

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5-6, 2012 // PUBLISHED BY THE COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MISSOURI VS. VANDERBILT

# TIGERKICKOFF



## THE MANY FACES OF **JAMES FRANKLIN**

THE SUBJECT OF BOTH  
PRAISE AND CRITICISM  
HAS A COMPLEX IDENTITY



WHO THE HECK IS  
**PAUL FINEBAUM?**

10 THINGS YOU  
DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT  
**VANDERBILT**

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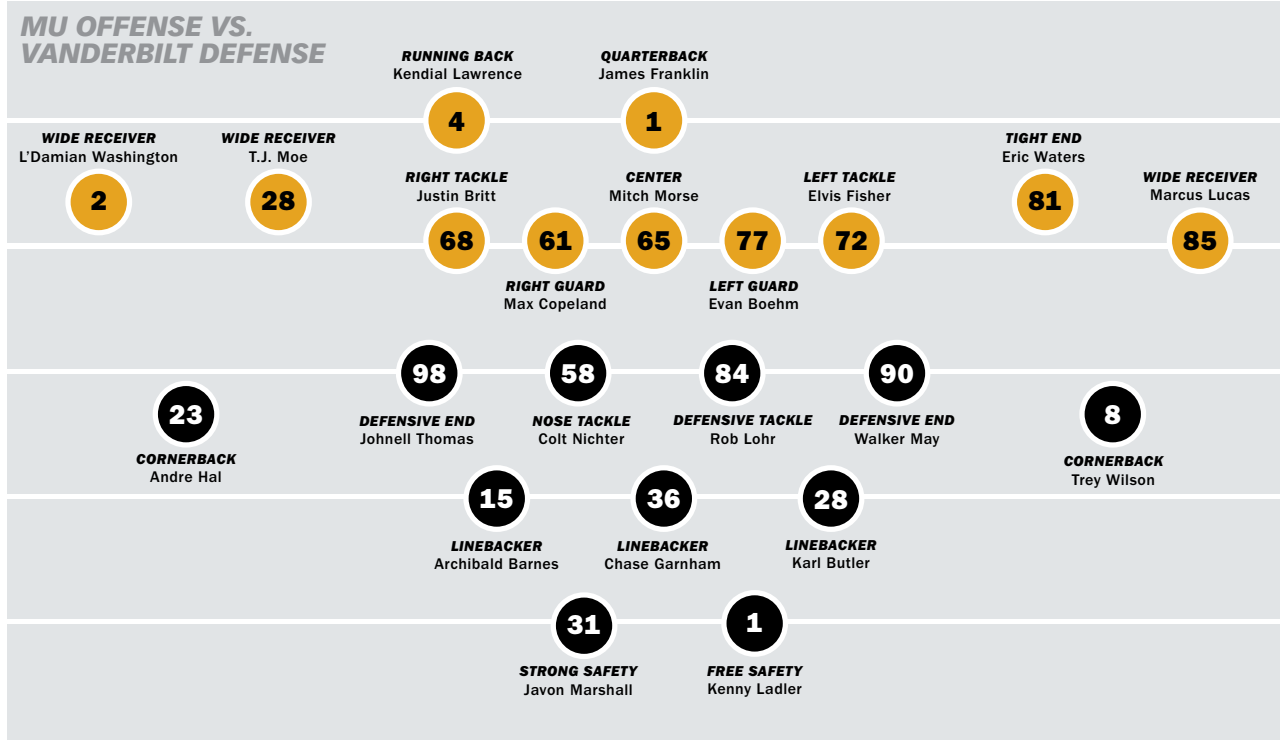
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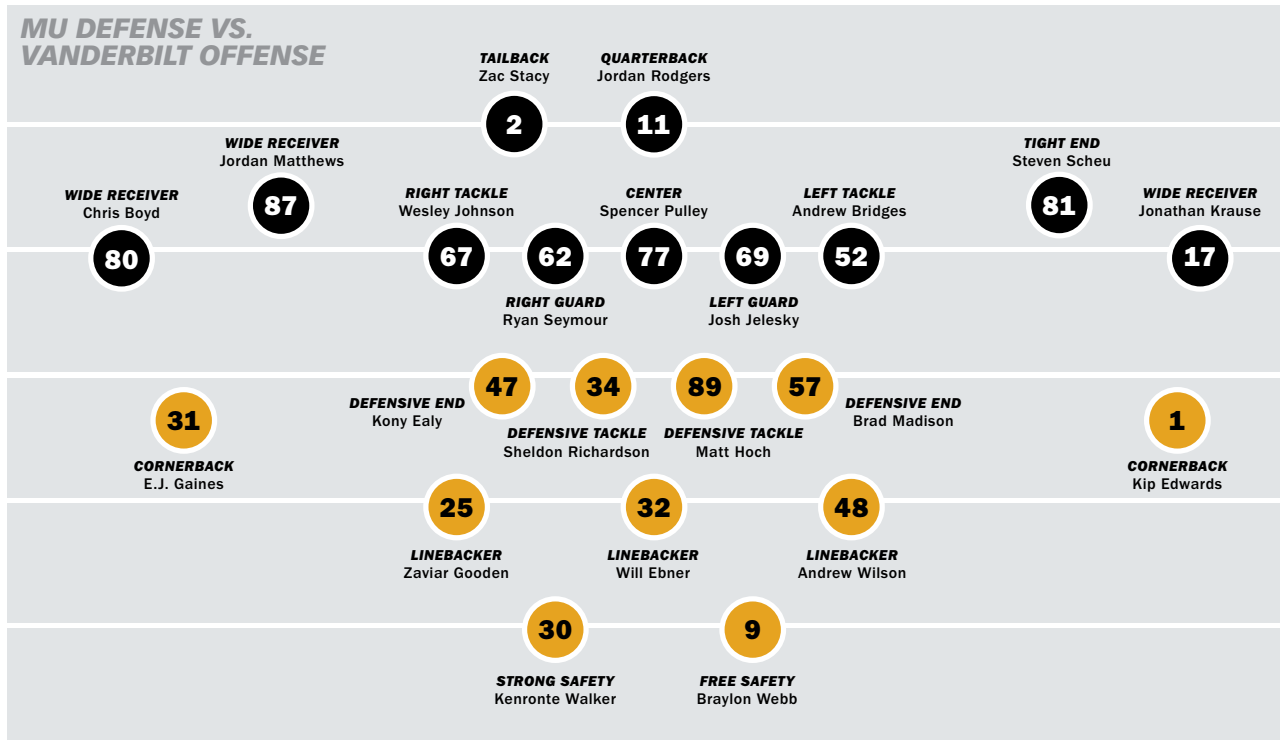
# DEPTH CHART



