

the LINE



Week 4 - Quote of the Week



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Less than two weeks ago, Clemson's DeShaun Watson issued a very public apology for "having developed some negative energy" in the program, saying in part:

*"This past weekend, you could just see it," Watson said. "You could just feel the energy, starting with me being the leader of the team, not enjoying it. You can tell my **body language** has been bad and it kind of spreads throughout the team and it spreads throughout the fans in the stadium that people weren't really excited about the game."*

While we all know that Elvis could move clouds about in the sky just by using his mind, who knew that a QB's body language could have such far-reaching effects—poisoning an entire stadium full of earnest fans? Over the past weekend, a college football commentator also mentioned that the QB's and other team leader's body language has an effect on others.

So as sure as two points define a line (HA!), we immediately see a pattern. Perhaps in addition to Intro to Geology (also known at Mizzou as "Rocks for Jocks"), it's time for another course for our collegiate gridiron warriors. Through a quasi-nefarious source, **the LINE** was able to obtain the preliminary syllabus below for a new class being jointly tested at both Notre Dame and Ole Miss this semester. The working title for the 12-step course is **Body Language: Learning to Read and Influence People without Saying a Word**.

1. **HEY, I'm Open! How Not to Cross your Arms and Legs**
2. **Alternatives to Fidgeting / Drawing a False Start Penalty**
3. **Does that Opposing Lineman's Head Tilt Mean He Thinks I'm Stupid?** [Yes]
4. **The Pros and Cons of Eye Contact: Us and Them**
5. **What are they hiding from me in that huddle anyway?**
6. **A Guide for Cornerbacks—Pacing: Being the Other Person's Mirror Image**
7. **For the O-Line and D-Line: Averting Your Gaze Signals Insecurity**
8. **SMILE!** (with a special video appearance by former Razorback coach John L. Smith) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-nQLd6z9OU>
9. **Expressing and Gesturing from the Heart: Why we still miss Bill Clinton**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=2NBIfVDKCOs
10. **Creating Mass Hypnosis with Cadence, Rhythm, and Guttural Utterances**
11. **When is it Okay to Cry on the Field of Play?** [The answer: Never. Not even if you win the BCS Championship Game; not when your cheerleader girlfriend says, "Yes!" to your Oh-So-Public Proposal, you Poser!]
12. **Capstone Project—Bringing it All Together: Expressing Yourself Through Interpretive Dance**

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It's Time for this Season's First Episode of . . .

The Under-Ranked and the Over-Ranked
A Very Special Edition: Now You KNOW that the LINE Speaks the Truth
. . . even when it hurts

The table below shows **the LINE's** quantitative assessment of which teams are currently the most Under-Ranked and the most Over-Ranked in the AP Poll.

THE MOST UNDER-RANKED		THE MOST OVER-RANKED	
#25	Oklahoma	#8	Michigan State
#23	Mississippi	#11	Wisconsin
NR	UCLA	#12	Georgia
NR	Iowa	#17	Arkansas
#18	LSU	#21	Texas
NR	Boise State		

First, the Under-Ranked: Except for Boise State—who though undefeated, has not and actually will not play any significant teams this season—these are one- or two-loss teams who either lost a close game to lesser opponents (LSU, Iowa, UCLA) or have lost twice to decent teams (Oklahoma, Ole Miss). It's way early, but we already plainly see that the human polls and all those mindless talking heads persist in over-reacting to and over-penalizing losses . . .

. . . while on the other hand, they also over-reward a *lack* of losses. Among the most Over-Ranked above, all but Texas are undefeated (the Longhorns have that one controversial loss at California, when they were sleepy). This displays the “**wins matter more than margin of victory**” bias we usually see when flawed humans begin employing their (myopic) “eye test.”

It's no surprise to this writer that the two most over-ranked teams both come from the Big 10. But oh baby, since they face each other this Saturday, maybe this over-ranking issues will be at least half-resolved by next week.

