

Ratings 11-03-12

Welcome to the first 2012 edition of By the Numbers, a rating system for college football teams. The system is quite simple (see the website at www.roanoke.edu/mcsp/minton/bynumbers.html for a description and links to old ratings), using only schedule, points for and against, and wins and losses. The predictions are surprisingly accurate: for the games of 10/27 they picked 72% winners and 53% against the spread. Not enough to make a living, but pretty good.

I intend to post ratings every week from now until the end of the season; this year's slow start was due to my work schedule, although the more cynical among you might say it has something to do with this being the first week that Clemson has made my top 20. (And you probably don't believe all of the political ads on tv, either). I need to thank Dan Larsen again for invaluable assistance in getting the game results collected. Now, let's talk football. I hope you enjoy By the Numbers!

The Halloween weekend games threw quite a scare into some of the top teams, although the only bad tricks in the end were played on the underdogs. I expect that Tuesday's election will also come down to the wire, hopefully not going to overtime with "further review" necessary.

You'll notice pretty close agreement between my ratings and the BCS standings. It's looking like a bad year for a 2-team playoff, but the BCS has been voted out already, so we can just try to enjoy the debates. My ratings (which are illegal by BCS standards because they use points scored; I use them because they make the predictions better) show some definite trends this year. On the large scale, there is more parity than usual. That may seem an odd statement when 18 of the top 25 teams come from 3 conferences. (Interestingly, the most - 7 - is from the Pac 12; also, the Big 12 has 6 and the SEC 5 in the top 25; my ratings tend to underrate the SEC due to its horrible out-of-conference scheduling.) My point is that the Mountain West has Boise at #38, the MAC has Northern Illinois at #32, the WAC has Utah State at #33 and Louisiana Tech (in the official top 25) at #35, Conference-USA has UCF at #42 and the Sun Belt has Louisiana-Monroe at #58. Even the Big 10 has a team high in the list (actually, unbeaten Ohio State is at #10 and there are

several good, not great, teams in the conference). The ACC is not rated highly; just keep scrolling - have a snack, listen to some tunes - if you want to find your favorite ACC team in the ratings. For some context, Georgia Tech is #84.

Before discussing this week's games, I wanted to give a shout out to Valparaiso, which beat the Fighting Camels of Campbell College 41-21 for their first win of the year. I find this significant because Valparaiso came into the game ranked #245 out of 246; Campbell was and remains #246.

Finally, a word about the picture in the background. This week's big game is Alabama and Texas A&M. The history of this rivalry includes two Cotton Bowl games with unique features. The 1942 game was won by Alabama 29-21. The oddity is that the Tide scored far more points than first downs. And more of almost everything else, too: *one* first down. Seven interceptions. The 1968 game ended with Texas A&M winning 20-16 and the Alabama coach helping carry the Texas A&M coach off the field. Both coaches had stints at A&M before moving to Alabama; both won a national championship at Alabama. Can you name the coaches?

To use my ratings to predict this year's Bama/A&M game, take Alabama's rating of 99.0, subtract A&M's rating of 90.3, and add 4 for Alabama being at home: Tide by 13. A&M and Johnny Football looked very good against Mississippi State and Alabama has to be a little tired from their near-Death Valley experience at LSU. The 13 points looks good to me. This is by way of saying that I think the ratings give a good starting point for predicting games. Knowing exactly what the ratings ignore makes it possible to try to adjust them. That sounds good in theory, but I have never been especially successful at doing that.

Similar logic could lead a person to thinking that VT and UVa are underrated in their games against the Florida schools. Lane Stadium on Thursday night has historically been worth more than 4 points; we'll see. A Tech win could give the ACC Atlantic division to Clemson, so I say Go Hokies! Following the theme of Hangover Weekend, Kansas State on the road at TCU, Oregon at Cal and Georgia at Auburn offer mental challenges for the heavy favorites.

I have included a lot of games this week, partly due to some important conference matchups. The game you might not understand my listing is Florida at home to Louisiana-Lafayette. You might remember that Louisiana-Monroe gave some decent teams trouble on the road (and beat Arkansas). Last week, Louisiana-Lafayette soundly beat Louisiana-Monroe. Whether the Cajuns can stay spiced up or not, I wouldn't be surprised if that stayed close for a couple of quarters (Cajuns are used to hanging with gators).

So, here are several predictions. Enjoy the games!

