IOWA STATE CYCLONES

Big 12 Conference

IOWA STATE BIO

National Championships - **0**

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Big 12 Championships: **2**
(Last: **1912**)

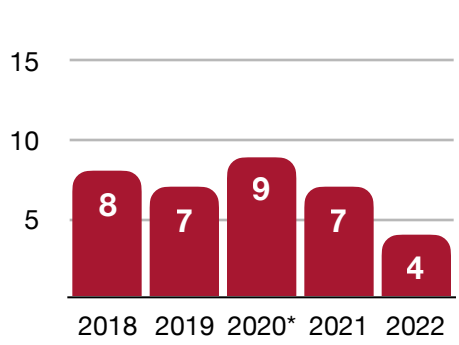
Location: **Ames, IA**

All-Time Record: **539-664-45**

2022 Results: **4-8**

Head Coach: **Matt Campbell**
8th Year (46-42)

5-YEAR WIN TREND



Jack Trice Stadium (61,500)

Cyclones to Prove 2022 An Anomaly

Matt Campbell has arguably been the best head coach in program history but there's no question that the 2022 season was a major disappointment for Iowa State. While there were expectations of bumps in the road following the departure of "Mr. Irrelevant" Brock Purdy, the school's all-time leading passer, the Cyclones' points per game plummeted from 31.3 to just 20.2. Purdy wasn't the only significant loss, Breece Hall wrapped up his Iowa State career with 3,941 yards, ranking second all-time in school history. Quarterback **Hunter Dekkers** was thrust into action after spending two seasons backing up Purdy and the results were mixed. The big lefty showed flashes of greatness but too often and interception, of which there were 14 last season, stopped a promising drive. He did complete 66.1% of his passes which actually led the conference so Dekkers isn't as far away from being one of the Big 12's better quarterbacks as some might think.

Dekkers did target Xavier Hutchinson a lot last season (who wouldn't?) and will now need other receivers to step up now that Hutchinson is a Houston Texan. **Jaylin Noel** hauled in 60 passes for 572 yards. **Dimitri Stanley** was next with 33 catches for 420 yards after spending his first four seasons with Colorado. **Jayden Higgins** should offer some support after transferring in from the FCS ranks (Eastern Kentucky). Completing easy passes to tight ends has historically be a big part of Campbell's offenses and that will likely remain true even with new offensive coordinator Nate Scheelhaase stepping in. That means **DeShawn Hanika** will be an option again after he recorded 17 catches for 244 yards and four touchdowns.

The run game understandably struggled to match the production of Breece Hall. A two-headed running back attack of **Jirehl Brock** and **Cartevious Norton** paced the Cyclone ground game that was unfortunately one of the least effective of any team in the country. Neither Brock or Norton were healthy, however, and the offensive line has several returning starters so the run game could be significantly improved. **Brady Petersen** is the only "newcomer" on the line but even he saw action in 11 different games. In addition to bolstering the run game, the offensive line will ideally give Dekker more time in the pocket which could help him eliminate some mistakes.

Despite just three returning starters on defense last season, the Iowa State defense had their best statistical season since Campbell took over the program in 2016. A part of that success can, of course, be attributed to first round draft pick Will McDonald and linebackers O'Rien Vance and Colby Reeder who are all gone, but there's still a lot of talent on the roster. **Gerry Vaughn** led the team with 71 tackles from his linebacker position and he's one of just three seniors in the projected starting lineup. The secondary was one of the best in the country last season and while they lose Anthony Johnson to the NFL, this unit remains strong. **TJ Tampa** is a talented corner with good size and his ten pass breakups and an interception earned him second-team All-Big-12 honors. His counterpart is **Myles Purchase** who made an appearance on the honorable mention team.

