

It's Bowl Game Time!

Analysis by Bob Asmussen

It's that time of year again. The time when a true national champion is undecided and 16 teams end the season with at least one-game winning streaks. It also is the time of year when people such as myself, try and make some semblance of order out of the whole mess by predicting who will win. It's bowl game time.

This season's bowls have many peculiarities. For instance, why is Southern Methodist, with a 10-1 record, playing in the Sun Bowl? That one's simple enough to answer, they don't draw good TV ratings. They can't play Jan. 2. Another example, why is a 6-5 Notre Dame team playing in the Liberty Bowl? Why did a 6-5 Mississippi team play in the Independence Bowl? Why is a 6-5 Florida State team playing in the Peach Bowl? It's simple to answer, Virginia Tech, East Carolina and Washington State don't draw good TV ratings, so they can't play in a bowl game, even though they probably would be able to "kick the crap" out of any one of the three formerly mentioned teams. The last Bowl Game mystery: why is Iowa spending its holiday at the Gator Bowl, while an 8-3 Ohio State team, defeated, gets to dry out in Tempe and play in

the more prestigious Fiesta Bowl? Easy. The Hawkeyes don't draw good enough TV ratings.

Florida Citrus Bowl: Saturday, Maryland vs. Tennessee-Florida. Citrus Bowl? Why not rename it the Tangerine Bowl, the Frozen Orange Concentrate Bowl or the Dust Bowl or the Punch Bowl? Despite the stupid name pinned on this game, it promises to be a good one. Maryland is led by Bloomer Esiason who had a poor year by his standards. Boomer was touted as a Heisman candidate before the season but, then again, so was Marcus Dupree. Last year I thought Maryland would beat Washington in the Aloha Bowl and they let me down, this year they won't. Maryland 35, Tennessee 21.

Holiday Bowl: Dec. 23, Brigham Young vs. Missouri. Who would have thunk it? Missouri got to a bowl game and saved Warren Powers' job. Not only did they save his job but they got him an extension on his contract with a nice pay raise. OK, so Missouri is a good team. They beat both Illinois and Oklahoma. They gave Nebraska a good three quarters before Marlon Adler fumbled away an upset bid at the 2-yard line.

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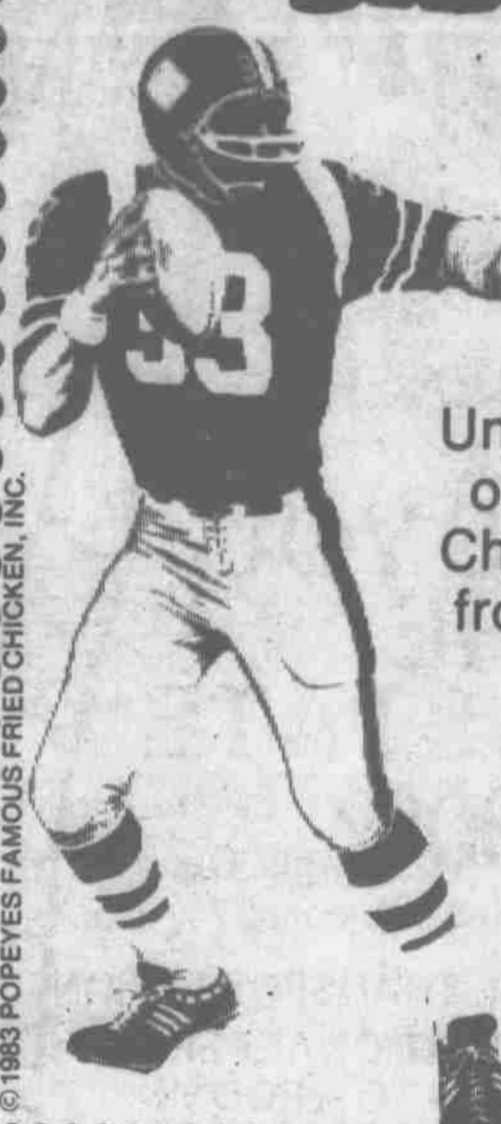
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