

A pair of Friday night games begin the week two action in Conference USA. Rice plays the first of its seven home games when Wake Forest comes to town, while Marshall makes the trip out west to battle No. 24 Boise State.

The 11-game Saturday schedule features the first C-USA league game of 2019 as WKU makes the trip to Miami to face FIU and also contains the conference's first game on NFL Network when Grambling visits Louisiana Tech.

Road games at four power 5 in-state opponents are on the docket with Old Dominion making the cross-commonwealth trip to Virginia Tech, Southern Miss going up the road to battle Mississippi State, UTSA moving up I-35 to take on Baylor and west Texas rivals UTEP and Texas Tech tangling in Lubbock.

A pair of games against defending conference champions are on the agenda, with Charlotte visiting defending Sun Belt Champion Appalachian State and Florida Atlantic hosting back-to-back American Athletic Conference champs and 17th-ranked UCF.

UAB will visit Akron for the first time on Saturday morning, North Texas will play at Metroplex rival SMU on Saturday night and Middle Tennessee will host Tennessee State in the Blue Raiders home opener.

WEEK TWO C-USA FOOTBALL PREVIEW

WAKE FOREST (1-0) at RICE (0-1)

Friday, September 6

7 p.m. CT

Houston, Texas (Rice Stadium)

Television: CBS Sports Network

Announcers: Ben Holden (PxP), Ross Tucker (AN)

All-Time Series: Series Tied 1-1-1

Last Meeting: at Wake Forest 56, Rice 24 (Sept. 29, 2018)

FAST FACTS

****Rice** begins a four game home stand as part of a seven game home schedule. This marks the first time since 1996 that the Owls will play four consecutive games at Rice Stadium. All seven home opponents were bowl-eligible last season.

****The Rice defense** held an Army offense that led the nation in rushing in 2018 (362 yards per game) and averaged 6.0 per carry to just 231 yards and 4.1 per carry in the season-opening 14-7 loss.

****Sophomore LB Antonio Montero** was credited with a career-high 11 tackles and added a pair of quarterback hurries at Army.

****After** only getting four carries last year due to injury, senior RB **Nahshon Ellerbee** ran nine times for 103 yards in the opener. It was his second career 100-yard rushing game and his most since rushing for 153 yards against Southern Miss in 2017. Ellerbee also had a career-long 54-yard touchdown run.

****This** is the second of three straight Friday night games for Wake Forest. The Demon Deacons edged Utah State, 38-35, last week as QB Jamie Newman completed 34-of-47 passes for 401 yards, three passing touchdowns, and one rushing score.

MORE

Wake Forest Football: <https://godeacs.com/index.aspx?path=football>

Rice Football: <https://riceowls.com/index.aspx?path=football>

MARSHALL (1-0) at (24) BOISE STATE (1-0)

Friday, September 6

7 p.m. MT

Boise, Idaho (Albertson Stadium)

Television: ESPN2

Announcers: Dave Fleming (PxP), Jim Mora (AN), Paul Carcaterra (SL)

All-Time Series: Boise State leads 1-0

Last Meeting: at Boise State 28, Marshall 24 (Dec. 10, 1994)

FAST FACTS

****The only previous meeting between the schools came in the 1994 I-AA playoffs, where Boise State edged Marshall, 28-24, to advance to the National Championship game the following week which was held at Marshall's campus in Huntington, West Virginia (Youngstown State defeated Boise State).**

****Redshirt sophomore QB **Isaiah Green** threw a career-high four touchdown passes in the 56-7 win over VMI last Saturday. The last time a Marshall QB tossed more TD passes was when Chase Litton threw six against Morgan State in 2016. Green completed 18 of 28 passes for 238 yards and also rushed eight times for 46 yards.**

****Freshman **Talik Keaton**'s 67-yard punt return for a touchdown against VMI was Marshall's first since Deandre Reaves' 69-yarder for a score against FIU in 2015. His 109 punt return yards (5 attempts) against the Keydets are the eighth-most in school history and the most by a Marshall man since Damone Williams had five returns for 140 yards at Ohio in 1998.**

