

KANSAS CITY, Mo. -- There were five new teams in the Top 25 but no change at the top of this week's National Prep Football Poll, released Monday morning.

Despite surviving arguably the nation's toughest schedule unscathed and winning its second Division I state title in three seasons, preseason No. 1 St. Xavier (Cincinnati) remained ranked just behind top-ranked Miami Northwestern again this week. If there were a weekly points tabulation for poll standings, this week's margin between Northwestern and St. Xavier would be razor thin.

But St. Xavier and its fans are not alone in making a legitimate claim for the top spot, should Northwestern lose or play badly enough to drop from No. 1.

No. 3 De La Salle (Concord, Calif.) is dominating opponents in a fashion reminiscent of the Spartans teams that won six Prep Poll titles between 1994-2003. And unlike those years, should it win this week, De La Salle will play in a legitimate state championship game this season against the top large-school team from Southern California.

Then there's No. 4 Katy (Texas). The Tigers, who have unmatched tradition in the Lone Star State, have reached the 5A state quarterfinals for the 10th time in 11 seasons and appear likely to claim their fourth state title since 1997.

No. 5 South Panola (Batesville, Miss.) certainly has a strong case of its own for the No. 1 spot again this season. The Tigers are closing in on a fifth consecutive 5A state championship and 75 straight wins.

With all that on the record, Miami Northwestern has done enough to keep the No. 1 ranking, in our view. The Bulls grade out highest when applying the four major criteria to which the National Prep Poll gives most weight when ranking teams: **schedule strength, accomplishing the ultimate goals of being a dominant team and winning championships, fielding a team with impact/memorable players, and coaching/recent tradition.**

Some other teams appear to grade out better in any one individual category than the Bulls. But, overall, Northwestern appears to us to be the best team in America.

At least for now.

^National Prep Football Poll - Week 17=

^By Jamie DeMoney=

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The National Prep Football Poll is compiled by high school sports journalist Jamie DeMoney with input from sportswriters, experts, and coaches. The national Top 25 and regional Top 10's follow with won-loss-tie records:

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#1. Miami, Northwestern (13-0-0), third straight trip to 6A semifinals  
#2. Cincinnati, St. Xavier (15-0-0), rolled to second Division I crown in three years

- #3. Concord, Calif., De La Salle (11-0-0), seeks 16th straight section title
- #4. Katy, Texas (13-0-0), sixth consecutive state quarterfinals berth
- #5. Batesville, Miss., South Panola (14-0-0), Darius Barksdale 399 rushing yards in 5A semifinal win
- #6. Prattville, Ala., (14-0-0), one win from repeat 6A title
- #7. Pahokee, Fla. (13-0-0), fifth straight trip to 2B state final
- #8. Chantilly, Va., Westfield (14-0-0), beat regionally ranked Oscar Smith to reach Div. 6 final
- #9. Miami, Washington (12-0-0), slipped past Dwyer, 7-6, in 4A quarter's
- #10. Seffner, Fla., Armwood (13-0-0), plays No. 9 Washington in 4A semi's
- #11. Duncan, S.C., Byrnes (15-0-0), won fifth 4A title in six years
- #12. Jenks, Okla. (13-1-0), avenged only loss to then-No. 10 Tulsa Union for 6A crown
- #13. Eules, Texas, Trinity (12-1-0), avenged lone loss to then-No. 13 Permian
- #14. Corona, Calif., Centennial (12-1-0), averaging 48 points per game
- #15. Long Beach, Calif., Poly (12-1-0), nipped regionally ranked Lutheran, 2-0, in section semi's
- #16. Encino, Calif., Crespi (11-2-0), plays No. 15 Poly in section final
- #17. Pittsburgh, Central Catholic (14-0-0), advanced to 4A state semi's
- #18. Bastrop, La. (14-0-0), third consecutive berth in 4A final
- #19. Maryville, Tenn. (14-0-0), one win from fourth consecutive 4A crown
- #20. Ramsey, N.J., Don Bosco (12-0-0), back-to-back undefeated, state championship seasons
- #21. Eden Prairie, Minn. (14-0-0), romped to repeat 5A title
- #22. Warner Robins, Ga., Northside (13-0-0), three straight playoff shutouts
- #23. Kansas City, Mo., Rockhurst (13-0-0), won third state crown since 2000
- #24. Gaithersburg, Md., Quince Orchard (13-0-0), advanced to 4A championship
- #25. Louisville, Ky., St. Xavier (14-0-0), faces archrival Trinity in 6A final

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^Northeast=

- #1. Pittsburgh, Central Catholic, 14-0-0
- #2. Ramsey, N.J., Don Bosco, 12-0-0
- #3. Everett, Mass., 13-0-0
- #4. Folsom, Pa., Ridley, 13-0-0
- #5. Allentown, Pa., Parkland, 13-0-0
- #6. Wayne, N.J., Wayne Hills, 12-0-0
- #7. Monroeville, Pa., Gateway, 11-2-0
- #8. Jefferson Hills, Pa., Jefferson, 14-0-0
- #9. Mastic Beach, N.Y., Floyd, 11-0-0
- #10. Harrisburg, Pa., 12-1-0

