

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

12 teams, 11 games and 1 champ: Your guide to this season's CFP

Associated Press

The 12-team College Football Playoff bracket is set, and the games begin Friday. The first round is hosted by the higher seed before the games shift to neutral sites. Here's what you need to know:

What teams are playing, and when are these games?

11 games are set from Friday through Jan. 19, and each will be broadcast nationally. The first round (CFP seeds, times Eastern):

No. 9 Alabama at No. 8 Oklahoma, Friday, 8 p.m. (ABC, ESPN)

■ **BetMGM Odds:** Oklahoma by 1.5.

■ **What to know:** The CFP kicks off with an SEC rematch: The Sooners got the best of Alabama with a 23-21 road win in mid-November. Oklahoma's defense led the charge, helping OU score 17 points off three turnovers, one of which was an 87-yard pick-six. Alabama comes off a lackluster SEC title game loss to Georgia. Quarterback Ty Simpson and Alabama's offense will look for redemption against one of the nation's top defenses, while Oklahoma quarterback John Mateer will try to rev up an inconsistent Sooners offense.

■ **The winner:** Advances to the Rose Bowl to play No. 1 Indiana.

No. 10 Miami at No. 7 Texas A&M, Saturday, noon (ABC, ESPN)

■ **BetMGM Odds:** Texas A&M by 3.5.

■ **What to know:** A&M



Indiana coach Curt Cignetti celebrated with the Big Ten championship trophy after the Hoosiers beat Ohio State for the league title. That earned Indiana the No. 1 playoff seed, followed by Ohio State, Georgia and Texas Tech. MICHAEL CONROY/AP

and Miami meet for the sixth time overall, and the first time in two years. The Aggies and Hurricanes were the only teams to beat Notre Dame this season, which played a major factor in Miami earning a CFP bid and the Irish being left out. The Canes stumbled with a pair of bad conference losses but bounced back with four consecutive victories to end the regular season. Texas A&M had a perfect season until the final week, when the Aggies lost 27-17 to in-state rival Texas.

■ **The winner:** Advances to the Cotton Bowl to play No. 2 Ohio State.

No. 11 Tulane at No. 6 Ole Miss, Saturday, 3:30 p.m. (TNT, HBO Max)

■ **BetMGM Odds:** Ole

Miss by 17.5.

■ **What to know:** Tulane punched its playoff ticket with a 34-21 American Conference championship win against North Texas. The Green Wave head to Oxford, Mississippi, to play Ole Miss for the second time this season. They met in September in Oxford, and Ole Miss had 548 yards of total offense in cruising to a 45-10 victory. The Rebels will be without the coach Lane Kiffin, whose request to lead the team before he left for LSU was turned down. Tulane coach Jon Sumrall already has accepted the job at Florida, but is with the Green Wave until they lose.

■ **The winner:** Advances to the Sugar Bowl to play No. 3 Georgia.

No. 12 James Madison at No. 5 Oregon, Saturday, 7:30 p.m. (TNT, HBO Max)

■ **BetMGM College Football Odds:** Oregon by 21.5.

■ **What to know:** James Madison's trip to the CFP accounts for several firsts: It marks the Dukes' first time in the playoff, it will be the first time James Madison and Oregon meet in football, and JMU made history with Tulane as the CFP has two Group of Five teams for the first time. The Dukes were crowned Sun Belt champions with a 31-14 win against Troy to move to 12-1. Oregon finished third in the Big Ten, with an 11-1 record. The Ducks' only loss of the season was to Indiana in October.

■ **The winner:** Advances to the Orange Bowl to play No. 4 Texas Tech.

Which teams are the favorites this season?

Ohio State is the betting favorite, with plus-225 odds (9-4) to win the national championship for the second year in a row, per BetMGM Sportsbook. Indiana (+275, or 11-4) and Georgia (+500, 5-1) are next.

The rest of the odds: Oregon (8-1), Texas Tech (9-1), Texas A&M (17-1), Miami (22-1), Ole Miss and Alabama (both 25-1), Oklahoma (50-1), and Tulane and James Madison (each 500-1).

How does the entire playoff process work?

A 12-member CFP selection committee finalized the highly anticipated bracket on Dec. 7.

Five spots were reserved for the highest-ranked confer-

ence champions, regardless of their overall CFP rankings. Duke won the ACC championship but was left out because of its five losses, clearing a path for the two G5 schools (Tulane and James Madison).

This year, first-round byes were awarded using a straight-seeding approach. No. 1 Indiana, No. 2 Ohio State, No. 3 Georgia and No. 4 Texas Tech await opponents in the quarterfinals. The rest play first-round games on campus: No. 5 Oregon, No. 6 Ole Miss, No. 7 Texas A&M, No. 8 Oklahoma, No. 9 Alabama, No. 10 Miami, No. 11 Tulane and No. 12 James Madison.

The CFP began with four teams in January 2015 and was expanded to 12 teams last season.

How much money is at stake this season?

Each conference earns \$4 million per team in the CFP bracket. The eight teams that advance to the quarterfinals earn their conferences an additional \$4 million each. No. 1 Indiana, No. 2 Ohio State, No. 3 Georgia and No. 4 Texas Tech already are on the books for \$8 million apiece as the top four.

