

Harvard

Tim Murphy enters his 28th season as HC of the Crimson. He has the 2nd most wins of any Head Coach in the Ivy, along with 9 Ivy League Titles. After finishing with at least 7 wins every year from 2001-2016, Harvard slipped back to just 5-5 in '17 and were -64 ypg in Ivy League play. In '18 held the yardage edge in every game but only improved to 6-4 (+107 ypg). Three of their losses came by 7 points or less, and they outgained Ivy League Champ Princeton in an 8 point loss. The Crimson only had 11 starters back in '19. They lost their opener then won 4 straight, all by double-digits. They suffered 5 straight losses, all by 7 points or less and outgained both #13 Princeton and #14 Dartmouth. Harvard finished 4-6 but were +43 ypg and were -5 net close losses!

Harvard improved from 22 ppg in '17 (339 ypg) up to 30.4 ppg and 438 ypg in '18. In '19 they only had 5 starters back. They slipped to 390 ypg but still put up 29.6 ppg. Jake Smith started 8 of the last 9 as a freshman (1154, 57%, 5-9). He beat out eventual Rice transfer Tom Stewart in camp for '18 then started the first 4 but was benched (726, 60.9%, 4-4) for the last 6. In '19 Smith returned as the clear starter. He threw for 325 in the opener and also had 322 vs Penn. Smith started all 10 and finished with 2,233 (60.1%, 19-9). This year Smith returns along with bkp Luke Emge who appeared in 4 games (110, 50%, 0-1). In '17 true frosh Aaron Shampklin rushed for 363 (4.5). Harvard returned a 2nd Tm All-Ivy RB in '18 but Shampklin emerged and led with 1,053 (6.1, 133 rec) and was 1st Tm All-Ivy. In '19 Harvard lost '18's leading rusher, then Shampklin missed the season. Devin Darrington was #2 in '18 with 435 (6.2) then led in '19 with 734 (4.0), but even more impressive was true frosh Aidan Borquet who finished #2 with 644, led with a 7.2 ypc and was named the Ivy League ROY. This year Darrington transferred to Virginia but Shampklin returns. Borquet and Shampklin make up the top RB duo in the Ivy League. Harvard only returned their #2 WR. 4 of their top 5 were gone along with their starting TE and the next most experienced WR on the roster had just 1 catch in '18. Cody Chrest led with 706 (15.7). Jack Cook was #2 with 447 (16.6). H-Back Ryan Reagan had 310 (17.2) and BJ Watson added 293 (9.5). This year Harvard loses Chrest, Cook and TE John Stivers (10 st, 114, 12.7). They do get 3 of their top 6 back and Kym Wimberly started the opener in '19 but was injured. They are in much better shape than they were entering '19 despite losing their top 2 guys. In '19 Harvard lost 4 starting Oline including 2 All-Ivy performers and they slipped to 156 rush ypg (4.2) and sacks increased to 24. All 5 starting OL started all 10 games. This year they lose 4 starters including 1st Tm All-Ivy RG Liam Shanahan who went on to start at LSU last year. Also gone are 3rd Tm All-Ivy LT James Lee, 2nd Tm All-Ivy LG Eric Wilson and C Jackson Ward. With 3 All-Ivy performers gone this is the biggest question mark on the team.

Harvard's defense has been impressively consistent through the years, allowing between 307 to 368 ypg each year since 2010. In '18 they had 5 starters back and allowed 21.8 ppg and 331 ypg. In '19 they had 7 starters back but slipped slightly to 347 ypg with their 2 worst performances coming in their opener and finale (only 304 ypg all'd gms 2-9). Harvard's Dline was their biggest concern in '19, losing 5 with starting experience and only 1 starter returned. Despite the losses, they improved from 114 (3.0) rush ypg all'd in '18 to just 90 (2.5) and sacks jumped from 18 to 43 (13%)!!! This year Harvard returns 3 starters but they do lose 1st Tm All-Ivy DE Brogan McPartland (7 st, #8 tkl'r, 9.5 sk). 7 return with starting experience, and after their excellent production in '19 this is clearly the Ivy League's top Dline. In '19 Harvard returned all 3 starting LB's, making this the strength of the team and their top 3 LB's started all 10 games. This year they lose starters Cameron Kline (#3 tkl'r) and Joey Goodman (#6 tkl'r, 6.5 tfl) along with backup Bobby Drysdale (#9 tkl'r). They are less experienced but do still have their #2 and #10 tkl'rs back. In '19 Harvard returned 3 starting DB's along with Max Jones who was their #3 tkl'r in '18. They allowed just 217 pass ypg and 54% (10-12) in '18 and were 3rd in pass eff D in the Ivy but in '19 they slipped to 6th, allowing 257 ypg (57.6%, 17-7). This year they lose CB Isaiah Wingfield (10 st, #5 tkl'r, 6 pd), FS Cole Thompson (10 st, #1 tkl'r, 6 pbu) and CB Wesley Ogsbury (7 st, 17 tkl). Only 1 starter and 1 experienced backup return so this unit needs rebuilt.

In '19 Jake McIntyre made 9-15 fg's (L/42). Jon Sot and Sean McKeough split punting duties and combined to avg 40.2 and led the Ivy with a 38.8 net. Wesley Ogsbury was their top PR with just a 4.9 avg while BJ Watson avg 18.4 KR. This year they lose K McIntyre and P McKeough but Sot had the better avg between the 2 (42.3).

While Harvard only brings back 9 starters this year, they have the have a 3 year starter at QB, the top RB and DL units in the Ivy League but also need to replace significant losses on their OL, LB and DB's. Everyone in the Ivy League is inexperienced this year so the losses aren't as crushing and they do get 4 Ivy League home games but both Yale and Princeton are on the road. This was the most unlucky team in the FCS in '19 (+5 Net close losses!). We think they easily surpass their 4 win total from '19 and this is our pick to win the Ivy League.

