



VARSITY

THE WEEK IN  
COLLEGE FOOTBALL

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 2019



Maryland head coach Mike Locksley looks on as his team works out during a training camp Aug. 2 in College Park, Md. Coming off the darkest season in the history of the Maryland football program, the Terrapins are poised to enter a new era under Mike Locksley, hired in December after a successful run as Alabama's offensive coordinator, who remembers what it was like when the team competed for conference titles and counted on playing in bowl games.

[WILL NEWTON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

# You can go home again

Unoccupied electric scooters certainly wouldn't have dotted the sidewalks. All the upscale restaurants on the water hadn't yet emerged. Would there have been solar panels? No way. Not in the Southwest Washington where Maryland coach Michael Locksley grew up.

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**In the spotlight:** Cam Newton's brother famous in his own right. **Page 8**

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A look at the college football landscape, including what to watch for this weekend. **Page 8**

# V COVER STORY

# Remember the time

Michael Locksley's childhood Washington is gone, but it led him back to Maryland



Maryland football coach Michael Locksley in the courtyard of his former elementary school in Washington. [TONI L. SANDYS/THE WASHINGTON POST]

By Emily Giambalvo  
The Washington Post

Unoccupied electric scooters certainly wouldn't have dotted the sidewalks. All the upscale restaurants on the water hadn't yet emerged. Would there have been solar panels? No way. Not in the Southwest Washington where Michael Locksley grew up.

A dichotomy between socioeconomic classes always existed in this neighborhood. Public housing complexes sat just blocks away from luxury waterfront apartments, just as they do now. But Nationals Park and Audi Field, both less than half a mile from Locksley's childhood home, have catalyzed the already occurring gentrification of Southwest Washington. So how much has changed here? Locksley repeats the question and laughs.

He stands on the field where he first played football for the Boys & Girls Club, back when he and the others shuffled through all the positions and sports distracted kids who could have been tempted by trouble. Even the grass, Locksley says, seems better than before.

As Locksley explains the neighborhood he remembers compared to the one that exists now, a man on a bicycle rides up to Locksley. It's a childhood friend, so the two hug and briefly reconnect.

"I saw you on TV, man!" the visitor said of Maryland's new head football coach.

"You look the same, bro!" said Locksley, 49. "Sheesh!"

That sparks a new topic: This community is tightknit. Everything and everyone feels connected. The kids whose lives centered around activities at the Boys & Girls Club have grown into adults, and many still live in the area.

"A lot of people have a tough time getting out," Locksley said. "It wasn't easy or normal to get out of here."

But as the high school version of Locksley developed into a promising football player, he kept taking the next logical step — first to play for Towson, then to coaching. He rose through the ranks, all the way to the top job at Maryland. When the university introduced Locksley nine months ago, the coach focused on his roots. That's what made this job attractive and meaningful to him. After a pep band created some fanfare and Locksley stepped to the podium, he mentioned growing up in a single-parent home and how the Boys & Girls Club helped raise him.

Lawrence Brown stood on the turf listening inside Cole Field House, long ago the basketball arena where

he'd hang out with Locksley, his childhood best friend. Speaking from the stage, Locksley detailed the CliffNotes version of his past. To most, the man in a suit came to Maryland as a highly successful assistant from Alabama with the added bonus of ties to the Washington area, the right fit to rebuild the program.

"A lot of people, they just see the finished product now," Brown said. "They don't know what it took for him to get to where he's at."

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At the No. 4 Police Boys & Girls Club, football bled into basketball and into baseball, with soccer, tennis, boxing — just about any sport — sprinkled throughout. That's where Locksley and his peers headed after school every day until about 8 p.m. School, sports and the club were all intertwined. They piled into a light blue van that shuttled to various parts of the city for games year-round. In the summers, the days started earlier, filled with camps and field trips for the younger kids, while Willie Borden, the director of the club, helped the older ones find jobs.

Borden saw himself as an extension of the kids' parents. Locksley calls the retired police officer one of the most influential people in his childhood. Borden ensured kids made it home safely, and he'd buy them shoes or a meal. Even the kids who grew up to be "hardened, big-time criminals," Locksley said, "when they went in the Boys & Girls Club, they took their hat off, they didn't use profanity." That's the discipline Borden instilled. Those who broke club rules weren't allowed back for a couple days, the worst punishment given how the club served as a focal point in the lives of all the kids.

Locksley played in a nighttime basketball summer league for teenagers and adults. From the court, they could see the Capitol Dome and the Washington Monument lit up, as well as a high rise known for drug trade and violent crime. Even as youngsters, Locksley said the neighborhood kids understood what surrounded them. They'd see people they looked up to sent to jail. The Boys & Girls Club, and the man known to everyone as Mr. Borden, helped keep them away.

"He was outstanding at keeping us busy," Brown said. "And he showed us that he really loved us."

When Locksley recalls the day his childhood hit a turning point, he isn't sure what time of year it was. It definitely wasn't winter, because he remembers walking home from school on a bright day. He saw his mom crying on the five steps that led to their home. All the family's belongings had been moved to the parking lot.

The family lived in a middle-class townhouse, but Locksley's parents split when he was in about fifth grade. His mom had been a homemaker and then started taking odd jobs to provide for Locksley, his two older brothers and a younger sister. After they were evicted, the siblings separated, living with various relatives until the end of school year. Locksley's mom brought them back together when they moved into public housing in Southeast Washington, a 10-minute drive from their previous home on the other side of the Anacostia River.

By the time Locksley reached about 14, he became the man of the house. Both of his older brothers, Bryant and Eric, have spent most of their adult lives in prison, mostly by way of trouble that started with selling drugs. Locksley isn't justifying what they did; there are other ways to make money. But the family needed financial help, and people can become products of their environments. Bryant now lives in the Washington area after his recent release from prison, while Eric is still jailed in California.

Locksley never let his focus drift. He cared about school and loved sports. He wouldn't have time to get into trouble even if he had wanted, Borden said. Locksley would visit his brothers in jail, and they too encouraged him to stay out of the streets. Kids might learn about prison through movies, but Locksley saw the gates and the guns firsthand. It felt real.

After Locksley finished junior high, he headed to Ballou High School, starred on the football team, continued to help out at home and eventually earned a scholarship. Locksley would go on to establish himself as a coach, but even then, he dealt with the pain of losing his son in 2017 and his mother this spring.

"The average person," Brown said after he collected himself from crying, "they would have folded."

•••

But, no, Locksley didn't fold. The kid who once doodled football plays in his school notes arrived at Towson as a lanky defensive back. The staff jokingly called him Manute, a nod to Manute Bol, the tall and skinny NBA player. Gordy Combs, the defensive coordinator at the time, assigned Locksley a double-digit jersey number so he'd look bigger on the field. It wasn't hard to spot the leaders on the team, Combs said. During meals, Locksley's table never had an empty seat.

In the same way Boys & Girls Club football turned into high school ball and then into a college career, coaching seemed like the natural next step

for Locksley when it became clear he wouldn't make it to the NFL. After his senior season, Towson's head coach, Phil Albert, retired. Combs moved into the top job and hired Locksley to coach defensive backs. There was no interview, just a question from Combs: "You want to coach the secondary?"

The transition came easily. As a free safety, Locksley led the defense and earned the respect of his teammates. He spent just one year coaching at Towson and then began his climb, including two stints at Maryland and a tumultuous first head-coaching tenure at New Mexico, eventually earning the 2018 Broyles Award, given to the top assistant in college football.

