

On to 2018: College football story lines for next season

By **RALPH D. RUSSO**
Associated Press

Congratulations to 2017 national champion Alabama. While the Crimson Tide celebrates, it's on to 2018 for the rest of college football. Here are some of the numerous story lines to follow next season:

QUARTERBACK COMPETITIONS

This is as much a story of the offseason as the season, but no doubt the ramifications will be felt all the way through 2018.

Three playoff teams, including the two that played for the national title, will have returning starting quarterbacks. None of those players are locks to start next season.

Jalen Hurts has led Alabama to two straight championship games in his first two college seasons, but it was Tua Tagovailoa who came off the bench Monday night to beat Georgia for the national championship.

Jake Fromm led Georgia to the national title game as a freshman, but five-star recruit Justin Fields will be practicing with the Bulldogs this spring. And where does that leave Jacob Eason, the former five-star who was relegated to backup-up behind Fromm?

At Clemson, Kelly Bryant will have to fend off both sophomore Hunter Johnson and five-star incoming freshman Trevor Lawrence. Miami's Malik Rosier is also likely to face a challenge from N'Kosi Perry, who will be a redshirt freshman and Notre Dame's Brandon Wimbush will have to reclaim his job after Ian Book led the Fighting Irish to a bowl victory.

Elsewhere, Ohio State will likely turn the team over to Dwayne



AP Photo/David J. Phillip

Alabama's Jalen Hurts (2) is seen on the bench with Tua Tagovailoa (13) head coach Nick Saban during the college football playoff championship game against Georgia on Monday in Atlanta.

Haskins. Can incoming freshman Tate Martell be a factor. Texas A&M transfer Kyler Murray is the heir apparent to Baker Mayfield at Oklahoma.

HEAT ON HARBAUGH

The offseason's most interesting coach needs to start having a bigger impact during the season. Part of Michigan's problem in 2017 was the expectations were a bit out of whack, but that doesn't let Harbaugh off the hook. The Wolverines' offense was bad and if you're a great coach who supposedly has a skill for developing

quarterbacks — and Harbaugh is being paid as such — you need to do better than 109th in the country in yards per pass attempt.

No excuses next season. Harbaugh will have three of his own recruiting class. The defense should be loaded again. The Wolverines could have Shea Patterson at quarterback if the Ole Miss transfer gets eligible, but even if they don't either Brandon Peters or Dylan McCaffrey should provide at least competency.

Harbaugh needs to start winning big things: rivalry games, division

titles, conference championships, playoff spots.

WHO FOR HEISMAN?

Baker Mayfield is gone. So is Lamar Jackson, Saquon Barkley and Rashaad Penny. That's four of the top five Heisman Trophy vote-getters.

Also, flashy quarterbacks such as San Darnold and Josh Rosen, who were trendy picks going in this past season, are on their way to the NFL.

So who is the favorite going into 2018? Runner-up Bryce Love of Stanford would be good pick, though the junior could go pro. Wisconsin's Jonathan Taylor, who ran for nearly 2,000 yards as a freshman, could easily surpass that in 2018. Still, it's become a quarterbacks' award, with 15 of the last 18 going to QBs.

The top quarterbacks? Keep an eye out for some of those newcomers and possible first-year starters. Of the established players, Penn State's Trace McSorley steps out of Barkley's shadow and Oregon's Justin Herbert could be the guy with the NFL draft buzz.

JIMBO IN AGGIELAND

It has been 40 years since a coach with a national championship on his resume left one college job for another. Texas A&M paid \$75 million dollars for Jimbo Fisher and his championship ring. The Aggies have been stuck in neutral for the past few years under Kevin Sumlin.

A&M is not bereft of talent, but it would be normal for year one to hit some bumps as the program transitions. Thing is \$75 million doesn't buy patience. A good measuring stick? Georgia was 8-5 in its first season and then took off in year two. That's not to suggest

A&M will be in the playoff in 2019, but an underwhelming 2018 is no reason to panic. Still, \$75 million.

