

TEXAS A&M AGGIES



OT Jake Matthews
QB Johnny Manziel

POSITION OUTLOOK FOR 2013

QUARTERBACKS - Ryan Tannehill began his career playing WR (#1 rec '08) but took over the QB spot and had a record setting '11 season throwing for 3,744 (62%, 29-15, 306 rush). He was a #1DC and st'd for Miami as a rookie. LY it was a 3-man battle between soph Jameil Showers (PS#41, strongest arm, 5 att '11), soph Matt Joeckel (PS#53) and the athletic rFr Johnny Manziel (PS#26). VHT Matt Davis (PS#6, Kevin Sumlin recruit, IFS) RS. Despite Showers being #1 out of the spring, I projected Manziel as the starter and he had a storybook season. He was the first frosh QB to start an opener here s/44 and had an SEC record of 557 tt yds (Ole Miss Archie Manning 540 '69, LSU's Rohan Davey '01 vs Ark. He reset the record with 576 vs LT (395 pass, 181 rush). "Johnny Football" broke the NCAA frosh QB rushing record (Brad Smith Mizzou '02) and set the SEC and NCAA frosh record for tt yds (5116, #1 NCAA ypg). He became the first frosh in FBS history to pass for 3,000 with at least 1,000 rush. Manziel threw for 3,706 (68.0%, 26-9) and was the #1 rusher (1410, 7.0, 21 td) becoming the first frosh ever to take home the Heisman. However, the last 2 Heisman Trophy winners that ret'd did not finish in the Top 10 the next year. Showers transferred to UTEP. Manziel returns for his soph season and it will be tough to top LY's stats but this unit is a lot more exp'd and it will be fun to watch "Johnny Football" again in '13.

RUNNING BACKS - A&M had just one 1,000 yd rusher from 1999-09 (Courtney Lewis 1024 in '03). The top rusher in '08 had just 406 (4.3). True frosh Christine Michael (PS#6) led in '09 with 844 (5.1) while Cyrus Gray (PS#13) added 757 (4.8). In '10 I said the Aggies should finally produce a 1,000 yd rusher. Michael was on his way with 631 (5.0) but he was OFY after 8. Gray, who had 195 in the first 6, became A&M's first RB s/'88 to top 100 in 7 str gms (1133, 5.7). In '11, Michael's season was cut short after 9 gms (899, 6.0). Gray, in just 5 sts, had 1,045 (5.3) and when both were inj'd vs Texas, soph Ben Malena (PS#31) rushed for 83 (3.3) and finished as the #3 RB (259, 3.9). LY they had to replace Gray. Michael missed gm 2 (sus) and was never 100%. Malena had 142 vs Ole Miss and 112 vs MSt and was the top RB with 808 (5.9). Michael (417, 4.7) had just 2 sts. Sumlin recruit true frosh Trey Williams (PS#4) had 109 vs Aub and was the #3 RB (376, 5.8). TY they lose Michael (#2DC SEA) and I expect either explosive Trey Williams or Okla transfer Brandon Williams (PS#5) to take over as the feature back. Added to the mix is fellow transfer Tra Carson (6'0" 227 So, PS#64) who had 254 (5.6) as a true at Oreg in '11. This is a deep group and looks even stronger.

