

WSN Pre-Season Football Rankings

Division 1

- 1) Waukesha West -- The defending champs return significant talent, including quarterback Brandon Berghoefer and All-State running back Joe Schobert. West plays a tough early schedule plus must travel to Arrowhead late in the year.
- 2) Milwaukee Marquette -- The GMC favorites are strong on the line and defense, but will need players to step up at quarterback and running back.
- 3) Kenosha Bradford -- The kind of talent the Red Devils lost, including WFC A Offensive Player of the Year Melvin Gordon, would cripple most programs, but head coach Jed Kennedy returns plenty of skilled players led by running back Vonte Jackson.
- 4) Homestead -- 61 North Shore Conference wins in a row and counting, although Germantown is hot on their heels. Quarterback Cody Berger and running back Antoine Easterling are among the best at their positions in the state.
- 5) Germantown -- This could be the year someone finally unseats Homestead in the North Shore, and Germantown is just the team that could do it. How will they handle transition from legendary coach Phil Datka to new head man Jake Davis?
- 6) Muskego -- A large and talented senior class has paid its dues, many starting for three years now. Multi-talented Jordan Gruettner leads a group with numerous college prospects.
- 7) Arrowhead -- Definitely a transition year for one of the state's elite programs, as Tom Taraska abruptly resigned in off-season to be replaced by newcomer to the state Greg Malling.
- 8) Stevens Point -- Yet another team going through a coaching change as Scott Rice takes over for Pete McAdams. Lots of skill position losses, but SPASH has an outstanding program from top to bottom.
- 9) Manitowoc Lincoln -- The FRCC favorites return Tanner Dixon at the quarterback spot and should be strong on defense as well.
- 10) Appleton North -- Head coach Rob Salm always has a strong defense, and he can turn to game-breaker Courtney Watkins on offense.
- 11) Wisconsin Rapids -- The Red Raiders lose two-time 1000-yard rusher Joe Ritchay and WSN Joe Thomas Award winner Frank Vruwink but welcome back All-State linebacker Vince Biegel, a Wisconsin commit.
- 12) Kenosha Tremper -- Senior Toneo Gulley was a two-way WFC A First Team All-State pick last season and will be among state's top players this year.
- 13) Milwaukee Riverside -- A lot of talent returns for head coach Pat Wagner, whose team will once again battle Milwaukee Bradley Tech for City Conference supremacy.
- 14) Sun Prairie -- The Cardinals lose some outstanding individual talent from last year but return enough quality players to be considered the early favorite in the always competitive Big Eight Conference.
- 15) Menomonee Falls -- After making the state finals in 2009 the Indians missed the playoffs last season. Look for a bounce-back season for Falls.

Others to Watch: Appleton East, Badger, Bay Port, Chippewa Falls, Hartford, Janesville Parker, Madison Memorial, Middleton, Mukwonago, Verona

Division 2

- 1) Waunakee -- Many considered the Warriors the best team in the state last year, regardless of division; that could very well be the case again this year. All-State running back Leo Musso could repeat as a 2,000-yard rusher.
- 2) Monona Grove -- May have been the second-best team in D2 last year, but ran into Waunakee in Level 3. As is often the case, the offensive line and defense will be strong for the Silver Eagles.
- 3) Kimberly -- A new Steve is in charge, as Steve Jones takes over for Steve Jorgensen. There will be lots of new faces on the roster as well, but the program is strong enough to remain a contender for some time.
- 4) Marshfield -- Quarterback Elliot Ashbeck is a sleeper for a breakout season after splitting time last season. The Tigers will compete in the incredibly tough newly formed Valley Football Association-South Division.
- 5) Menasha -- The BlueJays will turn to workhorse running back Caleb Belknap plenty this season. Menasha will also be in the VFA-South this year in what should be a highly competitive league race.
- 6) Beaver Dam -- The Golden Beavers have one of the state's top junior classes, led by All-State caliber running back R.J. Shelton. Senior Jake Heuer is a two-way standout at quarterback and defensive back.
- 7) Greendale -- The Panthers welcome back senior quarterback Sam Brick to orchestrate their high-powered spread offense.
- 8) Menomonie -- Neico Stokke may be the best quarterback you've never heard of, and will look to lead the

currently nickname-less team to a Big Rivers title.

9) Milwaukee Bradley Tech -- Running back Marcus Horne and company should challenge Milwaukee Riverside for the top spot in the Milwaukee City Conference.

10) DeForest -- The Norskies quietly had a very good season last year, with the bad fortune of meeting Monona Grove and Waunakee (twice, including a playoff loss). If the defense is as good as it was last year when it allowed less than 9 points a game, watch out.

