, Western Kentucky, Eastern Kentucky, East Tennessee State.

### WIDE RECEIVERS/ TIGHT ENDS

Losing six-foot-seven-inch #4 Trae Berry is the starting point when discussing receivers for Jacksonville State. Returning from a 2019 injury, Berry caught 33 passes for 534 yards, averaging 16.1 yards per reception. Although he only caught one TD pass, Berry is the go-to in keeping drives alive and sparking a big play. He entered the transfer portal and will be playing in the ACC in 2021 for Boston College. It's a significant loss for the Gamecocks, but they got their own transfer in **Sean Brown** from Tennessee. Brown is a 6'5" 246 lbs sophomore from Rome, Georgia. **#7 Dave Russell III**, a 6'0" receiver from Oxford, Alabama, led the WRs for JSU in 2020 with 26 catches for 326 yards. A balanced attack on offense spreads the ball between QB, RB, WR, and TE and allows for a lot of production, but not a whole lot of glaring numbers, but Russell did his job and did it well. His biggest game was against Florida State when he caught seven passes for 74 yards. Freshman **#13 Michael Pettway** had some big moments in 2020. He showed out in the postseason against Davidson with three receptions for 59 yards and a TD. **#9 Ahmad Edwards** (6'1, 185lbs) was a third receiver used by JSU very effectively. At Eastern Illinois, Edwards put up five catches for 101 yards and 2 touchdowns. He definitely has some moves and break-away speed and could be a top-tier WR. **#19 Quan Charleston** and **#86 Logan McVay** provided additional targets for Cooper and Webb during the season. Charleston had five multi-catch games in 2020 and scored two TDs. McVay saw a lot of targets last season and had some positive impacts. McVay, a Demopolis, Alabama native, was a track star in high school and could help spread the field.

### 2020-21 Jacksonville State Stats

Rushing Off.....	189.0
Passing Off.....	195.1
Total Off.....	384.1
<b>Scoring Off.....</b>	<b>28.4</b>
Third Down Off.....	42%
Third Down Def.....	31%
Red Zone Off.....	48/55 (87%)
Red Zone TD.....	65%
<b>Scoring Def.....</b>	<b>17.6</b>
Net Punting.....	38.2
Punt Returns.....	0.7
Kickoff Ret.....	37.0
Rushing Def.....	92.3
Passing Def.....	190.4
Total Def.....	282.7
Red Zone Def.....	31/42 (74%)

### Additional WR/ TE:

**#15 Jayson Jones** – 5'11" 180lbs – Birmingham, AL 2020: 9 games, 4 catches, 63 yards

**#12 Isaiah Montgomery** – 6'0" 207lbs – Atlanta, GA 2020: 5 games, 3 catches, 48 yards

**#84 Jacob Jenkins** – 6'4" 220lbs – Birmingham, AL 2020: 9 games, 3 catches, 33 yards

**#82 Braydon Hill** – 6'4" 225lbs – Hokes Bluff, AL 2020: 9 games, 2 catches, 13 yards

### OFFENSIVE LINE

The Gamecock's offensive line is anchored by OVC 2<sup>nd</sup> Team All-Conference C **#60 Zack Cangelosi**, a 6'3" 290lbs senior from Harvest, Alabama. Cangelosi was a wrestler and a shot-putter in high school. He is an all-around athlete who plays with fierce abandon to protect his QB. He started all 13 games in 2020-2021. He joins a returning group of O-linemen, including RG **#56 Cam Hill** (6'1" 305lbs) RT **70 Tylan Gamble** (6'7"

290lbs), LG **#52 Josh Wegener** (6'3" 305lbs) LT **#75 Ye'Majesty Sanders** (6'5" 297lbs). The JSU OL allowed 17 sacks (not all of their fault) over 13 games and were ranked top 20 nationally. They return great experience and some monsters in their depth chart at the O-Line position, including **#72 Drew Padgett** (6'7 295lbs) and **#69 Treylen Brown** (6'3" 315lbs), and #74 Jacob Dennison (6'6" 305lbs). Fellow AQ7 teams Stephen F. Austin and Eastern Kentucky also have stingy offensive lines that make the conference one of the best in the nation for offensive linemen.

### KICKERS

Kicker **#47 Alen Karajic** earned a starting position as a freshman. He finished the 2020-21 season 14 of 19 (.737) and hit a 46-yard FG. He was 45-of-47 in PATs and scored 87 points. Karajic hit 2 of 4 FG from the 40-49 yard range, 6 of 9 from 30-39 yards, and a perfect 6 of 6 from inside 29 yards. He also handled most of the kickoffs, including a beautiful pooch kick that JSU recovered vs. Davidson. It would appear the placekicking job is his at the start of the 2021 Fall football season. JSU used three punters in 2020-2021, with the majority being taken by Aussie **#87 Jack Dawson**. He averaged 41.8 yards per punt and planted 13 inside the twenty-yard line.

