



# 2023 PREVIEW

# COLLEGE FOOTBALL

## JOURNEY TO THE PROMISED LAND

*Precise and Analytical Information Provided to Determine Team's Season Win Totals*

## THE UNPREDICTABLE BIG 12

*When the Only Certainty Is Uncertainty, Who Will Be the Champion?*

## 24 PACK RANKINGS

1. GEORGIA
2. OHIO STATE
3. FLORIDA STATE
4. LSU
5. TEXAS
6. USC

+

## TEXAS' FINEST

PRESEASON LIST OF ALL-AMERICANS FROM THE LONE STAR STATE



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# AAC PREVIEW



COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH



Biff Poggi

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mike Miller

DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Ryan Osborn

## CHARLOTTE 49ERS

### OFFENSE

Charlotte faces a major overhaul on offense, as it loses most of its receivers from last season. Jalon Jones, a transfer from Bethune-Cookman, will likely start at quarterback. The offensive line will also depend on some transfers to fill the gaps. The left side of the line has more experience than the right side. The 49ers have a bright spot in running back Shadrick Byrd, who led the team in rushing last year.

### DEFENSE

The defensive line might be a strength for the team. Dez Morgan and Jalar Holley anchor the tackle positions, while Julius Welschof and Eyabi Okie-Anoma provide some edge pressure at the ends. The rest of the defense is a question mark, as it relies on many transfers to fill the roles. The only certainty is that this year's defense has a low standard to meet, as last year's defense ranked 128th in the nation (fourth from the bottom) in total defense. The team has improved its talent level on this side of the ball.

### SUMMARY

The upcoming season for the 49ers is shrouded in uncertainty and excitement. With a staggering 15 transfer starters (at least) joining the roster, this is literally a brand-new team that will have to gel quickly under the guidance of a first-year coach in Biff Poggi. Poggi, who has a successful track record at the high school level, will have to prove his mettle at the college level and make the most of the talent he has acquired through the transfer portal. The 49ers have a lot of potential, but also a lot of question marks as they enter the fall campaign.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	S	SC STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	M	MARYLAND TERRAPINS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	G	GEORGIA STATE PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	F	FLORIDA GATORS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	M	SMU MUSTANGS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	N	NAVY MIDSHIPMEN
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	E	EAST CAROLINA PIRATES
FRIDAY OCT. 27	VS	F	FLORIDA ATLANTIC OWLS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	T	TULSA GOLDEN HURRICANE
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	M	MEMPHIS TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	R	RICE OWLS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	U	USF BULLS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		A	AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP



Charlotte Athletics



## ECU PIRATES

### OFFENSE

ECU faces a major overhaul on offense, as it loses its star quarterback Holton Ahlers, its leading rusher Keaton Mitchell and its two 1,000-yard receivers. Mason Garcia, who saw limited action last season, will take over as the starting quarterback. He will have to rely on Jsi Hatfield and Jaylen Johnson as his main targets in the passing game. The running game will feature Marlon Gunn Jr. and Rahjai Harris, who were backups last season. ECU ranks near the bottom of the conference in returning production.

### DEFENSE

The defense is another area of concern for ECU, as it loses more than half of its key contributors from last season. The Pirates rank 126th in the nation in returning production on defense, with only 39% of their defensive output coming back. Chad Stephens is a standout defensive end who had 10 tackles for a loss last season, but he will need help from the rest of the unit. ECU will have to count on some transfers to fill the gaps on defense this year.

### SUMMARY

The ECU Pirates are in a rebuilding mode this season, as they rank last in the country in overall returning production. They have to replace most of their starters and key players on both sides of the ball, and they lack experienced depth at many positions. The schedule does not do them any favors, as they face some tough opponents in and out of the conference. The Pirates will have a hard time reaching bowl eligibility this year.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	MICHIGAN WOLVERINES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	MARSHALL THUNDERING HERD
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	APPALACHIAN STATE MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	GARDNER-WEBB RUNNIN' BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	RICE OWLS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF	OFF
THURSDAY OCT. 12	VS	SMU MUSTANGS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	CHARLOTTE 49ERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	UTSA ROADRUNNERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	TULANE GREEN WAVE
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	FLORIDA ATLANTIC OWLS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	NAVY MIDSHIPMEN
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	TULSA GOLDEN HURRICANE
SATURDAY DEC. 2		AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Mike Houston

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Donnie Kirkpatrick

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Blake Harrell



## FLORIDA ATLANTIC OWLS

### OFFENSE

FAU has a new head coach in Tom Herman, who brings his former Texas quarterback Casey Thompson with him. However, Thompson should be the starter and Daniel Richardson the backup. The team has a strong running game, led by Larry McCammon III, who ran for 1,001 yards and seven touchdowns last year. The team also has some experienced receivers, as three of the top four returners are back. The offensive line is another strength, as most of the starters return as well.

### DEFENSE

The defense is loaded with experience, as 18 of the 19 players who played at least 250 snaps last year are back. That gives the team the highest defensive returning production in the nation. The team has a lot of depth and continuity on defense, and it should be able to improve on its performance from last year.

### SUMMARY

FAU has a chance to make some noise this season, as it returns a lot of experienced players and has a new coaching staff led by Tom Herman. The team also has a favorable schedule with some talented skill players. The key will be finding the right quarterback, whether it is Casey Thompson or Daniel Richardson.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	MONMOUTH HAWKS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	OHIO BOBCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	CLEMSON TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	TULSA GOLDEN HURRICANE
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	USF BULLS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	UTSA ROADRUNNERS
FRIDAY OCT. 27	AT	CHARLOTTE 49ERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	UAB BLAZERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	EAST CAROLINA PIRATES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	TULANE GREEN WAVE
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	RICE OWLS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Tom Herman

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Charlie Frye

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Roc Bellantoni





## MEMPHIS TIGERS

### OFFENSE

Memphis has a returning starter at quarterback in Seth Henigan, a sophomore from Denton, Texas, and Ryan High School alum. However, he will have to work with a new group of receivers, as the team lost its top five pass catchers from last season. That could affect the team's offensive identity, as it relied heavily on the passing game last year. The team ranked low in rushing attempts on both standard and passing downs, but had a decent rushing success rate. The offensive line has plenty of experience, which could help the running game. The leading returning receivers are Roc Taylor, who had 20 catches and one touchdown; Joseph Scates, who averaged 23 yards per catch and had four touchdowns; and Tauskie Dove, a Missouri transfer from Denton, Texas (Ryah HS). Memphis also added several transfers from junior colleges and other schools to bolster its receiving corps. One of them is Demeer Blankumsee, a slot receiver from Toledo who could become one of Henigan's favorite targets.

### DEFENSE

The defensive line features two disruptive players in Jaylon Allen, a senior from Humble, Texas (Atascocita HS) and Cormontae Hamilton, who led the team in sacks last season. Allen had 67 tackles, 11 tackles for loss, five sacks, 16 run stuffs, one interception and one pass breakup. Hamilton had six sacks and nine tackles for loss. The team has some quality depth around them, but these two stand out. The linebackers have some experience, but they have to replace their top two players who played the most snaps last season: Xavier Cullens and Tyler Murray. Geoffrey Cantin-Arku, who played 506 snaps and had 72 tackles, is the top returnee at linebacker. The secondary faces a major overhaul, as it loses four of its top six players. The team will have to find some new starters and backups to fill the gaps in the defensive backfield.

### SUMMARY

Memphis has some uncertainty on its roster, as it has to replace many of its starters and key players on offense and defense. However, the team has a bright spot in quarterback Seth Henigan, who had a solid freshman season and could improve even more this year. The team also has an advantage in its schedule, which is relatively easier than some of its conference rivals. Memphis could surprise some people this year and contend for the conference title.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	BETHUNE-COOKMAN WILDCATS	SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	UAB BLAZERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	ARKANSAS STATE RED WOLVES	SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	NORTH TEXAS MEAN GREEN
THURSDAY SEP. 14	VS	NAVY MIDSHIPMEN	SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	USF BULLS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	MISSOURI TIGERS	SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	CHARLOTTE 49ERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	BOISE STATE BRONCOS	SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	SMU MUSTANGS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF	OFF	SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	TEMPLE OWLS
FRIDAY OCT. 13	VS	TULANE GREEN WAVE	SATURDAY DEC. 2		AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Ryan Silverfield

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tim Cramsey

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Matt Barnes



#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Brian Newberry

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Grant Chestnut

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



PJ Volker

## NAVY MIDSHIPMEN

### OFFENSE

Navy has a solid foundation on offense, with a veteran offensive line, experienced quarterback Tai Lavatai and seasoned fullbacks. However, the team will have to rely on some new faces at the skill positions, such as wide receivers and slotbacks. The newcomers will have to adjust quickly to the triple-option offense that Navy runs.

### DEFENSE

The defense has been a strength for Navy in the last couple of seasons, and it should remain so this year. The team returns most of its top players, such as linebacker Collin Ramos and free safety Rayuan Lane III. However, the Navy will have to fill some gaps in the secondary and the pass rush. The team loses its leading sack leader, John Marshall, who had 11.5 sacks last year. Jacob Busic, who was second in sacks with six, also returns to the defensive line.

### SUMMARY

Navy boasts a mostly veteran team this season, with many returning starters on both sides of the ball. The team has high hopes of reaching a bowl game for the first time since 2019, when it won 11 games and finished ranked in the top 25. The schedule is challenging, but Navy has the talent and experience to compete.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	VS	NOTRE DAME FIGHTING IRISH
SATURDAY SEP. 2	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	WAGNER SEAHAWKS
THURSDAY SEP. 14	AT	MEMPHIS TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	USF BULLS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	NORTH TEXAS MEAN GREEN
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	CHARLOTTE 49ERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	AIR FORCE FALCONS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	TEMPLE OWLS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	UAB BLAZERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	EAST CAROLINA PIRATES
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	SMU MUSTANGS
SATURDAY DEC. 9	VS	ARMY BLACK KNIGHTS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP





## NORTH TEXAS MEAN GREEN

### OFFENSE

The starting quarterback position will be a battle between Chandler Rogers of Mansfield (Lake Ridge HS) and Jace Ruder. The top three rushers return and will run behind what has been one of the top G-5 offensive lines in the country the last couple of seasons. The receiving corps loses Jyair Shorter to Auburn, but returns Roderic Burns of Houston (Lamar HS). Texas Tech transfer Trey Cleveland of Arlington adds length to the receiving room.

### DEFENSE

UNT has some holes to fill on defense, as it lost some of its best players to the transfer portal. The team still has some talented players on defense, such as cornerback Ridge Texada of Frisco (Centennial HS) and safety Mazin Richards of Burleson (Centennial HS). The defense could be a question mark this season, and it will need to improve its performance.

### SUMMARY

The Mean Green could have a potent offense and a shaky defense this year, which could lead to some shootouts. UNT has a favorable non-conference schedule and these games could help the team rack up some wins and reach a bowl game.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS  CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT  FIU PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT  LOUISIANA TECH BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	OFF OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS  ABILENE CHRISTIAN WILDCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT  NAVY MIDSHIPMEN
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS  TEMPLE OWLS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT  TULANE GREEN WAVE
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS  MEMPHIS TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS  UTSA ROADRUNNERS
FRIDAY NOV. 10	AT  SMU MUSTANGS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT  TULSA GOLDEN HURRICANE
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS  UAB BLAZERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2	AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP



## RICE OWLS

### OFFENSE

JT Daniels, a transfer from West Virginia, will start as quarterback. He has a talented receiver in Luke McCaffrey, who can make big plays in the air. The offense usually relies on the running game, but it might have to adjust its strategy to utilize Daniels' passing skills. The duo of Ari Broussard and Juma Otoviano who is from Arlington, Texas (James Martin HS) will provide strong support in the backfield.

### DEFENSE

The defense might be more effective against the run than the pass. The secondary had some difficulties last season, but the defensive line has some good size and the linebackers are outstanding. LB Myron Morrison of Humble, Texas, (Atascocita HS) returns to lead the way. He was second in solo tackles last year. Josh Percy, who led the team in sacks, also returns.

### SUMMARY

Rice has shown steady progress in its win total over the last few years, but the team faces a tougher challenge this year. The schedule includes some formidable opponents, such as Texas, Houston, Tulane and UTSA. The Owls will have to play at their best to earn a winning record.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT  TEXAS LONGHORNS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS  HOUSTON COUGARS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS  TEXAS SOUTHERN TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT  USF BULLS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS  EAST CAROLINA PIRATES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS  UCONN HUSKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF OFF
THURSDAY OCT. 19	AT  TULSA GOLDEN HURRICANE
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS  TULANE GREEN WAVE
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS  SMU MUSTANGS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT  UTSA ROADRUNNERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT  CHARLOTTE 49ERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS  FLORIDA ATLANTIC OWLS
SATURDAY DEC. 2	AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP



### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Eric Morris

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jordan Davis

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Matt Caponi

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Mike Bloomgren

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Marques Tuiasosopo

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brian Smith

## SMU MUSTANGS

### ■ OFFENSE

Quarterback Preston Stone takes over the starting job after Tanner Mordecai left for Wisconsin. He has a talented group of wide receivers to work with, as four of the top five returners are back. However, he will have to find a new go-to target, as Rashee Rice, who led the team in receiving yards and touchdowns last year, is gone. The running game is in good shape, with Tyler Lavine of Cedar Park and Velton Gardner of Dallas (Skyline HS) coming back. They were the team's top rushers last season.

### ■ DEFENSE

The SMU defense has been a perennial weakness for the team, allowing more than 30 points per game in each of the last six seasons. The team tried to improve its defensive talent by adding some transfers from other programs. The team hopes that these new additions will help the defense play better and complement the high-powered offense. If the defense can show some improvement, SMU could be a dangerous team in the American Athletic Conference.

### SUMMARY

SMU has a chance to have a successful season in the AAC, thanks to a favorable conference schedule. The team does not have to face two of the toughest teams in the league, UTSA and Tulane. However, the team will also need to improve its defense, which has been a long-standing problem for the program. The team added some transfers to boost its defensive talent, but it remains to be seen if they can make a difference. SMU will need its defense to play better if it wants to have a breakthrough year in the AAC.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	LOUISIANA TECH BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	OKLAHOMA SOONERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	PRAIRIE VIEW A&M PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	TCU HORNED FROGS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	CHARLOTTE 49ERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF	OFF
THURSDAY OCT. 12	AT	EAST CAROLINA PIRATES
FRIDAY OCT. 20	AT	TEMPLE OWLS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	TULSA GOLDEN HURRICANE
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	RICE OWLS
FRIDAY NOV. 10	VS	NORTH TEXAS MEAN GREEN
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	MEMPHIS TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	NAVY MIDSHIPMEN
SATURDAY DEC. 2		AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP



Smiley N. Pool/The Dallas Morning News



## SOUTH FLORIDA BULLS

### ■ OFFENSE

Quarterback Gerry Bohanon is back for his senior season, but he faces a lot of changes and challenges on offense. He will have to compete with redshirt freshman Byrum Brown for the starting job. He will also have to work with a new offensive line and a new group of receivers and tight ends, most of whom are transfers. The running game will feature Michael Dukes and K'Wan Powell, who were backups last year and did not have much production.

### ■ DEFENSE

The outlook is bleak for this season, as the team has been struggling for a long time. The defense is a big question mark, as it has not performed well in recent years. The team returns some of its top players, such as defensive end Jason Vaughn, who had five sacks last season, linebacker DJ Gordon IV, who was second on the team in tackles, and defensive back Aamaris Brown, who had two interceptions. However, they will need more help from the rest of the unit to improve.

### SUMMARY

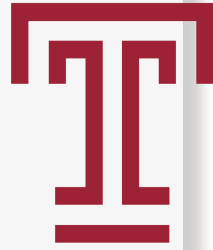
South Florida might have a tough time this season, as it faces a difficult schedule and a lot of uncertainty on both sides of the ball. The defense, in particular, needs to show some progress, as it has been one of the worst in the nation in recent years. The USF fans would welcome any signs of improvement this season. Brick by brick.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	WKU HILLTOPPERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	FLORIDA A&M RATTLEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	RICE OWLS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	NAVY MIDSHIPMEN
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	UAB BLAZERS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	FLORIDA ATLANTIC OWLS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	UCONN HUSKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	MEMPHIS TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	TEMPLE OWLS
FRIDAY NOV. 17	AT	UTSA ROADRUNNERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	CHARLOTTE 49ERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP



Julio Aguilar/Getty Images



## TEMPLE OWLS

### OFFENSE

Quarterback E.J. Warner is back for his sophomore season after an inconsistent freshman year. The offensive line has plenty of experience, but Temple will miss its top two receivers from last season. Ahmad Anderson returns as the slot receiver and Dante Wright, a transfer from Colorado State, adds some depth to the receiving corps. Running back Edward Saydee, who led the team in rushing yards and touchdowns last season, also returns.

### DEFENSE

The defense brings back most of its key players from last season, with 10 of the 15 players who played at least 300 snaps returning. The team excelled at pressuring the quarterback in third-and-long situations. Layton Jordan, who led the team in sacks, is back. So are the top three tacklers: Yvandy Rigby, Jordan Magee and Alex Odom.

### SUMMARY

Temple has the potential to surprise some teams this season, especially if quarterback E.J. Warner can show more consistency and accuracy. He has a veteran offensive line and some solid weapons at his disposal. The defense should be one of the best in the conference, with most of its starters returning and a strong pass rush. Temple could be a tough opponent for anyone on its schedule.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	AKRON ZIPS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	NORFOLK STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	MIAMI (FL) HURRICANES
THURSDAY SEP. 28	AT	TULSA GOLDEN HURRICANE
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	UTSA ROADRUNNERS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	NORTH TEXAS MEAN GREEN
FRIDAY OCT. 20	VS	SMU MUSTANGS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	NAVY MIDSHIPMEN
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	USF BULLS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	UAB BLAZERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	MEMPHIS TIGERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		AAC FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Stan Drayton

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Danny Langsdorf

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Everett Withers



Robert Joseph Cruz/Rjc Pictures



## TULANE GREEN WAVE

### OFFENSE

Quarterback Michael Pratt had an incredible season, throwing 27 touchdowns and five interceptions. He returns to lead the Tulane offense, but he will have to find some new targets. Two of the top three receivers and top offensive player Tyjae Spears are gone. Slot receiver Jha'Quan Jackson and Phat Watts are back, along with most of the offensive line, which was one of the best in the conference. The team will rely on some transfers to fill the gaps at receiver.

### DEFENSE

The Tulane defense should be solid again, with most of the defensive line and secondary returning. The defensive line has some experienced players who can pressure the quarterback and stop the run. The secondary has some playmakers who can create turnovers and cover well. The biggest question will be the new look linebacking corps, which lost some key contributors from last year. The team will need some newcomers and backups to step up and fill the void. The team also hopes to maintain its speed on defense, which was a strength last year.

### SUMMARY

Tulane has a chance to compete for a New Year's Six bowl game, but it will depend on how well the new skill players on offense perform. The team lost some of its top receivers and running backs from last year, and it will need some transfers and young players to step up quickly. The team has a strong foundation with quarterback Michael Pratt, who had a stellar season last year, and the lines of scrimmage, which return most of their starters. The team also benefits from a weaker American Athletic Conference, which lost some of its top teams to other conferences.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	SOUTH ALABAMA JAGUARS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	OLE MISS REBELS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	SOUTHERN MISS GOLDEN EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	NICHOLLS COLONELS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	UAB BLAZERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF	OFF
FRIDAY OCT. 13	AT	MEMPHIS TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	NORTH TEXAS MEAN GREEN
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	RICE OWLS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	EAST CAROLINA PIRATES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	TULSA GOLDEN HURRICANE
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	FLORIDA ATLANTIC OWLS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	UTSA ROADRUNNERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		AAC FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Willie Fritz

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Slade Nagle

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Shiel Wood



USATSI



## TULSA GOLDEN HURRICANES

### OFFENSE

Quarterback Braylon Braxton, a sophomore from Frisco, Texas (Independence HS) is a dynamic player who can make plays with his arm and legs. He is the leader of the offense and the most exciting player to watch. However, he does not have much support around him. The team has to replace its tackles on the offensive line and its receivers, who have little experience. The only other skill position player with some experience is transfer (Mizzou) running back Anthony Watkins, from Fort Worth, Texas (South Hills HS).

### DEFENSE

The defense struggled last season, as it ranked near the bottom of the nation in total defense. The defense also faces a major challenge this season, as it loses its top five players in terms of snaps and production. Tulsa will have to find some new leaders and playmakers on defense to improve its performance.

### SUMMARY

Tulsa faces a tough challenge this season, as it has to deal with a lot of changes and uncertainty. The team has a new coaching staff, led by head coach Kevin Wilson, who replaced Philip Montgomery after eight seasons. The team also has to replace many of its starters and key players on both sides of the ball, especially on defense. The team has a difficult schedule, which includes some of the top teams in the conference and some tough nonconference opponents. The Golden Hurricane could have a hard time competing this year and might struggle to win games.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	VS	UAPB GOLDEN LIONS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	WASHINGTON HUSKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	OKLAHOMA SOONERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	NORTHERN ILLINOIS
THURSDAY SEP. 28	VS	TEMPLE OWLS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	FLORIDA ATLANTIC OWLS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF	OFF
THURSDAY OCT. 19	VS	RICE OWLS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	SMU MUSTANGS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	CHARLOTTE 49ERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	TULANE GREEN WAVE
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	NORTH TEXAS MEAN GREEN
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	EAST CAROLINA PIRATES
SATURDAY DEC. 2		AAC FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP



AP Images



## UAB BLAZERS

### OFFENSE

The offense has a major overhaul, as it lost nine of its 11 starters from last year, including the entire offensive line. The team will have to rely on some new faces and backups to step up and fill the gaps. The team has some bright spots, such as running back Jermaine Brown Jr., who ran for 948 yards and eight touchdowns as a backup last year, and reliable receiver T.J. Jones. However, they will need some support from the rest of the offense, especially the quarterback, who will be relatively inexperienced. The team has a quarterback competition between three candidates, but none of them have much game experience.

### DEFENSE

The defense has a lot of turnover, as it lost 11 of its 16 players who played more than 300 snaps last year. The team will have to rebuild its defense with some young and unproven players. The defensive line returns last season's sack leader Drew Tuazama.

### SUMMARY

UAB faces a tough challenge this season, as it has to replace most of its starters and its coaching staff. The team hired Super Bowl winning quarterback Trent Dilfer as its new head coach, but he has no previous head coaching experience. The team will have to rely on some transfers and backups to fill the gaps, and it will also have to adjust to a new system and culture. UAB could struggle this season with an inexperienced roster and an inexperienced coaching staff.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	VS	NORTH CAROLINA A&T AGGIES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	GEORGIA SOUTHERN EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	LOUISIANA RAGIN' CAJUNS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	GEORGIA BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	TULANE GREEN WAVE
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	USF BULLS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	UTSA ROADRUNNERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	MEMPHIS TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	FLORIDA ATLANTIC OWLS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	NAVY MIDSHPMEN
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	TEMPLE OWLS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	NORTH TEXAS MEAN GREEN
SATURDAY DEC. 2		AAC FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP



UAB Athletics Media Relations





## UTSA ROADRUNNERS

### OFFENSE

UTSA has a potent offense, led by quarterback Frank Harris of Schertz, Texas (Clemens HS) who is back for his seventh year. He has some reliable targets in Joshua Cephas of Houston (Dekaney HS) and De'Corian Clark of Fort Worth (Wyatt HS), who are two of the best receivers in the conference. The team lost its leading receiver, Zakhari Franklin, to Ole Miss, but it has some depth at the position. The offensive line is also strong, with four players who earned at least honorable mention All C-USA honors returning. The running game features Kevorian Barnes of San Augustine, who ran for 845 yards and nine touchdowns last year. He will be the main starter this year and will try to build on his impressive performance.

### DEFENSE

The defense is led by a strong front seven, which returns all of its starters and should be able to pressure opposing quarterbacks consistently. Outside linebacker Trey Moore from San Antonio (Smithson Valley HS) is a standout pass rusher, who had 8 sacks and 18 tackles for loss last year. He is one of the best players in the conference, but he is not well-known nationally. The secondary also has some talent, with cornerback Nicktroy Fortune and safety Rashad Wisdom of Converse, Texas (Judson HS) coming back.

### SUMMARY

UTSA is a serious contender for the AAC title this year. The team has a lot of experience and talent, and it will try to make a splash in its debut season in the new conference. The team has won two consecutive conference championships in the C-USA, and it wants to keep the streak alive in the AAC. The team has most of its key players back, and it is ready to challenge the best teams in the league.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	HOUSTON COUGARS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	TEXAS STATE BOBCATS
FRIDAY SEP. 15	VS	ARMY BLACK KNIGHTS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	TEMPLE OWLS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	UAB BLAZERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	FLORIDA ATLANTIC OWLS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	EAST CAROLINA PIRATES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	NORTH TEXAS MEAN GREEN
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	RICE OWLS
FRIDAY NOV. 17	VS	USF BULLS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	TULANE GREEN WAVE
SATURDAY DEC. 2		AAC FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP



Conference USA/UTSA Athletics



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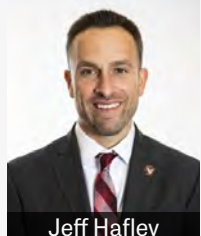
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## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



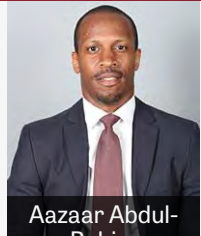
Jeff Hafley

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR

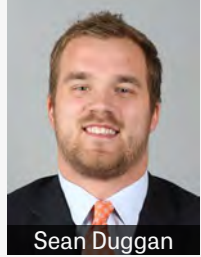


Steve Shimko

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Aazaar Abdul-Rahim



Sean Duggan

## BOSTON COLLEGE EAGLES

### OFFENSE

Boston College in 2022 could be summarized by one aspect: poor offensive line play. It didn't help that the offensive line was decimated with injuries last year, as well as having lost four of five starters from 2021. There was not much depth to begin with, but the injury bug still hit. Boston College last season had the second-worst rushing output among Power Five non-Mike Leach-coached teams in the last 15 years. Only one Power Five team gave up more sacks than Boston College last season. Only one other Power Five team gave up more tackles for a loss per game than Boston College. Put simply, the offensive line cannot get worse. It does return experience, as well as its best offensive lineman from 2021 in All-ACC guard Christian Mahogany. At least the depth will be better because of the revolving door here last season. A couple of transfers will also help improve the depth. Returning quarterback Emmett Morehead was decent last year despite the struggles with the offensive line and running game. Morehead had a 60% completion percentage, throwing for 10 touchdowns and six interceptions. He should return well prepared for his sophomore season.

BC loses its best receiver in Zay Flowers, whose production will be missed. Ryan O'Keefe from UCF is a great gain from the transfer portal. O'Keefe is expected to have a big year. There are other experienced options, but others will need to step up. Joseph Griffin Jr. has some upside and could be a breakthrough candidate after catching five touchdowns last season. Junior WR Jaden Williams from Pflugerville, Texas (Hendrickson HS) only stands 5-foot-9, but he still had 178 yards from scrimmage with three touchdowns. The running backs will only go as far as the offensive line will allow. The running game should improve simply because it can't get any worse. The Eagles do bring back their top two RBs in Patrick Garwo and Alex Broome.



Anthony Garro/BC Football

### DEFENSE

The starting group for the defensive line is pretty good, but the depth is a little bit questionable. BC returns defensive end Donovan Ezeiruaku, who had 8.5 sacks and 14.5 tackles for a loss that led the team last season. DE Neto Okpala should contribute to the pass rush as well. Linebacker Vinny DePaula, who led the Eagles in tackles last year, returns along with Kam Arnold, the second-leading returning tackler. Expect sophomore outside linebacker Jaylen Blackwell to make some noise after racking up 2.5 sacks last season, which was third on the team. The secondary will be a new-look position group, but the FCS transfers could help. At the very least, they are long here. Elijah Jones returns; he snagged two interceptions with 13 pass defenses.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Both kicking and punting duties are up for grabs. Sam Candotti saw some action last season as the punter. It's a battle of Connors for the place-kicking job. Connor Lytton and Liam Connor will battle for the starting job.

### SUMMARY

With what should be an improved offense in 2023, with an established quarterback, a more experienced offensive line and a manageable schedule, Boston College has a great chance of doubling its 2022 win total and getting to bowl eligibility. There is plenty of experience on this team for the Eagles to sneak up on some opponents this season.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		NORTHERN ILLINOIS HUSKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		HOLY CROSS CRUSADERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		LOUISVILLE CARDINALS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		VIRGINIA CAVALIERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		ARMY BLACK KNIGHTS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		UCONN HUSKIES
FRIDAY NOV. 3	AT		SYRACUSE ORANGE
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES
THURSDAY NOV. 16	AT		PITT PANTHERS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	VS		MIAMI HURRICANES
SATURDAY DEC. 2			ACC CHAMPIONSHIP

Brett Davis/USA TODAY Sports



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Dabo Swinney

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Garrett Riley

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mickey Conn



Wes Goodwin

## CLEMSON TIGERS

### OFFENSE

Former TCU offensive coordinator Garrett Riley will help to provide a spark for what has been a Clemson offense that has regressed the last couple of seasons.

The passing offense needs the most work (66th last season), but the running game is in good hands with Will Shipley and his 1,182 yards rushing and 15 touchdowns returning.

Former five-star quarterback from Austin, Texas (Westlake HS), sophomore Cade Klubnik should be better this season, but he has yet to live up to the hype after appearing in 10 games last season. Klubnik struggled under pressure as a true freshman. We'll see if Riley can help develop him.

Clemson returns four starters on its offensive line, which made improvements from 2021 (30th in average offensive line yards) to 2022 (12th). The left tackle position is the biggest question entering the season.

Clemson is experienced at the receiver position, but the guys here have struggled to create separation the last couple of seasons. They need someone to step up and be the go-to guy. Not a ton of explosiveness with this group. Antonio Williams returns after leading the Tigers in receiving yards as a freshman. Beaux Collins also returns; he was tied for the lead with five receiving touchdowns.



Jacob Kupferman/AP

### DEFENSE

Wow, the Clemson defensive line is not what it was four and five years ago, but they still have a lot of talent. Clemson is very experienced here and could make strides this season. Watch out for freshman Peter Woods. The depth at defensive end is not great. Defensive tackle Tyler Davis returns after 5.5 sacks and 9.5 tackles for a loss last season. The linebacking corps is one of the best in college football, with Barrett Carter and Jeremiah Trotter Jr., who were both in the top three in sacks and tackles for loss last year.

Clemson's secondary was not quite as good last year, as they were dealt a youth movement in the back end in 2022. Last year, the secondary struggled giving up big plays, but they began to play better as the season wore on. Clemson returns most of its defensive backs this season - look for them to improve. Safety RJ Mickens from Southlake, Texas (Carroll HS), returns after leading the team in interceptions a year ago.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Placekicker is a huge question, having to replace the most productive kicker in Clemson history in B.T. Potter. Shipley and receiver Antonio Williams will be the return men.

### SUMMARY

The offense should improve with Klubnik as the quarterback and with Garrett Riley as offensive coordinator, but the receivers need to take that next step. The defense was not elite last season (28th), but they should make strides with eight returning starters and a more seasoned secondary. The question for Clemson is: Are they a playoff-caliber team or "just an ACC Championship" caliber team? Our scouting department was high on QB Klubnik as a true freshman, but after his many "deer in the headlights" moments last year, we look forward to seeing improvements.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

MONDAY SEP. 4	AT		DUKE BLUE DEVILS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		CHARLESTON SOUTHERN BUCCANEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		FLORIDA ATLANTIC OWLS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		SYRACUSE ORANGE
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		MIAMI HURRICANES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		NC STATE WOLFPACK
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		NOTRE DAME FIGHTING IRISH
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			ACC CHAMPIONSHIP



## DUKE BLUE DEVILS

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Mike Elko

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kevin Johns

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tyler Santucci



Lyle Hemphill

### ■ OFFENSE

The Blue Devil offense improved to a great extent from 2021 to 2022 as it averaged 10 more points per game. Part of that improvement was because of quarterback Riley Leonard, who returns after throwing 20 touchdowns with only six interceptions while completing nearly 64% of his passes. The top three receivers, Jalon Calhoun, Jordan Moore and Sahmir Hagans, and the top two running backs, Jordan Waters and Jacquez Moore, return. The very skilled Leonard, who is also a more than capable runner, led the Blue Devils in rushing with 699 yards. The offensive line returns mostly intact with two fifth-year seniors in the interior and the best pro prospect of them all in Graham Barton at left tackle.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

Everyone returns in the kicking department. Porter Wilson is back at punter, and Todd Pelino, who was 8/9 (88.89%), is back kicking field goals. Sophomore receiver Sahmir Hagans will be the return man.

### ■ DEFENSE

Eight starters are back on defense for Duke. The strength is up front with three seniors: defensive tackles DeWayne Carter and Ja'Mion Franklin and defensive end RJ Oben. Also, nose tackle Brandon Johnson was tied for the lead in sacks with Carter at 5.5 sacks each. Losing linebacker Shaka Heyward does not help, but senior linebacker Cam Dillon is back to man the middle. The secondary brings back four of five starters and recorded 10 interceptions last season. Look for the Blue Devils to continue creating havoc on the back end. Safety Jaylen Stinson led the defensive backs and was third on the team with 44 solo tackles. Stinson also tied for the lead in interceptions with two. Cornerback Chandler Rivers from Beaumont, Texas (Beaumont United), was fourth on the team with 33 solo tackles and had two interceptions himself.



Sam Navarro/USA TODAY Sports

### SUMMARY

Duke's breakthrough 2022 nine-win season came out of nowhere. Most had projected the Blue Devils as a three- or four-win team. They more than doubled that. While Duke returns a lot of production (19th), it will be interesting to see if the team can repeat that same level of success with a much more difficult schedule. Duke played only four teams with a winning record last year (went 2-2 in those games). This year, the Blue Devils will play eight teams that finished with a winning record in 2022. We will see if Duke has the same level of success in Mike Elko's second season. At the very least, Elko has an experienced team with a quality dual-threat quarterback in Riley Leonard.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

MONDAY SEP. 4	VS		CLEMSON TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		LAFAYETTE LEOPARDS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		UCONN HUSKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		NOTRE DAME FIGHTING IRISH
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		NC STATE WOLFPACK
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		LOUISVILLE CARDINALS
THURSDAY NOV. 2	VS		WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		VIRGINIA CAVALIERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		PITT PANTHERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			ACC CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Mike Norvell

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Alex Atkins

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Adam Fuller

## FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES

### OFFENSE

Florida State returns a veteran-heavy offense and perhaps one of the nation's best receiving corps. The size and playmaking ability of this group stand out. Not to mention, one of our scouting department's top NFL quarterbacks in Jordan Travis. The 2022 second-team All-ACC quarterback and 2023 Heisman candidate Jordan Travis will be leading the offense again this season. Travis has improved greatly over the last few seasons. Florida State's top returning receivers are Johnny Wilson (6-foot-7, 235 pounds), Keon Coleman (6-foot-4, 210 pounds) and Kentron Poitier (6-foot-3, 210 pounds). Florida State also welcomes back Winston Wright Jr. from injury. In 2021, Wright had 63 receptions for nearly 670 yards and five touchdowns at West Virginia. South Carolina transfer TE/H-back Jaheim Bell is another player to watch out for. The Florida State offensive line has improved more than any other OL in the country. This season, Florida State has over 14,000 career snaps returning along with 207 career starts. That's the

most in college football history for an offensive line. The OL could be better in short-yardage situations (in power success rate, they ranked 55th and stuff rate, they ranked 69th). In the running back room, the Seminoles lose Treshaun Ward to Kansas State, but Florida State is still loaded. Junior starting RB Trey Benson returns after leading the team with 154 touches for 990 yards. RB Lawrance Toafili was third behind Ward with 93 carries for 457 yards and five touchdowns. The Seminole offense should not lose any sleep, especially running behind this offensive line.



### DEFENSE

Florida State returns a veteran bunch on defense as well. All-ACC defensive end Jared Verse and starting defensive tackle Fabian Lovett are joined by Western Michigan defensive tackle transfer Braden Fiske. Fiske is legit and will probably start at one of the interior defensive line spots for the Seminoles. Florida State also added other transfers to bulk up its defensive front. Starting defensive end opposite Verse is ACC defensive rookie of the year Patrick Payton, who finished second to Verse's nine sacks last season with five. The linebacker corps returns two seniors in Tatum Bethune and Kaylen DeLoach, Florida State's second- and third-leading tacklers last season. Bethune and DeLoach were also second and third behind Verse in tackles for a loss. The 'Noles are in good shape with both of these anchors behind the D-line. The secondary returns four of five starters and adds All-ACC cornerback Fentrell Cypress from Virginia. His name says it all: Greedy Vance and his team-leading three interceptions also return. Renardo Green with his 42 solo tackles and five pass deflections will also be back.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Both punter Alex Mastromanno and placekicker Ryan Fitzgerald return. Fitzgerald was 12/20 (60%) on field goals last season and will need to improve on that number. RB Trey Benson returned five kicks last season, and one was for a touchdown.

### SUMMARY

This is the year for Florida State. This is its window of opportunity. The Seminoles are fourth in total returning production and have a veteran-heavy team with tons of quality players that will be selected in next year's NFL draft. This is, without a doubt, Florida State's best team since 2014. It is no surprise, but our scouting department loves QB Jordan Travis and DE Jared Verse, who are set to lead each side of the ball.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SUNDAY SEP. 3	VS	LSU	LSU TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		SOUTHERN MISS GOLDEN EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		BOSTON COLLEGE EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		CLEMSON TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	VT	VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	S	SYRACUSE ORANGE
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	D	DUKE BLUE DEVILS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	WF	WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	Pitt	PITT PANTHERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	U	MIAMI (FL) HURRICANES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		NORTH ALABAMA LIONS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		FLORIDA GATORS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		ACC	ACC CHAMPIONSHIP



## GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Brent Key

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Buster Faulkner

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Andrew Thacker

### ■ OFFENSE

Georgia Tech has plenty to replace on the offensive side of the ball. Quarterback transfer from Texas A&M Haynes King from Longview, Texas (Longview High School), is now on the roster. Freshman Zach Pyron will back him up. The wide receiver corps starts from scratch. Alabama transfer Christian Leary headlines the WRs, but even he had only one reception last season. The offensive line returns mostly intact with four starters, but they need to improve as they finished 100th in the country last season in offensive line yards. Running backs have a little more experience than the receivers, with Donte Smith returning for another season and Trey Cooley transferring in from Louisville.

### ■ DEFENSE

For the defensive front, the pass rush is a question mark, but most of the defensive tackles are back. The interior of the defensive line returns both starting tackles, but they need to be better against the run as Georgia Tech finished last against the run in the ACC last year. Both starting linebackers from last season are gone. In response to this, Georgia Tech brings in two senior transfers: Braelen Oliver from Minnesota and Andre White from Texas A&M. The secondary returns three starters, with the strength at safety with LaMiles Brooks leading the way with his three interceptions from last season.



Brett Davis/USA TODAY Sports



Georgia Tech Athletics

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

Georgia Tech has one of the best punters and placekickers in the ACC. Gavin Stewart made 12 of 13 field goals (92.3%), and David Shanahan is among the ACC's best punters.

#### SUMMARY

Brent Key does not have a ton to work with in his first full season in Atlanta. With a brand-new receiving corps and a quarterback in Haynes King, who has not lived up to his four-star recruiting ranking, the offense could take some time to mesh well together, especially with all the transfers. While the defense returns a little more experience, they are coming off a season in which they ranked 85th in total defense.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

FRIDAY SEP. 1	VS		LOUISVILLE CARDINALS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		SC STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		OLE MISS REBELS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		BOWLING GREEN FALCONS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		MIAMI HURRICANES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		BOSTON COLLEGE EAGLES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		VIRGINIA CAVALIERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		CLEMSON TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		SYRACUSE ORANGE
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		GEORGIA BULLDOGS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			ACC CHAMPIONSHIP



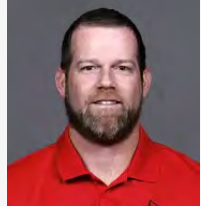
## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



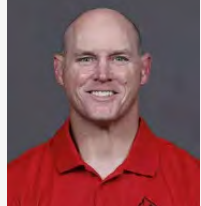
Jeff Brohm

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brian Brohm

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mark Hagen



Ron English

## LOUISVILLE CARDINAL

### OFFENSE

Louisville will be relying on transfer quarterback Jack Plummer from California. Plummer is experienced and knows Jeff Brohm's system, having played for Brohm at Purdue for his first four years of college. However, there is not much depth behind him.

A starter that will be returning is running back Jawhar Jordan, who toted the rock 142 times for 815 yards and four touchdowns.

The receiver position lost a great deal to the transfer portal, but they also gained some. Jamari Thrash, the Sun Belt leading receiver last season, could be their best receiver. They will need many of these transfers to mesh quickly, with only one returning pass catcher from last year's group.

Same goes for the offensive line, as they brought in five OL from the transfer portal. The Cardinals have a good starting five, with a mix of transfers and returning starters.

### DEFENSE

Last season, Louisville's defense was very good at pressuring the opposing quarterback. However, the defensive line and linebackers lose a ton of production. It'll be a revamped defensive line, outside of Ashton Gillotte (seven sacks in 2022). Defensive line is the biggest question on the team, after losing a couple of the Cardinals' top sack getters.

Linebacker Keith Brown (transfer from Oregon) is a good pickup. The rest of the linebacker corps is relatively inexperienced.

The back end of the defense returns mostly everyone. They also brought in six transfers to help the depth of the secondary. The secondary will likely be the strength for the defense early on, given the inexperience of the front six. Marcus Washington, a transfer from Georgia, could be an immediate playmaker. The starters are in place, but the depth is questionable - this is why they brought in transfers to try to add depth. The Cardinals will bring back ball hawks Quincy Riley, who led the team in interceptions, and Jarvis Brownlee, who had 12 pass defenses.



Scott Utterback/Courier Journal

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Brock Travelstead will be the new punter, replacing the departed Mark Vassett. James Turner is a reliable kicker who was 20 of 22 (90.9%) on field goals last year.



James Dawson/AP

### SUMMARY

Louisville is one of the more intriguing teams in the ACC for 2023. A new-look team with a ton of transfers and a first-year coach in Jeff Brohm, who will be coaching his alma mater in his hometown, could make things unpredictable. What is known about the Cardinals this season is their schedule, which is one of the most manageable power five schedules in the country, with only three true road games and ranks 115th in strength of schedules (out of 133 teams) using the win/loss method. Not a terrible way for Brohm to get nestled back into Louisville, Kentucky.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

FRIDAY SEP. 1	AT		GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS
THURSDAY SEP. 7	VS		MURRAY STATE RACERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		INDIANA HOOSIERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		BOSTON COLLEGE EAGLES
FRIDAY SEP. 29	AT		NC STATE WOLFPACK
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		NOTRE DAME FIGHTING IRISH
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		PITT PANTHERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		DUKE BLUE DEVILS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES
THURSDAY NOV. 9	VS		VIRGINIA CAVALIERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		MIAMI HURRICANES
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		KENTUCKY WILDCATS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			ACC CHAMPIONSHIP



## MIAMI HURRICANES

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Mario Cristobal

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Shannon Dawson

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Lance Guidry

### OFFENSE

Tylor Van Dyke returns at quarterback, and he should have help in front of him with a much improved offensive line. Jalen Rivers and Zion Nelson return up front, and Miami added Javeon Cohen (from Alabama) and Matt Lee (from UCF) from the transfer portal, who both have tons of quality starting experience. True freshman and 2023 top-rated offensive tackle Francis Mauigoa looks to make an immediate impact this season. The depth still needs to be established, but Miami certainly has some quality pieces in hopes to improve its offensive line. The wide receiver group lacks a true go-to guy, but at least Miami has experience returning with its top three receivers from last season. The Hurricanes will be without last season's leading WR Will Mallory. They do return

Colbie Young, who had 32 receptions for 367 yards and five touchdowns, and Brashard Smith, who had 33 receptions for 308 yards. The Hurricanes will miss Mallory's 12.8 yards per reception. Running back Henry Parrish Jr. returns and should have a better offensive line to run behind to improve on his 616 yards and four touchdowns from last season. Depth is a question mark for this Hurricanes backfield.



### DEFENSE

The Miami defense has many unknowns but a few potential All-Americans. The safety duo of Kamren Kinchens and James Williams are one of the best in the country, who led last year's defense in tackles. The defensive end tandem of Akheem Mesidor and Jahfari Harvey combined for 12.5 sacks last season. Leonard Taylor III and Purdue transfer Branson Deen should provide experience at defensive tackle. However, there are depth questions surrounding the defense at every level. Miami will be breaking in two new cornerbacks who will be expected to keep up with Kinchens and Williams. The Hurricanes lost three of their top five tacklers from the linebacker position as well. They do bring back Corey Flagg Jr. from Houston, Texas (North Shore HS), who had 34 solo tackles, 10.5 tackles for a loss and 2.5 sacks. Flagg will need to carry the LB group this season.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Kicker Andres Borregales, who was 17/20 (85%), returns, and Miami will have a new punter in town with Australian freshman Dylan Joyce.



### SUMMARY

Mario Cristobal can recruit, and Miami has recruited well for a very long time. We have not seen the Hurricanes put it all together consistently on the field, as their last conference championship was in 2003. The talent is there, and last season they fell flat after losing on the road to Texas A&M. Now let's see if they live up to their capabilities.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

FRIDAY SEP. 1	VS		MIAMI (OHIO) REDHAWKS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		TEXAS A&M AGGIES
THURSDAY SEP. 14	VS		BETHUNE-COOKMAN WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		TEMPLE OWLS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		CLEMSON TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		VIRGINIA CAVALIERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		NC STATE WOLFPACK
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		LOUISVILLE CARDINALS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	AT		BOSTON COLLEGE EAGLES
SATURDAY DEC. 2			ACC CHAMPIONSHIP





## NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS

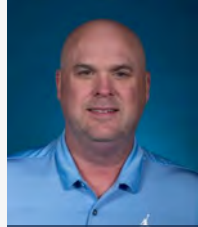
### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Mack Brown

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Chip Lindsey

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tommy Thigpen



Charlton Warren

### ■ OFFENSE

2022 ACC Player of the Year Drake Maye returns as one of the country's best quarterbacks. He finished second in total offense per game and first in EPA (expected points added).

North Carolina loses its top two receivers from last season, but the Tar Heels added transfers Nate McCollum (Georgia Tech's leading receiver) and Tez Walker from Kent State. Walker could be one of this year's biggest breakthrough receivers. Top returning WR J.J. Jones had 24 receptions for 434 yards and four touchdowns. North Carolina also has three tight ends who combined for more than 1,000 yards receiving last season. The offensive line returns four players with starting experience, and all four are entering at least their fifth season of college football. The big men up front will be well prepared to protect top NFL prospect QB Drake Maye this year. The running back room is the deepest on the team and returns its top two rushers from last season, Elijah Green and Omarion Hampton, who ran for a combined 14 touchdowns. QB Drake Maye led the Tar Heels in rushing last season with 698 yards and seven TDs.

