VU's Franklin a better coach than UT's Dooley?

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The Predators are dead in the frozen water. The Memphis Grizzlies joined the Preds Sunday by losing Game 7 to the Los Angeles Clippes in their first-round NBA playoff series.

The NFL draft has come and gone. Spring practices have concluded for college football programs. Future college basketball players have decided on which school they will grace with their talent.

In other words, it is a slow time of the season if you are a sports fan.

That often prompts a flurry of various lists compiled by sportswriters around the country.

The Sporting News has released its annual list that ranks all Division I college football coaches. It is highly subjective and one of two TSN writers who compile this list is Matt Hayes. I have known Matty for years. He delights in taking jabs at fan bases known for their thin skins.

For starters, Tennessee Coach Derek Dooley is considered the worst coach in the SEC, including the coaches from Missouri and Texas A&M, who have yet to stick their toes in the SEC pool.

Not only is Dooley No. 14 in the SEC, he ranks 99 out of 124 coaches on the national list. He is one spot behind Hawaii’s Norm Chow, who hasn’t been a head coach since 1972, when he was at Waialua High School.

Other notables deemed to be better coaches than Dooley on TSN’s list would include MTSU’s

Rick Stockstill (93), former Vanderbilt player and San Jose State head coach Mike MacIntyre (91), Western Kentucky's Willie Taggart (85) and Kentucky's Joker Phillips (90).

To pile on, TSN has the man Dooley replaced, Southern Cal's Lane Kiffin, ranked No. 37. I don't think he ranks anywhere near that high on Vols fans' list.

Dooley ranks behind Bob Davie (96). The former Notre Dame coach hasn't coached football since 2001 until accepting the job at New Mexico.

Co-author of the piece, Seth Greenberg, called the project, "an internal exercise. … We're pretty pleased with it.''

I would think Vanderbilt fans would be more pleased than Greenberg.

First-year Commodores Coach James Franklin authored a 6-7 season, lost to Dooley and Tennessee, and was judged by the TSN tandem as the No. 5 coach in the SEC.

If you think that might be high, TSN had Franklin as the 25th best coach in college football. Granted, Franklin generated excitement his first year. As TSN pointed out, Franklin's team lost four games to Georgia, Arkansas, Florida and Tennessee by a combined total of only 19 points.

If Franklin can coax a winning season this fall, I predict TSN will have him supplanting Alabama's Nick Saban as the number one coach on the planet. I'm not sure Vanderbilt Vice-Chancellor David Williams knew what a diamond he mined out of Maryland.

You can bet Vanderbilt will have plenty of TSN copies of the rankings sitting around for recruits to look at. Why not?

Back to Dooley. Is he that bad? This season will go a long way toward determining that. The Vols drop LSU for Mississippi State and have three cupcakes for non-conference automatics.

TSN claims Dooley has to make a bowl game this season to save his job. Vol fans would put the over-under win total to save his job at 8.

He could do that by beating Kentucky, Vanderbilt and two teams out of Florida, Georgia and N.C. State.

I know. That’s a lot to ask from the No. 99 coach in the country.

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