

GAMEDAY



IN THE INTERIM

Auburn unveils interim coach at Vandy, while Alabama hosts one in LSU

Win a Mini Max Big Green Egg from Story & Lee!*

TAILGATE of the week RECIPE



Sausage Corn Dip

INGREDIENTS

1 lb. sausage (I use Italian) 1 can Rotel tomatoes
2 8 oz. pkgs. cream cheese 1 can Mexicorn

DIRECTIONS:

Brown sausage in skillet, add softened cream cheese. When cheese is melted good, then add Rotel and Mexicorn.

Note: This recipe can also be used as a side dish.



This week's recipe submitted
by **Cindy Beaver,**
Tuscumbia, AL

Submit your recipes now and you could win \$50 if your recipe is selected.

To enter, submit your recipe to:

Tailgate Recipe Contest, 219 West Tennessee St., Florence, AL 35630 - Attn: Mara Beth Cravens

*Weekly winners are entered for grand prize drawing for a Mini Max Green Egg.

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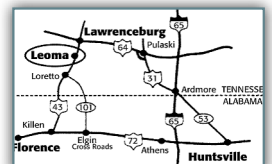
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Tears will be flowing for many again this week – and every week of the season. [KARL DEBLAKER/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

THE LINE

Thursday	(as of Tuesday)		
FAVORITE	TODAY	O/U	UNDERDOG
at SOUTH FLORIDA	13½	68½	UTSA
at APPALACHIAN ST.	6½	62½	Georgia Southern

Friday			
Houston	1½	47½	at UCF
at USC	14½	50½	Northwestern
at MEMPHIS	5½	55½	Tulane

Saturday			
at ARMY	6½	46½	Temple
James Madison	13½	54½	at MARSHALL
at TEXAS TECH	9½	52½	BYU
SMU	10½	55½	at BOSTON COLLEGE
Indiana	14½	48½	at PENN STATE
Georgia	7½	57½	at MISS. STATE
Southern Miss	4½	56½	at ARKANSAS STATE
at WEST VIRGINIA	6½	54½	Colorado
Ohio State	29½	48½	at PURDUE
at LIBERTY	7½	51½	Missouri State
at EASTERN MICHIGAN	2½	50½	Bowling Green
at RICE	2½	54½	UAB
at RUTGERS	1½	58½	Maryland
Florida International	1½	51½	at MIDDLE TENN.
Louisiana Tech	5½	57½	at DELAWARE
Jacksonville State	1½	49½	at UTEP
at FLORIDA ATLANTIC	3½	64½	Tulsa
at EAST CAROLINA	28½	56½	Charlotte
Duke	9½	65½	at UCONN
at TCU	6½	57½	Iowa State
at ARIZONA	4½	56½	Kansas
at MIAMI (FL)	28½	45½	Syracuse
Oregon	6½	41½	at IOWA
Texas A&M	7½	48½	at MISSOURI
Kennesaw State	8½	52½	at NEW MEXICO ST.
at COASTAL CAROLINA	7½	58½	Georgia State
at VANDERBILT	6½	45½	Auburn
at NORTH CAROLINA	7½	41½	Stanford
Washington	11½	45½	at WISCONSIN
Texas State	2½	64½	at LOUISIANA
at SAN JOSE STATE	4½	66½	Air Force
at CLEMSON	2½	56½	Florida State
at VIRGINIA	6½	48½	Wake Forest
at LOUISVILLE	20½	50½	Cal
at ALABAMA	9½	49½	LSU
Florida	3½	43½	at KENTUCKY
at NOTRE DAME	26½	55½	Navy
at UTAH STATE	8½	52½	Nevada
at UCLA	1½	43½	Nebraska
UNLV	4½	62½	at COLORADO STATE
at OREGON STATE	20½	52½	Sam Houston
San Diego State	6½	50½	at HAWAII



Colorado fans can bare (almost) all again this week when the Buffaloes play at West Virginia. [DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

GAMES ON TV

Thursday
Georgia Southern at App State, 6:30 p.m., ESPN2
UTSA at South Florida, 6:30 p.m., ESPN

Friday
Delaware State at Morgan State, 6 p.m., ESPN2
Harvard at Columbia, 6 p.m., ESPN2
Houston at UCF, 7 p.m., FS1
Northwestern at USC, 8 p.m., FOX
Tulane at Memphis, 8 p.m., ESPN

Saturday
BYU at Texas Tech, 11 a.m., ABC
Colorado at West Virginia, 11 a.m., TNT
Georgia at Mississippi State, 11 a.m., ESPN
Indiana at Penn State, 11 a.m., FOX

James Madison at Marshall, 11 a.m., ESPN2
Southern Miss at Arkansas State, 11 a.m., ESPN2
SMU at Boston College, 11 a.m., ACC Network
Temple at Army, 11 a.m., CBSSN
Ohio State at Purdue, noon, BTN
Maryland at Rutgers, 1:30 p.m., FS1
Duke at UConn, 2:30 p.m., CBSSN
Iowa State at TCU, 2:30 p.m., FOX
Kansas at Arizona, 2:30 p.m., ESPN2
Oregon at Iowa, 2:30 p.m., CBS
Syracuse at Miami, 2:30 p.m., ESPN
Texas A&M at Missouri, 2:30 p.m., ABC
Auburn at Vanderbilt, 3 p.m., SEC Network
South Dakota State at South Dakota, 3 p.m., ESPN2

Stanford at North Carolina, 3:30 p.m., CWTW
Washington at Wisconsin, 3:30 p.m., BTN
Air Force at San Jose State, 5 p.m., FS1
California at Louisville, 6 p.m., ESPN2
Florida State at Clemson, 6 p.m., ACC Network
Wake Forest at Virginia, 6 p.m., ESPN
Florida at Kentucky, 6:30 p.m., SEC Network
LSU at Alabama, 6:30 p.m., ABC
Navy at Notre Dame, 6:30 p.m., NBC
Nevada at Utah State, 6:30 p.m., CBSSN
UNLV at Colorado State, 8:30 p.m., FS1
Nebraska at UCLA, 8 p.m., FOX
Sam Houston at Oregon State, 9 p.m., CWTW

TOP 25 SCHEDULE

Friday
No. 20 Southern Cal (6-2) vs. Northwestern (5-3), 8 p.m.
No. 22 Memphis (8-1) vs. Tulane (6-2), 8 p.m.
Saturday
No. 1 Ohio St. (8-0) at Purdue (2-7), noon
No. 2 Indiana (9-0) at Penn St. (3-5), 11 a.m.

No. 3 Texas A&M (8-0) at No. 19 Missouri (6-2), 2:30 p.m.
No. 4 Alabama (7-1) vs. LSU (5-3), 6:30 p.m.
No. 5 Georgia (7-1) at Mississippi St. (5-4), 11 a.m.
No. 6 Oregon (7-1) at Iowa (6-2), 2:30 p.m.
No. 7 Ole Miss (8-1) vs. The Citadel (4-5), noon
No. 8 BYU (8-0) at No. 9 Texas Tech (8-1), 11 a.m.