### ■ DEFENSE

The Tar Heels return some talent on the defensive front, but they have yet to live up to expectations. Last season, UNC ranked 128th in sacks and 129th in tackles for loss (out of 131 FBS teams). The Tar Heels have said they will blitz more this season to try to create havoc on opposing offenses. We will see if this is true.

Linebackers Cedric Gray and Power Echols, who both had more than 100 total tackles, are the stars of the defense.

The back end of the defense is very questionable, as the entire secondary will be relying on transfers and newcomers. DeAndre Boykins does return with his one interception and seven pass deflections.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

The battle for starting kicker will be between Ryan Coe and Noah Burnette. The punter will be Ben Kiernan, who led the ACC in yards per punt (46.8).

### SUMMARY

If North Carolina's defense can live up to its potential, watch out. North Carolina brought in 12 blue chip front seven players from 2020 to 2022. Some are gone, and most have not been developed. They were outside the top 120 in line yards last season. They are saying they'll be more aggressive this season. Apparently, it's been the "most physical" spring in the Mack Brown era thus far. The Tar Heels have yet to make strides on the defensive side of the ball. Something else to watch for: North Carolina's offense was not as great late in the season as it was in the first several

games. In the final six games, teams blitzed 36% of the time compared to just 30% in the first eight games. UNC went from averaging more than 40 points in their first eight games to a shade over 24 in the final six games. The Tar Heels also played many coin flip games last season (6-3 in one-score games last year). North Carolina is a high variance team entering this season, who lost the last four games of the season, including its bowl game. Although, having Drake Maye can help a team win almost any game will he be enough?



## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		APPALACHIAN STATE MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		PITT PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		SYRACUSE ORANGE
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		MIAMI HURRICANES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		VIRGINIA CAVALIERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		CAMPBELL CAMELS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		DUKE BLUE DEVILS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		CLEMSON TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		NC STATE WOLFPACK
SATURDAY DEC. 2			ACC CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



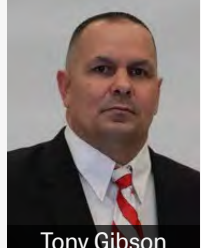
Dave Doeren

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Robert Anae

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tony Gibson

## NORTH CAROLINA STATE WOLFPACK

### OFFENSE

New offensive coordinator Robert Anae, from Syracuse, will try to improve an offense that ranked 104th in Bill Connelly's SP+ offensive ratings. The last few years, North Carolina State has struggled to run the football, so it will need improvement here. Last year's top rusher, Jordan Houston, did not have a rushing touchdown but averaged 4 yards per carry. Brennan Armstrong, a transfer from Virginia, will likely be the starting quarterback. Armstrong will have to improve on his numbers from last year and play better than he did in North Carolina State's spring game. Our scouting department was high on MJ Morris as a true freshman QB last season. Don't be surprised if he is the eventual starter sooner rather than later. The receiving corps this season will be young.

Most of the guys who stepped up in the spring game were freshmen. Most of the receivers they will be counting on this season will be underclassmen. Keyon Lesane brings veteran leadership to an otherwise young group. The Wolfpack lose their top three graded offensive linemen but return a few with starting experience.



### DEFENSE

The Wolfpack were great on defense last season, but they lose some really good players at each level. The linebackers and safeties are the biggest questions. On the defensive line, NC State loses a couple of studs. CJ Clark could have a breakthrough season at defensive tackle. NC State usually does a good job of developing interior defensive linemen. The projected DEs have some experience.

At linebacker, NC State loses a couple of its best and two of the most productive linebackers in North Carolina State history. Peyton Wilson returns, but he'll be coming off an injury, so we'll see if he's fully healthy. Middle linebacker is a large unknown, and North Carolina State always relies on good linebacker play. The linebacking corps is a group with new blood, so we'll see how they perform this season.

Three of the top five based on snap count are gone, and the safeties will be very inexperienced. The starting corners, however, are really good, but the depth behind the starting corners is rather questionable. Aydan White returns; he had four interceptions and nine pass defenses last season.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

The Wolfpack landed Western Kentucky transfer kicker Brayden Narveson. Narveson was 15 of 21 (71%) on field goals last season. Punter Caden Noonkester (43 yards per punt) returns.

## SUMMARY

The Wolfpack missed out on a window of opportunity in 2022. The defense was great, but the offense struggled. The midseason injury to QB Devin Leary did not help. Now, with the defense having to replace a load of production (107th in defensive returning production), a young offense will have to make strides. The addition of OC Robert Anae and the possibility of QB MJ Morris taking over the starting job should not go overlooked. Perhaps a younger NC State team with lower expectations will have less pressure and play the role of the "hunter."



## 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	AT		UCONN HUSKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		NOTRE DAME FIGHTING IRISH
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		VMI KEYDETS
FRIDAY SEP. 22	AT		VIRGINIA CAVALIERS
FRIDAY SEP. 29	VS		LOUISVILLE CARDINALS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		MARSHALL THUNDERING HERD
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		DUKE BLUE DEVILS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		CLEMSON TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		MIAMI HURRICANES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			ACC CHAMPIONSHIP



## PITTSBURGH PANTHERS

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Pat Narduzzi

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Frank Cignetti Jr.

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Randy Bates

### ■ OFFENSE

Phil Jurkovec transfers in from Boston College and will be the starting quarterback. Jurkovec has plenty of experience and good upside. He will be an upgrade from Kedon Slovis and Nick Patti.

Rodney Hammond returns after earning Sun Bowl MVP honors. Hammond ran for 460 yards and five touchdowns, averaging 4.2 yards per game last season.

At receiver, Pittsburgh returns Konata Mumpfield and Bub Means. They'll need others to step up after losing WR Jared Wayne and his more than 1,000 receiving yards. Watch for Florida transfer Daejon Reynolds. Reynolds averaged more than 22 yards per catch last season in Gainesville. He only had 11 receptions last season, so look for that to increase with Jurkovec at QB this year. The offensive line returns three starters and a combined 84 starts.



Pittsburgh Panthers

### ■ DEFENSE

The Pittsburgh defense has had an NCAA-best 199 sacks since 2019. The Panthers will have a new-look defensive line this year, led by defensive tackle David Green, who had 3.5 sacks last season. Pittsburgh normally reloads up front, but there are more questions than usual for this group after losing its top three sack leaders from last season. Seniors Bangally Kamara and Shayne Simon return at linebacker. They combined for 95 tackles, including nine tackles for loss, last season. The strength of the secondary this season is at cornerback. Safety is a little bit more of a question, but the secondary returns Marlin "MJ" Devonshire, who had three interceptions and three defensive touchdowns last season, along with Marquis Williams, who had two interceptions and two touchdowns.

### SUMMARY

Jurkovec should be an upgrade at quarterback from Kedon Slovis. The starting receivers have experience, but the backups need to be sorted out. The running game is usually strong, and the same is expected this fall, though there will be some new faces at running back. Pittsburgh always develops good running backs. Speaking of developing, the Panther defensive line will need a lot of it, as almost every major contributor from last year's defensive front has moved on. Pat Narduzzi always has an aggressive and effective defensive line. Pittsburgh has the second-most wins of all ACC teams since 2021 (Clemson being first).

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

Placekicker Ben Sauls went 20 of 24 (83.3%) on field goals and returns. Pittsburgh ranked 13th in the ACC in punting. Look for Caleb Junko to win the punting job.



Lucy Schaly/Post Gazette

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		WOFFORD TERRIERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		CINCINNATI BEARCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		LOUISVILLE CARDINALS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		NOTRE DAME FIGHTING IRISH
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		SYRACUSE ORANGE
THURSDAY NOV. 16	VS		BOSTON COLLEGE EAGLES
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		DUKE BLUE DEVILS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			ACC CHAMPIONSHIP

# S

## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Dino Babers

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jason Beck

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Rocky Long

## SYRACUSE ORANGE

### OFFENSE

Garrett Shrader returns at quarterback. Last season, Schrader had a career-high 64.7% completion percentage to go along with his 17 touchdowns, leading the Orange Men to a winning record. Syracuse loses Sean Tucker, the program's third all-time leading rusher. Not bad for a university with legends such as Jim Brown, Ernie Davis and Larry Csonka, and Tucker is ahead of all three. LeQuint Allen will have an expanded role this year after averaging 6.7 yards per carry last season on only 41 attempts (Tucker had 206). QB Shrader has a rushing element, as he was second on the team in rushing with 444 yards and nine touchdowns. Syracuse returns three of its top five wide receivers from last season. Oronde Gadsden II (6 feet 5 inches, 215 pounds) returns as QB Scrader's favorite target, grabbing 61 balls for 969 yards and six touchdowns. His numbers were almost double the next receiver's production. The offensive line will have three new starters. Both starting tackles and the center needed to be replaced.

### DEFENSE

The defensive line returns intact, however, they need to improve after ranking 110th in defensive line yards, 123rd in opportunity rate and 122nd in stuff rate. Senior Caleb Okechukwu returns with his team-leading seven sacks, 10 tackles for loss and two forced fumbles.

While the linebackers lose their second-leading tackler, the others return. The secondary loses three starters. The safeties are active and all return, but how the cornerback room shakes out will be the question. No defensive back returns with more than one interception.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Placekicker is a question, as Syracuse must replace 2018 Lou Groza Award-winning placekicker Andre Szmyt. Punter will likely be Missouri transfer Jack Stonehouse. Receiver Trebor Pena is a great return man who averaged 27 yards per return.

### SUMMARY

While Syracuse loses quality in the likes of Sean Tucker, Darian Chestnut, Ja'Had Carter, Mikel Jones and Garrett Williams, the Orange still rank in the top 15 in returning production. Syracuse will need new playmakers to step up on defense and for pass catchers to emerge around Oronde Gadsden II. Garrett Shrader will be asked to carry the offense as the leading returning passer and rusher.



David Butler II/USA TODAY Sports

Scott Schild/Syracuse.com

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		COLGATE RAIDERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		WESTERN MICHIGAN BRONCOS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		PURDUE BOILERMAKERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		ARMY BLACK KNIGHTS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		CLEMSON TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
THURSDAY OCT. 26	AT		VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES
FRIDAY NOV. 3	VS		BOSTON COLLEGE EAGLES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		PITT PANTHERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			ACC CHAMPIONSHIP



## VIRGINIA CAVALIERS

### OFFENSE

The Cavalier offense last season finished 120th in offensive efficiency (adjusted for opponent).

Tony Muskett transfers in from Monmouth and will more than likely be the starting quarterback. Muskett was a two-time first-team all-Big South selection. Muskett is looking to be the “point guard” for the Virginia offense this fall.

The offensive line was one of the worst in the Power Five last season, as well as one of the worst in the country among all teams. They lose their top three here, but statistically speaking, it has much more room to grow for improvement rather than regression. Virginia will be relying on plenty of transfers here, and most of those transfers will not arrive until late in the summer. They will need some time to gel together here.

The receiving corps will also be a mystery for the Virginia offense. The Cavaliers lose their top five pass catchers from last year. It will be a young and inexperienced group overall.

Northwestern’s leading receiver Malik Washington will likely be the go-to guy early and maybe often. We’ll see who else steps up.

At least the Virginia running back room is deep and experienced. With the questions at receiver, the running backs will probably be used in the passing game. RB Mike Hollins had eight receptions for 114 yards, averaging 14.3 yards per reception last season. Fifth-year senior Perris Jones will also return.

### DEFENSE

The defensive line is the most experienced position group on the Virginia roster. They are very deep here as well. They are good at rushing the passer (11th in sack rate) but need to improve on standard downs (124th in standard downs line yards). Defensive end Chico Bennett Jr. returns after racking up seven sacks and 7.5 tackles for a loss last season.

Virginia lost its leading tackler and last year’s defensive leader in linebacker Nick Jackson. The linebacker room has a bit to figure out.

In the back end of the defense, the cornerbacks are unknown and the safeties are experienced. Virginia has some guys from the portal to try to address the new cornerback room. The Virginia defense only had five interceptions last season.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

They struggled here last season and have the same punter and placekicker.

### SUMMARY

Virginia’s offense could struggle this season. It will be an even more difficult job in Tony Elliott’s second season, by the looks of things. The defense has some veteran leadership and will be counted on. The nonconference schedule does not provide many sure wins, with Tennessee, James Madison and a road game against Maryland in the first three weeks. The season outlook may depend on transfer QB Tony Muskett and his new offense that ranked toward the very bottom of the country last season.

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Tony Elliott

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Des Kitchings

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



John Rudzinski



## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	T	TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	JM	JAMES MADISON DUKES
FRIDAY SEP. 15	AT	M	MARYLAND TERRAPINS
FRIDAY SEP. 22	VS	W	NC STATE WOLFPACK
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	BC	BOSTON COLLEGE EAGLES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	W&M	WILLIAM & MARY TRIBE
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	NC	NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	U	MIAMI HURRICANES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	GT	GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS
THURSDAY NOV. 9	AT	L	LOUISVILLE CARDINALS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	D	DUKE BLUE DEVILS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	VT	VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES
SATURDAY DEC. 2		ACC	ACC CHAMPIONSHIP



## VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES

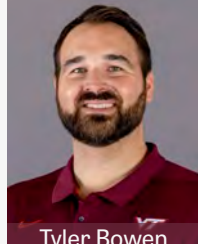
### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Brent Pry

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tyler Bowen

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



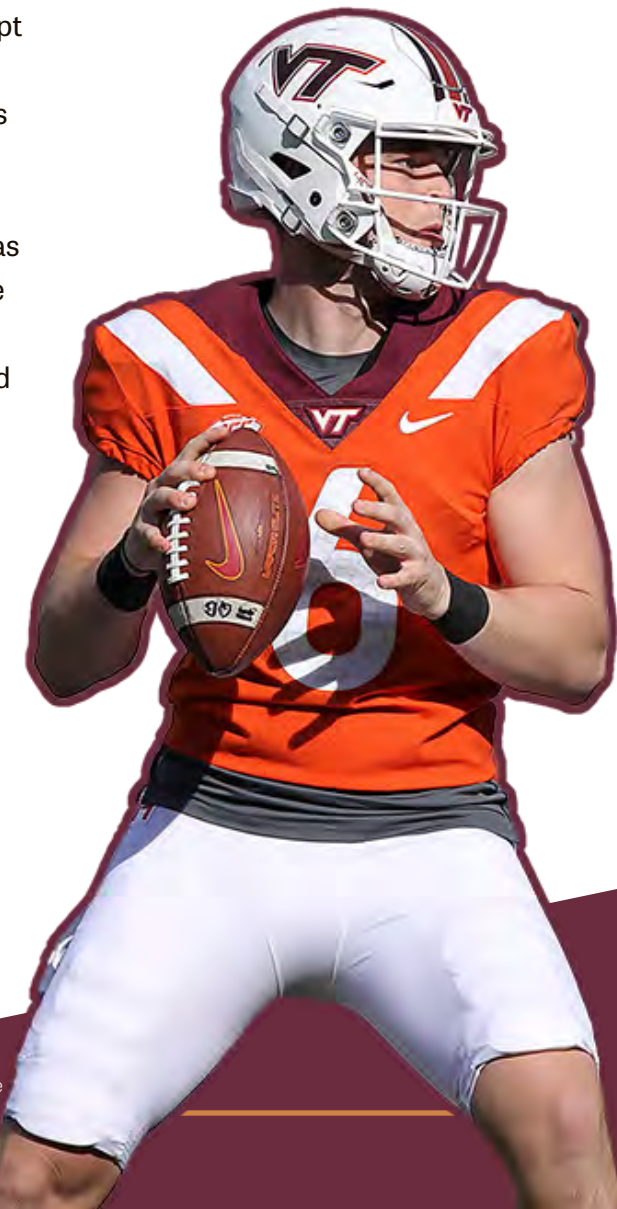
Chris Marve

### ■ OFFENSE

Last season, the Virginia Tech offense struggled; it finished 125th in Bill Connolly's offensive power ratings. Virginia Tech had a 36% success rate throwing the football, which needs to be improved upon this season. The two quarterbacks vying for the starting job are returning quarterback Grant Wells and Baylor transfer from Pearland, Texas (Shadow Creek HS), Kyrone Drones. There has been talk this offseason that Virginia Tech will attempt to run the quarterback more this coming season. Both Wells and Drones are effective runners. However, the passing game still remains a question. Wells needs to improve, and Drones has only attempted 23 passes in his college career thus far. The Hokie receivers last year struggled to create separation, but Virginia Tech did well in the transfer portal at the receiver position. VaTech picked up Ali Jennings from Old Dominion and Jaylin Lane from Middle Tennessee State. However, the rest of the receiving corps is still questionable, but at least they will have those two to

work with early on.

One of the biggest questions for Virginia Tech this year is its offensive line. Both the left tackle and center need to be replaced. Virginia Tech could be starting a redshirt freshman at both left guard and left tackle. There is also a huge question at the right guard position. The depth here is very questionable, so an injury or two and they could be in trouble.



Jon Fleming/TECH Sideline

### ■ DEFENSE

The interior of the defensive line needs to improve against the run. Virginia Tech will have two sixth-year defensive tackles who need to step up their game for their final years of eligibility. The pass rushers on the outside remain unknowns.

If it is not defensive end, middle linebacker is the biggest question mark for Virginia Tech's defense. The outside linebackers are experienced, at least. Virginia Tech feels good about its corners, while the safeties are a bit more of a question. Georgia Southern transfer Derrick Canteen is a good pickup for the nickel spot. They also return Nasir Peoples, who is the leading tackler returning.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

Everyone is back, but both the kicking and punting game need improvements. Kicker William Ross only attempted 10 field goals but made eight of them (80%).



Rob Kinnan/USA TODAY Sports

### SUMMARY

It was not too long ago that Virginia Tech had hopes of playing in ACC Championship games. That seems out of reach for the near future. Virginia Tech should be patient with head coach Brent Pry, as the recruiting is harder than it used to be for the Hokies and the talent is not where it used to be. Getting to a bowl game should be the goal. In order for the Hokies to make the postseason, the offense will need a significant improvement and the front seven on defense must get sorted out.

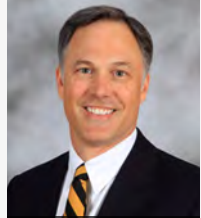
### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		OLD DOMINION MONARCHS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		PURDUE BOILERMAKERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		MARSHALL THUNDERING HERD
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		PITT PANTHERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
THURSDAY OCT. 26	VS		SYRACUSE ORANGE
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		LOUISVILLE CARDINALS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		BOSTON COLLEGE EAGLES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		NC STATE WOLFPACK
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		VIRGINIA CAVALIERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			ACC CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Dave Clawson

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Warren Ruggiero

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brad Lambert

## WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS

### ■ OFFENSE

The Demon Deacons lose quarterback Sam Hartman to Notre Dame after throwing for 3,700 yards and 38 touchdowns last season. QB Mitch Griffis, who threw for 348 yards with five touchdowns and only one interception last season, returns. Much more will be asked of Griffis this season.

If not quarterback, the offensive line is the biggest question for the Wake Forest offense. There's not much depth, and only two starters return.

Justice Ellison leads the running back room, due to the rest of the running backs being inexperienced.

The wide receivers are the Demon Deacons' strength, with four of the top five receivers back from last year. All four averaged more than 12 yards per catch with multiple touchdowns.

Donavon Greene, Jahmal Banks and Taylor Morin lead this strong group, which should help the new man under center.



Walt Unks photos/Journal

### ■ DEFENSE

The defensive line for Wake Forest is one of the biggest questions on their team. The whole position group will be relatively new. The sack leaders from last year are now gone

Safety and linebacker have some experience, but corners are inexperienced and the depth is questionable at corner. The Demon Deacons only had a total of seven interceptions last season.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

Matthew Dennis returns at kicker. He was 12 of 14 (85.7%), but his range hasn't been tested. Punter Ivan Mora returns.

### SUMMARY

Per usual, the Wake Forest offense will be the strength of the team. It remains to be seen, though, if the offense will be at the same level without Sam Hartman. Both lines of scrimmage have many new faces and there will be questions entering the season. The receiving corps is one of the best in the ACC. The season may depend on the sophomore QB Mitch Griffis' shoulders, but the offensive and defensive lines will need to hold their own as well.



Rob Kinnan/USA TODAY Sports

## 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	VS	ELON PHOENIX
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	VANDERBILT COMMODORES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	OLD DOMINION MONARCHS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	CLEMSON TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	PITT PANTHERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES
THURSDAY NOV. 2	AT	DUKE BLUE DEVILS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	NC STATE WOLFPACK
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	NOTRE DAME FIGHTING IRISH
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	SYRACUSE ORANGE
SATURDAY DEC. 2		ACC CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



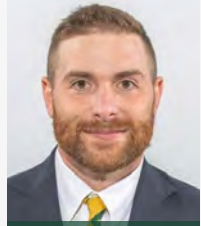
Dave Aranda

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jeff Grimes

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Matt Powledge

## BAYLOR BEARS

### OFFENSE

Blake Shapen is back and had a good season last year, but needs to take that next step. He should have an improved receiving corps with big-play threats in Monaray Baldwin from Killeen, Texas (Shoemaker HS), and Arkansas transfer Ketron Jackson Jr. from Royse City, Texas.

If Shapen and the passing game do not improve, it could be because of a revamped offensive line. Baylor lost its top four by snap count, and those four had either some form of All-Conference or All-American honors.

Richard Reese from Bellville, Texas (Bellville HS), returns at running back after a productive first year as a starter, rushing for just under 1,000 yards with 14 touchdowns. Qualan Jones from Grand Prairie, Texas (Trinity Christian), who rushed for 462 yards and seven touchdowns, returns.

BYU transfer center Clark Barrington and left tackle Campbell Barrington will slide right into the starting five with lone returnee left guard Gavin Byers from Grapevine, Texas (Colleyville Heritage HS). The right side of the offensive line has a ton of upside but does not have the proven production. Right guard Tate

Williams from Wall, Texas (Wall HS), is a guy the coaches really like, while senior right tackle Elijah Ellis from Paris, Texas (Paris HS), has yet to play up to his full potential. It will probably be a drop-off from last year's bunch due to the amount of youth and new pieces in the three deep. The starting five will need to stay healthy as there is not much experience in the offensive line room.



Jerome Miron/USA Today Sports

### DEFENSE

Baylor was dead last in the nation in blitz rate last season. The biggest question upfront is the interior of the defensive line. There is not a lot of size, and there could be concerns inside. The ends return in TJ Franklin from Temple, Texas (Temple HS), and Gabe Hall from Waller, Texas (Waller HS). Again, the pass rush needs to improve.

In the secondary, Baylor loses five of the seven DBs that played 350 or more snaps. Baylor did not have the speed in the back end of the defense that it had in 2021. The safeties should be more athletic this season with Devyn Bobby from Desoto, Texas, and Devin Lemear from Manor, Texas. Bryson Jackson from Mansfield, Texas (Lake Ridge HS), will play the star role and has the ability to rush the passer and play in the box. The corners in Miami transfer Isaiah Dunson and Tevin Williams III have upside but are very inexperienced.

### SUMMARY

A school-record eight home games could help what was a team last season that was better than its record indicated (2-3) in one-score games but had other competitive losses. Essentially, every odd year of the last decade, Baylor breaks through. Baylor has won double-digit games in five of the last six odd-year seasons. We will see if this trend continues into this season with questions at the offensive line and at nearly every level of the defense. There are definitely other Big 12 teams in worse shape than the Baylor Bears.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Isaiah Hankins returns at place kicker and the No. 3-ranked punting prospect in the country, freshman Palmer Williams, takes over the punting duties.



Carter Pirtle

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		TEXAS STATE BOBCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		UTAH UTES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		LIU SHARKS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		TEXAS LONGHORNS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		UCF KNIGHTS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		CINCINNATI BEARCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		IOWA STATE CYCLONES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		HOUSTON COUGARS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		KANSAS STATE WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		TCU HORNED FROGS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP





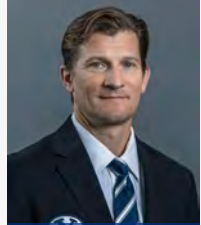
## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Kalani Sitake

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Aaron Roderick

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jay Hill

## BYU COUGARS

### OFFENSE

Pittsburgh transfer and former USC Trojan Kedon Slovis will be the starting quarterback, and the coaching staff likes what they have seen from Slovis thus far. In the receiver room, there is not a ton of proven depth behind the starters. Kody Epps, Keanu Hill from Bedford, Texas (Trinity HS), Chase Roberts and Eastern Michigan transfer Darius Lassiter will be stepping up at wideout. While these four are proven entities, there are no elite receivers here. Behind these guys, it's just about all freshmen. Standing 6-foot-5, Jojo Phillips is a freshman to watch for this season. On the offensive line, BYU took five transfers, but that was mostly because they wanted to get better depth. It was not because they felt nervous about the offensive line starting talent. The coaching staff likes the offensive line led by their star left tackle in Kingsley Suamataia. The Cougars lost some star players to the portal here, so the ceiling is not as high for the offensive line, but the floor isn't alarmingly low because of the depth. UNLV transfer running back Aidan Robbins is one of the most overlooked transfers in the country. Robbins should be productive in this offense immediately. Behind Robbins, there's not much experience.

### DEFENSE

Last season they were a bend-don't-break defense, but they ended up breaking (94th in total defense). On the defensive front, there are questions with a lot of walk-ons here. Boise State transfer Isaiah Bagnah will play at one of the end spots. The problem is Bagnah has struggled to stay healthy during his career. Because of the lack of high-end talent, transfers including Bagnah will likely start right away. Jackson Cravens is another transfer that'll play a lot up front. The talent is not where it needs to be overall from a depth standpoint. At linebacker, Max Tooley and Ben Bywater return and AJ Vongphachanh transfers in from Utah State and will probably start right away as he compiled over 220 tackles and 88 solo tackles at Utah State. In the secondary, the safeties return but the corners are new. The linebackers led the team in interceptions last season.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Place kicker is a huge question mark but punter is set with Ryan Rehkow.

### SUMMARY

The defense has a lot of questions and may not have the level of talent to compete at a high level in their first season in the Big 12. The offense has some good veteran leaders but maybe not elite talent. BYU is in an adjustment year. Getting to a bowl game would be a successful season.



Godofredo A. Vásquez/AP Photo



Scott G Winterton/Deseret News

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		SAM HOUSTON BEARKATS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		SOUTHERN UTAH THUNDERBIRDS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		KANSAS JAYHAWKS
FRIDAY SEP. 29	VS		CINCINNATI BEARCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		TCU HORNED FROGS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		TEXAS LONGHORNS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		IOWA STATE CYCLONES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		OKLAHOMA SOONERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		OKLAHOMA STATE COWBOYS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



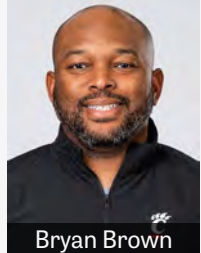
Scott Satterfield

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brad Glenn

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Bryan Brown

## CINCINNATI BEARCATS

### OFFENSE

Arizona State transfer QB Emory Jones will probably be the starting QB. He is a good runner but needs to get better at passing. He struggled with turnovers last season in the Pac-12 and this season he will see much better defenses in the Big 12.

Cincinnati will probably be more of a running team this season due to the inexperience at quarterback. Running back Corey Kiner returns after only 81 touches for 362 yards and five touchdowns, along with Ryan Montgomery, who tallied five rushing touchdowns last year. The entire wide receiver room is new. There is only one returnee from the entire room from last season. Cincinnati brought in seven transfers to help. Dee Wiggins from Louisville (four receptions, 67 yards), Washington State transfer Donovan Ollie from Wylie, Texas (Wylie HS) (43 receptions, 490 yards, three TDs) and Xzavier Henderson from Florida (38 receptions, 410 yards, two TDs) have experience, but that's about it. Although, Henderson could be a great deep threat in the offense. The Bearcats will

definitely rely on these guys to help the new QB.

Five of the top six offensive linemen are gone, so they probably will regress here except for the center position. They brought in a couple of transfers for the guards, so the interior should be good. The tackles are the bigger question mark.



### DEFENSE

Defensive line will definitely be the strength of the team. Defensive end Eric Phillips returns after recording eight tackles for a loss that was good enough for second best last season and three sacks. Senior Jowon Briggs also returns at defensive end, looking to improve on his three sacks from last year. Cincinnati lost plenty at the linebacker position, especially Ivan Pace Jr., who led the team in tackles for a loss and sacks. Dorian Jones (a transfer from Louisville) is a decent pickup. The secondary loses a ton. Jordan Young (transfer from Florida) had a great spring. He is a true sophomore with hardly any experience, so we will see what he does. A four-star in Sammy Anderson, who has a little more experience, will be opposite Young at the other cornerback spot. Safety is an even bigger question.

### SUMMARY

Cincinnati will have a new head coach this season in Scott Satterfield, who was underwhelming at Louisville after building up the Appalachian State football program. Satterfield will now strive for success in a new conference, Cincinnati, which is a step up in competition, and succeed with a new QB. Satterfield is a long way from the Blue Ridge Mountains of Boone, North Carolina. It's time to play with the big boys in the Big 12.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Arizona State transfer kicker Carter Brown, who finished 11 of 14 (79%) on field goals, will shore up the recent field goal kicking issues for the Bearcats. Punter Mason Fletcher is one of the better punters in the Big 12.



USA Today

## 2023 SCHEDULE

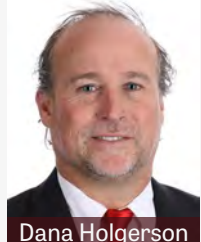
SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	ECU	EASTERN KENTUCKY COLONELS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	Pitt	PITT PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	M	MIAMI (OHIO) REDHAWKS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	OU	OKLAHOMA SOONERS
FRIDAY SEP. 29	AT	BYU	BYU COUGARS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	ISU	IOWA STATE CYCLONES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	BU	BAYLOR BEARS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	OSU	OKLAHOMA STATE COWBOYS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	UCF	UCF KNIGHTS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	UH	HOUSTON COUGARS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	WVU	WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	KU	KANSAS JAYHAWKS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		XFL	BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## HOUSTON COUGARS

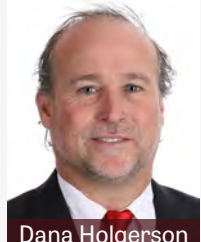
### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



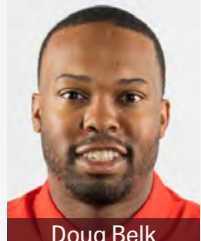
Dana Holgerson

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Dana Holgerson

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Doug Belk

### OFFENSE

The Cougars picked up transfer quarterback Donovan Smith from Texas Tech. Smith needs to improve his QBR from last season (88th). Smith is also a very capable runner, so he presents a dual threat.

The receivers have some new players that will need to step up with the loss of Tank Dell, who had nearly 800 more receiving yards and over 70 more receptions than the next closest receiver. Matthew Golden from Houston (Klein Cain HS) is a guy the coaches feel could step up this year, but there is so much production to replace. Sam Brown also returns, bringing back the second-most production from a year ago. The Cougars will be deep at the running back position. Transfer running back and former leading West Virginia rusher Tony Mathis Jr. will be the starting running back. U of H will also be returning sophomore Stacy Sneed from Arlington, Texas (Mansfield Timberview HS), and sophomore Brandon Campbell from Houston (Pearland HS).

The offensive line lost seven players to

the portal. Center Jack Freeman from Midlothian, Texas (Heritage HS), and left tackle Patrick Paul from Houston (Jersey Village HS), return, but there was so much lost.



### DEFENSE

The defense has questions everywhere. The defensive line must replace a lot of star talent from last season. Oklahoma transfer David Ugwoegbu from Katy, Texas (Seven Lakes HS), can provide help off the edge, but there are more questions than answers up front. Chidozie Nwankwo from Richmond, Texas (Foster HS), returns at nose tackle, but a lot of the tackle room, like the edge rushers, are new. We will see if Nelson Ceaser from Missouri City, Texas (Ridge Point HS), can take another step up and be the leader after recording four sacks last year.

The linebackers are the biggest unknown on the team. The starters are set, but not much depth behind them. The secondary loses its top four by snap count. Just like most of the questions surrounding the defense around this position, transfers will need to mesh quickly. The safeties look decent at least with freshman All-American Adari Haulcy from Houston (Fort Bend Marshall HS) transferring in from New Mexico and senior Antonio Brooks also from Missouri City, Texas (Fort Bend Marshall HS).



### SPECIAL TEAMS

Lots of unknowns here as well losing their top place kickers. Punter is a known entity with returnee Laine Wilkins.

### SUMMARY

With so many transfers that will have to mesh quickly in the Cougars' first year in the Big 12, it could be an uphill battle to achieve bowl eligibility. Houston is in a great area of the country to recruit well and has a good national brand, so the future is bright, but this season could be a tough one.

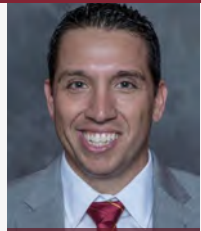
## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		UTSA ROADRUNNERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		RICE OWLS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		TCU HORNED FROGS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		SAM HOUSTON BEARCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
THURSDAY OCT. 12	VS		WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		TEXAS LONGHORNS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		KANSAS STATE WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		BAYLOR BEARS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		CINCINNATI BEARCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		OKLAHOMA STATE COWBOYS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		UCF KNIGHTS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



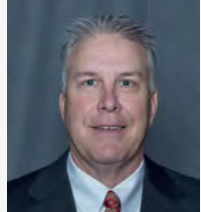
Matt Campbell

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Nate Scheelhaase

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jon Heacock

## IOWA STATE CYCLONES

### OFFENSE

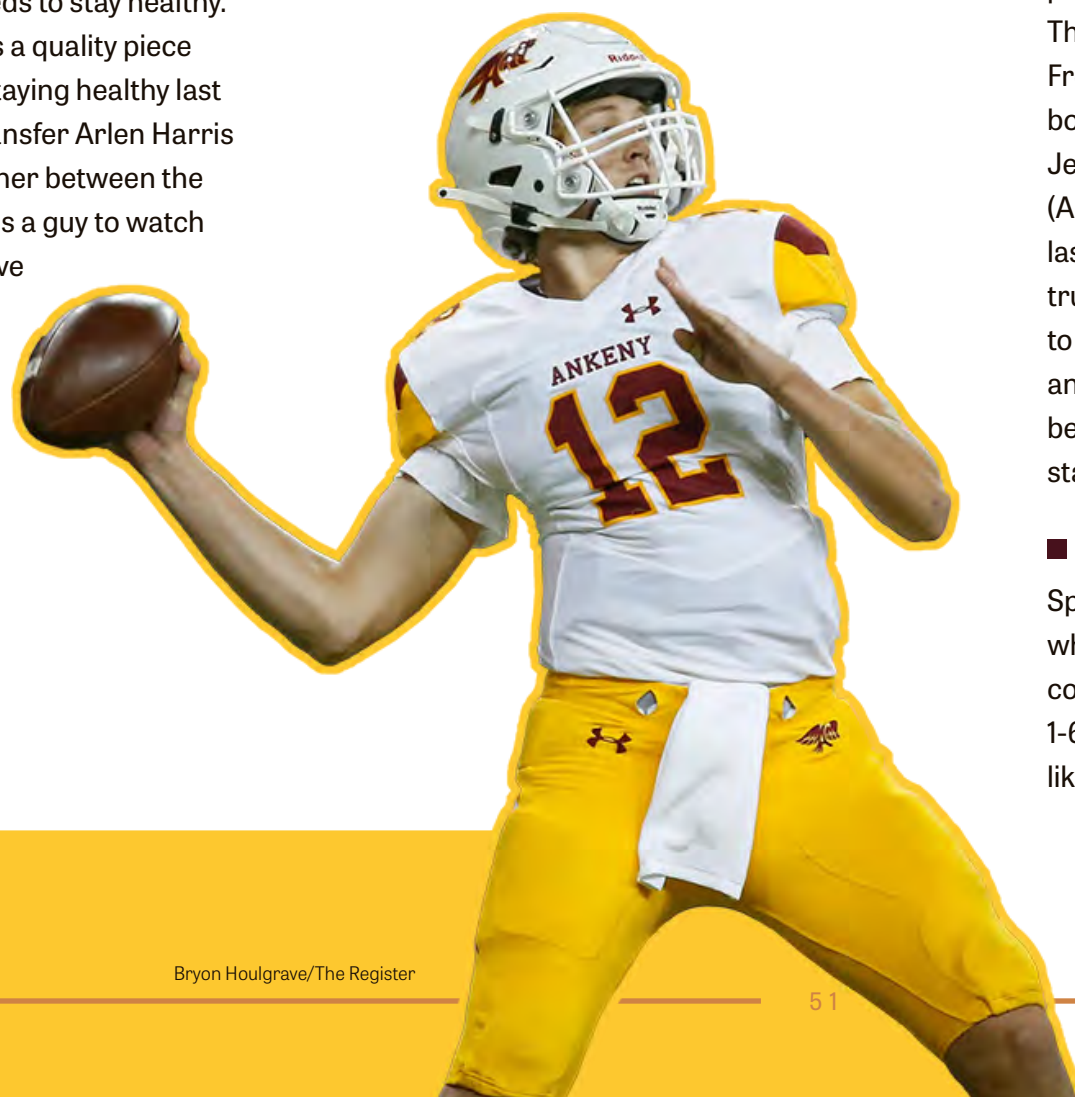
Hunter Dekkers returns at quarterback, but Dekkers struggled last season, completing only 66% of his passes, 6.7 yards per attempt, with 19 touchdowns and 13 interceptions. Freshman J.J. Kohl could be in the hunt to be the starting quarterback if Dekkers cannot create separation. Kohl is 6 feet, 7 inches, 235 pounds, so he will be able to hold his own physically in the Big 12 as a true freshman.

The running back room has depth, but improvement is needed. Jirehl Brock is experienced but needs to stay healthy. Cartevious Norton is a quality piece but also struggled staying healthy last season. Stanford transfer Arlen Harris Jr. is a powerful runner between the tackles. Eli Sanders is a guy to watch for. The Cyclones have plenty of backs, but consistency and health plagued them last season. ISU did not have a

rusher crack 500 yards.

At receiver, losing Xavier Henderson is a killer for the Cyclones. Henderson had more targets (163) and catches (107) than the next three receivers combined. Look for Jaylin Noel to be one of the go-to guys this season. The receivers struggled with drops last year and will need to improve.

The offensive line brings back a lot of experience.



### DEFENSE

Iowa State will have trouble replicating the production from losing edge rushers such as Will McDonald and M.J. Anderson. ISU does bring back Joey Petersen, Tyler Onyedim from Richmond, Texas (Foster HS), and Domonique Orange, who are expected to step up. Isaiah Lee also returns. The interior is more solid than the pass rush going into the season.

At linebacker, they only lose O'Rien Vance, but almost all the depth is back. Garry Vaughn is a guy to watch for at linebacker.

In the secondary, the corner tandem of T.J. Tampa and Myles Purchase is one of the best in the conference and one of the more overlooked corner tandems in the country. Tampa led the team with nine pass breakups last season.

The bigger question is safety. Beau Freyler is back, and he can play in the box and play more of the nickel position. Jeremiah Cooper from El Paso, Texas (Andress HS), is back. He got his feet wet last season, playing in a reserve role as a true freshman. Malik Verdon is a player to watch for. Verdon has shown flashes and has the upside to be one of the better players for this defense if he can stay healthy.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Special teams struggled last season, which is one of the reasons why they could not win close games as they were 1-6 in one-score games. Iowa State will likely rely on the same players here.

### SUMMARY

Bill Connelly's ratings had the Cyclones as a top-50 team despite them finishing with a 4-8 record. Iowa State is what it is. It will give just about every team a tough battle, but it will often come out on the losing side with an inefficient offense. If the offense and special teams improve, bowl eligibility is certainly up for grabs in Ames.



Luke Lu/KL6PHOTO LLC.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		NORTHERN IOWA PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		IOWA HAWKEYES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		OHIO BOBCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		OKLAHOMA STATE COWBOYS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		OKLAHOMA SOONERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		TCU HORNED FROGS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		CINCINNATI BEARCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		BAYLOR BEARS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		KANSAS JAYHAWKS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		BYU COUGARS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		TEXAS LONGHORNS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		KANSAS STATE WILDCATS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP



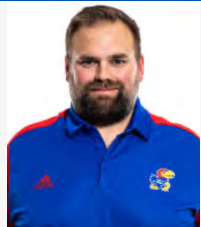
## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Lance Leipold

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Andy Kotelnicki

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brian Borland

## KANSAS JAYHAWKS

### ■ OFFENSE

The Jayhawks have a really good one-two punch at quarterback with starter Jalon Daniels and backup Jason Bean from Mansfield, Texas (Lake Ridge HS). Both Daniels and Bean like to run, so it's noteworthy that the third-string quarterback has never played a down of football.

The offensive line returns mostly intact and adds a couple of transfers in Logan Brown, a former Wisconsin tackle and five-star recruit and Spencer Lovell. The pass blocking should be great, but run blocking needs to improve. Look for the offensive line to get a better push in the run game this season. Running back Devin Neal returns after rushing for 1,090 yards and nine touchdowns.

The receivers return everyone who caught more than five passes. A very experienced receiving corps led by Lawrence Arnold from DeSoto, Texas, Quentin Skinner out wide (both averaged over 16 yards per reception) and Luke Grimm in the slot. Tight end Mason Fairchild is effective in the pass-catching department, finishing third in receptions and tied for first in TDs last year.

### ■ DEFENSE

They were bad last season (127th in total defense). Their pressure rate was one of the worst in the country last year, and they simply could not get a push up front (125th in defensive line yards). Now for this season, the top three defensive tackles are gone. Potentially addition by subtraction with the transfers: Devin Phillips (from Colorado State) and Gage Keys (Minnesota) could be better, but it's not a high bar to clear. There's not much depth here either. Defensive end could be an even bigger issue. Losing Lonnie Phelps and his seven sacks is a killer. There is no proven production at defensive end now.



Ed Zurga/AP

Linebacker returns everyone, but they need an upgrade in athleticism. Perhaps Bowling Green transfer JB Brown can help in this area. Rich Miller returns and his 56 solo tackles from last season that led the linebackers. Senior Craig Young also returns, who was fourth in tackles. The secondary returns all of the most used players. Cobee Bryant is a legit playmaking corner. He led the team in interceptions and pass breakups last season. The safeties have a lot of experience and depth. Not that the secondary is great at the moment (finished 108th last year in pass yards allowed), but it is the strength of the Kansas defense.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

This unit really struggled last year. The Kansas kicking game had the worst Big 12 field goal percentage of any Big 12 team since 2017. Texas State place kicker transfer Seth Keller from Colleyville, Texas (Covenant Christian), is a great addition at kicker. Punter is still a question.

### SUMMARY

Taking the over on the point totals in Kansas' games this season may be a good idea. The offense should be great, but the defense, especially the front six or seven, could be a weakness again. Kansas ranks first in the country in overall returning production. We will see if that leads to a breakthrough or if Kansas struggles to make a bowl game. Nonetheless, games involving Kansas should be fun this year.



Missy Minear/Kansas Athletics



## 2023 SCHEDULE

FRIDAY SEP. 1	VS		MISSOURI STATE BEARS
FRIDAY SEP. 8	VS		ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		NEVADA WOLF PACK
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		BYU COUGARS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		TEXAS LONGHORNS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		UCF KNIGHTS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		OKLAHOMA STATE COWBOYS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		OKLAHOMA SOONERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		IOWA STATE CYCLONES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		KANSAS STATE WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		CINCINNATI BEARCATS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## KANSAS STATE WILDCATS

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Chris Klieman

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Collin Klein

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Joe Klanderma

### OFFENSE

This is one of the better quarterback rooms in recent memory for Kansas State. Will Howard is back at quarterback as the starter providing a dual threat for the K-State offense. The coaching staff wants to see him run more, and he definitely has the size (6 feet, 6 inches, 245 pounds) to do it. Avery Johnson is a highly touted recruit who can run very well. He might see some playing time this season behind Howard. Replacing Deuce Vaughn in the running game will not be easy. Florida State transfer Treysaun Ward and DJ Giddens both have large shoes to fill this season. Both are good, experienced backs who run with power and patience. The wide receiver room does not have a star No. 1 to rely on. Iowa transfer Keagan Johnson has experience, and RJ Garcia is a true sophomore who has been moving up the ranks of the receiving corps. The go-to pass catchers are tight end Ben Sinnott and Phillip Brooks. There are plenty of unknowns with this group after losing Malik Knowles and Kade Warner to graduation.

The strength of the Kansas State offense, and maybe the team, is the offensive line that returns all five starters led by left guard Cooper Bebee. If the O-line can protect Will Howard, the Wildcats should be able to find success this season.

### DEFENSE

On the defensive side of the ball, Kansas State loses some individual stars but brings some experience back. Khalid Duke is back at defensive end after a five-tackle-for-loss and three-sack season. Duke was the starting end in front of NFL first-round draft pick Felix Anudike-Uzomah two years ago before getting injured. The ends have experience with Brendan Mott, who was second on the team with six sacks, and Nate Matlack. There is not a lot of size or depth in the middle for the K-State defensive line. This is perhaps the biggest concern on the team, if not wide receiver.

The linebackers are back intact, led by last season's leading tackler Austin Moore, who also had 10 tackles for loss. Daniel Green also returns; he was fifth in tackles last year.

With the exception of three players, everyone who played more than 200 snaps is gone. Two true freshmen, Jacob Parrish and VJ Payne, played a ton in Kansas State's bowl game and will be asked to do more this coming season. There will be plenty of new faces in the Wildcat secondary this season. Kobe Savage from Paris, Texas, returns and is the leader of the secondary at safety.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Placekicker is a huge question. Losing Ty Zentner will be felt with his clutch kicking. Chris Tennant is likely going to take over the place kicking duties while Jack Blumer returns as punter.

### SUMMARY

The offensive line and quarterback return, but the receiving corps, interior defensive line and secondary have a number of questions. Kansas State may not be quite at the level it was last season, but it still has a shot at a top-four finish in the Big 12 this season. EMAW Nation is excited to see what Will Howard can accomplish as a full season starter.



Chandler Mixon/Kansas State Athletics

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		SOUTHEAST MISSOURI REDHAWKS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		TROY TROJANS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		MISSOURI TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		UCF KNIGHTS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF		OFF
FRIDAY OCT. 6	AT		OKLAHOMA STATE COWBOYS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		TCU HORNED FROGS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		HOUSTON COUGARS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		TEXAS LONGHORNS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		BAYLOR BEARS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		KANSAS JAYHAWKS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		IOWA STATE CYCLONES
SATURDAY DEC. 2			BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



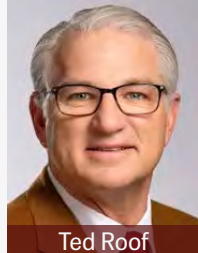
Brent Venables

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jeff Lebby

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Ted Roof

## OKLAHOMA SOONERS

### OFFENSE

At quarterback, Dillon Gabriel will start week one. The backup, Jackson Arnold from Denton, Texas (Guyer HS), is the future barring any injury; it is Gabriel's job to lose.