The Bottom Line: Campbell guided the Cyclones to five straight bowl games prior to 2022. I expect for the offense to be better and for the defense to remain at the elite level that they've sustained over the past three seasons, in particular. If both of those predictions come to fruition, then the Cyclones will almost certainly go bowling. They'll also be dangerous enough to throw the Big 12 into chaos with an upset or two. However, the schedule is quite challenging and arguably the toughest in the Big 12. The non-conference schedule is sneaky difficult. Northern Iowa has played the Cyclones tough in the past and made it to the FCS Championship game last year. Iowa State hosts the Cy-Hawk rivalry and then takes an unusual road trip to MAC-favorites Ohio. The conference schedule is loaded and Iowa State inconveniently misses the 10th, 12th, and 14th ranked teams in our preseason standings. Despite the difficulties, the defense should keep the team in nearly every game they play just like last season, with the exception of the season finale.

Projection: 6-6 (9th in Big 12)

Note: This article was written prior to the information about Dekkers and others being charged with illegally betting on sports. At time of publishing, the consequences are unknown but this issue has a chance to disrupt Iowa State's entire season in what could be a long year in Ames.

2022 Statistics

Points Scored	Rush Yards	Pass Yards	Turnover Margin
20.2	108.0	261.8	-7
114th in FBS	116th in FBS	38th in FBS	T-116th in FBS

Points Allowed	Rush YDS Allowed	Pass YDS Allowed
20.3	107.3	178.3
18th in FBS	56th in FBS	10th in FBS

2023 Iowa State Schedule		
Week	**Date**	**Team**
1	Sat, Sept 2	vs. Northern Iowa
2	Sat, Sept 9	vs. Iowa
3	Sat, Sept 16	@ Ohio
4	Sat, Sept 23	**vs. Oklahoma St.**
5	Sat, Sept 30	**@ Oklahoma**
6	Sat, Oct 7	**vs. TCU**
7	Sat, Oct 14	**@ Cincinnati**
8	Bye Week	
9	Sat, Oct 28	**@ Baylor**
10	Sat, Nov 4	**vs. Kansas**
11	Sat, Nov 11	**@ BYU**
12	Sat, Nov 18	**vs. Texas**
13	Sat, Nov 25	**@ Kansas State**

Conference Games in Bold

KEY GAMES

Sat, Sept 9: vs. Iowa - The Hawkeyes have had the upper hand in the series as of late but the Cyclones put an end to a six game win streak in Iowa City last year. Both teams will be desperately searching for offense this year, but it's almost always a safe bet to expect a defensive slugfest for the Cy-Hawk.
Sat, Oct 7: vs. TCU - Iowa State played every team close except for the season finale disaster in which the Horned Frogs hung 62 on the Cyclones. Can Iowa State hang tight with TCU at Jack Trice?
Sat, Nov 25: @ Kansas State - Who doesn't love some season ending "Farmaggedon"? Kansas State narrowly escaped with a 10-9 victory and the defending Big 12 Champions will be tough at home.

KEY PLAYERS

Hunter Dekkers - QB

Dekkers had an up and down season that was unfortunately marred by interceptions and red zone struggles. However, there's no denying his arm talent and potential. He was asked to do a lot (457 pass attempts) given a stagnant running game and should be better supported this season. He gained experience in several close games last season and it's now time for him to perform in the clutch.

T.J. Tampa - CB

A second-team All-Big-12 member, Tampa was a key cog in Iowa State's dominant pass defense in 2022 and his return to the Cyclones means he'll once again be one of the best lock-down corners in the conference. He forced a fumble at the goal line against Iowa that very well may have been the difference in the Cyclones' defensive-minded 10-7 victory. As the elder statesman of the secondary, he'll need to make more big plays in 2023.

2022 RESULTS (4-8)

SE Missouri State (W 42-10)
@ Iowa (W 10-7)
Ohio (W 43-10)
Baylor (L 24-31)
@ Kansas (L 11-14)
Kansas State (L 9-10)
@ Texas (L 21-24)
Oklahoma (L 13-27)
West Virginia (W 31-14)
@ Oklahoma State (L 14-20)
Texas Tech (L 10-14)
@ TCU (L 14-62)

CYCLONES

RECRUITING

2023 Class Ranking

41st

(Via 24/7 Sports)