



2019 Media Guide

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Quick Facts

Game Information

Game Date: Monday, Jan. 6, 2020

Kickoff: 6:30 pm CST

TV: ESPN

Radio: Grace Unlimited, Sirius XM Radio

Match up: Sun Belt Conference vs Mid-American Conference

Home Team: Mid-American Conference, East Sideline, Dark jerseys

Away Team: Sun Belt Conference, West Sideline, Light jerseys

Ticket Prices: \$45 sideline, \$15 general admission

LendingTree Bowl Contact Information

Address: 1000 Hillcrest Road, Suite 115 | Mobile, AL 36695

Phone: 251-635-0011

Fax: 251-635-0014

Website: www.lendingtreebowl.com

Social Media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram

Post-Game Award Ceremony

A post-game award ceremony will be held on the field immediately after the game. The winning team and MVPs will be presented trophies. All media will be allowed on the field to cover the awards ceremony.

ABSOLUTELY NO INTERVIEWS ARE PERMITTED ON THE FIELD AFTER THE GAME (unless pre-approved by the team's SID).

Post-Game Press Conference

The post-game press conference will be held in the stadium lobby (beneath the press box). The losing team will appear first. Each team will receive a ten minute cooling off period. The head coach and three requested players will be brought to the interview lobby for a formal press conference. The head coach will make a brief statement then it will be opened up for questions. Members of the Bowl Media Relations Staff will be taking quotes. Final stats will be brought to the interview lobby as soon as they become available and will be available in the press box. Both teams' locker rooms are closed to all post-game interviews. Additional requested players will be brought to the interview lobby at the conclusion of the formal press conference.

Bowl Week Schedule of Events

Thursday, Jan. 2

11:30 am – LTB Welcome Press Conference (Miami) – Mobile Downtown Airport

3:30 pm – LTB Welcome Press Conference (Louisiana) – Mobile Downtown Airport

7:00 pm – LTB Team Bowling Challenge – Eastern Shore Lanes

Friday, Jan. 3

10:00 am – LTB Player Hospital Visit – USA Children’s & Women’s Hospital

7:00 pm – LTB Team Reception Party – Team Hotels (Mobile Marriott/Renaissance Riverview Plaza)

Saturday, Jan. 4

9:00 am – LTB Player Service Project (Miami) – Saint Mary’s Home

9:00 am – LTB Player Service Project (Louisiana) – Habitat for Humanity (Location TBD)

6:30 pm – Greer’s/This is Alabama Mardi Gras Parade – Downtown Mobile

Sunday, Jan. 5

11:00 am (Miami) – Battleship USS Alabama Luncheon and Tour – Battleship Memorial Park

12:00 pm – Official Press Conference – Battleship Memorial Park

12:30 pm (Louisiana) – Battleship USS Alabama Luncheon and Tour – Battleship Memorial Park

6:30 pm – This is Alabama Pep Rally – Downtown Mobile

7:00 pm – This is Alabama Street Party – Downtown Mobile

Monday, Jan. 6

6:30 pm – LendingTree Bowl – Ladd-Peebles Stadium

Mid-American Conference

Providing leadership in education and diversity, in 2019 the Mid-American Conference moves into its 74th year of service to our students.

Since its inception in 1946, the Mid-American Conference has progressively grown and developed into one of the most aggressive Division I conference's in the country. One of only 10 FBS conferences, the MAC named Dr. Jon A. Steinbrecher as its eighth commissioner in March of 2009.

The league hosts championships in 23 sports, including neutral site events at some of the finest facilities in the nation – football (Ford Field, Detroit), men's and women's basketball (Rocket Mortgage Fieldhouse, Cleveland), softball (Firestone Stadium, Akron) and baseball (Sprenger Stadium, Avon, Ohio). The MAC secured a two-year contract extension with Ford Field to host the MAC Football Championship Game through the 2021 football season, anchored a six-year contract extension for the MAC Men's and Women's Basketball Tournaments at Rocket Mortgage Fieldhouse through the 2023 season, and stabilized a five-year contract extension through the 2020 season for the MAC Baseball Tournament at Sprenger Stadium in Avon, Ohio.

