

Catholic Athletes For Christ Top 25
Presented by Siena Heights University
& Global Football
Notes 2018-16
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CATHOLIC ATHLETES FOR CHRIST TOP 25 WEEK 14 RANKING

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2018 - ALEXANDRIA, Va. – The magic number is three. That means only three weekends remain in the high school regular season and teams from the Catholic Athletes for Christ Top 25 High School Football rankings have left their marks.

Heading into this weekend's games, 11 teams from the CAC Top 25, presented by Siena Heights University and Global Football, have secured state or conference postseason championships. That's a lot of hardware for the CAC Top 25 and each one of these championships has great storylines, heroes, coaches and devoted fans that traveled great distances to see their teams raise trophies.

That's the beauty of schoolboy football and the CAC Top 25 plays a vital role nationally. Moving forward there's plenty to cover, starting with the most recent additions.

The CAC Top 25 welcomes two teams to the fold, from Ohio and Washington.

No. 21 St. Edward (Lakewood, Ohio) pulled off an upset when it toppled nationally ranked Colerain (Cincinnati) in the Division I final. The Eagles started the season 0-2 but stuck to their guns and won five straight playoff elimination games for the school's fourth state title.

No. 25 Eastside Catholic (Sammamish, Wash.) re-enters the CAC Top 25 after capturing a third state crown in a 31-13 win over rivals O'Dea (Seattle) in the Washington Class 3A final. The Crusaders (12-1) might not be done, meaning an invitation to a postseason bowl game is in the works. We'll verify this one when it is announced.

Teams from Nevada, Washington and Ohio won state championship last weekend. Well done and kudos to the champions.

The Triple Option section touches on the superlatives of the previous week and opens a window to top games this weekend. In Nevada, there's running back that was a one-man wrecking crew in a state championship game and in Ohio a mentor who rolled the dice and it paid off in a state final. Staying with the championship theme, six states are poised to crown champions.

Triple Option

Player of the Week: Running back Amod Cianelli of No. 21 Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, Nev.). Cianelli was a man on a mission this season and culminated the season last week with a monster game as the Gaels defeated Bishop Manogue (Reno), 69-26, in the Class 4A state championship game. It was Gorman's 10th straight Nevada state title and Cianelli rushed for a season-high 286 yards and six touchdowns on 27 carries (10.6 yards a pop!). His rushing TDs from 61, 16, 7, 48, 7 and 7 yards were the most in a state championship game and the second-most in a large-school final in NIAA history.

Cianelli pointed the Gaels to a 10th consecutive crown on the second play from scrimmage, bolting 61 yards for a score. Gorman rolled up 676 yards of offense. Cianelli concluded the season with 1,431 yards and 23 TDs on 165 attempts.

At 5 feet 10 and 190 pounds, the speedy Cianelli took over this season for graduated Biaggio Ali Walsh, who is a freshman at California. According to recruiting websites, Cianelli is uncommitted with interest from programs such as UCLA, Massachusetts, Portland State, Yale, Columbia and Connecticut.

Coach of the Week: No. 21 Tom Lombardo of St. Edward (Lakewood, Ohio). Sometimes a coach has a gut feeling and Lombardi went with his instinct in St. Edward's 24-10 victory over nationally ranked Colerain (Cincinnati) in the Ohio Division I state final last Friday. After tying the score at 10 early in the third quarter, Lombardo called for an onside kick on the ensuing kickoff and the Eagles recovered the loose ball. They added two more touchdowns from Michigan-bound WR Quintel Kent for 17 straight points to end the game, recording the upset and won the program's second state title in the last five years.

Lombardo, who completed his fourth season at St. Edward, had a masterful season with the Eagles, who started the season 0-2 and finished 11-3. St. Edward became the fourth team in Ohio football history to win a title entering the playoffs as a seventh or eighth seed (out of eight teams) in the region. The Eagles avenged two regular season losses in the Region 1 playoffs, topping Mentor and rivals St. Ignatius (Cleveland) for the program's fourth state championship.

Games of the Week (All times Eastern): Here are five states (Pennsylvania, Texas, Louisiana, Florida, and California) that will conduct state championships and become must-see games.

The Pennsylvania finals are this weekend at Hersheypark Stadium in Hershey.

