

HOUSTON COUGARS



QB John O'Korn

POSITION OUTLOOK FOR 2014

QUARTERBACKS - UH is known for some exceptional QB's including Heisman Trophy winner Andre Ware & David Klingler. Kevin Kolb became the career pass leader ('03-'06) but was topped shortly after by Case Keenum who is the NCAA's all-time leading passer (19,217). David Piland started the final 8 in '10 when Keenum was inj'd and did not have typical UH QB stats (2641, 58%, 24-14). Keenum (5631, 71%, 48-5) departed after '11 and Piland started in '12 and threw for "just" 2,924 (57%, 16-12). UH went just 5-7. Levine made it a high priority of recruiting QB's who were winners in HS and brought in John O'Korn (PS#54) and Greg Ward (PS#58). Piland s't'd the '13 opener but was inj'd and true frosh O'Korn (6'4" pocket passer) came off the bench. In Wk 3 vs Rice, Levine also unveiled Ward (5'10", great arm, dangerous runner). The true frosh duo were used in every game after that and were very effective. O'Korn threw for 3,117 (58.1%, 28-10) while Ward threw for 310 (65.5%, 1-0, 176 rush, 10 rec at WR). Adding depth are Sr Billy Cosh who ran the Air Raid offense in HS but was still recovering from an ACL LY and true frosh Bear Fenimore (PS#86, IFS). Ward moved to WR but could still be used in the Wildcat. This unit is vastly more exp'd than it was heading into Wk 1 LY.

RUNNING BACKS - When I wrote my magazine LY this unit appeared to be in great shape as Charles Sims (2370 rush yds 3 yrs, 379 rec in '12) was back. Sims however transferred to WV over the summer. The top returnee was soph Kenneth Farrow (PS#111, 216 lbs, 4.55 spd) who had 3 sts in '12 (466, 5.4). PS#98 Ryan Jackson (252, 4.3 '12) who runs a 10.3 in the 100M, led with 661 (4.8, 296 rec) while Farrow was #2 (514, 5.0, 113 rec). Justin Hicks (5'6" 191 Jr) had 95 (4.5). TY they are much more exp'd (provided nobody transfers) as the only loss is FB Kent Brooks (1 st, 78, 3.9). Added in to the mix is rFr Javin Webb (5'8" 172, PS#166) and FB's Luke Stice (6'0" 218 Jr) & Tyler McCloskey (6'5" 212 So) who comb for 3 sts. The UH RB's should provide a solid supporting role for their dangerous passing game.

RECEIVERS - In '12 UH lost their top 5 WR's (comb 4732, 13.7%) incl their all-time career rec. The top returning WR was Daniel Spencer (171, 14.2). Dewayne Peace led the young corps with 603 (11.2). Deontay Greenberry (PS#10), UH's first ever 5-star recruit (orig commit ND) was #3 (564, 12.0) while Spencer was #2 (579, 14.1). LY the unit was vastly more exp'd. Over the summer they lost Peace but still ret'd 3 of the top 4. Greenberry became an elite WR and led with 1,202 (14.7) despite being banged up. Spencer was #2 with 768 (14.8, 138 rush). Markeith Ambles (PS#6 orig USC) didn't even sign until

the last week of summer camp and was not in shape and in tune to the offense until the bowl (6-105). TY they lose Xavier Maxwell (11 st, 405, 14.5), Larry McDuffey (6 st, 115, 6.8) and Aaron Johnson (4 st, 95 yd). QB Ward worked purely at WR this spring after having 10 rec over the 13 gms LY. This is one of the best WR corps in the country.

OFFENSIVE LINE - The UH OL "The Brick Squad" had very similar numbers the last 4Y despite their record going from 5-7 to 13-1 to 5-7 to 8-5. They had 9 of their top 10 back in '12 (71 car st) and rushed for more ypg (151) but the ypc dipped (4.6, 19 sk). LY they had to replace a 1st Tm CUSA RG (3Y st'r) but again had 9 of the top 10 back (92 car st). They lost starting LT Ralph Oragwu (10 st '12) in the opening game and LG Ty Cloud (12 st '12) only had 2 sts (really just 2 st's back). UH rushed for 139 ypg (4.2, 29 sk). TY they lose 2nd Tm AAC LT DeAnthony Sims (12 st, 3 st '12), RG Kevin Forsch (13 st, 2Y st'r), Oragwu and Cloud. They ret 75 car sts. They look stronger in '14 with OG Rowdy Harper and C Bryce Redman earning 2nd Tm AAC in '13 while adding 2 JUCO's plus a Hawaii transfer (5 st '13) but RT Zach Johnson suffered an ACL in the spring so likely only 2 st's return.

