



Escaping College Football Purgatory

UMASS BIO

National Championships - 0



Location: **Amherst, MA**

All-Time Record: **68-166-6**

2022 Results: **1-11**

Head Coach: **Don Brown**
2nd Year (1-11)

UMass was arguably college football's worst team last season in what has become an unfortunate trend. The Minutemen haven't really ever found their footing since joining the ranks of the FBS in 2012. Their stint in the MAC was short lived and they've been an FBS independent since 2016. In their time in the FBS, UMass hasn't topped four wins and the Minutemen now have just three wins to show for their last four seasons (although they played only four games in 2020). UMass enters 2023 desperate to find wins of any kind and to breathe hope into what has otherwise been a hopeless program the past few seasons. Don Brown returned to UMass in 2022 for his second stint as head coach. He was quite successful from 2004 to 2008 (a 43-19 record) but faces an entirely different challenge in present day. In many ways, UConn serves as an example of where UMass wants to go. The Huskies had a losing streak that spanned more than two years and there were even considerations of shutting down the program entirely. Yet, in 2022, Jim Mora guided UConn to six wins and a coveted bowl appearance and that's exactly the kind of hope UMass is looking for. Expecting a bowl game this season would be borderline ludicrous but there are small victories that the Minutemen could achieve this season.

One of those small victories would be winning a game against an FBS opponent, a feat that has happened only once in the last three years (vs. UConn). Another small victory would be winning a game on the road, a feat that hasn't happened since 2018 and also occurred against UConn. It's an uphill battle for the Minutemen but, frankly, it can't be much worse than it was last season.

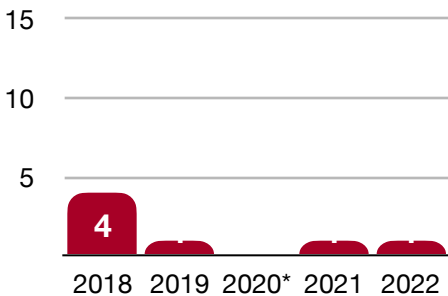
The Minutemen offense ranked dead last in college football. They floundered in every aspect but quarterback play was particularly dilettantish. The quarterback group threw just 4 touchdowns to 14 interceptions and only 1,403 total yards. Brown brought in Clemson and Georgia Tech transfer **Taisun Phommachanh** and Western Carolina transfer **Carlos Davis**. Both will join **Brady Olson** who threw for 791 yards, 2 touchdowns, and 8 interceptions last season. Of those three, the dual-threat Phommachanh offers the highest upside and even though he didn't see much playing time during his time in the ACC, his experience at the Power 5 level could be invaluable. Freshman **Ahmad Haston** is another quarterback to watch moving forward.

George Johnson is the leading receiver after 28 catches for 402 yards and he had one of the four touchdowns. He will certainly be more productive if there is more effective quarterback play behind him. **Isaac Ross** added 21 catches and quarterback turned wide receiver **Lamar Wise** should see some targets. Another quarterback on last year's roster, **Gino Campiotti**, has also moved positions and will play tight end along with **Eli Falayi**. **Anthony Simpson** and **Mark Pope** are two of the team's thirteen incoming transfers and should help bolster the receiver group. The running game was led by Ellis Merriwether who departs and Campiotti was second with 390 yards. **Kay'ron Adams** added 297 yards and will be the primary back with **Tim Baldwin** and **Jalen John** expected to also see carries. **Josh Atwood** leads the offensive line at center where he started all 12 games last season after transitioning from the defensive line.

Despite being put in tough situations far too frequently, the defense under Brown showed significant improvement and allowed less than 40 points per game for the first time since 2017. They allowed 31.1 points and return eight starters from that side of the football. Several transfers should make an impact including cornerback **Steven Ortiz** and linebacker **Jerry Roberts**. **Tyler Rudolph** and **Terrell Johnson** are the two leading tacklers. A better pass rush and run defense is critical to improvement.

The Bottom Line: At first glance, the UMass schedule looks manageable if you are only judging the strength of schedule by Power 5 appearances of which there is only two (Auburn and Penn State). However, a closer inspection is needed. UMass faces Miami (OH), Eastern Michigan, and Toledo out of the MAC (where UMass was a member from 2012 to 2015) but those three schools are arguably three of the top four teams in the conference. Army, New Mexico State, Liberty, and UConn all figure to be bowl teams and so that only leaves games against New Mexico, Arkansas State, and Merrimack as "easily winnable" games. In short, this looks to be another tough season but I do think the Minutemen claim a win over an FBS opponent this season.

5-YEAR WIN TREND















Warren McGuirk Alumni Stadium
(17,000)

Projection: 2-10

2022 Statistics

Points Scored	Rush Yards	Pass Yards	Turnover Margin
12.5	148.8	116.9	-3
131st in FBS	68th in FBS	126th in FBS	T-91st in FBS
Points Allowed	Rush YDS Allowed	Pass YDS Allowed	
31.1	194.3	175.3	
104th in FBS	114th in FBS	9th in FBS	

2023 UMass Schedule

Week	Date	Team
0	Sat, Aug 26	 @ N. Mexico St.
1	Sat, Sept 2	 @ Auburn
2	Sat, Sept 9	 vs. Miami (OH)
3	Sat, Sept 16	 @ E. Michigan
4	Sat, Sept 23	 vs. New Mexico
5	Sat, Sept 30	 vs. Arkansas State
6	Sat, Oct 7	 vs. Toledo
7	Sat, Oct 14	 @ Penn State
8		Bye Week
9	Sat, Oct 28	 @ Army
10	Sat, Nov 4	 vs. Merrimack
11		Bye Week
12	Sat, Nov 18	 @ Liberty
13	Sat, Nov 25	 vs. UConn

Conference Games in Bold

KEY GAMES

Sat, Sept 23: vs. New Mexico - New Mexico is picked toward the bottom of the Mountain West and must make the long cross-country trip to Amherst which could give the Minutemen a great chance to get their first FBS victory over a team not named UConn since 2019 (Akron).

Sat, Nov 4: vs. Merrimack - UMass snapped a two-game losing streak to FCS opponents with a win over Stony Brook last season. A team desperate for wins will take any victory they can get an UMass is certainly no exception.

Sat, Nov 25: vs. UConn - The Huskies took a major leap forward last year and claimed a 27-10 victory. Can UMass take a similar leap this season?

KEY PLAYERS

George Johnson III - WR



Johnson had just a single catch across the first two games of the 2022 season but a 6-reception, 48-yard performance in the Minutemen's lone win of the season over Stony Brook helped solidify his status as WR1. It appears that UMass upgraded in both the quarterback and receiver room which should only help Johnson and the offense become more productive in 2023.

Marcus Bradley - DE

Bradley contributed 2.5 sacks in his redshirt freshman and he'll be called upon even more this season with the departures of Jalen Mackie (100 tackles, 3.5 sacks) and Marcus Cushnie (5.5 sacks). Considering that Mackie and Cushnie combined for half of the team's 16 sacks, UMass is in desperate need for a better pass rush and Bradley could help energize the defensive front in his second year as a starter.



2022 RESULTS (1-11)

@ Tulane (L 10-42)

@ Toledo (L 10-55)

Stony Brook (W 20-3)

@ Temple (L 0-28)

@ Eastern Michigan (L 13-20)

Liberty (L 24-42)

Buffalo (L 7-34)

New Mexico State (L 13-23)

@ UConn (L 10-27)

@ Arkansas State (L 33-35)

@ Texas A&M (L 3-20)

Army (L 7-44)

RECRUITING

2023 Class Ranking

125th

(Via 24/7 Sports)