

## Gridiron Gold Sheet Football Newsletter

\$15

College & Pro Football Best Bets Newsletter

Dennis Stagliano's Award Winning Football Newsletter

Volume 36 Issue 3

August 30, 2017



# COLLEGE FOOTBALL 5-0 AGAINST THE SPREAD LAST WEEK

How Good is Michigans Defense?

## College Football Top QB's: Action Jackson Primed for Heisman Encore

QB's Listed in no particular order.

### Lamar Jackson, Louisville, Jr.

Last year's Heisman Trophy winner returns for what could be his final collegiate season. It will be tough for Jackson to match his 51 total touchdowns from last year, but bet against his cannon arm and blazing speed at your own risk. He won't sneak up on opponents this season either, but Jackson's immense talent outweighs most of what defensive coordinators can scheme to stop him. The dual-threat weapon is the consensus top pick in almost any format with elite passing and rushing numbers.

### Quinton Flowers, South Florida, Sr.

Flowers lost his head coach (Willie Taggart), top running back (Marlon Mack) and top receiver (Rodney Adams), but USF's offense will remain an uptempo attack that asks Flowers to run frequently under new coordinator Sterlin Gilbert. Regardless of his supporting cast, Flowers should continue to have both a high floor and high ceiling, thanks to superior rushing skills – 2,521 yards (6.5 YPC) and 30 touchdowns the last two years. Flowers is frightening to almost any defense, and the AAC is not built to slow him.

### J.T. Barrett, Ohio State, Sr.

It says a lot about a quarterback when a 33-touchdown season is considered a failure, but that was Barrett's scenario last year. The Ohio State offense wasn't as dominant as its usual self – the receiver position especially was a letdown – and Barrett's numbers fell short of his 45-touchdown freshman season in 2014. But Urban Meyer's teams rarely flounder for long, and Barrett is likely to be especially sharp as a senior. The arrival of offensive coordinator Kevin Wilson should also help – Wilson made strong offenses with lesser talent at Indiana.

MY BOOKIE

JOIN NOW

[WWW.GRIDIRONGOLDSHEET.COM](http://WWW.GRIDIRONGOLDSHEET.COM)

859-GIG-GOLD or 859-444-4653

**Nick Fitzgerald, Mississippi State, Jr.**

Being the quarterback to follow a legend is no small task, but Fitzgerald truly thrived as Dak Prescott's successor last year. He quickly established himself as one of the premier dual-threat playmakers in the game, tossing 21 touchdowns and adding 16 on the ground to go with 1,375 rushing yards. Only Lamar Jackson and Quinton Flowers ran for more yards among quarterbacks. If Fitzgerald takes a step forward as a passer, it'll only add to his vast upside that already projects for 1,000 yards and double-digit touchdowns on the ground.

**Luke Falk, Washington State, Sr.**

Falk is back at the helm of Washington State's offense for his third full season as the starter. He's already the second quarterback to throw for more than 10,000 yards under coach Mike Leach at WSU and likely will be the school's all-time leading passer by season's end. Falk has thrown for at least 4,400 yards and 38 touchdowns in each of his two full seasons as starter, and even though he's missing some of his top targets from last year, he's still one of the safest quarterback options in the game thanks to his talent and high-volume system.

**Justin Herbert, Oregon, So.**

He wasn't expected to see the field much with touted grad transfer Dakota Prukop at quarterback, but the latter faltered and Oregon turned to Herbert, a true freshman, in hopes of salvaging last season. There was no hope for Oregon, it would turn out, but Herbert proved promising. As the team around him sank, he threw for 1,936 yards, (7.6 YPA), 19 touchdowns and four interceptions in seven starts, and that was while playing tough defenses like Washington, USC, Stanford and Utah. New coach Willie Taggart helped make Quinton Flowers a star at USF, and Herbert should benefit too.

**Baker Mayfield, Oklahoma, Sr.**

It's easy to argue that Mayfield should be ranked higher after throwing for 3,965 yards (11.1 YPA), 40 touchdowns and eight interceptions last year and adding six more scores on the ground. The senior heads into his third season in a scheme in which he's proved unstoppable. He lost a great deal of surrounding talent, however, with lead wideout Dede Westbrook and the dominant backfield of Samaje Perine and Joe Mixon off to the NFL. Mayfield's good enough to overcome that, but the lifting will be heavier this year.

**Shane Buechele, Texas, So.**

It's a lot to ask of a true freshman to run a Baylor-style spread, but Buechele proved promising despite the overwhelming nature of the task. He overcame a weak group of receivers and a rotation with running-specialist QB Tyrone Swoopes to throw for 2,958 yards (7.6 YPA), 21 touchdowns and 11 interceptions. And now he gets to operate under the tutelage of coach Tom Herman, who made a buzzsaw out of the Houston offenses in recent years, propelling quarterback Greg Ward into stardom. Swoopes' exit assures a bigger rushing workload for Buechele, too.

**Shea Patterson, Mississippi, So.**

Last year's top quarterback recruit, Patterson was expected to redshirt while Chad Kelly served as starter, but a season-ending knee injury to Kelly thrust Patterson into the fire. There were some freshman moments during his three starts, but Patterson showed the arm strength and uncanny improvisational skills that led many to compare him to Johnny Manziel. With a deep group of receivers to target, his dual-threat skills should yield major profits in a system that made fantasy stars out of lesser talents like Kelly and Bo Wallace.

**Kyle Allen, Houston, Jr.**

After sitting out a year due to transfer rules, Allen is ready to take over the Houston offense. Allen won't have the burden of learning a new system, either, as former offensive coordinator Major Applewhite was promoted to head coach. Allen's talent isn't in question as a five-star commit to Texas A&M in 2014-15. He's not the runner that former quarterback Greg Ward was, but Allen brings upside as a passer and Houston has surrounded him with talented wideouts. In a pass-happy AAC offense, Allen is set for success.

**Nic Shimonek, Texas Tech, Sr.**

The Texas Tech program is on the way down with quarterback Pat Mahomes off to the NFL and several leading contributors also leaving the program, including Jonathan Giles, Ian Sadler, Devin Lauderdale and Tony Brown. But fantasy football owners won't care about Shimonek's losing record as long as he throws the ball 50-plus times per game. The Iowa transfer is the presumed starter, so such an outcome is expected. Shimonek is no Mahomes, but he should have the volume to put up excellent passing numbers.

**Brent Stockstill, Middle Tennessee, Jr.**

It's often a bad look for a coach to make his son the starting quarterback, especially when a solid incumbent gets benched to do it. But the younger Stockstill has made his father and head coach Rick look like a genius. Despite missing about four games with a broken collarbone, Brent threw for 3,233 yards (7.8 YPA), 31 touchdowns and seven interceptions last year. He threw for 4,005 yards (8.2 YPA) and 30 touchdowns the year prior. Heading into his third year as starter, Stockstill is poised to take the next step into stardom.

### **Jalen Hurts, Alabama, So.**

Hurts burst onto the scene in 2016, going from unknown freshman to starter for the national runner-up. He earned SEC Offensive Player of the Year honors by throwing for 2,780 yards, 23 touchdowns and nine interceptions while adding 954 yards and 13 touchdowns on the ground. Hurts showed his inexperience against some of the better competition Alabama faced, including a 13-for-31 outing against Clemson. But Hurts reportedly worked to refine his passing skills this offseason, and he'll have plenty of weapons around him with Calvin Ridley and freshman receiver Jerry Jeudy.

### **Riley Ferguson, Memphis, Sr.**

Ferguson entered last season with the tough task of following Paxton Lynch, but he managed to produce six more touchdowns than his predecessor while throwing for 3,698 yards. He'll benefit from getting most of Memphis' starters back for another year, including top target Anthony Miller, who caught 95 passes for 1,434 yards and 14 scores in 2016. Ferguson has already proven to be one of the AAC's top quarterbacks, and he should have little trouble replicating 2016's success thanks to his experience in the system and a strong supporting cast.

### **Logan Woodside, Toledo, Sr.**

After graciously redshirting the 2015 season so Toledo could avoid a quarterback controversy with Phillip Ely, Woodside returned in 2016 and quickly made up for the lost time. Despite throwing just 418 passes in 13 games, Woodside raced to 4,129 yards (9.9 YPA) and 45 touchdowns while throwing just nine interceptions. He has a talented backfield setting the ground game and two of the nation's best big-play threat wideouts in Cody Thompson and Jon'Vea Johnson. Don't expect Woodside to slow down in his senior season.

