

Catholic Athletes For Christ Top 25
Presented by Siena Heights University
& Global Football
Notes 2018-07
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CATHOLIC ATHLETES FOR CHRIST TOP 25 WEEK 7 RANKING

Weekly Ranking of Catholic High School Football Teams Presented by Siena Heights University and Global Football

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2018 - ALEXANDRIA, Va. – OK, we'll cut right to the chase: No. 1 St. John Bosco (Bellflower, Calif.) beat No. 2 Mater Dei (Santa Ana, Calif.), 41-18, in one of the most anticipated high school football games this season.

Instead of dancing around, the Catholic Athletes for Christ Top 25 High School Football rankings did not need a major makeover at the top. True it was a No. 1 vs. 2 matchup and the two teams are on a collision course for a second meeting in the "second season" (I sure hope so) but Bosco recorded a 23-point win, seizing control in the second quarter. No. 2 Mater Dei's ranking remains static. There's no way we drop them.

We want more. Check back in early December for the rematch.

So, getting back to the CAC Top 25 presented by Siena Heights University and Global Football, there are two newbies in the ranking from New York and Illinois.

We'll start in the Midwest or more specifically in Chicagoland where No. 22 Brother Rice (Chicago) debuts and carries a perfect 8-0 record into a Game of the Week mention against a league rival that will decide a regular season champion.

Back on the East Coast, they play some pretty creative football north of New York City in Westchester County, home of the No. 25 Iona Prep Gaels from New Rochelle. Unbeaten Iona Prep is considered one New York's top teams and has a tall task this weekend on Long Island. Check back next week for the results from each game.

Each week we highlight tremendous individual and team performances and introduce you to a coach who is accustomed to winning big games in big situations. He's the coach who surrounds himself with extraordinary assistants and isn't afraid to roll the dice with trickery or sticking to the tenets that have defined his modus operandi. There are feature games nationally from Long Island to Tampa Bay to suburban Chicago.

Triple Option

Player of the Week: Quarterback DJ Uiagalelei of No. 1 St. John Bosco. There are defining moments in a young career. Everyone knew Uiagalelei was the real deal and last Saturday he was a superstar when the Braves defeated No. 2 Mater Dei, 41-18. Uiagalelei completed 15 of 22 passes for 279 yards and five touchdowns and rushed for 60 yards.

The game was postponed by one day when lightning wreaked havoc in Orange County, California (south of Los Angeles) on Friday night. When the game was played, the 6 feet, 4 inch, 235 pounds field general engineered three scoring drive of 80 yards in the first half when the Braves built a 27-10 lead. Uiagalelei tossed TDs of 10, 24, 25, 28, and 30 yards. The first four occurred in the first half and three went to WR Jake Bailey.

What's more impressive is Uiagalelei wasn't the only talented QB on the field as Mater Dei junior Bryce Young (previously named a CAC Top 25 Player of the Week) threw for 303 yards and two scores.

Uiagalelei, a pro-style passer, has Georgia, Oregon, Alabama and Clemson on his shortlist, but it's early in the recruiting process. He's also considered a coveted right-handed Major League Baseball pitching prospect. As a sophomore on the gridiron, Uiagalelei has completed 164 of 249 passes (.659 percentage) 2,733 yards and 29 TDs and only two interceptions and 379 yards, with four more scores on the ground.

On Sunday afternoon, I had lunch with national rankings guru Tom Lemming, who confirmed that Uiagalelei is the clear-cut top QB in the Class of 2020 and is near the top of the board for all positions. Uiagalelei, who is of Samoan ancestry, is indeed a special talent and has already been named to play in the 2020 Polynesian Bowl.

Coach of the Week: Jason Negro of No. 1 St. John Bosco: It's easy to overlook the coach of the No. 1 team, but sticking with the theme of the week it's a natural selection. Negro had to keep his team focused when lightning delayed the Mater Dei game by a day and eventually the Braves went on to a 41-18 victory over their league rivals on the road on Saturday night. Bosco is 8-0 heading into Friday's game with Trinity League rivals Santa Margarita (Rancho Santa Margarita).