RECEIVERS - Jeff Fuller (630, 12.6, A&M rec 9 td '08) missed 4 in '09 and was #3 (568, 13.9). True frosh Uzoma Nwachukwu (PS#43) led with 708 (17.7). In '10 Fuller shattered Bob Long's career td record (19, '66-'68) with 28. Surprisingly, A&M had never produced a 1,000 yd receiver until Fuller led with 1,066 (14.8). Ryan Swope was #2 (825, 11.5) and a banged up Nwachukwu had just 407 (11.3). Fuller was never really 100% in '11 and had "just" 828 (11.8) While Swope earned 2nd Tm B12 with a schl rec 1,207 (13.6). LY despite the loss of Fuller, I rated it my #1 rec corps in the SEC. Nwachukwu was #3 (485, 18.7). 6's rFr Mike Evans became Manziel's favorite target (9 gms 80+) and had 1,105 (13.5). Swope was #2 (913, 12.7). True frosh Thomas Johnson (PS#7) had 2 sts (339, 11.3). TY they lose Swope (12 st, #6DC ARZ), Nwachukwu (13 st), Kenric McNeal (7 st, 265, 13.9), TE Michael Lamothe (3 st, 2 rec) and Johnson (withdrew). With the loss of their career leader, and 3 of the top 4, this unit may be down a notch but they do add in 6 VHT's incl a PS#1.

OFFENSIVE LINE - In '11 A&M had to replace a 2nd Tm B12 C but had 9 of the top 10 back (86 car sts). They improved to 199 ypg rush (5.1) and were #4 in the FBS allowing just 9 sks (1.7%). LY they had to replace a 2Y starting G but had 4 st's back incl their outstanding OT combo of Luke Joeckel and Jake Matthews. I billed them as the SEC's #2 OL (95 car sts). The "Maroon Goons" had 418 tt yds vs Bama and improved their numbers to 242 ypg rush and an outstanding 5.9 ypc but all'd 23 sks (4.7%). Having a 1,410 yd QB rusher helped and no starts were lost to inj. TY they lose C Patrick Lewis (13 st, 4Y st'r) and 1st Tm AA Joeckel (13 st, 3Y st'r, #1DC JAX). They ret 1st Tm AA Matthews who moves to LT and while their car sts drop to 73, this still figures to be one of the top OL's in the country.

DEFENSIVE LINE - In '11 A&M had 1 st'r back but allowed just 102 ypg rush (2.6) and led the NCAA with 51 sks. LY they had to replace a 3rd Tm B12 DT (13 st, 3 sk), a 2nd Tm B12 DT (13 st, 56 tkl, 5 sk) and a bkp (1 st, 26 tkl, 2 sk). They switched to a 4-3 and moved 3rd Tm B12 LB Damonte Moore to DE and Jonathan Mathis (7 st '10, 3 st inj'd '11) ret'd. With the loss of a couple of 300 lb DT's, I expected the rush ypg to go up and the sks to decrease. Despite A&M's great success, they slipped to 140 ypg rush (3.7) and only totalled 31 sks, even though Moore had 85 tkl, 12.5 sk and 8.5 tfl. TY they lose 1st Tm AA DE Moore (13 st, #3DC NYG), NG Spencer Nealy (13 st, 42 tkl, 7.5 tfl, outplayed Ala C Barrett Jones) and Mathis (23 tkl). They have 2 ret st's (same as LY) but lose their top 2.

LINEBACKERS - With its Wrecking Crew defense, A&M used to be known as "Linebacker U" but they had a dry spell at the position and in '10 no former Aggie was playing the position in the NFL. Von Miller changed that as he was the Butkus Award winner in '10. In '11 they had to replace Miller (#1DC) but ret'd their #2 and #3 tkl'rs and slipped to all'g 28.2 ppg. LY they had to replace an ILB (#10 tkl'r), then Moore moved to DE. They did ret their #1, #3 & #5 tkl'rs. The Aggies improved to 21.8 ppg. This year they lose MLB Jonathan Stewart (13 st, #2 tkl'r, 2.5 sk) and Sean Porter (13 st, #5 tkl'r, 3.5 sk, 3 tfl, #4DC CIN). They return their #3 and #12 tkl'rs but are less exp'd.

