VSiN

VOLS

SEC

2023 CFB
BETTING GUIDE

ESPN
CHATTANOOGA
((95.3ᴄᴍ))

photos by USA Today Sports Images

STEVE MAKINEN'S
POWER RATINGS

TEAM	POWER RATING	TEAM	POWER RATING	TEAM	POWER RATING
GEORGIA	70.5	PITTSBURGH	47.5	ARMY	36.0
OHIO ST	69.0	SYRACUSE	47.0	EAST CAROLINA	36.0
ALABAMA	67.5	BOISE ST	46.0	SOUTHERN MISS	36.0
MICHIGAN	67.0	BYU	46.0	UAB	35.0
LSU	62.5	KANSAS	46.0	COLORADO	34.5
TEXAS	62.5	MICHIGAN ST	46.0	MIAMI OHIO	34.5
USC	62.0	NEBRASKA	46.0	SAN JOSE ST	34.5
PENN ST	61.5	PURDUE	46.0	GEORGIA ST	34.0
CLEMSON	59.5	WASHINGTON ST	46.0	STANFORD	34.0
FLORIDA ST	59.5	CALIFORNIA	45.5	TEMPLE	33.5
OREGON	59.5	WAKE FOREST	45.5	GA SOUTHERN	33.0
UTAH	59.0	SMU	45.0	RICE	33.0
NOTRE DAME	58.5	WEST VIRGINIA	45.0	C MICHIGAN	32.5
WASHINGTON	58.0	MEMPHIS	44.5	JACKSONVILLE ST	32.5
OKLAHOMA	57.5	TROY	44.5	MIDDLE TENN ST	32.5
TENNESSEE	56.5	TX-SAN ANTONIO	44.5	CONNECTICUT	32.0
OLE MISS	56.0	S ALABAMA	44.0	E MICHIGAN	32.0
TEXAS A&M	56.0	CINCINNATI	43.5	BUFFALO	31.5
TEXAS TECH	54.0	HOUSTON	43.5	N ILLINOIS	31.5
WISCONSIN	54.0	ARIZONA	43.0	SOUTH FLORIDA	31.5
NORTH CAROLINA	53.5	ARIZONA ST	42.5	TULSA	31.5
OREGON ST	53.5	FRESNO ST	42.5	UNLV	31.5
KANSAS ST	53.0	TOLEDO	42.0	BALL ST	30.5
TCU	53.0	AIR FORCE	41.5	COLORADO ST	30.0
KENTUCKY	52.5	MARSHALL	40.5	LOUISIANA TECH	30.0
ARKANSAS	52.0	W KENTUCKY	40.5	UTAH ST	30.0
AUBURN	52.0	FLA ATLANTIC	39.5	UTEP	30.0
BAYLOR	52.0	JAMES MADISON	39.5	ARKANSAS ST	28.0
FLORIDA	52.0	VANDERBILT	39.5	BOWLING GREEN	28.0
IOWA	51.5	VIRGINIA TECH	39.5	OLD DOMINION	27.5
UCLA	51.5	GEORGIA TECH	39.0	TEXAS ST UNIV	27.5
MINNESOTA	50.5	INDIANA	39.0	NEVADA	26.5
MISSISSIPPI ST	50.5	SAN DIEGO ST	39.0	NEW MEXICO ST	26.0
SOUTH CAROLINA	50.5	VIRGINIA	39.0	W MICHIGAN	26.0
ILLINOIS	50.0	BOSTON COLLEGE	38.5	CHARLOTTE	25.0
LOUISVILLE	50.0	LA LAFAYETTE	38.5	LA MONROE	24.5
MARYLAND	50.0	NORTHWESTERN	38.5	AKRON	24.0
UCF	50.0	RUTGERS	38.5	HAWAII	23.0
MIAMI FL	49.5	WYOMING	38.0	SAM HOUSTON ST	23.0
MISSOURI	49.5	APPALACHIAN ST	37.5	FLA INTERNATIONAL	21.5
TULANE	49.0	COASTAL CAROLINA	37.5	NEW MEXICO	21.0
IOWA ST	48.5	NAVY	37.0	KENT ST	20.5
NC STATE	48.5	LIBERTY	36.5	MASSACHUSETTS	17.5
DUKE	47.5	NORTH TEXAS	36.5		
OKLAHOMA ST	47.5	OHIO U	36.5		

COLLEGE FOOTBALL PRESEASON TOP 25

by Matt Youmans

#1
GEORGIA

Kirby Smart

At the time, Nick Saban was probably unaware he was creating a monster. Saban's singular focus on winning and the process of maintaining dominance made him the king of college football. He has won seven national championships, including six as Alabama coach.

The monster Saban helped create was Kirby Smart, who served as his defensive coordinator from 2008 to 2015, when the Crimson Tide won four titles. Smart got his head-coaching start at Georgia in 2016, and look who's on top now.

The Bulldogs have won 29 of 30 games the past two years and are eyeing a national championship three-peat, a feat not even accomplished by Saban. Smart has become the new dominant force of the Southeastern Conference, and Georgia has earned the right to be the starting point for VSiN's college football power rankings in 2023.

"I still have Georgia No. 1, so I'm definitely buying in," South Point sports book director Chris Andrews said. "It seems like they are reloading every year, and I hate to use that expression, but it's really true."

After winning the 2021 title, the Bulldogs had a record 15 players selected in the 2022 NFL Draft. Smart reloaded and went 15-0 to record back-to-back championships. Georgia lost 10 players in this year's draft, including two-year starting quarterback Stetson Bennett. It's remarkable a program could lose 25 players to the draft in two years and remain preseason No. 1.

The Bulldogs' projected starting quarterback is sophomore Carson Beck, who attempted only 35 passes last year, and some might see a new QB as a sign of weakness. But Alabama and Ohio State also must replace star quarterbacks — Bryce Young and CJ Stroud, respectively — so no other team is an obvious pick to knock Georgia from the top spot.

"I'm just not sure who I would power-rate over Georgia," Fox Sports analyst Chris "The Bear" Fallica said. "Ohio State lost a ton, including on the offensive line, which most are not talking about. I guess Michigan would be the answer, but are we buying into that team which gave up 51 points to TCU in the playoff? It almost feels like a by-default situation. I do know someone who sees Georgia every day and said this is the best two-deep Smart has had. Maybe not the best from an

elite NFL draft-pick standpoint right now, but they are stacked. It's on the QB."

