

Auburn Football News: 8-20-2025

Auburn football notebook: Linebacker competition remains tight with season opener approaching:

<https://www.al.com/auburnfootball/2025/08/auburn-football-notebook-linebacker-competition-remains-tight-with-season-opener-approaching.html>

Auburn football recognizing seven additional national championships:

<https://www.al.com/auburnfootball/2025/08/auburn-football-recognizing-seven-additional-national-championships.html>

Auburn to recognize seven additional national championships:

<https://247sports.com/college/auburn/article/auburn-football-national-championships-john-cohen-252761609/>

Auburn football now claims nine national championships, 15 conference titles:

<https://www.on3.com/teams/auburn-tigers/news/auburn-football-now-claims-nine-national-championships-15-conference-titles/>

The tough task of preparing for a season opener in the transfer portal era:

<https://247sports.com/college/auburn/article/auburn-takes-on-a-baylor-team-with-nearly-two-dozen-transfers-252758233/>

What we saw at practice as Auburn starts preparations for Baylor:

<https://www.al.com/auburnfootball/2025/08/what-we-saw-at-auburn-football-practice-10-days-away-from-game-1.html>

Auburn defense limits offense to field goal in final open practice: Linebacker observations:

<https://www.al.com/auburnfootball/2025/08/auburn-defense-limits-offense-to-field-goal-in-final-open-practice-linebacker-observations.html>

How Keldric Faulk and Keyron Crawford guided this Auburn pass-rusher's recovery journey:

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Auburn offensive tackle describes what he learned from playing as a freshman:

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2025 Preseason All-SEC football team: Auburn football lands 6 players on list:

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Tommy Tuberville reacts to Auburn claiming the 2004 national championship:

<https://www.al.com/auburnfootball/2025/08/tommy-tuberville-reacts-to-auburn-claiming-the-2004-national-championship.html>

Why Auburn is completely justified in claiming 4 more national titles:

<https://sports.yahoo.com/college-football/article/why-auburn-is-completely-justified-in-claiming-4-more-national-titles-192627226.html>

Former Auburn defensive tackle makes quick return to the NFL:

<https://www.al.com/sports/2025/08/former-auburn-defensive-tackle-makes-quick-return-to-the-nfl.html>

Auburn football notebook: Linebacker competition remains tight with season opener approaching

By Jerry Humphrey III
al.com

All throughout fall camp, Auburn football's defense has proved that they're bound for another successful season.

Now with Tigers' 10 days out from its season opener at Baylor (Aug. 29), Auburn coach Hugh Freeze and his coaching staff are finalizing their depth chart on that side of the ball.

"[DJ Durkin] and his staff have done a really nice job to this point to getting those guys to buy into their strength in numbers," Freeze said. "I've never had an NFL scout, not one, ever ask me how many snaps somebody played. It's about what you do with the ones you have, and to this point, they don't seem to affect any of them."

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1957508768520106328>

The linebackers and defensive line raise some of the biggest questions when it comes to rotating guys this season.

The defensive line returns just Malik Blocton and Bobby Jamison-Travis from last year. However, the newcomers in that room are developing at a fast rate.

At linebacker, AL.com predicts Robert Woodyard Jr. (Mike) and Demarcus Riddick (Will) will start in the middle. However, all the buzz around camp has been about the reserves: Caleb Wheatland, Xavier Atkins, Bryce Deas, and Elijah Melendez.

"Heck, I don't know the difference between the ones and the twos. As a matter of a fact, they switch every day who goes out there first and who goes out there second," Freeze said. "[Robert Woodyard] has been solid. He can definitely get us lined up and he's playing hard at a high level. [Demarcus Riddick] is back now, which adds good depth and athleticism to that group."

"[Elijah Melendez] and [Bryce Deas] and [Xavier Atkins] and [Caleb Wheatland], those six guys have kind of been interchangeable. They are rotating in and out no matter what group runs out there first," Freeze added.

Durkin spoke on the linebacker corps saying depth chart decisions will be made off the scrimmages Auburn does to conclude the week.

"We have great competition in that room and we're rotating all those guys through, so we'll scrimmage again this week and start to make those decisions as we get closer," Durkin said. "I think, assignment, they've been sound. I like our speed at that position, and they've been tackling well."

Auburn returns to practice Tuesday morning and AL.com will dive into Auburn's linebacker drills for a full analysis on that ongoing position battle.

