



*The BCeStimation is a weekly column that predicts which 10 teams will make it to the Orange Bowl, Sugar Bowl, Fiesta Bowl, Rose Bowl and National Championship game. The name of the column was thought of by me, which means I'm awesome at naming things. Let's carry on.*

*There wasn't a whole lot of movement from week two to week three, but I still have plenty to talk about.□*

*The Pac 10 had a surprisingly good week, and at the expense of the Big Ten in most cases. Arizona notched a huge win over Iowa despite a late rally by Ricky Stanzi and the Hawkeyes. USC went on the road and got a victory over Big Ten opponent Minnesota, but that's about as useful to this article as a well executed shotgun snap in Florida (LOL center-exchange burn!). The Arkansas Razorbacks are knock, knock, knocking on heavens door, and with a strong performance against Alabama this coming week, they could make their first appearance in the BCeStimation. I realize that I just compared this article to heaven... I promise to work on some better analogies moving forward.□*

*Let's dive into the predictions...*

### **Orange Bowl: Miami vs. Iowa**

*I'm sure that teams like Florida, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, South Carolina, LSU, Auburn and (especially) Arizona would scoff at my prediction of Iowa here, but pairing two teams that already have one loss seems like the right call. There is a deep and rich tradition of*

*mediocrity and utter blandness the Orange Bowl needs to preserve, so I have to keep that in mind when I'm making this pick.*

*Why Miami? Because I think they'll take their 8-4 record into the ACC Championship game and win, earning the automatic BCS bid. As I stated last week, the ACC is just awful, consisting of a few decent teams and then a bunch of other football programs that want to get through the year without hurting anyones feelings. Miami plays Pittsburgh this Thursday at Heinz Field and then gets nine days to rest up for a decent looking Clemson team. I was tempted to recite the old cliché, "we'll find out a lot about this team in the next couple of weeks", but I feel like we already know everything. Fast defense, good running backs, and a quarterback who is great when he has time to throw but folds like Willis Mcgahee's knee under pressure. See! The analogies are getting better!*

*Why Iowa? Because I can think of a lot of very justifiable reasons as to why they lost to Arizona this past weekend. For starters, their outstanding defensive coordinator, Norm Parker, couldn't travel with the team because of some health issues. The team looked like they missed him. In addition to that, Iowa hasn't won a game in the Pacific time zone since 1987, and there's a reason for that. It's hard for a team to play at a high level when the game takes place so far out of their normal routine. You might be one of those people who think the game conditions shouldn't matter; and that a team should be able to handle a brutal 90 degree, loud and humid environment at one o'clock in the morning. If you are one of those people, then hey, I have this totally awesome triangle scheme... er, business opportunity that I'd like to talk to you about.*

*Still, there are some things that concern me about Iowa -- namely their offensive line and secondary. If these two areas don't improve by next week, and Arkansas plays well against Alabama, Iowa will get the boot.*

### **Sugar Bowl: Alabama vs. TCU**

*As the week's go by, it's getting harder and harder to keep Alabama out of the National Championship game. If they continue looking this dominant, they're going to get promoted. TCU will likely stay here for the rest of the season because they've pretty much hit their ceiling. Of course they could always lose and get knocked out, but I was taught not to get wrapped up in wishful thinking.*

*Why Alabama? Because they have looked absolutely dominant through their first three games.*

*For me, there are three teams in the country that have established themselves as the elite group of title contenders; Alabama, Oregon and Ohio State. Nebraska is pushing themselves back into the discussion (a 35 point drubbing of Washington will do that...), but they still need to show that consistency week in and week out. But in Alabama's case, they suffer in my opinion because they have the hardest schedule to navigate. Five of their remaining nine opponents are ranked in the top 20. Of the five ranked opponents Alabama will face, three of those teams (South Carolina, LSU, and Auburn) will be coming off their bye weeks entering the contest. Forgive me if I don't think they end the season unbeaten.*

*Why TCU? Because they're winning their games, and they're winning big. Remember in last week's article, when I said TCU would have their hands full with Baylor quarterback Robert Griffin, and that you should check your ESPN scroll around six o'clock? Ha ha, I was just kidding around, man. One of my friends bet me that I couldn't waste the collective time of hundreds of Cleveland fans, and I wanted to make some easy cash. The Horned Frogs throttled Baylor 45-10. TCU quarterback Andy Dalton completed 21 of his 23 passes, and the Horned Frogs scored touchdowns on their first five possessions. Griffin had this to say about TCU and the game afterwards, "It's just embarrassing. I've never been more embarrassed in my life." Yeah, I guess it sounds like he played a BCS caliber team.*

