



For Immediate Release
Nov. 16, 2022
Mike Kern

Illinois State • Indiana State • Missouri State • North Dakota • North Dakota State • Northern Iowa
South Dakota • South Dakota State • Southern Illinois • Western Illinois • Youngstown State

1818 Chouteau Ave. • St. Louis, MO 63103 • (314) 435-4779 [Kern cell]



2022 Valley Football Standings (thru Saturday, Nov. 12)

Team	Overall	Pct.	Conference	Pct.	PF	PA	Home	Away	Neut	Streak
South Dakota St.	10-1	.909	8-0	1.000	345	171	6-0	4-1	0-0	W 10
North Dakota St.	8-2	.800	6-1	.857	341	170	4-1	4-1	0-0	W 3
North Dakota	7-3	.700	5-2	.714	312	290	4-1	3-2	0-0	W 3
Youngstown St.	6-4	.600	4-3	.571	286	258	4-1	2-3	0-0	L 1
Southern Ill.	5-5	.500	4-3	.571	290	266	2-3	3-2	0-0	L 3
UNI	5-5	.500	4-3	.571	305	269	3-3	2-2	0-0	L 1
Illinois St.	5-5	.500	3-4	.429	170	211	3-2	2-3	0-0	L 3
Missouri St.	4-6	.400	2-5	.286	277	293	3-2	1-4	0-0	W 1
South Dakota	3-7	.300	2-5	.286	165	263	3-1	0-6	0-0	L 1
Indiana St.	2-8	.200	1-6	.143	169	336	1-4	1-4	0-0	W 1
Western Ill.	0-10	.000	0-7	.000	137	406	0-5	0-5	0-0	L 10

• • Media Services • •

Players of the Week

Each week a panel will select players of the week for offense, defense, newcomer, offensive line and special teams.

Weekly Features

The league produces weekly video segments (Two Minute Drill and The Extra Point) and a bimonthly audio podcast (First and Goal). Each is available by visiting the league's web site (valleyfootball.org).

www.valley-football.org

facebook.com/ValleyFootball

@valleyfootball • @FCS_Insider

@ESPNCFB • @NCAA_FCS

@FCS_STATS • @HEROSports_FCS



FCS ALL-IN

FCS conferences are collaborating for the third-straight season in the weekly program titled "FCS ALL-IN," which airs every Friday at 7 p.m. ET on ESPN+

The weekly episodes will be hosted by Mariluz Cook and features guests Craig Haley of Stats Perform and Sam Herder of HERO Sports, who will preview key matchups each week. The show will also feature a "Pick 'Em" segment, spotlighting guest pickers from the highlighted "Games of the Week."

Schedule/Results

Saturday, Nov. 12

*South Dakota at #19 North Dakota UND, 28-19
 *Indiana State at Western Illinois ISU, 21-0
 *#4/4 North Dakota State at RV S. Illinois NDSU, 21-18
 *Illinois State at #1/1 South Dakota State SDSU, 31-7
 *RV Youngstown State at MoState MSU, 25-22
no game: UNI

Saturday, Nov. 19

*Southern Illinois at Youngstown State (ESPN3) 11:00 A.M.
 *Western Illinois at Illinois State (Marquee/E+) 11:00 A.M.
 *Missouri State at Indiana State (ESPN+) 12:00 P.M.
 *UNI at South Dakota (Midco/ESPN+) 1:00 P.M.
 *#16/23 UND at #4/4 NDSU (Midco/ABC ND/E+) 2:30 P.M.
no game: South Dakota State

Sunday, Nov. 20

Selection Show -- 11:30 a.m. CT (ESPNU)

Saturday, Nov. 26

Playoffs First Round

Friday-Saturday, Dec. 2-3

Playoffs Second Round

Friday-Saturday, Dec. 9-10

Playoffs Quarterfinals

Friday-Saturday, Dec. 16-17

Playoffs Semifinals

Sunday, Jan. 8

Championship: Toyota Stadium, Frisco, Texas, 1 p.m. CT (ABC)

*indicates MVFC game; rankings reflect Stats Perform poll followed by AFCA poll; FBS rankings are Associated Press; RV stands for 'received votes.'

In the Metrics

Nine MVFC teams rank in the Top 31 of the Sagarin football ratings, which includes five of the Top 14, and two of the Top 4. The same nine MVFC schools rank in the Top 34 of the Massey FCS computer rankings. Notably, all 11 MVFC programs rank in the Top 23 of Massey's Strength of Schedule ratings, which includes South Dakota, which has the FCS' hardest SOS.

The MVFC is the top-rated FCS league in the Sagarin, followed by the Big Sky, ASUN, Southern, and CAA.

Team	Sagarin	Massey	SOS	Stats	AFCA
S. Dakota State	64 (1)	2	7	1	1
N. Dakota State	77 (4)	4	21	4	4
UNI	115 (10)	23	11	--	--
Southern Illinois	118 (11)	22	3	--	--
North Dakota	122 (14)	11	9	16	23
Missouri State	144 (23)	28	4	--	--
Youngstown St.	149 (26)	27	23	--	--
South Dakota	154 (30)	34	1	--	--
Illinois State	155 (31)	30	13	--	--
Indiana State	183 (53)	60	6	--	--
Western Illinois	223 (92)	104	12	--	--

Sagarin ratings list full DI rank (FCS rank); Strength of Schedule (SOS) is taken from Massey ratings; Stats is Stats Perform FCS poll; AFCA is Coaches poll.

