

# SPORTS



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## CLEMSON FOOTBALL



Clemson defensive coordinator Tom Allen during the first Spring football practice open to media in Clemson on Feb 27. KEN RUINARD/USA TODAY

## SOUTH CAROLINA FOOTBALL

# Grading Beamer's offseason moves

Lulu Kesin  
Greenville News  
USA TODAY NETWORK - SOUTH CAROLINA

COLUMBIA – South Carolina football coach Shane Beamer's staff and roster look a lot different now than it did three months ago.

The Gamecocks went 4-8 in 2025 and Beamer fired two coaches amid his worst season in Columbia, then had more staff changes throughout December.

South Carolina also used the transfer portal to rebuild at critical positions.

Spring practice begins on March 4 for the Gamecocks. Before they start practice, here's how we graded South Carolina's notable offseason decisions.

### Shane Beamer retains LaNorris Sellers, Nyck Harbor, Dylan Stewart

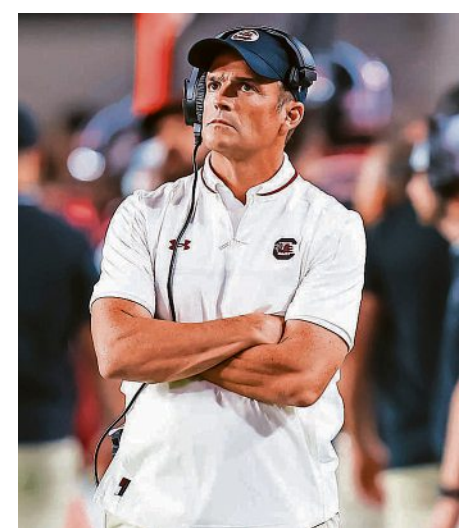
South Carolina fans knew by Christmas that Beamer had retained three star players, including starting quarterback LaNorris Sellers.

Sellers was a preseason Heisman Trophy contender and projected early 2026 NFL draft pick but was underwhelming in 2025. Sellers still was expected to be picked in the 2026 NFL Draft if he had entered, but he decided to return.

In the world of NIL and revenue share, it's no small feat to retain your starting quarterback.

Beamer also kept star edge rusher Dylan Stewart despite his position

See BEAMER, Page 3B



South Carolina head coach Shane Beamer directs his team against South Carolina State in September 2025. JEFF BLAKE/IMAGN IMAGES

# TRANSFERS MAKING MARK

## DC Allen says returners are getting wake-up call with the arrival of portal additions

Derrian Carter  
Greenville News  
USA TODAY NETWORK - SOUTH CAROLINA

CLEMSON – Clemson football defensive coordinator Tom Allen said the arrival of the Tigers' eight defensive transfers have made things uncomfortable for returners.

"It kind of wakes up the guys in that locker room," Allen said March 2 after Clemson's fourth day of spring practice. "Sometimes you think 'I'm gonna be the next guy because of time.' You know what? That just changed."

Coach Dabo Swinney welcomed 10 transfers in 2026, his largest single-season portal class ever, after the Tigers went 7-6 in 2025, the second-worst season in his full 17 seasons.

On defense, those additions include edge rushers London Merritt (Colorado) and CJ Wesley (Howard), defensive tackles Kourtney Kelly (West Georgia) and Markus Strong (Oklahoma), cornerbacks Donovan Starr (Auburn) and Elliot Washington II (Penn State) and safeties Corey Myrick (Southern Miss) and Jerome Carter III (Old Dominion).

See CLEMSON, Page 3B

# Our Super 25 boys rankings entering SCHSL finals

Todd Shanesy  
Greenville News  
USA TODAY NETWORK - SOUTH CAROLINA

Here are the Super 25 high school boys basketball power rankings headed into the state championships of the SCHSL playoffs. These are the best teams from the Greenville, Spartanburg and Anderson areas.

### 1. Greenville (23-6)

**Previous ranking:** 3  
**Results:** Beat Riverside, 55-47, in Class 5A Division 2 Upper State championship  
**Schedule:** State championship March 5 vs. Westwood, 8 p.m.

### 2. Riverside (25-4)

**Previous ranking:** 1  
**Results:** Lost to Greenville, 55-47, in Class 5A Division 2 Upper State championship



Greenville Red Raiders guard Caden Coleman celebrates after scoring on Feb. 10 against T.L. Hanna. ALEX MARTIN/GRENVILLE NEWS

### 3. Byrnes (23-5)

**Previous ranking:** 2  
**Results:** Lost to Ridge View, 84-76, in Class 5A Division 1 Upper State championship

### 4. Dorman (21-7)

**Previous ranking:** 4  
**Results:** Lost to Ridge View, 74-65, in Class 5A Division 1 quarterfinals

### 5. Christ Church (25-1)

**Previous ranking:** 6  
**Results:** Beat Mountain View Prep, 61-47, in Class 3A Upper State championship  
**Schedule:** State championship March 6 vs. Keenan or Fox Creek, 4 p.m.

