

Miami (OH) RedHawks

A data-backed preview built from the committed 2026 preseason SP+ snapshot, the CFBD schedule, and Bill Connelly's extracted conference preview tables. Every projection traces to a stored payload.

2026 SP+

#81

-2.9 overall · 1st of 13 in the MAC

PROJECTION

8.6

Expected wins across 12 games

MOST LIKELY

9-3

30.7% of outcomes

OFF / DEF

111/48

National ranks · Connelly model: 8.4 avg wins

Executive read

Miami (OH) RedHawks is the highest-rated team in the MAC at #81 nationally. The profile is an above average defense (#48) paired with a poor offense (#111). Schedule math puts the season at **8.6 expected wins**, against Connelly's independent 8.4. 2 games project as clear underdog spots (Pittsburgh, Cincinnati). The season turns on 1 close game: Western Michigan.

What the Ratings Say

OVERALL SP+

#81

-2.9 rating

OFFENSE

#111

19.5 pts/gm · poor

DEFENSE

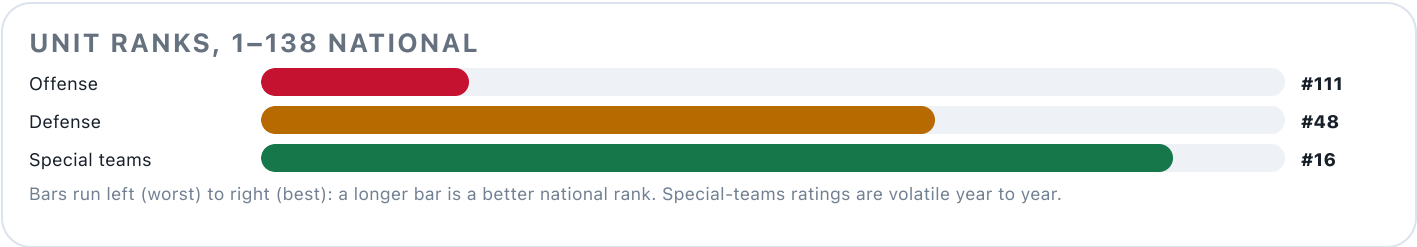
#48

22.9 allowed · above average

SPECIAL TEAMS

#16

+0.5 value



2025 RESULT	RECORD	CONF	SP+ RANK	OFF	DEF	ST
Where they finished	7-7	6-3	#82	#114	#54	#16

SIDELINE

Chuck Martin — year 13, 72-74 career.

OC: Gus Ragland (NEW)

DC: Bill Brechin

Ragland former Redhawks QB promoted to OC; Brechin avg 43.8 def SP+ since 2022; Martin most proven MAC coach

RETURNING PRODUCTION

49% overall, ranked #84 nationally.

Offense 45% · Defense 52%

127 returning starts, 17 redshirt freshmen.

Two models, one slate. This report's schedule math projects **8.64 wins**; Connelly's published model projects **8.4** (6.2 in conference) with a strength-of-schedule rank of #115. His model gives 98.1% odds of six-plus wins and 5.1% of eleven-plus. Two independent methods landing close together is corroboration, not confirmation — they share SP+ as an input.

Game-by-Game Projection

WEEK	DATE	OPPONENT	OPP SP+	PROJ MARGIN	WIN %	TIER
Wk 1	2026-09-05	@ Pittsburgh	#41 / +6.5	-11.9	18%	UPSET NEEDED
Wk 2	2026-09-12	vs Holy Cross	FCS	+24.6	96%	SHOULD WIN
Wk 3	2026-09-19	@ Cincinnati	#50 / +4.5	-9.9	22%	UPSET NEEDED
Wk 4	2026-09-26	vs UConn	#107 / -11.2	+10.8	79%	LEAN WIN
Wk 5	2026-10-03	vs Bowling Green	#115 / -13.3	+12.9	83%	SHOULD WIN
Wk 6	2026-10-10	@ Massachusetts	#137 / -30.9	+25.5	96%	SHOULD WIN
Wk 7	2026-10-17	vs Akron	#127 / -19.5	+19.1	92%	SHOULD WIN
Wk 8	2026-10-24	@ Central Michigan	#113 / -12.4	+7.0	71%	LEAN WIN
Wk 10	2026-11-04	vs Buffalo	#110 / -11.9	+11.5	81%	SHOULD WIN
Wk 11	2026-11-10	vs Ohio	#117 / -13.6	+13.2	84%	SHOULD WIN
Wk 12	2026-11-17	@ Kent State	#128 / -20.1	+14.7	86%	SHOULD WIN
Wk 13	2026-11-24	@ Western Michigan	#95 / -7.2	+1.8	56%	SWING