Other new coaches who will be getting a lot of attention: Chip Kelly at UCLA; Scott Frost at Nebraska; Jeremy Pruitt at Tennessee.

HOT SEATS

Michigan is not firing Jim Harbaugh so let's just end that right here. But which coach does enter next season very much in need of a change in trajectory?

Not a lot of really obvious choices though this is probably Kliff Kingsbury's last chance to get past mediocre at Texas Tech and Vanderbilt needs to show some improvement under Derek Mason after four seasons that have produced an 18-31 record. The most fascinating coaching situation will be at Kansas State, where 78-year-old Hall of Famer Bill Snyder is back with no exit plan in sight.

CAN THE PAC-12 REBOUND?

The West Coast's conference was a dud in 2017, missing out on the playoff for the second time and then crashing in the postseason with a 1-8 bowl record. Bowl records can be deceiving, but it is compounded by the fact that the conference is having a hard time keeping pace with the other Power Five conferences in revenue and exposure.

Washington should still be a national contender and Stanford can be relied upon for consistent top-20 performance. But coaching changes at UCLA, Oregon and the Arizona schools, in addition to USC trying to replace Darnold, means the Pac-12 could again have a hard time putting a team in the playoff.

Eighteen states may introduce sports betting bills in 2018

By **WAYNE PARRY**
Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — A new report predicts 18 states will introduce bills to regulate sports betting this year, with 11 having a good chance of passing legislation.

Eilers & Krejcik Gaming, which tracks gambling legislation nationwide, says that's just the minimum; the firm predicts more than 30 states could introduce sports betting bills.

The U.S. Supreme Court this year will decide a case brought by New Jersey that seeks to overturn a ban on sports betting in all but four states: Delaware, Montana, Nevada and Oregon. A favorable ruling in that case could open the floodgates in terms of states adopting a new form of gambling.

"Assuming a Supreme Court decision or action by Congress permits it, we could see the largest simultaneous expansion of regulated gambling in U.S. history with sports betting in 2018," said Chris Grove, the company's managing director.

The court is expected by June to decide New Jersey's case, which seeks to overturn a ban on sports betting by any state that did not meet a 1991 deadline to legalize it. States and private companies in the U.S. and abroad are already moving quickly to position themselves for a favorable ruling.

States listed as likely to introduce a sports betting bill are: Massachusetts; Rhode Island; New York; New Jersey; West Virginia; South Carolina; Georgia; Florida; Illinois; Michigan; Iowa; Minnesota; Louisiana; Mississippi; Oklahoma and California. Indiana and Kentucky already have introduced bills.

Pennsylvania and Connecticut have already passed bills. Grove said Delaware is arguing that it doesn't need to pass a bill due to gambling legislation already on the books, and added Mississippi may not need to pass a bill. He said an argument has been made that that state's fantasy sports bill also authorized sports betting.

The report listed 11 states as having a good chance of enacting sports betting bills this year: Massachusetts; Rhode Island; New York; New Jersey; West Virginia; Ohio; Michigan; Illinois; Oklahoma; Kentucky and Indiana.

It also listed states where the introduction, much less adoption, of a sports betting bill is considered unlikely: Tennessee; Alabama; Arkansas; Texas; Kansas; Nebraska; North and South Dakota; Wyoming; Utah; Idaho; Alaska and Hawaii.

States across the nation are looking for new sources of revenue, and adding or expanding gambling is seen as an attractive option for many.

NFL

By **TERESA M. WALKER**
Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Titans linebacker Derrick Morgan says he kind of blacked out.

Everyone who stayed on the Tennessee sideline went crazy, celebrating.

As a group of teammates mobbed him, quarterback Marcus Mariota simply stood and looked back at them knowing he had helped the Titans to their first playoff victory in 14 years in his postseason debut.

The big play? Not his first touchdown pass, which he conveniently caught after it was batted back to him.

Or the big first downs he delivered with his legs.

No, this time Mariota delivered by putting his right shoulder into a linebacker, clearing space for Derrick Henry to run for the clinching first down on their rally from 18 down to beat Kansas City 22-21.