Locksley made his name as a coach who excels in recruiting, but to those who know him best, it's almost a disservice to simplify his strengths to that. It's not just recruiting. It's the way he bridges gaps between people and connects, the way he understands the circumstances some of these players come from.

"Why do people trust him?" said Jay Robinson, who coached Locksley's position group at Towson. "Because he's a man of his word. He says he's going to do something for you. He's going to support you. He makes every effort to do that."

Locksley describes walking into homes to convince athletes to play for his school as *deja vu*. Maybe there's a single mom, who's trying to get home in time for the meeting after a long day. Some of the apartments look like the one he lived in.

"It's a very familiar place for me," said Locksley, whose high school coach led him through his recruiting process.

Locksley now lives in the suburbs in a home with a pool and a basketball court. When he introduces himself around Southwest, he says he's the head coach at Maryland but that he's from here.

The Boys & Girls club shut down years ago. But a recreation center has emerged in its place, and one of Locksley's childhood friends works there.

While wandering through Lansburgh Park, a couple blocks from the field where he first played, Locksley looks at a large grassy area. It's the perfect location for a Boys & Girls Club. He always said he'd build one if he made enough money. You could level the ground and create a football field. There'd be room for a gym, too.

It'd be tricky, though, and head football coaches aren't known for having ample spare time for projects. Brown calls this one of Locksley's "best-kept secrets," but he also realizes the coach has some ambitions to work toward at Maryland first.

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**STANDINGS** Final standings from 2018

EAST TEAM	OVERALL		CONFERENCE		PPG off.	PPG def.	WEST TEAM	OVERALL		CONFERENCE		PPG off.	PPG def.
	W-L	Pct.	W-L	Pct.				W-L	Pct.				
Georgia	11-3	.786	7-1	.875	37.9	19.2	Alabama	14-1	.933	8-0	1.000	45.6	18.1
Florida	10-3	.769	5-3	.625	35.0	20.0	LSU	10-3	.769	5-3	.625	32.4	21.8
Kentucky	10-3	.769	5-3	.625	26.6	16.8	Texas A&M	9-4	.692	5-3	.625	36.0	25.3
Missouri	8-5	.615	4-4	.500	36.6	25.5	Mississippi State	8-5	.615	4-4	.500	28.5	13.2
South Carolina	7-6	.538	4-4	.500	30.1	27.2	Auburn	8-5	.615	3-5	.375	30.9	19.2
Vanderbilt	6-7	.462	3-5	.375	28.5	26.6	Ole Miss	5-7	.417	1-7	.125	33.9	36.2
Tennessee	5-7	.417	2-6	.250	22.8	27.9	Arkansas	2-10	.167	0-8	.000	21.7	34.8

**GAME OF THE WEEK** NO. 16 AUBURN VS. NO. 10 OREGON

**When:** 7:30 p.m. EDT Saturday **Where:** AT&T Stadium, Arlington, Texas **TV:** ABC

## NIX OF TIME

**TRUE FRESHMAN GETS TESTED RIGHT AWAY WITH DUCKS SHOWDOWN**



Auburn quarterback Bo Nix. [BUTCH DILL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

**Keys for Auburn**

**Settle in:** True freshman Bo Nix takes the reins at quarterback and the nerves are sure to be frazzled for the first series or two. Nix has to shake out the butterflies and get comfortable. The Tigers' receivers can play a part with Nix getting settled in by making big plays. Going out and being flustered is the worst thing that can happen for Nix and his psyche.

**Apply pressure:** The AU defensive line is one of the best in the country. They need

to play like it against Oregon, disrupt quarterback Justin Herbert and force the offense to rethink its game plan.

**Keys for Oregon**

**Establish the run:** CJ Verdell ran for just over 1,300 yards as a freshman last year. He needs to have success against a top-notch Auburn defensive line, which will help open up the Ducks' passing game. If Auburn stuffs the run it could be a long day for Oregon.

**Be bold:** The SEC is the

top conference in the nation and Oregon has play well if it wants to be taken seriously as a contender and get the Pac-12 some respect. Oregon has to play mistake-free and take some chances on offense early.

**Prediction**

**Auburn 24, Oregon 17:** Oregon will probably hit a few big plays on offense but Auburn's defense will tighten up as the game goes on. It will take a quarter or two for the Tigers to establish the run game, which is just too deep for Oregon to handle.

**BEST OF THE REST** This weekend's other top conference games (all times EDT)

**SOUTH CAROLINA VS. NORTH CAROLINA**

**When:** 3:30 p.m. Saturday  
**Where:** Charlotte, N.C.  
**TV:** ESPN

**Notes:** After a few years away Mack Brown is back coaching again. He takes the helm of a Tar Heels program trying to be a contender in the ACC. South Carolina coach Will Muschamp was defensive coordinator for Brown at Texas from 2008-10. The Gamecocks have a seasoned quarterback in Jake Bentley.

**NO. 3 GEORGIA AT VANDERBILT**

**When:** 7:30 p.m. Saturday  
**Where:** Nashville, Tenn.  
**TV:** SEC Network

**Notes:** Georgia has had two running backs go over 1,000 yards in a season the past two seasons — D'Andre Swift, who led the team with 1,049 and 10 TDs, is back. Georgia has won 13 straight games against SEC East teams. Vanderbilt's quarterback situation is still up in the air between graduate transfer Riley Neal or junior Deuce Wallace.

**GEORGIA SOUTHERN AT NO. 6 LSU**

**When:** 7:30 p.m. Saturday  
**Where:** Baton Rouge, La.  
**TV:** ESPNU

**Notes:** Under new offensive coordinator Steve Ensminger, LSU's offense will look a lot different from the normal, bruising attack from year's past. LSU coach Ed Orgeron has said it's strictly a spread offense that can use four receivers at once, or possibly five.

**BY THE NUMBERS** SEC individual statistical leaders through 2018 season



**PASSING YARDS**  
**Player** **Yds.**  
T. Tagovailoa, ALA **3,966**  
J. Ta'amu, MISS 3,918  
D. Lock, MIZZ 3,498  
J. Bentley, SC 3,171  
K. Shurmur, VAN 3,130



**PASSING TOUCHDOWNS**  
**Player** **No.**  
T. Tagovailoa, ALA **43**  
J. Fromm, GA **30**  
D. Lock, MIZZ 28  
J. Bentley, SC 27  
Several tied at ... 24



**RUSHING YARDS**  
**Player** **Yds.**  
T. Williams, A&M **1,760**  
B. Snell Jr., KY 1,449  
K. Vaughn, VAN **1,244**  
L. Rountree III, MIZZ 1,216  
N. Fitzgerald, MSU 1,121



**RECEIVING YARDS**  
**Player** **Yds.**  
A. Brown, MISS **1,320**  
J. Jeudy, ALA **1,315**  
K. Lipscomb, VAN 916  
D. Samuel, SC 882  
D. Lodge, MISS 877



**SCORING**  
**Player** **Pts.**  
C. Tracy, LSU **129**  
T. McCann, MIZZ 123  
R. Blankenship, GA **122**  
J. Bulovas, ALA 117  
T. Williams, A&M 114

**POWER RANKINGS** Breaking down the SEC



**1. Alabama:** The Tide, still stinging from January, gets another shot at an ACC opponent in the season opener. Chances are they will keep it within 28 points this time.



**2. Georgia:** The Bulldogs will probably have half the crowd or more in Nashville and more than half the points, although Vandy's Ke'shawn Vaughn may get 40 carries.



**3. LSU:** There is a lot riding on Joe Burrow but finding the right quarterback is key for the teams that look to challenge the Alabama/Georgia hegemony.



