

Byrd says Gamecocks have big-play potential



Willie T. Smith III, wtsmith@greenvillenews.com 12:10 a.m. EDT August 21, 2014



(Photo: MYKAL McELDOWNEY/Staff)

COLUMBIA – Although Damiere Byrd missed South Carolina's 2014 Capital One Bowl game against Wisconsin after injuring his knee, it hasn't hurt his speed.

The Gamecocks' senior wide receiver was recently timed running the 40-yard dash at 4.3 seconds.

Despite practicing with a brace on his left knee, Byrd will discard it when the season starts on Thursday against Texas A&M.

The Gamecocks' top deep threat plans to enter his final collegiate season with a more diversified game and is ready to see how it plays out.



[GREENVILLEONLINE](#)

[Gamecocks give Moody push to the next level](#)

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/sports/college/usc/2014/08/20/gamecocks-give-moody-gets-push-next-level/14352675/?from=global&sessionKey=&autologin=>

"I worked really hard during the offseason," said Byrd. "I think I'm a more complete receiver. I can run any route and I know the entire playbook. I can't wait to see what happens."

The 5-9, 170-pound receiver caught 33 passes for 573 yards and four touchdowns last season. He has 48 career receptions for seven touchdowns and is 43 yards away from 1,000 career receiving yards.

"Damiere has played every wide receiver position," said USC receiver coach Steve Spurrier, Jr. "We can put them at any of them. That's what we've got him doing, playing a bunch of different positions. I think he's ready for a good year."

Although the Gamecocks will be without Bruce Ellington, who is now a member of the San Francisco 49ers, Byrd is confident the receiving corps is prepared to have a big season.

"We have a lot of experience," Byrd said following Saturday's scrimmage. "We know what we're doing. We know what to look for and I feel like our receiver corps is strong."

"We'll have a big impact on the team. We're coming into the season confident. We feel like we are a big play receiving corps and we can make a lot of big plays for this team. We want to show we're a great receiving corps."

A standout on the USC track team before being forced to sit out the 2014 outdoor season while rehabilitating his knee, Byrd is ready to show he is more than that.

"Damiere is very tough," said Spurrier, Jr. "We aren't afraid to send him on any route."

Byrd plans to use his speed to prove Spurrier, Jr. correct.

"It's a big asset for me," said Byrd. "Have teams respect my speed makes it easier for me. If they make one mistake, I'm able to capitalize, no matter the route."

Byrd has already developed a respect for the Gamecocks' secondary, which features senior Brison Williams, freshmen Al Harris, Jr., Chris Lammons and Wesley Green.

"They're definitely coming along well," said Byrd. "We're very competitive every day. They get better everyday. We get them better. All of them have stood out and put up great fights.... They've made an impact and shown they can play."

Byrd says Gamecocks have big-play potential

Our goals is to win the East and potentially the (Southeastern Conference) championship," said Byrd. "This team can be special. If we go out and play our best, we can put ourselves in a great position to do it.

"We can definitely feel it. We have been by ourselves the entire summer, working out. Now we know the start of the season is right around the corner."

Read or Share this story: <http://grnol.co/1oThXij>

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/sports/college/usc/2014/...>

FOOD FOR KIDS

For each pair of Merrell shoes purchased at Mast Store

October 14-31

Merrell will fill a backpack with food to feed a child for a weekend.





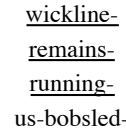
MAST GENERAL STORE
SINCE 1883
www.MastGeneralStore.com

MORE STORIES



Greenville firefighter Casey Wickline remains in running of U.S. bobsled team slot (</story/sports/2014/10/17/greenville-firefighter-casey-wickline-remains-running-us-bobsled-team-slot/17459843/>)

Oct. 17, 2014, 7:02 p.m.



Clemson defense fences in Boston College (</story/sports/college/clemson/2014/10/18/clemson-defense-fences-boston-college>)

10/20/14 9:59 AM

Refer a Friend, get a \$50 Gift Card ^x

[defense-17535129/](#)
[fences-boston-college](#)
[/17535129/](#)



Gallman, Davidson had right moves for Clemson ([/story/sports/college/clemson/2014/10/18/gallman-davidson-right-moves-clemson/17535125/](#))

Oct. 18, 2014, 11:21 p.m.

[/college/clemson/2014/10/18/gallman-davidson-right-moves-clemson/17535125/](#)