

By the Numbers, 10-22-11

One of the interesting questions about football ratings is how stable they should be. On the one hand, you don't want teams bouncing from #2 to #21 and back to #2 in consecutive weeks. A team like Boise that has a somewhat disappointing week should not suffer much (although I'm in favor of a little suffering, say dropping behind Clemson). On the other hand, teams that lose are supposed to drop. I was worried that Oklahoma might still be #1 in my ratings even after their loss to Texas Tech. They dropped to #5, which is about right. The human polls tend to follow rules: teams that win rarely drop, teams that lose always drop. But, here's a tough question: what if LSU and Alabama really are the top two teams in the country, they play in Tuscaloosa in two weeks and Alabama wins a great game on a late field goal; do we really need to drop LSU to #5 or lower? If so, we're not really trying to rate the teams, we're working some sort of ambiguous seniority system of teams moving up the pay scale just because they're still there. It might feel right because we're used to it, but the underlying logic is dubious. My system does not work by adjusting last week's rankings; each week it starts from scratch and evaluates the results from the entire season. Most of the BCS computer systems also start over each week. Thus, they sometimes do not obey the careful choreography of the unofficial rules that govern the human polls.

The background picture celebrates the 50th anniversary of one of college football's most famous mascots. To get full credit, you must name the horse as well as the team.

This week's classic rivalry is Georgia and Florida. Like Texas and Oklahoma, it is played on a neutral site (Jacksonville) and supporters of both sides keep the local police busy. They are proud of the designation "World's Largest Outdoor Cocktail Party." On Wikipedia, the history of the rivalry begins with the statement "The two teams do not agree on when the rivalry began." They definitely played in 1915 (they disagree about whether a Georgia win in 1904 should count), and every year since except for 6. The game has been in Jacksonville since 1933. Among several memorable plays in the rivalry was the Georgia celebration after scoring first in 2007 – the entire team partied in the Florida endzone. Even for this game, that took the tailgating concept too far.

For the computer's pick of this and other top games of the week, simply subtract the teams' ratings and add 4 points for home field. We have

