

the LINE



Week 7 – ESPN Game Day Poster of the Week



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Without further delay, it's time for another episode of . . .

The Under-Ranked and the Over-Ranked

In less than three weeks we'll finally know "The Truth." Or at least what this year's College Football Playoff Committee will try to sell as such. (Fear not, dear reader: You have the ever-watchful eye of **the LINE** on your side.) But until then, how's that AP Poll doing? Below is **the LINE**'s current assessment of which teams are the most Under-Ranked and the most Over-Ranked this week:

THE MOST UNDER-RANKED		THE MOST OVER-RANKED	
NR	LSU	#10	Nebraska
#23	Auburn	#11	Baylor
NR	Washington State	#15	Boise State
#19	Oklahoma	#9	Tennessee
#17	Virginia Tech	#8	Wisconsin
NR	Stanford	#20	West Virginia
		#21	Utah

First, the Under-Ranked: These are all two-loss teams, except for Virginia Tech who lost to some SEC team at a race track. That's still an over-simplification and over-condemnation of early season losses; let's see if these teams rise up in the coming weeks. We note that two of the six are from the SEC (West, for you conspiracy theorists) and two others are from the Pac 12.

On the Over-Ranked side of the ledger, we find three one-loss teams (Tennessee, Wisconsin and Utah); at least the first two did lose to Top 10 teams. The other four teams are undefeated—and we’d say largely unchallenged as well. As proof, here are their “signature wins” so far in 2016:

The Over-Ranked & Undefeated <i>Signature Wins</i> This Season		
#10	Nebraska	3-point win over unranked 2-4 Oregon; Strength of Schedule [SOS] rank = 84 th
#11	Baylor	a victory over unranked Oklahoma State—and even with that, the Bears’ SOS still ranks 117 th ; maybe Art is not the only one in Waco with a cover-up—take off the blinders, alums (not talking about you, Donald)
#15	Boise State	a 3-point win over unranked Washington State; SOS rank = 76 th
#20	West Virginia	a 1-point win over unranked 3-2 Kansas State and a 3-point win over unranked 3-3 BYU . . . which at least nets them the SOS rank prize at 28 th

As before, we see over-rewarding for a lack of losses, even if you play inferior teams; shoot, a *win* does matter more than the *margin of victory* and who you beat, right? And once again for the conspiracy theorists among you: Among the seven over-ranked teams above, two are from the Big 12 (hmmm) and two are from the big 10 (double hmmm). Well, for the latter at least, Ohio State should “correct” Wisconsin’s over-ranking this weekend . . . or verify it I suppose, if you’re a die-hard Cheese Head.

We find that in most cases, “The Real Truth” will come out: Three weeks ago Michigan State, Texas and (regrettably) Georgia were on the over-ranked list. No longer, and no longer in the AP Top 25 either.

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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.




- o  GEORGIA, Georgia—*The Whole Day Through* over the  Vanderbilt Ship of Fools by 12 1/2, 30-17 ~ 11:00 AM SEC



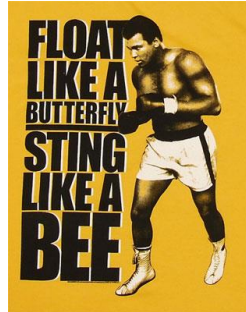
vs.



- **Top 25 Match-Up in the SEC West:** #12  Ol' Miss-y Padme Hum over the #22  ARKANSAS Sims BBQ by 7 1/2, 35-28 ~ 6:00 PM ESPN
- **Top Ten Tangle in the SEC:** #1 “Defense Wins Championships—and Scores Points!”  Alabama over the #9  TENNESSEE Deflated by 12 1/2, 35-23 ~ 2:30 PM CBS
- #18 “Calling ALL Tigers: Come Play at Our House”  FLORIDA over the  Missouri M-I-*whatever* by 13, 30-17 ~ 3:00 PM SEC
- The  BYU Bland, Young & Useless over the  Mississippi State Bell Cows by 7 1/2, 31-24 ~ FRIDAY 9:15 PM ESPN
- The  LSU Unreasonable over the  Southern Mississippi In-con-MISS-tent by 26, 40-14 ~ 6:30 PM SEC


the rest

- **Nominal Top 10 Squabble in the small 10:** The #2  Ohio State TOSU Tofu over #8 “Cheese—It’s *What for Dinner*”  WISCONSIN by 10 1/2, 30-20 ~ 7:00 PM ABC
- The #3  CLEMSON Rodney Dangerfields over Slip Slidin’ Away  North Carolina State by 17 1/2, 38-20 ~ 11:00 AM ABC



vs.