****Marshall's defense held VMI to 207 total yards and just 56 rushing yards, as the Herd did not allow a 100-yard rusher for the 15th consecutive game. The unit finished with four sacks and eight tackles for a loss.**

****Boise State has won 17 consecutive home openers and carry a nation's-best record of 113-9 (.926) at home since 2000 into the contest.**

****In its opener last Saturday, Boise State rallied from an 18-point deficit to knock off Florida State in Tallahassee, 36-31. True freshman QB Hank Bachmeier threw for 407 yards and a touchdown.**

MORE

Marshall Football: <http://www.herdzone.com/sports/m-footbl/mars-m-footbl-body.html>

Boise State Football: <https://broncosports.com/index.aspx?path=football>

OLD DOMINION (1-0) at VIRGINIA TECH (0-1)

Saturday, September 7

12 p.m. ET

Blacksburg, Virginia (Lane Stadium)

Television: ESPNU

Announcers: Mike Couzens (PxP), Kirk Morrison (AN)

All-Time Series: Series Tied 1-1

Last Meeting: at Old Dominion 45, (10) Virginia Tech 31 (Sept. 22, 2018)

FAST FACTS

**Old Dominion surprised No. 10 Virginia Tech last September in Norfolk, as Blake LaRussa passed for 495-yards and four touchdowns, while rushing for 19 yards and a score to lead the Monarchs to a 45-31 victory. It was the program's first win over a ranked FBS program.

Junior QB **Stone Smartt, in his first career start as a Monarch, finished 17-of-23 for 158 passing yards and ran for a touchdown. His 31-yard pass to graduate WR **Eric Kumah** in the final minutes set up a game-winning touchdown by freshman RB **La La Davis**.

ODU had five first-time starters on both offense and defense that were on the team last year. That list does not include graduate WR **Eric Kumah and graduate TE **Chris Cunningham**, Virginia Tech graduate transfers who are also first time Monarchs starters.

Junior **Steven Williams, who started at quarterback as a 17-year old true freshman in 2017, started for the first time as a wide receiver against Norfolk State. He caught a 15 yard pass on the first drive of the game for his first career catch and finished with three receptions for 25 yards.

**Virginia Tech turned the ball over five times in a season-opening 35-28 loss at Boston College. QB Ryan Willis finished 29 of 47 for 344 yards with four touchdowns, but accounted for four of the turnovers with three interceptions and one fumble.

MORE

Old Dominion Football:

http://www.odusports.com/SportSelect.dbml?DB_OEM_ID=31100&SPID=127313&SPSID=750425&DB_OEM_ID=31100

Virginia Tech Football: <https://hokiesports.com/index.aspx?path=football>

UAB (1-0) at AKRON (0-1)

Saturday, September 7

12:00 p.m. ET

Akron, Ohio (InfoCision Stadium)

Broadcast: CBS Sports Network

Announcers: John Sadak (PxP), Randy Cross (AN)

All-Time Series: First Meeting

FAST FACTS

Senior DL **Garrett Marino earned C-USA Defensive Player of the Week honors after posting a career and team-high nine tackles in a 24-19 victory over Alabama State on August 29. No two tackles were bigger than his back-to-back stops during a goal-line stand in the fourth quarter which preserved UAB's 24-19 lead.

Senior S **Jarrion Street, who rushed for 275 yards as a reserve running back last season, made his defensive debut as a Blazer and added eight tackles and one of UAB's three sacks in the opener.

Junior KR **Myron Mitchell compiled 162 total yards on special teams, including a 98-yard kickoff return for a touchdown in a 24-19 victory over Alabama State. Mitchell's kickoff return for a touchdown was the first for UAB since the 2014 season. In total, he had three kickoffs for 138 yards and two punt returns for 24 yards (long of 15).

**Akron opened the Tom Arth era last week at Illinois, where the first-year Zips head coach saw his squad drop a 42-3 decision, being held to 192 total yards by the Illini.