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^East Coast=

- #1. Chantilly, Va., Westfield, 14-0-0
- #2. Duncan, S.C., Byrnes, 15-0-0
- #3. Gaithersburg, Md., Quince Orchard, 13-0-0
- #4. Chesapeake, Va., Oscar Smith, 13-1-0
- #5. Dumfries, Va., Potomac, 14-0-0

- #6. Charlotte, N.C., Independence, 13-2-0
- #7. Hyattsville, Md., DeMatha, 10-2-0
- #8. Parkersburg, W.Va., 13-1-0
- #9. Charlotte, N.C., West Charlotte, 13-2-0
- #10. Middletown, Del., 11-1-0

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^Southeast=

- #1. Miami, Northwestern, 13-0-0
- #2. Batesville, Miss., South Panola, 14-0-0
- #3. Prattville, Ala., 14-0-0
- #4. Pahokee, Fla., 12-0-0
- #5. Miami, Washington, 12-0-0
- #6. Seffner, Fla., Armwood, 13-0-0
- #7. Bastrop, La., 14-0-0
- #8. Maryville, Tenn., 14-0-0
- #9. Warner Robins, Ga., Northside, 14-0-0
- #10. Kissimmee, Fla., Osceola, 13-0-0

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^Midwest=

- #1. Cincinnati, St. Xavier, 15-0-0
- #2. Louisville, Ky., St. Xavier, 14-0-0
- #3. Louisville, Ky., Trinity, 12-2-0
- #4. Naperville, Ill., North, 13-1-0
- #5. Dublin, Ohio, Coffman, 13-1-0
- #6. Maria Stein, Ohio, Marion Local, 15-0-0
- #7. Hartland, Wis., Arrowhead, 14-0-0
- #8. Detroit, King, 14-0-0
- #9. Macomb, Mich., Dakota, 14-0-0
- #10. Joliet, Ill., Catholic, 13-1-0

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^Midlands=

- #1. Eden Prairie, Minn., 14-0-0
- #2. Kansas City, Mo., Rockhurst, 13-0-0
- #3. Hutchinson, Kan., 13-0-0
- #4. Blue Springs, Mo., South, 9-1-0
- #5. Sandy, Utah, Alta, 13-1-0
- #6. Bettendorf, Iowa, 13-0-0
- #7. Omaha, Neb., Central, 11-2-0
- #8. Aurora, Colo., Grandview, 12-2-0
- #9. St. Paul, Minn., Cretin-Derham Hall, 13-1-0
- #10. Meridian, Idaho, 12-0-0

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^Southwest=

- #1. Katy, Texas, 13-0-0
- #2. Euless, Texas, Trinity, 12-1-0
- #3. Jenks, Okla., 13-1-0
- #4. Plano, Texas, 12-1-0
- #5. Odessa, Texas, Permian, 12-1-0
- #6. Abilene, Texas, 12-1-0
- #7. Southlake, Texas, Carroll, 11-2-0
- #8. Las Vegas, Bishop Gorman, 14-0-0
- #9. Phoenix, Brophy, 11-2-0
- #10. Fayetteville, Ark., 9-3-1

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^West Coast=

- #1. Concord, Calif., De La Salle, 11-0-0
- #2. Corona, Calif., Centennial, 12-1-0

- #3. Long Beach, Calif., Poly, 12-1-0
- #4. Encino, Calif., Crespi, 11-2-0
- #5. Lake Balboa, Calif., Birmingham, 12-1-0
- #6. Orange, Calif., Lutheran, 10-2-0
- #7. Anaheim, Calif., Servite, 9-3-0
- #8. Santa Ana, Calif., Mater Dei, 9-2-0
- #9. Sammamish, Wash., Skyline, 14-0-0
- #10. Newhall, Calif., Hart, 12-0-1

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FEATS OF THE WEEK: No. 2 Cincinnati, St. Xavier capped its second undefeated state championship season in three years, shutting out Mentor, 27-0, before 12,442 snow-swept fans at Canton's Fawcett Stadium. Louisville-bound running back Darius Ashley ran 36 times for a game-record 271 yards and two touchdowns. It was only the second shutout in Ohio Division I championship game history, dating back to 1972 . . . No. 8 Chantilly, Va., Westfield advanced to the Division 6 final, overcoming a record-setting aerial assault from regionally ranked Chesapeake, Oscar Smith. Westfield won the game, 24-21, in Chesapeake despite allowing 15 catches for a playoffs-record 349 yards and three touchdowns to Oscar Smith receiver Todd Harrelson (North Carolina). Oscar Smith sophomore quarterback Phillip Sims also set playoff records with 470 passing yards and 26 completions . . . A crowd of 16,723 at Tulsa's Chapman Stadium watched No. 12 Jenks, Okla., avenge its only loss and capture the 6A state title for the ninth time in 12 seasons. Running back Chris Adkins ran 29 times for 226 yards and two touchdowns to lead the Trojans past archrival and then-No. 10 Tulsa, Union, 42-24. Union beat Jenks, 43-42, in overtime earlier this season.