

By the Numbers, 10-15-11

All the classic signs of fall are here: sure the World Series (you know, the Fall Classic; baseball) is here, the leaves are changing, it's been over a month since you could wear white; but the real start of fall is the release of the first official BCS standings! The official top 8 are LSU, Alabama, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Boise, Wisconsin, Clemson, and Stanford. You'll note that my top 8 is remarkably similar.

The team that is #1 on the BCS computers is ... Oklahoma State. That struck me as interesting, since I have them #4. The biggest difference between the BCS computers and my system is that I use both wins/losses and points for/against; the BCS computer systems are not allowed to use points. I use points because it makes the predictions better. Logically, I would argue that better predictions mean a better ranking system; how else would you objectively judge a system? However, the BCS doesn't want the computer systems to encourage a team to run up the score on somebody (because clearly that never happens in the human polls). Anyway, the point is that my ratings shown below are a combination of ratings derived from wins only and ratings derived from points only – one way to view it is that the combination is 60% wins and 40% points. And I can change the weights. When I ran this week's ratings using only wins and losses, I got a top 5 of Oklahoma State, Oklahoma, Clemson, LSU, and Alabama. That matches up well with the BCS computers. Using wins only, Wisconsin is #18 for me and Stanford is #15; this explains their relatively low BCS standing. Strength of schedule is important for the computers and less so for the humans. I find it interesting that the computer objectively rates the strengths of schedules of the unbeaten teams in the order Oklahoma State, Oklahoma, Clemson, LSU, Alabama, Boise, Kansas State, Stanford and Wisconsin.

This week's marquee game is Southern Cal at Notre Dame, THE intersectional game. The page background is a program from 50 years ago, featuring "Notre Dame's first All-American." Given his dubious academic status and habit of playing professional games on Sundays under false names, I assume that the reference is to an official All-American list of outstanding players. I'm guessing that even without hints of Ronald Reagan and *Airplane!* you can identify this player.

The history of the rivalry is interesting. They started playing in 1926, which was a bold move back when Indiana was a long way from California. The official story is that the wives of Notre Dame coach Knute Rockne and Southern Cal athletic director Gwynn Wilson convinced them to schedule the series. Some are dubious of this old wives' tale (come on, you would have said it) and advance the theory that the matchup was motivated by money and marketing concerns. In college football? Actually, part of Notre Dame's motivation was getting a good game, because the teams in the Western Conference (now called ... wait for it ... the Big 10) refused to play them. It seems that Notre Dame's academic program was not up to the standards of Legends and Leaders.

The game often has national championship ramifications, but to my knowledge very few times have both teams been in contention. Amazingly, they each have 11 national championships and 7 Heisman winners. They are 1-2 in number of NFL draft picks (472 for USC, 469 for ND). The winner of the game gets to wield The Jeweled Shillelagh – I'm not going to touch that one!