Sagarin Conference Ratings

1. Missouri Valley Football
2. Big Sky
3. ASUN
4. Southern
5. CAA

2022 Missouri Valley Football Conference Weekly Release

vs. Non-Conference (16-17)

Home: 13-4 / Away: 3-13 / Neut: 0-0

NCAA FCS Teams (15-7)

ASUN	2-0
Central Arkansas.....	1-0
North Alabama.....	1-0
Big Sky.....	3-3
UC Davis.....	1-0
Cal Poly.....	1-0
Montana.....	0-2
Northern Arizona.....	1-0
Sacramento State.....	0-1
Big South.....	1-0
North Carolina A&T.....	1-0
NEC.....	1-0
Duquesne.....	1-0
Ohio Valley.....	2-2
Eastern Illinois.....	1-0
Southeast Missouri State.....	0-2
UT Martin.....	1-0
PFL.....	4-0
Butler.....	1-0
Dayton.....	1-0
Drake.....	1-0
Valparaiso.....	1-0
Southland.....	0-1
Incarnate Word.....	0-1
WAC.....	2-1
Abilene Christian.....	1-0
Southern Utah.....	0-1
Utah Tech.....	1-0

NCAA FBS Teams (1-10)

Big 12.....	0-1
Kansas State.....	0-1
Big Ten.....	1-5
Iowa.....	0-1
Minnesota.....	0-1
Nebraska.....	0-1
Northwestern.....	1-0
Purdue.....	0-1
Wisconsin.....	0-1
Mountain West.....	0-1
Air Force.....	0-1
Pac-12.....	0-1
Arizona.....	0-1
SEC.....	0-2
Arkansas.....	0-1
Kentucky.....	0-1

vs. Ranked (FCS) Teams (2-5)

S1 - W. Illinois at #15 UT Martin (42-25).....	L
S3 - S. Illinois at #14 UIW (64-29).....	L
S8 - Missouri St. vs. #14 UT Martin (35-30) . W	
S10 - S. Dakota at #2 Montana (24-7).....	L
S10 - SDSU vs. #25 UC Davis (24-22).....	W
S17 - Indiana St. vs. #2 Montana (49-14).....	L
S17 - UNI vs. #7 Sacramento St. (37-21).....	L

vs. Ranked (FBS) Teams (0-3)

S3 - Illinois State at #18 Wisconsin (38-0).....	L
S17 - Missouri St. at #10 Arkansas (38-27).....	L
S17 - Youngstown St. at #9 Kentucky (31-0).....	L

2022 MVFC Preseason Poll

1. North Dakota State (39).....	446
2. South Dakota State (2).....	407
3. Missouri State.....	355
4. Southern Illinois.....	306
5. UNI.....	304
6. South Dakota.....	235
7. North Dakota.....	190
8. Illinois State.....	178
9. Youngstown State.....	132
10. Indiana State.....	109
11. Western Illinois.....	44

SDSU Claims Title, AQ

With a win against visiting Illinois State, the Jackrabbits set a school record with their 10th consecutive victory, improved to 10-1 overall and finished the Conference slate with a perfect 8-0 mark. In addition to earning an outright title (its first outright crown and third overall title), SDSU has earned the MVFC's automatic berth into the FCS playoffs, marking the program's 11th consecutive postseason appearance.

MVFC All-Time Titles (Shared/Outright) TOT

UNI (6/10).....	16
North Dakota State (4/6).....	10
Southern Illinois (3/2).....	5
Western Illinois (1/4).....	5
Illinois State (2/1).....	3
Missouri State (2/1).....	3
South Dakota State (2/1).....	3
Eastern Illinois (1/1).....	2
Youngstown State (1/1).....	2
North Dakota (1/0).....	1
Western Kentucky (1/0).....	1

MVFC Teams To Go Unbeaten in League Play

UNI (1985, 1987, 1994, 1996, 2007).....	5
North Dakota State (2013, 2018, 2019).....	3
Southern Illinois (2004, 2009).....	2
Western Illinois (1988, 1997).....	2
Illinois State (1999).....	1
South Dakota State (2022).....	1

Playoff Bids on the Line

Seven of the league's 11 schools are still in line to win six DI games and post winning records with a shot at entry into the FCS playoffs (begins Saturday, Nov. 26). Here's what remains for those seven, in order of their current position in the league race:

Team (Record)	Nov. 12	Nov. 19
South Dakota State (10-1/8-0 MVFC)	ILS (W)	---
North Dakota State (8-2/6-1 MVFC)	at SIU (W)	UND
North Dakota (7-3/5-2 MVFC)	USD (W)	at NDSU
Youngstown State (6-4/4-3 MVFC)	at MSU (L)	SIU
Southern Illinois (5-5/4-3 MVFC)	NDSU (L)	at YSU
UNI (5-5/4-3 MVFC)	---	at USD
Illinois State (5-5/3-4 MVFC)	at SDSU (L)	WIU

In the Field of 24

Since 2014 (8 seasons), the Missouri Valley Football Conference has averaged 4.625 bids, earning a league-record and FCS-tying record six bids last season. The league had nine title-game appearances in those eight years and six titles (Illinois State and NDSU both reached the finals in 2014.) In those eight seasons, the MVFC has combined for 62 victories; next best is the CAA with 36.