From a quarterback standpoint, USC owns the best starting point in reigning Heisman Trophy winner Caleb Williams. The Trojans were a win away from the four-team playoff last season before falling to Utah in the Pac-12 title game, and coach Lincoln Riley has more horses in his second season.

Paul Stone, a college football handicapper from Texas, said LSU and USC are teams with second-year coaches that could make the playoff if any other top teams stumble. Brian Kelly won 10 games in his first year with the Tigers and returns quarterback Jayden Daniels.

"I believe the landscape in college football is ripe for a team outside the usual suspects to make the playoff," Stone said. "Georgia, Ohio State and Alabama all have first-time starting quarterbacks, so the door's at least slightly open."

Stone offered his analysis of several teams and provided his power rankings, which I combined with my own rankings to form the VSiN preseason Top 25.

1. GEORGIA

I have suspicions about the superiority of this team, but there's no proof of significant decline, and a soft schedule will help the Bulldogs avoid upsets while their new quarterback matures. Georgia's only true road tests will be at Auburn (Sept. 30) and Tennessee (Nov. 18), so Kirby Smart should be secure at the top until reaching the SEC title game.

2. OHIO STATE

The schedule is stacked against the Buckeyes, who play Notre Dame, Wisconsin and Michigan on the road, so they face a few high hurdles on the way to the playoff.

Stone: "Ohio State has some uncertainty at quarterback entering the season, but if Kyle McCord or Devin Brown can just be good — they don't have to be great — the Buckeyes will once again field one of the nation's premier offenses. Ohio State is absolutely loaded at both receiver and running back and will be better defensively."

Kyle McCord

Quinn Ewers

3. USC
Caleb Williams passed for 4,537 yards and 42 touchdowns with only five interceptions while rushing for 10 touchdowns last season. He's the college version of Patrick Mahomes and the likely No. 1 pick of the draft. A defense that allowed 29.2 points per game returns nine starters and adds several transfers, including tackle Bear Alexander (Georgia) and linebacker Mason Cobb (Oklahoma State). I rank the Trojans No. 2, and Stone ranks them No. 6. "USC's Achilles' heel last year was clearly its defense," Stone said, "but the Trojans will be significantly improved on that side of the ball through transfer additions."

4. MICHIGAN
Wolverines coach Jim Harbaugh has won back-to-back Big Ten titles and brings back his most productive offensive players — quarterback J.J. McCarthy and running backs Blake Corum and Donovan Edwards. The defense is a minor concern after getting exposed in last season's final two games against Purdue and TCU.

5. LSU
Jayden Daniels is the top returning quarterback in the SEC, and linebacker Harold Perkins could be the conference's top defensive player. Brian Kelly's first year in Baton Rouge produced a victory over Alabama and a 20-point loss to Georgia in the SEC title game.

6. ALABAMA
It's tough to rank the Tide outside the top five, but Nick Saban has only 10 starters returning and must replace quarterback Bryce Young and both coordinators. Young worked some miracles to get Alabama to 11-2. Ty Simpson, Jalen Milroe and Notre Dame transfer Tyler Buchner are battling for the starting quarterback job.

7. CLEMSON
Sophomore quarterback Cade Klubnik has some questions to answer after a poor finish to last season, but he's a dual threat with a lot of talent. The Tigers also return running back Will Shipley, an experienced offensive line and eight defensive starters.

8. PENN STATE
The Nittany Lions won 11 games, losing only to Michigan and Ohio State, and return eight starters on both sides of the ball. Nicholas Singleton and Kaytron Allen form an elite backfield tandem, and new quarterback Drew Allar could be an upgrade at the position.

9. TEXAS
The Big 12 preseason favorite, Texas has not won the league since 2009. The Longhorns have stayed Under their win total in 10 of the past 11 years, so underachieving is a long trend. Third-year sophomore Quinn Ewers leads an offense that should be explosive. The schedule is far from easy, and coach Steve Sarkisian is one game over .500 after two seasons in Austin. According to Stone, "Texas clearly has the best roster in the Big 12, and there are no glaring weaknesses. If Ewers can take the next step and fulfill his immense promise, the Longhorns could be one of college football's biggest stories."

10. WASHINGTON
Kalen DeBoer took an offense that averaged 21.5 points the previous year and improved it to 39.7 points per game in his debut as coach. Michael Penix ranked second in the nation with 4,641 passing yards last season, and Jalen McMillan and Rome Odunze are elite receivers. The Huskies will be a legit threat to win the Pac-12, so circle their Nov. 4 game at USC.

11. FLORIDA STATE
The development of quarterback Jordan Travis, who passed for 24 touchdowns and rushed for seven, was the key to coach Mike Norvell's turnaround to 10-3 in his third season in Tallahassee. The Seminoles, who return 17 starters, will get tested against LSU and Clemson in September.

12. NOTRE DAME
Sam Hartman, a transfer from Wake Forest, will give the Irish the quarterback play they need to complement coach Marcus Freeman's veteran defense. Ohio State and USC visit South Bend.

13. WISCONSIN
Expect a big bounce-back season for the Badgers, who return 18 starters and get a quarterback upgrade from SMU transfer Tanner Mordecai. Braelon Allen and Chez Mellusi will lead a powerful running attack. New coach Luke Fickell will design one of the nation's top defenses.

14. OREGON
Ducks coach Dan Lanning, a former Georgia defensive coordinator, enters his second year with eight starters back on both sides of the ball. Senior quarterback Bo Nix, a burnout at Auburn, was rejuvenated last season in a new conference and accounted for 43 total touchdowns.

15. TENNESSEE
The Volunteers must replace star quarterback Hendon Hooker, who beat LSU and Alabama, and former Michigan transfer Joe Milton has been a talented enigma in his career. Still, most signs are encouraging for coach Josh Heupel after an 11-win season and a dominant 31-14 victory over Clemson in the Orange Bowl.

