

GAMEDAY

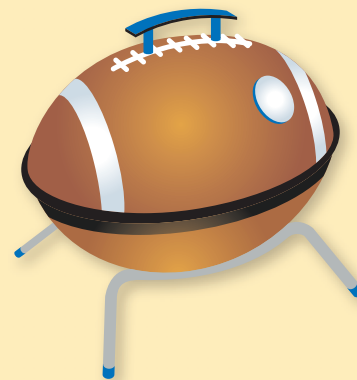


TIME TO CLIMB

Tide takes aim at Hilltoppers, Tigers to host Alabama A&M in openers

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TAILGATE of the week RECIPE



Tuna Salad Stuffed Tomatoes

INGREDIENTS

6 large tomatoes
2 (6.4 oz.) pkgs tuna
1/2 cup chopped pitted
green olives
1 tablespoon olive juice

2 hard cooked eggs, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh parsley
1/2 cup mayonnaise or
Miracle Whip



DIRECTIONS:

Remove and reserve tops from tomatoes. Using spoon, hollow out tomatoes, leaving 3/4 inch of tomato flesh and reserving 1 cup, chopped pulp for salad and 1/3 cup of juices for dressing. Drain tuna, fluff with fork. Add chopped tomatoes, juice, olives, eggs, parsley, pepper to taste, and mix with mayonnaise. Spoon 3/4 cup of tuna salad into each tomato shell, add tops and parsley leaves. Serves 6.

**This week's recipe submitted
by Carolyn Brown,
Muscle Shoals, 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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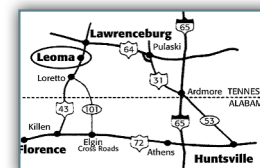
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THE LINE

(as of Tuesday)			
Thursday			
FAVORITE	TODAY	O/U	UNDERDOG
at RUTGERS	36½	49½	Howard
at WAKE FOREST	34½	50½	NC A&T
at NC STATE	33½	60½	Western Carolina
at ARKANSAS	49½	57½	UAPB
at UAB	26½	55½	Alcorn State
at JACKSONVILLE ST.	2½	54½	Coastal Carolina
at MISSOURI	47½	57½	Murray State
North Carolina	1½	49½	at MINNESOTA
at COLORADO	9½	59½	North Dakota State
at KANSAS	44½	58½	Lindenwood
at ILLINOIS	27½	44½	Eastern Illinois
at UTAH	38½	52½	Southern Utah
Friday			
at OKLAHOMA	42½	59½	Temple
at MICHIGAN STATE	13½	45½	Florida Atlantic
at DUKE	23½	49½	Elon
at WISCONSIN	23½	55½	Western Michigan
TCU	9½	59½	at STANFORD
Saturday			
at PITTSBURGH	24½	55½	Kent State
at NAVY	33½	47½	Bucknell
Penn State	8½	51½	at WEST VIRGINIA
at GEORGIA	13½	48½	Clemson
Virginia Tech	13½	48½	at VANDERBILT
at LOUISVILLE	36½	53½	Austin Peay
at IOWA	22½	40½	Illinois State
at MARYLAND	20½	44½	UConn
at PURDUE	33½	48½	Indiana State
at TENNESSEE	38½	56½	Chattanooga
at OKLAHOMA STATE	9½	54½	South Dakota State
at CINCINNATI	31½	54½	Towson
at WASH. STATE	28½	60½	Portland State
at TEXAS	31½	59½	Colorado State
Miami (Fla.)	2½	54½	at FLORIDA
at NEBRASKA	27½	48½	UTEP
at OHIO STATE	48½	58½	Akron
at AIR FORCE	28½	47½	Merrimack
at NORTHWESTERN	2½	39½	Miami (Ohio)
at SYRACUSE	17½	47½	Ohio
at IOWA STATE	28½	51½	North Dakota
at INDIANA	21½	50½	Florida International
at SOUTH CAROLINA	20½	52½	Old Dominion
at SOUTH ALABAMA	5½	64½	North Texas
at CAL	20½	53½	UC Davis
at MISS. STATE	24½	60½	Eastern Kentucky
at VIRGINIA	19½	50½	Richmond
at OREGON STATE	27½	54½	Idaho State
at MIDDLE TENN.	23½	52½	Tennessee Tech
at OLE MISS	42½	60½	Furman
at MEMPHIS	38½	61½	North Alabama
at BAYLOR	26½	55½	Tarleton State
at RICE	9½	49½	Sam Houston
at KANSAS STATE	37½	56½	UT Martin
at ARKANSAS STATE	10½	55½	Central Arkansas
at HOUSTON	2½	54½	UNLV
at SOUTH FLORIDA	40½	60½	Bethune-Cookman
at TROY	9½	45½	Nevada
at ALABAMA	31½	59½	Western Kentucky
at TEXAS A&M	2½	46½	Notre Dame
at MICHIGAN	21½	45½	Fresno State
at TEXAS TECH	32½	58½	Abilene Christian
at OREGON	44½	62½	Idaho
at AUBURN	46½	56½	Alabama A&M
UCLA	14½	54½	at HAWAII
at KENTUCKY	27½	49½	Southern Miss
at TEXAS STATE	32½	61½	Lamar
at GEORGIA TECH	21½	56½	Georgia State
at BYU	14½	50½	Southern Illinois
at ARIZONA STATE	6½	48½	Wyoming
at ARIZONA	31½	58½	New Mexico
at WASHINGTON	26½	52½	Weber State
Sunday			
LSU	4½	64½	at USC
Monday			
at FLORIDA ST.	15½	50½	Boston College

GAMES ON TV

Thursday
Howard at Rutgers, 5 p.m., BTN
UAPB at Arkansas, 6:30 p.m., ESPNU
Coastal Carolina at Jacksonville State, 7 p.m., CBSSN
Murray State at Missouri, 7 p.m., SEC Network
North Carolina at Minnesota, 7 p.m., FOX
North Dakota State at Colorado, 7 p.m., ESPN
Eastern Illinois at Illinois, 8 p.m., BTN
Sacramento State at San Jose State, 9 p.m., truTV
Friday
Lehigh at Army, 5 p.m., CBSSN
Florida Atlantic at Michigan State, 6 p.m., BTN
Temple at Oklahoma, 6 p.m., ESPN
Western Michigan at Wisconsin, 8 p.m., FS1
TCU at Stanford, 9:30 p.m., ESPN
Saturday
Bucknell at Navy, 11 a.m., CBSSN
Clemson vs. Georgia, 11 a.m., ABC
Illinois State at Iowa, 11 a.m., BTN
Indiana State at Purdue, 11 a.m., BTN
Kent State at Pittsburgh, 11 a.m., ESPN
Penn State at West Virginia, 11 a.m., FOX
UConn at Maryland, 11 a.m., FS1
Virginia Tech at Vanderbilt, 11 a.m., ESPN
Chattanooga at Tennessee, 11:45 a.m., SEC Network
Akron at Ohio State, 2:30 p.m., CBS
Colorado State at Texas, 2:30 p.m., ESPN
FIU at Indiana, 2:30 p.m., BTN
Merrimack at Air Force, 2:30 p.m., CBSSN
Miami at Florida, 2:30 p.m., ABC
Miami (Ohio) at Northwestern, 2:30 p.m., BTN
North Dakota at Iowa State, 2:30 p.m., FS1
UTEP at Nebraska, 2:30 p.m., FOX
Boise State at Georgia Southern, 3 p.m., ESPN

TOP 25 SCHEDULE

Thursday
No. 11 Missouri (0-0) vs. Murray St. (0-0), 7 p.m.
No. 12 Utah (0-0) vs. S. Utah (0-0), 8 p.m.
No. 22 Kansas (0-0) vs. Lindenwood (Mo.) (0-0), 7 p.m.
No. 24 NC State (0-0) vs. W. Carolina (0-0), 6 p.m.
Friday
No. 16 Oklahoma (0-0) vs. Temple (0-0), 6 p.m.
Saturday
No. 1 Georgia (0-0) vs. No. 14 Clemson (0-0), at Atlanta, 11 a.m.
No. 2 Ohio St. (0-0) vs. Akron (0-0), 2:30 p.m.
No. 3 Oregon (0-0) vs. Idaho (0-0), 6:30 p.m.