### **Mason Rudolph, Oklahoma State, Sr.**

Rudolph passed up the chance to be a first- or second-round pick in the NFL Draft to play his senior season at Oklahoma State, and all the pieces are in place for a strong finish. With 8,714 yards (9.1 YPA), 55 touchdowns and 17 interceptions to his name in 29 games, he returns to an offense that brings back star wideout James Washington, as well as a sound complementary crew, including Jalen McCleskey, Chris Lacy and Marcell Ateman. It would be a significant disappointment if Rudolph doesn't breeze past 30 passing touchdowns.

### **Sam Darnold, USC, So.**

It might seem like a little premature to rank Darnold as the consensus favorite to be the first pick in the 2018 NFL Draft, but it's solely because USC's offense doesn't play with the tempo of other quarterbacks in this range. Indeed, if this was a ranking of most talented, Darnold would be at the top. He plays in an offense that averaged just 32.2 passes per game in the regular season, and he doesn't run enough to make up for it. This type of offense makes it difficult for him to win the Heisman. Darnold will be efficient and nearly matchup-proof after throwing 31 touchdowns on 366 passes last year.

### **Eric Dungey, Syracuse, Sr.**

This will be Dungey's second year at the helm of one of college football's most up-tempo and explosive offenses. There were promising returns last season as Dungey took major steps forward as a passer, completing 65 percent of his passes and averaging just less than 300 yards per game while totaling 21 touchdowns (15 passing) in nine games. The only red flag is the concussion issues Dungey had each of the last two seasons, and injuries are the only thing holding him back from being an elite quarterback.

### **Zach Abey, Navy, Jr.**

Abey wasn't supposed to see the field last year, but injuries to senior starters Tago Smith and Will Worth opened the opportunity. He was caught off guard as a passer, throwing four interceptions in 35 attempts, but as a runner he was a natural. In rushing for 368 yards and six touchdowns (5.5 YPC) in the last four weeks, Abey proved a strong fit for Navy's triple-option. Running the ball that much makes Abey an injury risk, but the week-to-week upside should be huge. An offseason working as the starter should make him more polished in 2017.

### **Steven Montez, Colorado, So.**

Montez this season replaces the graduated Sefo Liufau, who leaves as the school's all-time leading passer. Montez showed promise in a brief stint as the starter last season, leading the Buffs to wins over Oregon and Oregon State before a narrow loss to USC, throwing seven touchdowns in that span. Montez also showed some running ability, torching the Ducks for 135 yards and a score on the ground. Although he is green, he will have an experienced supporting cast around him, particularly in the receiving corps.

## **Gridiron Gold Sheet Early Bird Special**

Get **FREE Gridiron Gold membership** with your season subscription.

**SUBSCRIBE FOR SEASON**



**[WWW.GRIDIRONGOLDSHEET.COM](http://WWW.GRIDIRONGOLDSHEET.COM)**

**859-GIG-GOLD or 859-444-4653**

## NFL AFC REVIEW

### **At least Edelman's injury happened in a season where he's no longer New England's best wide receiver.**

Let's hold off assuming that Brandin Cooks is going to transform into a No. 1 receiver until it happens. Edelman is the Patriots' all-time playoff leader in receptions and yards primarily because of his mind-meld with Brady, fastened by eight seasons playing together. New England's offense relies heavily on option routes where the receiver has to read the coverage the same way as Brady. It's one reason why rookies and free agents often struggle to adapt to the team's system. It's why guys like Troy Brown or Danny Amendola stick around an extra season or two. Cooks is a terrific talent, but he has exactly two catches for 15 preseason yards and will have to earn Brady's trust. A few drives after the Edelman injury, starter Chris Hogan failed to adjust to a route in the way Brady expected, leading to an interception and a rueful smile. The Patriots still have great receiver depth with Hogan, Cooks, Amendola and Malcolm Mitchell, but that play was a reminder that suiting up with Brady isn't always easy. Edelman just made it look that way.

### **On the way up**

**QB DeShone Kizer and Cleveland Browns fans:** This Browns season grew far more fascinating when coach Hue Jackson officially announced Kizer as the team's Week 1 starter.

"This is not just for the moment. We're going to get with DeShone (and) ride with him through it all," Jackson said in a conference call Sunday.

Kizer would have ideally sat his rookie season behind a veteran, but it became clear throughout the preseason that he is the best quarterback on the roster right now. So why not play him and let him learn on the fly? Kizer only completed six passes at Tampa Bay on Saturday, but showed so much on seemingly each one. He displays skills that are tough to teach, like navigating the pocket and pulling the trigger on difficult throws. While other young quarterbacks are fed short, "confidence-building" tosses, Kizer is asked to handle grown-man pass attempts. It's all happening.

**New England Patriots backfield:** Look to the Patriots' running backs to help mitigate the loss of Edelman. Mike Gillislee's return to health and Dion Lewis' return to form give Tom Brady the deepest, most diverse backfield of his career. Lewis, James White and Rex Burkhead will be difficult to match up with in the passing game no matter where they line up.

**The young Baltimore Ravens defense:** The Ravens' front seven is populated by relatively unknown youngins set to make an impact: outside linebackers Tyus Bowser and Matt Judon, defensive end Brent Urban, nose tackles Michael Pierce and Carl Davis. None of the above may be superstars, but the collective wave of youth and speed throughout Baltimore's defense is noticeable. Ravens games could have a distinct early-2000's feel to them when combining this group with a banged-up, lackluster offense.

**Jamaal Charles, RB, Denver Broncos:** Coach Vance Joseph made the rare, dramatic move to announce at a postgame podium that Charles had made the Broncos roster. (No reality show-style balloons fell.) Joseph must have made up his mind before fans saw Saturday night what the coach has been observing in practice. Charles piled up 42 yards from scrimmage on six touches, showing more explosion than at any time since his 2015 knee injury. With C.J. Anderson looking strong and rookie De'Angelo Henderson impressing, the Broncos have the makings of a dynamic running game.

**Taywan Taylor, WR, Tennessee Titans:** It's a safe bet by now that Taylor's early-season role will be more significant than that of No. 5 overall pick Corey Davis, who has been sidelined since early August with a hamstring injury. Taylor, a third-round pick from Western Kentucky, has been a consistent playmaker in the preseason from the slot.

**Philip Rivers, QB, Los Angeles Chargers:** Perhaps more signal callers should install a "mobile quarterback room" that takes you to work. Rivers used the extra study time to complete the ultimate veteran quarterback preseason: three drives, all ending in Chargers touchdowns, with only one incompleteness. The comfort and continuity in coordinator Ken Whisenhunt's offense shows, as does Rivers' surplus of young skill-position teammates.

## **Gridiron Gold Sheet Early Bird Special**

Get **FREE Gridiron Gold membership** with your season subscription.

**SUBSCRIBE FOR SEASON**



## On the way down

**Kansas City Chiefs running game:** Initially a sixth-round pick of the Seahawks back in 2013, Spencer Ware had slowly worked his way into a starting job in Kansas City. Now expected to miss the season with a torn PCL, Ware will be missed for his ability to handle any situation well. Andy Reid confirmed that third-round rookie Kareem Hunt will take over primary running back duties, with veterans Charcandrick West and C.J. Spiller playing behind him. Hunt might offer a higher ceiling than Ware, but this was an offense already thin on reliable weapons.

**First-round AFC rookie quarterbacks:** While DeShone Kizer prepares to start Week 1, the third week of the preseason was a reminder why it's nice Patrick Mahomes doesn't have to. He makes a few breathtaking passes each week, but his play is frenetic. It's a terrific luxury that Reid can prepare Mahomes behind the scenes while trying to win games with A Smith. The Deshaun Watson truthers also can admit he faded in the preseason. He was picked off once against the Saints and had at least three more passes which were nearly intercepted. There was a general lack of awareness of the pass rush -- moments that allowed coach Bill O'Brien some fine teaching points. These are all expected stages of a quarterback's development and should be remembered when fans are pushing for Watson and Mahomes to start in mid-September.

**Mike Maccagnan, GM, New York Jets:** If Christian Hackenberg had been drafted in the fourth round, he'd be a strong candidate for release. Since Maccagnan scooped up Hackenberg in the second round, the team gave him first-team reps all last week and started him in the team's third preseason game. Hackenberg is by all accounts well-liked inside the Jets facility, but his play has failed to meet even the lowest of expectations entering this preseason. Before re-entering Saturday night's game in the waning moments following Bryce Petty's knee injury, Hackenberg had completed eight of his 15 passes for 60 yards, with two interceptions returned for touchdowns. Petty's solid play has made Hackenberg look worse by comparison. Hackenberg is either late or inaccurate on anything but the shortest of throws. These are not your normal developmental blips. These are sequences that cause lower-drafted players to lose their jobs.