The third team listed above should ***prove once and for all*** that **the LINE** is not afraid to call it “as it is.” Our beloved Dawgs are over-rated at #12 this week based on their showing so far, having used the (gulp) “Luck of the Irish” to pull out wins in their last two games against paltry competition. Sad to say it, but there it is. Freshman QB Eason may gel sooner than later, and the O-line might begin hitting their blocks for Mr. Chubb, but traveling to Oxford this weekend to face (under-ranked) #23 Ole Miss may confirm today's over-ranking. We'll see: While the ESPN Football Power Index (FPI) estimates only a 25% chance for a Georgia victory (ugh), Fox Sports' simulation results say they have a 47% chance. We'll take the latter, without hesitation.

The fourth team listed, #17 Arkansas, is again a painful admission. But outside of a complete shellacking of ~ #142 Texas State last weekend, their two other wins were by a TOTAL of 4 points, and one of them took double overtime plus several fortunate calls and decidedly quirky turns to occur at all. Still, our hope is that the Hogs finally assert themselves against the dreaded A&M Fish Campers and win this week, so that their current ranking will be validated!

Time will tell; maybe these teams really are this bad or this good, but maybe not. And for the remaining 17 teams in the AP Top 25? While they're not perfectly ranked as they should be, they are closer to being “ranked right” than either group above.

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^ AP Poll Rankings ^ HOME team in CAPS ^ Central Times ^ SATURDAY unless noted ^

split decision means that Vegas, the computers, and simulation sites do not all agree on the winner

SEC – The Best



vs.

- **Top 25 Action from the SEC (duh):** The #23  OLE MISS Disparaging Rebels over

The Young & The Restless of #12



Georgia by 9, 33-24 ~ 11:00 AM ESPN



- **Top 20 Demolition Derby in the SEC—from only hypothetically neutral**

JerryWorld (AT&T Stadium) in Arlington, TX: #10



TEXAS A&M over #17



Arkansas by 7, 28-21 ~ 8:00 PM ESPN

- #1 Calm & Cool (unless there's A** to be chewed) State Wet Matches by 46, 49-3 ~ 11:00 AM SEC



ALABAMA over the



Kent

- **Top 20 Battle from the SEC (East?)** The #14



TENNESSEE Rounder Wanna

Bees over #19 "Orange you glad to see us?"



Florida by 5 1/2, 26-21 ~ 2:30 PM CBS

- #18 “Is it time to start playin’ yet?”  lsu over the  AUBURN Disenchanted by 2 1/2, 26-23 ~ 5:00 PM ESPN

○ **From not really neutral –but not like it really matters–Gillette Stadium in**



Foxboro, MA: The  Mississippi State Ding Dongs (“Y’all can ring ‘em and eat ‘em!”)

over “We just last like about a minute, man”  MASSACHUSETTS by 21, 34-13 ~ 2:30 PM PPV/online

- *No point spread offered by Vegas—only in **the LINE!*** “Much Ado About . . . Nothing”

 MISSOURI over the  Delaware State Micro Gnats by 51, 54-3 ~ 3:00 PM SEC


- The  WESTERN KENTUCKY Dukes of Paducah over the  Vanderbilt Viscounts by 7, 30-23 ~ 3:30 PM CBS Sports Network

- **split decision:** The  KENTUCKY Stoooped (*with Head and Shoulders Habitually Bent Forward*) over New (Not Old) Ball Coach  South Carolina by HALF A POINT, 28-27 ~ 6:30 PM SEC

the rest

- The #3  Louisville Amped Up over the  MARSHALL Scattered Herd by 27, 47-20 ~ 7:00 PM CBS Sports Network



- The #4  MICHIGAN Deflate Gate Support Group (Did Gisele make the trip too?) over

the  Penn State Snarling by 18 1/2, 36-17 ~ 2:30 PM ABC



vs.