Steinbrecher has been aggressive in pursuing NCAA Championship events. The MAC served as the host for the 2015 NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Midwest Regional in Cleveland and the 2018 NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships, which set NCAA Wrestling three-day Championship total attendance and single-session attendance records. The MAC will also be hosting the 2020 NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament First and Second Rounds, and the 2024 Women's Final Four also at Rocket Mortgage Fieldhouse.

Several key MAC initiatives include the development of the first of its kind Conference-wide Mental Health Program, which includes a bi-annual Mental Health Summit to focus on student well-being, along with grassroots efforts with a Mental Health Awareness Week on each member campus. A comprehensive Diversity & Inclusion Program was created to accelerate the growth of minority candidates for collegiate job opportunities in coaching and administration, and the development of the MAC Academic Consortium to integrate across membership the next generation of leaders in higher education, providing leadership development opportunities among faculty and administration.

In the summer of 2014, the MAC and ESPN announced a historic 13-year rights extension deal through the 2026-27 season for expanded national television and digital distribution. This is the largest and most extensive agreement in the history of the Conference and brings long-term security for the MAC through the 2026-27 academic year.

ESPN has exclusive television and digital distribution rights for all MAC sporting events, and guarantees coverage of every football game, men's and women's basketball games and select Olympic sporting events. The MAC and ESPN have established on-campus production capabilities that provide a significant increase in the national coverage of baseball, softball, soccer, volleyball, wrestling and

Olympic sports on ESPN platforms. This has opened up nearly 92 million households from ESPN platforms for exposure to MAC sports for the first time in Conference history. Through this ESPN partnership, the MAC and CBS Sports Network announced another four-year sublicensing agreement to expand its national coverage of football and basketball through the 2022-23 season.

For the second time in Mid-American Conference history a member institution played in one of the prestigious New Year's Six Bowl Games, as 2016 MAC Champion Western Michigan faced Wisconsin in the Goodyear Cotton Bowl Classic on Jan. 2, 2017 at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas.

During the 2019 season, the MAC matched a league record with seven members accepting bowl invitations -- Miami (LendingTree Bowl), Central Michigan (New Mexico Bowl), Buffalo (Makers Wanted Bahamas Bowl), Western Michigan (SERVEPRO First Responder Bowl), Ohio (Famous Idaho Potato Bowl), Kent State (Tropical Smoothie Cafe Frisco Bowl) and Eastern Michigan (Quick Lane Bowl) will represent the MAC in bowl games this season.

The MAC will increase its primary bowl agreements to a Conference-best six guaranteed bowl games coming in the next bowl cycle in 2020. The MAC will have bowl agreements with the Famous Idaho Potato Bowl; Makers Wanted Bahamas Bowl, Arizona Bowl and Quick Lane Bowl, and will be in a rotation with other conferences to appear in the Camellia Bowl, Cheribundi Boca Raton Bowl, Frisco Bowl and the newly created Myrtle Beach Bowl. These bowl agreements provide the MAC the opportunity to build on relationships with multiple bowl partners, expand national television exposure and broaden geographical opportunities to perform against peer FBS conferences.

Kent State's Julian Edelman was named Super Bowl MVP as part of New England's 13-3 win over the Los Angeles Rams in Super Bowl LIII at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta. Edelman, a nine-year NFL veteran, won his third Super Bowl as a member of the Patriots, and became the first former MAC student-athlete to be named NFL Super Bowl MVP, and only the seventh wide receiver in NFL history to be named Super Bowl MVP. Also, Sean McVay, the youngest head coach in the NFL (33 years old during 2018 NFL season), led the Los Angeles Rams to the NFC Title and Super Bowl appearance against the New England Patriots in Super Bowl LIII at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta.

The MAC had nine draft selections in the 2019 NFL Draft, along with 36 former MAC football student athletes who either signed NFL rookie free agent contracts or received invites to rookie mini-camps with various NFL clubs. The MAC modern era record for number of selections in an NFL Draft is 11 draft selections, which happened two years ago (2017 NFL Draft) and in the 2005 NFL Draft.

Sun Belt Conference

With each passing season, the Sun Belt Conference continues to challenge itself, and its competitors, in all aspects of intercollegiate athletics. Not content with being simply the youngest football conference in the NCAA Football Bowl Subdivision, the conference has shown that it can rise each and every season that comes along.