No. 10 Notre Dame (6-2) vs. Navy (7-1), 6:30 p.m.
No. 12 Virginia (8-1) vs. Wake Forest (5-3), 6 p.m.
No. 14 Louisville (7-1) vs. California (5-4), 6 p.m.
No. 15 Vanderbilt (7-2) vs. Auburn (4-5), 3 p.m.
No. 18 Miami (6-2) vs. Syracuse (3-6), 2:30 p.m.
No. 24 Washington (6-2) at Wisconsin (2-6), 3:30 p.m.

Auburn at Vanderbilt

When: 3 p.m. Saturday

TV/radio: SEC/FM-94.9, FM-100.3

Records: Auburn (4-5, 1-5 SEC), No. 15
Vanderbilt (7-2, 3-2)

The series: Tied 22-22-1.

Four-down territory

1. Two hats: D.J. Durkin is in as interim head coach, but it's business as usual regarding how the defense works. He will maintain his defensive coordinator duties and call all the schemes. "We won't change how we're doing that. I think we have a good flow of how to do things on defense," he said this week. "I love our staff. I love our group, and I don't want to uproot any changes on that." He also said that offensive coordinator Derrick Nix will call the plays on offense, a role that fired head coach Hugh Freeze performed.

2. Searching for QB1: Durkin says there won't be any off-the-field changes, but what about on-the-field changes, particularly at quarterback? Ashton Daniels got his shot as starter against Kentucky and it didn't yield positive results (108 yards, five sacks). Jackson Arnold was inserted in the second half with not much success (2-of-3 for 15 yards, two sacks). "I know this, we have three tremendous young men that can play the quarterback position at a high level. They are in the conversation on that, and we'll make a decision soon," Durkin said.

3. Pavia problem: Auburn has not been successful against quarterback Diego Pavia. The Tigers are 0-2 against him, once when he was at New Mexico State and last year with Vanderbilt. The odds are not good against Auburn this time around either. Pavia passed for 201 yards and three touchdowns two years ago in New Mexico State's 31-10 win, and he passed for 143 yards and a pair of TDs in a 17-7 Vanderbilt win last season. Pavia's averaging 229 yards per game this season with 18 touchdowns and six rushing scores.

4. Key to success: Texas provided the blueprint to beat Vanderbilt. The Longhorns held the Commodores to a season-low 58 rushing yards. Their previous season low was 136 against Alabama, another loss. Auburn has the edge with its No. 9-ranked run defense. The Tigers have held seven opponents, including four straight, to under 100 yards. Opponents are averaging just 2.4 yards per run and



Alex McPherson has been in the middle of Auburn's offensive production of late. His field goals have accounted for 21 of the Tigers' 36 points the last two games. [MICHAEL WOODS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

83 yards per game for the season and 78 over the last four games.

Key matchup

Auburn DB Kensley Loudor-Faustin vs. Vanderbilt DB CJ Heard

Loudor-Faustin has provided a spark in the secondary with his three tackles for loss, two pass breakups and one interception. Heard is the Vandy leader with 47 tackles and also had a sack with one interception.

Player of the week

Alex McPherson, K

The only one doing the scoring lately

for Auburn is McPherson. After missing three against Missouri, he has connected on seven straight, accounting for 21 of Auburn's 36 points the past two games.

By the numbers

1: Of Auburn's interim coaches (Bill Oliver, Kevin Steele, Carnell Williams), Oliver has the only win in his first game, beating Louisiana Tech 32-17 in 1998.

6: Including Vandy, Auburn has played six opponents ranked in the top 16.

6: A loss guarantees Auburn will finish with six or less regular-season wins for the six straight season.

9: Auburn has held its opponent under its scoring average in all nine games this season.

Prediction

Vanderbilt 28, Auburn 21

Maybe the firing of Hugh Freeze will help inspire Auburn to victory. More likely, the Tigers will be motivated, but it won't be enough to carry them past Vandy. There is too much disarray on offense at this point of the season. Expect a few new wrinkles and explosive plays, but the QB situation is beyond hope.

— Edwin Stanton

Vanderbilt tries to rekindle momentum

By Jim Vertuno
The Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — Vanderbilt's big rally against Texas last weekend came up short as an onside kick rolled out of bounds and took one last chance for the Commodores with it.

And those mere inches in a desperate scramble for the ball may be all the difference between a really good season in Nashville and a great one.

No. 15 Vanderbilt rallied from a 34-10 fourth-quarter deficit at Texas last weekend in a 34-31 loss, an effort that — most seasons — would please the Commodores.

Not this year.

Instead of a statement road victory, the result was a dreaded second loss in conference play that could be the difference in getting a shot at the Southeastern Conference title game, and the College Football Playoff beyond that.

"I would have loved to have seen us recover that onside kick, but we didn't," Vanderbilt coach Clark Lea said last weekend.

He praised his team's grittiness in the rally but also noted why it was needed. The Commodores (7-2, 3-2 SEC) hope no such theatrics are needed when they host Auburn on Saturday.

"In our program, to say that we weren't the hardest playing team on the field hurts me, but that's how I feel," Lea said. "In the second half, we woke up to that, and I think we started to play the way we want to play. Just it was too late."

Quarterback Diego Pavia ran for a touchdown and passed for two in the desperate fourth quarter.

Pavia, the engine that drives the Commodores on the field and in the locker room, did what he could. Sacked six times, he was often on the run, but kept delivering big plays.

A Pavia fumble in the first quarter set up a Texas field goal. He was also sacked near the Vanderbilt goal line on the final touchdown drive but converted a 4th-and-19 pass to keep the drive and the rally going.



Vanderbilt quarterback Diego Pavia led a furious — though unsuccessful — fourth-quarter rally in last weekend's loss at Texas. [ERIC GAY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

Pavia had a 25-yard touchdown run and scoring passes of 67 and 8 yards in the fourth quarter.

Defensively, Vanderbilt never forced a turnover, never got a sack and only forced Texas to punt once. The game started with the Commodores giving up a 75-yard touchdown on the first play.

Vanderbilt has already qualified for a bowl game, but reaching the SEC championship game for the first time will need some things to happen around them and above them in the league standings to get there.

Vanderbilt was ninth heading into the Texas game and had hoped a win could boost the Commodores to match or beat the highest ranking in school history: No. 7 in 1937.

The Commodores are 16th in the initial CFP committee rankings released Tuesday, which would leave them out of the 12-team field.

"We can't play like we played today ... At some point, everything won't be out in front of us if we don't play the right way," Lea said. "We will keep charging at it, but this one hurts."

SCORE YOUR WINNING LOOK!