### **Fiesta Bowl: Nebraska vs. West Virginia**

*This is the same matchup that I predicted last week, and we can only hope that if this game does happen, it ends up more exciting than it looks on paper.*

*Why Nebraska? Because they spent three hours last Saturday pummeling the love of Todd McShay's heart. Seriously, after hearing McShay talk about Washington quarterback Jake Locker all summer long, don't tell me you couldn't picture the two exchanging candy hearts like an elementary school couple. Poor Todd Mcshay, it must have been a tough day for him... Imagine if your fourth grade sweetheart was harassed by the Nebraska defense, forced into two interceptions and a 20% completion percentage. Would you be able to look at him/her the same way again, knowing he was only able to manage 71 passing yards? I doubt it. I wonder if Todd Mcshay still gets butterflies when he thinks about Jake Locker. (Dang it, I promised to work on my analogies... guess there's always next week).*

*Why West Virginia? Because they remain the strongest looking team in a weak conference. The Mountaineers got a big win over Maryland this past Saturday (crazy to think a win over*

Maryland is considered big to some teams). West Virginia quarterback Geno Smith provides something to this team that hasn't been there for a long time -- an actual vertical threat in the passing attack (looking at you with a condemning glare, Rich Rodriguez). Through three games, Smith has thrown for 800 yards and seven touchdowns, with just one interception. Combining his efficient and productive passing with Noel Devine's ridiculous talent in the backfield should provide enough offense to win the Big East.□

### **Rose Bowl:** Texas vs. Boise State

Oklahoma was knocked out of this week's prediction because of their poor effort defensively against Air Force. At this point, I might as well alternate between Texas and Oklahoma until the two teams meet in the Red River Rivalry.□

Why□ Texas? Because defensive coordinator Will Muschamp has his unit playing lights out this year, especially against the run. The Longhorns have only given up 132 yards on the ground through their first three games combined and no, I am not kidding. Garrett Gilbert has struggled throwing the ball, and the offense doesn't look like it's establishing the running game the way they want to. Still, they're winning games behind a strong defense and Gilbert will only get better as the season progresses. Texas plays UCLA this week, which means they basically have a bye week before they play Oklahoma on October 2. Then they get a real bye week the following Saturday before traveling to Lincoln for what could be the conference game of the year.□

Why Boise State? Because their 16-game win streak keeps growing, like the yard of that lazy neighbor you have that hasn't been mowed in three weeks. The Broncos will play their last game of the year this Saturday against Oregon State. If they can get a win over the Beavers, they'll blow through the nine remaining scrimmages they have on the schedule and earn a BCS bid.□

Let's go Beavers.

### **National Championship Game:** Ohio State vs.□ Oregon

*REMATCH, REMATCH, REMATCH!! Oregon's Speed vs. Ohio State's power. Spread offense vs. monster defense. Future vs. the past.□*

*The 40 days in between the last season of the game and the National Championship have to be filled with something, and this is the kind of hype we'd hear. Wouldn't it be fantastic?*

*Why Ohio State? Because nothing has changed from last week. The offense is looking pretty stellar. The defense is playing some crazy opportunistic football -- already compiling 12 turnovers through three games. The special teams continue to be an issue this year though. You could literally hear the collective groan of 100,000+ people as the Bobcats blocked an Ohio State punt this past Saturday. And if it weren't for a block in the back penalty, the Buckeyes would have surrendered another kickoff return for a touchdown. I know the block in the back made the play possible, but seriously, where was the safety? People keep saying that this is a Jim Tressel coached team and that special teams will get fixed. It's been three games and I'm still waiting.*

*Now, how awesome is it that□ this is the only thing we can really complain about when it comes to the Buckeyes?*

*Why□ Oregon? □ Because they're the most explosive team in the country right now. Aside from the fact that they're scoring more than a point per minute of football played -- they lead the country in total yards, total points, and total awesome. This team is just fun to watch. And oh yeah, they currently have the best scoring defense in the country as well. The Ducks have already recorded two shutouts and through three weeks, they've only allowed 4.3 points per game. Conference play starts this week for the PAC 10, so we'll get to see if Oregon can keep up their insane play against better competition.*

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