

the SPORTS page

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Weekly

Meet the 2025 College Football Hall of Fame Class

Jan. 31 - Feb. 6, 2025

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DECEMBER 21

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JANUARY 7

NORTH CAROLINA

JANUARY 11

GEORGIA TECH

JANUARY 15

VIRGINIA

JANUARY 18

MIAMI

JANUARY 21

LOUISVILLE

JANUARY 25

NC STATE

JANUARY 29

CALIFORNIA

FEBRUARY 1

STANFORD

FEBRUARY 5

VIRGINIA TECH

FEBRUARY 11

PITT

FEBRUARY 15

WAKE FOREST

FEBRUARY 19

NOTRE DAME

FEBRUARY 22

CLEMSON

FEBRUARY 26

CALIFORNIA

MARCH 1

STANFORD

MARCH 4

SYRACUSE

MARCH 8

FLORIDA STATE

HOME

AWAY

2024-2025 ACC MEN'S BASKETBALL OPPONENTS

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2024-2025 ACC WOMEN'S BASKETBALL OPPONENTS

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Preseason Schedule



8:30AM
JAN 26

PINE CLIFFS RESORT, PORTUGAL



7AM
JAN 30

ESTÁDIO ALGRAVE, PORTUGAL



11AM
FEB 7

TOYOTA STADIUM, USA



11AM
FEB 12

TOYOTA STADIUM, USA



12PM
FEB 15

CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE OF
ATLANTA TRAINING CENTER, USA

Stacked field for this year's Dallas Open



The 2025 Dallas Open will have the strongest field since moving to North Texas in 2022

Dallas Open 2025: How to watch, predictions, prize money, dates and everything you need to know

By Jon Thomas

The Dallas Open, held February 1-9 at Ford Center at The Star in Frisco, elevated its status from an ATP 250 to an ATP 500 event, promising the strongest field since the tournament's move to North Texas in 2022. The only ATP Tour indoor championship in the United States, the Dallas Open will feature more than 60 world-class ATP Tour professionals in singles and doubles competition. The tournament will be televised worldwide to more than 180 countries.

The Dallas Open, previously held as the New York Open, is one of the longest-running American tournaments on the ATP Tour. Its rich history features some of the top names in tennis, including legends John McEnroe, Pete Sampras, Andre Agassi, Andy Roddick, Michael Chang, John Isner, and Andy Murray, and a current generation of stars like Kei Nishikori, Milos Raonic, and Reilly Opelka.

The Dallas Open has attracted a stacked

field in 2025 with the ATP Tour upgrading the tournament from ATP 250 to ATP 500 status, so here is everything you need to know.

An array of the biggest names from the ATP Tour have decided to reject the Rotterdam Open and jet into Texas fresh off the back of the Australian Open this year. While the likes of Daniil Medvedev and Carlos Alcaraz compete in Europe, Taylor Fritz headlines the line-up in Dallas.

Fritz is one of several home favorites eager to become the first winner of the Dallas Open as an ATP 500 event with Tommy Paul and Ben Shelton. The tournament merited an upgrade in rank after three editions as an ATP 250 event after the tour returned to Dallas after 39 years.

Everything you need to know about the 2025 Dallas Open

America only stages 10 ATP Tour events each year, but the Dallas Open is even more unique as the sole ATP Tour tournament held on an indoor hard court in the USA. It even features a slightly exclusive field with 28 singles players contesting the Dallas Open main draw in 2025.

Becoming an ATP 500 event after three

editions as an ATP 250 tournament has also brought extra big-name stars to Dallas with Casper Ruud of Norway and Tomas Machac of the Czech Republic representing the global competition for the American gems such as Frances Tiafoe.

So, with that in mind, The Tennis Gazette takes a look into everything that you need to know ahead of the 2025 Dallas Open from how to watch in the USA and what the prize money is...

When will the 2025 Dallas Open take place?

ATP Tour aces will compete for glory over seven days with the 2025 Dallas Open scheduled to start on Monday, February 3 and last until the singles and doubles finals on Sunday 9. The 2025 Dallas Open doubles final will follow the singles final which is due to start at 1:00 CST.

When is the draw for the 2025 Dallas Open?

The ATP Tour has confirmed that the draw for the 2025 Dallas Open will be held on Saturday, February 1 and that the draw for the first round is arranged to get underway from 2:30 CST.

Where will the 2025 Dallas Open take place?

While the Dallas Cowboys are still yet to win another Super Bowl since 1995, an ATP ace will win a trophy at a venue the NFL franchise owns in 2025 with the Dallas Open taking place at The Ford Center at The Star which is the global corporate headquarters for America's Team.

- Location: The Ford Center at The Star, 9 Cowboys Way Frisco, TX 75034
- Year built: 2014-16
- Court type: Indoor hard
- Ford Center capacity: 12,000

COMPLETE TENNIS SCHEDULE
All Times Listed are Central Time Zone

Friday, January 31:
Court Christening / Media Day -10:30 a.m.

Saturday, February 1:
Qualifying Round 1 - Matches start at 10 a.m.
Women's Tennis Classic - Match starts at 8 p.m.

Sunday, February 2
Qualifying Round 2 - Matches start at 12 p.m

Monday, February 3:
Session 1 - Matches start at 12 p.m.
Session 2 - Matches start at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, February 4:
Session 3 - Matches start at 12 p.m.
Session 4 - Matches start at 7 p.m.

Wednesday, February 5:
Session 5 - Matches start at 12 p.m.
Session 6 - Matches start at 7 p.m.

Thursday, February 6:
Session 7 - Matches start at 12 p.m.
Session 8 - Matches start at 7 p.m.

Friday, February 7:
Session 9 - Matches start at 12 p.m.
Session 10 - Matches start at 7 p.m.

Saturday, February 8:
Session 11 (Semifinals) - Matches start at 12 p.m.
Session 12 (Semifinals) - Matches start at 5 p.m.

Sunday, February 9:
Session 13 (Finals) - Matches start at 1 p.m

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This week: AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am



Wyndham Clark returns as the defending champion, looking to become the first person to go back-to-back at Pebble Beach since 2009-10

AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am
January 30 - Feb. 2, 2025
Pebble Beach Golf Links
Spyglass Hill Golf Course
Monterey Peninsula Country Club
Pebble Beach, California
Purse - \$20,000,000
Winners share - \$3,600,000
Defending champ - Wyndham Clark

By Adam Stanley

The PGA TOUR returns to one of its most iconic venues, while this week also marks a highly anticipated return for a pair of top-ranked Texans. Both Scottie Scheffler and Jordan Spieth are set to tee it up this week at the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am after returning from injuries that required surgery. It is the 2025 PGA TOUR debut for both Scheffler and Spieth, while Rory McIlroy is also set to make his first TOUR start of the season. The AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am will once again feature 80 of the TOUR's best, earning their way into the field thanks to their finishes through 2024 on the FedEx Cup standings, or an impressive start to 2025 via the Aon Swing 5.

Here's everything else you need to know as the PGA TOUR's second Signature Event of the season is about to begin. **FIELD NOTES:** Scottie Scheffler is back. Scheffler, who suffered a puncture wound making ravioli on Christmas Day and needed surgery, is making his 2025 PGA TOUR debut after a magical 2024 campaign that saw him capture Player of the Year honors. Scheffler was scheduled to play both The Sentry and The American Express. In his AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am debut a year ago, Scheffler finished T6. ... Rory McIlroy is also set to make his PGA TOUR debut in 2025 after opening his season on the DP World Tour and finishing T4 at the Hero Dubai Desert Classic. McIlroy notched two victories on TOUR a year ago and sits No. 3 in the world. ... Wyndham Clark returns as the defending champion, looking to become the first person to go back-to-back at Pebble Beach since 2009-10. Clark won last year's event after a third-round 60, as the event was shortened to 54 holes. This is Clark's third start of the season. He finished T15 at The Sentry. ... Other past winners in the field include Justin Rose, Tom Hoge, Jordan

Spieth (more on Spieth below) and Nick Taylor, who won the Sony Open in Hawaii in a playoff earlier in January. ... Harris English returns to action following his first PGA TOUR win since 2021 after capturing the Farmers Insurance Open, while Hideki Matsuyama (The Sentry) and Sepp Straka (The American Express) are also in-season winners teeing it up.

HIGHEST RANKED PLAYERS IN THE FIELD

Official WGR	FedExCup
1. Hideki Matsuyama	1. S. Scheffler
2. Sepp Straka	3. Rory McIlroy
3. Nick Taylor	4. C. Morikawa
4. Harris English	5. H. Matsuyama
5. Sungjae Im	6. Ludvig Åberg
6. Collin Morikawa	7. W. Clark
7. Justin Thomas	9. V. Hovland
8. Jhonattan Vegas	10. T. Fleetwood
9. Nico Echavarria	11. K. Bradley
10. Thomas Detry	13. P. Cantlay

SPONSOR EXEMPTIONS: Spieth returns to action on the PGA TOUR for the first time since the FedEx St. Jude Championship last summer. Spieth had wrist surgery at the end of August last year. Earlier this month Spieth said that he went nearly 12 weeks before he could hit balls and another month before he played his first round, but plans to play three straight weeks in his return. Spieth has played the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am 12 times and has recorded six top-10s, including a win in 2017. He finished runner-up in 2022. ... Rickie Fowler is back at Pebble Beach, where his best result came in 2010. Fowler will be teeing it up for the second time this season, after finishing T21 at The American Express. ... Gary Woodland returns to a place where the biggest win of his career took place. The winner of the 2019 U.S. Open at Pebble Beach is making his second start of the season after finishing T16 at the Sony Open. His best finish at the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am was a T5 in 2017. ... Harry Hall looks to continue his tremendous start to 2025. He started his year with back-to-back top 10s in Hawaii before adding a T21 at The American Express. He finished T34 in his debut at Pebble Beach in 2023.

SIGNATURE EVENT STORYLINES: Those who qualified for the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am via their finish in the Aon Swing 5 (which concluded after the Farmers Insurance Open), were Sam Stevens, J.J. Spaun, Andrew Novak, Justin Lower and Lee Hodges. Stevens topped the Aon Swing 5 list after his solo second at Torrey Pines. ... Qualifying for The Genesis Invitational via the Aon Swing 5 comes from the top FedExCup points earners from the Sony Open in Hawaii, The

American Express, plus the Farmers Insurance Open and the WM Phoenix Open. **COMCAST BUSINESS TOUR TOP 10 UPDATES:** With his win at the Farmers Insurance Open, Harris English catapulted himself into the COMCAST BUSINESS TOUR TOP 10 moving all the way from 109th to 4th in the standings. ... Sam Stevens, who finished solo-second, also made an impressive leap, going from 107th to 11th. ... Ludvig Åberg and Corey Connors were bumped to Nos. 12 and 13, respectively, in the standings with English moving inside. **COURSE:** The AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am reverted to a two-course rotation for 2024 with the smaller Signature Event field. • Pebble Beach: Par 72, 6,972 yards. Since last year's tournament, the sixth green has been rebuilt and more than 50 trees were planted. • Spyglass Hill: Par 72, 7,041 yards. December storms took out approximately 30 trees including the featured cypress on No. 16. The irrigation system has been updated since last year. **72-HOLE RECORD:** 265, Brandt Snedeker (2015) **18-HOLE RECORD:** • Pebble Beach record: 60, Wyndham Clark (third round, 2024) • Spyglass Hill record: 62, Phil Mickelson (first round, 2005), Luke Donald (first round, 2006) **LAST TIME:** In a weather-shortened event, Clark, on the back of a third-round, course-record 60, was triumphant at Pebble Beach. He topped Åberg by one after his 12-under effort in the third round turned out to be the finale. The tournament's initial final round was postponed to Monday because of inclement weather, but after further assessment from local officials and the PGA TOUR, "out of an abundance of caution" they cut the event to 54 holes. It was Clark's third TOUR title.

Matthieu Pavon, who had won the Farmers Insurance Open the week prior, finished third – two shots back – while Mark Hubbard and Thomas Detry rounded out the top five.

How to follow (all times ET)

Television:

- Thursday-Friday: 3-7 p.m. ET (Golf Channel)
- Saturday: 1-3 p.m. (Golf Channel), 3-7 p.m. (CBS)
- Sunday: 1-3 p.m. (Golf Channel), 3-6:30 p.m. (CBS)

Power Rankings: AT&T Pebble Beach



By Rob Bolton

And just like that, the PGA TOUR has arrived at the midpoint of the West Coast Swing.

This week's AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am is the third in the series of five. It's the only one among them without a cut, and it returns the circuit to the familiar Thursday-to-Sunday cadence of competition.

Even though the field goes only 80 deep for the second Signature Event of the season, this is the last of three straight tournaments contested on multiple courses. The explanation of the format, what everyone can expect and more details are below.

Power Rankings for AT&T Pebble Beach

Rank Players

15 Tom Hoge USA

Picked off his lone PGA TOUR title here three years ago and added a T6 last year. His 2025 results aren't eye-popping, but he's been consistently low. Already in his familiar position of leading the PGA TOUR with 11 sub-70s.

14 Harry Hall England

Received the last sponsor exemption. This is his third consecutive appearance in a Power Rankings, and rightfully so after opening the season T8-T10-T21, but he's been comfortable since earning the attention last July.

13 Nick Taylor Canada

After prevailing in a playoff at the Sony Open in Hawaii, he kept the pedal down for a T12 at The American Express despite a third-round 73. Now he's treated to Pebble Beach, where his victory in 2020 is one of four top 20s.

12 Taylor Pendrith Canada

Continues to crash leaderboards. A T7 at the Farmers Insurance Open is his second top-15 finish of 2025 and 11th in the last nine months. Last appeared at Pebble Beach in 2023 and walked off a T7 with a field-low-tying 64.

11 Keegan Bradley USA

He's opened the season as the antithesis of how most Ryder Cup captains have trended over the years. Riding patented tee-to-green efficiency, he has a T6 and a pair of T15s to sit 18th in the FedExCup. T11 here last year.

10 Thomas Detry Belgium

Led outright after the first round last year and shared the lead after two before settling for a T4 in what was his second straight appearance. Busted out of the gates this month with a T5 at The Sentry and a T15 at Torrey Pines.

9 Mark Hubbard USA

Pebble Beach is a special place to countless golfers, but a victory on it might mean more to him than anyone else, especially as his breakthrough title on the PGA TOUR. Personal-best T4 last year and off to a nice start in 2025.

8 Scottie Scheffler USA

Welcome back! There's no cut this week, so the promise of four rounds is exactly what the three-time PGA TOUR Player of the Year needs in his return from injury.

7 Ludvig Åberg Sweden

Benefited by an extra day to recover from the illness that shoved him from the 36-hole co-lead of the Farmers to a T42 at the tape. Also co-led after two rounds in his debut at Pebble Beach last year en

route to a solo second.

6 Jason Day Australia

No matter form upon arrival, format, weather and every other variable you want to consider, the Aussie's record here is astonishing. He's 14-for-14 and has placed inside the top seven nine times. T3 two weeks ago at PGA WEST.

5 Patrick Cantlay USA

Steady as he goes, which is outstanding. Launched into 2025 with a T15 at The Sentry and a T5 at The American Express. He's performed similarly at Pebble Beach over time with a T3, a T4 and two T11s in his last four trips.

