



UNITED ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

2026 SEASON • FCS FOOTBALL

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SP/Coaches SCHOOL	UAC						OVERALL							
	W-L	PCT	PF	PA	H	A	W-L	PCT	PF	PA	H	A	N	STREAK
ABILENE CHRSTIAN ^{15/14}	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0	0
AUSTIN PEAY ^{17/18}	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0	0
CENTRAL ARK. ^{-/RV}	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0	0
EKU ^{-/RV}	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0	0
NORTH ALA.	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0	0
TARLETON ST. ^{5/5}	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0	0
WEST FLORIDA	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0	0
WEST GEORGIA ^{RV/-}	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0	0	0

THIS WEEK IN UAC FOOTBALL

WEEK ZERO

THURSDAY, AUG. 27

AUSTIN PEAY VS. GARDNER-WEBB // 7 P.M. ET
CLARKSVILLE, TENN. **ESPN+**

WEST FLORIDA VS. SOUTHERN ILL. // 7 P.M. ET
PENSACOLA, FLA. **ESPN+**

WEST GEORGIA VS. CHATTANOOGA // 7 P.M. ET
CARROLLTON, GA. **ESPN+**

CENTRAL ARKANSAS AT UT MARTIN // 7:30 P.M. ET
MARTIN, TN. **ESPN+**

SATURDAY, AUG. 29

ABILENE CHRISTIAN AT LAMAR // 7 P.M. ET
BEAUMONT, TEXAS **ESPN+**

NORTH ALABAMA VS. SAMFORD // 7 P.M. ET
HUNTSVILLE, ALA. **ESPN+**

EKU AT WESTERN CAROLINA // 7 P.M. ET
CULLOWHEE, N.C. **ESPN+**

TARLETON STATE VS. PRAIRIE VIEW A&M // 9P.M. ET
STEPHENVILLE, TEXAS **ESPN 2**

UAC PRESEASON HONORS

PRESEASON OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: CHRIS PARSON, AUSTIN PEAY

Austin Peay's Chris Parson was named the Preseason Offensive Player of the Year after finishing the 2025 season ranked third in FCS in total offense (3,746), fourth in total offense per game (312.2) fourth in points responsible for (222) fifth in points responsible for per game (18.5) - all of which led the UAC. The redshirt junior was named First Team All-UAC, was a Third Team Stats Perform/Football Central All-American honoree and was selected as a Walter Payton Award Finalist. Parson led the Gobs in four different categories (carries, yards, touchdowns and rushing yards per game) and ranked 11th in FCS (third among quarterbacks) and second in the UAC in rushing touchdowns. The Brentwood, Tennessee native was also the only player in the UAC last season to post 400+ yards of total offense in a game with 487 against No. 5 Tarleton State.

PRESEASON DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR: KADEN SMITH, EKU

EKU's Kaden Smith was a unanimous decision for Preseason Defensive Player of the Year after the linebacker made 77 total tackles, 37 of them as solo efforts, with 4.5 tackles for loss during the 2025 season. A Buck Buchanan Award Watchlist honoree for this season, Smith added in a fumble recovery in the Colonels season finale win over Utah Tech and had a 16-yard pick-six against Nicholls with eight tackles for the game. The Campbells-ville, Ky. native had seven games of seven or more tackles with a season-best against Marshall where Smith totaled 11 tackles.

All-UAC Preseason Offensive Team

QB: Chris Parson, Austin Peay*
RB: Tylan Hines, Tarleton State
RB: Brayden Latham, EKU
WR: Jaden Robinson, Austin Peay
WR: Dallas Dudley, Abilene Christian
TE: Jackson Head, Austin Peay
OL: Joshua Sales Jr, Austin Peay
OL: Aidan Moe, Tarleton State
OL: Luke Roaten, Abilene Christian
OL: Landon Roaten, Abilene Christian
C: Colter Lynch, Abilene Christian*

All-UAC Preseason Defensive Team

DL: Kortlin Rausaw, Abilene Christian
DL: Trevion Traylor, Central Arkansas
DL: Fred Vili, North Alabama
DL: Chris Herpin, Abilene Christian
LB: Kaden Smith, EKU
LB: Ashtyn Williams, Central Arkansas
LB: Tango McCauley Jr., North Alabama
DB: Omar Emmons, Tarleton State
DB: Dillon Williams, Abilene Christian
DB: Marcus Washington, Central Arkansas
DB: Derek Taylor, EKU

All-UAC Preseason Specialists Team

K: Brandon Perez, Abilene Christian
P: Charlie Mullen, Tarleton State
LS: Quaid Luginbill, EKU
RS: DeAndre Buchannon, Tarleton State

*indicates a unanimous decision



WEEKLY AWARDS



The UAC will name an Offensive Player, Defensive Player, Special Teams Player, and Freshman of the Week each Monday during the regular season.