16. UTAH
Kyle Whittingham is a classic tough-guy coach who could have the toughest offensive and defensive lines in the Pac-12. The Utes finished 10-4 in each of the past two seasons and won the conference championship game in a blowout each year. Senior quarterback Cameron Rising suffered a torn ACL in the Rose Bowl loss to Penn State, but he's reportedly ahead of schedule in rehab and expects to be ready for the Aug. 31 opener against Florida.

17. TEXAS A&M
The Aggies (5-7) were a jumbo disappointment for coach Jimbo Fisher last year, but he's got 20 starters returning and gambled on hiring Bobby Petrino as offensive coordinator.

18. KANSAS STATE
Chris Klieman, the Big 12's best coach, knocked off TCU in the conference title game, and he's got eight starters back on offense. Running back Deuce Vaughn will be missed, but veteran quarterback Will Howard is a winner.

19. OREGON STATE
Jonathan Smith's work in Corvallis has been extraordinary, coaching the Beavers from 2-10 in his first year to 10-3 in his fifth year. The new quarterback is Clemson transfer DJ Uiagalelei, who was inconsistent while going 22-6 as the starter. Oregon State went 12-1 at home the past two years and hosts UCLA, Utah and Washington.

20. MISSISSIPPI
Despite his efforts to escape Oxford and get to Auburn, coach Lane Kiffin is back with nine starters on offense and seven on defense. He has three quarterbacks — Jaxson Dart, Oklahoma State transfer Spencer Sanders and freshman Walker Howard — competing for the top job. The schedule will take Kiffin to Alabama, Auburn and Georgia.

21. OKLAHOMA
Brent Venables was a bust in his first year as a head coach. The Sooners finished 6-7 for their first losing record since 1998. Oklahoma, which suffered five losses by seven points or fewer, faces a weaker schedule, and quarterback Dillon Gabriel returns.

22. IOWA
Michigan transfer Cade McNamara will be the new quarterback for the Hawkeyes, who were in desperate need of a competent passer. The defense will be typically strong. Iowa will challenge Wisconsin atop the Big Ten West.

23. TEXAS TECH
Eleven starters return on offense, including quarterback Tyler Shough, and six on defense for underrated coach Joey McGuire. Don't be too surprised if the Red Raiders are playing for a Big 12 title on November 24 at Texas.

24. NORTH CAROLINA
Drake Maye passed for 4,321 yards and 38 touchdowns last season. He also ran for 698 yards and seven scores. He's the likely No. 2 draft pick behind USC's Williams. The Tar Heels bring back 17 starters for coach Mack Brown.

25. TCU
A fall from the Top 25 would not be surprising for the Horned Frogs, who were crushed 65-7 by Georgia in the national title game and waved goodbye to quarterback Max Duggan. TCU coach Sonny Dykes gets the benefit of the doubt with this ranking.

DJ Uiagalelei

BUILDING A POWER RATING MODEL

by Adam Burke

For the last several seasons, I have put together college football power ratings. In concert with my home-field advantage values, I use these team ratings to create spreads for every game. That allows me to look at season win total markets, but also to have an idea of where I think a line should be in a given game throughout the season.

Power ratings can be as basic or detailed as you want them to be, depending on how much time and effort you want to dedicate to the process. My process is fairly basic, but my goal is to get ahead of some line moves on Sunday and Monday by taking positions based on my ratings for the teams. If I have a line -7 and the market has -4, I anticipate that line to move towards my line as the week goes along, which gives me some incentive to grab -4.

The measure of a good set of power ratings is to have more lines move toward your numbers than move against them. Sometimes your line will be wrong. Sometimes an injury slips through the cracks. Sometimes bettors with a lot of market influence like the other side, and the line will move in the other direction. Sometimes those bettors will be wrong. Sometimes your power ratings will be wrong.

Starting with a good foundation is important because it can be a cat-and-mouse game throughout the season. Let's start with the foundation and then move into how to adjust and adapt as the season goes along.

I do what I consider to be "Positional Power Ratings". I use seven positions to determine my rating for a team on a scale of basically 40-100. The Georgias and Alabamas of the world will be closer to 100. The FIUs and New Mexicos of the world will be closer to 40. Why a 40-100 scale? I break my position groups down like this: QB, OL, DL, and coaching/special teams are graded up to 15 (60 total points). RB, WR, LB, and DB are graded up to 10 (40 total points). Therefore, a perfect score would be 100.

The position units for the top teams will be closer to the highest possible number, while the best players in Group of Five schools might lead to a rating 2-3 points away from the highest possible number. Mid-tier teams in Power Five conferences would have position groups graded similarly to the best of the best in the Group of Five.

The goal is to look at the rosters, the returning production, and the offensive and defensive schemes to develop these values. On an Air Raid team, the running backs won't be as productive and probably won't be a position of emphasis in recruiting. But a QB and a WR group are going to be weighted differently.

Are these an exact science and 100% accurate? Absolutely not. But, they give me a starting point for the season and something to go off as the season goes along so that I'm not blindly saying things like "this line looks too low" or "that line is too high" without having it based on anything other than opinion or conjecture.

So, let's take the two-time reigning National Champion Georgia Bulldogs, the highest-rated team for me going into the season.