- Cathedral Prep (Erie) vs. Imhotep Charter (Philadelphia), Thursday, 7 p.m.: This is an East meets west in the commonwealth. Chocolate Town USA hosts the Class AAAA final as Prep (12-3) is back for a fourth straight year and enters as reigning champions.
- Harrisburg (Pa.) vs. No. 6 St. Joseph's Prep (Philadelphia), Saturday, 6 p.m.: Prep (12-0) is in the PIAA state final for the fifth time in program history but lost in last year's final.

- Bishop Dunne (Dallas, Texas) vs. Bishop Lynch (Dallas), Friday, 8 p.m.: The TAPPS Division I title is on the line at Midway High School in Waco between two Dallas area rivals. Dunne (10-3) won 21-13 in the regular season on Oct. 26.
- No. 14 Catholic (Baton Rouge) vs. John Curtis Christian (River Ridge), Saturday, 1 p.m.: Catholic (11-1) heads to the Mercedes-Benz Superdome in New Orleans for the Division I title against an unbeaten and nationally ranked team.

The Florida championships will be played at Camping World Stadium in Orlando starting on Thursday.

- Cardinal Gibbons (Fort Lauderdale) vs. North Marion (Citra), Friday, 3 p.m.: The Class 5A title is up for grabs.
- No. 5 St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale) vs. Lakeland, Friday, 8 p.m.: The third game of the day is for the Class 7A title.
- No. 20 Chaminade-Madonna (Hollywood) vs. King's Academy (West Palm Beach), Saturday, 10 a.m.: The morning matchup pits two talent-laden teams from south Florida.
- No. 10 Columbus (Miami) vs. Mandarin (Jacksonville), Saturday, 8 p.m.: Columbus (14-0) is the lone Catholic school competing in Florida's largest classification.

And out west, in California...

- No. 1 Mater Dei (Santa Ana, Calif.) vs. No. 4 De Sa Salle (Concord), Saturday, 11 p.m.: This one could go a long way to decide the CAC Top 25's No. 1 team. Mater Dei won last year's meeting between the schools in the CIF Open Division Bowl Game final. Cerritos College's Falcons Stadium will be packed

It's another judgment weekend in the world of high school football. Enjoy it because the season is down to three weekends.

The CAC Top 25 rankings will return on December 12 and we'll report the results from the relevant state championship games.

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. 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.

A reminder: Global Football will celebrate a quarter of a century as the world's leading exporter of the sport outside of the United States, by again organizing a showcase spectacular of high school games as a partner event of the 2020 Aer Lingus College Football Classic on August 29, 2020. Twelve high schools can experience the Irish culture and compete in a series of games, with multiple venues in Greater Dublin, Ireland hosting American football games.

Global Football has established a web page dedicated to the 2020 event, which includes tour options for travelers, pricing, and how high school coaches can request an invitation. Visit www.GlobalFootball.com/Ireland-2020 for more information.

Enjoy the games and God Bless. – *Christopher Lawlor*

2018 Catholic Athletes for Christ Top 25 December 5, 2018

1. Mater Dei, Santa Ana, Calif. (11-2) #

Previous Rank: 1

In the Huddle: Idle. Next is the CIF Open Division Bowl Game against No. 4 De La Salle (Concord) on Saturday in a rematch of last year's final.

2. St. John Bosco, Bellflower, Calif. (13-1)

Previous Rank: 2

In the Huddle: Season complete.

3. Archbishop Hoban, Akron, Ohio (15-0)*

Previous Rank: 3

In the Huddle: Won the Division II state championship, defeating Massillon (Ohio) Washington, 42-28, in the final. The Knights have won four straight state titles and became Ohio's fifth program to do so. Eastern Kentucky-commit RB Tyris Dickerson closed out a brilliant season rushing for 211 yards and scored two TDs while sophomore QB Shane Hamm threw for 118 yards and two scores and ran for another. The Knights scored on their first four possessions for a 27-0 lead in the second quarter but Massillon stormed back to make it 34-28 in the fourth. The Knights executed a fake punt near midfield and added a late score to seal it. Season complete.

4. De La Salle, Concord, Calif. (12-0)

Previous Rank: 4

In the Huddle: Defeated Liberty (Brentwood), 42-7, in the CIF-North Coast Section Open Division final. It marked the Spartans' 27th straight sectional title. The defense picked off four passes. Trailing 7-0 in the second quarter, the Spartans took over in emphatic fashion. Now comes a rematch with No. 1 Mater Dei (Santa Ana, Calif.) in the CIF Open Division Bowl Game on Saturday.

