



# STANFORD CARDINAL

2024 Record: 3-9 (2-6 ACC)

Atlantic Coast Conference

Stanford, CA

## Preseason Ranking

**TBD**

**HC: Frank Reich**  
(1st Year, 0-0)

**OC: Nate Byham**  
(1st Year)

**DC: Bobby April**  
(3rd Year)

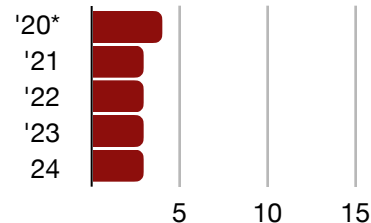
## 2025 Class Rankings

**Recruiting**  
**56**

**Transfer Portal**  
**54**

Via 24/7 Sports

## STANFORD WIN TREND



## 2024 Results (3-9)

TCU (L 27-34)  
Cal Poly (W 41-7)  
@ Syracuse (W 26-24)  
@ Clemson (L 14-40)  
Virginia Tech (L 7-31)  
@ Notre Dame (L 7-49)  
SMU (L 10-40)  
Wake Forest (L 24-27)  
@ NC State (L 28-59)  
**Louisville (W 38-35)**  
@ California (L 21-24)  
@ San Jose State (L 31-34)

**STANFORD**

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## Stanford Attempts to Build in the "Interim"

Stanford's offseason was tumultuous, to say the least. The arrival of new GM Andrew Luck brings a resurgence of energy to a program that has been spinning their wheels since 2018. What Jim Harbaugh and David Shaw were able to accomplish here over nearly two decades was significant, especially for an academically rigorous school like Stanford. To date, the Cardinal haven't been able to adjust to the NIL and portal era of college football. Will that change with Luck back at his alma mater?

One of the first things Luck did when he arrived on campus is fire Troy Taylor who went just 6-18 in his first two years and there were other, more serious, off the-field issues that led to his dismissal. Luck brings in his former coach Frank Reich to take the head coaching job, but on a one-year interim basis. Reich will be the stopgap until Luck finds a permanent head coach after this season. The Cardinal were already fighting an uphill battle prior to Taylor's firing late in the offseason in March, what can they salvage in 2025?

## OFFENSE

Ashton Daniels wasn't a great passer, but he was a major running threat from the quarterback position and his departure means that Stanford will need to replace both their leading passer and runner from 2024. **Elijah Brown's** return might have nudged Daniels a step closer to the portal and while Brown had a rough go of it as a true freshman with injuries and turnovers included, he may be the future at quarterback for Stanford. **Ben Gulbranson** (Oregon State) and **Dylan Rizk** (UCF) join the quarterback room in 2025. It's an open competition heading into fall camp and it wouldn't be surprising to see more than one quarterback (if not all three) take snaps in Honolulu.

The top three producers at the running back position all return although the group as a whole wasn't particularly effective. Recent years have seen a chasmous departure from the golden age of players like Toby Gerhart, Christian McCaffrey, Stepfan Taylor, and Bryce Love. A single McCaffrey season from 2015 (or 2016) would have topped the rushing production of the entire 2024 roster. The Cardinal won't be expecting that level of play from anyone in the unit, but they will need **Micah Ford**, **Chris Davis**, or **Cole Tabb** to step up. Shaky offensive line play certainly hasn't helped but there are three starters who return and there are portal backfills, too. **Kahlil House** and **Simone Pale** both saw significant snaps as true freshman and as a sophomore last year Pale started all 12 games.

Nearly half of the team's reception yards were credited to the talented Elic Ayomanor who was drafted by the Titans in the fourth round and who is reportedly turning heads in training camp. The rest of the wide receiver group departs as well including Emmett Mosley who registered 525 yards. **Sam Roush** does return at tight end after 40 catches for 334 yards. There are a number of transfers who will likely slide into bigger roles but there aren't a lot of known commodities on the roster.

## DEFENSE

The Stanford defense has been uncharacteristically shaky throughout the last few years and Bobby April has had a difficult time stopping anyone in his first two seasons as defensive coordinator. There were slight improvements made last year but the Cardinal still finished as one of the most porous defenses in the conference. The good news is that there are numerous key contributors who return and who are familiar with the system so Stanford should only improve on that side of the ball in 2025.

**Scotty Edwards** is the team's leading returning tackler who nearly doubled his output from 2023 with 80 tackles. **Mitch Leigber**, who has also played running back in his Cardinal career, is back at safety which gives the defense a senior pairing who have a combined 36 starts. The secondary was torched last season and San Jose State took full advantage in the series finale loss in which the Cardinal allowed a season-high 385 yards. Corners **Cam Richardson**, **Brandon Nicholson**, and **Collin Wright** all return.