Oklahoma loses both starting offensive tackles to the NFL. They do like their tackles again this season, thanks in large part to the transfer portal. A transfer from Stanford, tackle Walter Rouse, and a former TCU transfer, Tyler Guyton from Manor, Texas, will play the opposite tackle position. Guyton played well in the bowl game against Florida State. The starting five is set, but the depth is not great up front.

Oklahoma loses do-it-all receiver Marvin Mims. Jalil Farooq is likely the No. 1 receiver coming into the season.

Farooq has experience in the wildcat quarterback role as well. Drake Stoops is likely the No. 2 option, but others need to step up. Oklahoma picked up a few through the transfer portal from the last couple of years at the receiver position, including Texas transfer Brenen Thompson from Spearman, Texas, this year; LV Bunkley-Shelton from Arizona State; and J.J. Hester from Missouri last year. D.J. Graham

II, the defensive back who had the one-handed interception against Nebraska a couple of years ago from Fort Worth, Texas (Keller Central HS), will move to receiver this year.

The running back room is very deep this season. Leading the way will be true sophomore Jovantae Barnes and Gavin Sawchuk, who rushed for 100 yards and one touchdown on 15 carries against Florida State in the Cheez-It Bowl. The Sooners will have a dynamic duo in the backfield.



### DEFENSE

Oklahoma's defense finished 122nd in total defense last season, not up to OU or Brent Venables standards.

The linebackers should be much improved. Last year's best defensive player, Danny Stutsman, is back, and one of the best defensive transfers this year, Dasan McCullough from Indiana, will bring pressure off the edge. There is lots of talented young depth behind the experienced and talented veterans. The safeties may be the deepest position group on the team. Billy Bowman Jr. from Denton, Texas (Ryan HS), is back, and Reggie Pearson transfers in from Texas Tech. Peyton Bowen from Denton, Texas (Guyer HS), is an incoming five-star recruit, and Key Lawrence is really experienced.

At the line of scrimmage, the pass rush should be improved with McCullough as well as transfers from Wake Forest, defensive end Rondell Bothroyd, and Oklahoma State, Trace Ford.

The biggest question on the Oklahoma roster is the defensive tackle group, but the transfers could help. There are options led by returnee Isaiah Coe, and the depth is fine, but as of now the quality is lacking.

The defense in Brent Venables' second season will rely on the top returnees from last season, transfers and young players to make the freshman-to-sophomore leap.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Punter Michael Tirk is gone. He was legit and just didn't punt a lot. The kicking game in general is in a transitional phase.

### SUMMARY

The Sooners may or may not be elite, but the schedule provides the opportunity for a huge bounce-back season and for double-digit wins and a likely top-three spot in the Big 12 standings by the end of the season.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		ARKANSAS STATE RED WOLVES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		SMU MUSTANGS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		TULSA GOLDEN HURRICANE
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		CINCINNATI BEARCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		IOWA STATE CYCLONES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		TEXAS LONGHORNS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		UCF KNIGHTS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		KANSAS JAYHAWKS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		OKLAHOMA STATE COWBOYS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		BYU COUGARS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	VS		TCU HORNED FROGS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



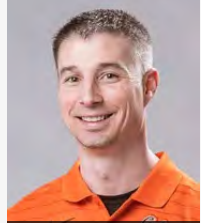
Mike Gundy

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kasey Dunn

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Bryan Nardo

## OKLAHOMA STATE COWBOYS

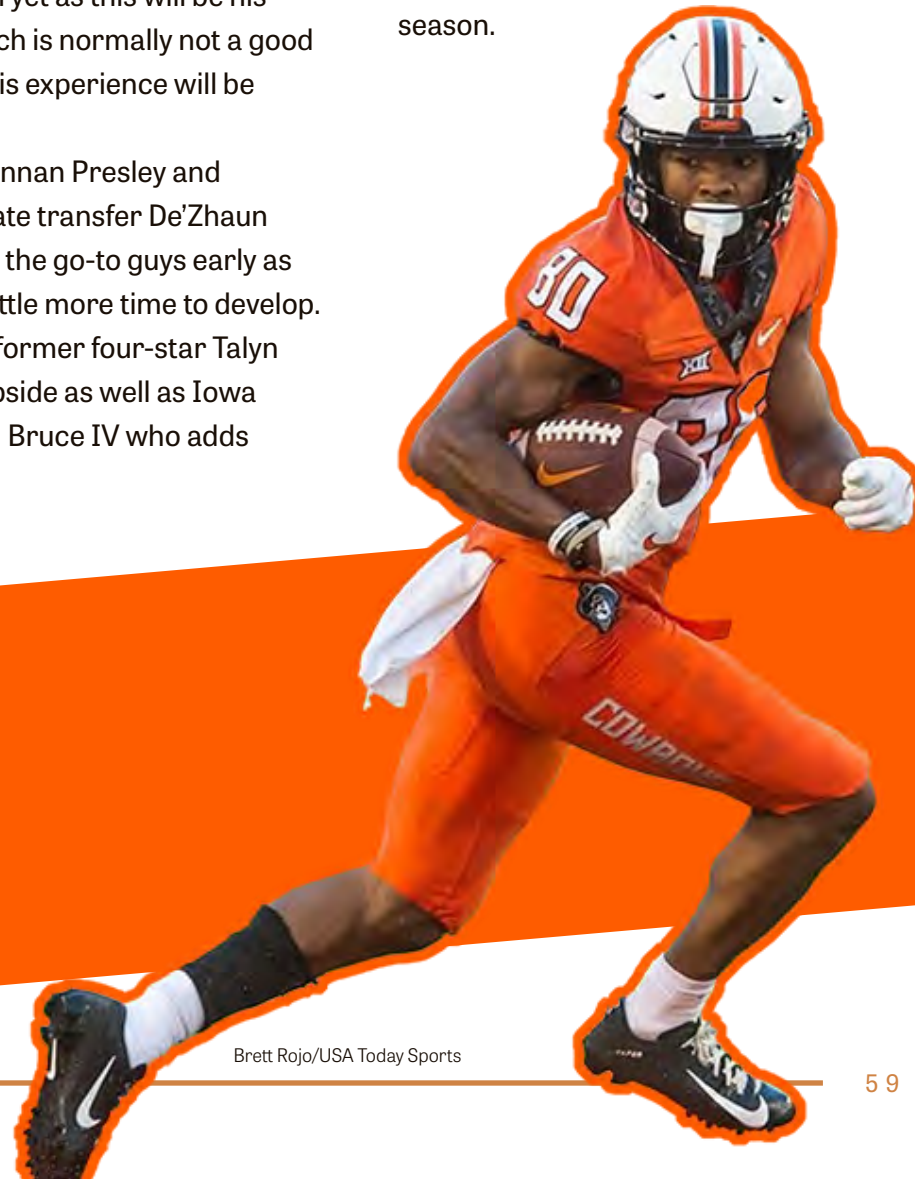
### OFFENSE

Former Texas Tech and Michigan quarterback Alan Bowman from Grapevine, Texas (Grapevine HS), transfers in and will be the starter. Redshirt Freshman Garret Rangel from Frisco, Texas (Lone Star HS), is the backup. Rangel struggled a little last season in the small amount of time he played (51.3% completion rate, four touchdowns, five interceptions). Bowman has experience but has not broken through yet as this will be his third team, which is normally not a good sign for a QB. His experience will be relied upon.

At receiver, Brennan Presley and Washington State transfer De'Zhaun Stribling will be the go-to guys early as others need a little more time to develop. Freshman and former four-star Talyn Shettron has upside as well as Iowa transfer Arland Bruce IV who adds experience.

The offensive line was never healthy last season and should be better this season just given how much healthier this unit stayed throughout this spring. It's a veteran group here that needs to improve, and they'll be counted on to do that with all the new faces at the skill positions.

At running back, there's experience with sophomores Jaden Nixon from Dallas (Lone Star HS) and Ollie Gordon II from Fort Worth, Texas (Eules Trinity HS), but more will be asked of these two this season.



Brett Rojo/USA Today Sports

### DEFENSE

Up front, the defensive line loses its top two tackles. Oklahoma State will run a 3-3-5 this season, which could be beneficial because of a tackle/nose position that lacks proven high-level quality. Collin Clay and Xavier Ross from Cedar Hill High School in Texas have been in Stillwater for a while, so it is their time to step up. The player to watch who had an impressive spring is Utah Tech transfer Justin Kirkland, who has the size to immediately contribute (6-foot-4, 345 pounds). Tulsa transfer Anthony Goodlow brings experience as well. The linebacker room will probably take a step back unless all the new players and Tulsa transfer Justin Wright from Cooper High School in Abilene, Texas, mesh quickly.

On the back end, safety Kendal Daniels has a lot of upside. Outside of Daniels, the safety room is very inexperienced. Korie Black from Connally High School in Waco, Texas, returns at one of the corner spots, but opposite him, Cam Smith from Braswell High School in Little Elm, Texas, might have the upper hand to start at the other corner spot.



Brett Rojo/USA Today Sports

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Alex Hale is back at placekicker. He was a Lou Groza Award semifinalist before a knee injury in 2020. Punter is still a question.

### SUMMARY

At the very least, the Cowboys will ask mostly upperclassmen to step into new roles. Most of the new pieces have experience, whether they are transfers or switching positions. Still, a lot of unknowns exist with this team, but a manageable schedule will help a transitioning Cowboy team potentially fly under the radar. The success of the offense will mostly determine whether Alan Bowman can play well, but he has not had much playing time since he was in Lubbock a couple of years ago.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		CENTRAL ARKANSAS BEARS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		ARIZONA STATE SUN DEVILS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		SOUTH ALABAMA JAGUARS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		IOWA STATE CYCLONES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF		OFF
FRIDAY OCT. 6	VS		KANSAS STATE WILDCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		KANSAS JAYHAWKS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		CINCINNATI BEARCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		OKLAHOMA SOONERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		UCF KNIGHTS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		HOUSTON COUGARS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		BYU COUGARS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP





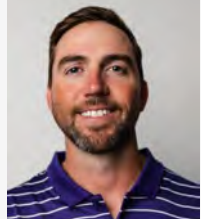
## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Sonny Dykes

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kendal Briles

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Joe Gillespie

## TCU HORNEFROGS

### OFFENSE

Chandler Morris has earned the coveted role of starting quarterback. Morris may not match Max Duggan's running prowess from last season, but he possesses a formidable skill set of his own.

The running back room will have some new faces, such as Emani Bailey from Denton, Texas (Ryan HS), and Trey Sanders. They have to replace last year's special duo of Emari Demercado and Kendre Miller.

The TCU offense loses 150 catches and more than 2,000 yards of production from last season. The slot receivers are set with transfers John Paul Richardson from Missouri City, Texas (Ridge Point HS) (Oklahoma State) and JoJo Earle from Aledo, Texas (Aledo HSI) (Alabama). The outside receivers are still a question, but 6-foot-5 Savion Williams from Marshall, Texas, returns and will provide a large target for Morris. The offensive line loses three starters, including some

high-level talent. The tackles are set with returning starters Andrew Coker from Katy, Texas (James E. Taylor HS), and Brandon Coleman from Denton, Texas (Denton HS). The interior has a lot of questions, mainly due to the lack of depth.



### DEFENSE

The interior is set with returning nose tackle Damon Williams, but the ends are the question, having to replace their top four pass rushers from last year. Redshirt freshman Paul Oyewale from Houston (Langham Creek HS) is a guy to watch for. He impressed the coaching staff during the spring. Physically, he is one of the more impressive players on the roster. Talent is not as much of a problem with the defensive ends as proven production and experience are. Depth still is not strong in the defensive trenches.

At linebacker, they lose Dee Winters, but as a whole this unit might be better. Jamoi Hodge and Johnny Hodges return in the middle, and they have depth with Shadrach Banks from Houston (North Shore HS) and highly touted freshman Jonathan Bax.

The secondary returns every starter except for one, although improvement is needed. It starts with Josh Newton. Newton and Avery Helm from Missouri City, Texas (Fort Bend Marshall HS), are good-sized corners. The cornerback position is deep, and all the safeties are back, but they need to take the next step to be more consistent.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

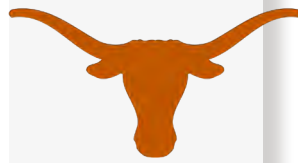
TCU will have one of the best special teams units in the country with kicker Griffin Kell from Arlington, Texas (Arlington HS), and punter Jordy Sandy.

### SUMMARY

TCU faces a challenging season ahead, despite having a talented roster. Last year's team had the knack of winning close games in almost every contest. This year's team has to live up to high expectations and overcome a tough second half of the schedule. A strong start is crucial, with a more favorable first half of the schedule. It begins Sept. 1 against Coach Prime and the Colorado Buffaloes.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		COLORADO BUFFALOES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		NICHOLLS COLONELS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		HOUSTON COUGARS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		SMU MUSTANGS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		IOWA STATE CYCLONES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		BYU COUGARS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		KANSAS STATE WILDCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF		OFF
THURSDAY NOV. 2	AT		TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		TEXAS LONGHORNS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		BAYLOR BEARS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	AT		OKLAHOMA SOONERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Steve Sarkisian

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kyle Flood

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Pete Kwiatkowski

## TEXAS LONGHORNS

### OFFENSE

Quinn Ewers from Carroll High School in Southlake, Texas, and potentially Maalik Murphy at quarterback will be asked to do more this season. Both have talent, needless to say, but Ewers in particular needs to live up to his NFL hype. Ewers has all the potential needed to be an NFL quarterback but he struggled after his collarbone injury last season. Ewers had some difficulties with accuracy and throwing the ball downfield, both characteristics that are extremely important when it comes to being successful, especially moving on to the next level. The UT coaching staff will be patient with top prospect Arch Manning as his time should come but maybe not this season.

The Longhorn offense lost two NFL running backs: Bijan Robinson and Roschon Johnson. The loss of these two will be felt because they relied on them more down the stretch last year both in rushing and passing with underneath routes that Bijan made look like longer routes with a 16.5-yard receiving average. Jonathan Brooks from Hallettsville High School in Texas has huge shoes to fill. Brooks led the Longhorns with 6.6 yards per carry on 30 attempts last season. There is depth behind Brooks with Jaydon Blue from Klein Cain High School in Houston and star freshman Cedric "C4" Baxter.

C4 needs to improve particularly in pass blocking but he is really good at catching the ball out of the backfield.

The offensive line and receiver room are two of the best of their respective position groups in the country. The receiver room brings back its top two: Xavier Worthy and Jordan Whittington from Cuero High School in Texas. Isaiah Neyor from Arlington Lamar High School in Fort Worth, Texas, will return from injury and UT also added a Georgia Bulldog transfer: Adonai Mitchell from Cane Ridge High School in Missouri City, Texas. This is one of the best receiving corps in the country.

The Texas offensive line is as good as it has been since it won its last national championship. It has elite talent with players such as Kelvin Banks Jr. (Humble), Jake Majors (Prosper) and Cole Hutson (Frisco), all from Texas high schools. It goes two deep at every position with everyone who played significant snaps returning. The recruiting of the offensive line under Steve Sarkisian has been criminally underrated.



USATSI

### DEFENSE

Up front, Texas loses a couple of defensive tackles but they might be better this season with talented and high-ceiling upperclassmen such as Byron Murphy II from DeSoto High School in Texas and T'Vondre Sweat from Huntsville High School in Texas. Barryn Sorrell returns as the top sacker from last season with 5.5 sacks. Watch for true freshman Anthony Hill Jr. from Ryan High School in Denton, Texas, who was one of the top linebackers in the 2023 recruiting class. This was a defensive front that led the nation in quarterback pressures last season and has NFL talent.

The linebackers lost most of their top players from last season but Jaylan Ford from Lone Star High School in Frisco, Texas, is the lone top returnee and needs to stay healthy as there is not much depth here.

The secondary should be really good this season if the starting safeties stay healthy given the lack of depth. The corners are set with former Ohio State transfer Ryan Watts from Little Elm High School in Texas and Wake Forest transfer Gavin Holmes as well as one of the top freshman corners in this past year's recruiting class: Malik Muhammad from South Oak Cliff High School in Texas. The starting safeties are also set with returnees Jerrin Thompson from Lufkin High School in Texas and Jahdae Barron from Connally High School in Austin, Texas, and Arkansas transfer Jalen Catalon from Mansfield Legacy High School in Mansfield, Texas.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Bert Auburn from Flower Mound, Texas (21-26 FGs last year) returns, and Stanford transfer Ryan Sanborn takes over the punting duties. A couple of games last season swung based on Auburn's leg. The same pressure will be on him this year.

### SUMMARY

There is always hype with Texas but this is an elite roster. Not many teams have this small amount of roster questions. If Texas has better game management in close games they will likely live up to expectations. This team has an incredibly high ceiling. If Quinn Ewers can take this Longhorn team to the next level there is a good chance he can win the Heisman as well as being the #1 NFL draft pick.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		RICE OWLS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		WYOMING COWBOYS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		BAYLOR BEARS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		KANSAS JAYHAWKS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		OKLAHOMA SOONERS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		HOUSTON COUGARS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		BYU COUGARS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		KANSAS STATE WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		TCU HORNED FROGS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		IOWA STATE CYCLONES
FRIDAY NOV. 24	VS		TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Joey McGuire

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Zach Kittley

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tim DeRuyter

### ■ OFFENSE

Tyler Shough will be the starting quarterback. Shough is a good dual threat when healthy. Behren Morton from Eastland, Texas (Eastland HS) is a quality backup and is the future in Lubbock. Both quarterbacks will probably see the field this year, but Shough is the guy.

The Red Raiders really like their receiving corps. Last year's leading receiver in Jerand Bradley from Frisco, Texas (DeSoto HS) returns. Bradley has the size (6 feet 5 inches, 215 pounds) and playmaking ability (14.6 yards per catch) to be one of the best receivers in the Big 12. Texas Tech returns mostly everyone else in the pass-catching group, including seniors Loic Fouonji from Midland, Texas (Midland Lee HS), Myles Price from The Colony, Texas (The Colony HS) and Xavier White from Lubbock, Texas (Lubbock Monterey HS). Fouonji has struggled with injuries throughout his college career but has the size (6 feet 4 inches, 210 pounds) and upside as a former four-star recruit to break through. Watch for Austin Peay transfer Drae McCray. McCray, another senior, does not have great size at 5 feet 9 inches, 185 pounds but he adds great speed to a tall receiving corps.

The offensive line was the weakness last season. The interior is set for this

year. Cole Spencer from Orange, Texas (C.E. King HS) was injured last year and redshirted but he's back for this year and will play guard. Last season the center position was occupied by Dennis Wilburn from Humble, Texas (Nimitz HS), but Wilburn's natural position is guard. Fortunately for Wilburn and the Red Raiders, Tech was able to pluck Western Kentucky starting center Rusty Staats and plug Staats into the starting center spot and move Wilburn to guard. The coaching staff feels great about those starting three getting a good push in the run game. The question is at tackle. The tackles are experienced but need to improve greatly in pass protection. The starting tackles will switch positions. The tackles are oftentimes exposed in this offense because they do not use the tight ends often for pass blocking.



## ■ DEFENSE

The strength of the defense will be up front despite the loss of Tyree Wilson. Myles Cole is a guy to watch for (6 feet 6 inches, 285 pounds) who will step up into one of the defensive end spots. Syracuse transfer Steve Linton will line up opposite Cole. The coaching staff is high on Linton. The interior is set as well with two fifth-year super seniors in Tony Bradford Jr. from Houston (North Shore HS) and Jaylon Hutchings from Forney, Texas, who are both 6 feet and over 300 pounds. Bradford Jr. and Hutchings have played together at Tech in the middle of the defensive line for four seasons. Look for Texas Tech to be able to get pressure with its defensive front this season.

Texas Tech's defense is very aggressive, especially in key situations (eighth in fourth-down defense and ninth in red zone defense last year).

The only position group on the team that doesn't return a ton of experience is the linebacker room. Tech loses its two leading tacklers in Krishon Merriweather and Kosi Eldridge. Jesiah Pierre will man the middle

this year and played a good amount last season (40 tackles and 4.5 sacks — third-most sacks for Tech last year). Jacob Rodriguez from Wichita Falls, Texas (Rider HS) and Tyrique Matthews from Houston (Eisenhower HS) will bring upperclassman leadership to the linebackers.

The secondary needs to improve (103rd in pass yards allowed last year). Look for this year's secondary to make that leap in improvement in what is another senior-laden position group. Tyler Owens from Plano, Texas (Plano East HS) is one of the more talented players in the secondary but has struggled to stay healthy. Owens

is expected to start at one of the safety positions next to Tech's leading returning tackler in free safety Dadrion Taylor-Demerson. Seniors Taylor-Demerson and Owens form one of the Big 12's better safety duos.

The corners have upside as well. Seniors Malik Dunlap and Rayshad Williams have length and playmaking ability. Dunlap is 6 feet 3 inches, 215 pounds and was one of the top Big 12 defensive backs in pass breakups with 12. It was the most PBUs by a Texas Tech defender since 2014. Williams (6 feet 3 inches, 195 pounds) also has length. The coaches feel confident in Dunlap's and Williams' ability to play in man coverage as they are often asked to do. Because of the way this defense plays, it is oftentimes "all or nothing," forcing incompletions (41st last season in this despite injuries), but they will need to combine this playmaking and attacking style defense

with a consistency in not giving up explosive plays this season (109th in opponent yards per completion).

The depth in the secondary, however, is not great. Tech has talent behind the starters but they are very green.

The back end of the defense has room for improvement but certainly has the talent, size and experience to make that jump in what will be the last season of most of these players' college careers.



## ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

Austin McNamara is arguably the top punter in program history and returns for one last season. Placekicker is unknown.

### SUMMARY

This feels like a season in which Texas Tech is going all in. Texas Tech is practically starting a senior at every position. There is a lot of quality too that is mixed in with this veteran-laden squad. Watch out for the Red Raiders. Texas Tech will be toward the bottom of returning production next season, so 2023 is the year to put themselves on the map with the positive momentum in recruiting. The \$26 million man Joey McGuire talks a big game, and this is the season to back it up.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT		WYOMING COWBOYS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		OREGON DUCKS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		TARLETON STATE TEXANS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		HOUSTON COUGARS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		BAYLOR BEARS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		KANSAS STATE WILDCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		BYU COUGARS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF		OFF
THURSDAY NOV. 2	VS		TCU HORNED FROGS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		KANSAS JAYHAWKS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		UCF KNIGHTS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	AT		TEXAS LONGHORNS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## UCF KNIGHTS

### OFFENSE

John Rhys Plumlee is back at quarterback. Plumlee is a great runner but needs to improve his pocket presence. As much as Plumlee runs, it is noteworthy that there is not much depth at quarterback. The top three quarterbacks can run, but Plumlee is the best passer by far.

Senior RJ Harvey returns at running back after rushing for 796 yards and five touchdowns. The other senior back, Johnny Richardson, also returns. The Knights will have a solid rushing attack if you include Plumlee with this pair.

At the receiver position, UCF returns three of the top four from last season. Javon Baker and Kobe Hudson will likely be the top two as they connected best with Plumlee during the spring. Chauncey Magwood adds experience, transferring in from Kentucky. The offensive line lost many

through the transfer portal but, like a lot of teams, also gained a good amount. Amari Kight, Bula Schmidt, Marcellus Marshall and Drake Metcalf all bring high-level experience and help patch up what should still be a really good offensive line.

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Gus Malzahn

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Darin Hinshaw

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Addison Williams



### DEFENSE

The defensive line is very experienced and should be good this season. Defensive tackle Lee Hunter, a former Auburn transfer, has really improved and could have a big season. Fifth-year senior defensive end Tre'Mon Morris-Brash, who led the team with 13 tackles for loss and six sacks, returns. This defense also returns defensive end Ricky Barber and defensive tackle Josh Celiscar, who finished with at least 8.5 tackles for loss and three sacks last season.

The linebackers return just about all the starters, including leading tackler Jason Johnson, and brought in transfers Rian Davis and Shaun Peterson to go along with experienced returnee Walter Yates III. This should be an improved unit, especially from a havoc standpoint. In the secondary, the corners are set with Brandon Adams and Middle Tennessee State transfer Decorian Patterson. Patterson tied for the lead for most interceptions with seven last season. The safeties were injured during the spring. If Quadric Bullard and Jireh Wilson are ready, that would be huge for UCF's defense.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

UCF returns Colton Boomer, a reliable kicker who made 14 of 15 field goals and 42 of 43 extra points last season, and Mitch McCarthy, a punter who averaged 41.2 yards per punt and placed 16 inside the 20-yard line.

### SUMMARY

Of the four Big 12 newcomers, UCF is probably in the best position to have the most immediate success. There is quality talent at the line of scrimmage and with the skill position players. A bowl game should be reached, but a winning regular-season record is also attainable.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	VS		KENT STATE GOLDEN FLASHES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		BOISE STATE BRONCOS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		VILLANOVA WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		KANSAS STATE WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		BAYLOR BEARS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		KANSAS JAYHAWKS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		OKLAHOMA SOONERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		CINCINNATI BEARCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		OKLAHOMA STATE COWBOYS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		HOUSTON COUGARS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP





## WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEERS

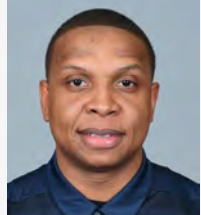
### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Neal Brown

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Chad Scott

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jordan Lesley

### OFFENSE

Quarterback Garrett Greene will likely be the starting quarterback. If it's not him, then it'll be redshirt freshman Nicco Marchiol. Neither is great, but Greene has the upper hand with experience.

The Mountaineers will probably rely on their running game with a brand new receiving corps and all five starters back on a good offensive line. Top rusher Tony Mathis Jr. must be replaced, but true sophomore C.J. Donaldson Jr. has some experience, having run for 526 yards and eight touchdowns on only 87 carries last year. He will be one of the best backs in the Big 12 this season.

The top receivers are yet to be known, but NC State transfer Devin Carter at least has experience and has good

size (6-foot-3, 215 pounds). There's no "alpha" guy here and not much proven production. Despite having a seasoned receiver position last year, they failed to produce explosive plays.



Ben Queen/USA TODAY Sports

### DEFENSE

Last year was a flat-out disappointment — especially the pass defense. This season, the defensive line will have almost a complete makeover, while the back end of the defense will be relying on transfers. West Virginia finished 111th in pass defense last year. Sean Martin returns to the defensive line after recording eight tackles for loss and four sacks. They also bring back linebacker Lee Kpogba, who was second on the team with 44 solo tackles. The transfers will need to mesh quickly, but at the very least, improvement does not need to clear a high bar.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Michael Hayes has earned the role of kicker, and Oliver Straw resumes his duties as punter.

### SUMMARY

West Virginia made a surprising decision to retain coach Neal Brown, despite hiring a new athletic director. Neal Brown's tenure in Morgantown has been a disappointment, considering that they have had the talent to contend at the top of the conference. WVU has some skilled players this year, but they are far from the elite of the Big 12.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT		PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		DUQUESNE DUKES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		PITT PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		TCU HORNED FROGS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
THURSDAY OCT. 12	AT		HOUSTON COUGARS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		OKLAHOMA STATE COWBOYS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		UCF KNIGHTS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		BYU COUGARS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		OKLAHOMA SOONERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		CINCINNATI BEARCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		BAYLOR BEARS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP



Ben Queen/USA TODAY Sports

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## ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI

### OFFENSE

New starting quarterback Luke Altmyer is inexperienced and has around a 50% completion percentage through his college career thus far. He has thrown the same amount of touchdowns (3) as interceptions (3) in two years, albeit with a low quantity of pass attempts (54). The offensive line will be relied upon. Last season, they were a Joe Moore Award finalist, which goes to the best offensive line unit. They may not be quite as good this season. Three starters are back, and those three are great, but they don't have the depth they had last season. They are the strength of the offense, but they still have a couple of questions going into the season, like at the center position. The run blocking is probably better than the pass blocking. The passing game will definitely need to improve, as well as the red zone offense, after finishing 93rd in the country, having scored only 24 touchdowns on 51 red zone trips. Iowa was the only Big Ten offense worse in the red zone last year.

For the passing game to improve, the receivers must improve. Isaiah Williams is a standout who grabbed 82 catches for 715 yards

and five touchdowns last season. He has been and will continue to be the go-to guy, as he proved last year, catching almost 50 more balls than the next WR. Casey Washington from Round Rock, Texas (Pflugerville HS), is a solid veteran but is not that explosive. For the offense to take another step, this position group will have to get much better. Outside of those top two, the only other receiver with extensive experience is Pat Bryant, who had 34 catches last year for 450 yards and a couple of TDs. Losing Chase Brown at running back will definitely be felt, but the coaching staff has a couple of players they feel confident with in the running game behind their solid offensive line.



Michael Reaves/Getty Images

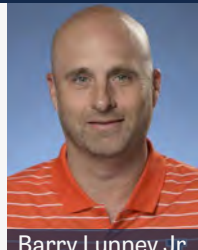
### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Bret Bielema

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Barry Lunney Jr.

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Aaron Henry

### DEFENSE

With former defensive coordinator Ryan Walters now at Purdue, head coach Brett Bielema looked in-house and promoted secondary coach Aaron Henry to be the new defensive coordinator

The whole front seven is back. The starting defensive line is as good as any in all of college football. The combination of Keith Randolph Jr. and Jer'Zhan Newton make up one of the top interior defensive lines in the country. The depth on the defensive line is not great, however, the starters are great. The Fighting Illini can potentially have four go to the NFL.

The coaching staff loves what the Illini have at linebacker as well. Freshman All-American Gabe Jacas returns at one of the outside spots, and the coaching staff feels he could be the next elite pass rusher. Tarique Barnes brings a ton of experience on the inside.

There is plenty of rebuilding to do in the secondary after losing No. 5 overall NFL draft pick CB Devon Weatherspoon. The Fighting Illini had the most talented secondary in the Big Ten last year. Four of five starters are gone, including three ultra-talented NFL draft picks. A couple of transfers will get significant playing time like Demetrius Hill from FIU playing safety. A couple of 2022 true freshmen that had substantial playing time could start in the secondary. They have bodies and depth, but where everyone will fit in is to be determined.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Caleb Griffin is a reliable veteran kicker. Punter Hugh Robertson needs to get better as he ranked toward the bottom of the Big Ten in net punting average (39.8).

### SUMMARY

For Illinois in 2023, there is a strong foundation in the trenches, but the QB and RB positions are unknowns. How the new-look secondary shakes out will be very interesting. Illinois ran more man coverage than every other team in the country in 2022, and they did some unique work with the secondary with their blitz packages. The offense will need to step up to make up for the likely defensive regression.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		TOLEDO ROCKETS
FRIDAY SEP. 8	AT		KANSAS JAYHAWKS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		FLORIDA ATLANTIC OWLS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		PURDUE BOILERMAKERS
FRIDAY OCT. 6	VS		NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		MARYLAND TERRAPINS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		WISCONSIN BADGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		INDIANA HOOSIERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		IOWA HAWKEYES
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS



## INDIANA HOOSIERS

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Tom Allen

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Walt Bell

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Chad Wilt

### ■ OFFENSE

The starting quarterback for the Hoosiers in 2023 will be one of two freshmen. Either Tennessee transfer and former 2022 four-star recruit Tayven Jackson or Brendan Sorsby from Corinth, Texas (Lake Dallas HS). Neither has much experience at all (combined 10 pass attempts). It will probably be Tayven Jackson, given his upside, but do not count out the Texas boy.

At running back, Indiana returns its second and third leading rushers from last season in Josh Henderson and Jaylin Lucas. Wake Forest transfer Christian Turner also adds more depth. Henderson was quietly decent last year, as he forced a missed tackle on a third of his 89 rushing attempts and is also a threat in the pass game.

While the offensive line boasts plenty of experience, it was not exactly a great group last season, as it ranked 127th in offensive line yards as well as ranking in the triple digits in most offensive line stats.

The receiving corps loses two of its top three from last season, but at least it returns one of its best from last season in Cam Camper from Lancaster, Texas (Lancaster HS). Outside of Camper and 2022 fourth leading receiver Andison Coby (18 rec., 237 yds., 1 TD), there are questions. Four-star freshman Omar Cooper might get involved early. One

name to keep an eye out for is DeQuece Carter. Carter is a transfer from Fordham, and last year Carter went off (56 rec., 1,167 yds., 13 TDs). Indiana will need Carter to adjust to Big Ten life quickly to help an otherwise revamped receiving group.



### ■ DEFENSE

The Hoosiers will be relying on transfers at every level of their defense this fall. Last season Indiana finished 119th in total defense. The good news for Indiana is that there is much more room to improve, especially with a whole new batch of players to work with!

The defensive line will be filled with a bunch of new players who have plenty to prove. Western Michigan transfer defensive end Andre Carter is a good pickup, as he was second-team All-MAC last season.

Like the defensive line, the linebackers will be a revamped position group as well. This position group has arguably even more question marks than the defensive line, as the Hoosiers lost a good amount of talent through the portal from this position group. At least Aaron Casey, who led the team in tackles and tackles for loss, is back to man one of the spots.

Indiana lost both starting cornerbacks and safeties from last year's team, but did a decent job through the portal. Kobe Minor from Corinth, Texas (Lake Dallas HS), a transfer from Texas Tech, and Texas transfer Jamier Johnson both have collegiate experience and will likely be the two starting corners. Safety has much less experience than the corners do, and it's not like the corners have a ton either. The whole Indiana defense will be relying on transfers this fall.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

Punter James Evans is back, but kicker is a question. Backup running back Jaylin Lucas is back as both a punt and kickoff returner. Lucas was an All-Big Ten and All-American kickoff returner last season.

### SUMMARY

Indiana will need its freshman quarterbacks to play well immediately with the way things look for their defense. In the current era of college football with NIL and the transfer portal, it will be hard for teams like Indiana to maintain consistent success. Indiana finished with four wins last season. It will be difficult to better that win total this fall for the Hoosiers.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		OHIO STATE BUCKEYES
FRIDAY SEP. 8	VS		INDIANA STATE SYCAMORES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		LOUISVILLE CARDINALS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		AKRON ZIPS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		MARYLAND TERRAPINS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		MICHIGAN WOLVERINES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		WISCONSIN BADGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		PURDUE BOILERMAKERS



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Kirk Ferentz

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brian Ferentz

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Phil Parker

## IOWA HAWKEYES

### ■ OFFENSE

The Hawkeyes bring back the Power Five's worst offense, including offensive coordinator Brian Ferentz. One hundred fourteen career starts return from an offensive line that needs improvement in every facet. Lucky for them, HC Kirk Ferentz is an O-line guru. Something that the offensive line didn't have last season was experience. At the very least, they'll have that in 2023.

Perhaps the most noteworthy pickup in the transfer portal for the Hawkeyes (yes, they used the portal) was former Michigan starting quarterback Cade McNamara. McNamara is certainly an upgrade at quarterback. He should be healthy coming into this season so expectations will be high.

At receiver, Iowa has sixth-year senior Nico Ragaini as a reliable target. One of the more underrated transfers since the season concluded was former Ohio State receiver Kaleb Brown's announcement that he was transferring to Iowa. The former four-star recruit is the highest rated receiver in Iowa history. The tight ends are good (per usual) and will be heavily utilized in the offense. Luke Lachey returns after a 398-yard and four-touchdown season. Of all running backs with at least 150 rushing attempts in 2022, Kaleb Johnson finished 18th in elusiveness, with 66% of his yards being after first

contact as a true freshman. If there is any improvement along the offensive line, Johnson could break through this season for his sophomore campaign.

### ■ DEFENSE

Iowa was special last year. Defensive coordinator Phil Parker is one of the best in the business. They may not be as special as last season, but they will still be a strong bunch, as they traditionally are.

The defensive line lacks size, but the pass rush is great. We will see how they fare straight up against the run.

The Hawkeyes do not have the experience as they did last year at linebacker. However, the top three linebackers are gone. Iowa is a linebacker factory, so they will put out another three from the conveyor belt. Nick Jackson is a huge pickup from Virginia to pair with presumed starter Jay Higgins.

They lose a couple of stars in the secondary, but they will still be really good with guys like Cooper DeJean and Quinn Schulte. Xavier Nwankpa, a former five-star recruit, could be one of the biggest breakthrough defensive backs in college football

with an increased role this fall. Nwankpa finished last season on a strong note with a pick-six in Iowa's 21-0 shutout victory against Kentucky in the Music City Bowl.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

One of the best in the country as you can see here:

Iowa's returning punter, Tory Taylor, had the following stats last year:

Punts - 82 (T-1st)

Punt Yards - 3725 (1st)

Punts Inside the 20 - 38 (1st)

Punts Inside the 10 - 20 (1st)

Kicker Drew Stevens returns for his sophomore year after a breakthrough campaign as a true freshman last year kicking 16/18 (88.89%) on FGs and 24/24 on XPs.

## SUMMARY

There are no secrets about this team. Struggle offensively, but have tremendous special teams and defense. No other team in 2022 averaged 20 points per game or fewer to win more than six games. There have been only four other teams to do so since 2000. Like it or not, Iowa knows how to win this way, which is a credit to Kirk Ferentz. If they can have just an average offense, especially given how wide open the West division is, they could easily play for a Big Ten championship. They almost did it last year with the worst Power Five offense in the country.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		UTAH STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		IOWA STATE CYCLONES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		WESTERN MICHIGAN BRONCOS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		PURDUE BOILERMAKERS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		WISCONSIN BADGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI
FRIDAY NOV. 24	AT		NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS





## MARYLAND TERRAPINS

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Michael Locksley

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kevin Sumlin



Josh Gattis

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brian Williams

### OFFENSE

Taulia Tagovailoa is back, and he holds a ton of records for passing statistics at Maryland. Who he will throw the ball to, though, is a bigger question than it was at this point last year.

As talented as the receivers were last season, they underperformed. They probably have more potential this season. Jashaun Jones leads the receiving corps. The coaching staff has raved about Octavian Smith Jr.'s playmaking abilities. Maryland also did a sneaky good job in the portal with getting a top 10 transfer receiver in West Virginia's Kaden Prather. Prather's 52 receptions for 500 yards and three TDs would have ranked first, second and second respectively for Maryland last year. FIU wide receiver transfer Tyrese Chambers is one of my favorite transfers this cycle. The rumors are he has meshed well with Taulia already. Both tight ends did well in the spring game and will be utilized in the passing game. Roman Hemby is a good running back. Hemby was third among all FBS freshmen with 1,287 yards from scrimmage with 10 touchdowns. The offensive line loses four starters,

but they were not that great to begin with after ranking 126th in pass downs sack rate. They were decent overall in line yards (41st). They did struggle overall in pass protection. There is not a ton of depth, and they will be relying on transfers.

### DEFENSE

They were a pleasant surprise last season, especially against the run, ranking 40th in run defense compared to 68th in passing yards allowed. The defensive line will be going through a bit of a rebuild, however. Tommy Akingbesote is a good tackle, but the rest of the line is filled with questions. St. Francis (PA) defensive end transfer Donnell Brown is one to watch. We will see how he does moving up in competition.

Maryland's strength on defense will be the linebackers, as everyone returns. The secondary was the weakness last season, and it returns mostly intact at safety and returns a talented cover corner in Tarheeb Still. Cincinnati transfer Ja'Quan Sheppard brings valuable experience opposite Still. Maryland will look to make strides in their pass defense.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Harrison Beattie will step in for second-team All-Big Ten kicker Chad Ryland. Punter Colton Spangler returns after averaging 45 yards per punt last season.



### SUMMARY

The revamped receiving corps might even be better than what last year's receivers turned out to be. The offensive line, though, could be an issue unless all the transfers and youngsters mesh well together and quickly. Maryland has never been known for its defense, and unless the pass defense turns things around, the Terrapins will continue to struggle against the top half of the Big Ten East. However, it should be noted that the first half of the Terps' 2023 schedule is very manageable. A bowl game and winning record are very attainable this season, especially with Taulia Tagovailoa back for his senior year.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		TOWSON TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		CHARLOTTE 49ERS
FRIDAY SEP. 15	VS		VIRGINIA CAVALIERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		INDIANA HOOSIERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		OHIO STATE BUCKEYES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		MICHIGAN WOLVERINES
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS



## MICHIGAN WOLVERINES

### ■ OFFENSE

Michigan usually does not pass a lot, but it will need to improve the passing game to meet its national championship expectations. Quarterback J.J. McCarthy will need to take the next step for the Wolverines this year if they want to do more than just win a conference championship. McCarthy was 82nd in the country in passing plays of 10 or more yards. McCarthy certainly has the upside, but he still has more to work on. The running game is really what this offense prides itself on. This season, it has two of the country's best running backs in Blake Corum and Donovan Edwards. The offensive line has been the best in the country for the last couple of years, and it could be again this season with both guards returning and with the help of a few transfers. Eight of the projected top 10 offensive linemen are seniors. The Wolverines do not have an elite player or that "alpha" wide receiver this season, but they do have experience. Two of the top three receivers return in Cornelius Johnson and Roman Wilson.

Both averaged more than 15 yards per catch last season. The tight ends are heavily featured in this offense, and the coaching staff loves Colston Loveland, who improved down the stretch last season as a freshman.

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Jim Harbaugh

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Sherrone Moore

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jesse Minter



Steve Clinkscale



### ■ DEFENSE

Despite losing so much to the NFL after the 2021 season, they did not drop off in 2022. The belief is that for this season, they want to create more pressure on standard downs. The vast majority of the pressures last season were on third down, manufactured by blitzing. The front seven returns mostly intact. Losing Mike Morris at edge hurts, but the Wolverines feel they are deeper and will use a rotating cast of players to create pressure. The defensive line got a big-time portal addition with pass-rushing specialist Josaiah Stewart from Coastal Carolina. Edge Jaylen Harrell returns after finishing second with 7.5 tackles for loss and 3.5 sacks. The linebackers are loaded with upside and experience. Earnest Hausmann is a great addition from Nebraska that only adds more depth to the linebackers. Junior Colson also returns after finishing second in solo tackles last year. In the secondary, the safeties are loaded with experience and talent. Cornerback depth is a little more questionable. UMass transfer Josh Wallace, who has four years of experience, is a big get for the cornerbacks. Rod Moore and his four interceptions that led the team last year return.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

For the first time in the last few years, the kicking game is a question. Tommy Doman is the likely candidate for both the kicking and punting duties.

### SUMMARY

Michigan has won back-to-back Big Ten championships and, for the first time this century, has Ohio State's number. The schedule is manageable, the roster is filled with talented seniors, there is finally upside at quarterback ... the path is there for the Wolverines to be special this season.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		EAST CAROLINA PIRATES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		UNLV REBELS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		BOWLING GREEN FALCONS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		INDIANA HOOSIERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		PURDUE BOILERMAKERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		MARYLAND TERRAPINS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		OHIO STATE BUCKEYES



## MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Mel Tucker

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jay Johnson

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Scottie Hazelton

### ■ OFFENSE

It will hurt the Spartans losing former starting quarterback Payton Thorne to Auburn. The remaining quarterbacks have thrown a combined 21 collegiate passes. Noah Kim and Katin Houser will compete for the starting job.

The receiving room also took a hit when top receiver Keon Coleman elected to transfer to Florida State. Although the receiving corps is not quite as green as the quarterbacks, there is a question on who will be the No. 1 guy. As of right now, Tre Mosley is the top guy, but this season for Michigan State, it will likely be more of a by-committee approach. With the questions at receiver, look for the tight ends to get more involved this season, including Maliq Carr, who has some upside.

The offensive line returns four starters, but they struggled last season (104th in line yards). It remains to be seen if this group improves, as most have been in East Lansing for a few years and have yet to take that next step.

The running backs are experienced, with last season's leading rusher Jalen Berger returning, but they can only go as far as the offensive line will allow.



### ■ DEFENSE

The past couple of seasons have not been great for this defense, as they have ranked 101st and 11th in total defense. With questions lingering on offense, the defense must step up this fall. The good news for Michigan State is the front seven will be the strength of the team. The defensive line was remade through the portal. The tackles could be decent with Simeon Barrow Jr., Maverick Hansen and Derrick Harmon providing quality size and depth. The defensive ends also have experience, and Michigan State addressed the position well in the portal, bringing in talented youngster from Katy, Texas (Tompkins HS), Tunmise Adeleye, who left Texas A&M.

The linebacker position brings back everyone. This is a good linebacker room overall. It's not elite, but they have depth and guys they can count on.

Just like in the previous seasons under Mel Tucker, the secondary remains the question. Michigan State was dead last in the country in 2022, forcing only two interceptions. The upside has not been there for this group, and that might change this season with talented underclassmen who will likely see significant snaps. The issue is experience and depth. Both safeties are very inexperienced, and the depth at both corner and safety could be better.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

Both the kicking and punting duties are in question as Michigan State struggled in place kicking last season and must replace Ray Guy Award finalist Bryce Baringer at punter.

### SUMMARY

With questions everywhere on offense, at quarterback, special teams and once again in the defensive secondary, Michigan State has its work cut out for it. With one of the most difficult schedules in the country, getting to a bowl game would be a successful season.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

FRIDAY SEP. 1	VS		CENTRAL MICHIGAN CHIPPEWAS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		RICHMOND SPIDERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		WASHINGTON HUSKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		MARYLAND TERRAPINS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		IOWA HAWKEYES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		MICHIGAN WOLVERINES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		OHIO STATE BUCKEYES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		INDIANA HOOSIERS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	AT		PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS



## MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH

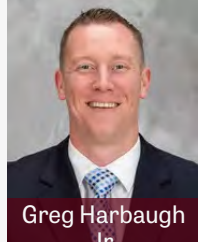


PJ Fleck

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Matt Simon



Greg Harbaugh Jr.

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Joe Rossi

### OFFENSE

Athan Kaliakmanis, the “Greek Rifle,” is an experienced quarterback who played down the stretch for the Golden Gophers last season. The Greek Rifle has a big arm, but he threw more interceptions than touchdowns with a 54% completion percentage. He also took more sacks than he should have given the lack of pressure he received. He improved a little as last year wore on and will look to carry that improvement into this fall.

At running back, Mohamed Ibrahim, a Golden Gopher great, will no longer be in the backfield. Western Michigan transfer running back Sean Tyler will add speed to the running back group. Bryce Williams returns after finishing third on the team with three touchdowns last season.

At receiver, Minnesota is arguably the best it has been since the 2019 season. Chris Autman-Bell is back for a seventh year with the Golden Gophers. Autman-Bell has nearly 2,000 receiving yards in his Minnesota career. Two transfer receivers from the Group of Five, Elijah Spencer from Charlotte and Corey Crooms from Western Michigan, are great pickups. Spencer was Conference USA freshman of the year in 2021 and last year had over 50 catches for over 940 yards with a 16.5-yard average and nine TDs. Crooms had over 50

receptions and over 800 yards with a 14-yard average and five TDs. Leading receiver Daniel Jackson is back for his senior year as well. Brevyn Spann-Ford solidifies the pass-catching group as one of the best tight ends in college football. The Minnesota offensive line is usually one of the best in the nation. This season, there will be some questions on the interior, but tackle is settled. The interior of the offensive line must replace three six-year players. It should be noted the replacements will be upperclassmen.