## MU OFFENSE VS. VANDERBILT DEFENSE



## MU DEFENSE VS. VANDERBILT OFFENSE



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 (20) HENRY JOSEY\*  
 (53) TRAVIS RUTH  
 (75) JACK MEINERS  
 (62) TAYLOR CHAPPELL\*

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# WHO IS THAT DUDE?

Gary Pinkel denied knowing him so this radio host responded by saying the Missouri coach declared “war” on him. Meet Paul Finebaum, “The Voice of the SEC” now on KFNS 590 AM.

BY RICHARD FERNANDEZ

**P**AUL FINEBAUM ISN'T JUST A VOICE. // In the Southeastern Conference, he is *the* voice. // Wright Thompson, a senior writer for ESPN.com, thought Rick Bragg put it best. Bragg, a professor at the University of Alabama, told him there are two types of people in Alabama: the people who admit they listen to Finebaum, and the liars.

Finebaum, 57, hosts “The Paul Finebaum Show,” also known as “F-bomb,” weekdays from 2 to 6 p.m. from Birmingham, Ala. As a guest on the show from time to time, Thompson learned it was not a normal sports talk show. This one is heavily driven by callers.

On the show last week, an Alabama fan called in asking if Crimson Tide quarterback A.J. McCarron could win the Heisman. The show is still dominated by callers from Alabama, so the Crimson Tide's weak schedule, Auburn's coaching problems and a new top recruit for Alabama coach Nick Saban are all also topics of discussion.

As irrelevant as a topic might be, it can be heard on Finebaum's show. And there are some very irrelevant topics. At the end of one show, a 77-year-old man called in. Before he asked his question, the man alluded to a court case he was involved in for some reason. Finebaum inquired.

“He got into some conversation about some live-in girlfriend of his from 20 or 30 years ago who is still in civil court with him and has accused him of rape,” Finebaum said by phone.

Finebaum said strange conversations are typical, though he doesn't think he'll ever top the day that Harvey Updyke Jr. called in saying he had poisoned the two trees at Toomer's Corner on the Auburn campus.

“That's who we are,” Finebaum said. “And as surprising or shocking as that may have been to someone, calls like that are what we're all about.”

The heart of the show is still the Alabama-Auburn rivalry, but the show has expanded in recent years. The show is now carried by 18 radio affiliates in Alabama, two in Florida, and one in Missouri after KFNS in greater St. Louis picked up the show in late September. The show is in its third year on Sirius XM radio, so it reaches listeners all over the country and in Canada. Listeners can also tune in at Finebaum.com.

As the audience has grown, Finebaum's voice has become more powerful. He says “The Voice of the SEC” title stuck after he was introduced with the name once on ESPN.

In 2009, an article in the Orlando Sentinel ranked Finebaum as the eighth most powerful person in the SEC. The article said Finebaum's “barbs can influence a coach's fate.”

“I would be naive to think that it hasn't happened,” Finebaum said, when asked if his influence has ever led to a coach's firing.

He says a radio show allows him to criticize coaches in a subtle way. Rather than repeatedly call for a coach to be fired, as a columnist might try, Finebaum just holds daily conversations on the radio, without making a proclamation.

“He has this army of listeners,” Thompson said by phone. “If you're a head coach, you just want to make real sure that Paul Finebaum likes you.”

CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FINEBAUM NETWORK

Finebaum does have good relationships with some coaches. He and South Carolina coach Steve Spurrier have a long friendship going. Finebaum says he also knows Saban well.

However, Finebaum's relationship with Missouri coach Gary Pinkel doesn't seem to be off to the best start. After Missouri officially joined the SEC, Pinkel went on Finebaum's show to talk about the move. But recently, Pinkel pretended not to know who Finebaum was after the host said Tigers quarterback James Franklin needed to "man up."

The two shows after Pinkel's comments, Finebaum says he spent more time talking about Missouri than Alabama or Auburn. He had fun with it, promoting the show on Twitter and saying Pinkel declared "war" on him.

"It became an enormous topic. And it became an enormous topic because of Gary Pinkel," Fine-

baum said. "Had he reacted in a normal, intelligent fashion to the question in the St. Louis radio station, none of this would have happened. But he didn't. His reaction was petulant, and predictable, and he opened the door. And then he really opened the door by just getting waylaid by South Carolina. That was just an embarrassing performance from where I sat."

Finebaum, who says he embraced the addition of Missouri to the SEC and picked the Tigers to win against the Georgia Bulldogs, said he doesn't go out and seek to get coaches fired. But that doesn't mean he thinks Pinkel's job is safe.

"Gary Pinkel, his future at Missouri, is not going to be dictated by what's said on a radio station in Alabama," Finebaum said. "It's going to be dictated by what he does on the football field."

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# THE MANY FACES OF JAMES FRANKLIN

Missouri quarterback James Franklin has had an eventful beginning to his season. Always nice and often smiling, Franklin — the subject of both praise and criticism — has a complex identity.

BY MIKE VOREL // PORTRAIT BY BENJAMIN HOSTE

**H**E'S A MAGNET for both praise and criticism, a tough guy on the field and a teddy bear off of it. He's always candid, choosing to smile at critics and praise defenders after big hits. The most talked-about bursa sac in recent history is attached to his right shoulder, sore and painful and rife with controversy.