MVFC in the Playoffs (Most Total Bids, All Time)

6 -- 2021
5 -- 2014, 2015, 2017, 2020
4 -- 2003, 2016, 2019
3 -- 2006, 2010, 2012, 2018

16 teams (1986-2009, 2020); 20 (2010-12); 24 (2013-present)

Jacks No. 1 Again This Week

An MVFC team (North Dakota State for the first seven polls and SDSU the last five weeks) has held the No. 1 spot in the FCS every week this year. SDSU became the eighth MVFC program to achieve a No. 1 ranking. Every league member (past and present) has been ranked No. 3 or higher.

Stats Perform Top 25 (Nov. 14)

	School (first-place votes)	Rec.	Pts.	Prev.
1	South Dakota State (47)	10-1	1343	1
2	Sacramento State (7)	10-0	1297	2
3	Montana State	9-1	1237	3
4	North Dakota State	8-2	1190	4
5	UIW	9-1	1047	6
6	Holy Cross	10-0	1030	5
7	Weber State	8-2	996	7
8	William & Mary	9-1	989	8
9	Samford	9-1	947	10
10	Jackson State	10-0	873	9
11	Richmond	8-2	786	12
12	Furman	8-2	783	13
13	Montana	7-3	625	16
14	Elon	8-3	566	18
15	Chattanooga	7-3	550	11
16	North Dakota	7-3	458	19
17	SE Missouri State	8-2	446	20
18	New Hampshire	7-3	426	21
19	Mercer	7-3	402	14
20	Delaware	7-3	313	17
t21	Fordham	8-2	275	23
t21	Idaho	6-4	275	15
23	SE Louisiana	7-3	223	25
24	UC Davis	6-4	217	NR
25	UT Martin	6-4	46	NR

AFCA Coaches Top 25 (Nov. 14)

	School (first-place votes)	Rec.	Pts.	Prev.
1	South Dakota St. (23)	10-1	695	1
2	Sacramento St. (5)	10-0	673	2
3	Montana St.	9-1	642	3
4	North Dakota St.	8-2	602	4
5	Jackson St.	10-0	575	5
6	Holy Cross	10-0	531	6
7	UIW	9-1	527	7
8	William & Mary	9-1	514	8
9	Samford	9-1	496	9
10	Weber St.	8-2	462	10
11	Richmond	8-2	410	13
12	Montana	7-3	375	14
13	Furman	8-2	360	T-16
14	Fordham	8-2	290	18
15	SE Missouri State	8-2	289	19
16	Mercer	7-3	275	11
17	Chattanooga	7-3	262	12
18	Elon	8-3	225	21
19	Delaware	7-3	165	15
20	New Hampshire	7-3	147	25
21	St. Thomas (Minn.)	9-1	114	23
22	Princeton	8-1	86	T-16
23	North Dakota	7-3	75	NR
24	Florida A&M	8-2	67	NR
25	NC Central	8-2	56	NR

Welcome, Murray State

In April 2022, the Missouri Valley Football Conference Presidents Council voted to extend an offer of membership to Murray State, establishing the Racers Football program as the 12th member of the nation's preeminent FCS conference. The Racers will begin competition in the MVFC in 2023.

2022 Missouri Valley Football Conference Weekly Release

Players of the Week

Co-Offense

TB Jaleel McLaughlin, Youngstown State

McLaughlin rushed for 227 yards on 28 carries and a TD at Missouri State. He scored on a 65-yard run against the Bears. During the contest, he became the NCAA's all-time leader in career rushing yards. He now has 8,082 yards to break the record of 8,074 set by Mount Union's Nate Kmic (2005-08). Additionally, McLaughlin set a school record with the fifth 200-yard rushing performance at YSU.

Co-Offense

QB Tommy Schuster, North Dakota

In the 28-19 win over South Dakota, Schuster went 24-for-28 passing for 223 yards and three touchdowns. This season alone, Schuster has a completion percentage of 71.6. His career completions percentage is 67.1 percent, up from 64.8 percent at the beginning of the season. Already this season, Schuster has cemented his place in UND history as the all-time record holder at UND for passing yards in a career (6,487), all-time career completions (601) and UND Division I touchdown passes thrown (40). In the last nine-plus quarters, Schuster has completed 46 of his past 54 attempts (85.2 percent).

Defense

LB James Kaczor, North Dakota State

Kaczor made a game- and career-high 14 tackles and recovered an onside kick with 37 seconds left to clinch North Dakota State's 21-18 road win over Southern Illinois. Kaczor made nine tackles in the first half for a Bison defense that spent more than 20 minutes on the field but held a 7-3 halftime lead. He also had one sack assist.

Special Teams

CB Montrae Braswell, Missouri State

His 56-yard kickoff return in the second quarter vs. Youngstown State set up a Bears go-ahead touchdown and gave the Bears a 7-6 halftime lead. The All-American return specialist averaged 28.5 yards on four kick returns and finished with 115 all-purpose yards.

Newcomer

LB Malachi McNeal, North Dakota

McNeal came up with a blocked punt right before intermission that gave UND momentum and led to a 14-3 lead at the break. North Dakota defeated South Dakota 28-19 with the help of the block before intermission. It is McNeal's second blocked punt this season.