Sebastian the Ibis and the Miami Hurricanes hope to have a grand time against the Florida Gators on ABC on Saturday afternoon. [WILFREDO LEE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

Old Dominion at South Carolina, 3:15 p.m., SEC Network	New Mexico at Arizona, 9:30 p.m., ESPN	
UNLV at Houston, 6 p.m., FS1	Wyoming at Arizona State, 9:30 p.m., FS1	
Western Kentucky at Alabama, 6 p.m., ESPN	Weber State at Washington, 10 p.m., BTN	
Fresno State at Michigan, 6:30 p.m., NBC	<th>Sunday</th>	Sunday
Idaho at Oregon, 6:30 p.m., BTN	Alabama State at NC Central, 2 p.m., ESPN	
Notre Dame at Texas A&M, 6:30 p.m., ABC	Johnson C. Smith vs. Tuskegee, 6 p.m., ESPN	
UCLA at Hawaii, 6:30 p.m., CBS	LSU vs. USC (Las Vegas), 6:30 p.m., ABC	
Southern Miss at Kentucky, 6:45 p.m., SEC Network	<th>Monday</th>	Monday
Georgia State at Georgia Tech, 7 p.m., ACC Network	Boston College at Florida State, 6:30 p.m., ESPN	
James Madison at Charlotte, 7 p.m., ESPN		

No. 4 Texas (0-0) vs. Colorado St. (0-0), 2:30 p.m.
No. 5 Alabama (0-0) vs. Western Kentucky (0-0), 6 p.m.
No. 6 Mississippi (0-0) vs. Furman (0-0), 6 p.m.
No. 7 Notre Dame (0-0) at No. 20 Texas A&M (0-0), 6:30 p.m.
No. 8 Penn St. (0-0) at West Virginia (0-0), 11 a.m.
No. 9 Michigan (0-0) vs. Fresno St. (0-0), 6:30 p.m.
No. 15 Tennessee (0-0) vs. Chattanooga (0-0), 11:45 a.m.

No. 17 Oklahoma St. (0-0) vs. S. Dakota St. (0-0), 1 p.m.	
No. 18 Kansas St. (0-0) vs. UT Martin (0-0), 6 p.m.	
No. 19 Miami (0-0) at Florida (0-0), 2:30 p.m.	
No. 21 Arizona (0-0) vs. New Mexico (0-0), 9:30 p.m.	
No. 25 Iowa (0-0) vs. Illinois St. (0-0), 11 a.m.	
<th>Sunday</th>	Sunday
No. 13 LSU (0-0) vs. No. 23 Southern Cal (0-0), at Las Vegas, 6:30 p.m.	
<th>Monday</th>	Monday
No. 10 Florida St. (0-1) vs. Boston College (0-0), 6:30 p.m.	

DeBoer steps out from Saban's shadow

By John Zenor

The Associated Press

TUSCALOOSA — Kalen DeBoer's plane hadn't even landed in Tuscaloosa before he reached out to Alabama's most important recruit.

It was a Friday night in January after DeBoer's whirlwind courtship to become the successor to Nick Saban, a seven-time national champion and relentless recruiter. DeBoer was mid-air when he called coveted wide receiver Ryan Williams, who had de-committed from the Crimson Tide after Saban's retirement.

Twelve days after that call, Williams re-committed to Alabama, where he figures to make an immediate impact as a freshman.

It didn't hurt that Jeff Kelly and Williams — his star player, a top-five prospect nationally — were watching together as DeBoer's high-powered Washington offense outlasted Texas in the College Football Playoff when two Huskies' receivers topped 120 yards.

"I really thought Ryan would go elsewhere," recalled Kelly, Williams' coach at Saraland. "He took a couple of official visits and then he went up and spent the weekend (in Tuscaloosa). He really came back with just a great confidence and a feel for a guy that he could go in and play for."

"When he got back from that visit, I think he knew that was the place for him. It felt like home."

Different but effective

Saban was businesslike and a larger-than-life figure when he walked into high schools and recruits' living rooms, drawing attention and top prospects like a magnet.

DeBoer is more low-key, affable and quietly confident. He shows no signs of feeling the pressure that comes with replacing a coach who won seven national championships (including one at LSU) with deep, talented teams year in, year out.

"He's just one of the guys. He is pleasant," Thompson High coach Mark Freeman said of DeBoer. "Coach has a lot on him. I think he does a great job of hiding his stress points and some of the difficulties he has with the job. He hides it."

Saban built his program on the recruiting trail, piling up blue-chip prospects



Kalen DeBoer will see how following Nick Saban at Alabama goes. [VASHA HUNT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

and future high NFL draft picks from Julio Jones to Tua Tagovailoa to Bryce Young, the Tide's fourth Heisman Trophy winner under Saban and ever.

A fiercely intense and sometimes scowling force on the sidelines, Saban was as effective as any coach in living rooms and high schools throughout the Southeast and beyond.

"When coach Saban shows up at your campus, it's kind of like what I would imagine it was back in the day when Elvis would show up," Kelly said. "He had such a presence and a respect and a following."

DeBoer is still building that in Bama country.

Replacing a legend

The question comes so frequently, it would have undoubtedly frustrated



Kalen DeBoer is following in Nick Saban's footsteps as Alabama's coach and plans to keep the Crimson Tide a championship contender. [JEFFREY MCWHORTER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

SEE DEBOER, G5

DEBOER

From Page G4

Saban: What's it like to be the man who replaces The Man?

Every single time, DeBoer takes it in stride like it's the first time he's heard it.

"I totally get it. I understand there's only one Coach Saban," DeBoer said at SEC media days in July. "There will only ever be one Coach Saban. This program is special, and I guess I just take it as a great honor to be the one that gets to do everything we can to carry on the tradition."

Maybe it's his nature to not be phased by such things. A lesson from his coach at Sioux Falls in South Dakota, Bob Young, also hit home. DeBoer said Young told him he started as a young high school coach trying to be like his idol Vince Lombardi. He found "you just have to be who you are" and find your own path in leading a team, the Alabama coach said.

"Everyone's different, right? We all have our ways of leading a team," DeBoer said, who noted there are certain "non-negotiables" like discipline and commitment.

"I think a lot of those things are very similar," DeBoer said. "They may just be done in different ways. Obviously there's a recipe for success with what Coach Saban did that was outstanding, the best to probably ever do it. I just know there's different ways to do things and it can all be done right, it can all be effective."

Quiet confidence

Ron McKeevery remembers being an off-the-field staffer at Eastern Michigan sharing a two-bedroom house with then-offensive coordinator DeBoer — once an on-field opponent as players — and Ryan Grubbs.

Two bedrooms. Three residents. The higher-ranking DeBoer claimed the living room, where he wrapped himself in a blanket and slept on the floor.

"He's one of those guys that will do stuff nine times before he asks you to do it even once," said McKeevery, who remains with DeBoer as his special assistant. "He's going to be the hardest-working guy in the room. He grew up on a farm in South Dakota, so he's been a model of the intensity and hard work that's necessary to win at a high level. But he balances that with the compassion and the humility."

McKeevery says DeBoer is "100% still the same guy" who happily yielded the bedrooms to his colleagues.

"That's probably the biggest thing about him, why he's the perfect guy for



Alabama's Kalen DeBoer is "100% still the same guy" he was before becoming a major college coach, according to longtime friends. [VASHA HUNT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

the job," McKeevery said. "He's got the right balance of humility and reverence for a place like Alabama mixed with a quiet confidence in his abilities and his knowledge of the game."