But who is James Franklin, really?

Well, that all depends on who you ask.

## When Mitch Morse looks at James Franklin, he sees a rock.

He sees a constant — the same guy he's known the past three years. The laugh is still there. The smile is still there. The "yes, sir" and "no, sir" responses in press conferences are still there, too.

Franklin has become a better player, he says, but he has never changed as a person.

Not even when snaps go high, low, or sideways. Morse, the team's starting center, has

had recurring problems with his shotgun snaps all year, spraying them erratically in all directions. It's been Franklin's job, sometimes impossibly, to corral the misfires.

The offensive line, which has gone through an unending cycle of injuries and position changes, has also had trouble giving Franklin a clean pocket. The junior quarterback has had to deal with constant pressure, as pass rushers such as Georgia's Jarvis Jones and South Carolina's Jadeveon Clowney have made homes in the offensive backfield.

Still, Franklin doesn't get frustrated. Almost immediately after picking himself up off the turf, he begins to tend to the psyches of his companions.

"He's always composed, which is an attribute of James that is unbelievable. To go through the pressure that sometimes he goes through and with the hits he takes — because of us, mostly — it's unbelievable," Morse said, slowly shaking his head as he speaks. "He always keeps us composed."

This season, though, Franklin has faced

adversity in forms other than defensive ends. He's had his toughness questioned for the first time in his career, after choosing to sit out of Missouri's Sept. 15 win over Arizona State because of an inflamed bursa sac in his throwing shoulder.

Even throughout an early season that has presented more crises than triumphs for his quarterback, Morse says Franklin has approached everything in his life the same way. The team has never doubted his willingness to fight through pain. Now, more than ever, Morse feels the need to protect his quarterback.

"You know, he's our quarterback. He's the anchor of the offense and he's always been there for us," Morse said. "It's not only an obligation...but a privilege for us to be with him through his tough time of being injured, and with the whole controversy."

"The controversy," as he calls it, was never one for Franklin's linemen. Even off the field, they're not ready to stop defending him.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



## When Gahn McGaffie looks at James Franklin, he sees a competitor.

And no, he's not talking about football.

It gets heated in the ping-pong room after Missouri's practices, as Franklin, McGaffie, Brad Madison and Kentrell Brothers battle daily for ultimate table tennis supremacy.

The four teammates began playing pingpong during two-a-days this fall as a way to kill time between meetings.

Of course, as an experienced player, Franklin dominated the early matchups. He was a vicious competitor, sending orange pingpong balls careening at and around the helpless, inexperienced McGaffie.

Looking back on the summer beat downs, McGaffie lets out a pained grimace. The cycle of humiliation was vicious, as was the victor.

"James pretty much is a ruthless player, because he knew we weren't that skilled," McGaffie said. "So he'd smash the ball on us every chance he got, and just laugh at us like it was nothing."

Slowly but surely, the competition improved. McGaffie and Co. started practicing, and the margin of victory began to shrink. Eventually, the title changed hands, and Missouri's starting quarterback became a table tennis second stringer.

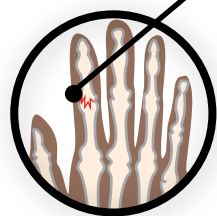
According to Franklin, though, McGaffie's recent success was all part of the plan.

"You know the term, 'If you throw a dog a bone he'll always come back for more?' Well if I'm always beating him then nobody wants to play me," Franklin said. "They'll think, 'No, he'll beat me.' I give him a couple wins, make him feel good."

Despite their animosity with

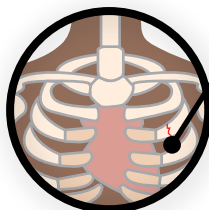
# NO REST FOR THE WEARY

James Franklin has faced his share of criticism this season. His supporters, however, note that the quarterback has had to play through a multitude of injuries. Here's a look at the injuries that have plagued Franklin the past two seasons.