5. St. Thomas Aquinas, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (13-1)

Previous Rank: 5

In the Huddle: RB Daniel Carter ran for 195 yards and scored three TDs and the Raiders crushed Venice, 38-18, in the Class 7A semifinals. Carter sped 74 yards for the game's first score and then Harvard-bound Curt Casteel tossed a 17-yard score to The'Andris Freeman. The Raiders play Lakeland on Friday in the Class 7A final at Camping World Stadium in Orlando.

6. St. Joseph's Prep, Philadelphia, Pa. (12-0)

Previous Rank: 6

In the Huddle: Sophomore Kyle McCord dissected the Pine-Richland (Gibsonia) defense and the Hawks crushed the defending state champions, a team they lost to in the last year's state final, 37-0, last weekend in the Class AAAAAA semifinals. McCord threw for 305 yards and three TDs. The Hawks can wrap up the season with a Class AAAAAA state title but need to overcome Harrisburg in Saturday's final at Hersheypark in Hershey.

7. Saint Louis School, Honolulu, Hawaii (11-0)*

Previous Rank: 7

In the Huddle: Won a third straight Hawaii Open Division championship. Season complete.

8. St. Frances Academy, Baltimore, Md. (9-0)

Previous Rank: 8

In the Huddle: Season complete.

9. Blessed Trinity, Roswell, Ga. (14-0)

Previous Rank: 9

In the Huddle: The Titans moved within one win of securing a second straight state title, defeating Troupe County (LaGrange), 51-35, in the Class AAAA semifinals. Ohio State-bound RB Steele Chambers did it all, rushing for 240 yards and three score and passed for another. They'll prepare for Cartersville in the Class AAAA final on Dec. 12 at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta.

10. Columbus, Miami, Fla. (14-0) @

Previous Rank: 11

In the Huddle: Junior RB Henry Parrish blasted off for 162 yards and three TDs as the Explorers defeated Deerfield Beach, 49-21, in the Class 8A semifinals. The defense pitched in with three interceptions. Next is the Mandarin (Jacksonville) Saturday in the Class 8A final at Camping World Stadium in Orlando.

11. Christian Brothers College, St. Louis, Mo. (12-1)*

Previous Rank: 12

In the Huddle: Won second consecutive Class 6 state championship. Season complete.

12. Bishop Gorman, Las Vegas, Nev. (11-3)*

Previous Rank: 14

In the Huddle: The Gaels are Nevada state champions for a 20th straight time! This time they rode RB Amod Cianelli's six TDs and 286 yards during a 69-26 thrashing of Bishop Manogue (Reno) in the Class 4A final. Cianelli's 62-yard TD run in the opening minute of the game set the tone and the Gaels shook loose for a 41-14 lead at the intermission. Season complete.

13. Charlotte (N.C.), Catholic (13-1)

Previous Rank: 13

In the Huddle: The Cougars scored in every quarter to methodically knock out Hunter Huss (Gastonia), 28-8, in the Class 3A third round. The Class 3A semifinals are Friday against Kings Mountain, a team featuring an offense averaging nearly 43 points per game.

14. Catholic, Baton Rouge, La. (11-1)

Previous Rank: 15

In the Huddle: Idle. The Bears play a state final rematch from a year ago against nationally ranked John Curtis Christian (River Ridge) on Saturday afternoon in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome in New Orleans.

15. Gonzaga, Washington, D.C. (9-3)*

Previous Rank: 16

In the Huddle: Won the Washington Catholic Athletic Conference championship for the first time since 2004. Season compete.

16. St. Joseph Regional, Montvale, N.J. (10-2)*

Previous Rank: 17

In the Huddle: Won the Non-Public Group 4 state championship; the program's 19th state title. Season complete.

17. St. John's College, Washington, D.C. (9-1)

Previous Rank: 18

In the Huddle: The Cadets captured the Washington Catholic Athletic Conference regular season title. Season complete.

18. Bergen Catholic, Oradell, N.J. (10-2)

Previous Rank: 19

In the Huddle: Advanced to the Non-Public Group 4 final. Season complete.

19. Chaminade-Madonna College Prep, Hollywood, Fla. (11-2)

Previous Rank: 20

In the Huddle: The defense pitched a shutout during a 16-0 win over then-No. 22 Clearwater (Fla.) Central Catholic the Class 3A semifinals. RB Willie Davis rumbled for a career-high 206 yards and scored the game's lone TD. Carter Davis added three field goals to close out the scoring and the Lions are back in the state final for the third consecutive year. Next up is King's Academy (West Palm Beach) on Saturday morning in the Class 3A final at Camping World Stadium in Orlando.