Auburn football recognizing seven additional national championships

By Peter Rauterkus
al.com

After years of consideration and debate, Auburn football will now recognize seven additional national championships, bringing the program's total to nine, the school confirmed on Tuesday.

Each claimed championship represents an Auburn team that was awarded the national championship a particular poll or service. Those years include 1910, 1913, 1914, 1958, 1983, 1993 and 2004, adding to the already recognized titles in 1957 and 2010.

"For too long, Auburn has chosen a humble approach to our program's storied history – choosing to recognize only Associated Press National Championships," athletic director John Cohen said in a statement. "Starting this fall, we have made the decision to honor the accomplishments of our deserving student-athletes, coaches, and teams from Auburn's proud history.

"Our visible National Championship recognitions now align with the well-established standard used by the NCAA's official record book and our peers across the nation."

Here's a list of each newly recognized title team and who awarded them the national championship.

1910

Record: 6-1

Head coach: Mike Donahue

Awarding parties: Maxwell Ratings, College Football Rankings (retroactive)

1913

Record: 8-0

Head coach: Mike Donahue

Awarding party: Billingsley

1914

Record: 8-0-1

Head coach: Mike Donahue

Awarding party: James Howell's Power Ratings (retroactive)

1958

Record: 9-0-1

Head coach: Ralph “Shug” Jordan

Awarding party: Montgomery Full Season Championship

1983

Record: 11-1

Head coach: Pat Dye

Awarding party: New York Times, Rothman, College Football Researchers Association

1993

Record: 11-0

Head coach: Terry Bowden

Awarding party: National Championship Foundation

2004

Record: 13-0

Head coach: Tommy Tuberville

Awarding parties: Several, including Darryl Perry and GBE College Football Ratings

Auburn to recognize seven additional national championships

By Jason Caldwell

For many years Auburn fans have been fighting to get the university to claim championships that were legitimately won . The time has finally come. Auburnundercover.com has learned that Auburn will recognize nine total national championships that were awarded by various polls and services, adding seven titles to the Auburn record books. Like other schools have done in the past, Auburn will now rightfully claim the titles that were won.

When contacted for a statement, Auburn AD John Cohen sent this statement on Auburn's change to recognize these titles:

"For too long, Auburn has chosen a humble approach to our program's storied history – choosing to recognize only Associated Press national championships. Starting this fall, we have made the decision to honor the accomplishments of our deserving student-athletes, coaches, and teams from Auburn's proud history. Our visible national championship recognitions now align with the well-established standard used by the NCAA's official record book and our peers across the nation."

In addition to 1957 and 2010, Auburn will recognize the 1910, 1913, 1914, 1958, 1983, 1993 and 2004 teams as national champions.

Five of these teams (1913, 1957, 1983, 1993, 2010) are formally recognized in the NCAA Football Record Book as national champions because they were awarded by NCAA-recognized independent selectors. The other four were awarded national titles, but by selectors not formally recognized by the NCAA.

Auburn is also expected to add SIAA Conference titles in 1904, 1908 and 1910 to push the total of conference championships to 15.

Here is a list of Auburn's national championship teams that will be recognized beginning this season inside Jordan-Hare Stadium as well as on AuburnTigers.com and in the media guide.

1910 (6-1, 5-0 SIAA)

Coached by Mike Donahue, Auburn was 6-1 on the season and 5-0 in the SIAA. The only loss on the season came 9-0 to Texas with Auburn winning the rest of the games in shutout fashion, outscoring the opposition 176-0 in six victories.

1913 (8-0 SIAA)

Coached by Donahue, the team played just two games at home and outscored opponents 224-13. In 1999, the Billingsley Report retroactively recognized the team as the national champions. Kirk Newell was the star player for the Tigers, rushing for more than 1,700 yards. He was later enshrined in the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame.

1914 (8-0-1, 4-0-1 SIAA)

Retroactively awarded a national championship by James Howell's computer rating system, Auburn outscored its opponents 193-0 that season with the tie coming in a scoreless game against Georgia in Atlanta. That season Auburn played three games at home in Auburn, two home games at Rickwood Field in Birmingham and also a home game at Grant Field in Atlanta.

1957 (10-0, 7-0 SEC)

Shug Jordan's team dominated the competition on the way to the national championship. The Tigers didn't allow more than a touchdown in any game with six shutouts. One of those was a 40-0 victory over Alabama in the Iron Bowl. For the season they outscored opponents 207-28.