The SEC already has accumulated \$24 million, with five teams making the playoff and one already in the quarterfinals. With three teams in the bracket and two earning first-round byes, the Big Ten starts with \$20 million.

Conferences earn an additional \$6 million per team for advancing to the semis and another \$6 million for making the finals.

Teams that make the playoff each get \$3 million to cover expenses for each round.

Dawgs' Allen named a first-team All-American

Big Ten schools have 10 players on first team, including two Ohio State defensive players from Atlanta area.

By Eric Olson

Associated Press

Georgia junior linebacker CJ Allen was named a first-team All-American on Monday by The Associated Press, and he was joined on the first team by two Ohio State players from the Atlanta area: safety Caleb Downs from Mill Creek High and defensive tackle Kayden McDonald from North Gwinnett High.

Georgia punter Brett Thorson was a second-team pick.

Downs and McDonald were two of four players from Ohio State and one of 10 from a Big Ten school on the first team. That group is headed by Heisman-winning Indiana quarterback Fernando Mendoza, who also was the AP Player of the Year.

Downs, the Big Ten defensive player of the year, has made the first team each of his two seasons at Ohio State after landing on the second team as a freshman at Alabama in 2023. He is one of 12 players on the 27-man first team who did not start their careers at their current school. Downs and McDonald are joined on the first team by fellow Buckeyes Jeremiah Smith and Arvell Reese.

Mendoza led the top-ranked Hoosiers to a 13-0 record and the No. 1 seed in the College Football Playoff after transferring from California. He has thrown a nation-leading 33 touchdown passes and is the catalyst of one of the most productive offenses in the country.

A total of 18 schools are represented on the first team, including seven of the 12 in the CFP.

Iowa has had at least one first-team player seven consecutive seasons and in 10 of the past 12. This is the fourth year in row Miami, Notre Dame and Ohio State have had at least one.

Punter Cole Maynard gave Western Kentucky its first-ever first-team pick. Defensive lineman Landon Robinson is Navy's first since 1975.



USC's Makai Lemon, who won the Biletnikoff Award as the nation's best receiver, was one of three wide receivers selected to the AP All-America first team Monday. Ohio State's Jeremiah Smith and UConn's Skylar Bell were the others. Lemon and Smith were two of the 10 Big Ten players named to the first team. MARK J. TERRILL/AP

The AP All-America team was selected by a panel of 52 college Top 25 poll voters.

First-team offense

■ **Wide receiver** – Makai Lemon, USC, junior, 5-11, 195, Los Angeles.

■ **Wide receiver** – Jeremiah Smith, Ohio State, sophomore, 6-3, 223, Hollywood, Florida.

■ **Wide receiver** – Skylar Bell, UConn, senior, 6-0, 185, New York, N.Y.

■ **Tackle** – Francis Mauigoa, Miami, junior, 6-6, 335, Ili'ili, American Samoa.

■ **Tackle** – Spencer Fano, Utah, junior, 6-6, 308, Spanish Fork, Utah.

■ **Guard** – Emmanuel Pregnon, Oregon, senior, 6-5, 318, Denver.

■ **Guard** – Beau Stephens, Iowa, senior, 6-5, 315, Blue Springs, Missouri.

■ **Center** – Logan Jones, Iowa, graduate, 6-3, 202, Council Bluffs, Iowa.

■ **Tight end** – Eli Stowers, Vanderbilt, graduate, 6-4, 235, Denton, Texas.

■ **Quarterback** – Fernando Mendoza, Indiana, junior, 6-5, 225, Miami.

■ **Running back** – Jeremiah Love, Notre Dame, junior, 6-0, 214, St. Louis.

■ **Running back** – Ahmad Hardy, Missouri, sophomore, 5-10, 210, Oma, Mississippi.

■ **Kicker** – Kansei Matsuzawa, Hawaii, senior, 6-2, 200, Tokyo.

■ **All-purpose** – KC Concepcion, Texas A&M, junior, 5-11, 190, Charlotte, North Carolina.

First-team defense

■ **Edge rusher** – David Bailey, Texas Tech, senior, 6-3, 250, Irvine, California.

■ **Edge rusher** – Cashius Howell, Texas A&M, senior, 6-2, 248, Kansas City, Missouri.

■ **Interior lineman** – Kayden McDonald, Ohio State, junior, 6-3, 326, Suwanee, Georgia.

■ **Interior lineman** – Landon Robinson, Navy, senior, 6-0, 287, Fairlawn, Ohio.

■ **Linebacker** – Jacob Rodriguez, Texas Tech, senior, 6-1, 235, Wichita Falls, Texas.

■ **Linebacker** – Arvell Reese, Ohio State, junior,

6-4, 243, Cleveland.

■ **Linebacker** – CJ Allen, Georgia, junior, 6-1, 235, Barnesville, Georgia.

■ **Cornerback** – Leonard Moore, Notre Dame, sophomore, 6-2, 195, Round Rock, Texas.

■ **Cornerback** – Mansoor Delane, LSU, senior, 6-0, 190, Silver Spring, Maryland.