### DEFENSE

Minnesota ranks outside the top 90 in defensive returning production for this season. The pass rush was not great last year (117th in sack rate), but they are still very good on this side of the ball because they do two things better than almost any other team in the country: eliminate explosive plays and execute a bend-don't-break style very well. Despite not being elite at rushing the passer the last couple of years, they have managed to rank in the top 10 in total defense in both 2021 and 2022. The talent is not equal to the defenses of Georgia and Alabama, but they play great as a unit. The buy-in is there, and defensive coordinator Joe Rossi is one of the best in the country. The defensive line brings back experience and figures to be the strength early on as the linebackers and secondary have questions. The linebacker corps will likely take a step back as they lose a couple to the portal and one to graduation. The coaching staff is high on Cody Lindenberg, and his experience will be counted on. The depth is very questionable around him, though. The biggest concern for Minnesota is cornerback depth. Tyler Bride is a transfer from Georgia Southern and brings much-needed experience because three of the top four corners are gone. Top corner Justin Walley and top safety Tyler Nubin return. Minnesota could be relying on freshmen and/or transfers in the secondary if injuries occur down the stretch.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Minnesota must replace kicker Matthew Trickett. Return man Quentin Redding is back as return man for both punts and kickoffs.

### SUMMARY

2024 seems like the year Gopher fans are pointing to. Given the loss of Ibrahim, who was second in the country in yards after contact, and with the experience of the receiving corps (four senior pass catchers), Minnesota might be switching its identity from a running team to more of a passing team. The last two years, this offense has seen a 7-to-3 run-to-pass ratio. Last season, Minnesota threw the ball more than only the service academies, but this might change in 2023. Defensively, combining not much depth at cornerback with the lack of a pass rush these last couple of seasons could spell trouble for the pass defense.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	VS		NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		EASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		LOUISIANA RAGIN' CAJUNS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		MICHIGAN WOLVERINES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		IOWA HAWKEYES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		PURDUE BOILERMAKERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		OHIO STATE BUCKEYES
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		WISCONSIN BADGERS



## NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Matt Rhule

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Marcus Satterfield

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tony White

### ■ OFFENSE

The Cornhuskers will want to be physical and run with pre-snap motion and take play-action shots down the field

Jeff Sims is a quality transfer quarterback from Georgia Tech. Sims is a very good runner, but he will need to cut down on the interceptions. He also needs to improve his footwork, but he has a ton of potential.

The power with Nebraska on the offensive line and running game has not been there in recent years. Matt Rhule will try to get that back for this team.

Last season's leading rusher, Anthony Grant, returns, but the depth is good, having the top four rushers back.

Transfer receiver Billy Kemp IV from Virginia might be one of the breakout candidates for this fall. He will be the go-to guy for Sims. Second-leading receiver Marcus Washington returns to provide another pass-catching option for Sims. The potential is there with this group of receivers, but the depth is not that great, so they will need

freshmen to step up.

Arizona State transfer Ben Scott is a very experienced offensive lineman and will slide in at center. Starting left tackle Teddy Prochazka has plenty of potential as a true sophomore. The depth is not there yet with this group.



### ■ DEFENSE

New defensive coordinator Tony White has his work cut out for him as Nebraska finished 100th in total defense last year. He runs a 3-3-5 scheme (three down lineman, three linebackers and 5 defensive backs). White is a good X's and O's type of coach that needs to get this defense back to a respectable place for the Nebraska Blackshirt defense. The front seven will be young, so they may take their lumps. The defensive line will likely be relying on freshmen on the two-deep if not in the starting lineup. Linebackers Luke Reimer and Nick Henrich return to lead the group. Secondary will likely be the strength of the defense early on as the top six guys by snap count return. Improvement is needed, though, as Nebraska finished 68th in pass yards allowed last season.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

Timmy Bleekrode returns at kicker after making 75% of his kicks last season. Nebraska returned only five punts last season. Billy Kemp IV should help in the return department.



Steven Branscombe/USA TODAY Sports

### SUMMARY

The vibes are high in Lincoln with first-year coach Matt Rhule. However, it will not be easy for Rhule in 2023, picking up the pieces from years past. The depth is not particularly great, as Nebraska could be relying on five to eight true/redshirt freshmen this year with significant snaps. It should be noted that in Rhule's first seasons at Temple and Baylor, he won two games and one game, respectively. Rhule's approach typically takes a couple of years. The clock is ticking to bring this once respected program back to prominence.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	AT		MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		COLORADO BUFFALOES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		NIU HUSKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		LOUISIANA TECH BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		MICHIGAN WOLVERINES
FRIDAY OCT. 6	AT		ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		PURDUE BOILERMAKERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		MARYLAND TERRAPINS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		WISCONSIN BADGERS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	VS		IOWA HAWKEYES





## NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



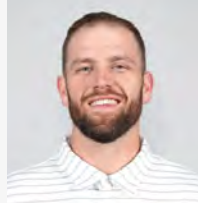
David Braun  
(Interim)

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mike Bajakian

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



David Braun

### ■ OFFENSE

Northwestern had 10 touchdowns and 17 interceptions from their quarterbacks last season. They have been bringing in transfers at QB for a few years, and nothing has worked. Brendan Sullivan will likely get the starting job for the fall. Sullivan will be throwing to a revamped receiving corps that does not have a go-to guy at the moment after losing their top two receivers from last year. More will be asked of Bryce Kirtz this season, given he is their top returnee. Cam Johnson from Arizona State is a sixth-year senior that adds some much-needed experience to the receiving room. Running back could have some upside if Cam Porter comes back strong from an ACL injury suffered two years ago. The offensive line was a strength for Northwestern last year, but now it is a big question mark. There are only a couple of players with noteworthy experience, and the depth is not as good up front.



### ■ DEFENSE

The defensive line is a big question for this defense, having lost so much from the past couple of seasons. Northwestern will be relying on a handful of transfers and the youngsters up front. The linebackers are experienced, but there is not much depth here. The starters are sure tacklers, but are not the fastest of linebackers. The secondary is the strength of the defense. Cornerback Garnett Hollis Jr. returns with three safeties that have an abundance of experience.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

Northwestern ranked last in the Big Ten in net punting and both punt and kickoff returns. Obvious improvement is needed.

### SUMMARY

Northwestern will be starting the season with drama surrounding its football program and their previous head coach Pat Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald was suddenly fired after allegations of hazing went on without his knowledge. Now, defensive coordinator David Braun will take over the HC duties. It looks like it will be another long year for Northwestern. The off-the-field drama surrounding the program will only make it more difficult for Northwestern going forward.

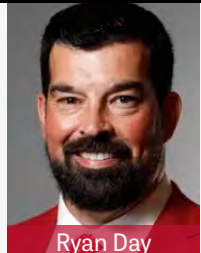
## 2023 SCHEDULE

SUNDAY SEP. 3	AT	<b>R</b>	RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	<b>UTEP</b>	UTEP MINERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	<b>D</b>	DUKE BLUE DEVILS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	<b>M</b>	MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	<b>PS</b>	PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	<b>HOWARD</b>	HOWARD BISON
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	<b>N</b>	NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	<b>M</b>	MARYLAND TERRAPINS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	<b>I</b>	IOWA HAWKEYES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	<b>W</b>	WISCONSIN BADGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	<b>P</b>	PURDUE BOILERMAKERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	<b>I</b>	ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Ryan Day

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brian Hartline

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jim Knowles

## OHIO STATE BUCKEYES

### OFFENSE

There will likely be a little regression at quarterback, but the question is how much? Kyle McCord is the projected starter because of his knowledge of the playbook. However, Devin Brown has the higher ceiling, but he has more to learn. McCord held the ball longer than needed a couple of times in the spring game.

Perhaps the biggest question for Ohio State this season is the offensive line – specifically tackle. The pressure rate will almost certainly increase this season. The Buckeyes lose both starting offensive tackles and the center. Last season's QB CJ Stroud was pressured on only 23% of dropbacks. Part of it is he knew where to go with the ball. Last year's starting OTs allowed only 19 pressures on nearly 900 pass block snaps. The projected starting tackles this season are not the same quality that Paris Johnson Jr. and Dawand Jones were in 2022.

The guards return, but they are more run blockers and maulers than pass blockers: Donovan Jackson (replacement level in pass protection) and Matthew Jones (slightly above average in pass protection). Ohio State picked up SDSU OT transfer Josh Simmons. Simmons brings experience, however he was a three-star recruit out of high school as an interior lineman.

Simmons last season at SDSU, as an offensive tackle with nearly 800 snaps at the Mountain West level. He played to a 47 out of 100 and replacement player level is at 60. It was not a good year. Ohio State's offensive line and specifically pass blocking is a big question this season.

The receiving corps is the best in the country, led by Marvin Harrison Jr. The talent in the receiving room in Columbus is just silly, with others like Emeka Egbuka and Julian Fleming, not to mention uber-talented underclassmen who may not even see the field much this season.

Running backs TreVeyon Henderson and Miyan Williams will be productive this season behind an offensive line that should be good at run blocking. Henderson and Williams combined for more than 1,000 yards with 21 touchdowns last year and could improve on those numbers this season with an inexperienced QB. That does not even include sophomore Dallas Hayden, who ran for 553 yards and four touchdowns.

### DEFENSE

Jim Knowles is a great defensive coordinator. Can they take another step this season? This could and should be the best Ohio State defense since 2019. The Buckeyes are very talented at defensive line. The defensive ends, JT Tuimoloau and Jack Sawyer, have unlimited potential, but they have to be more consistent. The defensive tackles may not have the same level of upside the ends do, but they are still very good. Returning DT Michael Hall Jr. tied Sawyer for the lead with 4.5 sacks. Ohio State's linebackers are great, with seniors Tommy Eichenberg and Steele Chambers. Cody Simon, another senior, provides quality depth. The Buckeyes are loaded at safety. The corners need more established depth, but Denzel Burke is a good option on one side. Ohio State did get a couple of transfers that will help upgrade the cornerback room.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Punter Jesse Mirco is great, and Egbuka looks to be the established punt returner.

### SUMMARY

The biggest questions that linger for Ohio State are at two of the most important positions: quarterback and offensive line. With the talent at receiver and running back, they will have guys who can help raise the floor for the new quarterbacks. Pressure will be on the offensive tackles to support the young QBs. Quarterback play more than likely will determine the Buckeyes' season. The defense should be great in Knowles' second year as defensive coordinator, with improved consistent disruption from the defensive line and playmakers at linebacker and safety.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT		INDIANA HOOSIERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		YOUNGSTOWN STATE PENGUINS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		WKU HILLTOPPERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		NOTRE DAME FIGHTING IRISH
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		MARYLAND TERRAPINS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		PURDUE BOILERMAKERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		WISCONSIN BADGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		MICHIGAN WOLVERINES



Danny Karnik/AP Photo



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



James Franklin

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mike Yurcich

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Manny Diaz

## PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS

### OFFENSE

Highly touted sophomore QB Drew Allar takes over as starter. Allar has only 60 career attempts, but there is a reason he has received so much hype. He has the arm strength, the size and his release point is there. His accuracy needs some work, and his rhythm is not consistent. There is plenty of potential with Allar, but there is also improvement that needs to be made for his development. Penn State does return experience, but they have not been great. There are no awesome run blockers on the offensive line, and as a collective group last season, they ranked 60th in line yards and 106th in opportunity rate. They are better on passing down line yards (35th) and sack rate (22nd), but they aren't elite despite the running numbers. By having several linemen with starting experience returning, they may provide a higher ceiling for the Nittany Lions' offensive line. The running

backs are very good: Kaytron Allen and Nicholas Singleton are as good as you can get for a 1-2 RB punch in college football. They each had 10 or more rushing touchdowns and combined for more than 1,800 rushing yards. Receiver is a little bit of the opposite. Penn State loses its top two WRs. It is not great here, but they have a couple of decent receivers in KeAndre Lambert-Smith and Kent State transfer Dante Cephas. Lambert-Smith needs to take the next step and become the WR 1. Cephas is a great intermediate route runner. Florida State transfer Malik McClain brings some experience at receiver. The tight ends will be utilized heavily if the receivers do not pan out. The receiver room still has some more developing to do from top to bottom.

### DEFENSE

Much of the reason that Penn State is garnering spring and summer hype as a preseason top 10 team, aside from Allar, is the returning production on defense. The starting defensive ends are awesome, with one of the best pass rushes in the country. They are also deep at that position. The tackles are not that big overall, and there's no "dude" in the middle of the defensive line. They are fine at tackle, just not as talented as they are at defensive end with guys like Chop Robinson and Adisa Isaac. The linebacker corps is one of the best in the country, with everyone back. The sophomore Abdul Carter will be leading the way. The secondary loses a couple of its best players, but they should still be good. They bring back veterans in: Kalen King and Keaton Ellis, as well as a veteran corner opposite of King in Johnny Dixon.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Two key transfers in punter Riley Thompson (45.4 yards per punt) from Florida Atlantic and kicker Alex Felkins from Columbia, who was 11 of 16 (68.75%) on field goals, will look to establish themselves as the starting kickers.

### SUMMARY

The inexperience at quarterback and receiver might hurt Penn State, but the defense and running game should be enough to help the Nittany Lions at the very least challenge for double-digit wins. If the passing game does click, watch out.



Dan Rainville/USA Today Network



Dan Rainville/USA Today Network

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		DELAWARE BLUE HENS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		IOWA HAWKEYES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		UMASS MINUTEMEN
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		OHIO STATE BUCKEYES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		INDIANA HOOSIERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		MARYLAND TERRAPINS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		MICHIGAN WOLVERINES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	AT		MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS



## PURDUE BOILERMAKERS

### ■ OFFENSE

Replacing starting quarterback Aidan O'Connell will not be easy, but picking up quarterback Hudson Card from Austin, Texas (Lake Travis HS) via the transfer portal makes the transition into a new era for Purdue much easier. QB Card is no sure thing, but he did start a few games for the University of Texas. TJ Sheffield will likely be Card's early go-to target, but others will need to step up their game to make up for the loss of Charlie Jones, who was selected in the fourth round of the NFL draft this past April. Deion Burks brings some upside to the receiver position that lost plenty of production from last season. Purdue loses the right side of its offensive line, but the rest are back. The Purdue offensive line did the best job in some time last year opening up lanes for the running backs. The Boilermakers have a good running back in sophomore Devin Mockobee, and Dylan Downing also brings experience.

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Ryan Walters

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Graham Harrell

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kevin Kane



Mark Konezny/USA Today Sports



Zach Bolinger/Icon Sportswire via Getty Images

### ■ DEFENSE

The defensive line lost a lot of depth through the portal since the end of the Jeff Brohm era. Lots of questions remain on the defensive front that was deep last year.

The strength of the defense will likely be at linebacker with Kydran Jenkins leading the way along with former four-star recruit Nic Caraway. Khordae Sydnor returns at outside linebacker after racking up 4.5 sacks last season, second-best on the team.

In what was a seasoned secondary a year ago, Purdue loses its best in corner Cory Trice, who is now in the NFL. For this season, the strength of the secondary is on the back end with senior safeties Sanoussi Kane and Cam Allen.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

The role for the starting kicker will be a battle into fall camp. Punter Jack Ansell returns after averaging 41.9 yards per punt.

#### SUMMARY

Purdue had a breakthrough season in 2022, playing for the Big Ten Championship, but this year with first-year head coach and former Illinois defensive coordinator Ryan Walters, it will be an uphill battle to make a bowl game with one of the most difficult schedules in the Big Ten. The Boilermakers bring in new offensive coordinator Graham Harrell, so look for the offense to air it out this fall.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		FRESNO STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		SYRACUSE ORANGE
FRIDAY SEP. 22	VS		WISCONSIN BADGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		IOWA HAWKEYES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		OHIO STATE BUCKEYES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		MICHIGAN WOLVERINES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		INDIANA HOOSIERS



## RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS

### ■ OFFENSE

Rutgers' offense struggled last season, averaging 254 yards and 13 points per game against FBS opponents

The likely starting quarterback, Gavin Wimsatt, struggled last year with a 45% completion rate, which ranked second lowest among 146 FBS quarterbacks who attempted at least 125 passes. Multiple offensive linemen with starting experience return, but they must improve (91st in line yards). They especially must improve in passing downs situations (113th in pass downs line yards) with a revamped receiving corps this year.

Rutgers lost five of its top six pass catchers from last season. Chris Long is the leading returning wideout with 15 catches for 200 yards. None of the returning wideouts even saw 30 targets. Western Illinois transfer receiver Naseim Brantley is the receiver to look out for in Rutgers' receiving room. Rutgers' top two running backs return in Samuel Brown V and Kyle Monangai. They will be heavily leaned on with new offensive coordinator Kirk Ciarrocca (back for his second stint), given the looks of the receivers.

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



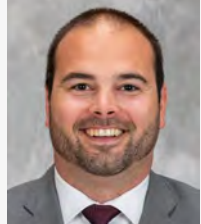
Greg Schiano

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kirk Ciarrocca

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Joe Harasymiak



USA Today Sports

### ■ DEFENSE

This should be a good defense, with Rutgers returning most of its starters from a group that finished 38th in total defense.

On the defensive front, Rutgers returns one of the more underappreciated defensive end tandems in the Big Ten in Aaron Lewis and Wesley Bailey. The tackles also return mostly intact. There is decent depth here for the Scarlet Knights.

The linebackers should also be a strength this season, as their top three return. Rutgers plays with a two-linebacker set.

The corners are decent, but must improve with another year of experience. Safety is the biggest question for Rutgers after losing their top two from last season. Rutgers added Flip Dixon from Minnesota, which helps, but depth might be an issue on the back end.



USA Today Sports

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

Jude McAtamney is back at kicker, while Ray Guy Award-winning punter Adam Korsak must be replaced.

#### SUMMARY

The Rutgers defense should rank in the top half of the Big Ten this season. Just about the whole offense has questions and needs major improvement in order for Rutgers to challenge for a few Big Ten wins and potentially the postseason. Rutgers has a manageable nonconference schedule, with all three nonconference opponents having to play at Rutgers. There are some wins to be had in September, and if Rutgers wins all its toss-up games, there is a chance they can finish with five or dare I say six wins.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

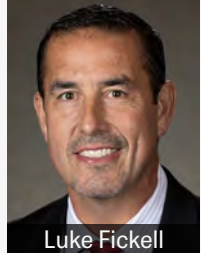
SUNDAY SEP. 3	VS	NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	TEMPLE OWLS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	MICHIGAN WOLVERINES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	WAGNER SEAHAWKS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	WISCONSIN BADGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	INDIANA HOOSIERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	OHIO STATE BUCKEYES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	IOWA HAWKEYES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	MARYLAND TERRAPINS



## WISCONSIN BADGERS

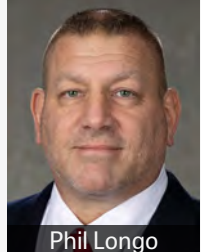
### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Luke Fickell

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Phil Longo

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mike Tressel

### OFFENSE

The Badgers are completely transitioning their style and scheme with Phil Longo coming in as the new offensive coordinator. Longo specializes in high-pace, hurry-up offenses he has run at Sam Houston State, Ole Miss and most recently North Carolina. SMU transfer quarterback from Waco, Texas (Midway HS), Tanner Mordecai threw four interceptions in the spring game. In his defense, the weather was poor, but that cannot be an excuse when playing in the Big Ten. Mordecai is still an upgrade over Graham Mertz at QB and will be counted on heavily for the offense. The offensive line has some good players, and we will see how effective they are with Wisconsin changing its blocking scheme to fit Longo's system. The running backs are exceptionally good, with Braelon Allen and Chez Mellusi. The running backs will be utilized more often in the passing game than they have been in the past in Madison, Wisconsin. Allen will look to build off his 1,242-yard and 11-touchdown campaign last season. At receiver, they want at least six guys heavily used in the lineup. For the first time in years - thanks to the transfer portal - they have depth at receiver. Chimere Dike returns after leading the

team in receptions, receiving yards and touchdowns last year.

### DEFENSE

New defensive coordinator and inside linebackers coach Mike Tressel will inherit a much more experienced defense than where they were a year ago. However, they do lose a couple of their top players. At defensive line, the biggest question is where the pressure will be coming from after losing Nick Herbig. The inside linebackers are the strength, with Maema Njongmeta and C.J. Goetz. The starters are in place in the secondary, but the depth is not great. Look for Hunter Wohler to have a breakthrough season.



John Fisher/Getty Images

### SPECIAL TEAMS

The kicking duties are unknown as of right now. The punting duties will be held by senior Jack Van Dyke.

### SUMMARY

This will not be your dad's or grandfather's Wisconsin Badgers. Things are changing in Madison with the Badgers now that they are, wait for it ... running the shotgun offense and could very well be airing it out this fall. How effective the Badgers are at this "new style" remains to be seen with a first-year head coach and a revamped coaching staff. Wisconsin could be labeled as one of the more "high variance" teams in the country when one considers all the change and the fact that the Big Ten West is wide open for the last year of the East and West divisions in the Big Ten.



Chris Coduto/Getty Images

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		BUFFALO BULLS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		WASHINGTON STATE COUGARS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		GEORGIA SOUTHERN EAGLES
FRIDAY SEP. 22	AT		PURDUE BOILERMAKERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		IOWA HAWKEYES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		OHIO STATE BUCKEYES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		INDIANA HOOSIERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS



## FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL PANTHERS

### OFFENSE

The Florida International Panthers have a big question mark at the quarterback position, as they have to decide between Grayson James from Duncanville, Texas, and Haden Carlson, a returning starter. Whoever gets the nod will have to lead a struggling offense that ranked near the bottom of the nation in several categories last season, including total yards and passing yards per game. The departure of Tyrese Chambers, the team's top receiver who transferred to Maryland, is a major blow to the passing game. However, the Panthers still have some veteran receivers who could step up and improve their production from last year. The running game also needs a boost from the offensive line, which was one of the worst in the country in creating space for the runners. The bright spot is Lexington Joseph, the team's leading rusher from last season, who returns to anchor the backfield.

### DEFENSE

The Florida International Panthers had a dismal performance on defense last season, allowing more than 500 yards and 40 points per game. They ranked 120th out of 127 teams in total defense, showing their inability to stop the run or the pass. The Panthers need to make some drastic changes and improvements on this side of the ball if they want to compete and win more games this season. They have to find ways to generate more pressure, force more turnovers and limit big plays. Any kind of improvement could help this team turn things around and become more competitive.

### SUMMARY

The Florida International Panthers managed to win four games last season, despite being the worst team in the nation according to some power ratings. They benefited from a favorable nonconference schedule and a weak conference that featured several teams with worse records than them. However, this season, the Panthers will have to face tougher opponents and prove that they are not just a bottom-dweller. They will have to improve their performance on both sides of the ball and show some signs of progress and potential. The Panthers will have to challenge themselves to exceed their win total from last year or at least improve their power rating this season.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	AT	LOUISIANA TECH BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	MAINE BLACK BEARS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	NORTH TEXAS MEAN GREEN
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	UCONN HUSKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	LIBERTY FLAMES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF	OFF
WEDNESDAY OCT. 4	AT	NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES
WEDNESDAY OCT. 11	VS	UTEP MINERS
WEDNESDAY OCT. 18	AT	SAM HOUSTON BEARKATS
WEDNESDAY OCT. 25	VS	JACKSONVILLE STATE GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	MIDDLE TENNESSEE BLUE RAIDERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	WKU HILLTOPPERS
FRIDAY DEC. 1		C-USA CHAMPIONSHIP

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Mike MacIntyre

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



David Yost

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jovan Dewitt



## JACKSONVILLE STATE GAMECOCKS

### OFFENSE

The quarterback position is in good hands with Zion Webb, who returns for a seventh year of eligibility. The running game should also be strong, featuring running backs Anwar Lewis and Malik Johnson, a transfer from ULM. The offensive line has four returning starters, providing stability and protection. At receiver, P.J. Wells, Sterling Galban, and Jamarye Joiner, a transfer from Arizona, bring experience and skill.

### DEFENSE

One of the strengths of the team is the defensive end duo of Chris Hardie and Jaylen Swain, who are both awesome pass rushers and run stoppers. They will be the leaders of a defense that has a lot of question marks and new faces. The team has brought in many transfers to fill the gaps in the defense, but their chemistry and performance are yet to be tested. The defense will have to prove itself on the field and overcome the challenges of playing together for the first time.

### SUMMARY

Jacksonville State faces a tough challenge in its inaugural season in the FBS, as it will have to compete against stronger opponents and deal with a lot of uncertainty on defense. The defense has many unknowns and will be composed of a lot of transfers, who will have to adjust quickly and play cohesively. The offense, on the other hand, will likely be the strength of the team, with experienced players at quarterback, running back, and receiver. The team will have to lean on its offense to score points and keep up with the competition. Reaching bowl eligibility will be a difficult but achievable goal for the team, if it can overcome the growing pains and find its identity in the FBS.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	VS	UTEP MINERS
SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	ETSU BUCCANEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	COASTAL CAROLINA CHANTICLEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	EASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLES
THURSDAY SEP. 28	AT	SAM HOUSTON BEARKATS
WEDNESDAY OCT. 4	AT	MIDDLE TENNESSEE BLUE RAIDERS
TUESDAY OCT. 10	VS	LIBERTY FLAMES
TUESDAY OCT. 17	VS	WKU HILLTOPPERS
WEDNESDAY OCT. 25	AT	FIU PANTHERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	LOUISIANA TECH BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES
FRIDAY DEC. 1		C-USA CHAMPIONSHIP

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Rich Rodriguez

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Rod Smith

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Zac Alley





## LIBERTY FLAMES

### OFFENSE

The quarterback position is unsettled, as both Johnathan Bennett and Cedar Hill, Texas' Kaidon Salter, return from last year, but neither impressed. They both completed less than 59% of their passes and had only three more touchdowns than interceptions. The receiving corps also took a hit, losing a lot of production, but Noah Frith has some experience and Reese Smith, a transfer from West Virginia, adds some depth. The running game is another question mark, as Liberty has to replace its top two running backs from last year. The only solid unit on offense is the offensive line, which has three returning starters.

### DEFENSE

The defense faces a major challenge this season, as it has to rebuild its front six, which was the source of its disruptive play last season. The defense will have to rely on mostly new and unproven players on the defensive line and at linebacker, and hope that they can replicate the havoc that their predecessors created. The defense will also have to overcome its lack of experience and continuity, as it has lost over half of its production from last season.

### SUMMARY

Liberty has a chance to make a big splash this season, if it can maintain its defensive level and get better quarterback play. The team has a favorable schedule that could be one of the easiest in the nation, and it could take advantage of that to rack up wins and gain national attention.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	BOWLING GREEN FALCONS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	BUFFALO BULLS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	FIU PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF	OFF
THURSDAY OCT. 5	VS	SAM HOUSTON BEARKATS
TUESDAY OCT. 10	AT	JACKSONVILLE STATE GAMECOCKS
TUESDAY OCT. 17	VS	MIDDLE TENNESSEE BLUE RAIDERS
TUESDAY OCT. 24	AT	WKU HILLTOPPERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	LOUISIANA TECH BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	OLD DOMINION MONARCHS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	UMASS MINUTEMEN
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	UTEP MINERS
FRIDAY DEC. 1		C-USA CHAMPIONSHIP



Liberty Athletics

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Jamey Chadwell

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Willy Korn



Newland Isaac

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Skylor Magee



## LOUISIANA TECH BULLDOGS

### OFFENSE

The offense has a new leader in Hank Bachmeier, who transfers in from Boise State and takes over the starting quarterback role. He has a lot of weapons at his disposal, such as Smoke Harris, Cyrus Allen, and Decoldest Crawford, a transfer receiver from Nebraska, who form a formidable receiving corps. The running game also gets a boost from Craig "Sqwir" Williams, a transfer running back from Baylor, who hails from Crosby, Texas. Last season's leading rusher, Marquis Crosby, also returns after his 918 yards and nine touchdown season.

### DEFENSE

The defense is the biggest concern for Louisiana Tech, as it was one of the worst in the nation last year. The defense has to improve its performance and efficiency, especially against the run. The front six has some experience, but that did not translate into results last season, as they allowed 243 yards per game on the ground and ranked 122nd in defensive line yards. The defense also has to improve its tackling, which was very poor and led to many missed opportunities and big plays. The defense has to show some progress this season, or it will hold back the team.

### SUMMARY

Louisiana Tech had a strong recruiting class, ranking 78th in the nation, which is the best they have done in over a decade. The Bulldogs also added 17 players from the transfer portal, boosting their depth and talent. LA Tech was close to winning more games last season, as they lost three games by one score, so their 3-9 record was somewhat misleading. The team has the potential to challenge for a bowl game this season, if it can capitalize on its offensive firepower. The key question is whether the defense can improve and complement the offense.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	VS	FIU PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	SMU MUSTANGS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	NORTHWESTERN STATE DEMONS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	NORTH TEXAS MEAN GREEN
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS
FRIDAY SEP. 29	AT	UTEP MINERS
THURSDAY OCT. 5	VS	WKU HILLTOPPERS
TUESDAY OCT. 10	AT	MIDDLE TENNESSEE BLUE RAIDERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF	OFF
TUESDAY OCT. 24	VS	NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	LIBERTY FLAMES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	SAM HOUSTON BEARKATS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	JACKSONVILLE STATE GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	OFF	OFF
FRIDAY DEC. 1	VS	C-USA CHAMPIONSHIP

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Sonny Cumbie

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jake Brown



Scott Parr

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Scott Power



Tom Morris/LA Tech Athletics





## MIDDLE TENNESSEE BLUE RAIDERS

### OFFENSE

The offense has a lot of turnover, especially at the quarterback and receiver positions. Chase Cunningham, the starting quarterback from last year, is gone, as well as the top three receivers. The new starter will be either Nicholas Vattisto or DJ Riles, who will have to prove themselves as leaders and playmakers. The receivers also have some experience with Elijah Metcalf and DJ England-Chisolm, but they will have to step up their game and fill the void left by the departures. The coaching staff is confident in the offensive line, which has some continuity, but it will have to improve its performance after ranking 117th in the nation in offensive line yards last year. The only bright spot on offense is the return of starting running back Frank Peasant, who will have to carry the load for the running game.

### DEFENSE

The Blue Raiders have one of the best defenses in Conference USA this season, but they also have some holes to fill. They lost some of their top players, such as defensive end Jordan Ferguson and defensive backs Decorian Patterson and Deidrick Stanley, who were instrumental in creating turnovers. The defense may not be as opportunistic this season, but it should still be able to create havoc with its disruptive play. The defense will rely on Zaylin Wood and Marley Cook to lead the defensive line, and hope that the other players have developed enough to complement them.

### SUMMARY

The team has lost all five of its captains from last year, who were the leaders and the glue of the team. MTSU also benefited from a +12 turnover margin last year, which masked its negative half yards per play. The team will have to find new ways to win this year, but it has an advantage in having Rick Stockstill as its coach, who is very experienced and going into his 18th year. The team also has a chance to make some noise this year, as Conference USA is not as strong as it used to be after conference realignment.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT  ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE	TUESDAY OCT. 17	AT  LIBERTY FLAMES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT  MISSOURI TIGERS	SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS  MURRAY STATE RACERS	SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT  NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS  COLORADO STATE RAMS	SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS  FIU PANTHERS
THURSDAY SEP. 28	AT  WKU HILLTOPPERS	SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS  UTEP MINERS
WEDNESDAY OCT. 4	VS  JACKSONVILLE STATE GAMECOCKS	SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT  SAM HOUSTON BEARKATS
TUESDAY OCT. 10	VS  LOUISIANA TECH BULLDOGS	FRIDAY DEC. 1	C-USA CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Rick Stockstill

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mitch Stewart

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Scott Shafer



## NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES

### OFFENSE

The offense has a great foundation with dual-threat quarterback Diego Pavia, who returns for another season. He has plenty of weapons at his disposal, including two of the top three receivers and four regulars on the offensive line. The running game is also well-stocked, with the top two running backs, Jamoni Jones and Star Thompson, coming back. Pavia was second on the team in rushing last year, adding another dimension to the offense.

### DEFENSE

The defense faces a bigger challenge than the offense, as it has to replace a lot of key players from last year. The defense ranks 113th in the nation in returning production, meaning it has lost a lot of experience and talent. The most vulnerable position is the linebacker, which has to fill the void left by several departures. The linebacker position will have to find new leaders and playmakers, and adjust to a new scheme and coordinator. The defense will have to overcome its lack of continuity and depth, and prove itself on the field.

### SUMMARY

The Aggies have a lot of excitement on offense, as they have a lot of returning players who rank in the top 25 in the nation in offensive production. New Mexico State surprised many people last season by playing in a bowl game, but the question is whether that was a fluke or a sign of things to come. Jerry Kill and the Aggies have higher expectations than in recent years, and they will have to prove that they can sustain their success and compete in the conference.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	VS  UMASS MINUTEMEN
SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS  WESTERN ILLINOIS LEATHERNECKS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT  LIBERTY FLAMES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT  NEW MEXICO LOBOS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT  HAWAII RAINBOW WARRIORS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF OFF
WEDNESDAY OCT. 4	VS  FIU PANTHERS
WEDNESDAY OCT. 11	VS  SAM HOUSTON BEARKATS
WEDNESDAY OCT. 18	AT  UTEP MINERS
TUESDAY OCT. 24	AT  LOUISIANA TECH BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS  MIDDLE TENNESSEE BLUE RAIDERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT  WKU HILLTOPPERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT  AUBURN TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS  JACKSONVILLE STATE GAMECOCKS
FRIDAY DEC. 1	C-USA CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Jerry Kill

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tim Beck

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Nate Dreiling





## SAM HOUSTON STATE BEARKATS

### OFFENSE

The offense had a dismal performance last season, as three different quarterbacks had a dismal 45% completion percentage, six touchdowns and 10 interceptions. All of them are back this year, but they will have to improve their passing accuracy and decision making. They will also have to cope with the loss of their top receiver from last year and the inexperience of three new offensive line starters. The quarterbacks can run a little bit, but that may not be enough to keep the defenses honest. The current projected starter is Keegan Shoemaker, who will have to prove himself as a leader and a playmaker. The only bright spot on offense is the return of last year's leading rusher Zach Hrbacek from Troy, Texas, who will have to carry the load for the running game.

### DEFENSE

The defense will rely on its linebackers to make plays and stop the run, as they have two talented players in Kavian Gaither from Waco, Texas (Connally HS) and Jaylen Phillips from Katy, Texas. Gaither and Phillips are both versatile and athletic, and can also blitz the quarterback or drop into coverage. The secondary is also a solid unit, with experienced players who can defend the pass and create turnovers. The weak link of the defense is the defensive line, which lost a lot of continuity from last year. The defensive line will have to rebuild its chemistry and find its identity, as it will face tough challenges from the opposing offensive lines.

### SUMMARY

Sam Houston faces a steep learning curve in its first year in the FBS, and it will have to improve its offense significantly to have any success. The offense will have to start with better quarterback play, as the position was inconsistent and ineffective last year. The offense will also have to improve its running game, passing game, and offensive line play, as it will face tougher defenses in the FBS. The defense has some strengths in the secondary, which should be able to defend the pass and create turnovers. However, the defense also has some weaknesses in the defensive line, which is not ideal for a team that is moving up to the FBS. The defensive line will have to overcome its lack of experience and depth, and hold its own against the opposing offensive lines. Sam Houston will have a difficult first year in the FBS, but it will also have an opportunity to grow and compete.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT  BYU COUGARS	WEDNESDAY OCT. 18	VS  FIU PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS  AIR FORCE FALCONS	WEDNESDAY OCT. 25	VS  UTEP MINERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	OFF OFF	SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS  KENNESAW STATE OWLS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT  HOUSTON COUGARS	SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT  LOUISIANA TECH BULLDOGS
THURSDAY SEP. 28	VS  JACKSONVILLE STATE GAMECOCKS	SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT  WKU HILLTOPPERS
THURSDAY OCT. 5	AT  LIBERTY FLAMES	SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS  MIDDLE TENNESSEE BLUE RAIDERS
WEDNESDAY OCT. 11	AT  NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES	FRIDAY DEC. 1	C-USA CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



KC Keeler

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brad Cornelsen

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Clayton Carlin



Joe Morris



## UTEP MINERS

### OFFENSE

The offense has some continuity, as Gavin Hardison returns as the starting quarterback. He also has his top target back, Tyrin Smith from Cibolo, Texas (Steele HS), who decided to come back to El Paso. Smith was a 1,000-yard receiver last season and was the clear leader of the receiving corps, as he had more than four times as many receiving yards as the second-best receiver. The next-best receiver from last year is also back and will likely have a bigger role this season. The offensive line is the backbone of the UTEP offense, as it has four returning starters, including a potential all-conference interior led by starting guards Justin Mayers from Frisco, Texas (Reedy HS) and Elijah Klein. The running game also has an experienced player in Deion Hankins from Parkland High School in El Paso, who is the returning running back.

### DEFENSE

The defense has some experience, as eight players who played at least 200 snaps last season are back. The defense is strongest on the defensive line, with Keenan Stewart and Praise Amaewhule from Katy, Texas (Katy Taylor HS) leading the way. The secondary also has some stability, as Torey Richardson, from Tomball, Texas (Memorial HS), returns from injury to play one of the cornerback spots, and AJ Odums, a transfer from New Mexico from Houston, Texas (Westfield HS), will play the other.

### SUMMARY

The UTEP football team has a tough schedule ahead of them, facing some of the strongest opponents in the country. However, they should not be underestimated or overlooked by their rivals. The Miners have a talented roster, a motivated coach and a loyal fan base that will support them through thick and thin. UTEP may not be favored to win many games this season, but they have the potential to surprise everyone with their performance and results. They could be a sneaky good team that challenges the expectations and makes some noise in the conference.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	AT  JACKSONVILLE STATE GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS  UIW CARDINALS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT  NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT  ARIZONA WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS  UNLV REBELS
FRIDAY SEP. 29	VS  LOUISIANA TECH BULLDOGS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF OFF
WEDNESDAY OCT. 11	AT  FIU PANTHERS
WEDNESDAY OCT. 18	VS  NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES
WEDNESDAY OCT. 25	AT  SAM HOUSTON BEARKATS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS  WKU HILLTOPPERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	OFF OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT  MIDDLE TENNESSEE BLUE RAIDERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS  LIBERTY FLAMES
FRIDAY DEC. 1	C-USA CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Dana Dimel

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Scotty Ohara

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Bradley Dale Peveto



## WESTERN KENTUCKY HILLTOPPERS

### OFFENSE

The Western Kentucky Hilltoppers have a potent passing attack that should keep the fans entertained and the opponents on their toes. They have Austin Reed, one of the best quarterbacks in the nation, who threw for more than 3,000 yards last season. They also have Malachi Corley, a dynamic slot receiver who led the team in receptions and yards last season. In addition, they have Michael Mathison and Dalvin Smith, two reliable targets who were among the top five receivers on the team last year. The Hilltoppers also added some talented transfers from power five schools, who have shown flashes of big-play ability in their previous stops. Blue Smith, Jimmy Holiday and Ze'Vian

### DEFENSE

The Western Kentucky Hilltoppers have a lot of uncertainty and inexperience on defense, as they lost most of their key players from last season. They rank near the bottom of the nation in defensive returning production, meaning they have to rebuild almost every position group. The defensive line has to find new starters and backups, as they lost five of their top six players in terms of tackles and sacks. The linebackers have to fill the void left by three of their top four tacklers, who graduated or transferred. The secondary has to cope with the departure of two of their best defensive backs, who were leaders and playmakers in the back end. The Hilltoppers will have to rely on a lot of new faces

and young players to step up and perform on defense. The only exception is JaQues Evans, the star pass rusher who led the team with 8.5 sacks last season. He is the lone returning starter on the defensive line and the best player on the defense. He will have to carry a heavy load and provide some leadership and stability for the defense.

Capers have all averaged more than 10 yards per catch in their careers, but they have not had much opportunity to showcase their skills in larger roles. They will have a chance to prove themselves and add more depth and diversity to the passing game. The main concern for the offense is the offensive line, which has to protect Reed and open lanes for the running game. The Hilltoppers will rely on Davion Ervin-Poindexter, who was the team's leading rusher last season with 525 yards, to carry the load in the backfield.

### SUMMARY

The Western Kentucky Hilltoppers have a high-powered offense that will have to shoulder most of the responsibility for the team's success, given the lack of experience and depth on defense. They will have to improve their efficiency and execution in the red zone, both on offense and defense, as they ranked poorly in both categories last season. The Hilltoppers have a realistic chance to win the Conference USA title, as they have more talent and firepower on offense than most of their rivals, especially in the skill positions. They have a star quarterback, a dynamic slot receiver, a solid running back and some promising transfers at wide receiver. They will have to outscore their opponents and overcome their defensive weaknesses to achieve their goals.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	USF BULLS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	HOUSTON BAPTIST HUSKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	OHIO STATE BUCKEYES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	TROY TROJANS
THURSDAY SEP. 28	VS	MIDDLE TENNESSEE BLUE RAIDERS
THURSDAY OCT. 5	AT	LOUISIANA TECH BULLDOGS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF	OFF
TUESDAY OCT. 17	AT	JACKSONVILLE STATE GAMECOCKS
TUESDAY OCT. 24	VS	LIBERTY FLAMES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	UTEP MINERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	SAM HOUSTON BEARKATS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	FIU PANTHERS
FRIDAY DEC. 1		C-USA CHAMPIONSHIP

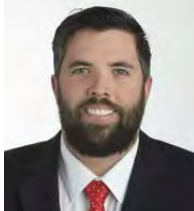
#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Tyson Helton

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR

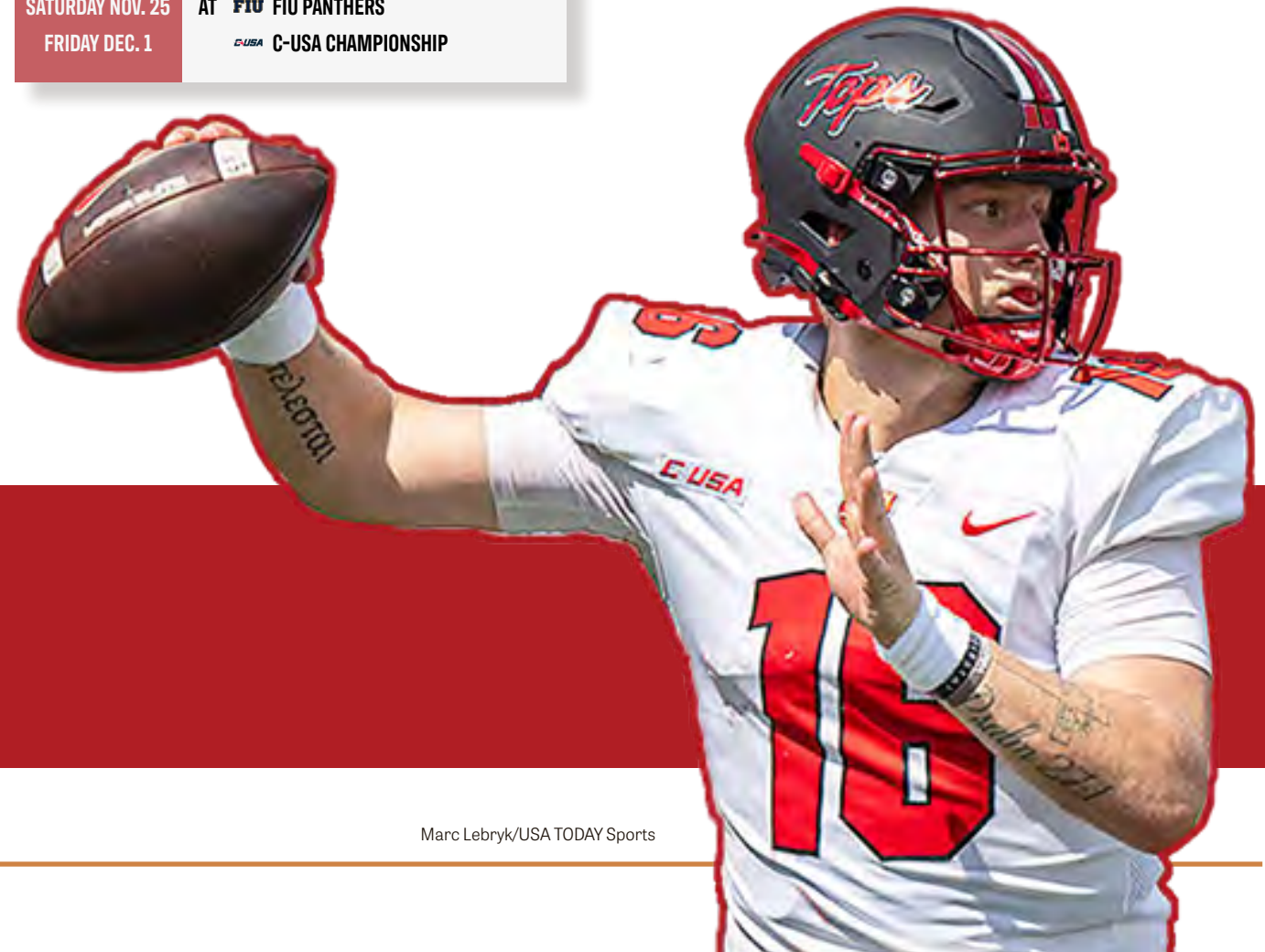


Drew Hollingshed

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tyson Summers



Marc Lebryk/USA TODAY Sports

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EL PASO, TEXAS



@MIDFADEPAPI

(915) 330-1107

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# ANJERA ONSEN

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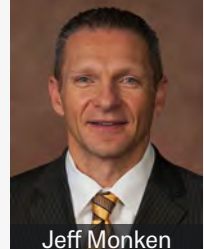
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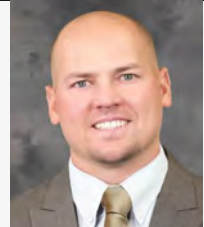
## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



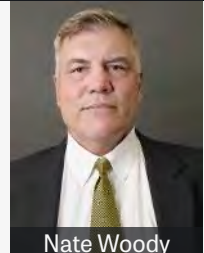
Jeff Monken

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Drew Thatcher

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Nate Woody

## ARMY BLACK KNIGHTS

### OFFENSE

Army is known for its triple-option offense, which relies on a lot of cut blocks and below-the-waist blocking. However, Army might have to adjust its offense this year, as the NCAA changed its rules last spring, banning those types of blocks. Army also has to replace its top three quarterbacks from last year. The current starter is Bryson Daily, who barely played last year. He threw only one pass and ran for 163 yards. Army will have to lean on its experienced offensive line and fullbacks, who are the key to its running game. Tyson Riley and Jakobi Buchanan are the top returning backs. Isaiah Alston and Ay'Jaun Marshall are the top returning receivers, who both had six catches each, respectively, last year. Army will have to find a way to make its offense work, with a new quarterback and new rules.



### DEFENSE

The defense has a lot of experience and continuity, as it returns 10 of the 14 players who played more than 250 snaps last year. The defense will be led by seniors, who have played a lot of games for Army. However, the defense also needs to improve its performance against the better teams. The leader and star of the defense is senior captain linebacker Leo Lowin, who hails from Austin, Texas (Westlake HS). Lowin was the team's leading tackler last year, with 48 stops, three sacks and he also had two interceptions, the second-most on the team. Lowin is a versatile and reliable player, who can do it all for the defense. He will need some support from his teammates, as he is the anchor of the defense.