**4. Auburn:** This spot might be wildly optimistic for AU but the Tigers look experienced and talented on both lines of scrimmage and that's where things get done in this league.



**5. Texas A&M:** See above for the Joe Burrow/Bo Nix/Feleipe Franks/Kelly Bryant/Jake Bentley/Jarrett Guarantano Theory and insert Kellen Mond squarely in that mix.



**6. Florida:** For all the hot takes about Florida after their Week Zero win over Miami, you just have to accept Franks as a high risk/high reward quarterback.



**7. Missouri:** Kelly Bryant looks to forge a legacy as something other than "that quarterback between Deshaun Watson and Trevor Lawrence."



**8. South Carolina:** I never could figure out South Carolina last year, when I thought they were better than they seemed. This year could be more of the same.



**9. Tennessee:** Rebuilding is slow. That's why it's going to another "be patient" year for the Big Orange, although the record should be better because of the schedule.



**10. Mississippi State:** There is a fair argument to be made that MSU has the best defense in the SEC a year ago but much of it is in the NFL and the preseason.



**11. Vanderbilt:** The Commodores scratched and clawed their way out of the poll basement last year, so I'm not going to arbitrarily exile them downstairs — for now.



**12. Kentucky:** This may seem drastically low but almost everything went right for Kentucky last season and the pendulum may be due to swing back.



**13. Ole Miss:** A look at the roster gives the impression that the Hugh Freeze talent has just about run out. Saturday's game with Memphis will involve some low-key local hatred, too.



**14. Arkansas:** The Razorbacks didn't win an SEC game in 2018 so there's lots of room for advancement — but no guarantee they will win one this season, either.

**PLAYERS TO WATCH**

**Jake Fromm, QB, Georgia:** The senior passed for 2749 with 30 touchdowns last season and is poised for another big year. He could get off to a nice start this season against Vanderbilt.

**Trey Knox, WR, Arkansas:** The Razorbacks need help after a 2-10 season in 2018. Knox, a freshman who is 6-5 and fast, could be the answer. He had a big spring game with three catches, including a 45-yard touchdown.

**ROUNDING IT OUT** This weekend's other games

**SATURDAY (all times EDT)**

Time	Matchup	TV
Noon	Toledo at Kentucky	SECN
Noon	Ole Miss at Memphis	ABC
Noon	Mississippi State vs. Louisiana	ESPNU
3:30 p.m.	Duke vs. #2 Alabama	ABC
3:30 p.m.	Georgia State at Tennessee	ESPNU
4 p.m.	Portland State at Arkansas	SECN
7:30 p.m.	Missouri at Wyoming	CBSSN



It's more than a game.

SEC preview coverage in **VARSITY**

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	W-L	Pct.	W-L	Pct.				W-L	Pct.				
Ohio State	13-1	.929	8-1	.889	42.4	25.5	Northwestern	9-5	.643	8-1	.889	24.2	23.2
Michigan	10-3	.769	8-1	.889	35.2	19.4	Iowa	9-4	.692	5-4	.556	31.2	17.8
Penn State	9-4	.692	6-3	.667	33.8	20.5	Wisconsin	8-5	.615	5-4	.556	29.7	22.6
Michigan State	7-6	.538	5-4	.556	18.7	17.2	Purdue	6-7	.462	5-4	.556	30.5	30.0
Maryland	5-7	.417	3-6	.333	28.5	28.7	Minnesota	7-6	.538	3-6	.333	28.9	26.5
Indiana	5-7	.417	2-7	.222	26.4	29.9	Nebraska	4-8	.333	3-6	.333	30.0	31.3
Rutgers	11-1	.083	0-9	.000	13.5	31.4	Illinois	4-8	.333	2-7	.222	26.0	39.4

**GAME OF THE WEEK** NORTHWESTERN AT STANFORD

**When:** 4 p.m. EDT Saturday **Where:** Stanford Stadium, Stanford, Calif. **TV:** Fox



**Northwestern's Paddy Fisher.** [JIM YOUNG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

## WILDCATS SEE RED

FISHER, NORTHWESTERN OPEN SEASON WITH TOUGH MATCHUP IN CALI

**Keys for Northwestern**

**Settle on a QB:** At midweek, Wildcats coach Pat Fitzgerald still had yet to name a starting quarterback, insisting that competition remains stiff between Clemson transfer and former five-star prospect Hunter Johnson and senior TJ Green. Fitzgerald may wait for the first snap to decide, though it seems like Johnson has the tools to emerge.

**Unleash the defense:**

Defensive tackle Joe Gaziano, who led Northwestern in sacks (7.5) and tackles for loss (12.5) a year ago, will anchor a defense that finished among the top half of the Big Ten in scoring and rushing defense. LB Paddy Fisher will play the role of

workhorse. He finished eighth in the Big Ten in tackles (17 total) and has room to improve.

**Keys for Stanford**

**Find offensive leadership:**

The Cardinal lost two marquee playmakers in running back Bryce Love and receiver JJ Arcega-Whiteside, leaving two significant holes in the offense. Even with those two in 2018, Stanford's offense didn't light the world on fire. The unit mustered 381 yards per game to rank 76th nationally, and its 28-point scoring average was good for 59th. Offensive coordinator Tavita Pritchard will need new leaders to take the reigns.

**Establish a pass rush:**

While the Cardinal's offense

lacked explosiveness, their defense allowed an average of 410 yards per game. The defense returns only five starters and lost its top two tacklers in Bobby Okerke and Sean Barton. Stanford's strength will be its pass rush, which helped force 36 sacks, 11 interceptions and 10 forced fumbles.

**Prediction**

**Stanford 21, Northwestern 17:** Expectations are high for the Wildcats, especially following the program's first Big Ten West Division title. If Hunter Johnson gets the starting nod, he and running back Isaiah Bowser, will need to push the pace against Stanford's suspect defense.

**BEST OF THE REST** This weekend's other top conference games (all times EDT)

**NO. 19 WISCONSIN AT SOUTH FLORIDA**

**When:** 7 p.m. Saturday  
**Where:** Raymond James Stadium, Tampa, Fla.  
**TV:** ESPN

**Notes:** Wisconsin won the only previous meeting, a 27-10 decision in 2014 in Madison. Badgers RB Jonathan Taylor, who statistically dominated the Big Ten last season, once again will be a Heisman Trophy candidate and the driving force in Wisconsin's run-heavy offense.

**PURDUE AT NEVADA**

**When:** 9:30 p.m. Friday  
**Where:** Mackay Stadium, Reno, Nev.  
**TV:** CBS Sports Network  
**Notes:** Purdue won only previous meeting, 24-14 in 2016 in West Lafayette. The Boilermakers, second in the Big Ten West in 2018, must replace their two leading rushers, D.J. Knox and Markell Jones, but standout receiver Rondale Moore returns after making 114 catches for 1,258 yards.

**FLORIDA ATLANTIC AT NO. 5 OHIO STATE**

**When:** Noon Saturday  
**Where:** Ohio Stadium, Columbus, Ohio  
**TV:** Fox  
**Notes:** Ohio State enters a new era under coach Ryan Day and quarterback Justin Fields, a transfer from Georgia. Defense is where the Buckeyes must improve, however, after last year's unit conceded 403 yards per game and failed to generate turnovers.

