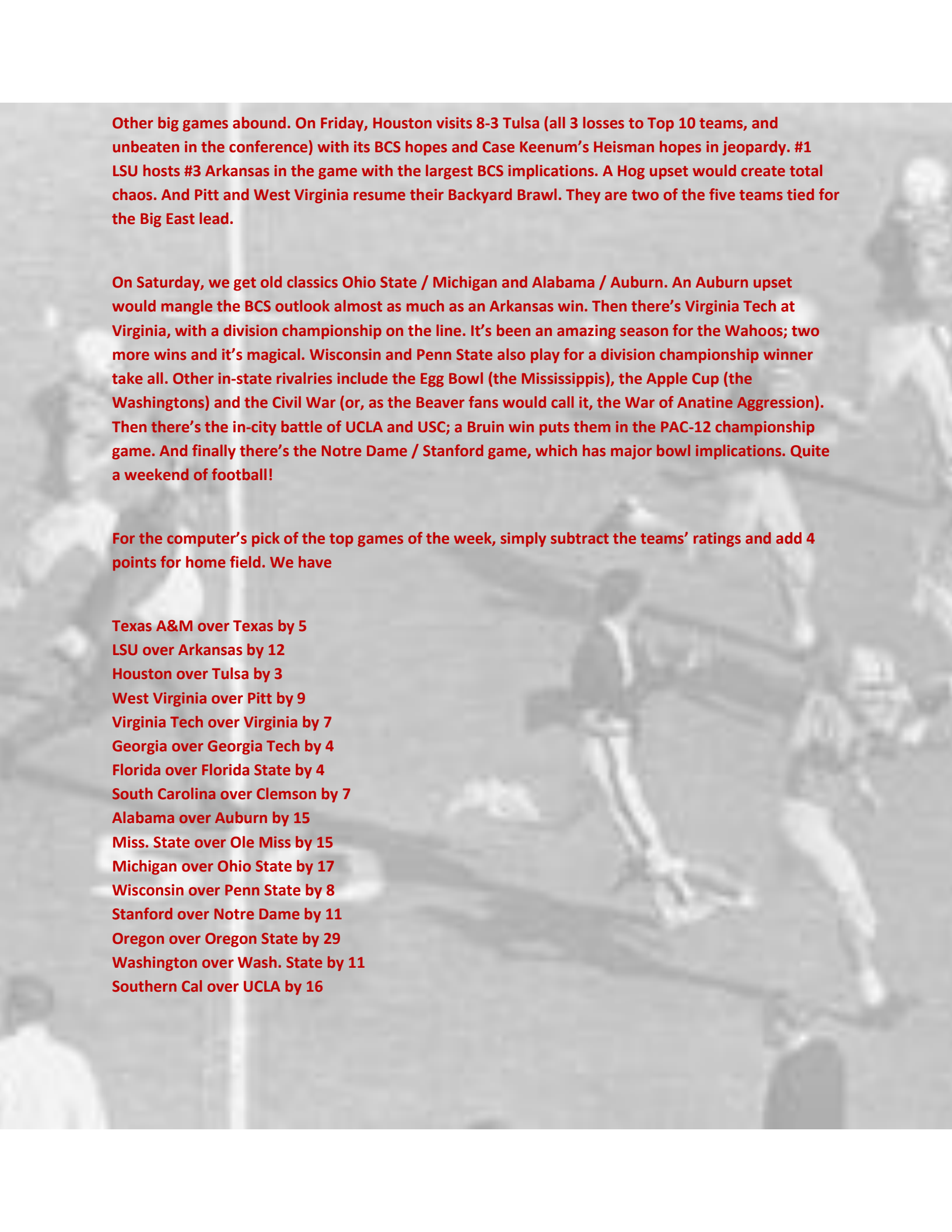


## By the Numbers, 11-19-11

The BCS is a mess! There is great gnashing of teeth as we debate which one-loss teams are deserving of facing LSU for the championship. And what if LSU loses to either Arkansas or Georgia? Then it's a complete free-for-all! Perhaps, people are hoping, this is the situation that will finally convince everybody that the BCS is flawed and we need a playoff. As Lee Corso says, "Not so fast, my friend." (You might as well insert the f-bomb he dropped over the weekend, too.) I think that the issue of playoff or not is separate from the BCS issue. What I mean is, if you had a 4-team playoff this year, which four would it be? How about 8? In any playoff system, you have a finite number of teams and there will always be arguments over that last spot. In the NCAA basketball tournament last year, I remember hearing how VCU didn't deserve that 68<sup>th</sup> spot. My point is that the BCS is a way of choosing teams for the system that is in place. And I think it's a good one. Without it, we'd have the bowls deciding matchups based on backroom intrigue and projected TV ratings and whatever other bizarre criteria they used to give us games like BYU beating 6<sup>th</sup>-ranked Michigan (that is, 6<sup>th</sup> in the Big 10; 6-5 record) for the 1984 national championship. At least there are objective criteria to determine which two teams play in the championship game. We may not agree 100%, but in a year like this year there is no single correct choice. That said, I do not agree with my ratings; but I also don't agree with the official polls. I think that the O-teams are certainly top 8 and probably top 6. I wouldn't put Oklahoma State at the top, though. LSU and Alabama seem to me to be the place to start, and after that you can throw some darts.

The answer to last week's trivia question is Roman Gabriel, NC State quarterback from 50 years ago. Not exactly a *Greek* statue, I guess. (The previous week, by the way, featured the Ramblin Reck of Georgia Tech.) This week's background honors one of the greatest pranks ever. This was, I'm sad to say, perpetrated by South Carolina versus Clemson in 1961. A South Carolina fraternity had "borrowed" some football uniforms that looked like Clemson's, dressed up one of the brothers to look like Clemson coach