DATE	OFFENSIVE	DEFENSIVE	SPECIAL TEAMS	FRESHMAN
8/31				
9/7				
9/14				
9/21				
9/28				
10/5				
10/12				
10/19				
10/26				
11/2				
11/9				
11/16				
11/23				



AFCA COACHES POLL

AUG. 17 POLL

SCHOOL	RECORD	PTS
1. MONTANA STATE (25)	14-2	649
2. MONTANA	13-2	605
3. SOUTH DAKOTA STATE (1)	9-5	591
4. ILLINOIS STATE	12-5	553
5. TARLETON STATE	12-2	527
6. UC DAVIS	9-4	498
7. VILLANOVA	12-3	448
8. RHODE ISLAND	11-3	434
9. YOUNGSTOWN STATE	8-5	428
10. NORTH DAKOTA	8-6	396
11. LEHIGH	12-1	359
12. SOUTH DAKOTA	10-5	347
13. STEPHEN F. AUSTIN	11-3	313
14. ABILENE CHRISTIAN	9-5	295
15. TENNESSEE TECH	11-2	294
16. SOUTHERN ILLINOIS	7-5	231
17. MERCER	9-3	189
18. AUSTIN PEAY	7-5	186
19. YALE	9-3	164
20. SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA	9-4	160
21. LAMAR	8-5	133
22. UT MARTIN	6-6	123
23. MONMOUTH	9-3	105
24. NORTHERN ARIZONA	7-5	67
25. SOUTH CAROLINA STATE	10-3	63

STATS PERFORM FCS TOP 25

AUG. 3 POLL

SCHOOL	RECORD	PTS
1. MONTANA STATE (57)	14-2	1,425
2. MONTANA	13-2	1,328
3. SOUTH DAKOTA STATE	9-5	1,266
4. ILLINOIS STATE	12-5	1,231
5. TARLETON STATE	12-2	1,100
6. UC DAVIS	9-4	1,063
7. RHODE ISLAND	11-3	1,048
8. VILLANOVA	12-3	1,008
9. YOUNGSTOWN STATE	8-5	946
10. NORTH DAKOTA	8-6	945
11. LEHIGH	12-1	826
12. SOUTH DAKOTA	10-5	783
13. STEPHEN F. AUSTIN	11-3	773
14. TENNESSEE TECH	11-2	594
15. ABILENE CHRISTIAN	9-5	579
16. SOUTHERN ILLINOIS	7-5	509
17. AUSTIN PEAY	7-5	440
18. YALE	9-3	418
19. SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA	9-4	392
20. LAMAR	8-5	380
21. MERCER	11-3	306
22. MONMOUTH	9-3	200
23. UT MARTIN	6-6	144
24. SOUTH CAROLINA STATE	10-3	107
25. NORTHERN ARIZONA	7-5	103

WEEK-BY-WEEK IN THE POLLS

BELOW IS A WEEKLY LOOK AT EACH UAC TEAM'S SPOT IN THE AFCA COACHES AND STATS PERFORM POLLS IN 2026. RANKINGS ARE LISTED STATS PERFORM/COACHES.

	ACU	APSU	EKU	TSU	UCA	UNA	UWF	UWG
PRESEASON	15/14	17/18	-/RV	5/5	-/RV	-/-	-/-	RV/-

AROUND THE UAC



IN THE PRESEASON POLLS

The UAC placed three teams in both the Stats Perform FCS Top 25 and AFCA Coaches Polls to start the season. Tarleton State comes in at No. 5 in both polls, Abilene Christian found themselves at No. 15 in Stats Perform and No. 14 in the Coaches Poll while Austin Peay clocked in at No. 17 and No. 18 in the Stats Perform and Coaches Polls, respectively.

UAC PRESEASON COACHES POLL

To no surprise of anyone, Abilene Christian and Tarleton State were picked to win the UAC this season, both receiving 65 points and three first places votes. ACU took the regular season last season for back-to-back titles.