DEFENSIVE BACKS - In '10 A&M was #14 in my PDR and the entire 2-deep ret'd in '11. Their top cover corner CB was inj'd (2 st) and a SS missed 6. It was still surprising they fell to #51 (62%, 19-7). LY the losses were heavy as they had to replace 4 DB's who comb'd for 110 car sts. I said the less exp'd group would allow less ypg leaving the pass happy B12 and they improved to #43 (57.9%, 17-12, 25 ypg less). TY they lose FS Steven Terrell (13 st, #6 tkl'r, 2 int, 5 pbu), CB Dustin Harris (9 st, #9 tkl'r, 1 int, 11 pbu) and 2 bkps (14 tkl). They basically have 3 ret st's (0 LY) making them much more exp'd.

SPECIAL TEAMS - A&M is famous for their "12th Man" ST unit (5 Top 10 finishes s/'95). In '11 I called for the best finish in Sherman's 4Y and they accomplished that (#8). Dustin Harris (1st Tm B12 PR) was #1 in the FBS in PR (18.6). Randy Bullock won the Groza Award (29-33 fg's, car pts leader here). Sumlin's ST units at UH were #60, #29, #60 and #38. LY rFr Taylor Bertoletto (PS#7) hit just 13-22 fg's (incl 3-4 from 50+, 1-6 30-39!). Bertoletto had 65 TB on 103 KO. Dustin Harris had a schl and SEC record 246 PR yds vs SCSt (203 VU Lee Nalley '44) and finished with 432 (12.7). P Ryan Epperson avg 41.2 (35.0 tm net) in '11 and 42.0 (39.8 net) in '12. The Aggies finished at #38 LY and while it will be tough to replace Epperson they could find themselves near their solid '12 mark.

COACHES - Kevin Sumlin was the Houston HC for 4Y piloting my Most Improved Team in '11 to a 13-1 record. Previously he was co-OC at Okla ('06-'07) and was the OC here in '02. He was the SEC COY LY. LY's OC Kliff Kingsbury took the TT job so the new OC is Clarence McKinney who was Sumlin's RB coach. Also joining the A&M staff is Jake Spavital who will co-OC and cch QB's. He spent the last 2 years at WV and has also had stints at Okla St ('10) and Houston ('09). The DC in his second season is former Marshall HC Mark Snyder ('05-'09) who spent '10-'11 as USF's DC. Marcel Yates is co-DC for a 2nd season (DB cch Boise 9 yrs).

ALSO ON ROSTER: WR Travis Labhart 5'9" 182 Sr DB Josh Willard 5'9" 165 rFr QB Connor McQueen 5'10" 175 rFr WR Boone Niedemeyer 6'0" 180 rFr QB Ace Ferre 6'1" 193 Jr TE Britton Udenigbo 6'4" 233 Jr RB Bryce Collier 5'9" 170 So DB Matt Fritzsche 6'3" 171 So

PHIL'S FORECAST

In '10 A&M made my MIT List coming off a 6-7 season. They won 6 of their last 7 in '10 only losing to LSU in the Cotton Bowl, 41-24 finishing 9-4 (+58 ypg B12, 4th best). Of their top 50 players in '11, only 6 were Sr's. They appeared poised for their first DD win season s/'98. A&M was picked 2nd in the B12 (highest s/'99) and announced they would join the SEC in Sept. They could have easily had a much better record. They were +93 ypg (2nd best B12) but finished 4-5 in conf play. The story of their season was blown DD 2H leads as they led Ost 20-3, Ark 35-17, Mizzou 28-17 and TX 16-7 at HT but lost each game. I noted LY that Kevin Sumlin took over a team that could have been 12-1 as there was only 1 game that they did not have a DD lead in. A&M had less exp (13 ret sts vs 18) and was taking a step up to the SEC. In the opener they led Fla 17-10 at HT but it appeared to be déjà vu as UF dominated the 2H and won 20-17. They blew out both SMU, SCSt and then demolished Ark by a comb 176-27 margin. Miss was SOD at its own 39 late 4Q and A&M pulled out the 30-27 win. A&M had LSU on deck and led LT 39-13 but needed to stop a 2 pt conv to hold on for the 2 pt win. LSU was off huge games vs Fla and SC and was travelling. A&M jumped out to a 12-0 lead but LSU led 24-12 in the 5 pt win. A&M obliterated Aub and Miss St and caught Bama off their big game vs LSU and pulled the upset on the road vs the eventual Nat'l Champ, 29-24 (A&M 23-17 FD). They led 47-0 vs SHSt. With Corbin Berkstresser at QB for Mizzou hitting 3-8-28 in the 1Q, A&M scored td's on its first 6 poss in another blowout. They had perhaps their best game in the Cotton Bowl. At HT they led 14-13 (outgained 274-248) but dominated the 2H in a 41-13 win. Johnny Manziel won the Heisman Trophy and returns for his soph yr. On the positive side, they avoid the Big 3 out of the East and their +153.4 ypg LY was #2 in the SEC and they were also -5 in TO's. On the negative side, they are a -3.0 in the Stock Market Indicator and had positive of (12.6) and def (17.9) ypg's plus return just 11 st's. A&M did bring in one of the top recruiting classes in the country and is a legitimate Nat'l Title contender, however after being under the radar last year teams will be focusing on the Aggies TY.