Frank Howard, and came running onto the field for pre-game drills. The Clemson crowd roared, then looked on stunned as the frat boys proceeded to stumble, drop passes and generally look like fools. They then formed two lines, with one line holding their thumbs down while the other side grabbed the thumbs and made cow-milking motions. At some point, the Clemson crowd caught on that it was a hoax and chased the impostors off. Hey ... maybe that's what happened at NC State last Saturday.

This is the week of traditional rivalry games, including the three SEC-ACC games in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina. The computer likes the SEC in all three. Then we have what might be the last Texas / Texas A&M game. What has always been a fierce rivalry that was fun to watch from the outside (and for many years featured a "party" for the winners at the Chicken Ranch in Lagrange) is now a symbol of modern collegiate athletics: A&M is mad/jealous about the ridiculous money and publicity given Texas by the Longhorn Network and is taking their game elsewhere. One last chance to enjoy this Turkey Day game!




Other big games abound. On Friday, Houston visits 8-3 Tulsa (all 3 losses to Top 10 teams, and unbeaten in the conference) with its BCS hopes and Case Keenum's Heisman hopes in jeopardy. #1 LSU hosts #3 Arkansas in the game with the largest BCS implications. A Hog upset would create total chaos. And Pitt and West Virginia resume their Backyard Brawl. They are two of the five teams tied for the Big East lead.


On Saturday, we get old classics Ohio State / Michigan and Alabama / Auburn. An Auburn upset would mangle the BCS outlook almost as much as an Arkansas win. Then there's Virginia Tech at Virginia, with a division championship on the line. It's been an amazing season for the Wahoos; two more wins and it's magical. Wisconsin and Penn State also play for a division championship winner take all. Other in-state rivalries include the Egg Bowl (the Mississippi), the Apple Cup (the Washingtons) and the Civil War (or, as the Beaver fans would call it, the War of Anatine Aggression). Then there's the in-city battle of UCLA and USC; a Bruin win puts them in the PAC-12 championship game. And finally there's the Notre Dame / Stanford game, which has major bowl implications. Quite a weekend of football!