### 6. Westside (21-8)

**Previous ranking:** 5  
**Results:** Lost to South Pointe, 61-59, in Class 4A quarterfinals

### 7. T.L. Hanna (21-6)

**Previous ranking:** 7  
**Results:** Lost to Fort Mill, 62-59, in Class 5A Division 2 second round

### 8. Daniel (21-8)

**Previous ranking:** 8

See RANKINGS, Page 3B

## SPORTS ON TV WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4 (ALL TIMES EASTERN)

## BASEBALL

**1:05 p.m.**  
ESPN — Spring Training, N.Y. Yankees vs. Boston, Fort Myers, Fla.

**2:05 p.m.**  
MLBN — Exhibition, Detroit at Team Dominican Republic

**10 p.m.**  
FS1 — World Baseball Classic, Pool C, Chinese Taipei vs. Australia, Tokyo

**COLLEGE BASKETBALL (MEN'S)**

**6 p.m.**  
FS1 — Creighton at Butler

**6:30 p.m.**  
BTN — Minnesota at Indiana

**7 p.m.**  
ACCN — Miami (Fla.) at SMU

ESPN2 — Texas at Arkansas

ESPNU — California at Georgia Tech

PEACOCK — Marquette at Providence

**7:30 p.m.**  
PEACOCK — Ohio State at Penn State

**8 p.m.**  
CBSSN — Loyola Chicago at Saint Louis

FS1 — Maryland at Wisconsin

PEACOCK — Villanova at DePaul

**8:30 p.m.**  
BTN — Purdue at Northwestern

**9 p.m.**  
ACCN — Florida State at Pittsburgh

ESPN2 — Baylor at Houston

ESPNU — Stanford at Notre Dame

**10 p.m.**  
CBSSN — Colorado State at New Mexico

**10:30 p.m.**  
BTN — USC at Washington

**COLLEGE BASKETBALL (WOMEN'S)**

**11 a.m.**  
ACCN — ACC Tournament, First Round, Miami (Fla.) vs. Stanford, Duluth, Ga.

SECN — SEC Tournament, First Round, Arkansas vs. Kentucky, Greenville, S.C.

**1:30 p.m.**  
ACCN — ACC Tournament, First Round, California vs. Wake Forest, Duluth, Ga.

SECN — SEC Tournament, First Round, Mississippi State vs. Florida, Greenville, S.C.

**3:30 p.m.**  
PEACOCK — Big Ten Tournament, First Round, Nebraska vs. Indiana, Indianapolis

**4 p.m.**  
ACCN — ACC Tournament, First Round, Georgia Tech vs. Florida State, Duluth, Ga.

**6 p.m.**  
PEACOCK — Big Ten Tournament, First Round, Illinois vs. Wisconsin, Indianapolis

SECN — SEC Tournament, First Round, Auburn vs. Texas A&M, Greenville, S.C.

**8:30 p.m.**

PEACOCK — Big Ten Tournament, First Round, Oregon vs. Purdue, Indianapolis

SECN — SEC Tournament, First Round, Missouri vs. Alabama, Greenville, S.C.