### DEFENSIVE LINE

The JSU Defensive is a distinct set that traditionally has two edge rushers that play on both sides of the line combined with two "true" down linemen. Mix in a couple of Bandit linebackers on and off the line, and you've got a good idea of what D-Line Coach Greg Stewart throws at you. The highly experienced and respected line coach has been around and is in his second stint at Jacksonville State. Coach Stewart will have Defensive Ends **#2 DJ Coleman** (6'6" 245lbs) and **#12 Umstead Sanders** (6'2" 247lbs/ Florida), both of who started all 13 games in 2020-21 for JSU. Coleman also started all 11 games in 2019 and brought a monstrous size and tremendous athletic ability to the field. He caused havoc with 54 tackles (12 TFL), nine sacks, and had 13 QB Hurries. Sanders had 39 tackles (5.5 TFL), and 14 QB hurries. They complement the "biggs" **#99 Anthony Nesby** (6'1" 315lbs), **#91 Chris Hardie** (6'2" 260lbs), **#93 Dacorri West** (6'3" 325lbs), who only allowed 92.4 Yards Per Game as a defensive line. **#4 Lemuel Gordon** was another All-OVC selection from the DT position, but again, he played all over the line. The 6'3" 288lbs redshirt-sophomore got his first start vs. Mercer and earned eight additional starts for the season. An experienced, diverse, and athletic corps of players constantly mix things up for the JSU defensive line. The return of Coach Stewart is no small aspect of Gamecock's coaching staff. He has proven the ability to raise the level of play for his athletes. Expect the same come Fall 2021, which should scare the crap out of opponents, as the Gamecocks will also have Tennessee transfer **Deven Jones** to add to the pile. Jones (6'4" 309lbs) freshman from Knoxville walked on at Tennessee and has yet to see the field. However, the coaching staff is fired up to have Jones in the Red & White.

### LINEBACKERS

Jacksonville State also can feature All-OVC Linebackers **#8 Markail Benton** (6'2" 235lbs/ Alabama) and **#30 Jaylen Swain** (5'10" 235lbs) up on the line bringing hard-hitting and quickness to pressure the opposing offense. The linebackers have some question marks about who will get the start, but the depth is fairly good. JSU lost redshirt junior Zack Woodard, who started all 13 games in 2019 and left the team and entered the portal with a month left in the season. He landed at the University of Louisiana-Monroe. **#16 Laletia Hale** got starts at the MLB position, but injuries forced **#3 Marshall Clark** to move from ILB over to finish the season in the middle. That allowed Benton to rotate back to the WLB position, where he earned OVC All-Conference honors with Swain. Coach Grass and LB Coach Josh Linam have some decisions about the middle of the JSU defense in Fall 2021.

The nickel package for JSU features **#23 Kolbi Fuqua** (6'3" 212lbs) a redshirt junior who came to the Red & White from Auburn, where he was recruited as a receiver. Fuqua played in the fall and spring, but his season was cut short during the UT-Martin game in March 2020. His replacement was **#28 Stevonte Tullis**, who finished the season starting the final five games. Fuqua and Tullis are talented and now have decent experience. Now staying healthy will be essential for the nickel position.

### DEFENSIVE BACKS

Junior safety **#1 Nacario Harper** (5'11" 180lbs/ Southern Miss) is a headliner for the JSU defense. He has earned All-OVC since 2017 and is the 2020 OVC Defensive Player of the Year, the fourth Gamecock to earn that title, but the first defensive back. After leading the Gamecock defense, he garnered the conference's top defensive honor that set a school record by limiting nine straight opponents to under 100 rushing yards, including holding nationally-ranked Murray State to just 26 yards in the regular-season finale. He tallied 51 tackles (29 solos) in the seven-game spring season, had two interceptions and a trio of pass breakups. He had 28 additional tackles in four fall contests and a 64-yard fumble recovery for a touchdown against Mercer. No matter how good Harper is, he can't do it alone, and he doesn't have t. JSU hoped to welcome back All-OVC CB Jacquez Payton, but he entered the portal and has committed to Louisiana Tech. **#14 Jeremiah Harris** started eight games in the long 2020-21 season and proved valuable down the stretch recording seven solo tackles in each of the two playoff games for JSU. He recorded 66 tackles overall with three TFL, one forced fumble, and an interception. Other Gamecock safeties include **#31 Hudson Petty**, **#9 Darius Joiner**, **#32 Drew Tejchman**. All received playing time last season for JSU.

All-OVC selection **#10 Jacquez Payton** returns to the secondary for Coach Owen Kilgore at the cornerback position. Payton made seven starts with 30 tackles and three interceptions. Joining Payton is **#7 Yul Gowdy**, who returns after only playing five games in the 2020-21 season. Other cornerbacks include **#6 George Steele**, who played in all 13 of JSU's games and started six. He finished the season with 32 total tackles and a forced fumble. **#18 Malik Feaster** and **#0 Jamari Jemison** add depth to the Gamecock's secondary.