"The bright lights of SEC football are not going to be too big for him. But he's gonna be the same guy that I played against."

Building a foundation

So far, DeBoer has built a 2025 recruiting class rated No. 2 nationally, according to the 247Sports composite rankings.

His biggest coups have come outside the state, including landing Texas quarterback Keelon Russell. Rival Auburn, meanwhile, has pulled in pledges from eight of the state's top-10 2025 recruits.

Still, DeBoer did hit the ground running. Saraland's Kelly figures the first call from Alabama's new coach "was probably on his plane flight" to Tuscaloosa.

Courtney Morgan, DeBoer's general manager, said the coach hit every speaking engagement he could after he arrived. They quickly went to the state's four biggest cities — Montgomery, Mobile, Huntsville and Birmingham — and hosted socials on recruiting trips to meet as many coaches as possible.

DeBoer can't be Saban and doesn't try in recruiting or otherwise. "That's like Phil Jackson walking in a house," Morgan said of Saban.

But unlike some of his earlier coaching stops, DeBoer now runs a program

where he can recruit nationally. Combine that work ethic with the Bama logo and that, Morgan says, "is when the magic happens."

"I think with Coach DeBoer, that's actually who he is as a person," said Morgan, pointing to his boss's sincerity. "That's the No. 1 characteristic of him that jumps out for everyone who meets him is how friendly and down to earth he is."

Another coach who made a similar long-distance move, Boise State's Bryan Harsin, struggled to land in-state recruits at Auburn. Freeman said he has already met DeBoer three times, three more than Harsin.

When Western Kentucky visits No. 5 Alabama on Saturday, the on-field comparisons to Saban will also begin, though DeBoer clearly is already carving out his own niche, his own approach.

"Coach Saban is an iconic hero, particularly in our state. And I think coach DeBoer will grow into that in some ways," said Freeman, who is longtime friends with Tide assistant and Saban holdover Freddie Roach. "There's never been another Coach (Bear) Bryant, in my opinion."

"I don't think that there will be another Coach Saban down there, but that doesn't mean Coach DeBoer won't have his place the same way. Just different styles."

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Western Kentucky at Alabama

When: 6 p.m. Saturday

TV/radio: ESPN/FM-93.9, AM-920

The series: Alabama leads 3-0.

Four-down territory

1. Poll position: Alabama's No. 5 ranking in the preseason Associated Press poll marks the 262nd consecutive week the Crimson Tide has been ranked. It's the longest active streak in college football. The 262 weeks more than doubles second-place Georgia with the Bulldogs appearing in the poll for 115 consecutive weeks. Alabama's 262 straight weeks tops the Crimson Tide's previous program-long streak of 105 weeks under head coach Gene Stallings in the mid-1990s.

2. Leaders of the pack: The Crimson Tide's 2024 team captains have already been announced. As selected by their teammates, Tyler Booker (OL), Deontae Lawson (LB), Jalen Milroe (QB) and Malachi Moore (DB) were each named team captains. It's the second year in a row for Milroe and Moore, who were voted permanent team captains at the end of the 2023 regular season.

3. Opening with a bang: The Crimson Tide owns an 83-11-2 all-time record across 96 total home openers. Alabama is riding a 22-game winning streak, the fourth longest opening day winning streak of the Associated Press poll Era. The Tide's streak trails only Ohio State (24, 2000-present), Florida (27, 1990-2016) and Nebraska (29, 1986-2004).

4. Kicked off: The Crimson Tide snagged Miami of Ohio kicker Graham Nicholson, the 2023 Lou Groza Award winner, from the transfer portal to fill the void left by Will Reichard's departure. Former Miami coach Chuck Martin suggested Alabama "stole" Nicholson from the Warhawks. Alabama coach Kalen DeBoer responded by saying, "I don't know anything about that comment. He entered into the portal, and we reached out to him. So, that's how it goes, right?"

Key matchup

Alabama QB Jalen Milroe vs. WKU QB TJ Finley

Milroe enters his second season as a starter but with a new head coach. There's high expectations for the junior, who passed for 2,834 yards, 23 TDs last season. The Tide will see a familiar face Saturday in Finley, a former Auburn



Alabama's Jam Miller will try to carry the load at running back as a sophomore. [VASHA HUNT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

quarterback (2022) who takes over for the Hilltoppers. Finley played at Texas State in 2023 (3,439 yards, 24 TDs).

Player of the week

Jam Miller, RB

The junior has patiently waited for his time to carry the load in the backfield. This is his chance to prove he can be the go-to player this season. He ran for 201 yards on 41 carries last season and had 223 yards on 33 carries as a freshman.

By the numbers

0: For the first time in Alabama

history a player will have the jersey number 0. Linebacker Deontae Lawson switched from No. 32 to 0 over the summer.

10: Alabama gained 400-plus yards in six games last season. Led by Kalen DeBoer, Washington had 400-plus yards in 10 games, including five games of over 500 yards.

35: Jalen Milroe accounted for 35 touchdowns last season, including 10 against non-conference opponents.

38: Alabama's average point total in three games with WKU is 38. The Hilltoppers' average point total is 6, which includes a shutout.

Prediction

Alabama 42, WKU 10

The Kalen DeBoer era is under way. Don't count on seeing anything special on offense. There will be more to reveal in Week 3. Yes, that's a slight against the Hilltoppers, but that's what happens when you're a 30-point underdog. The big questions are what kind of defense will the Crimson Tide put on the field. Can the pass rush find the next Will Anderson or Dallas Turner? Will the defensive backs take a step in the right direction?

— Edwin Stanton

Alabama A&M at Auburn

When: 6:30 p.m. Saturday
TV/radio: SEC+/ESPN+/FM-94.9
The series: Auburn leads 2-0.

Four-down territory

1. In the hunt: Jarquez Hunter will be one of the top running backs in the SEC and the nation. He's increased his production since his freshman season, culminating in his 909-yard performance last year. The bar has been raised for 2024. He's rushed for 100-plus yards eight times and Alabama A&M could be the right opponent for him to get No. 9.

2. The unknown: It shouldn't make much of a difference, considering Auburn is a 46-point favorite, but the Tigers aren't really sure which quarterback they will see Saturday. The Bulldogs return starter Xavier Lankford but they picked up transfers in Aveon Smith from Miami of Ohio and Cornelious Brown IV from Georgia State. "They have a quarterback battle going on there. We can't find out exactly what the plan is there," Auburn coach Hugh Freeze said.

3. Line change: The Auburn depth chart has Percy Lewis and Tyler Johnson at left tackle with Dillon Wade and Bradyn Joiner at left guard. That means nothing. Freeze said all four have been rotating on the left side of the line in the preseason and the positions aren't settled, and probably won't be after Saturday. "It will be a few games in before we settle in to exactly what it looks like. The film will be the ultimate decider," Freeze said.

4. Fresh look: Auburn's wide receiving corps might be young, but the expectations are high. Cam Coleman leads a quartet of first-year players, which also includes Bryce Cain, Malcolm Simmons and Perry Thompson. "It's going to be a pretty free rotation," Freeze said of the entire receiving corps. "I want to keep them fresh. They are just going to have to go out there and do it."

Key matchup

AU RB Jarquez Hunter vs. A&M RB Donovan Eaglin

Everyone knows what Hunter brings to the offense. The senior will share carries with Damari Alston, but Hunter will be the bell cow (2,172 career yards). A&M looks for big things from Eaglin, who led the Bulldogs with 765 yards and seven TDs last year.