4 Maverick McNealy USA

The Stanford product who knows Pebble Beach as well as anyone couldn't have asked for better timing as a palate cleanser after last week's rough outing at Torrey Pines. Seventh appearance but first as a PGA TOUR winner.

3 Rory McIlroy Northern Ireland

Discounting the last two U.S. Opens held at Pebble Beach (2010, 2019), he's appeared on a version of this week's test just twice, but he's poised to shatter his previous best (T66, 2024) as his sensational form hasn't abated.

2 Collin Morikawa USA

Rested since opening the year with a solo second at The Sentry. It was his third runner-up finish in his last 10 PGA TOUR starts, but his surge of extended brilliance dates back to the Masters last April. T14 here last year.

1 Justin Thomas USA

Not that he ever needs support from converging trends, but it's still noteworthy to cite them now. He took last week off after a runner-up finish at The American Express, and he finished T6 at Pebble Beach last year.

While it's not unprecedented that Torrey Pines Golf Courses, both the North and the South, deal with the kind of wind that disrupted the second round of the Farmers Insurance Open, typically but only periodically, those kinds of conditions are reserved for the Monterey Peninsula when Pebble Beach toes the slab. They very much did last year, but naturally, figuratively and literally, Mother Nature is taking it easy this week.


After a pleasant opening round, clouds will pass overhead throughout the remainder of the tournament. The threat of rain will increase gradually into the weekend and the daytime highs will be lunging for 60 degrees. The good news is that wind isn't an early headliner. Of course, that was the case hundreds of miles down the California coastline a week ago, but the touring professionals always keep their heads on swivels.

They had a year ago here when the tournament was shortened to 54 holes due to encroaching severe weather. Still, that allowed the entire field to cycle through Pebble Beach Golf Links and Spyglass Hill Golf Course for the first two rounds. That tournament within the tournament represents the entirety of the pro-am portion of the competition. Then, only Pebble Beach Golf Links hosts however much more golf can be played to arrive at a champion, hopefully at the conclusion of four rounds. There shouldn't be any worries about that this week.

Both tracks are stock par 72s and stretch to the same tips that they have for a few years now. Pebble Beach Golf Links maxes at just 6,972 yards but its greens are the smallest on the PGA TOUR, while Spyglass Hill is only 7,041 yards with larger greens that still are below average among all courses on the docket. All putting surfaces consist of Poa annua and could measure the prepared 12 feet on the Stimpmeter with calm breezes. The worst of the rough is trimmed to three inches for the second consecutive year, an increase of an inch from previous editions.

Both courses have undergone a few modifications and upgrades in the last 12 months, but none should have a measurable impact on scoring. Pound for pound and despite averaging less than one-half stroke harder than the host course last year, Spyglass Hill is the tougher test. However, when the wind blows that's the place to be, as scores on Pebble Beach Golf Links can soar. The moral is to capitalize on Pebble Beach when conditions are ideal.

With small targets, even with short irons in hands, ball-strikers get the edge. Average and worse putters will lean more on greenside touch than needing to hang with the guys who can win putting contests.



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Top stories to follow at AT&T Pebble Beach



Rory McIlroy has only played Pebble Beach four times in his career with his best finish being ninth at the 2019 U.S. Open

By Paul Hodowanic

The second Signature Event of the 2025 season is upon us, and it's not short on storylines. Top players are returning from injury; others are making their season debut. The usual anticipation of a week at Pebble Beach continues to bubble up as everyone eyes a friendly weather week after last year's washout cut the tournament short.

From the return of Scottie Scheffler and Jordan Spieth to intriguing stakes for Rory McIlroy and Maverick McNealy, here's a look at the top storylines ahead of this week's AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am.

Scottie Scheffler's return

Scheffler's riveting, but delayed, encore begins this week at Pebble Beach. When we last saw the world No. 1 in December, he put a decisive cap on one of the best seasons in modern pro golf with a victory at the Hero World Challenge, his ninth and final win of 2024.

Scheffler was scheduled to tee it up just a few weeks later at The Sentry, but he injured his hand in a freak accident on Christmas Day, delaying his season debut until now.

Will Scheffler pick up where he left off? Will there be lingering effects of the hand injury, which required surgery and several weeks of no golf? Those are fair questions. Scheffler's first chance to answer them comes this week.

Scheffler has played the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am just twice in his career, though that includes a solo sixth-place finish last year when his putting performance was still in flux.

This is one of the first times Scheffler's entered a tournament with his form in doubt since this time a year ago.

That's a new wrinkle.

Jordan Spieth's first start in five months

Scheffler's recent absence was unplanned. Spieth's was a long time coming.

After battling wrist issues for the better part of two seasons, Spieth underwent surgery in August to repair ulnar nerve damage in his left wrist. Now Spieth says he's "pain-free" and has kicked "some really bad habits" in his swing that were caused by the nagging injury.

Spieth had dealt with wrist issues since May 2023, when he injured it while playing with his son Sammy. He resisted surgery at the time, opting for a rest-and-recovery strategy, but it never fully healed. Spieth re-aggravated the injury last fall while reaching for a toaster in his home and was diagnosed with ulnar nerve damage shortly after.

Spieth felt better to begin 2024, but the pain grew as the season wore on. He nearly withdrew during the first round of the RBC Heritage in April after a tendon in his wrist "popped out" while hitting a greenside bunker shot. He told PGATOUR.COM, "I thought I was done for the week," but he was able to pop the wrist back into place and finish.

He carded just three top 10s, a career low, and missed eight cuts, a career high in 2024. Spieth's season ended at the FedEx St. Jude Championship, where he failed to qualify for the top 50. By the end of the year, surgery was "inevitable."

So what's in store now that Spieth is healthy? The Texan still managed solid results while struggling with the injury, but it was far from the Spieth that set the golf world ablaze in the mid-2010s. Could his lack of recent high-end play be explained

away because of the injury? That's what Spieth will be hoping to prove. His return couldn't come at a better venue. Spieth won the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am in 2017 and has finished in the top 10 in half of his appearances at the event. If there's any place to start the turnaround, it's Pebble Beach.

A missing piece to Rory McIlroy's resume

For all of McIlroy's career accomplishments, he has struggled at Pebble Beach, one of the most iconic venues in golf. In 15 years, McIlroy has only played at Pebble Beach four times (twice for the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am and twice for the U.S. Open). In those appearances, he's missed the cut twice and his ninth-place finish at the 2019 U.S. Open is his only result in the top 60.

It's a strange blank spot on McIlroy's resume. The 26-time TOUR winner is course agnostic. No course setup renders McIlroy's talent useless, but Pebble Beach has limited him effectively. Can he change that this week?

The Northern Irishman finished T4 in his first start of 2025 at the DP World Tour's Hero Dubai Desert Classic. This will be his first start on the PGA TOUR since the TOUR Championship.

Maverick McNealy arrives at Pebble Beach as a TOUR winner

McNealy has cultivated memories at Pebble Beach that few can rival. Sure, he's come close to winning the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am twice (he finished T5 in 2020 and runner-up in 2021). But the best memories are from many years earlier. As a kid, he grew up playing at The Hay, a short par-3 course on the same property. McNealy and his brother, Scout, would walk their dog through Pebble Beach at night, hiding a few golf balls in their pockets so they could putt on some of the most famous greens in the world when nobody was looking. McNealy once was even thrown off the course by a marshal after McNealy was selling balls for 50 cents to recreational golfers playing the bucket list course.

"Definitely a lot of nights looking for the marshal and sneaking around and seeing if you get a few chips and putting out there," McNealy said.

There's no need to sneak on the course this week. And McNealy is no longer sneaking up on the field. He returns to his favorite course in the world as a PGA TOUR winner. And, after needing a sponsor exemption to play in the tournament previously, McNealy is here on his own merit. A breakthrough winner at The RSM Classic last year, McNealy qualified for the event via the Aon Next 10. He's playing

the best golf of his life, currently ranked No. 26 in the Official World Golf Ranking, the highest ranking of his career.

McNealy's game fits Pebble Beach to a tee, with strong approach play a must into the famously small greens and a reliable putter that has mastered Poa annua surfaces. Combine that with McNealy's glowing memories around the Monterey Peninsula and there could be a storybook ending at Pebble Beach this week.

Rare opportunity for the last players in

The AT&T Pebble Beach is a unique stop on the calendar that offers a rare opportunity for a handful of golfers who wouldn't normally qualify to play the tournament if it was a normal Signature Event. While every other Signature Event has a minimum field of 72 players, the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am has a minimum field size of 80 players.

To reach 80 players, the tournament had to go beyond the typical exemption categories – previous year's top 50 in the FedExCup, Aon Swing 5, Aon Next 10, OWGR top 30 and sponsor exemptions.

That's how an additional 12 golfers punched their ticket to Pebble Beach, earned based on their finish in last year's FedExCup standings.

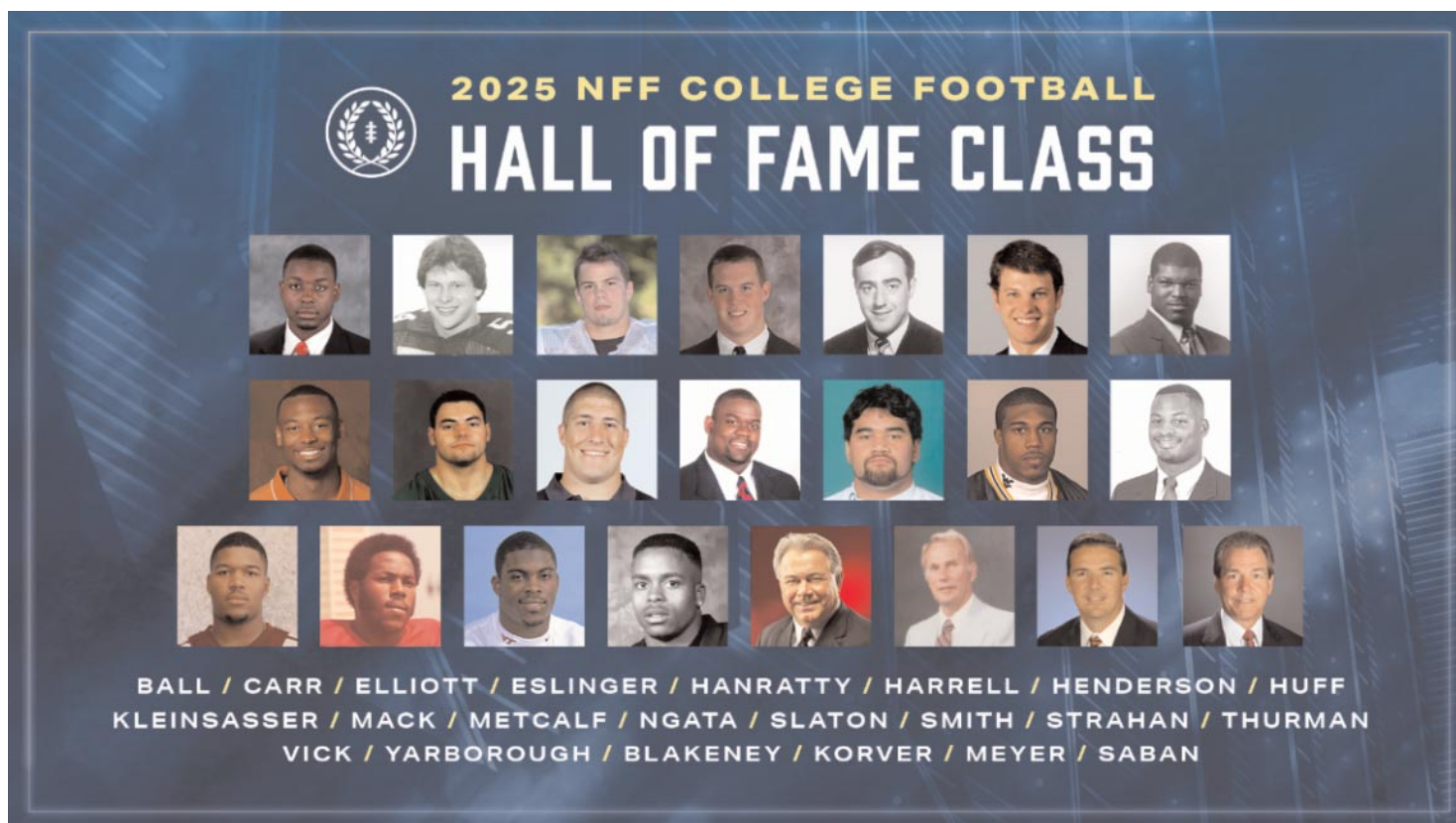
The 12 golfers are:

- Lucas Glover
- Justin Rose
- Mark Hubbard
- Jake Knapp
- Min Woo Lee
- Beau Hossler
- Taylor Moore
- Erik van Rooyen
- Doug Ghim
- Brendon Todd
- Jhonattan Vegas
- Keith Mitchell

If any of these golfers have a strong week at Pebble Beach and parlay it into a strong season, we will look back at this tournament as a major reason why.



2025 College Football Hall of Fame Class



Eighteen First Team All-America players and four coaches will be inducted during the 67th NFF Annual Awards Dinner Presented by Las Vegas on Dec. 9, 2025.

By National Football Foundation

The National Football Foundation (NFF) & College Hall of Fame announced this week the 2025 College Football Hall of Fame Class.

2025 COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME CLASS

PLAYERS:

- Montee Ball, RB (2009-12)
University of Wisconsin
- Gregg Carr, LB (1981-84)
Auburn University
- Blake Elliott, WR (2000-03)
Saint John's University (MN)
- Greg Eslinger, C (2002-05)
University of Minnesota
- Terry Hanratty, QB (1966-68)
University of Notre Dame
- Graham Harrell, QB (2005-08)
Texas Tech University
- John Henderson, DT (1999-2001)
University of Tennessee
- Michael Huff, DB (2002-05)
University of Texas
- Jim Kleinsasser, TE (1995-98)
University of North Dakota
- Alex Mack, OL (2005-08)
University of California
- Terrence Metcalf, OL (1997. '99-2001)
University of Mississippi
- Haloti Ngata, DT (2002, 2004-05)

University of Oregon

- Steve Slaton, RB (2005-07)
West Virginia University
 - Darrin Smith, LB (1989-92)
University of Miami
 - Michael Strahan, DL (1989-92)
Texas Southern University
 - Dennis Thurman, DB (1974-77)
University of Southern California
 - Michael Vick, QB (1999-2000)
Virginia Tech
 - Ryan Yarbrough, WR (1990-93)
University of Wyoming
- COACHES:**
- Larry Blakeney – 178-113-1 (61.1%):
Troy University (1991-2014)
 - Larry Korver – 212-77-6 (72.9%):
Northwestern College [IA] (1967-94)
 - Urban Meyer – 187-32-0 (85.4%):
Bowling Green (2001-02); University of Utah (2003-04); University of Florida (2005-10); Ohio State University (2012-18)
 - Nick Saban – 292-71-1 (80.4%):
University of Toledo (1990); Michigan State University (1995-99); LSU (2000-04); University of Alabama (2007-23)

The 18 First Team All-America players and four standout coaches in the 2025 Class were selected from the national ballot of 77 players and nine coaches from the Football Bowl Subdivision and 101 players and 34 coaches from the divisional ranks.