**Tyrod Taylor/Marcell Dareus, QB/DT, Buffalo Bills:** Two of the Bills' key players had a rough Saturday for very different reasons. Dareus was sent home for violating a team rule, one of many off-field issues the talented defensive tackle has encountered as a pro. He also has failed to produce up to his contract since signing a \$103.2 million pact in 2015. General manager Brandon Beane called out Dareus' leadership and it's worth wondering if the 27-year-old could become a trade candidate like Sammy Watkins did earlier this month. Taylor could be a similarly awkward long-term fit with the organization as Beane and new coach Sean McDermott try to re-shape the Bills in their image. Taylor's concussion suffered Saturday comes at a difficult time. Taylor and the first-team offense have reportedly struggled to get in synch all offseason, a trend that has kept up in August. Taylor's absence opens the door for fifth-round rookie quarterback Nathan Peterman to get snaps with the first team. Peterman has absolutely shown some flashes of potential, but way too many Bills fans on my timeline want the rookie to start. He's only completed half his passes this preseason, while averaging 5.5 yards per attempt. This Bills offense is set to take some lumps, but Taylor has a much better chance of leading the team out of the darkness if he can get on the field

**Kony Ealy, DE, New York Jets:** The Patriots are very thin at edge-rushing talent, so consider it a bad sign that Ealy couldn't even make it to final cuts with the team. (The Jets claimed Ealy off waivers, but he's far from a lock to make the 53-man roster.) While Bill Belichick gave up close to nothing to acquire Ealy (an eight-spot move down from No. 64 to No. 72 in the draft), this still qualifies as a big disappointment because the New England front seven needs some pleasant surprises to emerge.

**Chad Henne, QB, Jacksonville Jaguars:** Coach Doug Marrone cited Blake Bortles' mobility when choosing him as the team's starting QB. Perhaps that's a nod to Jacksonville's struggling offensive line, although it's hard to find the logical line connecting the Jaguars' quarterback decisions since February. It's strange to think Henne could have kept the starting job if he had been more accurate on a handful of throws in the rain and even stranger to imagine Bortles starting 16 games.

**Vontaze Burfict, LB, Cincinnati Bengals:** Bengals coach Marvin Lewis brought back Burfict in 2016 despite the linebacker's repeated rules infractions that led to a three-game suspension to start last season. With Burfict facing a five-game suspension for an August 19 hit on Chiefs fullback Anthony Sherman, the Bengals are left flat-footed. Perhaps the team should be used to this. If Burfict's suspension is upheld after appeal, he will have missed 27 of the Bengals' last 53 games because of suspension or injury. Lewis' reliance on Burfict as a team leader grows more mystifying each season.

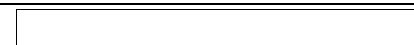


Thu, Aug 31

Gm#	Team	Overall			Off (Yds)			Def (Yds)			TO	ToP	Home/Away		
		SU W/L	ATS	AF-AA	Ru	Pa	Tot	Ru	Pa	Tot			SU W/L	ATS	AF-AA
133	OSU *	11-2-0	6-7-0	39.4-15.5	245.2	213.9	459.2	127.9	172.2	300.2	0.9	33.0	4-2-0	2-4-0	29.2-20.2
134	IND *	6-7-0	6-7-0	25.8-27.2	152.2	273.8	426.0	160.4	219.7	380.1	2.2	28.1	4-3-0	2-5-0	29.0-29.4
135	BUFF *	2-10-0	4-8-0	16.5-32.3	153.3	200.5	353.8	253.3	181.5	434.8	1.6	27.0	0-6-0	1-5-0	8.8-36.0
136	MINN *	9-4-0	5-5-3	29.3-22.1	183.6	173.6	357.2	117.8	230.9	348.8	1.3	31.1	6-1-0	2-5-0	33.3-23.4
137	ULM *	4-8-0	6-6-0	23.3-39.1	181.3	192.0	373.3	260.4	220.1	480.5	2.0	29.4	1-6-0	4-3-0	18.0-45.0
138	MEM *	8-5-0	5-8-0	38.8-28.8	160.0	304.4	464.4	204.9	249.7	454.6	1.6	27.2	5-2-0	3-4-0	44.1-29.4
139	NMSU *	3-9-0	7-5-0	24.8-38.8	169.3	244.9	414.3	244.8	252.4	497.3	1.8	26.6	0-7-0	3-4-0	21.9-47.9
140	ASU *	5-7-0	6-6-0	33.3-39.8	131.8	259.3	391.1	164.3	357.4	521.7	1.8	30.2	4-2-0	5-1-0	40.7-35.8
169	FIU *	4-8-0	5-6-1	24.0-34.8	148.6	226.7	375.3	199.0	235.8	434.8	1.9	31.6	2-3-0	2-2-1	24.8-31.8
170	UCF *	6-7-0	8-5-0	28.8-24.6	141.2	209.7	350.8	169.5	200.8	370.3	1.9	27.4	3-3-0	4-2-0	28.0-16.7
199	TLSA *	10-3-0	9-4-0	42.5-29.8	262.4	265.3	527.7	176.3	250.2	426.5	1.6	29.7	3-3-0	4-2-0	36.0-36.5
200	OKST *	10-3-0	8-5-0	38.6-26.5	171.0	323.9	494.9	193.5	252.8	446.3	1.1	28.8	6-1-0	4-3-0	43.1-28.7
215	PRE *	2-9-0	1-1-0	8.9-30.9	21.9	14.5	36.5	46.0	36.7	82.7	0.5	5.8	1-6-0	1-1-0	8.1-33.6
216	WAKE *	7-6-0	8-5-0	20.4-22.2	145.8	165.7	311.5	142.4	228.2	370.5	1.5	30.8	5-3-0	4-4-0	21.8-19.0
217	PEAY *	0-11-0	2-0-0	23.5-47.0	31.8	17.1	48.9	60.4	41.1	101.5	0.3	6.4	0-6-0	2-0-0	21.8-47.0
218	CIN *	4-8-0	3-9-0	19.3-26.9	118.3	255.9	374.3	189.8	233.3	423.0	1.9	26.5	3-4-0	1-6-0	18.9-26.4
219	TNST *	7-4-0	1-0-0	32.3-30.1	11.4	25.9	37.3	32.5	13.0	45.5	0.2	2.4	3-3-0	1-0-0	31.0-33.8
220	GSU *	3-9-0	7-5-0	19.9-26.6	87.7	246.3	333.9	206.8	173.9	380.7	1.9	25.6	3-3-0	3-3-0	27.0-25.0
221	ELON *	2-9-0	0-1-0	12.2-30.7	8.8	29.3	38.1	21.1	24.9	46.0	0.3	3.2	1-4-0	0-1-0	12.8-34.0
222	TOL *	9-4-0	7-6-0	38.0-25.7	195.0	322.8	517.8	176.3	220.8	397.1	1.1	30.2	5-2-0	3-4-0	37.3-21.9
223	URI *	2-9-0	0-1-0	16.8-36.4	15.5	4.5	19.9	15.5	36.3	51.8	0.3	3.0	1-5-0	0-1-0	13.5-42.2
224	CMU *	6-7-0	5-8-0	26.3-30.3	115.9	276.1	392.0	169.0	222.9	391.9	1.8	33.5	4-2-0	3-3-0	29.7-23.5
225	HC *	4-7-0	0-0-0	23.5-32.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3-3-0	0-0-0	29.0-30.3
226	CONN *	3-9-0	2-9-1	14.8-28.1	117.3	202.7	320.0	146.3	264.7	410.9	1.6	29.9	3-4-0	1-5-1	15.7-22.0
227	UND *	9-3-0	1-0-0	29.6-22.0	14.1	18.3	32.3	7.5	27.3	34.8	0.0	3.0	4-2-0	1-0-0	23.8-16.0
228	UTAH *	9-4-0	7-6-0	29.8-23.9	214.0	216.7	430.7	128.7	254.3	383.0	1.9	33.8	5-2-0	3-4-0	27.0-22.0
229	FAMU	1-0-0	0-0-0	29.0-7.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0-0-0	0-0-0	0.0-0.0
230	ARK *	7-6-0	5-8-0	30.3-31.1	164.4	264.2	428.5	205.9	221.2	427.1	1.9	34.7	2-4-0	2-4-0	29.0-40.7
231	CSUS *	2-9-0	0-0-0	24.3-40.0	8.7	8.1	16.8	18.2	24.9	43.1	0.2	2.6	0-6-0	0-0-0	16.7-38.3
232	IDHO *	9-4-0	9-4-0	30.8-31.3	147.8	249.2	397.0	146.0	283.1	429.1	1.3	31.6	4-1-0	3-2-0	32.6-23.4

