

MISSOURI TIGERS

SEC - East Division

MISSOURI BIO

National Championships - 0



SEC Championships: 0

Location: **Columbia, MO**

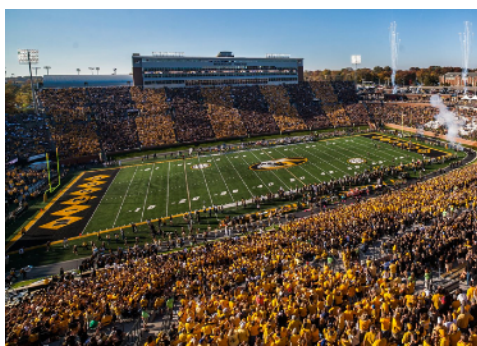
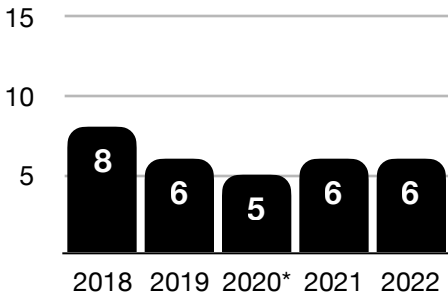
All-Time Record: **654-554-50**

2022 Results: **6-7**

Lost in Gasparilla Bowl

Head Coach: **Eli Drinkwitz**
4th Year (17-19)

5-YEAR WIN TREND



Memorial Stadium (71,168)

Momentum Building in Columbia

Signs are beginning to show that Eli Drinkwitz has the Missouri program pointed in the right direction. The Tigers landed the #3 overall recruit in the 2024 class and there have been other notable 4-star and 5-star products that have made their way to Columbia in recent seasons. While there is lots of young talent coming Missouri's way, the time is now to start showing improvement in the win column. Drinkwitz has yet to top six wins but he has guided Missouri to a bowl game in each of this first three seasons although he has yet to win one. He nearly scored a huge victory over Georgia at home last season but the Tigers couldn't find a way to close out the game even with a double-digit lead in the fourth quarter. He's just 2-9 against teams in the top 25 and his road record of 3-12 could use improvement although the Tigers have been strong at Memorial Stadium.

Quarterback **Brady Cook** provided the best quarterback play Drinkwitz has had so far at Missouri, but only by a small margin. Cook has been with the program since 2020 and assumed the starting role last season and threw for 2,739 yards and 14 touchdowns. He was also impactful as a runner and carried the ball 139 times for 585 yards. He got better as the season went along but could be pushed by freshman **Sam Horn** or Miami transfer **Jake Garcia** if he struggles early. Games against South Dakota and Middle Tennessee should help build his confidence before a big showdown against the Big 12 champions Kansas State. His two favorite targets from last season depart in Dominic Lovett and Barrett Banister but that should mean an expanded role for **Luther Burden III** which should only be a good thing. Burden finished his freshman campaign with 45 catches for 375 yards and a team-high six touchdowns. Rumors circulated that he might hit the transfer portal but he put Missouri fans' fears to rest by announcing his return shortly after the season concluded. His season wasn't without some drama mixed in, but his talent is undeniable. If fellow wide receivers **Mookie Cooper** and **Theo Wease** step into bigger roles, the passing game should improve again in 2023.

Cody Schrader ran for 744 yards last season and **Nathaniel Peat** backed him up with 425 yards. Neither back ran for better than 4.5 yards per carry but a banged up offensive line may have had something to do with that. Both backs return and redshirt freshman **Tavorus Jones** could make a bigger impact, so it appears depth at this position has improved. Tackle **Javon Foster** was second team All-SEC and offers stability to a now experienced line and will be Cook's personal protector.

The Missouri defense allowed 32.3 points in Drinkwitz's first season but that number dropped to a much more respectable 25.2 points last season. There's still plenty of room for improvement as that number was only a hair better than the average across college football, and SEC offenses are far from average. The pass defense was relatively solid in 2022 but did get lit up by Tennessee (460 yards) and Louisiana Tech (336 yards). The four top tacklers are back including the hard-hitting linebacker **Ty'Ron Hopper**. The Tigers posted 35 sacks last season but lose their top two most productive players in that categories. **Darius Robinson** made three and linebacker **Chad Bailey** added 2.5 in addition to his 57 tackles. The secondary brings back all four starters including cornerbacks **Kris Abrams-Draine** and **Ennis Rakestraw** and safeties **Joseph Charleston** and **Jaylon Carlies**. Carlies led the team with 81 tackles and had three picks. **Daylan Carnell** also had three interceptions so the secondary appears to be a major strength for the Tigers this season.













