

# 8/23/2013: Big Ten preseason bowl projections

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As I have done annually here on *HawkeyeDrive.com*, I conclude my preseason football coverage here with my Big Ten bowl projections. After a 2012 season where the conference only had one BCS team for the first time since 2004, I see the Big Ten sending two teams back to BCS games this year and eight teams in total to bowl games. With these numbers in mind, yes, I'm projecting the league doesn't fill its entire bowl allotment for 2013.

Below are my projections involving those eight teams:

**BCS National Championship Game – Ohio State (Big Ten champion) vs. Oregon (Pac-12 champion)**

***Jan. 6, 2014; Pasadena, Calif.***

Chances are you quickly noticed how I don't have a SEC team in this game despite the conference having each of the last seven national champions. That's because I don't see an undefeated SEC team in 2013, but do see three teams from other BCS conferences doing so and have two of them meeting in what will basically be a second Rose Bowl (Louisville is the third unbeaten if you were wondering). Right now, I don't see anyone in the Big Ten beating Ohio State and I don't see anyone in the Pac-12 beating Oregon. These will be your beneficiaries of the SEC not having an unbeaten squad.

**Rose Bowl – Nebraska (replacement for Ohio State) vs. Stanford (replacement for Oregon)**

***Jan. 1, 2014; Pasadena, Calif.***

Because I have Ohio State meeting Oregon for the national title, the Rose Bowl gets to make replacement picks before other selections are made and I assume they'll stick to tradition here. If that's the case, Nebraska is my pick to win the Legends Division this season and replacing the Buckeyes with the Cornhuskers here wouldn't be a bad trade-off. Meanwhile, I think Stanford is the clear No. 2 in the Pac-12 and will end up in position here to win a second consecutive Rose Bowl.

**Capital One Bowl – Michigan (Big Ten No. 2) vs. Georgia (SEC No. 2)**

***Jan. 1, 2014; Orlando, Fla.***

The Legends Division will be brutal in 2013. Since I have Nebraska winning the division again and playing in Indianapolis on Dec. 7, Michigan goes to Orlando to face a Georgia squad that I think will benefit from South Carolina losing in the SEC title game. This would be a second straight trip to this bowl for the Bulldogs, but it's either this or the Wolverines playing the Gamecocks for the second straight year.

**Outback Bowl – Northwestern (Big Ten No. 3) vs. South Carolina (SEC No. 3/4)**

***Jan. 1, 2014; Tampa, Fla.***

There's precedent for the Outback Bowl picking Northwestern over Wisconsin back in 2009 and I have a hunch it would do so again if this plays out like I'm projecting. Part of my reasoning here, again, is the strength of the Legends Division. I also think the Wildcats will start to benefit long-term from what it was able to accomplish last winter and this will be an example of that. Here, I have Northwestern facing South Carolina, who ends up here after losing the SEC title game (a la Georgia in 2011).

**Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl – Wisconsin (Big Ten No. 4) vs. Oklahoma State (Big 12 No. 4)**

***Dec. 28, 2013; Tempe, Ariz.***

Since I have Northwestern going to Tampa, that leaves Wisconsin heading to a bowl game that probably wouldn't pick Michigan State for a second straight year. The one concern that might exist here is the Badgers returning to Tempe after playing at Arizona State in September, but I feel a match-up between Wisconsin and Oklahoma State here would entice the members of this committee. Regarding the Cowboys, they were picked to win the Big 12 this year and I'm not as sold on them as others are. That's why I have them here facing Wisconsin.

**Gator Bowl – Michigan State (Big Ten No. 5) vs. Ole Miss (SEC No. 6)**

***Jan. 1, 2014; Jacksonville, Fla.***

Since I don't see Michigan State returning to the B-Dubs Bowl, I got the Spartans ending up in Jacksonville and playing Ole Miss in the Gator Bowl. This would be an interesting match-up between a current up-and-coming program and a program like Michigan State who a few years ago might've been considered the same but now is trying to sustain that previous success.

