



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.

A quick prelude to this week's BCeStimation:

I was in Columbus for the Nationwide Better Health Marathon this past weekend and spent the majority of Saturday at the running convention, our hotel room (that didn't have ESPN, are you kidding me?) eating ungodly amounts of pasta, etc... In short, I wasn't able to watch as much college football as I usually do, so this week's article might not be as detailed as past articles. I'll get back into the full swing of things next week, and hopefully the Buckeyes will follow suit.

Now, it's starting to look like the Big Ten has four legitimate BCS caliber teams, and it's very hard to choose which two will get the nod. I try to take off the Scarlet glasses for this article. I also hate Wisconsin. These are just random thoughts. Let's stop and get to the picks before I get carried away.

Orange Bowl: Florida State vs. West Virginia

Same matchup as last week because both teams held serve.

Why Florida State? Because they beat Wisconsin 42-13 two years ago in the Champs Sports Bowl, so that means I kind of love them. They also won in embarrassing fashion this past weekend against Boston College, but hey, I'll take winning in embarrassing fashion over losing in embarrassing fashion any day. The Seminoles are half way through their ACC schedule and they're currently unbeaten in league play, so they probably only need two more wins to claim their division.

Why West Virginia? Because they handled one of the better teams in the conference (South Florida) this past Tuesday in a 20-6 victory. West Virginia continues to look like the class of the Big East. Unlike years past, the Mountaineers are winning games mainly because of their defense. The team is currently third in the country in points allowed, and if they keep flying around on that side of the ball, they're going to earn the BCS's automatic bid pretty easily.

Sugar Bowl: Alabama vs. TCU

Same matchup as last week because both teams held serve, take two.

Why Alabama? Because they successfully rebounded after their loss to South Carolina by beating Ole Miss 23-10. No, the offensive numbers don't look good at first glance, but Bama's defense got their groove back by smothering an Ole Miss offense that was putting up huge numbers in previous weeks. I still think the Tide will win the SEC because the other contenders don't like to play defense (read - Auburn) and are coached by a man who's so crazy he probably licks his hands repeatedly for fun (read - LSU).

Why TCU? Because they're still unbeaten. It's that simple. A couple of note-worthy tidbits, the Horned Frogs streak of shutouts (two games) ended when BYU managed a field goal in the third quarter. Also, after getting off to a slow start, TCU hit the gas pedal and apparently kept it down as they passed for a late fourth quarter touchdown when the game was already in hand. After the game, reporters asked head coach Gary Patterson if he was going for style points, and his response was the typical coach speak you would expect. But hey, I'd rather win and look like a jerk doing it then lose in an embarrassing fashion.

Fiesta Bowl: Ohio State vs. Auburn

Listen, I'm not a homer -- I have legitimate reasons as to why Ohio State is still in the BCS. Okay, maybe I am a homer, but I still have my reasons.

Why Ohio State? Because the Buckeyes are my favorite team. No, in all seriousness, it was hard watching the Buckeyes get pushed around in Madison. I spent three and a half hours in a TGI Friday's sitting next to a guy dressed in Florida gear, cheering vehemently against the Buckeyes as his team was on the other screen getting beat by Mississippi State 10-7. He showed no interest in his team's game, focusing solely on every mistake the Buckeyes made and obnoxiously cheering and chanting for Wisconsin. In the middle of downtown Columbus dude, really?

Anyway, I obviously knocked the Bucks out of the National Championship game, but I still think they'll make it to Glendale this January. I know that you can't call any game an easy win, but looking at four of the five remaining games on Ohio State's schedule, they look like W's (Purdue, Minnesota, Penn State and Michigan). If Ohio State can go into Iowa City and knock off the Hawkeyes, you can't tell me that the Fiesta Bowl would pass up on an 11-1 Ohio State team. Also, if you look at the BCS rankings, you can tell that the computers hate Wisconsin just as much as I do because the Badgers are currently [ranked three spots behind the Buckeyes](#) despite what happened this past Saturday. We'll just have to wait and see how the next six weeks unfold.

Why Auburn? Because Cam Newton is freaking crazy! The Auburn quarterback is shredding his way through SEC defenses and has forced himself to the top of everyone's Heisman list. I was able to catch a good amount of the Auburn - Arkansas game, and although Arkansas' defense is only a notch above Michigan's (okay, maybe two notches), Auburn still put up *65 points*. Yes, they gave up 43 in that game as well, but to this point, Cam Newton and this offense has been unbeatable. The Tigers will face their stiffest test this weekend as they host a very good (defensive) team in LSU. This one should be fun to watch.

**Side note* -- How much fun would it be to see Cam Newton square off against Terrelle Pryor and the Buckeyes? This would be a *fantastic* matchup, and is currently the best looking game from my predictions.

Rose Bowl: Iowa vs. Boise State

Same matchup as last week because both teams held serve, take three.

Why Iowa? Because I still like this team better than Michigan State and Wisconsin. Iowa was able to escape Michigan with a win this past Saturday and now turn their attention to the Badgers, who visit Iowa City this Saturday at 3:30. If Iowa wins this game, which I think they will -- they'll have some momentum for the following week's game against Michigan State. Ricky Stanzi has really cut down on the mistakes he made last year and that makes the Hawkeyes very hard to beat. Regardless, the Big Ten title race will start to take shape in Iowa City, and all the fun begins this weekend.

Why Boise State? Because they're fortunate enough to play a schedule that doesn't feature teams like Michigan, Wisconsin and Michigan State in consecutive weeks. Last week, while most other contenders were playing real teams, Boise was waxing San Jose State 48-0. The BCS standings currently have Boise ranked third, but if teams like Auburn, LSU, Michigan State and even Alabama continue winning, Boise will be justifiably jumped.

National Championship Game: Oklahoma vs. Oregon

How boring does this matchup look? I'm not even sure I would watch this game if it came to fruition. Okay, I obviously would because college football is my favorite sport, but I would hate every second of it.

Why Oklahoma? Because Texas isn't dead and knocked off Nebraska, giving Oklahoma the easiest path to Glendale of any other contender. The Sooners get a stiff test this weekend from a Missouri team that is playing fantastic defense this year. The game is at night in Memorial Stadium, so the Sooners will have to overcome the same obstacle that Ohio State couldn't handle this past weekend: managing the number one ranking on the road against a tough opponent... at night. Good luck with that Sooners.

Why Oregon? Because computers and humans and everyone loves offense! The Ducks are

coming off a bye week and go into their Thursday night matchup with UCLA well rested. Hopefully they took the week to tighten up some of the things that have been going wrong for them on defense. But as it stands, the Ducks offense looks pretty much impossible to stop (last statement applies specifically to Pac 10 defenses). After Thursday night, they'll get nine days to rest up for a USC team that will be looking for revenge after the beat down they received from Oregon last year.

Now if you'll excuse me, I have to go throw darts at my new *Bret Bielema* poster.

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