

2008 BIG SOUTH PRESEASON POLL

Defending champion Liberty has been selected to repeat as champions in 2008 in the League's annual preseason poll, as voted by the head coaches and media panel. Below are the preseason poll results, with first-place votes in parenthesis:

1. Liberty (12)	77
2. Coastal Carolina	58
3. Gardner-Webb	52
4. Stony Brook	38
5. Charleston Southern (1)	30
6. VMI	18

Presbyterian is not playing a full Conference schedule in 2008 and is therefore not eligible for the regular-season championship.

2008 PRESEASON ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

Preseason Offensive Player of the Year
Rashad Jennings, R-Sr., RB, Liberty

Preseason Defensive Player of the Year
Mario Brown, Sr., LB, Gardner-Webb

PRESEASON ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

OFFENSE

- QB Brock Smith, Sr., Liberty
- RB Rashad Jennings, R-Sr., Liberty
- RB Conte Cuttino, Jr., Stony Brook
- WR Dee Brown, Sr., Charleston Southern
- WR Lynell Suggs, Sr., Stony Brook
- WR Dobson Collins, Sr., Gardner-Webb
- TE Scott Fambrough, Jr., Coastal Carolina
- OL Demario Deese, Sr., Gardner-Webb
- OL Britt Leggett, R-Sr., Coastal Carolina
- OL Mike Godsil, Sr., Liberty
- OL Britt Stone, Sr., Liberty
- OL Alex Bragg, R-Sr., Charleston Southern

DEFENSE

- DL Colin Dugan, Sr., Liberty
- DL Phillip Oboh, Jr., Coastal Carolina
- DL Adam Soivilien, Sr., Stony Brook
- DL Jake Killeen, Sr., Charleston Southern
- LB Mario Brown, Sr., Gardner-Webb
- LB Nick Hursky, Sr., Liberty
- LB D.J. Rice, Sr., Coastal Carolina
- LB Josh Mitchell, R-Sr., Charleston Southern
- DB Marrio Norman, R-Sr., Coastal Carolina
- DB Cedric McGowan, Jr., Gardner-Webb
- DB Daniel Cooke, Sr., Gardner-Webb
- DB Patrick Calvary, Sr., Liberty

SPECIAL TEAMS

- PK Luke Gaddis, Sr., Stony Brook
- P Michael Hanna, Sr., Gardner-Webb
- LS Dan Pope, R-Sr., Liberty
- KR Tim Maypray, Jr., VMI
- PR Dobson Collins, Sr., Gardner-Webb

2008 BIG SOUTH FOOTBALL COACHES TELECONFERENCE - EACH TUESDAY

Each Tuesday during the 2008 season -- with the exception of Wednesday, Oct. 15, the Big South head football coaches will participate in a weekly teleconference call, beginning at 10:20am ET. Each call will be recorded and available for playback on the Conference website Tuesday afternoons. The first call is scheduled for tomorrow, **Tuesday, Aug. 26. THIS CALL IS OPEN TO MEDIA ONLY.** For more information, please contact Mark Simpson at 704-341-7990 or marks@bigsouth.org.

THE BIG SOUTH IN THE NATIONAL POLLS

<u>Week of</u> Preseason	<u>CSU</u> --/--	<u>CCU</u> RV/RV	<u>GWU</u> --/--	<u>LU</u> RV/RV	<u>PC</u> --/--	<u>SBU</u> --/--	<u>VMI</u> --/--
Sept. 1							
Sept. 8							
Sept. 15							
Sept. 22							
Oct. 29							
Oct. 6							
Oct. 13							
Oct. 20							
Oct. 27							
Nov. 3							
Nov. 10							
Nov. 17							
Nov. 24							

The Sports Network poll is listed first, followed by the FCS Coaches Poll.

RV - Received Votes

Notes: Lindy's College Football Preview ranked Liberty at No. 19 and Coastal Carolina at No. 24 in its preseason rankings.

