

DEC. 18

New Mexico Bowl

At Albuquerque, N.M.
UTEP (+12) over BYU
Cougars freshman QB Jake Heaps has been on a nice roll lately, but he's thrown too many picks (eight, to just 11 TDs) this season to give nearly two touchdowns.

Humanitarian Bowl

At Boise, Idaho
N. Illinois (-1) over Fresno St.
The departure of Northern Illinois coach Jerry Kill to Minnesota shouldn't stop the Huskies from playing Fresno, which lost 51-0 on this same blue turf on Nov. 19.

New Orleans Bowl

Ohio (+2.5) over Troy
Have to go with the MAC over the Sun Belt here. The Bobcats will ride their defense hard to get their first bowl victory in five tries.

DEC. 21

Beef 'O' Brady's Bowl

At St. Petersburg, Fla.
Southern Miss (+3) over Louisville
Here comes the first of many Big East disappointments this bowl season. Louisville's defense is solid but will bow to dual-threat QB Austin Davis.

DEC. 22

MAACO Bowl

At Las Vegas
Utah (+17) over Boise State
The Broncos' loss is college football fans' gain, as this is a fantastic matchup for Dec. 22. Have to give the motivational edge to the Utes, who will lose but cover.

DEC. 23

**Poinsettia Bowl**

San Diego State (-4.5) over Navy
The Aztecs haven't won a bowl game since 1969, but they'll get it done here. Quarterback **Ryan Lindley** has thrown for more than 3,500 yards this season.

DEC. 24

Hawaii Bowl

Hawaii (-10) over Tulsa
The Rainbows are nationally relevant again, and the offense is humming like it used to under June Jones. There could be 80 points here — and Hawaii might have 50 of 'em.

Dec. 26

Little Caesars Pizza Bowl

At Detroit
Toledo (-1.5) over FIU
The Rockets are tied for the national lead in forcing turnovers. For a program still in its infancy — FIU has only played nine seasons of football — that could be trouble.

DEC. 27

Independence Bowl

At Shreveport, La.
Ga. Tech (+3) over Air Force
This game should last about two hours, tops. With both teams running the option, give a slight edge to the Jackets, who are eager to put past bowl disasters behind them.

DEC. 28

**Champs Sports Bowl**

At Orlando, Fla.
West Virginia (-2.5) over N.C. State
The Mountaineers are riding a four-game winning streak and have the nation's 11th-ranked pass defense, which should provide comfort against **Russell Wilson & Co.**

2010-11 COLLEGE FOOTBALL BOWL GUIDE



Once again, Aaron McFarling handicaps the bowl season. All picks are made against the Las Vegas point spread. A minus sign means the team is favored and must win by more than that number of points. A plus sign means the team is the underdog and must win the game or lose by fewer than the designated points.

BCS BOWL GAMES

JAN. 1

Rose Bowl At Pasadena, Calif. Wisconsin (+2.5) over TCU
The Horned Frogs are a good team. They've pounded every decent opponent (Utah, Air Force, BYU) that's come their way. The problem is, those tests haven't come often enough. The Badgers have been destroying people — 201 points in their past three games! — and it's hard to give almost a field goal to a scorching squad like that.

Fiesta Bowl At Glendale, Ariz. Oklahoma (-17) over Connecticut
This is the BCS bowl nobody wants to see, featuring the Big East team desperately carrying its flag for the beleaguered conference. Kudos to the Huskies for winning five straight and capturing the circuit's rusty crown, but it's just hard to see any team from that pathetic loop competing against the big boys. Sooners roll by 25-plus.

JAN. 3

Orange Bowl At Miami Virginia Tech (+3) over Stanford
The Hokies just don't scare you in big games like they used to. They actually prepare for bowls like they want to win them, and lately they have, taking two straight. Stanford is a wonderful story led by a wonderful quarterback, but Tech has a pretty good signal-caller of its own. Look for Tyrod Taylor to add one lasting memory to his fantastic career.

JAN. 4

Sugar Bowl At New Orleans Arkansas (+3.5) over Ohio State
The inaugural bowl guide a few years back took shot after shot at the Big Ten — and the conference deserved it. But you know what? That league is pretty darn good this year. For the Buckeyes to emerge from the fray with only one loss is a nice feat, but I've still got to take the SEC and the points in this spot.

JAN. 10

BCS National Championship At Glendale, Ariz. Auburn (-3) over Oregon
How can you pick against Auburn here? They've escaped NCAA trouble, rallied from a three-touchdown deficit to win at Alabama and have the runaway Heisman Trophy winner at the controls. Hard to imagine a more attractive national title game than this one, and this is by no means a lock.



TYROD TAYLOR ■ VIRGINIA TECH TERRELLE PRYOR ■ OHIO STATE CAM NEWTON ■ AUBURN

Insight Bowl
At Tempe, Ariz.
Iowa (+1) over Missouri
Teams from neighboring states playing for the first time since 1910. Missouri backed out of a scheduled four-game series in 2005. Still think there are too many bowls?

