

What To Watch: Several Ranked Matchups Highlight Week 4 Slate



I'm issuing a formal apology to Week 3, which I completely underestimated, as it turned out to perhaps have been the most exciting weekend so far this season

But for as good as last week was, Week 4 has the opportunity to be even better, with six matchups between ranked teams and an additional collection of interesting ranked-unranked games. Here are some of the top matchups for this week:

No. 4 Florida State at Clemson (12 p.m., ABC): This appears to be a statement game for both teams. Can Florida State continue to rise to the top of the sport, winning games like these that the top teams should take care of? Or will Clemson announce that the program's demise was greatly exaggerated?

This has more intrigue than it did a week ago, with the Seminoles struggling to put away Boston College and head coach Jeff Hafley in a 31-28 slugfest. Clemson hasn't shown much since losing the season opener at Duke, so despite being a ranked-unranked matchups, most view this one as a tossup with major ACC implications.

No. 22 UCLA at No. 11 Utah (3:30 p.m., FOX): This game is two of the best that - for at least this season - the Pac-12 has to offer.

The Utes have continued a strong start to the season after opening with a win over then-ranked (then unranked, now ranked again) Florida, though there is some question as to whether quarterback Cameron Rising will play.

Let's hope he does, as it would be an exciting battle between him and UCLA freshman signal caller Dante Moore, who has thrown for 615 yards, seven touchdowns and just one interception in three games.

No. 15 Ole Miss at No. 13 Alabama (3:30 p.m., CBS): Is Alabama done? Has Nick Saban lost his fastball? Will parity return to college football?

The answer to all of those is likely "no," but it should still be an interesting game with the Crimson Tide returning to quarterback Jalen Milroe after trying out seemingly every other quarterback under the sun.

Alabama's defense has been solid this season, but against a strong Ole Miss offense, I don't know if they'll be able to hold up for the entire game, and when that happens, I don't know if Alabama's offense will be able to respond.

No. 24 Iowa at No. 7 Penn State (7:30 p.m., CBS): This should be one of the best battles of the week, with Penn State's new-look offense under quarterback Drew Allar - not to mention running back Nicholas Singleton - going up against one of the best defenses in the Big Ten.

But the real question is whether Iowa's offense - which, and this is not a joke, needs to maintain 25.0 points per game to maintain offensive coordinator Brian Ferentz' job - will be able to move the ball. The Hawkeyes were able to score through their first three games of the season but it was against Utah State, Iowa State and Western Michigan - not exactly a murderer's row of competition.

No. 6 Ohio State at No. 9 Notre Dame (7:30 p.m., NBC): Any other reasonable preview for this week's slate would cover this game in full, but considering it's been extensively covered elsewhere on BuckeyeSports.com, I'd encourage you to just take a gander around this website for other preview content for that one.

Other notable games on the schedule include:

- No. 16 Oklahoma at Cincinnati (12 p.m., FOX)
- Rutgers at No. 2 Michigan (12 p.m., BTN)
- SMU at TCU (12 p.m., FS1)
- No. 20 Miami (Fla.) at Temple (3:30 p.m., ESPN2)
- No. 19 Colorado at No. 10 Oregon (3:30 p.m., ABC)
- Maryland at Michigan State (3:30 p.m., NBC/Peacock)
- No. 14 Oregon State at No. 21 Washington State (7 p.m., FOX)
- Arkansas at No. 12 LSU (7 p.m., ESPN)
- No. 3 Texas at Baylor (7:30 p.m., ABC)
- No. 15 USC at Arizona State (10:30 p.m., FOX)