**SU W/L:** Straight-Up Win/Loss Record  
**ATS:** Against the Spread Record  
**AF-AA:** Average Points For - Average Points Against  
**Ru:** Rushing Yards

**Pa:** Passing Yards  
**Tot:** Total Yards  
**TO:** Turnovers  
**ToP:** Time of Possession



Fri, Sep 1

Gm#	Team	Overall			Off (Yds)			Def (Yds)			TO	ToP	Home/Away		
		SU W/L	ATS	AF-AA	Ru	Pa	Tot	Ru	Pa	Tot			SU W/L	ATS	AF-AA
141	CHAR *	4-8-0	5-7-0	25.2-34.6	176.8	192.8	369.5	143.4	309.8	453.3	1.3	29.0	3-3-0	3-3-0	23.5-37.5
142	EMU *	7-6-0	10-3-0	29.6-29.8	159.1	296.1	455.2	167.5	265.2	432.7	1.8	30.8	3-3-0	4-2-0	28.8-25.5
143	WASH *	12-2-0	7-7-0	41.8-17.7	198.1	258.8	456.9	133.9	182.9	316.9	1.1	31.0	5-1-0	3-3-0	42.3-23.5
144	RUTG *	2-10-0	4-8-0	15.7-37.5	145.3	138.3	283.5	264.6	186.5	451.1	1.6	27.3	2-5-0	3-4-0	18.6-32.9
145	NAVY *	9-5-0	8-5-1	37.9-31.0	311.1	128.1	439.2	179.9	254.1	434.0	1.1	31.2	4-3-0	3-3-1	38.0-29.1
146	FAU *	3-9-0	2-9-1	26.4-39.8	188.5	210.1	398.6	245.4	268.4	513.8	1.7	27.6	2-4-0	0-5-1	25.0-35.7
147	USU *	3-9-0	3-9-0	23.9-29.3	170.8	205.8	376.6	203.3	176.5	379.8	1.3	26.7	0-6-0	1-5-0	19.3-35.8
148	WIS *	11-3-0	9-4-1	28.4-15.6	203.1	179.1	382.1	98.8	202.6	301.4	1.1	35.0	7-2-0	4-4-1	30.3-18.0
149	BC *	7-6-0	6-6-1	20.4-25.0	149.1	143.8	292.8	108.6	205.6	314.2	1.5	33.5	3-2-0	3-2-0	14.2-25.8
150	NIU *	5-7-0	6-6-0	30.5-30.3	239.8	224.0	463.8	200.8	250.7	451.5	1.4	29.0	2-4-0	2-4-0	32.0-27.0
151	CSU	1-0-0	1-0-0	58.0-27.0	191.0	334.0	525.0	152.0	304.0	456.0	2.0	34.3	0-0-0	0-0-0	0.0-0.0
152	COLO *	10-4-0	10-4-0	31.1-21.7	183.9	254.5	438.4	149.7	193.1	342.9	1.4	30.8	3-3-0	5-1-0	25.8-29.0
233	FOR *	8-3-0	0-1-0	40.1-30.1	14.7	27.5	42.2	38.8	11.2	50.0	0.1	2.8	2-3-0	0-1-0	36.8-37.6
234	ARMY *	8-5-0	7-6-0	29.9-19.8	339.6	74.4	414.0	121.2	170.2	291.5	1.9	34.6	4-3-0	4-3-0	30.0-21.6
235	CCONN *	2-9-0	0-0-0	22.3-34.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0-6-0	0-0-0	19.0-35.3
236	SYR *	4-8-0	5-7-0	25.7-38.6	119.7	321.3	440.9	225.5	276.1	501.6	1.7	28.7	2-4-0	2-4-0	24.3-35.2

Sat, Sep 2

Gm#	Team	Overall			Off (Yds)			Def (Yds)			TO	ToP	Home/Away		
		SU W/L	ATS	AF-AA	Ru	Pa	Tot	Ru	Pa	Tot			SU W/L	ATS	AF-AA
153	BGSU *	4-8-0	4-8-0	24.8-38.3	181.0	226.1	407.1	191.4	273.3	464.8	2.8	28.6	1-5-0	3-3-0	21.7-49.8
154	MSU *	3-9-0	4-8-0	24.1-27.8	172.7	222.3	395.0	158.7	206.2	364.8	1.5	31.7	2-5-0	3-4-0	25.1-25.3
155	WYO *	8-6-0	9-5-0	35.9-34.1	207.0	229.1	436.1	203.6	249.5	453.1	1.7	31.6	2-4-0	2-4-0	37.0-42.5
156	IOWA *	8-5-0	6-7-0	24.9-18.8	171.8	153.2	325.0	149.8	201.4	351.2	0.9	29.9	4-4-0	3-5-0	25.6-19.4
157	M-OH *	6-7-0	9-4-0	22.8-23.8	136.8	230.6	367.4	144.5	208.8	353.4	1.5	32.4	3-4-0	6-1-0	24.7-27.0
158	MRSH *	3-9-0	4-7-1	26.4-35.3	108.2	241.8	350.0	202.3	253.7	456.0	1.3	29.9	3-4-0	2-4-1	32.4-35.6
159	KENT *	3-9-0	6-6-0	20.6-28.7	167.5	141.7	309.2	189.8	196.8	386.5	1.1	29.0	2-4-0	3-3-0	17.5-30.8
160	CLEM *	14-1-0	8-7-0	39.2-18.0	170.3	333.9	504.3	129.6	181.9	311.5	1.9	30.6	7-1-0	5-3-0	42.3-15.9
161	MASS	0-1-0	0-1-0	35.0-38.0	115.0	298.0	413.0	112.0	391.0	503.0	2.0	28.6	0-0-0	0-0-0	0.0-0.0
162	CCAR *	10-2-0	0-0-0	37.3-19.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7-1-0	0-0-0	39.8-20.9
163	AKR *	5-7-0	4-8-0	27.4-33.6	132.2	255.3	387.4	224.8	241.3	466.2	1.8	26.0	3-3-0	3-3-0	27.3-32.3
164	PSU *	11-3-0	10-3-1	37.6-25.4	174.9	260.7	435.6	151.3	216.6	367.9	1.4	27.7	7-1-0	5-2-1	36.6-22.4
165	LOU *	9-4-0	5-7-1	42.5-23.8	242.2	290.5	532.7	115.2	207.1	322.2	2.5	28.5	4-2-0	2-3-1	41.8-27.7
166	PUR *	3-9-0	5-7-0	24.6-38.3	96.3	294.9	391.3	238.5	207.4	445.9	2.8	29.3	1-4-0	4-1-0	22.0-35.6
167	ARST *	8-5-0	7-6-0	27.3-21.5	137.2	242.2	379.4	143.4	219.5	362.8	1.3	29.0	3-3-0	2-4-0	25.8-23.7
168	NEB *	9-4-0	6-5-2	26.5-23.9	169.2	211.7	380.9	148.0	215.8	363.8	1.1	32.2	7-0-0	3-2-2	34.3-16.1
171	NEV *	5-7-0	4-8-0	25.4-29.0	174.0	208.2	382.2	297.8	158.4	456.2	0.9	29.3	1-5-0	2-4-0	20.3-26.7
172	NW *	7-6-0	8-5-0	26.0-22.2	153.2	245.1	398.2	139.2	265.2	404.4	1.2	28.6	4-4-0	4-4-0	21.1-18.5

