



The Southern Conference, which began its 90th season of intercollegiate competition in 2010, is a national leader in emphasizing the development of the student-athlete and in helping to build lifelong leaders and role models.

The Southern Conference is the nation's fifth-oldest NCAA Division I collegiate athletic association. Only the Big Ten (1896), the Missouri Valley (1907), the Pacific 10 (1915) and the Southwestern Athletic (1920) conferences are older in terms of origination.

Academic excellence has been a major part of the Southern Conference's tradition. Hundreds of Southern Conference student-athletes have been recognized on Capital One/CoSIDA Academic All-America and all-district teams. A total of 19 Rhodes Scholarship winners have been selected from conference institutions.

The Conference currently consists of 12 members in five states throughout the Southeast and sponsors 19 varsity sports and championships that produce participants for NCAA Division I Championships.

The Southern Conference offices are located in the historic Beaumont Mill in Spartanburg, S.C. A textile mill that was in operation from 1880 until 1999, Beaumont Mill was renovated in 2004 and today offers the league first class meeting areas and offices as well as a spacious library for storage of the conference's historical documents.

Membership History

On Feb. 25, 1921, representatives from 14 of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association's (SIAA) 30 members met at Atlanta's Piedmont Hotel to establish the Southern Intercollegiate Conference. On hand at the inaugural meeting were officials from Alabama, Alabama Polytechnic Institute (Auburn), Clemson, Georgia, Georgia School of Technology (Georgia Tech), Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi A&M (Mississippi State), North Carolina, North Carolina State, Tennessee, Virginia, Virginia Polytechnic Institute (Virginia Tech) and Washington & Lee.

Dr. S.V. Sanford of Georgia was chosen as acting chairman and N.W. Dougherty of Tennessee was named secretary. The decision to form a new athletic conference was motivated by the desire to have a workable number of conference games for each league member.

Play began in the fall of 1921 and a year later, six more schools joined the fledgling league including Tulane (which had attended the inaugural meeting but had elected not to join), Florida, LSU, Mississippi, South Carolina and Vanderbilt. VMI joined in 1925 and Duke was added in 1929.

By the 1930s, membership in the Southern Conference had reached 23 schools. C.P. "Sally" Miles of Virginia Tech, president of the Southern Conference, called the annual league meeting to order on Dec. 9, 1932 at the Farragut Hotel in Knoxville, Tenn. Georgia's Dr. Sanford announced that 13 institutions west and south of the Appalachian Mountains were reorganizing as the Southeastern Conference. Members of the new league included Alabama, Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Florida, Georgia, Georgia School of Technology, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Mississippi A&M, University of the South, Tennessee, Tulane and Vanderbilt.

The Southern Conference continued

excelled as the premier Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) conference. Southern Conference member Appalachian State won the three consecutive FCS titles from 2005-07, becoming the first team to do so. The league boasts more than 250 players who have garnered All-America recognition and numerous national player or coach of the year awards. The conference has had at least one team in the Top 10 of the final FCS poll for 25 consecutive years with at least two teams finishing in the Top 20 in every season since 1982.

The conference has placed multiple representatives in the FCS Playoffs in 23-of-27 seasons, with 16 Championship Game appearances and eight national titles. The Southern Conference has had at least one team reach the semifinals in 10 of the last 12 years and in 16 of the last 19 seasons.

In 2007, Appalachian State became the first FCS team to defeat a nationally-ranked Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) team when the Mountaineers defeated No. 5-ranked Michigan, 34-32, on Sept. 1 before a sellout crowd at Michigan Stadium.

Prior to the conference's reclassification in 1981, Southern Conference football teams appeared in a total of 36 bowl games, posting a record of 16-18-2. From 1925-30, league schools won five football national championships in a six year span. There are nearly 40 former Southern Conference players in the College Football Hall of Fame.

In recent years, the Southern Conference has continued to produce outstanding student-athletes. In 1999, Georgia Southern's Adrian Peterson captured the Walter Payton Award presented annually to the Football Championship Subdivision's most outstanding offensive player. Furman's Louis Ivory was awarded the honor in 2000, Georgia Southern's Jayson Foster was presented with the 2007 trophy and most recently, Appalachian State's Armanti Edwards claimed the award in 2008.

Appalachian State's Dexter Coakley was a three-time all-conference selection and consensus All-America in 1994, '95 and '96 before going on to stardom with the Dallas Cowboys. Coakley won a pair of Buck Buchanan Awards, given to Football Championship Subdivision's top defensive player each year. Terrell Owens went from catching passes at Chattanooga to a stellar NFL career. Western Carolina's David Patten and Appalachian State's Matt Stevens were both members of the New England Patriots Super Bowl Champion team in 2002 and Patten also earned Super Bowl rings with the Patriots in 2004 and '05.



with membership of 10 institutions including Clemson, Duke, Maryland, North Carolina, North Carolina State, South Carolina, Virginia, VMI, Virginia Tech and Washington & Lee.

The second major shift occurred some 20 years later. By 1952, the Southern Conference included 17 colleges and universities. Another split occurred when seven schools including Clemson, Duke, Maryland, North Carolina, North Carolina State, South Carolina and Wake Forest departed to form the Atlantic Coast Conference which began play in 1953. The revamped Southern Conference included members The Citadel, Davidson, Furman, George Washington, Richmond, VMI, Virginia Tech, Washington & Lee, West Virginia and William & Mary.

Today, the league continues to thrive with a membership that includes 12 institutions and a footprint that spans five states: Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama and Georgia. Current league members are Appalachian State, Chattanooga, College of Charleston, The Citadel, Davidson, Elon, Furman, Georgia Southern, UNC Greensboro, Samford, Western Carolina and Wofford.

Football

The Southern Conference has