OPENING THIRD

2.16

expected wins across 4 games

Pittsburgh, Holy Cross, Cincinnati, UConn

MIDDLE THIRD

3.42

expected wins across 4 games

Bowling Green, Massachusetts, Akron, Central Michigan

CLOSING THIRD

3.07

expected wins across 4 games

Buffalo, Ohio, Kent State, Western Michigan

How to read the margin column. It is the SP+ rating gap plus home field, in points — a positive number means the model favors Miami (OH). Win percentage is that margin mapped through a logistic calibrated so a seven-point favorite wins about 70% of the time.

Season Distribution

EXPECTED WINS

8.64

across 12 games

BOWL ODDS

99%

six or more wins

TOTAL MASS

100%

distribution sums to 100%

CONFERENCE

MAC

13 teams rated



QUARTERBACK

Thomas Gotkowski vs David McComb vs Caleb Heavner

BATTLE (3-WAY) **LIMITED SAMPLE**

Gotkowski: 575 pass yds as redshirt frosh; McComb: Kansas transfer; Heavner: Fort Hays State D2 transfer; no clear spring winner

TOP TRANSFER

Rodney Nelson (RB, from Monmouth)

1802 rush yds 18 TDs; 3 200-yd games including back-to-back; will run behind most proven OL in conference; surefire star

PROGRAM CONTEXT

Martin Era • 27-15

2023-25: 27-15 (.643) 69.7 avg SP+; 3 straight MAC title game appearances; 2014-15: 5-19 (.208) 120.0 avg; 2016-22: 40-40 (.500) 93.9 avg

Def Brechin • 43.8

Avg defensive SP+ ranking of 43.8 since Brechin hired in 2022; despite portal losses; awfully impressive

Buckley Surge

Buckley last 4 games: 67 carries 570 yds (8.5 ypc) 6 TDs vs first 10: 112 carries 433 (3.9) 3 TDs; WMU 33 PPG when over 5.0 ypc

DATE	MATCHUP	WHY IT MATTERS
Oct. 24	Miami at CMU	Back-to-back CMU opportunities; title race insertion; Chippewas play only 1 team above 68th all year
Nov. 24	Miami at WMU	Two most likely title game participants playing week before title game; could be huge elimination game; scheduling quirk

Independence between games is an approximation: one injury correlates outcomes, so treat the spread as schedule math, not a true uncertainty band.

Where They Sit in the MAC

#	TEAM	SP+ RANK	RATING	OFF	DEF	RET PROD	RET RANK
1	Miami (OH)	#81	-2.9	#111	#48	49%	#84
2	Western Michigan	#95	-7.2	#112	#68	51%	#72
3	Toledo	#108	-11.5	#121	#84	33%	#130
4	Buffalo	#110	-11.9	#126	#85	30%	#135
5	Central Michigan	#113	-12.4	#116	#92	46%	#100
6	Bowling Green	#115	-13.3	#128	#88	35%	#124
7	Ohio	#117	-13.6	#134	#72	33%	#129
8	Eastern Michigan	#121	-15.0	#115	#112	62%	#24
9	Akron	#127	-19.5	#135	#106	40%	#115
10	Kent State	#128	-20.1	#125	#127	48%	#87
11	Sacramento State	#130	-22.7	#127	#131	32%	#131
12	Ball State	#134	-25.2	#136	#128	36%	#123
13	Massachusetts	#137	-30.9	#138	#136	46%	#96

Method & Provenance

Sp 2026. Committed preseason SP+ snapshot data/external/cfbd_2026/sp_plus_2026.csv via cfb_model_lab.preseason.load_sp_plus; CFBD /ratings/sp returns zero rows for 2026.

Schedule. data/external/cfbd_2026/schedule_2026.csv (CFBD /games snapshot, regular season only).

Connelly. Bill Connelly ESPN+ 2026 conference previews extracted to data/external/connelly_*_2026/.

Projection Method. SP+ differential plus 2.5-point home field, mapped to win probability by a logistic with scale 8.0 (calibrated in analysis/06_power_ratings.ipynb). Win distribution is an exact Poisson-binomial assuming independent games. Not a betting model and not the repo's StackedEnsemble forecast.

Lower Division. FCS/lower-division opponents absent from the FBS SP+ table are assigned a -25.0 rating placeholder.

Not betting advice. No market lines were pulled for this report and no edge is claimed. These are schedule-strength projections from public preseason ratings. If a real market exists, price it independently.