PHIL STEELE PRESEASON ALL-AMERICA TEAM

The United Athletic Conference placed five athletes on the Phil Steele Preseason All-America Team. Offensive linemen Joshua Sales Jr. from Austin Peay and Luke Roaten from Abilene Christian both were named to the Offense Second Team while Tarleton State's B.J. Fleming (WR) and Aidan Moe (OL) were named to the Offense Third and Fourth Teams, respectively. DeAndre Buchannon (KR) was also named to the list as a Special Teams honoree on the Second Team.

PRESEASON WATCH LISTS

Four UAC football players earned spots on preseason watch lists with Collin Hurst (UWG), Chris Parson (APSU) and Tylan Hines (TSU) finding themselves on the Walter Payton Award Preseason Watch List while Kaden Smith was named to the Buck Buchanan Award Watch List.

WEST FLORIDA JOINS THE UAC

On April 2, the Atlantic Sun Conference (ASUN) and the UAC announced that the University of West Florida will transition to the NCAA Division I level and join both leagues beginning Fall 2026. UWF will compete in the ASUN as a full multi-sport member, in addition to joining the UAC as a football-playing affiliate. UWF became the 17th member of Unisun Sports.

TARLETON STATE'S TOP RECRUITING CLASS

The Texans inked their largest NSD class in Tarleton State Football history. According to AthLinkd, College Football's Premier Prospect Database, Tarleton State had the No. 1 class across all of the FCS. Earlier in the portal window, 247Sports had the Texans as the No. 1 ranked portal class in the FCS.

AUSTIN PEAY PARTNERS WITH MITCHELL ROSS ROCCONI FOR JERSEY PATCH

Austin Peay State University Athletics and Clarksville law firm Mitchell Ross Rocconi, PLLC have announced a multi-year jersey patch sponsorship through Taymar Sales U. supporting Austin Peay football, beginning with the 2026 season. Through this agreement, a Mitchell Ross Rocconi patch will be worn on all APSU football uniforms following the passing of NCAA legislation in January allowing for jersey patches to be worn.

WEST GEORGIA INKS HOME & HOME WITH MONTANA STATE

Just days ahead of the 2026 football season the UWG Department of Athletics has announced a marquee matchup in a future home-and-home series with defending FCS National Champion Montana State. The Wolves will make the nearly-2,000-mile trek to Bozeman, Montana for a meeting at Bobcat Stadium in 2030 and Montana State will return to Carrollton in 2031, playing in Georgia for the first time in their program history that dates back to 1897. The 2030 meeting is slated for September 14 while the game in Carrollton in 2031 will take place on September 6 of that year.

WILDCATS AT HOME

Abilene Christian starts the season on a current 10-game winning streak at Anthony Field at Wildcat Stadium – the third longest in the program's history. To break the school record of 11 straight home victories, ACU will have to go through Stephen F. Austin (13/13) and Mercer (21/17).

NATHAN BROWN INDUCTED INTO ARKANSAS SPORTS HALL OF FAME

Current Central Arkansas head coach, and former Bear himself, Nathan Brown was inducted into the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame on April 10. A Russellville native, Brown has left a lasting mark on the Bears program as both a player and coach. He has been part of four of the top six total offense seasons in school history—two as quarterback and two as head coach—and has contributed to seven of the program's top 10 passing seasons. Brown was a three-time All-American with 10,558 passing yards and 100 touchdowns in his tenure.

TOP PLAYERS TO WATCH - NCAA FCS

NCAA FCS writer Stan Becton put together a 49-player to watch list prior to the season with five UAC players being named to the list: Collin Hurst (QB, UWG), Chris Parson (QB, APSU), Tylan Hines (RB, TSU), Luke Roaten (OL, ACU), Joshua Sales Jr. (OL, APSU).

UAC AGAINST FBS

Numerous UAC teams have FBS teams on their schedule for the 2026 season; Tarleton State will take on Bowling Green, North Alabama will head to Arkansas, Abilene Christian makes the trip to Texas Tech and Austin Peay will face Vanderbilt in Week One of the season. West Georgia will head up to Arkansas State in Week Two while Central Arkansas will head to Florida State in Week Four.