At no time has league athletic success been more obvious than during the course of the last several football seasons. In recent years, Sun Belt members have participated in as many as six bowl games, a 50 percent increase in the league's former high-water mark and only a decade removed from a "one-bowl league" moniker in its formative years.

The Sun Belt has earned due respect in the FBS over the last several years by consistently beating teams from peer conferences, winning bowl games and upsetting Power Five teams. In fact, the 2019 football season was more evidence of the Sun Belt's success as the conference tied its second-highest total for non-conference wins in a single season. The 22 total wins matched the previous high set in 2016, with five bowl games to go. Additionally, the Sun Belt's 22 regular season non-conference wins broke the record of 21 that was set in 2018.

Those league success stories have been more public in recent years, in part because the Sun Belt itself has been progressive and in the forefront of the digital media world. The league continues to adapt to the ever-changing world of collegiate athletics and continues the process of evolving to better serve its membership, keeping the pledge it made at its founding to be a league of opportunity.

The Sun Belt's partnership with ESPN was revamped in 2018 and is the most significant and extensive multimedia rights agreement in conference history. Highlights of the contract include that: a minimum of 500 events a year will appear on an ESPN platform beginning in 2020-21 and that, every Sun Belt football, men's basketball and women's basketball game will be viewable on an ESPN platform. It was also announced that, linear network football games at Sun Belt home venues will expand to a minimum of 10 games a year on a combination of ABC, ESPN, ESPN2 and ESPNU, that all Sun Belt Championship events will be viewable on an ESPN platform each academic year that will give exposure to all 18 conference sports and that digital productions will expand to include regular-season competition in Sun Belt sports that have received only limited coverage previously.

Opportunity for Sun Belt growth and success extends beyond television deals. The Sun Belt annually awards nearly \$70 million in student-athlete financial aid, an increase of 130% from five years ago, to more than 3,100 student-athletes, while also providing life experiences such as team building, domestic and foreign travel, community service, mentoring and recognition through honors and awards. Sun Belt institutions are also leaders in providing career services and the tools to assist in the pursuit of personal goals. Each member employs full-time academic advisors and on average nearly two dozen tutors for academic support.

The Sun Belt has nationally-respected programs in nearly every NCAA sport offering and remains a fixture on the national scene while remaining heavily involved in the conduct and competition of college athletics. But it also provides opportunities for success on many unique and different levels. In athletic parlance, the Sun Belt has upside and its mantra of “Rise Above” is just as applicable now as when it was founded as a home to some of the nation’s premier basketball programs.

In the spring, baseball and softball continue to put the league in the national spotlight with deep runs in postseason play and high visibility in national polls. Coastal Carolina reigned supreme at the pinnacle of college baseball, winning the College World Series for the 2016 season. Louisiana’s baseball team ranked No. 1 nationally recently and reached the NCAA Super Regional round in 2014 and 2015. In softball last season, the Sun Belt sent multiple teams to the postseason for the eighth straight year with UTA capturing the 2019 National Invitational Softball Championship title. A perennial national power, Louisiana advanced to the NCAA Division I Softball Championship for the 21st consecutive season. The Ragin' Cajuns have been to the NCAA Super Regionals seven times and NCAA Women’s College World Series three times.

The conference is currently comprised of 12 institutions – Appalachian State, Little Rock, Arkansas State, Coastal Carolina, Georgia Southern, Georgia State, Louisiana, ULM, South Alabama, UTA, Texas State and Troy – and competes in the FBS as a 10-team league. Little Rock and UTA are full Sun Belt members in all sports other than football. The league also have two associate members in men's soccer, Central Arkansas and Howard.