2008 BIG SOUTH NATIONAL HONORS

The Sports Network Preseason All-America

- Rashad Jennings, Liberty (1st team)
- Dominic Bolden, Liberty (3rd team)
- Mario Brown, Gardner-Webb (3rd team)

Lindy's Preseason All-America

- Tim Maypray, VMI (1st team)
- Mario Brown, Gardner-Webb (2nd team)

The Sports Network Positional Rankings

- Rashad Jennings, Liberty (No. 1 RB)
- Brock Smith, Liberty (No. 14 QB)

BIG SOUTH GETS BIGGER IN 2008

The Big South football membership officially increases to seven overall in 2008 with the addition of Stony Brook University as an associate member and Presbyterian College beginning its full-time affiliation as a League member. The addition of SBU gives the League six Division I playing members, marking the first 5-game League slate. Meanwhile, Presbyterian College, which is in the midst of its transition into Division I, is playing five of the six members in 2008, and will officially become a Big South opponent in 2009 when the Blue Hose play their first full Conference schedule, at which time PC will be eligible for the regular-season title. However, Presbyterian is not eligible for the football postseason until the 2011 season.

BIG SOUTH SCORES AUTOMATIC BID IN 2010

As part of the NCAA's expansion of the FCS Playoffs to 20 teams in 2010, the Big South Conference has been granted an automatic bid to the playoffs beginning that same year. In the meantime, Big South members are eligible to receive an at-large berth in 2008 and 2009.

BIG SOUTH KICKS OFF SEVENTH SEASON THIS WEEK

The Big South begins Year Seven of its young football history this week with all but VMI in action. It also will mark the first time in League history that two teams will open the season on a Thursday night, as Charleston Southern travels to Miami (Fla.) and Gardner-Webb visits Tennessee Tech. Big South teams are a combined 16-13 in season openers since 2002, including a League-best 4-1 mark in 2005 and 2006. Liberty and Gardner-Webb own the best season opening record in the Big South's football history, each going 4-2 in the first game since 2002. The Flames have won their last four season openers. Meanwhile, VMI has won its last three openers, including shutouts in 2005 and 2007.

TEAM-BY-TEAM OPENERS

Charleston Southern is opening the campaign on the road for the sixth-straight season. Coastal Carolina is opening on the road for the fourth time overall and the fourth time in the last five years, and will play its first-ever FBS opponent (Penn State) at the same time. Gardner-Webb is on the road to start the year for the fourth time in five seasons as well. Liberty is hosting its fifth consecutive season opener, and VMI, which is playing its 119th season, will open at home next week for the fourth-straight year. Newcomer Stony Brook is opening at home for the second consecutive campaign, while Presbyterian starts the year on the road for the third-straight season. Below is a team-by-team look at season openers:

Team	Record	Last Season Opening Win	Notes
Charleston Southern	4-13	2006 (at Presbyterian, 21-13)	3-0 at home, 1-13 on road
Coastal Carolina	3-2	2005 (at Elon, 17-10)	1-1 at home, 2-1 on road
Gardner-Webb	19-17-2	2006 (at Jacksonville, 49-14)	8-3 under Steve Patton
Presbyterian	29-61-5	2006 (at West Georgia, 10-0)	0-1 under Bobby Bentley
Liberty	17-18	2007 (Tusculum, 38-14)	15-7 opening year at home
Stony Brook	13-11	2007 (Georgetown, 35-28)	10-5 opening year at home
VMI	71-43-4	2007 (Lock Haven, 20-0)	19-10 under new coach

RACE FOR THE TOP

Liberty running back duo **RASHAD JENNINGS** and **ZACH TERRELL** enter the 2008 season as the Big South's active leading rushers. Jennings is fifth all-time with 2,133 rushing yards, just ahead of sixth-place Terrell (2,104). Jennings needs 867 yards to become the third player in League history with 3,000 career rushing yards (Terrell is 896 yards shy). Jennings also needs 1,277 yards to break the Big South's all-time rushing record of 3,409, held by Liberty's **DRE BARNES**. Meanwhile, Jennings has been tabbed as the No. 1 running back in all of FCS by *The Sports Network*, and the media outlet also placed him on its preseason All-America First-Team squad.

ANYONE FEEL A DRAFT?

The Big South had two players selected in the 2008 NFL Draft, a League first. Coastal Carolina WR **JEROME SIMPSON** was selected by the Cincinnati Bengals in the second round with the 46th overall pick, while Gardner-Webb DE **BRIAN JOHNSTON** was selected by the Kansas City Chiefs in the seventh round with the 210th overall pick. In addition, Coastal's **MIKE TOLBERT** (Chargers), Liberty's **VINCE REDD** (Patriots) and Liberty's **STEPHEN SENE** (Rams) were signed to free agent contracts following the draft. Sene has since moved onto the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

FB-YES

The Big South football membership is playing a League-record five games against FBS members in 2008. The list features two ACC teams, two MAC teams and one Big Ten opponent. Charleston Southern is facing two FBS squads -- Miami of both Florida and Ohio. Coastal Carolina opens the season at Penn State, while Gardner-Webb plays a mid-season contest at Georgia Tech. VMI rounds out the Big South's FBS slate with a visit to Ohio.