The inductees will also be recognized at their respective collegiate institutions with NFF Hall of Fame On-Campus Salutes, presented by Fidelity Investments, during

the fall. Their accomplishments will be forever immortalized at the Chick-fil-A College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta. Each inductee will receive a custom ring created by Jostens, the official and exclusive supplier of NFF rings.

2025 COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME CLASS NOTES

PLAYERS:

- 4 unanimous First Team All-Americans (Eslinger, Huff, Slaton, Thurman)
- 7 consensus First Team All-Americans (Ball—2, Carr, Hanratty, Henderson—2, Metcalf, Ngata, Thurman)
- 8 multi-year First Team All-Americans (Ball, Elliott, Eslinger, Henderson, Kleinsasser, Smith, Thurman, Yarbrough)
- 8 winners of college football major awards (Ball—Doak Walker, Elliott—Gagliardi Trophy, Eslinger—Outland and Rimington, Harrell—Unitas, Henderson—Outland, Huff—Thorpe, Mack—Campbell, Strahan—I-AA Defensive Player of the Year and Black College Defensive Player of the Year)
- 5 members of national championship teams (Elliott, Hanratty, Huff, Smith—2, Thurman)
- 7 conference players of the year (Ball, Elliott—2, Henderson, Ngata, Smith, Strahan—2, Vick)
- 11 members of conference championship teams (Ball—3, Carr, Elliott—3, Harrell, Huff, Kleinsasser, Mack, Slaton—2, Smith—2, Thurman—2, Vick)
- 8 players who still hold school records

(Ball, Elliott, Harrell, Huff, Slaton, Strahan, Vick, Yarbrough)

- 9 played for College Football Hall of Fame coaches (Carr—Pat Dye, Elliott—John Gagliardi, Hanratty—Ara Parseghian, Henderson—Phillip Fulmer, Huff—Mack Brown, Ngata—Mike Bellotti, Smith—Dennis Erickson, Thurman—John McKay and John Robinson, Vick—Frank Beamer)

- 5 NFF National Scholar-Athletes (Carr, Eslinger, Harrell, Mack, Smith), including 1 Campbell Trophy recipient (Mack)

- 6 first-round NFL draft picks (Ball, Henderson, Huff, Mack, Ngata, Vick), including 1 first-overall selection (Vick)

- 11 offensive players (Ball, Elliott, Eslinger, Hanratty, Harrell, Kleinsasser, Mack, Metcalf, Slaton, Vick, Yarbrough)

- 7 defensive players (Carr, Henderson, Huff, Ngata, Smith, Strahan, Thurman)

- 6 decades represented: 1960s—Hanratty; 1970s—Thurman; 1980s—Carr; 1990s—Kleinsasser, Smith, Strahan, Vick, Yarbrough; 2000s—Elliott, Eslinger, Harrell, Henderson, Huff, Mack, Metcalf, Ngata, Slaton; 2010s—Ball

- 2 schools with their first-ever Hall of Fame player (Saint John's [MN]—Elliott, Texas Southern—Strahan)

COACHES:

- 12 national championships (Korver—2, Meyer—3 [Florida-2, Ohio State-1], Saban—7 [Alabama-6, LSU-1])

- 28 conference championships (Blakeney--8, Korver-1, Meyer-7, Saban12)
- 2 coaches with the most wins in school history (Blakeney—Troy, Korver—Northwestern College [IA])

- 63 bowl/postseason appearances (Blakeney—5 bowls and 7 playoff appearances, Korver—11 playoff appearances, Meyer—15 bowls, Saban—25 bowls)

- 156 First Team All-Americans coached (Blakeney—14, Korver—32, Meyer—44, Saban—66)

- 12 conference coach of the year honors (Blakeney—4, Meyer—3, Saban—5)

- 2 schools with their first-ever Hall of Fame coach or player inductee (Northwestern College [IA] -Korver, Troy -Troy—Blakeney)

SELECTION CRITERIA

1. First and foremost, a player must have received First Team All-America recognition by a selector recognized by the NCAA and utilized to comprise its consensus All-America teams.

2. A player becomes eligible for consideration by the NFF's Honors Court 10 full seasons after his final year of intercollegiate football played.

3. While each nominee's football achieve

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ments in college are of prime consideration, his post football record as a citizen is also weighed. He must have proven himself worthy as a citizen, carrying the ideals of football forward into his relations with his community. Consideration may also be given for academic honors and whether or not the candidate earned a college degree. 4. Players must have played their last year of intercollegiate football within the last 50 years*. For example, to be eligible for the 2025 ballot, the player must have played his last year in 1975 or thereafter. In addition, current professional players and/or coaches are not eligible until retirement. 5. A coach becomes eligible three full seasons after retirement or immediately following retirement provided he is at least 70 years old. Active coaches become eligible at 75 years of age. He must have been a head football coach for a minimum of 10 years and coached at least 100 games with a .600 winning percentage. 6. Nominations may only be submitted by the current athletics director, head coach or sports information director (SID) of a potential candidate's collegiate institution. * Players that do not comply with the 50-year rule may still be eligible for consideration by the Football Bowl Subdivision and Divisional Veterans Committees. Veterans Committee candidates must still meet First Team All-America requirement.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME QUICK FACTS

- When the 2025 Hall of Fame Class is officially inducted in December, only 1,111 players and 237 coaches will have been inducted into the CFHOF from the nearly 5.78 million who have played or coached the game during the past 155 years. In other words, less than two one-hundredths of a percent (.02%) of the individuals who have played/coached the game have earned this distinction.

- Founded in 1947, The National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame inducted its first class of inductees in 1951. The first class included 32 players and 22 coaches, including Illinois' Red Grange, Notre Dame's Knute Rockne, Iowa's Duke Slater, Coach Amos Alonzo Stagg and Carlisle (PA)'s Jim Thorpe.

- 326 schools are represented with at least one College Football Hall of Famer.

2025 College Football Hall of Fame Class Bios

MONTEE BALL

University of Wisconsin Running Back, 2009-12

Montee Ball carved out a place in the NCAA record books as one of the most prolific scorers in college football history with a rare blend of power, vision, and a nose for the end zone. The Wentzville, Missouri, product now becomes the 12th Badger player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A two-time consensus First Team All-America pick (2011, 2012), Ball took home the Doak Walker Award as the nation's best running back in 2012 after

finishing as a finalist the previous year. He finished fourth in the Heisman Trophy voting in 2011 after tying Hall of Famer Barry Sanders' NCAA record of 39 total touchdowns in a season and setting the record for most points scored in a single season with 236. His 33 rushing touchdowns in 2011 rank second in NCAA annals.

During his four seasons in Madison, Ball set the NCAA record for career touchdowns (83, now third) and career rushing touchdowns (77, now second) and career points scored (500, now third). He led the nation in 2011, rushing for 1,923 yards and amassing a total of 2,229 yards from scrimmage. He finished his career with 5,140 career rushing yards, averaging 104.9 yards per game, and 77 rushing touchdowns. He added 598 receiving yards and six touchdown receptions during his career.

Named the Big Ten Offensive Player of the Year twice, Big Ten Running Back of the Year and a First Team All-Big Ten pick. He helped the Badgers claim three consecutive Big Ten titles, make three trips to the Rose Bowl and four bowl game appearances overall. The Badgers posted a 40-14 record with final rankings of No. 16 in 2009, No. 7 in 2010 and No. 10 in 2011 with Ball in the backfield.

A team captain in 2012, Ball is the only player in history to rush for at least 100 yards in three straight Rose Bowls. His 202 rushing yards and three touchdowns in the 2012 Big Ten title game earned him MVP honors as the Badgers routed Nebraska 70-31. A 2023 inductee into the Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame, Ball holds multiple Big Ten and school records, including total points scored and total touchdowns in a season. His career rushing total of 5,140 yards ranked second in Wisconsin annals at career's end (now third) behind only Hall of Famer Ron Dayne.

A second round NFL Draft pick (No. 58 overall) by Denver, Ball played two seasons with the Broncos. He currently works in real estate. He also serves as a clinical outreach ambassador and recovery coach with Sandstone Care, a treatment facility, publicly speaking about his own battles with alcoholism, anxiety and depression.

GREGG CARR

Auburn University Linebacker, 1981-84

The heart of the Auburn defense in the early 1980s, Gregg Carr established himself as a hard-hitting and instinctive linebacker with game-changing playmaking abilities. The Birmingham, Alabama, native now becomes the ninth Auburn player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A consensus First Team All-American in 1984, Carr was Auburn's leading tackler as a sophomore (125 tackles), junior (136) and the second leading tackler as a senior (139). A two-time First Team All-SEC selection and 1984 SEC Lineman of the Year, Carr amassed 453 career tackles, currently ranking him second in school history. His career totals include 289 solo tackles, which also rank second in the school

record books, and nine sacks. His 139 total tackles as a senior rank eighth in school annals for a single season.

Playing for College Football Hall of Fame coach Pat Dye, Carr helped the Tigers to a 34-14 record, a SEC title and victories in the 1982 Tangerine Bowl, the 1984 Sugar Bowl and the 1984 Liberty Bowl. His sophomore season, the Tigers beat archrival Alabama for the first time in ten years, handing Hall of Fame Coach Bear Bryant the final loss of his career. His junior season, the Tigers claimed the 1983 SEC title, the school's first conference crown since 1957. Auburn finished ranked No. 14 in 1982, No. 3 in 1983 and No. 14 in 1984 during Carr's run with the Tigers.

Carr, the 1984 team captain, also excelled in the classroom, boasting a 3.22 GPA in civil engineering. His combined academic and athletic accomplishments earned an NFF National Scholar-Athlete Award and recognition as an Academic All-American and as one the NCAA's Top Five Student-Athletes.

Drafted in the sixth round (160th overall) of the 1985 NFL Draft by Pittsburgh, Carr played four seasons with the Steelers. He graduated from the University of Alabama-Birmingham School of Medicine in 1994, and he is currently an orthopedic surgeon in Birmingham.

Carr was inducted into the State of Alabama Sports Hall of Fame in 2008. In 2010, he was selected as a recipient of the NCAA Silver Anniversary Award as well as being honored as an SEC Legend.

BLAKE ELLIOTT

Saint John's University (MN) Wide Receiver, 2000-03

A dynamic wide receiver, Blake Elliott's sure hands and clutch performances made him the ultimate playmaker for Saint John's while cementing his place as one of the greatest players in Division III history. The Melrose, Minnesota, product now becomes the first Saint John's player to ever enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A two-time First Team All-American, Elliott claimed the 2003 Gagliardi Trophy as the best player in Division III while leading Saint John's to the national title and claiming the MVP honors in the Stagg Bowl. A finalist for the 2002 Gagliardi Trophy and a two-time MIAC Player of the Year, Elliott helped the Johnnies earn playoff berths all four years of his college career, including the national title in 2003, back-to-back semifinal appearances in 2001, 2002 and as the national runner-up in 2000. The Johnnies would go 50-7 during Elliott's time in Collegeville, including a historic win in 2003 that gave Hall of Fame Coach John Gagliardi his NCAA record 409th victory, making him the winningest coach in the history of college football.

A three-time First Team All-MIAC selection who led the Johnnies to three MIAC titles (2001-03), Elliott holds the NCAA record for all divisions with a record of 47 consecutive games with a reception. He ended his career ranked second in DIII his-

tory for both receptions (327) and touchdown receptions (56) with the marks respectively ranking second and third across all divisions at the time. His career receiving yards (4,200) and all-purpose yards (7,605), rank fourth and fifth, respectively, in DIII history. He holds the NCAA playoff record for receptions in a tournament with 41 and the longest punt return at 89ds.

Elliott holds 26 school records, including career receiving yards (4,829), touchdowns receptions (63), 100-yard receiving games (22), career punt returns yards (1,459), punt touchdown returns (6) and all-purpose yards (8,635).

Inspired by the challenges faced by his younger brother who suffered a traumatic brain injury in a car accident, Elliott founded Everyday Living, a foster care system for adults with special needs. He serves on the board of the NFF Minnesota Chapter, SJU Athletic Booster Club and the SJU Alumni Association Board, and he volunteers for Feed My Starving Children.

GREG ESLINGER

University of Minnesota Center, 2002-05

Dominating the line, Greg Eslinger exhibited exceptional intelligence and agility as he became one of the most decorated offensive linemen in college football history. The Bismarck, North Dakota, native now becomes the 20th player from Minnesota to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A two-time First Team All-American, including unanimous selection in 2005, Eslinger claimed the Outland Trophy as the most outstanding interior lineman in the country and the Rimington Trophy as the nation's best center during his senior season. Minnesota went 32-18, posting winning records in all four years of his college career. He led the Gophers to four consecutive bowl games for the first time in school history, notching a 3-1 record in postseason play and ranking No. 17 in the final Coaches Poll after the 2003 season with a victory over Oregon in the Sun Bowl.

Eslinger is just one of two Minnesota players in history to be named a First Team All-Big Ten selection in three consecutive seasons, and he started all 50 games of his college career. A two-year team captain, Eslinger anchored an offensive unit that twice led the Big Ten in rushing with 256.8 yards per game in 2004 and 273.1 ypg in 2005. He opened the lanes for four consecutive 1,000-yard Gopher running backs, including Laurence Maroney who shared team Co-MVP honors with Eslinger in 2005 and led the Big Ten with 1,464 yards. He was also named the Big Ten Offensive Lineman of the Year in 2005, the first Gopher to ever claim the honor.

During his tenure, the Gophers set multiple single-season offensive records, including rushing attempts (683), rushing yards (3,759), rushing yards per game (289.2), rushing touchdowns (46), total season yards (6,430), total yards per game

(494.8), total season points (503), average points per game (38.7), season touchdowns (66) and first downs (326).

A two-time Second Team CSC Academic All-American and a three-time Academic All-Big Ten pick, Eslinger earned an NFF National Scholar-Athlete Award as a 2005 NFF William V. Campbell Trophy® Finalist, and he received the 2006 Big Ten Medal of Honor for his combined efforts on the field and in the classroom.

Drafted in the sixth round of the 2006 NFL Draft, Eslinger played for the Broncos, Browns and Texans from 2006-08. After playing in the NFL, he entered the business world as an orthopedic sales consultant with DePuy Synthes Companies in Minnesota. He has coached youth football and hockey, and he has also volunteered with the Special Olympics and as a motivational speaker to elementary and junior high school students.

TERRY HANRATTY
University of Notre Dame
Quarterback (1966-68)

Terry Hanratty set the standard as a precision quarterback in the 1960s, helping usher in an era of high-powered passing under Hall of Fame Coach Ara Parseghian and cementing his legacy as one of Notre Dame's all-time greats. The Butler, Penn., native now becomes the 50th Fighting Irish to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A consensus First Team All-American in 1968, Hanratty led Notre Dame to a 24-4-2 record during his three years under center in South Bend, including a share of the national title in 1966. The Irish finished the 1966 season 9-0-1, tying Michigan State in the "Game of the Century" with Hanratty sidelined with an injury.

The Irish won 83.3 percent of their games with Hanratty as the starting signal caller, and the Irish boasted a final ranking of No. 5 or better during all three years of his tenure. Hanratty finished third in the Heisman voting in 1968, ninth in 1967, and sixth in 1966.

