

OLE MISS

7-6 LAST SEASON / 3-5 SEC / WON COMPASS BOWL VS PITTSBURGH

COACH:

Hugh Freeze – 2nd year at Mississippi, 17-8 overall

AGAINST THE SPREAD

- OVERALL: 17-7
- FAVORITE: 11-4
- UNDERDOG: 6-3
- HOME: 8-3
- AWAY: 9-4

RETURNING STARTERS:

18 TOTAL, 8 Offense, 10 Defense

KEY LOSSES:

OL Hawkins

PLAYERS TO WATCH:

QB Wallace, RB Scott, WR Moncrief, DL Nkemdiche

RETURNING PRODUCTION:

OFFENSE

- TOTAL OFFENSE: 92.45 %
- RUSHING: 84.17%
- PASSING: 98.24 %
- RECEIVING: 79.74%

DEFENSE

- TACKLES: 80.49%
- TACKLES FOR LOSS: 70.87%
- INTERCEPTIONS: 100.00%

LACK OF DEPTH

“We’re still a little ways away from having the depth for this league. We were so fortunate last year. We played three receivers pretty much the whole year, five offensive linemen pretty much the whole year. That’s rare that happens. We’re seeing it now in the spring where we get some injuries and it changes your team pretty fast.” -- **HC Hugh Freeze**

OFFENSE

Ole Miss had one of the better offenses in the SEC last year, averaging 412 ypg of total offense (SEC 5th) and 30 ppg (SEC 6th) overall against FBS competition. More importantly they put up these impressive numbers against some of the better defenses in college football.

Ole Miss played 4 of the top 6 defenses in the SEC last year (Alabama, LSU, Vandy & Georgia) and still managed to average 343.25 ypg vs D’s that allowed 318.97 (+24.28 ypg) and scored 21.25 ppg vs D’s that allowed 17.32 ppg (+3.93).

Area of concern: Interceptions -- Ole Miss threw an interception on 4.47% of their pass attempts, ranking #117 nationally.

Look for Ole Miss to be even better on offense in 2013 for the following reasons:

- The Rebels return over 90% of their offensive production from last year including four starters along the OL and QB Bo Wallace, who enters his third season in HC Hugh Freeze’s offensive system (he was with Freeze at Arkansas State). Wallace threw for 2294 yards, 22 TDs and 17 ints last year, all numbers he should improve upon in 2013.
- The Rebels improved on offense throughout the 2012 season and ***should hit the ground running in their second year of Freeze’s system.*** Ole Miss really got it cranking over the final four games, gaining 458 yards against Vanderbilt (# 5 SEC D), 463 at LSU (# 3 SEC D), 527 against Mississippi State and 387 against Pitt in the Compass Bowl.

DEFENSE

Last season, Ole Miss was 9th in the SEC in scoring defense and 7th in total defense. The Rebels allowed 27.67 ppg & 378.25 ypg against FBS teams who averaged 28.43 ppg (-0.76) & 398.97 ypg (-20.72). Ole Miss also held 8 of 12 FBS opponents below their offensive season averages, including Alabama and Georgia.

These were respectable numbers in 2012 and ***Ole Miss should take a step forward on defense this season.***

- The Rebels return over 80% of last year’s total tackles and 66.14% of their TFL. In addition to returning 10 starters they add the nation’s # 1 recruit, Robert Nkemdiche along with juco All-American Lavon Hooks.

Area of concern: 3rd down-defense

Miss allowed 3rd-down conversions 38.2% of the time. By comparison Florida (31%), LSU (31.9%), Alabama (32.9%) and Texas A&M (32.4%) led the SEC.

- ***Improved Secondary:*** The Rebels struggled in pass defense last season yielding 246.5 ypg (10th in the SEC) and 22 TD passes (12th SEC). Three starters and everyone responsible for an INT last year is back, but more importantly Nick Brassell returns after spending 2012 at JC. Brassell was shutting down receivers from his corner spot in 2011.