BIG SOUTH VS. OTHER CONFERENCES	
TOTAL	0-0 (.000)
Atlantic Coast	0-0
Georgia Tech	
Miami (Fla.)	
Big Ten	0-0
Penn State	
Colonial	0-0
Hofstra	
Maine	
Richmond	
Towson	
William & Mary	
Ivy	0-0
Brown	
Mid-American	0-0
Miami (Ohio)	
Ohio	
Mid-Eastern Athletic	0-0
North Carolina A&T	
Missouri Valley Football	0-0
Youngstown State	
Northeast	0-0
Monmouth	
St. Francis (Pa.)	
Ohio Valley	0-0
Austin Peay	
Tennessee Tech	
Patriot League	0-0
Colgate	
Lafayette	
Southern	0-0
Appalachian State	
Elon	
Western Carolina	
Wofford	
Southland	0-0
Sam Houston State	
FCS Independent	0-0
Iona	
Savannah State	
FCS Reclassifying	0-0
North Carolina Central	
Presbyterian	
Non-Division I	0-0
Chowan	
Edward Waters	
Fayetteville State	
Glenville State	
North Greenville	
Tusculum	

PRESEASON ALL-AMERICANS

In addition to Liberty RB **RASHAD JENNINGS**, *The Sports Network* also named Flames kick returner **DOMINIC BOLDEN** and Gardner-Webb LB **MARIO BROWN** to its preseason All-America squad with Third-Team honors. *Lindy's College Preview* recognized VMI's **TIM MAYPRAY** on its preseason First-Team and named Brown as a preseason Second-Team All-American. The honors mark the seventh-straight year Gardner-Webb has had a student-athlete receive preseason All-America recognition.

ZACH ATTACK ENTERS SENIOR SEASON WITH STREAK INTACT

Liberty senior RB **ZACH TERRELL** carries a 16-game rushing touchdown scoring streak into the 2008 season. He has scored 21 touchdowns in that span, increasing his career total to 26, good for sole possession of second all-time in Big South history. Terrell started his streak Oct. 14, 2006 with two scores vs. William & Mary.

POINT OF ORDER

Coastal Carolina has scored a point in all 56 games in its history, extending its Big South record for consecutive games with a point. Gardner-Webb saw its 50-game scoring streak end in the 2007 season finale against Liberty. Charleston Southern narrowly extended its point scoring streak to 31 games during the final weekend of 2007, as the Bucs needed a defensive extra point against Coastal Carolina to crack the scoreboard. Meanwhile, VMI (38) and Liberty (27) extended their respective scoring streaks to close out the 2007 campaign.

GOING FOUR IT!!

Four Big South football players -- Gardner-Webb's **HUNTER SMITH**, Coastal Carolina's **ADRIN GRADY** and **JEROME SIMPSON**, and Charleston Southern's **JADA ROSS** -- earned All-Conference honors all four years. The list could double by the end of the 2008 season, as Gardner-Webb teammates **DANIEL COOKE**, **DEMARIO DEESE** and **MICHAEL HANNA**, and Liberty's **ZACH TERRELL** have all been voted All-Conference three times during their respective careers.

JENNINGS' JAUNTS

Liberty RB **RASHAD JENNINGS** is third all-time in Big South history with 12 100-yard rushing games. Former VMI back **SEAN MIZZER** is second with 15 games, while former Liberty rusher **DRE BARNES** holds the record at 17. Meanwhile, Jennings is the Big South career leader with five 3-TD games, including four 3-TD rushing efforts.

CAN HE DO IT?

If he should break the 1,000-yard rushing barrier this season, Liberty senior **RASHAD JENNINGS** would become the first player in Big South history with three 1,000-yard seasons. Last season, he gained 1,113 yards on the ground, and he has missed leading the League in rushing twice by a combined 11 yards. Jennings and former Flames running back **DRE BARNES** are the only players in Conference annals to record consecutive 1,000-yard seasons.

2,000 YARDS IN THEIR SIGHTS

Junior running backs **HOWARD ABEGESAH** (VMI) and **DAVID MONTGOMERY** (Gardner-Webb) each enter 2008 with an outside chance of becoming the seventh and eighth players in Big South history with 2,000 career rushing yards. Abegesah gained a League-best 1,121 yards last season and is 879 yards from the milestone. Montgomery rushed for a career-high 736 yards in 2007 and is 915 yards away from the magical number.