Paired with wide receiver Jim Seymour as part of the duo dubbed "Fling and Cling," Hanratty set Notre Dame career records for pass completions (304), passing yards (4,152), and touchdown passes (27) during his time in South Bend. He added 16 touchdowns and 586 yards on the ground. His 63 pass attempts against Purdue in 1967 still rank second in school annals, and his 159.7 passing yards per game land him at No. 9 in the school record books. His pass attempts per game in a season (28.1) and pass completions per game (16.6) stood as school records for more than 25 years.

In addition to Coach Parseghian, Hanratty will now join teammates Jim Lynch, Alan Page and Joe Theismann as members of the College Football HoF.

Drafted in the second round of the NFL Draft by Pittsburgh, Hanratty played seven years with the Steelers, including winning two Super Bowls, before finishing his pro career after one year with the Tampa Bay

Buccaneers in 1976.

Following his football career, Hanratty transitioned to Wall Street as a stock trader. He worked at several firms before a 24-year stint at Sanford C. Bernstein in New York City and then shifting to the hedge fund business at Cross Shore Capital Management LLC. Hanratty's son, Conor, played O line for the Irish from 2012-14.

Active in the community, Hanratty served as the Allegheny County chairman of the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation, and he has participated in the Jerry Lewis Telethon to support Muscular Dystrophy as well as NFL events to raise funds for children with cancer and the blind.

GRAHAM HARRELL
Texas Tech University
Quarterback, 2005-08

Graham Harrell's pinpoint accuracy and quick decision-making abilities allowed him to redefine the Texas Tech high-flying passing attack, etching his name in the NCAA record books and cementing his place among college football's all-time great signal callers. The Ennis, Texas, product now becomes the seventh Red Raider player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A 2008 First Team All-American, Harrell won the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award and was named Sporting News Co-Player of the Year that season. He finished fourth in the Heisman Trophy voting and was a finalist for the Davey O'Brien Award, capping off a career in which he set seven NCAA records, including most pass completions in a season (512 in 2007), passes per game in a season (39.4 in 2007) and most 400-yard passing games in a career (21, tied). He remains in the top five of seven FBS statistical categories, including career yards with 15,739 and career touchdown passes with 134.

A master of Mike Leach's Air Raid offense, Harrell paired with Hall of Fame wide receiver Michael Crabtree to help redefine the college passing game, leading the Red Raiders to a 37-14 record during his tenure. He guided the team to four bowl games, earning MVP honors at 2006 Insight Bowl and the 2008 Gator Bowl. Texas Tech posted final national rankings in 2005 (No. 18), 2007 (No. 22), and 2008 (No. 12). The team's 11-2 record in 2008 matched the school record for single season wins.

A three-time All-Big 12 selection (Second Team-2007 and Honorable Mention-2006, 2008) Harrell led Texas Tech to a share of the 2008 Big 12 South title, and he still holds the conference's all-time records for career completions (1,403) and touchdown passes (134). He ranks second in Big 12 history in career passing yards (15,793), career attempts (2,011), and career completion percentage (69.8). He remains the only player in conference history to lead the league in passing yards three times. He still owns 14 Texas Tech records, including career passing yards and touchdowns.

A model student-athlete, Harrell was a 2008 NFF National Scholar-Athlete and NFF William V. Campbell Trophy® Finalist. A three-time Academic All-Big 12 honoree, he graduated with a degree in history in 2007.

Harrell signed with Saskatchewan Roughriders of the CFL in 2009. He later signed with the Green Bay Packers, playing with the team from 2010-12 and earning a Super Bowl XLV ring.

Following his playing career, he entered the coaching profession with stints at North Texas, Southern California, West Virginia, and Purdue.

JOHN HENDERSON
University of Tennessee
Defensive Tackle, 1999-2001

A dominant force in the trenches as a defensive tackle at Tennessee, John Henderson possessed a rare combination of size, power, and agility that made him a nightmare for opposing offenses. The Nashville, Tennessee, native now becomes the 23rd Vol player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A two-time consensus First Team All-American (2000, 2001), Henderson claimed the 2000 Outland Trophy as the best interior lineman in the nation while finishing as a finalist for the Nagurski Trophy as the nation's best defensive player the same year. A two-time First Team All-SEC pick (2000-01), Henderson was also named the SEC Defensive Player of the Year in 2000. He was a finalist for the Outland Trophy again in 2001.

Playing for Hall of Fame coach Phillip Fulmer, Henderson guided Tennessee to the 2001 SEC East title and an overall record of 28-9 during his career. The Vols made three consecutive bowls with appearances in the 2000 Fiesta and 2001 Cotton and a win in the 2002 Citrus Bowl, where he earned Outstanding Defensive Player honors. His impact was instrumental in the Vols finishing inside the Top 10 in 1999 and reaching No. 4 in the final 2001 polls.

Henderson played a pivotal role in 2000 on a defense that set a school record for the fewest rushing yards allowed (817). His 12 sacks in 2000 rank fourth all-time for a single season in program history, while his 21 tackles for loss that year rank third. Over his career, he amassed 162 tackles, 38.5 TFL, 20.5 sacks, four forced fumbles, five fumble recoveries, and seven pass breakups.

Selected in the first round of the 2002 NFL Draft by Jacksonville, Henderson played for the Jaguars from 2002-09 and the Raiders from 2010-11, earning two Pro Bowl selections and Second Team All-Pro honors in 2006.

Henderson was inducted into the State of Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame in 2023 and the University of Tennessee Athletics Hall of Fame in 2024. An entrepreneur and philanthropist, Henderson founded the Luvthekidz Foundation, a non-profit dedicated to improving the quality of life for disabled children, in honor of his late daughter, Talia, who passed away after bat-

ting cerebral palsy and epilepsy.

MICHAEL HUFF
University of Texas
Defensive Back, 2002-05

A defensive back with exceptional speed and impeccable instincts, Michael Huff consistently thwarted opposing offenses while making clutch plays and helping Texas claim the 2005 national title. The Irving, Texas, native now becomes the 22nd Longhorn player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A unanimous First Team All-American in 2005, Huff capped his career by winning the Thorpe Award, given to the nation's best defensive back, becoming the first Longhorn ever to receive the prestigious honor. Playing for Hall of Fame coach Mack Brown during his four years in Austin, Huff helped the Longhorns to a 45-6 overall record, four consecutive bowl

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appearances, the program's first national championship in 35 years, a perfect 13-0 season and a Big 12 title.

Huff earned Defensive MVP honors in Texas' legendary 2005 BCS National Championship victory over USC in the Rose Bowl after making a crucial fourth-down tackle late in the game to give the Longhorns possession for their iconic game-winning drive. He also helped the Horns defeat Michigan the previous season in the Rose Bowl and LSU in the Cotton Bowl following the 2002 season. Texas never finished lower than No. 12 nationally during his four years in Austin.

A two-time First Team All-Big 12 pick (2004, 2005), Huff led the Longhorns' defense as the unit topped the conference in total defense (302.9), scoring defense (16.4) and passing defense (172.0). Huff set multiple records at Texas, including the most career defensive touchdowns (five) and the most interceptions returned for a touchdown in a career (four). His 23.1-yard average on interception returns remains a UT record. His 162 career interception return yards rank sixth in UT annals, and his 44 career pass breakups also place him sixth all-time in program history. Starting 50-of-51 career games, Huff posted 318 tackles, 26 tackles for loss, seven interceptions, six forced fumbles, and three blocked kicks, proving his ability to impact the game in multiple ways.

In addition to his football excellence, Huff showcased his elite speed as an All-Big 12 sprinter for the Texas track team. He also excelled in the classroom, earning Big 12 Commissioner's Honor Roll recognition before graduating with a degree in youth and community studies in 2005.

A first-round pick (seventh overall) of the Raiders in the 2006 NFL Draft, Huff played seven seasons in Oakland before a final season in 2013 when he helped the Denver Broncos reach Super Bowl XLVIII.

Following his playing career, Huff returned to Texas as the Assistant Director of Player Development, mentoring the next generation of Longhorns. Off the field, he has remained deeply committed to philanthropy, supporting initiatives such as Foster Village, the North Texas Food Bank, and the Neighborhood Longhorns Program, while also providing funding for student loan relief, summer school scholarships, and STEM education. He was inducted into the Texas Athletics Hall of Honor (2015) and the Irving ISD Hall of Fame (2013), and he now joins Texas teammates Vince Young and Derrick Johnson in the College Football Hall of Fame.

JIM KLEINSASSER **University of North Dakota** **Tight End, 1995-98**

Overpowering defenders as both a blocker and a pass-catcher, Jim Kleinsasser carved out a place in the history books as one of the best tight ends in Division II history. The Carrington, North Dakota, native now becomes just the second player in Fighting Hawk history to enter the College

Football Hall of Fame.

A two-time First Team All-American (1997, 98), Kleinsasser helped North Dakota to an overall record of 32-10, earning two NCAA Division II Playoff appearances during his four seasons in Grand Forks. He was also an Honorable Mention All-American in 1996 and secured First Team All-North Central Conference (NCC) honors three times (1996, 1997 and 1998). He helped the team claim the NCC title in 1995 with a 9-2 record and an overall NCC record of 28-8 during his four years. The Fighting Hawks posted final AP rankings of No. 7 in 1995, No. 19 in 1996 and No. 7 in 1998.

Playing at 6-foot-2 and 273 pounds, Kleinsasser caught 88 passes for 1,309 yards and averaged 14.8 yards per catch during his career. He finished with 10 receiving touchdowns, and he also rushed eight times for 91 yards and a touchdown. A team captain in 1998, Kleinsasser started all 42 games of his college career, playing for head coach Roger Thomas. In recognition of his outstanding collegiate performance, Kleinsasser was selected to start in the 1999 Senior Bowl.

Selected in the second round (44th overall) in the 1999 NFL Draft by the Vikings, he played from 1999 to 2011 before retiring at the end of the 2011 season. He remains the highest NFL Draft pick in UND history. He was inducted into the University of North Dakota Hall of Fame in 2012.

ALEX MACK **University of California** **Offensive Line, 2005-08**

A powerful, tough and cerebral leader, Alex Mack achieved a level of excellence that has made him one of the most successful linemen in college football history. The Santa Barbara, California, product now becomes the 17th Golden Bear player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

Named a First Team All-American by The Sporting News and a finalist for the Rimington Trophy in 2007, Mack was also selected as a Second Team All-American by Walter Camp in 2008. He helped propel the Golden Bears to four consecutive bowl victories while anchoring an offense that consistently ranked among the nation's best. He played a pivotal role in Cal's 2006 Pac-10 co-championship, the program's first conference title since 1975, and an overall record of 34-17 and final rankings of No. 25 in 2005 and No. 14 in 2006.

A three-time Pac-10 First Team selection, Mack's dominance was punctuated by his unique achievement as a two-time winner of the Morris Trophy (2007-08), awarded to the Pac-10's top offensive lineman. He was the first player to win the award twice since Hall of Famer Lincoln Kennedy (Washington) accomplished the feat in 1991-92.

With Mack as the anchor, Cal's offensive line was the best in the Pac-10 in pass protection, allowing the fewest sacks in both the 2005 and 2006 seasons. The Golden Bears also led the conference in scoring in

2006, averaging 32.8 points per game. His ability to open lanes in the run game was equally impressive, helping running back Marshawn Lynch rush for 1,246 yards in 2005 and 1,356 yards in 2006 while leading the conference in rushing yards (104.3 ypg), all-purpose yards (137.3 ypg), and touchdowns (15) in 2006. During his tenure, the Cal offense averaged 427.9 ypg in 2005, 415.6 ypg in 2006, 407.5 ypg in 2007 and 376.0 ypg in 2008.

A team captain in 2008, Mack also set an example off the field, graduating magna cum laude and winning the NFF William V. Campbell Trophy® as the best football scholar-athlete in the nation. A four-time Academic All-Pac-10 selection and a three-time Academic All-District honoree, Mack was named the Pac-10 Football Scholar-Athlete of the Year in 2008.

A first-round pick (21st overall) in the 2009 NFL Draft by Cleveland, Mack played 13 seasons in the NFL with the Browns, Falcons and 49ers, making seven Pro Bowls and earning Second Team All-Pro honors three times.

Mack has been deeply involved in charitable and civic initiatives, including American Football Without Barriers (A.F.W.B.), which spreads football to new parts of the world through service and leadership. He has also been active in CTE research and awareness and served as treasurer of the NFL Players Association for two years.

TERRENCE METCALF **University of Mississippi** **Offensive Lineman, 1997, 1999-2001**

Playing at 6-foot-4 and 315 pounds, Terrence Metcalf used a unique blend of size, technique, and agility to become one of the most formidable linemen in Ole Miss history. The Clarksdale, Mississippi, native now becomes the 10th Rebel player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A consensus First Team All-American in 2001 and a Sporting News Second Team selection in 1999, Metcalf helped lead Ole Miss to three bowl appearances (1997 Motor City, 1999 Independence, 2000 Music City Bowl) and two final national rankings (No. 22 in 1997 and No. 22 in 1999).

Lettering in 1997 and 1999-2001, Metcalf started the first three games in 1998, but he was redshirted after an ankle injury for the remainder of that season. Ole Miss would go 37-22 over the five-year period with Metcalf helping his teammates set new school highwater marks. He blocked during the first two seasons of NFF National Scholar-Athlete Eli Manning's record setting career, who would pass for 10,119 yards to claim multiple school records at the time. He also cleared a path for Deuce McAllister who still holds the school rushing record with 3,060 yards and all-purpose record with 4,889 yards.

A two-time First Team All-SEC selection (2000, 2001), Metcalf was named the SEC's Most Valuable Lineman in 2001 by

the Birmingham Monday Morning Quarterback Club. Metcalf's impact was particularly felt in pass protection, where he anchored an offensive line that allowed the fewest sacks in the SEC in both 2000 (7 sacks) and 2001 (10 sacks).

A team captain, his leadership and athletic prowess also earned him multiple team awards, including the Co-Offensive Player of the Year by the Rebel Club of Jackson in 1997; the Clower-Walters Scholarship Award in 2001; the J. Richard Price Courage and Compassion Award in 2001; and the Birmingham Alumni Club's Leadership Award. He participated in the 2002 Senior Bowl as one of the top NFL prospects.

Drafted in the third round by Chicago, Metcalf played for the Bears for seven seasons, including the 2006 season with an appearance in Super Bowl XLI. After retiring from the NFL, Metcalf dedicated himself to coaching in Mississippi, with stints at Oxford High School, Pearl River Community College and as the head coach at Coahoma Community College in his hometown of Clarksdale.

He has also remained active in civic initiatives, participating in charity fundraisers, Habitat for Humanity, and military and church outreach programs. As part of the Rebel Reconnect program, Metcalf returned to Oxford to complete his degree in management, graduating in 2016. His son DK Metcalf played at Ole Miss and is currently an All-Pro wide receiver with the Seattle Seahawks.

Metcalf has been inducted into the Ole Miss Sports Hall of Fame, Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame in 2021 and honored as an SEC Legend.

HALOTI NGATA **University of Oregon** **Defensive Tackle 2002, 2004-05**

At 6-foot-5 and 338 pounds, Haloti Ngata used his size, strength and athleticism to dominate the line of scrimmage during his three seasons in Eugene. The Salt Lake City, Utah, product now becomes the seventh player from Oregon to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A consensus First Team All-American in 2005, Ngata became the first player in Oregon history to be named Pac-10 Defensive Player of the Year. That year, he also finished as a finalist for the Outland Trophy as one of the top interior linemen in the nation, and as a finalist for the Nagurski Trophy as one of the best defenders in the nation.