OFFENSE

WIDE RECEIVER: 9.5/10
Brock Bowers might be the best tight end in football (TE are included here), and Ladd McConkey, when healthy, has been a reliable option. There are a bunch of highly-touted recruits here, plus Oscar Delp, who was the No. 1 TE in the class of 2022.
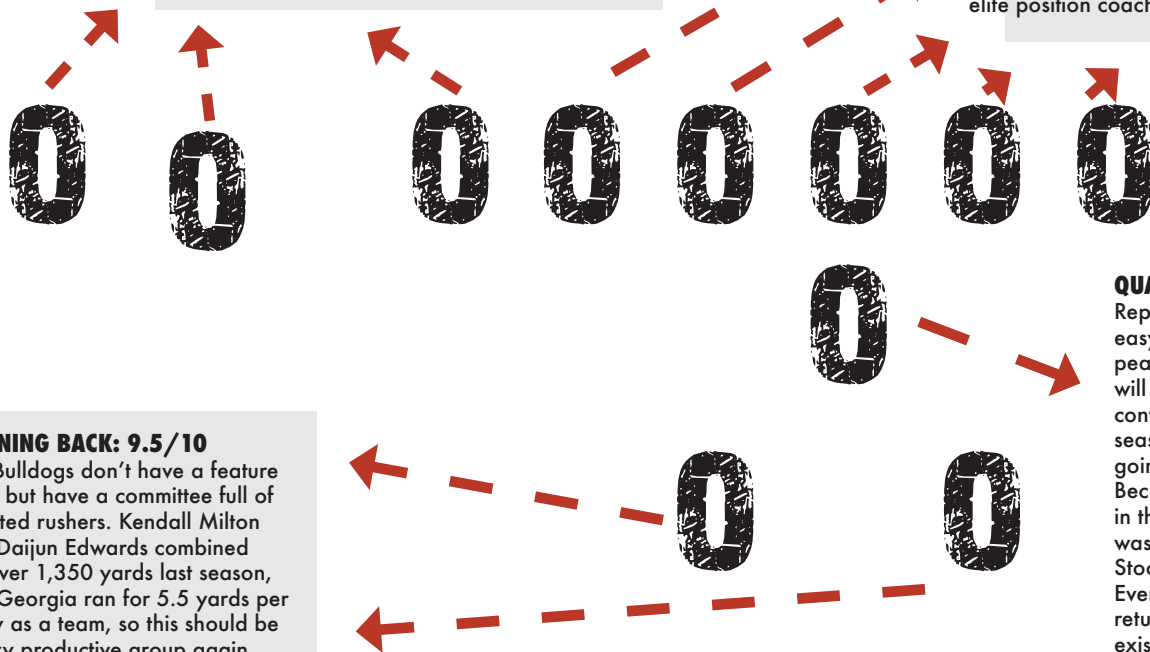
OFFENSIVE LINE: 15/15
Georgia allowed nine total sacks last season, with those 5.5 yards per carry and over seven yards per play. It all starts with the guys up front. Three starters are back, with new starters at the tackle position, but again, these are four and five-star recruits. Remember, a lot of elite programs also have a lot of elite position coaches and awesome recruiters.

QUARTERBACK: 13.5/15
Replacing Stetson Bennett will not be easy as Georgia looks for a three-peat. However, a program like this will recruit at a very high level. The contenders for the job, including last season's backup Carson Beck, are going to be four and five-star guys. Beck, for instance, was a four-star kid in the class of 2020. Brock Vandagriff was a four-star in 2021, while Gunner Stockton was a four-star in 2022. Even though experience is low and returning production is basically non-existent, there's a ton of talent here, and one of them should emerge.

RUNNING BACK: 9.5/10
The Bulldogs don't have a feature back but have a committee full of talented rushers. Kendall Milton and Daijun Edwards combined for over 1,350 yards last season, and Georgia ran for 5.5 yards per carry as a team, so this should be a very productive group again.
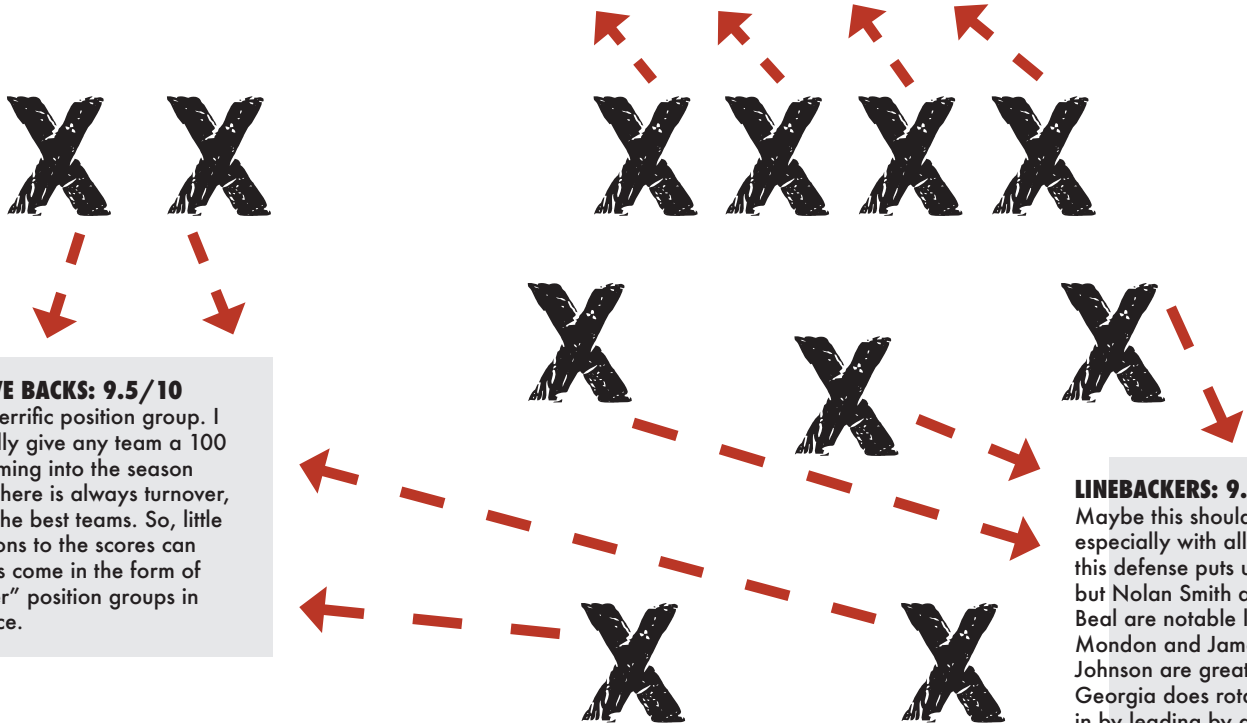
DEFENSE

DEFENSIVE LINE: 15/15
If there's anything we know about the Georgia defense, it will reload annually. The Bulldogs have allowed under 80 rushing yards per game in each of the last four seasons. They've allowed under five yards per play in each of the last six—just elite.

DEFENSIVE BACKS: 9.5/10
Another terrific position group. I don't really give any team a 100 grade coming into the season because there is always turnover, even for the best teams. So, little moderations to the scores can oftentimes come in the form of the "lesser" position groups in importance.