**Texas Bowl – Indiana (Big Ten No. 6) vs. Kansas State (Big 12 No. 6)**

***Dec. 27, 2013; Houston, Texas***

I like Indiana enough this year that I not only foresee the Hoosiers in a bowl game, but I think 7-8 wins is doable for this team assuming it can handle its business at home since the schedule features eight games played at Memorial Stadium. Here I got Kevin Wilson battling wits with Bill Snyder and the Kansas State Wildcats, who I believe take a step back this season without Collin Klein and Arthur Brown leading the way

like they did a year ago.

## **Heart of Dallas Bowl – Iowa (Big Ten No. 7) vs. Tulsa (C-USA)**

***Jan. 1, 2014; Dallas, Texas***

If the Hawkeyes can get to 6-6, I believe they end up in Texas and it wouldn't shock me to see them playing down at Cotton Bowl Stadium on New Year's Day against Tulsa, a team that I don't see winning C-USA this season even though it's considered by many pundits to be the favorite in that conference. Keep in mind there's currently a rotation between the Big 12 and C-USA, which is why C-USA would be sending a team to Dallas on New Year's Day 2014.

## **Illinois – no bowl**

*Tim Beckman's squad should be better this season, but I don't think it'll be good enough to crack six victories.*

## **Minnesota – no bowl**

*Regardless of the Floyd of Rosedale outcome, I foresee the Golden Gophers having a tough season, mainly because their schedule is a lot more challenging this year. Should Minnesota reach six wins however, Detroit's a likely landing spot for the Little Caesars Bowl on Dec. 26.*

## **Purdue – no bowl**

*I like Darrell Hazell, but it's going to take some time there in West Lafayette.*

## **Penn State – ineligible for postseason play from 2012-15**

And just for fun, I'll leave you here with the rest of my bowl projections for the 2013-14 bowl season. This way you can kind of get an idea how I got to some of those match-ups involving Big Ten teams I projected:

***Orange Bowl – Clemson (ACC champion) vs. Louisville (American***

*Athletic champion)*

***Sugar Bowl*** – Alabama (SEC champion) vs. Florida State (BCS at-large)

***Fiesta Bowl*** – TCU (Big 12 champion) vs. Texas A&M (BCS at-large)

***New Mexico Bowl*** – Utah vs. San Diego State

***Las Vegas Bowl*** – Fresno State vs. Oregon State

***Idaho Potato Bowl*** – Ball State vs. Nevada

***New Orleans Bowl*** – UAB vs. ULM

***Beef O'Brady's Bowl*** – East Carolina vs. Rutgers

***Hawaii Bowl*** – Louisiana Tech vs. San Jose State

***Little Caesars Bowl*** – Northern Illinois vs. Louisiana-Lafayette

***Poinsettia Bowl*** – Toledo vs. Boise State

***Military Bowl*** – Rice vs. Duke

***Kraft Fight Hunger Bowl*** – BYU vs. Washington

***Pinstripe Bowl*** – Cincinnati vs. Baylor

***Belk Bowl*** – UCF vs. North Carolina State

***Russell Athletic Bowl*** – Miami (Fla.) vs. Notre Dame

***Armed Forces Bowl*** – Utah State vs. Navy

***Music City Bowl*** – Tennessee vs. Georgia Tech

***Alamo Bowl*** – USC vs. Oklahoma

***Holiday Bowl*** – UCLA vs. Texas Tech

***V100 Bowl – Syracuse vs. Kentucky***

***Sun Bowl – Virginia Tech vs. Arizona State***

***Liberty Bowl – Marshall vs. Arkansas***

***Chick-Fil-A Bowl – North Carolina vs. Florida***

***Cotton Bowl – Texas vs. LSU***

***BBVA Compass Bowl – Vanderbilt vs. Houston***

***GoDaddy Bowl – Western Kentucky vs. Bowling Green***