

ALABAMA A&M BULLDOGS

POSITION OUTLOOK FOR 2022

QUARTERBACKS - Glass started nine games as a true freshman in '17 and has served as a team captain since '18. In '19 Glass threw for 3,500 (61%) with a 32-11 ratio in. He followed that up by throwing for at least three touchdowns in each game and sported a 16/4 ratio in the spring. Glass threw for 339 ypg (7th in FCS) and was averaging 310 ypg through the air since the start of the '19 season. Glass was named Walter Payton Award finalist, BOXTOROW National Player of the Year, SWAC Offensive Player of the Year, and SWAC Championship Game MVP. Last year he threw for 3,568 (62.6%) with a 36-7 ratio. He topped 400 passing yards in five of their 10 games. The Bulldogs biggest challenge this year is replacing a 2x SWAC Offensive Player of the Year. They added Miami transfer Jarren Williams (PS#25) who started who started 10 games in '19 and threw for 2,187 (19-7). Xavier Lankford (4-7-31-0-1) and Quincy Casey (1-3-25-0-1) are competing for the backup spot. The addition of Williams means they won't have a huge drop off but he is unlikely to match Glass' superb production.

RUNNING BACKS - A&M lost their top rusher from '19 in Jordan Bentley who had 1,417 (5.2) and 18 td's. George Quarles was #2 in '18 with 281 (4.2). He was decent in spring, rushing for 287 but only 3.8. Last year Quarles topped 100 in each of his first 3 games and had 162 vs Texas Southern in their road finale. He finished with 955 (4.7) and 10 td's along with 224 receiving (10.7). Their #2 rusher was Harold Jemison with just 131 (7.7). Quarles returns this year. HC Maynor seems to prefer a workhorse approach with their lead rusher getting a vast majority of the carries each of the last 3 seasons. Quarles is first team All-SWAC and if he stays healthy he could be their first 1,000 yard rusher since '19.

RECEIVERS - Alabama A&M had two WR's top 1,000 yards in '19. Zabrian Moore had 1,057 (18.2) and Abdul-Fatai Ibrahim had 1,004 (17.0). Both returned in spring and Moore led with 363 and a wild 27.9 ypc. Ibrahim had 338 (14.1) while Odieu Hilaire was #3 with 233 (13.7). This was the top WR corps in the SWAC last year. Ibrahim had 176 vs Texas Southern and led with 1,008 (15.0). Hilaire was #1 in catches with 71 and 102 in yards with 918 (12.9). Oklahoma St transfer Dee Anderson (PS#43, orig LSU) was #3 with 493 (14.9) and led with 12 td's. Moore played all 10 games but only finished with 391 (18.6). Hilaire, Anderson and Moore all depart this year. Ibrahim returns and they added transfers Isiah Cox (Ohio, PS#248, 1,476 17.0 4Y), Jeremiah Payton (Miami, PS#16, 6 rec 2Y), Keenan Hambrick (W Carolina, 11 rec 2Y) and Darin Turner (Ark, PS#28). Brian Jenkins had 221 (14.7) in just 4 games. They lost 3 of their top 4 and the school's career leading passer is gone so regardless of the transfers they won't be as productive.

OFFENSIVE LINE - The Bulldogs rushed for 156 (4.7) and allowed 25 sacks in '19, both similar numbers to the previous season. They lost 4 starters heading into spring and dipped to 113 (3.4) and allowed 9 sacks (5.7%). This was still a young Oline last year and the Bulldogs rushed for 113 (3.6) and allowed 27 sacks (6.4%). This year A&M returns 3 starters including 3rd Team All-SWAC RT Jonathan Williams and they add FAU transfer Sebastian Dolcine. They lose LG Jonathan Timmons and RG's Israel Muzwika and Eddie Maxon. They are

more experienced this year so we look for them to be more productive.

DEFENSIVE LINE - A&M's run D took a nose dive in '19 when they allowed 217 (5.1). They had all 4 starters back in the spring and allowed just 144 (4.2) and had 11 sacks (7.9%) in their 4 games. They took a huge hit going into fall when their #2 tkl'r and sack leader Marcus Cushnie transferred to Florida St. They still had 3 starters back from '19 but allowed 193 (5.8) rush ypg and produced just 13 sacks (4%). This year they lose Trenel Troutman (#5 tkl'r, 6.5 tfl, 3 int), Breon Austin (#11 tkl'r, 2 sk, 3.5 tfl), Aaron Robinson (#19 tkl'r, 2.5 tfl) and Selmar Russell (#20 tkl'r, 3.5 tfl). The Bulldogs get two starters back in Phillip Hopkins (#3 tkl'r, 2.5 sk, 2.5 tfl) and Drey Carter (#6 tkl'r, 2.5 sk, 1.5 tfl). Only two of their top 6 are back. They added FIU transfer Rashad Colson (PS#178, 1 st, 4 tkl). They are inexperienced again but there 2 best DL are back so if they add more transfers they might surprise.