"You don't really see quarterbacks blocking and doing such a selfless play like that," Morgan said Tuesday.

The 2014 Heisman Trophy winner may be polite and as well-mannered as any parent's dream. He's also a winner, and Tennessee's third-year quarterback finally is healthy and leading the Titans to victories that matter.

He's also showing off his versatility from catching the first TD pass he ever threw in a postseason game to running and even blocking

to lead the Titans to an AFC divisional game in New England against the defending champs.

Pro Bowl left tackle Taylor Lewan said Mariota has made big plays two weeks in a row to fire up the Titans, including a stiff-arm while running to a big first down to clinch Tennessee's playoff berth in the regular-season finale.

"It's pretty awesome, especially as mild-mannered as he is," Lewan said. "His competitive nature is bigger than anybody else's in here, so I know he wants to win every single game, and we're just here to help him do that."

Mariota, 24, easily had his worst regular season yet in the NFL with more interceptions (15) than touchdown passes (13). But he ran for a career-high five touchdowns, while playing through a hamstring injury that cost him one start in October.

Now Mariota gets his second chance at the Patriots and Tom Brady, whose 25 playoff victories not only are the most in the NFL, but more than Mariota has (21) since arriving in the league from Oregon.

Mariota's first trip to Foxborough did not go well at all in his rookie season.

The Patriots sacked him three times, and Mariota completed just 3 of 6 passes before having his season ended with a sprained knee in a loss Dec. 20, 2015.

These Patriots (13-3) have won



Mariota

11 of their past 12 games, and Brady led the NFL with 4,577 yards passing.

The Titans quarterback showed he's as healthy as he's been all season with a handful of highlight plays starting with the NFL's first touchdown pass by a quarterback to himself when Darrelle Revis batted the ball

back to Mariota who ran toward the pylon to cap a 91-yard drive to jumpstart the Titans' comeback.

Mariota also threw the game-winning TD to Eric Decker with 6:06 left for his fifth game-winning drive this season and ninth of his career.

"This guy is a physically tough player," Patriots defensive coordinator Matt Patricia said of Mariota. "You definitely see that on film."

Mariota ran eight times for 46 yards, twice on third down for first downs in the second half against the Chiefs.

And that block was the cap to a performance that let tight end Delanie Walker know his quarterback finally is healthy.

"When he wasn't healthy, you wouldn't see him run out of the pocket, juke people or anything like that," Walker said.

"It just shows that he's healthy. This is the Marcus that everyone knows. He's been doing this in college, and now everyone just starting to see it because it's prime-time, and we're in the playoffs. At the end of the day, this is him."

SCOREBOARD

Local slate

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL

Wednesday
Riverside at Irrigon, 7:30

Friday
Pilot Rock at Culver, 4:30 p.m.

Stanfield at Heppner, 6 p.m.

Sunset at Hermiston, 7 p.m.

Mac-Hi at La Grande, 7 p.m.

Condon/Wheeler at Sherman, 7 p.m.

Irrigon at Umatilla, 7:30 p.m.

Horizon Christian at Ione, 7:30 p.m.

Arlington at Dufur, 7:30 p.m.

Echo at Powder Valley, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday
Nixyaawii at Helix, 7:30 p.m.

Culver at Stanfield, 2:30 p.m.

Weston-McEwen at Heppner, 4 p.m.

Umatilla at Burns, 5 p.m.

Wallowa at Echo, 5 p.m.

Helix at Joseph, 5 p.m.

Pine Eagle at Nixyaawii, 5:30 p.m.

Ione at South Wasco, 5:30 p.m.

Sherman at Arlington, 5:30 p.m.

Duffur at Condon/Wheeler, 5:30 p.m.

Hermiston at La Grande, 7:30 p.m.

PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL

Wednesday
Riverside at Irrigon, 6:30 p.m.

Hermiston at Post Falls (ID), 7 p.m.

Friday
Mac-Hi at La Grande, 6 p.m.