A photograph of four men sitting on a wooden floor, watching a television. The television shows a football player in a blue jersey running with the ball. The men are wearing casual clothing and are looking intently at the screen.

A circular logo for The Wood Floor Store. It features a tree in the center, with the text "THE WOOD FLOOR STORE" around the top and "ESTABLISHED 2002 FLORENCE, AL" around the bottom.

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LSU at Alabama

**No. 4 Alabama (7-1, 5-0 SEC)
vs. LSU (5-3, 2-3)**

When: 6:30 p.m. Saturday

TV/radio: ABC/FM-93.9, FM-97.7, AM-920

Records: LSU (5-3, 2-3 SEC), No. 4 Alabama (7-1, 5-0)

The series: Alabama leads 57-27-5

Four-down territory

1. Talkin' ball: Alabama offensive coordinator Ryan Grubb didn't spend the bye week relaxing. He spent it talking X's and O's with former NFL coach Jon Gruden. They met in the summer at a golf tournament, and they stayed in touch. The two caught up to talk offensive schemes and strategies. "Coach is great with stuff like that," Grubb said. "Sent him kind of a request list of some things I'd like to talk about with him. He's got more film than NFLfilms.com."

2. Teacher vs. pupil: LSU interim coach Frank Wilson and Alabama defensive coordinator Kane Wommack share a link. Wilson coached the running backs at Southern Miss and Wommack was one of his players. Wommack knows a lot about Wilson and while the Tigers are reeling from the firing of head coach Brian Kelly, it's no reason to take them lightly on Saturday. "He'll have that team ready to go. They will be motivated, they'll be ready. They'll be well prepared," Wommack said. "I can't think of a better person to step in at LSU, in a place that cares deeply for that program and that state, and what this means to him."

3. Returning soon: Alabama lost line-backer Qua Russow several weeks ago with an injury, but he is expected to be back on the field as early as next week. Yhonzae Pierre has played well in Russaw's absence, racking up four sacks with eight QB hurries. Guard Geno VanDeMark is expected to return this week following an injury. Jaeden Roberts filled in for him against South Carolina. Tight end Danny Lewis Jr., who has battled injuries throughout the season, could see action against LSU.

4. Still an issue: The run game situation hasn't improved. It's actually declined the last three games with 125 yards, 122 and 72, respectively. Bama is 14th in the SEC, but the good news is LSU is 15th in the league. The Tigers average 106 yards per game to Alabama's 118. Alabama's numbers are far off last year's pace of 173



Alabama offensive lineman Parker Brailsford, who has not allowed a sack this season, looks to continue such success this week against LSU. [VASHA HUNT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

yards per game with 41 total touchdowns (just nine in 2025).

Key matchup

Alabama WR Germie Bernard vs. LSU WR Zavion Thomas

Both are receiving and running threats. Bernard leads Alabama with 526 receiving yards and six touchdowns with 109 rushing yards and two scores. Thomas has 267 receiving yards with three scores and 102 rushing yards.

Player of the week

Parker Brailsford, C

Brailsford has yet to allow a sack across

245 pass blocking snaps according to Pro Football Focus, in addition to providing key blocks. He's a team captain for a reason.

By the numbers

43: Alabama has surrendered 43 individual 100-yard rushing performances since 2005, the fewest in the nation.

2: Alabama has two touchdowns off interceptions, which is tied with Tennessee for most in the SEC.

16: Alabama coach Kalen DeBoer has a 16-2 record when coming off a bye week. He's 3-0 at Alabama.

83: Alabama has won 83 straight games against unranked opponents at home.

Prediction

Alabama 24, LSU 13

The situation at LSU is a giant mess after losing three of its last four games, losing its coach and with all the drama between the athletic director and governor. It is not a good look. But it doesn't mean the Tigers will surrender to Alabama. A big win against the No. 4 team in the nation would end the turmoil quite a bit. The good news for the Crimson Tide is the game is at home, where they have lost to LSU just once in the past seven meetings.

— Edwin Stanton

West Georgia at UNA

When: 3 p.m. Saturday

TV: ESPN+

Records: West Georgia (6-3, 3-3 UAC), UNA (2-7, 1-4)

The series: UNA leads 23-13.

Four-down territory

1. Trying to escape the bottom: There are nine teams in the United Athletic Conference. UNA is officially tied for last in the standings with Utah Tech. Although, if tiebreakers were taken into account, the Lions would own last place. The Trailblazers, after all, did beat UNA 34-33 in overtime last week. But the Lions could potentially escape the league cellar with a win over West Georgia. Utah Tech is playing at No. 18 Abilene Christian, which knocked Tarleton State from the ranks of the unbeaten last week. Central Arkansas and Eastern Kentucky, meanwhile, are one game ahead of UNA and Utah Tech. Central Arkansas is at Austin Peay. Eastern Kentucky hosts Southern Utah.

2. Possibly adding on to a winning record: No, not UNA. The Lions secured their seventh straight losing season thanks to that Utah Tech loss. This is referring to West Georgia. The Wolves, who are coming off a bye, clinched their first Division I winning season on Oct. 25 by beating Central Arkansas 18-17. (Remember, UNA was blown out by the Bears 49-21 this year.) West Georgia is in its second Division I season and is only playing 11 games. UNA's lone winning DI record occurred in 2018, but that was against a mixed DI and DII schedule. The Wolves' slate this season hasn't featured any lower-level opponents.

3. Just shy of a decade: The last time West Georgia graced the immaculate confines of Braly Stadium was 2016 — the year UNA played for the Division II national title. The Lions came out with a 24-23 victory after Blake Hawkins scored on a 2-yard run with 1:44 remaining. It was the second of two fourth-quarter UNA touchdowns. Quarterback Jacob Tucker crossed the goal line from 2 yards out with 9:24 left. West Georgia beat the Lions 37-23 the next year in Carrollton, while UNA took a 25-16 victory last season in the programs' inaugural DI meeting. Over the last 10 matchups between the two, UNA holds a 7-3 advantage with six of



DeAndre Buchannon is one of three United Athletic Conference players to return a kickoff for a touchdown this season. [WEST GEORGIA ATHLETICS]

those contests being decided by two scores or less.

4. Shortening the field: A good return game — via kickoff or punt — is never a bad thing. DeAndre Buchannon provides that for West Georgia. The junior is one of three players in the UAC to return a kickoff for a touchdown. (Eastern Kentucky's T.J. Mitchell and Southern Utah's Ran Sawyer are the others.) Buchannon returned a kickoff

sacks allowed with 13. Hoage, however, presents an interesting challenge. The seventh-year player's six sacks rank third in the UAC behind Southern Utah's Lando Brown (11.5) and Tarleton State's Angelo Anderson (8.5). It doesn't hurt the Wolves have generated the most sacks in the conference (26), either.