DEFENSIVE LINE - In 2011's 13-1 season, UH ret'd 3 st's and improved to allowing 172 ypg rush (4.2), their best in 5Y. In '12 they had 5 of the top 6 back and added in a PS#33JC so it was surprising that UH slipped to 193 ypg (4.4) with the DL having just 9 of the tms 36 sks. LY they had to replace 5 DL (comb 34 st) giving them 1 st'r back. DE Eric Braswell missed 5 sts and DE Eric Eiland (5Y minor league baseball) only st'd 8 (inj). It was stunning that UH improved to 149 ypg (3.6) with 31 sks. TY the entire 3-deep returns incl Trevor Harris (4.5 spd WR in HS, 5 sk) and 312 lb DT Joey Mbui. Eiland (236 lb) was at S in spring but moved back to DE when Braswell suffered an ACL. While they probably won't improve as much statistically, this unit is clearly more exp'd and stronger.

LINEBACKERS - In '11 UH ret'd their #1, #2 and #3 tkl'rs and finally showed some teeth allowing just 22.4 ppg. In '12 they had to replace 1st & 2nd Tm CUSA LB's (#1, #3 tkl'rs) but returned Efram Oliphant (#5 tkl'r, '10, RS '11), Derrick Mathews, (#2, 106 tkl true), and #4 Phillip Steward (77 tkl, 6 int '11) so they had 2 st's back to a now 3-man unit. Steward (128 tkl, 11 sk) earned 1st Tm CUSA but UH still all'd 36.0 ppg (highest s/'03). LY they ret'd 2nd Tm CUSA Mathews (126 tkl) and Oliphant (only 11 tkl '12). VHT LSU transfer Trevon Randle (PS#29) and a true frosh they were high on in Caleb Tucker (PS#116) both RS. Oliphant was 1 tkl'r w/134 (3 sk, 10 tfl) and Mathews was #2 tkl'r (1st Tm AAC). LB cch Hargreaves was high on rFr Steven Taylor (45 tkl'r, 4 sk, 6.5 tfl) st'd 9 of the last 11. They improved by over 2 td's, all'g 21.8 ppg. TY the only loss is George Bamfo (2 st, 21 tkl) but with everyone else back plus the addition of Randle, Tucker and TY's recruits, this should be one of the AAC's best LB corps.

DEFENSIVE BACKS - In '12 UH had 7 of their top 8 back (#15 PDR '11) and stayed strong at #33 (59%, 25-19). LY they had to replace a #1 IDC CB and 2 bkp (comb 2 st, 46 tkl). They moved up to #25 (60.4%, 15-25). The unit spearheaded the NCAA's top TO machine grabbing 25 int's and the team caused 43 TO's (#2 had 35) leading to 141 pts. The Cougars were also #1 in TO margin at +25 (#2 was +17). TY they lose 2nd Tm AAC CB Zach McMillian (12 st, #6 tkl'r, 5 int, 7 pbu), and CB Thomas Bates (12 st, #7 tkl'r, 2 int, 9 pbu). Trevon Stewart had 6 FR's breaking the schd record (Chuck Weatherspoon '88). They have players who comb for 30 sts from LY returning incl 3rd Tm AAC SS Adrian McDonald and 2nd Tm AAC FS Stewart. They also add in Boise ST transfer 6'2" Lee Hightower (7 st tll susp '12). I'll call them equal in talent but they'll fall short in the turnover dept.

SPECIAL TEAMS - HC Tony Levine was the ST coor here from '08-'11 (#38 '11). In his first year he had one of the best K/P

combos in the country. P Richie Leone avg 45.5 in '12 (39.7 tm net). He was asked to handle all 3 duties early on LY (lost K 20-25 L52). Leone avg 43.2 (#2 FBS 41.4 net, only 3 TB) while also having 37 TB on 78 KO. Leone hit 11-17 fg's (1-5 40+) and Kyle Bullard took over (6-6, L46). Demarcus Ayers became the top KR (1021, 27.6, 1 td). TY they lose Leone but bring in Oklahoma transfer Dylan Seibert (PS#41) for punting and Bullard is back at K. Ty Cummings (PS#5) who RS LY is now available and was one of the nation's top KO specialists in HS. UH finished #23 in my ST rankings and with the loss of Leone, figures to drop a few notches.