Negro is a well-respected coach in southern California and is a 1991 graduate of St. John Bosco, who earned a college degree in mathematics. He was an assistant coach and taught math at Bosco after graduating from college and eventually became the successful head coach at Trabuco Hills (Mission Viejo) before heading back to Bosco as the head coach in 2010.

He guided the Braves to California Open Division state titles in 2013 and 2016, both times defeating national powerhouse and CAC Top 25 regular De La Salle (Concord).

Negro knows a thing or two about grooming high school QBs. His former prodigy Josh Rosen had a dream prep career before heading to UCLA in 2015. Last spring he was the first round pick (tenth overall) of the Arizona Cardinals.

In a few years, Negro should have another QB taken in the first round.

Games of the Week (All times Eastern): Check out these handful of games that feature undefeated teams this late in the regular season.

No. 25 Iona Prep (New Rochelle, N.Y.) at St. Anthony's (South Huntington, N.Y.), Friday, 7 p.m.: Only two weeks remain in the CHSFL Class AAA season and first place and top seed for the upcoming playoffs could be decided at James C. Metzger Stadium. Both teams are 4-0 in league play. It will be St. Anthony's head coach Rich Reichert's final regular season home game. Suffolk County's winningest coach is stepping down after this season. Last weekend, undefeated Iona Prep topped Christ the King (Middle Village), 42-12, and the Friars (5-1) beat Cardinal Hayes (Bronx), 56-32. This could be a preview to the CHSFL AAA final in November.

Trinity Catholic (St. Louis, Mo.) at La Salle (Cincinnati, Ohio), Friday, 7 p.m.: This an intriguing matchup between two programs that were ranked earlier this season by the CAC Top 25. Trinity (6-2) opened with two losses but has averaged 58 points in six victories. La Salle (4-4) plays in one of the nation's top leagues GCL South. This is a great primer for the state playoffs in Missouri and Ohio.

Clearwater (Fla.) Central Catholic at Jesuit (Tampa, Fla.), Friday, 7:30 p.m.: Nothing like a local rivalry from the Sunshine State between two unbeaten teams to thicken the interest of the upcoming postseason. The CC Marauders are 8-0 and one of Florida's top Class 3A teams. The Jesuit Tigers are 7-0 and sit atop the District 5-5A standings with two games remaining after this one.

No. 22 Brother Rice (Chicago, Ill.) at Montini Catholic (Lombard, Ill.), Friday, 8:30 p.m.: What better way to conclude the season than when two rivals go head-to-head with the Chicago Catholic League Blue championship at stake. Both squads enter the title tilt with 8-0 records and feature stout defenses. The Montini Broncos have allowed 46 points while Rice has conceded only 52.

No. 3 Mater Dei (Santa Ana, Calif.) at No. 10 JSerra Catholic (San Juan Capistrano, Calif.), Friday, 10 p.m.: JSerra (7-1), which opened in 2003 and started play in the uber-competitive Trinity League three years later, hosts one of the program's most important games. Both teams have lost to top-ranked St. John Bosco, including JSerra's 35-28 setback on Sept. 28. JSerra is coached by former USC and NFL tackle (Patriots and Raiders) Pat Harlow. Mater Dei is 6-2.

It's time to catch your breath again as we reload for another competitive week in the CAC Top 25. There are games galore and hopefully we can unearth a few gems that will be mentioned in next week's column.

Fans, coaches, players and parents are encouraged to follow the CAC Top 25 through social media at www.Facebook.com/CACTop25 and on Twitter @CACTop25. The CAC Top 25 rankings will return on Oct. 24. If you want to nominate a player or coach for CAC recognition get us the information no later than each Monday morning during the season by 11 a.m. ET.

The CAC Top 25 rankings will return on October 24. In the meantime, keep those affected along the Gulf Coast and the Florida Panhandle in your thoughts and prayers. Many lives were altered and some lost.

Thank you for your loyal readership. God Bless and enjoy the games and the spirit of the competition. – *Christopher Lawlor*

2018 Catholic Athletes for Christ Top 25, October 17, 2018

1. St. John Bosco, Bellflower, Calif. (8-0)

Previous rank: 1.

