

ASU Ranked 7th In TSN Poll

Written by Craig Haley

Monday, 19 November 2012 15:41

North Dakota State spent the majority of the regular season at No. 1 in The Sports Network FCS Top 25. The Bison's goal: To finish there at the end of the

playoffs, as they did last season in winning their first FCS national title.

NDSU heads into the playoffs as the team to beat, No. 1 for a fourth straight week and the ninth time in 13 polls this season, including the preseason. In Sunday's final regular-season poll, the Bison collected 126 of the 147 first-place votes and 3,653 points.

Coach Craig Bohl's Missouri Valley Football Conference champions, who have a 10-1 record and are 24-2 over the past two seasons, later gained the No. 1 playoff seed when the NCAA released its 20-team field Sunday afternoon.

"Once you're crowned champion, without question, you're no longer going to be a school that's just running under the radar," Bohl said. "I think people will look and say, 'OK, this team has a proven track record, they've got players who can win a championship.' And therefore, other opponents I'm sure look and say, 'They're a good program, we're going to need to get ourselves ready to play to win.'"

NDSU completed its regular season on Saturday with a 38-20 win at then-No. 11 Illinois State. Running backs Sam Ojuri and John Crockett both eclipsed the 100-yard mark and scored a touchdown in the win.

Eighteen Top 25 teams, including the first 12, qualified for the playoffs.

Montana State, which earned a share of the Big Sky Conference title for the third straight season, remained at No. 2 in the poll. The Bobcats (10-1) gained 12 first-place votes and 3,461 points after they finished the regular season with a 16-7 win at rival Montana.

Moving up to No. 3 was Old Dominion, which beat James Madison, 38-28. The Monarchs (10-1) had the best record among CAA Football teams, losing only to Villanova, but was ineligible for the conference title because they are leaving the conference for the FBS level after this season. Eastern Washington (9-2), the only team to beat Montana State, was No. 4, followed by Sam Houston State (8-3), which fell two spots to No. 5 after a 47-28 loss to Texas A&M.

Three of the next four spots went to the teams that shared the Southern Conference title: No. 6 Georgia Southern (8-3), No. 7 Appalachian State (8-3) and No. 9 Wofford (8-3). In between was No. 8 Central Arkansas (9-2), which shared the Southland Conference title with Sam Houston State, and right behind was No. 10 Stony Brook (9-2), which earned a share of its fourth straight Big South title.

The next 10 were No. 11 New Hampshire (8-3), No. 12 Cal Poly (9-2), No. 13 Lehigh (10-1), No. 14 Villanova (8-3), No. 15 Towson (7-4), No. 16 Illinois State (8-3), No. 17 James Madison (7-4), No. 18 Richmond (8-3), No. 19 South Dakota State (8-3) and No. 20 Northern Arizona (8-3).

The Top 25 was rounded out by No. 21 Eastern Kentucky (8-3), No. 22 Bethune-Cookman (9-2), No. 23 Indiana State (7-4), No. 24 Colgate (8-3) and No. 25 Eastern Illinois (7-4).

Colgate moved into the Top 25 after beating Fordham, 41-39, for its seventh straight win.

Tennessee State was knocked out after a 35-26 loss to UT Martin.

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

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points, all the way down to one point for a 25th-place vote.

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

Rank	Team (First-place votes)	2012 Record	Points	Previous Rank
1.	North Dakota State Bison (126)	10-1	3653	1
2.	Montana State Bobcats (12)	10-1	3461	2
3.	Old Dominion Monarchs (6)	10-1	3310	4
4.	Eastern Washington Eagles	9-2	3176	5
5.	Sam Houston State Bearkats (3)	8-3	3141	3
6.	Georgia Southern Eagles	8-3	2779	6
7.	Appalachian State Mountaineers	8-3	2688	8
8.	Central Arkansas Bears	9-2	2510	10
9.	Wofford Terriers	8-3	2318	9
10.	Stony Brook Seawolves	9-2	1953	12
11.	New Hampshire Wildcats	8-3	1910	7
12.	Cal Poly Mustangs	9-2	1817	17
13.	Lehigh Mountain Hawks	10-1	1802	14
14.	Villanova Wildcats	8-3	1627	16
15.	Towson Tigers	7-4	1626	19
16.	Illinois State Redbirds	8-3	1611	11
17.	James Madison Dukes	7-4	1290	13
18.	Richmond Spiders	8-3	1244	20
19.	South Dakota State Jackrabbits	8-3	1178	21
20.	Northern Arizona Lumberjacks	8-3	1073	15
21.	Eastern Kentucky Colonels	8-3	803	22
22.	Bethune-Cookman Wildcats	9-2	612	24
23.	Indiana State Sycamores	7-4	442	18
24.	Colgate Raiders	8-3	336	NR
25.	Eastern Illinois Panthers	7-4	258	24

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Others receiving votes: UT Martin 244, Albany 204, Youngstown State 167, Samford 99, Harvard 91, Tennessee State 71, Arkansas-Pine Bluff 70, Wagner 49, The Citadel 29, McNeese State 22, Penn 21, Sacramento State 21, Southern Illinois 17, Coastal Carolina 15, Northern Iowa 10, Drake 8, North Dakota 8, Delaware 4, Howard 3, Chattanooga 2, North Carolina A&T 1, Liberty 1.

Photo Courtesy: Sean Price, ASU Athletics