Player of the week

Juice Allen, RB

Allen logged 25 carries for 102 yards in last week's loss. It was his second 100-yard game of the season and third of his UNA tenure in last week's loss. But Allen was also held without a touchdown for the third time in four games. The Lions tend to win when the tailback scores at least twice. They beat Division II Northeastern State (Oklahoma) on Sept. 13 when he had rushed for a pair of touchdowns. UNA topped Eastern Kentucky on Oct. 18 when he had three. UNA is 0-7 otherwise. But there are plenty of other reasons for the Lions' struggles.

By the numbers

3-2: West Georgia's road record. That's three more road wins than UNA.

126.4: The number of yards Allen needs to average over the final three games to hit the 1,000-yard mark. He currently averages 69 and has 621 yards this season.

15: The number of turnovers West Georgia has forced — eight interceptions and seven fumbles. UNA has turned the ball over 14 times — eight picks and six fumbles.

2nd: West Georgia's conference rank in points per game allowed at 24. UNA is ninth at 38.8. The Wolves are sixth in points scored at 26. The Lions fourth at 28.

Prediction

West Georgia 33, UNA 27

Yes, this is a game at Braly Stadium where the Lions are 2-1 this season. But UNA has to give you some confidence it can win first. And that has been in short supply. But if we're being honest, this would be a bad — perhaps embarrassing — loss for the Lions.

— David Glovach

92 yards in the season opener against Samford. He also leads the conference in kick return average (31 yards) with Mitchell and Sawyer second and third, respectively. Buchannon is third in punt return average (5.9) as well.

Key matchup

UNA offensive line vs. West Georgia DL David Hoage

The Lions rank second in the UAC in



Anthony Evans III and Mississippi State are looking to get over the hump to land back-to-back SEC wins for the first time since 2022. [MICHAEL WOODS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

This week’s SEC, state games

No. 5 Georgia at Mississippi State

When: 11 a.m. Saturday
TV: ESPN
Records: Georgia (7-1, 5-1 SEC), Mississippi State (5-4, 1-4)
The series: Georgia leads 21-6.
The lowdown: Mississippi State is looking to win back-to-back SEC games for the first time since 2022, which was the late Mike Leach’s final season. The

Bulldogs beat No. 17 Texas A&M 42-24 on Oct. 1 and topped Arkansas 40-17 a week later. ... Georgia has won 14 of the last 15 meetings dating to 1975. The lone loss was in 2010. Mississippi State won 24-12. ... Georgia can become the ninth FBS program to reach 900 wins with a victory. UGA has been playing football for 132 years. That’s an average of 6.8 wins per season. ... Mississippi State’s

Brenen Thompson and Anthony Evans III each have three 100-yard receiving games this season (Arizona State, Florida and Arkansas). The Bulldogs are 2-1 in such outings.

The Citadel at No. 7 Ole Miss

When: noon Saturday
TV: SEC+
Records: The Citadel (4-5), Ole Miss

(8-1)
The series: Ole Miss leads 1-0.
The lowdown: The first meeting between Ole Miss and The Citadel ended in a 27-7 Rebels win in 2005. ... Ole Miss is 22-2 in nonconference games under coach Lane Kiffin. The Rebels lost 21-7 to No. 7 Baylor in the 2021 season Sugar

SEC

From Page G8

Bowl and a 42-25 loss to Texas Tech in the 2022 season Texas Bowl. ... The Citadel is 9-55 against FBS opponents. Its last win was a 27-24 overtime victory at Georgia Tech in 2019. Its last win over an SEC opponent was a 23-22 upset of South Carolina in 2015. ... The Bulldogs are coming off a 35-24 comeback win over VMI in the Military Classic of the South. The Citadel scored 28 fourth-quarter points.

UAB at Rice

When: 1 p.m. Saturday

TV: ESPN+

Records: UAB (3-5, 1-3 American), Rice (4-5, 1-4)

The series: UAB leads 7-5.

The lowdown: UAB quarterback Jalen Kitna was hurt early in last week's 38-19 loss at UConn. Backup QB Ryder Burton finished 21-of-30 for 209 yards, two touchdowns and two interceptions. ... Burton started the Blazers' previous game, a 31-24 home upset of then-unbeaten Memphis. ... UAB's Brandon Hawkins Jr. had four catches for 89 yards and a touchdown at UConn, plus ran for a 32-yard score on a busted play. ... UConn led 31-0 midway through the third quarter. ... Rice is coming off a 38-14 home loss to Memphis in which the Owls cranked out 212 yards offense. ... Memphis led 28-0 midway through the second quarter and, by halftime, had scored on five of its six possessions. ... Under first-year head coach Scott Abell, the Owls are trying for their first winning season since 2014. ... Rice has lost four of its last five with two of the losses by a combined 14 points and the win 37-34 in double overtime over UConn. ... The Owls rank 16th in the nation in rushing offense, averaging 213.3 yards per game. ... The Blazers rank 118th in the country in rushing defense, getting trampled for a 188.1-yard average.

Jacksonville State at Texas-El Paso

When: 2 p.m. Saturday

TV: ESPN+

Records: Jacksonville State (5-3, 4-0 Conference USA), UTEP (2-6, 1-3)

The series: Jacksonville State leads 1-0.

The lowdown: The Gamecocks, after playing their last three games in the middle of the week, are back on week-end duty and will remain there for their last four games. ... Jacksonville State is



Caleb Bennett and The Citadel were able to wrangle up an SEC win in 2015. [RICHARD SHIRO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]



Ryder Burton started in UAB's upset of Memphis three weeks ago but struggled last week with the Blazers getting shellacked by UConn. [UAB ATHLETICS]



Texas A&M is 8-0 for the first time since 1992. The Aggies finished that year 12-1 after being manhandled by Jerome Bettis and Notre Dame in the Cotton Bowl. [DAVID PHILLIP/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]



Plenty of opponents have dropped the ball when it comes to stopping Jacksonville State's Cam Cook this season. [JACKSONVILLE STATE ATHLETICS]



Alabama A&M hasn't had many reasons to break out its dance moves over the last month. [ALABAMA A&M ATHLETICS]

SEC

From Page G9

making its longest trip of the season, a 1,343-mile jaunt. ... JSU won 24-21 at Middle Tennessee on Oct. 29, scoring 17 fourth-quarter points. The Gamecocks took the lead on a 3-yard Cam Cook run with 4 ½ remaining. ... Cook finished with 103 yards on 21 carries, posting his sixth 100-yard game of the season. ... Cook leads the nation with 1,052 yards. Nebraska's Emmett Johnson is the only other 1,000-yard rusher so far. ... Cook's 131.5-yard average also leads the land. ... UTEP is honoring its 2005 football team and, as part of the celebration, is rolling back ticket prices to 2005 levels (\$13). The 2005 Miners were coached by Mike Price and went 8-4, going 5-3 in their first Conference USA season. They were ranked as high as 24th in the nation after starting 8-1. ... JSU and UTEP first met in 2023 in the Gamecocks' inaugural Conference USA game. Jax State won 17-14.

