



# NEW MEXICO LOBOS

Mountain West

## Finding Hope in Albuquerque

New Mexico has now suffered through six straight seasons with no more than three wins and have made only two bowl game appearances in the last decade (and both of those appearances were the New Mexico Bowl played at the Lobos' home stadium). Head coach Danny Gonzales inherited a 2-10 team from 2019 and then Covid hit. His Lobos started 0-5 in 2020 but did win the last two games of 2020 and the first two games of 2021 but the momentum petered out after that. The Lobos are 3-19 since that point with only a single Mountain West win and the time is now for Gonzales to turn things around, otherwise New Mexico may be hitting the restart button the rebuild yet again. His first task is fixing an offense that has been, frankly, the worst in college football over the past two seasons.

New Mexico amassed just 13.1 points per game last year which was actually a slight improvement over the 12.2 points scored in 2021. If you take the three service academies out of the question, the Lobos were the least effective passing team in the country and had only three touchdowns through the air compared to nine interceptions. New offensive coordinator Bryant Vincent will bring a fresh set of eyes to the problem that has been the offense. He recently completed a successful season as interim head coach of UAB and the Blazers scored 30.1 points per game and steamrolled their way to victory with a powerful running game. If he can capture some of that magic and employ it in Albuquerque, Lobos faithful will breathe a huge sigh of relief.

The Lobos have had difficulties identifying a consistent option at quarterback but that could change this season. **Dylan Hopkins** followed Vincent from UAB and brings nearly 5,000 career passing yards to the table. He guided the Blazers to seven wins last season and threw for 204 yards and a touchdown in a Bahamas Bowl victory over Miami. New Mexico will need to find a way to rally around him and provide both weapons and protection, but the quarterback position already looks better than it has in quite some time and New Mexico hasn't even taken a snap yet. New Mexico also added **DC Tabscott** from Appalachian State and **Devon Dampier** could be the quarterback of the future.


Four of the top six receivers are back including **Luke Wysong** who led the team with 34 catches and had one of the three receiving touchdowns. **Andrew Erickson** made 12 catches for 110 yards. **Ryan Davis** is another UAB transfer and should have some automatic chemistry with Hopkins. **Caleb Medford** offers additional support after his brief stint at TCU. **Christian Washington** is the leading returning runner who provided 310 yards on 73 carries last season. **Sherod White** found the end zone three times and **Andrew Henry** joins the running back room as a transfer from ULM. I'd expect better production in the run game with a healthier offensive line that returns more experience in 2023 compared to a season ago.

Despite the ongoing offensive woes, the defense has actually been remarkably effective although only two returners are back on that side of the ball and the top nine tacklers are gone. So, the defense unfortunately goes from a strength to somewhat of a question mark. Linebacker **Tavian Combs** and corner **Donte Martin** are the two lone returners. Gonzales will mostly rely on players who played backup roles to step into starting roles but did bring in a couple of transfers including defensive end **Gabriel Lopez** (Washington State) and linebacker **Bryson Washington** (Oklahoma). He also gained a pair of former TCU safeties **Marvin Covington** and **D'Arco Perkins-McCallister**. Punter **Aaron Rodriguez** is one of the best in the conference and will help New Mexico win the field position battle. His leg is an especially useful tool considering the Lobos will have to grind out some victories this season. I do expect the defense to suffer a bit of a setback (what defense wouldn't with that kind of production loss?) but hopefully for Gonzales' sake the impact is minimal.

**The Bottom Line:** If the Lobos can survive a potential bludgeoning in week one against Texas A&M, the non-conference schedule is quite favorable and although they may not be favored in all three remaining games, they certainly have a chance to win against Tennessee Tech, New Mexico State, and UMass. There's opportunities in the conference schedule too. The offense needs to make a dramatic turnaround to reach a bowl game and I don't see the improvement happening to that extent. However, I do think the Lobos double last year's win total.