**BY THE NUMBERS** Big Ten individual statistical leaders through 2018 season



**PASSING YARDS**

Player	Yds.
D. Haskins, OSU	4,831
D. Blough, PU	3,705
C. Thorson, NW	3,183
P. Ramsey, IND	2,875
N. Stanley, IOWA	2,852



**PASSING TOUCHDOWNS**

Player	No.
D. Haskins, OSU	50
N. Stanley, IOWA	26
D. Blough, PU	25
S. Patterson, MICH	22
P. Ramsey, IND	19



**RUSHING YARDS**

Player	Yds.
J. Taylor, WISC	2,194
M. Sanders, PSU	1,274
K. Higdon, MICH	1,178
M. Ibrahim, MINN	1,160
S. Scott, IND	1,137



**RECEIVING YARDS**

Player	Yds.
R. Moore, PU	1,258
T. Johnson, MINN	1,169
P. Campbell, OSU	1,063
S. Morgan Jr., NEB	1,004
K.J. Hill, OSU	885



**SCORING**

Player	Pts.
J. Pinegar, PSU	101
M. Recinos, IOWA	98
S. Evans, PU	96
C. McLaughlin, ILL	96
J. Taylor, WISC	96

**POWER RANKINGS** Breaking down the Big Ten\*



**1. Ohio State (0-0):** New coach (Ryan Day). New quarterback (Justin Fields). But will the Buckeyes show a needed new defense against Florida Atlantic?



**2. Michigan (0-0):** Time is running (out?) on the Wolverines delivering on the promise of a championship season. It gets rolling against Middle Tennessee.



**3. Iowa (0-0):** Age before beauty. It won't always be pretty but Kirk Ferentz, the dean of Big Ten coaches, figures out a way to keep the Hawkeyes in the hunt.



**4. Penn State (0-0):** Just when it looked like the Nittany Lions might become passé, the blue and white pass by more trendy conference picks.



**5. Nebraska (0-0):** In his second season at Central Florida, coach Scott Frost went undefeated. His second season in Lincoln should go better, but likely not as well.



**6. Wisconsin (0-0):** Badgers will ride tailback Jonathan Taylor deep into games, but can the passing attack put the Dub over the hump?



**7. Northwestern (0-0):** A huge test for the Wildcats arrives early in Palo Alto against No. 25 Stanford. Fitz will have them ready.



**8. Michigan State (0-0):** The Spartans have enjoyed a great run under Mark Dantonio, but it feels like MSU may be hitting the wall.



**9. Minnesota (0-0):** "Row the Boat" remains afloat, but the Golden Gophers need to prove they can compete on a weekly basis.



**10. Purdue (0-0):** The Boilermakers have the best playmaker in the Big Ten in Rondale Moore. Unfortunately, it's a team game.



**11. Maryland (0-0):** New coach (the old coach) Mike Locksley worked under Nick Saban at Alabama. The Terps hope osmosis happens early and often.



**12. Indiana (0-0):** Things never change. Try as they might, the poor Hoosiers always end up being the Little Train that Couldn't.



**13. Illinois (0-0):** Remember when the Illini were dangerous enough to play for the Rose Bowl? Yeah, fans struggle to recall it, too.



**14. Rutgers (0-0):** Talk about an early litmus test. The Scarlet Knights open against UMass. It's a must-win. Or else. \*Thursday/Friday games not reflected

**PLAYER TO WATCH**

**Justin Fields, QB, Ohio State:** Few players in the country will be under the microscope as much as Fields, who transferred from Georgia earlier this year when Jake Fromm solidified his spot as starting quarterback from the Bulldogs. Fields was one of the top recruits in the nation coming out of high school.



**ROUNDING IT OUT** This weekend's other games

**SATURDAY (all times EDT)**

Time	Matchup	TV
Noon	South Alabama at #24 Nebraska	ESPN
Noon	Howard at Maryland	BTN
Noon	Akron at Illinois	BTN
Noon	Indiana vs. Ball State	CBSSN
3:30 p.m.	Idaho at #15 Penn State	BTN
7:30 p.m.	Middle Tennessee at #7 Michigan	BTN
7:30 p.m.	Miami (Ohio) at #20 Iowa	FS1

**NOTE:** Minnesota was in action Thursday, while Purdue, Wisconsin, Michigan State and Rutgers had Friday matchups.



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	W-L	Pct.	W-L	Pct.				W-L	Pct.				
Clemson	15-0	.1000	8-0	.1000	44.3	13.1	Pitt	7-7	.500	6-2	.750	25.6	27.8
Syracuse	10-3	.769	6-2	.750	40.2	27.0	Georgia Tech	7-6	.538	5-3	.625	33.6	29.3
North Carolina State	9-4	.692	5-3	.625	33.8	24.9	Virginia	8-5	.615	4-4	.500	28.5	20.1
Boston College	7-5	.583	4-4	.500	32.0	25.7	Miami (Fla.)	7-6	.538	4-4	.500	28.8	19.5
Wake Forest	7-6	.538	3-5	.375	32.8	33.3	Virginia Tech	6-7	.462	4-4	.500	29.8	31.0
Florida State	5-7	.417	3-5	.375	21.9	31.5	Duke	8-5	.615	3-5	.375	29.4	27.4
Louisville	2-10	.167	0-8	.000	19.8	44.1	North Carolina	2-9	.182	1-7	.125	27.4	34.5

**GAME OF THE WEEK** VIRGINIA TECH (0-0) AT BOSTON COLLEGE (0-0)

**When:** 4 p.m. EDT Saturday **Where:** Alumni Stadium, Chestnut Hill, Mass. **TV:** ACC Network



**Boston College running back A.J. Dillon.** [THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

## HOKIE DOKIE

**VIRGINIA TECH, BC GIVE EACH OTHER AN EARLY SEASON TEST**

**Keys for Virginia Tech**

**Slow the run:** Once the dominant defense in the ACC, the Hokies slipped to 97th national in total defense and were 105th against the run surrendering an average of 5.3 yards per carry. The Eagles gashed Virginia Tech for 249 yards on the ground and three scores in a 31-21 road win last season. An experienced front returning should result in improvement, but will better be good enough?

**Throw it down field:** With veteran quarterback Ryan Willis and maybe the best corps of receivers returning in the ACC this season, Virginia Tech has the potential to gobble up yardage through the air. Damon Hazelton and Tre

Turner are big-time playmakers who will be hard for the Eagles to handle man-to-man. Willis has the arm and experience now to get the ball in their hands with consistency.

**Keys for Boston College**

**Win up front on offense:** The Eagles have experienced a major turnover on the offensive line, losing four of five starters. They do return some experience, including left tackle Ben Petrula. But Petrula's new line mates will need to gel immediately and create some space for premier back A.J. Dillon to escape with a win against the Hokies.

**Keep pressure on Willis:** This will be a challenge for Boston College, which lost its

big pass-rushing ends Zach Allen and Wyatt Ray to the NFL. Clemson grad transfer end Richard Yeargin could provide a major boost in that area, but new defensive coordinator Bill Sheridan may need to throw a linebacker or safety blitz or five at Willis to keep him off balance.

**Prediction**

**Virginia Tech 27, Boston College 17:** Both teams should be highly motivated since it's the season opener and an Atlantic Coast Conference game. The Hokies, however, may have even more to prove coming off a frustrating 5-7 record in 2018 and a myriad of offseason personnel departures.

**BEST OF THE REST** This weekend's other top conference games (all times EDT)

**DUKE (0-0) VS. NO. 2 ALABAMA (0-0)**  
**When:** 3:30 p.m. Saturday  
**Where:** Mercedes-Benz Stadium, Atlanta (Ga.)  
**TV:** ABC  
**Notes:** The Crimson Tide kicks off another national title run against Duke squad that could be a dark horse in the ACC Coastal Division race this season. The Blue Devils have eight defensive starters back and an explosive offensive star in running back Deon Jackson. But Alabama is, well, Alabama.