11) Green Bay Southwest -- The Trojans have shown steady improvement under former Green Bay Packers linebacker Bryce Paup and will look to take the next step of challenging for a league title this year.

12) Brookfield Central -- The Lancers should continue to improve this season with three-year starter Jason Meichtry under center.

13) Ashwaubenon -- The Jaguars return 26 letterwinners but need to replace some outstanding skill position players.

14) Pius XI -- New coach George Machado, a familiar name in the area after several previous stop on the coaching carousel, will look to take advantage of some very talented athletes on offense.

15) La Crosse Logan -- The defending Mississippi Valley Conference champs should be the favorites once again behind running back D'Andre LaRoche.

Others to Watch: Antigo, Cedarburg, Franklin, Kaukauna, Merrill, Milton, South Milwaukee, Sussex Hamilton, Westosha Central, Wilmot

Division 3

1) West De Pere -- Athletic quarterback Jay Tollefson will look to build on his breakout performance from last year when he helped the Phantoms to the Division 3 state title.

2) Wisconsin Lutheran -- No pre-season rankings would be complete without Wisco, who are the favorites in the Wisconsin Little Ten Conference.

3) Catholic Memorial -- The Crusaders were runners-up in 2010, and while they return some very good players up front, will have to replace most of the skill position players from last year, including 1800-yard rusher Pete Karczewski.

4) Waupaca -- The 2006 and 2008 Division 3 state champs are always competitive under head coach John Koronkiewicz and return First Team All-Conference running back Beau Ash.

5) Xavier -- EVC champs last season, the Hawks should battle Waupaca once again for league supremacy.

6) Plymouth -- The two-time unbeaten league champs are the favorites under head coach Dan Knaus once again in the Eastern Wisconsin Conference.

7) Kewaskum -- Shifty running back Eric Perkins will run behind a talented offensive line as the Indians chase Plymouth in the EWC.

8) Pewaukee -- Despite the loss of All-Stater Derek Watt, the Pirates have become a premier program under head coach Clay Iverson and should be the favorites in the Woodland-Blue.

9) Madison Edgewood -- Lots of skill position players return for the Crusaders, who will need the defense to step up if they want to unseat Monona Grove atop the Badger-South.

10) Mount Horeb/Barneveld -- Last year's cardiac kids will be without multi-year starting quarterback Danny Elver but return one of the most versatile players in the state in senior Matt Fargo.

11) McFarland -- Despite losing all-everything Tyler Wedel, the Spartans return several talented athletes, led by First Team All-Conference running back Jordan Smith.

12) Jefferson -- The Eagles should push McFarland for the Rock Valley-North crown behind running back Nate Keller, who put together two 300-yard games last year.

13) Whitefish Bay -- The Dukes play a number of larger schools in the North Shore, but it will pay off come playoff time, where they are a sleeper for a deep run.

14) Brown Deer -- Running back Najee Williams and quarterback Jake Schimenz give the Falcons a pair of talented, veteran playmakers.

15) Mosinee -- Jordan Roosa is a versatile threat on offense for the Indians, who are the early favorites in the Great Northern Conference this year.

Others to Watch: Edgerton, Evansville, Lodi, Luxemburg-Casco, New Richmond, Notre Dame, Reedsburg, Rice Lake, Two Rivers, West Salem

Division 4

1) Big Foot -- Loads of talent return for the Chiefs, who have advanced to at least the Level 4 playoffs each of the past three seasons, with a Division 4 state title in 2009. Big Foot is talented at every position and is hungry after falling to rival Brodhead/Juda in the playoffs last season.

2) Kewaunee -- The defending Division 4 state champs lost a large and talented senior class from last year

and will need to replace most of the skill positions on offense. Never count out head coach Kurt Flaten's group though.

