



# COLLEGE FOOTBALL

## 2017

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- Top Ten
- Power 5 Conferences
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- Features by Dan Ladd and more!

2016 Heisman Trophy winner  
**LAMAR JACKSON**  
leads the  
Louisville Cardinals

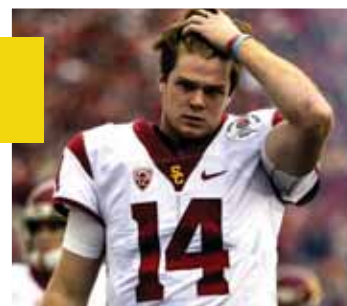
### Lamar Jackson

Quarterback  
Louisville  
Cardinals



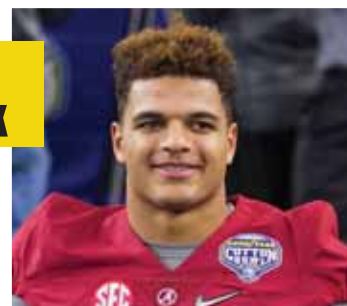
### Sam Darnold

Quarterback  
USC  
Trojans



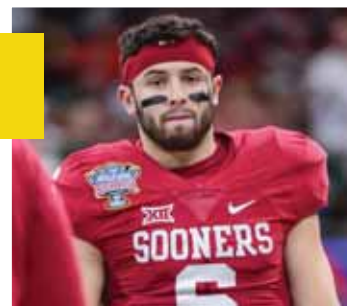
### Minkah Fitzpatrick

Defensive  
Back Alabama  
Crimson Tide



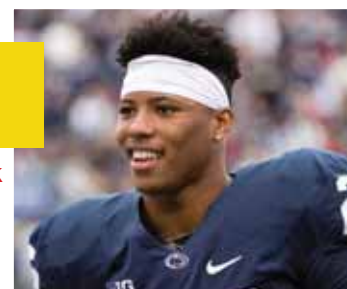
### Baker Mayfield

Quarterback  
Oklahoma  
Sooners



### Saquon Barkley

Running Back  
Penn State  
Nittany Lions



## FIVE TO WATCH

## in 2017





# ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE

## Will 'Bama's dominance continue?

**Head Coach:** Nick Saban

**2016 AP Rank:** 2

**2016 Record:** 14-1 (8-0 SEC), SEC Champion

**2016 Bowl Game:** Lost, 35-31 to Clemson in College Football Championship

Alabama is not used to losing, especially in big games. After watching their defense give up 21 fourth quarter points and a last-second, game-winning touchdown to Clemson in the College Football Playoff Championship, this team will enter 2017 on a redemption mission. What's scary for the rest of college football is that the Crimson Tide has the players to do it. It begins with dual-threat sophomore quarterback Jalen Hurts who threw for 2,780 yards last season and ran for another 954. He's surrounded by offensive weapons including junior running back Bo Scarbrough. Of course there's 'Bama's defense, anchored by Minkah Fitzpatrick, which ranked second in the nation behind only Michigan.

Alabama's schedule looks favorable overall. After a gutsy Week 1 matchup with Florida State, they'll have it pretty easy the rest of the way, although nothing is ever guaranteed in the SEC. Still, they'll be avoiding SEC East powerhouses such as Georgia and Florida.



**Jalen Hurts**

## SEC Preview

### SEC as competitive as ever

For a period of time the SEC was the best overall conference in college football, and it still very well may be. Alabama, of course, has made it to the College Football Playoff, including two championship games, in all three seasons it's been in existence. Since 2006, the only year that an SEC team was not in the championship game (CFP or BCS) was in 2014.

Coming into this season the more competitive division in the SEC looks to be the East, where the Florida Gators defense should dominate, assuming they can stay healthy. The Georgia Bulldogs are expected to improve vastly where sophomore quarterback Jacob Eason aims



to pick up where he left off last season.

In the West, it's all about Alabama but don't overlook the LSU Tigers, who last season discovered another solid running back in Derrius Guice, or the Arkansas Razorbacks and senior quarterback Austin Allen.

With a fairly easy schedule and talent on both sides of the ball Alabama should once again prevail, but could be tested by the likes of Florida or Georgia in the conference championship.