Offensive Lineman

RG Keagen Trost, Indiana State

Trost graded out a team-best 91% and didn't allow a sack or QB hurry against Western Illinois. The ISU starting right tackle shifted inside to right guard for the first time in 2022 due to injury and made his impact felt right away. The Sycamores churned out 163 rushing yards and two touchdowns on the ground with two running backs (Justin Dinka & Tee Hodge) both averaging over 4.4 yards per carry.

Ranked vs. Ranked

When North Dakota State and North Dakota face one another on Nov. 19 it will mark the 217th time two ranked Missouri Valley Football Conference teams have played one another. In the 216 previous such-meetings the home team is 123-92 and the higher-ranked team is 134-82. (*Rankings are based on appearance in either the Stats Perform or AFCA poll; the numbers above also include one neutral site game.*)

Blankity Blank

Indiana State's 21-0 result over Western Illinois on Nov. 12 represented the 48th shutout all-time in league play (since 1985). It marks the first time in league history that Indiana State shut out another MVFC team. The Leathernecks were limited to just nine rushing yards on 21 attempts and held onto the ball for just 21:30, including just 3:02 in the fourth quarter. The Sycamore defense posted its first shutout since holding Quincy (49-0) scoreless in the season opener on August 30, 2018. Also, Indiana State added its first shutout of the Leathernecks in program history dating back to the inaugural game in the series in 1967.

Winning on The Last Play

SDSU's Hunter Dustman's 26-yard field goal with no time remaining against UNI in SDSU's 31-28 win on Nov. 5 marked the 18th league games (since 1985 and not counting overtime games) decided with a score on the game's final play. Only one other time in league history has a team clinched the league title on the last play of a game. Mike Scifres of Western Illinois kicked a 56-yard field goal at UNI on Nov. 18, 2000, to secure the league title for the Leathernecks.

Margin Call

Through Nov. 12, a total of 18 league games (of 39 played) have been decided by one score including two-such contests last Saturday. Two league teams (UND and SDSU) are a perfect 2-0 in games decided by one score. Illinois State (3-2), UNI (2-3), and Youngstown State (3-2) have had five of their seven league games to date decided by a touchdown or less. Meanwhile, Indiana State (0-4) is winless in "close" league tilts.

Team	Margin of Each MVFC Game	Rec.*
ILS	5 (L), 2 (W), 2 (W), 6 (W), 17 (L), 2 (L), 24 (L)	3-2
INS	6 (L), 5 (L), 6 (L), 6 (L), 42 (L), 35 (L), 21 (W)	0-4
MoST	14 (L), 17 (L), 17 (L), 21 (L), 50 (W), 7 (L), 3 (W)	1-1
UND	2 (W), 17 (L), 17 (W), 5 (W), 14 (L), 35 (W), 9 (W)	2-0
NDSU	17 (W), 13 (W), 5 (W), 2 (L), 17 (W), 39 (W), 3 (W)	2-1
UNI	2 (L), 35 (W), 6 (W), 2 (L), 21 (W), 1 (W), 3 (L)	2-3
USD	17 (L), 25 (L), 2 (L), 3 (W), 21 (L), 7 (W), 9 (L)	2-1
SDSU	14 (W), 24 (W), 25 (W), 2 (W), 14 (W), 42 (W), 3 (W), 24 (W)	2-0
SIU	17 (W), 5 (W), 17 (W), 23 (W), 3 (L), 1 (L), 3 (L)	1-3
WIU	35 (L), 24 (L), 23 (L), 1 (L), 50 (L), 39 (L), 21 (L)	0-1
YSU	13 (L), 5 (L), 6 (W), 1 (W), 21 (W), 2 (W), 3 (L)	3-2

*games decided by one score

One-Point MVFC Games

UNI's 37-36 victory in Carbondale against Southern Illinois marked the 44th time in league history in which a conference game was decided by a single point. UNI has been involved in 18 of those contests, winning 12 times. It was SIU's 18th one-point MVFC contest, and the Salukis are 9-9 all-time after Saturday's loss.

SDSU, SacState Earn Top Votes

SDSU received 23 of 28 first-place votes in the AFCA coaches' poll and 47 of 54 first-place votes in the Stats Perform media poll to stay at No. 1 in both polls this week. Sacramento State (Big Sky, 10-0 record) earned the remaining first-place tallies in both polls. North Dakota State (4th in both polls) and UND (16th/23rd) also represent the MVFC this week in the national rankings.

2022 Valley Football Teams in the Top 25

Team	Pre	S5	S12	S19	S26	O3	O10	O17	O24	O31	N7	N14
Illinois State	--	RV	--	--	--	--	RV	RV	RV	RV	--	--
Indiana St.	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Missouri St.	5	5	5	4	7	19	RV	RV	--	--	--	--
UND	--	RV	22	19	RV	22	20	20	23	21	19	16
NDSU	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	4	4	4	4
UNI	21	24	RV	--	--	--	--	--	--	RV	--	--
S. Dakota	RV	RV	RV	RV	--	RV	--	--	--	--	--	--
SDSU	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
S. Illinois	9	17	RV	24	19	17	16	14	20	RV	RV	--
W. Illinois	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Youngstown	--	RV	23	24	RV	RV	--	--	--	--	RV	--

*Rank represents highest position in the two polls (Stats Perform or AFCA FCS Coaches polls)

2022 Missouri Valley Football Conference Weekly Release

No. 1 vs. No. 2

For just the second time in FCS history, the No. 1 and No. 2 ranked teams played one another in a regular-season game when #2 SDSU beat #1 NDSU in the Fargodome on Oct. 15, 2022. There have been just seven 1 vs. 2 matchups in FCS history, plus seven 1 vs. 2 (seed) matchups in FCS playoff history.