Prairie View A&M at Alabama A&M

When: 2 p.m. Saturday

TV: SWAC TV

Records: Prairie View (6-3, 4-1 SWAC), Alabama A&M (4-5, 1-4)

The series: Prairie View leads 10-8.

The lowdown: Prairie View has won four of its last five games, losing at home last

SEC
From Page G10

week to Alabama State, which clubbed A&M 56-13 two weeks ago. ... The Panthers missed a 53-yard field goal on the final play to fall 31-28. ... The Bulldogs have lost four of their last five. ... The teams first met in 1999, and the Bulldogs won the first six matchups. They last met in 2016. ... Prairie View, after running for 247 yards last week, average almost 189 per game and 5.3 per carry. ... Chase Bingmon ran for 118 yards and Cameron Peters 106 for the Panthers. ... Peters also threw for 189 yards and three touchdowns – and four interceptions. ... Alabama A&M’s defense, which gives up 411 yards per game, ranks 94th in the FCS. ... The Bulldogs racked up 175 yards offense in last week’s 13-10 loss at Grambling State, which mustered 143 yards. ... A&M led 10-0 in the first quarter and gave up the go-ahead touchdown midway through the fourth quarter on a 64-yard punt return. ... A&M coach Sam Shade and Prairie View coach Tremaine Jackson are both in their first seasons after being hired from Division II schools. Shade was at Miles and Jackson at Valdosta State. ... Jackson was 40-11 in five years with the Blazers, including a national runner-up finish last year.

No. 3 Texas A&M at No. 19 Missouri

When: 2:30 p.m. Saturday



Florida’s offense has been told to take a seat more than a few times since its showing against Long Island in the season opener. [ALAN YOUNGBLOOD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

TV: ABC
Records: Texas A&M (8-0, 5-0 SEC), Missouri (6-2, 2-2)
The series: Texas A&M leads 10-7.
The lowdown: Texas A&M is 8-0 for the first time since 1992. R.C. Slocum was the coach that year. The Aggies finished

the regular season 12-0 before getting blown out 28-3 by No. 5 Notre Dame in the Cotton Bowl. ... Ohio State, Indiana and BYU are the other undefeated FBS teams. ... Missouri had a bye last week to regroup from its 17-10 Oct. 25 loss at Vanderbilt. ... The Tigers are 5-1 at

home. The loss was a 27-24 defeat to Alabama thanks to a Beau Pribula interception with 37 seconds left. ... Texas A&M has scored at least 40 points in its three road games. The Aggies put up 41 at Notre Dame, 45 at Arkansas and 49 at LSU, which ended up being Brian Kelly’s final game on the Bayou.

Florida at Kentucky

When: 6:30 p.m. Saturday
TV: SEC
Records: Florida (3-5, 2-3 SEC), Kentucky (3-5, 1-5)
The series: Florida leads 54-21.
The lowdown: This is the first November matchup in Lexington between the teams since 1990 when Florida won 47-15. ... The Gators snapped a three-game skid to Kentucky last season thanks to a 48-20 final. ... Florida has only scored more than 30 points once this season. That was the 55-0 season-opening win against FCS Long Island. ... The Wildcats are in search of their first back-to-back wins since Sept. 21 and 28 last year. They beat Ohio and Ole Miss. ... Kentucky is looking for its first back-to-back SEC wins since Sept. 23 and 30, 2023, when it topped Vanderbilt and Florida. ... The Gators’ defense ranks 32nd in the FBS in scoring defense (20.5 points per game), but its offense is tied for 105th (22.1 ppg). Kentucky is 86th (26.8 ppg) and 101st (22.4 ppg), respectively.

– A. Stacy Long and David Glovach

PICKS
PANEL



STACY LONG



DAVID GLOVACH



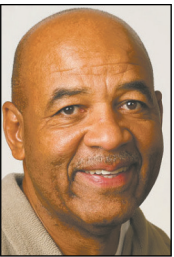
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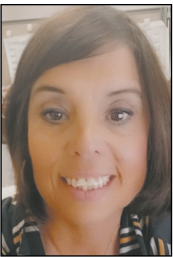
GREGG DEWALT



RENITA JIMMAR



DEANGELO MCDANIEL



MARA BETH CRAVENS



CALEB SUGGS

LSU at Alabama
Auburn at Vanderbilt
West Georgia at UNA
Texas A&M at Missouri
Florida at Kentucky
Georgia at Mississippi State
BYU at Texas Tech
Jacksonville State at UTEP
Florida State at Clemson
Nebraska at UCLA

Last week
Season record

Alabama
Vanderbilt
West Georgia
Texas A&M
Florida
Georgia
Texas Tech
Jacksonville State
Clemson
UCLA

3-7
72-28

Alabama
Vanderbilt
West Georgia
Texas A&M
Florida
Georgia
Texas Tech
Jacksonville State
Clemson
UCLA

2-8
66-34

Alabama
Vanderbilt
West Georgia
Texas A&M
Florida
Georgia
Texas Tech
Jacksonville State
Clemson
UCLA

4-6
64-36

Alabama
Vanderbilt
UNA
Texas A&M
Florida
Georgia
Texas Tech
Jacksonville State
Clemson
Nebraska

4-6
62-38

Alabama
Vanderbilt
West Georgia
Texas A&M
Florida
Georgia
Texas Tech
Jacksonville State
Clemson
Nebraska

4-6
62-38

LSU
Vanderbilt
UNA
Texas A&M
Florida
Georgia
BYU
UTEP
Florida State
Nebraska

4-6
55-45

Alabama
Vanderbilt
UNA
Missouri
Kentucky
Mississippi State
BYU
UTEP
Clemson
Nebraska

5-5
52-48

Alabama
Vanderbilt
West Georgia
Texas A&M
Florida
Georgia
Texas Tech
Jacksonville State
Florida State
Nebraska

4-6
45-55



Alabama receiver Isaiah Horton and the Crimson Tide could have at least one more showdown with Georgia in the SEC championship game or the playoffs. [COLIN HUBBARD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

Breaking down FBS conference races

By Noah Trister
The Associated Press

The race for college football's conference titles takes on a new importance in the era of an expanded playoff.

Champions of the top leagues have a shot at automatic bids. And given the size some leagues have ballooned to, the chase to reach a conference title game can seem unusually chaotic. Of the FBS conferences, only the Sun Belt still uses divisions, with the other leagues simply

pitting their first- and second-place finishers in the title game.

The race for college football's conference titles takes on a new importance in the era of an expanded playoff, with champions of the top leagues having a shot at automatic bids. And given the size some leagues have ballooned to, the chase to reach a conference title game can seem unusually chaotic.