20. Xavier, Cedar Rapids, Iowa (13-0)*

Previous Rank: 21

In the Huddle: Won second consecutive Iowa Class 3A state championship. Season complete.

21. St. Edward, Lakewood, Ohio (11-3)*

Previous Rank: Not ranked

In the Huddle: The Eagles are champions! And that would have been a bold prediction in August when they started 0-2. Coach Tom Lombardo's team tallied 17 unanswered points to topple unbeaten and nationally ranked Colerain (Cincinnati), 24-10 in the Division I final. The Eagles were down 10-7 at halftime before rallying as Gianluca Russo nailed a 25-yard field goal in the third and QB Garrett Dzuro connected with Quintel Kent for scores of 23 and 19 yards—the latter sealed it with 7:15 left. It was the Eddies' second title in five years under Lombardo. Season complete.

22. Nazareth Academy, LaGrange Park, Ill. (13-1)*

Previous Rank: 23

In the Huddle: Won the Class 7A state championship. Season complete.

23. Dowling Catholic, West Des Moines, Iowa (11-2)*

Previous Rank: 24

In the Huddle: Won Iowa's Class 4A championship—the Maroons' sixth straight state title. Season complete.

24. Cathedral Catholic, San Diego, Calif. (12-1)

Previous Rank: 25

In the Huddle: Washington State-bound Dean Janikowski kicked a the winning 40-yard field goal with 1:42 remaining and Jalen Dye picked off a pass in the end zone in the waning seconds, preserving a 24-21 victory over Narbonne (Harbor City) in the CIF-Southern Region Division 1-AA Bowl Game. RB Shawn Poma was the work horse, carrying 27 times for 246 yards and two TDs from 33 and 80 yards. Coach Sean Doyle's team is off this week and meets Central (Fresno) or Folsom in the CIF Division 1-AA Bowl Game on Dec. 14 at Cerritos College in Norwalk.

25. Eastside Catholic, Sammamish, Wash. (12-1)*

Previous Rank: Not ranked

In the Huddle: Won the Class 3A state championship, topping archrivals O'Dea (Seattle), 31-13, for the program's third title this decade and first since 2015. Junior RB Gio Ursino ran for 93 yards and two TDs, including the clincher from 30 yards with 2:47 left. The Crusaders, who have won 12 straight since an opening day loss to nationally ranked Oaks Christian (Westlake Village, Calif.), are likely to earn an invitation to the GEICO State Champions Bowl Series later this month.

Dropped out: No. 10 Covington Catholic (Park Hills, Ky.) and No. 22 Clearwater (Fla.) Central Catholic.

Special Consideration: Archbishop Stepinac (White Plains, N.Y.)*; Cardinal Gibbons (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.); Catholic Memorial (Waukesha, Wis.)*; Skutt Catholic (Omaha, Neb.)*; Calvert Hall College (Baltimore, Md.)*; St. John's Prep (Danvers, Mass.)*; Bishop Dunne (Dallas, Texas); Aquinas Institute (Rochester, N.Y.)*; St. Thomas Aquinas (Overland Park, Kan.)*; De La Salle Collegiate (Warren, Mich.)*; Loyola Academy (Wilmette, Ill.)*; Red Bank (N.J.) Catholic*; Bishop Dwenger (Fort Wayne, Ind.)*; Cathedral Prep (Erie, Pa.); Malvern (Pa.) Prep; JSerra Catholic (San Juan Capistrano, Calif.); McGill-Toolen (Mobile, Ala.); DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, Md.); Memorial (Evansville, Ind.); Salpointe Catholic (Tucson, Ariz.); Marist (Atlanta, Ga.); Jesuit (Tampa, Fla.); Strake Jesuit (Houston, Texas); Marist (Chicago, Ill.); St. Peter's Prep (Jersey City, N.J.); Conwell-Egan (Fairless Hills, Pa.); Bishop Amat (La Puente, Calif.); Mount Carmel (Chicago, Ill.); Bishop Chatard (Indianapolis, Ind.); St. Anthony's (South Huntington, N.Y.); Clearwater (Fla.) Central Catholic; Brother Rice (Chicago, Ill.); Covington Catholic (Park Hills, Ky.) and St. Pius X Catholic (Atlanta, Ga.).

* *Won a state or conference postseason championship*

Includes a forfeit loss

@ *Includes a forfeit win*

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 and 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.