

CAMPBELL 2019 PREVIEW

In 2016 the Camels, under then 4th year HC Mike Minter, finished 5-5, their first non-losing season since 2011. In 2017 their final in the non-scholarship Pioneer League, Campbell finished 6-5 including 5-3 in conference play, their first winning conference record since 2011.

Last year Campbell made the transition to scholarship football moving into the Big South. They started the season 2-0. Then because of the threat of a Hurricane, become the first FCS team to host an FBS team, since Yale Hosted Army in 2014. Ironically it was former Big South member Coastal Carolina. The Camels surprising led 21-0 early 2Q but then allowed 7 unanswered touchdowns. They won their next 3 by a combined 121-10. They were 5-1 heading into Big South play but lost their first 3 conference games all by 17+ including being shutout 49-0 by #2 Kennesaw St. In fact after giving up 35 pts to then 1-6 Gardner-Webb, Minter fired DC Craig Cox. Campbell beat Presbyterian to stay out of the Big South Basement and only trailed Charleston Southern 12-7, before being intercepted at the CSU 13 with 1:17 left. They finished 6-5 giving them back-to-back winning seasons for the first time since restarting their football program in 2008.

The Camels will be in the 7th season under HC Minter but will have 2 new coordinators but both were promoted from within. DC Weston Glaser joined the team in 2018 as the LB coach and took over as the interim-DC for the final 3 games last year. OC Nick Grimes was the Camels TE coach the last 2 years. The Camels look to return 15 returning starters overall and with the addition of Hampton & North Alabama to the Big South, will have an expanded conference schedule this year.

The Offense returns 7 starters to the Big South's #3 Scoring (24.8 ppg) & total offense (370 ypg). but take a big loss at QB as their top 2 both transferred after the season. Two year starting QB Daniel Smith, heads to Villanova after throwing for 1,582 (58.9%, 13-3) and leading the team with 668 rush yds (6.6, 13 td). Also departing is backup Jayson DeMild (636, 52.0%, 3-7, -2 rush), who was the only other player to attempt a pass. They bring in JC transfer QB Brock Domann, but no QB on roster has attempted a Div I pass. Also missing from the roster in July is former Wake Forest transfer RB Rocky Reid (8 st), who was the top RB with 614 yds (4.0, 5 td, 42 rec). They return their next 3 RB's led by Joshua Jones (3 st, 259, 4.5). The receiving corps loses their #2 & #5 WR's in 2nd tm BSC Aaron Blockman (11 st, 580, 13.6, 3 td) & Trey Sanders (121, 11, 1 td). They return 5 of their top 7 receivers led by 1st tm BSC WR Caleb Sneed (11 st, 810, 18.0, 9 td) & WR Zack Roderick (10 st, 253, 12.1 2 td). The OLine loses their top man, 2nd tm BSC LT Shular Littleton (7 st) but return the 7 other OL who combined for the Camels other 48 starts. The experience at receiver and on the Oline, should help whoever wins the QB spot but their numbers may slip some without QB Smith and under a new OC.

The defense returns 8 starters to the Big South's #2 scoring (22.0 ppg) & #3 total defense (335 ypg). The DLine looks solid, as they only lose DE Darren Flowers (2 st, 23 tkl, 3 tfl). They return 8 of their top 9 DL led by 2nd tm BSC DE Damien Dozier (9 st, 49 tkl, 3.5 sk, 8 tfl), DT Terence Harper (11 st, 44 tkl, 4 tfl) & DT Dre Giles (5 st, 24 tkl, 1.5 tfl). The LB Corps takes the biggest hit on the defense as they lose two of 3 starters in 2nd tm BSC MLB Jack Ryan (11 st, 89 tkl, 3.5 sk, 5 tfl) and OLB Giddel Waters (9 st, 40 tkl, 3 tfl). They return 5 of their top 7 LB led by OLB's Tywun Rivens (5 st, 45 tkl, 6 tfl) and Ray Miller (6 st, 29 tkl). The secondary loses FS Deontae Henderson (11 st, 67 tkl, 6 tfl) & NB Aaron Covington (2 st, 9 tfl, 1 tfl). They return 6 DB's who combined to start 32 gms last year, led by ROV Dorian Jones (10 st, 49 tkl, 1 int) & CB's Levi Wiggins (6 st, 38 tkl, 3 pd) and Kam Prewitt (10 st, 36 tkl, 4 pd). This is a solid defense with quality depth as they return 17 of their top 21 tacklers and could improve.

The Camels Special Teams unit only loses their top 2 KR's. They return 1st tm BSC P Brad Dennis (43.2 avg), who should again be solid. They also return K/KO Colin Gary, but he struggled some hitting just 2-5 FG (L/35) with 5 KO OOB.

Barring another Hurricane, Campbell will make their first trip to play an FBS foe since restarting their program, when they open at Troy. In their 2nd year in the now expanding Big South, the Camels should improve their conference win total this year. Despite being inexperienced at QB, the Camels have a shot at a 3rd straight winning season but likely won't challenge for Big South Title this year.