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2017 Mid Atlantic Conference Preview



Coppin State University Eagles
Baltimore, MD

2015 Record: 6-3 Mid Atlantic Champions, NCFA Playoff Qualifiers

Head Coach: Albert Howard

Assistants:

Team Captain(s): TBD

Returning Starters: N/A

Players to Watch:

Season Outlook

Coppin State continued its Mid-Atlantic Dominance, once again winning the MAC title in 2016. They pushed into the NCFA playoffs, falling in a very close game against Middle Georgia State. The 2017 Eagles are somewhat of an unknown at this point but until further notice they will continue to be the team to beat in the MAC. However, with the conference realignment bringing some top GLC teams into the MAC Coppin will have some new talent to contend with in the likes of Miami, OSU and Wright State. Coppin and Miami have a history so look for that matchup to be a great one, if it happens in the MAC title game. You can expect Coppin to have a strong defense and lean on their running game to get the points they need.



University of North Carolina at Greensboro Spartans
Greensboro, NC



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2016 Record: 3-4

Head Coach: Oscar Malone

Assistants:

Sammy Henderson, Matthew McKay, Dijon Mason, George Sills, Coach Duke, Coach Griffin

Team Captain(s): Blaine Ayres, Brandon Travis

Returning Starters: 10

Players to Watch: Quan Pratt, Chigozie Umoefia, Michael Youngblood, Blaine Ayers

Season Outlook

After their inaugural 2016 season, the UNCG Spartans are optimistic for the 2017 season. The promotion of Oscar Malone from defensive coordinator to Head Coach and a very impressive recruiting class has helped fuel championship thoughts for the Spartans. The Spartan defense looks to be among the league's best with Quan Bratt, Chigozie Umeona, and Michael Youngblood up front and Blaine Ayres at linebacker while the offense hopes dual-threat QB Brandon Travis can utilize a long receiving core, including 6'5 Trenton Evans, 6'4 Chase Jones, and 6'3 Alec Warren to find some more offensive success this fall. That crew should be exciting to watch and make for a tough matchup for opposing defense. If things come together well the Spartans will be in the hunt for the Mid-Atlantic title and a spot in the NCFA Playoffs.



Longwood University Elwoods
Farmville, VA

2015 Record: 3-3

Head Coach: Coach Gene

Team Captain(s): Garrett Lassiter, Ashton Reighard, Geoff Goodwin

Returning Starters: 12



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Players to Watch: Rob Mansueti

Season Outlook

Longwood has a very big bounce back 2016 season, parlaying a 3-1 conference record making it all the way to the MAC title game before falling to Coppin State. This fall they will be looking to reload with a large freshman class with hopes to push thru into the NCFA Playoffs. The fate of Longwood will fall on the shoulders of lineman and team captains Garrett Lassiter and Geoff Goodwin, if they can lead the O and D from their respective spots and the new talent can learn the system quick, Longwood should be able to contend for a repeat spot in the MAC title game.



George Mason University Patriots
Fairfax, Virginia

2015 Record: 2-5

Head Coach: Kenton Span

Assistants:

Virgil Seay

Billy Ray Davis

Tim Spicer

Jack Dumas

Team Captain(s): Xavier Savannah, Shareef Abulhawa, Darius Simington, Anthony Bedward

Returning Starters: 17

Players to Watch: Anthony Bedward, Ibrahim Ahmed, Willie Marrow, Chris Pelmore, Jeremy Wahyudi
Greg Sim, & Darius Simington

Season Outlook



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Although George Mason did not best their win total from 2015, the 2016 season could go down as the kickstart season to help bring back the glory to the Patriots. Once upon a time Mason and Coppin would do battle for conference dominance, the last few years has seen Mason fall back from that level but their return 30 players from last year's roster, including NCFA All-American Anthony Bedward and NCFA Team President of the Year Xavier Savannah. With 17 returning starters the core is in place for the Patriots to shine in 2017



Miami University Redhawks
Oxford, OH

2016 Record: 2-3

Head Coach: Jay Fry Sr.