The Bottom Line: Drinkwitz needs a winning season in order for Missouri fans to feel like progress is being made. He's had an opportunity to crack .500 in each of the last two seasons but lost the 2021 Armed Forces Bowl to Army and the 2022 Gasparilla Bowl to Wake Forest. The schedule is daunting and in addition to a non-conference game against Kansas State the Tigers also pull LSU and a road trip to Arkansas out of the West. Missouri must also travel to Georgia and Kentucky. I expect another 6-6 season but more help is on the way if fans and the athletic department can stay patient. However, four of their five conference losses were by a touchdown or less so they might be closer to contending that people realize and defensive improvement could help them turn those losses into victories.

Projection: 6-6 (5th in SEC East)

2022 Statistics

Points Scored	Rush Yards	Pass Yards	Turnover Margin
24.8	155.7	214.1	-3
88th in FBS	65th in FBS	91st in FBS	T-85th in FBS
Points Allowed	Rush YDS Allowed	Pass YDS Allowed	
25.2	125.5	215.3	M
56th in FBS	32nd in FBS	48th in FBS	

2023 Missouri Schedule

Week	Date	Team
1	Sat, Sept 2	 vs. South Dakota
2	Sat, Sept 9	 vs. Mid Tennessee
3	Sat, Sept 16	 vs. Kansas State
4	Sat, Sept 23	 vs. Memphis*
5	Sat, Sept 30	 @ Vanderbilt
6	Sat, Oct 7	 vs. LSU
7	Sat, Oct 14	 @ Kentucky
8	Sat, Oct 21	 vs. S. Carolina
9	Bye Week	
10	Sat, Nov 4	 @ Georgia
11	Sat, Nov 11	 vs. Tennessee
12	Sat, Nov 18	 vs. Florida
13	Fri, Nov 24	 @ Arkansas

Conference Games in Bold

KEY GAMES

Sat, Sept 16: vs. Kansas State - The long awaited reunion of two Big 12 rivals ended badly for the Tigers who left Manhattan smarting after a 40-12 beatdown. The Wildcats went on to win the Big 12 championship and have similar expectations this season.

Sat, Oct 21: vs. South Carolina - If the Tigers want to start increasing their win total, they'll need to take care of business at Faurot Field and defeat the Gamecocks for a fifth straight time.

Sat, Nov 24: @ Arkansas - These two teams have met in a recently developed cross-division rivalry ever year since 2014. The Tigers have won all but two meetings including a win in last year's season finale to become bowl eligible.

KEY PLAYERS

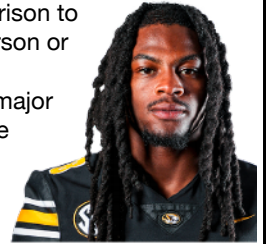
Luther Burden III - WR

Burden's commitment to Missouri had Columbia buzzing and the second-highest rated recruit in program history made an impact. He started slow but picked up steam as the season went along and Missouri fed him the football in both the passing and running games. He may have had a small breakout game in the bowl game when he caught a season-high seven passes. He found the end zone eight times and I expect his overall production to dramatically increase in 2023.



Ty'Ron Hopper - LB

Hopper has flown under the radar in comparison to other recent SEC linebackers like Will Anderson or Nakobe Dean but he has been incredibly impactful in his own right. The Tigers got a major steal from the portal when Hopper joined the team from Florida and he improved on what was already a solid 2021 season. 74 tackles (14 for loss) later, Hopper was second team All-SEC.



2022 RESULTS (6-7)

Louisiana Tech (W 52-24)

@ Kansas State (L 12-40)

Abilene Christian (W 34-17)

@ Auburn (L 14-17)

Georgia (L 22-26)

@ Florida (L 17-24)

Vanderbilt (W 17-14)

@ South Carolina (W 23-10)

Kentucky (L 17-21)

@ Tennessee (L 24-66)

New Mexico State (W 45-14)

Arkansas (W 29-27)

Wake Forest (L 17-27)

MIZZOU

RECRUITING

2023 Class Ranking

33rd

(Via 24/7 Sports)