Tuesday: Toledo over Ball State by 8 in the Glass Bowl

Wednesday: Ohio over Bowling Green by 8

Thursday: Arkansas State over Louisiana-Monroe by 1 (for the Sun Belt lead and likely bid to the Independence Bowl)

Florida State over Virginia Tech by 13

Saturday: Miami over Virginia by 9

Kansas State over TCU by 17 (to clinch the Big 12)

Alabama over Texas A&M by 13 (to clinch the SEC West)

Georgia over Auburn by 19 (to clinch the SEC East and a likely Vicking in the SEC title game)

Florida over Louisiana-Lafayette by 31

Nebraska over Penn State by 8

Michigan over Northwestern by 7

Wisconsin over Indiana by 5 (for the lead in the Big 10 Leaders division at least among the few leaders who aren't on probation)

SMU over SMU by 19 (hard to go wrong here)

San Diego State over Air Force by 15 (the Aztecs just upset Boise and are tied for the lead in the Mountain West)

Oregon over Cal by 20 (62 points and 730 yards for the Ducks against Southern Cal - wow!)

Southern Cal over Arizona State by 5

Stanford over Oregon State by 0.3

1	Alabama	99.03
2	Kansas St	96.20
3	Notre Dame	95.14
4	Oregon	94.45
5	Florida	93.66
6	Texas A&M	90.26
7	Oregon St	89.76
8	Oklahoma	89.67
9	Georgia	89.21
10	Ohio State	88.29
11	South Carolina	88.06
12	LSU	87.95
13	Stanford	86.08
14	Florida St	85.16
15	UCLA	85.05
16	Texas	83.66
17	Clemson	83.01
18	Texas Tech	82.91
19	Nebraska	82.85
20	Michigan	82.05
21	Southern Cal	81.94
22	Arizona	81.61
23	Arizona St	81.20
24	Oklahoma St	80.93
25	Louisville	80.46
26	Mississippi St	79.80
27	Iowa St	79.01
28	Wisconsin	78.92
29	Northwestern	78.66
30	Penn State	78.48
31	Washington	78.45
32	Northern Illinois	78.41
33	Utah St	78.22
34	Missouri	77.61
35	Louisiana Tech	77.19
36	Mississippi	77.10
37	West Virginia	77.08
38	Boise St	77.06
39	Michigan St	76.99
40	Brigham Young	76.78
41	North Carolina	76.45
42	Central Florida	76.03
43	Rutgers	75.96



44	Cincinnati	75.46
45	TCU	75.43
46	San José St	75.39
47	Utah	75.20
48	Toledo	75.02
49	Fresno St	75.00
50	Miami FL	74.69
51	Baylor	74.54
52	Vanderbilt	74.19
53	Kent St	74.05
54	Tennessee	73.28
55	San Diego St	73.17
56	Tulsa	72.50
57	Arkansas	72.47
58	Louisiana-Monroe	72.06
59	North Dakota St	72.00
60	Ball St	70.90
61	Navy	70.86
62	Minnesota	70.70
63	Iowa	70.50
64	Western Kentucky	70.28
65	California	69.98
66	Indiana	69.72
67	Duke	69.62
68	Purdue	69.34
69	Arkansas St	69.25
70	Syracuse	69.20
71	Ohio U.	68.28
72	Middle Tennessee St	67.97
73	North Carolina St	67.96
74	Pittsburgh	67.83
75	Virginia Tech	67.78
76	East Carolina	67.31
77	Nevada	67.20
78	Louisiana-Lafayette	66.84
79	Montana St	66.57
80	Eastern Washington	66.44
81	Auburn	66.12
82	Sam Houston St	66.05
83	Indiana St	65.41
84	Georgia Tech	65.38
85	SMU	65.20
86	Illinois St	65.06