### SUMMARY

Army faces a tough challenge this year, as it has to deal with some changes and obstacles. Army has a harder schedule than usual, as it has to play some strong opponents, such as UTSA, Syracuse, Boston College and LSU. Army also has to break in a new starting quarterback, who has little experience and will have to run the triple-option offense. Army might also have to change its offense a bit, as the NCAA banned some of the blocks that Army used to execute its running game. Army will have to find a way to adapt and overcome these challenges, if it wants to reach a bowl game this year. It might be a difficult task, as Army needs six wins to become bowl eligible.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	ULM	ULM WARHAWKS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	DE	DELAWARE STATE HORNETS
FRIDAY SEP. 15	AT	UTSA	UTSA ROADRUNNERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	S	SYRACUSE ORANGE
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	BC	BOSTON COLLEGE EAGLES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	T	TROY TROJANS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	LSU	LSU TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	UMASS	UMASS MINUTEMEN
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	AF	AIR FORCE FALCONS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	HC	HOLY CROSS CRUSADERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	CC	COASTAL CAROLINA CHANTICLEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY DEC. 9	VS	N*	NAVY MIDSHIPMEN



COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH



Jim Mora

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Nick Charlton

DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Doug Shearer

## CONNECTICUT HUSKIES

### OFFENSE

The offense had a disappointing performance last year, but it could make a significant improvement this season with more experience under its belt. UConn boasts the 6th highest offensive returning production in the nation, meaning that almost all of its offensive players are back for another year. This could be a positive sign for the Huskies, especially in the interior of the offensive line, which is a solid unit. The receiving corps could also benefit from some transfers who could add more depth and talent. The quarterback position is still a question mark, as sophomore Zion Turner will likely take the reins, but he will have to overcome his accuracy after throwing more interceptions than touchdowns. However, he will have some help from the backfield, where sophomore Victor Rosa is

a promising prospect. Our scouting department has high praise for Rosa's quickness and agility, which helped him rack up 636 yards and 11 touchdowns last year. Devontae Houston, another productive running back who had 578 rushing yards, also returns to the offense.



### DEFENSE

The defense was a young and resilient group last season that exceeded expectations (70th). This season, they could make another leap with 12 of the 15 players who played at least 200+ snaps coming back. The defensive end duo of Eric Watts and Pryce Yates from San Antonio, Texas (Reagan HS) is a formidable pair for 2023. Watts led the team in sacks last season and Yates was right behind him. The safeties are also very talented and versatile. Senior linebacker Jackson Mitchell is a key leader who topped the team with 52 solo tackles and was third in sacks. The defensive backs, Malik Dixon-Williams and Chris Shearin, are very active and disruptive.

### SUMMARY

UConn achieved a remarkable feat last season by reaching a bowl game. The Huskies have a lot of continuity going into this season, as they rank 9th in the nation in returning production. However, the offense will have to show some progress for the Huskies to advance further. UConn benefited from some favorable matchups last year, so it remains to be seen if they can replicate or surpass last year's win total.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	VS		NC STATE WOLFPACK
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		GEORGIA STATE PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		FIU PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		DUKE BLUE DEVILS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		UTAH STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		RICE OWLS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		USF BULLS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		BOSTON COLLEGE EAGLES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		JAMES MADISON DUKES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		SACRED HEART PIONEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		UMASS MINUTEMEN





## MASSACHUSETTS MINUTEMEN

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Don Brown

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Steve Casula

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Keith Dudzinski

### OFFENSE

The offense has a lot of experience in the offensive line and some new additions at the quarterback and receiver positions from the transfer portal. The likely starter at quarterback will be Taisun Phommachanh, who came from Georgia Tech. The UMass offense was one of the worst in the nation last season, ranking 129th in total offense. They will have to improve significantly this season. George Johnson III, the leading receiver last year, is back for another year. Gino Campiotti, who was the second leading rusher on the team, switches to tight end.

### DEFENSE

The UMass defense has a chance to be the best it has been in recent years this season. They have 13 of the 18 players who played more than 200 snaps coming back and they also added some transfers from power five schools on this side of the ball. The key will be to improve the run defense, which was ranked 114th last season. If they can do that, this defense could be a pleasant surprise this year. The pass rush is a concern, as there is not much experience returning. However, the secondary has some playmakers, such as cornerback Jordan Mahoney, who led the team with three interceptions, and safety Tyler Rudolph, who was a reliable tackler with two interceptions.



Troy Taormina/USA TODAY Sports

### SUMMARY

The offense may still face some challenges, but the defense could be a strong point for the team. UMass would benefit from winning a few games, but this team may show more fight this year.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	AT		NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT		AUBURN TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		MIAMI (OHIO) REDHAWKS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		EASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		NEW MEXICO LOBOS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		ARKANSAS STATE RED WOLVES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		TOLEDO ROCKETS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		ARMY BLACK KNIGHTS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		MERRIMACK WARRIORS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		LIBERTY FLAMES
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		UCONN HUSKIES





## NOTRE DAME FIGHTING IRISH

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Marcus Freeman

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Gerard Parker

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Al Golden

### OFFENSE

The offense has a big advantage at quarterback, where Sam Hartman takes over. Hartman might be the best passer Notre Dame has had since the 2000s. He threw for 3,071 yards and 38 touchdowns last year at Wake Forest. The offensive line is always a strength for Notre Dame, and it improved as last year went on. Center Zeke Correll and tackles Blake Fisher and Joe Alt are outstanding. The guard position is the only concern. The running game was efficient but not explosive last year. It needs to improve its big-play ability. Audric Esteime, who rushed for 920 yards and 11 touchdowns last year, is the top returning back. The receivers have potential, but they have been the biggest question mark lately. Hartman should help them perform better, as he has a strong arm and accuracy. The receivers have talent, but they are mostly unproven. Deion Colzie and Tobias Merriweather have ability, but they had only 10 catches combined last year. The slot receivers are more experienced, with Jayden Thomas and Chris Tyree. The loss of tight end Michael Mayer, who was the top pass catcher last year with 67 receptions, will be hard to replace.

### DEFENSE

The defense had a major problem in the red zone last year. It allowed touchdowns on 27 of the 34 trips by opponents. The defensive line could be a weak spot this year. The pass rush is a huge question mark, as they lost their top sack leader from last year (10.5 sacks). They added a transfer from Ohio State, Javontae Jean-Baptiste, to play one of the end positions. The interior is also a big concern, as they lack size and experience. All the projected starters weigh less than 300 pounds, and only one returning defensive lineman who played significant snaps last year weighs more than 300 pounds. They need senior edge rusher Jordan Botelho to have a breakout season, as he is the only proven pass rusher on the roster. The linebackers are very experienced, but they do not have a lot of upside. The younger players are more athletic, but the starters are reliable but limited. Marist Liufau and JD Bertrand, who led the team with 67 tackles last year, are back. The corners are great, including Benjamin Morrison, who led the team with six interceptions last year. The starting safeties are good, but the depth at safety is poor. The safety group is not very talented from top to bottom.

### SUMMARY

Notre Dame has a big advantage at quarterback this year, as they added Sam Hartman, who transferred from Wake Forest. Hartman is a prolific passer, who threw for more than 3,000 yards and 30 touchdowns last year. He could be the best passer Notre Dame has had in a long time. However, Notre Dame also has some big question marks at other positions, especially at outside receiver and on the defensive line. The outside receivers are mostly unproven and inexperienced. They will need some of the young players to step up and produce. The defensive line is also a concern, as they lost most of their starters and playmakers from last year. They have little size and depth on the interior, and they lack a proven pass rusher on the edge. They will need some of the transfers and backups to fill the gaps and create pressure. Notre Dame has a chance to have another successful season, but they will need to overcome their weaknesses at outside receiver and on the defensive line.



Notre Dame Athletics

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	VS		NAVY MIDSHIPMEN
SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		TENNESSEE STATE TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		NC STATE WOLFPACK
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		CENTRAL MICHIGAN CHIPPEWAS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		OHIO STATE BUCKEYES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		DUKE BLUE DEVILS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		LOUISVILLE CARDINALS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		USC TROJANS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		PITT PANTHERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		CLEMSON TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		STANFORD CARDINAL



The Athletic





## AKRON ZIPS

### OFFENSE

The offense should show improvement this season with the return of last year's top two quarterbacks, DJ Irons and Jeff Underkuffler Jr. They will have plenty of weapons at their disposal, including Alex Adams, who had 856 yards and nine touchdowns, and Daniel George, who had 793 yards, as the top two returning receivers. Irons, who was second on the team in rushing yards, and Clyde Price III, who was third, will also contribute to the running game.

### DEFENSE

The Akron Zips had a better run defense than pass defense last season, but they have to rebuild their front six, which lost eight of its top 16 players. The Zips also have to find new sources of pass rush after ranking 106th in the nation in sacks. The secondary is the most experienced unit on the defense, with all four starters returning, but it has to improve its coverage after giving up 93rd-most pass yards per game. The defense will rely on the leadership and playmaking of Nate Thompson, who was second on the team in tackles, and Tyson Durant, who led the team with three interceptions.

### SUMMARY

The Akron Zips play in the Mid-American Conference, where close games are far too common. The Zips have a slim chance of reaching a bowl game, but they would have to win most of their tight contests. The Zips should show some improvement this season, however, after covering six of their last nine games last year and being competitive despite a -13 turnover differential. The Zips lost five games by one score or less. The Zips also signed their best recruiting class in more than 10 years. The Zips are better than they may seem, but they have to prove it in the win column.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	TEMPLE OWLS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	MORGAN STATE BEARS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	KENTUCKY WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	INDIANA HOOSIERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	BUFFALO BULLS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	NORTHERN ILLINOIS HUSKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	CENTRAL MICHIGAN CHIPPEWAS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	BOWLING GREEN FALCONS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
WEDNESDAY NOV. 1	VS	KENT STATE GOLDEN FLASHES
WEDNESDAY NOV. 8	AT	MIAMI (OHIO) REDHAWKS
TUESDAY NOV. 14	AT	EASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLES
FRIDAY NOV. 24	VS	OHIO BOBCATS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MAC CHAMPIONSHIP



#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Joe Moorhead

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Billy Fessler

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tim Tibesar

## BALL STATE CARDINALS

### OFFENSE

The offense has undergone a lot of changes, as many of last year's players left the program via the transfer portal. The offense will have to rely on some new faces, especially at the skill positions. The quarterback will likely be Layne Hatcher, who transferred from Texas State with plenty of experience. The running back will be Marquez Cooper, who transferred from Kent State. He was a thousand-yard rusher last year. The receiving corps is the biggest question mark, as most of the top receivers are gone. The only returning starter is tight end Tanner Koziol, who had 35 catches for 373 yards and seven touchdowns last year. The offensive line is the strength of the offense, as all five starters return. The offense will have to find chemistry and cohesion quickly, with so many new players.

### DEFENSE

The defense has a contrast between the front seven and the secondary. The front seven is very experienced, as most of the starters and contributors are back. The secondary, however, is a mystery, as they have to replace six of their top eight players from last year. The front seven has some playmakers, such as Cole Pierce and Sidney Houston Jr. Pierce is the top returning defender, as he had 14 tackles for a loss and five sacks last year. Houston Jr. was second in both categories, with 7.5 tackles for a loss and four sacks. The secondary has only one returning starter, Jordan Riley, who was the team's leading tackler with 61 solo stops. The defense will have to rely on the front seven to pressure the quarterback and stop the run, while the secondary tries to find its footing.

### SUMMARY

Ball State has some areas of concern, but also some areas of strength, heading into this season. The wide receiver and defensive back groups are both thin and inexperienced, as they lost some key players from last year. The wide receivers have to replace their top pass catchers, while the defensive backs have to replace three of their four starters. However, the line of scrimmage could be a strength for Ball State, as they have a lot of returning talent and depth on both the offensive and defensive lines. The offensive line has four starters back, while the defensive line has three. They will have to lean on their lines to control the game, while their receivers and defensive backs try to improve.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	KENTUCKY WILDCATS	SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	CENTRAL MICHIGAN CHIPPEWAS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	GEORGIA BULLDOGS	SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	INDIANA STATE SYCAMORES	WEDNESDAY NOV. 1	AT	BOWLING GREEN FALCONS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	GEORGIA SOUTHERN EAGLES	TUESDAY NOV. 7	AT	NORTHERN ILLINOIS HUSKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	WESTERN MICHIGAN BRONCOS	SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	KENT STATE GOLDEN FLASHES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	EASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLES	SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	MIAMI (OHIO) REDHAWKS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	TOLEDO ROCKETS	SATURDAY DEC. 2		MAC CHAMPIONSHIP



#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Mike Neu

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kevin Lynch



Jared Elliott

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tyler Stockton



## BOWLING GREEN FALCONS

### OFFENSE

The offense will have to overcome some significant losses from last year, such as Matt McDonald, who was the starting quarterback, and three of the top four receivers. However, they have a capable replacement in Connor Bazalak, who transfers in from Indiana and brings a lot of experience at the quarterback position. The running game will also be a strength, as they have Jaison Patterson, who was the leading rusher last year, along with Jamal Johnson and Terion Stewart, who are both experienced running backs. Odieu Hilaire, the top receiver from last year, will also be back to lead the receiving corps. The offensive line will have some continuity, as three starters return to anchor the unit.

### DEFENSE

The secondary is the bright spot of the defense, with cornerbacks Deshawn Jones Jr. and Jordan Oladokun providing solid coverage. However, the defensive line faces a challenge to fill the gap left by Karl Brooks, who finished with 18 tackles for a loss and 10 sacks last season. The run defense and the pass defense both ranked in the bottom 10 of the nation last year, and without a consistent pass rush, it will be hard to improve those numbers. Linebackers Darren Anders and Demetrius Hardamon are the leading returners in tackles, but they will need more help from the front four.

### SUMMARY

Bowling Green surprised many people last year by reaching a bowl game for the first time since 2015. The Falcons finished with a 6-3 record and a 5-3 mark in the MAC, which was good enough for second place in the East division. However, they lost their bowl game to Coastal Carolina, 38-17, and they have some key players to replace this year. Can they maintain their momentum and compete for the MAC title, or will they fall back to the bottom of the conference? In the MAC, anything can happen.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	LIBERTY FLAMES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	EASTERN ILLINOIS PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	MICHIGAN WOLVERINES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	OHIO BOBCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	MIAMI (OHIO) REDHAWKS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	BUFFALO BULLS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	AKRON ZIPS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
WEDNESDAY NOV. 1	VS	BALL STATE CARDINALS
WEDNESDAY NOV. 8	AT	KENT STATE GOLDEN FLASHES
TUESDAY NOV. 14	VS	TOLEDO ROCKETS
TUESDAY NOV. 21	AT	WESTERN MICHIGAN BRONCOS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MAC CHAMPIONSHIP

Wade Payne/AP Photo



#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Scott Loeffler

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Max Warner



Greg Nosal

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Steve Morrison



Sammy Lawanson



## BUFFALO BULLS

### OFFENSE

The offense has a proven quarterback in Cole Snyder, who threw for more than 3,000 yards last season. However, the offense has to find new targets for him, as the top three receivers are gone. The offense will count on some transfers to fill the void at receiver. The offense has a strong running game, with Mike Washington, the team's leading rusher, and Ron Cook Jr., who had similar numbers, returning. The offensive line is also experienced, with most of the starters back.

### DEFENSE

The defense has to replace its best player, James Patterson, who was a star linebacker and a leader. However, the defense has plenty of experience and talent at every level. Shaun Dolac, last season's leading tackler, returns as a dominant linebacker who can make plays in the backfield (97 solo tackles & 13.5 tackles for a loss). Daymond Williams, a defensive tackle, returns to clog the middle and disrupt the run. Marcus Fuqua, a safety, returns as a ball-hawk who led the team with seven interceptions. The defense has playmakers who can step up and push this defense to the next level.

### SUMMARY

Buffalo will have to find a way to play more consistently this season, as they showed a lot of ups and downs last year. The Bulls had some impressive wins, but also some disappointing losses. They will have to avoid the letdowns and maintain a high level of performance throughout the season. Buffalo has a lot of talent on the roster, but they have to develop some reliable receivers for QB Snyder to throw to.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	WISCONSIN BADGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	FORDHAM RAMS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	LIBERTY FLAMES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	LOUISIANA RAGIN' CAJUNS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	AKRON ZIPS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	CENTRAL MICHIGAN CHIPPEWAS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	BOWLING GREEN FALCONS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	KENT STATE GOLDEN FLASHES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
TUESDAY OCT. 31	AT	TOLEDO ROCKETS
TUESDAY NOV. 7	VS	OHIO BOBCATS
WEDNESDAY NOV. 15	AT	MIAMI (OHIO) REDHAWKS
TUESDAY NOV. 21	VS	EASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLES
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MAC CHAMPIONSHIP



Paul Hokansons/UB Athletics



## CENTRAL MICHIGAN CHIPPEWAS

### OFFENSE

The Chips have a talented but unproven quarterback in Bert Emanuel Jr., who hails from Houston, Texas (Ridge Point HS). He showed his ability to run the ball last year, as he amassed 496 yards and seven touchdowns on the ground in just four games. However, he barely threw the ball, as he completed only four of his eight attempts. The Chips like to use their quarterbacks as runners, but they also have a veteran running back in Marion Lukes, who has 1,024 career rushing yards. The biggest concern for the offense is the receiver group, which lacks experience and depth. The offense is young and inexperienced overall, as it returns only 46% of its production from last year, ranking 116th in the nation. The Chips will have to rely on their dual-threat quarterbacks, Emanuel Jr. and Jase Bauer, to lead the offense.

### DEFENSE

The defense was a work in progress last year, as Central Michigan fielded a lot of young players. However, that experience should pay off this year, as the Chips bring back 88% of their defensive production, ranking fourth in the nation. The only major loss is Thomas Incoom, who led the team with six sacks and 11 tackles for a loss. However, the Chips have two of their top playmakers returning: linebacker Kyle Moretti and defensive back Trey Jones. Moretti was the team's leading tackler with 60 solo tackles, while Jones was second with 47 tackles and also had two interceptions, the most on the team. The defense should be much improved this year, with more depth and continuity.

### SUMMARY

The Chips have a strong defense and a solid running game, which should be their strengths this year. The defense returns most of its starters and playmakers, while the running game has a veteran back and two dual-threat quarterbacks. However, the Chips will need to improve their passing game, which was inconsistent and ineffective last year. The Chips have a young and inexperienced receiver group, and they will need their quarterbacks to be more accurate and efficient. If the Chips can develop a balanced offense, they could be a contender in the MAC.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

FRIDAY SEP. 1	AT	MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS	SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	BALL STATE CARDINALS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	NEW HAMPSHIRE WILDCATS	SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	NOTRE DAME FIGHTING IRISH	TUESDAY OCT. 31	VS	NORTHERN ILLINOIS HUSKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	SOUTH ALABAMA JAGUARS	TUESDAY NOV. 7	AT	WESTERN MICHIGAN BRONCOS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	EASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLES	WEDNESDAY NOV. 15	AT	OHIO BOBCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	BUFFALO BULLS	FRIDAY NOV. 24	VS	TOLEDO ROCKETS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	AKRON ZIPS	SATURDAY DEC. 2		MAC CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Jim McElwain

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Paul Petrino

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Robb Akey



## EASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLES

### OFFENSE

The Eastern Michigan Eagles had a strong offense last season, but they may struggle to replicate it this season. They rank 120th in the nation in offensive returning production, meaning they have to replace many key players. They have a new quarterback in Austin Smith. They also have three new starters on the offensive line and new faces at receiver. Tanner Knue, who had 32 catches last season, will likely be the top target for Smith. Samson Evans, who ran for 1,000 yards last season, returns as the lead running back.

### DEFENSE

The Eastern Michigan Eagles have a lot of experience on defense, with 11 of the 15 players who played at least 250 snaps last season returning. The Eagles do have to replace their best defender, Jose Ramirez, who led the team in tackles for a loss and sacks. Tim Grant-Randall, a defensive lineman from Conroe, Texas (Oak Ridge HS), is back after showing some run-stopping ability with 4.5 tackles for a loss. Joseph Sparacio anchors a solid linebacking corps. The secondary is the strength of the defense, playing with aggressiveness and confidence. Joshua Scott, who led the team in interceptions, is a standout defensive back.

### SUMMARY

The Eastern Michigan Eagles have some challenges on offense, as they have to replace many key players and adjust to a new quarterback. The defense will have to carry more of the load this year, as it has more experience and depth. The Eagles have a proven head coach in Chris Creighton, who has a track record of maximizing the team's potential.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

FRIDAY SEP. 1	VS	HOWARD BISON
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	UMASS MINUTEMEN
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	JACKSONVILLE STATE GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	CENTRAL MICHIGAN CHIPPEWAS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	BALL STATE CARDINALS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	KENT STATE GOLDEN FLASHES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	NORTHERN ILLINOIS HUSKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	WESTERN MICHIGAN BRONCOS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	OFF	OFF
WEDNESDAY NOV. 8	AT	TOLEDO ROCKETS
TUESDAY NOV. 14	VS	AKRON ZIPS
TUESDAY NOV. 21	AT	BUFFALO BULLS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MAC CHAMPIONSHIP



#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Chris Creighton

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mike Piatkowski

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Ben Needham

## KENT STATE GOLDEN FLASHES

### OFFENSE

The Golden Flashes face a daunting task this season, as they have to replace every single starter from last year's team. They have the lowest returning production in the nation, with only 11% of their offensive yards and points coming back. They will have to rely on newcomers, transfers and backups to fill the massive holes in their roster. One of the few experienced players they have is running back Xavier Williams, who rushed for 424 yards and four touchdowns last year. He will likely be the focal point of the offense, as the rest of the unit tries to find its identity.

### DEFENSE

The defense also has to deal with a lot of turnover, as ten of their top 16 tacklers from last year are gone. The returning production is slightly higher than the offense, at 46%, but that's still below the national average. The defense was one of the worst in the country last year, ranking 113th in yards allowed per game. They gave up 34.3 points per game and struggled to stop both the run and the pass. They will need some of the returning players to step up and some of the new faces to contribute right away.

### SUMMARY

The Golden Flashes have to start from scratch this season, as they have the least amount of returning production in the nation. They lost 71% of their offensive and defensive output from last year, which means they have to rebuild almost every position group. They play in the MAC where they will face an uphill battle to compete with the rest of the conference. They won only one MAC game last year, and they might not even match that this year. This is a season of transition and learning for the Golden Flashes.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	AT	UCF KNIGHTS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	CCSU BLUE DEVILS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	FRESNO STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	MIAMI (OHIO) REDHAWKS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	OHIO BOBCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	EASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	BUFFALO BULLS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
WEDNESDAY NOV. 1	AT	AKRON ZIPS
WEDNESDAY NOV. 8	VS	BOWLING GREEN FALCONS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	BALL STATE CARDINALS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	NORTHERN ILLINOIS HUSKIES
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MAC CHAMPIONSHIP



Lisa Scalfano/Record-Courier



#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Keni Burns

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Matt Johnson

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Dave Duggan



## MIAMI (OH) REDHAWKS

### OFFENSE

The offense has a returning quarterback in Brett Gabbert, who did not throw an interception in 115 attempts last season. He should help the offense improve from its dismal performance last year, when it ranked 122nd in the nation in total offense. The offense has to rebuild its offensive line, which lost three starters, but it has most of its skill players back. However, they have to improve their production and consistency. Keyon Mozee returns as the lead running back. Wide receiver Miles Marshall and tight end Jack Coldiron return as well, but they have to fill the void left by Mac Hippenhammer, who had twice as many catches as anyone else. QB Aveon Smith is also back, after playing 10 games last season, but he may lose the starting job to Gabbert.

### DEFENSE

The RedHawks have a strong defense that could be their best in recent years. They have a lot of experience and talent, as they rank in the top 30 in the nation in defensive returning production. They were also one of the top defenses in the Mid-American Conference last season. The defense is led by linebacker Matthew Salopek, who was the team's leading tackler, and linebacker Oscar McWood, who was second. Defensive lineman Ethan McDowell also had a standout season. The defense has a potent pass rush, with defensive lineman Corey Suttle, who led the team with six sacks, and Brian Ugwu, who had five sacks, returning. The only concern for the defense is at cornerback, where they lost two of their top three players from last season.

### SUMMARY

The Miami Ohio RedHawks are looking forward to a challenging but promising 2023 football season. The defense, which was one of the best in the MAC last year, will certainly be relied on to stop the opposing offenses and create turnovers. Having Brett Gabbert back as the starting quarterback is huge. If the offense can just slightly improve its consistency and efficiency, especially in the running game and the red zone, this team could surprise a lot of people and contend for the MAC title. The RedHawks have high expectations for themselves and their fans, and they are ready to show what they can do on the field.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

FRIDAY SEP. 1	AT	MIAMI (FL) HURRICANES	SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	TOLEDO ROCKETS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	UMASS MINUTEMEN	SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	OHIO BOBCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	CINCINNATI BEARCATS	SATURDAY NOV. 4	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	DELAWARE STATE HORNETS	WEDNESDAY NOV. 8	VS	AKRON ZIPS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	KENT STATE GOLDEN FLASHES	WEDNESDAY NOV. 15	VS	BUFFALO BULLS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	BOWLING GREEN FALCONS	SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	BALL STATE CARDINALS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	WESTERN MICHIGAN BRONCOS	SATURDAY DEC. 2		MAC CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Chuck Martin

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Pat Welsh

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Bill Brechin



## NORTHERN ILLINOIS HUSKIES

### OFFENSE

The offense has a lot of continuity and talent, as most of the top players are back from last year. Rocky Lombardi, who transferred from Michigan State, is the starting quarterback. He had a strong start to the season, throwing for 645 yards and five touchdowns in four games, before he suffered a season-ending injury. He will have his top target back, as Trayvon Rudolph returns from a knee injury that kept him out all of last year. Rudolph had 877 receiving yards and seven touchdowns in 2021. Another key receiver is Kacper Rutkiewicz, who led the team with six touchdown catches last year. The running game is also solid, with Antario Brown leading the way. He rushed for 689 yards and seven touchdowns last year. The offensive line is experienced and deep, as the top six players return. The offense has the potential to be explosive and efficient, if Lombardi can stay healthy and pick up where he left off.

### DEFENSE

The defense has a lot of returning players, but they also have a lot of room for improvement. The defense was young and inexperienced last year, and it showed in their performance. They ranked 80th in the nation in total defense. However, they have another year of growth and development, which could help them get better. The defense has some playmakers, especially on the defensive line. Raishein Thomas is the top returning defender, as he had nine tackles for a loss last year. Devonte O'Malley is another disruptive force, as he had 7.5 tackles for a loss and 5.5 sacks, the most on the team. The secondary also has a leader in CJ Brown, who was the team's leading tackler with 37 solo tackles. The defense will need to step up and support the offense this year.

### SUMMARY

NIU has a lot of experience and depth, as they are second in the MAC in returning production. However, last year was a disappointing one for the Huskies, as they finished with a 3-9 record. One of the main reasons for their struggles was the injury bug, which hit them hard at several positions. They should be a healthier team this year, which could make a big difference. The offense should be potent, but the defense will need to improve. The defense was below average last year, and they will need to be more consistent and opportunistic this year.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT  BOSTON COLLEGE EAGLES	SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS  EASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS  SOUTHERN ILLINOIS SALUKIS	SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT  NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS	TUESDAY OCT. 31	AT  CENTRAL MICHIGAN CHIPPEWAS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS  TULSA GOLDEN HURRICANE	TUESDAY NOV. 7	VS  BALL STATE CARDINALS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT  TOLEDO ROCKETS	TUESDAY NOV. 14	VS  WESTERN MICHIGAN BRONCOS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT  AKRON ZIPS	SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT  KENT STATE GOLDEN FLASHES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS  OHIO BOBCATS	SATURDAY DEC. 2	MAC CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Thomas Hammock

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Eric Eidsness

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Nick Benedetto



## OHIO BOBCATS

### OFFENSE

The Ohio Bobcats have one of the best offenses in the Group of Five, especially if Kurtis Rourke is fully healthy at quarterback. Rourke threw for 3,257 yards, 25 touchdowns and only four interceptions last season, and added 245 yards and four touchdowns on the ground. He is one of the top quarterbacks in the Mid-American Conference. The Bobcats also have a 1,000-yard rusher with 13 touchdowns in Sieh Bangura, who returns along with three of the four receivers who had more than 500 yards last year. That includes last year's leading receiver in Sam Wiglusz. The offensive line is experienced, with four of five starters back. The Bobcats have a reliable backup quarterback in CJ Harris, too. The offense is loaded and ready to build on its success from last season.

### DEFENSE

The Ohio Bobcats have some uncertainty on defense, as they have to replace their three best safeties and their top pass rusher from last season. The defense also lost its coordinator, who left for another job. The Bobcats have some experience, however, with eight of their top 14 players in snap count returning. The defense does not have to be dominant, as the offense can score at will.

### SUMMARY

The Ohio Bobcats have a lot of potential, but they also have some doubts. The first one is about their defense, which was mediocre last season and lost some key players. The defense has to show some improvement or at least avoid being worse. The second one is about their quarterback, Kurtis Rourke, who is a star but also injury-prone. Rourke has to stay healthy and lead the offense. If these two questions are answered positively, the Bobcats will have a breakthrough season. But those two things are not guaranteed.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	AT  SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS
SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS  LIU SHARKS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT  FLORIDA ATLANTIC OWLS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS  IOWA STATE CYCLONES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT  BOWLING GREEN FALCONS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS  KENT STATE GOLDEN FLASHES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT  NORTHERN ILLINOIS HUSKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS  WESTERN MICHIGAN BRONCOS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS  MIAMI (OHIO) REDHAWKS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	OFF OFF
TUESDAY NOV. 7	AT  BUFFALO BULLS
WEDNESDAY NOV. 15	VS  CENTRAL MICHIGAN CHIPPEWAS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	AT  AKRON ZIPS
SATURDAY DEC. 2	MAC CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Tim Albin

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Scott Isphording

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Spence Nowinsky



## TOLEDO ROCKETS

### OFFENSE

The Rockets have a potent offense, led by Dequan Finn, a dual-threat quarterback who had 23 touchdowns and 12 interceptions last season. Finn also ran for 632 yards and nine touchdowns, ranking second on the team. He has a lot of weapons around him, such as Jacquez Stuart, the team's leading rusher, and Jerjuan Newton, the team's leading receiver. The offensive line is experienced, with three starters from last season and one from 2021 returning. The offense will be great if Finn stays healthy and avoids unnecessary runs.

### DEFENSE

The Toledo Rockets have a strong defense, but they have some concerns on the defensive line, especially in the middle. The Rockets lost most of their pass rushers, but they have Darius Alexander, a defensive tackle who had seven tackles for a loss and 1.5 sacks last season. They also have Adrian Woliver, an outside linebacker who was fourth on the team with 4.5 sacks. The secondary is the strength of the defense, and maybe the best in the Group of Five. The Rockets allowed the third-lowest passing success rate in the nation last year. The Rockets have a stellar cornerback duo of Quinyon Mitchell and Chris McDonald, who had six interceptions and 27 pass breakups combined. They are the best corner tandem that most people don't know about.

### SUMMARY

The Toledo Rockets have a lot of reasons to be optimistic this season. They are the defending Mid-American Conference champions and they bring back the most production in the league. They have a potent offense, a strong secondary and a veteran coach. They could be one of the top teams in the Group of Five and challenge for a major bowl bid. This is Toledo's best team since 2015, when they won 10 games and beat a ranked team. The Rockets have high expectations for this season.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	<b>I</b> ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	<b>T</b> TEXAS SOUTHERN TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	<b>S</b> SAN JOSE STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	<b>W</b> WESTERN MICHIGAN BRONCOS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	<b>N</b> NORTHERN ILLINOIS HUSKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	<b>M</b> UMASS MINUTEMEN
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	<b>B</b> BALL STATE CARDINALS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	<b>M</b> MIAMI (OHIO) REDHAWKS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
TUESDAY OCT. 31	VS	<b>B</b> BUFFALO BULLS
WEDNESDAY NOV. 8	VS	<b>E</b> EASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLES
TUESDAY NOV. 14	AT	<b>B</b> BOWLING GREEN FALCONS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	AT	<b>C</b> CENTRAL MICHIGAN CHIPPEWAS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		<b>MAC CHAMPIONSHIP</b>



#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Jason Candle

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mike Hallett



Robert Weiner

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Vince Kehres

## WESTERN MICHIGAN BRONCOS

### OFFENSE

The offense was one of the worst in the nation last year, as they ranked 125th in yards per game. They have little reason to be optimistic this year, as they have a lot of uncertainty and turnover at the skill positions. They have to replace their top rusher, receiver and tight end from last year, and they have no clear leader at quarterback. The only bright spot for the offense is the offensive line, which returns four starters. The quarterback situation is murky, as the current starter is Treyson Bourguet, a redshirt freshman who completed less than half of his passes last year. He will be challenged by Jack Salopek, who also had a poor season last year, throwing four interceptions and only one touchdown, while completing less than half of his passes. The offense will have to find some playmakers and some consistency this year, or they will struggle again.

### DEFENSE

The defense was a solid unit last year, as they ranked 54th in the nation in yards allowed per game. However, that was last year, and this year is a different story. The defense has to undergo a major overhaul, as they lost nine of their top 12 tacklers from last year. They have the lowest returning production in the nation, with only 28% of their defensive output coming back. The defense will have to rely on some newcomers, transfers and backups to fill the huge gaps in their roster. The defense will have a hard time replicating their performance from last year, with so much turnover and inexperience.

### SUMMARY

Western Michigan faces a tough challenge this year, as they have to rebuild almost every position group. They have very little returning production, especially on defense, where they lost most of their starters and playmakers. They also have some uncertainty on offense. It will be difficult for them to compete and win games, with so many holes and question marks. It will be a rebuilding year for Western Michigan, and they will be lucky to finish with more than three wins.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	VS	<b>SF</b> SAINT FRANCIS U. RED FLASH	SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	<b>O</b> OHIO BOBCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	<b>S</b> SYRACUSE ORANGE	SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	<b>E</b> EASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	<b>I</b> IOWA HAWKEYES	SATURDAY NOV. 4	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	<b>T</b> TOLEDO ROCKETS	TUESDAY NOV. 7	VS	<b>C</b> CENTRAL MICHIGAN CHIPPEWAS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	<b>B</b> BALL STATE CARDINALS	TUESDAY NOV. 14	AT	<b>N</b> NORTHERN ILLINOIS HUSKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	<b>M</b> MISSISSIPPI STATE BULLDOGS	TUESDAY NOV. 21	VS	<b>B</b> BOWLING GREEN FALCONS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	<b>M</b> MIAMI (OHIO) REDHAWKS	SATURDAY DEC. 2		<b>MAC CHAMPIONSHIP</b>



#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Lance Taylor

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Billy Cosh

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Lou Esposito

# AF

## AIR FORCE FALCONS

### OFFENSE

Air Force loses a three-year starting quarterback, top running back, and top receiver. Although skill is not as proven, running back John Lee Eldridge is good. The offensive line should be great with four returning starters and all seniors in the two-deep. Unfortunately, no player with over 100 total rushing yards last season returns.

### DEFENSE

This defense faced the least amount of plays and drives per game last season in the FBS. They will have eight returning starters. Free Safety Trey Taylor from Frisco, Texas (Lone Star HS) returns after leading the team in tackles along with Camby Goff who led the team in interceptions and pass breakups. With the experience coming back, the Falcon defense should be great.

### SUMMARY

With another manageable schedule and a veteran-laden team, Air Force has a great chance of another strong season. Although they will need to replace the quarterback and receiver positions, they will still be able to run the ball. Will Air Force win 10 games for a third straight season? This has never happened in school history.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	ROBERT MORRIS COLONIALS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	SAM HOUSTON BEARKATS
FRIDAY SEP. 15	VS	UTAH STATE AGGIES
FRIDAY SEP. 22	AT	SAN JOSE STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	WYOMING COWBOYS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	NAVY MIDSHIPMEN
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	COLORADO STATE RAMS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	ARMY BLACK KNIGHTS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	HAWAII RAINBOW WARRIORS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	UNLV REBELS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	AT	BOISE STATE BRONCOS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MOUNTAIN WEST CHAMPIONSHIP



Jamie Schwaberow/NCAA Photos



## BOISE STATE BRONCOS

### OFFENSE

Taylen Green from Lewisville, Texas returns at quarterback after a decent freshman campaign throwing for 1,157 yards, 14 touchdowns and six interceptions at a 61% clip. There is still some improvement to be made but he is only a sophomore.

The Bronco rushing game should be great, which includes Green with the top two running backs returning behind him: George Holani and Ashton Jeanty. The Boise State receiving corps is one of the best in the Mountain West with Latrell Caples from Lancaster, Texas, Billy Bowens and Stefan Cobbs from Fort Worth, Texas (Fossil Ridge HS) all returning.

### DEFENSE

The Boise State Broncos defense will only have five starters return for the Boise State defense. The leading tackler from last season, DJ Schramm returns for his sixth season of eligibility. Schramm also led the team in tackles for a loss with 11.5. Demetri Washington is also back at defensive end after leading the Broncos in sacks last season. The secondary will be the biggest question with three starters departing. Safety Rodney Robinson returns for his junior season after picking off three passes last year.

### SUMMARY

Boise State Broncos have a difficult non-conference slate with games at Washington and at Memphis as well as a home game against UCF. Boise should do well in conference play but the schedule is more difficult than normal and there are more questions than usual for the Broncos.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	WASHINGTON HUSKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	UCF KNIGHTS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	NORTH DAKOTA FIGHTING HAWKS
FRIDAY SEP. 22	AT	SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	MEMPHIS TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	SAN JOSE STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	COLORADO STATE RAMS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	WYOMING COWBOYS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	FRESNO STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	NEW MEXICO LOBOS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	UTAH STATE AGGIES
FRIDAY NOV. 24	VS	AIR FORCE FALCONS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MOUNTAIN WEST CHAMPIONSHIP



Boise State Athletics



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



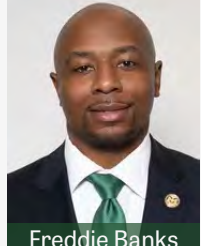
Jay Norvell

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jay Norvell

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Freddie Banks

## COLORADO STATE RAMS

### OFFENSE

As a freshman Clay Millen was first in the country in completion percentage despite the bad offensive line play and second in the country among FBS QBs with an 82.4 adjusted completion percentage (adjusting for drops). He only averaged 23 attempts per game but made smart decisions mostly due to the offensive line giving him no time.

The team sack rate allowed was 15.7%, which was dead last in the country and no other team was particularly close. They gave up the most sacks (59) in the country last season. They literally cannot get worse. Only one starter is back, which is probably addition by subtraction. There are plenty of new faces this season outside of Center Jacob Gardner.

There is certainly some upside with the wide receivers. Tory Horton is incredible and the best receiver in the Mountain West. Justus Ross-Simmons was the No. 2 receiver last year as a freshman. Others need to step up around these two. Louis Brown IV in the slot will have an increased role in his sophomore season. Dallin Holker is coming in from BYU at TE and brings experience who can be a useful target in the passing game. SMU transfer Dylan Goffney from Cypress, Texas transfers in as well

after tallying 18 receptions for 369 yards and two touchdowns.

Senior Avery Morrow returns at running back after rushing for 838 yards and four touchdowns. Not much experience will be returning and the backs will be relying on the offensive line to open up some lanes.



### DEFENSE

Colorado State's defensive line is good. Mohamed Kamara is a monster at defensive end. The interior has experience with Cam Bariteau and Grady Kelly. They have some depth here as well. Others around Kamara will need to step up in the pass rush. They were middle of the road (79th) in team sack rate but it could get better.

Both starters are gone from Utah State's linebacking corps. They only run two LBs on the field at a time. They brought in some transfers to help but the two players they lost were really good so this is the biggest question on the defense. Colorado State's secondary has bigger safeties and everyone returns. They are also deep here. This could be the best secondary in the Mountain West if not at the very least one of the best. In Mountain West play, they were fourth in opponent completion rate, second in TDs per attempt allowed, and had the third-best passer rating in the MW defensively. They did this while facing the second-most pass attempts in the conference last season.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Paddy Turner needs to improve as a punter and placekicker will likely be kickoff guy Henry Katleman.

## SUMMARY

Jay Norvell is now in his second year at Colorado State. The team finished 3-9 and 126th in SP+ in 2022. Interestingly enough, in his first season at Nevada (2017), Norvell went 3-9 and in his second year at Nevada (2018), he then went 8-5 (7-5 that regular season with two non-conference losses). This just might be the season where Colorado State makes that leap.



## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		WASHINGTON STATE COUGARS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		COLORADO BUFFALOES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		MIDDLE TENNESSEE BLUE RAIDERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		UTAH TECH TRAILBLAZERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		UTAH STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		BOISE STATE BRONCOS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		UNLV REBELS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		AIR FORCE FALCONS
FRIDAY NOV. 3	AT		WYOMING COWBOYS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		NEVADA WOLF PACK
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		HAWAII RAINBOW WARRIORS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			MOUNTAIN WEST CHAMPIONSHIP





## FRESNO STATE BULLDOGS

### OFFENSE

The Fresno State offense is experiencing an overhaul this season. The team loses QB Jake Haener and its top three receivers, and the offensive coordinator is gone. Returning experience is very thin at the skill positions. UCF transfer Mikey Keene will likely be the starting quarterback. Running backs Malik Sherrod and Elijah Gilliam return after being backups last year.

### DEFENSE

Fresno State's front seven returns intact this season. However, the team loses its best pass rusher David Perales, which leaves a massive hole in regards to the pass rush for the defense. Last year's leading tackler Lavelle Bailey and Malachi Langley will be leading the linebacking corps. Two of the better defensive backs return that includes Cam Lockridge who had five interceptions and nine pass breakups. However, a couple of stars in the back end must be replaced.

### SUMMARY

With the rebuild on offense, Fresno State will rely on their defense this year. After winning the conference championship last year, Fresno will likely take a step back.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	PURDUE BOILERMAKERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	EASTERN WASHINGTON EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	ARIZONA STATE SUN DEVILS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	KENT STATE GOLDEN FLASHES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	NEVADA WOLF PACK
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	WYOMING COWBOYS
FRIDAY OCT. 13	AT	UTAH STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	UNLV REBELS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	BOISE STATE BRONCOS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	SAN JOSE STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	NEW MEXICO LOBOS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MOUNTAIN WEST CHAMPIONSHIP



## HAWAII RAINBOW WARRIORS

### OFFENSE

Quarterback Brayden Schager of Dallas (Highland Park HS) threw 13 touchdowns and 10 interceptions last season and needs to improve. The receiving corps is uncertain, but Jalen Walthall of Houston (Manvel HS) and Jonah Panoke are the only returners with more than 300 receiving yards each. The offensive line is also in flux. Tylan Hines of Mt. Pleasant, Texas (Plano Senior HS) will be the starting running back.

### DEFENSE

The defense ranked 117th nationally last season and needs to improve. Some transfers could help the front seven, but the unit has a long way to go. Linebacker Logan Taylor, the leading tackler, and John Tuitupou, the sack leader, are back. Virdell Edwards Jr. of Plano (Prestonwood Academy), who had three interceptions, and Peter Manuma return in the secondary, but there are still questions there.

### SUMMARY

The team won only three games last year and faces a long road to bowl eligibility. The team showed some signs of improvement late in the season, but it has a lot of work to do. Timmy Chang will have his work cut out for him.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	AT	VANDERBILT COMMODORES
FRIDAY SEP. 1	VS	STANFORD CARDINAL
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	UALBANY GREAT DANES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	OREGON DUCKS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	UNLV REBELS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	NEW MEXICO LOBOS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	SAN JOSE STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	NEVADA WOLF PACK
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	AIR FORCE FALCONS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	WYOMING COWBOYS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	COLORADO STATE RAMS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MOUNTAIN WEST CHAMPIONSHIP

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Timmy Chang

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Ian Shoemaker



Roman Sapolu

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jacob Yoro

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Jeff Tedford

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Pat McCann

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kevin Coyle





## NEVADA WOLF PACK

### OFFENSE

Brendon Lewis of Melissa, Texas (Colorado transfer) is likely the starting quarterback, but Shane Illingworth will compete. Running backs Sean Dollars and Ashton Hayes, both Pac-12 transfers, will get most of the carries. Keleki Latu, a transfer from California, is a good addition. Three of the top four receivers return, including Dalevon Campbell of Missouri City, Texas (Fort Bend Marshall).

### DEFENSE

The Nevada defense was one of the worst in the nation last year, ranking 117th in total defense and allowing 35.8 points per game. The team needs to improve on that side of the ball under head coach Ken Wilson. The defense has some returning talent, such as linebacker Drue Watts, who led the team with 39 solo tackles, cornerback Isaiah Essissima from Houston, Texas (Fort Bend Hightower), who had two interceptions, and defensive tackle James Hansen, who had four sacks. The defense also added some transfers at linebacker and safety. However, the defense still has some question marks, especially in the pass rush and the depth. The defense will need to step up if Nevada wants to improve on its 2-10 record from last year.

### SUMMARY

The team has some new faces and some returning talent, but it also faces a challenging schedule that includes some tough opponents in and out of the Mountain West Conference. Nevada has an uphill battle this year. Winning more than two games (last year's win total) is certainly possible, but bowl eligibility is going to be very difficult to achieve. The team will need to show significant improvement on both sides of the ball and play with more consistency and confidence.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT USC TROJANS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS IDAHO VANDALS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS KANSAS JAYHAWKS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT TEXAS STATE BOBCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT FRESNO STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS UNLV REBELS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS NEW MEXICO LOBOS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS HAWAII RAINBOW WARRIORS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT UTAH STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT COLORADO STATE RAMS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS WYOMING COWBOYS
SATURDAY DEC. 2	MOUNTAIN WEST CHAMPIONSHIP



Nevada Athletics



## NEW MEXICO LOBOS

### OFFENSE

The New Mexico offense ranked as the worst in the FBS last year. Quarterback Dylan Hopkins, a transfer from UAB, is a welcome addition for the Lobos. Sophomore running back Christian Washington assumes the starting role after rushing for only 310 yards last season. The passing offense will undergo a complete makeover, as the top two receivers from last season are gone and need to improve.

### DEFENSE

New Mexico's defense was the bright spot of the team in recent years - though not a difficult feat. Only five of the 15 defensive players who played more than 250 snaps last year are back for this season. Defensive end Bryce Santana, who had three sacks and ranked fourth on the team, returns. This defense will face some changes.