## BROKEN FINGER

A common injury among quarterbacks, Franklin broke fingers in his left hand last season.



## BROKEN RIBS

Most commonly caused by a blow to the chest, Franklin fractured his ribs last season. Broken ribs usually take about six weeks to heal.

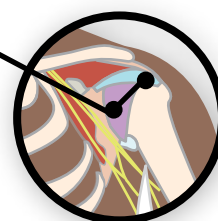


## NECK STINGER

A common injury among contact sport athletes, Franklin suffered from a neck stinger last season. Common symptoms include burning sensations, numbness and weakness.

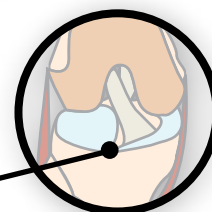
## BURSITIS

Also known as an inflamed bursa sac, bursitis occurs when the bursa, a fluid-filled sac in joints, becomes overworked or overused.



## TORN LABRUM

Positioned around the shoulder socket to add stability, the labrum consists of a ring of firm tissue. Franklin tore his labrum during spring practice last March.



## SWOLLEN KNEE

Much like the shoulder joint, the knee can become inflamed when overworked or overused.

Graphic by RACHEL STINEBRING/Missourian  
Photo by STUART PALLEY/Missourian

a paddle, McGaffie can't deny Franklin's positive traits. He's a good guy, he says, "definitely a person I would let my daughter date."

Sure, but would he let her play him in pingpong?

"Probably not, because he's pretty dominant in that game," McGaffie said. "But he's still a good guy."

## When Corbin Berkstresser looks at James Franklin, he sees a blueprint.

Ever since Berkstresser arrived on campus in summer 2011, Franklin has been there — to teach, to help, to be the goofiest guy in the room. And all the while, Berkstresser has

watched him, quietly taking notes.

Franklin served as Berkstresser's "Big Brother" in the freshman quarterback's first fall camp, rooming with him in the dorms, keeping him up to speed in practice and studying the playbook with him every night.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Even now, more than a year later, the roles haven't exactly shifted. "On the field, he's always helping me. He's still my big brother, helping me with the plays," Berkstresser said. "And off the field, he helps me every day to be a better person."

When Franklin unexpectedly missed a start for the first time in his career, Berkstresser was there to jump in. After the 24-20 win against Arizona State, he sat in Missouri's crowded media room, surrounded by a throng of reporters, and fielded repeated questions about his big brother's toughness.

"James is probably the toughest kid on the team," Berkstresser said more than once throughout the press conference. "It's a long season. He wants to be there. He's definitely thinking about the team and not himself."

Admittedly, the criticisms got to Franklin. He has never been one to tune them out. But Berkstresser also knows that critics are not what matters most to his big brother.

"He cares what people think, but at the same time he knows that it's not up to them what he does. It's not as important to them," he said. "He looks to a higher power for his approval."

Even now, with a start and a win under his belt, Berkstresser follows Franklin's lead. After every series against Arizona State, Berkstresser found Franklin first on the sideline, asking him what could be corrected, how he could improve. He asks him the same kinds of questions off the field, looking for guidance from an old friend.

To Berkstresser, Franklin is the blueprint of what a big brother — and a starting quarterback — should be.

"If you lean on him, he's not going to let you fall," Berkstresser said. "He's always going to be there to help you."

### When James Franklin looks at himself, he isn't sure what he sees.

He can be defined in so many different ways. The football player. The future public speaker (he hopes). The pingpong player. The son.

Going deeper, though, Franklin doesn't see himself as a quarterback first. He looks around the sport and sees a mass of people who think the game is all they are. They forget that football is just that — a game.

“He cares what people think, but at the same time he knows that it's not up to them what he does. It's not as important to them. He looks to a higher power for his approval.”

**CORBIN BERKSTRESSER**  
Missouri quarterback

When the stress begins to overwhelm him — which he admits that it has at times over the past month — he tries to put his entire life into perspective.