Penn

Penn was off B2B 7-3 seasons but slipped to 6-4 in '17. In '18 Penn had 13 starters back including 8 on offense. They started the season 6-2 then were outscored 71-21 in their last 2 vs Harvard and at Princeton. The Quakers 6 wins came by 10.5 ppg, their 4 losses by 21.5 ppg (+3 net close wins). In '19 Penn had 15 returning starters back, Penn opened with a 1 point loss at Delaware but had a +102 yard edge. They were +139 yds at Lafayette & won 28-24. They lost 3 of their next 4 before then won 3 straight by a combined 7 points despite getting outgained in all 3 (-134 ypg in 3 gm win streak). They outgained Princeton 446-438 but only put up 7 points in a 21 point loss and finished 5-5.

In '18 Penn had 5 starters back on offense. They averaged 32 ppg in their 3 non-conference games. The offense stalled in Ivy League play, with the Quakers only avg 13 ppg and they only topped 14 pts once (20 vs Cornell). In '19 Penn had an experienced QB, RB and Oline. They put up over 500 yards in 3 games and increased to 393 ypg and 24.5 ppg but only 346 ypg and 22 ppg in Ivy League play. Ryan Glover started all 10 games in '19, throwing for 1,482 (60%, 7-6, 300 rush, 3.0) while Nick Robinson added 306 (68%, 3-0). Both returned in '19 but this time Robinson started all 10, and was much more productive, throwing for 2,331 (59.6%, 16-5) while Glover only played in 5 games (79, 46.2%, 1-1). Both are gone this year, leaving Owen Goldsberry (2 attempts '19) as the only QB with experience. Penn has to replace their 3x leading rusher Karekin Brooks who put up 1,003 (4.9, 200 rec) in '19. Also gone is their #2 rusher Abe Willows (157, 5.1). Their top returnee, Isaiah Malcome had 73 yds in their opener in '19 but was OFY. In '19 Penn lost their top 2 WR's as well as their starting TE then their top returnee, Tyler Herrick, was OFY after 3 games. Ryan Cragun led with 885 (15.3). Rory Starkey was #2 with 643 (16.5). Kolton Huber added 270 (11.7). This year they get their top 2 back in Cragun and Starkey but the rest of the unit is depleted with Huber, Eric Markes (183, 20.3), Herrick (104, 8.0) and TE Sire Woods (10 st, 41, 6.8). They are in better shape than '19 but depth is a concern. In '18 Penn had 4 Oline start all 10 and they slid to 162 rush ypg (4.0, 11 sk). In '19 they had 4 starters back but lost a 2x All Ivy and fell to 144 ypg but they actually increased to 4.1 ypc (16 sk). This year only 1 starter returns and 1 other has starting experience so the Oline will need rebuilt.

In '17 Penn allowed 26.8 ppg and 412 ypg but only 21 ppg and 372 ypg in Ivy League play. In '18 Penn returned 8 starters on defense and improved to 20.9 ppg and 341 ypg allowed. The Quakers had 7 starters back in '19. They held their F/3 opponents to 356 ypg but over their L/7 they gave up 452. Overall they allowed 29.8 ppg and 423 ypg. Two starters returned on their Dline in '19. In their 4 Non-Conf games they allowed just 128 rush ypg (3.6) but allowed 191 (4.3) in Ivy League play. This year Penn loses 2 starters in DE Taheeb Sonekan (9 st, #9 tkl'r, 5 tfl) and NG David Ryslik (9 st, #8 tkl'r, 4.5 tfl) along with DE Benji Mowatt who led with 6.5 sks. Their top guy, Prince Emili (10 st, #2 tkl'r, 14 tfl) does return. Penn lost 3 starting LB's in '19 but Zach Evans (#6 tkl'r) returned and led with 83 tkls. This year they lose 1st Tm All Ivy LB Evans along with Hunter Hayes (10 st, #11 tkl'r, 4.5 tfl) and James McCarthy (#12 tkl'r). They do get their 1st Tm All Ivy LB Brian O'Neill (#3 tkl'r, 12.5 tfl) along with their #7 and #14 tkl'rs back so this is still a solid unit with experience. In '18 Penn got 7 of their top 8 back but lost their SS to injury after 1 game. They improved to 4th in pass efficiency defense in the Ivy (185 ypg, 58%, 15-10). In '19 they once again returned all 4 starters and got Sam Phillipi back from injury. The experience didn't help as they slipped to #7 in pass eff D, allowing 251 ypg (65.2%, 16-7). This year they lose FS Phillipi (10 st, #5 tkl'r, 5 pd), FS Tayte Doddy (10 st, #6 tkl'r, 5 pd). Four of their top 6 are back and while they are less experienced than '19 but should perform better.

Penn used 2 K's in '19 but they only combined to go 3-9 (L/43). Jake Haggard avg'd 38.5 ypp (34.1 net). Isaiah Malcome had a 69 yd PR td in his only attempt and the Quakers had 3 combine to avg 21.4 KR. K David Karrash returns (2-4, L/24) but they lose Haggard. Their kicking can't get much worse so they should at least improve slightly despite losing their punter and their return game is solid.

Penn only returns 8 starters this year but everyone in the Ivy League is inexperienced. Whoever their starting QB is, will have 2 solid targets that were both 2nd Tm All Ivy in '19. The defense gets 3 of their top 4 tkl'rs back. The Quakers get 4 conference home games and usually do well in non-conference play so they should match '19's 5 wins.