Irrigon at Umatilla, 6 p.m.

Pilot Rock at Culver, 6 p.m.

Arlington at Dufur, 6 p.m.

Condon/Wheeler at Sherman, 6 p.m.

Horizon Christian at Ione, 6 p.m.

Echo at Powder Valley, 6 p.m.

Nixyaawii at Helix, 6 p.m.

Stanfield at Heppner, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday
Culver at Stanfield, 4 p.m.

Ione at South Wasco, 4 p.m.

Duffur at Condon/Wheeler, 4 p.m.

Sherman at Arlington, 4 p.m.

Helix at Joseph, 4 p.m.

Pine Eagle at Nixyaawii, 4 p.m.

Wallowa at Echo, 5 p.m.

Weston-McEwen at Heppner, 5:30 p.m.

Hermiston at La Grande, 5:45 p.m.

Umatilla at Burns, 6:30 p.m.

PREP WRESTLING

Hermiston, Pendleton, Mac-Hi, Riverside, Irrigon, Heppner at Oregon Classic (Redmond)

(Redmond)

Echo at Bonanza Invite

PREP SWIMMING

Saturday
Pendleton, Hermiston at Baker, Noon

COLLEGE MEN'S BASKETBALL

Wednesday
Yakima Valley at BMCC, 8 p.m.

Friday
Multnomah at EOU, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday
BMCC at Columbia Basin, 4 p.m.

Warner Pacific at EOU, 7:30 p.m.

COLLEGE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Wednesday
Yakima Valley at BMCC, 6 p.m.

Friday
Multnomah at EOU, 5:30 p.m.

Saturday
BMCC at Columbia Basin, 2 p.m.

Warner Pacific at EOU, 5:30 p.m.

COLLEGE WRESTLING

Saturday
EOU vs. North Idaho (at Missoula, MT)

Prep Scores

Boys Basketball

Tuesday
Astoria 41, Estacada 40
Baker 50, Fruitland, Idaho 48
Banks 62, Corbett 26
Butte Falls/Crater Lake Charter 61, Bonanza 55
Carnas Valley 56, New Hope Christian 36
Central 49, Lebanon 45
Central Catholic 80, David Douglas 57
Clackamas 67, Centennial 44
Columbia Christian 58, Vernonia 42
Coquille 65, Harrisburg 30
Cottage Grove 48, Gladstone 45
Country Christian 46, St. Stephens Academy 38
Crosshill Christian 102, Oregon School for Deaf 33
Dallas 53, Corvallis 49
Damascus Christian 75, Open Door 17
Days Creek 51, Glendale 40
De La Salle 60, Clatskanie 40
Dufur 57, Ione 32
Falls City 73, Willamette Valley Christian 31
Grant 91, Benson 65
La Salle 59, Milwaukie 52
Livingstone 56, Jewell 43
Lowell 57, Mohawk 43
Madison 80, Wilson 63
McMinnville 75, West Albany 57

Girls Basketball
Tuesday
Banks 57, Corbett 31
Blanchet Catholic 67, Colton 23
Bonanza 62, Butte Falls/Crater Lake Charter 18
Canby 52, Tualatin 43
Canyonville Christian 19, Prospect 12
Cascade 56, Seaside 24
Central 41, Lebanon 30
Central Linn 46, East Linn Christian 25
Churchill 69, North Eugene 37
Clackamas 71, Centennial 22
Clatskanie 66, De La Salle 45
Cleveland 46, Madison 32
Condon/Wheeler 31, Arlington 25
Coquille 45, Harrisburg 32
Country Christian 54, St. Stephens Academy 29
Crater 54, Eagle Point 17
Crosshill Christian 29, Oregon School for Deaf 5
Days Creek 54, Glendale 16
Echo 54, Stanfield 45
Elkton 47, Yoncalla 21
Franklin 68, Wilson 30
Grant 94, Jefferson PDX 39
Grants Pass 46, South Eugene 39
Henley 47, North Valley 46
Hidden Valley 78, Phoenix 22
Jefferson 32, Scio 31
Lakeridge 37, Sherwood 34
Lakeridge 52, St. Mary's 38
Livingstone 28, Jewell 24, OT
Lost River 40, Riddle 17
Lowell 43, Mohawk 21
Marist 41, Springfield 31