FCS No. 1 vs. No. 2 Matchups (7)

12/19/81: No. 2 Idaho State 34, No. 1 Eastern Kentucky 23 (FCS Championship)

10/24/92: No. 1 UNI 27, No. 2 Idaho 26 (Regular Season)

12/21/96: No. 2 Marshall 49, No. 1 Montana 29 (FCS Championship)

12/18/09: No. 2 Villanova 23, No. 1 Montana 21 (FCS Championship)

1/9/16 (2015 Season): No. 2 NDSU 37, No. 1 Jacksonville State 10 (FCS Championship)

1/11/20 (2019 Season): No. 1 NDSU 28, No. 2 James Madison 20 (FCS Championship)

10/15/22: No. 2 South Dakota State 23, No. 1 North Dakota State 21 (Regular Season)

FCS No. 1 vs. No. 2 Seeds in Playoffs (7)

12/19/81: No. 2 Idaho State 34, No. 1 Eastern Kentucky 23 (FCS Championship)

12/21/96: No. 2 Marshall 49, No. 1 Montana 29 (FCS Championship)

12/18/09: No. 2 Villanova 23, No. 1 Montana 21 (FCS Championship)

1/7/12 (2011 Season): No. 2 NDSU 17, No. 1 Sam Houston State 6 (FCS Championship)

1/6/18 (2017 Season): No. 2 NDSU 17, No. 1 James Madison 13 (FCS Championship)

1/11/20 (2019 Season): No. 1 NDSU 28, No. 2 James Madison 20 (FCS Championship)

5/16/21 (2020 Season): No. 2 Sam Houston 23, No. 1 SDSU (FCS Championship)

MVFC-Big Sky Challenge

In an effort to publicize current matchups and promote future non-conference scheduling between two of the premier FCS conferences, the MVFC and the Big Sky Conference announced a Challenge Series between the two leagues before the 2017 season. (Only regular-season contests count in the series standings.)

The conferences tied this year's series with three wins apiece.

Series History (2017-22)

2017 (MVFC Wins Series, 5-3)

Playoffs: Big Sky 1, MVFC 0

2018 (MVFC Wins Series, 5-3)

Playoffs: MVFC 2, Big Sky 1

2019 (MVFC Wins Series, 6-4)

Playoffs: MVFC 1, Big Sky 0

20-21 (COVID - No regular-season games)

Playoffs: MVFC 2, Big Sky 0

2021 (MVFC Wins Series, 4-2)

Playoffs: MVFC 3, Big Sky 2

2022 (Series Tied, 3-3)

Playoffs: TBD



Against the FBS

Including Southern Illinois' 31-24 win at Northwestern in 2022, Missouri Valley Football Conference schools have combined for 48 wins against FBS teams since 1985. A league member has picked up at least one FBS win for 12 of the last 13 seasons (only missing the 2020-21 COVID season in which only one FBS team was played).

Against the FCS

The MVFC has a 15-7 record against FCS schools in 2022. Five of the seven losses have been against ranked FCS teams. Remarkably, a league member has only lost two games to an unranked FCS opponent since September of 2019, going 37-2 against FCS unranked teams during that span, including a perfect 24-0 last year.

Walter Payton Award Watch List

Eight MVFC student-athletes were among the 35 finalists on the preseason Stats Perform Walter Payton Award Watch List. An additional MVFC student-athlete was added to the list on Oct. 20 (*).

QB Nic Baker, Southern Illinois, Jr.
QB Jason Shelley, Missouri State, Sr.
RB Isaiah Davis, South Dakota State, Jr.
RB Hunter Luepke, North Dakota State, Sr.
RB Jaleel McLaughlin, Youngstown State, Sr.
WR Avante Cox, Southern Illinois, Sr.
WR Jaxon Janke, South Dakota State, Sr.
TE Tucker Kraft, South Dakota State, Jr.
*OT Cody Mauch, North Dakota State, Sr.

Buck Buchanan Watch List

Six MVFC student-athletes were among the 35 finalists on the preseason Stats Perform Buck Buchanan Watch List. Two additional defensive players from the MVFC were added to the list on Oct. 20 (*).

DL Spencer Waege, North Dakota State, Sr.
LB Adam Bock, South Dakota State, Jr.
LB Spencer Cuvelier, Northern Iowa, R-Sr.
LB James Kaczor, North Dakota State, Sr.
DB Montrae Braswell, Missouri State, Jr.
DB Michael Tutsie, North Dakota State, Sr.
*LB Zeke Vandenburg, Illinois State, Sr.
*DB Myles Harden, South Dakota, So.

MVFC Ties FCS Record

In 2021, for the first time in Conference history, six Missouri Valley Football teams earned bids into the 24-team FCS playoff field. Only one other conference in NCAA history has received six bids in a single playoff (CAA in 2018). The MVFC had received as many as five bids four times previously (2014, 2015, 2017, and in Spring 2021).