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UAB Football: <http://uabsports.com/index.aspx?path=football>

Akron Football: <https://gozips.com/index.aspx?path=football>

CHARLOTTE (1-0) at APPALACHIAN STATE (1-0)

Saturday, September 7

3:30 p.m. ET

Boone, North Carolina (Kidd Brewer Stadium)

Broadcast: ESPN+

Announcers: Harrison Battle (PxP), Pierre Banks (AN)

All-Time Series: Appalachian State leads 1-0

Last Meeting: Appalachian State 45, Charlotte 9 (Sept. 8, 2018)

FAST FACTS

Charlotte scored 49 points, appropriately, in head coach **Will Healy's debut, a 49-28 win over Gardner-Webb on August 29. It is the most points the 49ers have scored at the FBS level.

Senior RB **Bobby LeMay had 16 carries for 120 yards and two touchdowns in the opener, including a 65-yard burst to close the first half. That 65-yard TD run is the ninth-longest in school history and the longest of LeMay's career. The game marked his eighth career 100-yard rushing performance.

Sophomore QB **Chris Reynolds was 14-of-20 passing for 136 yards, a TD and one interception. He split time, as scheduled, with starter **Brett Kean**, who was 4-of-8 for 50 yards with a TD and two interceptions. Kean threw a 31-yard TD pass to freshman **Micaleous Elder** for Charlotte's final score.

**Charlotte held Gardner-Webb to 56 yards of total offense in the first half and gave up just 60 yards passing for the game.

**Appalachian State has won seven straight games, the nation's third-longest active winning streak behind Clemson (16) and Army (10). The defending Sun Belt Conference Champion Mountaineers won 42-7 against visiting East Tennessee State in the FBS head coaching debut for Eliah Drinkwitz last Saturday.

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Charlotte Football: <http://www.charlotte49ers.com/index.aspx?path=football>

Appalachian State Football: <https://appstatesports.com/index.aspx?path=football>

GRAMBLING (0-1) at LOUISIANA TECH (0-1)

Saturday, September 7

2:30 p.m. CT

Ruston, Louisiana (Joe Aillet Stadium)

Television: NFL Network

Announcers: Rhett Lewis (PxP), Max Starks (AN), Molly Sullivan (SL)

All-Time Series: Louisiana Tech leads 1-0

Last Meeting: Louisiana Tech 20, Grambling 6 (Sept. 4, 2010)

FAST FACTS

**This marks the first game as part of Conference USA's new four-year deal with NFL Network. A total of 10 games will air on NFL Network this season, all with a 2:30 p.m. CT kickoff.

**Though located just six miles apart, the teams will be meeting for just the second time and for the first time on campus. Louisiana Tech defeated Grambling in 2010 in Shreveport, Louisiana.

**Louisiana Tech has won four straight home openers and topped the 50-point mark in each of them.

****Senior QB J'Mar Smith** became the only active FBS quarterback to start in a season-opener in each of the last four years at Texas last Saturday night. He finished the game 34-of-51 for 331 yards and two scoring strikes. The 34 completions were a career-high for Smith.

****In his first game as a Bulldog, redshirt freshman WR Smoke Harris** led the team in receptions with six, totaling 56 yards.

****Grambling** opened the season with a 31-9 loss at nearby Louisiana-Monroe. The Tigers generated 407 yards of total offense but were held under 10 points.

MORE

Grambling Football: <https://gsutigers.com/index.aspx?path=football>

Louisiana Tech Football: <http://www.latechsports.com/sports/m-footbl/latc-m-footbl-body.html>

SOUTHERN MISS (1-0) at MISSISSIPPI STATE (1-0)

Saturday, September 7

2:30 p.m. CT

Starkville, Mississippi (Davis Wade Stadium)

Television: ESPNU

Announcers: Kevin Brown (PxP), Andre Ware (AN)

All-Time Series: Series Tied 14-14-1

Last Meeting: Mississippi State 34, at Southern Miss 16 (Sept. 5, 2015)

FAST FACTS

****The Southern Miss defense** finished third in the FBS last season, allowing 278.4 yards per game, and holding three opponents to less than 200 yards of total offense. The group was sixth in rushing defense, allowing just 102.3 yards an outing. The 161 first downs allowed ranked No. 1 in the country. Six starters return from that unit this season.

