

# Baseball America - 2010 College Preseason Top 25 Capsules

Breakdowns of the top teams heading into the season

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 [E-mail](#)  [Print](#)

[1. Texas](#) | [2. Virginia](#) | [3. Louisiana State](#) | [4. Cal State Fullerton](#) | [5. Rice](#) | [6. Georgia Tech](#) | [7. Florida](#) | [8. UC Irvine](#) | [9. Florida State](#) | [10. South Carolina](#) | [11. Texas Christian](#) | [12. Coastal Carolina](#) | [13. Louisville](#) | [14. Arizona State](#) | [15. Clemson](#) | [16. Miami](#) | [17. Arkansas](#) | [18. East Carolina](#) | [19. San Diego](#) | [20. North Carolina](#) | [21. Southern Mississippi](#) | [22. Georgia](#) | [23. UCLA](#) | [24. Mississippi](#) | [25. Oregon State](#)

## About Our Grades

We love the 20-80 scouting scale at Baseball America; we use it to assess everything from prospects to lunch spots. So we figured it would be fun and instructive to subject our preseason top 25 rankings to the same scrutiny.

Scouts grade prospects on how their tools compare with those of an average major leaguer, but we are rating teams relative to an average college baseball team with NCAA tournament aspirations. In addition to grading our top 25 teams on typical tools like hitting for average, hitting for power, speed and defense, we have divided the fifth tool (arm) into two categories: starting pitching and bullpen. We're also giving teams a grade for Experience/Intangibles—think of it as a team's makeup, if you like. For each category, a grade of 50 is solid-average, comparable to a typical NCAA tournament contender; 60 is above-average; 70 is well above-average; 40 is below-average; and 30 is well below-average. Twenty and 80 are the extreme limits in each direction.

Finally, each team is given an Overall Future Potential (OFP) grade. The OFP scale:

**80: A team for the ages.** An overwhelming favorite with no obvious weaknesses. Think 1981 Arizona State or 1996 Louisiana State. There is no team like this heading into 2010.

**70: Elite.** A leading contender for the national title. (Texas, Virginia.)

**65: Well-above-average.** Legitimate championship contender. (Louisiana State, Cal State Fullerton, Rice, Georgia Tech, Florida, UC Irvine, Florida State.)

**60: Above-average.** Strong Omaha contender. (South Carolina, Texas Christian, Coastal Carolina, Louisville, Arizona State.)

**55: Slightly above-average.** A threat to win a conference title and perhaps reach Omaha. (Clemson, Miami, Arkansas, East Carolina, San Diego, North Carolina, Southern Mississippi.)

**50: Solid-average.** Strong NCAA tournament teams who could make a postseason run. (Georgia, UCLA, Mississippi, Oregon State.)

Remember, of course, that ranking teams is far from an exact science, and there will doubtless be surprises and disappointments as the season unfolds. But we think applying the 20-80 scale is an interesting way to gauge each team's projected strengths and weaknesses heading into the season.

## 11. Texas Christian

**2009 Record (Ranking):** 40-18 (14). **RPI:** 8.

**Coach (Record at school):** Jim Schlossnagle (251-120, 6 years).

**Postseason History:** 8 regional appearances (active streak: 6 straight), 0 CWS appearances, 0 national titles.

### 2010 LINEUP

Pos.	Name, Yr.	AVG/OBP/SLG	HR	RBI	SB	
C	Bryan Holaday, Sr.	.300/.351/.507	10	48	2	
1B	Matt Curry, Sr.	.315/.421/.444	3	31	2	
2B	Jerome Pena, Jr.	Tr.—Western Nevada	JC			
3B	Jantzen Witte, Fr.	DNP—Redshirted				
SS	Taylor Featherston, So.	.322/.395/.461	5	28	8	
LF	Jason Coats, So.	.316/.393/.518	6	32	2	
CF	Kyle Von Tungeln, Fr.	HS—Sugarland, Texas				
RF	Josh Elander, Fr.	HS—Round Rock, Texas				
DH	Joe Weik, Jr.	Tr.—Weatherford (Texas)	JC			
Pos.	Name, Yr.	W-L	ERA	IP	SO	SV
RHP	Steven Maxwell, Jr.	3-2	6.10	38	27	0
LHP	Matt Purke, Fr.	HS—Spring, Texas				
RHP	Kyle Winkler, So.	7-1	4.15	74	48	0
RP	Eric Marshall, Sr.	2-2	1.48	30	20	9

### THE BREAKDOWN

**Hitting: 55.** The top three hitters off last year's super regional team—stalwarts Matt Vern, Matt Carpenter and Chris Ellington—have graduated, thrusting talented sophomores Featherston and Coats into load-carrying roles in the lineup. Both are athletic, strong and capable of significantly increasing their production. TCU has big hopes for Von Tungeln (a speedy table-setter in the Jacoby Ellsbury mold) and Elander (a big, physical athlete who reminds the coaches of Vern).

**Power: 55.** Curry, who has earned comparisons to Matt Stairs in the past, lost 25 pounds in the offseason and looks poised to provide good lefthanded power in the middle of the lineup. Coats and Elander have plus raw power that they're still learning to tap into. Featherston, Holaday, Pena, Weik and even Von Tungeln have good gap power and occasional home run pop.

**Speed: 50.** Von Tungeln runs the 60-yard dash in 6.5 seconds, while Elander has been clocked at 6.6, making both above-average runners. Coats has average speed, and Featherston is a fringy runner. There is not much speed in the rest of the lineup.

**Defense: 50.** TCU's infield defense was uncharacteristically shaky for much of 2009, but the Horned Frogs hope the strong-armed Featherston will be more consistent as a sophomore after making 27 errors as a freshman. Witte's bat is a question mark, but the redshirt freshman should start at third because of his strong defensive skills. Pena and Curry must prove themselves on the right side. Holaday has outstanding catch-and-throw skills, while Von Tungeln, Coats and Elander make for an athletic outfield that will cover plenty of ground.

**Starting Pitching: 65.** The only knock on this group is its lack of a proven Friday ace, but it makes up for that shortcoming with incredible depth of quality arms. Maxwell, who is nearly two years removed from Tommy John surgery, had a sensational fall, commanding an 88-93 mph fastball and a power curve in the 78-82 range. Purke, an unsigned first-round pick of the Rangers last year, could be a superstar from day one, thanks to a lively fastball that reaches 95 and a plus changeup. The undersized Winkler also features a plus fastball that reaches 94 with good life, and he mixes in a quality changeup and curve. Fifth-year senior RHP Paul Gerrish (7-2, 3.84), a competitive sinkerballer, gives TCU a reliable fourth starter.



Kyle Winkler

**Bullpen: 65.** TCU's bullpen features an impressive blend of steady veterans and younger power arms. Marshall and Sr. RHP Tyler Lockwood both command sinkers that reach 90 mph, and Marshall mixes in a very good curveball. Jr. RHPs Trent Appleby and Greg Holle give this staff a pair of veteran long men. So. RHP Kaleb Merck has taken a big step forward, flashing 96 mph heat and a plus slider in the fall, and So. RHP Erik Miller also has power stuff.

**Experience/Intangibles: 55.** The Horned Frogs played as many as six seniors at times last year, and they'll be asking a lot from their sophomores and freshmen in 2010. But there are plenty of key players with super regional experience on this roster.

**Baseball America OFP: 60.** Winning a regional for the first time was a big step for this program, which appears ready to take the next step—reaching Omaha.