1958 (9-0-1, 6-0-1 SEC)

After winning the championship the year before, the Tigers had another dominant season in 1958 with the only blemish a 7-7 tie against Georgia Tech in Atlanta. The Tigers played four home games at Cliff Hare Stadium and played both Tennessee and Alabama at Legion Field in Birmingham.

1983 (11-1, 6-0 SEC)

A team that was named a national champion by Billingsley and New York Times and a co-champion by Rothman and Sagarin, the 1983 Tigers faced the toughest schedule in the country in 1983 with the only loss coming to Texas in week two of the season. Coming down the stretch that season, Auburn defeated No. 5 Florida, No. 7 Maryland, No. 4 Georgia and No. 19 Alabama before beating No. 8 Michigan in the Sugar Bowl.

1993 (11-0, 8-0 SEC)

Terry Bowden's first season at Auburn was a memorable one with the Tigers going undefeated with big wins over Florida and Alabama highlighting an undefeated season. The National Championship Foundation recognized Auburn as its national champion that season. Ineligible for postseason play, Auburn finished as the only undefeated power program in the country that season.

An interesting sidenote is that Oklahoma was on probation in 1974 and was awarded the AP title that season despite being ineligible for postseason play.

2004 (13-0, 8-0 SEC)

One of the most talented teams in Auburn history, the 2004 Tigers got by No. 5 LSU early in the season and then a blowout win at Tennessee propelled them to an undefeated season that culminated with a win over Virginia Tech in the Sugar Bowl. With USC and Oklahoma both unbeaten, Auburn was left out of the title game but named national champions by several independent services. USC beat Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl, but was stripped of its title in 2011 and it remains vacated.

2010 (14-0, 8-0 SEC)

Led by Cam Newton and dominating defensive tackle Nick Fairley, Auburn got hard-fought wins over Mississippi State and Clemson early and finished with wins over six ranked teams by the time they dispatched Oregon in the BCS title game in Glendale, Arizona. The game of the year came in Tuscaloosa when the Tigers came back from a 24-0 deficit to beat Alabama in Bryant-Denny Stadium.

Auburn football now claims nine national championships, 15 conference titles

By Justin Hokanson

It's about time.

Auburn football, finally, will claim nine deserving and legitimate college football national championships, AuburnSports confirmed on Tuesday.

When reached for comment, athletic director John Cohen offered this explanation of the school's decision.

"For too long, Auburn has chosen a humble approach to our program's storied history – choosing to recognize only Associated Press National Championships. Starting this fall, we have made the decision to honor the accomplishments of our deserving student-athletes, coaches, and teams from Auburn's proud history," Cohen said. "Our visible National Championship recognitions now align with the well-established standard used by the NCAA's official record book and our peers across the nation."

Previously, there have been two AP national titles recognized inside Jordan-Hare Stadium (1957 and 2010) and three more national titles quietly noted in the football media guide (1913, 1983 and 1993).

Four more national titles will now be recognized.

Auburn's official national titles will now be: 1910 (new), 1913, 1914 (new), 1957, 1958 (new), 1983, 1993, 2004 (new) and 2010.

1910: Maxwell Ratings (Loren Maxwell), College Football Rankings (Kyle Matschke)

1913: Billingsley MOV (Margin of Victory) and NCAA Football Record Book

1914: James Howell's Power Ratings System

1957: AP and NCAA Football Record Book

1958: Montgomery Full Season Championship (David Montgomery)

1983: Billingsley, FACT, Football Research, Sagarin, NY Times and NCAA Football Record Book

1993: National Championship Foundation and NCAA Football Record Book

2004: Several, including Darryl Perry and GBE College Football Ratings

2010: AP, BCS and NCAA Football Record Book

For Auburn, this is a debate that goes back well over a decade. In 2014, then Auburn athletic director Jay Jacobs acknowledged the school was considering recognizing legitimate titles.

Jacobs said at the time, "it's not about taking anything from anybody else. It's not about saying you aren't the champion and we are. It's about appropriately recognizing those teams that were rewarded by a credible poll. They were a champion. So why shouldn't we have a flag or banner in our stadium like other schools are doing?"

The school is also updating their conference title count to 15, reclaiming three titles from the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association era. New signage for updated national and conference titles will start going up inside and around the stadium on Tuesday.