- 3) Brodhead/Juda -- The Cardinals exercised some demons in upsetting Big Foot in the Level 4 playoffs last year on their way to a state runner-up finish. Jesse Delorme is a two-way standout that loves to deliver a blow.
- 4) Bloomer -- Eight starters return on both sides of the ball for head coach John Post, whose team boasts some talented athletes at the skill positions.
- 5) Lakeside Lutheran -- While just five starters are back on both sides of the ball, the returning players are all standouts with All-Conference potential.
- 6) Nekoosa -- Two-time South Central Conference Player of the Year Austin Kukulka gives the Papermakers one of the state's top running backs.
- 7) Platteville -- An outstanding senior class boasts talent at every level of the offense and defense, making the Hillmen the favorite in the SWC.
- 8) Northwestern -- The Tigers have had back-to-back unbeaten regular seasons, but lost several outstanding two-way players from last year's team.
- 9) Somerset -- Head coach Bruce Larson's team has ruled the Middle Border in recent years, winning the title seven of the past nine years and finishing second twice in that span.
- 10) Roncalli -- The only two losses last year came to state champions: D5 champ Brillion during the regular season and D4 champ Kewaunee in the playoffs.
- 11) Marshall -- Five straight Capitol-South titles for the Cardinals, who bring back 21 letterwinners including seven starters on each side of the ball.
- 12) Omro -- The Foxes dethroned Saint Mary's Springs in their first year as a Flyway Conference member, but lose Player of the Year Ryan Winske to graduation.
- 13) Prairie du Chien -- First Team All-Conference running back Zach Thornton is one of seven returning starters on the Blackhawks offense.
- 14) Baldwin-Woodville -- Losing two-time two-way WFC A First Team All-State pick Jake Keefer hurts, but the Blackhawks have a solid program in place and should once again be highly competitive.
- 15) Racine St. Catherine's -- St. Cat's welcomes back the Midwest-South's top passing combo in seniors Cary Thomas and Justin Erickson.

Others to Watch: Cumberland, Gale-Etrick-Trempealeau, Kettle Moraine Lutheran, Montello/Princeton/Green Lake, River Valley, Saint Croix Central, Saint Croix Falls, Wautoma, Wittenberg-Birnamwood, Wrightstown

Division 5

- 1) Brillion -- The defending champs get the edge in Division 5, although it will be all they can do just to win the suddenly stacked Olympian-Packerland Large that now features defending D4 champ Kewaunee and several other outstanding programs.
- 2) Colby -- It won't be easy to replace running back Dylan Loertscher's 37 touchdowns, but with three straight unbeaten Cloverbelt titles, the Hornets have the kind of program that reloads, not rebuilds.
- 3) Cedar Grove-Belgium -- Many of the top players return from what was a young team last season as the Rockets look to regain Central Lakeshore Conference supremacy.
- 4) Oostburg -- Only nine letterwinners return from last year's unbeaten conference champs, but those that do come back are outstanding for head coach Scott Ring.
- 5) Lancaster -- WFC A Hall of Fame coach John Hoch, who has led the Flying Arrows to six state titles, welcomes back 23 letterwinners, including seven starters on each side of the ball.
- 6) Pardeeville -- The Bulldogs have not lost a conference game since 2005 and should be the Trailways-Large favorites again this season.
- 7) Bonduel -- The Bears were unbeaten CWC-8 champs last year and advanced to the State Semi-Finals but have significant holes to fill following the graduation of a strong senior class.
- 8) Osseo-Fairchild -- The team will go without a nickname to start the year as it transitions from the Native American-based "Chieftains", but for now you can call them one of the top teams in Division 5.
- 9) Arcadia -- The Raiders get the early edge in the Coulee Conference after tying for the league title last season.
- 10) Necedah -- The Cardinals of Necedah will battle the Cardinals of Bangor once again for the Scenic Bluffs championship.
- 11) Darlington -- Losing do-everything Alex Erickson and several other key players from last year's team will hurt, but the Redbirds should field another strong squad.
- 12) Stratford -- The Tigers won six straight Division 6 state titles from 2003 to 2008 but have just one playoff win the past two seasons after moving up to Division 5.
- 13) Laconia -- Despite a summer coaching change, the Spartans are poised to make a strong push in the

highly competitive Flyway Conference.

14) Marion/Tigerton -- The Mustangs will look to build on the success of last year after winning the CWC-10 with a perfect 6-0 league mark.

15) Cameron -- The Comets should be one of the most improved teams thanks to the return of 13 starters from last year's playoff squad.

Others to Watch: Aquinas, Elk Mound, Grantsburg, Howards Grove, Kenosha St. Joseph's, Mondovi, Northern Elite, Peshtigo, Poynette, Waterloo

Division 6

1) Edgar -- It's Edgar's World and everyone else in Division 6 is just living in it as the Wildcats have claimed two straight state titles in dominating fashion, outscoring opponents 1250-87 in 28 games over the past two years. While just seven starters return, there is plenty of talent remaining.

2) Saint Mary's Springs -- Division 5 champs in 2009, the Ledgers were Division 6 runners-up to Edgar last season despite seeing Omro knock them from the top spot in the Flyway Conference. Ten starters return on offense and eight on defense.

3) Bangor -- Fifteen starters are back for the Cardinals, who have gone unbeaten in the regular season the past three years.

4) Blair-Taylor -- The three-time defending Dairyland champion Wildcats will be solid up front, but must replace quarterback Hank Kujak, who totaled 33 touchdowns passing and rushing last year.