### SUMMARY

New Mexico had a disappointing season last year, finishing with a 2-10 record and ranking near the bottom of the nation in scoring offense. The team hopes to bounce back this year, but it faces some major challenges. The offense needs to show significant improvement in order to compete in the Mountain West Conference, but it is unclear if the new coaching staff and the returning players can make that happen. Meanwhile, the defense, which was the bright spot of the team last year, could suffer from the loss of some key starters and the lack of depth. Therefore, it could be a long season for New Mexico again if the offense does not take a major step in improvement and given the likelihood of defensive regression.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT TEXAS A&M AGGIES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS TENNESSEE TECH GOLDEN EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT UMASS MINUTEMEN
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT WYOMING COWBOYS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS SAN JOSE STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS HAWAII RAINBOW WARRIORS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT NEVADA WOLF PACK
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS UNLV REBELS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT BOISE STATE BRONCOS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT FRESNO STATE BULLDOGS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	VS UTAH STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY DEC. 2	MOUNTAIN WEST CHAMPIONSHIP



John Scott/Daily Lobo

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Ken Wilson

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Derek Sage

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



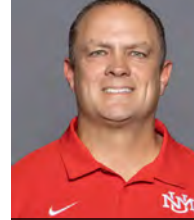
Kwame Agyeman



Mike Bethea

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Danny Gonzalez

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Bryant Vincent

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Troy Reffett



## SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS

### OFFENSE

Quarterback Jalen Mayden, from Garland, Texas, (Sachese HS) faces uncertainty after throwing 10 interceptions last season. Jaylen Armstead, who rushed for 313 yards at 6 yards per carry, returns to running back. The Aztecs lose their top two receivers from last season but have Mekhi Shaw back. The offensive line and receiving corps are undergoing reconstruction.

### DEFENSE

San Diego State faces a major overhaul on defense, losing five of its front six and its top four sack leaders from last season. Safety Davaughn Celestine, who had 41 solo tackles, returns along with cornerbacks Dallas Branch and Dezjhon Malon, who each had three interceptions. This defense is in transition mode this season.

### SUMMARY

San Diego State's team has some question marks on both sides of the ball, especially at the quarterback position, where Jaylen Mayden must improve. The team also has to deal with a difficult schedule. The schedule poses a tough challenge in the first half. If San Diego State fails to address its issues quickly, it could face a dismal season. If quarterback Mayden falters, this could be a bleak season with both an untested offense and defense.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	VS	OHIO BOBCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	IDAHO STATE BENGALS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	UCLA BRUINS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	OREGON STATE BEAVERS
FRIDAY SEP. 22	VS	BOISE STATE BRONCOS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	AIR FORCE FALCONS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	HAWAII RAINBOW WARRIORS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	NEVADA WOLF PACK
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	UTAH STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	COLORADO STATE RAMS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	SAN JOSE STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	FRESNO STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MOUNTAIN WEST CHAMPIONSHIP



## SAN JOSE STATE SPARTANS

### OFFENSE

Chevan Cordeiro returns at quarterback for his senior season. Cordeiro is one of the better quarterbacks in the Mountain West but he will need to improve on his 61% completion percentage. In the backfield, 5'7" Kairee Robinson returns after a 752 yard and 10 touchdown season on the ground. There are some questions at receiver outside of Justin Lockhart. Everyone else is gone except the sixth leading receiver in tight end Dominick Mazotti. The offensive line returns intact but they struggled last season.

### DEFENSE

The San Jose State defensive line is the biggest question on the team. Although they have been very talented, big and strong upfront on the defensive line in the last few seasons, this season the defensive line is missing that juice. The inside linebackers, outside linebacker, defensive line and the pass rush are still questions. Other than safety Tre Jenkins returning there is not much else returning for the Spartans.

### SUMMARY

San Jose State has some questions on both sides of the line of scrimmage as well as most of the receiving corps. However, having Chevan Cordeiro at quarterback is a plus. Although the schedule is a gauntlet in the first half of the season, it is more manageable in the second half of the season. The defense will be inexperienced and will need the offense led by Cordeiro to carry them.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	AT	USC TROJANS
SUNDAY SEP. 3	VS	OREGON STATE BEAVERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	CAL POLY MUSTANGS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	TOLEDO ROCKETS
FRIDAY SEP. 22	VS	AIR FORCE FALCONS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	BOISE STATE BRONCOS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	NEW MEXICO LOBOS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	UTAH STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	HAWAII RAINBOW WARRIORS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	FRESNO STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	UNLV REBELS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MOUNTAIN WEST CHAMPIONSHIP



#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Brady Hoke

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Ryan Lindley

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kurt Mattix

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Brent Brennan

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kevin McGiven

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Derrick Odum



## UNLV REBELS

### OFFENSE

Doug Brumfield returns at quarterback after having a solid season throwing 10 touchdowns and five interceptions. Top receiver Ricky White returns, but the pickings are slim at receiver. The top running back is gone, and Courtney Reese will take over the starting duties after only 50 carries last season. The rest of the offense will be relying on transfers. First-time offensive coordinator Brennan Marion will be implementing his "Go-Go Offense" for UNLV, so expect these Rebels to be running up and down the field this season.

### DEFENSE

Barry Odom is one of the best defensive coaches in the country, and this will be his second chance at being the head coach. Transfers will play a huge role in the front seven on defense, but the secondary returns mostly intact. The combination of Jordyn Morgan from Universal City (Cornerstone Christian HS) and Jonathan Baldwin from Houston, Texas (Frank Dobie HS) at safety is impressive. UNLV also returns Cameron Oliver from Richmond, Texas (William B. Travis HS) who tied for the lead with three interceptions last year.

### SUMMARY

UNLV is a difficult team to project for this year. There is some sneaky good quality on this team, but the transfers will need to step up. With a new coaching staff, the Rebels are excited to see Barry Odom's defense implemented along with Brennan Marion's Go-Go Offense.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	BRYANT BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	MICHIGAN WOLVERINES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	VANDERBILT COMMODORES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	UTEP MINERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	HAWAII RAINBOW WARRIORS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	NEVADA WOLF PACK
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	COLORADO STATE RAMS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	FRESNO STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	NEW MEXICO LOBOS
FRIDAY NOV. 10	VS	WYOMING COWBOYS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	AIR FORCE FALCONS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	SAN JOSE STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MOUNTAIN WEST CHAMPIONSHIP



Lucas Peltier/UNLV Athletics



## UTAH STATE AGGIES

### OFFENSE

Utah State has Cooper Legas back as their quarterback and Levi Williams from Canyon Lake, Texas (Smithson Valley HS) as backup. Legas had a 61% completion rate with 11 touchdowns and 10 interceptions. All the guys who attempted at least 50 passes last year averaged 11 yards per target. However, Cooper Legas has been very inconsistent. In the wins last year, he had a 2 to 1 TD to INT ratio but this stat flips in last year's losses.

Last year's running back Calvin Tyler is gone which is a huge loss as he had over a thousand rushing yards last season. It will be a by-committee approach with returning true sophomore Robert Briggs Jr. from Bellville, Texas. The Aggies will have to rely on Briggs Jr. to step up and fill the void left by Tyler's departure.

Terrell Vaughn is a good slot receiver with sure hands and had the third-lowest drop rate in the Mountain West at 3.5%. However, the outside receivers are a big question mark. Tight ends have not been used much but they do have experience and may have to utilize them more. The inexperience at wideout could be an issue for Utah State this season.

The Aggies' offensive line has four new starters this season. A couple of the new projected starters have played a lot of snaps. There are two new starters with over a thousand snaps. However, they are not that special as one of the new tackles

has allowed 9 sacks in his career. On passing downs, they were 118th in blocking. QB Legas struggled more in passing downs and the offensive line has some to do with that. A lot of new faces here as five of the top eight don't have much experience and the depth isn't too great.



Utah State University Athletics

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Barry Odom

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brennan Marion

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mike Scherer

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Blake Anderson

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kyle Cefalo

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Joe Cauthen

## DEFENSE

Utah State's defensive line lost a lot through the portal and a good amount of quality players went to the P5. The interior is stronger than the end. The ends will be new and it will be a by-committee approach to get pressure on opposing QBs. DT Hale Motu'apuaka returns after having 8 tackles for a loss and 5 sacks. The Aggies' linebacking corps is rebuilding this season but they do have one veteran in MJ Tafisi who was sixth in solo tackles with 27 and third with nine tackles for a loss last season. The secondary has some talent but also has many questions. Ike Larsen has some experience at safety and is very talented as he was graded out as one of the best in the Mountain West last season with four interceptions despite not playing full time. However, it is a small sample size given the little time he played. They bring in a couple of transfers with not much experience. Corner Michael Anyanwu is good with 11 pass breakups. Beyond that, everything else is a question in the



secondary. Utah State gave up 27 passing TDs last season which was most in the conference and now they have questions again for this year. A total of five DB transfers are back here which means the coaching staff doesn't love what they have at this position.

## SPECIAL TEAMS

The Aggie punter is good but their placekicker is unknown. Connor Coles was a good kicker last season (12-17) but is no longer there.

### SUMMARY

Utah State had a great record last year in one-score games, winning all four of them. However, many of their starters missed games due to injuries. In fact, 15 starters missed 59 combined games. They also had a lot of players start last season, with 39 different Aggies making a start. This was tied for the 14th most of any team in the country. Utah State is projected to be 116th in SP+. They lost many transfers including many to P5 teams and the transfers that they got aren't as talented. They have two new coordinators (New OC & DC) and a new Athletic Director as well. Their net points per drive was 92nd on offense vs 95th on defense. Utah State was first in the Mountain West in 4th down attempts with 35.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	IOWA HAWKEYES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	IDAHO STATE BENGALS
FRIDAY SEP. 15	AT	AIR FORCE FALCONS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	JAMES MADISON DUKES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	UCONN HUSKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	COLORADO STATE RAMS
FRIDAY OCT. 13	VS	FRESNO STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	SAN JOSE STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	NEVADA WOLF PACK
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	BOISE STATE BRONCOS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	AT	NEW MEXICO LOBOS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MOUNTAIN WEST CHAMPIONSHIP



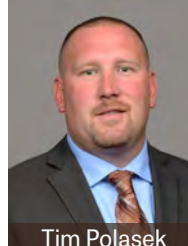
### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Craig Bohl

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tim Polasek

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jay Sawvel

## WYOMING COWBOYS

### OFFENSE

Andrew Peasley returns to start at quarterback but needs to improve after throwing 10 touchdowns with nine interceptions last year. It would help if the receivers could create better separation, but the talent just is not there. Aside from QB Peasley, the leading rusher returning is true sophomore DQ James from Lancaster, Texas. The leading pass catcher returning is tight end Treyton Welch who grabbed five touchdowns. Although five regulars return on the offensive line and there is a good amount of experience overall returning on the offense, it really struggled last season.

### DEFENSE

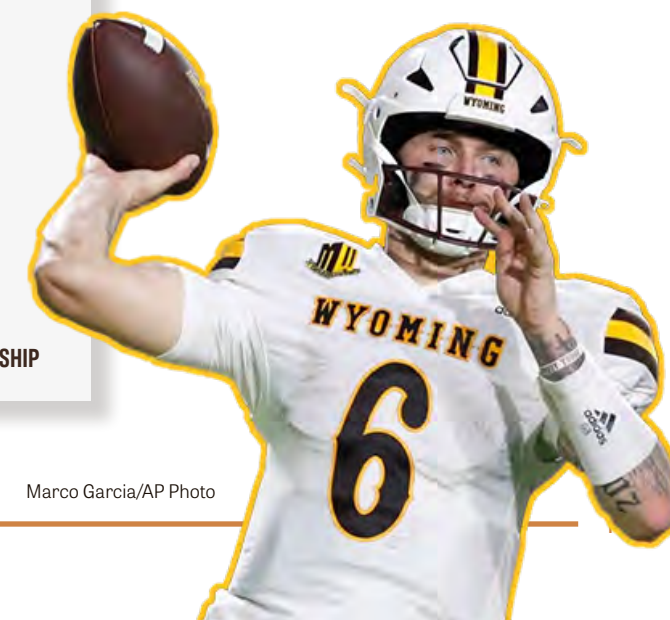
On defense, this team had difficulties stopping the run last year and performed much better against the pass. Wyoming had a youthful defense last season, which may explain their decline. The Cowboys are expected to improve this year with the returning players. They will bring back their top five leading tacklers from last season and top two sack leaders. This experienced defense should show significant progress this coming season.

### SUMMARY

Wyoming exemplifies one of the most steady and reliable teams in the country. They adopt a cautious approach on offense and boast a formidable defense. By cautious, I mean they rarely take risks. Wyoming attempted 4th downs at the lowest rate in the FBS last year, only 6%. In essence, Wyoming adheres to a traditional style of football. Experience returns to the defense but the offense will need to step up for a third winning season in a row.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	PORTLAND STATE VIKINGS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	TEXAS LONGHORNS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	APPALACHIAN STATE MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	NEW MEXICO LOBOS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	FRESNO STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	AIR FORCE FALCONS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	BOISE STATE BRONCOS
FRIDAY NOV. 3	VS	COLORADO STATE RAMS
FRIDAY NOV. 10	AT	UNLV REBELS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	HAWAII RAINBOW WARRIORS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	NEVADA WOLF PACK
SATURDAY DEC. 2		MOUNTAIN WEST CHAMPIONSHIP



Marco Garcia/AP Photo



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Jedd Fisch

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brennan Carroll

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Johnny Nansen

## ARIZONA WILDCATS

### OFFENSE

Jayden de Laura is a gunslinger at times, but he is a really effective quarterback when he uses his speed and agility to find open receivers. He will have a couple of great targets that are some of the best in the country. Last season, de Laura finished with 3,685 passing yards, 25 touchdowns and 13 interceptions. In this high-powered offense, he will look to improve to be one of the best QBs in the Pac-12.

The running back room for Arizona is an underrated position group. Arizona plans on using four running backs this season. The Arizona offense is based on what the opponent's defense is giving them, but most of the Arizona offense is through the passing game. Michal Wiley from Houston, Texas (Strake Jesuit HS), will be returning after leading the team with 1,120 all-purpose yards and 11 touchdowns.

The receiving corps for Arizona in 2022 was one of the country's best position groups that you may not have heard about. Last season the Wildcats had two 1,000-yard receivers: Dorian

Singer and Jacob Cowing. Singer transferred to USC, but Cowing is back. Alongside Cowing is sophomore Tetairoa McMillan (6-foot-5, 205 pounds), who had a breakthrough freshman season (39 receptions, 702 yards and eight touchdowns). McMillan and Cowing form one of the best receiving tandems in the conference. The weakest position group of the Arizona offense is the offensive line. Not that it's bad (15th in line yards but 129th in power success rate), but there is just no depth behind the established starters. Arizona is one injury away from where things could get ugly.



### DEFENSE

Arizona's defense struggled mightily last season. The Wildcats finished in the triple digits in just about every defensive category and finished 125th in total defense. Perhaps addition by subtraction with only three returning starters. Arizona will be relying on a ton of transfers on the defensive side of the football this season. There is plenty of room for improvement rather than regression. It will be hard to be worse statistically; we'll see if they can turn it around to help out their offense.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Arizona has some of the conference's top specialists in kicker Tyler Loop from Lucas, Texas (Lovejoy HS), and punter Kyle Ostendorp.

### SUMMARY

The offense for the Wildcats should be great again, though they will need to get better in the red zone (85th in red zone offense last season). Though one injury to the offensive line and the Wildcat offense could tailspin. The defense can only improve after last season. For Arizona to improve on its win total and make a bowl game, the defense will have to step up or it will be difficult for Arizona to win multiple shootouts, especially with the more winnable games being away from home this season.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	N/A	NORTHERN ARIZONA LUMBERJACKS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		MISSISSIPPI STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		UTEP MINERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		STANFORD CARDINAL
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		WASHINGTON HUSKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		USC TROJANS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		WASHINGTON STATE COUGARS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		OREGON STATE BEAVERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		UCLA BRUINS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		COLORADO BUFFALOES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		UTAH UTES
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		ARIZONA STATE SUN DEVILS
FRIDAY DEC. 1			PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Kenny Dillingham

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Beau Baldwin

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brian Ward

## ARIZONA STATE SUN DEVILS

### ■ OFFENSE

New head coach Kenny Dillingham will try to resurrect this Sun Devils offense. Drew Pyne from Notre Dame transfers in. Pyne had decent numbers last season as one of two quarterbacks used by the Irish but struggled against better competition. Trenton Bourguet will also be in competition for the starting position. Bourguet played a decent amount last season (145-204, 1,490 yards, 71.1% completion, 11 touchdowns, four interceptions) but was playing banged up most of the time when he saw action.

Pyne probably has the better arm and a better ability to throw the ball downfield. However, Bourguet completed more than 70% of his throws last season. Only one other Pac-12 quarterback completed his passes at a higher clip - Bo Nix (71.9%) - whose offensive coordinator last year is now Arizona State's head coach.

True freshman Jaden Rashada has the best arm in the quarterback room but Rashada may not play much this season. Rashada is the future of this team, just not this year. Maybe.

The receiving corps is the strength of the entire team. Most of the top pass catchers return, including one of the top receiver-tight end tandems in the conference in Elijah Badger and Jalin

Conyers from Gruver, Texas (Gruver HS). Idaho State transfer and All-Big Sky receiver Xavier Guillory adds another dimension to the receiving corps with his good hands, speed and route running. The 2022 second-leading receiver Giovanni Sanders also returns. Melquan Stovall from Colorado State and Texas transfer Troy Omeire from Sugar Land, Texas (Fort Bend Austin), who is 6-foot-5 and 220 pounds, provide quality depth and upside to an already stacked receiving corps.

The offensive line is a bit of a question. Four of the top six linemen by snap count are gone. At least statistically, this was a good offensive line last year (third in line yards last season and first in opportunity rate). The guards are the biggest question. Tackles look good with returnees Isaiah Glass and Emmit Bohle. Though do not be surprised if Aaron Frost starts in place of Bohle. Frost is a former two-time All-Mountain West offensive lineman. The depth is not great at tackle, but Arizona State might be able to hold serve in pass blocking (ninth in pass downs line yards in 2022) if they can stay healthy.

Leif Fautanu transfers in from UNLV; he was a three-year starter at center for the Rebels. The guards, however, are a concern. The depth is not good either at the interior spots.

While pass blocking could be good up front, the run blocking may not be as much. So we'll see what this means for Sacramento State transfer running back Cameron Skattebo, who finished top 10 in rushing yards in the FCS last season. This won't be the first time Dillingham has operated with a questionable offensive line; he formerly was the offensive coordinator and QB coach in Tallahassee from 2020-2021 before operating with a tremendous offensive line at Oregon last season.



Rob Schumacher/The Republic/USA TODAY NETWORK

■ **DEFENSE**

The Sun Devils lose their top three defensive linemen by snap count. They did a good job in the portal here, especially at defensive end. Oklahoma transfer Clayton Smith from Queen City, Texas (Texas High), and Texas transfer Prince Dorbah from Dallas, Texas (Highland Park), add depth to an edge rushing room that already returns its sack leader over the last two years in B.J. Green II. Smith stood out in spring, but the defensive tackles don't have the experience or depth the ends have. Outside of Anthonie Cooper, the rest of the tackles are all unknowns. At linebacker, Arizona State loses its top two in Kyle Soelle and Merlin Robertson, who were two of the three leading tacklers last season and combined for nearly 1,500 snaps. Former Texas and Tennessee linebacker Juwan Mitchell transfers in with four years of experience and will slide in at one of the two starting linebacker spots. At the other starting spot will be another senior transfer in Washington State's Travion Brown. The depth isn't great at linebacker, but they have their starters in place. The secondary is the strength of the defense. USC transfer Xavion Alford from Pearland, Texas (Shadow Creek), has some experience and was one of the standouts in spring. Austin Peay transfer and All-ASUN safety Shamari Simmons played well in spring so much that he might be a starter immediately in the back end. Chris Edmonds has NFL

upside and only makes the safety room that much stronger. The corners have talent and experience as well. Ro Torrence returns and is one of the biggest corners in the league at 6-foot-3 and 215 pounds. Ed Woods returns opposite Torrence and Jordan Clark returns at nickel. Defensive coordinator Brian Ward, who comes in from Washington State, will be able to be aggressive with the play calls this fall, given the experience and playmakers, especially on the back end of the defense.



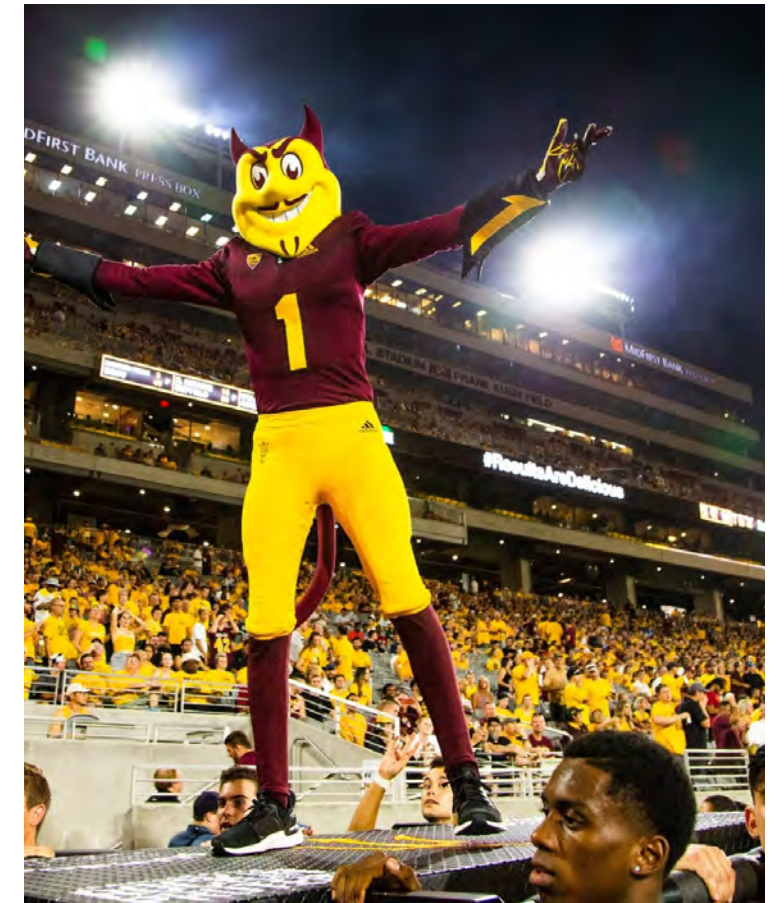
Sun Devil Athletics

■ **SPECIAL TEAMS**

Just like in a lot of places on the roster that had holes, Arizona State hit the portal for its specialists as well. Place kicker will likely be California transfer Dario Longhetto and punter will more than likely be New Mexico transfer Josh Carlson.

**SUMMARY**

The transfer portal gives an opportunity to cycle quicker than in the past. Arizona State will have more than 50 new scholarship players and only 31 players returning from last season. As much production as the Sun Devils lost, they only lost a handful of players that would have been starters. Arizona State could be entering the season overlooked.



SI/Sun Devil Athletics

**2023 SCHEDULE**

THURSDAY AUG. 31	VS		SOUTHERN UTAH THUNDERBIRDS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		OKLAHOMA STATE COWBOYS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		FRESNO STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		USC TROJANS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		COLORADO BUFFALOES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		WASHINGTON HUSKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		WASHINGTON STATE COUGARS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		UTAH UTES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		UCLA BRUINS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		OREGON DUCKS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		ARIZONA WILDCATS
FRIDAY DEC. 1			PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP





## CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Justin Wilcox

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jake Spavital

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Peter Sirmon

### OFFENSE

New coordinator Jake Spavital will speed up this offense, and they should see some improvements.

TCU transfer Sam Jackson V, will likely be the starting quarterback for Cal. Jackson is elusive with his feet but green; he has attempted only six passes in his college career. Ben Finley, who transfers in from NC State, could challenge Jackson. Jackson struggled with consistency and turnovers, both passing and running the ball.

Cal has a great running back in Jaydn Ott and added a couple of transfers. With Jackson V and Ott, Cal could have a dangerous rushing offense if the offensive line improves. Ott, a true sophomore, rushed for 897 yards and eight touchdowns last season. Our scouting department is very high on Ott; he is one of the best running backs most fans have never heard of.

At receiver, the Golden Bears lose J. Michael Sturdivant to UCLA but return three of their top four receivers, including one of their best players on the team, Jeremiah Hunter. Hunter was 35 yards away from being a 1,000-yard

receiver. Cal also added experience to the receiving room through the portal in Brian Hightower from Illinois. Ott is also used prevalently in the passing game and was third in receptions last year. The offensive line returns mostly intact but struggled last season, allowing 31 sacks. Both of the offensive tackles are back and will most likely be relied upon again despite struggling in pass protection.



### DEFENSE

The defensive line was not good last year (116th in line yards) but returns a ton of depth; everyone who played 50 or more snaps returns. Brett Johnson's return from injury could really help this group. There is no difference maker on the interior, and some guys in the defensive line room missed spring ball. Linebacker could be a strength, especially on the outside, with the depth. Junior Xavier Carlton returns after leading the Golden Bears in sacks last year with 4.5. Outside linebacker Myles Jernigan from Grand Prairie, Texas (South Grand Prairie HS), also returns after tallying four sacks last season. The secondary returns most of their starters from last season. Cal hit the portal for the secondary despite the returning experience. UNLV transfer Nohl Williams is a great addition for the secondary. Craig Woodson from Grand Prairie, Texas (South Grand Prairie HS), returns after being second in tackles and interceptions last season for this defense. Also, Collin Gamble from Flower Mound, Texas (Liberty Christian HS), who had six tackles for loss last year.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

The Golden Bears will have new specialists Michael Luckhurst and Lachlan Wilson at kicker and punter, respectively.

### SUMMARY

California does not have it easy; the current era of college sports does not suit the university's academic requirements. Despite the uphill battle in this new era, Cal did a good job in the portal, adding depth to a team that already brought back a good amount of production that ranks 24th in the country. If Sam Jackson V can be consistent this season and the defense gets tougher up front, then the Golden Bears could improve their win total. A difficult schedule and a new, inexperienced QB won't make it easy.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT		NORTH TEXAS MEAN GREEN
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		AUBURN TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		IDAHO VANDALS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		WASHINGTON HUSKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		ARIZONA STATE SUN DEVILS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		OREGON STATE BEAVERS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		UTAH UTES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		USC TROJANS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		OREGON DUCKS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		WASHINGTON STATE COUGARS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		STANFORD CARDINAL
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		UCLA BRUINS
FRIDAY DEC. 1			PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## COLORADO BUFFALOES

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



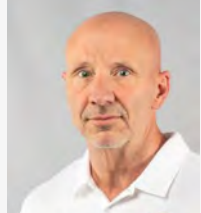
Deion "Coach Prime" Sanders

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Sean Lewis

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Charles Kelly

### OFFENSE

Jackson State transfer quarterback Shedeur Sanders from Dallas, Texas (Trinity Christian HS), is a huge upgrade at quarterback for the Buffaloes. The depth at quarterback for Colorado, though, is a scary situation; behind Sanders, there is not any experience. Houston transfer running back Alton McCaskill from Conroe, Texas (Oak Ridge HS), and Kentucky transfer running back Kavosiey Smoke form a good one-two punch at running back. South Florida transfer receivers Xavier Weaver and Jimmy Horn Jr. will start for Colorado this season. Both averaged more than 13 yards a catch last season, combining for more than 1,200 yards receiving and nine touchdowns between the two. The most important player for Colorado this season - potentially - is Travis Hunter, who will play receiver as well as defensive back. The depth behind these three, though, is inexperienced, so Hunter might be required to play significant snaps at receiver.

The offensive line will be a concern. There is not much depth or size. It will also be made up of mostly transfers, and most of those transfers are moving up in competition from lower-level play to the FBS. Half of the offensive line two-deep will be made up of players who are listed at 290 pounds or fewer.



### DEFENSE

Similarly to the offensive line, the trenches are also a question mark for the defensive line. The D-line does not have a lot of size or depth. There are only a couple of D-linemen listed at more than 300 pounds in the entire position group. Most of the defensive line transfers have never been starters at the FBS level. Linebacker LaVonta Bailey transfers in from Clemson and will look to help a new-look linebacker room that loses its top four from last season. The secondary is the strength of the defense with the No. 1 cornerback in the country from each of the past two recruiting classes in Travis Hunter and Cormani McClain. Safety Trevor Woods from Katy, Texas (James E. Taylor HS), returns and is one of the few holdovers from last season's team.



### SPECIAL TEAMS

Alejandro Mata transfers in from Jackson State and will likely be the starting place kicker. Louisville transfer Mark Vassett will be the starting punter.

### SUMMARY

We have never seen a one-year roster makeover like this, so it is hard to tell for sure what will happen. What we do know is Colorado will have more speed than it will have size. Will Colorado get pushed around at the line of scrimmage? Will depth emerge behind the starting skill position players? Colorado has an uphill battle to finish with a winning record or to simply just make a bowl game. Coach Prime has had his work cut out for him, and improvement is likely coming off last year's (1-11) team.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	TCU	TCU HORNED FROGS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	N	NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	CS	COLORADO STATE RAMS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	O	OREGON DUCKS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	S	USC TROJANS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	AS	ARIZONA STATE SUN DEVILS
FRIDAY OCT. 13	VS	S	STANFORD CARDINAL
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	UCLA	UCLA BRUINS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	OS	OREGON STATE BEAVERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	A	ARIZONA WILDCATS
FRIDAY NOV. 17	AT	WS	WASHINGTON STATE COUGARS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	U	UTAH UTES
FRIDAY DEC. 1			PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Dan Lanning

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Will Stein

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tosh Lupoi

## OREGON DUCKS

### ■ OFFENSE

Will Stein left UTSA to become the Ducks' new offensive coordinator, who will get to keep Bo Nix climbing on the NFL draft boards and help raise his Heisman stock. Expectations are high in Eugene after Nix had his best season of his career last year.

The running back room is loaded with the top two backs in Bucky Irving and Noah Whittington returning after combining for more than 1,800 yards in 2022.

A major reason for the success of the running backs last year was the offensive line. Last year, the offensive line was the best nationally in least amount of sacks allowed (five) and in created rushing yards at a top 30 rate. However, for this season, the offensive line will have to replace four starters off of last year's unit, including three NFL draft picks. In the spring game, there was a decent amount of heat on the quarterbacks and not a ton of running lanes. Oregon picked up a couple of transfers to help shore up the offensive line. The offensive line will likely not be as good as last season. The question is how much of a step back will it take?

Bo Nix will have one of the better receiving corps in the Pac-12 at his disposal. Troy Franklin

is probably the best of them all and Chris Hutson returns as well. Transfer Tez Johnson, Sun Belt champion Troy's leading receiver last year, is a breakthrough candidate for the Ducks this year. Behind those three, the youngsters will need to step up.



### ■ DEFENSE

With Dan Lanning as head coach, one would assume the Ducks would rank better than 71st in the country in total defense.

The defense this season for Oregon will be made up of a lot of transfers. Jordan Burch transfers in from South Carolina and will be one of the starting defensive ends. He has a ton of upside. The rest of the defensive line returns experienced players from last season's defense in Eugene.

In the linebacking corps, Oregon returns two of three starters and will bring in Jestin Jacobs (six tackles and one pass defended last year) from Iowa, who will slide in at one of the inside linebacker spots

The secondary is made up of mostly transfers. Starting safeties Tysheem Johnson and Evan Williams are both transfers from Ole Miss and Fresno State, respectively. Both were third in total tackles on their teams last season. Safety also has some depth with last year's starters returning as well. The depth in the cornerback room is inexperienced overall.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

Place kicker Camden Lewis returns and has a chance to become Oregon's record holder in both made field goals and points. Oregon has not yet identified a starting punter. Oregon has an explosive return game with Bucky Irving and Chris Hutson.

## SUMMARY

Oregon could be a playoff contender if the defense improves and the offensive line does not regress greatly. The quarterback and receivers are in place, and Oregon has the kind of talent and depth that most teams don't possess. Will all the new defensive players play well cohesively? Can the offensive line allow for the running backs to run wild and keep Bo Nix upright at the same or close to the same level? As top-heavy as the Pac-12 is this season, if Oregon does not answer these questions with efficient play, they could trip up a time or two more than some might expect.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		PORTLAND STATE VIKINGS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		HAWAII RAINBOW WARRIORS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		COLORADO BUFFALOES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		STANFORD CARDINAL
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		WASHINGTON HUSKIES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		WASHINGTON STATE COUGARS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		UTAH UTES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		USC TROJANS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		ARIZONA STATE SUN DEVILS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	VS		OREGON STATE BEAVERS
FRIDAY DEC. 1			PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## OREGON STATE BEAVERS

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Jonathan Smith

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brian Lindgren

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Trent Bray

### OFFENSE

The quarterback position will be an upgrade this season no matter who starts: DJ Uiagalelei, Ben Gulbranson or freshman Aidan Chiles. Given Uiagalelei's status and transferring in from Clemson for his last season of college football, I would be surprised if he is not named the official starter. Chiles is the future QB for Oregon State, but the Beavers may take their time. Uiagalelei is coming from a Clemson program in which the offensive system was basic. He has even made that comment before while being at Oregon State. At the very least, Uiagalelei will have a better offensive line ahead of him in Corvallis than he did at Clemson. Oregon State returns one of the best offensive lines in the country. The Beavers bring back four starters and could very well have at least three NFL draft picks from this offensive line next April. The big boys up front will be paving the way for what could end up being one of the best rushing attacks in the nation with leading rusher Damien Martinez from Lewisville, Texas (Lewisville HS),

returning for his sophomore season. Martinez ran for nearly 1,000 yards last season (982) as a freshman. There is also a ton of depth at running back behind Martinez in veterans Deshaun Fenwick and Jam Griffin. Receivers Silas Bolden and Anthony Gould are very explosive. Neither of them, however, has size (5 feet 8 inches, 155 pounds and 5 feet 8 inches, 165 pounds, respectively). The tight ends are heavily utilized in the Beaver offense and they have a lot of depth in the tight end room this season. Tight end Jack Velling could break through.



## ■ DEFENSE

The improvement from the Beaver defense from 2021 to 2022 was incredible. In 2021, the Beavers finished 61st in the country in total team defense. Last season, Oregon State improved to 16th. Under first-year defensive coordinator Trent Bray, the Beavers surprised everyone as Oregon State finished with the top overall defense in the Pac-12.

The defensive line for this season is the deepest they have been under Smith. Lots of seniors here and they can go two to three deep at every position up front. Wyoming transfer Oluwaseyi Omotosho from Houston, Texas (George Bush HS) could be one of the better pass rushers as a sophomore. Oregon State had a great defense last season despite not having much of a pass rush (119th in sack rate). This number should improve and might improve drastically given the Beavers have their best defensive line yet under coach Jonathan Smith. At linebacker, Oregon State loses essentially everyone from middle linebacker. The Beavers' only returnee at inside linebacker is someone the coaching staff is high on: Easton Mascarenas-Arnold. Mascarenas-Arnold has been with the program for a while and is one of the top-rated recruits of the Smith era. More will be put on his shoulders this year. Illinois transfer and senior CJ Hart has a lot of college experience, having played since 2019. The starters might be in place, but the depth is questionable at the inside spots. Outside linebacker, however, is one of the deepest position groups on the team and is loaded with experience,

starting with seniors John McCartan and Andrew Chatfield Jr. Last year's Beaver secondary might have been the best in school history. It almost certainly will not be as good this season as they lose three out of the five starters, including both starting cornerbacks. Sixth-year senior corner and speedster Jaden Robinson will finally have his chance to show himself. Robinson has been waiting his turn, playing behind high-caliber corners the past few years. Last year's corners set a high bar to clear and it will be tough to reach, especially considering opposite Robinson and behind Robinson in the cornerback depth chart there is little to no experience. While the corners may not be quite as good as last season's, the safeties might be the best in the conference and one of the best in the country. Kitan Oladapo, one of the defensive leaders, returns for his super senior season looking to improve his draft stock. Ryan Cooper, another senior, will likely play the same position as he occupied last year at nickel, where he led the team in pass breakups. Cooper tied for the team lead in interceptions last season (three). Perhaps one of the Pac-12's most overlooked players returning for this fall is Alton Julian. The word on the block is Julian will be ready to return for fall camp. Julian was Oregon State's best defensive back in 2021 before his ACL injury halfway through the 2021 season and did not play in 2022. With a healthy Julian, Oregon State's safety position will be one of the best in the country.



Soobum Im/USA Today Sports

## ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

The Beavers boast the Pac-12's top set of kick (Silas Bolden) and punt (Anthony Gould) returners. Placekicker Everett Hayes returns for his fifth season. Punter Josh Green also returns.

### SUMMARY

Jonathan Smith is a tremendous coach. Not too long ago, Oregon State football was an afterthought. The Beavers just won double-digit games for the first time since 2006. Each year under Smith's leadership, Oregon State football has improved. Last season, the Beavers were 10-0 when they scored 24 or more points. With what should be improved quarterback play this season, an experienced senior-laden defense and a manageable schedule, the Beavers could have their biggest breakthrough yet of the CFB playoff era under Jonathan Smith.

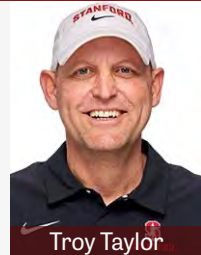
### 2023 SCHEDULE

SUNDAY SEP. 3	AT		SAN JOSE STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		UC DAVIS AGGIES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		WASHINGTON STATE COUGARS
FRIDAY SEP. 29	VS		UTAH UTES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		UCLA BRUINS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		ARIZONA WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		COLORADO BUFFALOES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		STANFORD CARDINAL
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		WASHINGTON HUSKIES
FRIDAY NOV. 24	AT		OREGON DUCKS
FRIDAY DEC. 1			PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

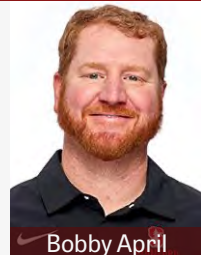
### HEAD COACH



### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



## STANFORD CARDINAL

### OFFENSE

As of now, the starting quarterback battle is between Ari Patu and Ashton Daniels. The two have combined for 31 collegiate passes.

Six of the top eight offensive linemen by snap count are gone. Two of the four transfers in for Stanford are offensive linemen from the Ivy League. Trevor Mayberry (Penn transfer) is an undersized tackle that might play center this season. Alec Bank (Harvard transfer) might start at guard. Stanford struggled fielding a two-deep roster at offensive line during the spring. This might be an issue. Losing three of the five main pass catchers won't help either. There is not much depth at receiver. In fact, there is so little depth that tight ends might play at receiver. Speaking of tight ends, Stanford has a good one in Benjamin Yurosek, who was the Cardinal's third-leading pass catcher last season. John Humphreys is the only other experienced pass catcher.

Stanford has two proven running backs in E.J. Smith from Dallas, Texas (Jesuit College Prep), and Casey Filkins. However, Stanford struggled running the football

last season (117th in rushing offense), especially after Smith's injury two games into the season. It might be even more of an uphill battle this season with the looks of the offensive line.



### DEFENSE

The entire linebacking unit and secondary must be replaced. Outside linebacker David Bailey, who led the team with 7.5 tackles for a loss, returns. There is some experience at defensive line, but they struggled last season (last in FBS in defensive line yards last season). There is some depth at defensive end, but this will be a rebuild for the Cardinal defense. The secondary does not have very much depth and barely enough bodies to field a two-deep in the spring.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Stanford returns one of the best place kickers in the country in Joshua Karty. Karty was a perfect 18 for 18 last season on field goal attempts. Connor Weselman is the punter.

### SUMMARY

The term "rebuild" may be an offensive term to some fan bases, but in Stanford's case, it is just a fact. There are a couple of winnable games in the nonconference against Hawaii and Sacramento State, but other than that, Stanford would have to pull off an upset to get simply one conference victory. Getting to four wins would be a good season for the Cardinal this year.



Scott Strazzante/The Chronicle

## 2023 SCHEDULE

FRIDAY SEP. 1	AT		HAWAII RAINBOW WARRIORS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		USC TROJANS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		SACRAMENTO STATE HORNETS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		ARIZONA WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		OREGON DUCKS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
FRIDAY OCT. 13	AT		COLORADO BUFFALOES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		UCLA BRUINS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		WASHINGTON HUSKIES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		WASHINGTON STATE COUGARS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		OREGON STATE BEAVERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		NOTRE DAME FIGHTING IRISH
FRIDAY DEC. 1			PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP

# Ucla

## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Chip Kelly

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Chip Kelly

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



D'Anton Lynn

## UCLA BRUINS

### OFFENSE

UCLA loses a lot of stars and production. Dorian Thompson-Robinson leaves after five years of being the main quarterback. Ethan Garbers is the returning backup. He might be the starting quarterback - particularly early. Garbers was consistent in the spring, but he does not have a cannon for an arm and he's not extremely athletic. He does have good decision making. The future of UCLA football is five-star freshman Dante Moore. In the spring, Moore was still a little inconsistent on intermediate throws and still has to get up to speed with the college level. Kent State transfer quarterback Collin Schlee could get some time this fall. Schlee has the strongest arm of the three and can run pretty well, but he needs to work on consistency and accuracy.

In the running game, Carson Steele is a great pickup in the portal from Ball State, having run for more than 1,500 yards. Steele and others will contribute to the running game, but losing Zach Charbonnet will be felt.

Kam Brown is the leading returning receiver (24 receptions, 362 yards and three touchdowns). California transfer J. Michael Sturdivant from Flower Mound, Texas (Marcus HS), will more than likely be the go-to receiver after breaking through as a freshman last

season (65 receptions, 755 yards and seven touchdowns). Sturdivant adds size at 6-foot-4 and 205 pounds. Logan Loya adds experience. Replacing do-it-all Jake Bobo, who had twice as many receiving yards as the next closest receiver, won't be easy, but Sturdivant might just be that guy. Others will need to take that next step

The offensive line is the biggest question on offense. Center and right tackle are set, but the rest will be transfers. The starting five likely will not be as good as last year, but they should be fine. The depth, however, is not good.



### DEFENSE

Last season, UCLA had to blitz to get pressure on opposing quarterbacks. The Bruin defensive front will need to improve (121st in line yards) so the defense does not have to bring extra guys all the time to create pressure. The front six is experienced and loaded with upperclassmen with upside, so we'll see if that helps.

The secondary has more to replace - specifically at safety. The secondary would be better off (117th in pass yards allowed last year) if the defensive line could get pressure by itself. The defense for UCLA has disappointed under Chip Kelly year after year. The personnel is there to be improved this season. Will they finally live up to their talent?

### SPECIAL TEAMS

UCLA hit the portal hard for its offense and specialists. UCLA welcomes Montana State kicker Blake Glessner and Princeton All-Ivy League punter Will Powers.

## SUMMARY

The Bruins will be relying on a lot of new faces on the offense this season. UCLA had one of the best offenses in school history last season and left a high bar to clear for this year's squad. It will be hard to reach last year's level of play, even if some of the transfers pan out. The defense has the experience and depth to be better, but they have not lived up to expectations for the last few years. Is this the year they finally do, or will they struggle again? Just like last year, the schedule is manageable, so the Bruins will have every opportunity to match last year's win total.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		COASTAL CAROLINA CHANTICLEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		NC CENTRAL EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		UTAH UTES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		WASHINGTON STATE COUGARS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		OREGON STATE BEAVERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		STANFORD CARDINAL
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		COLORADO BUFFALOES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		ARIZONA WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		ARIZONA STATE SUN DEVILS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		USC TROJANS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS
FRIDAY DEC. 1			PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP





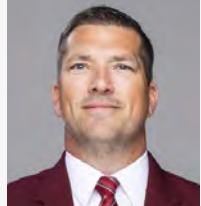
## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



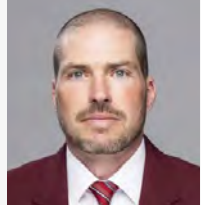
Lincoln Riley

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



John Hensen

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Alex Grinch

## USC TROJANS

### OFFENSE

This will only be the second time Lincoln Riley has returned his starting QB. Not due to bad coaching, but because his quarterbacks win the Heisman and head to the NFL. Caleb Williams is back to lead what just might be the nation's best offense in 2023. Williams led the country with 52 total TDs. While Williams does lose his top target in Jordan Addison, USC will still have a top-five receiving corps in the country this year. The Trojans bring back three of their four leading receivers in Tajh Washington from Marshall, Texas (Marshall HS), Mario Williams and Brenden Rice. The Trojans also added All-Pac-12 first-teamer Dorian Singer from Arizona. Incoming five-star Zachariah Branch will see the field this season. Branch might be the fastest freshman in college football. South Carolina transfer MarShawn Lloyd and senior Austin Jones are a nice one-two punch at running back. The lone question offensively is up front, where only two regulars return and lose their top two offensive linemen who combined for 90 career starts. USC added three starters via the portal to try to shore up the offensive line. Kliff Kingsbury is the QB coach paired with last year's Heisman-winning quarterback and an electric receiving corps. The Trojans should be fantastic offensively this season.

### DEFENSE

The defense is usually the question with Lincoln Riley teams, and it is no different this year. USC defensively in 2022 was good at two things: havoc rate and forcing turnovers. The Trojans were top 10 in sacks and sixth in turnovers forced (29). If you have a tremendous offense, then you can win playing that kind of defense. Though the defense was eighth-worst in yards per play allowed. Believe it or not, there was defensive improvement last season - in schedule-adjusted efficiency: 109th in 2021 and 79th in 2022. Defensive coordinator Alex Grinch is often scrutinized, and the pressure is definitely on him this season as USC has very high expectations.

The Trojans have some depth in the front seven this season. Top-15 defensive line recruit in '22 and Georgia transfer Bear Alexander from Denton, Texas (IMG Academy) and Texas A&M transfer Anthony Lucas (five-star recruit in 2022 class) are talented, and then the rest of the front seven are full of veterans. This will likely be the strength of the defense. Like the front seven, USC's secondary brings back a lot of experience. In fact, the Trojans rank 10th overall in defensive returning production. The secondary must improve as they finished outside the top 100 in passing yards allowed per game last year. With the talent that USC has, one would think they could at least improve on that number. Defensive back Calen Bullock returns after leading the team with five interceptions last season.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Both kicker Denis Lynch and punter Aadyn Sleep-Dalton return. Lynch is a reliable kicker, but Sleep-Dalton punted only 30 times last season.



## SUMMARY

When a team has the likes of QB Caleb Williams, they have a chance to win every ball game. Whether or not USC can make the CFB playoff will rely on the defense. Last season, USC led the country in turnover margin with plus-97 points in this category. This helped USC in the close games last year, where they finished 4-2 in one-score games. Relying on turnover margin is not sustainable unless it's the Iowa Hawkeyes, so USC will need to improve the defense on a down-to-down basis to get to that next level. After USC lost in the Pac-12 championship game to Utah by 23 points and blew a lead against Tulane in the Cotton Bowl, the pressure is definitely on Lincoln Riley, Caleb Williams and company this season.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	VS		SAN JOSE STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		NEVADA WOLF PACK
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		STANFORD CARDINAL
SATURDAY SEP. 16	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		ARIZONA STATE SUN DEVILS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		COLORADO BUFFALOES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		ARIZONA WILDCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		NOTRE DAME FIGHTING IRISH
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		UTAH UTES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		WASHINGTON HUSKIES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		OREGON DUCKS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		UCLA BRUINS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	OFF		OFF
FRIDAY DEC. 1			PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP





## UTAH UTES

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Kyle Whittingham

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Andy Ludwig

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Morgan Scalley

### OFFENSE

The return of quarterback Cam Rising and tight end Brant Kuithe from Katy, Texas (Cinco Ranch HS), is awesome news for the Utes. However, both are coming back from serious injuries. It will be interesting to see when they return and how healthy they look when they play.

