



# TEXAS A&M AGGIES

SEC - West Division

## The \$85 Million Decision

The price tag to fire Jimbo Fisher was \$85 million after last season. Nobody could have expected Texas A&M to even consider firing Fisher back in 2021 when he signed a 10-year, \$95 million contract, the biggest fully guaranteed contract in the history of college football. At the time, the Aggies were coming off a 9-1 season in 2020 and would have made both their first SEC Championship game and College Football Playoff appearance if not for a blowout loss to the eventual national champions Alabama. Even though the Aggies had to replace their all-time leading quarterback Kellen Mond (9,661 yards) heading into 2021, A&M was ranked #6 in preseason but started just 3-2 with back-to-back sluggish losses against Arkansas and Mississippi State although they did shock #1 Alabama 41-38 in their next game. The Aggies also lost two of their last three games to finish 8-4 although those losses were only by a combined 27 points.

After a disappointing finish to the 2021 season, Jimbo Fisher brought in the best recruiting class in the country and expectations skyrocketed again in College Station. The Aggies once again entered the season ranked #6 and with expectations of taking down Alabama to win the West title. Instead, disaster struck. Appalachian State pulled off another all-time great upset and shocked the Aggies at home 17-14. Three weeks later, A&M dropped a game at Mississippi State and proceeded to lose six games in a row although they ironically nearly defeated Alabama even in the midst of that slide. A season finale win over #6 LSU salvaged at least some kind of momentum at the end of the season but by pretty much all accounts the 2022 campaign was a colossal failure. If not for the \$85 buy-out fee, Fisher would have almost certainly been fired and while he did have a great season in 2020 he has never reached double digit wins in College Station. The buy-out money decreases each season Fisher is here so the pressure will only increase for the former national-championship-winning head coach to figure things out.


Several freshman from the uber-talented 2022 class played immediately for the Aggies and while there were noticeable growing pains throughout the season, the experience could pay big dividends this year. Quarterback **Conner Weigman** was one of those freshman who saw the field. He started the final four games of the season and was arguably the most effective option of the three that played for the Aggies. **Max Johnson** also returns at quarterback and the two combined for 11 touchdowns and no interceptions in 203 attempts. They will be working in a new offense with former Arkansas and Louisville head coach Bobby Petrino joining the coaching staff at offensive coordinator although there's been some debate about whether Fisher will truly relinquish play calling duties to Petrino. For the team's sake, he probably should after the offense scored just 22.8 points per game last season. **Evan Stewart** led the team at receiver as a freshman with 53 catches and 649 yards and **Moose Muhammed** was a big-play threat with 610 yards and 16.1 yards per catch. Now sophomore **Noah Thomas** could make a bigger impact this year. If **Ainias Smith** is healthy, he'll offer a huge lift to the passing game. The biggest loss felt by the offense is jack-of-all-trades running back Devon Achane who had over 1,500 all-purpose yards. **Le'Veon Moss** and **Amari Daniels** will need to step up and freshman **Rueben Owens** could make an immediate impact. The offensive line should be one of the best in the conference if they can stay healthy.

The A&M defense allowed just 15.9 points per game in 2021 and if the Aggies want to get back to contention in the SEC the defense will need to reflect their play from 2021 as opposed to the 21.2 points they allowed in 2022. The Aggies were somehow simultaneously the passing defense (in terms of yardage) and one of the worst rushing defenses in the entire country. The return of **McKinnley Jackson** and **Fadil Diggs** should bolster the line and the secondary only got better when Fisher added cornerback **Tony Grimes** from North Carolina.

**The Bottom Line:** The talent is undeniable on this team and is the reason they are ranked in the AP Poll preseason Top 25 in 2023 despite doing nothing to earn that ranking last year. A&M has underachieved so badly in the past two seasons that it's hard for me to predict A&M actually competing at the top of the SEC although nearly every main contributor from last year's team is back. This season will come down to how well Fisher and the staff were able to develop the influx of young talent.