Basketball

NBA Eastern Conference Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	33	10	.767	—
Toronto	28	11	.718	3
Philadelphia	19	19	.500	11½
New York	19	21	.475	12½
Brooklyn	15	25	.375	16½

NBA Eastern Conference Southeast Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	23	17	.575	—
Washington	23	17	.575	—
Charlotte	15	23	.395	7
Orlando	12	29	.293	11½
Atlanta	10	30	.250	13

NBA Western Conference Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	26	14	.650	—
Detroit	21	18	.538	4½
Milwaukee	21	18	.538	4½
Indiana	21	19	.525	5
Chicago	14	27	.341	12½

NBA Western Conference Southwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	28	11	.718	—
San Antonio	28	14	.667	1½
New Orleans	20	19	.513	8
Dallas	14	28	.333	15½
Memphis	12	27	.308	16

	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	26	16	.619	—
Portland	22	18	.550	3
Oklahoma City	22	19	.537	3½
Denver	21	19	.525	4
Utah	16	24	.400	9

NBA Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Golden State	33	8	.805	—
L.A. Clippers	18	21	.462	14
Phoenix	16	26	.381	17½
Sacramento	13	27	.325	19
L.A. Lakers	13	27	.325	19

NBA Tuesday's Games

Miami 90, Toronto 89
Portland 117, Oklahoma City 106
Dallas 114, Orlando 99
L.A. Lakers 99, Sacramento 86
Wednesday's Games
Dallas at Charlotte, 4 p.m.
Miami at Indiana, 4 p.m.
Utah at Washington, 4 p.m.
Chicago at New York, 4:30 p.m.
Detroit at Brooklyn, 4:30 p.m.
New Orleans at Memphis, 5 p.m.
Oklahoma City at Minnesota, 5 p.m.
Orlando at Milwaukee, 5 p.m.
Portland at Houston, 5 p.m.
Atlanta at Denver, 6 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at Golden State, 7:30 p.m.

NBA NCAA Men's Basketball Top 25 Schedule

Tuesday
No. 2 West Virginia 57, Baylor 54
No. 21 Kentucky 74, Texas A&M 73
No. 9 Oklahoma 75, No. 8 Texas Tech 65
No. 20 North Carolina 96, Boston College 66
No. 3 Virginia 68, Syracuse 61
No. 25 Creighton 85, Butler 74
No. 12 Kansas 83, Iowa 78
No. 22 Auburn 85, Mississippi 70
No. 5 Purdue 70, Michigan 69
Marquette 84, No. 13 Seton Hall 64
No. 24 Tennessee 92, Vanderbilt 84
Wednesday
No. 7 Duke at Pitt, 4 p.m. (ESPN2)
Rutgers at No. 4 Michigan State, 4 p.m. (BTN)
No. 10 Xavier at No. 1 Villanova, 5 p.m. (FS1)
Louisville at No. 23 Florida State, 6 p.m. (ACCNE)
No. 16 TCU at Texas, 6 p.m. (ESPN)

NBA Pac-12 Schedule

Tuesday
No games scheduled.
Wednesday
Colorado at USC, 7 p.m. (FS1)

NCAA Women's Basketball

Top 25 Schedule

Tuesday
No. 1 Connecticut 80, UCF 44

Wednesday
No. 21 Rutgers at Purdue, 4 p.m.

Indiana at No. 23 Michigan, 4 p.m.

No. 15 West Virginia at Kansas, 5 p.m.

No. 7 Texas at TCU, 6 p.m.

Pac-12 Schedule

Tuesday-Thursday
No games scheduled.

Friday
USC at Colorado, 5 p.m.

No. 18 Arizona St at No. 22 Oregon St, 6 p.m.