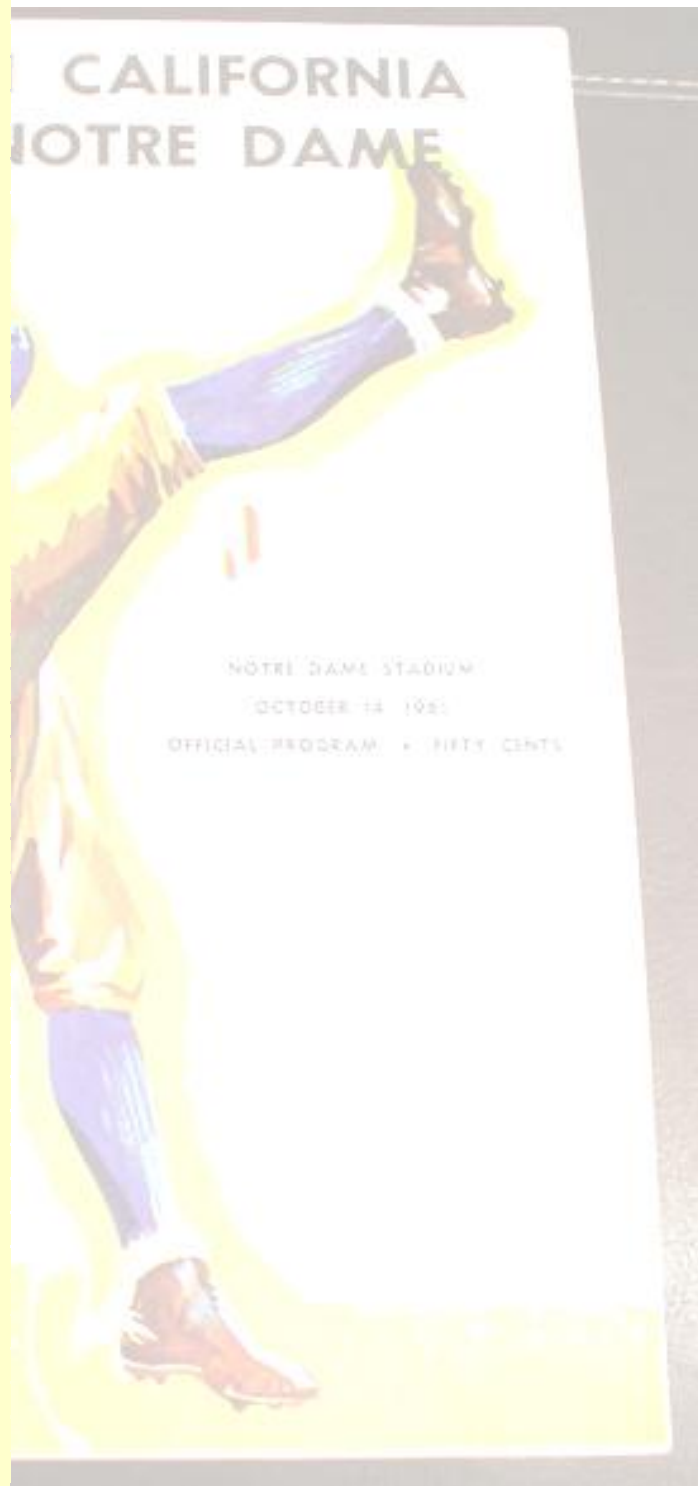
For the computer's pick of this and other top games of the week, simply subtract the teams' ratings and add 4 points for home field. We have

- Notre Dame over Southern Cal by 5
- Virginia Tech over Boston College by 32
- Virginia over NC State by 10
- Oklahoma over Texas Tech by 23
- Oklahoma State over Missouri by 11
- Stanford over Washington by 15
- SMU over SMU by 1
- Wisconsin over Michigan State by 5
- LSU over Auburn by 21