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

Texas A&M over Texas by 5  
LSU over Arkansas by 12  
Houston over Tulsa by 3  
West Virginia over Pitt by 9  
Virginia Tech over Virginia by 7  
Georgia over Georgia Tech by 4  
Florida over Florida State by 4  
South Carolina over Clemson by 7  
Alabama over Auburn by 15  
Miss. State over Ole Miss by 15  
Michigan over Ohio State by 17  
Wisconsin over Penn State by 8  
Stanford over Notre Dame by 11  
Oregon over Oregon State by 29  
Washington over Wash. State by 11  
Southern Cal over UCLA by 16



1	Oklahoma St	98.23
2	LSU	97.63
3	Alabama	96.40
4	Oklahoma	96.03
5	Oregon	91.31
6	Stanford	91.23
7	Boise St	89.88
8	Kansas St	89.47
9	Arkansas	88.99
10	Michigan	88.70
11	Wisconsin	88.06
12	Baylor	87.08
13	Texas A&M	86.99
14	Southern Cal	86.84
15	Houston	86.84
16	Georgia	86.22
17	Texas	86.12
18	Virginia Tech	86.03
19	South Carolina	85.27
20	Missouri	84.80
21	Michigan St	84.33
22	Notre Dame	83.91
23	Penn State	83.71
24	TCU	83.12
25	Nebraska	83.04
26	Clemson	82.59
27	Iowa St	80.29
28	Tulsa	80.11
29	West Virginia	78.76
30	Utah	78.55
31	Florida	78.45
32	Florida St	78.25
33	Georgia Tech	78.22
34	Miami FL	77.97
35	Arizona St	77.97
36	Iowa	77.56
37	Auburn	77.52
38	Southern Miss	77.46
39	Rutgers	76.84
40	Illinois	76.83
41	North Carolina	76.66
42	Cincinnati	76.47
43	Tennessee	76.09
44	Ohio State	76.02
45	Toledo	75.78



46	California	75.52
47	Arkansas St	75.33
48	Texas Tech	75.31
49	Virginia	75.23
50	Mississippi St	74.93
51	Brigham Young	74.83
52	Vanderbilt	74.45
53	Washington	74.28
54	UCLA	74.20
55	Northern Illinois	73.69
56	South Florida	73.35
57	Pittsburgh	73.26
58	Louisiana Tech	72.96
59	San Diego St	72.93
60	Wake Forest	72.06
61	Nevada	71.78
62	Temple	71.71
63	Louisville	71.62
64	Georgia Southern	71.34
65	Northwestern	71.28
66	Northern Iowa	70.88
67	North Carolina St	70.81
68	North Dakota St	70.63
69	Purdue	70.37
70	SMU	70.17
71	Wyoming	69.61
72	Air Force	69.42
73	Arizona	69.19
74	Ohio U.	68.99
75	Sam Houston St	68.92
76	Syracuse	68.79
77	Louisiana-Lafayette	68.54
78	Western Michigan	67.99
79	Utah St	67.49
80	Washington St	67.19
81	Florida Int'l	67.09
82	Navy	66.71
83	Oregon St	66.16
84	Kentucky	66.06
85	Marshall	65.84
86	Wofford	65.72
87	Kansas	65.43
88	East Carolina	65.39
89	Ball St	65.09
90	Western Kentucky	64.98



