

UL Lafayette Unanimous Choice to Win Sun Belt

Written by John McElwain
Saturday, 19 July 2014 14:23

After tying for the regular season championship last year, UL Lafayette and Arkansas State have been picked to finish first and second in the 2014 Sun Belt Football Preseason Coaches' Poll.

UL Lafayette is picked to repeat as they garnered all 11 first place votes from Sun Belt head coaches and the maximum 121 points. Arkansas State will look to grab a share of their fourth straight Sun Belt title as they earned 102 points and second place in the poll. South Alabama was tabbed for a third place finish with 98 points after concluding last season with three straight wins to earn bowl eligibility in only their second year as a Sun Belt member.

Five time Sun Belt Champion, Troy finished fourth in the preseason poll with 84 points. The league's coaches predicted a fifth place finish for UL Monroe, edging out Texas State, 78-70. Football Bowl Subdivision newcomers Appalachian State and Georgia Southern took seventh and eighth in the poll. The two schools begin their first season as Sun Belt members after ranking first and third in NCAA FCS Championships with nine titles between them.

The poll is rounded out by Idaho (9), Georgia State (10), and New Mexico State (11). Idaho and New Mexico State will be making their return to the Sun Belt Conference as football only

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members having last played in the Sun Belt during the 2004 season.

Last season, seven of the eight Sun Belt teams reached six wins and bowl eligibility and the conference was undefeated in bowl games.

Preseason All-Sun Belt Conference Coaches Poll

First Place Votes in Parenthesis

1. UL Lafayette 121 (11)
2. Arkansas State 102
3. South Alabama 98
4. Troy 84
5. UL Monroe 78

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6. Texas State 70

7. Appalachian State 47

8. Georgia Southern 44

9. Idaho 29

10. Georgia State 27

11. New Mexico State 26