2013 PROJECTED STARTING LINEUP

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------|---|--|----------|-----------------|--|
| QB 2 JOHNNY MANZIEL SO. | 6-1 200 | PS#26. | 3706 (68%, 26-9), 1410 rush (7.0), 1st Fr Heisman Winner. 6 Matt Davis (6'2" 206 rFr) PS#6. | DE 95 JULIEN OBIOHA SO. | 6-4 255 | PS#190. | 12 st, 25 tkl, 6.5 tfl true. 72 Gavin Stansbury (6'4" 270 Jr) PS#203. |
| TE 28 BRANDON WILLIAMS SO. | 6-0 192 | PS#5. | 8 gm, 219 (4.8) true at Okla. Trans LY Ben Malena (5'8" 195 Sr) PS#31. | NG 42 KIRBY ENNIS SR. | 6-4 300 | PS#140. | 12 gm, 13 tkl true. 13 gm, 11 tkl '11, 11 st, 24 tkl LY. OFS '13. |
| WR 13 MIKE EVANS SO. | 2 st, 19 gm, 259 (3.9) 2Y. 9 st, 808 (5.9) LY. | PS#4. | 376 (5.8), 171 rec (14.2), 557 KR (22.3) true. | DT 83 ALONZO WILLIAMS SO. | 6-4 280 | PS#97. | 1 st, 7 gm, 5 tkl true. Justin Manning PS#14. |
| PS#33. | 6-5 225 | PS#184. | 13 st, 1105 (13.5), 1st Tm Fr AA rFr. 18 Edward Pope (6'4" 170 Sr). | SS 31 HOWARD MATTHEWS JR. | 6-2 200 | PS#72. | 2 st, 13 gm, 28 tkl, 4 qb true. 5 st, 12 gm, 58 tkl, 6 pbu LY. 4 Toney |
| PS#33. | Sebastian Larue PS#23. | Kyrion Parker PS#40. | 19 Ryan Buscha (5'8" 175 Jr). RB 34 Blaine Townsend (6'0" 230 So). | RUSH 35 TYRELL TAYLOR JR. | 6-4 230 | PS#341. | Potential to be solid pass rusher. 10 gm, 4 tkl true. 11 gm, 6 tkl, 1 sk, 3 qb LY. 50 Tyrone Taylor (6'3" 240 rFr) PS#186. |
| WR 84 MALCOLM KENNEDY JR. | 6-0 200 | PS#108. | 13 gm, 140 (12.7) rFr. 3 st, 13 gm, 285 (11.0) LY. Sabian Holmes (5'11" 175 So) PS#209. | SLB 55 TOMMY SANDERS JR. | 6-2 210 | PS#55JC. | HM AA at JC LY. 9 Nate Askef (6'4" 225 Sr) PS#74WR. |
| WR 11 DEREL WALKER SR. | 6-2 185 | PS#50JC. | 12 gm, 85 (10.6) LY. 4 JaQuay Williams PS#16. | MLB 36 DONNIE BAGGS JR. | 6-1 230 | PS#66. | 10 gm, 6 tkl true. 1 st, 12 gm, 27 tkl, 4.5 tfl LY. 40 Shaun Ward |
