

n.c. state at boston college

CHESTNUT HILL, MASS.; 2:30 P.M.; ESPN2; WRAL-101.5; NEITHER TEAM IS RANKED

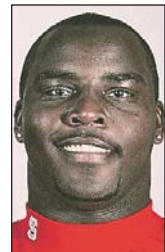
Familiar turf for Pack's O'Brien

Tom O'Brien says, yes, he does know where the visiting locker room is at Boston College's Alumni Stadium. After 10 years as the Eagles' head coach, O'Brien will be the visitor today, coaching N.C. State in what should be an ACC game filled with more emotion than usual on both sides.

what to watch

Pressley is the latest Wolfpack standout to face knee surgery

The Pack's leading defender, senior tackle DeMario Pressley, went down with an injury in practice Thursday. By Friday afternoon, the news was worse: He's out indefinitely and is set to have knee surgery.



DeMario Pressley out indefinitely.

As the ACC season gets under way today for N.C. State, it's yet another setback. Pressley is the third key player to suffer a major injury. State lost starting tight end and one of the ACC's top pass catchers, Anthony Hill, to a knee injury before preseason practice began. Then, in the Pack's opener, a loss to Central Florida, running back Tonye Baker went down, also with a knee injury.

Pressley was expected to anchor State's defense. He is one of the team's most experienced players, having started 24 games. The loss is especially discouraging because coach Tom O'Brien had already expressed concern about his defense. He acknowledged his team suffered a big letdown last week when UCF opened the game with an 80-yard TD run, saying it was like sticking a pin in a balloon. "We don't face adversity well," he said. There could be a lot more today.

storylines



Harrison Beck gets his first start at quarterback for the Wolfpack after a solid relief performance.

STAFF PHOTO BY ETHAN HYMAN

BC's Tribble will try to keep State's Beck from having too much fun

Beck's bravado: Wolfpack quarterback Harrison Beck doesn't seem fazed by starting against BC, before a hostile crowd against one of the ACC's most experienced defenses. "This will be my first road experience," he says. "But I don't look at football as a pressure-kind situation. I just go out and play. I like to have fun."

Tribble trouble: Last season, BC cornerback DeJuan Tribble was burned on the Pack's winning TD pass from Daniel Evans to John Dunlap in the final seconds. A week ago, Tribble had three interceptions in the opener against Wake Forest and was named the ACC defensive player of the week. That's fine, but you know he wants a few more picks today, even if Evans isn't starting for the Pack.

scouting report

N.C. State wins if ...

Sophomore quarterback Harrison Beck is effective throwing the ball in his first start, while the Pack defense pressures BC senior Matt Ryan, who threw for 408 yards and five TDs last week.

Boston College wins if ...

Ryan has another big day passing and the Eagles shut down the Pack's running attack, as BC did against Wake Forest last week. The Eagles allowed 2 net yards rushing on 24 carries.

caulton tudor's take

On paper, Tom O'Brien's return to Boston College looks like 40 miles of rocky road for his Wolfpack. But be warned, don't base everything on the first week's outcomes. Without DeMario Pressley along State's defensive front, odds are BC will try to run more.

BC quarterback Matt Ryan won't throw for five touchdowns again (as he did a week ago). Expect the Eagles to rely much more on their ground game, while the Pack will throw a lot early. It should be close, with BC winning on a late score, 28-24.

CHIP ALEXANDER

duke at virginia

SCOTT STADIUM, NOON, WRDC, WFXI; WDNC-620, WRBZ-850

the storyline

Futility Bowl

Neither Duke (0-1) nor Virginia (0-1) looked like competent offensive teams, managing a total of 279 yards in opening game losses against Connecticut and Wyoming, respectively.

Duke QB Thaddeus Lewis and Virginia QB Jameel Sewell both had standout freshman campaigns as first-time starters in 2006. They also had rough starts in 2007. Lewis threw three interceptions and Sewell two last week. Whichever team's signal caller gets going first gets the win.



Duke QB Thaddeus Lewis struggled in the opener.

STAFF PHOTO BY CHUCK LIDDY

scouting report

Duke wins if ...

It can move the ball through the air and punt the ball effectively to give its defense a fighting chance. The offensive line is back at full strength for the first time since August, and that should help.

Virginia wins if ...

It can run the ball. UVa managed just five first downs last week. It has won seven straight over Duke but will make it eight only if an upperclassman like tailback Cedric Pearman can lead the way.

key stats

15 Total rushing yards gained in the Blue Devils' opening loss.	7 Total rushing yards gained in the Cavaliers' opening loss.
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LUCIANA CHAVEZ

la.-monroe at clemson

CLEMSON, S.C., 1 P.M.; RANKINGS: CLEMSON NO. 25

the storyline

Smart move

The Tigers jump from the fishbowl of playing Monday night on national television against Florida State to the depths of the Atlantic with a meeting against a random Sun Belt Conference team.

Smart scheduling here by the Tigers, who get a presumed break with just four days between the FSU game and this visit from the Warhawks, who opened with a 35-17 home loss to Tulsa.