## Arkansas Razorbacks QB Austin Allen

### 2016 SEC Standings Champion: Alabama

Eastern	Overall	Conf.
Florida	9-4	6-2
Tennessee	9-4	4-4
Georgia	8-5	4-4
Kentucky	7-6	4-4
South Carolina	6-7	3-5
Vanderbilt	6-7	3-5
Missouri	4-8	2-6
Western		
Alabama	14-1	8-0
Auburn	8-5	5-3
LSU	8-4	5-3
Texas A&M	8-5	4-4
Arkansas	7-6	3-5
Mississippi State	6-7	3-5
Ole Miss	5-7	2-6





# OHIO STATE BUCKEYES

## Big Ten is Buckeyes to lose

**Head Coach:** Urban Meyer

**2016 AP Rank:** 6

**2016 Record:** 11-2 (8-1 Big Ten), Big Ten East co-champion

**2016 Bowl Game:** Lost, 31-0 to Clemson in Fiesta Bowl, CFP semi-final

Ohio State never does what's expected of them. In 2014 they won it all after losing not one, but two starting quarterbacks to injuries. A year later they slipped late in the season when they were expected to defend that title. Last season, a talented young defense supported a sputtering offense allowing the Buckeyes to reach the College Football Playoff. Now, that defense is expected to be one of the best in college football, anchored by sophomore defensive end Nick Bosa and senior Jalyn Holmes. But it will be the Bucks' offense that will likely determine the outcome of their season, as well as the play of senior quarterback J.T. Barrett. He looked brilliant at times in 2016, especially during a Week 3 dismantling of Oklahoma, but his numbers tapered off afterward.

Urban Meyer will not let this team forget the thrashing it took courtesy of Clemson in the CFP. That alone may be enough motivation in an increasingly competitive Big Ten and a schedule where they get a stingy Indiana Hoosiers team in Week 1, followed by Oklahoma a week later. They'll also have revenge on their minds when they host Penn State in late October. This team could be something special, and if that's the case the annual season finale with Michigan would be another one for the ages.



**J.T. Barrett**

## BIG TEN PREVIEW

### Big Ten goes big time

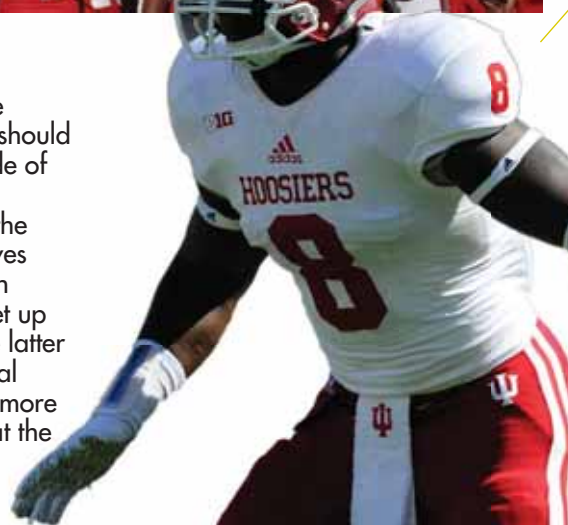
The Big Ten has several teams showcasing top quarterbacks including defending conference champion Penn State, who should enter the season with a chip on their shoulder after being passed over by Ohio State for a spot in the College Football Playoff. Emerging pro-style quarterback Trace McSorley and running back Saquon Barkley could both not only be Heisman Trophy candidates, but propel the Nittany Lions past Ohio State in the East.

Although Jim Harbaugh works miracles, can he keep Michigan's offense competitive after losing several starters from last season? Over in the west, Indiana looks



to improve with a defense led by linebacker Tegrav Scales. But Wisconsin, with sophomore quarterback Alex Hornibrook, should be able to emerge from that side of the Big Ten.

Overall, this conference is in the hands of the Ohio State Buckeyes who play Oklahoma at home in Week 2, where they'll also meet up with Penn State in Week 9. The latter may prove to be the most crucial game for the conference; even more so than Michigan/Ohio State at the end of the season.



## Indiana Hoosiers LB Tegrav Scales

### 2016 Big Ten Standings Champion: Penn State

East	Overall	Conf.
Penn State	11-3	8-1
Ohio State	11-2	8-1
Michigan	10-3	7-2
Indiana	6-7	4-5
Maryland	6-7	3-6
Michigan State	3-9	1-8
Rutgers	2-10	0-9
West		
Wisconsin	11-3	7-2
Iowa	8-5	6-3
Nebraska	9-4	6-3
Minnesota	9-4	5-4
Northwestern	7-6	5-4
Illinois	3-9	2-7
Purdue	3-9	1-8