**NORTH CAROLINA (0-0) VS. SOUTH CAROLINA (0-0)**  
**When:** 3:30 p.m. Saturday  
**Where:** Bank of America Stadium, Charlotte (N.C.)  
**TV:** ESPN  
**Notes:** Mack Brown begins his second tenure at UNC with the spotlight clearly on heralded freshman quarterback Sam Howell. The one-time Florida State commit will try to get the Mack II era off to a successful start against a South Carolina defense that spent a lot of time in opposing backfields last season.

**VIRGINIA (0-0) AT PITTSBURGH (0-0)**  
**When:** 7:30 p.m. Saturday  
**Where:** Heinz Field, Pittsburgh  
**TV:** ACC Network  
**Notes:** The battle for the ACC Coastal Division starts with this season opener. The Panthers have won five of the six meetings against the Cavaliers since joining the ACC, including the last four. But Virginia has now emerged as one of the Coastal favorites, led by dynamic quarterback Bryce Perkins.

**POWER RANKINGS** Breaking down the ACC

- 1. Clemson:** The Tigers are a staple atop this list. And this year, they carry the same status in national polls.
- 2. Syracuse:** The Orange rose faster than any other ACC team last year. Syracuse has a couple of non-league games before tangling with Clemson in its ACC opener.
- 3. Virginia:** The Cavaliers are the choice by many to win the Coastal Division, and there's a matchup against the division's 2018 champion to begin the season.
- 4. Virginia Tech:** The Hokies floundered at times last season, so putting it back on track is one of the priorities.
- 5. Miami (0-1):** The Hurricanes came up short in the debut under new coach Manny Diaz, but the loss to Florida came with encouraging aspects.
- 6. Pittsburgh:** The Panthers will want to keep their spot atop the Coastal Division.
- 7. Georgia Tech:** There's mystery regarding the Yellow Jackets this season as they no longer will be dubbed a triple-option team.
- 8. Florida State:** The Seminoles didn't go to a bowl game last season, so the gap between games has been larger than normal.
- 9. Boston College:** The Eagles can grind it out with many teams and that could be the strategy again this season.
- 10. Wake Forest:** The Demon Deacons have ended the past three seasons with bowl victories, something that never happened before for the program.
- 11. North Carolina State:** The Wolfpack opens the season at home against East Carolina. That's how the 2018 regular season ended (albeit with a make-up game).
- 12. North Carolina:** There has been plenty of hype regarding Mack Brown's return to the sideline. Now the Tar Heels will be judged by results on the field.
- 13. Duke:** The Blue Devils have an opener against Alabama and they don't have quarterback Daniel Jones anymore. This could be tough.
- 14. Louisville:** New coach Scott Satterfield has arrived from Appalachian State, and the Cardinals need quick fixes.

**PLAYER TO WATCH**

**Jonathan Greenard, OLB, Florida:** The transfer from Louisville, who missed all but a few plays last season with a gruesome wrist injury, was part of a relentless pass rush for the Gators against Miami. Florida finished with 10 sacks and they were spread around. No player had more than two. Greenard finished with 1.5 and looked very much like the player who had a breakout season for the Cardinals in 2017.



**BY THE NUMBERS** ACC individual statistical leaders through 2018 season

PASSING YARDS	Yds.	PASSING TOUCHDOWNS	No.	RUSHING YARDS	Yds.	RECEIVING YARDS	Yds.	SCORING	Pts.
R. Finley, NCST	3,928	T. Lawrence, CLEM	27	T. Etienne, CLE	1,549	K. Harmon, NCST	1,186	A. Szmyt, S YR	151
T. Lawrence, CLEM	2,953	R. Finley, NCST	25	Q. Ollison, PIT	1,213	G. Dortch, WF	1,078	T. Etienne, CLEM	150
E. Dungey, SYR	2,868	B. Perkins, UVA	25	D. Hall, PIT	1,144	O. Zacccheaus, UVA	1,058	C. Dunn, NCST	120
D. Francois, FSU	2,731	R. Willis, VT	24	AJ Dillon, BC	1,108	J. Meyers, NCST	1,047	R. Gallaspy, NCST	114
R. Willis, VT	2,716	A. Brown, BC	20	R. Gallaspy, NCST	1,091	J. Custis, SYR	906	N. Sciba, WF	107

**ROUNDING IT OUT** This weekend's other games

SATURDAY (all times EDT)		
Time	Matchup	TV
Noon	East Carolina at N.C. State	ACCN
6 p.m.	Syracuse at Liberty	ESPN+
7 p.m.	Boise State vs. Florida State	ESPN
MONDAY		
8 p.m.	Notre Dame at Louisville	ESPN



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ACC preview coverage in **VARSITY**

# THIS WEEK IN THE



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**STANDINGS** Final standings from 2018

TEAM	OVERALL		CONFERENCE		PPG off.	PPG def.
	W-L	Pct.	W-L	Pct.		
Oklahoma	12-2	.857	9-1	.900	48.4	33.3
Texas	10-4	.714	7-3	.700	31.1	25.9
Iowa State	8-5	.615	6-3	.667	26.8	22.9
West Virginia	8-4	.667	6-3	.667	40.3	27.2
Baylor	7-6	.538	4-5	.444	29.5	31.7

  

TEAM	OVERALL		CONFERENCE		PPG off.	PPG def.
	W-L	Pct.	W-L	Pct.		
Texas Christian	7-6	.538	4-5	.444	23.5	23.1
Oklahoma State	7-6	.538	3-6	.333	38.4	32.5
Kansas State	5-7	.417	3-6	.333	22.5	25.4
Texas Tech	5-7	.417	3-6	.333	37.3	31.1
Kansas	3-9	.250	1-8	.111	23.8	30.0

**GAME OF THE WEEK** HOUSTON AT OKLAHOMA

**When:** 6:30 p.m. CDT Sunday **Where:** Memorial Stadium, Norman, Okla. **TV:** ABC

**Oklahoma quarterback Jalen Hurts transferred from Alabama this spring.** [SUE OGRICKI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]



## SUNDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

HURTS, SOONERS OPEN SEASON WITH MATCHUP AGAINST KING, COUGARS

**Keys for Oklahoma**

**No mistakes:** Oklahoma is the more talented football team and that means a win comes easily if the Sooners avoid costly mistakes like turnovers on offense and bad tackling on defense. Quarterback Jalen Hurts must play within himself despite the excitement of taking over a new program. The defense must do the small things right that it didn't do in 2019. Oklahoma's offense will score points. It's up to the defense to simply be average. **Run the football:** The Sooners need to establish a new identity with a new quarterback in charge and the

ground game is where Oklahoma can punish Houston over the course of 60 minutes. Use Hurts in the running game early to settle him down, and then pound away in the second half until the lack of depth on the Cougars' defense begins to show.

**Keys for Houston**

**Big plays:** Quarterback D'Eriq King is an unsung star in the state of Texas. He's arguably the best quarterback in the state and he'll want to prove that status in his first game under Dana Holgorsen's high-powered offensive system. Some big plays early and often, including a few by

the defense, is the only way the Cougars pull off an upset.

**Force passing situations:** Houston's defense can't handle the running game of Oklahoma for 60 minutes unless the Cougars find a way to win the early downs and force uncomfortable third down situations. It's no secret that Hurts isn't as effective when he's in must-pass situations. Houston does that by stopping the run on first and second down, and bringing pressure when Oklahoma passes.