AGAINST THE CONFERENCES



FCS

Big Sky

Abilene Christian at Idaho (9/19)

Independent

Tarleton State vs. Merrimack (9/19)

Tarleton State vs. Chicago State (10/3)

MVFC

West Florida vs. Southern Illinois (8/27)

Northeast

Austin Peay vs. New Haven (10/3)

OVG-Big South

Austin Peay vs. Gardner-Webb (8/27)

Central Arkansas at UT Martin (8/27)

Central Arkansas at Southeast Missouri (9/19)

Austin Peay vs. UT Martin (9/26)

North Alabama vs. Western Illinois (9/26)

West Florida at Southeast Missouri (9/26)

Pioneer

Austin Peay vs. Morehead State (9/12)

EKU vs. Dayton (9/19)

Southern

West Georgia vs. Chattanooga (8/27)

EKU at Western Carolina (8/29)

North Alabama vs. Samford (8/29)

EKU vs. Chattanooga (9/12)

West Georgia at ETSU (9/19)

Abilene Christian vs. Mercer (9/29)

EKU at Tennessee Tech (10/17)

Southland

Abilene Christian at Lamar (8/29)

North Alabama at Southeastern Louisiana (9/12)

Tarleton State at McNeese (9/12)

Abilene Christian vs. Stephen F. Austin (9/12)

Central Arkansas sv. UT Rio Grande Valley (10/24)

SWAC

Tarleton State vs. Prairie View A&M (8/29)

North Alabama vs. Alcorn State (9/19)

FBS

ACC

Central Arkansas at Florida State (9/26)

Big 12

Abilene Christian at Texas Tech (9/5)

Conference USA

West Georgia at Kennesaw State (9/3)

EKU at Jacksonville State (9/5)

MAC

Tarleton State at Bowling Green (9/5)

SEC

North Alabama at Arkansas (9/5)

Austin Peay at Vanderbilt (9/5)

Sun Belt

West Georgia at Arkansas State (9/12)



2026 COMPOSITE SCHEDULE

Thursday, Aug. 27

Austin Peay vs. Gardner-Webb // 7 p.m.
West Georgia vs. Chattanooga // 7 p.m.
West Florida vs. Southern Illinois // 7 p.m.
Central Arkansas at UT Martin // 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Aug. 29

Abilene Christian at Lamar // 7 p.m.
EKU at Western Carolina // 7 p.m.
North Alabama vs. Samford // 7 p.m.
Tarleton State vs. Prairie View A&M // 9 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 3

West Georgia at Kennesaw State // 7 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 5

Tarleton State at Bowling Green // 12 p.m.
North Alabama at Arkansas // 4:15 p.m.
Abilene Christian at Texas Tech // 7 p.m.
Austin Peay at Vanderbilt // 7 p.m.
West Florida at Central Arkansas* // 7 p.m.
EKU at Jacksonville State // 7 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 12

Austin Peay vs. Morehead State // 5 p.m.
EKU vs. Chattanooga // 6 p.m.
Central Arkansas vs. Central Oklahoma // 7 p.m.
North Alabama vs. Southeastern Louisiana // 7 p.m.
Tarleton State vs. McNeese // 7 p.m.
West Georgia at Arkansas State // 7 p.m.
Abilene Christian vs. Stephen F. Austin // 8 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 19

West Georgia at ETSU // 12 p.m.
Abilene Christian at Idaho // 4 p.m.
EKU vs. Dayton // 6 p.m.
Austin Peay at West Florida* // 7 p.m.
Central Arkansas at SEMO // 7 p.m.
North Alabama vs. Alcorn State // 7 p.m.
Tarleton State vs. Merrimack // 7 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 26

Central Arkansas at Florida State // TBD
Austin Peay vs. UT Martin // 2 p.m.
North Alabama vs. Western Illinois // 4 p.m.
West Georgia vs. Fort Valley State // 6 p.m.
West Florida at SEMO // 7 p.m.
Abilene Christian vs. Mercer // 8 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 3

Austin Peay vs. New Haven // 5 p.m.
EKU vs. North Alabama* // 6 p.m.
Tarleton State vs. Chicago State // 7 p.m.
West Florida at Abilene Christian* // 8 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 10

West Florida vs. Northeastern State // 5 p.m.
West Georgia at EKU* // 6 p.m.
Tarleton State at Austin Peay* // 7 p.m.
Central Arkansas at Abilene Christian* // 8 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 17

Austin Peay at West Georgia* // 2 p.m.
EKU at Tennessee Tech // 2:30 p.m.
West Florida vs. West Alabama // 5 p.m.
Abilene Christian at North Alabama* // 7 p.m.
Central Arkansas at Tarleton State* // 7 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 24

Tarleton State at West Georgia* // 2 p.m.
West Florida at EKU* // 3 p.m.
Central Arkansas vs. UT Rio Grande Valley // 5 p.m.
Austin Peay at North Alabama* // 7 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 31

West Georgia at Abilene Christian* // 4 p.m.
North Alabama at Central Arkansas* // 5 p.m.
EKU at Tarleton State* // 7 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 7