Georgia over Florida by 6

Stanford over Southern Cal by 3

Virginia Tech over Duke by 19

Miami over Virginia by 16

Oklahoma over Kansas State by 1

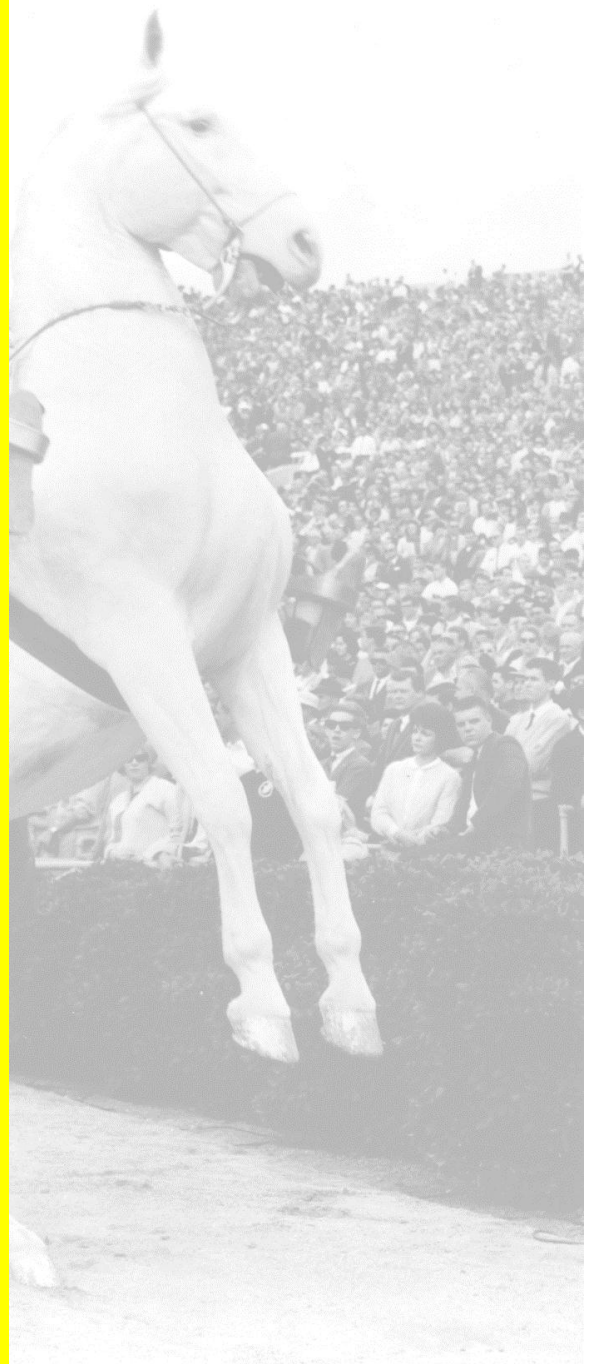
Oklahoma State over Baylor by 11

Nebraska over Michigan State by 2

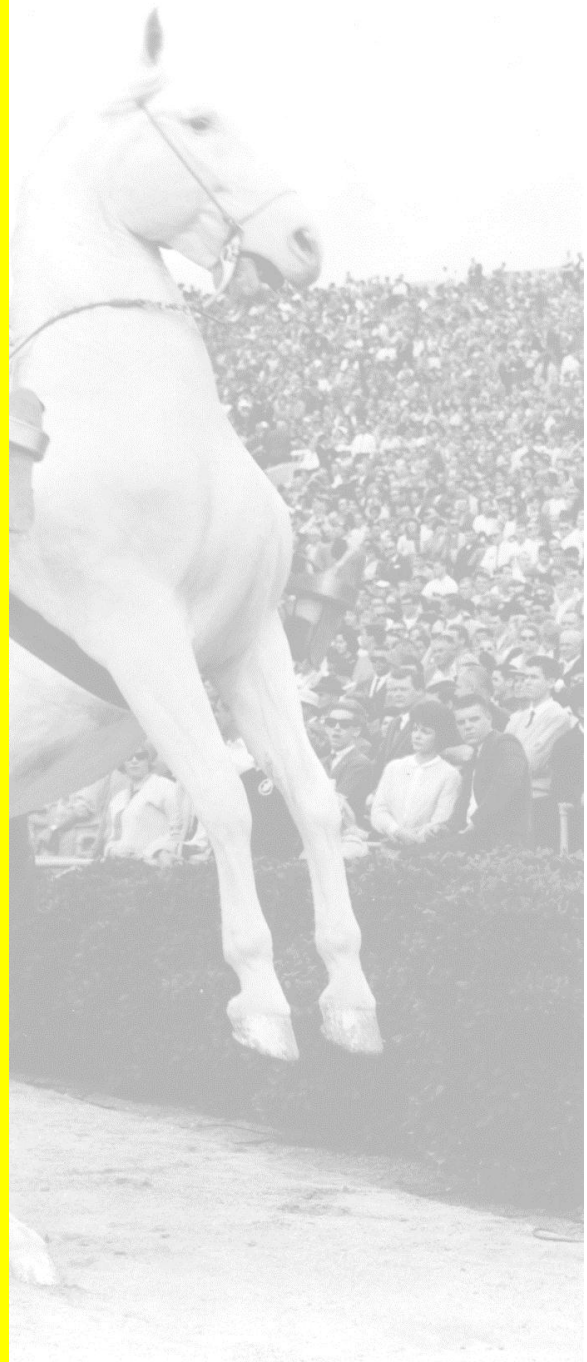
Penn State over Illinois by 9

Wisconsin over Ohio State by 6

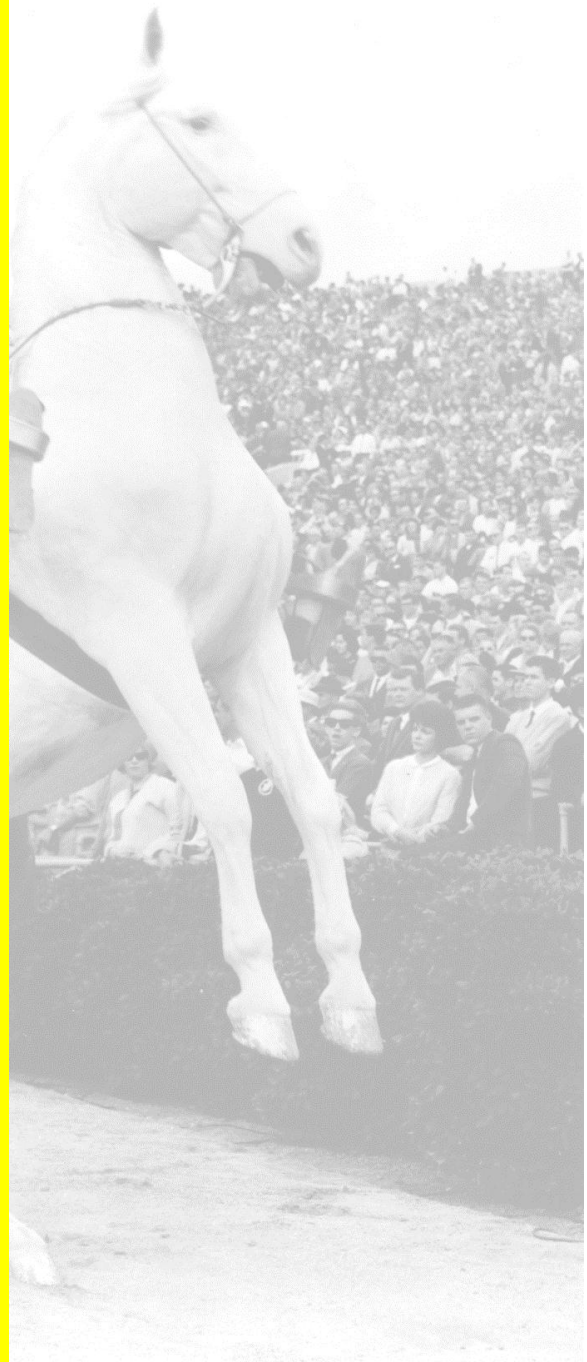
1	LSU	97.43
2	Alabama	96.42
3	Oklahoma St	95.23
4	Boise St	92.87
5	Oklahoma	92.79
6	Stanford	91.84
7	Oregon	91.01
8	Clemson	89.08
9	Kansas St	87.84
10	Texas A&M	87.80
11	Wisconsin	87.16
12	Michigan	85.39
13	South Carolina	85.33
14	Virginia Tech	85.23
15	Southern Cal	84.52
16	Michigan St	83.89
17	Georgia	83.36
18	Houston	83.06
19	Arizona St	82.96
20	Arkansas	82.89
21	Nebraska	82.43
22	Texas	81.87
23	Texas Tech	81.78
24	Penn State	81.47
25	Notre Dame	80.53
26	Baylor	79.91
27	Miami FL	79.20
28	West Virginia	79.15
29	Auburn	78.03
30	Missouri	77.99
31	Southern Miss	77.92
32	Toledo	77.81