■ **Safety** – Caleb Downs, Ohio State, junior, 6-0, 205, Hoschton, Georgia.

■ **Safety** – Bishop Fitzgerald, USC, senior, 5-11, 205, Woodbridge, Virginia.

■ **Defensive back** – Jakari Foster, Louisiana Tech, senior, 6-0, 211, Piedmont, Alabama.

■ **Punter** – Cole Maynard, Western Kentucky, senior, 6-1, 180, Mooresville, North Carolina.

Second-team offense

■ **Wide receiver** – Carnell Tate, Ohio State, junior, 6-3, 195, Chicago.

■ **Wide receiver** – Malachi Toney, Miami, freshman, 5-11, 188, Plantation, Florida.

■ **Wide receiver** – Danny

FIRST-TEAM ALL-AMERICANS BY CONFERENCE

Big Ten – 10

SEC – 6

Big 12 – 3

ACC – 1

Independent – 3

Conference USA – 2

American – 1

Mountain West – 1

Scudero, San Jose State, sophomore, 5-9, 174, San Jose, California.

■ **Tackle** – Kadyn Proctor, Alabama, junior, 6-7, 366, Des Moines, Iowa.

■ **Tackle** – Carter Smith, Indiana, junior, 6-5, 313, Powell, Ohio.

■ **Guard** – Olaiavega Ioane, Penn State, junior, 6-4, 323, Graham, Washington.

■ **Guard** – Ar'maj Reed-Adams, Texas A&M, graduate, 6-5, 325, Dallas.

■ **Center** – Jake Slaughter, Florida, senior, 6-4, 303, Sparr, Florida.

■ **Tight end** – Kenyon Sadiq, Oregon, junior, 6-3, 245, Idaho Falls, Idaho.

■ **Quarterback** – Diego Pavia, Vanderbilt, graduate, 6-0, 207, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

■ **Running back** – Emmett Johnson, Nebraska, junior, 5-11, 200, Minneapolis.

■ **Running back** – Kewan Lacy, Mississippi, sophomore, 5-11, 210, Dallas.

■ **Kicker** – Tate Sandell, Oklahoma, junior, 5-9, 182, Port Neches, Texas.

■ **All-purpose** – Wayne Knight, James Madison, junior, 5-7, 190, Smyrna, Delaware.

Second-team defense

■ **Edge rusher** – Rueben Bain Jr., Miami, junior, 6-3, 270, Miami.

■ **Edge rusher** – John Henry Daley, Utah, sophomore, 6-4, 255, Alpine, Utah.

■ **Interior lineman** – A.J. Holmes Jr., Texas Tech, junior, 6-3, 300, Houston.

■ **Interior lineman** – Peter Woods, Clemson, junior, 6-3, 310, Alabas-

ter, Alabama.

■ **Linebacker** – Sonny Syles, Ohio State, senior, 6-5, 243, Pickerington, Ohio.

■ **Linebacker** – Anthony Hill Jr., Texas, junior, 6-3, 238, Denton, Texas.

■ **Linebacker** – Red Murdoch, Buffalo, graduate, 6-1, 240, Petersburg, Virginia.

■ **Cornerback** – D'Angelo Ponds, Indiana, junior, 5-9, 173, Miami.

■ **Cornerback** – Chris Johnson, San Diego State, senior, 6-0, 195, Eastvale, California.

■ **Safety** – Dillon Thienerman, Oregon, junior, 6-0, 205, Westfield, Indiana.

■ **Safety** – Louis Moore, Indiana, senior, 5-11, 200, Mesquite, Texas.

■ **Defensive back** – Hezekiah Masses, California, senior, 6-1, 185, Deerfield Beach, Florida.

■ **Punter** – Brett Thorson, Georgia, senior, 6-2, 235, Melbourne, Australia.

DAILY LAW JOURNAL

legal public notice

Request for Proposals (RFPs) Multiple Opportunities Available Proposal Deadline: Friday, January 30, 2026, 5:00 p.m. CT

The Alliance for Innovation (AFI), acting as the Lead Contracting Agency with Michigan Municipal Services Authority (MMSA) acting as the Lead Participating Entity and Edge Public as the National GP and participating entities—including all local and state government agencies, higher education institutions, K-12 schools and non-profit organizations—is seeking proposals from qualified vendors for a range of RFPs: RFP-2025117 ADA Digital Accessibility – WCAG 2.1 AA / 2.2 AA Compliance Services RFP-2025118 ADA Digital Accessibility – WCAG 2.1 AA / 2.2 AA Compliance Services – Consulting and Design RFP-2025119 Paint and Related Supplies RFP-2025120 Equipment Maintenance Management Program RFP-2025121 Promotional Items and Services Contracts resulting from this solicitation may be awarded to multiple vendors. All RFPs are subject to the Lead Contracting Agency's General Conditions & Requirements to Offerors. Full specifications and proposal documents are available via the AFI's Procurement Portal at <https://indigo.bonfire.com>. Only proposals submitted through this portal will be accepted. Deadline for submission: Friday, January 30, 2026, 5:00 p.m. CT 12-16-25

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