

ASU Ranked No.8 TSN Poll

Written by Craig Haley

Monday, 12 November 2012 15:43

Just in time for the FCS playoffs, the teams that were considered in the preseason to have the best chance for winning a national championship are staking their claim again. The Sports Network FCS Top 25 released on Monday resembled what

it looked like in the preseason. Seven of the top nine teams in the rankings were in the Top 10 back in mid-August.

After 11 weeks of the FCS regular season, and with one final full Saturday of action ahead, defending FCS national champion North Dakota State remained No. 1 as the Top 5 went unchanged. The Bison (9-1) received 121 of the 159 first-place votes and 3,930 overall points following their 20-17 victory over South Dakota State this past weekend. The Missouri Valley Football Conference leaders were ranked second in the preseason poll.

No. 2 Montana State (9-1), No. 3 Sam Houston State (8-2), No. 4 Old Dominion (9-1), No. 6 Georgia Southern (8-2), No. 8 Appalachian State (8-3) and No. 9 Wofford (8-2) were all ranked in the Top 10 of the preseason poll. Sam Houston State, which lost to North Dakota State in last season's national championship game, had been selected as the preseason favorite.

All of those teams are expected to qualify for the 20-team FCS playoffs. The field will be announced on Sunday and starts with four first-round games on Nov. 24. Also in this week's Top 10 were No. 5 Eastern Washington (8-2), No. 7 New Hampshire (8-2) and No. 10 Central Arkansas (8-2). Each was in the Top 25 in the preseason poll.

After Illinois State (8-2) at No. 11, there were four straight teams that suffered losses this past weekend: No. 12 Stony Brook (9-2), No. 13 James Madison (7-3), No. 14 Lehigh (9-1) and No. 15 Northern Arizona (8-2).

They were followed by No. 16 Villanova (7-3), No. 17 Cal Poly (8-2), No. 18 Indiana State (7-3), No. 19 Towson (6-4) and a poll-best sixth team from CAA Football, No. 20 Richmond (7-3). Rounding out the Top 25 were No. 21 South Dakota State (7-3), No. 22 Eastern Kentucky (8-3), No. 23 Tennessee State (8-2), and Bethune-Cookman (8-2) and Eastern Illinois (7-3), which shared the No. 24 spot.

Bethune-Cookman, the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference champion, and Eastern Illinois, the Ohio Valley Conference champion, entered the rankings for the first time this season. Both teams have earned their conference's automatic bids to the playoffs. UT Martin and Harvard fell from the Top 25 after suffering losses.

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 for a 25th-place vote.

During the regular season, the Top 25 is released every Monday afternoon, except for the final weekend, when it will be released Sunday morning 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.

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The Sports Network FCS Top 25 College Football Poll

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□□□□□□□□ **Team**□□□□□□□□□□ **(First-place votes)**□□ **2012 Record**□□□□ **Points**□□□□ **Previous Rank**

1. North Dakota State Bison (121)	9-1	3930	1
2. Montana State Bobcats (20)	9-1	3748	2
3. Sam Houston State Bearkats (14)	8-2	3585	3
4. Old Dominion Monarchs (3)	9-1	3496	4
5. Eastern Washington Eagles	8-2	3362	5
6. Georgia Southern Eagles	8-2	3113	7
7. New Hampshire Wildcats (1)	8-2	2897	10
8. Appalachian State Mountaineers □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□	8-3 □□□□□□□□□□	2659 □□□□□□□□□□	12
9. Wofford Terriers	8-2	2502	13
10. Central Arkansas Bears	8-2	2341	14
11. Illinois State Redbirds	8-2	2094	15
12. Stony Brook Seawolves	9-2	1917	6
13. James Madison Dukes	7-3	1885	9
14. Lehigh Mountain Hawks	9-1	1843	8
15. Northern Arizona Lumberjacks	8-2	1594	11
16. Villanova Wildcats	7-3	1477	21
17. Cal Poly Mustangs	8-2	1354	19
18. Indiana State Sycamores	7-3	1294	18
19. Towson Tigers	6-4	1251	17
20. Richmond Spiders	7-3	1153	20
21. South Dakota State Jackrabbits	7-3	1046	16
22. Eastern Kentucky Colonels	8-3	750	22
23. Tennessee State Tigers	8-2	450	24
24. Bethune-Cookman Wildcats	8-2	423	NR
24. Eastern Illinois Panthers	7-3	423	NR

Others receiving votes: Colgate 213, Samford 200, Albany 136, Sacramento State 90, UT Martin 75, Arkansas-Pine Bluff 52, Harvard 43, Youngstown State 40, Wagner 29, McNeese State 28, Northern Iowa 22, Liberty 21, The Citadel 20, Delaware 17, Southern Utah 16, Penn 15, Southern Illinois 13, Chattanooga 7, Coastal Carolina 3, Alabama A&M 3, Alabama State 2, Drake 2, North Carolina A&T 2, San Diego 1, Jacksonville 1.

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Photo Courtesy: Jerry Moore, ASU Athletics