

# Sports & Entertainment

## Showboats unveil 2025 schedule; Kick off set for March 30 from sports page 1

•Week 6 - Saturday, May 3 - 11 a.m. at Houston Roughnecks - ABC  
 •Week 7 - Sunday, May 11 - 2 p.m. - vs. St. Louis Battlehawks - ESPN  
 •Week 8 - Friday, May 16 - 7 p.m. - at San Antonio Brahmas - FOX  
 •Week 9 - Saturday, May 24 - 11 a.m. - vs. Arlington Renegades - ABC  
 •Week 10 - Sunday, June 1 - 2 p.m. vs. Birmingham Stallions - FOX

### UFL 2025 Schedule Information By The Numbers:

•43 - League media partners FOX, ABC, ESPN, ESPN2 and FS1 will present all 43 UFL games during the league's second season (40 regular season games, two playoff games, one Championship game).  
 •22 - ESPN will present 22 regular season and postseason games across ABC (12), ESPN (9), and ESPN2 (1) during the league's second season.  
 •21 - FOX Sports will show 21 regular season and postseason games across FOX (20) and FS1 (1) this season.  
 •10 - The UFL will feature 10 weeks of regular season that will include 10 live regular season matchups on Fridays as part of

**FOX UFL Friday.**  
 •8 - The UFL features eight teams: Arlington Renegades, Birmingham Stallions, D.C. Defenders, Houston Roughnecks, Memphis Showboats, Michigan Panthers, San Antonio Brahmas, St. Louis Battlehawks.  
 •5 - ABC, ESPN, and FOX will broadcast five doubleheaders during the season.  
 •2 - The Conference Championships, which will feature the top two teams with the best records in their respective conferences playing against each other for the right to play for the second UFL Championship, will each air on Sunday, June 8, on ABC (3:00 p.m. ET) and FOX (6:00 p.m. ET).  
 •74 - 74% of all UFL games will air on network television (either on ABC or FOX) this season.

About The United Football League  
 The United Football League (UFL) is the premier spring football platform, formed by the merging of the XFL and USFL in 2024 under the combined ownership of RedBird Capital Partners, FOX, Dany Garcia and Dwayne Johnson. The UFL has eight teams in Arlington (TX), Birmingham (AL), Detroit (MI), Houston (TX), San Antonio (TX), Memphis (TN), St. Louis (MO), and Washington D.C.

## Memphis Showboats extend FREE parking promotion; Season holders who purchase by January 20 get free parking for home games

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Jan 3, 2025 - The Memphis Showboats are ringing in the new year with a special gift to new and returning season ticket holders. Last month, the Showboats announced a free parking promotion running through the end of 2024. The team has announced it will extend that offer through Jan. 20, 2025.

This special free parking offer from the Showboats will be available to all new purchasers as well as current season ticket holders who renew before the promotion ends. In addition, those who have already purchased their season tickets for the 2025 UFL season will receive this benefit as well. With every season ticket purchase through Jan. 20, Showboats fans will receive one complimentary parking pass (per account) for all 2025 Memphis Showboats home games at Simmons Bank Liberty Stadium.

To be eligible, a season ticket member account must be paid in full before Jan. 20, and each account will be allocated one free season parking pass in the Gold Lot. Game day parking is \$20 per vehicle, so season ticket



members save \$100 in parking fees by purchasing their tickets before Jan. 20.

"We are thrilled to extend this popular offer to our incredible fans," said Steve Macy, Vice President of Team Business and Event Operations. "Our season ticket members bring amazing energy to each game and we are constantly looking for ways to bring them even more value. Extending our free parking offer is just our way of saying thank you to Showboats fans."

Season tickets begin at just \$100 and can be purchased at [uflshowboats.com/tickets](http://uflshowboats.com/tickets). Fans can also reach a ticket specialist by calling 901-341-7008 or sending an email to [tickets@uflshowboats.com](mailto:tickets@uflshowboats.com).

The 2025 Showboats season kicks off March 30 at Simmons Bank Liberty Stadium, when

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Memphis hosts the Michigan Panthers. The Showboats will also play home games April 12, May 11, May 24 and June 1.