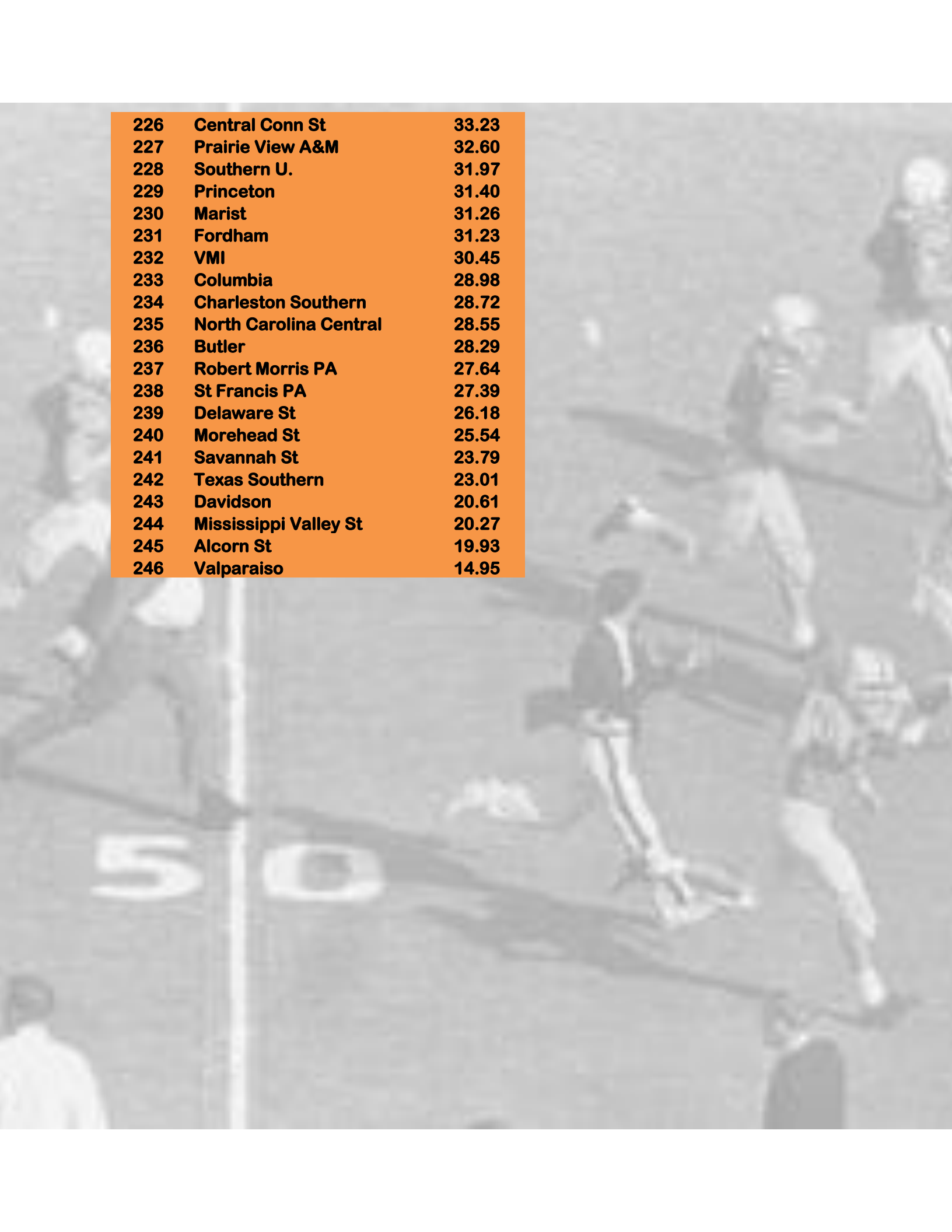
91	Connecticut	64.85
92	Montana	64.81
93	UTEP	64.79
94	Rice	63.86
95	Montana St	63.83
96	Mississippi	63.65
97	Appalachian St	63.58
98	Towson	63.32
99	Boston College	63.27
100	Maryland	63.06
101	Central Florida	63.05
102	Hawai'i	62.97
103	Fresno St	62.78
104	Kent St	62.66
105	Duke	62.66
106	San José St	62.39
107	Minnesota	62.31
108	Miami OH	61.98
109	Eastern Michigan	61.93
110	Lehigh	61.52
111	New Hampshire	61.34
112	North Texas	61.31
113	Maine	61.08
114	Bowling Green	61.06
115	Harvard	60.82
116	Chattanooga	60.78
117	Old Dominion	60.13
118	Illinois St	59.94
119	Indiana St	59.84
120	Colorado	59.79
121	Furman	59.46
122	Cal Poly SLO	59.22
123	Central Arkansas	59.16
124	Youngstown St	58.98
125	Louisiana-Monroe	58.78
126	Army	58.50
127	New Mexico St	58.24
128	James Madison	57.72
129	Southern Utah	57.69
130	Samford	57.46
131	Eastern Kentucky	57.19
132	Buffalo	57.17
133	Indiana	57.04
134	Troy	56.86
135	Stony Brook	56.42