Of the FBS conferences, only the Sun Belt still uses divisions, with the other leagues simply pitting their first- and

second-place finishers in the title game. Here's a look at where each conference stands. (All records are in-conference records.)

SEC

Standings: Texas A&M (5-0) and Alabama (5-0) are tied for first, followed by Mississippi (5-1), Georgia (5-1) and Texas (4-1).

Possible tiebreakers: Alabama beat Georgia, and Georgia beat Mississippi.

Down the stretch: Texas plays at

Georgia on Nov. 15 and hosts Texas A&M on Nov. 28.

Betting favorite: Alabama (+115 according to BetMGM Sportsbook).

Conference USA

Standings: Conference USA isn't in the playoff mix, with every team having at least two losses overall, but there's still a conference title race to watch. Kennesaw State (4-0) and Jacksonville State (4-0)

SEE CONFERENCE, G13



Memphis offensive lineman Chris Adams, running back Frank Peasant and the rest of the Tigers hope to show their stripes and win an American Conference title and earn a CFP berth. [MICHAEL WYKE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

CONFERENCE

From Page G12

lead the way, followed by Western Kentucky (5-1) and Liberty (3-1). Missouri State (3-1) is not yet eligible to play in the Conference USA title game after joining the league this season.

Possible tiebreakers: Jacksonville State has a win over Liberty.

Down the stretch: Kennesaw State still has to play at Jacksonville State on Nov. 15 and at Liberty on Nov. 29. Jacksonville State hosts Western Kentucky on Nov. 29.

Sun Belt

Standings: Could the Sun Belt put a team in the playoff? Maybe if James Madison wins out and enough AAC teams cannibalize each other? JMU (5-0) leads the East Division in the Sun Belt, with Coastal Carolina (4-1) close behind. Southern Mississippi (4-0) leads the West, followed by Troy (4-1) and Arkansas State (4-1).

Possible tiebreakers: Arkansas State has a head-to-head win over Troy.

Down the stretch: There's still a lot to be decided here, with James Madison playing at Coastal Carolina on Nov. 29. Southern Miss is at Arkansas State next weekend and hosts Troy on Nov. 29.

ACC

Standings: Virginia (5-0) is now the only unbeaten team in ACC play, followed by Georgia Tech (5-1), Pittsburgh

(5-1), Louisville (4-1), SMU (4-1) and Duke (4-1).

Possible tiebreakers: Virginia has a head-to-head win over Louisville, Georgia Tech beat Duke and Louisville beat Pitt.

Down the stretch: Duke hosts Virginia on Nov. 15. Then a week later, Georgia Tech hosts Pitt and SMU hosts Louisville. Miami (2-2) can hand Pitt a head-to-head loss on Nov. 29, but the Hurricanes need help to get back into the title picture.

Betting favorites: Georgia Tech and Duke (+300 according to BetMGM Sportsbook).

American Athletic

Standings: After Navy's loss to North Texas on Saturday, a whopping six teams have one loss in conference play: Navy (5-1), Memphis (4-1), North Texas (4-1), South Florida (3-1), Tulane (3-1) and East Carolina (3-1). The AAC champ has a shot to earn the Group of Five bid to the 12-team playoff.

Possible tiebreakers: Memphis beat South Florida, South Florida beat North Texas and North Texas beat Navy. Tulane beat East Carolina.

Down the stretch: The situation could become less muddled in a hurry. Memphis hosts Tulane on Friday night and then plays at East Carolina on Nov. 15. Navy hosts South Florida on Nov. 15. Memphis hosts Navy on Nov. 27, which is Thanksgiving night.

Big 12

Standings: BYU (5-0) is alone in first



Indiana quarterback Fernando Mendoza and the Hoosiers are hunting for the school's first Big Ten title since 1967. [STEPHANIE SCARBROUGH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

place, followed by Texas Tech (5-1), Cincinnati (5-1), Houston (4-2), Utah (4-2), Arizona State (4-2) and TCU (3-2).

Possible tiebreakers: BYU beat Utah and Texas Tech beat Houston and Utah but lost to Arizona State. Utah beat Cincinnati. Houston and Utah both beat Arizona State, and Arizona State beat TCU.

Down the stretch: BYU plays at Texas Tech on Saturday and at Cincinnati on Nov. 22. TCU visits BYU on Nov. 15 and Houston on Nov. 22 before hosting Cincinnati on Nov. 29.

Betting favorite: Texas Tech (-200 according to BetMGM Sportsbook).

Big Ten

Standings: Indiana (6-0) and Ohio State (5-0) top the standings, and they don't play each other in the regular season. Michigan (5-1), Iowa (4-1), Oregon (4-1) and Southern California (4-1) are next in line.

Possible tiebreakers: Indiana has beaten Iowa and Oregon, and USC beat Michigan.

Down the stretch: Iowa hosts Oregon on Nov. 8 and plays at USC on Nov. 15. Oregon hosts USC on Nov. 22. Michigan hosts Ohio State on Nov. 29.

Betting favorite: Ohio State (-155 according to BetMGM Sportsbook).

Mid-American

Standings: Every MAC team began this week with at least three losses overall. The conference leaders are Miami

of Ohio (4-0), Buffalo (4-1), Western Michigan (4-1) and Ohio (3-1).

Possible tiebreakers: Miami beat Western Michigan.

Down the stretch: Miami played at Ohio on Tuesday night and at Buffalo on Nov. 19. Ohio is at WMU on Nov. 11 and at Buffalo on Nov. 28.

Mountain West

Standings: The Mountain West received a bid to the playoff last season via Boise State, but right now only San Diego State and UNLV have fewer than three losses overall. San Diego State (4-0) leads in conference play, with Boise State (4-1) in second. Then it's another step back to Hawaii (3-2), Fresno State (3-2), New Mexico (3-2), UNLV (2-2), Utah State (2-2) and San Jose State (2-2).

Possible tiebreakers: San Diego State beat Fresno State. Boise State beat New Mexico and UNLV but lost to Fresno State. Hawaii beat Utah State but lost to Fresno State and San Jose State. New Mexico beat Utah State and UNLV but lost to San Jose State. Utah State beat San Jose State.

Down the stretch: San Diego State is at Hawaii on Nov. 8 and then hosts Boise State a week later. UNLV hosts Utah State on Nov. 15 and hosts Hawaii on Nov. 21. On Nov. 22, Fresno State hosts Utah State and San Diego State hosts San Jose State. New Mexico hosts San Diego State on Nov. 28, the same day Utah State hosts Boise State. San Jose State hosts Fresno State the following day.