BROCK YOU LIKE A HURRICANE

Liberty QB **BROCK SMITH** is fifth all-time in Big South history with 4,416 passing yards, and he needs 584 passing yards to become the fifth QB in League history with 5,000. VMI's **JONATHAN WILSON** is ahead of Smith with 5,096 career yards. Smith enters his senior season ranked sixth in pass attempts (528), fifth in completions (305), fourth in TD passes (31) and fifth in total offense (4,482).

HUGHES EFFORT

VMI junior QB **KYLE HUGHES** needs 466 rushing yards to become the third quarterback in Big South history with 1,000 in his career. Coastal's **TYLER THIGPEN** is first among QBs with 1,638, followed by Gardner-Webb's **NICK ROBERTS** at 1,182. Hughes' 444 rushing yards last season were third-most in a campaign by a Big South signal-caller, while his 71-yard TD run at Robert Morris is the third-longest rush from scrimmage by a QB in League history. In addition, Hughes is one of just four quarterbacks in Big South history to rush for 100 yards and pass for 100 yards in the same game.

**UPCOMING BIG SOUTH EDGE WEB
VIDEO STREAMING & TELEVISION SCHEDULE**

Thursday, Aug. 28	
Charleston Southern at Miami (Fla.)	ESPN360
Saturday, Aug. 30	
Coastal Carolina at Penn State	BTN
Colgate at Stony Brook	The EDGE
North Greenville at Liberty	WTLU *, The EDGE
Saturday, Sept. 6	
Wofford at Charleston Southern	The EDGE
Fayetteville State at Presbyterian	The EDGE
St. Francis (Pa.) at VMI	The EDGE
Elon at Stony Brook	The EDGE
Tusculum at Gardner-Webb	The EDGE
Colgate at Coastal Carolian	The EDGE
Glennville State at Liberty	WTLU *, The EDGE
Saturday, Sept. 13	
Stony Brook at Maine	WABI-TV, CW/MyTV
Saturday, Sept. 20	
Western Carolina at Presbyterian	The EDGE
Chowan at VMI	The EDGE
Towson at Coastal Carolina	The EDGE
Friday, Sept. 26	
Hofstra at Stony Brook	MSG
Saturday, Sept. 27	
N. Greenville at Charleston Southern	The EDGE
Sam Houston State at Gardner-Webb	The EDGE
Saturday, Oct. 4	
Liberty at Coastal Carolina	MASN, SS
Gardner-Webb at Charleston Southern	The EDGE
Richmond at VMI	The EDGE
North Greenville at Presbyterian	The EDGE
Saturday, Oct. 11	
Coastal Carolina at VMI	The EDGE
N.C. Central at Presbyterian	The EDGE
Stony Brook at Liberty	WTLU *, MASN, The EDGE
Saturday, Oct. 18	
Charleston Southern at Stony Brook	The EDGE
Lafayette at Liberty	WTLU *, MASN, The EDGE
Presbyterian at Gardner-Webb	The EDGE
N.C. Central at Coastal Carolina	The EDGE
Saturday, Oct. 25	
VMI at Gardner-Webb	The EDGE
Charleston So. at Liberty	WTLU *, MASN, The EDGE
Stony Brook at Coastal Carolina	The EDGE
* - Simulcast on FamilyNet (satellite) and WSET-TV digital (Lynchburg, VA)	
Key:	
BTN - Big Ten Network	
MASN - Mid-Atlantic Sports Network	
MSG - Madison Square Garden	
SS - SportSouth	
WTLU - Liberty campus TV airing Flames Television Network production	

BIG SOUTH FOOTBALL WEEKLY REPORT • TEAM-BY-TEAM SCHEDULES • AUG. 25, 2008

CHARLESTON SOUTHERN (0-0, 0-0 Big South)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>OPPONENT</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Aug. 28	at Miami (Fla.)	7:30pm
Sept. 6	WOFFORD	1:30pm
Sept. 13	at Miami (Ohio)	3:00pm
Sept. 27	NORTH GREENVILLE	1:30pm
Oct. 4	GARDNER-WEBB *	1:30pm
Oct. 11	at Savannah State	2:00pm
Oct. 18	at Stony Brook *	3:00pm
Oct. 25	at Liberty *	3:30pm
Nov. 1	VMI *	1:30pm
Nov. 8	PRESBYTERIAN	1:30pm
Nov. 15	EDWARD WATERS	1:30pm
Nov. 22	at Coastal Carolina *	6:00pm