The biggest improvement on defense last season was up front on the defensive line. In 2022, Stanford allowed opponents' ground games to resemble a runaway freight train (224 yards per game, 6.1 average) but those numbers dropped to 134 yards per game last season. Watch for **Tevarua Tafiti** at LB.

## MITCH LEIGBER – S

Photo via Stanford Athletics

## 2025 Stanford Schedule

Wk		
0	Sat, Aug 23	@ Hawaii
2	Sat, Sept 6	@ BYU
3	Sat, Sept 13	vs. Boston College
4	Sat, Sept 20	@ Virginia
5	Sat, Sept 27	vs. San Jose State
7	Sat, Oct 11	@ SMU
8	Sat, Oct 18	vs. Florida State
9	Sat, Oct 25	@ Miami (FL)
10	Sat, Nov 1	vs. Pittsburgh
11	Sat, Nov 8	@ North Carolina
13	Sat, Nov 22	vs. California
14	Sat, Nov 29	vs. Notre Dame

■ Home ■ Away ■ Neutral

## Key Games

**Sept 13 vs. Boston College:** The Eagles make the cross-country journey, can Stanford take advantage of some jet lag? An early opportunity for the Cardinal to steal a win in conference play at home.

**Sept 27 vs. San Jose State:** The "Bill Walsh Legacy Game" was resumed last season after a decade plus hiatus and the Spartans claimed a 34-31 win with a superior passing attack. This year SJSU will make the short jaunt to Palo Alto where the Cardinal will be waiting for revenge.

**Nov 22 vs. California:** Conference realignment has stolen far too many rivalry games but thankfully The Big Game isn't one of them.

## Player Spotlight

Photo via Sports Illustrated



### SAM ROUSH – TE

Roush has been the primary tight end for Stanford the past two seasons, a critically important position in Stanford's offense. He caught his first touchdown pass in a win against Cal Poly and added his second of the year against Wake Forest. He set career bests in just about every category and if Stanford evolves into a better passing team in 2025, expect the senior to be a major factor.

**2024 Stats: 40 REC, 334 YDS, 2 TD**

Photo via @stanfordfb on Instagram



### SCOTTY EDWARDS – S

Edwards brought his best game in Stanford's big upset over Louisville with a career-high 11 tackles. While his 80 tackles ranked second on the team, Stanford will probably hope for that number to go down and for fewer opponents to get to the second level where Edwards is waiting. The secondary was shredded for much of last season and Edwards will be a key catalyst in helping the Cardinal bounce back in 2025.

**2024 Stats: 80 TKL, 2 TFL, 2 PBU**

Photo via College Gridirons



**Stanford Stadium (50,424)**



**Cole  
TABB**

### SPECIAL TEAMS

Emmet Kenney posted a strong season, hitting 14 of 17 (and perfect inside of 40) with a long of 56 yards. Aidan Flintoft is back for his third season as Stanford's punter and his numbers should improve yet again. Tiger Bachmeier handled both kickoffs and punt returns and did so effectively including a 90-yard touchdown and the Cardinal will be looking for his replacement.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

The Cardinal haven't won more than two conference games since 2020, but two conference wins should be considered a success this season, especially if Stanford can pair those wins with a pair of wins against the Mountain West (Hawaii and San Jose State). Stanford was going to be facing a learning curve this season anyways and the Taylor firing, while likely the right decision, only adds to the challenge facing this problem. Last year, Stanford was an underdog in every game except one and their fate will be similar this year.

Reich has been a successful coach throughout his long career and the hope is that he instills important lessons and injects some life into this program even in the somewhat awkward one-year time frame. Can he put the Cardinal in a position to spring a big upset like Stanford did last year knocking off #22 Louisville as 21-point dogs? This season is quite literally a "transition year" and the record will most likely reflect it.

### Appointment Television



**Sat, Nov 22 - Time TBD**

The last few years of Stanford football have been highly disappointing but one of the biggest issues has been the Cardinal performance in The Big Game. Losers of four straight for the first time since the early 2000s, Stanford could have ended that streak last year and held a double-digit lead in last year's contest, but they lost on a last-minute touchdown. The 119th edition of the rivalry returns to The Farm.

### 2024 Statistics

Offense			Defense		
Statistic	Per Game	FBS Rank	Statistic	Per Game	FBS Rank
Points	22.8	106	Points	33.7	115
Rushing	132.7	93	Rushing	133.5	41
Passing	191.2	105	Passing	280.6	130
Total	323.9	120	Total	414.1	107
Sacks	39	123	Sacks	26	T-54

**2025 Projection**  
**2-10**  
**17th in ACC**

### Trophy Case

  
**X2**  
National  
Champions

**1926**  
**1940**

  
**XO**  
ACC  
Champions

  
**15-14-1**  
Bowl  
Record

  
**O**  
Playoff  
Appearances