Full Memphis Showboats 2025 Schedule All Times Listed as CT Home Games In Bold

- Week 1 - Sunday, March 30 - 11 a.m. vs. Michigan Panthers - ESPN
- Week 2 - Saturday, April 5 - 7 p.m. - at D.C. Defenders - ABC
- Week 3 - Saturday, April 12 - 1:30 p.m. - vs Houston Roughnecks - ESPN
- Week 4 - Friday, April 18 - 7

- p.m. - at Michigan Panthers - FOX
- Week 5 - Friday, April 25 - 7 p.m. - at Birmingham Stallions - FOX
- Week 6 - Saturday, May 3 - 11 a.m. at Houston Roughnecks - ABC
- Week 7 - Sunday, May 11 - 2 p.m. - vs. St. Louis Battlehawks - ESPN
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## The NFL announces Wild Card Weekend powered by Verizon, January 11-13

NEW YORK — Jan. 5, 2025 — The following is the schedule of sites, dates and times for Wild Card Weekend, powered by Verizon, Jan. 11-13 (all times ET).

**SATURDAY, JAN. 11**  
 AFC: 4:30 p.m. 5 Los Angeles Chargers at 4 Houston (CBS, Paramount+)  
 AFC: 8:00 p.m. 6 Pittsburgh at 3 Baltimore (Prime Video)

**SUNDAY, JAN. 12**  
 AFC: 1:00 p.m. 7 Denver at 2 Buffalo (CBS, Paramount+)

NFC: 4:30 p.m. 7 Green Bay at 2 Philadelphia (FOX, FOX Deportes)  
 NFC: 8:00 p.m. 6 Washington at 3 Tampa Bay (NBC, Peacock, Universo)

**MONDAY, JAN. 13**  
 NFC: 8:00 p.m. 5 Minnesota/Detroit at 4 Los Angeles Rams (ESPN/ABC/ESPN+/ ESPN Deportes; ManningCast-ESPN2/ESPN+)

The Divisional Playoffs schedule will be announced next weekend.

## Memphis Hustle acquires second round draft pick in three-team trade deal

MEMPHIS, Tenn., January 6, 2025 - The Memphis Hustle announced the team acquired a 2025 second round pick (via College Park) from the Texas Legends in a three-team trade. As part of the deal, Memphis traded forward Robert Woodard II to the Delaware Blue Coats.

Woodard II (6-6, 235) has appeared in 16 games (three starts) this season for the Hustle, aver-

aging 6.3 points and 4.1 rebounds in 22.0 minutes.

The 25-year-old has appeared in 97 games (51 starts) across four seasons with the Oklahoma City Blue, Austin Spurs and Memphis Hustle. The Starkville, Mississippi, native has appeared in 25 games off the bench in two NBA seasons with the Sacramento Kings since being drafted 40th overall in the 2020 NBA Draft.

## DJ Steward from Maine Celtics goes to Memphis

MEMPHIS, Tenn., January 6, 2025 - The Memphis Hustle announced the team acquired guard DJ Steward from the Maine Celtics for the returning player rights to guard Jason Preston and a 2025 second round pick.

Steward (6-2, 162) has appeared in 16 games (15 starts) this season with the Windy City Bulls averaging 19.9 points, 4.7 rebounds and 7.3 assists in 34.8 minutes while shooting 39.8 percent from beyond the arc. The 23-year-old has appeared in 152 games (51 starts) across four seasons with the Stockton Kings,

Maine Celtics and Windy City Bulls and averaged 16.0 points, 3.9 rebounds and 4.4 assists in 27.8 minutes.

Preston (6-3, 181) has appeared in 81 games (76 starts) across three seasons with the San Diego Clippers, Memphis Hustle and Salt Lake City Stars and averaged 15.2 points, 7.1 rebounds and 8.2 assists in 33.1 minutes. The 25-year-old has appeared off the bench in 21 games across two NBA seasons with the Los Angeles Clippers and Utah Jazz and averaged 2.5 points and 2.0 assists in 9.3 minutes.

## Former Arkansas State defensive backs coach Jay Simpson added to Silverfield's staff as UofM Tigers cornerbacks coach

MEMPHIS, Tenn. - Jay Simpson, former Arkansas State defensive backs coach and defensive pass game coordinator, has been hired as cornerbacks coach, University of Memphis head football coach Ryan Silverfield announced on Thursday.

Simpson comes to Memphis after just finishing up his third season with the Red Wolves in his defensive backs coach and defensive pass game coordinator roles, helping the Red Wolves to an 8-5 record and Ventures Bowl Championship - the best season for the program since 2019.