**SU W/L:** Straight-Up Win/Loss Record

**ATS:** Against the Spread Record

**AF-AA:** Average Points For - Average Points Against

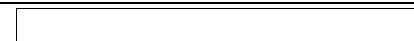
**Ru:** Rushing Yards

**Pa:** Passing Yards

**Tot:** Total Yards

**TO:** Turnovers

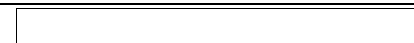
**ToP:** Time of Possession



Gm#	Team	Overall			Off (Yds)			Def (Yds)			TO	ToP	Home/Away		
		SU W/L	ATS	AF-AA	Ru	Pa	Tot	Ru	Pa	Tot			SU W/L	ATS	AF-AA
173	BALL *	4-8-0	7-5-0	27.0-30.1	220.0	229.2	449.2	150.6	319.7	470.3	2.0	31.0	3-4-0	6-1-0	24.7-25.9
174	ILL *	3-9-0	5-7-0	19.7-31.9	140.5	174.6	315.1	219.2	185.9	405.1	1.7	26.0	2-5-0	2-5-0	23.4-30.6
175	UTEP *	4-8-0	5-6-1	26.3-34.9	185.5	183.7	369.2	210.3	209.0	419.3	1.3	30.2	1-4-0	2-2-1	24.2-39.4
176	OKLA *	11-2-0	7-6-0	43.9-28.8	236.8	318.0	554.8	162.6	269.4	432.0	1.3	32.3	7-1-0	5-3-0	42.5-23.1
177	CAL *	5-7-0	5-7-0	37.1-42.6	154.3	358.8	513.2	272.9	245.4	518.3	1.3	28.3	1-5-0	1-5-0	36.8-45.8
178	UNC *	8-5-0	8-5-0	32.3-24.9	145.8	293.2	439.0	227.3	180.8	408.1	1.2	24.4	4-4-0	4-4-0	31.6-26.4
179	USA *	6-7-0	3-10-0	25.4-27.0	145.6	243.8	389.4	215.5	174.6	390.2	1.7	29.5	1-5-0	1-5-0	23.0-31.7
180	MISS *	5-7-0	4-8-0	32.6-34.0	149.4	314.9	464.3	246.4	214.9	461.3	1.6	25.9	4-3-0	3-4-0	37.1-32.1
181	WMU *	13-1-0	10-4-0	41.6-19.8	228.9	252.4	481.2	153.6	200.1	353.6	0.6	34.0	7-1-0	6-2-0	35.0-16.1
182	USC *	10-3-0	8-5-0	34.4-24.2	201.1	276.4	477.5	139.8	227.5	367.3	1.5	31.9	6-0-0	5-1-0	40.3-19.2
184	LSU *	8-4-0	6-6-0	28.3-15.8	233.1	190.1	423.2	117.3	197.2	314.4	1.4	31.1	3-2-0	3-2-0	29.6-18.4
183	BYU	1-0-0	0-1-0	20.0-6.0	171.0	194.0	365.0	86.0	134.0	220.0	0.0	29.6	0-0-0	0-0-0	0.0-0.0
185	MD *	6-7-0	4-9-0	25.8-29.5	199.5	178.2	377.8	214.8	212.3	427.1	1.5	27.8	2-5-0	1-6-0	23.0-34.4
186	TEX *	5-7-0	6-6-0	31.9-31.5	240.2	252.0	492.2	190.3	258.5	448.8	1.9	28.3	4-2-0	4-2-0	30.3-24.8
187	TEM *	10-4-0	12-2-0	32.4-18.4	176.4	237.4	413.8	130.5	152.1	282.6	1.4	33.5	4-3-0	6-1-0	27.4-19.6
188	ND *	4-8-0	4-8-0	30.9-27.8	163.3	254.3	417.6	182.4	196.4	378.8	1.5	28.9	3-5-0	3-5-0	31.3-27.9
189	GASO *	5-7-0	3-9-0	26.6-26.5	224.8	155.7	380.4	170.6	229.5	400.1	1.5	32.7	2-5-0	2-5-0	25.4-29.4
190	AUB *	8-5-0	9-4-0	31.2-17.1	271.3	169.5	440.8	132.8	229.2	361.9	1.1	29.2	6-2-0	6-2-0	36.3-12.6
191	APP *	10-3-0	7-6-0	29.2-17.8	256.9	179.0	435.9	125.5	203.8	329.3	1.0	33.6	5-2-0	6-1-0	29.7-18.7
192	UGA *	8-5-0	6-7-0	24.5-24.0	191.5	193.5	384.9	143.7	183.8	327.5	1.5	33.7	3-4-0	2-5-0	22.6-22.1
193	UK *	7-6-0	7-6-0	30.0-31.3	234.2	186.1	420.2	230.8	206.1	436.8	2.2	29.9	2-3-0	4-1-0	25.0-37.4
194	SOMIS *	7-6-0	4-8-1	32.8-29.5	177.7	298.2	475.9	149.9	174.9	324.8	2.5	33.5	4-2-0	1-4-1	36.8-23.5
195	HOU *	9-4-0	5-8-0	35.8-23.5	147.1	296.3	443.4	100.2	219.5	319.6	1.9	33.1	2-4-0	2-4-0	35.7-30.8
196	UTSA *	6-7-0	7-6-0	29.2-27.9	161.9	213.6	375.5	162.5	229.5	392.0	1.2	31.4	4-3-0	5-2-0	34.6-26.1
197	SOCAR *	6-7-0	6-6-1	20.8-26.5	134.4	213.2	347.5	203.5	208.7	412.2	1.5	29.9	1-4-0	1-3-1	10.2-26.0
198	NCST *	7-6-0	9-4-0	27.0-22.8	156.2	260.5	416.7	109.3	244.2	353.5	1.5	31.8	3-3-0	4-2-0	27.3-28.2
202	FLA *	9-4-0	5-7-1	23.9-16.8	128.2	215.8	344.0	144.5	148.5	293.0	1.7	31.2	4-3-0	3-4-0	19.1-18.4
201	MICH *	10-3-0	6-7-0	40.3-14.1	213.3	212.0	425.3	119.2	142.5	261.8	0.9	33.0	2-3-0	2-3-0	36.4-20.0
203	VAN *	6-7-0	7-6-0	23.0-24.0	164.5	191.2	355.7	163.5	244.6	408.2	1.2	31.8	2-4-0	3-3-0	16.8-25.5
204	MTU *	8-5-0	6-6-1	39.7-35.8	192.2	325.8	518.1	198.8	250.8	449.5	1.6	28.1	3-3-0	3-3-0	45.5-38.5
206	ALA *	14-1-0	10-5-0	38.8-13.0	245.0	210.3	455.3	63.9	197.9	261.8	1.3	30.9	5-0-0	4-1-0	42.0-19.8
205	FSU *	10-3-0	8-4-0	35.1-25.0	202.3	264.1	466.4	128.0	221.1	349.1	1.5	32.9	4-1-0	3-2-0	32.8-30.2
207	TROY *	10-3-0	6-7-0	33.7-22.1	169.2	260.5	429.6	120.2	246.4	366.5	1.6	30.9	4-2-0	4-2-0	31.2-21.7
208	BSU *	10-3-0	3-10-0	33.8-23.3	174.5	298.3	472.8	176.2	213.0	389.2	1.4	28.0	6-0-0	0-6-0	32.5-24.0

**SU W/L:** Straight-Up Win/Loss Record  
**ATS:** Against the Spread Record  
**AF-AA:** Average Points For - Average Points Against  
**Ru:** Rushing Yards

**Pa:** Passing Yards  
**Tot:** Total Yards  
**TO:** Turnovers  
**ToP:** Time of Possession





**Sun, Sep 3**

Gm#	Team	Overall			Off (Yds)			Def (Yds)			TO	ToP	Home/Away		
		SU W/L	ATS	AF-AA	Ru	Pa	Tot	Ru	Pa	Tot			SU W/L	ATS	AF-AA
209	WVU *	10-3-0	5-8-0	31.2-24.0	228.4	257.2	485.5	168.2	257.7	425.9	1.6	29.1	4-2-0	3-3-0	31.7-26.0
210	VT *	10-4-0	8-6-0	35.0-22.8	183.5	261.4	444.9	140.5	200.2	340.7	1.9	31.3	4-1-0	2-3-0	29.6-24.4
211	TAM *	8-5-0	4-9-0	34.8-24.5	211.8	255.2	467.0	191.8	250.0	441.8	1.6	26.5	2-3-0	1-4-0	24.6-26.0
212	UCLA *	4-8-0	4-8-0	24.9-27.5	84.6	295.6	380.2	171.5	210.5	382.0	2.1	26.7	3-3-0	2-4-0	32.8-29.8

**Mon, Sep 4**

Gm#	Team	Overall			Off (Yds)			Def (Yds)			TO	ToP	Home/Away		
		SU W/L	ATS	AF-AA	Ru	Pa	Tot	Ru	Pa	Tot			SU W/L	ATS	AF-AA
213	TENN *	9-4-0	6-7-0	36.4-28.8	205.2	238.5	443.7	218.5	230.2	448.8	2.0	27.4	2-3-0	2-3-0	34.4-33.8
214	GT *	9-4-0	7-4-1	28.2-24.5	258.1	129.2	387.2	172.2	229.4	401.6	1.2	30.3	4-2-0	4-1-1	27.0-27.3

## PRES COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

### OKLAHOMA Over UTEP by 50

The Oklahoma Sooners are -43 on the betting line. Why because Baker Mayfield has come back for one last run at a National Championship, and pound for pound, this absolutely looks like one of the best teams in America. Mayfield is sitting on 9,980 passing yards and 88 touchdowns in his collegiate career, and with both Joe Mixon and Samaje Perine heading to the NFL this year, there's no doubt that he'll be throwing the ball more often. Could Mayfield throw for 5,000 yards and 50 touchdowns? We aren't doubting it. We also aren't doubting a defense that could have two NFLers in the secondary in Jordan Thomas and Jordan Parker.