Utah loses its two best offensive linemen but has 12 guys vying for the top 10 spots. Kyle Whittingham loves the depth at offensive line this season. The OL will most likely be better at run blocking than pass blocking.

Receiver might be the weakest position group on the team. Devaughn Vele and Money Parks from Aledo, Texas (Aledo HS), are the top two experienced receivers, but neither are that explosive.

Losing Dalton Kincaid to the NFL is going to hurt; he was the top pass catcher last season despite being a tight end. Florida transfer and slot receiver Micah Pittman is sure-handed (2.8 drop rate over four seasons) but Pittman may not be available for the first handful of games, as he is

also coming back from injury.

The running game, as always, will be a strength this season as Ja'Quinden Jackson from Dallas, Texas (Duncanville HS), began to play better down the stretch last season as a true freshman. Micah Bernard also returns to help carry the load.



### DEFENSE

The defensive line for the Utes should improve, as the coaching staff feels confident in them heading into the season. They have five guys who they feel confident with up front with just the tackles alone. The coaching staff feels even better about the defensive ends. This is normally a strength for Utah. It took a slight step back last season, but it might be back to its usual self this year. Karene Reid and Lander Barton return from last season, and Utah adds Stanford's leading tackler Levani Damuni to a great starting linebacking group. However, the depth is untested. The secondary loses two starters, including their best in All-American Clark Phillips III. All-Pac-12 safety Cole Bishop is back, and there is some other experience back here, but the secondary may not be as strong as the defensive front. It is, however, the longest cornerback room Utah has had in a while.



### SPECIAL TEAMS

Utah's special teams used to be the best in the country but have not been that good the last couple of years. Cole Becker transfers in from Colorado and is a reliable kicker. The rest of the special teams need to improve.

### SUMMARY

With arguably the most difficult schedule in the entire Pac-12, the Utes have their work cut out for them this season. Utah needs to have its best players healthy at the start of the season because Utah's schedule is brutal right off the bat. The two-time defending Pac-12 champion may have an uphill battle this season finishing atop the conference standings with road games.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	VS		FLORIDA GATORS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		BAYLOR BEARS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		WEBER STATE WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		UCLA BRUINS
FRIDAY SEP. 29	AT		OREGON STATE BEAVERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		USC TROJANS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		OREGON DUCKS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		ARIZONA STATE SUN DEVILS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		WASHINGTON HUSKIES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		ARIZONA WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		COLORADO BUFFALOES
FRIDAY DEC. 1			PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP



# W

## WASHINGTON HUSKIES

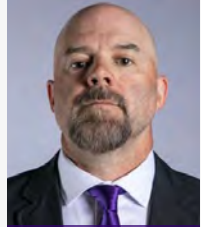
### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Kalen DeBoer

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR

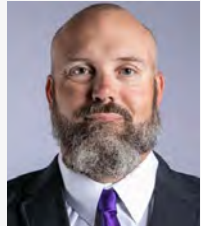


Ryan Grubb

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



William Inge



Chuck Morrell

### OFFENSE

The Huskies will have one of the best offenses in the country with quarterback Michael Penix Jr. deciding to run it back for one more year.

An area that this offense could improve is short-yardage situations and red zone offense. It will be interesting to see if that improves, given the one question for the Husky offense this fall: offensive line. The interior of the offensive line must replace both guards and the center. The players stepping up into those spots are experienced, but they have big shoes to fill. The tackle combination of Troy Fautanu and Roger Rosengarten is one of the best in the country. The Huskies' backups are inexperienced, so depth becomes an issue.

The Washington receiver corps is one of the best in the country, returning six of their top seven pass catchers, including two 1,000-yard receivers in Rome Odunze and Jalen McMillan. That also includes Ja'Lynn Polk from Lufkin, Texas (Lufkin HS), who had 41 receptions for 694 yards and six touchdowns.

### DEFENSE

Everyone who is at least 270 pounds returns. The interior should be decent against the run again (26th in rush defense last season) but needs to improve overall in the quality of play (91st in defensive line yards). Having more depth this season should help in that regard. Ulumoo Ale has the size (6-foot-6, 345 pounds) and experience but needs to put it all together for his senior season. There is plenty of potential for the defensive line with its depth and experience.

The ends have experience and upside as well, with Pro Football Focus' national leader in pressures - Bralen Trice - and 2020 All-American Zion Tupuola-Fetui. Zach Durfee, a transfer from Division II Sioux Falls, adds depth to the edge position as well. Linebackers will have some new faces and bring in USC's eighth-leading tackler last year to add some immediate experience. The Huskies bring back their second-leading tackler last season in Alphonzo Tuputala as well.

Oklahoma State transfer Jabbar Muhammad from DeSoto, Texas

(DeSoto HS), is a good pickup for an otherwise young cornerback group. The veteran senior safeties Asa Turner and Dominick Hampton are the strength of the secondary.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Washington didn't punt much last season, but when it did, it wasn't great; the Huskies had one of the least efficient punt units in the country. Washington's place kicking unit was great, though. In fact, Washington had the largest gap between field goal efficiency and punting efficiency. The problem is Washington loses its kicker Peyton Henry - Washington's all-time leading scorer. Washington returns its punter Jack McCallister. The starting kicker will come down to walk-ons Grady Gross and Addison Shrock.

### SUMMARY

Washington has been penciled in by many as a playoff dark horse, and for good reason. The Huskies return one of the best passing offenses in the country. They had multiple players on both sides of the ball decide to run it back for one more year. While the Huskies are certainly a great team this season, it will be interesting to see how they play the role of the hunted rather than the hunter, as last season when they broke through with no pressure. Washington had one of the more manageable schedules in the Pac-12 last season but will have a much more difficult schedule this year.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		BOISE STATE BRONCOS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		TULSA GOLDEN HURRICANE
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		ARIZONA WILDCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		OREGON DUCKS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		ARIZONA STATE SUN DEVILS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		STANFORD CARDINAL
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		USC TROJANS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		UTAH UTES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		OREGON STATE BEAVERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		WASHINGTON STATE COUGARS
FRIDAY DEC. 1			PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP





## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Jake Dickert

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Ben Arbuckle

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jeff Schmedding

## WASHINGTON STATE COUGARS

### OFFENSE

Cameron Ward from West Columbia, Texas (Columbia HS), is back for Washington State and is the program's first returning starter at quarterback since Luke Falk in 2017. Ward will need to improve on his longer throws; he had one of the worst completion percentages in the Power Five on 30-yard or more throws last season. New offensive coordinator Ben Arbuckle from Western Kentucky is an upgrade and will try to work out Ward's kinks. The offensive line will need to improve after finishing 125th in the country. Only two Power Five offensive lines gave up more sacks than the Cougars. The offensive line returns four starters but loses its best ones. The receiving corps loses its top four but did a good job in the portal, getting a few former Mountain West receivers and a junior college WR. Josh Kelly from Fresno State has more than 1,000 yards in his career. Kyle Williams from UNLV has more than 1,500 yards in his career. Wazzu also picks up DT Sheffield from the junior college ranks and might be the best addition from the portal; he could be a breakthrough player if he improves his consistency. The run game could be a strength with the top two rushers returning. Last year's leading rusher was Nakia Watson from Austin, Texas (Westlake HS), who

finished with 769 rushing yards and nine touchdowns. There is also Jaylen Jenkins from Allen, Texas (Allen HS), who averaged 5.8 yards per carry as a true freshman.

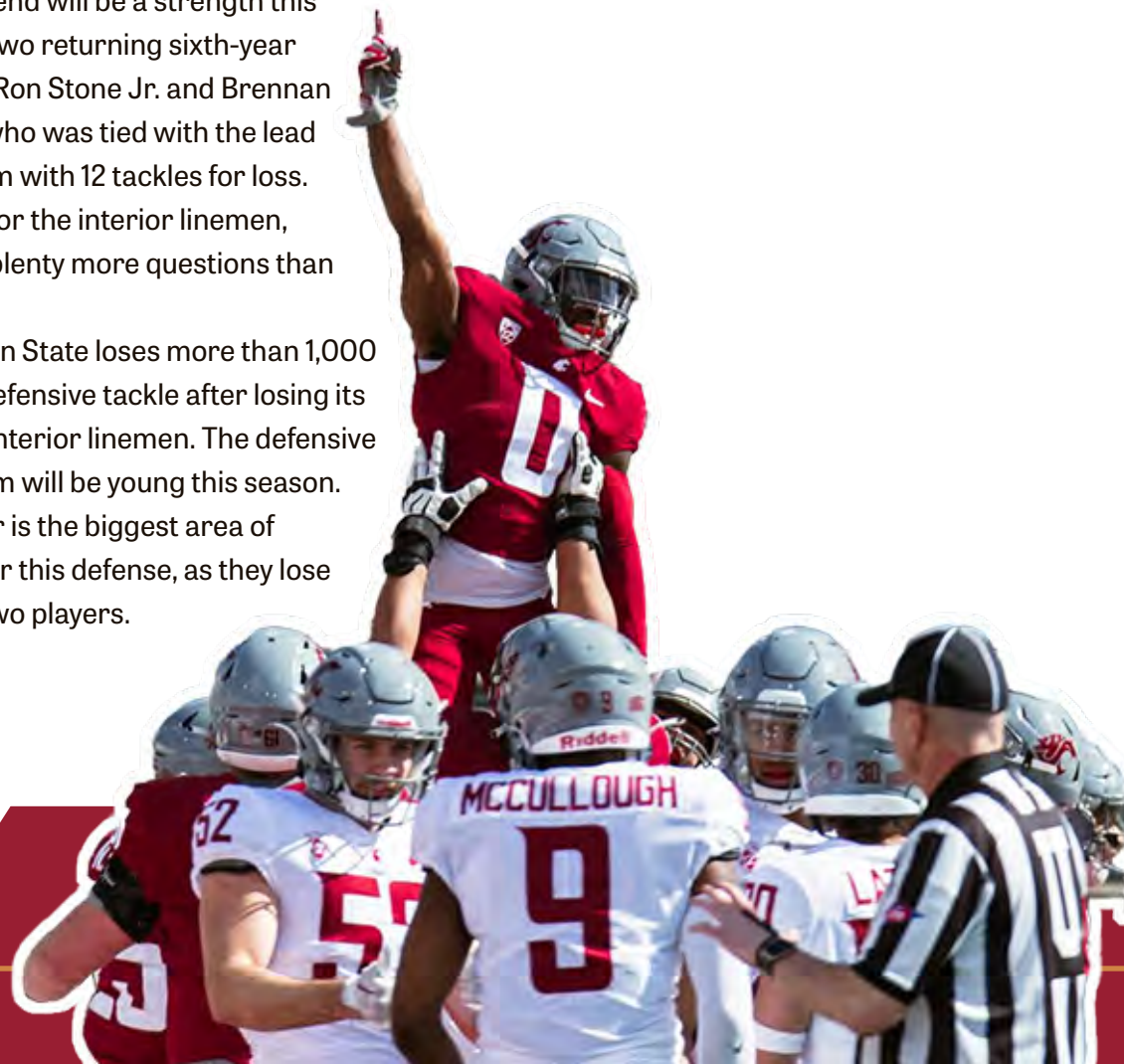
### DEFENSE

Jeff Schmedding takes over as the new defensive coordinator after Brian Ward left to go to Arizona State. Washington State arguably had the best defense in 15 years last season. However, a ton of production must be replaced, as well as losing its defensive coordinator. Defensive end will be a strength this year with two returning sixth-year seniors in Ron Stone Jr. and Brennan Jackson, who was tied with the lead on the team with 12 tackles for loss. However, for the interior linemen, there are plenty more questions than answers. Washington State loses more than 1,000 snaps at defensive tackle after losing its top three interior linemen. The defensive tackle room will be young this season. Linebacker is the biggest area of concern for this defense, as they lose their top two players.

They brought in a couple of transfers here, but it will be a drop-off. This will be a by-committee approach for the linebacking corps this season. The secondary was not a strength last season for Washington State (114th in pass yards allowed) and they lost two of their three best players, who accounted for more than 700 snaps. Returning cornerback Chau Smith-Wade is one of the Pac-12's best. Safety is experienced but needs to improve. There is not as much depth this season in the middle of the defense and at corner.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Washington State has the best in the conference with first-team All-Pac-12 kicker Dean Janikowski and All-Pac-12 honorable mention punter Nick Haberer.



## SUMMARY

Washington State loses a good amount of experience to the portal and some of last year's coaching staff. New offensive coordinator Ben Arbuckle will attempt to kick-start an offense with a revamped receiving corps that will look to improve from last season after underperforming. Cam Ward will need to improve for any of this to occur. The offensive line needs to keep Ward from having to scramble on every play, avoiding sacks. What was one of the better Wazzu defenses in recent memory will have a new coordinator calling plays for a defense that must replace five of its top seven tacklers. Last year, Wazzu beat the teams they should have but only had one win over an FBS team with a winning record. Washington State is not an easy place to win at and, per usual, it will not be this season.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT		COLORADO STATE RAMS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		WISCONSIN BADGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		NORTHERN COLORADO BEARS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		OREGON STATE BEAVERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		UCLA BRUINS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		ARIZONA WILDCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		OREGON DUCKS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		ARIZONA STATE SUN DEVILS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		STANFORD CARDINAL
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS
FRIDAY NOV. 17	VS		COLORADO BUFFALOES
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		WASHINGTON HUSKIES
FRIDAY DEC. 1			PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Nick Saban

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tommy Rees

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kevin Steele

## ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE

### OFFENSE

Who will take over at quarterback for this year's Crimson Tide? Whether it is Notre Dame transfer Tyler Buchner or Jalen Milroe from Katy, Texas (Tompkins HS) who has great running ability but needs to improve his passing. Or could it be freshman Ty Simpson who has a higher ceiling in the passing game? New offensive coordinator Tommy Rees will need to decipher who the starter will be. The offensive line has not been quite the same the last few years, and Bama has three new starters this season so we will see if this unit improves.

Jase McClellan from Aledo, Texas will probably be the starter at running back, but there are some exciting freshmen here that will probably see the field quite a bit. It is no surprise the Tide has a stable of running backs, but replacing Jahmyr Gibbs will not be easy.

The receivers disappointed a little last year so top returnees Jermaine Burton and Ja'Corey Brooks will need to take that next step.



### DEFENSE

Replacing Will Anderson will not be easy, but fortunately for Alabama, they have Dallas Turner that will bring the heat this season from his outside linebacker spot. Kool-Aid McKinstry is one of the top names in CFB and he also happens to be one of the best defensive backs in CFB. There are some questions in the secondary and at middle linebacker. UAB transfer Jaylen Key is a good addition for the safety room.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Will Reichard returns as one of the top placekickers in CFB, and punter James Burnip returns as well.

### SUMMARY

This year's Alabama team will probably be fine. They are Alabama. There just seems to be more questions and unknowns than normal for the Crimson Tide. This will be one of the youngest Saban-led Alabama teams.



Alabama Athletics/Kent Gidley



## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		MIDDLE TENNESSEE BLUE RAIDERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		TEXAS LONGHORNS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		USF BULLS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		OLE MISS REBELS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		MISSISSIPPI STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		TEXAS A&M AGGIES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		LSU TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		KENTUCKY WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		CHATTANOOGA MOCS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		AUBURN TIGERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			SEC CHAMPIONSHIP



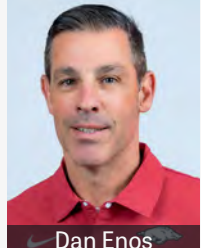
## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



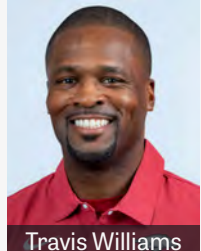
Sam Pittman

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Dan Enos

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Travis Williams

## ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS

### OFFENSE

Most of the issues for Arkansas last season were centered around injuries. North Carolina backup quarterback Jacoby Criswell transfers in and will be a more quality and game-ready backup quarterback than what Arkansas had last year. K.J. Jefferson returns as starting quarterback after a career season, but offensive coordinator Kendal Briles has moved on to TCU. This will be the first true Sam Pittman offensive line recruiting cycle with this being his third year. There will be more new faces up front than recently. The interior is more set than the tackles. Arkansas has eight guys they feel really good about on the offensive line. For the third straight season, K.J. Jefferson will have a completely new receiving corps. Matt Landers is now in the NFL, and Trey Knox is now at South Carolina. North Texas transfer Var'keyes Gumms from Houston (Dekaney HS) at tight end is a sneaky good pickup. This brand-new receiving corps will be heavily relied on with transfers including some from lower-level

schools.

Raheim Sanders returns in the backfield after leading the Hogs with 1,443 rushing yards and 10 touchdowns. AJ Green and true sophomore Rashad Dubinion also return, so expect this team to pound the rock this season.



Charlie Kaijo

### DEFENSE

On the defensive line, Arkansas has nine seniors. They feel they can go three deep at every position up front. The experience and depth are there up front with a mix of returnees and transfers. At linebacker, Arkansas loses a couple of their leading tacklers in Bumper Pool and Drew Morgan. Chris Paul Jr. and transfers Antonio Grier and Jaheim Thomas bring experience. The front seven should be good. The question is in the secondary. Last year the Arkansas secondary was decimated by injuries and finished as one of the worst pass defenses in the country. While Arkansas lost many through the portal, they also gained some. Arkansas brought in two Baylor starters in their second-leading tackler Alfahiym Walcott and former four-star starter in transfer Lorando Johnson from Lancaster, Texas. These are important pickups because Baylor was statistically the second-best pass defense in the Big 12 last year. Dwight McGlothorn from Houston (Klein Oak HS) returns as one of the top DBs for the Razorbacks last season. The secondary should be much better this season. Safety does not have a ton of depth, however. If Quincy McAdoo can recover quickly from an injured vertebrae, that would be huge for the Razorback secondary.

David Butler II/USA TODAY Sports

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Cam Little is back at kicker and has been great throughout his career, making 33/40 field goals (82.5%). Punter Max Fletcher also returns.

### SUMMARY

There are questions at quite a few positions. Arkansas' secondary and receivers are big unknowns at the moment, and for the first time in a while, the offensive line has questions. The first four SEC games are very difficult, but a manageable non-conference and back half of the schedule will help get Arkansas to a bowl game and probably finish with a winning record.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	WESTERN CAROLINA CATAMOUNTS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	KENT STATE GOLDEN FLASHES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	BYU COUGARS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	LSU TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	TEXAS A&M AGGIES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	OLE MISS REBELS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	MISSISSIPPI STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	FLORIDA GATORS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	AUBURN TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	FIU PANTHERS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	VS	MISSOURI TIGERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		SEC CHAMPIONSHIP



## AUBURN TIGERS

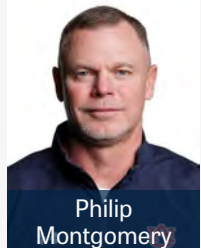
### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



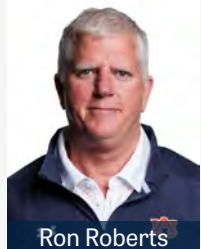
Hugh Freeze

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Philip Montgomery

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Ron Roberts

### OFFENSE

No doubt the passing game has to improve. Getting Payton Thorne from Michigan State was needed. Last year, true freshman Robby Ashford struggled (7 TDs, 7 INTs, 49% comp pct), the lowest completion percentage of an Auburn starting quarterback since 1998. A lot of his throws were shorter to intermediate throws, so it's not like he was throwing it deep. Thorne isn't a 'home run' from the portal, but he is an upgrade with 25+ college starts under his belt. Hugh Freeze is one of the best offensive coaches in the country, so they both are in good hands this year.

The offensive line definitely should be improved thanks to the portal. Both of Tulsa's 2022 starting offensive tackles transfer in along with new offensive coordinator Philip Montgomery. Dillon Wade from Houston, Texas (Cypress Falls) will slide in at left tackle. The other Tulsa offensive line transfer, Jaden Muskrat, will provide depth at guard. ECU transfer center Avery Jones is one of the most underrated transfers of 2023. Jones was one of the top pass-blocking centers in CFB last season regardless of whether it was P5 or G5. Jones will slide in at center. The starting right tackle will now be former Western Kentucky tackle Gunner Britton. Britton was in the top five least amount of pressures allowed among

G5 offensive tackles last season. The offensive line should greatly benefit from these additions. Auburn has not had an offensive lineman drafted since 2018. This is a position that needed an upgrade.

The receiving corps, similar to the rest of the offense, went hard in the portal. The returnees from last year's team were not special. While none of the transfers are going to rank in the 'top ten of top transfer receivers,' they did get upgrades, which was not a high bar to clear. Four transfers come in and three of them are noteworthy. North Texas transfer Jayire Shorter from Killeen, Texas (Ellison HS) is intriguing. Look for starting running back Jarquez Hunter to have a breakthrough year running behind what should be a much-improved offensive line. Hunter ran for over 650 yards last year despite a struggling offensive line and passing game. Hunter was third in the SEC last season in yards per attempt (6.6) versus a stacked box (7+ defenders in the box).



### DEFENSE

Defensive coordinator Ron Roberts comes in from Baylor. The strength of the defense and perhaps the whole team is in the secondary. All 11 defensive backs that saw the field are back, including Nehemiah Pritchett (safety), Jaylin Simpson (safety), and D.J. James (cornerback).

The front seven has plenty of questions that need answers. The secondary may be asked to play a lot of man coverage because Auburn will probably need to blitz more in order to get pressure on opposing teams.

Upfront, Justin Rogers is a good pickup from Kentucky and will play nose in Auburn's new 3-4 scheme. The defensive ends and where the pressure will come from remains a mystery. Freshman Keldric Faulk is really talented, but he will be asked to elevate the players around him. Transfer from North Texas, Larry Nixon III from Fort Worth, Texas (Richland) is a big pickup for the linebackers, but Auburn will still need some help.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Special Teams are great. Oscar Chapman is a great punter, and freshman kicker Alex McPherson has impressed thus far. USF transfer kick returner Brian Battie is one of the best returners in the country.

### SUMMARY

Thanks to the transfer portal and a manageable non-conference schedule, Auburn probably should make a bowl game in Hugh Freeze's first season. Auburn has some questions in the front seven on defense, but the offensive line should be much improved, and the quarterback should be an upgrade from last season's output. Receivers will need to step up, but Auburn could be one upset away from finishing with a winning record in Freeze's first year.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		UMASS MINUTEMEN
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		SAMFORD BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		TEXAS A&M AGGIES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		GEORGIA BULLDOGS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		LSU TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		OLE MISS REBELS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		MISSISSIPPI STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		VANDERBILT COMMODORES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		NEW MEXICO STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE
SATURDAY DEC. 2			SEC CHAMPIONSHIP



## FLORIDA GATORS

### OFFENSE

Wisconsin transfer quarterback Graham Mertz will be the starting quarterback. He was not very good in the Big Ten, so he may get beaten and battered in the SEC this season. Not the best replacement for Anthony Richardson.

The offensive line returns only one full-time starter, but Austin Barber, who will start at left tackle, got his feet wet as a freshman and played very well. Baylor transfer guard Micah Mazzucca is a great pickup in the portal. Center Kingsley Eguakun returns as the lone returning starter. The left side of the line looks great, but the right side of the line does have questions, and depth is an issue.

At receiver, Ricky Pearsall leads a very inexperienced group. Florida always has talent, but these youngsters are going to need to step up quickly.

The running back room is great with Trevor Etienne and Montrell Johnson Jr., who combined for 1,560 rushing yards and 16 touchdowns on the ground.

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Bily Napier

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Rob Sale

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Austin Armstrong



### DEFENSE

New defensive coordinator Austin Armstrong was the youngest DC in the country in 2021 at Southern Mississippi, and now he takes over the Gators' defense. The line definitely has size, but they'll need guys to step up outside of star edge rusher Princely Umanmielen from Manor, Texas. Memphis transfer Cam Jackson is a great get for the interior. There are seven newcomers for the defensive front.

At linebacker, Florida has experience with returnee Shemar James and Ohio State transfer Teradja Mitchell. The secondary has a great corner in Jason Marshall Jr., but the rest of the secondary is very young, especially the safeties.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Jeremy Crawshaw should be returning as the punter for Florida, and kicker Adam Mihalek, who was 14/21 (66%), is back but after a tough season he could be challenged by true sophomore Trey Smack.

### SUMMARY

New quarterback Graham Mertz will need to lean on his two proven running backs this season. Although the Gators were a solid team last year, they may take one or two steps back due to the lack of talent. It is difficult to say whether Florida will find a way to make a bowl game. As crazy as it may sound to some, Florida will most likely finish with their third straight losing season. That has not happened in Gainesville since 1945-1947.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	AT	UTAH UTES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	MCNEESE COWBOYS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	CHARLOTTE 49ERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	KENTUCKY WILDCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	VANDERBILT COMMODORES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	GEORGIA BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	LSU TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	MISSOURI TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES
SATURDAY DEC. 2		SEC CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Kirby Smart

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mike Bobo

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Glenn Schumann



Will Muschamp

## GEORGIA BULLDOGS

### ■ OFFENSE

The starting quarterback job is up for grabs between Carson Beck and Brock Vandagriff, and the competition could last well into the fall. Whoever wins the role will have plenty of elite talent around him, as expected. The receiving corps is stacked with Ladd McConkey, Rara Thomas, Dominic Lovett and Marcus Rosemy-Jacksaint. The best pass catcher, however, is All-American tight end Brock Bowers, who is rated as one of the best and most athletic tight ends in recent memory. The offensive line is also loaded and deep, and the running back room features two of the top three rushers from last season, in Daijun Edwards and Kendall Milton.

### ■ DEFENSE

Georgia has been the dominant defense in the nation for the past few seasons, and there is no reason to expect a drop-off this season. The defense was young last season, but it returns most of its production and experience. The interior defensive line, the inside linebacker, and the secondary are all loaded with veteran players who know how to stop the run and defend the pass. The only potential weakness is the pass rush, which was not very effective last season and will have to rely on inexperienced players at outside linebacker this season. The leader of the pass rush is sophomore Mykel Williams, who had 4.5 sacks last season. Junior Jamon Dumas-Johnson is also back, and he will be a force at outside linebacker.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

The team will have a new place kicker this season, probably Jared Zirkel, but it will have the stability of returning punter Brett Thorson.

### SUMMARY

Georgia is the undisputed top team in the nation, and it has a favorable schedule this season that matches its elite status. It would be a shocking upset if Georgia suffers a loss in the regular season, as it has no clear weaknesses or challengers. The only two areas that Georgia needs to sort out are the quarterback and the outside linebacker positions, but those are minor concerns compared to the rest of the team's strengths.



## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		UT MARTIN SKYHAWKS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		BALL STATE CARDINALS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		UAB BLAZERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		AUBURN TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		KENTUCKY WILDCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		VANDERBILT COMMODORES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		FLORIDA GATORS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		MISSOURI TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		OLE MISS REBELS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			SEC CHAMPIONSHIP





## KENTUCKY WILDCATS

### OFFENSE

Quarterback Devin Leary, a transfer from NC State, is a great pickup. Leary should be an upgrade over last year's Will Levis.

Kentucky will have two really good sophomore wide receivers who should only improve from their freshman season: Dane Key and Barion Brown. Talented true freshman Anthony Brown will see playing time early on this season. Vanderbilt transfer running back Ray Davis is a great pickup. This position group will be good for the Wildcats. The offensive line was bad last season. Marques Cox is a good pickup from NIU and will play left tackle. Right tackle is the biggest question. The interior is better, but the position group has to improve after finishing with the second-most sacks allowed in P5 after Boston College.

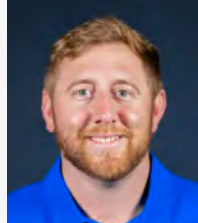
### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Mark Stoops

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Liam Coen

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brad White



### DEFENSE

Kentucky's defensive line continuity is great, but they need to improve their pass rush. However, the interior is great. Inside linebacker will be the strength because the outside is a little bit of a concern with no proven pass rushers and not much experience overall. The secondary is in good shape, but they do lose a lot - especially at corner. It should be noted that in 2019 they came into the season having lost four DB starters from the previous year yet they did not take any step back and actually improved. For this season, the safeties are more experienced, but the corners do have questions.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Kicker and punter positions are up for grabs as they were a weakness last season. There are a lot of unknowns at the moment.



Jordan Prather/USA TODAY Sports

### SUMMARY

Kentucky has a very manageable schedule in the first half of the season but a much more treacherous second half. The team will go as far as the offensive line will allow. The passing game could be great if the blocking up front improves. The defense for several years has been good and likely will be again if the pass rush can improve with some questions at corner.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		BALL STATE CARDINALS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		EASTERN KENTUCKY COLONELS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		AKRON ZIPS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		VANDERBILT COMMODORES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		FLORIDA GATORS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		GEORGIA BULLDOGS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		MISSOURI TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		MISSISSIPPI STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT		SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		LOUISVILLE CARDINALS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			SEC CHAMPIONSHIP



## LSU TIGERS

### ■ OFFENSE

One of the top three quarterback rooms in the country, Jayden Daniels returns for one more year with one of the best “backup quarterbacks” in proven quality second string Garrett Nussmeier. We know Daniels can use his legs but can he stick in the pocket and make some throws? He will need to improve on moving the ball down the field.

The LSU receiving corps is one of the best in the country with Malik Nabers, Brian Thomas Jr., Kyren Lacy, Aaron Anderson and Chris Hilton Jr.

The offensive line returns all five starters and should be one of the best in the country.

LSU played for the SEC Championship last season with two freshman offensive tackles.

The only question offensively is the running back room.

They have known entities in Josh Williams from Houston, Texas (Kinkaid) and Noah Cain but the running game needs to improve as Daniels finished last season as the top rusher.



### ■ DEFENSE

The LSU defensive line should be one of the best in the country with Maason Smith and Mekhi Wingo inside with Sai'vion Jones and Ovie Oghoufo. There is also depth up front with veteran backups and raw talented freshmen in the three deep.

Linebacker is tremendous with Oregon State transfer Omar Speights and one of the most talented players in the county in Harold Perkins Jr. as well as last year's second leading tackler in Greg Penn III. Harold Perkins Jr. will be used in true pass rush situations this year after finishing with 13 tackles for a loss and 7.5 sacks.

The only question defensively is in the secondary and particularly at cornerback. Five of the top seven DB's in snap count are gone. Greg Brooks Jr. and Major Burns return to safety. Nickel is loaded with returnee Sage Ryan and Syracuse transfer Duce Chestnut. The corners could be a work in progress. Texas A&M transfer Denver Harris from Houston, Texas (North Shore) and Southeastern Louisiana transfer Zy Alexander will likely be the starting corners. We will see how those two do and if others emerge.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

The Tigers are set here with Damian Ramos returning as kicker who was 10-14 on FGs (71%) and punter Jay Bramblett.

#### SUMMARY

LSU has a chance to play for the SEC Championship in back-to-back years for the first time ever and an outside chance at the CFB playoff. Is Jayden Daniels ready to make that next step? Can they get past Florida State in week 1? Brian Kelly has this program full steam ahead in the right direction.

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



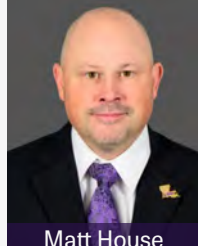
Brian Kelly

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mike Denbrock

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Matt House

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SUNDAY SEP. 3	VS		FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		GRAMBLING STATE TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		MISSISSIPPI STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		OLE MISS REBELS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		MISSOURI TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		AUBURN TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		ARMY BLACK KNIGHTS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		FLORIDA GATORS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		GEORGIA STATE PANTHERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		TEXAS A&M AGGIES
SATURDAY DEC. 2			SEC CHAMPIONSHIP



## MISSISSIPPI STATE BULLDOGS

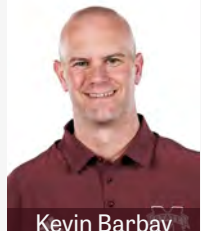
### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



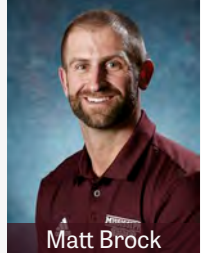
Zach Arnett

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kevin Barbay

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Matt Brock

### OFFENSE

The Bulldog offense will be different this season with a more balanced attack rather than Mike Leach's Air Raid. They will probably attempt to be a run-first team. Will Rogers returns as quarterback and will need to adjust to the new offense that will contain more play-action.

They do lose three of the top four receivers from last season. The starters should be good with Lideatrick Griffin and Justin Robinson returning.

Whatever the running back stats were the last few years under the Air Raid offense they will improve this season. Senior Jo'Quavious Marks, who led the team in rushing yards and touchdowns, does return.

The offensive line returns plenty of guys with experience. The question is, can they adapt to a scheme change? This may take time.



### DEFENSE

The defensive line lost six of the top seven, but the interior should still be good as they have a couple of players returning from injury. Edge will be a question for the D-line.

The linebacker unit will be great, but they lack depth

The secondary is the biggest question on the team, and this could be a weakness because the depth isn't that great.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Nick Barr-Mira transfers in from UCLA and will be the starting placekicker. Punter is the only question on special teams as the return game is one of the best in the country with Lideatrick Griffin and Zavion Thomas.



Gary Cosby Jr./USA TODAY Sports

### SUMMARY

The Bulldogs are potentially a high-variance team with some good returning production on offense, but a drastic scheme change could be difficult to adjust to. Defensively, State will have multiple seniors in the starting lineup to make up for the players lost. A tough conference schedule will make it difficult to finish in the top half of conference standings, but the non-conference could help the Bulldogs achieve bowl eligibility.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA LIONS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		ARIZONA WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		LSU TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		WESTERN MICHIGAN BRONCOS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		AUBURN TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		KENTUCKY WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		TEXAS A&M AGGIES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		SOUTHERN MISS GOLDEN EAGLES
THURSDAY NOV. 23	VS		OLE MISS REBELS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			SEC CHAMPIONSHIP



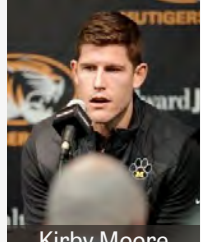
## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



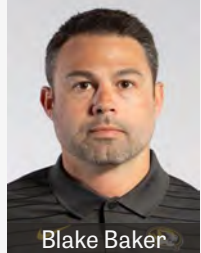
Elijah Drinkwitz

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kirby Moore

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Blake Baker

## MISSOURI TIGERS

### OFFENSE

Brady Cook will likely be the starting quarterback, but Miami transfer Jake Garcia will have a chance to start. An issue last year that has gone a bit under the radar was that Brady Cook dealt with an injured throwing shoulder most of the season. Cook had surgery earlier this offseason and should be ready in time for fall camp.

No Power Five offensive line gave up more tackles for loss per game than Missouri's last year. The O-line improvement seems likely given the return of star left tackle Javon Foster, as well as transfer from Eastern Michigan Marcellus Johnson to shore up the right tackle spot and Houston transfer Cam'Ron Johnson from Pearland, Texas (Shadow Creek) to attempt to improve on Missouri's weakest spot - center.

If these two transfers can stay

healthy, the Missouri offense could make a big improvement.

The running backs will go as far as the offensive line will allow. Seniors Cody Schrader and Nathaniel Peat return. The receiving corps has some undervalued talent with former five-star Luther Burden III who will be the featured receiver this season. Upperclassman Oklahoma transfer Theo Wease Jr. from Allen, Texas, and Ole Miss transfer Dannis Jackson both averaged over 19 yards per catch last season. Mookie Cooper also adds upside to this group.

### DEFENSE

This is one of the most overlooked position groups in the country. The only question on the whole defense is at defensive end. Versatile defensive lineman Darius Robinson will move to defensive end to try to improve his draft stock while the opposite end position is up for grabs. Arizona State transfer Joe Moore could help. The defensive tackle room is loaded with quality seniors. The rest of the defense returns intact. The linebackers and secondary have the chance to be one of the best position groups in the history of the Mizzou Football program. It starts with senior linebackers Chad Bailey from Missouri City, Texas (Ridge Point) and Ty'Ron Hopper who are great open-field tacklers who both will likely be drafted next April.

In the secondary, the cornerback tandem of Ennis Rakestraw Jr. from West Dallas, Texas (Duncanville HS) and Kris Abrams-Draine is one of the best cornerback tandems in the country. Both are awesome in man coverage and figure to be drafted. Senior safeties Jaylon Carlies and Joseph Charleston are great athletes who have NFL upside. Starting nickel Daylan Carnell, the only underclassmen on defense, is set to receive a lot of snaps and has a ton of upside as well.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

The real star of the special teams unit is placekicker Harrison Mevis, while the punter will be new.

### SUMMARY

Mizzou could be a potential breakthrough team this year as four of the seven losses last season were by only one score. A difficult schedule will make things tough to hit the best-case scenario, but there is a lot of undervalued talent for the Tigers in 2023. Missouri could have one of the nation's best defenses this fall. If the offense improves - watch out.



## 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	VS		SOUTH DAKOTA COYOTES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		MIDDLE TENNESSEE BLUE RAIDERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		KANSAS STATE WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		MEMPHIS TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		VANDERBILT COMMODORES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		LSU TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		KENTUCKY WILDCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS		SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		GEORGIA BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		FLORIDA GATORS
FRIDAY NOV. 24	AT		ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			SEC CHAMPIONSHIP

Ole Miss

## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH

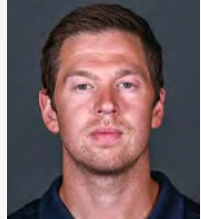


Lane Kiffin

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



John David Baker



Charlie Weis Jr.

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Pete Golding

## OLE MISS REBELS

### OFFENSE

What might be a crazy quarterback competition between last year's starter Jaxson Dart and Oklahoma State transfer Spencer Sanders. It seems like Jaxson Dart has the upper hand for the starting job, but he will need to be smarter with the football (11 INTs last season).

The obvious star for Ole Miss is running back Quinshon Judkins. The offense went as far as the running game took them last season. The passing game struggled when the offense got behind the chains in true passing downs situations. The passing game did better in RPO (run-pass option) situations and in play-action. It will be interesting to see if Dart (or whoever the starting quarterback is) and the passing game will take that next step with new-look receivers after losing their top two from last season.

Lane Kiffin did a great job in the portal by getting two high-caliber and experienced receivers from the G5 in Louisiana Tech's Tre Harris (65 rec 935 yds 10 TDs) and UTSA transfer Zakhari Franklin from Cedar Hill, Texas (93 rec 1,137 yds

15 TDs). Jordan Watkins and Dayton Wade return but neither eclipsed over 500 receiving yards. The tight end combination of Memphis transfer Caden Prieskorn and Michael Trigg is good, and they might be used more in double tight end sets.

The offensive line returns intact and will need to be a little better, especially in pass protection.



### DEFENSE

The starting defensive line rotation of JJ Pegues and NC State transfer Joshua Harris at tackle and Cedric Johnson and Jared Ivey at end will probably be good against the run, but the pass rush remains a question with this group. There are bodies behind them, but the quality is lacking. They cannot afford any injuries.

The whole entire back seven of the defense is a question. Just about the entire linebacking corps and the entire secondary will consist of transfers or former transfers. The safeties return, but the pass defense must improve as it faltered down the stretch last year.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Caden Costa returns after going 14 out of 17 (82%) on field goals in 2021, while Fraser Masin returns as punter.

### SUMMARY

Just like with most Lane Kiffin teams moving forward, the question will remain if all the transfers will mesh together. Behind strong quarterback play two years ago, Ole Miss was in a New Year's Six Bowl, but the position has dropped off. Dart, or whoever the quarterback is, needs to improve when the offense falls behind the chains. The defense needs to at least hold serve and hope the defensive line does not suffer injuries.



John Bowen

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		MERCER BEARS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		TULANE GREEN WAVE
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT		ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		LSU TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		AUBURN TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		VANDERBILT COMMODORES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		TEXAS A&M AGGIES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		GEORGIA BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		ULM WARHAWKS
THURSDAY NOV. 23	AT		MISSISSIPPI STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			SEC CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Shane Beamer

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Dowell Loggains

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Clayton White

## SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS

### OFFENSE

There is plenty of excitement surrounding this Gamecocks team after coming off a successful end to last season. Spencer Rattler led the nation in passes thrown behind the line of scrimmage. He will need to work on getting the ball downfield this season, and with a new offensive coordinator, that may help with his simpler offense. Decision-making and consistency have plagued Rattler in his career, but there is plenty of upside for him.

The results from the running game were not good last year, and now they are losing their top two rushers. They do not have a bell cow right now. It also does not help that the offensive line is a major concern though.

Receiver Antwane Wells Jr. is one of the best receivers in the SEC and in the country. He is great after the catch. Outside of him, other players will need to emerge. They got some good transfers to help. Eddie Lewis transfers in from Memphis. He is a good receiver as he was Memphis' leading receiver last year (42 rec, 615 yds & 7 TDs). If Xavier Legette can become more consistent catching the ball, he could be pretty good. Tight end Trey Knox, a transfer from Arkansas standing 6 foot 5 inches, could be a good fit for South Carolina.

Another tight end in WKU transfer Joshua Simon is a decent pick up from the portal that can contribute. The offensive line is a concern. They lost by far their top three players. They very well could be relying on some players that may be out of their league at tackle. On top of this, they could have freshmen in the starting lineup, which is not ideal. Typically freshmen do not play at the line of scrimmage.



McKenzie Lange/USA TODAY Sports

### DEFENSE

The defensive line lost six of their top eight in snap count. They could have a couple of their better players back from injury if they are fully healed by the start of the season, which is not a given. There is not a ton of depth at linebacker, but the starters are still solid. The top three guys return at cornerback and all graded out well last year. They lost a couple of corners to the NFL. The starting corners could be good this year, but there is not much depth. South Carolina is very good at the safety position.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Beamer is the coach, so you know the special teams will be a strength. This will help them in close games. Kai Kroeger is one of the nation's best punters, and Mitch Jeter was perfect (11-11) on FGs last year.

### SUMMARY

There are concerns at the line of scrimmage, and with a difficult schedule, South Carolina will need to overachieve for the third straight season to finish with a winning record. Pressure will be on Spencer Rattler, especially after the way he finished last season. Expectations will be high in Columbia.



Jeff Blake/USA TODAY Sports



## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		FURMAN PALADINS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		GEORGIA BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		MISSISSIPPI STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT		TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		FLORIDA GATORS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		MISSOURI TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		TEXAS A&M AGGIES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		JACKSONVILLE STATE GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		VANDERBILT COMMODORES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		KENTUCKY WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		CLEMSON TIGERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			SEC CHAMPIONSHIP



## COACHING STAFF

### HEAD COACH



Josh Heupel

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Joey Halzle

### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tim Banks

## TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS

### OFFENSE

Joe Milton (6'5" 245 lbs) will be the starting quarterback, and our scouts love his potential for the NFL. Milton has the arm strength; the question is whether or not he will be accurate and consistent. Milton played well last season (10 TDs and 0 INTs), but we will see what he does with an expanded role. Last year, no other team in the country threw a higher percentage of its passes to outside receivers than Tennessee. There is a little bit of a question in terms of living up to what the receiving corps was last year. Losing Jalin Hyatt and Cedric Tillman will be felt. In terms of who steps up at receiver, Bru McCoy (52 rec 667 yds 4 TDs), Squirrel White (30 rec 481 yds 2 TDs), and Ramel Keyton (31 rec 562 yds 5 TDs) return. Squirrel White (5 foot 10, 165 pounds) has the speed to make things happen after the catch. Ramel Keyton is very consistent, and Bru McCoy is a proven wideout. Oregon transfer Dont'e Thornton Jr. adds upperclassman experience and big-play ability. Freshmen will be making up the rest of the roster. On the offensive line, two three-year starters in center Cooper Mays and

right guard Javontez Spraggins return, but the remaining three spots are up for grabs. They do have some experienced options to fill those holes, but whether or not the tackle combination quality will match 2022 is unknown. Miami transfer John Campbell Jr. is one to watch up front. The depth on the offensive line is questionable, especially on the interior, given the lack of experience in the room overall.



Ian Cox/Tennessee Athletics

### DEFENSE

The Vols pride themselves in shutting down the run but they did struggle against the pass (127th in pass yards allowed) last season. One of the biggest questions about the defense, aside from the pass defense, is if the defensive line can get pressure without having to blitz. There is some experience up front, but they need to improve the pass rush. They should be good at stopping the run at least (21st in rush defense last year). The secondary is very experienced but struggled last year, and the coaching staff is seemingly going to stick with mostly the same players. There are some high-upside freshmen in the cornerback room, but they are still true freshmen.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Tennessee will have new specialists this year in Indiana transfer placekicker Charles Campbell and Australian freshman punter Jackson Ross.

### SUMMARY

Can Joe Milton be consistent, and can the new receivers replicate last season's production? Can the pass defense make strides? That's what the season will come down to and whether or not the Volunteers will live up to a potential preseason top ten ranking. After Tennessee had its best season since 2007, expectations will be high for the Vols.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		VIRGINIA CAVALIERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS		AUSTIN PEAY GOVERNORS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		FLORIDA GATORS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		UTSA ROADRUNNERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		TEXAS A&M AGGIES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT		ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		KENTUCKY WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		UCONN HUSKIES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		MISSOURI TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		GEORGIA BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS		VANDERBILT COMMODORES
SATURDAY DEC. 2			SEC CHAMPIONSHIP



## TEXAS A&M AGGIES

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Jimbo Fisher

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Bobby Petrino

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



DJ Durkin

### OFFENSE

The biggest question of the offseason has been whether or not Jimbo Fisher will let Bobby Petrino call the plays, especially if things go south for the Aggies early.

Conner Weigman from Cypress, Texas (Bridgeland) will likely be the starting quarterback. Weigman needs to take that next step and the playmakers around him out wide may make it easier: Evan Stewart from Frisco, Texas (Liberty), Moose Muhammad, Ainius Smith from Missouri City, Texas (Fort Bend Dulles), and Noah Thomas from Pearland, Texas (Clear Springs HS) form a great receiving corps. Sophomore tight end Donovan Green from Dickinson, Texas has nice ability as well. The Aggies have a full stable of running backs with: Five-star Rueben Owens from El Campo, Texas, David Bailey, Amari Daniels and Le'Veon Moss will all see the field.

Of course, none of the skill position players will show out if the offensive line continues to struggle as they were dead last in the nation in pressure rate

allowed. Most of the offensive line is back. The starting five returns intact and given the struggles last season that may not be great. The strength of this bunch is better than their athleticism and quickness. The depth is not good either. If one of the starting tackles goes down with an injury they would be relying on true freshmen at tackle.



### DEFENSE

No doubt the Texas A&M defensive front has talent. Now the thing about the A&M defensive line is they certainly have size, power and depth but they need more production at defensive end. One of these talented players needs to develop into a more pure edge rusher.

Linebacker play was not where it needed to be last season and the hope with both starters returning is that they either improve or that a new player steps up whether it's an underclassman or perhaps Jackson State transfer Jurriente Davis.