33	Cincinnati	77.81
34	Florida	77.64
35	TCU	77.39
36	Ohio State	76.59
37	Tennessee	76.26
38	Georgia Tech	76.24
39	Washington	76.21
40	Illinois	76.16



41	North Carolina	76.11
42	SMU	76.00
43	Syracuse	75.51
44	Florida St	75.39
45	Vanderbilt	74.12
46	California	73.47
47	Wake Forest	73.32
48	San Diego St	73.32
49	Tulsa	73.15
50	Temple	72.85
51	Rutgers	72.63
52	Georgia Southern	72.49
53	Mississippi St	72.43
54	Utah	72.36
55	South Florida	72.12
56	Iowa	72.11
57	Nevada	71.94
58	Arkansas St	71.38
59	Brigham Young	70.72
60	Arizona	69.97
61	Iowa St	68.66
62	Pittsburgh	68.63
63	Maryland	68.62
64	Purdue	68.58
65	Wofford	68.53
66	UCLA	67.48
67	North Carolina St	67.47
68	Northern Illinois	67.30
69	Virginia	67.22
70	North Dakota St	67.18
71	Air Force	66.97
72	Northern Iowa	65.95
73	Louisiana-Lafayette	65.73
74	UTEP	65.71
75	Mississippi	65.36
76	Kansas	65.31
77	Western Michigan	65.04
78	Louisville	64.72
79	Florida Int'l	64.67
80	East Carolina	64.47
81	Ball St	64.44
82	Louisiana Tech	64.38
83	Ohio U.	64.29