136	Stephen F. Austin	56.18
137	Eastern Washington	56.08
138	Delaware	55.96
139	Idaho	55.93
140	Tennessee Tech	55.90
141	Central Michigan	55.59
142	North Dakota	55.47
143	South Dakota St	55.44
144	South Dakota	55.38
145	Colorado St	55.16
146	Alabama-Birmingham	55.08
147	Portland St	54.79
148	The Citadel	53.58
149	Weber St	53.53
150	Jacksonville St	53.52
151	Norfolk St	53.41
152	Bethune-Cookman	53.10
153	Murray St	52.77
154	Middle Tennessee St	52.72
155	Liberty	52.29
156	UNLV	52.27
157	Brown	52.01
158	Southern Illinois	51.94
159	Holy Cross	51.93
160	Northwestern St	51.01
161	Elon	50.85
162	UC-Davis	50.79
163	Massachusetts	50.65
164	Missouri St	50.19
165	William & Mary	49.86
166	McNeese St	49.55
167	Georgetown DC	49.45
168	South Carolina St	49.25
169	Texas St-San Marcos	49.17
170	Tulane	48.93
171	Sacramento St	48.76
172	New Mexico	48.49
173	Northern Arizona	48.12
174	Tennessee-Martin	48.10
175	Albany NY	48.00
176	Rhode Island	47.68
177	Coastal Carolina	47.45
178	Florida Atlantic	47.19
179	Jackson St	47.04
180	Duquesne	46.97

A grayscale background image showing a baseball game in progress. A batter is in the middle of a swing, and a catcher is crouched behind home plate. The scene is captured from a low angle, emphasizing the action on the field.

181	Bucknell	46.77
182	South Alabama	46.70
183	Memphis	46.44
184	Richmond	46.20
185	Tennessee St	46.06
186	Drake	45.90
187	Hampton	45.43
188	Western Illinois	45.31
189	Lafayette	45.13
190	Yale	45.00
191	Florida A&M	44.71
192	Akron	44.08
193	Presbyterian	44.00
194	Cornell NY	43.98
195	Colgate	43.95
196	Dartmouth	43.51
197	Alabama St	42.92
198	San Diego	42.70
199	Villanova	42.61
200	Jacksonville FL	42.43
201	Pennsylvania	42.35
202	Georgia St	41.10
203	SE Louisiana St	40.95
204	Eastern Illinois	40.82
205	Bryant	40.74
206	North Carolina A&T	40.72
207	Texas-San Antonio	40.32
208	Alabama A&M	38.25
209	Howard	37.95
210	Western Carolina	37.60
211	Idaho St	37.60
212	Monmouth NJ	37.43
213	Morgan St	37.41
214	SE Missouri St	37.21
215	Gardner-Webb	35.80
216	Grambling St	35.21
217	Austin Peay	35.09
218	Northern Colorado	34.90
219	Wagner	34.60
220	Campbell	34.45
221	Dayton	34.39
222	Sacred Heart	34.34
223	Lamar	34.32
224	Arkansas-Pine Bluff	33.73
225	Nicholls St	33.62



226	Central Conn St	33.23
227	Prairie View A&M	32.60
228	Southern U.	31.97
229	Princeton	31.40
230	Marist	31.26
231	Fordham	31.23
232	VMI	30.45
233	Columbia	28.98
234	Charleston Southern	28.72
235	North Carolina Central	28.55
236	Butler	28.29
237	Robert Morris PA	27.64
238	St Francis PA	27.39
239	Delaware St	26.18
240	Morehead St	25.54
241	Savannah St	23.79
242	Texas Southern	23.01
243	Davidson	20.61
244	Mississippi Valley St	20.27
245	Alcorn St	19.93
246	Valparaiso	14.95