Auburn running back Jarquez Hunter looks to lead more touchdown celebrations this season. [BUTCH DILL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

Player of the week

Payton Thorne, QB

The 2024 campaign for Thorne should not resemble last year's, which saw the Michigan State transfer struggle. He's got an abundance of riches at wideout to throw to this season, including freshman Cam Coleman, Georgia State transfer Robert Lewis and Penn State transfer KeAndre Lambert-Smith.

By the numbers

4: The Tigers are 4-0 all-time against current SWAC members with two wins

against Alabama A&M and Alabama State.

19: Freshman All-American Alex McPherson set an Auburn record with his current string of 19 consecutive field goals made, breaking Daniel Carlson's previous mark (16).

101: Auburn is 101-27-2 in season openers. The Tigers have won 15 of their past 17 openers since 2006.

191: Auburn continues the longest FBS streak of games (191) without having a punt blocked. Auburn last had a punt blocked vs. Mississippi State in 2009.

Prediction

Auburn 52, Alabama A&M 10

The Tigers have something to prove this season and there's no better way to do that than with a thrashing of the Bulldogs in the opener. It will ignite the offense, which needs some motivation to get the season started, and it will help the defense, too. No one is saying Auburn's going to run the table this season, but there's reason to feel optimistic.

— Edwin Stanton

Better supporting casts boosts Thorne, AU

By John Zenor

The Associated Press

AUBURN — The Auburn Tigers are banking on a better season from quarterback Payton Thorne, and they've certainly surrounded him with more talented playmakers.

Thorne's pedestrian passing numbers, lack of consistent targets and sometimes poor pass protection helped send the Tigers to their third straight losing record last season. The Michigan State transfer now has a full year under his belt after arriving last summer.

He also has an array of receivers that should make it easier to improve on a passing offense that was among the nation's least productive last season.

The supporting cast matters for any quarterback. Thorne likes the group Auburn has assembled around him for this season, which begins Saturday against Alabama A&M.

"People say it's the ultimate team game, and it really is," he said. "It's tough. You've seen great quarterbacks in the NFL, if stuff starts to break down around them, they're still good. But they're not the same as they are when they have all their pieces."

"It's definitely a tough situation sometimes, and you just have to deal with what you've got at times."

That's not to say Thorne's own play doesn't need significant improvement. He passed for 1,755 yards and 16 touchdowns against 10 interceptions last season and was thoroughly shut down in the bowl game.

Auburn coach Hugh Freeze declared that Thorne held the "pole position" for the starting job after spring practice, but he stopped short of declaring the job his over Hank Brown and Holden Geriner. Brown appears to be Thorne's backup going into the season.

Freeze brought in an impressive collection of receivers to replace a group that didn't have a wideout reach 350 yards last season. Tight end Rivaldo Fairweather, the only key target to return, led the team with 38 catches for 394 yards.

Auburn added three transfers and four freshman receivers. Transfers KeAndre Lambert-Smith (Penn State) and Robert Lewis (Georgia State) and five-star freshman Cam Coleman appear to be likely starters right away.



Auburn quarterback Payton Thorne, after struggling last season, is optimistic and says "just about everything" is different this year. [VASHA HUNT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

"I feel really good with where we're at right now," Thorne said. "We still have young guys. We still have four freshmen who are going to potentially play for us. That's not exactly one, common. And two, at the end of the day they're still young. You can't go out there and expect them to be these veteran receivers who know everything."

"There's still going to be some times where you're like, what the heck? But you remind yourself this kid was playing high school ball last year."

With all those new targets, the Tigers are hoping Thorne can at least come

closer to his numbers at Michigan State. He passed for 6,494 yards in 29 games, going 16-10 as a starter for the Spartans.

He is no longer taking a crash course in Freeze's offense.

"We're totally different than last year," Freeze said. "From the spring until now, his understanding of what the expectations are from him have grown leaps and bounds. He does some things out there right now that I'm really, really proud of."

But Thorne finished last season with two of his worst performances. He was a

combined 18-of-43 passing for 175 yards and was intercepted three times in season-ending losses to Alabama and in the Music City Bowl to Maryland.

But now, Thorne said, "just about everything" is different this season, including new offensive coordinator Derrick Nix and most of the players he'll be passing to.

"Obviously there's more talent out there as well," Thorne said. "So it's been really fun working these past few months. And obviously right now is the team that we have. And so this is who we're going with."

UNA at Memphis

When: 6 p.m. Saturday

TV/radio: ESPN+/FM-98.3, FM-103.5

Records: UNA (0-1), Memphis (0-0)

The series: Memphis leads 1-0.

Four-down territory

1. Singing the blues? This is the second meeting between the programs in three seasons. And the first one was either hard to forget or easy depending on your way of thinking. Memphis won 59-0 in the 2022 season finale. UNA managed more punting yards (283) than offensive yards (124 on 49 plays). The Lions did not make it past midfield. Perhaps this game will be a better showing?

2. Safety is key: Edwin White-Schultz was named the United Athletic Conference's preseason defensive player of the year. The safety led UNA with 87 tackles last season. He also recorded a pair of sacks. But White-Schultz did not play in the Lions' season-opening loss last week to Southeast Missouri. He was serving an academic suspension and there's no timetable for when he'll return.

3. Conference favorites: The College Football Playoff expanded to 12 teams and Memphis is among the top choices to represent the Group of Five. It helps the Tigers are also favored to win the American Athletic Conference. They were the preseason pick over UTSA and Tulane. Memphis is coming off its fifth 10-win season (1938, 2014, 2017 and 2019) and is returning the majority of its production, including at quarterback, receiver and linebacker.

4. Another historic site: UNA is getting a chance to see some history in the early part of its schedule. Liberty Stadium (formerly known as the Liberty Bowl) will be the second of three consecutive places the Lions will play in that have at least crossed the midcentury mark. Liberty Stadium was built in 1965. Cramton Bowl, the site of UNA's season opener, opened in 1922. And then, of course, there is Braly Stadium for Game 3. That place has been up and running — well, that might be a loose term — since 1949.

Key matchup

Memphis QB Seth Henigan vs. UNA secondary

Why not go with another QB? After all, Henigan will likely be the best signal caller the Lions will see this season. Henigan had a modest day against UNA



Jackson Bratton, second from left, and UNA's defense will see how it will fare against an FBS opponent this week at Memphis. [DAN BUSEY/TIMESDAILY]

in 2022 — 14-of-24 passing or 218 yards and a touchdown — but he is considered one of the top non-Power Five quarterbacks. Last season, he threw for 3,880 yards and 32 touchdowns compared to just nine interceptions. He also had his top two receivers back. Yeah ...

Player of the week

UNA's offensive line

Yes, the entire starting five. Why, might you ask? Well, the stats mentioned in the first of the four-down territory probably says enough. But

then again, perhaps it will be like last season against Florida State when UNA went up 13-0.

By the numbers

\$325,000: The amount of money UNA is receiving from Memphis to play this game. It is the same amount the Lions received from the 2022 edition.

10-0: Memphis' record against FCS teams since 2013, which includes that UNA season finale in 2022.

2-7: UNA's all-time record against FBS opponents. The last win was in 1997. So,

you're say there's a chance?

9: Memphis is one of nine FBS teams with 10 or more consecutive bowl appearances. Alabama, Georgia, Clemson, Ohio State, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Wisconsin and Iowa are the others.

Prediction

Memphis 56, UNA 10

It's a money game. But maybe the Lions will surprise some people.

— David Glovach

Chattanooga at Tennessee

When: 11:45 a.m. Saturday

TV/radio: SEC/FM-97.9/AM-1340

The series: Tennessee leads 38-2-2.

Four-down territory

1. Next man up: The Vols led the SEC with 202.6 yards per game and was led by All-SEC running back Jaylen Wright. The bad news is Wright is gone. That leaves the door open for Dylan Sampson to take over the running game. It was tough to shine with Wright ahead of him, but Sampson still rushed for 604 yards on 106 carries with seven touchdowns. He's also an option as a receiver out of the backfield, catching 17 passes for 175 yards and a score last year.

