

## 34th Bayou Classic Preview

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Grambling State and Southern will meet in New Orleans on Saturday for the 34th Bayou Classic amid the usual fanfare and excitement. Yet, the Tigers and Jaguars are teams moving in opposite directions. Grambling's (8-2, 8-0 SWAC) only losses were to Bowl Championship Subdivision (formerly Division IA) teams Pittsburgh during the season's second week and a 28-14 loss to Louisiana-Monroe two weeks ago; ULM followed with a defeat at Alabama last Saturday. Win or lose on Saturday, Grambling is assured a place in the SWAC Championship on December 15. Meanwhile, Southern (7-3, 5-3) has lost three of their last five contests, including a two point loss at Arkansas-Pine Bluff two weeks ago. As it is their last game of the season, the Jaguars will no doubt feel an extra sense of pride if they can knock off the Tigers. Southern won last year's meeting 21-17 before the smallest crowd (over 47,000) in the Classic's history.

The Tigers enter the season's final regular season game with arguably the most complete team in the SWAC. The conference's second most prolific offense (28.1 ppg) ranks fifth in passing yards (225) and fourth in rushing yards (137.7) per game. If that weren't enough the Tigers are just as potent on defense, giving up the fewest points (15.2) and second-fewest yards on the ground (91) per game. If there is one area in which they struggle its pass defense, where they give up just under 200 yards per contest through the air. Offensively, GSU is led by junior quarterback Brandon Landers and freshman running back Frank Warren. Landers is the conference's second-rated passer completing 56.4% of his passes for 2,188 yards with 13 touchdowns and 10 interceptions and has also rushed for 354 yards; Warren's numbers--813 yards and four touchdowns on 168 carries (4.8 ypc)—also rank second in the SWAC. Together the two pace a unit that has allowed just 15 sacks and leads the league in time of possession.

Other offensive weapons for the Tigers include the league's leading receiver in terms of receptions, Reginald Jackson (57 catches, 613 yards, 4 TDs), fellow receiver Clyde Edwards (42-648-11 TDs), running back Cornelius Walker (114-521-4 TDs) and tight end Tim Abney (20-210-2 TDs). Defensively, the Tigers are led by defensive back Jeffrey Jack (64 tackles, 2.5 sacks), linebacker Keefe Hall (55 tackles, 2 fumble recoveries), DB Zaire Wilborn (60 tackles, 2 fumble recoveries) and ends John Scroggins (6 sacks) and Christian Anthony (6 sacks).

On paper Southern matches up well with their counterparts. Their 27.5 points per game average is fourth-best in the conference and they rank in the top three in passing (250.5) and rushing (137.8) yards per game. Their 388.3 total yards from scrimmage is second-best in the SWAC. However, their defense sometimes leaves something to desire; though they allow opponents just 17.6 ppg, they also allow 121.6 yards on the ground and another 211 through the air. They'll need to shore up those numbers in to find success against Grambling's potent offensive attack.

The Jaguars' success on offense starts with sophomore quarterback Bryant Lee, the league's top-rated passer having completed 65.6% of his passes for 2,206 yards, 22 touchdowns and just three interceptions. His top receiving targets are 6'3, 230 pound senior Gerard Landry (43-503-9), junior Del Roberts (42-474-2) and 6-3 Juamorris Stewart (19-194-1). Joining Lee in the backfield is senior Darren

Coates who has rushed 126 times for 625 yards and 6 TDs while ranking among the SWAC receiving leaders with 45 receptions for 520 yards and four scores. The Jags are paced on defense by linebacker Jonathan Malveaux (63 tackles, 1.5 sacks), defensive backs Glenn Bell (77 tackles, 1.5 sacks) and SWAC Preseason Defensive Player of the Year Jarmaul George (61 tackles, 4 ints.) linebacker Vincent Lands (58 tackles, 21.5 for loss, 7 sacks).

