



Stanford's Rebuild Begins in Earnest

The San Francisco Bay Area has seen better days from their college football teams. Neither Stanford nor California made a bowl game last year. California has a coach on the hot seat and Stanford is now breaking in a new head coach after parting ways with longtime leader David Shaw. From 2009-2018 the Cardinal won at least 8 games, including two Rose Bowl victories. Shaw took over a program that Jim Harbaugh had rebuilt and ran it extraordinarily well. Yet, in the last four years there has been a total reverse in fortunes. In those seasons Stanford went 14-28 overall and missed out on a bowl game in every year. Stanford will look to start anew with Troy Taylor coming over from FCS Sacramento State. He comes in with an impressive track record after turning the Hornets program from a perennial punch bag to legitimate contenders in the FCS.

In the height of the power, Stanford was known for great consistency and "intellectual brutality". You could count on incredibly strong offensive lines, dominating running backs, and the occasional star at quarterback such as Andrew Luck and Kevin Hogan. Taylor's background as a coach doesn't necessarily fit this model, but he understands the region and how to develop underutilized talent. The "intellectual brutality" had dissipated over the last few years, anyway, and so too had Stanford's consistency. Last season, Stanford pulled a stunner in South Bend with a 16-14 victory over Notre Dame but were also blown out by several opponents including Washington State.

Last season, Stanford ranked just 117th in rushing yards despite improving by nearly 20 yards per game from 2021. Running back **E.J. Smith** will be leaned on heavily this season and needs to stay healthy which is something he struggled with last season as he missed all but 2 games. **Benjamin Yurosek** has the chance to have another productive year (and become the next tight end Stanford sends to the draft). A quality target, he has 92 catches and 1,103 receiving yards over the last two seasons. Tight end is one of the focal points of Taylor's offensive scheme, so he could be poised for an even bigger year.

The quarterback position is far more unsettled after Tanner McKee left for the NFL. Currently it's still an open battle between four quarterbacks: **Ari Patu**, **Ashton Daniels**, **Justin Lamson** (Syracuse transfer), and **Myles Jackson**. Jackson appears to be the future at the position after being a reclassified four star recruit, but whoever starts will have big shoes to fill. Stanford may have fallen from their track record of success, but talent at the quarterback position is not to blame. McKee and **Davis Mills** before him were plenty talented to continue the winning ways, but failure on the offensive line and running back position often put the burden of winning on them. Perhaps the scheme change and a healthier running back room will allow the offense to regroup this season no matter who the signal caller is.

The inability to run the ball and dominate time of possession has hurt the defense, but it's still no excuse to surrender 434 yards per game. Ranking 114th in total defense last year, former Wisconsin OLB coach Bobby April III is coming in as the new defensive coordinator. April was part of a coaching staff that continuously had the Badgers ranked in the top 30 in total defense and hopes to bring that same success to Palo Alto. There is some leftover talent to work including linebacker **David Bailey** who had a team high 7.5 tackles for loss his freshman year. With academic hindrances, there are few quick fixes to be found in the transfer portal for Stanford, so some patience, especially on defense is warranted.

The Bottom Line: Only six returning starters is a significant issue for any team but especially for a team like Stanford who is already going through a significant rebuild from top to bottom. It's unfortunate to see a program of this caliber fall this low, but here's to hoping Taylor and company can build Stanford back up, and (somewhat) quickly. The schedule is brutal given the strength of the conference but games against Hawaii and Sacramento State (Taylor's old team) are the most obvious "wins" to pencil in on the schedule. Three or four wins would feel like a relative success this season but I am unfortunately not very optimistic about the Cardinal this season.

