

What To Watch, Week 6: No. 9 Missouri Travels To AggieLand For Top-25 Matchup Vs. No. 25 Texas A&M



Just one week after Alabama and Georgia played perhaps one of the best early regular season games in recent memory, college football fans will likely be treated to a slightly-less action packed and high stakes set of matchups in Week 6.

But before we already look forward to Week 8's stellar slate of Ohio State-Oregon, Texas-Oklahoma and Penn State-USC, let's take a look at some matchups this Saturday that we should keep an eye on:

No. 9 Missouri (4-0) At No. 25 Texas A&M (4-1), Noon, ABC

The Saturday slate kicks off with maybe the best game of the day between SEC foes Missouri and Texas A&M, who are both looking to return to CFP contention after rather sluggish starts to their seasons.

Missouri may be in a CFP spot right now with a 4-0 record, but they could easily be ranked more near Texas A&M if things had gone the other way in its previous games. The Tigers flirted with upset losses in their past two games, first eking past then-No. 24 Boston College 27-21 on Sept. 14, and then squeaking past Vanderbilt with a 30-27 overtime victory.

The Tigers inability to blow lesser teams out this season may stem from its relative ineffectiveness in the passing game, as veteran Brady Cook has thrown for just four touchdowns to one interception through the first four contests. Luckily for Missouri, though, they have been able to activate star wideout Luther Burden III in recent weeks, as he is now up to four touchdowns and 257 receiving yards, and an extra week of preparation for this game can only help them.

As for Texas A&M, the Aggies have also yet to fully click on all cylinders, defeating the MAC's Bowling Green just 26-20 at home and then coming away with a rather uninspiring 21-17 win over Arkansas at Dallas' AT&T Stadium in which it had just 163 passing yards on 11 completions.

Like Missouri, Texas A&M will need better quarterback play out of backup quarterback Marcel Reed, who has yet to throw for over 200 yards passing, assuming he continues to fill in for the injured Connor Weigman. Reed does have 230 rushing yards and two scores in his four games as starter, which could

provide an extra dimension for the Aggies against a stout Missouri defense. **BSB Prediction: Texas A&M 24, Missouri 20**

Rutgers (4-0) At Nebraska (4-1), 4 p.m., FS1

This may not be a ranked matchup that will dominate many headlines on Saturday, but it does provide some significant storylines that fans may compel fans to tune in. For the first time since 2012, the Scarlet Knights and head coach Greg Schiano are 4-0 to start a season, and they should have a fighter's chance to continue that magical start to their 2024 campaign on the road against a rather young and inexperienced Cornhuskers team.

Rutgers enters Lincoln, Neb., with a stifling defense that ranks 29th in the country in scoring defense at just 16.3 points allowed per game, but it is its dominant running game — led by star senior tailback Kyle Monangai — that could give the Scarlet Knights their fifth-straight win to start the season.

Monangai may be the best kept secret in the NCAA, as he enters Week 6 fifth in the nation in total rushing yards with 589, which has come on 97 carries and includes six scores. Rutgers' elite run game can help Schiano's team control the time of possession on the road, which could help limit the explosiveness of true freshman Dylan Raiola and his Cornhuskers' offense.

The former five-star Raiola has impressed in his first five games leading Nebraska, completing an efficient 100 of his 142 passes (70.4 completion percentage) for 1,224 passing yards and nine touchdowns to just five interceptions. His passing yard total ranks 26th among all FBS quarterbacks, while his nine scores are tied for ninth in the nation.

Raiola has a plethora of weapons to throw to, most notably Jahmal Banks (225 yards, two scores) and Isaiah Neyor (291, four), which could make for a fun chess match between the Nebraska offense and Rutgers defense as both teams look to climb into the top 25 rankings (Rutgers has not been ranked since 2012, the longest active drought among Power Four teams). **BSB Prediction: Rutgers 20, Nebraska 17**

No. 4 Tennessee (4-0) at Arkansas (3-2), 7:30 p.m., ABC

This primetime SEC on ABC matchup does not carry nearly the same allure as Alabama vs. Georgia did last week, but nonetheless, it serves as an interesting road test for what has turned into a wagon of a Tennessee team.

The Volunteers are ranked in the top five for the first time since the program's national championship in 1998, and that is in large part because of how dominant they have looked on both sides of the ball through four weeks.

Tennessee's brilliance this year begins with its offense, led by redshirt freshman quarterback Nico Lamaleava. He has shown off his talents as a thrower so far this season by completing 61 of his 88 passes for 892 yards and seven scores to just two interceptions, a statline that has him as a potential Heisman Trophy dark horse candidate.

Lamaleava may get a chance to continue building his resume against a Razorbacks defense that hasn't necessarily thrived on defense so far this season, giving up 319.4 yards per game, ninth in the SEC and ranking 10th in pass efficiency defense at 125.93.

The Razorbacks on offense have yet to excel in the passing game, ranking third-to-last in the conference in passing efficiency (126.61) with Taylen Green under center, but they have thrived in the run game. Sam Pittman's team enters the matchup with Tennessee with the fifth-best rushing offense in the SEC at 212.0 yards per game, a number that has been created by starting tailback Ja'Quinden Jackson (509 yards, nine scores) and also Green, who has 331 yards and four scores in addition to his 1,236 passing yards and five scores.

Arkansas' only chance for an upset may be to dominate the time of possession and keep the ball out of Lamaleava's hands, but the Volunteers are still likely to come out of this one with another solid road victory. **BSB Prediction: Tennessee 45, Arkansas 20**

Other Games To Watch:

- No. 12 Ole Miss (4-1) at South Carolina (3-1), 3:30 p.m., ESPN
- No. 23 Indiana (5-0) at Northwestern (2-2), 3:30 p.m., BTN
- Auburn (2-3) at No. 5 Georgia (3-1), 3:30 p.m., ABC
- No. 11 USC (3-1) at Minnesota (2-3), 7:30 p.m., BTN
- No. 10 Michigan (4-1) at Washington (3-2), 7:30 p.m., NBC
- UCF (3-1) at Florida (2-2), 7:45 p.m., SEC Network
- No. 8 Miami (5-0) at Cal (3-1), 10:30 p.m., ESPN