

## College Football Weekly --- Wednesday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2005

BY MATTHEW HATFIELD

### PICKS: Thursday - 9-1-05

Temple @ #20 Arizona State	SU Pick: Arizona St. 45-3	ATS Pick: AS -31.5
Central Florida @ South Carolina	SU Pick: So. Carolina 38-12	ATS Pick: SC -21
Oregon @ Houston	SU Pick: Oregon 29-17	ATS Pick: OR -8.5
Minnesota @ Tulsa	SU Pick: Minnesota 34-13	ATS Pick: MN -15.5
Vanderbilt @ Wake Forest	SU Pick: Vanderbilt 24-20	ATS Pick: Van +8.5
William & Mary @ Marshall	SU Pick: Marshall 40-7	ATS Pick: No Line
Eastern Michigan @ Cincinnati	SU Pick: E. Michigan 34-31	ATS Pick: EM +8.5

### PICKS: Friday - 9-2-05

Arizona @ Utah	SU Pick: Utah 42-27	ATS Pick: Utah -7
Indiana @ Central Michigan	SU Pick: Indiana 27-21	ATS Pick: CM +8.5

### PICKS: Saturday - 9-3-05

#1 USC @ Hawaii	SU Pick: USC 56-19	ATS Pick: USC -35
UL Lafayette @ #2 Texas	SU Pick: Texas 49-6	ATS Pick: TX -40
UAB @ #3 Tennessee	SU Pick: Tennessee 30-14	ATS Pick: UAB +24
Northern Illinois @ #4 Michigan	SU Pick: Michigan 35-21	ATS Pick: NI +18.5
Miami (OH) @ #6 Ohio State	SU Pick: Ohio St. 22-10	ATS Pick: Mia +14.5
TCU @ #7 Oklahoma	SU Pick: Oklahoma 42-8	ATS Pick: OU -26.5
Wyoming @ #10 Florida	SU Pick: Florida 49-21	ATS Pick: FL -23
Ball State @ #11 Iowa	SU Pick: Iowa 48-0	ATS Pick: Iowa -39
#18 Boise State @ #13 Georgia	SU Pick: Boise St. 24-21	ATS Pick: Boise +7
Georgia Tech @ #16 Auburn	SU Pick: Auburn 17-14	ATS Pick: GT +7
#17 Texas A&M @ Clemson	SU Pick: Texas A&M 35-28	ATS Pick: A&M +2
Sacramento State @ #19 California	SU Pick: Cal 63-0	ATS Pick: No Line
#22 Boston College @ BYU	SU Pick: BC 32-23	ATS Pick: BC -2.5
Notre Dame @ #23 Pittsburgh	SU Pick: Pittsburgh 27-20	ATS Pick: Pitt -3
Western Michigan @ #25 Virginia	SU Pick: Virginia 31-0	ATS Pick: WM +34
Bowling Green @ Wisconsin	SU Pick: B. Green 26-16	ATS Pick: BG +2.5
South Florida @ Penn State	SU Pick: Penn St. 31-6	ATS Pick: PS -22.5
Kent State @ Michigan State	SU Pick: Mich. St. 33-13	ATS Pick: MS -18.5
Colorado State @ Colorado	SU Pick: Colorado 23-17	ATS Pick: CSU +7
Rutgers @ Illinois	SU Pick: Rutgers 22-14	ATS Pick: Rut +2
Navy vs. Maryland	SU Pick: Maryland 15-10	ATS Pick: Navy +13
Middle Tennessee St. @ Alabama	SU Pick: Alabama 38-7	ATS Pick: Bama -22
Ohio @ Northwestern	SU Pick: NW 18-12	ATS Pick: OH +14.5
Florida International @ Kansas St.	SU Pick: Kansas St. 45-9	ATS Pick: KS -33.5
UTEP @ New Mexico State	SU Pick: UTEP 39-37	ATS Pick: NM +10

### PICKS: Sunday - 9-4-05

#8 Virginia Tech @ NC State	SU Pick: NC St. 20-17	ATS Pick: St. +3.5
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#12 Louisville @ Kentucky  
West Virginia @ Syracuse