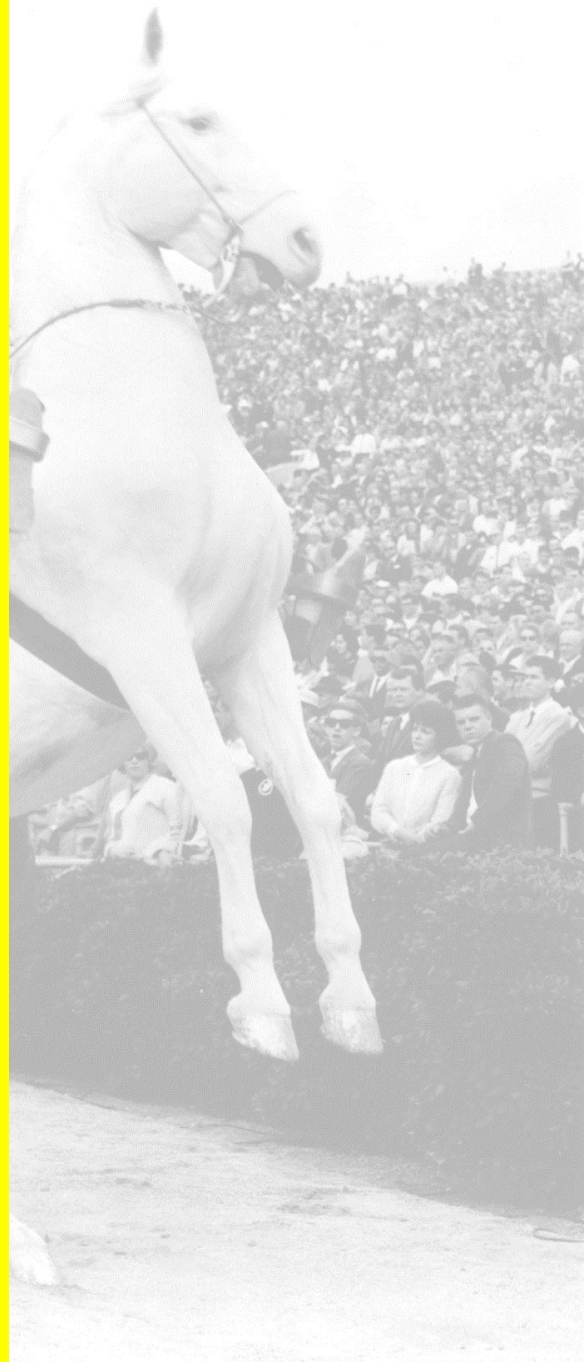
84	Kentucky	64.26
85	Sam Houston St	64.09
86	Hawai`i	64.01
87	Appalachian St	63.88
88	Bowling Green	63.77
89	Marshall	63.54
90	Navy	63.47
91	Eastern Michigan	63.42
92	Wyoming	63.02
93	San José St	62.72
94	Maine	62.72
95	Fresno St	62.66
96	Oregon St	62.56
97	Connecticut	62.56
98	Towson	62.43
99	Duke	62.24
100	Washington St	61.93
101	Harvard	61.35
102	Chattanooga	61.33
103	Montana St	61.21
104	Utah St	61.17
105	Rice	61.13
106	Central Florida	60.43
107	Northwestern	60.30
108	North Texas	59.86
109	Brown	59.69
110	New Hampshire	59.43
111	Lehigh	58.87
112	Furman	58.51
113	Samford	58.35
114	Indiana St	58.24
115	James Madison	58.12
116	Colorado	57.55
117	Western Kentucky	57.43
118	Boston College	57.36
119	Troy	57.34
120	Montana	57.24
121	Miami OH	57.24
122	Old Dominion	56.66
123	Cal Poly SLO	56.34
124	Buffalo	56.33
125	Army	56.31
126	Northwestern St	55.87