## USC's success hinges on offense

**Head Coach:** Clay Helton

**2016 AP Rank:** 3

**2016 Record:** 10-3 (7-2 Pac 12),

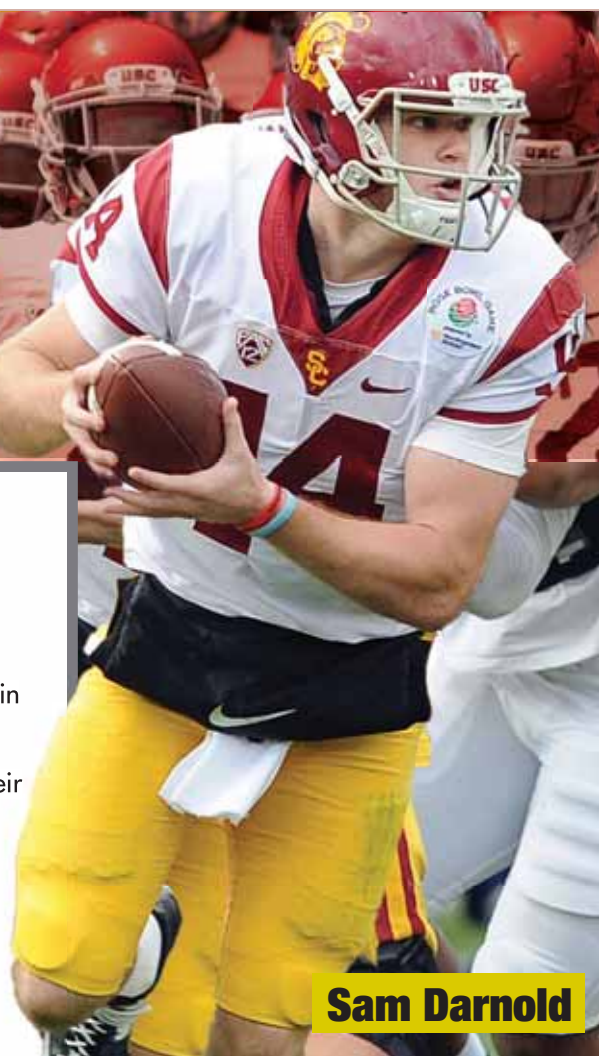
**2016 Bowl Game:** Won, 52-49 over Penn State in the Rose Bowl

Coming off one of the most exciting finishes last season, including an offensive shootout with Penn State in the Rose Bowl, things are looking up in Southern California where the USC Trojans have their eyes on the College Football Playoff.

In his inaugural season last year Clay Helton's USC team got off to a horrendous start, losing three of their first four games. They then ran off nine straight, including the last four against ranked opponents and although they never got to compete for the Pac-12 title, they finished third in the nation.

Sophomore quarterback Sam Darnold is ready to go and if his offensive line is healthy he could put up bigger numbers than the 3,086 yards and 31 touchdowns he threw for last season.

The Trojans have to survive the early part of their schedule this season, which includes matchups against Pac-12 rival Stanford in Week 2 and an improving Texas Longhorns team in Week 3. One team they won't play from the North will be Washington, but they will tangle with Washington State mid-season. If Darnold can keep the offense rolling, look for USC to be a serious CFP contender.



**Sam Darnold**

## Pac-12 Preview

### Exciting teams head Pac-12

This could and should be an interesting year for the Pac-12. While there's a lot of excitement brewing around Sam Darnold and the USC Trojans, who should rule the South Division, a number of teams from the North are forces to be reckoned with.

Sophomore quarterback Jake Browning returns to Washington, where the Huskies still have a solid roster of players who made it to the semifinals in last year's College Football Playoff. Washington State, meanwhile, is a team on the rise that will give their opponents fits.



But it's the Stanford Cardinal who may step up and take not only the North, but the entire Pac-12 with a suffocating defense led by defensive tackle Harrison Phillips, who will likely be playing in the NFL next year. The key for the Cardinal will be on offense, especially at the quarterback position. And, never underestimate the Cal Golden Bears.

While the teams in the North beat up on each other, USC should have their way in the South but will still have to watch out for defending

South champ Colorado, who is solid on offense but hurting on defense. USC also has to survive that Week 2 matchup at home against Stanford that could prove to be a Pac-12 championship game preview.

## Stanford Cardinal DT Harrison Phillips

### 2016 Pac-12 Standings Champion: Washington

North	Overall	Conf.
Washington	12-2	8-1
Washington State	8-5	7-2
Stanford	10-3	6-3
Oregon State	4-8	3-6
California	5-7	3-6
Oregon	4-8	2-7
South		
Colorado	10-4	8-1
USC	10-3	7-2
Utah	9-4	5-4
Arizona State	5-7	2-7
UCLA	4-8	2-7
Arizona	3-9	1-8





## FSU eyes return to CFP

**Head Coach:** Jimbo Fisher

**2016 AP Rank:** 8

**2016 Record:** 10-3 (5-3 ACC)

**2016 Bowl Game:** Win, 33-32 over Michigan in the Orange Bowl

Jimbo Fisher once again has it going in Tallahassee. Last year his Seminoles were ranked No. 2 in both the AP and Coaches polls when they ran into Lamar Jackson and Louisville and suffered a 63-20 Week 3 loss. They would later lose to North Carolina and Clemson before ending the season on a five-game winning streak that included a nail-biter in the Orange Bowl against Michigan.

