Accuracy in College Football's Pre-Season Selection for #1—how close are they?

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For the third consecutive season, a team from the SEC has been selected as the Pre-Season No. 1.

It's that time of the year—when members of the media, annual publications and fans are all on the same page (or so they think): on who will be No.1 team in college football for the coming season.

Some selectors have been making choices for over 50 years; others as few as 10; all have a say-so and not all have been completely accurate with their choices for a given year.

From all that I have been able to find, was that in 1950 the AP and UPI began the initial Pre-Season polls; and all have developed over the last 60 years.

In compiling this, I used 11 selected publications and the AP and all coaches' selections; as this was pulled from the website: stassen.com (http://preseason.stassen.com/over-under/all-teams.html) 1989-2009 and research by the author. Permission has been granted by Stassen.com to use the information.

• **Wire Services:**
AP   10 correct out of 60 seasons (1950-2009)
UP/UPI   9 of 23 (1950-53, 71-91)
USA Today   3 of 27 (1983-2009)

• **Publications:**
11--*Street & Smith's,* (1st season, 1956)

6—S*ports Illustrated,* (1st season, 1963)
5—A*thlon's,* (1st season, 1992)
5—G*ame Plan,* (1st season, 1992)
3—Lindy's, (1st season, 1993)
1—*Phil Steele* (1st season 1995)
1—B*lue Ribbon* (1st season, 2000)

Those were the experts and their accuracy; now, how about a closer look at the teams that went into the creation of the above.

Most Predicted Pre-Season #1...by a National Champion

Season	Actual #1	Avg. Pre-Season Ranking+	#1	# Selectors
1993	Florida State	1.11	8	9
2004	USC	1.30	7	10
1999	Florida State	1.14	6	7
1975	Oklahoma	1.00	4	4
2001	Miami FL	3.10	3	10
2008	Florida	4.40	3	10
1977	Notre Dame	1.50	3	4
1978	Alabama	1.50	3	4

>>10 Teams are tied with 2

+*Pre-Season Ranking* *is the composite ranking position of the selectors for a given season—a total of each ranking position and then divided by the number of polls a team appeared in.*

National Champions and Not Ranked in any Pre-Season Survey	
Season	**National Champion**
1958	LSU
1960	Minnesota
1964	Arkansas (FWAA)
1964	Notre Dame (NFFHF)
1965	Michigan State
1981	Clemson
1990	Georgia Tech

Most Predicted #1; but failed to become National Champion

Season		Predicted #1	Selectors #1 Total	Final Ranking AP—Coaches
1994	Florida	10	10	8—7
2000	Nebraska	10	10	2—2
2005	USC	10	10	3—2
2007	USC	8	8	3—3
2009	Florida	6	6	3—3
1992	Miami FL	6	6	4—5
1995	Florida State	6	6	3—3
2003	Oklahoma	5	5	7—7
1994	Florida	5	5	3—3
2001	Florida	5	5	13—10

>>6 National Champions tied with 4; 14 with 3; 23 with 2 and 44 with 1.