- #7 “Fly like a Butterfly, but Stung like a Bee”  LOUISVILLE over Daisy  Dukes & Cowboy Boots by 32, 49-17 ~ FRIDAY 6:00 PM ESPN



- The #10  Nebraska Nuberry over the  INDIANA Chicanery by 4 ½, 30-26 ~ 2:30 PM ABC/ESPN2







vs.




- #11  BAY(lor) [should be] WATCH(ed) over the  Kansas Parrot Fish by 32, 49-17 ~ 2:30 PM FOX Sports 1

- #13 “Where’d that Speed Bump come from?”  HOUSTON over “We Coulda Been a Contender!”  Tulsa by 21 ½, 44-23 ~ 6:00 PM ESPN2

- The #14 “Plop Plop Fizz Fizz—Oh what a relief it is!”  FLORIDA STATE over the  Wake Forest Walking Dead by 20 ½, 37-17 ~ 2:30 PM ESPN

- #15 “Boll me up some Taters”  BOISE STATE over the  Colorado State Fort (Barnabas) Collins by 29, 43-14 ~ 9:15 PM ESPN2

- #16 “One Toke (but not One Point) Over The Line, Sweet Jesus”  MIAMI over the



North Carolina Rightly Embarrassed by 8 ½, 35-27 ~ 2:30 PM ABC/ESPN2



- The #17  Virginia Tech Valiant over the  SYRACUSE Sub-Par by 20 ½, 42-21 ~ 2:45 PM ESPNU







vs.

Purple balances the stimulation of red and the calm of blue. With a sense of mystic and royal qualities, purple is well liked by very creative or eccentric types and is the favorite color of adolescent girls.



- #19 “We are . . . Climbing . . . Jacob’s . . . Ladder”  OKLAHOMA over the  Kansas State Purple over by 10, 34-24 ~ 11:00 AM ESPN

- **split decision (Vegas says PICK 'EM = all EVEN):** The  TEXAS TECH Marauders over the #20  West Virginia Sure Shots by HALF A POINT, 42-41 ~ 11:00 AM FOX Sports 1


- The #21  Utah Canyonlands over the  OREGON STATE Early Resers by 10, 30-20 ~ 3:00 PM PAC12

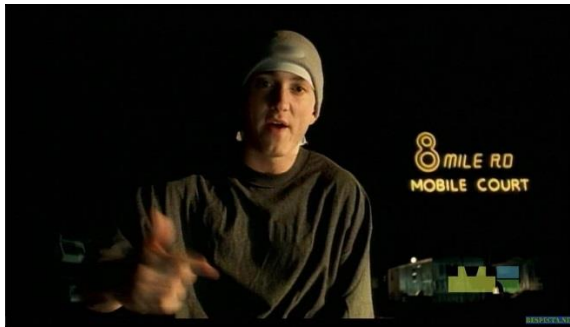


vs.




- **Both Undefeated in the MAC—but not after Saturday!**: The #24  Western

Michigan Row House over the  AKRON Zipa-Dee-Doo-Dahs by 12, 39-27 ~ 2:30 PM
CBS Sports Network



vs.




- **split decision:** *The Eminem Bowl*— Lose Yourself  MARYLAND over the “Un-Real”

Slim Shady of  Minnesota by 5 ½, 27-21 ~ 11:00 AM ESPNU





- **The 2-3 “Biggest Loser” Bowl:** *The Defeaters of 2-4 Notre Dame* and *the FCS’s 0-6*

Furman  MICHIGAN STATE over *The Defeaters of both Iowa and Duke*



Northwestern by 3 ½, 24-21 ~ 2:30 PM big 10 



- **Both Winless . . . in the One Conference with One True Champion! (some years)**

Staunchly Trump  TEXAS over Just Leaning Trump  Iowa State by 13, 37-24
 ~ 6:00 PM Longhorn, PPV, online, local, CNN?

- **Just Three Losses in Total for Both Teams this Season—and Two of Those Against**

USC: The  COLORADO Charging over the  Arizona State Matadors by 12,
 35-23 ~ 7:00 PM PAC12



vs.