Sophomore quarterback Deondre Francois gives the 'Noles a lot to look forward to as he finished 2016 as both the ACC Rookie of the Year and ACC Offensive Rookie of the Year. But this year he'll have some new faces on the O-line blocking for him.

The biggest challenge for FSU will be their schedule as they open the season against Alabama, which means someone will be knocked out of the top five. They get Jackson and Louisville at home in Week 7 but play both Clemson and Florida on the road late in the season. They'll also tangle with an improving Miami team, who they've owned the past seven seasons. That's a lot to endure in a season.



**Deondre Francois**

## ACC Preview

### ACC all about the Atlantic

The ACC this year will be all about the Atlantic Division, where three teams - Clemson, Louisville and Florida State - will contend for the division and the conference. Clemson, of course, is the defending College Football Playoff champion but will be without superstar quarterback Deshaun Watson. Kelly Bryant steps in with confidence from head coach Dabo Swinney that he can do the job given Clemson's talent on both offense and defense.

In Louisville, Lamar Jackson seeks a curtain call on his fantastic



freshman season from a year ago that earned him the Heisman Trophy, while at Florida State, Deondre Francois keeps the Seminoles championship dreams alive after a disappointing 2016.

Over in the Coastal Division, Virginia Tech looks to defend their divisional title with a new quarterback while Miami is the team on the rise

Look for the conference champion and CFP contender to come from the Atlantic.



## Clemson Tigers

### QB Kelly Bryant

#### 2016 ACC Standings Champion: Clemson

	Americ	Overall	Conf.
<b>Americ</b>			
Clemson	14-1	7-1	
Louisville	9-4	7-1	
Florida State	10-3	5-3	
N. C. State	7-6	3-5	
Wake Forest	7-6	3-5	
Boston College	7-6	2-6	
Syracuse	4-8	2-6	
<b>Coastal</b>			
Virginia Tech	10-4	6-2	
North Carolina	8-5	5-3	
Miami (Fla.)	9-4	5-3	
Pittsburgh	8-5	5-3	
Georgia Tech	9-4	4-4	
Duke	4-8	1-7	
Virginia	2-10	1-7	



#5

# OKLAHOMA SOONERS

## Will Stoops retirement impact Sooners?

**Head Coach:** Lincoln Riley

**2016 AP Rank:** 5

**2016 Record:** 11-2 (9-0 Big 12), Big 12 champion

**2016 Bowl Game:** Won, 35-19, over Auburn in the Sugar Bowl

Bob Stoops shocked the college football world in June when he walked away as head coach at Oklahoma. Enter Lincoln Riley, Stoops' offensive coordinator who has worked with quarterback Baker Mayfield for two seasons. The Sooners were expected to contend last season and may have if they didn't lose two of their first three games. Both were to ranked teams in Houston and Ohio State. They never looked back, however, and rattled off 10 straight victories to finish their season, including a Sugar Bowl win against Auburn.

Senior quarterback Baker Mayfield may once again be a Heisman Trophy candidate if he can keep out of trouble and get some help from a new core of wide receivers and running backs who will play behind one of the best O-lines in college football.

The Sooners have a Week 2 matchup with Ohio State circled on their calendar as they hope to avenge last season's embarrassing 45-24 loss to the Buckeyes at home. Other than the annual Red River Showdown with Texas in October, their schedule looks doable, which may actually hurt them when it comes time to pick four teams for the College Football Playoff. They need to win big all season long.



**Baker Mayfield**

## Big 12 Preview

### Championship Game returns

The Big 12 has only 10 teams, which up until now has prevented it from having a championship game since 2010. The NCAA, however, overturned a 12-team requirement and starting in 2017 the Big 12 championship will be played by the two teams with the best conference record.

That's good news for the Big 12 in the national championship picture, as it's been overtaken by the other Power Five conferences when selecting teams for the College Football Playoff. Oklahoma made the CFP in 2015 but it took five wins against ranked teams.



The Sooners remain the class of the Big 12 with a well-balanced team more than capable of a championship run. An improving Texas Longhorns team should make the Red River Showdown another classic. The TCU Horned Frogs hope to improve their defense while the Oklahoma State Cowboys and quarterback Mason Rudolph will challenge a lot of teams.

The Sooners should be making a trip to AT&T Stadium in Dallas for the championship game against Texas, TCU or Oklahoma State.



## Oklahoma State

### QB Mason Rudolph

#### 2016 BIG 12 STANDINGS

Champion: Oklahoma  
Overall Conf.