After missing the 2003 season due to injury, he returned stronger than ever, earning Second Team All-Pac-10 honors in 2004 before solidifying his place among college football's elite with a First Team All-Pac-10 selection and team MVP honors in 2005, the first defensive lineman to claim the accolade in 18 seasons.

During his tenure in Eugene and playing for Hall of Fame coach Mike Bellotti, the Ducks tallied a 25-19 record. His efforts contributed to an appearance in the 2002

Seattle Bowl, and in 2005, the Ducks posted a 10-2 record with an appearance in the Holiday Bowl with a final No. 12 ranking.

He led the conference's interior linemen in tackles (61) his final year, claiming the 2005 Morris Trophy as the league's top interior lineman. In three seasons, he totaled 151 career tackles, 24.5 tackles for loss, 10 sacks, three forced fumbles, and an astounding seven blocked kicks, showcasing his rare ability to impact every phase of the game.

Selected 12th overall in the 2006 NFL Draft by the Baltimore Ravens, he played 13 years in the NFL with the Ravens (winning Super Bowl XLVII), Lions and Eagles. He earned five Pro Bowl selections, First Team All-Pro honors twice and Second Team All-Pro honors three times.

Ngata was selected to the Pac-10's "All-Century Team" and was inducted into Oregon's Athletic Hall of Fame in 2016. His name also appears in the Baltimore Ravens Ring of Honor. Beyond football, Ngata has made a significant impact with his wife Christinia through the Haloti Ngata Foundation, which focuses on supporting at-risk youth, gang prevention, and providing college-preparation resources.

COACH URBAN MEYER

Bowling Green State University (2001-02); University of Utah (2003-04);

University of Florida (2005-10); Ohio State University (2012-18)

Head Coach: 187-32-0 (85.4%)

Winning 85 percent of his games and claiming three national titles, Urban Meyer guided four different FBS programs and became one of the most successful and transformative coaches in college football history. The Toledo, Ohio, native now becomes the second coach from Utah, the third from Bowling Green, the fifth from Florida and the eighth from Ohio State to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

Meyer's coaching career began at Bowling Green, where he orchestrated a dramatic turnaround, making the Falcons the first Mid-American Conference (MAC) team to go 3-0 against BCS opponents in a single season (2001) and posting a 17-6 record during two seasons.

He then took over at Utah, leading the Utes to a 22-2 record in two seasons, including their first undefeated season (12-0) since 1930, their first-ever BCS bowl appearance (Fiesta Bowl), and the first back-to-back Mountain West Conference (MWC) titles in league history. The Utes finished No. 21 after the 2003 season with a win in the Liberty Bowl. The Fiesta Bowl win made history as the first time a team from a non-automatically qualifying BCS conference played in a BCS bowl, earning the Utes the distinction as the inaugural "BCS Buster." The Utes would finish at No. 4 in the final AP Poll after the 2004 season, and quarterback Alex Smith (a 2024 Hall of Fame inductee) was a Heisman finalist and eventual No. 1 overall pick in the NFL Draft.

At Florida, Meyer won two national

championships (2006, 2008) and two SEC titles (2006, 2008) with an overall record of 65-15 during his six seasons in Gainesville. His Florida tenure included a 22-game winning streak, one of four separate 20-game winning streaks he achieved across his career—the only coach in major college football history to do so. He also coached 2007 Heisman Trophy winner and 2023 Hall of Fame inductee Tim Tebow, who won the Campbell Trophy.

Meyer's success continued at Ohio State, where he led the Buckeyes to three Big Ten Championships (2014, 2017, 2018) and a national title in 2014, making him the only modern-era coach to win a national championship in two different conferences and one of only two to do it at two different schools (fellow 2025 inductee Nick Saban being the other). His Ohio State teams went 83-9 during seven seasons, never finishing lower than first in their division. They tallied a 54-4 Big Ten record while setting an NCAA record with 30 consecutive conference victories. His Buckeyes also dominated their archrival, going 7-0 against Michigan during his tenure.

Meyer set a major college record with 165 wins in his first 15 seasons, and his 85.4 winning percentage ranks third all-time in college football history, trailing only Hall of Fame coaches Knute Rockne and Frank Leahy. His postseason success was equally impressive, with a 12-3 bowl record (78.5% win rate), the second-highest in FBS history. In total, Meyer coached 44 First Team All-Americans, 77 First Team all-conference players, four NFF National Scholar-Athletes (two at Florida, two at Ohio State) and two College Football HoF inductees. He won seven conference championships overall. He was named the Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year in 2004, and he was named the conference Coach of the Year three times (MWC in 2003, 2004 and MAC in 2001).

Beyond football, Meyer has made a lasting impact through civic service, serving on the boards of the Veterans Golfers Association, Folds of Honor, and the Tim Tebow Foundation. He and his wife established the Urban and Shelley Meyer Fund for Cancer Research at Ohio State's Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Meyer earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Cincinnati (1986), lettering one season (1984) with the Bearcats as a defensive back. While launching his coaching career as a graduate assistant with the Buckeyes, he earned his master's degree in sports administration from Ohio State in 1988. Meyer's coaching career also includes assistant positions at Illinois State, Colorado State and Notre Dame. He was the head coach of the Jacksonville Jaguars in 2021.

Meyer is a member of the Greater Cleveland Sports Hall of Fame and the Ashtabula County Football Hall of Fame. He currently serves as a host and analyst on FOX's Big Noon Kickoff.

COACH NICK SABAN

University of Toledo (1990); Michigan State (1995-99); LSU (2000-04);

University of Alabama (2007-23)

Head Coach: 292-71-1 (80.4%)

A master strategist and unparalleled recruiter, Nick Saban's legendary career includes an unprecedented seven national titles and a list of accomplishments that cements his name in the pantheon of the greatest to have ever coached the game. The Monongah, West Virginia, native now becomes the second coach from Toledo, the sixth from Michigan State, the sixth from LSU and the fifth from Alabama to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

Over 28 seasons as a head coach, Saban compiled a 292-71-1 career record (80.4%), retiring as the NCAA's active leader in wins and ranking sixth all-time among FBS coaches. With seven national championships—six at Alabama and one at LSU—Saban holds the record for the most titles in FBS history. He also holds the distinction as the first coach in history to win national crowns at two different FBS schools since the AP Poll's inception in 1936. He is the only head coach in the BCS and CFP eras with multiple undefeated national championship seasons.

Saban's head coaching journey began at Toledo (1990), where he went 9-2 and won a share of the Mid-American Conference title in his lone season with the Rockets. From 1995-99, Saban led Michigan State, revitalizing the Spartans program while posting a 34-24-1 record. He landed four bowl appearances in his five seasons in East Lansing, with the 1999 Spartans finishing with a final No. 7 ranking.

Coaching in Baton Rouge for five seasons (2000-04), Saban tallied an overall record of 48-16 and delivered LSU its first national championship since 1958 with a win in the 2003 National Championship over Oklahoma. He also led the Tigers to two SEC titles (2001, 2003), a 4-1 postseason record in bowl games, and four top 25 final national rankings.

During his 17 seasons at Alabama (2007-23), Saban built the most dominant dynasty in modern college football, leading the Tide to nine BCS/CFP championship game appearances while winning six national titles. He compiled an overall record of 201-29 (87.4%) and produced 15 consecutive seasons with a No. 1 AP ranking and nine SEC titles. He Alabama to 17 bowl appearances, posting an overall postseason record of 13-4. His 201 wins at Alabama ranks second all-time, eclipsed only by Hall of Fame coach Paul "Bear" Bryant. He had a 26-game winning streak from 2015-16, and combining his tenures at LSU and Alabama, he went 11-1 in SEC Championship games.

Saban's unmatched ability to develop talent resulted in 66 First Team All-Americans, including four Heisman Trophy winners, which ties him with Hall of Famer Frank Leahy for the most by any coach in history. He coached seven NFF National

Scholar-Athletes, including Campbell Trophy® winners Rudy Niswanger at LSU and Barrett Jones and Jalen Milroe at Alabama. He mentored 136 NFL Draft picks at Alabama, and he holds the most first round draft picks in a career with 52.

Saban never had a losing season in 28 years as a head coach, and claimed more than 20 coach of the year honors during his

(continued on page 14)



career, including the Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year twice and SEC Coach of the Year five times. His expansive coaching tree includes more than 35 assistant head coaches who have gone on to head coaches in college and the NFL.

Beyond football, Saban's impact extended into philanthropy. His Nick's Kids Foundation has distributed over \$13 million to more than 150 charities. He helped rebuild 22 homes with Habitat for Humanity after a devastating tornado in Tuscaloosa and made multiple \$1 million donations to support first-generation scholarships, Alabama athletics, and St. Francis Catholic Church. His latest initiative, the Saban Center, will house a STEM Discovery Center, the Alabama STEM Hub, and the Tuscaloosa Children's Theater.

A three-year letterman at safety for Kent State (1970-72), he earned both his bachelor's (1973) and master's (1975) degrees from Kent State. Now an ESPN College GameDay analyst, he remains a revered figure in college football. In recognition of his unparalleled success, the Board of Trustees approved plans to name the field at Bryant-Denny Stadium in his honor.

STEVE SLATON **West Virginia University** **Running Back, 2005-07**

An elusive running back who torched defenses with his explosive speed, Steve Slaton led West Virginia during one of the most successful periods in school history. The Levittown, Pennsylvania, native now becomes the seventh Mountaineer player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A unanimous First Team All-American in 2006, Slaton finished fourth in Heisman Trophy voting and as a finalist for the Doak Walker Award that year, setting the WVU single-season rushing record with 1,744 yards while accumulating 2,104 all-purpose yards.

Making an immediate impact as a true freshman in 2005, Slaton set a then-Big East record with 1,128 rushing yards, including a memorable six-touchdown performance in a triple-overtime victory against Louisville. His MVP performance in the Sugar Bowl against Georgia included a bowl-record 204 rushing yards and three touchdowns. He was named Big East Rookie of the Year while being named a First Team Freshman All-American. He rushed for 1,051 yards in 2007, adding a third consecutive season of more than 1,000 yards.

During his three seasons in Morgantown, WVU went 33-5, winning three consecutive bowls (2006 Sugar, 2007 Gator and the 2008 Fiesta upset of Oklahoma) and boasting final national rankings of No. 5 in 2005, No. 10 in 2006 and No. 6 in 2007. The run included two Big East titles (2005, 2007), the winningest three-year period in WVU history and the second-best record in the nation over the three years.

A three-time All-Big East performer

(First Team in 2006, Second Team in 2005, 2007), Slaton finished his college career as WVU's all-time leader in total touchdowns (55), rushing touchdowns (50), and points scored by a non-kicker (330). He and quarterback Pat White formed one of the most prolific rushing duos in NCAA history, each surpassing 1,000 rushing yards in consecutive seasons as just the third pair to ever do so. He rushed for 3,923 yards during his career, adding another 805 receiving and totaling 4,775 all-purpose yards. He finished his career as the NCAA active leader in points per game (9.4) with multiple spots in the conference and school records books.

Selected in the third round of the 2008 NFL Draft by Houston, Slaton played four years with the Texans before concluding his career with the Miami Dolphins in 2011. He played with the Toronto Argonauts in the CFL for one season before retiring from football and pursuing a career in the culinary arts as a personal chef and kitchen consultant in Houston. He was inducted into the WVU Sports Hall of Fame in 2018.

DARRIN SMITH **University of Miami (FL)** **Linebacker, 1989-92**

Darrin Smith was a relentless and fearless linebacker whose key playmaking ability helped him anchor one of the most dominant defenses in college football history. The Miami, Florida, native led the Canes to two national titles and now becomes the 10th Miami player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A two-time First Team All-American (1991, 1992), Smith was a principal contributor to two national championship teams (1989, 1991), and during his four-year career, the Hurricanes compiled an outstanding 44-4 record, never finishing a season ranked lower than No. 3 nationally. Playing for Hall of Fame coach Dennis Erickson, Miami appeared in four consecutive bowl games, winning the 1990 Sugar, 1991 Cotton and 1992 Orange bowls while appearing in the 1993 Sugar Bowl.

Playing alongside fellow linebackers Micheal Barrow and Jessie Armstead from 1989-92, the trio earned the nickname "The Bermuda Triangle," stifling opposing offenses including a 22-0 shutout of Nebraska in the 1992 Orange Bowl to notch a perfect 12-0 season. The defense also led the nation by only allowing an average of 8.3 points per game and contributed to the Canes' 29-game winning streak.

A two-time First Team All-Big East pick (1991, 1992), Smith was named the conference co-Defensive Player of the Year in 1991 as the Hurricanes claimed back-to-back Big East titles. In Miami's memorable 17-16 win over Florida State in Tallahassee, Smith had 18 tackles (ten solo), helping propel the Canes to the 1991 national title. Smith recorded 401 career tackles, including 10 sacks, 15 tackles for loss, and 24 pass breakups during his four

years in Coral Gables.

Excelling in the classroom, Smith graduated in 3.5 years, claiming a prestigious NFF National Scholar-Athlete Award as a senior. He was also named a member of the Big East All-Academic Team and a Hitachi/CFA Scholar-Athlete.

Selected in the second round of the NFL Draft by Dallas, he played 12 years in the league with the Cowboys (winning two Super Bowls in 1993, 1994), Eagles, Seahawks and Saints. He was tapped for Miami's Iron Arrow Society Honor Society in 1993, the university's highest honor, and the University of Miami Sports Hall of Fame & Museum in 2006.

After retiring from professional football, Smith worked in real estate and coaches youth and high school football. He currently serves as a chaplain with Cru (Campus Crusade for Christ) in South Florida. He founded "Project 59," a youth foundation that assists children with reading comprehension and academic development, and he is active with Athletes in Action, which helps athletes grow in all dimensions of life.

MICHAEL STRAHAN **Texas Southern University** **Defensive Lineman, 1989-92**

Michael Strahan was an unstoppable force and sack machine on the defensive line at Texas Southern, dominating the Southwestern Athletic Conference and leaving an indelible mark on the Tigers' program. The Houston, Texas, native now becomes the first person ever from Texas Southern to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A First Team All-American in 1992, Strahan was the kind of player that kept opposing offensive coordinators up at night. He was more often than not double-teamed by opposing's offensive linemen, which his coaches referred to as "Strahan rules." He recorded a school-record 19 sacks while amassing 32 tackles for losses for 142 yards his senior season, claiming 1992 Division I-AA Defensive Player of the Year and Black College Defensive Player of the Year honors.

As a junior in 1991, Strahan led the Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC) with 14.5 sacks. His career total of 41.5 sacks remains a Texas Southern record. He was a two-time First-Team All-SWAC pick, and he was twice named SWAC Player of the Year (1991, 1992).

Selected in the second round (40th overall) pick in the 1993 NFL Draft by the Giants, Strahan played 15 seasons with the Giants, twice leading the NFL in sacks (including setting the record for sacks in a single season with 22.5 in 2001) while earning four First Team and two Second Team All-Pro selections. He was a member of the Super Bowl XLII-winning team, finishing his career with 141.5 sacks.

Inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2014, he has also been inducted into the Black College Football Hall of Fame, the Southwestern Athletic

Conference Hall of Fame, Texas Sports Hall of Fame and the Texas Southern Sports Hall of Fame. His number has been retired at Texas Southern, and he received an honorary doctorate of humane letters from his alma mater in 2013. He was named to the Senior Bowl 75th Anniversary Team in 2024. The Giants retired his No. 92, and his name appears in the Giants Ring of Honor.

An Emmy winner and Peabody award-winning journalist, Strahan currently is a co-host on ABC's Good Morning America and as an analyst on FOX NFL Sunday. He also has an eponymous lifestyle brand, Michael Strahan™, a top-seller across more than 50 categories, including men's and boy's clothing, accessories and skin care.

DENNIS THURMAN **University of Southern California** **Defensive Back, 1974-77**

Dennis Thurman was a fearless and instinctive playmaker whose ability to read the game and lock down receivers helped define the Trojans' defense, earning him a legacy as one of the greatest in Southern California history. The Santa Monica, California, native now becomes the 35th Trojan player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A two-time First Team All-American, Thurman earned consensus honors in 1976 and unanimous pick in 1977. He helped USC win the national title in 1974 and four consecutive bowl victories, defeating Ohio State in the 1975 Rose Bowl, Tennessee in the 1975 Liberty Bowl, Michigan in the 1977 Rose Bowl and Texas A&M in the 1977 Bluebonnet Bowl. Southern Cal finished in the top 20 each year, posting an overall record of 37-10-1 during his four years playing in the Coliseum.

Playing for Hall of Fame coach John McKay during his first two seasons, Thurman helped the Trojans finish No. 1 in the 1974 Coaches Poll and No. 19 in 1975. Playing for Hall of Fame John Robinson the next two years, he led USC to final rankings of No. 2 in 1976 Coaches Poll and No. 12 in 1977. His Hall of Fame teammates during the run included Ricky Bell, Brad Budde, Anthony Davis, Ronnie Lott, Marvin Powell, Charles White, and Richard Wood.

A two-time First Team All-Conference pick in 1976 and 1977, Thurman led the Pac-8 with eight interceptions in 1976, including one pick-six and averaging 21.3 yards per interception. He recorded 13 career interceptions, tied for sixth-most in USC history, with two returned for touchdowns. He amassed 169 career tackles, 11 deflections, and four fumble recoveries. He was named team MVP in 1977 as well as the Trojans' Defensive Player of the Year. Recognized as one of the top senior prospects, he played in the 1978 Senior Bowl.

Drafted in the 11th round of 1978 NFL Draft by the Cowboys, Thurman played

eight years with the Cowboys, including Super Bowl XIII, and a final year in 1986 with the St. Louis Cardinals. After his playing career, he became a coach, currently as the defensive coordinator and cornerbacks coach at Hawaii. He has worked in the NFL as an assistant with the Cardinals, Ravens, Jets and Bills. His college previous stops include USC, Jackson State and Colorado.

MICHAEL VICK
Virginia Tech
Quarterback, 1999-2000

Michael Vick was a transcendent player at Virginia Tech with electrifying speed as well as amazing arm strength, making him the ultimate dual threat and revolutionizing the quarterback position. The Newport News, Virginia, native now becomes the sixth player from Virginia Tech to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

Vick was selected as a First Team All-American in 1999 as a redshirt freshman, making him the first Tech freshman to ever achieve the honor. Playing for Hall of Fame coach Frank Beamer and with Hall of Fame teammate Corey Moore anchoring the defense, Vick helped guide Tech to the school's first ever 11-0 regular season in 1999 and its first appearance in a national championship game, the Sugar Bowl against Florida State.

Vick's efforts in 1999 included leading the nation in passing efficiency (180.37), which set an NCAA record for a freshman. He completed 59.2 percent of his passes for 1,840 yards and 12 touchdowns while adding 585 yards and eight touchdowns rushing. He finished third in the Heisman Trophy voting while also claiming the ESPY as the top college football player. The Hokies finished No. 2 in the nation in 1999.

As a redshirt sophomore, Vick completed 87 of 161 passes for 1,234 yards and eight touchdowns while rushing for 617 yards and eight more touchdowns. He closed out his college career as the MVP in a Gator Bowl win over Clemson with a final No. 6 ranking.

A two-time All-Big East performer (First Team in 1999, Second Team in 2000), Vick guided the Hokies to the conference title in 1999 as the Big East Offensive Player of the Year and the Big East Rookie of the Year. During his two seasons in Blacksburg, the Hokies posted a 22-2 overall record, losing only one conference game and the national title game in 1999.

Vick holds multiple school records, including single-season passing efficiency (180.4 in 1999), single-season yards per completion (20.4 in 1999), single-season yards per attempt (12.0 avg. in 1999), career yards per attempt (9.79). His 8.14 career yards per play was also a school record at the time. He finished his career with 177 completions for 3,074 yards and 20 touchdowns, adding 1,202 rush yards and 16 touchdowns on the ground.

Vick was taken as the No. 1 overall pick

by Atlanta in the 2001 NFL Draft. He played 13 seasons in the league with the Falcons, Eagles, Jets and Steelers, selected for four Pro Bowls and set NFL records for rushing yards by a quarterback in a season and a career.

Since retiring from the NFL, has worked as an analyst for Fox Sports and was recently named the new head football coach at Norfolk State University. He established the Team Vick Foundation to support underserved communities and is involved with other nonprofits and charitable work. Virginia Tech retired his No. 7 jersey in 2002.

RYAN YARBOROUGH
University of Wyoming
Wide Receiver, 1990-93

Ryan Yarborough was an explosive playmaker at Wyoming whose ability to make clutch catches and stretch the field helped make him one of the most prolific receivers in college football history. The Park Forest, Illinois, product now becomes the third player from Wyoming to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

A two-time First Team All-American, Yarborough led the nation in receiving yards in both 1992 (1,351) and 1993 (1,512). He set NCAA marks at the time for the most career receiving yards (4,357—still ranks ninth), 200-plus yard receiving games (7), most 1,000-yard receiving seasons in a career (3), and the most games catching a touchdown pass in a career (27).

He still holds the NCAA record for yards per reception (minimum of 200 catches), averaging 19.0 yards for his 229 career receptions. His 42 career touchdown receptions still rank eighth all-time, and his average of 137.5 receiving yards per game in 1993 still ranks him among the top 30 in history.

Playing for coaches Paul Roach his freshman season and Joe Tiller the next three years, Yarborough helped the Cowboys to a 26-21 overall record, including appearances in the 1990 and 1993 Copper Bowls and an 8-4 record in 1993 with a share of the Western Athletic Conference (WAC) title.

Yarborough was a dominant force in the WAC, earning First Team All-WAC honors in both 1992 and 1993. He led Wyoming in receiving for three straight years from 1991 to 1993 and broke nearly every significant school receiving record, including the single-season mark for receiving yards with 1,512 in 1993, the single-season record for touchdown receptions with 16, and the career record for touchdown receptions with 42.

Selected in the second round of the 1994 NFL Draft by the Jets, Yarborough played six seasons in the NFL with Jets, Packers, Ravens and Saints. He was inducted into the Wyoming Athletics Hall of Fame in 2003. He currently works as a coach and business consultant in the Houston area.

COACH LARRY BLAKENEY
Troy University (1991-2014)

Head Coach: 178-113-1 (61.1%)

The all-time winningest coach in both Troy and Sun Belt Conference history, Larry Blakeney led the Trojans to eight conference titles while becoming one of only two coaches in history to guide a program from Division II ultimately to the Football Bowl Subdivision. The Birmingham, Alabama, native now becomes the first-ever player or coach in Troy history to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

During his 24 seasons as the Troy head coach, Blakeney won 61.1 percent of his games, posting a career record of 178-113-1. He led the Trojans to five bowl games, securing victories in the 2006 and 2010 New Orleans bowls and appearances in the 2004 Silicon Valley Bowl, the 2008 New Orleans Bowl and the 2010 GMAC Bowl. Prior to Troy's transition to the FBS, he guided the Trojans to seven FCS playoff appearances in eight seasons.

He remains the all-time winningest coach in Sun Belt Conference history, holding a 20-win advantage over the next closest competitor. He guided Troy to eight conference championships, including three in the Southland Conference before leading the Trojans to a Sun Belt-record five consecutive titles from 2006 to 2010.

His teams regularly competed against and defeated Power Five opponents, including a signature 24-14 victory over No. 17-ranked Missouri in 2004. He also notched Power Five wins against Mississippi State and Oklahoma State. He was named conference Coach of the Year four times, twice in the Southland and twice in the Sun Belt. He was a two-time AFCA Regional Coach of the Year in 1999 and 2000. In 1993, during the program's first full year at the FCS level, he led the Trojans to a 10-0-1 regular-season record, the first undefeated regular season in school history. In 1995, his team finished 11-0 in the regular season, marking the first undefeated and untied season in program annals.

Blakeney mentored 14 First Team All-Americans, including 1999 Buck Buchanan Award winner Al Lucas, and he coached 2000 NFF National Scholar-Athlete Nick Colbert. His tenure included 86 First Team All-Conference selections, including three Sun Belt Players of the Year.

He oversaw significant renovations to Veterans Memorial Stadium, increasing its capacity from 12,000 to 17,500 in 1998 and later to 30,000 in 2003. Troy named the playing surface at Veterans Memorial Stadium "Larry Blakeney Field." He is one of only two head coaches, alongside UCF's Gene McDowell, to successfully lead a program from Division II to the FBS.

Blakeney has been inducted into the Wiregrass Sports Hall of Fame, the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame, and the inaugural class of the Troy University Sports Hall of Fame. Beyond coaching, Blakeney remained active in civic service, earning the Chilton County Auburn Club

"Unsung Hero" Award. A frequent speaker at local events, he has dedicated his time to numerous organizations. A former Auburn quarterback, Blakeney made history as the first sophomore to start at the position for legendary Hall of Fame coach Shug Jordan.

COACH LARRY KORVER
Northwestern College [IA] (1967-94)
Head Coach: 212-77-6 (72.9%)

Larry "Bub" Korver transformed a young and struggling Northwestern College (IA) program into a national powerhouse during his 28-year tenure, leading the Red Raiders to two NAIA National Championships and multiple-postseason runs. The Orange City, Iowa, product now becomes the first-ever player or coach in the history of the Red Raiders program to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

Taking over a program that had managed just 18 wins in the school's first seven seasons as a four-year college, Korver quickly changed the culture at Northwestern, winning a remarkable 72.9 percent of his games with a career record of 212-77-6.

Under his guidance, the Red Raiders captured NAIA National Championships in 1973 and 1983, while also finishing as national runner-up three times in 1972, 1979, and 1984. His teams made 11 national playoff appearances, establishing Northwestern as a perennial contender. Twice named NAIA National Coach of the Year, Korver's success put him among the most distinguished figures in NAIA coaching circles.

When he retired in 1994, his 212 career victories ranked him second among all active NAIA coaches, and his 72.9 winning percentage was fifth-best. Korver guided Northwestern College to a Nebraska-Iowa Athletic Conference title in his final season in 1994.

The school's all-time winningest coach, Korver's teams won at least eight games in 13 different seasons and suffered only three losing campaigns during his tenure. In recognition of his contributions, Northwestern renamed its football field in his honor.

Korver produced 32 NAIA All-Americans and he was inducted into both the Northwestern College Athletic Hall of Fame and the NAIA Hall of Fame.

After graduating from Northwestern when it was still a junior college in 1954, Korver went on to earn his bachelor's degree from South Dakota State University. He was a standout athlete for the Jackrabbits, earning First Team All-Conference honors in football in 1954 and was named team MVP in both football and basketball that same year. Before arriving back at Northwestern as the head coach, he was a high school coach in Iowa and Minnesota.

Following his retirement from coaching, Korver remained active in his community and pursued a career in the special products industry at Med-Tec.

College Football News and Notes



BO CARTER

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CFP notemeister Dave Plati continues his award-winning work with several dities from the 11th annual College Football Playoff contest between champ Ohio State and runnerup Notre Dame:

- The Big Ten last won back-to-back national championships in 1965 and 1966 when Michigan State we co-champs both years; the last outright titles were in 1940-42 (Minnesota, Minnesota, Ohio State).
- Ohio State improved to 6-0 when the opponent scored first but trailed on the season only 81:55 out of 960 minutes.

- The 46-yard field goal by Ohio State's Jayden Fielding vs Notre Dame was the fourth-longest in CFP title game history.

- Ohio State's Will Howard set a championship game record for most consecutive completions, opening with 13 in a row (old mark was 12). Including the end of the Texas semifinal win, it extended his streak to 16. It was his season-best and also the fourth time this season he started a game completing his first 10 passes (also vs. Western Michigan, Iowa and Nebraska).

- Howard accounted for 18 first downs out of 21 the offense earned from scrimmage (the 22nd was by penalty); he threw for 10 and rushed for eight – four of

which came on third downs.

- Ohio State's Ryan Day becomes the fourth active head coach to win a national title in playoff era; he joins Sherrone Moore (Michigan 2024); Kirby Smart (Georgia, 2022 and 2023); and Dabo Swinney (Clemson, 2016 and 2018).

- Ohio State's 214 rushing yards is the fourth-highest total in CFP finale history, and former Buckeyes standout Ezekiel Elliott still holds the AT&T Stadium individual rushing record with 246 yards on 36 carries with four TDs against Oregon in '14 season championship.

- Ohio State's 21-point second quarter was the 12th 21-point quarter this bowl season: by 11 different teams but the Buckeyes were the only ones who did it twice (also vs. Tennessee). It was the eighth time the Buckeyes scored 21 in a quarter this season.

- Seven different players touched the ball on Ohio State's first 15 plays.

- The Buckeyes shook off a 2014 upset in Columbus by Virginia Tech and losses to Oregon and Michigan during the '24 regular season to capture their two CFP titles.

Also of note, the NFF Gen. MacArthur Bowl, soon to be engraved with Ohio State's 2024 national title, still has 34 panels available for national titlists from 2025-2058. The spectacular trophy is on display daily at the Chick Fil-A NFF College Hall of Fame in Atlanta after its ceremonial presentation to the Buckeyes last Tuesday. There were six NFF National Scholar-Athletes' alumni on opening days rosters for NFC and AFC finalists. Philadelphia DL Thomas Booker IV (2021 honoree) of Stanford helped the Eagles make their sixth trip to the Super Bowl on Feb. 9 against Buffalo/Kansas City. NFC runnerup Washington featured OL Max

Scharping (2018) of Northern Illinois in the NFC title test against the Eagles while AFC finalist Kansas City sported NFF Scholar-Athletes OL Mike Caliendo (2021) of Western Michigan and LB Drue Tranquill (2018) of Notre Dame, and Buffalo featured DT DeWayne Carter (2023) of Duke and DE Casey Toohill (2019) of Stanford. Kickoff for Super Bowl LIX is set for 5:30 p.m. (CST) at Caesars Superdome in New Orleans, La.