"Obviously, people do not want to hear that football is not the most important thing in life and that it's just a game, but that's what I try to think of it as. If getting criticized or yelled at because I play bad is the worst that I'm going through, then I consider myself pretty blessed," Franklin said.

"Other people have disabilities, tragedies, poverty, all different sorts of things. Thinking about all that, it'd be selfish to think that I have it bad. Yeah, I'm on a big stage and I'm criticized and all of that, but it takes a lot more than criticism to get me down."

Through his first season and a half as a starter at Missouri, nothing has kept Franklin down yet. He's been sacked and hit in every place imaginable, and he continues to get back up. He hears people say that he isn't strong enough, fast enough, accurate enough or tough enough for the Southeastern Conference; the words bounce off of him like bullets off of Superman.

So, behind the helmet, behind the smiles, behind the table tennis competitions, behind the big brother mentality, behind everything:

Who is James Franklin?

"Since we're playing Vanderbilt this week, I'd say the Vanderbilt head coach," Franklin said Monday, a sly

smile plastered across his face.

The reporters slowly leave his side, the interview over. The junior from Corinth, Texas, strolls out of the Mizzou Athletic Training Center's lobby and into the weight room, smirking happily as he goes.

The mystery continues. ■

## FRANKLIN'S STATISTICS

### 2011 SEASON

13 games  
2,865 yards passing  
21 passing touchdowns  
15 rushing touchdowns  
11 interceptions

### 2012 SEASON

4 games  
749 yards passing  
4 passing touchdowns  
0 rushing touchdowns  
2 interceptions

# Finebaum says Missouri won't be discussed much

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

That could mean trouble for Pinkel. Finebaum said when he looked at Pinkel's resume, he only saw three "SEC-quality" years. So far, Finebaum said he is disappointed with Missouri's performance this season. Finebaum estimates Missouri won't be discussed much on his show for the rest of the year after taking losses against Georgia and South Carolina.

What will be discussed? That's up to the callers.

"There are many, many shows in this country that are better, that have more knowledgeable hosts, that have a better guest line-ups. I mean, we can't compete with ESPN and shows like that," Finebaum said.

"But I will say that there is not a show in America that has a more fascinating group of callers than ours. I will boldly make that statement and I think we back that up every day." ■

# TIGER TWEETS

HERE ARE A FEW OF THE PLAYERS' MOST HUMOROUS, THOUGHTFUL, AND INTERESTING TWEETS



**@Ponder\_onThis**

RANDY PONDER

Feels good to win, I ain't got no worries.  
\*lil wayne voice

Sept. 30



**@SamoanTaika96**

LUCAS VINCENT

Glad to see eeveryone has jumped off  
the chiefs band wagon like its going  
up in flames

Sept. 31




**@TJMoe28**

T.J. MOE

When is the first day its ok to start  
listening to Christmas music? Day  
after thanksgiving? Oct. 1

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# 10 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT VANDERBILT

**A**fter playing University of Central Florida last week, it's time for the Missouri football team to come back to the Southeastern Conference. The Tigers are still looking for their first win in their new conference.

They have a chance this week. Vanderbilt is not as formidable as Georgia or South Carolina. Heck, the Commodores have already taken beatings from those schools this year, too. They actually gave South Carolina a scare but fell 48-3 at Georgia.

Missouri will have home field advantage, and Commodores fans are not known to travel. Their fan base is much smaller than the typical SEC school. Though it might

have been the doormat of SEC football for a while, the Vanderbilt football program is on the rise.

Missouri can't afford to take its new rival lightly. There is too much unknown.

In a few years, the Commodores will be familiar foes for the Tigers. But for now, here are 10 things you didn't know about Vanderbilt:

— RICHARD FERNANDEZ

**10** Vanderbilt University was founded in 1873 when **Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt donated \$1 million to establish the school.** His statue stands on campus, and the school named its mascot, the "Commodores," after him. The official school colors are black and gold, the same as those of Missouri's opponent last week, UCF. And, of course, the same as Missouri's. It's a popular color scheme.