In 1910, Auburn finished 6-1 (5-0 in SIAA) and outscored opponents 175-9. The Tigers were SIAA co-champions. In 1913, Auburn finished the season 8-0, were SIAA champions, and outscored opponents 224-13. And in 1914, the Tigers finished 8-0-1 (5-0-1 in SIAA) and outscored opponents 193-0.

In 1958, Auburn finished 9-0-1 and a perfect 6-0 in SEC play. LSU finished No. 1 at 11-0 and was widely regarded as national champions. The two sets of Tigers didn't play each other. Iowa was also named a national champion

that season by an outlet, finishing 8-1-1. Of note: Auburn's defense led the SEC and the nation in yards per game allowed. The Tigers' offense led the SEC in total yards per game.

In 1983, Auburn might have been the best team in the country, finishing 11-1. The Tigers beat five ranked teams, four of which were top 10. Texas went 11-1, with just three ranked wins, but did defeat Auburn. Nebraska went 12-1, but beat only one ranked team. Texas and Nebraska, ranked No. 1 and No. 2, lost their bowl games. Texas lost to No. 5 Georgia, while Nebraska lost to No. 5 Miami. Auburn defeated No. 8 Michigan in the Sugar Bowl.

The 1993 team finished as the only undefeated team in college football. NCAA probation prohibited the Tigers from playing on TV or playing in the postseason that year. The National Championship Foundation later named Auburn co-national champion.

The 2004 team went 13-0, won the SEC title and the Sugar Bowl. Because of a flawed BCS system, Auburn was left out of the national title game in place of USC and Oklahoma. USC was stripped of their title in 2011, leaving no official BCS champion. Auburn beat four top 10 opponents and five ranked opponents overall. Oklahoma beat one top 10 opponent and three ranked opponents in total. USC beat two top 10 opponents and three ranked opponents (although the OU win was later vacated).

In addition to the updated national title count, Auburn is adding back three conference titles. The league titles were previously recognized, but lost in the annals of history somewhere along the way. The program is adding back 1904, 1908 and 1910 as league titles when Auburn participated in the SIAA.

That will bring Auburn's conference championship number to 15: 1904, 1908, 1910, 1913, 1914, 1919, 1932, 1957, 1983, 1987, 1988, 1989, 2004, 2010 and 2013.

The school will invite back and honor players from these championship teams during the upcoming season.

The tough task of preparing for a season opener in the transfer portal era

By Jason Caldwell

It was still July when Auburn opened preseason camp and as Hugh Freeze and the Tigers close in on one week out from the season opener at Baylor, it's time to shift gears to begin full scale preparations for the Bears. Coaches don't like to switch gears to planning for games too early because it can get stale in a hurry. Because of that, Auburn is easing into the plan for next Friday night's kickoff with some work over the next two days that will allow the offense and defense to begin to get a look at what they'll see in Waco.

"We started back in June, trying to get a head start on our first couple of games, so we feel like we're in a decent spot," Freeze said of the preparations for Baylor. "Yesterday and Saturday were good days to kind of refresh ourselves on, 'what do we feel good about in base downs? Who really are they? Give me the overview again.' We're mixing it in. We're still going good-on-good, so it's not like we haven't broken up and gone scout teams yet.

"Today (Monday), we did one period of offense/defense choice, where we tell them what we want, and they make it look as close as we can, and they do the same for 10 plays. But I think, right now, keeping the speed of the game up's important — and the physicality of it. We serviced each other, and we'll do that again tomorrow, and then we'll start kind of really breaking this down to a true scout period heading into the weekend."

One of the biggest issues for Freeze, the Auburn coaching staff and coaching staffs around the country is just how do you properly prepare for teams in the transfer portal era? Baylor has a talented roster returning, but also added 23 players from the portal as Dave Aranda's program looks to build onto last year's 8-5 record that saw them win the final six games of the regular season before losing to LSU in the Texas Bowl.

"They have a lot returning, and they finished their season really strong and most have them picked to do well in their conference, if not play for the championship in it, plus the additions," Freeze said. "We've done our research on what the additions are. You're not quite sure exactly how they fit into their depth chart right now with the number of returners that they have. Certainly, it added value to them in some ways, but really, we're not going to change a whole lot offensively from what we've done in the past, and I doubt Dave's gonna change a whole lot of what has been really good to him.