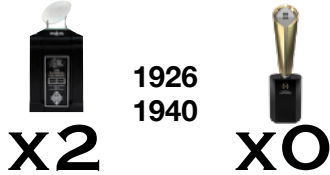
Projection: 2-10 (12th in PAC-12)

2022 Statistics

Points Scored 21.3 109th in FBS	Rush Yards 107.3 117th in FBS	Pass Yards 254.3 44th in FBS	Turnover Margin -10 T-122nd in FBS
Points Allowed 32.2 113th in FBS	Rush YDS Allowed 224.4 127th in FBS	Pass YDS Allowed 209.7 40th in FBS	

STANFORD BIO

National Championships - 2



PAC-12 Championships: **15**
(Last: **2015**)

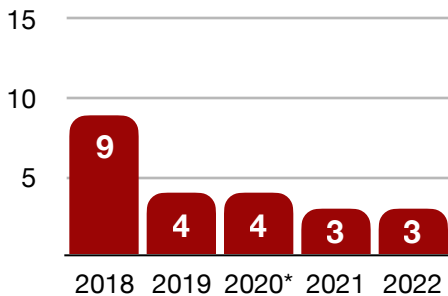
Location: **Stanford, CA**

All-Time Record: **593-470-34**

2022 Results: **3-9**













Head Coach: **Troy Taylor**
1st Year (0-0)

5-YEAR WIN TREND



Stanford Stadium (50,424)

2023 Stanford Schedule

Week	Date	Team
1	Fri, Sept 1	 @ Hawaii
2	Sat, Sept 9	 @ USC
3	Sat, Sept 16	 vs. Sacramento St
4	Sat, Sept 23	 vs. Arizona
5	Sat, Sept 30	 vs. Oregon
6	Bye Week	
7	Fri, Oct 13	 @ Colorado
8	Sat, Oct 21	 vs. UCLA
9	Sat, Oct 28	 vs. Washington
10	Sat, Nov 4	 @ Washington St.
11	Sat, Nov 11	 @ Oregon State
12	Sat, Nov 18	 vs. California
13	Sat, Nov 25	 vs. Notre Dame

Conference Games in Bold

KEY GAMES

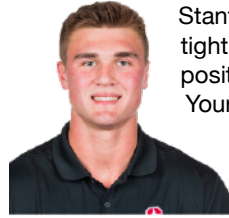
Sat, Sept 16: vs. Sacramento State - This could be somewhat of an awkward early season matchup as Taylor faces off against the team he essentially helped build from scratch.

Fri, Oct 13: @ Colorado - Facing off against another rebuilding program and another first year coach should provide an interesting matchup and a midseason measuring stick for the Cardinal.

Sat, Nov 18: vs. California - "The Big Game" has lost some of its luster, but if Cal is spiraling in late November, Stanford could be positioned to deal the final blow. Isn't that what rivals dream of? In any case, the Cardinal will be seeking revenge for a 41-11 blowout the last time these two met in Stanford.

KEY PLAYERS

Benjamin Yurosek - TE



A quality tight end is a quarterback's best friend. Stanford has a storied history of sending standout tight ends to the NFL and they ask a lot out of the position. With so much in flux under a new regime, Yours needs to have a strong season in pass protection, run blocking, and receiving. Doing so will alleviate pressure from the quarterback position and his draft stock will soar.

E.J. Smith - RB

A quality back in his own r right, the son of Emmitt Smith could (literally) carry Stanford back to their roots. Averaging almost seven yard a cary last season, he clearly has the ability and talent, but injuries have plagued his career so far and he has only taken 56 carries over the last three seasons. His 87-yard sprint to the end zone against Colgate gave Stanford fans a taste of what could be coming in 2023.



2022 RESULTS (3-9)

Colgate (W 41-10)

USC (L 28-41)

Washington (L 22-40)

@ Oregon (L 27-45)

Oregon State (L 27-28)

@ Notre Dame (W 16-14)

Arizona State (W 15-14)

@ UCLA (L 13-38)

Washington State (L 14-52)

@ Utah (L 7-42)

@ California (L 20-27)

BYU (L 26-35)

CARDINAL™

RECRUITING

2023 Class Ranking

45th

(Via 24/7 Sports)