**COLLEGE GOLF (WOMEN'S)**

**2:30 p.m.**  
GOLF — Darius Rucker Intercollegiate, Third Round, Hilton Head Island, S.C.

**GOLF**

**12 a.m. (Thursday)**  
FS1 — LIV Golf, Hong Kong, First Round, Fanling, Hong Kong

**1 a.m. (Thursday)**  
FS1 — LIV Golf, Hong Kong, First Round, Fanling, Hong Kong

**NBA BASKETBALL**

**7:12 p.m.**  
ESPN — Oklahoma City at New York

**9:35 p.m.**  
ESPN — Atlanta at Milwaukee

**NHL HOCKEY**

**7 p.m.**  
ESPN+/HULU — Toronto at New Jersey

**9 p.m.**  
NHLN — Whip-around coverage of Vegas at Detroit and Toronto at New Jersey

**10 p.m.**  
ESPN+/HULU — St. Louis at Seattle

**12 a.m. (Thursday)**  
NHLN — Whip-around coverage of Car-

olina at Vancouver, N.Y. Islanders at Anaheim and St. Louis at Seattle

**SOCCER (MEN'S)**

**2:30 p.m.**  
USA — Premier League, Chelsea at Aston Villa

**2:50 p.m.**  
FS2 — Coupe de France, Toulouse at Olympique Marseille

**7:50 p.m.**  
FS2 — CONCACAF U20, Group F, Canada at Nicaragua

**SOCCER (WOMEN'S)**

**3:30 p.m.**  
TRU TV — SheBelieves Cup, Colombia vs. Argentina, Nashville, Tenn.

**6:45 p.m.**  
TNT/TRU TV — SheBelieves Cup, United States vs. Canada, Nashville, Tenn.

**TENNIS**

**2 p.m.**  
TENNIS — BNP Paribas Open, ATP/WTA 1st Round, Indian Wells, Calif.

**UNRIVALED BASKETBALL (WOMEN'S)**

**9:30 p.m.**  
TNT/TRU TV — Playoffs, Championship, Mist vs. Phantom, Miami

**VOLLEYBALL (WOMEN'S)**

**8 p.m.**  
USA — League One, Houston at Madison

## Beamer

Continued from Page 1B

coach Sterling Lucas leaving for LSU. The same goes for Nyck Harbor, who led the team with 618 receiving yards on 30 catches and scored six touchdowns in 2025. Harbor is 6-foot-5 and one of the fastest receivers in college football.

Beamer also brought back key players like Vicari Swain, who played cornerback and had three touchdowns as a punt returner.

Losing wide receiver Vandrevius Jacobs (548 yards on 32 catches) was arguably the biggest transfer loss, but Beamer added Nitro Tuggle out of Purdue, who is an inch taller and had 500 receiving yards on 34 catches last year.

**Grade:** A+

### South Carolina, Shane Beamer hire Kendal Briles as new OC

Beamer needed to nail the offensive coordinator hire after having trouble with that job throughout his time in Columbia. He fired Mike Shula in November after less than a year and in Decem-

ber, hired Kendal Briles out of TCU.

TCU went 8-4 in 2025, 9-4 in 2024 and 5-7 in Briles' first year. The Horned Frogs were 30th in the FBS in total offense, averaging 425.3 yards last season. South Carolina was 107th at 336.3.

It's hard to gauge how Briles' system will work with Sellers and everyone at South Carolina, but bringing in a college offensive coordinator was a huge win for Beamer.

**Grade:** A-

### Shane Beamer flips Julian Walker to cap 2026 class

South Carolina flipped edge rusher Julian Walker from Michigan. He's is the No. 3 prospect from the state according to the 247Sports Composite and the No. 10 edge rusher in the Class of 2026.

Losing high school recruits is not uncommon following a disappointing season but Beamer still signed a high school recruiting class that is ranked No. 16 nationally by 247Sports.

Beamer signed 15 in the early period and 17 overall. Over the losing season, he only lost two commits.

**Grade:** B+

### Shane Beamer fires coaches, assembles new South Carolina staff

A lot of changes needed to happen and Beamer made those adjustments beyond the offensive coordinator.

Beamer first fired offensive line coach Lonnie Teasley on Oct. 12 after the 20-10 loss to LSU. Briles brought Randy Clements with him from TCU to replace him.

Beamer fired running backs coach Marquel Blackwell on Dec. 4 after the Gamecocks didn't sign a high school running back for the second straight season. He hired Stan Drayton out of Penn State to replace Blackwell.

A day after it was official Lucas was joining LSU, Beamer announced the hire of Deion Barnes from Penn State as defensive ends/outside linebackers coach. He moved quickly with the transfer portal about to open.

When special teams coordinator Joe DeCamillis was hired by the Las Vegas Raiders on Feb. 16 after two seasons with the Gamecocks, Beamer hired Matthew Smiley by Feb. 21.

**Grade:** B+

### South Carolina brings in top-25 transfer class but top player injured

South Carolina added 25 players via the transfer portal, and the class ranks No. 22 nationally and No. 10 in the SEC, according to 247Sports.

Beamer rebuilt his offensive line with the portal and added key players in necessary spots.

Before February, this category was more toward the A- range, but star transfer offensive lineman Jacarius Peak was injured while playing in a 3-on-3 basketball tournament organized by the program.

Peak transferred from NC State and was South Carolina's highest-rated transfer in the 2026 class. He will miss the spring but Beamer said, "We fully anticipate him being ready to roll when September rolls around."

**Grade:** B+

*Lulu Kesin covers South Carolina athletics for The Greenville News and the USA TODAY Network.*

## Clemson

Continued from Page 1B

Allen said each transfer has brought competition and experience to the Tigers and "urgency" to players. He sees this as a boon for Clemson as better depth will be created, which he felt the Tigers lacked in 2025.

"I couldn't even tell you who our starters are going to be for the most part," Allen said. "We got a lot of guys that are going to have to be fighting, clawing, scratching, and I want that to continue all through spring, all summer and all fall camp."

Allen said Myrick and Carter were Clemson's top two safety targets, and both are among the team's top three safeties with Ronan Hanafin through

the first four spring practices. Allen said the staff loved both transfers' length, productivity and competitiveness.

At cornerback, Washington and Starr are among competitors vying to be No. 2 opposite of Ashton Hampton. Washington played under Allen at Penn State in 2024, which the defensive coordinator said has been a positive since he knows the system already.