Team Captain(s): Garrett Shaw, Tom Radford, Jack Hannan

Returning Starters: 10

Players to Watch: Garrett Shaw, Tucker Berger, Connor Milosovic, Nate Patterson

Season Outlook

After battling all the way to the NCFA title game in 2015, the Redhawks fell down a few notches in 2016 thanks to a string of injuries and close losses. Miami has been one of the most consistent teams in the NCFA over the years and they are looking for 2017 to be a bounce back year. The move to the Mid Atlantic conference will give them some new rivalries to contend with and will hopefully help reinvigorate the program this fall. The steady leadership from former NFL coach Jay Fry Sr, a Miami University and Indiana Football Hall of Famer will allow Miami the room to grow into success. The Redhawks will look for its defense, led by Garrett Shaw, Tucker Berger and Connor Milosovic, to help keep them in games. One strength of Miami has always been special teams, that should continue in



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2017 with team captain Jack Hannan poised to be among the NCFA's best kickers and punters. You should expect Maini to once again bounce back and be among the NCFA's best this fall.



North Carolina Tar-Heels
Chapel Hill, NC

2016 Record: 3-3

Head Coach: Tolbert Matthews

Assistant: Rashad Mason

Team Captain(s): Lawrence Dugom, Matt Bigg, Jammin Altman

Returning Starters: 14

Players to Watch: Alex Fernandez, Hunter Church, Shawn Pierre

Season Outlook

After the program took a hiatus to regroup the North Carolina Club football team came back in 2016 to continue their reign as the longest tenured club football program in the NCFA, a 45-year tradition on campus. The Tar-Heels coaching staff stayed intact from last year which has given them a year to recruit the kind of players needed to compete in the now even. Although the first a is winning a Mid-Atlantic title, UNC has it eyes set on a NCFA title, with Coach Matthews saying "A run at a National Championship' is the goal "We didn't come this far too only come this far" Expect the Tar-Heels to be much improved in 2017.



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Ohio State University Buckeyes
Columbus, OH

2016 Record: 5-2

Head Coach: Darryl Payne

Team Captain(s): Hamzah, Barron, Brown, Jackson, Slade

Returning Starters: 15

Players to Watch: Patrick, Brown, Barron, Bardak, Mackowiak, Zemelka III

Season Outlook

Ohio State joins Miami and Wright State in the move to the MAC from the Great Lakes East this fall. They had one of their best years in 2016, finishing 5-2 and narrowly missing the GLC title game after falling to Oakland in overtime. With 32 returning players including 15 starters the Buckeyes look to follow the lead of the OSU varsity team and contend for an NCFA title. Head Coach Darryl Payne has been building up the program and as he enters his 4th season at the helm they have laid all the necessary pieces in place for success. Look for Ohio State to instantly become contenders for the MAC title and a spot in the NCFA playoffs.



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University of Pittsburgh Panthers
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

2016 Record: 1-5

Head Coach: TBA

Team Captain(s): Alyson Kornberg, Nicholas DelGallo, Jacob Blahut

Returning Starters: 13

Players to Watch: Matt Mutone, Kyle Cedeno, Nick DelGallo

Season Outlook

The Panthers saw some growing pains with their inaugural 2016 season, finishing with only 1 win. Team President Alyson Kornberg hopes to help lead the charge to greater success in 2017. A healthy returning roster of 20 players including 13 starters should help make that easier to accomplish. Returning QB Matt Mutone enters the season hoping to make his mark as one of the best signal callers in the NCFA while Jacob Blahut and Nick Delgallo hope to anchor the Pitt D and bring them into respectability. Although a MAC title may not be in the plans for this year, Pitt should have the tools to have a winning season and set them up for championship success in the coming years



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Wright State University Rowdy Raiders
Dayton, Oh

2015 Record: 4-4

Head Coach: Jimmy Johnson

Team Captain(s): Stephen Shock, Drew Danner, Peter Ngho, Ryan Alig

Returning Starters: 20

Players to Watch: Stephen Shock, Drew Danner, Peter Ngho, Ryan Alig, Devin Gevodon,
Pierce Piazza, Patrick Enright

Season Outlook

The last of the GLC additions, Wright State has been knocking at the door of championship season for the last few years and this move to the MAC could be the opportunity they needed to make that happen. Coach Jimmy Johnson enters his 2nd season at the helm of the Raiders and is hoping the large returning starter crowd can help them contend this fall. The Raiders return 3 NCFA All-Americans in WR Patrick Enright, LB Stephen Shock and G Devin Gevodon. Enright and Sophomore WR Drew Danner should form one of the best receiving duos in the NCFA this fall. Incoming Freshman Darian Arteaga steps into the shoes of graduated 3-year starter and former NCFA All-American Forrest Cordova. If Arteaga can grasp the system quickly you should see Wright State among the league leaders in offensive production. On the defensive side of the ball tackling machine Stephen Shock will anchor a young defense and hope to bring them together quickly. You should bank on seeing the Raiders among the top of the NCFA power rankings this fall.