Players of the Week

Sept. 4

Offense: TB Jaleel McLaughlin, Youngstown State
Co-Defense: LB Adam Bock, South Dakota State
Co-Defense: S Ryan Cole, Indiana State
Co-Special Teams: PK Ryan O'Grady, Indiana State
*Co-Special Teams: CB/RS Montrae Braswell, MOST
Newcomer: WR Naseim Brantley, Western Illinois
Lineman: LT Cody Mauch, North Dakota State

Sept. 11

Offense: QB Jason Shelley, Missouri State
Defense: LB Zeke Vandenburg, Illinois State
Special Teams: KR Jalen Carr, Illinois State
Newcomer: RB Jacardia Wright, Missouri State
Lineman: OL Erik Sorensen, UNI

Sept. 18

Co-Offense: QB Jason Shelley, Missouri State
Co-Offense: QB Nic Baker, Southern Illinois
Defense: LB Zeke Vandenburg, Illinois State
Special Teams: P Cade Peterson, North Dakota
Newcomer: QB Zack Annexstad, Illinois State
Lineman: LT Alex Jensen, South Dakota

Sept. 25

Offense: QB Mark Gronowski, South Dakota State
Defense: DB Woo Governor, UNI
Special Teams: K Griffin Croza, North Dakota State
Newcomer: S Dillon Thomas, Missouri State
Lineman: LT Cody Mauch, North Dakota State

Oct. 2

Offense: RB Isaiah Davis, South Dakota State
Defense: LB Zeke Vandenburg, Illinois State
Special Teams: PK Brady Stevens, North Dakota
Newcomer: WR D'Ante' Cox, Southern Illinois
Lineman: LG Mason McCormick, South Dakota State

Oct. 9

Offense -- AP Javon Williams Jr., Southern Illinois
Defense -- S Rylan Cole, Indiana State
Special Teams -- DT Will Mostaert, North Dakota State
Co-Newcomer -- DB Cole Davis, North Dakota
Co-Newcomer -- PK Ian Wagner, Illinois State
Lineman -- C Drew Bones, Illinois State

Oct. 16

Offense -- QB Nic Baker, Southern Illinois
Defense -- LB Stephen Hillis, South Dakota
Special Teams -- K/P Hunter Dustman, S. Dakota State
Newcomer -- QB Cade Chambers, Indiana State
Lineman -- OL Justin Peine, UNI

Oct. 23

Co-Offense -- QB Mark Gronowski, South Dakota State
Co-Offense -- RB Dom Williams, UNI
Defense -- CB Cameron Tisdale, South Dakota
Special Teams -- PK Colt McFadden, Youngstown State
Newcomer -- QB Zack Annexstad, Illinois State
Lineman -- OL Erik Sorensen, UNI

Oct. 30

Offense -- QB Nic Baker, Southern Illinois
Defense -- DE Dylan Wudke, Youngstown State
Special Teams -- PK Jose Pizano, Missouri State
Newcomer -- WR Desmond Hutson, UNI
Lineman -- OL Matthew Vanderslice, UNI

Nov. 7

Offense -- RB TaMerik Williams, North Dakota State
Defense -- LB Alex Howard, Youngstown State
Special Teams -- K/P Hunter Dustman, SDSU
Newcomer -- QB Aidan Bouman, South Dakota
Lineman -- OL Donny Ventrelli, North Dakota

Nov. 14

Co-Offense -- TB Jaleel McLaughlin, Youngstown State
Co-Offense -- QB Tommy Schuster, North Dakota
Defense -- LB James Kaczor, North Dakota State
Special Teams -- CB Montrae Braswell, Missouri State
Newcomer -- LB Malachi McNeal, North Dakota
Offensive Lineman -- RG Keagen Trost, Indiana State

Nov. 21

TBD

*indicates National Player of the Week

2022 Missouri Valley Football Conference Weekly Release

2021 Playoff Success

League schools combined for eight wins in the 2021 tournament, capped by NDSU's championship game victory against Montana State. NDSU extended the MVFC's FCS-record to 11-straight title game appearances for a league school. Notably, the 2021 season marked the 16th title appearance for the MVFC. The league is 11-5 in title games, although Youngstown State (1991, 1992, 1993, 1994) and Southern Illinois (1983) both played in the championship prior to joining the league. All of the league's title-game appearances have occurred since 1997.

Playoff Dominance

The MVFC is 81-38 (.681) since 2010 in the playoffs – which includes 15 intra-conference games (meaning the league is 66-23 against teams from other leagues for a phenomenal .776 winning percentage). Last season, MVFC teams combined to go 25-5 against non-conference FCS teams. All five losses were to ranked FCS teams, all of which made the 2021 playoff field.

Feeling the Pressure



Illinois State currently ranks No. 17 in the country in total defense (and third in the MVFC) and much of that is due to the amount of success the Redbirds have had getting to the quarterback. ISU ranks No. 12 in the country in team sacks per game at 2.90 per contest, and have a total of 29 on the year. A total of 10.5 of those have come from LB Zeke Vandenburg, who is No. 1 in the FCS in sacks per game (1.17) and No. 2 in tackles for loss per game (1.9).