87	South Florida	64.93
88	South Dakota St	64.78
89	Bowling Green	64.70
90	Wake Forest	64.52
91	Georgia Southern	63.91
92	Kentucky	63.66
93	Northern Arizona	63.65
94	Tennessee-Martin	63.48
95	Kansas	63.03
96	Western Michigan	63.02
97	Eastern Illinois	62.85
98	Cal Poly SLO	62.84
99	Washington St	62.83
100	Central Arkansas	62.71
101	Houston	62.61
102	Air Force	62.48
103	Troy	62.10
104	Virginia	62.04
105	Temple	61.39
106	Appalachian St	61.15
107	Southern Illinois	60.92
108	Stony Brook	60.50
109	Wofford	60.43
110	Marshall	60.30
111	Tennessee St	60.14
112	Eastern Kentucky	59.91
113	Illinois	59.76
114	Rice	59.67
115	Maryland	59.63
116	North Texas	59.58
117	Old Dominion	59.47
118	Miami OH	59.25
119	Central Michigan	59.13
120	UNLV	59.01
121	Texas St-San Marcos	59.01
122	Northern Iowa	58.98
123	Harvard	58.92
124	New Mexico	58.77
125	Bethune-Cookman	58.67
126	Jacksonville St	58.32
127	Missouri St	58.05
128	Boston College	57.90
129	Murray St	57.73



130	Youngstown St	57.70
131	McNeese St	57.70
132	Connecticut	57.65
133	UTEP	57.64
134	Towson	57.48
135	Wyoming	57.34
136	Florida Atlantic	57.12
137	Samford	57.02
138	Buffalo	57.00
139	James Madison	56.79
140	Chattanooga	56.46
141	Alabama-Birmingham	56.44
142	Army	55.97
143	Florida Int'l	55.96
144	North Dakota	55.83
145	Texas-San Antonio	55.76
146	New Hampshire	55.64
147	Richmond	55.39
148	Sacramento St	55.11
149	The Citadel	54.69
150	Colorado St	54.67
151	Villanova	54.20
152	Southern Utah	53.99
153	Colorado	53.77
154	Montana	53.57
155	Lehigh	53.40
156	Tulane	53.18
157	Eastern Michigan	52.66
158	Coastal Carolina	52.62
159	Albany NY	51.72
160	Stephen F. Austin	51.67
161	Arkansas-Pine Bluff	51.42
162	Akron	51.36
163	South Alabama	51.25
164	Memphis	51.02
165	Southern Miss	50.45
166	Portland St	49.51
167	Alabama St	48.60
168	UC-Davis	48.23
169	Idaho	48.13
170	Colgate	47.98
171	Northwestern St	47.79
172	North Carolina Central	47.77



173	Delaware	47.73
174	Furman	47.72
175	South Carolina St	47.64
176	Hawai'i	47.50
177	New Mexico St	47.47
178	Delaware St	46.81
179	Northern Colorado	46.66
180	Princeton	45.94
181	Weber St	45.92
182	SE Missouri St	45.89
183	SE Louisiana St	45.89
184	Alabama A&M	45.87
185	Maine	45.65
186	Wagner	45.59
187	Western Illinois	45.58
188	Howard	45.22
189	South Dakota	45.20
190	Elon	45.15
191	Tennessee Tech	44.77
192	Jackson St	44.52
193	North Carolina A&T	43.87
194	Brown	43.62
195	Fordham	43.31
196	Massachusetts	42.94
197	San Diego	42.89
198	Dartmouth	42.22
199	Florida A&M	42.17
200	Drake	41.81
201	Liberty	41.69
202	Cornell NY	41.53
203	Monmouth NJ	41.21
204	William & Mary	41.12
205	Pennsylvania	39.61
206	Lafayette	38.87
207	Morgan St	38.53
208	Duquesne	38.43
209	Jacksonville FL	38.25
210	Butler	38.14
211	Georgetown DC	37.52
212	Western Carolina	36.72
213	Dayton	36.47
214	Gardner-Webb	36.31
215	Lamar	36.08



216	Austin Peay	36.06
217	Nicholls St	36.01
218	Georgia St	35.52
219	Mississippi Valley St	35.37
220	St Francis PA	35.12
221	Southern U.	34.44
222	Robert Morris PA	34.43
223	Hampton	34.05
224	Norfolk St	33.90
225	Bucknell	32.92
226	Prairie View A&M	32.62
227	Central Conn St	32.59
228	Holy Cross	32.23
229	Alcorn St	31.83
230	Charleston Southern	31.78
231	Sacred Heart	31.21
232	Bryant	31.03
233	Columbia	30.42
234	Idaho St	30.01
235	Marist	29.93
236	Yale	29.27
237	VMI	29.01
238	Texas Southern	28.58
239	Morehead St	28.02
240	Rhode Island	27.56
241	Presbyterian	25.79
242	Savannah St	24.07
243	Grambling St	22.90
244	Valparaiso	15.97
245	Davidson	14.86
246	Campbell	10.00