2. Hold the line: Tennessee's offensive line is coming off back-to-back seasons of being a semifinalist for the Joe Moore Award. Four of the five starters from last year return, headlined by preseason All-American center Cooper Mays. He's joined by tackle John Campbell Jr., right guard Javontez Spraggins. Andrej Karic and Jackson Lampley started at guard. Karic is returning from injury and missed the final eight games of the season.

3. First things first: Something to watch on Saturday is first-quarter scoring. Tennessee outscored opponents 110-46 in 2023. The Vols have outscored opponents 441-169 in the first quarter under Josh Heupel. The Vols have scored at least one touchdown in the first quarter in 33 of 39 games under Heupel with the 2022 season games against Florida and Georgia and the 2023 season games vs. Austin Peay, Missouri and Iowa being the only exceptions.

4. New look: The Vols will be wearing a different uniform to start the season. The home grey jersey will have Tennessee in orange across the chest. For the first time in school history, the Tennessee Tri-Star state emblem will be on the uniform. The pants also will have the Tennessee state flag white stripe. The helmets feature the orange Power T and a mountain design in shades of grey that pays tribute to Tennessee's famous Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The center helmet stripe is orange and adjoined with the Tennessee state flag white stripe.

Key matchup

Tennessee WR Squirrel White vs. UTC WR Javin Whatley

White is the leading receiver for the



Center Cooper Mays, a preseason All-American, is one of four returning starters on Tennessee's offensive line. [WADE PAYNE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

Vols with 67 catches for 803 yards. He was fifth in the SEC in catches and eighth in receiving yards. Whatley is a preseason All-American who caught 55 passes for 907 yards with nine touchdowns last season for the Mocs.

Player of the week

Nico Iamaleava, QB

He's making his second career start for the Vols, but the good news is his first start was a huge success. He threw four touchdown passes in the Vols' Citrus Bowl win over Iowa. He's a redshirt freshman and there's room

for improvement, but he should shine Saturday.

By the numbers

1: James Pearce Jr. led the SEC last season with 10 sacks. He also led the league in tackles for loss (14.5)

13: The Vols have a 13-2 non-conference record under Heupel, including 11-1 in the regular season.

21: Tennessee has won 21 games since 2021 when the offense has more than 200 rushing yards.

95: Tennessee owns a 95-26-6 on-field all-time record in season openers,

including a 3-0 mark from Heupel.

Prediction

Tennessee 42, Chattanooga 6

Chattanooga is going to have a good season in the Southern Conference, but the Mocs won't have anything to write home about against the Vols. Tennessee should not miss a beat defensively while the offense needs to play well to give its new quarterback some confidence. That shouldn't be a problem, but Tennessee has been known to mess around and not finish strong like it should.

This week's SEC, state games

Arkansas-Pine Bluff vs. Arkansas

When: 6:30 p.m. Thursday

Where: Little Rock

TV: ESPNU

2023 records: UAPB (2-9), Arkansas (4-8)

The series: Arkansas leads 1-0.

The lowdown: Arkansas and Arkansas-Pine Bluff are separated by fewer than 250 miles, but the first time the schools played was 2021. The Razorbacks won that matchup 45-3. ... Arkansas coach Sam Pittman is considered to be on one of the hottest seats in the country. The good news for him? He's 2-0 when his program plays in Little Rock. ... Taylen Green, a Boise State transfer, is now the quarterback of the Razorbacks after KJ Jefferson left for Central Florida.

Murray State at No. 11 Missouri

When: 7 p.m. Thursday

TV: SECN

2023 records: Murray State (2-9), Missouri (11-2)

The series: Missouri leads 2-0.

The lowdown: The Tigers' preseason ranking is their highest since 2008 when Mizzou was ranked No. 6. ... The Racers have 65 new players on the roster as well as a new head coach. ... Jody Wright was named Murray State's coach in January. He was South Carolina's tight ends coach with stints with the New York Giants, Cleveland Browns, UAB and Alabama before that. ... Missouri's biggest returnee is quarterback Brady Cook who threw for 3,317 yards and 21 TDs and 5 INTs in 2023. ... It's the 100th season of football for Murray State.

Coastal Carolina at Jacksonville State

When: 7 p.m. Thursday

TV: CBSSN

2023 records: Coastal Carolina (8-5), Jacksonville State (9-4)

The series: Tied 1-1.

The lowdown: Coastal Carolina is entering its 22nd year of football and has a 166-89 all-time record. ... The Chanticleers' 52 wins since 2017 rank fifth in the Sun Belt. ... This will be the 33rd time in 51 games Coastal is being nationally televised. ... Chants kicker Liam Gray set a school record with 43 touchbacks last season.

Alcorn State at UAB

When: 7 p.m. Thursday



Murray State's Jody Wright might not have such a sunny disposition after playing Missouri in his first game as a head coach. [MURRAY STATE ATHLETICS]

TV: ESPN+

2023 records: Alcorn State (7-4), UAB (4-8)

The series: UAB leads 1-0.

The lowdown: UAB averaged a school-record 450 yards offense per game last season. ... The Blazers had recorded seven straight bowl-eligible seasons before going 4-8 last year. ... UAB has won nine straight season openers, outscoring those foes 332-77 with three shutouts. ... The Blazers beat the Braves 22-0 in September 2007.

Temple at No. 16 Oklahoma

When: 6 p.m. Friday

TV: ESPN

2023 records: Temple (3-9), Oklahoma (10-3)

The series: Tied 1-1.

The lowdown: This series has been filled with shootouts. The Sooners won the first meeting 9-6, while Temple won the second matchup 14-7. Then again, both did take place in the 1940s. ... Oklahoma is ranked in the AP preseason poll for the 25th straight year. ... This won't be the last matchup between the programs with Oklahoma set to visit Philadelphia in 2025 and the Owls returning to Norman in 2028. ... Both will be starting new QBs for this game with Jackson Arnold taking the place of Dillon Gabriel for the Sooners. EJ Warner, Temple's former incumbent and son of Kurt Warner, is now at Rice.

No. 14 Clemson vs. No. 1 Georgia

When: 11 a.m. Saturday

Where: Atlanta

TV: ABC

2023 records: Clemson (9-4), Georgia (13-1)

The series: Georgia leads 43-18-4.

The lowdown: Clemson coach Dabo Swinney won't have to worry about angry fans calling into his radio show if the Tigers lose. Those are now banned, replaced with texts or emails. Sorry, Tyler from Spartanburg. ... Georgia and Clemson last played in 2021 in Charlotte. The Bulldogs won 10-3. ... Georgia coach Kirby Smart is unbeaten against all active head coaches over the last five years. Perhaps a hip-hip-hooray Nick Saban is gone? ... Last season was the first time Clemson didn't win at least 10 games under Swinney since 2010.



Jackson Arnold will get to see how he fares as Oklahoma’s full-time starter. Oh, it will also be the Sooners’ first season in the SEC. [RICH BOWMER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]



Clemson coach Dabo Swinney won’t have to run away from any angry phone calls from fans this year. [JACOB KUPFERMAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

SEC

From Page G11

Virginia Tech at Vanderbilt

When: 11 a.m. Saturday
TV: ESPN
2023 records: Virginia Tech (7-6), Vanderbilt (2-10)
The series: Virginia Tech leads 6-3.
The lowdown: Vanderbilt has not had an undefeated season since 1944. ... Commodores coach Clark Lea will call the defense this season. ... Vanderbilt is looking to snap a 10-game losing streak. The last time the Commodores won a game was Sept. 2 of last year against Alabama A&M. ... Virginia Tech won three of its final four games. ... Hokies quarterback Kyron Drones is the cousin of Miami signal caller Cam Ward.