Finishing with a Bang

Senior OLB Zeke Vandenburg was back to his old tricks at No. 1 South Dakota State and put together one of the best performances of his career. After missing the Indiana State game due to injury, Vandenburg has worked his way back into form and was a big problem for the Jackrabbits. He set a career-best with four tackles for loss and tied his career high with three sacks, matching the mark he set earlier this season against Valparaiso. He also recorded the first interception of his stellar career at Illinois State, while finishing with 10 total tackles and a pass breakup against the Jacks. With that performance, he upped his season totals to a MVFC leading 10.5 sacks and 17.0 TFLs.

Special Effort

For the past several weeks, one of the Redbird weekly goals has been to either score or set up a score on special teams. Earlier in the season, ISU came away with a win thanks to a 98 yard kickoff return for a touchdown by Jalen Carr and they did it again against No. 1 South Dakota State. Late in the first quarter, as the Jackrabbits were punting deep from their own side of the field Dillon Gearhart broke free and blocked the punt which was recovered in the endzone by Sy Dabney for the first score of the game.

Stopping the Run



Indiana State's defense was at it again on Saturday afternoon as the Sycamores limited Western Illinois to just nine rushing yards in ISU's 21-0 win. It marked the second time in 2022 that ISU had held an opponent to single digit rushing yards after limiting North Alabama to eight rushing yards in the season opener. Both marks sit 1-2 in ISU's defensive rankings in the Curt Mallory era in fewest rushing yards allowed. ISU posted nine tackles-for-loss and four sacks in the win over the Leathernecks.

Hendrix Final Act

Dante Hendrix heads into Saturday's season finale against Missouri State sitting 10 career catches behind Sam Logan's ISU career mark of 196 set back from 2003-06. The redshirt senior wide receiver has 186 catches through this past Saturday against Western Illinois with 46 coming so far in the 2022 season. The Florence, Ky., native has already surpassed Logan as ISU's all-time receiving leader and has caught at least one pass in a school-record 36 consecutive games. He's caught at least seven passes in two games so far in 2022.

Pizano Leads FCS



All-American kicker Jose Pizano (Jr., Lehi, Utah) has converted a school-record 66 consecutive extra points. He has also converted 7 field goals in a row and made 25 of his last 28 attempts. Pizano is the FCS active career leader in field goal accuracy (.846), making 44-of-52 attempts in his career; he ranks 24th nationally in FG percentage (.786) and 36th in FG per game (1.10) this year.

Sack Master

DE Kevin Ellis (Sr., Forth Worth, Texas) currently has 19.5 career sacks (51g) and is on the verge of becoming the 10th MSU player to reach 20 career sacks (and first since

DeLaun Fowler in 1995). Ellis' 36.0 career tackles for loss places him 4th all-time in Bears history.

Milestone Updates

Including his two seasons at Alabama State, Jahod Booker (Sr., Montgomery, Ala.) needs 75 receiving yards for 1,000 career (24g) ... Montrae Braswell (Jr., Avon Park, Fla.) needs 2 passes defended for 40 career ... Kevon Latulas (Sr., Port Arthur, Texas) needs 71 rushing yards for 1,000 career (24g) ... Jason Shelley (Sr., Frisco, Texas) needs 166 passing yards from 6,000 at Missouri State (22g).

UND-NDSU Rivalry



The UND-NDSU rivalry dates back to 1894, tying it for the eighth-oldest college football rivalry among the likes of Oregon-Oregon State's "Civil War" and Texas-Texas A&M. UND's last win in Fargo was a 12-6 win in 2002. If UND wins in Fargo, they will be 4-2 in away games this season, giving it its most wins on the road since going 4-2 in 2016.

Winning the Close Ones

UND has won six of the last seven one-score games. And notably, UND has either had the lead or a chance to take the lead in the fourth quarter in 19 of its last 21 games. North Dakota has been involved in four games this season decided by a touchdown or less and are 4-0 in those games.

Tommy Efficiency

Tommy Schuster's completion percentage of 71.6 this year leads the conference and is No. 4 nationally. He is second in the conference in completions per game (21.7), a mark which is also No. 19 in the country. On the season, Schuster is 217-for-303 for 2,393 yards and 16 touchdowns while allowing five interceptions.

Harvest Bowl



This is the 47th Harvest Bowl game dating back to 1974. NDSU has a 42-2-2 record in the annual game and has won 11 straight including a 52-24 rout of South Dakota in the regular-season finale last year. This is the first Harvest Bowl appearance for North Dakota, which was the scheduled opponent for the fall 2020 game that was canceled.

Harvest Helmets Return

NDSU will wear its green "Harvest Helmet" and gold jerseys this week for the Harvest Bowl game. NDSU is 36-0 in gold jerseys since their first appearance in the 2011 season opener, 24-0 in the green helmets since their November 2015 debut, and 17-0 in the gold jersey/green helmet combo.

Third Down Success

NDSU converted 5 of 6 third down opportunities (excluding a kneel down) in the second half of the 21-18 win at Southern Illinois. Cam Miller connected with Joe Stofel (9 yards) and Zach Mathis (15 yards) to extend a 10-play scoring drive that put NDSU ahead 14-10, and NDSU's defense picked up its only three-and-out of the day before the Bison went 75 yards in 13 plays with a third-and-12 pass to Jake Lippe (13 yards) the only passing attempt of the drive that put NDSU ahead 21-10 with 4:40 to play.

