



Pre-Season Poll StatResearch

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The annual Pre-Season polls (AP and USA Today/Coaches) have been released and to no one’s surprise, Florida was picked No.1—to repeat as National Champion; and its third title in four campaigns.

Just how accurate has the AP, former UPI and USA Today Pre-Season choice for No.1 fared since the initial poll was released in 1950.

Before we look at this information; other questions have been raised: Are such polls necessary? Do they show that a team really is capable of winning the title—without playing a game? Should the pollsters wait till a few games of a current season be played before stating a team is worthy of the top spot?

While it is true no coach or sportswriter/broadcaster can see every game—even with today’s technology; then how can they vote for a Top 25……good question!!

But, somehow it all gets done and in a timely manner—in time for weekly “discussions.”

Since the initial Pre-Season Poll was released there has been 112 Pre-Season Polls—with only 22 times did the predicted No. 1 finish the season on top of the AP, UPI or USA Today’s final poll.

That’s not even 25%--18.03—to be exact.

A breakdown shows:

Poll	# of Polls	Correct	Pct. of Accuracy
AP, 1950-2008	59	9	15.25
UPI, 1950-53; 71-90	27	8	29.63
USA TODAY, 1991-2008	26	5	24.00
	112	22	18.03
Note: The USA Today became the Coaches' Poll in 1991			

Texas was picked second in both polls.

The last No.2 in Pre-Season...to become National Champion: 2005 Texas—played in the Rose Bowl; site of the 2010 BCS National Championship Game.

Before that, in the AP Poll, was Florida in 1996—the year of the Gators’ first crown; with Miami of Florida in 2001 picked second by the coaches and wound-up on top in the final selections.

Enjoy this look at the some of the accomplishments from the Pre-Season selections.

Pre-Season #1...also NC		Pre-Season #2... became NC	
1951-Tennessee	<i>AP:</i>	1950-Oklahoma	
1952-Michigan State		1955-Oklahoma	
1956-Oklahoma		1971-Nebraska	
1974-Oklahoma		1979-Alabama	
1975-Oklahoma		1995-Nebraska	
1978-Alabama		1996-Florida	
1985-Oklahoma		2005-Texas	
1993-Florida State			
1951-Tennessee	<i>UP/UIP:</i>	No UPI team, ranked	
1952-Michigan State		No. 2 in the Pre-Season	
1971-Nebraska		Poll, would become that	
1975-Oklahoma		the National Champion.	
1977-Notre Dame			
1985-Oklahoma			
1985-Oklahoma	<i>USA TODAY-</i>	1995-Nebraska	
1993-Florida State	<i>CNN/ESPN/</i>	2000-Oklahoma	
1994-Nebraska	<i>USA TODAY</i>	2001-Miami FL	
1999-Florida State		2005-Texas	
2004-USC			
Defending NC...is Pre-Season #1 Year After Title			

Pre-Season #1...also NC		Pre-Season #2... became NC	
Year/NC	AP	Final Rank	
1950	Notre Dame	NR	
1956	Oklahoma	1	
1957	Oklahoma	4	
1959	LSU	3	
1960	Syracuse	NR	
1963	USC	NR	
1966	Alabama	3	
1967	Notre Dame	5	
1969	Ohio State	4	
1972	Nebraska	4	
1973	USC	8	
1975	Oklahoma	1	
1986	Oklahoma	3	
1990	Miami FL	3	
1992	Miami FL	3	
1995	Florida State	4	
1996	Nebraska	6	
2002	Miami FL	2	
2004	USC	1	
2005	USC	2	
2009	Florida	TBD	
Year/ NC	UPI	Final Rank	
1972	USC	7	
1978	USC	2	
1986	Oklahoma	3	
1988	Notre Dame	3	
1989	Miami FL	3	
1994	Nebraska	1	
Year /NC	USA TODAY	Final Rank	
1995	Nebraska	6	
1996	Florida	6	
2001	Miami FL	2	
2003	USC	1	
2004	USC	2	
1998	Ohio State	2	
1999	Florida State	1	
2000	Nebraska	7	
2001	Florida	3	

Pre-Season #1...also NC		Pre-Season #2... became NC	
Same	Conference	in Consecutive Seasons	
AP: 1961	Iowa	Big 10	
1962	Ohio State	Big 10	
1968	Purdue	Big 10	
1969	Ohio State	Big 10	
1970	Ohio State	Big 10	
1974	Oklahoma	Big 8	
1975	Oklahoma	Big 8	
1976	Nebraska	Big 8	
1977	Oklahoma	Big 8	
1980	Ohio State	Big 10	
1981	Michigan	Big 10	
1997	Penn State	Big 10	
1998	Ohio State	Big 10	
2008	Georgia	SEC	
2009	Florida	SEC	
UPI: 1980	Ohio State	Big 10	
1981	Michigan	Big 10	
USA TODAY: 2008	Georgia	SEC	
2009	Florida	SEC	
Pre-Season	No. 1s	Meeting	Each Other
Season	AP	UPI	USA Today
1989	Michigan	Notre Dame^	n/a
1997	Penn State!	n/a	Florida*
^Notre Dame won, 24-19		!Penn State won, 21-16	* <i>Florida Citrus Bowl</i>
Different	Pre-Season	No.1	
Season	AP	UPI	USA TODAY
1971	Notre Dame	Nebraska	
1974	Oklahoma	Ohio State	
1977	Oklahoma	Notre Dame	
1983	Nebraska	Notre Dame	Nebraska
1989	Michigan	Notre Dame	Notre Dame
1994	Florida	Nebraska	
1997	Penn State		Florida

Pre-Season #1...also NC		Pre-Season #2... became NC	
Biggest	Surprises	Rank 11th* & was NC	
AP: 1958	LSU	NR	
1960	Minnesota	NR	
1962	USC	NR	
1954	Ohio State	20	
1959	Syracuse	20	
1981	Clemson	19	
1983	Miami FL	19	
2000	Oklahoma	19	
1980	Georgia	16	
1957	Auburn	15	
1997	Michigan	14	
1984	BYU	13	
1988	Notre Dame	13	
1968	Ohio State	11	
UPI: 1981	Clemson	NR	
1984	BYU	NR	
1990	Georgia Tech	NR	
1980	Georgia	20	
1983	Miami FL	19	
1988	Notre Dame	12	
USA TODAY: 2003	LSU	15	
2002	Ohio State	11	
*Ranked 11th or lower in	the Pre-Season to...	National Champion	
Biggest	Disappointments	11th or lower in Final Poll	
AP: 1950	Notre Dame	NR	
1961	Iowa	NR	
1962	Ohio State	NR	
1963	USC	NR	
1964	Mississippi	NR	
1960	Syracuse	19+	
1997	Penn State	16	
1980	Ohio State	15	
1984	Auburn	14	
1971	Notre Dame	13	
2008	Georgia	13	
1981	Michigan	12	
UPI: 1950	Notre Dame	NR	

Pre-Season #1...also NC		Pre-Season #2... became NC	
1983	Notre Dame	<i>NR</i>	
1980	Ohio State	15	
1984	Auburn	14	
USA TODAY: N/A			
		<i>+Tied Purdue</i>	
**Pre-Season #1...was	ranked 11th or lower...	Final Poll	