127	New Mexico St	55.66
128	Minnesota	55.63
129	Indiana	55.46
130	South Dakota	55.43
131	Central Michigan	54.94
132	Louisiana-Monroe	54.93
133	Liberty	54.71
134	Middle Tennessee St	54.67
135	Illinois St	54.38
136	Jacksonville St	54.34
137	Colorado St	54.15
138	Eastern Kentucky	54.09
139	Holy Cross	53.90
140	Kent St	53.79
141	The Citadel	53.01
142	Eastern Washington	53.01
143	Central Arkansas	52.31
144	Massachusetts	52.15
145	Idaho	52.15
146	Youngstown St	51.93
147	Stony Brook	51.54
148	Southern Utah	51.34
149	Norfolk St	50.65
150	Texas St-San Marcos	50.46
151	Delaware	50.36
152	Richmond	49.64
153	Alabama-Birmingham	49.56
154	Portland St	49.02
155	Tennessee-Martin	48.99
156	Bethune-Cookman	48.96
157	Weber St	48.84
158	McNeese St	48.76
159	Tennessee Tech	48.54
160	Murray St	48.40
161	North Dakota	48.33
162	Elon	48.27
163	Tulane	48.24
164	UNLV	48.23
165	Rhode Island	48.11
166	Sacramento St	48.07
167	William & Mary	48.02
168	Coastal Carolina	47.94
169	UC-Davis	47.74



170	Memphis	47.70
171	Akron	47.51
172	Southern Illinois	47.36
173	South Dakota St	47.34
174	Florida Atlantic	47.09
175	South Alabama	46.07
176	Albany NY	45.78
177	Missouri St	45.76
178	Georgetown DC	45.75
179	South Carolina St	45.67
180	Alabama St	45.41
181	Lafayette	45.38
182	Western Illinois	45.23
183	Yale	45.00
184	Jackson St	44.88
185	New Mexico	44.73
186	Stephen F. Austin	44.66
187	Bucknell	44.66
188	Jacksonville FL	44.04
189	Presbyterian	43.56
190	North Carolina A&T	43.27
191	Hampton	43.22
192	Northern Arizona	43.16
193	Morgan St	42.08
194	Colgate	42.01
195	Florida A&M	41.98
196	Tennessee St	41.81
197	Cornell NY	41.58
198	Monmouth NJ	40.96
199	Duquesne	40.40
200	Howard	40.20
201	SE Louisiana St	40.11
202	Bryant	39.64
203	Gardner-Webb	39.63
204	Pennsylvania	39.59
205	Georgia St	39.57
206	Villanova	38.81
207	Drake	37.94
208	Austin Peay	37.72
209	Western Carolina	37.71
210	Eastern Illinois	37.29
211	Campbell	36.68
212	Lamar	36.08



213	Dartmouth	35.20
214	Idaho St	34.52
215	San Diego	34.32
216	Texas-San Antonio	34.11
217	Nicholls St	34.02
218	SE Missouri St	33.68
219	Princeton	33.68
220	Dayton	33.63
221	Robert Morris PA	33.37
222	Alabama A&M	33.31
223	Arkansas-Pine Bluff	32.09
224	Sacred Heart	31.98
225	Northern Colorado	30.72
226	Prairie View A&M	30.55
227	Fordham	30.06
228	Marist	29.74
229	Central Conn St	29.22
230	Charleston Southern	28.36
231	Southern U.	28.22
232	Butler	28.15
233	VMI	27.77
234	Grambling St	26.64
235	North Carolina Central	26.09
236	Wagner	25.98
237	Delaware St	23.75
238	Texas Southern	23.21
239	Savannah St	22.66
240	St Francis PA	21.61
241	Alcorn St	21.09
242	Morehead St	21.06
243	Columbia	18.32
244	Mississippi Valley St	15.71
245	Davidson	14.21
246	Valparaiso	7.50