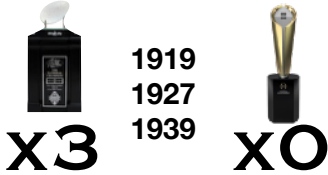
## Projection: 8-4 (4th in SEC West)

### 2022 Statistics

Points Scored <b>22.8</b> 101st in FBS	Rush Yards <b>141.5</b> 81st in FBS	Pass Yards <b>219.4</b> 84th in FBS	Turnover Margin <b>-1</b> 78th in FBS
Points Allowed <b>21.2</b> 25th in FBS	Rush YDS Allowed <b>208.8</b> 123rd in FBS	Pass YDS Allowed <b>156.2</b> 1st in FBS	

### TEXAS A&M BIO

National Championships - 3



SEC Championships: 0

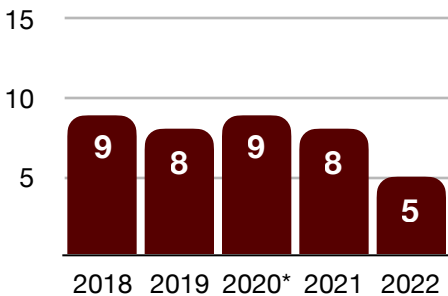
Location: College Station, TX

All-Time Record: 749-485-44

2022 Results: 5-7












Head Coach: Jimbo Fisher  
6th Year (39-21)

### 5-YEAR WIN TREND



Kyle Field (102,733)

## 2023 Texas A&M Schedule

Week	Date	Team
1	Sat, Sept 2	 vs. New Mexico
2	Sat, Sept 9	 @ Miami (FL)
3	Sat, Sept 16	 vs. ULM
4	Sat, Sept 23	 vs. Auburn
5	Sat, Sept 30	 vs. Arkansas
6	Sat, Oct 7	 vs. Alabama
7	Sat, Oct 14	 @ Tennessee
8	Bye Week	
9	Sat, Oct 28	 vs. S. Carolina
10	Sat, Nov 4	 @ Mississippi
11	Sat, Nov 11	 vs. Mississippi St
12	Sat, Nov 18	 vs. Abilene Chr
13	Sat, Nov 25	 @ LSU

Conference Games in Bold

### KEY GAMES

**Sat, Sept 9: @ Miami (FL)** - Last year's meeting against the Hurricanes was the definition of an "ugly win" but the Aggies found a way to win 17-9. Both teams suffered miserable 5-7 seasons and will be desperate to claim a big win early in the season.

**Sat, Oct 7: vs. Alabama** - The Aggies defeated the Crimson Tide in a thrilling victory the last time these two teams met in College Station (2021) and were just a couple of plays away from winning in Tuscaloosa last season. Can the Aggies find more magic?

**Sat, Nov 25: @ LSU** - A&M essentially ruined LSU's College Football Playoff hopes in last season's finale (38-23). Will they have the same opportunity in 2023 or will the Aggies be playing for more than that?

### KEY PLAYERS

#### Evan Stewart - WR



Even though Stewart was catching passes from three different quarterbacks over the course of the season, he was one of the few consistent options on an offense that labored to score any points. He caught 53 passes for 649 yards in just 10 games and scored a touchdown against Arkansas and Mississippi. His breakout game occurred against Alabama (8 catches, 106 yards) and he had another impactful performance against Florida (8 catches, 120 yards). He did all of that as a true freshman and the ceiling of his potential is sky high.

#### Demani Richardson - S



For the fifth straight season, Richardson will anchor the A&M secondary at safety. He led the team with a career-high 73 tackles and he caught his fourth career interception against Auburn. With 43 starts in an Aggies uniform he provides an excellent example to the young roster.

### 2022 RESULTS (5-7)

#### Sam Houston (W 31-0)

Appalachian State (L 14-17)

#### Miami (FL) (W 17-9)

#### Arkansas (W 23-21)

@ Mississippi State (L 24-42)

@ Alabama (L 20-24)

@ South Carolina (L 24-30)

Mississippi (L 28-31)

Florida (L 24-41)

@ Auburn (L 10-13)

#### UMass (W 20-3)

#### LSU (W 38-23)

# TEXAS A&M

### RECRUITING

2023 Class Ranking

# 15th

(Via 24/7 Sports)