Oklahoma	11-2	9-0
Oklahoma State	10-3	7-2
West Virginia	10-3	7-2
Kansas State	9-4	6-3
TCU	6-7	4-5
Baylor	7-6	3-6
Texas	5-7	3-6
Texas Tech	5-7	3-6
Iowa State	3-9	2-7
Kansas	2-10	1-8



#6

# CLEMSON TIGERS

## New quarterback, same Tigers

**Head Coach:** Dabo Swinney

**2016 AP Rank:** 1

**2016 Record:** 14-1 (7-1 ACC), ACC champion, College Football Playoff champion

**2016 Bowl Game:** Won, 35-31 over Alabama in College Football Playoff Championship Game

There's only one way to top a national championship season and that is to win another one. Clemson has been to the past two CFP championship games and no one would really be surprised if they went to a third.

Sure, Deshaun Watson and running back Wayne Gallman are gone, along with some talented receivers but this team still has a top defense led by ACC Defensive Rookie of the Year Dexter Lawrence, who is just a sophomore. Clemson maintains an equally talented offensive line that can protect incoming quarterback Kelly Bryant.

What's going against Clemson this year are teams such as Miami, Louisville and Florida State, who are improving with talented players of their own. Clemson's schedule finds them playing Auburn, Louisville and Virginia Tech early in the season. But it will be a November matchup with Florida State that could decide who represents the Atlantic Division in the ACC championship game. Could a Clemson/Alabama three-peat be in the works?



**Dexter Lawrence**

## Group of Five Conferences

### 2016 AMERICAN ATHLETIC STANDINGS

**Champion: Temple**

East	Overall	Conf.
Temple	10-4	7-1
South Florida	11-2	7-1
Central Florida	6-7	4-4
Cincinnati	4-8	1-7
Connecticut	3-9	1-7
East Carolina	3-9	1-7
West		
Navy	9-5	7-1
Tulsa	10-3	6-2
Houston	9-4	5-3
Memphis	8-5	5-3
SMU	5-7	3-5
Tulane	4-8	1-7

### 2016 CONFERENCE USA STANDINGS

**Champion: Western Kentucky**

East	Overall	Conf.
Western Kentucky	11-3	7-1
Old Dominion	10-3	7-1
Middle Tennessee	8-5	5-3
Florida Int.	4-8	4-4
Charlotte	4-8	3-5
Florida Atlantic	3-9	2-6
Marshall	3-9	2-6
West		
Louisiana Tech	9-5	6-2
Texas-San Antonio	6-7	5-3
Southern Miss	7-6	4-4
North Texas	5-7	3-5
Texas-El Paso	4-8	2-6
Rice	3-9	2-6

### 2016 INDEPENDENTS

#### W-L Records

Brigham Young	9-4
Army West Point	8-5
Notre Dame	4-8
Massachusetts	2-10

### 2016 MID-ATLANTIC STANDINGS

**Champion: Western Michigan**

East	Overall	Conf.
Ohio	8-6	6-2
Miami (Ohio)	6-7	6-2
Akron	5-7	3-5
Bowling Green	4-8	3-5
Kent State	3-9	2-6
Buffalo	2-10	1-7
West		
Western Michigan	13-1	8-0
Toledo	9-4	6-2
Northern Illinois	5-7	5-3
Eastern Michigan	7-6	4-4
Central Michigan	6-7	3-5
Ball State	4-8	1-7

### 2016 SUN BELT STANDINGS

**Champion: App. State/Ark. State**

Overall	Conf.
Appalachian State	10-3 7-1
Arkansas State	8-5 7-1
Troy	10-3 6-2
Idaho	9-4 6-2
Louisiana-Lafayette	6-7 5-3
South Alabama	6-7 2-6
Georgia Southern	5-7 4-4
Louisiana-Monroe	4-8 3-5
Georgia State	3-9 2-6
New Mexico State	3-9 2-6
Texas State	2-10 0-8

### COACH BRIAN KELLY



**Notre Dame Coach**

### 2016 MOUNTAIN WEST STANDINGS

**Champion: San Diego State**

Mountain	Overall	Conf.
Wyoming	8-6	6-2
Boise State	10-3	6-2
New Mexico	9-4	6-2
Air Force	10-3	5-3
Colorado State	7-6	5-3
Utah State	3-9	1-7
West		
San Diego State	11-3	6-2
Hawaii	7-7	4-4
Nevada	5-7	3-5
UNLV	4-8	3-5
San Jose State	4-8	3-5
Fresno State	1-11	0-8

### Power-Five conferences

- Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC)
- Big Ten Conference
- Big 12 Conference
- Pac-12 Conference
- Southeast Conference (SEC)





## Wolverines reload

**Head Coach:** Jim Harbaugh

**2016 AP Rank:** 10

**2016 Record:** 10-3 (7-2 Big Ten)

**2016 Bowl Game:** Lost, 33-32, to Florida State in the Orange Bowl

There may be no other team in college football with harder luck than the Michigan Wolverines. In 2016 they trounced opponents, getting off to a 9-0 start that found them ranked third in the nation before they hit a brick wall called the Iowa Hawkeyes, who upset Michigan 14-13 in November. Two weeks later they had rival Ohio State on the ropes but lost in overtime on a controversial play. They nearly pulled out a comeback win against Florida State in the Orange Bowl.