In the Huddle: Junior QB DJ Uiagalelei threw for four TDs in the first half and the Braves defeated No. 2 Mater Dei (Santa Ana, Calif.), 41-18. Uiagalelei's favorite target was Jake Bailey, who had six receptions for 161 yards and three scores, while RB George Holani carried 12 times for 123 yards and a 75-yard TD. The Braves host Santa Margarita (Rancho Santa Margarita) on Friday.

2. Mater Dei, Santa Ana, Calif. (6-2) #

Previous rank: 2.

In the Huddle: Lost to top-ranked St. John Bosco (Bellflower, Calif.), 41-18. Junior QB Bryce Young passed for 303 yards and two TDs. The Monarchs look to rebound this weekend at No. 10 JSerra Catholic (San Juan Capistrano) Friday in another Trinity League clash.

3. St. John's College, Washington, D.C. (7-0)

Previous rank: 3.

In the Huddle: The Cadets won for the 14th straight time, defeating then-No. 15 Good Counsel (Olney, Md.), 31-10. WRs Rakim Jarrett and Cameron Ross each caught two TDs from QB Sol-Jay Maiava. The Cadets enter their bye week and will face CAC Top 25 teams DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, Md.) and Gonzaga (Washington) to close out the regular season.

4. Archbishop Hoban, Akron, Ohio (8-0)

Previous rank: 4.

In the Huddle: RB Tyris Dickerson, an Eastern Kentucky commit, carried 13 times for 212 yards and four TDs during a 63-8 rout of Padua Franciscan (Parma). Sophomore QB Shane Hamm threw for 127 yards and two scores. The Knights face winless Walsh Jesuit (Cuyahoga Falls) on Friday.

5. De La Salle, Concord, Calif. (8-0)

Previous rank: 5.

In the Huddle: The Spartans defeated Foothill (Pleasanton), 55-10. Shamar Garrett scored three TDs and passed for another off a halfback option. The regular season is down two games, starting at San Ramon Valley (Danville) on Friday.

6. St. Thomas Aquinas, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (6-1)

Previous rank: 6.

In the Huddle: The Raiders scored 14 points in the first quarter en route to a 49-0 shutout of Fort Lauderdale. It was the fourth blanking this season and first win in District 14-7A. The Raiders are back at it Friday against Boyd Anderson (Lauderdale Lakes).

7. St. Frances Academy, Baltimore, Md. (4-0)

Previous rank: 7.

In the Huddle: The Panthers unleashed an offensive juggernaut to defeat Canada Prep Football (St. Catharines, Ontario), 55-0. In the last three weeks, the offense has tallied 51, 64, and 55 points. Next up is St. Thomas More (Oakdale, Conn.) on Friday.

8. St. Joseph's Prep, Philadelphia, Pa. (5-0)

Previous rank: 8.

In the Huddle: Sophomore QB Kyle McCord completed 16 of 19 passes for 245 yards and two scores as the Hawks throttled Archbishop Wood (Warminster, Pa.), 49-14. Prep led 35-7 at the break and now prepares for Father Judge (Philadelphia) on Saturday night at Widener University in nearby Chester, Pa.

9. Saint Louis, Honolulu, Hawaii (8-0)

Previous rank: 9.

In the Huddle: The Crusaders buried rivals Kamehameha School (Honolulu), 42-7, as QB Jayden de Laura hit on 15 of 18 passes for 275 yards and three TDs. Coach Cal Lee's team is off this weekend and will face Punahou School (Honolulu) or Kamehameha in the ILH title game with the winner advancing to the State Open Division playoffs.

10. JSerra Catholic, San Juan Capistrano, Calif. (7-1)

Previous rank: 10.

In the Huddle: In a game postponed last Friday by lightning, the Lions came out firing Saturday morning in a 56-21 victory over Orange Lutheran. Senior QB Caden Bell completed 13 of 21 passes for 246 yards and three TDs. Coach Pat Harlow's team plays No. 3 Mater Dei (Santa Ana) on Friday.

11. DeMatha Catholic, Hyattsville, Md. (5-1)

Previous rank: 11.