No. 19 Miami at Florida

When: 2:30 p.m. Saturday
TV: ABC
2023 records: Miami (7-6), Florida (5-7)
The series: Miami leads 29-27.
The lowdown: Florida coach Billy Napier is another candidate whose seat is getting a little warm. Napier posted losing records in each of his first two seasons. ... Miami quarterback Cam Ward was voted the ACC preseason player of the year after two years at Washington State. ... The Gators have won 33 straight home openers. Their last loss was to Ole Miss in 1989. ... One of the Hurricanes’ top defenders is Rueben Bain Jr. He was the ACC defensive rookie of the year after posting 44 tackles and 7.5 sacks.

Colorado State at No. 4 Texas

When: 2:30 p.m. Saturday
TV: ESPN



Bevo and Texas can brag about their place among the SEC winningest programs starting this season. [MICHAEL THOMAS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

2023 records: Colorado State (5-7), Texas (12-2)
The series: Texas leads 1-0.
The lowdown: The programs previously met in 1975. ... Texas is the SEC’s second-winningest program with 948 all-time victories. Alabama is first with 965. ... Colorado State is 10-40 against ranked opponents. ... This is the fourth straight year the Rams are opening against a team from the Power Five. They bested Cal in 2021 before losing to Michigan in 2022 and Washington State last year. ... Quinn Ewers has led the Longhorns to 16 wins in 22 starts and is one of four returning college quarterbacks to throw for at least 3,400 yards and 20 touchdowns last year.

Old Dominion at South Carolina

When: 3:15 p.m. Saturday
TV: SECN
2023 records: Old Dominion (6-7) South Carolina (5-7)
The series: First meeting.
The lowdown: The Gamecocks have 38 fourth-, fifth- or sixth-year seniors, which ranks second in the nation, one behind Eastern Michigan. ... LaNorris Sellers will be the first freshman to start at quarterback for Carolina in a season opener since Tuscaloosa native Chris

Smelley in 2007. ... Raheim “Rocket” Sanders makes his USC debut after transferring from Arkansas. He ran for 1,443 yards and 10 touchdowns in 2022 for the Hogs. ... Old Dominion is facing its second SEC opponent. The Monarchs lost 42-28 to Vanderbilt in 2014.

North Texas at South Alabama

When: 4 p.m. Saturday
TV: ESPN+
2023 records: North Texas (5-7), South Alabama (7-6)
The series: North Texas leads 1-0.
The lowdown: South begins its 16th season. The Jags have an all-time record of 83-92. ... USA has 53 first-year players (28 freshmen, 25 transfers). ... The Jaguars are 9-6 in season openers. ... Major Applewhite, USA’s offensive coordinator the last three years, makes his debut as Jags head coach. ... The Mean Green won the previous meeting 24-14 in November 2012. ... South Alabama QB Gio Lopez was invited to be a camp counselor at the Manning Passing Academy this summer.

Eastern Kentucky at Mississippi State

When: 5 p.m. Saturday
TV: ESPN+
2023 records: Eastern Kentucky (5-6), Mississippi State (5-7)
The series: First meeting.
The lowdown: Mississippi State’s Blake Shapen has thrown a touchdown pass in 11 straight games. He’s a first-year MSU player who transferred from Baylor. ... Shapen has 5,574 career passing yards with 36 touchdowns in his career. ...



South Alabama quarterback Gio Lopez got to spend some time this summer with the Manning family, so to speak. [SOUTH ALABAMA ATHLETICS]



Ole Miss defensive tackle JJ Pegues will get to wear Chucky Mullins' No. 38 jersey this season. [BRYNN ANDERSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

SEC

From Page G12

MSU coach Jeff Leiby, who is making his debut, has been part of two Big 12 championships and 16 bowl games as an assistant in his career. ... The Bulldogs have won 18 straight games vs. FCS teams.

Furman at No. 6 Ole Miss

When: 6 p.m. Saturday

TV: ESPN+

2023 records: Furman (10-3), Ole Miss (11-2)

The series: First meeting.

The lowdown: Defensive tackle JJ Pegues, who began his college career at Auburn, won this year's Chucky Mullins Courage Award will wear the No. 38 jersey at home this season. He'll stay in No. 89 on the road. ... The Purple Paladins are ranked ninth in the FCS. ... The Rebels are 95-29-5 in season openers, winning 22 of the last 27. ... Last year, Ole Miss also started the year against a Southern Conference team, beating Mercer 73-7.

Nevada at Troy

When: 6 p.m. Saturday

TV: ESPN+

2023 records: Nevada (2-10), Troy (11-3)

The series: First meeting.

The lowdown: Troy kicker Scott Taylor Renfroe fell one point and one field goal shy of tying school records last year. He was 19-of-24 on field goals, falling one make shy of Sam Glusman's 2008 school record. His 107 points were also one off Glusman.



Ja'Mori Maclin, who transferred to Kentucky from North Texas, is the cousin of former Pro Bowl receiver Jeremy Maclin. [BRANDON WADE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

... Troy added its expected kickoff man Aug. 21 when Paddy McAteer arrived from Ireland. He first kicked an American football in April and is well-versed in Gaelic football, a cross between soccer and rugby. ... The Trojans set a Sun Belt record with 47 sacks last season. Nationally, they ranked second behind Penn State.

No. 7 Notre Dame at No. 20 Texas A&M

When: 6:30 p.m. Saturday

TV: ABC

2023 records: Notre Dame (10-3), Texas A&M (7-6)

The series: Notre Dame leads 3-2.

The lowdown: This is the fourth time in

six games between the Irish and Aggies where both teams are in the Top 25. ... Texas A&M quarterback Conner Weigman returns after missing much of 2023 with an injury. He was 82-of-119 passing for 979 yards and eight touchdowns in four starts last year. ... Aggies linebacker Taurean York started all 13 games last year as a true freshman. He made 74 tackles, including 8½ for loss. ... The Aggies and Irish last met in 2001 with A&M winning 24-3. ... Since joining the SEC, the Aggies are 34-2 in nonconference home games. ...

Southern Miss at Kentucky

When: 6:45 p.m. Saturday

TV: SECN

2023 records: Southern Miss (3-9), Kentucky (7-6)

The series: Kentucky leads 3-1.

The lowdown: UK's Mark Stoops is the longest-tenured head coach in the SEC and ranks sixth in FBS. ... The Wildcats have won 16 straight nonconference regular-season games. ... Kentucky and USM last met in the 2017 season opener. The Wildcats won 24-17 in Hattiesburg. ... UK's Barion Brown and Dane Key each enter their junior seasons with over 1,000 yards receiving. ... Ja'Mori Maclin has 1,389 career yards receiving, including 1,004 last year at North Texas.

No. 23 Southern California vs. No. 21 LSU

When: 6:30 p.m. Sunday

Where: Las Vegas

TV: ABC

2023 records: USC (8-5), LSU (10-3)

The series: Tied 1-1.

The lowdown: LSU is making its Las Vegas debut and playing a third straight neutral-site opener. ... The Tigers lost to Florida State in New Orleans in 2022 and Orlando in 2023. ... LSU hasn't won a season opener since beating Georgia Southern 55-3 in 2019. ... New QB Garrett Nussmeier, taking over for Heisman-winning Jayden Daniels, has 18 career appearances and 1,720 yards passing with 11 touchdowns. ... LSU's top two returning running backs, sixth-year players Josh Williams and John Emery, both have over 1,000 career yards rushing.

— A. Stacy Long and David Glovach

Canes-Gators regularly a heated rivalry

By Mark Long

The Associated Press

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — Even though he grew up in Miami and kept close tabs on the Hurricanes, Florida cornerback Jason Marshall knows little about the once-heated rivalry involving the two Sunshine State teams.

The Florida Flop? The Peach Pelting? The Bourbon Street Brawl?