"He knows what he's doing on the defensive side, and their OC's been around a long time. He may have wrinkle here or a wrinkle there, but most of us are going to do what we do, and then we'll have to figure out -- if you get in the game and you're like, 'Oh gosh, these two guys here, they're war daddies, and we're having a problem,' -- then you gotta make adjustments. But I don't know that you start doing that right now until you kind of plan for who you think they are schematically."

Auburn will practice the rest of this week before having a dress rehearsal on Friday night at Jordan-Hare Stadium. That will feature the coaches upstairs communicating with the sidelines as the Tigers work on substitutions and more in preparation for the season opener.

What we saw at practice as Auburn starts preparations for Baylor

By Peter Rauterkus
al.com

Auburn football was back on the practice field Tuesday morning as preparations for Baylor are starting to ramp up.

The Tigers are 10 days away from taking the field in Waco, and have started familiarizing themselves with the Baylor scouting report.

The media was able to watch around 45 minutes of Tuesday's practice, which included position drills, an 11-on-11 period and one-on-one drills. Tuesday was also the final scheduled media viewing of practice before game week.

Here's a rundown of what we saw:

Availability report

-- Kayin Lee and Eric Singleton Jr. were both in non-contact jerseys, limiting them during practice. Singleton is recovering from a thigh bruise.

-- Perry Thompson once again wore a brace on his right knee.

-- Champ Anthony participated during the 11-on-11 period. He's been limited for most of camp while recovering from the leg injury that ended his 2024 season.

First team offense in 11-on-11 period

QB: Jackson Arnold

RB: Damari Alston

WR: Cam Coleman, Horatio Fields, Malcolm Simmons

TE: Brandon Frazier

LT: Xavier Chaplin

LG: Jeremiah Wright

C: Dillon Wade

RG: Izavion Miller

RT: Mason Murphy

First team defense in 11-on-11 period

DL: Keldric Faulk, Bobby Jamison-Travis, Zykeivous Walker

Buck LB: Keyron Crawford

Mike LB: Robert Woodyard Jr.

Will LB: Xavier Atkins

CB: Jay Crawford, Rayshawn Pleasant

Nickel: Sylvester Smith

S: Kaleb Harris, Champ Anthony

Other observations

-- The most intriguing period of the portion open to media was the 11-on-11 period, and the offense showed improvement relative to what we've seen in other practices.

-- Auburn used a different offensive line combination than normal during that period, with Wade replacing Lew at center and Miller playing right guard.

-- With Lee limited, Pleasant was the other first team corner opposite Crawford.

-- Pass protection has been an issue for Auburn throughout camp, but the offensive line held up during the 11-on-11 period we watched.

-- Arnold's decision making was sound, connecting on a few quick throws to get down the field

-- Arnold took a deep shot intended for Simmons on a fade route, but the ball fell incomplete after Simmons couldn't locate the back shoulder pass. Anthony was in coverage on the play.

-- Unsurprisingly, the entire front seven on defense rotated throughout the period.

-- Frazier was the first tight end on the field, but Auburn ran some 12 personnel with him and Preston Howard.

-- Connor Gibbs came on to kick what looked like a 40-yard field goal to end the drive, and the kick was good.

-- Before the 11-on-11 period, Auburn walked through its kickoff sets, and Pleasant was the primary kick returner. Freshman receiver Duke Smith also repped with the kick returners.

-- Freshman punter John McGuire was handling kickoff duties during the kickoff walkthrough.

-- Auburn ran some one-on-one and goal line two-on-two drills with the wide receivers and defensive backs, and the receivers seemed to win more than in prior practices.

-- Despite the receivers winning on a few more routes, Hugh Freeze was animated with the group.

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1957837198901866552>

-- Coleman started the drill with a nice slant route, easily beating Raion Strader in coverage.

-- Arnold had one throw that slightly behind Fields on a slant, leading to a drop and some frustrated words from Freeze.

Auburn defense limits offense to field goal in final open practice: Linebacker observations

By Jerry Humphrey III
al.com

Auburn football held its 16th practice of fall camp on Tuesday morning; it was the final session open for media viewing.

During the 45-minute media viewing period, AL.com focused on observing the linebackers as Auburn conducted kick return drills and a full 11-on-11 drive.

Here's what we saw:

https://twitter.com/peter_rauterkus/status/1957841979359818207?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweet%7Ctwterm%5E1957841979359818207%7Ctwgr%5E8c8c378e6e38e476d710546837843e89dbdf86f5%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.al.com%2Fauburnfootball%2F2025%2F08%2Fauburn-defense-limits-offense-to-field-goal-in-final-open-practice-linebacker-observations.html

Auburn practice observations: Linebackers

-- Practice started around 10:00 a.m. and ended at 10:45 a.m., giving reporters a brief look at the session.