NFF College Hall of Fame Facts:

Some notable birthdates in NFF College Hall of Fame annals in the Jan. 28 - Feb. 3 time period are Jan. 28 (1937) Charlie Krueger, Caldwell, Texas; (1978) 2025 inductee Terrence Metcalf, Clarksdale, Miss.; Jan. 29 (1896) Edwin "Goat" Hale, Jackson, Miss.; (1927) Arnold Galiffa, Donora, Pa.; (1945) Jim Donnan, Laurens, S.C.; Jan. 30 (1925) Bump Elliott, Detroit, Mich.; (1923) Frank "Muddy" Waters, Chico, Ga.; Jan. 31 (1909) Bert Metzger, Chicago, Ill.; (1913) Don Hutson, Pine Bluff, Ark.; (1913) Wayne Millner, Roxbury, Mass.; (1938) Chris Burford, Oakland, Calif.; (1953) Roosevelt Leaks, Brenham, Texas; (1977) 2025 inductee Jim Kleinsasser, Carrington, N.D.; Feb. 1 (1908) Albie Booth, New Haven, Conn.; (1915) Gaynell "Gus" Tinsley, Ruple, La.; Feb. 2 (1945) Loyd Phillips, Ft. Worth, Texas; (1951) Dave Casper, Bemidji, Minn.; Feb. 3 (1938) Joe Fusco, Wilkinsburg, Pa.; (1940) Fran Tarkenton, Richmond, Va.; (1945) Bob Griese, Evansville, Ind.; (1956) John Jefferson, Dallas, Texas.

Notable anniversaries of passings of NFF College Hall of Fame members are Jan. 28 (1991) Red Grange, Lake Wales, Fla.; (2004) Elroy "Crazy Legs" Hirsch, Madison, Wis.; (2013) Doug Kenna, No. Palm Beach, Fla.; Jan. 30 (2018) Clyde "Smackover" Scott, Little Rock, Ark.; Jan. 31 (1945) Al Blozis, Vosges Mountains, France; (2024) Terry Beasley, Moody, Ala.; Feb. 3 (1968) Homer Hazel, Marshall, Mich.; (1974) Bob Suffridge, Knoxville, Tenn.; (2006) Johnny Vaught, Oxford, Miss.; (2018) Jim Stillwagon, Columbus, Ohio.

Happy birthdays to NFF Hall of Fame members born Jan. 28 Terrence Metcalf, Jan. 29 Jim Donnan, Jan. 31 Chris Burford (a spry 87), Roosevelt Leaks, Jim Kleinsasser, Feb. 2 Dave Casper, Feb. 3 Joe Fusco (a spry 87), Fran Tarkenton (a spry 85), Bob Griese (a spry 80), John Jefferson

Schedules:

The scheduled TCU at North Carolina contests has been moved from Aug. 30 to Labor Day, Sept. 1, for a national telecast on one of the ESPN family of networks... Eastern Washington will leave its unique

red turf surface to tangle with nationally-ranked Boise State on Sept. 6... Morehead State will host Allen U. this autumn...

...Oregon State will travel to Houston for the first time in 2026... Arkansas and Utah have a 2026 and '29 home-and-home contract upcoming... Southern Miss and Middle Tennessee are slated to play again in 2026 and '28... UTRGV and Prairie View A&M will meet for the first time in 2025 and '28. UTRGV begins intercollegiate activity in August with home games being contested at Memorial Stadium in Brownsville, Texas, and HEB Park in Edinburg, Texas.

Good Works:

The Big Ten Conference just completed its extensive conference-wide blood drives through the Red Cross to collect 500,000-plus pints of blood for much-needed medical concerns... Mississippi Valley State helped celebrate the university's 75-year anniversary with a special, 13-minute presentation at the indoor inaugural mini-parade at the inauguration of U.S. President Donald Trump on Jan. 20... Time magazine 2024 Person of the Year and former Iowa standout now with the WNBA Indiana Fever Caitlin Clark donated 22,000 books to school kids in Iowa and Indiana to celebrate her 23rd birthday... Several women's and men's basketball programs are assisting the We Back Pat campaign to raise awareness and funds for the Pat Summit Foundation for Alzheimer's Disease Research.

Football Coaches:

The 39th annual American Heart Association Paul "Bear" Bryant National Coach of the Year will be was presented on Jan. 22, at its annual banquet in Houston, Texas, to Marcus Freeman of Notre Dame... Mississippi Valley State named NFF College Hall of Fame member (at Florida State) Terrell Buckley as head coach... Graham Craig was named head coach at 2024 NCAA Division II runnerup Valdosta State... South Carolina head coach Shane Beamer has received a contract upgrade through the 2030 season... North Carolina head coach Bill Belichick sees many similarities with the NIL and negotiations with drafted and undrafted student-athletes coming into the NFL each spring...

Colorado head coach and NFF College Hall of Fame member Deion Sanders warned rising seniors that skipping spring classes or falling below C averages for the 2025 first term will result in lessening of NIL compensation... New Southern Miss head coach observed another dilemma for his 2025 squad as some student-athletes were not pleased with their lower ratings on the EA Sports College Football 25 video game... Clemson and new defensive

coach Tom Allen have to formal terms on a multiyear contract...Former James Madison defensive coordinator Lyle Hemphill is moving into a similar assistant's role at Texas A&M...Kendrick Wade is the new tight ends coach at Memphis...Chad Lunsford is ticketed to become special teams coach at Auburn...Former Notre Dame football general manager Chad Bowden will attain the same post at USC with compadre and current Trojans football GM Dave Emerick becoming gridiron chief of staff...Old Dominion selected Hunter Sims as football general manager...Honey Grove (Texas) HS replaced former head coach Shane Fletcher (now offensive line coach and running game coordinator at Southeastern Oklahoma State) with new mentor Kyle Little.

Hometowns of more 2025 college head coaches – Tennessee State: Eddie George, Philadelphia, Pa.; Tennessee Tech: Bobby Wilder, Madison, Maine; Texas: Steve Sarkisian, Torrance, Calif.; Texas A&M: Mike Elko, South Brunswick, N.J.; East Texas A&M: Clint Dolezel, Waco, Texas.

Directors of Athletics:

Marquette named Mike Broeker, a 21-year veteran in Golden Eagles athletics, director of athletics...Virginia AD Carla Williams now owns a five-year contract extension with updated compensation, bonus and deferred salary options...Notre Dame AD Pete Bevacqua said he would surrender first-round byes if College Football Playoff invitation and bracket rules remain the same to keep the Fighting Irish's independent status in football...Oklahoma AD and NFF Board member Joe Castiglione would like to see Nos. 1-12 seeding in future College Football Playoff be based solely on the actual final 1-12 rankings in the early December CFP survey...Boise State AD Jeremiah Dickey believes that some critics of the CFP seeding were upset about the Broncos receiving one of the Top Four seeds in the post-2024 tourney as champion of the Mountain West Conference and not based on the last CFP Top 25...Grambling AD Trayvean Scott estimates House v. NCAA profit-sharing and other expenses to run nearly \$300,000 over the next 10 years at GSU...Houston AD Eddie Nunez has evaluated corporate logos and other signage in football, basketball, baseball, softball, and track and field venues and believes that logos on uniforms will enhance revenue with assistance from UH media and marketing facilitator Learfield...Richmond AD John Hardt is awaiting legal advice, NCAA memos and Atlantic Conference input before starting its budget adjustments for the House v. NCAA settlement amounts to be paid by RU...Tennessee men's basketball head coach Rick Barnes mentioned that stand-out Chaz Lanier now is being paid to score via the NIL and was disciplined for not taking a field goal attempt on a play designed for Lanier during a timeout huddle...UC Davis named Kat Mertz women's soccer head coach...Robert

Morris selected Erica Razzano as associate AD for compliance...Bowling Green men's soccer head coach Eric Nichols had his personal pact completed with extra years through Dec. 16, 2029...Siena added Tyler Kanelos as women's volleyball head coach...DePaul women's soccer head coach Michele O'Brien had her contract extended through January 2028...New Kansas women's volleyball head coach Matt Ulmer was greeted at his opening news conference by retiring 27-year KU volleyball head coach Ray Bechard, the younger brother of famed Kansas sports writer Harold Bechard...Ole Miss chief development officer Matt McLaughlin is now the Rebels senior associate AD for strategy and cap management...UNI added John Mosbach as senior associate AD for development and NIL...Creighton associate AD development director Matt Giller has left to pursue other opportunities...Cincinnati athletics named Ryan Holmes president of Cincy Sports Properties...George Mason tabbed Andrew Lieber as deputy AD for capital planning and strategic initiatives and Keith Morrisroe as senior associate AD for facilities and events...Valparaiso president Dr. Jose Padilla will retire Dec. 31, 2025...The latest position openings in athletics on D1Ticker.com are at Richmond, North Florida, UTEP, Ball State, Tulsa, Vanderbilt, the Southland Conference, Dayton, Nevada, William & Mary, SMU, and Illinois State.

The Conferences:

The Big Ten Conference placed three teams among the Top Five – Ohio State, No. 3 Oregon and No. 5 Penn State – among the Top Five in the final Associated Press national poll for the first time in the 89-year history of the survey...The Southeastern Conference had seven members in the AP Top 25 for the first time since 2013...Atlantic Coast Conference commissioner Jim Phillips wondered aloud how conference championship games might be affected by a 16-team draw in the CFP and wanted to protect the integrity and results of these loop title tussles...West Coast Conference commissioner Stu Jackson feels that the Power Four conferences seem to be making a strong move for additional decision-making power, particularly in men's and women's basketball NCAA Division I selections and governance...Big West Conference commissioner Dan Butterly notes that NCAA Championship expansion for men's and women's basketball, continuing Division I conference realignment, and NIL, the House v. NCAA settlement, and basketball squads playing in 'overseas' and resort area tournaments during Thanksgiving weekend with their impact on the NCAA team selection process...The Big 12 Conference produced three consensus All-America youngsters in Colorado's Heisman Trophy-winning Travis Hunter, Arizona's Tetairoa McMillan and West Virginia's Wyatt Milum...The Ivy League has decided not to comply with the revenue-sharing for stu-

dent-athletes aspect of the House v. NCAA settlement in a continuation of its policies concerning actual grants-in-aid and other considerations.

The Bowls:

Tampa, Fla., will host College Football Playoff championship contest on Jan. 22, 2029, after Arlington, Texas, AT&T Stadium had to withdraw its preliminary bid due to construction in the area...Other upcoming postseason dates for the CFP title clash are Miami Lakes, Fla., in January 2026, Las Vegas in January 2027, New Orleans in 2028, Tampa (tentative) in 2029, and Miami Lakes again in 2030...College Football Playoff executive director Air Force Gen. (ret.) Richard Clark addressed news media about the CFP's Management Committee, future locations of CFP quarterfinals and working with the NFL about game time conflicts with CFP contests...Second-hand sales of tickets for the 2025 College Football Playoff championship contests averaged \$2,500 each almost until game time with up to 700 tickets still available on Sunday, Jan. 19...The sold-out Alamo Bowl (64,261) and the Kinder's Texas Bowl (59,940) produced the two highest attendances with Big 12 teams competing outside CFP encounters...Defending Phillips 66 Big 12 Conference baseball tourney titlist Oklahoma State is the choice by coaches to win the 2025 loop crown in the largest Big 12 diamond field in history – 14 teams.

The Players:

Boise State RB Ashton Jeanty has captured the 12th annual Earl Campbell Tyler Rose Award for top FBS student-athlete from Texas or competing for a Texas university...The 84th annual FWAA All-America team featured such standouts as WR Harold Fannin of Bowling Green, WR Nick Nash of San Jose State, TE Tyler Warren of Penn State, OL Kelvin Banks Jr. of Texas, OL Will Campbell of LSU, OL Wyatt Milum of West Virginia, OL Addison West of Western Michigan, and center Seth McLaughlin of Ohio State...Ferris State QB Trinidad Chambliss has been feted again in 2025 for passing for three touchdowns, 153 yards and 11-of-20 through the air, and rushing 12 times for 78 yards and two more scores without a sack in the NCAA Division II championship win over Valdosta State 49-14...Colorado CB Preston Hodge will remain for his final year of eligibility in '25 with the Buffaloes after transferring from Liberty prior to the last campaign...Navy wide receiver speedster Nathan Kent has traded pads for indoor track thinclads for the 2025 Midshipmen's squad. He was a competitor in the 400 meters during the 2024 U.S. Olympic team trials...Wisconsin continues to debate with multiple authorities the requested NCAA transfer portal case of UW's Xavier Lucas to Miami (Fla.)...In the meantime, All-America women's volleyball star Mimi Colyer has left Oregon to join the Wisconsin program...Ohio State DB Calvin Simpson-Hunt is

leaving the program with an anticipated move to Baylor for '25...Georgia Tech added key transfers Kobie Jones, Mike Polly, Brian Bohannon, and Emil Ekiyor to help offset the loss of 21 outgoing transfer portal youngsters...Former U. of Calgary (Canada) and two-year ULM offensive lineman Sam Carson is a candidate for both the upcoming Canadian Football League and NFL drafts.

Around the Campus:

LSU is completing the Kelly Family \$1 Million Challenge with matching gifts for all LSU donations to athletics from Jan. 1-Feb. 5 with solid success to date...UCF athletics closed in the black for fiscal year 2024 with \$98.16 million in revenue (\$12 million higher than 2023) and \$97.5 million in expenses, including a \$2.5 million payment to the American Athletic Conference as a measured distribution exit fee from that circuit...Murray State athletics had a record-setting fiscal year 2024 with \$21.5 million-plus in total contributions to assist 430 student-athletes, coaches and staff...Boise State's final football rankings of No. 8 (AP) and No. 9 (Coaches/USA Today) were the tops at year's end for BSU since both polls had the Broncos at No. 4 to end the season...Boise State athletics also is beginning the Built Different Campaign with Bronco Athletic Association members, season ticket holders, and business people in the Idaho area for scholarships and general support of BSU athletics' endeavors...North Texas athletics had special individual game ticket rates last week for a seasonal Pack the Pit promotion for men's and women's home basketball tests...Mississippi State is set to make numerous renovations at Polk-Dement Stadium/Dudy Noble Field and other major facilities on campus. One of the updates calls for a unique year-round restaurant in the outfield area at PDSDNF...Texas A&M's second January Junior Day for incoming prospects was proclaimed a solid success with positive visits by the high schoolers...Louisiana athletics and Learfield renewed their sponsorship, broadcasting, marketing and signage agreements to go along with ULL contracts with Paciolan, SIDEARM and Collegiate Licensing Co...Vanderbilt athletics has segued into auction items' mode for men's and women's basketball, baseball and memorabilia from Vanderbilt competitors in the 2024 Paris Olympics...Vandy also dedicated its new the George and Cathy Huber Center last week as part of the \$3 billion Vandy United campaign with expanded men's and women's practice facilities, weight rooms and office space...West Virginia baseball set a school record for season ticket sales with three weeks of dispensing still available...Rutger athletics closed fiscal year 2024 with \$136.8 million in revenue and \$178.3 million in expenses – primarily from increased travel costs, coaching, administrative and staff salaries and other necessary areas.