Marshall hasn't heard of any of them. He knows the Gators won two of the last three matchups, in 2008 and 2019. Much of his knowledge comes from watching highlights designed to educate Florida players on the history of the game that peaked as one of the nation's best in the 1980s.

What stood out?

"I would say just the nastiness that both teams have toward each other," Marshall said. "Like, there's hate there."

No. 19 Miami and Florida will open their seasons in Gainesville on Saturday, ushering in a new chapter in a series that provided several instant classics and plenty of hard feelings over eight-plus decades.

Many believe it should be an annual occurrence, a debate ignited every time they land on each other's schedule.

"This is the real deal, the good ol' days," former Miami center and long-time radio broadcaster Don Bailey Jr. said. "When it was going every year, it was the most important game on the schedule. Period."

It's been one-sided of late, with the Hurricanes winning seven of nine and 12 of 17.

The rivalry has a rich history, complete with cakewalks, comebacks and controversy.

Miami romped the last time the teams played annually, a 31-4 drubbing in 1987 in which Florida scored on a pair of safeties because center Willis Peguese sailed snaps through the end zone.

The 2003 game was one for the ages. Brock Berlin rallied Miami from a 23-point deficit to stun the Gators. It ranks right up there with right-hander George Mira's left-handed pass to beat Florida in 1961 and fullback James Jones' falling-backward, one-handed TD catch in the closing minutes to seal a victory for the Gators in 1982.

The Florida Flop, the Peach Pelting and the Bourbon Street Brawl have their place in series lore, too.



Florida cornerback Jason Marshall Jr. has experience vs. Florida State and none against Miami, but he understands there remains a rivalry with the Hurricanes. "Like, there's hate there," he says. [JOHN RAOUX/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

With Florida leading 45-8 late in the 1971 season finale, defenders dropped to the ground and let the Hurricanes score so quarterback John Reaves could have the ball back and get the 15 yards he needed to break Jim Plunkett's NCAA record for career passing yards.

Miami coach Fran Curci refused to shake hands with Florida's Doug Dickey afterward, calling it a "bush-league stunt." Adding insult to Miami's misery, several Gators jumped into the Orange Bowl pool that housed Miami Dolphins mascot Flipper during NFL games.

The rivalry grew even more bitter in 1980, when Florida fans — angry that the Gators trailed Miami 28-7

late in Gainesville — threw oranges, tangerines, peaches and ice cubes at the Hurricanes, who were headed to the Peach Bowl. Miami coach Howard Schnellenberger was furious and ordered a field goal to add to the final margin.

Florida coach Urban Meyer repaid the Hurricanes in 2008 by sending Jonathan Phillips on to kick a 29-yard field goal with 25 seconds left to punctuate a 26-3 victory.

After playing annually 1938-87, Florida dropped Miami because it wanted to play a "more national schedule." The Gators promptly replaced the Hurricanes with Montana State.

After a 13-year hiatus, Florida and Miami played again in the 2001 Sugar Bowl. Just a few nights before Miami's 37-20 win, a handful of players from both teams mixed it up on Bourbon Street.

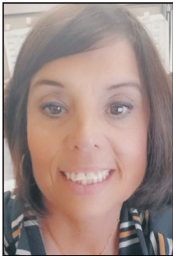
It's been relatively quiet since, although a new wrinkle is always looming. The teams are scheduled to play in Miami next year.

"There might not be any angst right now, but the losing team has to live with it the rest of their lives," Bailey said. "They may not look at it that way now. But lose that game and let's talk about in 10, 20, 30 or 40 years. That's how big this is."

PICKS
PANEL



SIRVELL
CARTER



MARA BETH
CRAVENS



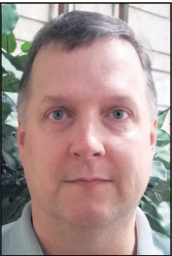
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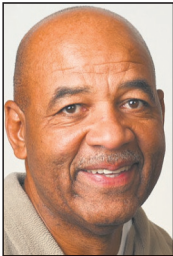
DAVID
GLOVACH



RENITA
JIMMAR



STACY
LONG



DEANGELO
MCDANIEL



CALEB
SUGGS

Western Kentucky at Alabama
Alabama A&M at Auburn
UNA at Memphis
Notre Dame at Texas A&M
Miami at Florida
LSU vs. Southern California
Coastal Carolina at Jacksonville State
Penn State at West Virginia
North Carolina at Minnesota
Boston College at Florida State

Alabama
Auburn
Memphis
Notre Dame
Miami
LSU
Jacksonville State
Penn State
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Florida State

Alabama
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Last week

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Season record

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2023 FBS LEADERS

RUSHING YARDS

	No.	Yards	TDs	Avg.
Ollie Gordon, Oklahoma St.	285	1,732	21	6.1
Kimani Vidal, Troy	297	1,661	14	5.6
Cody Schrader, Missouri	276	1,627	14	5.9
Tahj Brooks, Texas Tech	290	1,538	10	5.3
Omarion Hampton, North Carolina	253	1,504	15	5.9
RJ Harvey, UCF	226	1,416	16	6.3
Quinton Cooley, Liberty	221	1,401	16	6.3
Peny Boone, Toledo	194	1,400	15	7.2
Makhi Hughes, Tulane	258	1,378	7	5.3
Marcus Carroll, Georgia St.	274	1,350	13	4.9
Ashton Jeanty, Boise St.	220	1,347	14	6.1
Audric Estime, Notre Dame	210	1,341	18	6.4
Ismail Mahdi, Texas St.	223	1,331	10	6.0
Jaydn Ott, California	246	1,315	12	5.3
Antario Brown, NIU	212	1,296	10	6.1
Devin Neal, Kansas	203	1,280	16	6.3
Kyle Monangai, Rutgers	242	1,262	8	5.2
Blake Corum, Michigan	258	1,245	27	4.8
DJ Giddens, Kansas St.	223	1,226	10	5.5
Emani Bailey, TCU	223	1,209	8	5.4
Dillon Johnson, Washington	233	1,195	16	5.1
Kairree Robinson, San Jose St.	170	1,194	18	7.0
Jacory Croskey-Merriitt, New Mexico	189	1,190	17	6.3
Damien Martinez, Oregon St.	194	1,185	9	6.1
Bucky Irving, Oregon	186	1,180	11	6.3
Quinshon Judkins, Ole Miss	271	1,158	15	4.3
Kay/Ron Adams, Massachusetts	236	1,157	12	4.9
Blake Watson, Memphis	192	1,152	14	6.0
Jonathon Brooks, Texas	187	1,139	10	6.1
Rasheen Ali, Marshall	212	1,135	15	5.4
Jayden Daniels, LSU	135	1,134	10	8.4
Frank Gore, Southern Miss.	231	1,131	10	4.9
Ray Davis, Kentucky	199	1,129	14	5.7
Jawhar Jordan, Louisville	181	1,128	13	6.2
Thomas Castellanos, Boston College	215	1,113	13	5.2
Michael Salter, Liberty	163	1,089	12	6.7
Rashad Amos, Miami (OH)	210	1,075	13	5.1
LeQuint Allen, Syracuse	245	1,064	9	4.3
Jamal Haynes, Georgia Tech	174	1,059	7	6.1
Corey Kiner, Cincinnati	192	1,047	5	5.5
Marquez Cooper, Ball St.	227	1,043	4	4.6
Ayo Adeyi, North Texas	143	1,017	6	7.1
Jaylen Wright, Tennessee	137	1,013	4	7.4
La'Damian Webb, South Alabama	186	1,007	16	5.4
Jalen Buckley, Western Mich.	189	1,003	10	5.3
Braelon Allen, Wisconsin	181	984	12	5.4
Malik Sherrod, Fresno St.	172	966	9	5.6
Phil Mahfah, Clemson	179	965	13	5.4
Emmanuel Michel, Air Force	204	950	11	4.7
Harrison Waylee, Wyoming	164	947	5	5.8
TreVeyon Henderson, Ohio St.	156	926	11	5.9
Diego Pavia, New Mexico St.	176	923	7	5.2