In the Huddle: DeMarcco Hellams picked off a pass in the third overtime and RB MarShawn Lloyd scored on the first play on the change of possession as the Stags held off then-No. 16 Gonzaga (Washington), 27-21. There is little time to enjoy this one as coach Elijah Brooks prepares for No. 20 Good Counsel (Olney) on Friday.

12. Bergen Catholic, Oradell, N.J. (6-1)

Previous rank: 12.

In the Huddle: RB Anthony Corbin scored on a four-yard run in the first half and the Crusaders defeated Pope John XXIII (Sparta), 14-6. Late in the third quarter, QB Andrew Boel added a one-yard sneak for some breathing room. The Crusaders host Paramus Catholic on Friday and then travel to CAC Top 25 team DePaul Catholic (Wayne) in the season finale on Oct. 26.

13. Blessed Trinity, Roswell, Ga. (7-0)

Previous rank: 13.

In the Huddle: The Titans survived a 21-20 decision over previously unbeaten Flowery Branch in overtime. QB-DB Jake Smith scored QB sneak and then returned an interception 95 yards for a TD and a 14-0 lead. The score was tied at 14 after regulation before the Titans went ahead 21-14 on Smith's scoring strike to Ryan Davis. Flowery Branch scored and went for the win, but the two-point conversion pass fell incomplete.

14. Covington Catholic, Park Hills, Ky. (8-0)

Previous rank: 14.

In the Huddle: RB Casey McGinness shouldered the load with 203 rushing yards and two TDs in a 21-14 win over Highlands (Fort Mitchell, Ky.). There's a good chance the two teams will meet again in Kentucky's Class 5A playoffs in November. The Colonels carry a 23-game winning streak into Friday's game at Dixie Heights (Edgewood).

15. Columbus, Miami, Fla. (7-1)

Previous rank: 18.

In the Huddle: The Explorers routed Miami Beach, 46-0, for their third shutout of the season. With two games left in the regular season, it's a short week with Coral Park (Miami) in opposition on Thursday.

16. DePaul Catholic, Wayne, N.J. (6-1)

Previous ranked: 19.

In the Huddle: Ta'Quan Roberson threw four TD passes and Rutgers-bound LB Chris Conti added a 30-yard pick-six and the Spartans crushed Hudson Catholic (Jersey City), 44-19. The game was tied at 7 in the second quarter when Roberson hit James Westry with a 31-yard scoring strike and a Dave Drouet four-yard run made it 21-7. The Spartans host Don Bosco Prep (Ramsey) this weekend and No. 12 Bergen Catholic (Oradell) the following week to close the regular season.

17. Christian Brothers College, St. Louis, Mo. (7-1)

Previous rank: 20.

In the Huddle: RB Bryan Bradford put on a show, scoring five TDs in a 45-7 victory over then-No. 21 Rockhurst (Kansas City, Mo.). The Cadets exploded for 24 points in the opening quarter and coasted. Bradford caught aeriels of 12 and 53 yards from QB Brett Gabbert. Bradford also sped 3, 41 and 18 yards for scores. The Class 6 district playoffs start on Oct. 26.

18. Charlotte (N.C.), Catholic (7-1)

Previous rank: 22.

In the Huddle: Special teams and defense set the tone in the Cougars' 41-0 victory at Piedmont (Monroe). Brian Jacobs returned a punt 80 yards for a score and Jacob Schachte added a 29-yard pick-six. Michael Neel scored two TDs, one on a catch and the other a run. The Cougars host Parkwood (Monroe) on Friday.

19. Bishop Gorman, Las Vegas, Nev. (4-3)

Previous rank: 23.

In the Huddle: Junior QB Micah Bowens accounted for 438 yards of offense and five TDs in a 62-7 win over Sierra Vista (Las Vegas). The Gaels scored on their first nine possessions. RB Amod Cianelli ran for 172 yards and three scores. Next is Durango (Las Vegas) Friday on the road.

20. Good Counsel, Olney, Md. (5-2)

Previous rank: 15.