The secondary does not have a lot of depth, particularly with the corners, but Tyreek Chappell and UNC transfer Tony Grimes form a nice starting corner tandem. Both starting safeties return. Nickel Bryce Anderson from Beaumont, Texas (West Brook HS) might have the most upside of the current starting five. Boston College transfer Josh DeBerry provides quality depth at safety.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

The Aggies are in good shape here with punter Nik Constantinou back, as well as placekicker Randy Bond who made 13 out of 17 field goals (76%) last season and is returning.

### SUMMARY

If the offensive line stays healthy, there could be a major win improvement, but that would also require the offense to finally open up and modernize. It's hard to exactly project this team, but we know they are talented. Will they live up to their talent?

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		NEW MEXICO LOBOS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		MIAMI (FL) HURRICANES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS		ULM WARHAWKS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		AUBURN TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS		ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT		TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS		SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT		OLE MISS REBELS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS		MISSISSIPPI STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS		ABILENE CHRISTIAN WILDCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		LSU TIGERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			SEC CHAMPIONSHIP





## VANDERBILT COMMODORES

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Clark Lea

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Joey Lynch

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Nick Howell

### ■ OFFENSE

The Commodores finished 56th in offensive power rating last season. It should be noted that they converted a lot of 3rd-and-longs last year, and that is usually not a sustainable statistic. AJ Swann was decent last year, completing 58% of his passes, but will need to improve for Vanderbilt to be competitive. He tended to throw a little too often to Will Sheppard. Swann only had 2 interceptions, but that might increase given Swann's tendency to be a gunslinger. Vanderbilt has some experience to back up Swann even after Mike Wright's departure. Running back is the weakest position of the offense for Vandy. They lost their top back after transferring to Kentucky. Vandy uses a zone-blocking scheme to more or less just keep defenses honest rather than attempt to hit "home runs" in the running game. True freshman Sedrick "Baby Ray" Alexander from Austin, Texas (LBJ) will likely be the starter right away. Alexander does not have blazing speed but has good awareness. It'll be a by-committee approach for

the backfield.

Vanderbilt will be returning their best wide receivers who happen to be pretty good. This receiving corps is SEC caliber led by Will Sheppard. The tight ends have no depth, which is concerning considering the offensive line and how they utilized their tight ends last year. The offensive line has four starters back with over 70 starts under their belts. They are an experienced group but still are not that good.



Kevin C. Cox/Getty

### ■ DEFENSE

Vandy ranked 94th nationally defensively last season. The run defense was competitive, but the pass defense was bad. They blitzed a lot but were 128th in pressure rate, which says something about the personnel.

The defensive line lost 800 snaps. Head coach Clark Lea said in the Spring that this was the most improved position group on the team even though they are inexperienced. Unlike the offensive line that brings back experience and lacks upside, the D-line is a little inexperienced but has upside. The D-line showed improvements over the spring and the depth may pay dividends this season. The linebacker group lost a lot from attrition. They did okay in the portal and have a couple of young players they really like. We'll see if all these new players get acclimated.

With concerns of inexperience and depth, the cornerback position is one of the weakest on defense. The pass defense was bad last year. If they can pressure the QB at all this season, the secondary would greatly benefit.

### ■ SPECIAL TEAMS

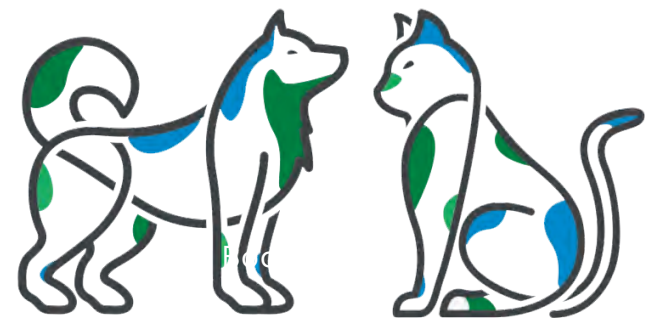
Vanderbilt's kicking game is likely to be a big weakness. However, punter Matthew Hayball is great.

### SUMMARY

The offense, especially the passing game, could be good, but the defense and kicking game are concerns. It will still be an uphill battle to achieve last year's win total (5), much less make a bowl game. Clark Lea is still building this program and is on the right path.

## 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AUG. 26	VS		HAWAII RAINBOW WARRIORS
SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS		ALABAMA A&M BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT		WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT		UNLV REBELS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS		KENTUCKY WILDCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS		MISSOURI TIGERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT		FLORIDA GATORS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS		GEORGIA BULLDOGS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT		OLE MISS REBELS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS		AUBURN TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT		SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	OFF		OFF
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT		TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2			SEC CHAMPIONSHIP



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**SUN BELT PREVIEW**



**COACHING STAFF**

**HEAD COACH**



Shawn Clark

**OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR**



Frank Ponce

**DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR**



Scot Sloan

**APPALACHIAN STATE MOUNTAINEERS**

**OFFENSE**

The offense will have a new leader at quarterback this season, as Chase Brice has moved on. The starting quarterback will be decided by the competition between redshirt freshman Ryan Burger and juco transfer Joey Aguilar. The offensive line has to replace two studs at both tackle spots, but they have a history of being strong up front. The interior of the offensive line is solid. The receiver position is loaded, with the top four receivers returning, including Christian Horn, Dashaun Davis, Dalton Stroman, and Kaedin Robinson. Nate Noel is a talented running back and Ahmani Marshall also returns. The passing game may face some challenges, with questions at tackle and an inexperienced quarterback room.

**DEFENSE**

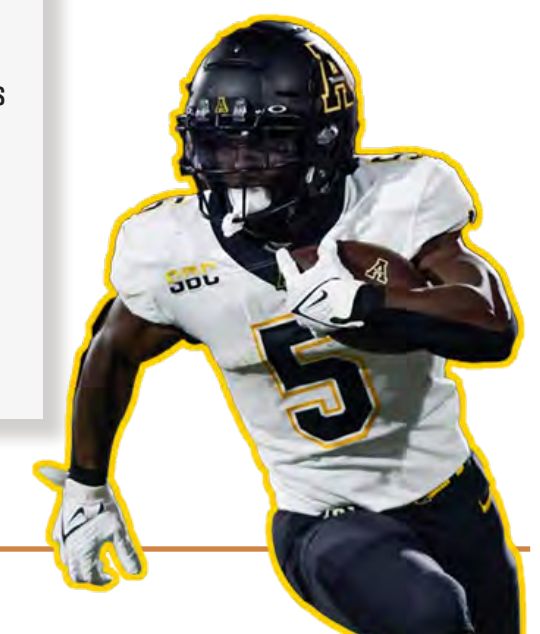
The defense faces a lot of turnover, as only four starters return. The linebacker position is a concern, as six of the top seven linebackers have departed. Brendan Harrington is the lone standout at outside linebacker. The secondary has some reinforcements from the portal and an experienced safety room. The corners will be another area of uncertainty.

**SUMMARY**

Appalachian State faces more uncertainty than usual, that's for sure. The Mountaineers rank 120th in returning production. The defense will have to prove itself with a lot of new faces and the new starting quarterback will have to perform well. Depth could be a problem with all of the turnover and lost production.

**2023 SCHEDULE**

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	GARDNER-WEBB RUNNIN' BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	EAST CAROLINA PIRATES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	WYOMING COWBOYS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	ULM WARHAWKS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF	OFF
TUESDAY OCT. 10	VS	COASTAL CAROLINA CHANTICLEERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	OLD DOMINION MONARCHS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	SOUTHERN MISS GOLDEN EAGLES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	MARSHALL THUNDERING HERD
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	GEORGIA STATE PANTHERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	JAMES MADISON DUKES
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	GEORGIA SOUTHERN EAGLES
SATURDAY DEC. 2		SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP





## ARKANSAS STATE RED WOLVES

### OFFENSE

Arkansas State faces a lot of uncertainty on offense this season, as they will likely have a new starting quarterback, a new group of receivers, and a new offensive line. The quarterback position will probably be filled by J.T. Shrout, a transfer from Colorado who has struggled with accuracy and turnovers in his career. Shrout has thrown only one more touchdown than interceptions and completed only about half of his passes. He will have to improve his performance with a revamped receiving corps that loses four of its top five pass catchers from last year. The only returning starter is Jeff Foreman, who will be joined by some transfers, including Courtney Jackson from Syracuse. The offensive line will also have to replace a lot of production, as the Red Wolves graduated four seniors from last year's unit. Arkansas State had one of the worst rushing offenses in the nation last season, ranking 128th in rushing yards per game. With all the questions at the skill positions, it is hard to see how this offense will generate consistent points unless J.T. Shrout can turn his career around with a new set of targets.

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Butch Jones

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Keith Heckendorf

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Rob Harley

### DEFENSE

The Red Wolves are looking for a turnaround on defense after several disappointing seasons. They bring back most of the same players who struggled to contain their opponents last year. There is still some potential in defensive linemen Ethan Hassler and Dennard Flowers, who tied for second on the team with three sacks each last season. They also have some solid tacklers in safety Trevian Thomas, who led the team with 41 tackles, and linebacker Melique Straker, who was second with 38 tackles. However, they will need more consistency and playmaking from their secondary, which gave up 24 passing touchdowns and only had six interceptions last year. The Red Wolves are hoping that some new faces from the transfer portal or their young talent can provide a spark for their defense, but they will have a hard time competing in the Sun Belt conference, which features some high-powered offenses.

### SUMMARY

Arkansas State is facing a lot of challenges this season. The Red Wolves have not had a winning season since 2019, and they finished last year with a 3-9 record. They will have to compete in a tough Sun Belt conference this year and it will be another uphill battle for the Red Wolves to achieve bowl eligibility. The Red Wolves will also need some luck and some breaks to go their way, as they have a difficult schedule that includes a road game against Oklahoma and a home game against Memphis. The Red Wolves have a lot of questions to answer this season, and they will need to show some improvement and resilience to reach their goal of playing in a bowl game.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	OKLAHOMA SOONERS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	MEMPHIS TIGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	STONY BROOK SEAWOLVES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	SOUTHERN MISS GOLDEN EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	UMASS MINUTEMEN
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	TROY TROJANS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	COASTAL CAROLINA CHANTICLEERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	ULM WARHAWKS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	LOUISIANA RAGIN' CAJUNS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	SOUTH ALABAMA JAGUARS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	TEXAS STATE BOBCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	MARSHALL THUNDERING HERD
SATURDAY DEC. 2		SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP





## COASTAL CAROLINA CHANTICLEERS

### OFFENSE

With one final season to showcase his skills, Grayson McCall leads a potent offense that features a trio of talented receivers: Jared Brown, Tyson Mobley and Sam Pinckney. Together, they amassed more than 2,000 yards and 14 touchdowns last season. The backfield is also loaded with returning players, such as Reese White and CJ Beasley, who combined to run for over a thousand yards. The offensive line may have lost some key players, but they still have plenty of experience to protect McCall and open lanes for the runners.

### DEFENSE

The defensive front faces a challenge to replace some of the best pass rushers from last season. The line will have to prove itself, but the defense can rely on a strong linebacker corps to contain the run game. The biggest concern, however, is the secondary. They were vulnerable against the pass last year (114th in passing success rate and 125th in passing yards allowed), even with a formidable pass rush.

### SUMMARY

Coastal Carolina boasts the second highest returning production in the conference, trailing only South Alabama. The offense should be explosive and efficient, and it may have to carry the team with a shaky pass defense.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	UCLA BRUINS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	JACKSONVILLE STATE GAMECOCKS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	DUQUESNE DUKES
THURSDAY SEP. 21	VS	GEORGIA STATE PANTHERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	GEORGIA SOUTHERN EAGLES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF	OFF
TUESDAY OCT. 10	AT	APPALACHIAN STATE MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	ARKANSAS STATE RED WOLVES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	MARSHALL THUNDERING HERD
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	OLD DOMINION MONARCHS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	TEXAS STATE BOBCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	ARMY BLACK KNIGHTS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	JAMES MADISON DUKES
SATURDAY DEC. 2		SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Tim Beck

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Travis Trickett

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Craig Naivar



Timothy T Ludwig/Getty Images



## GEORGIA SOUTHERN EAGLES

### OFFENSE

Davis Brin, a transfer from Tulsa and a native of Boerne, Texas (Champion HS), will take over as the starting quarterback. Brin has the potential to have a breakout season. Running back Jalen White is back after a stellar season, where he ran for 915 yards and 10 touchdowns. The receiver position is also strong, with the top two receivers, Khaleb Hood and Derwin Burgess Jr., returning. The offensive line has a lot of experience and was excellent last year, as they gave up only seven sacks.

### DEFENSE

The Eagles bring back only four starters, but that may be a blessing in disguise given the poor performance last season (third to last in the country). They have nowhere to go but up from last season. They added a lot of transfers to try to improve. However, it is still significant how much experience they lost and it will be a completely new-look defense.

### SUMMARY

The key question for this team is whether they can improve on defense. If they can, they could be a surprise contender in the Sun Belt, given how potent the offense could be. The offense has a lot of talent and experience, and could score a lot of points. The defense, however, has been a liability and needs to show some progress.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	THE CITADEL BULLDOGS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	UAB BLAZERS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	WISCONSIN BADGERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	BALL STATE CARDINALS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	COASTAL CAROLINA CHANTICLEERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	JAMES MADISON DUKES
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	ULM WARHAWKS
THURSDAY OCT. 26	VS	GEORGIA STATE PANTHERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	TEXAS STATE BOBCATS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	MARSHALL THUNDERING HERD
SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	OLD DOMINION MONARCHS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	APPALACHIAN STATE MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP

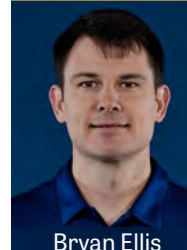
### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Clay Helton

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Bryan Ellis

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Brandon Bailey



Georgia Southern University Athletics



## GEORGIA STATE PANTHERS

### OFFENSE

Darren Grainger has to improve his passing game for this offense to reach its potential. He faces a lot of uncertainty around him. The offensive line has to replace three starters, as well as the top rusher. The receiver position is also a concern, as leading receiver Jamari Thrash transferred to Louisville. The second and third leading receivers are back, but they had much less production than Thrash. UMass transfer receiver Rico Arnold will get a lot of playing time and is one to watch. Marcus Carroll is the most experienced running back.

### DEFENSE

The defense has a lot of returning talent, as they bring back six of their top eight tacklers. The linebackers are the backbone of the defense, led by Jordan Veneziale. The secondary has some question marks, but the defense can improve with a strong front seven. One of the best pass rushers is outside linebacker Shamar McCollum, who had nine tackles for a loss and 4.5 sacks. Defensive end Javon Denis is also back, and he had nine tackles for a loss and four sacks.

### SUMMARY

Georgia State faces a lot of uncertainty entering this season, as they have to deal with several question marks on both sides of the ball. They will also have to navigate one of the toughest schedules in the Sun Belt this fall, which will test their resilience and depth. Reaching a bowl game, which they failed to do last season, is not a guarantee.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY AUG. 31	VS	RHODE ISLAND RAMS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	UCONN HUSKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	CHARLOTTE 49ERS
THURSDAY SEP. 21	AT	COASTAL CAROLINA CHANTICLEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	TROY TROJANS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS	MARSHALL THUNDERING HERD
SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	LOUISIANA RAGIN' CAJUNS
THURSDAY OCT. 26	AT	GEORGIA SOUTHERN EAGLES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	JAMES MADISON DUKES
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	APPALACHIAN STATE MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	LSU TIGERS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	OLD DOMINION MONARCHS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Shawn Elliott

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Trent McKnight

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Chad Staggs



## JAMES MADISON DUKES

### OFFENSE

James Madison faces a major transition on offense, as they will have to find a new starting quarterback, a new top rusher, and a new group of wide receivers. The projected starter at quarterback is Jordan McCloud, a transfer from Arizona. The wide receiver corps lost four of its top five contributors from last year. The only bright spot on offense is the offensive line, which returns all five starters.

### DEFENSE

The defense brings back a wealth of experience, with seven starters and 12 players who played at least 200 snaps. The only significant loss is defensive end Isaac Ukwu, who transferred to Ole Miss. The rest of the top performers are back, including five of the top seven defensive linemen, all three starting linebackers, and six defensive backs with starting experience. The defense is led by Taurus Jones, the team's leading tackler, and James Carpenter, who was third in sacks and tackles for a loss.

### SUMMARY

The strength of this team lies in their defense, which has a lot of returning experience and talent. The defense will have to carry the team, especially when the offense faces some challenges. The offense will have to overcome the loss of several key players. The passing game will be the biggest question mark for JMU this season, as they will have to break in a new quarterback and a new set of receivers.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, SEP. 2	VS	BUCKNELL BISON
SATURDAY, SEP. 9	AT	VIRGINIA CAVALIERS
SATURDAY, SEP. 16	AT	TROY TROJANS
SATURDAY, SEP. 23	AT	UTAH STATE AGGIES
SATURDAY, SEP. 30	VS	SOUTH ALABAMA JAGUARS
SATURDAY, OCT. 7	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY, OCT. 14	VS	GEORGIA SOUTHERN EAGLES
THURSDAY, OCT. 19	AT	MARSHALL THUNDERING HERD
SATURDAY, OCT. 28	VS	OLD DOMINION MONARCHS
SATURDAY, NOV. 4	AT	GEORGIA STATE PANTHERS
SATURDAY, NOV. 11	VS	UCONN HUSKIES
SATURDAY, NOV. 18	VS	APPALACHIAN STATE MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY, NOV. 25	AT	COASTAL CAROLINA CHANTICLEERS
SATURDAY, DEC. 2		SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Curt Cignetti

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mike Shanahan

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Bryant Haines



## LOUISIANA RAGIN' CAJUNS

### OFFENSE

The offensive line is expected to perform well and Ben Wooldridge has the advantage of having played extensively in the second half of the previous season. Wooldridge has room for improvement in his accuracy (56.6% pass completion) but he showed good decision-making by throwing only 5 interceptions. The receiving corps has some veterans but lacks a clear star or a proven track record after losing WR Michael Jefferson, who dominated the team in catches and yards. The tight ends are reliable. The running back position faces some turnover but has some experienced candidates, including Dre'lyn Washington from Hemphill, Texas.

### DEFENSE

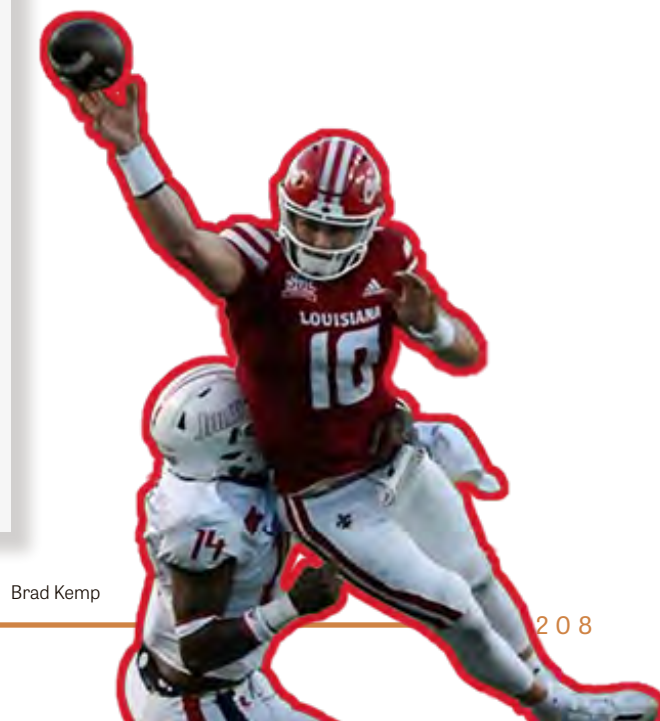
The defensive line has a solid core in the middle, but the edge rushers are unproven and need to step up. The defense as a whole faces a major challenge of replacing a lot of experienced players, as they rank near the bottom of the nation (129th out of 133) in defensive returning production. The defense also lacks standout performers who can make game-changing plays.

### SUMMARY

Louisiana had a deceiving record last season, as they lost four games by a single score or less. They showed resilience and competitiveness in those close contests, but they also revealed some weaknesses that prevented them from winning. Louisiana might struggle to overcome those flaws this season, as they lack the talent and depth that other teams have. Louisiana will need to find ways to close out games and avoid costly mistakes if they want to have a successful season.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	NORTHWESTERN STATE DEMONS
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	OLD DOMINION MONARCHS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	UAB BLAZERS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	BUFFALO BULLS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	TEXAS STATE BOBCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	GEORGIA STATE PANTHERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	SOUTH ALABAMA JAGUARS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	ARKANSAS STATE RED WOLVES
THURSDAY NOV. 9	VS	SOUTHERN MISS GOLDEN EAGLES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	TROY TROJANS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	ULM WARHAWKS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		SBC SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP



Brad Kemp



## MARSHALL THUNDERING HERD

### OFFENSE

The offense has a star in Rasheen Ali, who ran for over a thousand yards in 2021 but was sidelined for most of last year. The offensive line has three returning starters, who excel at run blocking but have to work on pass protection. The receiver position is a concern, as no one has proven to be a consistent threat. The quarterback situation is also up in the air, as Cam Fancher returns but has to improve his accuracy and decision making. He will be challenged by Rice transfer TJ McMahon, who has more experience but also has a tendency to throw interceptions (14 last year).

### DEFENSE

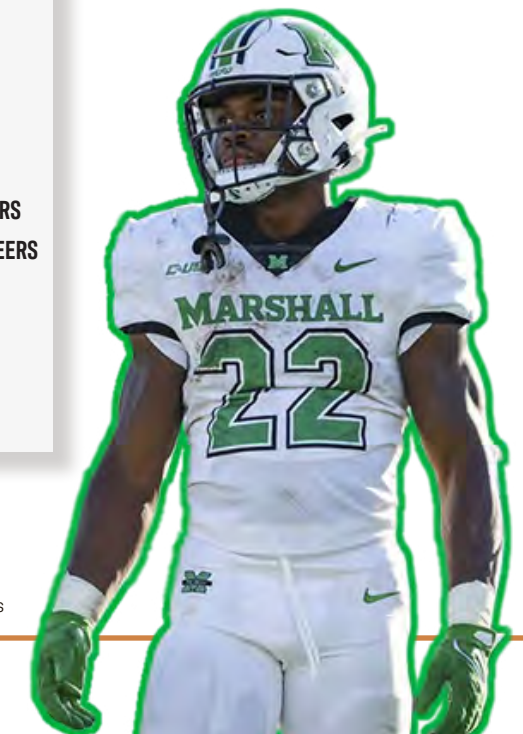
The defense faces a major overhaul, as only four starters return. Marshall ranks 100th in defensive returning production. The coaching staff brought in eight transfers to try to mitigate the drop-off from last year. The defense may not be able to replicate its performance from last year. They have a star at each level but a lot of new challenges to overcome. They will also have to adjust to a new defensive coordinator.

### SUMMARY

The offense will have to step up, as the defense may not be as dominant as last year. The offense will have to improve in several areas, especially in the passing game. The quarterback play needs to be more consistent and efficient, and the receivers need to develop into reliable weapons.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	UALBANY GREAT DANES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	EAST CAROLINA PIRATES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	OLD DOMINION MONARCHS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	NC STATE WOLFPACK
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	GEORGIA STATE PANTHERS
THURSDAY OCT. 19	VS	JAMES MADISON DUKES
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	COASTAL CAROLINA CHANTICLEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	APPALACHIAN STATE MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	GEORGIA SOUTHERN EAGLES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	SOUTH ALABAMA JAGUARS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	ARKANSAS STATE RED WOLVES
SATURDAY DEC. 2		SBC SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP



Associated Press



#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Michael Desormeaux

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Tim Leger

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



LaMar Morgan

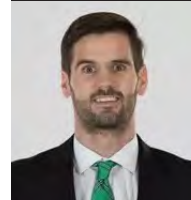
#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Charles Huff

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Clint Trickett

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jason Semore



## OLD DOMINION MONARCHS

### OFFENSE

The offense will have to replace some key players, as the top quarterback, top rusher and top pass catcher are gone. There are some worries on this side of the ball. The likely starter at quarterback is Fordham transfer Grant Wilson, who has very little experience. He only attempted 13 passes in two years at Fordham. The top returning receiver is Javon Harvey, who averaged over 18 yards a catch and was the second leading receiver last year. However, he will need some help from other receivers. The running game is also a question mark, as the leading rusher returning is Keshawn Wicks, who only had 125 rushing yards last year.

### DEFENSE

The defense faces a lot of turnover, as only a few regulars are back and half the two deep is gone. This is a worry for a unit that finished last season 118th in total defense. This defense was also the most overworked in the country last year, as they spent more time on the field than any other defense. Jason Henderson is a phenomenal linebacker, but he does not have much support around him. Safety Terry Jones is the only other major proven player on the defense.

### SUMMARY

Old Dominion may have a tough year, as they rank 125th in the country in total returning production. They only won three games last season, and it could be hard to match or exceed that win total this season. They have to replace a lot of players on both sides of the ball, and they may struggle to compete in the Sun Belt.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	LOUISIANA RAGIN' CAJUNS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	TEXAS A&M-COMMERCE LIONS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	MARSHALL THUNDERING HERD
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	SOUTHERN MISS GOLDEN EAGLES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF	OFF
SATURDAY OCT. 21	VS	APPALACHIAN STATE MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	JAMES MADISON DUKES
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	COASTAL CAROLINA CHANTICLEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT	LIBERTY FLAMES
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	GEORGIA SOUTHERN EAGLES
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	GEORGIA STATE PANTHERS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP



Old Dominion University



## SOUTH ALABAMA JAGUARS

### OFFENSE

The offense has a lot of continuity, as almost everyone is back. Quarterback Carter Bradley returns and has a reliable backup in former starter Desmond Trotter. The running game is led by one of the Sun Belt's best running backs, La'Damian Webb, who ran for 1,067 yards and 13 touchdowns. The receiver position is also strong, with two of the top three receivers, Devin Voisin and Caullin Lacy, returning and a new addition in Memphis transfer receiver Javon Ivory. The tight ends are deep and experienced, with several seniors. The offensive line has three returning starters, who have a lot of experience. The only concern on the offensive line is the lack of depth, so they will have to avoid injuries.

### DEFENSE

The defense could be one of the best in the entire group of five for 2023. South Alabama brings back over 75% of their defensive production from last season, when they were already a top 25 unit in total defense. The secondary is the backbone of the defense, and the safety room is one of the best in all of college football. The front six is also intact, and was responsible for the fourth best rushing defense statistically in all of college football last season. Inside linebacker and last year's leading tackler, who also tied for most tackles for a loss, Trey Kiser is back. Last season's sack leader Jamie Sheriff is also back, along with Brock Higdon. Defensive back Yam Banks also returns, after leading the team with six interceptions.

### SUMMARY

South Alabama is one of the elite group of five teams in the country for 2023, and they could be the best G5 team in the country this coming season. South Alabama faces a tough schedule, with three challenging road games against Tulane and Oklahoma State in the nonconference and Troy in the Sun Belt. However, the South Alabama team has the talent and experience to handle it. The Jaguars are a underrated team, coming off a double-digit-win season. The Jaguars have a lot of seniors on their roster this season.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT	TULANE GREEN WAVE	TUESDAY OCT. 17	VS	SOUTHERN MISS GOLDEN EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA LIONS	SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	LOUISIANA RAGIN' CAJUNS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	OKLAHOMA STATE COWBOYS	THURSDAY NOV. 2	AT	TROY TROJANS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS	CENTRAL MICHIGAN CHIPPEWAS	SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	ARKANSAS STATE RED WOLVES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT	JAMES MADISON DUKES	SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS	MARSHALL THUNDERING HERD
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT	ULM WARHAWKS	SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	TEXAS STATE BOBCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF	OFF	SATURDAY DEC. 2		SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Kane Wommack

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Major Applewhite

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Corey Batoon

### COACHING STAFF

#### HEAD COACH



Ricky Rahne

#### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Kevin Decker

#### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Blake Seiler

## SOUTHERN MISS GOLDEN EAGLES

### OFFENSE

The Southern Miss Golden Eagles have a new signal-caller in Billy Wiles, a transfer from Clemson. Wiles has barely seen any action at the college level, throwing only four passes, one of which was a touchdown. He will have to prove himself as a reliable leader for the offense, which has some uncertainty at the outside receiver positions. The slot receivers, however, are a strength of the team, with Jakarius Caston and Tiaquelin "Ty" Mims forming a dynamic duo. They combined for more than 50 catches, 800 yards and eight touchdowns last season, averaging over 14 yards per catch. The star of the offense, though, is Frank Gore Jr., the versatile running back who can do it all. He can run, catch and even pass the ball, as he showed last season when he amassed over 1,300 rushing yards and nine touchdowns on 228 carries. He also threw three touchdowns to zero interceptions and caught 19 passes for 219 yards. With seven of the nine offensive linemen returning, Gore will have plenty of opportunities to showcase his skills and carry the offense, especially with the new quarterback and the question marks at wide receiver.



Chuck Cook/USA TODAY Sports

### DEFENSE

The Southern Miss Golden Eagles had a solid defense last season, but they might struggle to replicate that performance. They have to deal with two major losses: their defensive coordinator, who left for the SEC, and several key players, who graduated or entered the NFL draft. They have to replace three of their top four linebackers and five of their top six defensive backs, leaving them with very little experience in the back seven. Southern Miss ranks 111th in the nation in defensive returning production, which means they have to rely on new faces and unproven talent. The only bright spot for the defense is the defensive line, which returns all four starters from last season. They will have to carry the load and pressure the opposing quarterbacks, while the rest of the defense tries to catch up.



Bobby McDuffie/Icon Sportswire

### SUMMARY

The Southern Miss Golden Eagles have some advantages in the trenches, but they also have some challenges in the skill positions. The offensive line and the defensive line are both experienced and talented, they should be able to dominate the line of scrimmage and create opportunities. The Golden Eagles will have to overcome these obstacles and find ways to win with a tough schedule. Frank Gore Jr. will need to put the team on his back this season.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	ALCORN STATE BRAVES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT	FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS	TULANE GREEN WAVE
SATURDAY SEP. 23	AT	ARKANSAS STATE RED WOLVES
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	TEXAS STATE BOBCATS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	OLD DOMINION MONARCHS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	OFF	OFF
TUESDAY OCT. 17	AT	SOUTH ALABAMA JAGUARS
SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT	APPALACHIAN STATE MOUNTAINEERS
SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS	ULM WARHAWKS
THURSDAY NOV. 9	AT	LOUISIANA RAGIN' CAJUNS
SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	MISSISSIPPI STATE BULLDOGS
SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS	TROY TROJANS
SATURDAY DEC. 2		SBC SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP





## TEXAS STATE BOBCATS

### OFFENSE

Texas State brings in Malik Hornsby, a transfer quarterback from Arkansas, who should be fun to watch in new coach GJ Kinne's offense. Hornsby, from Missouri City, Texas (Fort Bend HS), is a great athlete but still raw as a passer. He will play behind a good offensive line that was remade through the transfer portal. The receiving corps is mostly composed of transfers, except for Ashtyn Hawkins from DeSoto, Texas, and Charles Brown from Grand Prairie, Texas (Arlington HS), who are the top returning receivers. Beau Corrales from Georgetown, Texas, is an intriguing transfer receiver. The running back position is deep with Lincoln Pare and Calvin Hill from Baytown, Texas (Ross Sterling HS).

### DEFENSE

Texas State has a potential sleeper in their secondary, which could be one of the best units in the conference. They added a great pickup at safety in Kaleb Culp, from Dallas, Texas (Parish Episcopal), who has good size and instincts. He will join Tory Spears, the leading tackler from last season, who returns to anchor the defensive backs. Spears, from Houston (Cypress Woods), is a versatile and smart player who can play both safety and cornerback. The cornerbacks are the strength of the defense, with several experienced and talented players returning. The defensive line also has some quality pieces, especially in Tavian Coleman and Jordan Revels. Coleman is a disruptive force at defensive tackle who can clog the middle and pressure the quarterback. He is from Humble, Texas, and has a lot of potential. Revels, from Houston (North Shore), is an edge rusher who can get after the passer and set the edge against the run. He is one of the most athletic players on the team and has a high motor. The Bobcats have some talent on defense, but they will have to improve their consistency and discipline to compete with the best offenses in the league.

### SUMMARY

The Texas State Bobcats have undergone a massive overhaul this season, bringing in a slew of transfers to fill the gaps left by the departing players. The Bobcats rank 128th in the nation in returning production, which means they have to rely on newcomers and unproven talent to compete in the Sun Belt Conference. The offense has some promise, with some experienced and skilled players joining the team. The defense, however, is a big question mark, with many holes to fill and a lack of depth and continuity. The Bobcats are flying under the radar this season, with low expectations and little hype. They could surprise some people with their new-look roster, but they will also face some challenges along the way.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	AT  BAYLOR BEARS	SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT  UTSA ROADRUNNERS	SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS  TROY TROJANS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS  JACKSON STATE TIGERS	SATURDAY NOV. 4	VS  GEORGIA SOUTHERN EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS  NEVADA WOLF PACK	SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT  COASTAL CAROLINA CHANTICLEERS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT  SOUTHERN MISS GOLDEN EAGLES	SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT  ARKANSAS STATE RED WOLVES
SATURDAY OCT. 7	AT  LOUISIANA RAGIN' CAJUNS	SATURDAY NOV. 25	VS  SOUTH ALABAMA JAGUARS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	VS  ULM WARHAWKS	SATURDAY DEC. 2	SBC SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



GJ Kinne

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Mack Leftwich

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Jonathan Patke



## TROY TROJANS

### OFFENSE

The offense has some continuity, as Gunnar Watson is back at quarterback and leading rusher Kimani Vidal returns as well. However, the offense also has some holes to fill, as the top two leading receivers are gone, as well as three offensive line starters, including two all-conference offensive linemen. The left side of the line is a concern, while the right side is solid. The receiving corps has some returning experience, with their third, fourth, fifth and sixth leading receivers all returning, but they will have to take on bigger roles. Watson will also have to improve his ball security for the offense to be successful this season.

### DEFENSE

The defense was outstanding last year, but it faces some turnover this season. Troy has to replace seven of the top 16 players in terms of snap count. In fact, Troy ranks 120th in the country in defensive returning production. The pass defense should be excellent, however. The secondary is intact and the defensive end duo of T.J. Jackson and Richard Jibunor are great at getting pressure on opponents, after combining for 16 sacks last season. The run defense may not be as dominant as last year, with a brand new linebacking group that lost all time NCAA tackles leader Carlton Martial and all-conference defensive tackle Will Choloh. The defensive line is still very good, but the linebackers are a question mark. Reddy Steward is back at cornerback, after leading the team with three interceptions last season.

### SUMMARY

Troy enjoyed one of their best seasons in school history last season, as they won 10 games and finished second in the Sun Belt. This season, they will have to rely on some new players in key roles, so it remains to be seen if they can match last year's level, but this will still be a competitive team.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS  STEPHEN F. AUSTIN LUMBERJACKS	SATURDAY OCT. 21	OFF OFF
SATURDAY SEP. 9	AT  KANSAS STATE WILDCATS	SATURDAY OCT. 28	AT  TEXAS STATE BOBCATS
SATURDAY SEP. 16	VS  JAMES MADISON DUKES	THURSDAY NOV. 2	VS  SOUTH ALABAMA JAGUARS
SATURDAY SEP. 23	VS  WKU HILLTOPPERS	SATURDAY NOV. 11	AT  ULM WARHAWKS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	AT  GEORGIA STATE PANTHERS	SATURDAY NOV. 18	VS  LOUISIANA RAGIN' CAJUNS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS  ARKANSAS STATE RED WOLVES	SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT  SOUTHERN MISS GOLDEN EAGLES
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT  ARMY BLACK KNIGHTS	SATURDAY DEC. 2	SBC SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Jon Sumrall

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Joe Craddock

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Greg Gasparato



## LOUISIANA-MONROE WARHAWKS

### ■ OFFENSE

Louisiana-Monroe faces a tough decision at the quarterback position, where they have two inexperienced options: Jiya Wright, a junior, and Hunter Herring, a sophomore who transferred from Louisiana. The passing game will rely heavily on the talented receiving corps, which features Tyrone Howell, a sixth year senior who led the team with 852 yards and six touchdowns last season, and Alred Luke, a speedy slot receiver who can create mismatches. The offensive line, however, is a concern, as the interior will have some new faces and the depth is not great. The Warhawks will need to protect their quarterback and open up lanes for the running game.

### ■ DEFENSE

The Warhawks struggled to contain the ground game of their opponents last season, ranking 115th in the nation in rushing yards allowed per game. To address this weakness, the coaching staff scoured the transfer portal for reinforcements, especially for the defensive line. The linebackers, led by senior Traveion Webster, have some experience and should benefit from the new additions up front. The secondary, however, was more effective in limiting the passing attack, ranking 78th in the country in passing yards allowed per game. Cornerback Lu Tillery is a standout player who can make plays on the ball and tackle well.

### SUMMARY

UL Monroe has faced many challenges since joining the FBS in 1994, achieving a winning record only once in that span. The Warhawks have endured tough competition, limited resources, and frequent coaching changes. It will likely be another difficult season for the Warhawks, who are rebuilding under head coach Terry Bowden. The Warhawks hope to improve on their 4-8 record from last year and show some signs of progress.

### 2023 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY SEP. 2	VS	ARMY BLACK KNIGHTS	SATURDAY OCT. 21	AT	GEORGIA SOUTHERN EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 9	VS	LAMAR CARDINALS	SATURDAY OCT. 28	VS	ARKANSAS STATE RED WOLVES
SATURDAY SEP. 16	AT	TEXAS A&M AGGIES	SATURDAY NOV. 4	AT	SOUTHERN MISS GOLDEN EAGLES
SATURDAY SEP. 23	OFF	OFF	SATURDAY NOV. 11	VS	TROY TROJANS
SATURDAY SEP. 30	VS	APPALACHIAN STATE MOUNTAINEERS	SATURDAY NOV. 18	AT	OLE MISS REBELS
SATURDAY OCT. 7	VS	SOUTH ALABAMA JAGUARS	SATURDAY NOV. 25	AT	LOUISIANA RAGIN' CAJUNS
SATURDAY OCT. 14	AT	TEXAS STATE BOBCATS	SATURDAY DEC. 2		SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP

#### COACHING STAFF

##### HEAD COACH



Terry Bowden

##### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Matt Kubik

##### DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR



Vic Koenning



## COLORADO STATE

### ■ OVER 4.5 WINS (-165) [VIA DRAFTKINGS]

Jay Norvell is going into his second season at Colorado State. Interestingly enough, Norvell in his first season at Nevada (2017) went 3-9 and in his second year at Nevada (2018) went 8-5 (7-5 that regular season with two nonconference losses). Could Colorado State make a similar jump in Norvell's second year? I think it's very possible. But at the very least, I think they will get to five wins. That would be enough to cash in the over at 4.5. Watch out for Colorado State this season.

Connor Hibbett



## OREGON STATE

### ■ OVER 8.5 WINS (+120) [VIA DRAFTKINGS]

The most interesting aspect about Oregon State's success last season was that they won all those games despite having subpar quarterback play. Clemson transfer DJ Uiagalelei is going to raise the ceiling for this quarterback room. If this does not excite you enough for the Beavers, then the biggest takeaway is their schedule. It's arguably the easiest in the Pac-12 this season. Oregon State has one of the easier nonconference slates among all Power Five teams in

the country. This schedule for Oregon State sets them up very well to have potentially their best season of the College Football Playoff era. It is hard for me to see a scenario in which they do not win at least nine regular-season games. That would be good for the over in their win total.

Connor Hibbett



## TEXAS TECH

### ■ OVER 7.5 WINS (+110) [VIA DRAFTKINGS]

I believe the Red Raiders are going to be one of the biggest surprise teams for 2023. Personally, I feel this team is the second most talented team in the Big 12 this year, only behind Texas. Watch for Texas Tech to have their best defense that they have had in years. This is a senior-laden team and one of the last super senior teams (from the COVID-19 era). Texas Tech does not have an easy schedule, but look for them to win at least a couple of games that most have them projected

Connor Hibbett



to lose right now. This is a very balanced team with a really good offense and a defensive front that will create havoc this year.

## MICHIGAN STATE

### ■ UNDER 5.5 WINS (-130) [VIA BET MGM]

I just don't see it with Michigan State this year. Their schedule is very difficult relative to the strength of their roster. Michigan State is going through a transition season offensively, needing to replace most of their top playmakers from last year, including a very experienced quarterback in Payton Thorne. Defensively, Michigan State has struggled in the last few years. A team like Michigan State needs its 50-50 games at home to achieve success at an easier rate - in this case, for

Spartan to make a bowl game. Michigan State does not have the luxury of that this season. Michigan State could start the season 2-0, but after that there is no game where I feel certain Michigan State is winning. And there are way too many games on Michigan State's schedule where I think they simply just aren't winning. I don't see Michigan State getting to .500 this season.

Connor Hibbett



MISSOURI

■ **OVER 6.5 WINS (+115) [VIA DRAFTKINGS]**

Watch out for the Missouri Tigers this season. They are top 10 in the country in returning production. Missouri finished with six regular-season losses last year, but four of those six losses were by one score. Missouri's defense is one of the most underrated position groups in the country. I think they are elite on that side of the ball. The offense should improve this year with a healthy starting quarterback and an undervalued receiving corps. The schedule is difficult, so I am not

sure if Missouri is going to be the biggest breakthrough team this season, but I certainly think they are at the very least talented enough to finish with a winning regular-season record and hit the over on this win total.



Connor Hibbett

FLORIDA

■ **UNDER 5.5 WINS (+110) [VIA DRAFTKINGS]**

It is extremely difficult for me to see this team with their schedule making a bowl game. They have questions all over their offense, with an extremely young receiving corps, a quarterback who has struggled thus far in his college career in Graham Mertz, and an offensive line with little depth. The running back room is great, but they will have to carry this offense - literally. Defensively, Florida struggled last season, finishing 97th in the country in total defense. The defense might improve

this season, but even if they do, it is not enough to completely take over games given the difficulty of the schedule. In their best-case scenario, I see Florida finishing with five wins. That's the under.



Connor Hibbett

UTSA

■ **OVER 7.5 WINS (-148) [VIA FANDUEL]**

I was very surprised to see this number this low given what UTSA has coming back. This feels like a "last ride" kind of year for UTSA. The reason why this number could be this low is because the market is looking at UTSA's road games against Houston, Tennessee, Florida Atlantic, North Texas and Tulane. That is a difficult road schedule, but I do not believe UTSA is going to go 0-5 in those games. UTSA most likely will trip up a couple of times on the road here

and probably lose in Knoxville, but they're not going to finish the regular season worse than 8-4. Give me the over for the Roadrunners, who just may play in the AAC Championship in their first year in the conference.



Connor Hibbett

UAB

■ **UNDER 5 WINS (-150) [VIA DRAFTKINGS]**

I think the bottom could fall out for the Blazers this year. UAB is 131st out of 133 teams in returning production. Not only that, but UAB is moving from Conference USA to the American Athletic. While it may not be the same AAC of the past, UAB has arguably the AAC's most difficult schedule for 2023. On top of a difficult conference schedule, UAB will face defending national champion Georgia in the nonconference, as well as two tricky Sun Belt teams in Georgia Southern and Louisiana. UAB should start the season 1-0 with a win against a rebuilding NC A&T squad. After that, though, home games against South Florida and Temple are

winnable, but looking for other outright wins would be stretching the most likely outcome. UAB also has a very inexperienced coaching staff to go along with a very inexperienced roster. In my opinion, the best-case scenario for UAB is they smoke and mirror their way to five wins. I think there is a greater chance UAB goes 2-10 than they go 6-6. They will in all likelihood probably finish somewhere in the middle there and go 4-8, but I do not see them getting to six regular-season wins.



Connor Hibbett

**SOUTH ALABAMA**

■ **OVER 7.5 WINS (-165) [VIA BET MGM]**

This is a similar situation to UTSA. South Alabama is a quality team with a ton of veteran experience, but a tricky nonconference schedule and a very difficult road slate could hold them back slightly this season. That's the thing, though: It might hold them back slightly. South Alabama plays road games against Tulane and Oklahoma State in the nonconference and road games against James Madison and Troy. Is that tough? Yes. Except, I am not looking at a team that is "fighting to

make a bowl game." I am looking at what I feel will be one of the best Group of Five teams in the country. Even if South Alabama loses all four of those games - which I highly doubt - they most likely will win all their other games. And what about if they win just one of those road games? They could hammer the over. For a team I believe will be one of the best Group of Five teams in the country for this season, I really doubt they will finish worse than 8-4.



Connor Hibbett

**BOSTON COLLEGE**

■ **OVER 5.5 WINS (-115) [VIA BET MGM]**

Look for Boston College to get back to a bowl game this year. The real reason for Boston College's struggles last year was the offensive line. Perhaps the biggest takeaway, though, for this team could be the schedule. Boston College has a very manageable nonconference schedule, with three home games against Northern Illinois, Holy Cross and Connecticut and a road game against Army. BC's ACC schedule is also manageable, as Boston College avoids Clemson and North Carolina. Home conference games against Virginia and Virginia Tech are both very winnable, while BC's ACC road slate is far from a gauntlet, as the Eagles face Louisville, Georgia Tech, Syracuse and Pittsburgh. That's an

overall schedule of five not-impossible-to-win true road games and four, if not five, very likely home wins. Boston College is a little undervalued right now, considering the struggles last year that will likely not occur to the same degree this year, if at all. Also, considering the pressure that the coaching staff will be facing this year, I feel Boston College can at least get to six regular-season wins and achieve bowl eligibility. That's enough to hit the over of 5.5.



Connor Hibbett

**BONUS PICKS**

**BASED ON TEAM PREVIEWS** By John Robledo

**TEXAS STATE**

■ **OVER 4.5 WINS (+140) [VIA DRAFTKINGS]**



**OHIO**

■ **OVER 7.5 WINS (-115) [VIA DRAFTKINGS]**



**OLD DOMINION**

■ **UNDER 3.5 WINS (-110) [VIA BET MGM]**



**WEST VIRGINIA**

■ **UNDER 4.5 WINS (+120) [VIA DRAFTKINGS]**



**JAMES MADISON**

■ **UNDER 8 WINS (-115) [VIA DRAFTKINGS]**



**CINCINNATI**

■ **UNDER 5.5 WINS (-135) [VIA BET MGM]**



**FRESNO STATE**

■ **UNDER 8 WINS (+110) [VIA DRAFTKINGS]**



# 24 PACK RANKINGS

24 PACK  
RANKINGS

- 1 GEORGIA
- 2 OHIO STATE
- 3 FLORIDA STATE
- 4 LSU
- 5 TEXAS
- 6 USC
- 7 MICHIGAN
- 8 ALABAMA
- 9 CLEMSON
- 10 PENN STATE
- 11 OKLAHOMA
- 12 OREGON
- 13 TENNESSEE
- 14 TEXAS TECH
- 15 OREGON STATE
- 16 UTAH
- 17 WISCONSIN
- 18 WASHINGTON
- 19 TULANE
- 20 MISSOURI
- 21 NOTRE DAME
- 22 KANSAS STATE
- 23 TEXAS A&M
- 24 UTSA



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WRITING CONTRIBUTORS  
AUTHOR/ CONNOR HIBBETT  
EDITOR/ JOHN ROBLEDO

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