



Duke

1997 record: 2-9 (0-8 in ACC)
Head Coach: Fred Goldsmith (38-70-1 overall, 13-32 at Duke)

Home Field: Wallace Wade Stadium (33,941)

Returning Starters: 7 offense, 9 defense

Key Returnees: S Darius Clark, DT Chris Combs, K Sims Lenhardt, LB Kevin Lewis, WR Scottie Montgomery

Key Losses: LB Chike Egbuniwe, WR Corey Thomas

Strengths: With 16 starters returning, the Devils are experienced, especially on defense.

Weaknesses: Without an established quarterback and an uncertain running game, the Blue Devils will struggle to score points.

Keys to season: The defense must keep Duke in ballgames while the offense work on its quarterback and running back situation.

Key Game: Nov. 14 vs. Maryland



Fred Goldsmith

DUKE

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There will also be starters aplenty returning to the Blue Devil secondary. Strong safety Darius Clark, a junior who was fourth on the team in tackles last season with 54, will be back to start for the third straight season.

Clark will be joined in the secondary by junior free safety Eric Jones and junior cornerback Lamar Grant, who combined to break up eight passes and make 108 tackles in 1997.

Outside linebacker Kevin Lewis should take some of the defensive bur-

den off the shoulders of Stallmeyer and Combs. Lewis finished last season with 83 tackles and caused 3.5 fumbles.

On the other side of the ball, Duke lost three starters on the offensive line, leaving some doubt as to the level of protection QBs Bobby Campbell and Spencer Romine will get in 1998.

But the bigger concern may be at tailback, where Duke will return junior Letavious Wilks and sophomore Duane Epperson. In 1997, Wilks ran for 305 yards and Epperson contributed 217.

"We still have a question mark at tailback," Goldsmith said. "Will Letavious be ready? Will Duane be ready? I can't honestly say."

MARYLAND

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defense last year to a plus-0.73 turnover margin, good for second in the ACC.

If Maryland wants to make this season a positive one, it will have to fill in the gaping holes that remain at almost every position on the team — something Jordan believes Vanderlinden can accomplish.

"I really believe in coach Vandy," Jordan said. "Everywhere he's been, he's won. He may have started out at the bottom, but he got to the top each time."

Miami of Ohio

1997 record: 8-3 (6-2 in the MAC)

Head Coach: Randy Walker (49-34-5 overall and at Miami of Ohio)

Home Field: Yager Stadium (30,012)

Returning Starters: 5 offense, 6 defense

Key Returnees: LB Joeluan Armour, LB Dustin Cohen, WR Jay Hall, RB Travis Prentice, LB Drew Purcell

Key Losses: DE Chad Brightman, CB Jeff Cheeks, QB Sam Ricketts, CB Jamie Taylor, TE Damian Vaughn

Strengths: Prentice has played only 22 games at Miami, but holds the school record for rushing TDs with 37. Armour won the MAC's Defensive-Player-of-the-Year award last season.

Weaknesses: The Redhawks lost three-year starter Ricketts at QB and lost a pair of starting cornerbacks.

Keys to season: Give the ball to Prentice early and often. Prentice is the key to the Redhawk attack, amassing 5.2 yards per carry in 1997. The linebackers will have to take up the slack for the missing corners while also concentrating on stopping the run.

Key Game: Oct. 3 vs. Marshall

Stanford

1997 record: 5-6 (3-5 in the Pac-10)

Head Coach: Tyrone Willingham (19-15-1 overall and at Stanford)

Home Field: Stanford Stadium (85,500)

Returning Starters: 5 offense, 3 defense

Key Returnees: LB Donnie Spragan, FL Troy Walters

Key Losses: RB Anthony Bookman, LB Chris Draft, QB Chad Hutchinson, RB Mike Mitchell

Strengths: Stanford returns four starters to its offensive line, which will allow its unproven backfield time to develop.

Weaknesses: The defense lost eight starters from last season, leaving this year's squad with inexperience. In addition, the running back and quarterback positions go from solid to shaky with the losses of Bookman, Hutchinson and Mitchell.

Keys to season: Find a quarterback and a running back — and fast. The preseason depth chart lists three QBs as potential starters. The defense must learn on the job against Pac-10 powers UCLA and Arizona State.

Key Game: Oct. 31 at UCLA

Pittsburgh

1997 record: 6-6 (4-3 in the Big East)

Head Coach: Walt Harris (17-30 overall, 6-6 at Pittsburgh)

Home Field: Pitt Stadium (56,150)

Returning Starters: 5 offense, 8 defense

Key Returnees: RB Greg Bethea, LB Phil Clarke, WR Terry Murphy, WR Jackie Womack

Key Losses: QB Pete Gonzalez, OL Jon Marzoch, RB Dwayne Schulters, RB Billy West

Strengths: Murphy and Womack will provide a pair of easy targets for whomever takes the reins from Gonzalez under center. Clarke provides the heart, soul and most of the tackles for the Panthers' defense.

Weaknesses: The backfield of Schulters and West join Gonzalez on the departures list, leaving Pitt's offense almost completely reliant on the wide receivers. The problem is that someone has to get them the ball.

Keys to season: Stay healthy because of a lack of depth and try to find replacements, ones who will not make the kind of mistakes that lose games.

Key Game: Sept. 19 vs. Penn State

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