Look for first-year starter Cullen Harper to expand his repertoire at QB.



Tailback James Davis is one to watch for Clemson.

AP PHOTO BY MARY ANN CHASTAIN

scouting report

ULM wins if ...

The Tigers are no-shows after an emotional win over FSU and Charlie Weatherbie channels former boss Ralph Friedgen by tricking the Clemson defense with some play-calling wizardry.

Clemson wins if ...

The defense repeats the effort it gave against FSU and running backs James Davis and C.J. Spiller blow through an inferior Warhawks defense.

key stats

150 Rushing yards for ULM's Calvin Dawson in the opener vs. Tulsa.	0 Points in the second half by Clemson's offense vs. FSU.
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J.P. GIGLIO

nebraska at wake forest

GROVES STADIUM; NOON; ESPN, WZTK-101.1; RANKINGS: CORNHUSKERS NO. 16, DEMON DEACONS UNRANKED

Deacs brace for Big Red

After a tough loss at Boston College last week, Wake Forest tries to avoid an 0-2 start to its season. It won't be easy, though, as the formidable Cornhuskers roll into Winston-Salem with their smash-mouth offense.

scouting report

Wake Forest wins if ...



Andrews

The Demons Deacons' offensive line can do a better job of carving out space for running back Micah Andrews and the ground attack. Last week, Boston College limited Wake to 2 rushing yards.

Nebraska wins if ...

The Huskers continue to treat the red zone as their personal playground. In a season-opening 52-10 win over Nevada, Nebraska scored on seven of eight possessions within the 20-yard line.

what to watch

Huskers still love to run

The arrival of Huskers coach Bill Callahan and his passing schemes three seasons ago have not derailed the Huskers' ground attack. The 413 rushing yards against Nevada marked the highest Nebraska rushing total in five seasons.

key stats

233 NCAA-best rushing yards by Nebraska's Marlon Lucky against Nevada.	15 NCAA-best number of receptions last week by Wake WR Kenneth Moore.
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quotable

"Better than when we played them a couple of years ago. ... Whatever the old Nebraska used to be, that's what they look like right now."

Wake Forest coach Jim Grobe



Grobe

the storyline



Sam Keller is in his first season at quarterback for Nebraska.

AP PHOTO BY DAVE WEAVER

Hodges takes over for ailing Skinner at QB for Wake

Following a 38-28 loss at Boston College, Wake coach Jim Grobe did not plan to make wholesale changes to his lineup. Yet he has no choice but to make a change at quarterback after Riley Skinner suffered what Wake is calling "a mild separation" of his throwing shoulder against BC.

Brett Hodges will get his first start after coming in to complete 17-of-23 passes for

130 yards against the Eagles. Wake's defense was unable to prevent BC from racking up 462 yards and five touchdowns. Today, they'll face a Nebraska attack that amassed 625 yards of total offense against Nevada. No college team controlled the ball longer the first week than the Huskers, who held possession for more than 40 minutes (40:38) with 35 first downs.

caulton tudor's take

Quarterback Riley Skinner is banged up and the secondary was roundly exploited a week ago by Boston College, meaning the possibility of a depressing 0-2 start is at hand for the Deacons.

With several winnable games on deck, Wake's season would not end with a loss. It would, however, rule out the chance for another miracle season. The Deacs won't fold, but Nebraska should have enough to escape with a 20-13 win.

LORENZO PEREZ

miami at oklahoma

NORMAN, OKLA.; NOON; WTVD, WCTI; RANKINGS: OU NO. 5

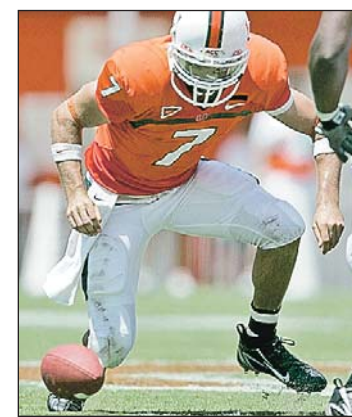
the storyline

Road to recovery

Miami has fallen so far off the national radar, the Canes aren't even ranked despite having one of the five best defenses in college football. A 7-6 season tends to do that.

This game and next week against Texas A&M is the way back to respectability for the Canes, who whipped Marshall 31-3 in their opener.

The Sooners have an image problem of their own. Hello, Boise State?



OU hopes to get the drop on Miami QB Kirby Freeman.

AP PHOTO BY WILFREDO LEE

scouting report

Miami wins if ...

If it can make some big plays. The running game was solid in the opener, as was the defense, but the Canes need to be able find "free" points - a pick-six, a kick return, a long pass - somewhere along the way to pull off the upset.

Oklahoma wins if ...

It stuffs Miami's running game and forces Kirby Freeman to win the game. OU won't score another 79 points this week, but three TDs would do the trick.

key stats

79-10 Final score of OU's season-opening win over North Texas.	81 Passing yards for Miami QB Kirby Freeman on nine completions.
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J.P. GIGLIO