COACHES - Houston's previous 2 HC's are now pacing the sidelines at Baylor and A&M. Tony Levine was the interim for the '11 bowl and then given the permanent job. His exp includes being the ST coor here s/'08, asst HC in '10-'11 and an NFL asst ST cch (CAR '06-'07). Travis Bush came to Houston in '12 after being at UTSA for 2 seasons (OC '10-'11) and at Texas St for 6Y ('04-'09, co-OC L/3). He was the RB/QB cch his 1st year, the co-OC LY and is now officially the OC. DC David Gibbs is back for his second season. His last college post was in '05 (Auburn's DC) spending time in the NFL more recently (DB cch HOU, '09-'10 & KC '06-'08).

ALSO ON ROSTER:			
TB Randall Hollimon 6'0" 212 Sr	WR Linell Bonner 6'0" 191 rFr	DE Vincent Hall 6'2" 232 Sr	
TE Josh Pegrem 6'4" 245 Sr	WR Jack Thomas 6'4" 195 rFr	DL Melvin Holland 6'0" 276 Sr	
WR Greyson Hughes 6'0" 179 Jr	DE Cameron Klapessy 5'11" 171 So	LB Austin Potter 6'0" 220 Jr	
WR Derek McLemore 5'10" 179 rFr	DE Jamal Baker 6'3" 260 Sr	LB Davonte Thomas 6'0" 210 So	
WR Kelechi Ejekam 6'3" 190 Sr	DE Jon Willett 6'2" 230 Sr		
	DE Aleksander Andric 6'4" 265 So		

HOUSTON'S FORECAST

Art Briles took a team that had won just 3, 0 and 5 gms prior to his arrival to 4 winning seasons (4 bowls) and a high point of 10-4 in '06. Kevin Sumlin took over in '08 and in '11 (his 4th yr) they were coming off a 5-7 season and I pegged Houston as my #1 Most Improved Team in the country. They had the largest improvement of any team in '11 record-wise going from 5-7 to 13-1 nearly playing in a BCS bowl. They were unbeaten and #7 when they hosted SMiss in the CUSA Title game as a 2 td fav but lost by 21 and dreams of a BCS bowl were gone. They were relegated to the TicketCity Bowl where they still beat Penn St 30-14. They finished 13-1 and #18. In '12 they were the preseason fav to win CUSA West but I mentioned it was a tough situation for Tony Levine to step into. After they lost to TXSt in the opener, 30-13 as a 5+ td fav, their OC resigned and Houston slipped back to a losing record as 5-7. Without Keenum, they scored 17 ppg less than they did in '11 and the D all'd 14 ppg more. LY they drew a +4.0 in my Stock Market Indicator, had -3 net upsets the previous year and ret'd 13 st's. Naturally UH made my Most Improved List at #5. UH spent 17 yrs as a member of the CUSA and was now in their 8th conf since the program started in 1946 as they joined the AAC and nearly won it. The Cougars opened up 5-0. They suffered a tough loss vs BYU by a single point then destroyed Rutgers 49-14. They blew a big lead vs USF but they still won 35-23. At UCF, they faced a 48gl from the W w/20 left but their pass in the EZ was tipped away and they lost by 5. They trailed L'ville by 7 and had the ball 4 more times but punted 3x and on 4&25 from the UL28 was SOD. UH was at home vs Cincy and in unusually cold weather, they were outgained 573-278 and lost a 3rd straight. They rebounded to blank SMU 34-0 in their FHG (1st conf shutout s/'89). In the bowl, trailing Vandy 24-0, they rallied back to tie but lost 41-24. Still it was an outstanding 8-5 finish in their first year of the AAC as they were 5-3 in conf play (-7 ypg). TY they are an even more veteran squad with 17 ret st's. UH had 3 net close losses, but was +25 in TO's. They do face my #109 rated schedule and they are a prime contender in the AAC and have a great shot at a DD win season.