LINEBACKERS: 9.5/10
Maybe this should be a 10/10, especially with all the special stats this defense puts up year-to-year, but Nolan Smith and Robert Beal are notable losses. Smael Mondon and Jamon Dumas-Johnson are great players, but Georgia does rotate a lot of guys in by leading by a ton more often than not.

TOTAL 96.5/100

COACHING/SPECIAL TEAMS: 15/15
Georgia is 29-1 over the last two seasons. There are other talented teams around the country, but few maximize their potential like the Bulldogs. Kirby Smart is one of the nation's elites, and his coordinators and position coaches are quite good as well. This is also a perennial Top 25 team in special teams, which makes sense when the guys on those units are also four and five-star kids just waiting for the chance to be an every-down player.

Some nitpicking here and there, but this is the No. 1 team in the country for me. If Beck, Vandagriff, or Stockton can take the bull by the horns and make the offense hum, I'll quickly adjust them up. We won't find out for a little while because of the schedule, but until proven otherwise, this is the nation's best team.

By comparison, UTSA is my top Group of Five team at 72.5, which is equal to UCF and right around teams like Tulane and Louisville.

The difference between teams is the line on a neutral field, and then I apply my home-field advantage values to make the spread.

The science of maintaining a good set of Power Ratings throughout the season is where the difficult part comes in. My process of updating them has three steps, and teams will move up or down based on three criteria - the closing spread, the box score, and injuries. That is something I'll do throughout the season on the VSiN website.

For now, focus on putting together a good set of initial ratings, and you can even cross-check and confirm with the lines that are already out there to make sure you have a good foundation.

TENNESSEE
VOLUNTEERS

HEAD COACH: JOSH HEUPEL (3RD)
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: JOEY HALZLE
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: TIM BANKS

BY ZACHARY COHEN

Josh Heupel has done a great job with this Tennessee Volunteers program, as he's 18-8 since joining the team in 2021. Last year, Tennessee earned double-digit victories and concluded its season with a 31-14 win over Clemson in the Orange Bowl. It was a statement win for a program that suddenly looks like it has championship potential. The problem is that the Volunteers lost a lot of key players from last year's squad, including star quarterback Hendon Hooker. But Tennessee hopes that former Michigan quarterback Joe Milton can finally live up to his immense potential. If he can, the Vols could be extremely dangerous in 2023, as they return seven starters on defense.

OFFENSE

Hooker was so good for the Vols in 2022 that he was picked in the third round of the 2023 NFL Draft, despite being a 25-year-old coming off a torn ACL. He was a huge part of why the Volunteers led the nation in scoring at 46.1 points per game. With that said, Milton has some huge shoes to fill. Milton does have a massive arm and should be very good in the running game with his combination of mobility and size. But his accuracy will be tested in this offense, and any slip in the passing game will make it hard for this Volunteers team to win at least 10 games this year. The good news for Milton is that the blocking up front should be great, and Tennessee does have weapons all over the field. Milton also has the luxury of working with one of the brightest offensive minds in the nation.

DEFENSE

The Vols gave up only 23.5 points per game last season, and this defense brings back seven starters from that group. The key one might be linebacker Aaron Beasley, who was the team's leader in tackles last season. He's the leader of a linebacking corps that should be solid in 2023. Tennessee also has good depth along the defensive line and at defensive back. Overall, this unit should be solid at every level, and it wouldn't be surprising if they improve a bit upon last year's impressive numbers.

OUTLOOK

You'll have to lay a lot of juice to play the Under on Tennessee's win total, but you might have to suck it up if you're desperate to take something on the Vols before the year. When looking at this schedule, it's just very hard to see a path to 10 wins. You'd have to have a ton of faith in Milton to play this Over, and we really haven't seen much that suggests he's ready to play to the level Hooker did in 2022 — especially with wide receiver Jalin Hyatt now in the NFL.

SEASON WIN TOTAL PLAY
UNDER 9.5

STEVE MAKINEN'S
POWER RATING 56.5

NATIONAL RANK: #16 OF 133

CONFERENCE RANK: #4 OF 14

2023 SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	EST. LINE	OPP PR
9/2	VIRGINIA	-20.5	39
9/9	AUSTIN PEAY	-31	28
9/16	at Florida	-1.5	52
9/23	TX-SAN ANTONIO	-14.5	44.5
9/30	SOUTH CAROLINA	-9	50.5
10/14	TEXAS A&M	-3.5	56
10/21	at Alabama	14	67.5
10/28	at Kentucky	-1	52.5
11/4	CONNECTICUT	-28	32
11/11	at Missouri	-4.5	49.5
11/18	GEORGIA	11.5	70.5
11/25	VANDERBILT	-20	39.5

SCHEDULE STRENGTH 47.50
#19 TOUGHEST OF 133

FIELD RATINGS 2.9 / 0.2
(HOME/ROAD)

2023 ODDS

14-1 ODDS TO WIN SEC

30-1 ODDS TO WIN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

RETURNING STARTERS 12
OFFENSE: 5
DEFENSE: 7

2022 STATS AND RANKS

	OFFENSE STAT/RANK		DEFENSE STAT/RANK	
Points Per Game	44.5	1	22.7	30
Yards Per Point	11.5	4	17.9	9
Plays Per Game	73.9	34		
Time of Possession	24:52	130		
3rd Down Conv. %	37.0%	83	35.0%	29
Total Yards Per Game	511.3	1	406.5	84
Yards Per Play	6.9	4	5.2	42
Rush Attempts Per Game	39.8	31		
Rush Yards Per Game	199.3	20	119.2	22
Yards Per Rush Attempt	5	28	3.3	12
Pass Attempts Per Game	32.1	62		
Completion %	68.6%	5	63.2%	99
Passing Yards Per Game	312	9	287.3	128
Yards Per Pass Attempt	9.7	2	7.1	61
Turnovers	0.8	10	1.7	31