COASTAL CAROLINA (0-0, 0-0 Big South)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>OPPONENT</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Aug. 30	at Penn State	12:00pm
Sept. 6	COLGATE	7:00pm
Sept. 13	at Monmouth	1:00pm
Sept. 20	TOWSON	7:00pm
Sept. 27	at North Carolina A&T	6:00pm
Oct. 4	LIBERTY *	7:00pm
Oct. 11	at VMI *	1:30pm
Oct. 18	NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL	7:00pm
Oct. 25	STONY BROOK *	7:00pm
Nov. 8	at Gardner-Webb *	3:30pm
Nov. 15	at Presbyterian	1:30pm
Nov. 22	CHARLESTON SOUTHERN *	6:00pm

GARDNER-WEBB (0-0, 0-0 Big South)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>OPPONENT</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Aug. 28	at Tennessee Tech	8:00pm
Sept. 6	TUSCULUM	6:00pm
Sept. 13	at Austin Peay	7:00pm
Sept. 27	SAM HOUSTON STATE	6:00pm
Oct. 4	at Charleston Southern *	1:30pm
Oct. 11	at Georgia Tech	TBA
Oct. 18	PRESBYTERIAN	6:00pm
Oct. 25	VMI *	1:30pm
Nov. 1	at Stony Brook *	3:00pm
Nov. 8	COASTAL CAROLINA *	3:30pm
Nov. 15	at Liberty *	7:00pm

LIBERTY (0-0, 0-0 Big South)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>OPPONENT</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Aug. 30	NORTH GREENVILLE	7:00pm
Sept. 6	GLENVILLE STATE	7:00pm
Sept. 13	at Western Carolina	6:00pm
Sept. 27	at Youngstown State	6:00pm
Oct. 4	at Coastal Carolina *	7:00pm
Oct. 11	STONY BROOK *	3:30pm
Oct. 18	LAFAYETTE	3:30pm
Oct. 25	CHARLESTON SOUTHERN *	3:30pm
Nov. 1	at Presbyterian	1:30pm
Nov. 8	at VMI *	1:30pm
Nov. 15	GARDNER-WEBB *	7:00pm
Nov. 22	ELON	1:00pm

PRESBYTERIAN (0-0)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>OPPONENT</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Aug. 30	at Wofford	7:00pm
Sept. 6	FAYETTEVILLE STATE	1:30pm
Sept. 13	at Elon	6:00pm
Sept. 20	WESTERN CAROLINA	1:30pm
Sept. 27	at Appalachian State	7:00pm
Oct. 4	NORTH GREENVILLE	2:00pm
Oct. 11	NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL	1:30pm
Oct. 18	at Gardner-Webb	6:00pm
Nov. 1	LIBERTY	1:30pm
Nov. 8	at Charleston Southern	1:30pm
Nov. 15	COASTAL CAROLINA	1:30pm
Nov. 22	at VMI	1:30pm

STONY BROOK (0-0, 0-0 Big South)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>OPPONENT</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Aug. 30	COLGATE	6:00pm
Sept. 6	ELON	3:00pm
Sept. 13	at Maine	6:00pm
Sept. 20	at Brown	12:30pm
Sept. 27	HOFSTRA	6:00pm
Oct. 11	at Liberty *	3:30pm
Oct. 18	CHARLESTON SOUTHERN *	3:00pm
Oct. 25	at Coastal Carolina *	7:00pm
Nov. 1	GARDNER-WEBB *	3:00pm
Nov. 8	at Iona	1:00pm
Nov. 15	VMI *	3:30pm

VMI (0-0, 0-0 Big South)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>OPPONENT</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Sept. 6	ST. FRANCIS (Pa.)	1:30pm
Sept. 13	at William & Mary	7:00pm
Sept. 20	CHOWAN	1:30pm
Sept. 27	at Ohio	2:00pm
Oct. 4	RICHMOND	1:30pm
Oct. 11	COASTAL CAROLINA *	1:30pm
Oct. 25	at Gardner-Webb *	1:30pm
Nov. 1	at Charleston Southern *	1:30pm
Nov. 8	LIBERTY *	1:30pm
Nov. 15	at Stony Brook *	3:30pm
Nov. 22	PRESBYTERIAN	1:30pm

* - Big South Conference game
 HOME GAME IN ALL CAPS
 All times EST and subject to change