Texas Tech's Tahj Brooks [COLIN E. BRALEY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

PASSING EFFICIENCY

	A	C	I	Yds.	TDs	Effic.
Jayden Daniels, LSU	327	236	4	3,812	40	208.0
Bo Nix, Oregon	470	364	3	4,508	45	188.3
Kaidon Salter, Liberty	290	177	6	2,876	32	176.6
Jason Bean, Kansas	199	124	7	2,130	18	175.0
Jalen Milroe, Alabama	284	187	6	2,834	23	172.2
Dillon Gabriel, Oklahoma	384	266	6	3,660	30	172.0
Caleb Williams, Southern Cal	388	266	5	3,633	30	170.2
Carson Beck, Georgia	417	302	6	3,941	24	167.9
J.J. McCarthy, Michigan	332	240	4	2,991	22	167.4
Noah Fifita, Arizona	333	241	6	2,869	25	165.9
Jaxson Dart, Ole Miss	358	233	5	3,364	23	162.4
Kyle McCord, Ohio St.	348	229	6	3,170	24	161.6
Preston Stone, SMU	344	206	6	3,197	28	161.3
Sam Hartman, Notre Dame	301	191	8	2,689	24	159.5
Michael Pratt, Tulane	283	185	5	2,406	22	158.9
Quinn Ewers, Texas	394	272	6	3,479	22	158.6
Graham Mertz, Florida	358	261	3	2,903	20	157.8
Brady Cook, Missouri	369	244	6	3,317	21	157.2
Michael Penix Jr., Washington	555	363	11	4,903	36	157.1
Jacob Zeno, UAB	379	279	9	3,126	20	155.6
Jordan Travis, Florida St.	324	207	2	2,756	20	154.5
Seth Henigam, Memphis	476	318	9	3,883	32	153.7
TJ Finley, Texas St.	414	279	8	3,439	24	152.4



UNLV's Ricky White [RICK SCUTERI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

Shedeur Sanders, Colorado	430	298	3	3,230	27	151.7
Joe Aguilar, App State	460	293	10	3,757	33	151.6
Carter Bradley, South Alabama	326	221	7	2,660	19	151.3
Dequan Finn, Toledo	317	201	9	2,657	22	151.0
Rocco Becht, Iowa St.	367	231	8	3,120	23	150.7
John Rhys Plumlee, UCF	256	161	8	2,271	15	150.5
Chandler Rogers, North Texas	421	262	5	3,382	29	150.1
Drake Maye, North Carolina	425	269	9	3,608	24	149.0
Jaylen Raynor, Arkansas St.	285	166	7	2,550	17	148.2
Spencer Rattler, South Carolina	399	275	8	3,186	19	147.7
Joe Milton III, Tennessee	354	229	5	2,813	20	147.3
Diego Pavia, New Mexico St.	366	221	9	2,973	26	147.1
Jayden Maiava, UNLV	353	224	10	3,085	17	147.1
Gunnar Watson, Troy	439	268	6	3,569	27	146.9
Andrew Peasley, Wyoming	266	166	5	1,991	20	146.3
Tyler Van Dyke, Miami (FL)	333	219	12	2,703	19	145.6
Cameron Ward, Washington St.	485	323	7	3,736	25	145.4
Taulia Tagovailoa, Maryland	349	229	11	3,377	25	145.1
DJ Uiagalelei, Oregon St.	315	180	7	2,638	21	145.1
Jack Plummer, Louisville	395	256	12	3,204	21	144.4
Byrum Brown, South Fla.	427	276	11	3,292	26	144.3
Darren Grainger, Georgia St.	358	244	7	2,621	20	144.2
Garrett Shrader, Syracuse	214	134	6	1,686	13	143.2
Garrett Greene, West Virginia	277	147	4	2,406	16	142.2
Haynes King, Georgia Tech	367	226	16	2,842	27	142.2
Chevan Cordeiro, San Jose St.	362	223	4	2,773	20	142.0

RECEIVING YARDS

	Rec.	Yards	TDs	Avg.
Rome Odunze, Washington	92	1,640	13	17.8
Malik Nabers, LSU	89	1,569	14	17.6
Ricky White, UNLV	88	1,483	8	16.9
Malik Washington, Virginia	110	1,426	9	13.0
Tetairoa McMillan, Arizona	90	1,402	10	15.6
Troy Franklin, Oregon	81	1,383	14	17.1
Caullin Lacy, South Alabama	91	1,316	7	14.5
Xavier Legette, South Carolina	71	1,255	7	17.7
Luther Burden, Missouri	86	1,212	9	14.1
Marvin Harrison Jr., Ohio St.	67	1,211	14	18.1
Tez Johnson, Oregon	86	1,182	10	13.7
Brian Thomas Jr., LSU	68	1,177	17	17.3
LaJohntay Wester, Fla. Atlantic	108	1,168	8	10.8
Ja'Lynn Polk, Washington	69	1,159	9	16.8
Joshua Cephus, UTSA	89	1,151	10	12.9
Javon Baker, UCF	52	1,139	7	21.9
Tory Horton, Colorado St.	96	1,136	8	11.8
Kris Mitchell, FIU	64	1,118	6	17.5
Xavier Restrepo, Miami (FL)	85	1,092	6	12.8
Roc Taylor, Memphis	69	1,083	4	15.7
Jalen Royals, Utah St.	71	1,080	15	15.2
CJ Daniels, Liberty	55	1,067	10	19.4
Tahj Washington, Southern California	59	1,062	8	18.0
Isaiah Williams, Illinois	82	1,055	5	12.9
Sean Atkins, South Fla.	92	1,054	7	11.5
Kelly Akharaiyi, UTEP	48	1,033	7	21.5
Sam Pinckney, Coastal Carolina	72	1,027	8	14.3
Steven McBride, Hawaii	63	1,024	9	16.3
Xavier Worthy, Texas	75	1,014	5	13.5
Elic Ayomanor, Stanford	62	1,013	6	16.3
Ja'Mori Maclin, North Texas	57	1,004	11	17.6
Jabre Barber, Troy	75	999	5	13.3
Luke McCaffrey, Rice	71	992	13	14.0
Brennan Presley, Oklahoma St.	101	991	6	9.8
Tre Harris, Ole Miss	54	985	8	18.2
Malachi Corley, Western Ky.	79	984	11	12.5
Jayden Higgins, Iowa St.	53	983	6	18.5
Ricky Pearsall, Florida	65	965	4	14.8
Drake Stoops, Oklahoma	84	962	10	11.5
Khaleb Hood, Ga. Southern	101	948	5	9.4
Terrell Vaughn, Utah St.	89	933	11	10.5
Josh Kelly, Washington St.	61	923	8	15.1
Xavier Weaver, Colorado	68	908	4	13.4
Kaedin Robinson, App State	67	905	10	13.5
DeMeer Blankumsee, Memphis	53	901	7	17.0
Kobe Huels, UCF	44	900	8	20.5
Joey Hoberg, Texas St.	76	895	8	11.8
Rashod Owens, Oklahoma St.	63	895	5	14.2
Jamaal Pritchett, South Alabama	57	883	8	15.5
Robert Lewis, Georgia St.	70	877	7	12.5
Ashtyn Hawkins, Texas St.	55	874	3	15.9
Eric McAllister, Boise St.	47	873	5	18.6



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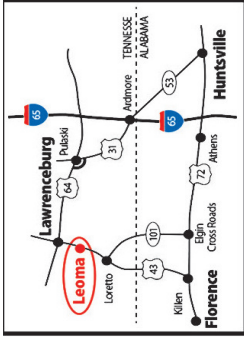
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