-- Auburn opened practice with kick return drills involving the special teams group.

-- Bryce Deas and Elijah Melendez were the linebackers who got the first reps in kick return. Demarcus Riddick, Keyron Crawford, and Robert Woodyard Jr. came in with the second team.

-- In the 11-on-11 scrimmage, Xavier Atkins, Woodyard and Crawford got the first team defense reps.

-- Atkins and Woodyard swarmed running back Damari Alston for a short gain to force the offense in a third and long scenario.

-- After the offense converted on third down, Melendez and Riddick came in with the second team. Sophomore Amaris Williams came in at the buck linebacker spot.

-- Melendez got a tackle on Alston in his first play of the drill. He was subbed out for Deas to close out the series.

-- Auburn's defense held the offense to just a field goal in one full series of 11-on-11.

Final Thoughts

Woodyard was the vocal leader of the entire defense, calling the adjustments and making his presence known all over the field.

After working his way up from the scout team last season and playing in 10 games, Woodyard appears well on his way to becoming a starter in the Tigers' defense this fall.

How Keldric Faulk and Keyron Crawford guided this Auburn pass-rusher's recovery journey

By Jerry Humphrey III
al.com

Auburn pass-rusher Jamonte Waller's freshman season was cut short after he appeared in just one game last season due to a foot injury.

Ranked as the No. 10 edge in the 2024 recruiting class, Waller was flipped from his Florida commitment by Auburn, complementing the team's second straight top 10 recruiting class.

Waller was cleared for action back in the spring and has flourished on defensive line in fall camp. He credited his veteran teammates for keeping him positive through his recovery process.

https://twitter.com/alDotComTigers/status/1957798572662911319?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1957798572662911319%7Ctwgr%5E4b3457e1a676ba1da93d374c4f769ef768464f4b%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.al.com%2Fauburnfootball%2F2025%2F08%2Fhow-keldric-faulk-and-keyron-crawford-guided-this-auburn-pass-rushers-recovery-journey.html

"It's a blessing, man. It showed me a lot, you know, not to take nothing for granted, and I'm just glad to be back. I love my teammates," Waller said after Tuesday's practice.

"The guys that I had around me, my support system, they helped me through it," Waller added. "You know, like the older guys, [Keldric Faulk] and [Keyron Crawford] they always told me to come up, watch film and helped me stay up to date with everything."

Outside linebackers coach Roc Bellantoni spoke about Waller's development last week, elaborating on his steady growth in practices.

"Jamonta has been through so much with the injury. He didn't get to play much and get a chance to grow," Bellantoni said. "Now we're starting to see him come to his own a little bit. He's getting better every day."

Waller has embraced being the 'sponge' in a room full of veteran players, competing every day in practice.

"Like, Keyron and Keldric, man. Those guys are freaks. Like, they're getting drafted, no doubt," Waller added. "So, just being around them, that helps me a lot."

Auburn offensive tackle describes what he learned from playing as a freshman

By Peter Rauterkus
al.com

Auburn offensive tackle Tyler Johnson got an early taste of college football last season.

He started Auburn's 2024 season opener at left tackle, something you don't commonly see a redshirt freshman do. Johnson had a solid performance against Alabama A&M, but the next week wasn't as kind to him.

Johnson started Auburn's 21-14 loss to Cal, but struggled against the stronger defense. He allowed three pressures and a sack in 23 pass blocking snaps, according to Pro Football Focus, leading to his eventual replacement in the starting lineup.

"I wish I would have took it a little more serious," Johnson told reporters after Tuesday's practice, reflecting on his early playing time last season.

Johnson never reclaimed his starting spot last year. He's now going into the 2025 season as a backup, but a potential piece of future Auburn offensive lines. Even while repping mostly with the second team, Johnson is enjoying the competition with Mason Murphy and Xavier Chaplin.

"It's something you need that's gonna make you better and make you come out here every day and show you that you got more work to put out there," Johnson said. "They try to challenge us every day so then we also pass knowledge to each other because they've been playing longer than I have."

With Johnson now in his third year, he also becomes a player that freshmen can learn from. Based on how he described it, his experience playing as a redshirt freshman could be used as a cautionary tale for other young players who earn playing time early in their careers.