### PUNTERS

Six-foot-three-inch Aussie punter **#87 Jack Dawson** handled the punting duties for JSU in the spring of 2021. He had a long of 61 yards, and put 13 punts inside the 20. Dawson's average punt went 41.8 yards in the spring. **#96 Cole Porch** is also listed on the roster and had three punts vs. Tennessee Tech.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Wide Receiver **#28 Michael Pettway** was an exceptional kick returner for JSU. His eight returns netted 201 yards and a 25.1 return average, earning him OVC First Team Specialist honors. A host of players worked as kick returners also, including Uriah West and Jamari Jemison. This position is wide open if someone wants to step up to the challenge.

Wide receiver **#19 Quan Charleston** was called on for punt return duties. He fielded seven punts for 12 yards and had a 1.7 return average. Once again, the punt returner position is wide open.

### RECRUITING CLASS

### 2021 Football Schedule

Sept 1	vs UAB
Sept 11	@ Florida State
Sept 18	vs. North Alabama
Sept 25	vs. UT-Martin
Oct 2	@ Kennesaw State
Oct 9	vs. Stephen F Austin
Oct 23	@ Sam Houston
Oct 30	vs Central Arkansas
Nov 6	vs. Abilene Christian
Nov 13	@ Lamar
Nov 20	@ Eastern Kentucky

The Jacksonville State added 14 new players to the program through the recruiting process. They will welcome in five transfers, including two big-time TE, **Sean Brown** (6'5" 246lbs/ Tennessee) and **Jackson Lowe** (6'4" 245/ Tennessee), both transfers from Tennessee. Lowe is a four-star from Cartersville, GA. The Gamecocks also signed three-star recruit, Safety, **Zamon Ross** (6'1" 200lbs)

Learn more about the JSU 2021 recruiting class here:

<https://jsugamecocksports.com/signingday/football/football/8/>

## **QUESTIONS/ ANSWERS**

The JSU football team's biggest question is filling the void left by Trae Berry and others who entered the transfer portal. There is no real QB controversy; Zerrick Cooper is your day one starter. Zion Webb tore his ACL against Delaware and his recovery time likely puts him missing the entire 2021 season. Backing up Cooper will be Chance Newman, AC Graham, and Shariif Brown. An injury to Cooper, could cause trouble for the Gamecocks' offense.

## **GRADES**

### **Offense**

**A**

The QB position with Cooper is solid, but the inexperience behind him is concerning. If Zion Webb's rehab is ahead of schedule, JSU has two of the most talented and experience QBs in the FCS. The Cocks are loaded with talent at the running back level with Josh Samuels and Uriah West and at wide receivers. Pettway was a breakout player for JSU and looks to improve and build on his numbers. Replacing Trae Berry will be huge, but the transfers coming in have the potential to make for an easy transition. The O-line may be the best in the ASUN and has good depth.

### **Special Teams**

**C**

**#47 Alen Karajic** is a young placekicker but handled the job well in 2020-21. No reason to believe he will falter. Karajic is a solid kicker who has proven to be consistent inside of 30 yards. The big question is beyond 30, and there can be some concern. He did not attempt a 50-yard FG last season and was only 50 percent greater than 40 yards. Some experience and another offseason and training may increase Karajic's distance.

The return game was almost nonexistent on punts for JSU. A return threat on special teams is a must-have for teams who want to play a complete football game. Return yards and an occasional special teams score are how good teams prevail

### **Defense**

**A**

The Jacksonville State defense is stout and it does not have many holes. The creative use of down linemen and outside linebackers create a physical type of attack for the Gamecocks. They will make it difficult to score once again in 2021.

### **Intangibles**

**C**

The ASUN-WAC Challenge instantly became one of the strongest conferences in FCS Football. Like UCA, Jacksonville State has a brutal schedule. The Cocks open up against UAB and Florida State. Both games will be nationally televised. A two-game home stand against UNA and UT-Martin will prep JSU for their blooming rivalry with Kennesaw State on October 2nd. The Gamecocks are 0-2 against the upstart Owls and have been frustrated by their spread-option offense. JSU travels to 5/3 Bank Stadium for one of their biggest matchups. Circle October 23<sup>rd</sup> on the calendar when Jacksonville State travels to Sam Houston. This game will test the JSU

football program and settle some of Coach Grass's critics. An upset win over the reigning FCS Champs could propel the Gamecocks for the remainder of the season. But there is no rest for the teams in the ASUN-WAC Challenge as Central Arkansas will travel to Jacksonville the following week. There can be no letdown in either of these games.

JSU fans are great and loyal and Burgess-Snow field at JSU Stadium is a great place for football. The students and community truly support their football program. With an average attendance of more than 14,000 fans each home game, it makes for one of the best atmospheres in college football at the FCS level.

The Jacksonville Gamecocks were one of three teams in the FCS to play in the Fall 2020 and again in the Spring 2021. This football team made a playoff run into the second round. There is no rest for the Gamecocks staff or athletes. That could be trouble as the Fall 2021 season progresses, especially if they suffer a slow start to the season. The September 18th game versus North Alabama may be a gauge to see if JSU is ramping up for the FCS schedule or worn down from the long previous season.

**Overall**

**B**