

# Go Gamecocks

## USC's most important defensive players for 2014: No. 1

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Brison Williams

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*The countdown concludes: GoGamecocks' Josh Kendall, David Cloninger and Dwayne McLemore each ranked the 10 players most important to South Carolina's defense in 2014. We took their predictions, compiled a composite list and conclude it with the revealing of No. 1 below. (This is not a ranking of the team's best players -- it's our rank of the players who are most vital to the team's success.)*

### 1. Brison Williams

The leader of a secondary that has been rocked by graduation and early NFL entries, Brison Williams may have to shuttle from safety to corner the entire season. The corners will be filled with freshmen, the safeties with players that have been around but may not have played that much.

Forever playing in his teammates' shadows, this is Williams' time to stand out. His role as a senior and the most experienced member of the new-look secondary make him the most valuable to the Gamecocks' defensive success in 2014.

Defensive coordinator Lorenzo Ward expects Williams to move back to safety when the team's cornerback depth improves this fall, but Williams this spring got more comfortable on the edge, he said.

"I am liking it right now. That might be my position, hopefully, depends on how everything goes," Williams said. "I don't know how much I am going to play (in the fall) because I have to wait for the young guys to get here and T.J. (Gurley) and Chaz (Elder) to develop and see how they carry on. Just going to see how it's going to play out right now."

Gurley and Kadetrix Marcus would be in line to start at safety opposite Elder if Williams makes the switch to corner full-time this fall.

Williams earned the most improved cornerback award for the spring despite never playing that position in a regular-season game. He started the spring game at one of the corner spots alongside Rico McWilliams.

"He's done a good job of being a team player and playing where we needed him," Brown said of Williams. "It's a pleasure to coach a guy like Brison. We have to keep pushing him to try and get better."

**Best-case scenario:** Williams sticks at safety, has a career-best season and earns all-SEC consideration. If he must play corner, it's because there's a dire need, and his replacement at safety at least has game experience.

**Stats:** Has played 33 games over the past three seasons, making 24 starts, most among the defensive players and second on the squad behind A.J. Cann. ... Two of his three career interceptions have come against Clemson.

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**Coming Saturday:** We begin our countdown of the 10 players most important to South Carolina's offense in 2014.

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The rest of the defense ...

**No. 2: Skai Moore**

**No. 3: J.T. Surratt**

**No. 4: Gerald Dixon**

**No. 5: Darius English**

**No. 6: The to-be-determined freshman cornerback(s)**

**No. 7: Chaz Elder**

**No. 8: Kaiwan Lewis**

**No. 9: Sharrod Golightly**

**No. 10: Gerald Dixon Jr.**

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