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Contact: Scott Strasemeier (410) 293-8775

Navy Announces 2008 Football Schedule

ANNAPOLIS, Md.-The Navy football team and new head coach Ken Niumatalolo will face an extremely challenging schedule in 2008 with five teams from BCS conferences and four programs who earned bowl bids in 2007 highlighting the slate.

The Mids return 12 starters (four on offense, eight on defense) off a squad that posted an 8-5 record, won the Commander-In-Chief's Trophy for a school-record fifth-straight year and participated in a fifth-straight bowl game.

Navy's Sept. 20 contest against Rutgers, the Oct. 18 Homecoming game against Pittsburgh and a date with Notre Dame on Nov. 15 at Baltimore's M&T Bank Stadium highlight the six-game home and neutral site schedule.

"This will be one the most challenging and entertaining schedules we have faced," said Naval Academy Director of Athletics Chet Gladchuk. " We look forward to welcoming our fans back to one of the most impressive venues in the nation in Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium and we expect our attendance in 2008 will surpass the record numbers we enjoyed last season."

"This is a very challenging schedule that should be very appealing to our fans," said Niumatalolo. "Our football team has appreciated the support our loyal fans have given us in making Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium a tough place to play and we look forward to another exciting football season in 2008."

Navy will open up the 2008 campaign on August 30 against the Towson Tigers of the Colonial Athletic Association, which is considered one of the top conferences in the FCS. This will be the first meeting between Navy and Towson on the gridiron.

Navy will hit the road the next two weeks with games at Ball State on Sept. 6 and at Duke on Sept. 13. The Cardinals finished 2007 with a 7-6 record and a berth in the International Bowl against Rutgers. Ball State defeated Navy, 34-31, in overtime last fall.

The Blue Devils will be another dangerous opponent under the direction of new head coach David Cutcliffe. The Mids barely escaped the Blue Devils last year, rallying for a 46-43 victory on a Joey Bullen 44-yard field goal at the gun.

The Mids return home on Sept. 20 to face a Rutgers team that has beaten the Mids three-straight years. The Scarlet Knights defeated Ball State in the International Bowl last year and finished with an 8-5 mark.

The Mids go back on the road for two more games against bowl teams as Navy travels to Wake Forest on Sept. 27 and at Air Force on Oct. 4. The Demon Deacons are coming off a 9-4 season, including a 44-24 victory over Navy, and a victory over Connecticut in the Meineke Car Care Bowl.

The Air Force game is the first leg in Navy's quest to win the Commander-In-Chief's Trophy for an unprecedented sixth-consecutive year. The Mids have won 11-straight games against their two service academy rivals, including a thrilling 31-20 victory over Air Force last season.

The Mids will have a week off before playing host to Pittsburgh on Oct. 18 for Homecoming. The Panthers finished the 2007 season in memorable fashion, stunning rival West Virginia in Morgantown, 13-9. The loss knocked the Mountaineers out of the BCS National Championship Game. Navy and Pitt hooked up in one of the more memorable games of 2007, as the Mids defeated the Panthers, 48-45, in double overtime.

The Pitt game kicks off a string of three-straight home games as the Mids play host to SMU on Oct. 25 and Temple on Nov. 1. The SMU game could be a shootout as the Mustangs bring to town with them one of the best offensive minds in football in new head coach June Jones.

Temple was one of the surprise teams in 2007 as second-year head coach Al Golden led the Owls to a 4-8 record. Navy defeated Temple, 30-19, in last year's season opener.

The Mids will have two weeks to prepare for the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame, who will come to Baltimore's M&T Bank Stadium for a 12-noon game on Nov. 15. Navy defeated the Irish in South Bend last year, 46-44, in triple overtime, breaking a 43-game losing streak to the Irish.

Navy will travel to DeKalb, Ill. the following week to take on the Huskies of Northern Illinois on Nov. 22. Navy defeated NIU, 35-24, last year in the first meeting between the two schools.

After another off-week, the Mids travel to Philadelphia on Dec. 6 to take on the Black Knights of West Point in a 12-noon contest. The Mids have defeated their rival six-consecutive years by an average margin of 28.2 points per contest.

Game times for all Navy home games will be set in the spring due to television considerations, while game times for the road games will be announced by the host institution when available.

Navy has already locked in seven nationally-televised games with the Towson, Rutgers, Pittsburgh, SMU and Temple games being televised by CSTV: College Sports Television and the Notre Dame and Army games by CBS.

Season tickets for the 2008 season go on sale Tuesday, Feb. 12 at www.navysports.com. Season tickets are \$222, which includes all five games at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium and the Notre Dame game at M&T Bank Stadium. A season parking pass will cost \$75.

2008 Navy Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Location	Time	TV
Aug. 30	Towson	Annapolis, Md.	TBA	CSTV
Sept. 6	at Ball State	Muncie, Ind.	TBA	TBA
Sept. 13	at Duke	Durham, N.C.	TBA	TBA
Sept. 20	Rutgers	Annapolis, Md.	TBA	CSTV
Sept. 27	at Wake Forest	Winston Salem, N.C.	TBA	TBA
Oct. 4	at Air Force	Colorado Springs, Colo.	TBA	TBA
Oct. 18	Pittsburgh (HC)	Annapolis, Md.	TBA	CSTV
Oct. 25	SMU	Annapolis, Md.	TBA	CSTV
Nov. 1	Temple	Annapolis, Md.	TBA	CSTV
Nov. 15	vs. Notre Dame	Baltimore, Md.	12 noon	CBS
Nov. 22	at Northern Illinois	DeKalb, Ill.	TBA	TBA
Dec. 6	vs. Army	Philadelphia, Pa.	12 noon	CBS