2014 PROJECTED STARTING LINEUP

OFFENSE				DEFENSE			
JERSEY # IN RED				JERSEY # IN RED			
QB 5 JOHN O'KORN SO. 6-4 205 PS#54. 11 st, 3117 (58%, 28-10), 104 (1.4) rush, AAC ROY , 3rd Tm AAC LY. 9 Billy Cosh (6'1" 202 Sr) PS#150JC. RS Can St '10. JC 2Y. Here LY. Bear Fenimore is PS#86. IFS. 8 Hunter McCoy (6'2" 215 Jr).				DE 17 CHAUNTEY JACKSON SO. 6-4 254 PS#31TE. 10 gm true. 94 Cameron Malveaux (6'6" 252 So) PS#453. 12 gm, 12 tkl LY. 97 Eric Braswell (6'5" 268 Sr) 11 st, 47 tkl, 3.5 tfl, CUSA Fr Tm '11. 2 st, 18 tkl, 1 sk '12.8 st, 22 tkl, 3 sk, 3 qbh LY.			
TB 35 KENNETH FARROW JR. 5-11 216 PS#111. RS '11. 3 st, 12 gm, 466 (5.4), 165 rec (2.2) '12. 11 st, 514 (5.0), 113 rec (4.7) LY. 22 Ryan Jackson (5'10" 183 Jr) PS#98. 1 st, 252 (4.3) as true. 2 st, 13 gm, 661 (4.8), 296 rec (11.0) LY.				DT 93 BJ SINGLETON SO. 6-4 285 13 gm, 22 tkl, 3 sk, 2 pbu, 1 int LY. 95 Tomme Mark (6'3" 288 Jr) PS#188. 1 st, 10 gm, 14 tkl, 1 pbu true. 13 st, 25 tkl, 2 qbh LY. 91 Nick Thurman (6'3" 285 rFr) PS#190.			
WR 21 MARKEITH AMBLES SR. 6-2 215 PS#6. 4 gm, 1 rec USC '10. JUCO '12. 1 st, 10 gm, 252 (14.8) LY. 10 Demarcus Ayers (5'10" 173 So) PS#82. 13 gm, 130 (11.8), 1021 KR (27.6) true. Cameron Oliver (6'2" 175 So).				DT 92 JOEY MBUI SR. 6-3 312 PS#256. 24 gm, 31 tkl, 1 sk, 1 int, 3 qbh 2Y. 13 st, 29 tkl, 1 sk, 2.5 tfl, 3 pbu, 6 qbh LY. On NFL's radar. 96 Jeremiah Farley (6'0" 283 Jr) 17 gm '10-'12. 13 gm, 27 tkl, 3 sk, 6 tfl, 1 pbu LY.			
WR 4 DANIEL SPENCER SR. 5-11 195 PS#140. 13 gm, 1071 (14.2) '11. 7 st, 584 (14.2) '12. 11 st, 768 (14.8), 138 (13.8) rush LY. 19 Shane Ross (5'10" 200 Sr) PS#171. Baylor '09. 24 gm '10-'11. 3 st, 11 gm, 337 (14.7) w/156 tfl '12. O'FV LY.				DE 46 TREVOR HARRIS SR. 6-5 233 PS#293JC. 4.5 spd, 9 st, 49 tkl, 5 sk, 3.5 tfl, 7 qbh LY. 1 Tyus Bowser (6'3" 226 So) PS#120. 1 st, 26 tkl, 5 sk, 11 qbh LY. 21 Eric Eiland (6'2" 236 Jr) 10 tkl, 1 sk, 1 int true. 8 st, 21 tkl, 2 sk LY.			
WR 1 Greg Ward So. 5-10 175 PS#58. QB/WR LY. 85 John Ledy (6'0" 185 Fr) PS#281. 2 gm as true LY. Still RS. 84 Wayne Beadle (5'11" 178 Sr) 2 gm ST '12. 11 gm, 63 (10.5) LY. Donald Gage (5'11" 175 rFr) PS#170.				LB 50 EFREM OLIPHANT SR. 6-1 230 PS#158. 23 gm, 73 tkl 2Y. 13 st, 134 tkl, 3 sk, 10 tfl, 1 pbu, 5 qbh, 3rd Tm AAC LY. 4 Trevon Randle (6'2" 218 Jr) PS#29. LSU trans '12. Sat LY. 8 Caleb Tucker (6'2" 223 rFr) PS#116.			
WR 3 DEONTAY GREENBERRY JR. 6-3 198 PS#10. UH's first 5 star recruit. 11 st, 569 (12.1) '12. 10 st, 1202 (14.7), 1st Tm AAC LY. 31 Hayden Daniels (6'4" 200 Jr) PS#300. 32 Damian Payne (6'0" 210 Sr) PS#164. Casey Williams (5'9" 175 So).				94b DERICK MATHEWS SR. 6-0 214 PS#186. 14 st, 106 tkl, 10 tkl, 3 int. Fr AA. 12 st, 126 tkl, 6 sk, 1 tfl, 5 pbu, 9 qbh, 2nd Tm CUSA '12. 13 st, 116 tkl, 7 sk, 5 tfl, 5 pd, 1st Tm AAC LY. 44 Elanor Roberts (6'1" 223 Jr) 8 gm, 7 tkl LY.			