Wilton Speight is back at quarterback but he'll have some new faces around him that will have to step up fast. There's no such thing as replacing Jabrill Peppers but Harbaugh is a master at getting his defenses together, especially for big games. He has some holes to fill there, too, but he's also got a lot of good, young talent to fill it with. The question is how soon will they play well and will Michigan be a good team or a great team in a competitive conference? Either is possible.

They'll be tested early as they play Florida in Week 1, which should be a defensive battle. Later in the season they face the usual Big Ten rivals in Penn State, Wisconsin and, of course, Ohio State, who'll they'll get at home at the "Big House" this year.



**Wilton Speight**

## College Football 101

College football is one of the most popular sports in America. Some of the biggest stadiums in the country are university football stadiums. TV ratings prove that Americans just love football. On most Saturdays in the fall there are games on TV from the late morning on through the evening hours with additional games on Thursday, Friday and even Tuesday nights.

This can be confusing for someone new to college football, so here is a primer to the "Saturday" game.

### So many teams

How does a fan follow a sport with over 250 teams? The NCAA breaks university football programs into two divisions, based on size. The bigger schools with top-level teams play in the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS). The FBS has ten

Michigan Stadium, known as "The Big House"



conferences and a few independents that total 130 teams. The Football Championship Subdivision (FCS), known as Division I-A, currently has 124 smaller schools.

### Two levels of conferences

Conferences are like divisions in other major sports, but they typically represent a particular geographic region.

Focusing on the FBS, among the 10 conferences is the Power Five, which consists of the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), Big Ten Conference, Big 12 Conference, Pac-12 Conference, and Southeastern Conference (SEC).

Generally, the elite teams come from these conferences and are thus invited to bowl games. The rest of the FBS includes the Group of Five conferences - Conference USA (C-USA), the Mid-American Conference (MAC), the Mountain West Conference (MWC), and the Sun Belt Conference (SBC) - as well as four independents.

### Conference play matters

Teams play the majority of their games against conference opponents. A team's conference record is valued higher than their overall record. For example, when the regular season ended last year

Ohio State had a better overall record than Penn State. Both were 8-1 in the Big Ten and since Penn State had beaten Ohio State earlier in the season, they prevailed in the East and earned the right to play in the conference championship game.

### Rules

Some rules differ between the NFL and college game. In college football, a player is down if any part of his body other than his hands or feet touch the ground. Receivers have to have only one foot in play to be in bounds. There are other rules pertaining to penalties and the kicking game and there's no two-minute warning.

Most recognizable is college football's overtime scheme, where each team gets the ball at the 25-yard line and play continues until a winner is determined.





# WASHINGTON HUSKIES

## Huskies seek repeat in Pac 12

**Head Coach:** Chris Petersen

**2016 AP Rank:** 6

**2016 Record:** 12-2 (8-1 Pac 12), Pac 12 champion

**2016 Bowl Game:** Lost, 24-7 to Alabama in the Peach Bowl, CFP semi-final

The Washington Huskies had a heck of a 2016 season. Other than a loss to USC they rolled through their schedule in powerhouse fashion, often putting up 40, 50 and even 70 points on opponents with then-sophomore Jake Browning operating under center. They made it all the way to the College Football Playoff semifinals, where Alabama finally stifled them.

Although many Pac-12 teams are improving, don't expect the Huskies' success to be a one-season showcase. Browning returns to a team with plenty of offensive talent and likely the second-best defense in the conference behind only Stanford. They should light up the scoreboard once again.

The Huskies should also roll through the early part of the season and perhaps surge in the rankings. Their real test will come in two of the season's last three games when they visit the Cardinal in Stanford before hosting Utah and rival Washington State at home. While many are picking Stanford to take the North Division, Browning and crew could easily find themselves in the Pac-12 championship game and perhaps the CFP later in the season.