EKU at Austin Peay* // 5 p.m.
West Georgia at Central Arkansas* // 5 p.m.
Abilene Christian at Tarleton State* // 7 p.m.
West Florida at North Alabama* // 7 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 14

Abilene Christian at Austin Peay* // 2 p.m.
Central Arkansas at EKU* // 2 p.m.
North Alabama at West Georgia* // 2 p.m.
Tarleton State at West Florida* // 3 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 21

EKU at Abilene Christian* // 2 p.m.
West Florida at West Georgia* // 2 p.m.
Tarleton State at North Alabama* // 4 p.m.
Austin Peay at Central Arkansas* // 5 p.m.

*denotes a UAC game

TEAM TALKING POINTS



ABILENE CHRISTIAN

0-0, 0-0 UAC



LAST GAME: L vs. #7 Stephen F. Austin (41-34) (2025)

NEXT GAME: at #20 Lamar (8/29)

- Wildcats picked to finish first in the UAC - tied with Tarleton State in overall points (65) and first place votes (3)
- Eight players named to Preseason All-UAC Team
- Luke Roaten (OL) was named a player to watch this season by NCAA FCS writer Stan Becton



NORTH ALABAMA

0-0, 0-0 UAC

LAST GAME: L vs. Southern Utah (36-34) (2025)

NEXT GAME: vs. Samford (8/29)

- Fred Vili and Tango McCauley Jr. were named to the Preseason All-UAC Team
- Dearmon hired former NFL talent Jovante Moffatt as his safeties coach.

AUSTIN PEAY

0-0, 0-0 UAC



LAST GAME: L vs. #5 Tarleton State (45-44) (2025)

NEXT GAME: vs. Gardner-Webb (8/27)

- Chris Parson (QB) was named the Preseason Offensive Player of the Year.
- Austin Peay State University Athletics and Clarksville law firm Mitchell Ross Rocconi, PLLC have announced a multi-year jersey patch sponsorship supporting Austin Peay football.
- The Govs finished the 2025 season with a perfect 6-0 record at home



TARLETON STATE

0-0, 0-0 UAC

LAST GAME: L vs. #12 Villanova (26-21) (2025)

NEXT GAME: vs. Prairie View A&M (8/29)

- Tarleton State was voted first in the UAC Coaches Poll - tied with Abilene Christian with 65 overall -points and three first place votes.
- Five Texans were named Preseason All-UAC Teams: Tylan Hines, Aiden Moe, Charlie Mullen, Omar Emmons and DeAndre Buchanan.
- Head Coach Todd Whitten agreed to a two-year extension with Tarleton State following the completion of the 2025 season.

CENTRAL ARKANSAS

0-0, 0-0 UAC



LAST GAME: L vs. Abilene Christian (49-28) (2025)

NEXT GAME: at UT Martin (8/27)

- Three Bears were picked to the All-UAC Preseason Defensive Team: Trevion Traylor, Ashtyn Williams and Marcus Washington.
- Current Central Arkansas head coach, and former Bear himself, Nathan Brown was inducted into the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame on April 10.



WEST FLORIDA

0-0, 0-0 UAC

LAST GAME: L vs. Newberry (24-17) (2025)

NEXT GAME: vs. Southern Illinois (8/27)

- West Florida joined the UAC in football on April 2 when it made the jump to Division I.
- The Argos broke ground on Darrell Gooden Stadium on Feb. 11. The multi-use football and events facility is expected to host UWF football in the fall of 2027.

EKU

0-0, 0-0 UAC



LAST GAME: W at Utah State (33-10) (2025)

NEXT GAME: at Western Carolina (8/29)

- Kaden Smith was named the Preseason Defensive Player of the Year.
- Brayden Latham, Derek Taylor and Quaid Luginbill all named as Preseason All-UAC selections.



WEST GEORGIA

0-0, 0-0 UAC

LAST GAME: W at Utah Tech (33-0) (2025)

NEXT GAME: vs. Chattanooga (8/27)

- The Wolves are led by new head coach Steve Engelhart, who was the 2025 AFCA FCS National Coach of the Year last season at Presbyterian College.
- West Georgia announced a home-and-home series with FCS powerhouse Montana State for the 2030 and 2031.