The Miners have gone 18-31 in their last four seasons. Ryan Metz is going to be in for a big challenge as the quarterback. With a porous offensive line in front of him, it's going to be hard to see him getting much of anything in terms of points on the board in this game. Hopefully he will escape injury free? Let's also remember that the top running back in school history, Aaron Jones is no longer in El Paso, and Quadriz Wadley, the man who was projected to replace him, is already down for the season with a shoulder injury. UTEP is no stranger to playing against these huge betting lines. The team was clocked 41-7 last year at Texas as a 31-point pup, and the year prior, Arkansas and Texas Tech beat the Miners 48-13 and 69-20 respectively to cover massive point spreads.

The real question is whether Oklahoma even wants to cover a spread like this one. Last season, there were two games with tremendous spreads on the docket. The Sooners covered against Kansas in conference play, 56-3 at -39.5, but they didn't against Louisiana Monroe in a 59-17 victory at -46. That said, the fact that the Sooners put up eight touchdowns in both of those games tells us that similar could be expected in this one. Can UTEP score twice to cover anyway? It's doubtful. This is just unfortunate for UTEP. Metz and the Miners are going to get crushed in what looks like the biggest blowout of the week. That's why I'm going to bite the bullet and lay the lumber with the Sooners. We just don't think the Miners are scoring a TD in this game, and we know that Oklahoma has a history of getting into the 50s in games like this. Mayfield is going to want to put on a show in his senior season. Grease up the wheels on the wagon. Sooners Roll!

**Projected Score: Oklahoma 53, UTEP 3**

## DJ COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

### Wyoming at IOWA Under Total by 8

The biggest name right now in college football that you've never heard of is Wyoming Cowboys' quarterback Josh Allen. You wouldn't think that a man who had no major scholarship offers from Power Five schools could ultimately evolve into an NFL quarterback in a place like Laramie, Wyoming. Instead, Allen not only could be a first-round pick this year; he might end up as the No. 1 overall pick in the NFL Draft with a good season. Allen is going to have his work cut out for him at the start of the season, though. There really isn't another player worth discussing on this Wyoming roster aside from Allen. He threw for 3,203 yards last season with 28 touchdowns. That said, he also threw 15 interceptions and had to rely heavily upon one of the better running backs in the Mountain West, Brian Hill. Allen is also losing all three of his best receivers from last season. That's why this game is so crucial for him. You can bet there will be all sorts of scouts in Iowa City to see how Allen performs on a relatively big stage against a very stout defense. But bringing in Kellen Overstreet, Milo Hall and C.J. Johnson could be a challenge for him so early in the campaign.

Kirk Ferentz keeps maintaining his job in spite of the fact that the results coming out of Kinnick Stadium haven't been great. The Hawkeyes always seem to be a fringy Big Ten contender, and they even rise up every now and again and finish the year ranked in the Top 25. This year probably isn't going to be one of those seasons, though. The entire Iowa offense is really rolling over. There isn't a clear quarterback in town with C.J. Beathard now playing for the 49ers, and we can't imagine either Nathan Stanley or Tyler Wieggers are going to be much better than Beathard was. Let's remember that Beathard turned into an NFL quarterback. Are either of these guys really all that capable?

With all the attention on Allen, the biggest thing Iowa can do is try to limit his time to throw the ball. The Hawkeyes are flipping over their whole secondary from last year, but they do have one of the better front sevens in the Big Ten. The Iowa Hawkeyes perpetually have a strong defense, and they're going to try to make life a living nightmare for Allen. Keep a really close eye on Josey Jewell, an NFL prospect at linebacker and a man who could change this game all on his own. If Jewell and a front four that will feature three excellent defensive ends can harass Allen, there's no doubt that life is going to be easier on the new defensive backs.

Allen is one of the premier quarterbacks in the nation, and Iowa is breaking in a brand new pivot. But the difference is that the Hawkeyes are always great defensively. We can't say anything near the same for Wyoming. If the Cowboys can't figure out how to get off the field and don't look comfortable in the passing game, they're going to be in a lot of trouble. We feel like there's no choice but to doubt the A) Iowa offense B) new offensive Cowboy starters C) Cowboy D in preventing the Hawkeyes from ball control. Therefore, we're going to take the tick and go under the total of 52.

**Projected Score: Iowa 27, Wyoming 17**

## BAGS COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

### LSU Over BYU by 24

BYU has already started this season off with a win over Portland State. The 20-6 victory didn't really do much to inspire for a game against LSU, but it's easy to say that the Cougars were far more interested in this battle than they were that one against a woeful FCS squad. The Cougars didn't really show much to LSU in that first game of the year. They ran the ball right up the gut a ton, and most of the passing game with Tanner Mangum was vanilla. That said, BYU looks like it could have a budding star on its hands in Squally Canada. Canada, now looks to be the featured back. He got the ball in his hands 16 times in the opener and ran for 98 yards and a touchdown. Replicating that success is going to be incredibly tough against a stout LSU defense.

The Bayou Bengals are flawed this year, but they could look a lot different offensively than what we're used to. Danny Etling is still nothing more than a game manager at best, but he's going to be commanded with more to do this season. New offensive coordinator, Matt Canada comes over from Pittsburgh with a lot of buzz surrounding him. At the Spring Game in Baton Rouge, the Tigers called a slew of reverses and jet sweeps, and that might be just what the doctor orders to get some of the pressure off of Derrius Guice, the team's Heisman Trophy contending tailback.

BYU's third down conversion pct. against Portland State was 31%. Then again, it's also worth remembering that five of BYU's first six third down attempts came at distances of 10 yards or longer. Staying out of that type of disastrous down and distance scenario against LSU is a must. Hurricane Harvey really put a damper on the Cougars and their chances in this game. This was originally supposed to be played at NRG Stadium in Houston. Obviously with all the rain flooding out the area, all of the major sporting events in south Texas have been forgotten about. Still, that kills any sense of a "neutral field" for this game. Only the diehard of diehards will change plans and ultimately head to New Orleans instead of Houston, and even then, the area is so soaked around the whole gulf coast at this point that it would be tough to justify changing travel plans. Thus, there should be nothing but LSU fans in attendance in this one. The game may as well have been played in Baton Rouge at night at this point. This is the second straight year the Bayou Bengals have gotten some help from a hurricane in terms of a game's location being changed, and with that, they should walk away with an easy victory. There's a reason all the sportsbooks changed this spread from LSU -12.5 to LSU -14.5 as soon as the location change was announced. Tigers ROAR!

**Projected Score: LSU 37, BYU 13**

## SAMMY COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

### MICHIGAN ST. Over Bowling Green by 27

When the Spartans were at their best, they were lining up and just pounding the football. Last season, they didn't quite have the QB play to match the running game, and that gave teams the ability to sit in the box with eight and nine guys. This year, it should be back to basics for Sparty. Brian Lewerke is back after an injury-riddled freshman campaign. He dazzled in the Spring and clearly is going to be a man who can make a difference with both his arm and his legs. Lewerke might end up being a future star in East Lansing, and if he can stay healthy, that should open up the box a little more for Scott and Holmes. Don't be shocked if both running backs end up having huge years for the Spartans, starting in this game against Bowling Green.