In the Huddle: Lost to No. 3 St. John's College (Washington, D.C.), 31-10. The game was tied in the third quarter when SJC pulled away. Senior RB Latrele Palmer rushed for 79 yards and two-yard TD run in the first quarter. The Falcons entertain No. 11 DeMatha (Hyattsville) in a Washington Catholic Athletic Conference clash on Friday.

21. Gonzaga, Washington, D.C. (6-2)

Previous rank: 16.

In the Huddle: Lost to No. 11 DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville), 27-21, in three overtimes. QB Caleb Williams forced the third overtime when he sprinted 12 yards for a score.

22. Brother Rice, Chicago, Ill. (8-0)

Previous rank: Not ranked.

In the Huddle: For the second consecutive week, the defense shone and pitched a shutout in a 48-0 win over Leo (Chicago). The Chicago Catholic League Blue title is on the line Friday at Montini Catholic (Lombard, Ill.).

23. St. Peter's Prep, Jersey City, N.J. (5-2)

Previous rank: 24.

In the Huddle: Navy-bound QB Maasai Maynor threw five TD passes as the Marauders shut down Paramus Catholic, 42-0. Next up is Pope John XXIII (Sparta) on Saturday.

24. St. Joseph Regional, Montvale, N.J. (5-2)

Previous rank: 18.

In the Huddle: Gavin Sharkey caught two TD passes from QB Michael Alaimo during a 31-10 victory over rivals Don Bosco Prep (Ramsey). The Green Knights host Seton Hall Prep (West Orange) on Saturday in the penultimate game of the regular season.

25. Iona Prep, New Rochelle, N.Y. (5-0)

Previous rank: Not ranked.

In the Huddle: The Gaels stopped Christ the King (Middle Village), 42-12. With the regular season nearing the finish, the Gaels travel to powerhouse St. Anthony's (South Huntington) for a showdown in CHSFL Class AAA.

Dropped out: No. 17 McGill-Toolen (Mobile, Ala.) and No. 21 Rockhurst, (Kansas City, Mo.).

Special Consideration: Marist (Chicago, Ill.); Bishop Chatard (Indianapolis, Ind.); Clearwater (Fla.) Central Catholic; Xavier (Cedar Rapids, Iowa); St. Anthony's (South Huntington, N.Y.); McGill-Toolen (Mobile, Ala.); St. Pius X, (Houston, Texas); Bishop McDevitt (Harrisburg, Pa.); Archbishop Moeller (Cincinnati, Ohio); Memorial (Evansville, Ind.); Chaminade-Madonna College Prep (Hollywood, Fla.); Salpointe Catholic (Tucson, Ariz.); Central Catholic (Pittsburgh, Pa.); Bishop Dwenger (Fort Wayne, Ind.); Aquinas Institute (Rochester, N.Y.); St. Ignatius (Cleveland, Ohio); Jesuit (Tampa, Fla.); Central Catholic (Toledo, Ohio); Catholic (Baton Rouge, La.); Mount Carmel (Chicago, Ill.); Strake Jesuit (Houston, Texas); Nazareth Academy (LaGrange Park, Ill.); Eastside Catholic (Sammamish, Wash.); St. Edward (Lakewood, Ohio); Cathedral Prep (Erie, Pa.); Xaverian Brothers (Westwood, Mass.); St. Thomas Aquinas (Overland Park, Kan.); Catholic Memorial (Waukesha, Wis.); Montini Catholic (Lombard, Ill.); and Cathedral Catholic (San Diego, Calif.)

Includes a forfeit loss

About: The Catholic Athletes for Christ Top 25 High School Football Rankings, presented by Siena Heights University and Global Football are released on Wednesdays from September until the conclusion of the high school season in December. Criteria include the quality of the team and its players, strength of schedule, tradition, and quality of the team's league, conference, region or district. The rankings are compiled by Christopher Lawlor, an award-winning writer, who is a voting committee member and advisor for several major national high school events. All Catholic high schools from the United States that feature only four-year players on 11-man teams are eligible for consideration. Catholic Athletes for Christ chapters and presenting sponsors provide input into the weekly rankings, including Global Football Founder & President Patrick Steenberge, who benefited from 16 years of Catholic education at University of Notre Dame, Erie Cathedral Prep and St. Luke's School, Erie, Pa.