Cook Sets UNI Mark

 PK Matthew Cook set a new UNI record for consecutive made PAT kicks (115), passing Tyler Sievertsen (2010-13) who made 114 in a row. A perfect 115-for-115 in his career, Cook ranks third in program history in career PATs. Cook is tied with fellow Panther Billy Hallgren (2007-10) for the most field goals made in UNI and MVFC history (64). Cook also leads the MVFC making a league-best 78.6% of his field goal attempts. The league record for consecutive PATs is 129, held by WIU's Taylor Rowan (2005-08).


Offense Continues to Roll

UNI continues to lead the MVFC in passing offense with 279.3 yards per game, as well as in total offense (430.1 YPG). QB Theo Day leads the league in passing touchdowns (21), passing yards (2,741) and passing yards per game (274.1). Day also ranks 10th in the nation in total passing yards, and 5th in yards per pass attempt (9.35).

Closing Strong

UNI's Nov. 12 bye was the latest during head coach Mark Farley's tenure (since 2001). The Panthers are 17-4 in their final game of the regular season under Farley.

Senior Day


 South Dakota hosts UNI for Senior Day Saturday inside the DakotaDome and what a diverse and unique group of seniors it is. Eight of the 12 seniors are in their sixth season of college football. Josh Manchigiah, the SDSU

transfer, played his seventh season. Half have been with the Coyotes since 2017. Four are finishing their first season at USD. Alex Jensen, an all-Valley left tackle, is set to play in his 49th game as a Coyote.

Top Tacklers

It is a three-horse race in the competition for the Valley's leading tackler and all three players in the running will compete inside the DakotaDome Saturday. South Dakota's Stephen Hillis enters with 101 tackles, which are five more than teammate Brock Mogensen, who stands with 96. Spencer Cuvelier has 90 stops to lead UNI. No other Valley player has more than 83.

Defense Never Rests

 South Dakota State did not allow an offensive TD and limited Illinois State to 100 yards of total offense. The yardage total was the lowest by an SDSU opponent since Indiana State managed only 90 yards in a game played Sept. 19, 2009.


Record Winning Streak

SDSU will take a school-record 10-game winning streak into the FCS playoffs. The Jackrabbits previously won nine games in a row during the 1928 season and put together a combined nine-game winning streak between the 1950 (last three games) and 1951 (first six games) seasons. The Jackrabbits reached the 10-win mark for the first time in regular season action. SDSU previously reached 10 wins in 2017 (11 wins), 2018 (10 wins) and 2021 (11 wins), but needed multiple wins in postseason play to accomplish the feat.

Going for Two

Through its first nine games this season, SDSU did not attempt a two-point conversion. However, the Jackrabbits attempted two-point tries in each of their last two regular season games and were successful both times. Isaiah Davis scored on a pass from Mark Gronowski in the Nov. 5 road win at UNI, while Gronowski scored on a bootleg a week later against Illinois State. Both attempts came in the third quarter of their respective games.

Dawg Bites

 SIU's last four losses have come by a total of 10 points. No team in school history has lost four games in a season by 10 or fewer points. The Salukis are 8-6 in their last 14 road games. And SIU has won its last six games against in-state schools (Northwestern, Illinois State twice, Western Illinois three times).

Baker Leads SIU Offense

QB Nic Baker broke his own single-game passing yards record versus UNI (485 yards) on Oct. 29. He set the school completion percentage record vs. Western Illinois (25-of-28, .893). Baker is 16-10 as SIU's starting QB and he had a streak of 161-straight attempts without throwing an INT during a five-game stretch that ended at South Dakota. Baker has passed Nick Hill into second in career TD passes (47) at SIU. He had a career-high 13 carries for 44 rushing yards versus NDSU.


Golden Graham

 Chase Graham set a new season-high last week, recording 11 tackles in Western Illinois' loss to Indiana State. It was the second time this season Graham recorded double-digit tackles in a game.

Keeping It Clean

Western Illinois ranks third in FCS in fewest penalty yards (279) and penalty yards per game (31) this year. The Leathernecks are eighth in FCS with fewest penalties committed (37) and penalties per game (4.11)

Top of the Mountain

 TB Jaleel McLaughlin took over the top spot on the NCAA career rushing chart following his 227-yard performance at Missouri State. He now has 8,082 yards on 1,229 carries (6.6 per rush) and 77 TDs in 55 games. He is the active career NCAA leader in attempts, touchdowns and yards.

NCAA Career Rushing Yards Leaders

1. Jaleel McLaughlin (YSU/ND Ohio | 2018-22) - 8,082
2. Nate Kmic (Mount Union | 2005-08) - 8,074

McFadden Booming Kicks

PK Colt McFadden has been dialed in on field goals since the start of league play. He is 15-of-17 in MVFC games. Against South Dakota, he made a career-long 52-yarder. It was the first field goal of more than 50 yards by the Penguins since September 2003. On two occasions he has made three field goals in a game (UND and MoState).

Oliver a Top Target

WR Bryce Oliver has been a big touchdown producer for the Guins during his Youngstown State career. His 16 TDs are just two shy of tying the most touchdown catches by in a Penguin during the FCS era. In 19 games played at YSU, Oliver has 71 receptions for 942 yards and 16 touchdowns. He is one of just six players in school history with 16 touchdown receptions in a career.