Last season couldn't have started any worse for Bowling Green. The Falcons allowed a whopping 77 points to Ohio St and couldn't figure out how to do much of anything on either side of the ball. There's a big matchup problem here for BGSU, too. The Falcons are notorious for having one of the worst rushing defenses in America, and taking that team up against Michigan State is going to be a problem. Cleveland is going to be the featured running back in this offense this year. With that type of running average (7.0 ypc) over the course of the last three wins of last season? Why not?

Spartan is going to be one of the tougher teams to back in the early going this year. On paper, this team should win eight or nine games and contend in the Big Ten. However, on paper, this was a 10-win team last year, too, and we all see how that panned out. The early line movement at all of the online sportsbooks has been on the Falcons. Most are forecasting a nice turnaround this year for Mike Jinks' team in his third year on the job because of that end of season push in 2016. We still don't see it. The Spartans have tremendous motivation on their side to perform at a high level after last season's dud, and we can't get that 77-point showing from Ohio State out of our minds. If MSU can get to half of that, it should cover this spread easily, especially now that it's come down to 17.

**Projected Score: Michigan St. 37, Bowling Green 10**





# CONSENSUS COLLEGE FOOTBALL UNDERDOG BEST BET

## TEXAS Over Maryland by 7

The Big Ten East is a scary place right now with Michigan, Ohio State and Penn State all challenging for the National Championship. Maryland lost games to all three last year (and will probably do the same this year), yet it still found a way to get to the Quick Lane Bowl where it was beaten by Boston College. The Terrapins have 12 starters returning from last season's team, and they could be scary on offense. Caleb Henderson is a fast quarterback with a big arm. Transferring from North Carolina will give Henderson a leg up on this offense from most newcomers, as the UNC and Maryland offenses are very similar in nature. Ty Johnson and Lorenzo Harrison were fantastic last year. They averaged 9.1 and 7.2 yards per carry a campaign ago behind an offensive line that is mostly intact heading into 2017. The real problem for the Terrapins is their defense. We know that Maryland is going to blitz a ton, but there is a real problem defending the run. The issue really is more about the offense than anything else. Though the Terps play fast, they also end up off the field quickly, too. Three-and-outs tend to be a disaster for a thin unit.

The Longhorns have largely underachieved by their own standards, and that's why Charlie Strong doesn't have a job there any longer. But the cupboard is far from bare for new HC Herman. Shane Buechele was under a ton of scrutiny in the Spring from Herman. The new coach demands excellence and accuracy under center. Buechele is capable of filling the role, and there isn't going to be much of a choice for him to do that knowing that the Longhorns only have two scholarship quarterbacks this year. But the real question is whether the rest of the skill position players around him can do the job. Chris Warren III will have the backfield to himself after D'Onta Foreman left for the NFL, and Collin Johnson, Devin Duvernay, Armanti Foreman and Jerrod Heard might make up the deepest receiving corps in America.

We think Maryland is going to be incredibly live dog in this game. The biggest thing Texas might have going against it is the fact that it's at home. Expectations are sky high this season, and anything short of a blowout of the Terps won't be looked upon kindly for a fan base with expectations that are bordering on unrealistic. Obviously taking the 18.5 points because this is our underdog pick of the week.

**Projected Score: Texas 34, Maryland 27**

### GRIDIRON GOLD FINAL COLLEGE FOOTBALL 2016 POWER RATINGS

Top GPR is 100. Add the HFA (Home Field Advantage) to the home team. Subtract lower GPR from higher GPR. This is the GPR pointspread. Example: Team A GPR is 90, Team B (at home) GPR is 78+3 HFA = 81. Team A favored by 9 pts

GRIDIRON GOLD COLLEGE FOOTBALL POWER RATINGS											
TEAM	GPR	HFA	TEAM	GPR	HFA	TEAM	GPR	HFA	TEAM	GPR	HFA
AIR FORCE	69	3	FRESNO ST	48	2	MISSISSIPPI ST	68	3	SO. MISS	60	3
AKRON	59	3	GEORGIA	73	3	MISSOURI	63	4	STANFORD	75	3
ALABAMA	100	4	GA SOUTHERN	56	3	NAVY	71	3	SYRACUSE	57	3
APP ST	70	3	GEORGIA STATE	50	2	NEBRASKA	73	5	T.C.U.	71	3
ARIZONA	58	4	GEORGIA TECH	73	3	NEVADA	53	4	TEMPLE	78	3
ARIZONA ST	60	3	HAWAII	53	4	NEW MEXICO	64	3	TENNESSEE	74	3
ARKANSAS	71	3	HOUSTON	76	3	NEW MEXICO ST	47	2	TEXAS	72	4
ARKANSAS ST	65	3	IDAHO	60	2	NO. CAROLINA	78	3	TEXAS A&M	74	4
ARMY	61	2	ILLINOIS	55	2	NO CARO ST.	73	3	TEXAS ST	38	1
AUBURN	82	3	INDIANA	68	3	NORTH TEXAS	49	3	TEXAS TECH	65	4
BALL ST	58	2	IOWA	75	3	NO. ILLINOIS	66	3	TOLEDO	72	3
BAYLOR	66	4	IOWA ST	62	4	NORTHWESTERN	72	3	TROY	65	3
BOISE ST	76	4	KANSAS	53	2	NOTRE DAME	70	3	TULANE	55	3
BOSTON C.	65	2	KANSAS ST	78	4	OHIO	65	6	TULSA	72	3
B. GREEN	53	2	KENT ST.	51	3	OHIO ST.	91	3	U.C.F.	70	3
BUFFALO	44	2	KENTUCKY	67	3	OKLAHOMA	90	4	U.C.L.A.	64	3
B.Y.U.	75	3	LA LAFAYETTE	63	2	OKLAHOMA ST	79	3	U.N.L.V.	56	2
CALIFORNIA	62	4	LA MONROE	51	2	OLD DOMINION	65	4	UTAH	75	4
C MICHIGAN	63	3	LA TECH	68	4	OREGON	65	3	UTAH ST	61	3
CHARLOTTE	50	2	LOUISVILLE	87	5	OREGON ST	63	3	U.T.E.P.	47	2
CINCINNATI	58	3	L.S.U.	86	3	PENN ST	82	3	U.T.S.A.	61	3
CLEMSON	91	3	MARSHALL	46	2	PITTSBURGH	77	3	VANDERBILT	69	3
COLORADO	78	4	MARYLAND	61	3	PURDUE	55	2	VIRGINIA	58	3
COLORADO ST	70	3	MASS. U.	37	3	RICE	53	2	VIRGINIA TECH	80	4
CONNECTICUT	51	3	MEMPHIS	72	3	RUTGERS	48	2	WAKE FOREST	64	3
DUKE	64	3	MIAMI	79	4	SAN DIEGO ST	73	3	WASHINGTON	88	5
E CAROLINA	55	3	MIAMI OHIO	61	3	SAN JOSE ST	57	2	WASH. ST.	74	4
E MICHIGAN	63	3	MICHIGAN	82	4	S.M.U.	60	3	W VIRGINIA	77	3
FLORIDA	72	4	MICHIGAN ST	65	3	SO. ALABAMA	56	3	W KENTUCKY	77	4
FLA ATLANTIC	48	2	MID TENN ST	62	3	SO. CAROLINA	65	4	W MICHIGAN	78	3
FLA INTL	53	1	MINNESOTA	71	3	SO. FLORIDA	76	3	WISCONSIN	81	3
FLORIDA ST	85	3	MISSISSIPPI	68	4	SO. CALIFORNIA	87	4	WYOMING	66	3



## PRES PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

### Philadelphia Over NY JETS by 6

Philadelphia (2-1) beat Miami 38-31 last Thursday. Carson Wentz threw touchdown passes to both of his new receivers, and Mychal Kendricks returned an interception 31 yards for a score. Wentz connected with Torrey Smith on a 50-yard TD down the right side on a third-and-8 on Philadelphia's opening series. Smith, who was signed along with Alshon Jeffery in free agency to bolster the receiving group, didn't have a catch in the first two games. Wentz then hit Jeffery for a 20-yard gain and found him again for a 15-yard TD pass over the middle on his fourth and final series. Wentz finished 6 of 10 for 129 yards, two TDs and one interception.