SU Pick: Louisville 52-14  
SU Pick: Syracuse 23-16

ATS Pick: Lou -22  
ATS Pick: SYR -2

### **PICKS: Monday - 9-5-05**

#9 Miami (FL) @ #14 Florida State  
Ole Miss @ Memphis  
UNLV @ New Mexico

SU Pick: Miami 21-13  
SU Pick: Memphis 32-16  
SU Pick: N. Mexico 24-0

ATS Pick: Miami -3  
ATS Pick: MEM -2.5  
ATS Pick: NM -14.5

### ***MY LOCKS & UPSET SPECIALS:***

**LOCKS: Pittsburgh -3, Memphis -2.5, Texas A&M +2, UAB +24 (POTW), Miami -3 (Under 39), Minnesota -15.5, Bowling Green +2.5 and Vanderbilt +8.5**

**UPSET SPECIALS: Boise State SU & +7 (Upset POTW), NC State SU & +3.5 (Under 42), Eastern Michigan SU & +8.5 and Rutgers SU & +2\_**

### **Inside the Games:**

**Boise State @ Georgia** - I know, the Bulldogs hold an impressive 22-3 record in Athens under Head Coach Mark Richt. **BUT**, I see a Northern Illinois over Maryland, Fresno State over Kansas State in Manhattan, or Rutgers defeating Michigan State (all of which were upsets called by me) type upset. Boise's offense - considered to be one of the five most explosive in the country this century - operates at its best on the blue smurf turf. However, quarterback Jared Zabransky is a good leader that can maneuver in the pocket well on the road. Georgia's defense loses three early NFL draft picks in David Pollack, Odell Thurman and Thomas Davis. Remember, Boise returns eight starters from a defense that quietly ranked 10<sup>th</sup> nationally against the run. Believe me, that'll be big Saturday.

**Notre Dame @ Pittsburgh** - Am very interested to see what Notre Dame's offense looks like under new Head Coach Charlie Weis, the former offensive coordinator of the New England Patriots. Receivers Maurice Stovall and Rhema McKnight, along with tight end Anthony Fasano, might flourish with Weis coaching them and Brady Quinn throwing passes to them. Quinn improved his completion percentage by 7% last year and has a potential 1000 yard back to hand the ball off to in sophomore Darius Walker. So this is a win for the Irish right? Well... not exactly. Even though they've got a tough schedule, they won't face too many defenses as good as or better than Pittsburgh's, which returns its top three tacklers. Dave Wannstedt won't be as pass happy as Walt Harris was. He'll mix in the run some more. Just don't think he will abandon the pass either as he has a fiery quarterback in Tyler Palko (3067Yds. 24-7TD/Int. ratio) that's looking to shred a weak Notre Dame pass defense for 300+ yards for the second straight season.

**West Virginia @ Syracuse** - Setting is huge. 'Cuse benefits playing this one at the Carrier Dome rather than Morgantown, where they have lost by an average of 24PPG since '02. WVA doesn't have RB's Quincy Wilson or Avon Cobourne anymore. The top

four WR's from last year are gone. Replacing conference Off. POY Rasheed Marshall - the team's best QB since Mark Bulger (8153Yds.) - also is a daunting task. Orange defense squeezes the life out of the Mountaineers in this one.

**Bowling Green @ Wisconsin** - Now this is a dog-on good football game. Barry Alvarez recently announced that the upcoming 2005 season will be his last as the Head Coach of Wisconsin football. Defensive coordinator Bret Bielema, who was an assistant at Iowa and Kansas State, has the task of filling Alvarez' shoes next year. Before he can do that, he must find a way for this defense - which has seven new starters - to keep BG quarterback Omar Jacobs from beating them. Jacobs and tailback P.J. Pope aren't new to this game. Last season, Pope ran for 15 touchdowns and caught six more, while Jacobs threw for 41 scores [only 4 picks too] and ran in four more. That's about 66 touchdowns produced by the two of them. It'll be a miracle if Wisky - without defensive standouts Erasmus James, Anttaj Hawthorne, Jim Leonhard and Scott Starks - keep them both out of the end zone. Brian Calhoun, a former Colorado football player, will be asked to do a lot on offense for the Badgers alongside signal caller John Stocco and WR Brandon Williams. Falcons won at Purdue two years ago and I like the outright upset again.

