

What To Watch: Week 5



With a few upsets shaking things up in college football in week four, most notably Kansas State's upending of then-No. 6 Oklahoma, a renewed excitement hangs in the air as conference play continues ramping up across the country.

Five ranked matchups await, with a top-10 showdown in the mix as No. 10 North Carolina State hits the road to take on No. 5 Clemson.

No. 7 Kentucky at No. 14 Ole Miss (12 p.m., ESPN): With several teams vying for position behind No. 1 Georgia and No. 2 Alabama in the SEC, this should be a telling slugfest.

Kentucky hasn't been ranked this high in the AP Poll since it reached No. 6 in 1977, and has reached its current No. 7 ranking in large part due to a win at then-No. 12 Florida Sept. 10. Former Penn State quarterback Will Levis leads the charge for the Wildcats, having completed 67.5 percent of his passes this year.

Ole Miss is largely untested off a 10-win campaign in 2021. Tulsa gave them a scare last week in a 35-27 contest, and Troy kept things respectable against the Rebels in week one during a 28-10 affair. They feature another transfer portal addition at quarterback in Jaxson Dart.

No. 4 Michigan at Iowa (12 p.m., FOX): If the Wolverines are to lose before playing No. 3 Ohio State to close the season, this is one of the more likely spots.

Michigan cruised through one of the easier nonconference schedules in college football before scraping by Maryland 34-27 in week four. The Wolverines have settled on J.J. McCarthy as their quarterback, complementing star running back Blake Corum, who's already amassed 478 rushing yards in four games at a clip of 7.5 yards per carry.

Iowa's own offense has been anemic, scoring a combined 10 points (excluding defensive scores) in the Hawkeyes' first two games, the latter of which handed the team its first loss on the year to Iowa State. The team only got to 27 last week due to two defensive touchdowns. Stout defense and a home crowd could keep them in the mix down the stretch, however.

No. 9 Oklahoma State at No. 16 Baylor (3:30 p.m., FOX): A rematch of last year's Big 12 Championship Game — which Baylor won — is on tap for 3:30.

Only three undefeated teams remain in the Big 12, and of those three only Oklahoma State is ranked. The Cowboys lost defensive coordinator Jim Knowles to Ohio State prior to the season and opened the year by surrendering 44 points to Central Michigan. Oklahoma State's offense has yet to fall short of 34 points this season, however, and its defense held Arizona State to 17 last week.

Baylor suffered its lone loss thus far to No. 19 BYU in double overtime, but rattled off a solid conference win last week at Iowa State. The Bears' front has already accumulated 24 sacks in four games to help the squad land as the No. 24 total defense in the nation.

No. 10 North Carolina State at No. 5 Clemson (7:30 p.m., ABC): A top-10 showdown that should go a long way in deciding this year's ACC race awaits in primetime.

NC State and Clemson not only represent the two highest-ranked teams in their conference, they play in the same division. The loser of this game has to hope the other loses twice elsewhere if that loser intends on making a conference championship game.

Clemson survived a double-overtime thriller at Wake Forest last week. The Wolfpack similarly survived a one-point scare against East Carolina in week one, but have since handled three opponents by multiple scores.

Two ranked matchups outside the ones listed above, No. 2 Alabama at No. 20 Arkansas and No. 22 Wake Forest at No. 23 Florida State, kick off at 3:30 p.m. on CBS and ABC, respectively. Other notable games on the schedule include:

- Purdue at No. 21 Minnesota (12 p.m., ESPN2)
- Texas Tech at No. 25 Kansas State (12 p.m., ESPN+)
- Oregon State at No. 12 Utah (2 p.m., PAC-12)
- Rutgers at **No. 3 Ohio State** (3:30 p.m., BTN)
- Northwestern at No. 11 Penn State (3:30 p.m., ESPN)
- Iowa State at Kansas (3:30 p.m., ESPN)
- Michigan State at Maryland (3:30 p.m., FS1)
- Virginia Tech at North Carolina (3:30 p.m., ACCN)
- No. 17 Texas A&M at Mississippi State (4 p.m., SEC)
- LSU at Auburn (7 p.m., ESPN)
- No. 1 Georgia at Missouri (7:30 p.m., SEC)
- Georgia Tech at No. 24 Pitt (8 p.m., ACCN)
- Arizona State at No. 6 USC (10:30 p.m., ESPN)
- Stanford at No. 13 Oregon (11 p.m., FS1)