2022 RESULTS

SU: 11-2, ATS: 10-3, O/U: 7-6

DATE	OPPONENT	SCORE	SU	ATS
9/1	BALL ST (-36.5)	59-10	W	W
9/10	at Pittsburgh (-6)	34-27	W	W
9/17	AKRON (-47.5)	63-6	W	W
9/24	FLORIDA (-10.5)	38-33	W	L
10/8	at LSU (-2.5)	40-13	W	W
10/15	ALABAMA (9.5)	52-49	W	W
10/22	TENN-MARTIN (-39)	65-24	W	W
10/29	KENTUCKY (-10.5)	44-6	W	W
11/5	at Georgia (9.5)	13-27	L	L
11/12	MISSOURI (-19)	66-24	W	W
11/19	at South Carolina (-22.5)	38-63	L	L
11/26	at Vanderbilt (-14)	56-0	W	W
12/30	vs. Clemson (3.5)	31-14	W	W

GEORGIA
BULLDOGS

HEAD COACH: KIRBY SMART (8TH)
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: MIKE BOBO
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: WILL MUSCHAMP / GLENN SCHUMANN

BY ZACHARY COHEN

The Georgia Bulldogs have won back-to-back national championships, and Kirby Smart's team is favored to win it all again this year. Georgia will, however, need to do it without Stetson Bennett, the team's starting quarterback for the past two seasons, as well as several elite players that went on to be selected in the 2023 NFL Draft. But programs like this one never really struggle to retool on a year-to-year basis.

Georgia has five-star talent to plug into open positions on the depth chart, and the team also has 13 starters returning from last year's championship team. If quarterback Carson Beck can get himself comfortable and start playing some good football after an easy early-season schedule, the Bulldogs should once again be in the College Football Playoff. There isn't a team in the country that is as talented as this one from top to bottom.

OFFENSE
It seems like Beck is going to get the starting quarterback job, but it isn't out of the question that Brock Vandagriff will steal it from him. Either way, this passing game should be just fine with Bennett gone. Of course, Georgia will miss Bennett's poise in big games, but the Bulldogs have one of the best offensive lines in college football.

Georgia also brought back pass-catching stars in tight end Brock Bowers and wide receiver Ladd McConkey, who leads a group of gifted wideouts. The Bulldogs should also have a great running game in 2023, with Kendall Milton leading a solid stable of running backs that should mostly be running through big holes. Overall, it shouldn't surprise anybody if Georgia comes close to matching last year's 41.1 points per game, which was tied for the fourth-highest mark in college football in 2022.

DEFENSE
Georgia had the second-best scoring defense in college football last year, allowing only 12.8 points per game on the season. The team did lose some elite talent to the NFL Draft, but the Bulldogs have plenty of studs remaining — and new players ready to have their coming out parties. Georgia is especially strong in the secondary, where Javon Bullard should be one of the best players in all of college football next season. The Dawgs also have a ton of talent along the defensive line, which is always helpful in a conference that is won in the trenches. If somebody can emerge from Georgia's young group of linebackers, this should be one of the best defenses in the nation again.

OUTLOOK
Georgia obviously has a great chance of winning the College Football Playoff this year, but it's still hard to back the Dawgs to go undefeated in the regular season. Road games against Auburn and Tennessee will really test this Bulldogs team, and I just find it hard to believe they won't get tripped up somewhere along the way. With that in mind, the best way to back Georgia is probably by taking them to win the SEC at -115. That gives you some wiggle room throughout the regular season, but you'll still have a good price on them in the SEC Championship Game. They'd surely be a moneyline favorite of -115 or greater against anybody they face there.

SEASON WIN TOTAL PLAY
UNDER 11.5

STEVE MAKINEN'S
POWER RATING **70.5**

NATIONAL RANK: #1 OF 133

CONFERENCE RANK: #1 OF 14

2023 SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	EST. LINE	OPP PR
9/2	TENN-MARTIN	-50.5	22.5
9/9	BALL ST	-42.5	30.5
9/16	SOUTH CAROLINA	-22.5	50.5
9/23	UAB	-38	35
9/30	at Auburn	-16.5	52
10/7	KENTUCKY	-20.5	52.5
10/14	at Vanderbilt	-30	39.5
10/28	vs. Florida	-19	52
11/4	MISSOURI	-24	49.5
11/11	OLE MISS	-17	56
11/18	at Tennessee	-11.5	56.5
11/25	at Georgia Tech	-30.5	39

SCHEDULE STRENGTH **43.68** #60 TOUGHEST OF 133

FIELD RATINGS **2.5 / 0.5** (HOME/ROAD)

2023 ODDS

-115 ODDS TO WIN SEC

+215 ODDS TO WIN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

RETURNING STARTERS **13**

OFFENSE: 6
DEFENSE: 7

2022 STATS AND RANKS

	OFFENSE STAT/RANK		DEFENSE STAT/RANK	
Points Per Game	41.6	4	15.3	5
Yards Per Point	12.1	6	20.2	3
Plays Per Game	70.1	65		
Time of Possession	33:09	10		
3rd Down Conv. %	52.1%	3	28.0%	3
Total Yards Per Game	502.9	6	308.9	10
Yards Per Play	7.2	2	4.8	16
Rush Attempts Per Game	37.5	55		
Rush Yards Per Game	211.4	14	81.2	1
Yards Per Rush Attempt	5.6	3	3	4
Pass Attempts Per Game	32.1	64		
Completion %	68.4%	6	57.3%	25
Passing Yards Per Game	291.4	13	227.6	61
Yards Per Pass Attempt	9.1	6	6.6	25
Turnovers	1.2	40	1.3	81

2022 RESULTS

SU: 15-0, ATS: 8-7, O/U: 7-7

DATE	OPPONENT	SCORE	SU	ATS
9/3	vs. Oregon (-16)	49-3	W	W
9/10	SAMFORD (-53.5)	33-0	W	L
9/17	at South Carolina (-25.5)	48-7	W	W
9/24	KENT ST (-45)	39-22	W	L
10/1	at Missouri (-31)	26-22	W	L
10/8	AUBURN (-27.5)	42-10	W	W
10/15	VANDERBILT (-37)	55-0	W	W
10/29	vs. Florida (-23)	42-20	W	L
11/5	TENNESSEE (-9.5)	27-13	W	W
11/12	at Mississippi St (-16)	45-19	W	W
11/19	at Kentucky (-21.5)	16-6	W	L
11/26	GEORGIA TECH (-36.5)	37-14	W	L
12/3	vs. LSU (-17)	50-30	W	W
12/31	vs. Ohio St (-5)	42-41	W	L
1/9	vs. TCU (-13.5)	65-7	W	W

ALABAMA
CRIMSON TIDE

HEAD COACH: NICK SABAN (17TH)
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: TOMMY REES
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: KEVIN STEELE

BY ZACHARY COHEN

The Alabama Crimson Tide have seemingly fallen behind Georgia as the class of the SEC, but there's no way Nick Saban will sit back and accept that. The legendary head coach is going to do everything in his power to get this team back in the College Football Playoff hunt, but will the quarterback play allow that to happen this season? That is seemingly the biggest question mark heading into the year, as Bryce Young is now spending his Sundays playing for the Carolina Panthers.

