

Mountaineers Fall To 17th TSN Poll

Written by Craig Haley

Monday, 17 September 2012 17:18

The concept that CAA Football teams are lurking in the shadows seems a little strange. The CAA had become the FCS' dominant conference, only to take a step backward on the national scene last year. But as CAA teams try to reaffirm

lofty status among the best in the FCS, the conference is still home to the most ranked teams this season.

The CAA had six teams in The Sports Network FCS Top 25 on Monday, led by Old Dominion and James Madison. Every FCS team continued to look up to North Dakota State, which strengthened its hold on No. 1 after Sam Houston State lost to FBS member Baylor and fell one spot to No. 3. Montana State also took advantage of it to move up one spot to No. 2.

The CAA had participants in the FCS national championship game in seven of the eight seasons from 2003-2010, including four title winners. Last season, only Maine reached the national quarterfinals before the Black Bears' run ended as well. This season, the CAA again has depth across the board, including ranked teams Old Dominion (No. 5); James Madison (No. 6); Delaware (No. 12); Towson (No. 13), the defending conference champion; New Hampshire (No. 18); and Maine (No. 23).

Conference play will start to heat up across the nation this week, and the biggest game in the CAA on Saturday will be New Hampshire at Old Dominion. The host Monarchs (3-0) feature sophomore quarterback Taylor Heinicke, who leads the nation in passing yards (1,191) and touchdown passes (14).

After the CAA's six teams, the Missouri Valley Football Conference was second with five ranked teams. The Big Sky and Southern conferences had four each. North Dakota State (2-0), the defending Missouri Valley and FCS national champion, had a bye this past weekend, which was conveniently timed considering the Bison are nursing some injured players. Coach Craig Bohl's squad collected 140 of the poll's 165 first-place votes and 4,085 points to remain at No. 1. Montana State (3-0) received nine first-place votes, Sam Houston State (1-1) eight and No. 4 Youngstown State (3-0) seven. The surging Penguins had not been ranked as high as No. 4 since they held that spot in the final 2006 poll. After ODU and James Madison (2-1), the rest of the Top 10 teams were No. 7 Wofford (3-0), which received one first-place vote; No. 8 Northern Iowa (1-2), whose two close losses are to Big Ten members Wisconsin and Iowa; No. 9 Eastern Washington (1-1); and No. 10 The Citadel (3-0).

The Citadel, which has defeated national powers Georgia Southern and Appalachian State over the last two weekends, moved up 11 spots and into the Top 10 for the first time since being ranked No. 1 during its 1992 Southern Conference championship season.

Georgia Southern (1-1) followed at No. 11. Then it was Delaware (3-0), Towson (1-1), No. 14 Montana (2-1), No. 15 Illinois State (3-0), No. 16 Lehigh (3-0), No. 17 Appalachian State (1-2), New Hampshire (2-1), No. 19 McNeese State (3-0) and No. 20 Stony Brook (2-1).

Rounding out the rankings were No. 21 Eastern Kentucky (2-1), No. 22 Indiana State (2-1), Maine (1-1), No. 24 Jacksonville State (1-1) and No. 25 Central Arkansas (2-1), which moved back into the Top 25 as Stephen F. Austin fell out of it. A national panel of sports information and media relations directors, broadcasters, writers and other dignitaries select the Top 25. A first-place vote is worth 25 points, a second-place vote 24 points, all the way down to one point

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for a 25th-place vote.

During the regular season, the Top 25 is released every Monday afternoon, except for the final weekend of the regular season, when it will be released Sunday morning, Nov. 18, prior to the selection of the FCS playoff field. The Sports Network will release a final Top 25 following the FCS championship game, which will be held Jan. 5 in Frisco, Texas.

The Sports Network FCS Top 25 College Football Poll

| Team | (First-place votes) | Record | Points | Previous Rank |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|--------|--------|---------------|
| 1. North Dakota State Bison | (140) | 2-0 | 4085 | 1 |
| 2. Montana State Bobcats | (9) | 3-0 | 3767 | 3 |
| 3. Sam Houston State Bearkats | (8) | 1-1 | 3669 | 2 |
| 4. Youngstown State Penguins | (7) | 3-0 | 3579 | 5 |
| 5. Old Dominion Monarchs | | 3-0 | 3299 | 6 |
| 6. James Madison Dukes | | 2-1 | 3115 | 4 |
| 7. Wofford Terriers | (1) | 3-0 | 2912 | 9 |
| 8. Northern Iowa Panthers | | 1-2 | 2673 | 7 |
| 9. Eastern Washington Eagles | | 1-1 | 2656 | 10 |
| 10. The Citadel Bulldogs | | 3-0 | 2468 | 21 |
| 11. Georgia Southern Eagles | | 1-1 | 2209 | 11 |
| 12. Delaware Blue Hens | | 3-0 | 2120 | 13 |
| 13. Towson Tigers | | 1-1 | 2111 | 12 |
| 14. Montana Grizzlies | | 2-1 | 1959 | 14 |
| 15. Illinois State Redbirds | | 3-0 | 1883 | 15 |
| 16. Lehigh Mountain Hawks | | 3-0 | 1544 | 16 |

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17. Appalachian State Mountaineers ██████████ 1-2 █████ 1476 ████████ 8

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|----------------------------------|-----|------|----|
| 18. New Hampshire Wildcats | 2-1 | 1429 | 18 |
| 19. McNeese State Cowboys | 3-0 | 1319 | 19 |
| 20. Stony Brook Seawolves | 2-1 | 1189 | 17 |
| 21. Eastern Kentucky Colonels | 2-1 | 810 | 20 |
| 22. Indiana State Sycamores | 2-1 | 621 | 22 |
| 23. Maine Black Bears | 1-1 | 369 | 25 |
| 24. Jacksonville State Gamecocks | 1-1 | 358 | 24 |
| 25. Central Arkansas Bears | 2-1 | 292 | NR |

Others receiving votes: Cal Poly 288, Stephen F. Austin 261, Harvard 174, Sacramento State 154, Northern Arizona 149, Samford 99, Bethune-Cookman 88, UT Martin 88, Tennessee State 84, North Dakota 76, South Dakota State 31, Albany 29, Lafayette 29, Eastern Illinois 29, Norfolk State 26, Richmond 19, Tennessee Tech 18, Alabama A&M 16, Alabama State 11, South Carolina State 10, Villanova 10, Howard 4, Florida A&M 4, Yale 3, Southern Utah 3, Jacksonville 3, Western Illinois 1, Brown 1, Chattanooga 1.