**9** A building in **Vanderbilt's engineering school has a room called "Jacobs believed in me Auditorium."** Gerry Hull, a 1964 graduate and longtime supporter of the engineering school, made it possible to build the lecture hall. It was named to honor the late Dillard Jacobs, a legendary mechanical engineering professor.

**8** **President John F. Kennedy visited the school just six months before his death.** Kennedy spent just three hours in Nashville, Tenn., on May 18, 1963, to celebrate the 90th anniversary of Vanderbilt and dedicate the Percy Priest Dam construction. He spoke at Vanderbilt's Dudley Field. That day, he rode around Nashville in the same limo that he would use in Dallas on Nov. 22 of that year, the day of his assassination.



PHOTOS: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS, SXC.HU

**7** **Vanderbilt is one of the 10 schools left from the original SEC formed in 1932.** It is also the smallest school in the conference with just 12,859 students enrolled last year. Vanderbilt is the SEC's only private school, and it is a difficult school to get into. In 2011, it had just a 16.4 percent acceptance rate. By comparison, MU had an 81 percent acceptance rate the same year.

**6** **Taylor Swift and Aaron Rodgers both go to Vanderbilt. No? Well, at least their little brothers, Austin Swift and Jordan Rodgers, do.** Austin Swift is a student, and Jordan Rodgers is the quarterback for the Commodores. As for Taylor Swift, she lives in Nashville and is often seen on or around the Vanderbilt campus. She's currently dating Connor Kennedy, grandson of Robert F. "Bobby" Kennedy.

**5** **The Grand Ole Opry, "The show that made country music famous," has been broadcast from Nashville since 1925.** Some of country music's biggest stars perform each week on the show. The list of Opry stars includes Willie Nelson, Jimmy Dickens, Vince Gill, Garth Brooks, Dierks Bentley, Brad Paisely and many more.

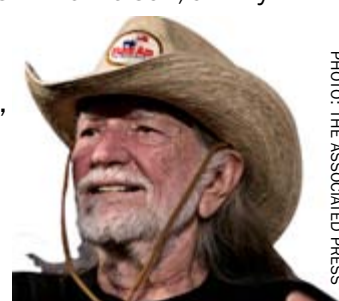
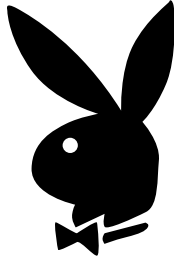


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**4** **Playboy magazine recently ranked Vanderbilt as the seventh best party school in the nation.** The No. 1 school on the list, the University of Virginia, was the alma mater of Bobby Kennedy and Edward “Ted” Kennedy. And you thought you were done with Kennedy mentions in this list.



**3** **The student athletes don't get special treatment.** Even players on the football team live in the same dorms as other students and are held to the same academic standards. This is because in 2003, Vanderbilt Chancellor Gordon Gee merged the school's athletics department with the university. Many thought the removal of a separate athletics department was a sign that the Commodores were giving up trying to compete in SEC sports, but it was quite the opposite. The Commodores have had growing success in sports ever since. The football team won six games last season, earning just its second bowl berth since 1982. Gee is now president of Ohio State University.

**2** **Nashville is Music City.** Dorms at Vanderbilt are just blocks away from music row, the home of hundreds of music-related businesses. While Nashville is most known for country, there are also other genres such as bluegrass, folk and gospel. There are also many young indie music artists in town. The famous music venues in Nashville include RCA Studio B, The Country Music Hall of Fame, the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame and the Ryman Auditorium, where the Grand Ole Opry was held from 1955 to 1974.

**1** Vanderbilt students don't fill the stadium for football games; they are more interested in tailgates or fraternity parties on game day. Commodores coach James Franklin, who shares the same name as

Missouri's quarterback, has been trying to change this culture since he became head coach following the 2010 season. Still, **Vanderbilt is notorious for letting opposing team fans outnumber home fans at home games** against nearby SEC schools.



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