Alabama's offensive line wasn't very good last season, but Young was so good that he could mask that, along with some of the program's other deficiencies — at least when playing at home. Without a legitimate superstar at quarterback, will things look a lot worse? The defense likely won't be what it was last year, which isn't great, considering last season was a bit of a drop from the year before.

OFFENSE

If Jalen Milroe wins this job, the passing game could take a small hit. That'd be a slight shame considering the efficiency this unit has had through the air over the years, but it might be a necessary evil when you factor in that Alabama returns only two starters from last year's offensive line. Milroe's ability to take off and extend plays would help a unit that might lack connectivity early in the season. But Ty Simpson is a bit better as a decision-maker, and his accuracy as a passer is better than Milroe's. Simpson would likely be a bit better of a fit for new offensive coordinator Tommy Rees' system, and he also has the ability to tuck it and run. It's just not something he looks to do quite as early.

Regardless of who wins this job, the wide receiver group should be a lot better than last year, and most of that will come from the internal development of some highly talented athletes. The Crimson Tide also have a stable of gifted running backs, so the ground game should be fine as long as the offensive line doesn't implode.

DEFENSE

Even though Will Anderson Jr.. struggled to live up to the hype last year, the team will miss his presence. But talent is never an issue on the defensive side of the ball for Alabama. Sure, the linebacking corps won't be quite as good as it was with Anderson in the mix, but the defensive line should be better in 2023.

The Crimson Tide also have a very good group of defensive backs, which should be a big asset against some of the SEC's better passing teams. Overall, Alabama might struggle to replicate last year's 18.0 points per game allowed (tied for 9th in CFB). But it's hard to see the Tide completely falling apart on this side of the ball, and they should ultimately be a top-20 unit once again.

OUTLOOK

There's just no value in betting the Under at -175 odds. This is a very talented football team, and the schedule isn't as awful as you might think for a top-tier SEC program. Alabama's toughest road game will come against Texas A&M, but that's one the Tide could easily find a way to win. If they steal that one on the road, it's hard to find two other losses on the schedule. And there's national title potential if the quarterback play is better than people think.

SEASON WIN TOTAL PLAY
OVER 10.5

STEVE MAKINEN'S
POWER RATING **67.5**

NATIONAL RANK: #3 OF 133

CONFERENCE RANK: #2 OF 14

2023 SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	EST. LINE	OPP PR
9/2	MIDDLE TENN ST	-38	32.5
9/9	TEXAS	-8	62.5
9/16	at South Florida	-34.5	31.5
9/23	OLE MISS	-14.5	56
9/30	at Mississippi St	-15	50.5
10/7	at Texas A&M	-9	56
10/14	ARKANSAS	-19	52
10/21	TENNESSEE	-14	56.5
11/4	LSU	-7.5	62.5
11/11	at Kentucky	-12	52.5
11/18	CHATTANOOGA	-41	29.5
11/25	at Auburn	-13	52

SCHEDULE STRENGTH **48.71**
#9 TOUGHEST OF 133

FIELD RATINGS **3.1 / 0.3**
(HOME/ROAD)

2023 ODDS

+300 ODDS TO WIN SEC

+600 ODDS TO WIN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

RETURNING STARTERS **10**
OFFENSE: 5
DEFENSE: 5

2022 STATS AND RANKS

	OFFENSE STAT	RANK	DEFENSE STAT	RANK
Points Per Game	41.7	3	19.7	12
Yards Per Point	11.4	3	16.7	20
Plays Per Game	70	67		
Time of Possession	29:28	76		
3rd Down Conv. %	46.0%	17	30.8%	10
Total Yards Per Game	473.1	12	327.7	17
Yards Per Play	6.8	7	4.5	5
Rush Attempts Per Game	34.4	84		
Rush Yards Per Game	190.1	30	136.4	40
Yards Per Rush Attempt	5.5	6	3.7	33
Pass Attempts Per Game	34	46		
Completion %	63.2%	37	54.4%	6
Passing Yards Per Game	283	17	191.3	16
Yards Per Pass Attempt	8.3	16	5.7	3
Turnovers	1.1	26	0.9	120

2022 RESULTS

SU: 11-2, ATS: 7-6, O/U: 6-7

DATE	OPPONENT	SCORE	SU	ATS
9/3	UTAH ST (-42)	55-0	W	W
9/10	at Texas (-21)	20-19	W	L
9/17	LA MONROE (-49.5)	63-7	W	W
9/24	VANDERBILT (-40.5)	55-3	W	W
10/1	at Arkansas (-17)	49-26	W	W
10/8	TEXAS A&M (-24.5)	24-20	W	L
10/15	at Tennessee (-9.5)	49-52	L	L
10/22	MISSISSIPPI ST (-21.5)	30-6	W	W
11/5	at LSU (-13)	31-32	L	L
11/12	at Ole Miss (-11)	30-24	W	L
11/19	AUSTIN PEAY (-44.5)	34-0	W	L
11/26	AUBURN (-21.5)	49-27	W	W
12/31	vs. Kansas St (-7.5)	45-20	W	W

VANDERBILT
COMMODORES

HEAD COACH: CLARK LEA (3RD)
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: JOEY LYNCH
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: NICK HOWELL

BY ZACHARY COHEN

It hasn't always looked the prettiest, but Clark Lea has the Vanderbilt Commodores moving in the right direction. After going 2-10 in 2021, the Commodores went 5-7 in 2022. The team also earned wins over Kentucky and Florida, which was massive after having gone winless in SEC play in each of the previous two seasons. Now, Vanderbilt returns 15 starters from last year's team. The hope is that the Commodores can continue to take more steps toward being a competitive football team. But the oddsmakers aren't showing Vanderbilt much respect, as the team has a regular season win total of 3.5.