- **Late Game:** The Wazoo Woo-Hoo of  WASHINGTON STATE over the  ucla
 Uneven by 6, 33-27 ~ 9:30 PM ESPN

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What About Notre Dame: The AGNOSTIC vs. ATHEIST Edition

the LINE and most college football fans (including many Irish supporters) are, like the old joke, moving from being agnostic to being atheistic:

Q: What's the difference between an agnostic and an atheist?

A: An agnostic doesn't know if there is a God; an atheist doesn't care.

This weekend we have a [traditionally] much-anticipated game between Notre Dame and Stanford. In fact, **the Line** has this game as a split decision—meaning that Vegas, the computers, and simulation sites do not all agree on the winner. Intriguing, right?

Not so much. For this year, the two teams' combined record is an abysmal, not-ready-for-prime-time 5-6. We wonder: Can the NBC/Notre Dame Network advertisers get a rebate?

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

1 Corinthians 15:55 (KJV)

We do enjoy kicking the Irish in the gut 97%+ of the time. But when even Irish fans know that they suck large, it's hard for us to keep on kicking. Part of the fun is watching the Irish lovers rationalize and explain why they've fallen on "unlucky times" or "the refs made bad calls," and that they will soon come steaming back. Kind of like watching Kayleigh McEnany defend Trump's latest misstep(s) on CNN.



So we outsourced / commandered another's breakdown of this week's "classic." Because we just don't care so much.

Notre Dame (2-4) vs. Stanford (3-2) Game Preview

excerpts from a story by Pete Fiutak, <http://collegefootballnews.com/>

Why Stanford Will Win

Why has Notre Dame been so awful? The big problem appears to be confidence, if that can be quantified.

When you're at Notre Dame and the playoff is gone, the New Year's Six is out of the question, and there's no real hope for anything other than, maybe, a bowl game, it's hard to find the mojo again.

But really, the problem continues to be the secondary that was an issue going into the season, and struggled throughout the first five games—[though] saved statistically last

week against NC State by the weather . . . and the Irish – stunningly – didn’t rely on their offensive line, and instead tried to move the ball with QB DeShone Kizer throwing it in a monsoon.

For Stanford this week, all that matters is gearing up the offense for the rest of the Pac-12 season, and that means it’s time to start firing away.

Why Notre Dame Will Win

Christian McCaffrey is hurting with a leg injury. Stanford won’t be able to rely on No. 5 this week, and while it might seem like a nice idea to get the passing game going, outside of a desperate drive against UCLA, nothing suggests the Cardinal can bomb away.

Kizer should be able to light up the Cardinal secondary, since the Stanford pass defense is not stopping anyone. [Last year] Kizer threw for 284 yards and two scores. He’ll blow up the Cardinal secondary this year.


What’s Going To Happen?

It’s been a horrible few weeks for the Notre Dame defense, the ground game, and more than anything else, **the coaching staff**. Both teams are a long, long way from where they were at the end of the 2015 regular season. This time around, Stanford is too banged up, Kizer is too good, and the Irish will finally come up with something positive.

Pete’s Notre Dame vs. Stanford Prediction

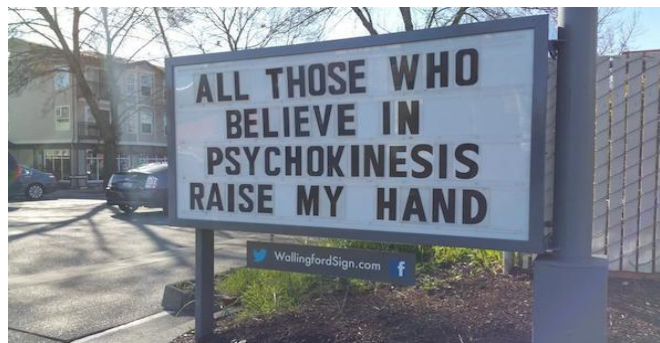
Final Score: Notre Dame 31, Stanford 27

the LINE calls it even closer:

- **split decision:** **The Unranked “Oh How the Mighty Have Fallen!” Bowl**—“It’s the Defensive Coordinator’s Fault! No, it’s the Players’ Fault!”  NOTRE DAME over

Christian Who?  Stanford by HALF A POINT, 28-27 ~ 6:30 PM NBC

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+ ciao 4 now,
randy