5) Shiocton -- In addition to eight returning starters on offense and seven on defense, the Chiefs should get a boost from a JV team that went 8-1.

6) Mineral Point -- RB/LB Brady Tibbits is one of the state's top two-way players and a major reason the Pointers should challenge Darlington for the SWAL title.

7) Pacelli -- Despite some heavy graduation losses, you can never count out the Cardinals under head coach Bob Raczek, who is second on the state's all-time coaching wins list with 352.

8) Regis -- The Ramblers have been among the state's best small-school programs over the last decade with one state title, a pair of runner-up finishes, and three other trips to the Level 4 playoffs.

9) Coleman -- Senior running back Mitch Champagne returns after rushing for 1488 yards and 22 touchdowns last year for the Marinette & Oconto Conference champions.

10) Hurley -- The Midgets are sometimes a bit forgotten playing in the largely Minnesota-based Great Western Conference, but they have made 13 straight playoff appearances.

11) Ozaukee -- Devon Linzenmeyer is one of the state's most productive backs, rushing for 1694 yards and 25 touchdowns last year.

12) Clear Lake -- For the first time in four years, the Warriors will be without quarterback Matt O'Connell, who broke the state's career record for total offense by going over the 10,000 yard mark last season (and accounting for 44 touchdowns in 2010 alone).

13) Thorp -- The Cardinals quietly had one of the best defenses in the state last year, including posting a 21-0 shutout of eventual Division 5 champion Gilman.

14) Hilbert -- After a one-year hiatus, the Wolves were back in the postseason in 2010 and are the early favorite in the Olympian-Packerland Small.

15) Lake Country Lutheran -- Despite losing First Team All-Conference quarterback Garrett Stocke, the Lightning are the favorites in the revamped Midwest Classic-North.

Others to Watch: Athens, Brookfield Academy, Fennimore, Hilbert, Johnson Creek, Northwood/Solon Springs, Pecatonica/Argyle, Pepin/Alma, Whitehall, Wild Rose

Division 7

1) Gilman -- The defending champion Pirates got some bad news in the off-season when it was revealed standout fullback/linebacker Austin Zach would miss the season due to injury. With just five returning starters, WFCA Coach of the Year Robin Rosemeyer will have his work cut out for him in 2011.

2) Randolph -- Don't call them a basketball school as the Rockets are blasting off on the football field as well. A Level 4 playoff trip last year brought a lot of confidence that will carry over to 2011.

3) McDonell Central -- The Macks go from the Marawood to the Cloverwood this year but don't expect much to change; they'll still hurl the ball around with standout senior quarterback Kyle Cody, who is the top returning passer in the state with 2218 yards and 21 touchdowns.

4) Catholic Central -- After back to back state titles in 2008 and 2009 the Hilltoppers had to settle for a silver ball last year. While they will need playmakers to step forward on offense, head coach Tom Aldrich has built a program that should remain highly competitive.

5) Potosi -- The Chieftains have won three straight Six Rivers Conference titles but have a number of holes

to fill due to graduation.

6) Plum City -- Plum City has captured six straight undefeated Lakeland-South titles and gone unbeaten during the regular season five consecutive years.

7) Owen-Withee -- The 1-2 running back duo of Tommy Schuh and Mark Wilson is among the seven returning offensive starters for the Blackhawks, who also bring back eight starters on defense.

8) Seneca -- Two-way First Team All-Conference choice John Alanis leads the Ridge & Valley favorites into 2011.

9) Ithaca -- While Ridge & Valley Back of the Year Jesse Scholl has graduated, two-time First Team All-Conference running back Mitchell Ricco returns for his junior season, along with seven starters on defense.

10) Spring Valley -- The Cardinals could be one of the most improved teams in 2011 thanks to a strong senior class led by three-year running back starters Kyle Bosshart and Steven VonHaden.

11) Frederic -- Fifteen letterwinners and 11 starters return for veteran head coach Ken Belanger and company.

12) Shell Lake -- The Lakers reclaimed the Lakeland-Small title last season but will be pushed by Frederic and Northwood/Solon Springs this year.

13) Hillsboro -- Several key players have graduated, but the Tigers welcome back 12 starters from last year's team.

14) Greenwood/Granton -- The Indians appear to be an ascending program with the return of eight starters on offense and eight starters on defense.

15) Black Hawk -- This scrappy and tough bunch should be in the thick of the Six Rivers race this season thanks to the return of 11 starters from last year.

Others to Watch: Benton/Scales Mound (IL), Cashton, Clayton, Cochrane-Fountain City, De Soto, Elmwood, Newman Catholic, Shullsburg, Southwestern, Suring