| WR 11 RICKY SEALS-JONES FR. | 6-5 225 | PS#1. | TE Cameron Clear PS#39JC. | WLB 45 STEVEN JENKINS SR. | 6-2 220 | PS#52JC. | 6 st, 13 gm, 61 tkl '11, 10 st, 12 gm, 79 tkl, 5.5 tfl, 3 pd LY. |
| C 56 MIKE MATTHEWS SO. | 6-3 280 | PS#37. | 7 gm true. 68 Ben Compton (6'4" 307 Jr) PS#233. | BRETT WADDEY PS#60. | 6-2 220 | PS#59. | 9 gm, 9 tkl true. Alvin Munroe (6'1" 195 rFr). |
| RG 74 GERMAIN FEDI FR. | 6-5 320 | PS#71. | Travel squad but still RS LY. 78 Garrett Gramling (6'6" 309 Jr) PS#81. | 190 SR PS#36JC. | 5-10 175 | PS#26. | 7 st, 12 gm, 30 tkl, 2.5 tfl, 4 pd true. 7 Traiman Jacobs (6'1" 190 Sr) PS#36JC. |
| LG 51 JARVIS HARRISON JR. | 6-4 320 | PS#91. | John Albert Arechiga (6'2" 300 So). | 230 SR PS#36JC. | 6-2 185 | PS#79. | 12 gm, 10 tkl true. 12 st, 56 tkl, 3 tfl, 9 pd LY. Alex Sezer PS#177. |
| RT 70 CEDRIC OGBUEHI JR. | 6-5 300 | PS#33. | 6 st (5 RG, 1 LG), 10 gm rFr. 13 st at RG LY. 79 Joseph Cheek (6'7" 300 So) PS#59. | IFS 15 KENNETH MARSHALL (6'0" 191 rFr) PS#68. | 6-2 200 | PS#72. | 2 st, 13 gm, 28 tkl, 4 qb true. 5 st, 12 gm, 58 tkl, 6 pbu LY. 4 Toney |
| LT 75 JAKE MATTHEWS SR. | 6-5 305 | PS#4. | 7 st RT, HM B12 true. 13 st RT, HM B12 '11, 13 st RT, 1st Tm | SS 31 HOWARD MATTHEWS JR. | 6-2 200 | PS#72. | 2 st, 13 gm, 28 tkl, 4 qb true. 5 st, 12 gm, 58 tkl, 6 pbu LY. 4 Toney |
| AA LY 73 JEREMIAH STUCKEY (6'4" 285 So) PS#60JC. | 6'0" 285 So | PS#60JC. | 6'0" Nathan Gutekunst (6'6" 308 So) PS#135. | 38 DREW KASER SO. | 6-3 220 | PS#45. | 2 punts (45.5), L/69, 1 TB, 0 In20, 1 gm still RS '11. No gm |
| K 24 TAYLOR BERTOLETTO SO. | 5-9 174 | PS#7. | 13-22 fg, L/54, 1 blk 67-74 PAT rFr. 49 Josh Lambro (6'0" 215 So). 36 Davis Plowman (5'10" 185 rFr) PS#51. | 29 KYLE SERRES (6'4" 190 Jr). | 6-2 190 | PS#51. | 2 punts (45.5), L/69, 1 TB, 0 In20, 1 gm still RS '11. No gm |
| 31 SETH WICKS (5'10" 165 rFr). | 40 Seth Hiddink (6'4" 200 rFr). | | | | | | |