Watch out for: Cornerback **Nick Brassell** is a very talented defender, but he has been experiencing academic issues. Keep an eye on his eligibility moving forward, as he could be a crucial part of Mississippi’s ascending defense.

OLE MISS

2012 ATS: 9-3

2012 O/U: 6-6

Favorite ATS: 4-1

Underdog ATS: 5-2

Home ATS: 4-2

Away ATS: 5-1

2013 BETTING PROSPECTUS

SCHEDULE BREAKDOWN

Ole Miss starts out the season with a HUGE SEC showdown at Vandy on a Thursday night, return home the following week for a scrimmage against SE Missouri State before embarking on a grueling three game road trip against Texas, Alabama and Auburn. The Rebels don't play another game outside the state of Mississippi, playing six straight home games before ending the regular season at Miss State.

Probable Wins & Losses - Ole Miss will be heavily favored to win all three of their OOC home games and will most likely be DD road dogs at Texas and Alabama.

Toss-ups - The remaining 7 games on the schedule are all winnable, or losable. Ole Miss should be an underdog against Vandy (currently +2), LSU, and A&M, where I expect them to win one, maybe even two of those games. The Rebels could find themselves as short favorites in the remaining 4 games.

PROJECTED WINS

7

SEC WEST ODDS

10/1

SEC CHAMP ODDS

50/1

2013 Schedule

8/29	@ VANDY	50/50
9/7	SE MIZZ ST	W
9/14	@ TEXAS	L
9/28	@ BAMA	L
10/5	@ AUBURN	50/50
10/12	TEXAS AM	L
10/19	LSU	50/50
10/26	IDAHO	W
11/9	ARKANSAS	W
11/16	TROY	W
11/23	MISSOURI	W
11/28	@ MISS ST	50/50

TEAM WIN TOTAL RECOMMENDATION:

No Play at 7.5

I believe Ole Miss will win at least 7 games, and quite possibly 8 if they can pull off the upset against one of the big boys (TX, AL, A&M or LSU). However, depth concerns would keep me from pulling the trigger on over 7.5 (See "Lack of Depth" on Page 1).

BETTING VERDICT

ATS Projection - Bullish

Ole Miss was 9-3 ATS last year and repeating that spread success in 2013 is unlikely. However, Ole Miss returns 18 starters and a ton of proven production on both sides of the ball. They also add some elite recruiting talent to a team that shapes up to be every bit as good, if not better than last year's version.

As such they will continue to be undervalued and a solid PLAY ON team throughout the 2013 season, though it will be more important to pick your spots for this team.

Be careful in any SEC game where Ole Miss is favored by more than 4 points or favored on the road. The Rebels were only favored against 2 SEC schools last year (both at home) and neither by more than 4 points (they went 1-1 SU & ATS). They're likely to be favored in a few more SEC games this year, including some road games.

Ole Miss was 4-1 ATS (2-3 SU) as DD dogs last year. It is unlikely that the Rebels will be DD dogs that many times again in 2013. However **look to play on the Rebels if they are getting 10+ at Texas and 27+ at Alabama.**

Totals Projection - Over

Ole Miss went 6-6 O/U last season overall. However, the Rebels went over the number in their four lowest lined totals (49, 49, 50.5, 51) and under in all three games lines in the 60's.

The Rebels went under in four of their first five games. But as mentioned earlier, once this offense started getting on track, Ole Miss went over the posted total in 5 (49, 50.5, 49, 53.5, 54) of their final 7 games (going under 63 & 62.5).

Ole Miss went over (50.5, 49, 53.5, 54) in their final four games of the season scoring 26, 35, 41 & 38 points against some solid defenses (Vandy, LSU, Miss State & Pitt). **Look for Ole Miss to go over any games in 2013 that are lined in the upper 40's or lower 50's.**

VALUE AGAINST
THE SPREAD FOR
2012:

+7.21

AVERAGE MARGIN
THEY BEAT THE
SPREAD

Author: **Max Sabert** - SaturdayEdge
Writer and Handicapper; SEC specialist