****Southern Miss sophomore WR Jaylond Adams** earned C-USA Special Teams Player of the Week honors after producing the rare feat of scoring on both a kickoff and a punt return in the win over Alcorn State. He opened the season by returning a kickoff 89 yards for a touchdown and then later tallied an 80-yard score on a punt return.

****Redshirt junior QB Jack Abraham** collected his eighth 200-plus-yard throwing game in his 10th contest as a Golden Eagle, throwing for 293 yards on 18-of-28 passing with a 55-yard TD strike to senior WR **Neil McLaurin** in the third quarter of the win over Alcorn State.

****Senior WR Jordan Mitchell** recorded his second career 100-yard receiving game in the opener with 133 yards on seven catches.

****In the season-opening win**, the Golden Eagles improved to 14-3 under head coach **Jay Hopson** when the opposition is held to under 300 total offensive yards (219). It also was the 16th time Southern Miss limited its opponent to less than 100 yards rushing under Hopson, improving to 12-4 in those contests.

****With last Saturday's 38-28 win over Louisiana-Lafayette in New Orleans**, Mississippi State has won 10 straight games against non-conference teams during the regular season. Junior RB Kylin Hill racked up 197 yards rushing on 27 carries and found the end zone once in the win.

MORE

Southern Miss Football: <http://www.southernmiss.com/sports/m-footbl/smis-m-footbl-body.html>

Mississippi State Football: <https://hailstate.com/index.aspx?path=football>

UTSA (1-0) at BAYLOR (1-0)

Saturday, September 7

3 p.m. CT

Waco, Texas (McLane Stadium)

Television: FSN

Announcers: Eric Collins (PxP), Jordan Palmer (AN)

All-Time Series: Series Tied 1-1

Last Meeting: Baylor 37, at UTSA 20 (Sept. 8, 2018)

FAST FACTS

**Teams are meeting for the third straight season with the home team winning each of the first two matchups. UTSA's 17-10 win at Baylor in 2017 marked the program's first victory over a Power 5 school.

Making his first career start, sophomore QB **Frank Harris passed for 206 yards and three touchdowns and ran for 123 yards in the 35-7 victory over Incarnate Word. Harris completed his first 13 passes — a school record for a debut — and finished 28 of 36 through the air.

*The Roadrunners allowed only 209 yards of offense on 53 plays (3.9 yards per play) — 28 yards on the ground and 181 yards through the air — to Incarnate Word, the defending Southland Conference champions. UTSA also held UIW without a third- or fourth-down conversion in 13 combined tries.

UTSA junior DE **Lorenzo Dantzler posted four tackles, including a pair of sacks, against UIW.

**Baylor piled up 518 yards of offense — 268 rushing and 250 passing — in a 56-17 win over Stephen F. Austin last week. Charlie Brewer completed 21 of 31 passes for 199 yards and three touchdowns, while John Lovett dashed for 108 yards and a score on just eight carries.

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UTSA Football: <http://www.goutsa.com/index.aspx?path=football>

Baylor Football: <https://baylorbears.com/index.aspx?path=football>

WKU (0-1) at FIU (0-1)

Saturday, September 7

7 p.m. ET

Miami, Florida (Riccardo Silva Stadium)

Television: ESPN+

Announcers: A.J. Ricketts (PxP), Kenny Kelly (AN)

All-Time Series: Series Tied 6-6

Last Meeting: FIU 38, at WKU 17 (Oct. 27, 2018)

FAST FACTS

**Game marks the opening league game in Conference USA this season. FIU also played the first league game last season, winning at Old Dominion in week two.

**FIU has won the last two years to even the all-time series at 6-6.

**In the season opener, the Hilltoppers held Central Arkansas to only 20 yards rushing — tied for the fourth-fewest allowed by a WKU defense dating back to 2007.