**Prediction**

**Oklahoma:** Sooners have too much firepower at skilled positions for Cougars.

**BEST OF THE REST** This weekend's other top conference games (all times CDT)

**OKLAHOMA STATE AT OREGON STATE**  
**When:** 9:30 p.m. Friday  
**Where:** Reser Stadium, Corvallis, Ore.  
**TV:** FS1  
**Notes:** Oklahoma State is the only Big 12 program facing a Power Five opponent in Week 1 of the football season. This isn't an easy test for the Cowboys, but it is a winnable game that carries some national importance for the perception of the Big 12.

**LOUISIANA TECH AT TEXAS**  
**When:** 7 p.m. Saturday  
**Where:** DKR Memorial Stadium, Austin  
**TV:** Longhorn Network  
**Notes:** It's a slow slate of games in Week 1 so the season-opener for the Longhorns makes the cut for one simple reason: Maryland. Texas is undoubtedly improved over the course of two seasons under Tom Herman, but it still hasn't started a season with a win in his era.

**INDIANA STATE AT KANSAS**  
**When:** 11 a.m. Saturday  
**Where:** Memorial Stadium, Lawrence, Kan.  
**TV:** Local  
**Notes:** The pickings are thin this week with most of the conference opting for glorified scrimmages in Week 1, but any game is a tough game for the Jayhawks. Kansas is only a 4.5-point favorite at home in Les Miles' first game in charge of the Jayhawks. That means Vegas considers this nearly even.

**BY THE NUMBERS** Big 12 individual statistical leaders through 2018 season

Player	Yds.	Player	No.	Player	Yds.	Player	Yds.	Player	Pts.
<b>PASSING YARDS</b>		<b>PASSING TOUCHDOWNS</b>		<b>RUSHING YARDS</b>		<b>RECEIVING YARDS</b>		<b>SCORING</b>	
K. Murray, OU	4,361	K. Murray, OU	42	A. Barnes, KSU	1,355	T. Wallace, OSU	1,491	A. Seibert, OU	138
T. Cornelius, OSU	3,978	W. Grier, WVU	37	D. Montgomery, ISU	1,216	A. Wesley, TCU	1,410	M. Ammendola, OSU	109
W. Grier, WVU	3,864	T. Cornelius, OSU	32	P. Williams, KU	1,125	H. Butler, ISU	1,318	E. Staley, WVU	107
S. Ehlinger, UT	3,292	S. Ehlinger, UT	25	K. Brooks, OU	1,056	M. Brown, OU	1,318	C. Hatfield, TCU	106
C. Brewer, BU	3,019	C. Brewer, BU	19	J. Hill, OSU	930	L. Humphrey, UT	1,176	C. Dicker, UT	105

**POWER RANKINGS** Breaking down the Big 12

**1. Oklahoma:** American hero Ric Flair once said "to be the man, you gotta beat the man" and that's exactly the case in the Big 12 with Oklahoma. The Sooners are the four-time defending conference champions and no other team belongs on the top of this poll until that changes. Lincoln Riley hopes to win his third straight with a transfer quarterback as the Jalen Hurts era begins.

**2. Texas:** The Longhorns are a sexy pick in the Big 12 as the program rises back towards national relevance. The hopes lie on the arm and legs of third-year quarterback Sam Ehlinger. Texas is breaking in new starters all over the field on both sides of the ball, but at least Maryland isn't on the schedule. Depth at running back and fresh faces on defense are the main concerns entering the season.

**3. Iowa State:** Matt Campbell stayed in Ames to continue building the football program at Iowa State rather than chase success at a higher-profile school. That chance will still come, but the Cyclones are the darkhorse to unseat Oklahoma and Texas atop the Big 12 thanks to the return of quarterback Brock Purdy and a stout defense.

**4. TCU:** It's all about the quarterback position for Gary Patterson and the Horned Frogs. The defense should be improved and there are weapons at the skill-positions on offense. TCU has struggled with consistency over the past few years and there isn't a clear leader at quarterback on the roster. Have the Horned Frogs flatlined after a decade-plus of success under Patterson?

**5. Oklahoma State:** Mike Gundy remains the man in Stillwater despite continuous flirtations with new jobs, friction with the biggest donor in the program, and a haircut that is stuck between a party and a business meeting. The Cowboys are a middle-of-the-pack program expected to finish in the middle of the standings. Status quo.

**6. Baylor:** Matt Rhule is improving the Bears and the program is home to one of the best quarterbacks in the conference with Charlie Brewer leading the way. Still, the roster isn't where it needs to be to compete for a conference championship due to the wreckage left by former head coach Art Briles.

**7. Texas Tech:** Matt Wells is one of four new coaches in the Big 12 as the Red Raiders watched Kliff Kingsbury fail forward into the NFL. The Red Raiders haven't been a threat in the conference since the program chose the word of Craig James over head coach Mike Leach, who is still owed money from the university as he flourishes at Washington State.

**8. West Virginia:** The black sheep of the Big 12 is also under new leadership as Neal Brown takes over for the wildly entertaining Dana Holgorsen, who is now the head coach at Houston. Quarterback Will Grier is also gone.

**9. Kansas State:** I still expect to look at Kansas State's sideline and see Bill Snyder mull walking his way around in purple even though the Wizard of Manhattan announced his retirement after last year.

**10. Kansas:** LES MILES IS BACK. Kansas fans will now wait four weeks until moving on to basketball season instead of the zero weeks the Jayhawks normally care about football. The 2020 recruiting class is looking solid, though.

**PLAYER TO WATCH**

**Brock Purdy, Iowa State:** QB averaged more than 10 yards per attempt last season — good for third in the country.

**ROUNDING IT OUT** This weekend's other games

**SATURDAY (all times CDT)**

Time	Matchup	TV
11 a.m.	Northern Iowa at Iowa State	FS1
1 p.m.	James Madison at West Virginia	N/A
3 p.m.	Montana State at Texas Tech	N/A
6 p.m.	Stephen F. Austin at Baylor	ESPN+
6 p.m.	Nicholls at Kansas State	ESPN+
7 p.m.	Arkansas-Pine Bluff at TCU	N/A



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# THIS WEEK IN THE

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**STANDINGS** Final standings from 2018

NORTH TEAM	OVERALL		CONFERENCE		PPG off.	PPG def.	SOUTH TEAM	OVERALL		CONFERENCE		PPG off.	PPG def.
	W-L	Pct.	W-L	Pct.				W-L	Pct.				
Washington State	11-2	.846	7-2	.778	37.5	23.3	Utah	9-5	.643	6-3	.667	28.1	19.4
Washington	10-4	.714	7-2	.778	26.4	16.4	Arizona State	7-6	.538	5-4	.556	29.9	25.5
Stanford	9-4	.692	6-3	.667	28.4	22.9	Arizona	5-7	.417	4-5	.444	31.3	32.6
Oregon	9-4	.692	5-4	.556	34.8	25.4	USC	5-7	.417	4-5	.444	26.1	27.0
California	7-6	.538	4-5	.444	21.5	20.4	UCLA	3-9	.250	3-6	.333	24.6	34.1
Oregon State	2-10	.167	1-8	.111	26.1	45.7	Colorado	5-7	.417	2-7	.222	27.1	27.3

**GAME OF THE WEEK** NO. 11 OREGON VS. NO. 16 AUBURN

**When:** 4:40 p.m. PDT Saturday **Where:** AT&T Stadium, Arlington, Texas **TV:** ABC



**Oregon QB Justin Herbert.**  
[TONY AVELAR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

## PUTTING IT ON THE LINE

**DUCKS' O-LINE FACES MAJOR TEST FROM ALL-AMERICAN BROWN, TIGERS' RUSH**

**Keys for Oregon**

**Hold the line:** Oregon returns five starters on an offensive line ranked among the top units in the nation, but it will face its toughest test of the season against Auburn's defensive line led by All-American candidate Derrick Brown. "I don't recall seeing a defensive line as good as this in a long, long time," UO coach Mario Cristobal said. Cristobal, who arrived at Oregon two years ago as the offensive line coach, still works extensively with the offensive line in practice and knows Auburn well from his years coaching at Alabama.

