

Holy Cross

Bob Chesney is in his 4th season as HC at Holy Cross and has led the Crusaders to B2B Patriot League Titles and FCS Playoff appearances. Chesney was named Patriot League COY in '19. Prior to his time at Holy Cross he was the HC for 5 seasons at Assumption College and led them to 3 Division 2 playoff appearances. Holy Cross went 5-6 in '18, finished -36 ypg but were +105 ypg vs Patriot League foes and -205 ypg in non-conference play. In Chesney's first season they went 7-6, losing in the first round of the FCS playoffs to Monmouth. They finished -33 ypg but were +89 ypg in league play and -137 ypg against non-league foes. They started the spring 3-0, winning all 3 league games by double-digits then lost to South Dakota St in the playoffs. The Crusaders finished -65 ypg.

Holy Cross hasn't topped 24 ppg since 2016. They did avg 30 ppg and 358 ypg in Patriot League play in 2018 but only 18 ppg and 305 ypg in non-conference play. In '19 Holy Cross put up 22.8 ppg including 28 ppg and 409 ypg in league play. The Crusaders failed to top 300 yards in 3 of their 4 games in the spring, avg just 265 ypg but matched '19 with 22.5 ppg. In '19 Connor Degenhardt threw for 2,372 (53%, 14-8). He was hurt in the finale and Matt Considine saw his most considerable action. Considine finished with 341 (52%, 3-1). Considine departed in the spring. Degenhardt started the first 2 and played all 4 but was benched and Matthew Sluka started the last 2. Sluka led with 187 (57.1%, 2-1) and also led in rushing with 234 (5.3). Degenhardt threw for 147 (55.3%, 2-1). Degenhardt departs while Sluka returns as the clear starter but they are less experienced entering '21. Dominic Cozier led Holy Cross with 643 (4.9) rushing in '18. He missed the opener in '19 and only had 84 rush yards after the 4th game. He topped 100 in 5 of the last 9 and finished with 1,147 (6.3, 131 rec). Peter Oliver was #2 with 396 (3.8) but no one else topped 100. Cozier departed last year, but Oliver returned. Oliver was only #2 with 226 but did have an excellent 7.1 ypc. Jonathan Abrams added 147 (4.9). Oliver and Abrams both return and their only loss is Macklin Kortebein (91, 4.0). Holy Cross lost their top 3 receivers in '19 that totaled 1414 (13.1). Ayir Asante led with 697 (14.5). Tenio Ayeni was #2 with 568 (13.2). Spencer Gilliam was #3 with 553 (14.6). Despite the losses their top 3 actually improved with 1818 (14.1) and TE Derek Mountain added 413 (14.2). Asante only played 1 game in spring and they had to replace Ayeni and TE Mountain. With basically 3 of their top 4 they were depleted and no one topped 100 yards. Their co-leaders were Jalen Coker (18.0) and Spencer Gilliam (7.2) who both had 72 yds. This year they get the whole unit back including Asante who returns from injury. This is the most improved unit on the team. In '19 Holy Cross rushed for 136 ypc (4.1, 33 sk). Last year they lost 4 starters and only had 3 back with starting experience, and LT Brian Foley only played the F/2 yet they improved to 179 (4.5) but also gave up 12 sacks (15.4%). 4 of their starters are back from spring so they are more experienced than entering last year.

Holy Cross allowed 24 ppg 379 ypg in '19 but only 15 ppg & 321 in league play and 32 ppg & 429 against non-conference foes. They had 10 of their top 15 tkl'rs back in '19 but did lose 3 of their top 4. They allowed 330 ypg and 17 ppg. The Crusaders held foes to 160 rush ypg (4.1, 23 sk) in '19. They got 3 starters on the Dline back in the spring including DE Dan Kuznetsov (#10 tkl'r, 5.5 sk, 4.5 tfl) and only gave up 103 (3.4). Three multi-year starters return and they only lose DT Jordan Jackson (3 st, 9 tkl, 2.5 tfl). Holy Cross brought back 3 of their top 4 LB's in spring. Jacob Dobbs led with 41 tkls (3.5 tfl). Joe Lang was #2 (29 tkls) and Liam Anderson (15 tkl, 2 tfl) is #3. The Crusaders lose their #2 tkl'r but 2 starters return and Liam Doran, who started 12 games in '19 is back after posting just 3 tkls last year. They return their #1, #3 and #9 tkl'rs from spring and have 2 multi-year starters back. Holy Cross allowed 225 pass ypg (57.4%, 18-15) in '19. Last year they lost 2 starters including FS Chris Riley who posted 5 int's in '19. They matched those numbers in spring, holding foes to 227 pass ypg (58.1%, 5-7). This year they get all 4 starters from spring back so they are more experienced. Overall 7 starters are back from '19 and 9 from spring.

Derek Ng made 11-16 fg's in '19 (L/48) then hit 6-9 (L/51) in spring. Patrick Haughney avg'd 43.1 ypp (net 41.1). Tyler Purdy avg'd 21.5 KR. This year they get the whole unit back and Ng has the strongest leg in the Patriot league.

Holy Cross comes in off B2B Patriot League Titles. They have 17 starters back from the spring and will be in contention for another trip to the FCS playoffs. They only play 5 home games and travel to Fordham in what could determine the Patriot League title. They also have tough non-conference games against Yale, Harvard and UConn so it might be tough to match '19's 7 win total.