The Jets (1-2) lost at the Giants 32-31 on Saturday. After failing to score a touchdown in their first two preseason games, the Giants got three in the first half against the Jets in opening a 29-3 lead. The Jets had a chance, though, to win after starter Christian Hackenberg took over for an injured Bryce Petty with 2:00 to play and finished off a 75-yard touchdown drive with a 17-yard pass to Frankie Hammond with 1:26 left. Coach Todd Bowles went for the win, but the Giants stopped a 2-point run by rookie Elijah McGuire. Hackenberg finished 12 of 21 for 126 yards. So no surprise, Jets coach Todd Bowles has named veteran journeyman Josh McCown as his Week 1 starting QB.

There's obviously no question that Wentz is Philly's starting QB. What about No. 2? Nick Foles was brought in to be the backup but he hasn't seen the field at all this preseason. He's been nursing an elbow injury, which sidelined him thus far. Eagles coach Doug Pederson expects Foles to be ready for Week 1. Matt McGloin has thrown the most passes of any of the quarterbacks this preseason, including Wentz. McGloin has attempted 88 total passes and has completed 62 of them.

At running back, how the Eagles split up carries this season is anyone's guess. But the main three ball-carriers, in some order, will likely be LeGarrette Blount, Wendell Smallwood, and Darren Sproles. If the Eagles keep a fourth running back on the roster, it seems likely to come down to Donnel Pumphrey versus Corey Clement. It's hard to imagine the Eagles cutting Pumphrey after trading up in the fourth round of the 2017 NFL Draft to pick him.

Hackenberg has played poorly in extensive action with the starters. It's a short week for the Jets and they won't have Petty, who has been their best QB. Take Philly as a short road dog.

**Projected Score: Philadelphia 20, NY Jets 14**

## DJ PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

### CAROLINA Over Pittsburgh by 10

Pittsburgh (2-1) lost Saturday to Indianapolis 19-15. The Steelers' first-team offense ran 15 plays for three points. The connection between Ben Roethlisberger and Antonio Brown looked effortless on two over-the-middle plays for 28 yards. After Roethlisberger took a strip-sack on the first drive, the Steelers didn't mind removing him on short work to avoid injury. Roethlisberger completed 6 of 9 passes for 73 yards on two drives, mostly working the intermediate passing game. Landry Jones, back from an abdominal injury, played like a reliable backup by completing 21 of 31 passes for 163 yards and a score.

Carolina (2-1) won in Jacksonville 24-23 last Thursday. Seeing live action for the first time since last season's finale, Newton completed both of his passes for 21 yards and a touchdown. Newton's 9-yard slant pass to Kelvin Benjamin capped a 10-play opening drive that showed coach Ron Rivera all he needed to see from his star quarterback. Jonathan Stewart rushed five times for 39 yards. Stewart busted off a 31-yard gain on his second carry of the night. Stewart looks like he will remain an important part of the Panthers offense despite the addition of first-round pick Christian McCaffrey.

Pittsburgh star running back Le'Veon Bell continues to hold out and he won't play here – Bell says he will report to the team on Friday. Fitzgerald Toussaint, Knile Davis, James Conner, Terrell Watson and Trey Williams are using every available rep to get work. Davis, a free agent addition this offseason, worked with the first-team against the Colts, and rattled off runs of 10 and 11 yards in the game's first drive.

Conner notched 26 yards on four carries Saturday in the Steelers' third preseason game. All of his work came in the second half. The third-round rookie entered camp as the favorite to back up Bell, but was the third Steeler to see a carry Saturday behind starter Davis and fullback Roosevelt Nix. Toussaint caught his lone target for three yards before exiting with a left leg injury Saturday. This could be an important game for WR Sammie Coates. Brown is not going to play in the final preseason game for the Steelers. Coming off an injury yet again, JuJu Smith-Schuster, their rookie second-round pick, will likely not play. Chances are Eli Rogers and Martavis Bryant are not going to see a significant amount of playing time, either. That would seem to be a golden opportunity for the re-emergence of Coates, who due to the circumstances at the time began last season as a starter and performed very well in the first five games before a hand injury quickly derailed him for the rest of the year. In two preseason games, he has four receptions for 21 yards. It's a short week for Pittsburgh and Carolina is at home, so take the Panthers because the Steelers will sit most starters.

**Projected Score: Carolina 23, Pittsburgh**

## BAGS PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

### GREEN BAY Over LA Rams by 10

Green Bay (2-1) lost Saturday in Denver 20-17. Starting quarterback Aaron Rodgers played just two series and the Packers were substituting regularly on defense by the second quarter. With starting right tackle Bryan Bulaga sidelined by an ankle injury, Rodgers was sacked by Denver star Von Miller early in the game, forcing a field-goal try. That was the two-time MVP's last snap. Penalties and sacks were the biggest problems in backup Brett Hundley (20-of-30, 186 yards, 83.5 rating) getting much going until a scoring drive in the fourth quarter cut into Denver's 20-10 lead. Ty Montgomery (three carries for 31 yards and a touchdown), fourth-round pick Jamaal Williams (three catches for a team-high 46 yards) and fifth-round pick Aaron Jones (six carries for 43 yards) led the way for a backfield that produced 166 total yards.

The Rams (2-1) lost at home to the Chargers 21-19 on Saturday – the Rams were down 21-0 in the first quarter. Jared Goff was 4 of 6 for 49 yards. He fumbled on a snap and it was returned for a touchdown. Sean Mannion played well, including throwing a 38-yard TD pass to Josh Reynolds in the third quarter. Travis Coons kicked a 53-yard field goal after starter Greg Zuerlein made field goals of 42, 21 and 57 yards. The Rams held out running back Todd Gurley and wide receivers Tavon Austin and Cooper Kupp, who have injuries.

If Green Bay wins, it will finish the preseason with a 3-1 record for the third time in the last four years. Coach Mike McCarthy still believes in the importance of this game. McCarthy did not get into specifics about playing time on Thursday vs. the Rams, but he said both the No. 3 and 4 quarterbacks, Joe Callahan and Taysom Hill, would play after not getting any action in Denver. Take Green Bay simply because McCarthy wants to be 3-1 and they're home team, even though Rodgers won't leave the bench.

**Projected Score: Green Bay 24, LA Rams 14**

## SAMMY PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

### Washington at TAMPA BAY Under Total by 6

The Washington Redskins were a team in turmoil for several years, but things seemed to calm down a little with the arrival of Kirk Cousins at QB. It would appear that the circus has rolled back into town, though, as they have already fired their GM and placed the franchise tag on their QB for the second straight season. Cousins has expressed his desire to stay in Washington, but the longer this team puts off paying him the money that he probably deserves, the likelier it is that he is going to cut his losses and go elsewhere at some point. That may well happen if the Redskins fail to make the playoffs again this NFL preseason.

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers made a big step forward last season, coming close to making the playoffs. They look like a team that can challenge the Falcons and Panthers for the NFC South this season, although they are no longer going to be able to take anyone by surprise like they did last season. This team is a legitimate dark horse in the making, and some savvy offseason acquisitions may have turned them into a real playoff contender. The Redskins and Buccaneers will hook up in Tampa in their final game of the 2017 NFL preseason. Here's a look at why the Buccaneers are the NFL odds favorites against the Redskins on Thursday.

It was a bit of a disappointing year for the Redskins in 2016, as they only managed to put together an 8-7-1 record, which meant they missed the playoffs. That took their 3-year record to 21-27-1, which included an 8-15 record on the road. The Redskins are the underdog for this game, and will need to improve on their 6-13 road dog record over the past 3 seasons if they hope to come away with a positive result.

It was an unexpectedly good year for this young Buccaneers squad, as they put together a 9-7 record, taking them to 17-31 over the past 3 seasons. This is a team that was not very competitive in their own building during that run, going just 7-17. On the few occasions that they were in as the home favorite, the Bucs went just 4-8. Expect that tide to turn this NFL preseason.

The Redskins come into this one as a 2½ point underdog. While their SU record left something to be desired, the Skins did manage to go 10-6 ATS last season. That record was something of an improvement on previous seasons, and took their record since 2014 to 24-25. The Redskins did a little better on the road ATS, going 12-11, which included a 10-9 record as the road dog.

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers went 9-7 ATS in the 2016 season, which was a little better than their previous efforts, taking them to 23-25 since 2014. During that 3-year span, the Bucs went just 8-16 ATS as a home team, and a very disappointing 3-9 as the home favorite.

The Redskins have had the better of this match-up, winning 2 of their last 3 meetings with Tampa Bay. I think the Buccaneers win this by a FG, and I believe that the score will be low, which means that the UNDER is the bet for me.

**Projected Score: Tampa Bay 17, Washington 14**