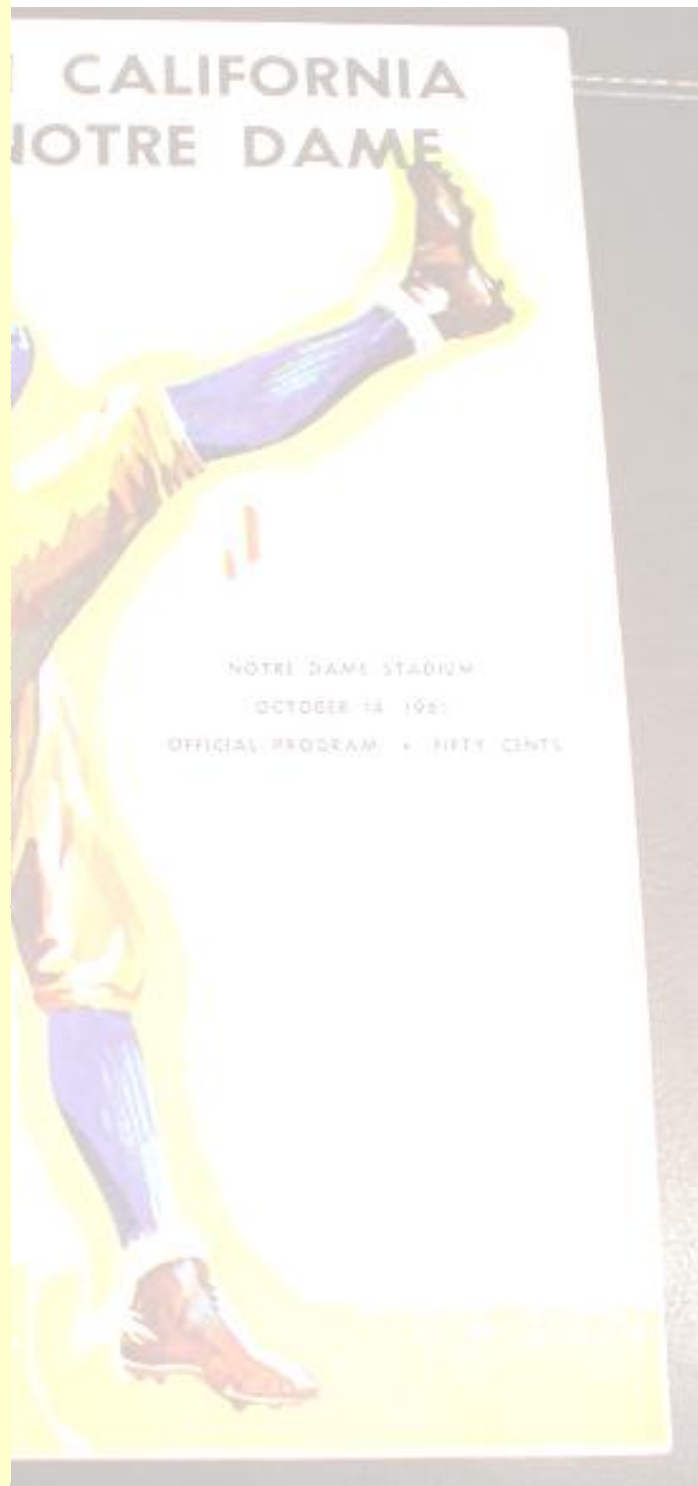
1	Oklahoma	95.10
2	LSU	93.78
3	Alabama	93.34
4	Oklahoma St	92.72
5	Boise St	92.28
6	Wisconsin	88.24
7	Stanford	87.57
8	Oregon	86.66
9	Clemson	86.21
10	Texas A&M	85.54
11	Kansas St	83.55
12	West Virginia	82.38
13	Michigan	82.27
14	Nebraska	82.16
15	Virginia Tech	82.10
16	South Carolina	81.76
17	Georgia	81.44
18	Texas	81.30
19	Arizona St	81.19
20	Arkansas	80.47
21	Penn State	79.77
22	Notre Dame	79.04
23	Michigan St	78.97
24	Houston	77.89
25	Southern Cal	77.56
26	Illinois	77.43
27	Missouri	77.28
28	SMU	77.10
29	Georgia Tech	76.83
30	Baylor	76.75
31	Auburn	76.71
32	Texas Tech	76.37
33	Washington	76.33