DEC. 29

Military Bowl
At Washington
ECU (+7) over Maryland
As a Terp, it bums me to make this my lock of the bowl season, but I must. Maryland's five ACC wins? Wake, Virginia, BC, N.C. State and Duke — a real murderer's row.

Texas Bowl
At Houston
Baylor (-1) over Illinois
Like Maryland, the Illini fattened up on conference weaklings on their way to bowl eligibility. Baylor QB Robert Griffin III is a 66-percent passer with 3,195 yards.

Alamo Bowl
At San Antonio

Oklahoma State (-4.5) over Arizona
Another defenseless battle here. But with Arizona having lost four straight and the Cowboys boasting a 4,000-yard passer in Brandon Weeden, have to go with the favorite.

DEC. 30

Armed Forces Bowl
Army (+7.5) over SMU
The Mustangs are a long way from their "Pony Express" days. Look for the Black Knights to grind it out on offense and keep things close throughout.

Pinstripe Bowl
At New York
Syracuse (+1) over Kansas State
Don't ask me why. Maybe it's because a team from the Empire State is playing in Yankee Stadium. Despite the squad's Big East affiliation, gimme the Orange here.

Music City Bowl
At Nashville, Tenn.
Tennessee (+2) over North Carolina

The Music City Bowl often is an underrated affair, and this is no exception. SEC vs. ACC is always a must-watch. Vols have won four straight — and covered five in a row.

Holiday Bowl
At San Diego
Washington (+14) over Nebraska
Despite all the hype, Huskies quarterback Jake Locker is only completing 56.6 of his passes this season. Still, I'll take a flier on him when he's getting two touchdowns.

DEC. 31



Meineke Car Care Bowl
At Charlotte, N.C.
South Fla. (+5) over Clemson
I think Tigers QB **Kyle Parker** should be honing his pitching mechanics as

we speak, and I'm guessing he does, too. Come back and go 6-6? Could be 6-7 after this one.

Sun Bowl
At El Paso, Texas
Notre Dame (+3) over Miami
The Irish have won three straight against the spread and six of their past eight. The Hurricanes, meanwhile, have lost their coach and two in a row. But the swag's back next year, right Miami?

Liberty Bowl
At Memphis, Tenn.
UCF (+6.5) over Georgia
Instinct tells you the Bulldogs will roll, but UCF has been a blessing to bettors. They Knights have covered the spread in eight of their past nine games. Don't undervalue them.

Chick-fil-A Bowl
At Atlanta
South Carolina (-3) over Florida State
This is one of those games that could go a long way toward determining the strength of the ACC.

Which, if history holds, means the Seminoles will get their doors blown off.

JAN. 1

TicketCity Bowl

At Dallas
Northwestern (+9.5) over Texas Tech
Texas Tech is not an elite team. Fully aware the Wildcats aren't, either, but they won't need to be to cover this way-too-large number. Back-and-forth game, easy cash.

**Outback Bowl**

At Tampa, Fla.
Penn State (+7.5) over Florida
JoePa should feel right at home in the retirement haven of Tampa. Even if he isn't, though, the Gators have been less than impressive in recent losses to South Carolina and FSU. Take the points.

**Capital One Bowl**

At Orlando, Fla.
Michigan St. (+10) over Alabama
I love the Capital One Bowl. It's like golf's nebulous "fifth major" — every year, the matchup seems BCS worthy. QB **Kirk Cousins** and the Spartans are too good to lose by this many.

Gator Bowl

At Jacksonville, Fla.
Mississippi St. (-5) over Michigan
The Gator Bowl has to be thrilled to get rid of the ACC-Big East matchup — at least this year. The Wolverines aren't exactly steaming into this one after a 37-7 loss to rival Ohio State.

JAN. 6

GoDaddy.com Bowl

At Mobile, Ala.
Miami (Ohio) (-1.5) over Middle Tenn.
Both teams come into this one on a bit of a roll, but you've got to lean toward the RedHawks — who shocked Northern Illinois in the MAC title game for their fifth straight win.

JAN. 7

Cotton Bowl

At Arlington, Texas
Texas A&M (+1) over LSU
The Aggies have won six in a row, including dispatching rival Texas in the regular-season finale. Playing in the Dallas Metroplex shouldn't hurt their chances here.

JAN. 8

BBVA Compass Bowl

At Birmingham, Ala.
Kentucky (+3) over Pittsburgh
Sorry, Big East — this is a straight-up conference play. I just hope the Kentucky team that shows up is the one that took Auburn to the wire and beat South Carolina. No guarantees.

JAN. 9

**Fight Hunger Bowl**

At San Francisco
Boston College (+9.5) over Nevada
One good way to fight hunger is to donate all the snacks we won't be eating — because we won't be watching this game. Ah, what the heck. Maybe those great BC linebackers — like **Luke Kuechly** — keep it close.