Under Simpson, safety Trevian Thomas earned 2024 First Team All-Sun Belt honors after recording 79 total tackles and four pass break ups to go along with five interceptions (T-No. 4 in NCAA).

"We are very excited to add Coach Simpson to our staff," Silverfield said. "He brings incredible knowledge and experience to our program."

Before his time in Jonesboro, Simpson spent six seasons in multiple roles on the UAB football staff, including the last three

as the Blazers cornerbacks coach. He helped UAB win three-straight C-USA West Division titles in 2018, 2019 and 2020, along with winning the 2018 and 2020 Conference USA Championships. The championships were led in part by defenses that finished top-10 nationally in total defense for three straight years (2018-2020).

Simpson helped guide UAB to a 9-4 overall record and 6-2 mark in C-USA play in 2021 as the defense excelled, ranking 16th in the country in total defense. Under Simpson's guidance, Starling Thomas was named All-Conference USA after leading the team in pass break ups (8) and total passes defended (10) while Dacarrion McWilliams was a Freshman All-Conference selection.

In 2020, UAB finished seventh nationally in passing yards allowed per game, allowing just 173.2. The Blazers also ranked seventh in total defense, allowing opponents to gain 311.1 yards per game. UAB continued to excel in third-down defense. The Blazers ranked seventh in the country

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after boasting a third-down conversion percentage of just .298.

In 2019, UAB finished eighth nationally in total defense and Simpson's unit ranked eighth nationally in passing yards allowed (183.6).

Simpson joined UAB in 2016 and spent two seasons (2016, 2017) as a graduate assistant working with defensive backs. He transitioned into his role as defensive analyst for UAB's record-setting 2018 season in which the Blazers finished ninth nationally in total defense.

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ment and Coach Silverfield for this amazing opportunity to serve," Simpson said. "I've always had tremendous respect for this university and staff. Coach Silverfield has built a winning program and culture, and I'm eager to contribute."

Prior to UAB, Simpson began his coaching career at South Alabama and spent the 2014-15 seasons with the Jags where he was quality control and worked with linebackers in 2014, and defensive backs in 2015. Simpson played his college football career at South Alabama from 2009-11 and was a two-year starter at corner. He graduated from South Alabama in 2011 with a business degree.

Simpson and his wife, Kelsey, have three daughters, Khodi, Kamden and Kassidy.

For complete information on Memphis Tigers Football, visit [www.GoTigersGo.com](http://www.GoTigersGo.com) and follow the team's social media channels on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

## NFL announces Nix, London, Gibbs, Henry, and Robinson as FedEx Air and Ground Players of WK

N.Y., N.Y., January 6, 2025-The NFL announced on January 6 that the nominees for FedEx Air & Ground NFL Players of the Week for Week 18 are:

Denver quarterback BO NIX completed 26 of 29 attempts (89.7 percent) for 321 yards and four touchdowns with a 152.4 rating. He also rushed for 47 yards.

Carolina quarterback BRYCE YOUNG completed 25 of 34 attempts (73.5 percent) for 251 yards and three touchdowns with a 123.5 rating. He also rushed for 24 yards and two touchdowns.

Atlanta wide receiver DRAKE LONDON recorded 10 receptions for 187 yards and two touchdowns.

Detroit running back JAHMYR GIBBS recorded 170 scrimmage yards (139 rushing, 31 receiving) and four touchdowns (three rushing, one receiving).

Baltimore running back DERRICK HENRY recorded 161 scrimmage yards (138 rushing, 23 receiving) and two rushing touchdowns.

Atlanta running back BIJAN ROBINSON recorded 173 scrimmage yards (170 rushing, three receiving) and two rushing

touchdowns.

For the 2024-25 NFL regular season, FedEx is once again proudly working with the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF) to make donations of \$2,000 in the name of the winning players (\$4,000 total) to Historically Black Colleges and

Universities (HBCUs) across the country.

Over the course of the entire season, select HBCUs will receive grants totaling more than \$100,000 to support needs-based scholarships through the 2025-26 school year.

*Watch for The Mid-South Tribune's 30th Annual Black History Month Special in February 2025!*

*Email events, press releases and photos to [MSTnews@prodigy.net](mailto:MSTnews@prodigy.net) or [MSTsports@prodigy.net](mailto:MSTsports@prodigy.net) or [BlackInfoHwy@prodigy.net](mailto:BlackInfoHwy@prodigy.net)*