

Durbin Index – 2026 NCAA Tournament Projection Report

Model-driven projections using Durbin Index scoring forecasts. Each regional section simulates the bracket from the Round of 64 through the regional champion based solely on the model's projected scores.

Durbin Index – First Round Market Differences

Summary of the largest differences between the Durbin Index model projections and the Vegas market. ATS entries exclude games where the Vegas spread is 15 points or larger. The Durbin model is unlikely to ever produce a predicted margin greater than 20 points so those games with Vegas lines >20 points have been removed.

Largest ATS Differences

| Region | Matchup | Vegas Line | Durbin Line | Line Delta |
|---------|-----------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| East | St. John's vs Northern Iowa | -11.5 | 0 | -11.5 |
| South | Nebraska vs Troy | -13.5 | -8 | -5.5 |
| South | Vanderbilt vs McNeese | -11.5 | -7 | -4.5 |
| East | Ohio State vs TCU | -2.5 | -7 | 4.5 |
| Midwest | Georgia vs Saint Louis | -2.5 | -6 | 3.5 |
| West | Wisconsin vs High Point | -9.5 | -13 | 3.5 |

Largest Total (O/U) Differences

| Region | Matchup | Vegas Total | Durbin Total | OU Delta |
|---------|-----------------------------|-------------|--------------|----------|
| East | St. John's vs Northern Iowa | 131.5 | 148 | 16.5 |
| Midwest | Georgia vs Saint Louis | 170.5 | 154 | -16.5 |
| West | Purdue vs Queens | 163.5 | 151 | -12.5 |

| | | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|-------|-----|------|
| East | Kansas vs Cal Baptist | 136.5 | 149 | 12.5 |
| East | Duke vs Siena | 136.5 | 147 | 10.5 |
| South | Houston vs Idaho | 135.5 | 145 | 9.5 |
| South | Clemson vs Iowa | 130.5 | 139 | 8.5 |
| East | Connecticut vs Furman | 136.5 | 144 | 7.5 |

Note: These differences indicate where the Durbin Index projection diverges most from the Vegas market. They are not guarantees of outcomes but highlight where the model and market expectations differ the most.

EAST REGION

Round of 64

Duke 83 – Siena 64

Ohio State 78 – TCU 71

St. John's 74 – Northern Iowa 74

Kansas 77 – Cal Baptist 72

Louisville 84 – South Florida 75

Michigan State 79 – North Dakota State 69

UCLA 78 – UCF 72

Connecticut 79 – Furman 65

Round of 32

Duke 80 – Ohio State 75

St. John's 78 – Kansas 77

Louisville 79 – Michigan State 79

Connecticut 75 – UCLA 74

Sweet Sixteen

Duke 85 – St. John's 72

Louisville 77 – Connecticut 77

Elite Eight

Duke 83 – Louisville 77

Champion

East Champion: Duke

Summary

Most Likely Upset: St. John's over Kansas

Best Game: Louisville vs Connecticut

Most Likely Cinderella (Seed ≥ 7): UCLA

SOUTH REGION

Round of 64

Florida 87 – Lehigh 68

Iowa 71 – Clemson 68

Vanderbilt 78 – McNeese 71

Nebraska 75 – Troy 67

North Carolina 77 – VCU 76

Illinois 85 – Penn 66

Saint Mary's 77 – Texas A&M 75

Houston 77 – Idaho 68

Round of 32

Florida 81 – Iowa 74

Vanderbilt 78 – Nebraska 74

Illinois 82 – North Carolina 72

Houston 75 – Saint Mary's 73

Sweet Sixteen

Florida 85 – Vanderbilt 79

Illinois 78 – Houston 72

Elite Eight

Illinois 82 – Florida 81

Champion

South Champion: Illinois

Summary

Most Likely Upset: Iowa over Clemson

Best Game: Illinois vs Houston

Most Likely Cinderella (Seed ≥ 7): Saint Mary's

MIDWEST REGION

Round of 64

Michigan 89 – Howard 71

Georgia 80 – Saint Louis 74

Texas Tech 81 – Akron 71

Alabama 82 – Hofstra 72

Tennessee 76 – SMU 74

Virginia 77 – Wright State 70

Kentucky 79 – Santa Clara 79

Iowa State 78 – Tennessee State 71

Round of 32

Michigan 84 – Georgia 78

Alabama 79 – Texas Tech 78

Tennessee 76 – Virginia 74

Kentucky 78 – Iowa State 75

Sweet Sixteen

Michigan 85 – Alabama 82

Tennessee 76 – Kentucky 76

Elite Eight

Michigan 83 – Tennessee 75

Champion

Midwest Champion: Michigan

Summary

Most Likely Upset: Santa Clara over Kentucky

Best Game: Alabama vs Texas Tech

Most Likely Cinderella (Seed ≥ 7): Santa Clara

WEST REGION

Round of 64

Arizona 84 – Long Island 67

Utah State 78 – Villanova 74

Wisconsin 86 – High Point 73

Arkansas 86 – Hawaii 71

Texas 76 – BYU 75

Gonzaga 79 – Kennesaw State 72

Miami 76 – Missouri 75

Purdue 84 – Queens 67

Round of 32

Arizona 79 – Utah State 77

Wisconsin 82 – Arkansas 81

Texas 76 – Gonzaga 75

Purdue 79 – Miami 73

Sweet Sixteen

Wisconsin 82 – Arizona 78

Purdue 80 – Texas 72

Elite Eight

Purdue 78 – Wisconsin 77

Champion

West Champion: Purdue

Summary

Most Likely Upset: Texas over Gonzaga

Best Game: Wisconsin vs Arkansas

Most Likely Cinderella (Seed ≥ 7): Utah State

Projected Final Four

East – Duke

South – Illinois

Midwest – Michigan

West – Purdue

Final Four Results

Michigan 82 – Duke 78

Illinois 79 – Purdue 75

National Championship

Michigan 84 – Illinois 80

Durbin Index National Champion: Michigan