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Maligned Dogs defense looks to rebound

By Andy Johnston

Correspondent

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ATHENS, Ga. — The criticism has died down, but Georgia's defensive players know that they again will feel the wrath of the Bulldogs faithful if they have a poor performance against Florida.

Georgia's defense, particularly coordinator Willie Martinez, has been under fire all season for a parade of poor performances and breakdowns. It's a carryover from 2008, when the Bulldogs gave up 24.5 points a game and fell out of the top 20 in scoring defense for the first time under coach Mark Richt.

If last year was a gradual slide to mediocrity, this season has been a plummet to pitiful.

The Bulldogs are last in the SEC and 84th in the country in scoring defense (27.7 points a game). They're No. 54 in rushing defense (127.3), but only because it's so easy to throw on them. Georgia is No. 90 in pass defense (238.3) and has given up a league-worst 15 touchdown passes.

"Any time you let teams put up some points on you, (you have) got to expect some criticism, because (you're) making mistakes," linebacker Rennie Curran said. "You're going to hear about them. All we can do, and all we have been doing, is trying to improve, trying to work on those fundamentals and anything that can help us to do better."

Three of the top seven passing performances in the SEC have been against Georgia this season, but none drew the ire of fans more than the much-maligned Jonathan Crompton's 310-yard, four-touchdown show in Tennessee's 45-19 victory over the Bulldogs on Oct. 10.

[Maligned Dogs defense looks to rebound](#)By Andy Johnston

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