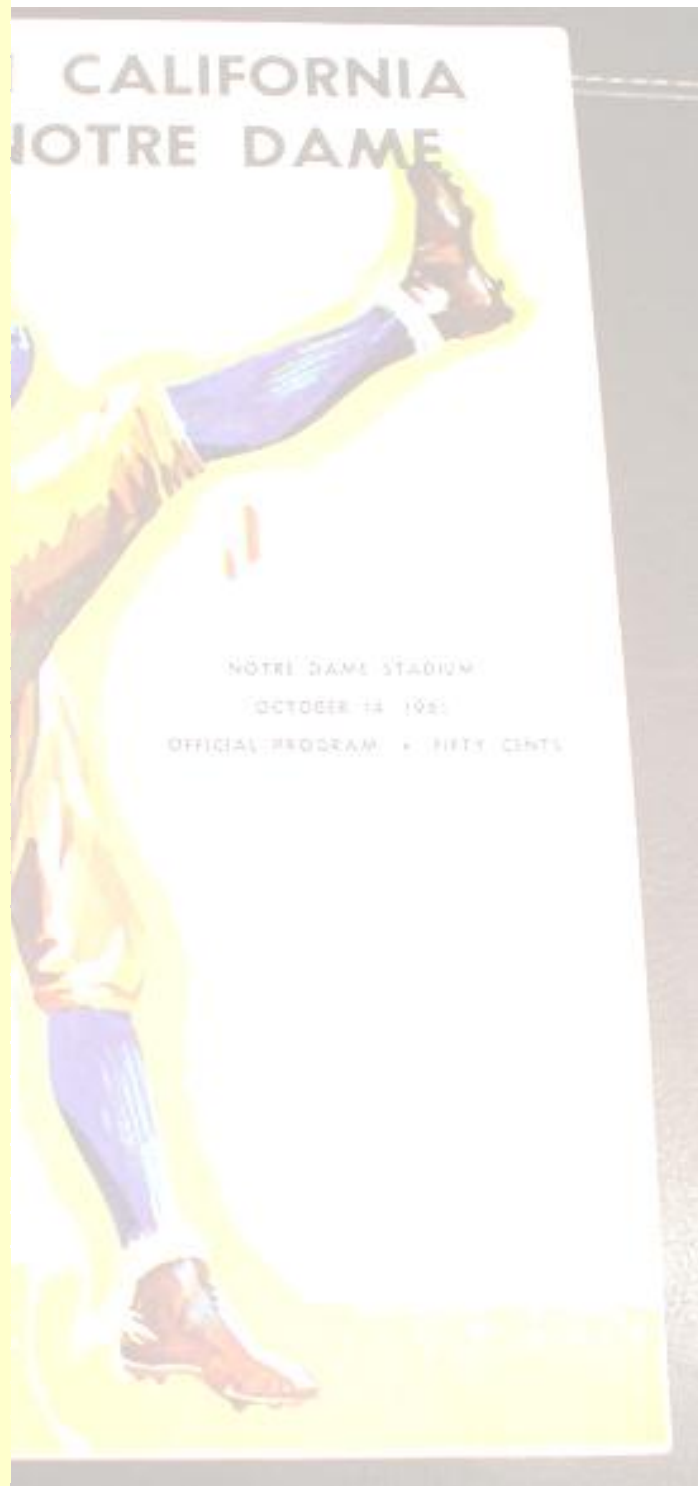
34	Temple	74.86
35	North Carolina	74.69
36	Toledo	74.60
37	Utah	74.50
38	Ohio State	74.25
39	Tennessee	74.24
40	TCU	74.24
41	Miami FL	74.03
42	Florida	74.02
43	Cincinnati	73.49
44	Rutgers	73.37
45	Southern Miss	71.78
46	Vanderbilt	71.51
47	Georgia Southern	71.32
48	South Florida	71.18
49	San Diego St	71.05
50	Florida St	70.81
51	Brigham Young	70.80
52	Maryland	70.42
53	Wofford	70.23
54	Tulsa	69.63
55	Iowa	69.21
56	UCLA	69.05
57	Louisiana-Lafayette	68.70
58	Nevada	68.65
59	Virginia	68.54
60	Mississippi St	68.01
61	Wake Forest	67.87
62	Pittsburgh	67.75
63	Syracuse	67.23
64	Iowa St	66.94
65	California	66.81
66	Northern Illinois	66.17
67	Western Michigan	66.15
68	Arkansas St	65.74
69	Florida Int'l	65.55
70	Kansas	65.00
71	Northern Iowa	64.38
72	Ball St	63.76
73	Washington St	63.61
74	Central Florida	63.57
75	Wyoming	63.07
76	Montana St	62.98
77	Utah St	62.91
78	UTEP	62.77
79	North Carolina St	62.76
80	Air Force	62.65
81	Mississippi	62.61
82	Marshall	62.44
83	Ohio U.	62.43