"You kind of want to stay levelheaded going through it and making sure you're working hard so you can maximize your opportunity," Johnson said.

2025 Preseason All-SEC football team: Auburn football lands 6 players on list

By Jerry Humphrey III
al.com

The 2025 Preseason Coaches All-Southeastern Conference Football Team was announced Tuesday afternoon.

Twelve schools had at least one first team All-SEC representative and six SEC schools had multiple first team selections.

Auburn football was one of the six schools with multiple first team selections, with wide receiver Cam Coleman and edge rusher Keldric Faulk being placed on the first team.

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1957868711169388908>

On Monday, Coleman was placed on the AP All-America second team and was Auburn's only player selected on the preseason AP team.

Wide receiver Eric Singleton was named to the All-SEC second team after transferring in from Georgia Tech.

The All-SEC third team featured two Auburn offensive linemen: Virginia Tech transfer Xavier Chaplin and center Connor Lew.

Kicker Alex McPherson was also placed on the third team for special teams.

Tommy Tuberville reacts to Auburn claiming the 2004 national championship

By Peter Rauterkus
al.com

Auburn football's claimed national championship count rose to nine on Tuesday, as the school announced it will recognize seven additional titles, adding to the ones in 1957 and 2010.

One of those newly recognized titles came in 2004, a team that went 13-0 and was led by now U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville. The former head coach uploaded a video to X (formerly Twitter) on Tuesday, celebrating the news.

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1957869086781710392>

"I want to congratulate the 2004 Auburn Tigers football team on being recognized as the true national champions of college football of 2004," Tuberville said. "There is no doubt that the 2004 Auburn team was the best team in the country for the entire season."

The 2004 season was Tuberville's sixth at Auburn, and the only undefeated season in his head coaching career. After he congratulated the team in the video, he explained why he believes Auburn was the best team in the country that year.

"We went undefeated and had four wins against top 10 teams," Tuberville said. "Not only were our players great athletes, they were great young men. They were unselfish and they played for each other. Some players had opportunities to go to the NFL Draft after the 2003 season, but returned for their senior year because they loved our team and they loved Auburn. And that's why we were so successful."

The other six titles that Auburn announced it will now recognize came in 1910, 1913, 1914, 1958, 1983 and 1993.

Why Auburn is completely justified in claiming 4 more national titles

By Jay Busbee
Senior writer
Yahoo Sports

The Auburn Tigers just closed the gap on the University of Alabama in the national title debate, and they didn't have to take a single snap to do it. Claiming four new national titles in one swoop, in the year 2025, has to rank as Auburn's greatest victory since the Kick Six.

Thing is, based on the precedent already set down by that school across the state, Auburn is completely justified in claiming most, if not necessarily all four of the new titles. What's good for the Tide is good for the Tigers, after all.

"For too long, Auburn has chosen a humble approach to our program's storied history — choosing to recognize only Associated Press national championships," Auburn athletic director John Cohen told On3 in announcing the new title windfall. Two banners, for the 1957 and 2010 seasons, hang in Jordan-Hare Stadium, and prior to this week the Tigers also acknowledged the 1913, 1983 and 1993 seasons as meeting national championship qualifications.

Effective immediately, Auburn will now claim the 1910, 1914, 1958 and 2004 seasons as national championship ones, because, as Cohen notes, the Tigers' recognitions "now align with the well-established standard used by the NCAA's official record book and our peers across the nation."

Auburn can justify the new rings on two fronts: first, because pre-21st-century college football was a chaotic nest of competing rankings and ad hoc justifications, and second, because Alabama already went there.

Reason #1: Nobody knows anything

The Tigers are taking advantage of 20th century college football's inherent absurdity. Then as now, the soul of college football lies in argument, the furious and fiery debate over unanswerable questions of strength and worth. But for all the good that the College Football Playoff and its predecessor postseason series have brought the game, they've robbed us of the debate of which team really would've come out on top in a winner-take-all matchup.

When you determine your postseason rankings via polls rather than games, there's ample room for debate ... and ample territory to claim championships on your own a century after the fact. Multiple contemporaneous and after-the-fact polls have attempted to make sense of college football's anything-goes era, some with far more statistical rigor and validity than others. Still, finding a poll that breaks your way is like finding a \$100 bill on the ground; you might not be entitled to it, but you're going to keep it anyway.