COLLEGE STANDINGS

(Through Nov. 1 games)

	Conference				All Games			
	W	L	P	PA	W	L	P	PA
Navy	5	1	192	154	7	1	278	192
Memphis	4	1	196	109	8	1	339	173
North Texas	4	1	221	155	8	1	400	217
South Florida	3	1	196	109	6	2	323	195
Tulane	3	1	107	98	6	2	207	204
East Carolina	3	1	133	73	5	3	257	134
Temple	3	2	159	149	5	4	283	253
UTSA	2	2	147	121	4	4	272	242
Army	2	3	116	117	4	4	187	185
FAU	2	3	151	199	3	5	242	290
UAB	1	3	101	146	3	5	227	310
Rice	1	4	89	164	4	5	187	262
Tulsa	0	5	108	197	2	6	176	237
Charlotte	0	5	84	209	1	7	140	298

	Conference				All Games			
	W	L	P	PA	W	L	P	PA
Virginia	5	0	172	122	8	1	328	200
Georgia Tech	5	1	193	152	8	1	324	208
Pittsburgh	5	1	227	139	7	2	357	196
Louisville	4	1	151	118	7	1	270	166
SMU	4	1	138	85	6	3	277	191
Duke	4	1	192	129	5	3	283	225
Miami	2	2	111	79	6	2	258	125
Wake Forest	2	3	103	141	5	3	194	174
California	2	3	125	160	5	4	221	226
NC State	2	3	170	181	5	4	292	275
Virginia Tech	2	3	124	148	3	6	219	267
Clemson	2	4	190	159	3	5	227	192
Stanford	2	4	107	192	3	6	160	271
North Carolina	1	3	71	86	3	5	155	177
Florida St.	1	4	146	135	4	4	320	165
Syracuse	1	5	94	188	3	6	213	277
Boston College	0	5	85	185	1	8	224	300

	Conference				All Games			
	W	L	P	PA	W	L	P	PA
BYU	5	0	160	120	8	0	290	136
Texas Tech	5	1	218	84	8	1	392	119
Cincinnati	5	1	199	157	7	2	320	197
Houston	4	2	176	161	7	2	265	194
Utah	4	2	219	103	7	2	356	128
Arizona St.	4	2	130	155	6	3	222	213
TCU	3	2	152	142	6	2	277	201
Baylor	3	3	190	174	5	4	304	264
Kansas	3	3	174	172	5	4	282	228
Kansas St.	3	3	192	167	4	5	268	249
Arizona	2	3	162	133	5	3	273	159
Iowa St.	2	4	156	162	5	4	251	198
UCF	1	4	99	124	4	4	218	150
Colorado	1	5	110	217	3	6	198	271
West Virginia	1	5	123	230	3	6	209	274
Oklahoma St.	0	6	95	254	1	8	137	349

	Conference				All Games			
	W	L	P	PA	W	L	P	PA
Montana	5	0	198	129	9	0	370	210
Montana St.	5	0	228	51	7	2	323	147
UC Davis	4	1	176	117	6	2	267	245
Sacramento St.	3	2	189	156	5	4	303	240
E. Washington	3	2	95	153	4	5	196	283
N. Arizona	2	3	128	149	5	4	268	290
Idaho	2	3	157	149	4	5	252	229
Idaho St.	2	3	134	175	3	6	301	291
Cal Poly	1	4	120	160	3	6	243	282
N. Colorado	1	4	125	181	3	6	202	252
Weber St.	1	4	119	177	3	6	212	335
Portland St.	1	4	117	189	1	8	140	373

	Conference				All Games			
	W	L	P	PA	W	L	P	PA
Tennessee Tech	6	0	249	113	9	0	431	144
UT Martin	4	1	144	98	4	5	188	246
Gardner-Webb	3	2	127	121	5	4	249	290
L'wood (Mo.)	3	2	148	155	4	5	204	275
Chas. Southern	3	3	137	149	4	6	178	265
SE Missouri	2	3	120	124	3	6	219	287
E. Illinois	2	4	121	137	3	6	189	231
W. Illinois	1	4	115	174	2	7	207	350
Tennessee St.	0	5	56	146	2	7	128	256

	Conference				All Games			
	W	L	P	PA	W	L	P	PA
Indiana	6	0	262	74	9	0	418	97
Ohio St.	5	0	172	39	8	0	293	55
Michigan	5	1	143	111	7	2	253	155
Oregon	4	1	161	85	7	1	330	108
Iowa	4	1	156	75	6	2	250	105
Southern Cal	4	1	162	112	6	2	318	179
Minnesota	4	2	111	157	6	3	214	194



Virginia's Kam Robinson signals how many teams other than the Cavs are unbeaten in ACC play. [BEN MCKEOWN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

Washington	3	2	117	112	6	2	284	167
Northwestern	3	2	93	97	5	3	180	134
UCLA	3	2	120	140	3	5	163	248
Illinois	3	3	163	211	6	3	298	233
Nebraska	3	3	150	154	6	3	297	178
Maryland	1	4	105	143	4	4	208	176
Rutgers	1	5	125	222	4	5	264	280
Penn St.	0	5	120	157	3	5	252	174
Michigan St.	0	6	124	213	3	6	230	283
Wisconsin	0	5	27	143	2	6	100	191
Purdue	0	6	104	170	2	7	199	243

	Conference				All Games			
	W	L	P	PA	W	L	P	PA
Monmouth (N.J.)	5	0	205	102	8	1	380	249
Rhode Island	5	0	196	98	7	2	268	187
Villanova	5	1	215	133	6	2	245	202
Maine	4	1	161	107	5	4	215	206
William & Mary	4	2	177	154	5	4	248	239
New Hampshire	3	2	116	115	5	4	211	202
Elon	2	3	114	113	4	5	239	222
Stony Brook	2	3	133	139	4	5	236	239
Towson	2	3	141	119	4	5	240	223
Campbell	2	3	142	152	2	7	214	334
N.C. A&T	2	3	134	191	2	7	198	367
Bryant	0	5	110	183	2	7	201	263
Hampton	0	5	95	196	2	7	184	312
Albany (N.Y.)	0	5	58	195	1	8	127	300

Conference USA		Conference				All Games			
		W	L	P	PA	W	L	P	PA
Kennesaw St.		4	0	137	69	6	2	210	169
Jacksonville St.		4	0	125	97	5	3	239	207
W. Kentucky		5	1	164	138	7	2	271	205
Missouri St.		3	1	96	85	5	3	182	216

Liberty	3	1	132	99	4	4	193	181
Louisiana Tech	3	2	168	102	5	3	229	145
Delaware	2	3	148	168	4	4	234	257
FIU	1	3	88	117	3	5	178	239
UTEP	1	3	74	99	2	6	167	202
New Mexico St.	1	4	111	148	3	5	171	203
Middle Tenn.	0	4	85	101	1	7	151	232
Sam Houston St.	0	5	92	197	0	8	133	327

