



OCT. 20, 2009

Alabama bumps SEC brother Florida from the top spot after the Gators' narrow escape vs. homecoming guest Arkansas. The Crimson Tide is the only team among the top trio that hasn't found themselves challenged deep into the fourth quarter. Cincinnati stays a shade ahead of Iowa for No. 4, but that could change if the Hawkeyes stay unbeaten at Michigan State. -- JS

#1 ALABAMA (7-0)

Previously: 2.

Last week: Beat South Carolina 20-6.

Next: Saturday vs. Tennessee.

Comment: If you haven't had to sweat a 4th quarter, it's time for a promotion.

#2 FLORIDA (6-0)

Previously: 1.

Last week: Beat Arkansas 23-20.

Next: Saturday at Mississippi State.

Comment: Nation's-best winning streak nearly didn't make it to its 16th in a row.

#3 TEXAS (6-0)

Previously: 3.

Last week: Beat Oklahoma 16-13.

Next: Saturday at Missouri.

Comment: Gritty defense forced 5 OU turnovers, held Sooners to -16 rushing yards.

#4 CINCINNATI (6-0)

Previously: 5.

Last week: Beat Cincinnati 34-17.

Next: Saturday vs. Louisville.

Comment: Didn't skip a beat when QB Zach Collaros replaced the injured Tony Pike.

#5 IOWA (7-0)

Previously: 6.

Last week: Beat Wisconsin 20-10.

Next: Saturday at Michigan St.

Comment: Last time Hawkeyes opened 7-0 came in 1985 during Hayden Fry's heyday.

#6 BOISE ST. (6-0)

Previously: 7.

Last week: Beat Tulsa 28-21.

Next: Saturday at Hawaii.

Comment: Excursion to Hawaii ends a stretch of four road games in a five-week span.

#7 TCU (6-0)

Previously: 8.

Last week: Beat Colorado St. 44-6.

Next: Saturday at BYU.

Comment: 14 Frogs had at least one rushing attempt vs. CSU; none topped 47 yards.

#8 OREGON (5-1)

Previously: 9.

Last week: Idle.

Next: Saturday at Washington.

Comment: RB LaMichael James averages 125.8 yards since moving into starting job.

#9 MIAMI (5-1)

Previously: 10.

Last week: Beat Central Fla. 27-7.

Next: Saturday vs. Clemson.

Comment: RB Javarris James has become the 7th Hurricane to top 2,000 career yards.

#10 GEORGIA TECH (6-1)

Previously: 12.

Last week: Beat Virginia Tech 28-23.

Next: Saturday at Virginia.

Comment: Jackets hit just one pass vs. Va. Tech - a 51-yarder to Demaryius Thomas.

#11 LSU (5-1)

Previously: 11.

Last week: Idle.

Next: Saturday vs. Auburn.

Comment: Past four LSU-Auburn meetings have been decided by total of 19 points.

#12 PENN ST. (6-1)

Previously: 13.

Last week: Beat Minnesota 20-0.

Next: Saturday at Michigan.

Comment: Defense hasn't allowed a first-half TD this season and just five TDs overall.

#13 USC (5-1)

Previously: Not ranked.

Last week: Beat Notre Dame 34-27.

Next: Saturday vs. Oregon St.

Comment: Notre Dame's two TD passes were the first allowed by the Trojans this year.

#14 OKLAHOMA ST. (5-1)

Previously: Not ranked.

Last week: Beat Missouri 33-17.

Next: Saturday at Baylor.

Comment: O-line has given up just two sacks this year; none since Sept. 12 vs. Houston.

#15 VIRGINIA TECH (5-2)

Previously: 4.

Last week: Lost to Georgia Tech 28-23.

Next: Oct. 29 vs. North Carolina.

Comment: TB Ryan Williams set new Tech freshman record with fifth 100-yard game.

#16 SOUTH FLORIDA (5-1)

Previously: 15.

Last week: Lost to Cincinnati 34-17.

Next: Saturday at Pittsburgh.

Comment: Inside dope didn't help defensive coordinator Joe Tresey beat his old employer.