WKU junior RB **Gaej Walker is the leading rusher in C-USA after posting a career-high 152 against Central Arkansas. That included a 68-yard scoring rush on WKU's first offensive play of the 2019 campaign, and the first offensive touch of Walker's career.

Junior DE **DeAngelo Malone leads C-USA and is fourth nationally after posting 3.5 tackles for loss in the opener. He had 1.5 sacks and registered eight total tackles.

****For the first time in his career, WKU redshirt junior QB Steven Duncan** passed for over 300 yards, completing 26-of-39 attempts for a career-high 304 yards and one touchdown vs. CAU.

****In the opener at Tulane, FIU senior RB Anthony Jones** picked up his penchant for finding the end zone from the end of last season with the Panthers first score of 2019. He scored once in the regular season finale and then had three TDs in the Makers Wanted Bahamas Bowl win over Toledo.

****Senior DB Stantley Thomas-Oliver III** earned a career-high nine tackles to lead FIU on the defensive side of the ball in the season opener.

MORE

WKU Football: <http://wkusports.com/index.aspx?path=football>

FIU Football: <http://www.fiusports.com/index.aspx?path=football>

(17) UCF (1-0) at FLORIDA ATLANTIC (0-1)

Saturday, September 7

7 p.m. ET

Boca Raton, Florida (FAU Stadium)

Television: CBS Sports Network

Announcers: Carter Blackburn (PxP), Aaron Taylor (AN), Jenny Dell (SL)

All-Time Series: UCF leads 2-0

Last Meeting: at UCF 56, Florida Atlantic 36 (Sept. 21, 2018)

FAST FACTS

****Florida Atlantic faces its second straight Top 20 opponent to open the season after falling at No. 5 Ohio State last week.**

****Sophomore QB Chris Robison** made good on 65 percent of his past attempts (22-for-34) for 178 yards at Ohio State, throwing a three-yard TD to senior TE John Raine.

****Raine and fellow senior TE Harrison Bryant** led all receivers in catches at Ohio State with six each. Bryant paced all players in receiving yards with 79.

****Senior LB Rashad Smith** reached double-figure tackles for the seventh time in his career, registering a game-high 11 stops.

****UCF makes its first visit to Boca Raton carrying a nine-game road winning streak.**

****The Knights had 42 first downs in last week's 62-0 win over Florida A&M. It was only three first downs off of the NCAA single-game record of 45 (Texas Tech, 2003).**

MORE

UCF Football: <https://ucfknight.com/?path=football>

Florida Atlantic Football: <http://www.fausports.com/sports/m-footbl/fau-m-footbl-body.html>

TENNESSEE STATE (1-0) at MIDDLE TENNESSEE (0-1)

Saturday, September 7

6 p.m. CT

Murfreesboro, Tennessee (Floyd Stadium)

Television: ESPN3

Announcers: Jake Rose (PxP), Alex Myers (AN), Kaitlyn Runion (SL)

All-Time Series: Middle Tennessee leads 10-9

Last Meeting: at Middle Tennessee 28, Tennessee State 27 (Sept. 5, 1998)

FAST FACTS

****Teams** are meeting for the first time in 21 years after facing each other 19 times in a 25-year period from 1973-1998. The first 14 meetings were played at Vanderbilt Stadium in Nashville.

****Middle Tennessee** has won five of its last six home openers.

****When** the Blue Raiders have lost a season opener under head coach **Rick Stockstill** they have come back to win the next game six of eight times.

****Sophomore QB Asher O'Hara** earned his first collegiate start at Michigan last week. O'Hara threw for a career-high 217 yards on a personal-best 22 completions and his first two career touchdown passes. O'Hara, who also ran for a team-high 32 yards, became the first starter under center in a season opener not named Brent Stockstill since 2014.

****The Blue Raiders** had 14 different players catch passes in the season opener at Michigan. That goes down as the most since MT hit 15 different players in the 2017 season opener against Alabama A&M.