	Conference				All Games			
	W	L	P	PA	W	L	P	PA
Harvard	4	0	141	41	7	0	290	79
Penn	3	1	112	101	5	2	194	175
Yale	3	1	116	64	5	2	204	112
Dartmouth	2	2	100	86	5	2	192	147
Cornell	2	2	84	116	3	4	145	190
Princeton	2	2	88	86	3	4	175	194
Brown	0	4	73	139	3	4	176	179
Columbia	0	4	44	125	1	6	84	204

	Conference				All Games			
	W	L	P	PA	W	L	P	PA
Miami (Ohio)	4	0	115	68	5	3	208	171
Buffalo	4	1	134	106	5	4	223	176
W. Michigan	4	1	118	63	5	4	201	171
Ohio	3	1	125	82	5	3	234	198
Cent. Michigan	2	3	132	84	5	4	217	216
Toledo	2	2	126	55	4	4	254	128
Ball St.	2	2	69	105	3	5	131	238
Kent St.	2	2	104	103	3	5	149	292
Akron	2	3	90	145	3	6	169	261
N. Illinois	1	3	66	96	2	6	107	177
Bowling Green	1	4	78	137	3	6	164	231
E. Michigan	1	4	110	137	2	7	217	296

	Conference				All Games			
	W	L	P	PA	W	L	P	PA
Delaware St.	2	0	62	46	6	3	330	244
S.C. State	2	0	87	50	6	3	277	260
N.C. Central	1	1	61	49	6	3	314	232
Howard	1	1	47	62	4	5	169	212
Morgan St.	0	2	57	69	3	6	219	244
Norfolk St.	0	2	40	78	1	8	180	317

Missouri Valley Conference								
	W	L	PF	PA	W	L	PF	PA
N. Dakota St.	6	0	243	90	9	0	381	107
North Dakota	4	1	175	86	6	3	341	175
South Dakota	4	2	137	145	6	4	223	258
S. Dakota St.	3	2	120	109	7	2	258	164
Illinois St.	3	2	149	134	6	3	273	248
S. Illinois	3	2	149	134	6	3	311	212
Youngstown St.	2	3	168	160	5	4	303	261
Indiana St.	1	4	89	170	3	6	188	344
N. Iowa	0	5	57	145	2	7	128	224
Murray St.	0	5	94	208	0	9	166	380

COLUMN

Don't look now: OU, Texas (almost) back

By Doug Segrest
For GameDay

Oklahoma and Texas are back, Hugh Freeze's golf schedule just freed up, and folks are griping about Josh Heupel less than a year after he got Tennessee to the playoffs for the first time.

It just means more, right?

Welcome to the SEC where the chaos continues unabated. With a month to go, things are starting to come into fuzzier focus. Four league teams look to be in great shape after they unveiled the first CFP rankings Tuesday.

But given everything that's happened, don't count on the status quo staying the same. Here's a look at the SEC's CFP prospects:

No. 3 Texas A&M (8-0, 5-0 SEC)

If the season ended today: The Aggies would lock in a top-3 seed and a first-round CFP bye.

What's standing in the way: The finish isn't a cakewalk. Road games at No. 19 Missouri and No. 13 Texas await. One loss wouldn't hurt, but two could change everything.

The skinny: Lock. Texas A&M has been too consistent to fall apart.

No. 4 Alabama (7-1, 5-0)

If the season ended today: Bama would get a top-4 seed and first-round bye.

What's standing in the way: One circa-2024 performance. The Tide gets its two biggest games (LSU and Oklahoma) at home before ending the season on The Plains, where strange things always happen.

The skinny: If the Tide takes care of business, a close loss at Auburn would probably be survivable and make the Tide a first-round CFP host.

No. 5 Georgia (7-1, 5-1)

If the season ended today: Georgia would be a first-round host.

What's standing in the way: The Dawgs get No. 13 Texas and No. 16 Georgia Tech at home to close the regular season — two programs playing for their playoff life.

The skinny: Georgia has a Top 5 win over Ole Miss. But a loss down the stretch could leave the Bulldogs the odd team out.

No. 7 Ole Miss (8-1, 5-1)

If the season ended today: Ole Miss



Texas A&M receiver KC Concepcion and the Aggies are third in the CFP rankings, the first of the season, and are in position for a high playoff seed.

[MICHAEL WOODS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

would be a first-round host.

What's standing in the way: Start with LSU and Florida — not in the field, but in the rumor mill. Both want Lane Kiffin bolting to restore their programs. The guess here is that he remains in Oxford, but the attention has proven distracting before.

The skinny: Even with a loss to Florida or Mississippi State, Ole Miss should survive.

Still need help

Texas (7-2, 4-1): With one Top 10 foe (Vandy) dispatched, the Longhorns still have the best opportunity to join the field. Georgia and Texas A&M are must-wins now, but this team seems to thrive

under pressure.

Oklahoma (7-2, 3-2): Must win out. The trip to Tuscaloosa is OU's biggest game of the year.

Vanderbilt (7-2, 3-2): Ditto, for consideration. But Oklahoma's win at Tennessee really hurt Vandy's last remaining springboard.

Missouri (6-2, 2-2): Fate is a highway dead ahead for the Tigers with dates against No. 3 Texas A&M and No. 11 Oklahoma. A longshot, but if Mizzou wins out, it is in.

Looking ahead

• **Texas A&M at Missouri (2:30 p.m. on ABC):** Like we said, don't count out Eli Drinkwitz's team just yet. Keep this

in mind: before bringing the curtain down on the Brian Kelly era, the Aggies barely escaped with a three-point win at Arkansas.

• **Auburn at Vanderbilt (3 p.m. on SEC Network):** Will the Tigers respond to D.J. Durkin the way the defense has and end Vandy's storybook season?

• **LSU at Alabama (6 p.m. on ABC):** — So much talent, so little direction. How will the Tigers bounce back? Historically, LSU has had more luck against the Tide at Bryant-Denny Stadium than at home.

Doug Segrest, who covered college football for 28 years for numerous newspapers in Alabama and Tennessee, is a freelance columnist.



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This spaceage material encases the interior steel frame and sinuous springs, allowing for body-friendly curvatures to be covered with glove-fitted upholstery. This guarantees absolute comfort and durability.



360 swivel on MANUAL
- 180 on MOTORIZED



Integrated footstool



Adjustable head and
neck support



Gliding / rocking function



Effortless reclining



3 sizes



WARRANTY

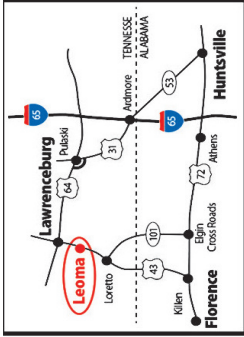
Ten years on molded foam cushions
and steel frames.
Five years on mechanisms.
Two years on motor battery-parts
plus leather and fabric covers.

This ad turned sideways per advertiser's request



Story & Lee
Since 1970
Furniture & Bedding

Store Hours:
Monday thru
Saturday
9 A.M. 'til 6 P.M.



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