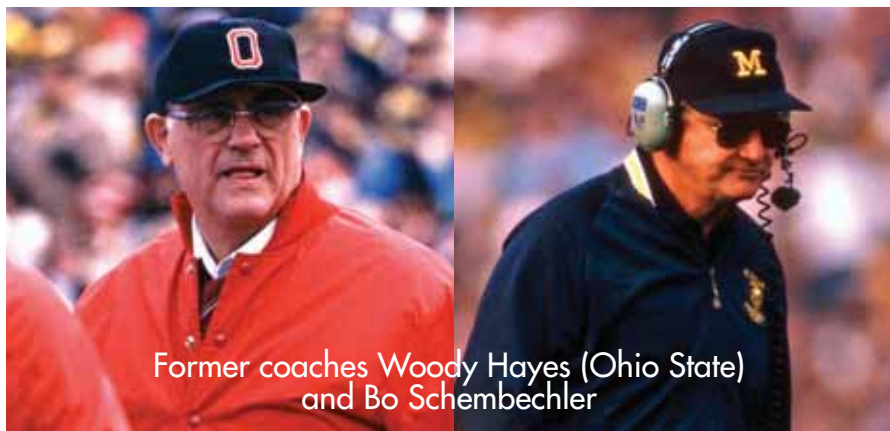
**Jake Browning**

## College Football's BIGGEST Rivalries

### The Game:

#### Michigan vs Ohio State

Perhaps the biggest rivalry in all of sports is that which exists between Big Ten rivals Michigan and Ohio State. "The Game," as it is known, reached its equinox during the late 1960s and 1970s, when Bo Schembechler, a former assistant of Buckeyes Coach Woody Hayes, took over Michigan, resulting in the "Ten Year War." Legend has it that Hayes once refused to buy gas in Michigan. When Jim Tressel inherited a limping Ohio State team in 2001, he pledged to defeat Michigan. Since then, Ohio State is



Former coaches Woody Hayes (Ohio State) and Bo Schembechler

15-2 against their rival, including the last five under Urban Meyer.

#### The Red River Showdown: Oklahoma vs Texas

This rivalry dates back to before Oklahoma was even a state and takes place annually at the Cotton Bowl in Dallas during the Texas

State Fair in mid-October. That can mean devastating results for the loser and many times over the years one or both teams have been contenders, including in 2008 when both were ranked in the top five and Texas prevailed 45-35. The governors and ROTC units of both states even get involved with this Big 12 classic.

### The Iron Bowl:

#### Alabama vs Auburn

When these two SEC schools meet up on the last weekend of the season, anything can happen. Perhaps one of the most iconic plays in any football game occurred on the final play of the 2013 matchup. With the game tied 28-28, Alabama lined up for a potentially game-winning 57-yard field goal attempt, which was short and caught in the end zone by Auburn cornerback Chris Davis, who promptly returned it 109 yards for a game-winning touchdown. Auburn went on to play in the BCS Championship game, losing to Florida State. The fact that both teams, especially Alabama, have won national championships in recent years only adds fuel to the fire in this showdown between the two biggest universities in the State of Alabama.





# PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS

## McSorley, Barkley lead the Lions

**Head Coach:** James Franklin

**2016 AP Rank:** 6

**2016 Record:** 11-3 (8-1 Big Ten), Big Ten champion

**2016 Bowl Game:** Lost, 52-49, in to USC in the Rose Bowl

The folks in State College are hoping what they saw last year was a sign of things to come. The Penn State Nittany Lions' return to college football prominence came in stylish fashion with a pair of offensive stars in quarterback Trace McSorley and running back Saquan Barkley. Both enter the season as Heisman Trophy hopefuls, which is bad news for the rest of the Big Ten.

Penn State started slowly in 2016, including being being rocked by Michigan. They then went on a nine-game winning streak that included a come-from-behind win over Ohio State and a shootout against Wisconsin in the Big Ten Championship game.

They won't fly under anyone's radar this season and the Buckeyes will be seeking redemption when they meet in Columbus in October, a game that is smack in the middle of matchups with the Wolverines and Michigan State. If they survive those three games, or even win two, they could be in good shape down the stretch in the Big Ten's East Division.



**Trace McSorley**

## Three Prolific Coaches

Coaches are everything to a college football program. For them, it's not just X's and O's on a chalkboard and running drills on the football field. NCAA rules dictate the amount of time teams can practice and with 85 players on a team, there's a lot to sort out prior to kickoff. Coaches are also tasked with recruiting the next generation of players, awarding scholarships and keeping their players on the right track, and are the first to take the blame when things go wrong.

Some are better at it than others and here are three who have become household names not only in the arena of college football, but in the entire sports world.

### Nick Saban - Alabama

All Nick Saban does is win. Since he took over in Alabama in 2007, he has guided the Crimson Tide to four national titles (2009, 2011, 2012, 2015). He won another in 2003 as the head coach of LSU.

He was also the head coach of the Michigan State Spartans prior to LSU and eventually tried his hand in the NFL with the Miami Dolphins, where he coached for two seasons (2005-06). He left Miami and went back to college football when Alabama came calling.