MORE

Tennessee State Football: <http://www.tsutigers.com/football/>

Middle Tennessee Football: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/index.aspx?path=football>

NORTH TEXAS (1-0) at SMU (1-0)

Saturday, September 7

6 p.m. CT

Dallas, Texas (Gerald J. Ford Stadium)

Television: ESPN3

Announcers: David Saltzman (PxP), Doug Graber (AN)

All-Time Series: SMU leads 31-6-1

Last Meeting: at North Texas 46, SMU 23 (Sept. 1, 2018)

FAST FACTS

****Teams** are meeting for the sixth consecutive season, with SMU having won 3 of the 5 meetings over that period. Last season, North Texas rolled up 529 yards of total offense and built up a 36-0 lead at the end of the third quarter en route to a 46-23 win. Mean Green senior QB **Mason Fine** was 40-of-50 for 444 yards and three TDs and Cole Hedlund kicked four field goals.

**** Junior TE Jason Pirtle** hauled in four catches for 88 yards and three touchdowns in North Texas' 51-31 win over Abilene Christian. Those were the first three TD receptions of his career and tied for the second-most in a game in program history. The **Mason Fine**-to-Pirtle connection was good for 59 touchdowns as teammates at Locust Grove High School, but these were their first scores at North Texas. Pirtle, the C-USA Offensive Player of the Week, was the only TE in the FBS to catch three TD passes on opening weekend and just four players scored more TD's.

****Junior WR Rico Bussey, Jr.** caught four passes for a career-high 156 yards and a touchdown in the season opener. He moved into ninth place in career receiving yards at North Texas with 1,791 and fourth in career receiving touchdowns with 21.

****Nick Harvey**, the graduate-student defensive back, was a tackling machine in his Mean Green debut. Harvey, who came to North Texas after stops at Texas A&M and South Carolina, had 12 tackles in the first half and finished with 14 for the game.

****Senior RB Xavier Jones** ran for three touchdowns and junior WR Reggie Roberson, Jr. caught 11 passes for 180 yards to lead SMU to a season-opening 38-31 victory at Arkansas State.

MORE

North Texas Football: <http://www.meangreensports.com/sports/m-footbl/ntex-m-footbl-body.html>

SMU Football: <https://smumustangs.com/index.aspx?path=football>

UTEP (1-0) at TEXAS TECH (1-0)

Saturday, September 7

7 p.m. CT

Lubbock, Texas (Jones AT&T Stadium)

Television: FSN

Announcers: Mark Followill (PxP), Brian Baldinger (AN), CT Steckel (SL)

All-Time Series: UTEP leads 16-6-1

Last Meeting: at Texas Tech 69, UTEP 20 (Sept. 12, 2015)

FAST FACTS

****UTEP** compiled 508 total yards of offense in the opening weekend win over Houston Baptist, which is the most under head coach **Dana Dimel** and most in a game since the 2016 season finale vs. North Texas (555). UTEP has posted six straight wins when tallying 500 yards or more dating back to 2013.

****Senior RB Treyvon Hughes** was a force to be reckoned with on the ground for the Miners in the 36-34 win over HBU after recording a career-best 23 carries for 144 yards and two rushing TDs. His previous UTEP best was 76 yards rushing.

****Sophomore K Gavin Baechle** was a key component for the Miners last weekend with a total of 12 points after booting a career-best three field goals in as many attempts, including the eventual game-winning 35-yard field in the fourth quarter. Baechle also added three PATs to finish the night with 12 points. He became the first Miner to make three field goals in a game since Oct. 15, 2011.

****After** posting a career-best 53 tackles last season, senior S **Justin Rogers** registered a team-high 10 stops in the opener. He also recovered a fumble.

****Texas Tech**, which has won 10 straight non-conference home games, opened the Matt Wells era last Saturday by rolling up 690 yards of total offense in a 45-10 win over Montana State.

MORE

UTEP Football: <http://www.utepathletics.com/index.aspx?path=football>

Texas Tech Football: <https://texastech.com/index.aspx?path=football>