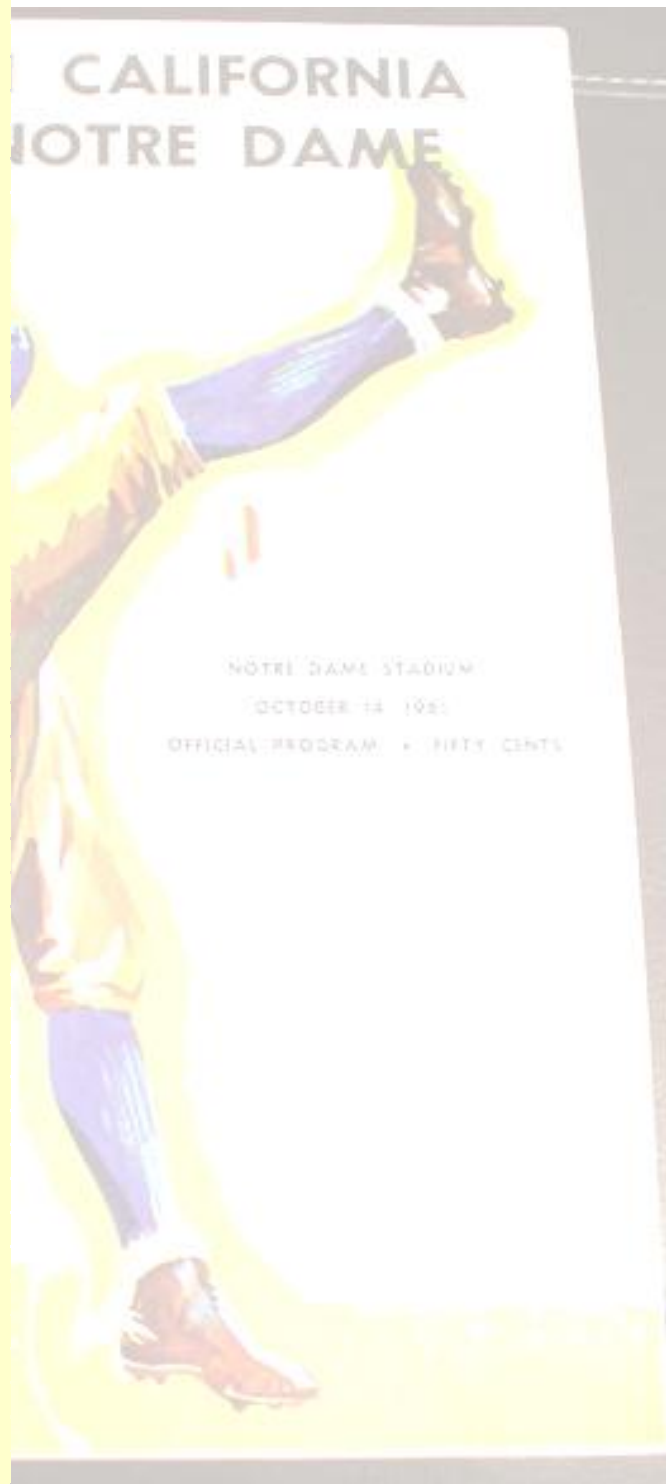
84	Sam Houston St	62.19
85	Navy	62.00
86	Connecticut	61.90
87	Fresno St	61.89
88	Arizona	61.77
89	North Dakota St	61.42
90	San José St	61.24
91	Hawai'i	60.98
92	Towson	60.20
93	Purdue	60.20
94	Maine	59.87
95	Duke	59.73
96	Bowling Green	59.62
97	Appalachian St	59.46
98	Harvard	59.43
99	Indiana St	58.85
100	Samford	58.72
101	Louisiana Tech	58.54
102	Louisville	58.46
103	Rice	57.98
104	Oregon St	57.90
105	Eastern Michigan	57.85
106	East Carolina	57.79
107	Kentucky	57.66
108	Chattanooga	57.60
109	Northwestern	56.98
110	North Texas	56.68
111	James Madison	56.21
112	Brown	55.91
113	Lehigh	55.88
114	Indiana	55.71
115	New Hampshire	55.69
116	Buffalo	55.47
117	Montana	55.22
118	Colorado	54.83
119	Army	54.81
120	Northwestern St	54.66
121	New Mexico St	54.54
122	Miami OH	54.36
123	Troy	54.02
124	Colorado St	53.88
125	Texas St-San Marcos	53.60
126	Boston College	53.60
127	Furman	53.30
128	Louisiana-Monroe	53.21
129	Cal Poly SLO	53.10
130	Liberty	52.97
131	Kent St	52.68
132	Jacksonville St	52.40
133	Central Michigan	52.39