### Projection: 4-8 (11th in Mountain West)

#### 2022 Statistics

| Points Scored  | Rush Yards       | Pass Yards       | Turnover Margin   |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|---|
| 13.1           | 123.2            | 104.9            | +4  |
| 130th in FBS   | 101st in FBS     | 128th in FBS     | T-38th in FBS   |
| Points Allowed | Rush YDS Allowed | Pass YDS Allowed |  |
| 26.0           | 157.4            | 202.8            |   |
| 61st in FBS    | 76th in FBS      | 28th in FBS      |   |

#### NEW MEXICO BIO

National Championships - 0



Mountain West Championships: 0

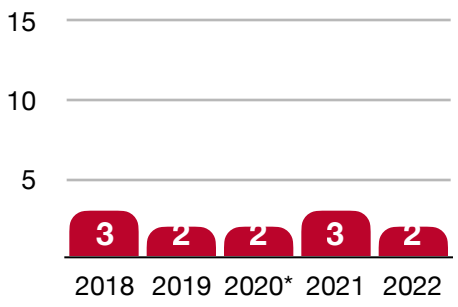
Location: **Albuquerque, NM**

All-Time Record: **407-568-17**

2022 Results: **2-10**













Head Coach: **Danny Gonzales**  
4th Year (7-24)

#### 5-YEAR WIN TREND



Dreamstyle Stadium (39,224)

## 2023 New Mexico Schedule

| Week | Date         | Team  |
|------|--------------|---|
| 1    | Sat, Sept 2  |  @ Texas A&M       |
| 2    | Sat, Sept 9  |  vs. Tenn Tech     |
| 3    | Sat, Sept 16 |  vs. N. Mexico St. |
| 4    | Sat, Sept 23 |  @ UMass           |
| 5    | Sat, Sept 30 |  @ Wyoming         |
| 6    | Bye Week     |   |
| 7    | Sat, Oct 14  |  vs. San Jose St.  |
| 8    | Sat, Oct 21  |  vs. Hawaii        |
| 9    | Sat, Oct 28  |  @ Nevada          |
| 10   | Sat, Nov 4   |  vs. UNLV         |
| 11   | Sat, Nov 11  |  @ Boise State   |
| 12   | Sat, Nov 18  |  @ Fresno State  |
| 13   | Fri, Nov 24  |  vs. Utah State  |

Conference Games in Bold

### KEY GAMES

**Sat, Sept 16: vs. New Mexico State** - The Lobos have historically dominated the Rio Grande Valley and had won three straight in the series before the Aggies won 21-9 in Las Cruces. New Mexico State overcame several down seasons and reached a bowl game in 2022. Could the Lobos replicate that success?

**Sat, Sept 30: @ Wyoming** - The Cowboys are the only Mountain West team that New Mexico has defeated. The Lobos took down Wyoming 14-3 in Laramie in 2021 as 20-point underdogs.

**Sat, Nov 4: vs. UNLV** - The Rebels defeated the Lobos in both 2021 and 2022 and will aim to match their longest win streak in the series (1979-1981). This could be a must-win game for New Mexico.

### KEY PLAYERS

#### Dylan Hopkins - QB



Hopkins isn't necessarily a flashy quarterback (and he didn't have to be with the incredibly dangerous DeWayne McBride in the backfield for UAB) but he manages the game well and had just four interceptions in 215 pass attempts last season and collected 1,913 yards and 10 touchdowns for the Blazers. He steps into a more challenging situation in New Mexico but he's experienced and gets to stay in the same offense.

#### Donte Martin - CB

Martin is one of only two holdovers from last year's defense but his return is a welcome one as the Canadian native has been a staple at cornerback for the Lobos over the last four seasons. In addition to his 28 tackles and six pass breakups Martin also snagged an interception in New Mexico's 27-10 victory over UTEP. With so much roster turnover, Martin's leadership and skills will be more valuable than ever.



### 2022 RESULTS (2-10)

#### Maine (W 41-0)

Boise State (L 14-31)

#### UTEP (W 27-10)

@ LSU (L 0-38)

@ UNLV (L 20-31)

Wyoming (L 14-27)

@ New Mexico State (L 9-21)

Fresno State (L 9-41)

@ Utah State (L 10-27)

@ Air Force (L 3-35)

San Diego State (L 10-34)

@ Colorado State (L 0-17)

# LOBOS

### RECRUITING

2023 Class Ranking

# 126th

(Via 24/7 Sports)