

Dedication of the Vince Dooley Athletic Complex
8:30 a.m. Saturday, November 29, 2008
Butts-Mehre

- I want to express appreciation to everyone who has had a part in today's event, especially those in the platform party and the members of the Athletic Board, and the donors to the sculpture executed by Stan Mullins. In particular, I want to thank Billy Payne for their efforts in making today's dedication a reality, and Governor Perdue and Senator Isakson for participating in this special occasion.

- The University of Georgia has a long and proud history in athletics. Throughout that history, certain figures stand above the crowd for the impact they had on the direction of the athletic program here.

- Charles Herty, the first coach. Pop Warner. Harry Mehre. Wally Butts. Joel Eaves.

- The University of Georgia athletic program has been blessed with great leadership for more than a century. But none shines brighter than Vince Dooley.

- Born in Mobile, he attended Auburn University, playing both basketball and football.

- In 1954, he played in the College All-Star Game in Chicago and graduated with a degree in business management.
- He served his country for two years in the Marine Corps, then returned to Auburn as an assistant coach. He earned a master's degree in history – a lifelong love – in 1963.
- 1963 was an important year for another reason – Joel Eaves offered the then 30-year-old coach the head coaching position at UGA. That move was the start of one of the most storied career in Georgia athletics.
- He was head football coach from the 1964 season until the 1988 season, during which time his teams won six SEC titles and the national championship in 1980. The Bulldogs played in 20 bowl games, and at the time of his retirement he ranked third in wins among active coaches.
- In 1979, he was named athletic director and continued the level of success he had demonstrated on the football field. Bulldog teams won 23 national titles and 78 SEC championships during his time as athletic director.
- Ara Parasheghian said, “A good coach will make his players see what they can be rather than what they are.” Coach Dooley did just that for UGA athletes.

- His impact extends well beyond athletics, however. He has been a true citizen of the university and an example to those he has led.
- A lover of history, it was not unusual to find him in the back of a classroom in Park Hall. Late in his career, he developed a passion for gardening and approached horticulture with the same determination he applied to game plans.
- He has been a lead supporter of the University Libraries, for he understands the critically important role that private support plays in making UGA the great university that it is.
- He has given countless hours in Athens and around the state in support of a variety of charitable causes.
- Coach Dooley is widely respected by his peers and has been the recipient of a number of awards and honors for his leadership. In 1994 he was elected to the College Football Hall of Fame, and in 2004 he received the Corbett Award, the highest honor bestowed by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics.
- In many, many ways he has been an ambassador for the entire University of Georgia, and we are forever in his debt.

- It was a privilege for me to propose this tribute to the board of the Athletic Association, which provided the funding for the Dooley Complex.
- I was also pleased to present it to the Cabinet and to the Regents, both of which approved it unanimously.
- What we do today is a fitting tribute to a man whose impact on the athletic program at the University of Georgia is evident today and will be for decades to come. The successes we enjoy today are built on the shoulders of those who came many years before any of us, and Vince, you built on and expanded that base and led UGA athletics into the modern age.
- We all thank you and salute you for that leadership.
- I am honored to be a part of this dedication ceremony.
- Thank you.