LINEBACKERS - In '19 Armoni Holloway led with 114 tackles and 14.5 tfl's. They lost 2 starters in spring. Holloway led again with 20 tackles (4 tfl) in 4 games. Last year this was still a young unit outside of Holloway. He led with 43 tackles. Brandon Bailey was #4 with 31 tackles. Dimitris Biamby had 20 tackles (2.5 tfl) and Richard Calloway had 15 tackles. This year they lose 4th Team All-SWAC LB Holloway and Bailey. The two LB's they lost totaled 74 tackles while the 3 that return had 48. Only 1 starter is back so they are down a notch but most of their depth returns.

DEFENSIVE BACKS - In '19 Alabama A&M allowed a SWAC high 30 td passes against just 12 int's. They finished 7th in pass D efficiency, allowing 220 pass ypg (56.1%). In spring they allowed 199 pass ypg and 56.8% but only a 7-5 ratio. All 4 starters from '19 were gone. Last year they allowed 237 pass ypg (55.8%, 23-8) and finished 7th again in Pass D Efficiency in the SWAC. This year they lose CB Amari Holloway (#7 tkl'r, 2 pd, 4 tfl), Trenton McGhee (#9 tkl'r, 2 tfl), Ja'Marian Green (#14 tkl'r), Caleb Riley (#16 tkl'r, 4 pd) and Demarco Gibson (#18 tkl'r, 2 pd). Three of their top 8 tacklers are back including JaBraun McNeal (#2 tkl'r). They are more experienced entering this season despite the losses and added Florida St transfer Carlos Becker (PS#41, 2 st, 33 tkl 2Y) and Marquez Beason (Illinois).

SPECIAL TEAMS - Spencer Corey was made 8 of 12 field goals between '19 and the spring season (L/43). He made 7 of 9 fg's (L/43). Troy Lendvay had a 37.9 average in spring and increased his average to 41.1 with a 35.8 net last year. Terrell Gardner had a 22.7 KR average on 12 attempts and Cameron young had 22.0 on 11 attempts. Lendvay is back but Spencer departs so they are down a notch.

COACHES - Connell Maynor is in his 5th year as head coach at Alabama A&M. He has a 25-13 record here and was a finalist for the Eddie Robinson Award in '18. He was also the HC at Hampton and Winston Salem St. The 5th year OC is Duane Taylor who was also the OC at Hampton under Maynor. 2nd year DC Granville Eastman was DC at NC Central from '14-'17 and Interim Head Coach as well. He was the DC at Austin Peay from '05-'13. He was also DC at Tiffin for 3 years. The Bulldogs don't have a designated ST's Coordinator.

FORECAST

OFFENSE - A&M averaged just 18 ppg and 289 ypg in '18. They brought in HC Maynor in '18 and immediately increased to 28 ppg and 392 ypg. Against SWAC foes they put up 31 ppg and 422 ypg. They found another bump in '19 when they put up 34 ppg and 461 ypg. They also averaged 41 ypg more than their foes allowed on average (#23 in FCS). They lost their top rusher and most of their Oline but returned QB Glass and put up 40 ppg and 452 ypg in the spring's 4 game season. In the fall they they were #7 in the FCS with 38 ppg and 481 ypg. This year 5 starters are back. They lose the 2x SWAC Offensive POY in Glass and 3 of their top 4 receivers are gone. The running game should be improved and the addition of Miami transfer QB Jarren Williams should help them move on but it's highly unlikely they will be as explosive. This should still be one of the top offenses in the SWAC regardless.

DEFENSE - In '19 A&M allowed 33 ppg and 438 ypg. They were 4th in Scoring D and 3rd in Total D. In the spring season they allowed 24 ppg and 342 ypg. Last year they had 5 starters back from '19. They fell to 9th in both scoring D, allowing 35.1 ppg and Total D at 426 ypg. This year the Bulldogs only get 9 of their top 20 tacklers back. They do have 5 starters back and 5 of their top 10 tacklers return. They added a few transfer additions that could help immediately and the secondary is actually more experienced so they might make a slight improvement.

2022 - When Cornell Maynor was hired in '18 A&M was coming off a 4-7 season (3-5 vs SWAC) where they were -9 TO's and +54 ypg against conference foes. They started '18 1-3 then won 5 of their next 7 for their first winning season since '12 (+73 ypg vs SWAC). In '19 they went 7-5 but were -10 ypg vs their SWAC brethren. The Bulldogs won all 4 of their spring games and were +109 ypg. They won their first SWAC Title since 2006, beating Arkansas Pine-Bluff 40-33. Last year A&M won their opener by 1 point over South Carolina St, getting an interception on the final drive. They never trailed Bethune-Cookman but only won by a fg. After a 3-0 start they lost their next 3. They held a 477-275 yard edge at Grambling but lost by 9 thanks to a -4 TO margin. They allowed 10 sacks vs Jackson St and were smoked 61-15 then lost to Florida A&M by 4 but were outgained 524-296. They won their last 4 games with only one being close to finish 7-3 and were +49 ypg. This year they have 10 starters back. They travel to FAMU and play Jackson St in Mobile, AL in the Gulf Coast Challenge. Their cross division games are against SWAC West Champs Prairie View A&M and an improving Arkansas Pine-Bluff. The Bulldogs were picked 3rd behind Jackson St and FAMU by the media. Their first two games are at UAB and Troy and if they don't beat Austin Peay on 9/17 they could be staring at an 0-3 start with a trip to FAMU on deck. We don't see them matching last year's 7 win season.