### Urban Meyer - Ohio State

Urban Meyer and Nick Saban are the only two coaches in college football to have won a national championship with two different teams in the AP Poll era.

Meyer coached two seasons each at Bowling Green and Utah, turning both programs around. He

then went to Florida where he won his first two championships with the Gators in 2006 and 2008.

After a year off in 2011 he signed with Ohio State, who was undergoing NCAA sanctions. In 2014-15 he guided the Buckeyes to victory in the first College Football Playoff.

### Jim Harbaugh - Michigan

An NFL quarterback with a long career, Jim Harbaugh headed for the sideline when the time came. His head coaching career began successfully in San Diego and proceeded to Stanford where he made a winner out of The Cardinal, guiding them to two bowl games.

He left Stanford to coach the San Francisco 49ers from 2011-2014, losing in Super Bowl XLVII. Michigan was desperate when they hired Harbaugh in 2015 and in just two seasons he has made them a contender once again.







# #10 GEORGIA BULLDOGS

## Bulldogs ready to play “Smart”

**Head Coach:** Kirby Smart

**2016 AP Rank:** Unranked

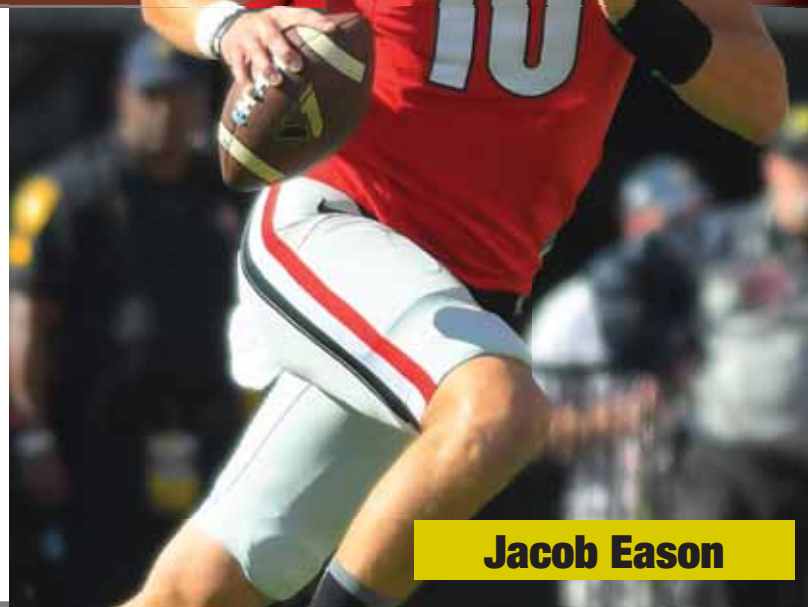
**2016 Record:** 8-5 (4-4 SEC)

**2016 Bowl Game:** Won, 31-23, over TCU in the Liberty Bowl

How many times in recent years was Georgia expected to be good only to be mediocre? That didn't happen in 2016, a year when new coach Kirby Smart was figuring things out. His Bulldogs looked good down the stretch and they found a quarterback in then-freshman Jacob Eason.

Georgia enters the season with a defense expected to dominate, especially in the SEC East where only Florida should give them trouble. They also have a solid running game to help out Eason but a questionable offensive line. Winning the East won't be easy but it is very possible and is the team's goal.

They play Notre Dame early on before their usual matchup with Tennessee in late September. Other key games include a mid-season showdown with Florida, a trip to Auburn in mid-November before a season finale at Georgia Tech. They avoid Alabama on the schedule this year but if things go right for Eason and the Bulldogs, they could get a chance to upset the Crimson Tide in the SEC Championship game.



**Jacob Eason**

## The rest of the top 25

### No. 11 — Auburn Tigers

Coach: Gus Malzahn

### No. 12 — Louisville Cardinals

Coach: Bobby Petrino

### No. 13 — Wisconsin Badgers

Coach: Paul Chryst

### No. 14 — LSU Tigers

Coach: Ed Orgeron

### No. 15 — Florida Gators

Coach: Jim McElwain

### No. 16 — Oklahoma State Cowboys

Coach: Mike Gundy

### No. 17 — Kansas State Wildcats

Coach: Bill Snyder

### No. 18 — Stanford Cardinal

Coach: David Shaw

### No. 19 — Miami Hurricanes

Coach: Mark Richt

### No. 20 — West Virginia Mountaineers

Coach: Dana Holgorsen

### No. 21 — Texas Longhorns

Coach: Tom Herman

### No. 22 — South Florida Bulls

Coach: Charlie Strong

### No. 23 — Washington State Cougars

Coach: Mike Leach

### No. 24 — Pittsburgh Panthers

Coach: Pat Narduzzi

### No. 25 — Tennessee Volunteers

Coach: Butch Jones





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