Game History

Date	Game	Match-Up/Score
12/22/99	Mobile Alabama Bowl	TCU 28, East Carolina 14
12/20/00	GMAC Mobile Alabama Bowl	Southern Miss 28, TCU 21
12/19/01	GMAC Bowl	Marshall 64, East Carolina 61 (2OT)
12/18/02	GMAC Bowl	Marshall 38, Louisville 15
12/18/03	GMAC Bowl	Miami (OH) 49, Louisville 28
12/22/04	GMAC Bowl	Bowling Green 52, Memphis 35
12/21/05	GMAC Bowl	Toledo 45, UTEP 13
1/7/07	GMAC Bowl	Southern Miss 28, Ohio 7
1/6/08	GMAC Bowl	Tulsa 63, Bowling Green 7
1/6/09	GMAC Bowl	Tulsa 45, Ball State 13
1/6/10	GMAC Bowl	Central Michigan 44, Troy 41 (2OT)
1/6/11	GoDaddy.com Bowl	Miami (OH) 35, Middle Tennessee 21
1/8/12	GoDaddy.com Bowl	Northern Illinois 38, Arkansas State 20
1/6/13	GoDaddy.com Bowl	Arkansas State 17, Kent State 13
1/5/14	GoDaddy Bowl	Arkansas State 23, Ball State 20
1/4/15	GoDaddy Bowl	Toledo 63, Arkansas State 44
12/23/15	GoDaddy Bowl	Georgia Southern 53, Bowling Green 36
12/23/16	Dollar General Bowl	Troy 28, Ohio 23
12/23/17	Dollar General Bowl	Appalachian State 34, Toledo 0
12/22/18	Dollar General Bowl	Troy 42, Buffalo 32

For full game recaps, visit <https://lendingtreebowl.com/about/game-recaps/>

LendingTree Bowl in the NFL

Player	College	NFL Team
Jahleel Addae	Central Michigan	Houston Texans
Mario Addison	Troy	Carolina Panthers
Olasunkanmi Adeniyi	Toledo	Pittsburg Steelers
Tarell Basham	Ohio	New York Jets
Nick Bellore	Central Michigan	Seattle Seahawks
Matt Brieda	Georgia Southern	San Francisco 49ers
Brandon Brooks	Miami (OH)	Philadelphia Eagles
Jordan Chunn	Troy	Dallas Cowboys
Chris Clark	Southern Miss	Houston Texans
Charles Clay	Tulsa	Arizona Cardinals
Demario Davis	Arkansas State	New Orleans Saints
Gehrig Dieter	Bowling Green	Kansas City Chiefs
Eric Fisher	Central Michigan	Kansas City Chiefs
Antonio Garcia	Troy	Miami Dolphins
Colby Gossett	Appalachian State	Cleveland Browns
Stephen Gostkowski	Memphis	New England Patriots
Chuck Harris	Buffalo	Chicago Bears
Tae Hayes	Appalachian State	Jacksonville Jaguars
Treyvon Hester	Toledo	Washington Redskins
Ka'dar Hollman	Toledo	Green Bay Packers
Reggie Howard	Toledo	Los Angeles Chargers
Kareem Hunt	Toledo	Cleveland Browns
Ryan Hunter	Bowling Green	Kansas City Chiefs
Anthony Johnson	Buffalo	Los Angeles Chargers
Diontae Johnson	Toledo	Pittsburg Steelers

NFL Continued

Player	College	NFL Team
Jon'vea Johnson	Toledo	Dallas Cowboys
Roubbens Joseph	Buffalo	Washington Redskins
Brett Kern	Toledo	Tennessee Titans
Josh Kline	Kent State	Minnesota Vikings
Roger Lewis	Bowling Green	Indianapolis Colts
Joe Lowery	Ohio	Chicago Bears
Greg Mancz	Toledo	Houston Texans
J. D. McKissic	Arkansas State	Detroit Lions
Rashaan Melvin	Northern Illinois	Detroit Lions
Scott Miller	Bowling Green	Tampa Bay Buccaneers
Rolan Milligan	Toledo	Indianapolis Colts
Roosevelt Nix	Kent State	Pittsburgh Steelers
Elijah Nkansah	Toledo	Houston Texans
James O'Hagan	Buffalo	New York Giants
A.J. Ouellette	Ohio	Cleveland Browns
Quentin Polling	Ohio	Oakland Raiders
Ben Roethlisberger	Miami (OH)	Pittsburgh Steelers
Trevon Sanders	Troy	New York Jets
Tuzar Skipper	Toledo	New York Giants
Willie Snead IV	Ball State	Baltimore Ravens
Cody Thompson	Toledo	Kansas City Chiefs
Brynden Trawick	Troy	Baltimore Ravens
Brant Weiss	Toledo	Los Angeles Chargers
Damion Willis	Troy	Cincinnati Bengals
Brian Winters	Kent State	New York Jets
Logan Woodside	Toledo	Tennessee Titans