**Texas A&M @ Clemson** - Two very interesting quarterbacks in this game as A&M's Reggie McNeal squares off opposite Charlie Whitehurst of Clemson for the second straight year. Last season the outcome was 27-6 Aggies, but I'm thinking it'll be closer this time around. A few reasons for that. Number one, it's in South Carolina, not College Station. Secondly, the Tigers have a definite special teams edge, despite losing exciting corner/return man Justin Miller to the New York Jets. Finally, the Aggies aren't the best road team in the world if you recall last year's season opening 41-21 loss at Utah. For Clemson to win outright, they need to spread the offense out more and find a receiver to emerge alongside Sr. Curtis Baham, the only guy with multiple TD grabs back. Clemson favored? That's a little bit of a reach if you ask me.

**Miami (FL) @ Florida State** - Here's the grandest of grand nationally televised games this week and it comes on Memorial Day. Miami hasn't lost to Florida State this decade, going 5-0 since their narrow three point upset in 2000. Last year weather postponed the game and the Hurricanes (how appropriate this time of year right?) stormed back from a 10-0 deficit to 16-10 in overtime. Thank goodness Hurricane Katrina didn't postpone this classic matchup that surprisingly has less hype to it in '05. Part of the reason is that Va. Tech seems to be the favorite in the ACC Coastal Division with a more exciting QB in Marcus Vick rather than Kyle Wright. The other reason is that FSU has had a tumultuous off-season with injuries, suspensions and you name it for Bobby Bowden's club. There's still some quality matchups in this heavyweight title despite the muddied quarterback situation in Tallahassee. Should be a great defensive battle and it may be up to the offensive playmakers. For the Noles, running backs Leon Washington and Lorenzo Booker have to knife through the front seven. Miami's receiving core is licking their chops that Antonio Cromartie - out for the season with an injury - won't be playing. That means FSU safety Pat Watkins may line up one-on-one occasionally.

**Virginia Tech @ NC State** - For some reason, I've got bad vibes about the Tech offensive line going up against the NC St. defensive line, probably the best in all of

College Football. Mario Williams, Manny Lawson and those guys plan on bringing down the Hokies running backs at the initial point of attack, and not letting Marcus Vick get comfortable in the pocket. Also, I'm not sure about the Tech d-line, which goes up against an okay o-line of the Wolfpack. They may have to play Darryl Tapp some at defensive tackle in addition to end. Plus, let's not forget that the only conference loss Frank Beamer's Hokies suffered a year ago was vs. NC St. in Blacksburg. What it's ultimately going to come down to in my opinion is what power struggle prevails: Vick running and throwing wild or the Wolfpack defense that allowed an NCAA low 221YPG.



**Steve Spurrier is known for running up the score whether it be in the regular season opener, preseason opener, or vs. the Central Florida's of the world.** (Photo Courtesy: Associated Press)

#### **Five Downs:**

**William & Mary @ Marshall** - Tribe sophomore (Mike Potts) replacing Lang Campbell will have a rough day vs. an extremely aggressive Marshall secondary.

**Northern Illinois @ Michigan** - Only way I see the Huskies, coached by Joe Novak, to keep it close in the fourth quarter is getting 150+ yards out of tailback Garrett Wolfe.

**Georgia Tech @ Auburn** - If it comes down to a kick, the Yellow Jackets might hold an edge. Sophomore Travis Bell hit 15 straight field goals in '04 and missed just two of 17.

**Colorado State @ Colorado** - Sonny Lubick's Rams are 3-1 SU as an underdog vs. Colorado the past six years. Buffs defense keeps close from turning into an upset L.

**Boston College @ BYU** - Tough game to project as super defensive end Mathias Kiwanuka and BC take on a BYU offense that can be dangerous if you're not careful.