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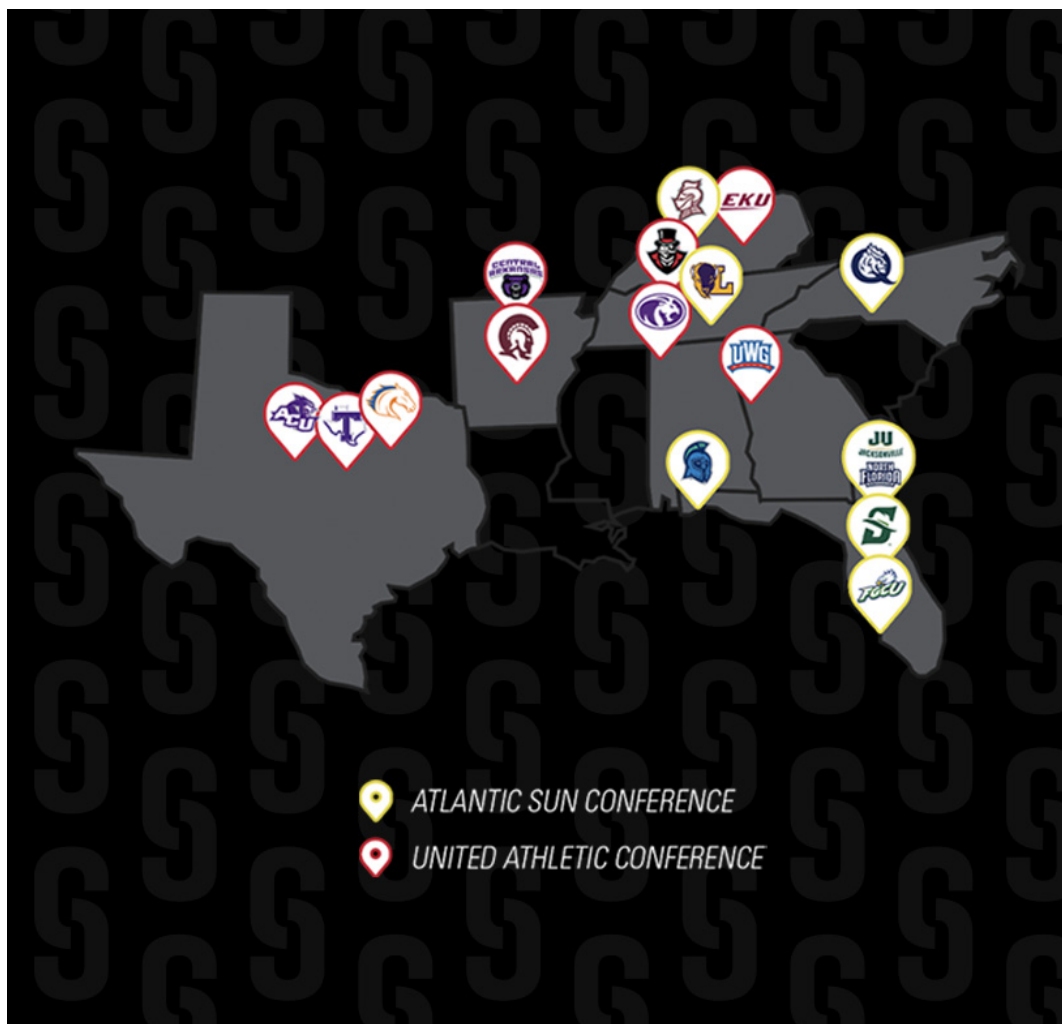


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CREATING WHAT'S NEXT

On July 1, 2026, Unisun Sports, the groundbreaking strategic alliance between the Atlantic Sun Conference (ASUN) and the United Athletic Conference (UAC) commenced. Unisun Sports serves both conferences, designed to significantly enhance operation efficiency, foster deeper collaboration, and drive innovation across both NCAA Division I organizations.

Unisun Sports is a first-of-its-kind consortium stretching throughout the southeast. We serve as the operational and business engine for two premier NCAA Division I conferences, uniting them under a single umbrella to drive innovation and shared success, creating a high-performance ecosystem that benefits every student-athlete and partner institution.



AN INNOVATIVE BUSINESS MODEL

Through Unisun Sports, we leverage collective scale to unlock premium media rights, amplified sponsorships, and operational efficiencies that traditional models can't match. By bridging the gap between legacy conference structures and modern business demands, Unisun Sports provides the ASUN, UAC and their 17 member institutions with the financial strength and national visibility needed to thrive in a transformative era, ensuring our members remain at the forefront of Division I competition while retaining independent access to NCAA Championships.

At Unisun Sports, we aren't just reacting to the future—we're building it.