134	Old Dominion	52.14
135	Norfolk St	51.70
136	South Dakota	51.19
137	Delaware	50.90
138	Coastal Carolina	50.45
139	Youngstown St	50.33
140	Holy Cross	50.32
141	Eastern Washington	50.28
142	Minnesota	50.26
143	Idaho	50.24
144	Massachusetts	50.02
145	Weber St	49.87
146	Central Arkansas	49.53
147	The Citadel	49.15
148	Western Kentucky	49.14
149	UC-Davis	48.63
150	South Alabama	48.63
151	Eastern Kentucky	48.60
152	McNeese St	48.39
153	Stony Brook	48.16
154	Illinois St	48.06
155	Elon	48.03
156	Southern Utah	47.94
157	Sacramento St	47.94
158	North Dakota	47.83
159	Portland St	47.51
160	William & Mary	47.20
161	Richmond	47.11
162	UNLV	47.08
163	Tennessee-Martin	47.03
164	Middle Tennessee St	46.64
165	Florida Atlantic	46.37
166	Western Illinois	46.15
167	Tulane	46.15
168	Akron	46.14
169	South Dakota St	45.56
170	South Carolina St	45.56
171	Yale	45.00
172	North Carolina A&T	44.52
173	Tennessee Tech	44.21
174	Murray St	44.10
175	New Mexico	43.48
176	Bethune-Cookman	43.15
177	Southern Illinois	42.70
178	Albany NY	41.92
179	Alabama-Birmingham	41.67
180	Rhode Island	41.41
181	Colgate	41.12
182	Memphis	41.01
183	Bucknell	40.99



184	Alabama St	40.89
185	Jacksonville FL	40.70
186	Northern Arizona	40.61
187	Jackson St	40.61
188	Stephen F. Austin	40.25
189	Lafayette	40.24
190	Hampton	39.69
191	Cornell NY	39.31
192	Georgetown DC	38.99
193	Morgan St	38.96
194	Missouri St	38.96
195	Presbyterian	38.80
196	Tennessee St	37.97
197	Western Carolina	37.33
198	Monmouth NJ	37.04
199	Nicholls St	36.87
200	San Diego	36.77
201	Villanova	36.63
202	Duquesne	36.62
203	Austin Peay	36.62
204	Drake	36.46
205	Lamar	35.82
206	Florida A&M	35.46
207	Bryant	34.61
208	Texas-San Antonio	33.65
209	SE Louisiana St	33.19
210	Idaho St	32.89
211	Howard	32.88
212	Gardner-Webb	32.72
213	Eastern Illinois	32.55
214	Georgia St	32.10
215	Pennsylvania	31.62
216	Robert Morris PA	31.42
217	Dayton	30.53
218	Dartmouth	30.16
219	Campbell	29.84
220	Butler	29.42
221	Sacred Heart	29.12
222	Alabama A&M	29.10
223	Princeton	28.61
224	Arkansas-Pine Bluff	27.70
225	Central Conn St	27.37
226	Northern Colorado	27.35
227	Fordham	27.29
228	VMI	26.83
229	Charleston Southern	26.32
230	Prairie View A&M	25.96
231	SE Missouri St	25.50
232	North Carolina Central	23.73
233	Southern U.	23.69



234	Delaware St	22.96
235	Marist	22.90
236	Wagner	22.82
237	Grambling St	22.06
238	Texas Southern	18.82
239	Morehead St	18.82
240	Savannah St	17.55
241	St Francis PA	17.11
242	Alcorn St	16.74
243	Columbia	15.79
244	Mississippi Valley St	11.81
245	Davidson	10.49
246	Valparaiso	7.03