OFFENSE

In Will Sheppard, Quincy Skinner and Jayden McGowan, the Commodores have a nice trio of wide receivers for AJ Swann to get the ball to. Swann unseated Ken Seals as the quarterback of the future for this Vanderbilt team, throwing for 1,274 yards with 10 touchdowns and only two picks last year. Swann has real arm talent and can fit the ball into tight windows. But with that arm talent comes the need to make good decisions with the football. He got a bit lucky on some questionable passes last year, but that comes with being a young quarterback. Vanderbilt also have a good offensive line, which should help Swann get comfortable. It'd be big if somebody could emerge as the top dog in the running game, but that group is a glaring weakness for this Commodores team.

DEFENSE

While Lea has a defensive background, Vanderbilt's defense has been a huge weakness in his two years at the helm. Last year, the Commodores gave up 36.0 points per game, the highest mark in the SEC. In fact, only six teams in all of college football gave up more points per game than Vanderbilt last year. Now, the team does get back eight starters from last year, so you'd think that some added experience will help take things to another level. But talent is still an issue for this group. There isn't any particular level of the defense that stands out as worse than others, but none of them are strong. So, this unit should once again hold the program back a bit. The 2024 season could be when things finally click for this group.

OUTLOOK

I'm not exactly sold on Vanderbilt being a better team in 2023 than it was in 2022, but it won't take much for this team to win four games. In fact, it isn't out of the realm of possibility that the Commodores will lock this up by their fifth game of the season. All four of their early-season games are extremely winnable, with 3-1 seeming like the worst possible outcome. From there, you'd have to think Vanderbilt can find one more win the rest of the way.

SEASON WIN TOTAL PLAY
OVER 3.5

STEVE MAKINEN'S
POWER RATING 39.5

NATIONAL RANK: #72 OF 133

CONFERENCE RANK: #14 OF 14

2023 SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	EST. LINE	OPP PR
8/26	HAWAII	-18	23
9/2	ALABAMA A&M	-34	7
9/9	at Wake Forest	9.5	45.5
9/16	at UNLV	-5.5	31.5
9/23	KENTUCKY	11.5	52.5
9/30	MISSOURI	8	49.5
10/7	at Florida	16	52
10/14	GEORGIA	30	70.5
10/28	at Ole Miss	19.5	56
11/4	AUBURN	11	52
11/11	at South Carolina	13.5	50.5
11/25	at Tennessee	20	56.5

SCHEDULE STRENGTH 46.33
#27 TOUGHEST OF 133

FIELD RATINGS 1.5 / 0.3
(HOME/ROAD)

2023 ODDS

500-1 ODDS TO WIN SEC

ODDS TO WIN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP 500-1

RETURNING STARTERS 15
OFFENSE: 7 QB
DEFENSE: 8

2022 STATS AND RANKS

	OFFENSE STAT/RANK		DEFENSE STAT/RANK	
Points Per Game	23	91	36.5	123
Yards Per Point	14.8	79	12.6	115
Plays Per Game	67.5	98		
Time of Possession	32:10	18		
3rd Down Conv. %	36.7%	88	41.2%	86
Total Yards Per Game	341	101	458.3	120
Yards Per Play	5.1	90	6.8	129
Rush Attempts Per Game	37.3	59		
Rush Yards Per Game	158.9	59	172.5	88
Yards Per Rush Attempt	4.3	62	5.3	122
Pass Attempts Per Game	28.8	95		
Completion %	57.4%	92	64.9%	114
Passing Yards Per Game	182.1	113	285.7	127
Yards Per Pass Attempt	6.3	109	8.6	125
Turnovers	1.5	65	1.4	70

2022 RESULTS

SU: 5-7, ATS: 5-7, O/U: 6-6

DATE	OPPONENT	SCORE	SU	ATS
8/27	at Hawaii (-9)	63-10	W	W
9/3	ELON (-18.5)	42-31	W	L
9/10	WAKE FOREST (13.5)	25-45	L	L
9/17	at N Illinois (2.5)	38-28	W	W
9/24	at Alabama (40.5)	3-55	L	L
10/8	OLE MISS (17)	28-52	L	L
10/15	at Georgia (37)	0-55	L	L
10/22	at Missouri (14)	14-17	L	W
11/5	SOUTH CAROLINA (6.5)	27-38	L	L
11/12	at Kentucky (17)	24-21	W	W
11/19	FLORIDA (14)	31-24	W	W
11/26	TENNESSEE (14)	0-56	L	L

VSiN

VSiN PRO SUBSCRIPTION BENEFITS

BETTING GUIDES
- Betting previews for major sports and events (NFL, CFB, NHL, NBA, NCAA Basketball, College Bowl, March Madness, MLB, and PGA Masters)

DAILY PRO PICKS
- Daily recap of host and guest top plays
- "Top VSiN Experts" leaderboard to show you who has the hot hand

24-7 VIDEO
- VSiN's live stream, including Follow the Money, A Numbers Game, Lombardi Line and your other favorite programs
- Access to full show replays

PREMIUM ANALYSIS
- Exclusive articles from oddsmakers and VSiN Insiders
- Includes Matt Youmans, Michael Lombardi, Steve Makinen, Josh Appelbaum, and more

BETTING SPLITS
- Displays percentage of handle and tickets for all major sports from DraftKings sportsbooks in the US
- Updated every 10 minutes to help you follow where the public and sharp money is going

PRO TOOLS
- 3 sets of power ratings used by betting pros to handicap games
- Estimated scores and lines
- Advance betting statistics for major sports (e.g. ATS records for referees and umpires)

VSIN.COM/SUBSCRIBE

LIMITED TIME OFFER: SIGN UP NOW AND GET 30 DAYS OF VSIN PRO ACCESS FOR ONLY

$19