At defensive end, Merritt and Wesley were brought in to provide depth behind Will Heldt and Jahiem Lawson. Strong and Kelly will do the same at defensive tackle with Amare Adams, Vic Burley and junior-college addition Andy Burburija.

### How Luke Ferrelli's departure impacted Clemson football's linebackers

Clemson lost Luke Ferrelli, a Cal linebacker who is the ACC's defensive rookie of the year, to Ole Miss. He transferred to Clemson on Jan. 7, then reentered the portal on Jan. 16 to transfer to Ole Miss on Jan. 22. This led to Swinney calling out the Rebels and coach Pete Golding for tampering.

An issue Swinney and his staff had with Ferrelli leaving was the Tigers canceled other visits with other potential portal linebackers when he initially transferred to Clemson.

Clemson retained star linebacker Sammy Brown but has to develop depth behind him with Ferrelli leaving, and Allen recognizes that.

"I feel way better after four days because I feel like there's a bunch of hungry guys in there who have something to prove and have to take the next big step," Allen said.

Those players include Jeremiah Alexander, Kobe McCloud, C.J. Kubah-Taylor, Drew Woodaz, Logan Anderson and freshman Brayden Reilly.

All have combined for four starts with Alexander having three and McCloud starting once, but Allen is confident in where the position's depth is heading.

"We've made progress in that room, and I think that room can be one of our strengths when it's all said and done," Allen said.

*Derrian Carter covers Clemson athletics for The Greenville News and the USA TODAY Network. Email him at DCarter@usatodayco.com and follow him on X, formerly known as Twitter, @DerrianCarter00*

## Rankings

Continued from Page 1B

**Results:** Lost to Lancaster, 71-67, in Class 4A quarterfinals

### 9. Eastside (17-10)

**Previous ranking:** 9  
**Results:** Lost to Riverside, 70-68, in Class 5A Division 2 quarterfinals

### 10. Spartanburg (17-11)

**Previous ranking:** 10  
**Results:** Lost to Dorman, 79-75, in Class 5A Division 1 second round

### 11. High Point Academy (28-2)

**Previous ranking:** 14  
**Results:** Beat American Leadership, 80-56, in Class 2A Upper State championship

**Schedule:** State championship March 5 vs. Mullins or Philip Simmons, 4 p.m.

### 12. Hillcrest (18-10)

**Previous ranking:** 11  
**Results:** Lost to Greenville, 91-65, in Class 5A Division 2 second round

### 13. Mauldin (14-14)

**Previous ranking:** 12  
**Results:** Lost to Dutch Fork, 50-48, in Class 5A Division 1 second round

### 14. Greer (13-12)

**Previous ranking:** 13  
**Results:** Lost to Lancaster, 75-74, in Class 4A second round

### 15. Mountain View Prep (20-7)

**Previous ranking:** 15  
**Results:** Lost to Christ Church, 61-47, in Class 3A Upper State championship

### 16. Chapman (22-6)

**Previous ranking:** 16  
**Results:** Lost to Christ Church, 54-50, in Class 3A quarterfinals

### 17. St. Joseph's (19-5)

**Previous ranking:** 17

**Results:** Lost to Mountain View Prep, 49-30, in Class 3A quarterfinals

### 18. Belton-Honea Path (17-9)

**Previous ranking:** 18  
**Results:** Lost to St. Joseph's, 57-51, in Class 3A second round

### 19. Woodmont (11-16)

**Previous ranking:** 19  
**Results:** Lost to Hillcrest, 75-73, in Class 5A Division 2 first round

### 20. Boiling Springs (14-14)

**Previous ranking:** 20  
**Results:** Lost to Ridge View, 87-64, in Class 5A Division 1 second round

### 21. J.L. Mann (12-14)

**Previous ranking:** 21  
**Results:** Lost to Boiling Springs, 65-59, in Class 5A Division 1 first round

### 22. Fountain Inn (13-15)

**Previous ranking:** 22  
**Results:** Lost to Daniel, 84-77, in

Class 4A second round

### 23. Chesnee (18-10)

**Previous ranking:** 24  
**Results:** Lost to American Leadership Academy, 57-53, in Class 2A second round

### 24. Pendleton (13-15)

**Previous ranking:** 25  
**Results:** Lost to Chapman, 69-45, in Class 3A second round

### 25. Liberty (20-7)

**Previous ranking:** 23  
**Results:** Lost to Fairfield Central, 48-46, in Class 2A first round

*Todd Shanesy covers high school athletics for The Greenville News, Spartanburg Herald-Journal and Anderson Independent Mail in the USA TODAY Network. Contact him by email at todd.shanesy@shj.com. Follow him on X, formerly called Twitter, at @ToddShanesySHJ.*