**Find some receivers:** Oregon two potential starters

at wide receiver — Brenden Schooler and Mycah Pittman — to injuries during fall camp that will keep both players out for the first month of the season. Jaylon Redd and Johnny Johnson are the only returning wide receivers with much experience in the offense as the Ducks look for immediate contributions from grad transfer Juwan Johnson and freshman Josh Delgado.

**Keys for Auburn**

**Relax the quarterback:** True freshman Bo Nix, a five-star recruit ranked as the top dual-threat quarterback in the country, beat out redshirt freshman Joey Gatewood to become the first true frosh to start an opener

at quarterback at Auburn since 1946. "He's not your normal freshman, that's fair to say," Auburn coach Gus Malzahn said. Nix plays behind a veteran offensive line with experienced running backs and receivers as well.

**Keep up with Herbert:** Oregon senior Justin Herbert is considered one of the top pro prospects in next year's draft and Auburn will try to counter him with a couple of speedy corners.

**Prediction**

**Oregon 23, Auburn 20:** The Ducks prevail in a rematch of the 2011 BCS national championship game.

**BEST OF THE REST** This weekend's other top conference games (all times PDT)

**OKLAHOMA STATE AT OREGON STATE**  
**When:** 7:30 p.m. Friday  
**Where:** Reser Stadium, Corvallis.  
**TV:** FS1  
**Notes:** Second-year coach Johnathan Smith announced Jake Luton would be his starting quarterback after two injury-plagued seasons out of junior college allowed the NCAA to give him a sixth year of eligibility. Offense wasn't the problem during last year's 2-10 season when the Beavers gave up an average of 45.7 points per game.

**NORTHWESTERN AT STANFORD**  
**When:** 1 p.m. Saturday  
**Where:** Stanford Stadium, Palo Alto, Calif.  
**TV:** FOX  
**Notes:** The Cardinal will need to find the next feature back to follow the line of Christian McCaffrey and Bryce Love with Cameron Scarlett the top candidate after rushing for 719 yards and 16 scores mainly as a backup the past two seasons. Quarterback KJ Costello should give the Cardinal more options through the air.

**FRESNO STATE AT USC**  
**When:** 7:30 p.m. Saturday  
**Where:** Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, L.A.  
**TV:** ESPN  
**Notes:** Last year's 1-2 start for USC led to a 5-7 finish that put Clay Helton on the hot seat headed into his fourth season at USC. The Trojans need to get off a better start this season to take the pressure off Helton, but the schedule is difficult with Fresno State followed by Stanford, Brigham Young, Utah, Washington, and Notre Dame.

**BY THE NUMBERS** Pac-12 individual statistical leaders through 2018 season

PASSING YARDS	Yds.	PASSING TOUCHDOWNS	No.	RUSHING YARDS	Yds.	RECEIVING YARDS	Yds.	SCORING	Pts.
<b>Player</b>		<b>Player</b>		<b>Player</b>		<b>Player</b>		<b>Player</b>	
G. Minshew, WSU	4,779	G. Minshew, WSU	38	E. Benjamin, ASU	1,642	D. Mitchell, ORE	1,184	M. Gay, UTAH	123
K.J. Costello, STAN	3,540	J. Herbert, ORE	29	J.J. Taylor, ARI	1,434	N. Harry, ASU	1,088	E. Benjamin, ASU	108
J. Browning, WASH	3,192	K.J. Costello, STAN	29	<b>J. Jefferson, OREST</b>	<b>1,380</b>	J. A-Whiteside, STAN	1,059	<b>B. Ruiz, ASU</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>J. Herbert, ORE</b>	<b>3,151</b>	<b>K. Tate, ARI</b>	<b>26</b>	M. Gaskin, WASH	1,268	<b>L. Shenault Jr., COLO</b>	<b>1,011</b>	J. Williams, WSU	96
M. Wilkins, ASU	3,025	M. Wilkins, ASU	20	J. Kelley, UCLA	1,243	C. Wilson, UCLA	965	P. Henry, WASH	91

**POWER RANKINGS** Breaking down the Pac-12

- 1. Washington:** The Huskies get a softer opening than last season when their 21-16 loss against Auburn ended their national-title hopes in Week 1.
- 2. Oregon:** The Ducks have won seven straight openers by an average of 38.4 points, but Auburn will provide a tougher opening test.
- 3. Utah:** Thursday night openers have become a tradition for the Utes, who open up at BYU.
- 4. Washington State:** Anthony Gordon, a backup quarterback at WSU for the past three seasons, beat out grad transfer Gage Gubrud to take over Mike Leach's offense.
- 5. Stanford:** The Cardinal are ranked in the preseason AP Top 25 for the ninth straight season, the sixth-longest streak in the nation.
- 6. USC:** Trojans are set to show off a \$315 million renovation of the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum that includes new seats and a tower on the south side.
- 7. Colorado:** New coach Mel Tucker opens up by facing two of the Buffs' top rivals in Colorado State and Nebraska.
- 8. Arizona State:** The Sun Devils will debut freshman Jayden Daniels, a four-star recruit, at quarterback.
- 9. California:** Offensive lineman Gentle Williams, who has started three games in the past three seasons, suffered a season-ending injury.
- 10. UCLA:** After losing 26-17 at home to Cincinnati to begin his first season, Chip Kelly takes the Bruins to Cincy to open up his second year.
- 11. Oregon State:** Guard Gus Lavaka and tight end Noah Togiai were both named to the watch list for the Polynesian College Football Player of the Year.
- 12. Arizona:** Khalil Tate looked back to 2017 form with 361 passing yards and three touchdowns to go with 108 rushing yards in a season-opening 45-38 loss to Hawaii.

**PLAYER TO WATCH**



[DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

**Bradlee Anae, DE, Utah:** Led the conference with eight sacks and was third in 15.5 tackles for loss last season. League again is filled with playmakers in the backfield, but Anae spearheads a Utes defense that will be among the best in the country.

**ROUNDING IT OUT** This weekend's other games

**SATURDAY (all times PDT)**

Time	Matchup	TV
Noon	Eastern Washington at Washington	Pac-12
3:30 p.m.	Cal Davis at Cal	Pac-12
7 p.m.	New Mexico State at Washington State	Pac-12

**NOTE:** UCLA, Arizona State and Utah were in action Thursday, and Colorado had a Friday game.



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# V AROUND THE NATION

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Caylin Newton arrives at the 5th annual NFL Honors at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium on Feb. 6, 2016, in San Francisco. [JOHN SALANGSANG/INVISION FOR NFL]

# Superman, too

## Howard quarterback Caylin Newton, brother of Panthers star Cam, a star even without spotlight

By Edward Lee  
The Baltimore Sun

Near-anonymity suits Caylin Newton well.

Despite being the starting quarterback for the Howard football team and the reigning Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference Offensive Player of the Year, Newton said he can walk around the university's Washington campus with little fanfare. Much of that, he said, has to do with the number of celebrities who have swung by the school.

Former MTV VJ Alani Nicole "LaLa" Anthony (née Vázquez) led the 2017 Homecoming Parade, rapper Snoop Dogg paid a visit last fall and actor/director Jordan Peele made an appearance in March for a private screening of "Us."