- #5 “I’m Only Human”  Clemson over the  GEORGIA TECH Human Calliope by 8 ½, 33-24 ~ THURSDAY 6:30 PM ESPN

- The #7  Stanford Onward Christian Soldiers over the  UCLA Godless Horde by 3 ½, 26-23 ~ 7:00 PM ABC



- **From the Big 10 (duh), it’s yet another *Nominal* Top 20 Slap Fight—the “Neither-of-these-Team-Deserves-to-be-Ranked” Bowl . . . oh well, at least one of ‘em’s gotta lose!:**

- #8 “How Green Was My Valley”  MICHIGAN STATE over the #11  Wisconsin Wet Nurses by 4 ½, 24-20 ~ 11:00 AM Big 10



vs.



- #9 “Isn’t the **Huskies** coach rather **SLIM?**”  Washington over “Are You Not Entertained?”  ARIZONA by 12 ½, 37-24 ~ 9:30 PM PAC12


- The #13  Florida State Dowsed over  SOUTH FLORIDA’s Wally World by 4 ½, 31-27 ~ 11:00 AM ABC






vs.




- The #16 Hootie & the Blowfish of  BAYLOR (“Let Her Cry”) over *That’s Some Bad*



Haircut There, Coach Mike  Oklahoma State by 7 ½, 38-30 ~ 6:30 PM FOX

- **split decision:** The #24  UTAH Fast-Traveling Native Americans over the usc Ladies in Waiting by 2, 26-24 ~ FRIDAY 8:00 PM Fox Sports 1 

- “Toto, I don’t think we’re in Kansas anymore”  IOWA STATE over “Align with us,

Fellow Spartans!”  San José State by 6, 30-24 ~ 11:00 AM FOX Regional (if you’re lucky, Two-Time Best Man Craig)

- The  MINNESOTA Golfers over the  Colorado State Greenskeepers by 16 ½, 37-20 ~ 11:00 AM ESPNU

- The  VIRGINIA TECH Blue Ridges over the  East Carolina Cape Fears by 12, 33-21 ~ 11:30 AM ACC



vs.



West Virginia

- From “Let’s call it neutral?” FedEx Field in Landover, MD: The



Wavy Lay’s over the byu Baked! by 6, 28-22 ~ 2:30 PM ESPN2



vs.



- The Soon-to-be-Re-Ranked OREGON Hydroelectric over the



OREGON Hydroelectric over the



Colorado Sluice Box by 8 ½, 37-28 ~ 4:30 PM PAC12

- *No point spread offered by Vegas—only in the LINE!* Winless but not yet Hopeless



ARKANSAS STATE over the Central Arkansas Friends of Barney by 16 ½, 37-20 ~ 6:00 PM PPV/online—or just drive on up to Jonesboro, Farrell



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We Can't Kick a Program When It's Down


Okay then, maybe just a few “extra points” to warm-up the leg:

1. Among FBS independent teams, Notre Dame (1-2) is now in a 3-way tie for second with Massachusetts (*guffaw*) and BYU. Army (3-0) is alone as the King of the Mountain (Hill, to be more truthful) in this Non-Conference Group of **Leftovers**.
2. The Irish rank no better than 40th in: passing yards (tied for 40th), rushing yards (72nd), points for (43rd), and points against (tied for 94th).
3. So it's clear that it must be time for the **Patsy Parade** to begin in earnest! I mean, how long can you bask in the afterglow of that one **big** win over #91 Nevada?
 - a. This week they face Laughably Distraught #68 Duke.
 - b. But wait! They'll follow this up with a game against weaker #82 Syracuse.

So in just two weeks, the Faux Irish will again sport a “winning” record (3-2) . . . and no doubt begin muttering about why they're *NOT* in the Top 25 and headed for a New Year's Six Bowl.

Praise be to the Father—and thanks for the early Xmas present. This week's prediction:

- Mercifully (and Thankfully) Unranked  NOTRE DAME over the truly

Formidable  Duke Ruthless (hey, there's no one with that name on their roster) by 19, 38-19 ~ 2:30 PM NBC [Notre Dame Network, of course]

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+ ciao 4 now,
randy