C 58 BRYCE REDMAN SR. 6-1 285 PS#202. 14 gm '11. 8 st, 12 gm, 358 (15.8) LY. LSU '12. 13 st, 3rd Tm AAC LY. 70 Mac Long (6'3" 291 So) PS#131. 1 gm, 10 pl LY. Colton Freeman is PS#358. HS Nolan Fries (6'2" 230 Jr).				WLB 41 STEVEN TAYLOR SO. 6-0 211 PS#285. 9 sts, 13 gm, 89 tkl, 4 sk, 6.5 tfl, 5 pbu, 1 int, 2 qbh LY.			
RG 74 ROWDY HARPER SR. 6-6 295 14 st RT, CUSA Frosh Tm, Fr AA '11. 12 st, 11 st, 13 gm, and 2nd Tm AAC LY. 65 Carter Wall (6'4" 304 Jr) PS#135JC. Left TCU '12. 66 Mike Mustafa (6'3" 277 Jr) PS#297. 11 gm LY.				12 D'Juan Hines (6'2" 203 rFr) PS#81QB. 54 Cameron Doubenmier (5'11" 217 rFr). Andrew Hogan (6'0" 215 Jr).			
LG 72 EMEKA OKAFOR JR. 6-5 322 21 gm 3Y. Ben Dew (6'3" 305 Jr) 5 st at RG at Hawaii LY. Trans, eligible TY. Marcus Oliver (6'4" 275 Fr) PS#220. Hank Grandia (6'2" 282 So) Walk-on. LS 89 Byron Simpson (6'4" 222 rFr).				CB 18 Lee Hightower Jr. 6-2 192 PS#366. Boise 2Y. 4 st, 25 tkl, 5 pd true. 7 st, 31 tkl, susp'd '12. RS after trans, sat LY. 26 Brandon Wilson (5'11" 195 So) PS#216. 12 gm, 5 tkl LY. 19 Marcus Dillard (5'10" 174 Jr) 4 gm, 1 tkl LY.			
RT 56 Damien Parris Jr. 6-5 310 PS#130JC. 76 JaBraylin Thomas (6'5" 358 rFr) PS#94. 1st Tm TX as HS Sr. Darius Joiner (6'4" 270 Fr) PS#252. Could play OL or DL. 62 Emerald Faletupai (6'7" 356 Fr) PS#231. IFS.				CB 5 Turon Walker Sr. 5-11 190 PS#167JC. 12 gm, 13 tkl LY. 3 William Jackson (6'1" 175 Jr) 4 st, 13 gm, 35 tkl, 8 pd LY. 28 Tyler White (5'10" 181 Jr) PS#348. WO at Utah, earned schlp. Trans LY. Scout POY.			
LT 77 JOSH THOMAS RFR. 6-5 327 PS#111. 60 Alex Cooper (6'4" 285 Jr) PS#476. 2 gm '12. 1 st as TE in jumbo pkg, 12 gm LY. 71 Zach Johnson (6'6" 301 Jr) 12 gm '12. F/11 st, 16 tkl LY. #1LT in spg but ACL.				SS 16 ADRIAN McDONALD JR. 5-10 191 3 st, 35 tkl '12. 13 st, 99 tkl, 2.5 tfl, 9 pd, 3rd Tm AAC LY. Steven Aikens (6'2" 200 So) PS#157LB. 12 gm LY. 36 Nomliis Fruge (6'1" 199 rFr) PS#273. Khalil Williams is PS#301.			
K 39 KYLE BULLARD JR. 5-11 170 PS#134. DNP '12. 6-6 fg, L/46, 0 blk, 20-20 PAT in U/6 st, 8 gm LY. Awarded schlp. 47 Ty Cummings (5'10" 164 So) PS#5. 5 KO (60.8) 1 TB, 1 OOB in 3 gm as true LY. #2 K in spring.				23 TREVON STEWART JR. 5-9 192 PS#176. L/10 tkl, 126 tkl, 1 sk, 2.5 tfl, 7 pbu, 1 int '12. 13 st, 109 tkl, 1.5 tfl, 7 qbh LY. 2nd Tm AAC LY. 30 Earl Foster (6'1" 192 Jr) PS#178. 12 gm, 2 tkl '12. 12 gm, 2 tkl LY. 2 Kent Gordon (6'2" 215 Sr) PS#99JC.			
				P 38 Dylan Seibert Jr. 6-3 220 PS#41. At OKLA '12. 13 gm as holder here LY, did not sit. 40 Sam Martin (6'1" 185 Jr) PS#156. 3 gm, 4 KO '12. No action LY. 31 Logan Piper (6'1" 200 Sr) no action LY.			

Enrollment: 32,760 (#11)

3RD Year Here / **3RD** Overall

AFRICAN ATHLETIC