"I would say that I'm blessed to go to a school like Howard because who knows who will be walking on campus?" said Newton, the younger brother of Carolina Panthers star quarterback Cam Newton. "I feel like this campus is pretty much accustomed to people of higher profile and celebrity status walking on campus, and for me, I'm just like everybody else. ... So little old me is not too much of a big deal."

In football circles, however, Newton's reputation precedes him. As a freshman in 2017, he racked up 2,432 passing yards, 753 rushing yards and 25 total touchdowns en route to being named MEAC Rookie of the Year. Last fall, he totaled 2,629 passing yards, 504 rushing yards and 26 touchdowns to become a finalist for the 2018 Black College Football Player of the Year Award.

Last month, the 21-year-old Newton was chosen by the MEAC as its Preseason Player of the Year, but the 6-foot, 195-pound junior downplayed the "best player" label.

"It means a lot to me to be the Preseason Player of the

Year, but as far as calling myself the best player in the MEAC, I wouldn't call myself that," Newton said.

The Bison open their season Saturday at noon at Maryland, and Terps coach Mike Locksley called Newton "a dynamic player" who "extends plays with his feet."

"He can make plays with his arm," Locksley said. "Has a lot of experience. ... We've got to do a good job of containing him, making him win in the pocket. I also know they've got great skill across the board on offense and defense. It's a great challenge for us going into Week 1."

Many people have been referring to Newton according to his sibling relationship with older brother Cam. Aside from their shared surname and position though, the brothers are separated by nine years, five inches and 50 pounds.

Caylin Newton acknowledged that when he was younger, he chafed at the comparisons with his older brother.

"I feel like there was a time in my life when I guess I was caught up in the hype, when he won the Heisman and life was good — until the time when I was ready to move on from middle school to high school and try to create my own name," he said. "To this day, I feel like I will be (better than Cam) at some point. We always compete at everything."

"But there was a time when I was about 10 or 11 and I would tell everybody, 'Yeah, I can throw better than Cam. Yeah, I can do this.' And then he won the Heisman, and then he was the No. 1 draft pick, and then he broke records in the NFL, and then he went to the Super Bowl. Then I was like, 'OK, let me just put my head down and start working.'"

Whether it's maturity or appreciation, Newton said he now understands why he is peppered about his brother.

"It's a blessing," he said. "It's

like a blueprint for success to see what he does and learn from his mistakes and to learn what works for him and to see why he is so successful and to just do it. We're two different people, but to learn from him and have a good relationship from an NFL MVP and to have an MVP quarterback as my sibling, it doesn't really get any better than that."

Howard's first-year head coach Ron Prince said he first heard of the younger Newton through Howard graduate Pep Hamilton when they were members of Michigan's coaching staff last season. Prince, who was hired Dec. 10, said he has been impressed with Newton's desire to learn.

"He is a very bright, engaged young man who's very interested in being successful," Prince said. "He has a real 'Coach me, Coach' mentality and attitude with seeking instruction, and that was really positive because at that position, the head coach and the quarterback spend a lot of time together. So I was very excited that he was so open to instruction."

Newton said he has leaned on Prince — who has worked with quarterbacks such as former Indianapolis Colt Peyton Manning, current Detroit Lion Matthew Stafford and former Kansas State Wildcat Josh Freeman — to improve his accuracy, timing and ball protection.

Newton said he's more concerned with lowering the 17 interceptions he threw a year ago than celebrating his lofty numbers.

"Last year is last year," he said. "I just want to learn from last year because at the end of the day, we went 4-6, which was middle of the pack. So all of our individual accolades and achievements and awards mean nothing. So going into this year, there's just one goal, and that's winning the championship and that's taking each game at a time — starting off with Maryland."

## WHAT TO WATCH FOR THIS WEEKEND

The first full slate of the college football season brings with it another referendum game for the Pac-12, highlighting a schedule light on marquee matchups.

No. 11 Oregon against No. 16 Auburn in Arlington, Texas, on Saturday is the only game of Week 1 with two ranked teams. It's a big opportunity for the Ducks and the Pac-12, which has not sent a team to the College Football Playoff since 2016. Last season, Washington came all the way across the country to face Auburn in Atlanta on opening weekend, and the Huskies were handed a loss that helped keep the eventual Pac-12 champions out of the playoff. The Ducks will try to set a new narrative. After a Week 0 warmup, the season goes full throttle today. No. 2 Alabama opens its season against Duke. The Crimson Tide lost preseason All-America linebacker Dylan Moses to a knee injury this week, which could be a bigger issue for Alabama later in the season. Things to know as the season starts with a long Labor Day weekend filled with football.

## GAME OF THE WEEK

**Oregon vs. Auburn:** The Ducks are a trendy pick to win the Pac-12 after going 9-4 last season. They have a highly touted pro prospect at quarterback in Justin Herbert and one of the best offensive lines in the country. Guard Shane Lemieux was a first-team AP preseason All-American and tackle Calvin Throckmorton was selected to the second team. Auburn counters with one of the top defensive lines, led by preseason All-America tackle Derrick Brown. Tigers coach Gus Malzahn, perpetually on the hot seat with a finicky fanbase, is going with freshman and former five-star recruit Bo Nix at quarterback.

## HEISMAN WATCH

A big game against Auburn would help Herbert make an early statement in the Heisman race. A couple of transfer quarterbacks get the opportunity to make good first impressions with their new teams against far less daunting competition. No. 5 Ohio State opens against FAU at home on Saturday with former Georgia quarterback Justin Fields running the show. Fields had some promising moments as a backup last season for the Bulldogs, but saw little action when games were in doubt. New Buckeyes coach Ryan Day should be able to ease Fields in against the Owls. Former Alabama quarterback Jalen Hurts gets his first start with No. 4 Oklahoma on Sunday against Houston. Hurts replaces Heisman winner Kyler Murray, who replaced Heisman winner Baker Mayfield. Can Sooners coach Lincoln Riley make it three straight?

## NUMBERS TO KNOW

**8:** Consecutive victories for No. 14 Utah against in-state rival BYU in the Holy War. The Utes and Cougars play Thursday night in Provo.

**11:** Consecutive losses by Rutgers entering the season, the longest active losing streak in the country. The Scarlet Knights open the season against UMass on Friday. Rutgers is also celebrating the 150th anniversary of the first college football game, played on the campus in 1869 between Rutgers and Princeton.

**15:** Consecutive victories for Clemson entering the season, the longest current streak in the country. The Tigers will also put a 15-game home winning streak and 13-game conference streak on the line.

## UNDER THE RADAR

Lots of coaching debuts that aren't getting much of attention. Most notably:

- Colorado coach Mel Tucker's first game is against rival Colorado State on Friday night.
- Mack Brown coaches his first game in his second stint at North Carolina against South Carolina in Charlotte on Saturday.
- Les Miles' first games as Kansas coach comes against Indiana State, an FCS opponent, on Saturday.

## HOT SEAT

Southern California coach Clay Helton begins a pivotal season Saturday against Fresno State, the defending Mountain West champions. USC is coming off a losing season that nearly cost Helton his job. Instead, he was allowed to overhaul his coaching staff and give it another go. Helton will need to have the Trojans clicking early. Fresno State is coming off consecutive double-digit victory seasons, though has some reloading to do this year under coach Jeff Tedford. After Fresno State, USC faces No. 25 Stanford, BYU, No. 14 Utah and No. 13 Washington, all bowl teams last season.

Ralph D. Russo, *The Associated Press*