Auburn does have history in its corner. The Auburn of the 1910s was a fearsome unit, led by a diminutive Irishman named Mike Donahue and featuring players with spectacular names like Fatty Warren, Baby Taylor and Moon Ducote. In the three national championship seasons Auburn now claims, the Tigers won 22 games, lost one and tied one. Auburn and Alabama weren't playing at that time due to hard feelings on both sides, which was good news for a Tide team that went a mediocre 15-11 over the same stretch.

The 1958 Auburn team played under a total blackout — no television, no bowl appearances — but still managed to go 9-0-1. That was only good enough for fourth in the final rankings, behind LSU (10-0), Iowa (7-1-1), and Army (8-0-1). The 2004 team went 13-0 but was not included in the two-team BCS, losing out on a berth by mere percentage points to USC and Oklahoma. Auburn and Oklahoma were tied going into the regular season's final

week, but because Auburn didn't beat Alabama badly enough in the Iron Bowl, winning by "only" eight points, Oklahoma moved ahead only to get shellacked by USC in the Orange Bowl.

Reason #2: Alabama did it first

If you're mad at Auburn for claiming four new titles, you might want to reserve a good measure of your scorn for their rival. Back in the 1980s, an Alabama sports information director went diving in the record books and in one swoop, awarded Alabama five pre-Bear Bryant-era titles. These range from defensible and acceptable to absurd, like the 1941 season where Alabama went 9-2 and finished 20th (!) in the AP poll ... but ranked No. 1, tied with Minnesota, in a single, much smaller poll. Nothing Auburn did Tuesday is anywhere near as egregious as that, and yet the 1941 team remains canonized on Alabama's Walk of Champions in front of Bryant-Denny Stadium.

Now, granted, there's the question of an incredibly slippery slope here. If Auburn is going to claim a national title for 2004, why can't Utah — which also went undefeated at 12-0 that year — also claim one? Why couldn't 2017 Central Florida or 2023 Florida State, which, like 2004 Auburn, were both left out of the postseason dance despite going undefeated?

For that matter, why can't Alabama claim the 1966 title and jump up to 19? That season, Alabama went 11-0 with six shutouts, but finished behind two teams — Notre Dame and Michigan State — that went 9-0-1 and played to a tie in late November. The suspicion, then and now, was that pollsters of the day were punishing the Crimson Tide for the state of Alabama's woeful record on civil rights in the turbulent 1960s. (Politics and sports have always intertwined.)

Yes, Auburn's ring-grab could well set off a new wave of schools retroactively seeking to claim national titles won by their great-grandfathers. We could see new banners hanging in stadiums all across the country as enterprising researchers whip up dissertation-length justifications for why their school deserves titles from the days before cars or TV.

But so what? We now have in place a means of determining, once and for all, a season's indisputable national champion. And as college football sins go, a bit of reapportioned valor ranks pretty low on the list. We've got to hold onto something to argue about, after all.

Former Auburn defensive tackle makes quick return to the NFL

By Mark Inabinett
al.com

Waived by the Tennessee Titans on Sunday, Philip Bliidi returned to the NFL on Tuesday, when the New England Patriots announced the signing of the former Auburn defensive tackle.

Bliidi signed with the Titans on May 9 after being passed over during the 2025 draft.

Bliidi played 12 defensive snaps in the Titans' preseason opener – a 29-7 loss to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on Aug. 9 – but he did not play on Friday night in Tennessee's 23-20 preseason victory over the Atlanta Falcons.

New England signed Bliidi after he cleared waivers on Monday.

Bliidi played one season at Auburn. In 2024, the defensive lineman had 21 tackles, one sack and one fumble recovery in 12 games, with seven starts, for the Tigers. Before coming to Auburn, Bliidi played at Texas Tech from 2020 through 2022 and Indiana in 2023.

New England has one preseason game remaining on Thursday night against the New York Giants.

Bliidi's return to the NFL came at the expense of defensive tackle Jereme Robinson, a former Carver-Montgomery standout.

Following five seasons at Kansas, Robinson joined the Chicago Bears on May 8 after being passed over in the 2025 NFL Draft. But the Bears waived Robinson on July 22. Chicago waived Robinson when it signed defensive lineman Tanoh Kpassagnon, an eight-year NFL veteran.

The Patriots had signed Robinson on Aug. 10. He was on the field for two special-teams plays in New England's 20-12 preseason victory over the Minnesota Vikings on Saturday.