(continued on page 18)

The Big Ten Conference allotted the Scarlet Knights just under \$54 million in league shares...The 166th season of college baseball (it began in 1859 when Amherst edged Williams 73-32) began last Thursday, Jan. 23, with four NAIA contests and an additional 30 NAIA matchups last Friday along with dozens of community college clashes...Sacramento State athletics has decided to follow revenue-sharing aspects of the House v. NCAA for its student-athletes...New Jersey Advance Media's Adam Zagoria visited with Vitaminwater/Body Armor founder and loyal St. John's (N.Y.) alumnus Mike Repole about the Red Storm's recent advances in the field of funding NIL arrangements and how it has impacted all the SJU programs...Colorado athletics and the 5430 NIL Alliance are no longer affiliated, and CU officials are seeking additional gifts for the Buff Club's AD Excellence Fund and Colorado Sport Excellence Fund as well as the already-operating CU NIL Exchange...Central Michigan and Teamworks General Manager are now in a years-plus agreement...East Texas A&M athletics has signed a multiyear apparel and marketing partnership with Nike and BSN Sports starting June 1.

Other Notables:

The NFF Good in the Game video segment last week highlighted the four head coach inductees and standout student-athletes named to the NFF College Hall of Fame Class of '25. The four coaches are Larry Blakeney of Troy, Larry Korver of Northwestern College (Iowa), Urban Meyer of Bowling Green, Utah, Florida, and Ohio State University; and Nick Saban of Toledo, Michigan State, LSU, and Alabama...Former Mississippi State and NFL Buffalo Bills great and NFL official (along with his son and MSU grad Brad Freeman) Steve Freeman is preparing for induction into the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame...The NFL Dallas Cowboys named former Kansas and Florida QB and son of longtime NFL coach Marty Schottenheimer – Brian Schottenheimer – head coach Jan. 24...Brian and the late Marty Schottenheimer have followed in a long tradition of father-son head coaching combinations in the NFL in research by historian Mike Burrows. The others include Bill and Brian Callahan, Jim Mora Sr. and Jim Mora Jr., Dick Nolan and Mike Nolan, Bum Phillips and Wade Phillips, Buddy Ryan and Rex Ryan, Mike Shanahan and Kyle Shanahan, and Don Shula and David Shula along with father-in-law and son-in-law head coaches Mike Sherman and Zac Taylor...The MLB Los Angeles Dodgers 25-year television and multimedia contracts signed in 2013 guarantee the franchise \$334 million in revenue for 2025...

The National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., named C.C. Sabathia, Billy Wagner of Ferrum (Va.) College and Ichiro Suzuki as its '25 Hall of Fame class...The City of Dallas, Texas, is undertaking a complete redo of the Kay Bailey

Hutchinson Convention Center to attract more national and international sporting events and meetings. The renovations are expected to take 5-6 years...The Athletes.org meeting last week continued to try and sort out revenue-sharing and NIL compensation as former Notre Dame AD Jack Swarbrick urged both sides to gather with major leaders in college athletics and seek some common ground.

Media Musings:

The Jan. 21 College Football Playoff title clash between Notre Dame and Ohio State averaged 22.1 million Nielsen Ratings' viewers on all ESPN networks with a high note of 26.1 million. It was the highest-rated non-NFL sporting event to date in 2025...Sports Business Journal identifies just under \$6 billion in renovation and construction at U.S. and Canadian sports facilities in 2025. Some of the most visible projects are the \$458 million in upgrades at Kansas' Booth Memorial Stadium and Florida State's \$265 million Doak Campbell Stadium updates....

...Longtime NFL Tennessee Titans (27 years) broadcaster Mike Keith has been tabbed as the new radio voice of the Tennessee Volunteers to replace the legendary Bob Kesling...The Ringer founder Bill Simmons (formerly of Grantland.com website named after famed NFF tri-founder and namesake of the Vanderbilt Grantland Rice-Fred Russell sports journalism scholarship fund) is remaining with Spotify for his popular columns and could someday re-integrate his writings with ESPN....

...Inside Higher Education interviewed several college administrators about changes in policies by the new U.S. presidential administration and that colleges might benefit from higher budgets for researches and technical data to keep the U.S. ahead of other technologically fruitful nations...ESPN's Heather Dinich has been looking into possible changes in the College Football Playoff selection methods either at the winter meetings or during April confabs. Extensive visits with executive director Air Force Gen. (ret.) Richard Clark revealed that there may not be significant changes in the 2026 season, but tweaks may be coming...The American Association of Colleges and Universities is concerned that massive tax cuts on the U.S. might impact financial opportunities for college students...ESPN's beloved analyst Dick Vitale may be delayed a bit more into February for his return from throat cancer after he suffered an accident at his home...The San Jose (Calif.) Mercury News newspaper columnist Jon Wilner came up with another Hot 25 List of major power brokers who may be in the shadows slightly from daily news reports. Among them are House v. NCAA settlement attorneys Steve Berman and Jeffrey Kessler, ES Sports' chief business officer Paul Cairns and senior vice president Daryl Holt, super agent Jimmy Sexton, ESPN president of content Burke Magnus, FOX Sports president Mark Silverman,

Baylor president Dr. Linda Livingstone, Northern District of West Virginia judge John Preston Bailey, CAA media expert and agent Alan Gold, and vice president Dan Cappetta and managing executive Dean Jordan of the Wasserman Group, among others...Extra Points publisher Matt Brown wrote several sidebars about his memorable trip to cover the CFP title tussle. Brown also related that at an Athletes.org players-only meeting recently all participants turned thumbs down to the NCAA FBS coaches recommendation for the 10-day transfer portal only in January...CBS Sports columnist Dennis Dodd interviewed Big Ten Conference commissioner Tony Petitti concerning possible expansion of the College Football Playoff to 16 teams, the success of the 2024-25 CFP and dialogue about in-game experience and continued enhancement of game officiating through training and cooperation of assignments through all divisions of conferences...The Arizona State-Texas Chick-Fil-A Peach Bowl contest was the second-most-watched postseason clash outside CFP semifinals and final with a Nielsen Rating of 17.3 million...The all-Big 12 Conference Valero Alamo Bowl between BYU and Colorado had the second-highest Nielsen Rating in VAB annals with an average 8 million viewers...Washington Post newspaper college writer Jesse Dougherty profiled Ohio State's pre-2024 movement, which featured \$20 million in NIL roster arrangements, new game-day duties for head coach Ryan Day, the addition of offensive coordinator Chip Kelly from his previous role as head coach at UCLA, and a solidifying of another national recruiting class via the rich tradition at OSU...Cable News Network is reorganizing its operations; center and expects to make as many as 200 upcoming layoffs....

...Sports Business Journal's Rachael Axon talked with numerous ADs in recent days about fundraising ideas to create NIL funding and received some of these insights: Texas A&M AD Trev Alberts referred to new donors stepping up with key gifts to assist the effort. Clemson AD Graham Neff cited the IPTAY booster club's steeping up to keep the coffers filled. Michigan AD Warde Manuel mentioned how the competition nationwide for NIL donations spurred on the Wolverines alumni base to stay ahead of the curve. ULM AD John Hartwell added that certain groups of donors do not feel comfortable with specific contributions for NIL but would rather help to fund scholarship needs and facilities for athletics...Yahoo Sports columnist Ross Dellenger discovered that the NCAA and its plaintiffs were not able to negotiate a legal settlement to disallow student-athletes from negotiating with NIL collectives after they sign with a college and before they enroll; the NCAA also requested more time to present evidence to support its restrictions...Columnist Chip Brown at Horns247 Sports compared 2025 NFL draft bonus salaries (\$13-42 million) with a pro-

jected \$8 million NIL agreement for Texas QB Quinn Ewers to remain at UT or another university for the 2025 season and how those figures probably impacted his final decision...The Elevate Group has purchased Bowlsby Sports Advisors, and BSA president Kyle Bowlsby will segue to senior partner...Sportico's Daniel Libit indicated that a civil rights' group previously engaged in future NCAA Title IX/NIL advice has decided to allow the U.S. Office of Civil Rights and NCAA committees to find some solutions for queries into equal opportunity cases and NIL amounts...The WMT Group has made an additional commitment in 2025 for more effective data strategy, delivery, communication, reporting, and enhanced dashboard usage for college athletics programs in their associations with WMT...NFL regular-season Nielsen Ratings fell by two percent, and wildcard and divisional ratings dropped nine and seven percent, respectively, but insiders said this could have been caused by the absence of traditional high-profile franchises and usual ratings' boomers Dallas and San Francisco, among others...The Salt Lake City Deseret News' Joe Coles explained how increased travel in all sports and the absence of a bowl game caused some financial challenges for Utah Utes athletics. Big 12 member-by-member distribution also was lessened slightly by the addition of four schools in July 2024. Department reserves helped solve some budget shortages...San Jose (Calif.) Mercury News columnist Jon Wilner feels that upcoming jurisprudence between the Mountain West and the Pac-12 Conferences may determine additional NCAA Division I conferences' realignments. He also hints that Texas State, Memphis, USF, Tulane, and similar colleges may be on the radar for either of these conferences...The RealResponse Group now is associated the collegiate Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity for personal integrity and anonymous reporting of any perceived misdeeds...The Big Ten Network and the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation will be working together for national broadcasts over BIG+ and BTN for 2025 MPSF men's volleyball and beach volleyball this spring...USA Today sports columnist Lindsay Schnell is now with The Athletic as a senior writer on the college basketball beat. FWAA, CSC, NCAA, Etc.:Major FWAA honors presented last week at the group's 84th annual awards breakfast included longtime FWAA member, 2002 FWAA president and College Football Playoff selection committee member Kelly Whiteside as the FWAA's 2025 Bert McGrane Award winner presented by the More Family...USBWA recent Men's National Division I Players of the Week were Tyeree Bryan of , Santa Clara and Rahsool Diggins of Massachusetts while the women's DI Players of the Week were Paige Bueckers of Connecticut, Gonzaga's Yvonne Ejim, NC State's Aziaha James, Richmond's Rachel Ullstrom, LSU's

Mikaylah Williams and Tamika Catchings National Freshmen of the Week Vanderbilt's Makayla Blakes and Nebraska's Britt Prince ...College Sports Communicators featured on recent social media posts or in the national spotlight have been Shelly Poe and Kurt Sampson of Auburn, Kevin Messenger at Ball State, Brent Ingram of Baylor, and Patrick Walsh of Louisiana Tech...Colorado, Florida, Florida State, Kentucky, LSU, Michigan State, Ohio State, Oregon, UCF, UCLA, and Wisconsin are conferring with NCAA enforcement and compliance officials concerning possible challenges and probes at their respective schools...Obscure national championship note of the week: the 2019 College Football Playoff and NCAA FCS titles were last won before this season by schools named "State" – LSU and North Dakota State in '19 and Ohio State and North Dakota State, respectively, for the 2024 campaign...NCAA senior vice president of administration and chief financial officer Mario Morris explained how the association can help formulate revenue-sharing processes at colleges, additional investment in NCAA men's and women's championships and key sponsorships along with increased revenue generation to keep the NCAA viable...The NCAA updated its major agenda items from the 120th annual convention in Nashville, Tenn., with three divisional votes on a recommendation to add women's wrestling as a 91st championship, revenue boosts for the NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Championship starting in March, a glance back at NCAA participants in the 2024 Paris Olympics, student-athletes' safety, performance venues, and expansion of other women's championships, among other discussions...The Knight Commission conducted a seminar at the just-concluded NCAA Convention to dis-

cuss the House v. NCAA settlement, additional revenue situations, how institutions might be impacted on varying degrees of revenue-sharing with student-athletes, how different colleges have handled the Alston v. NCAA settlement, and how NCAA FCS members might be assessed much more than their annual \$2.4 million average annual income...NCAA vice president of Division I Jenn Fraser commented on how the basic NCAA rulebook will be changing due to the House v. NCAA settlement and how the Division I Board of Directors has been tasked with coming up with some common-sense objectives when the settlement occurs most likely in the coming summer due to several appeals on both sides of the jurisprudence...The U.S. Department of Education's issued some new Title IX guidance prior to the advent of the President Donald Trump administration with the phrase "proportionately available" for women's athletics funding causing some confusion among administrators and legal experts...Media reports are that the Federal Reserve seems committed to hold the line on prime interest rate cuts to curb inflation but that the Trump administration may have a strong influence on future rate changes...Kennyhertz Perry Law Group senior attorney Mit Winter gathered information about a Connecticut legislative passage to allow colleges to pay student-athletes by direct means or a third party (such as a NIL collective) and keeps the NCAA from taking any prohibitive action in any case...The American Association of Colleges and Universities and Elon's Imagining the Digital Future Center had a research project with 330 college presidents, provosts and other senior leaders to ascertain their ideas about Artificial Intelligence and its effect on teaching and learning modes. Just 43 percent of the administrators said they

were utilizing AI in this way...Former University of Minnesota Board of Regents' member and College Basketball Players Association co-founder Michael Hsu is awaiting further word from advisers about carrying on union negotiations with Dartmouth men's basketball, Notre Dame student-athletes, Northwestern, USC, and the Ivy League as the national climate continues to change. Some of the activity will depend on action or policy interpretations again by the National Labor Relations Board...Venable Law Group LLP attorney Philip Sheng heard many comments from parents of student-athletes with NIL agreements about possible future rosters limits for all NCAA-sponsored sports and pointed out possible legal activity depending on a Jan. 31 roster numbers' outcome.

2024-25 College Football Playoff Bowl Schedule

Friday, Dec. 20 – First Round (5-12 Seeds Competing) at Notre Dame 27, Indiana 17 Saturday, Dec. 21 at Penn State 38, SMU 10 at Texas 38, Clemson 24 at Ohio State 42, Tennessee 17 Quarterfinal Games Vrbo Fiesta Bowl - Penn State 31, Boise State 14 Chick-Fil-A Peach Bowl – Texas 39, Arizona State 31 (2 OT) Rose Bowl presented by Prudential – Ohio State 41, Oregon 21 Allstate Sugar Bowl, Notre Dame 23, Georgia 10 Thursday-Friday, Jan. 9-10 – CFP Semifinals Jan. 9 – Capital

One Orange Bowl - Notre Dame 27, Penn State 24 Jan. 10 – Goodyear Cotton Bowl – Ohio State 28, Texas 14 Monday, Jan. 20 – College Football Playoff National Championship Game, Ohio State 34, Notre Dame 23, Atlanta, Ga. 2025-26 College Football Playoff Bowl Schedule (All Games Televised by ESPN, ABC or TNT Sports, Tentative Eastern Standard Time Airtimes, Currently Campus Sites For First Four Games) Friday, Dec. 19 – First Round (5-12 Seeds competing Dec. 19-20) – Campus Sites One game TBD – seeds 5 vs. 12, 6 vs. 11, 7 vs. 10, 8 vs. 9 over two dates, 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 20 Three games at 11 a.m., 3 p.m., 7 p.m. Quarterfinal Games (Nos. 1-4 bye seeds against 5-12 winners) Thursday, Dec. 31 – (Times TBD) Goodyear Cotton Bowl, Arlington, Texas Friday, Jan. 1, 2026 – (Times TBD) Capital One Orange Bowl, Miami Lakes, Fla.; Rose Bowl presented by Prudential, Pasadena, Calif.; Allstate Sugar Bowl, New Orleans, La. Thu., Jan. 8 or Friday, Jan. 9, 2026, Semifinals – (Times and Dates TBD) Vrbo Fiesta Bowl, Glendale, Ariz.; and Chick-Fil-A Peach Bowl, Atlanta, Ga., ESPN Monday, Jan. 19, 2026 – College Football Playoff National Championship Game, Hard Rock Stadium, Miami Lakes, Fla., semifinal winners, 7:30 p.m.-30-



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